

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

## 1. Name of Property

historic name: Whipple-Cullen House and Barn

other name/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street & number: Old River Road

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Lincoln vicinity: N/A

state: RI county: Providence code: 007 zip code: 02865

## 3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: buildings

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources of Lincoln, R.I. 1636-present

Property name Whipple-Cullen House and Barn

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

_____ entered in the National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined eligible for the	_____	_____
_____ National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined not eligible for the	_____	_____
_____ National Register	_____	_____
_____ removed from the National Register	_____	_____
_____ other (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic:	<u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub:	<u>single dwelling</u>
	<u>AGRICULTURE</u>		<u>storage/animal facility</u>
Current:	<u>VACANT</u>	Sub:	_____
	_____		_____
	_____		_____



Property name Whipple-Cullen House and Barn

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification:

COLONIAL  
OTHER/utilitarian

Other Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: foundation STONE/granite roof ASPHALT  
walls WOOD/shingle/ other \_\_\_\_\_  
weatherboard

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

X See continuation sheet.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: c.1740 c.1885

Significant Dates: c.1740 c.1885 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet.



Property name Whipple-Cullen House and Barn

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: R.I. Historical Preservation Commission

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property: less than one

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	<u>19</u>	<u>297520</u>	<u>4644720</u>	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:  See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification:  See continuation sheet.

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/Title: Vivienne F. Lasky, Consultant - Pamela A. Kennedy, Principal  
Hist. Pres. Specialist

Organization: R.I. Historical Preservation Commission Date: Sept. 91

Street & Number: 18 Savoy St. - 150 Benefit St. Telephone: 401-272-6692

City or Town: Providence State: R.I. ZIP: 02906

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### Description

The Whipple-Cullen House (c. 1740) is a 2 1/2-story, 5-bay, gable-roof, center-chimney house, set on a dressed stone foundation. It has a 1-1/2-story rear addition and a Victorian bracketed side porch. A late 19th-century cowbarn is located just north of the house; a farm shed (converted to a garage) is located to the east. The Whipple-Cullen House and Barn are set high on the ridge of Old River Road, about halfway between the villages of Lime Rock (listed in the National Register, 1974) and Old Ashton (listed in the National Register, 1984). To the west across Old River Road are the Lincoln Town Hall and public works garage; to the north and south are newer houses; on the east behind the house, the land falls away toward the Blackstone River and is partially wooded.

The Whipple-Cullen House faces west and is set back about 30 feet from the road. The original clapboards of the house are now covered by painted shingles. The windows have narrow cornice caps and deeply rounded sills; the sash is double-hung, two-over-one. The center entrance is hidden by a small, hip-roof enclosed portico, a later addition. The Victorian porch runs the width of the house on the south side; it has paired brackets, turned posts, turned balusters, and a molded rail.

The Whipple-Cullen House is built on the common 5-room plan, centered on the large brick chimney which rests on a stone barrel vault. The stair is located between the front door and chimney. There is a parlor on each side of the stair. A large room extends across the rear and is flanked by two small rooms.

The front door opens into a small entry with a narrow, 3-run, closed-string stair with wide moldings, acorn pendants on the angle posts, a turned newel and balusters, and a molded rail.

The first-floor rooms are finished with plaster ceilings, plaster walls (now papered), wide floor boards, deep cornice moldings, which break around the windows, cased corner posts, and some old hardware from various periods. The north parlor fireplace has a wide, flat overmantel and paired colonnettes supporting the mantel itself. The south parlor's mantel is supported by single engaged columns; the cornice in this room has a delicate Adamesque swag detail, probably a Federal addition. The center rear room contains the cooking fireplace, now bricked in; the bakeoven is set to the right of the fireplace. The mantelpiece here is heavier in scale and may be a later Colonial Revival alteration. The rear ell, which also appears to be a later addition, contains a modern kitchen.

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The plan of the second floor mirrors the first floor, but the detailing is simpler: narrow cornice moldings, plain cornerpost casings, simple fireplace surrounds, and panelled interior window blinds.

The attic contains some small rooms, finished in this century. The unfinished section displays several faint signatures on the rafters--the only legible one is that of Edward Cooke, the son of Benoni and Abigail Whipple Cooke who owned the house after 1840.

North of the house is a long, flank-gable, 2-level cowbarn. The exterior walls are covered with vertical boards. The interior is divided by rough plank walls into milking stalls. Attached to the south end of the barn is a series of outbuildings. An open shed covered with vertical boards connects the barn to a small dairy building/smokehouse. The dairy is in poor condition; its northeast corner has collapsed. A small smokehouse attached to the south wall of the dairy is in fair condition.

Behind the house is a thoroughly remodelled barn, used as a garage. It is in poor condition and is a non-contributing part of the property.

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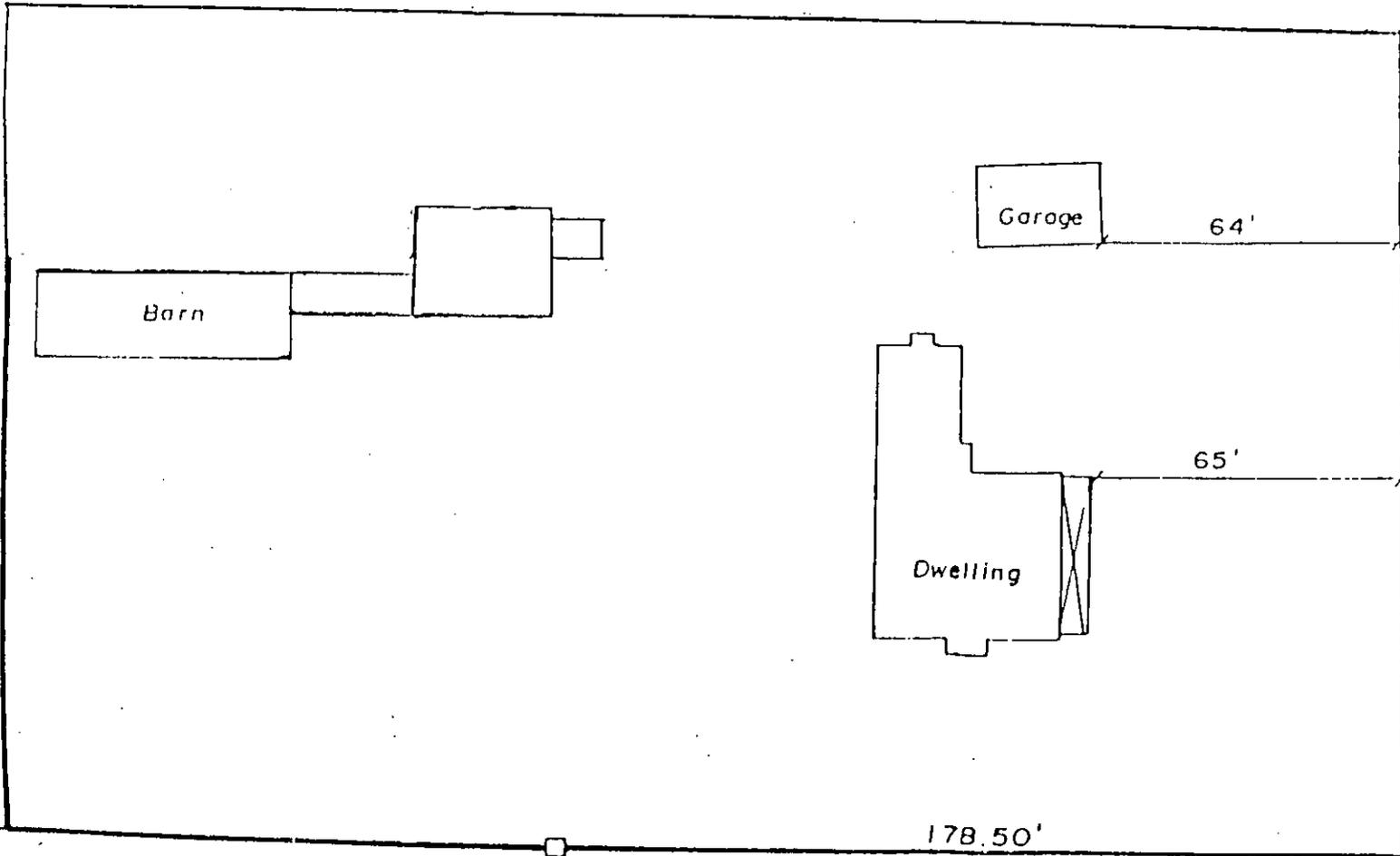
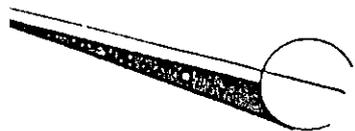
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Site plan



178.50'  
N 12° 55' 22" W

OLD

RIVER

ROAD

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### Significance

The Whipple-Cullen House is significant as a typical eighteenth-century farm house, able to document the quality and character of domestic construction during Lincoln's first century of development. The Whipple-Cullen Barn is a useful example of nineteenth-century farm buildings, a building type which was significant in the town's past and is now relatively rare.

The size, elevation, plan, and detail of the Whipple-Cullen House is typical of Lincoln's eighteenth-century houses. The house's elevation (with center door flanked by two windows on each side); its plan (five rooms arranged around a center chimney, the narrow stair tucked between door and chimney, fireplaces in each of the three principal rooms); its size (two full stories with an attic); and its detail (classically inspired yet simple woodwork) are characteristic of houses built in Lincoln through the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries. With variations, houses on this pattern were built for decades.

Lincoln retains a number of eighteenth-century houses. Many of them show the effects of two centuries of modification; a smaller number, including the Whipple-Cullen House are remarkably well preserved. The greatest concentrations of these early structures are on lower Great Road (listed in the National Register in 1974) and Lime Rock (listed in the National Register in 1974). Scattered through the rest of Lincoln are a handful of early houses, such as the Whipple-Cullen House, once outlying farms, left from a century when cultivating the land was the principal economic activity of the town.

Similarly, the Whipple-Cullen Barn is a good example of its building type. Farm buildings have proved to be one of the most fragile elements of the town's stock of historic buildings. Replaced often and rarely maintained after they outlive their utility, barns and sheds are increasingly rare. The Whipple-Cullen Barn, probably built in the late nineteenth century, is a good well-preserved example of the stock barn.

In its history of ownership and use, the Whipple-Cullen property evinces some of the patterns of Lincoln's development. The house was probably built by Job Whipple who acquired the land in 1736. The property remained in the Whipple family until 1873. Of particular interest are owners Stephen Whipple and his son Simon, both of whom were extensively involved in the local lime industry and in Smithfield town affairs, both in the General Assembly and on the Town Council. Simon Whipple was also connected with the Smithfield Woolen & Cotton Manufacturing Company, one of

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the town's earliest factories. The Whipplés appear to have operated a general, unspecialized farm. In the mid-nineteenth century when Benoni Cooke and his wife Abigail Whipple farmed here, ten cows were kept on the place, along with small crops of potatoes, rye, apples, and barley.

In 1881 the farm was acquired by John Cullen (1837-1908). Cullen emigrated from Ireland at age 20 and worked at the Lonsdale Company farm. As with many Blackstone Valley farms, Cullen converted the Whipple Farm to a dairy operation--the barn on the property seems to date from his tenure here. The Cullen family raised Holsteins and are reported to have done their own bottling and delivery on local routes. John Cullen became a building contractor and started a coal and dry goods business; he participated in the construction of the Berkeley Mill and did the company's teaming on contract. Among his children were Rev. Thomas Cullen, editor of the diocesan newspaper, The Providence Visitor, and author of a history of the Catholic church in Rhode Island, and Patrick Cullen, a senator in the General Assembly and head of the state's Milk Control Division. The Cullens operated the dairy until the 1940s and, in fact, still own the property.

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### Geographical Data

#### Boundary Description

The boundary of the Whipple-Cullen House and Barn is a section of Plat 29, lot 150, fronting on Old River Road. The boundary is a rectangle, 178.5 feet by 150 feet, with 90 degree corners, the short side set along a line drawn between a point 65 feet south from the southeast corner of the house's porch, a point 64 feet south from the southwest corner of the garage, and a point along the highway line of Old River Road.

#### Boundary Justification

For much of its history, the Whipple-Cullen House has been the headquarters for a moderate-size general farm and (later) a dairy farm. The early boundaries of the farm stretched along Old Rive Road and Cullen Hill Road, toward Washington Highway and the village of Old Ashton. In the last century, sections of the farm along Washington Highway, Old River Road, and Cullen Hill Rad have been platted and built upon. The Whipple-Cullen House and Barn are now located on a 55-acre polygonal lot. The land is partially wooded and does not sufficiently convey its original use to justify its inclusion in the nomination. The bulk of the 55 acres may be platted in the near future. The boundary outlined here provides a suitable and appropriate setting for the house and barn; it excludes land not directly related to the significance of the buildings.

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### Major Bibliographical References

Bayles, Richard M. History of Providence County, Rhode Island, W.W. Preston & Co., New York, 1891.

Conley, Patrick T. and Smith, Mathew S. Catholicism in Rhode Island - The Formative Era. Published by the Diocese of Providence, 1976.

Cullen, Rev. Thomas F., The Catholic Church in Rhode Island, published by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, North Providence, Rhode Island, 1936.

Smithfield Land Evidence Records (located in Old Smithfield Town Hall, now Central Falls City Hall)

Deeds: Book I p. 257  
Book II p. 704  
Book 21 p. 320-323  
Book 22 p. 188  
Book 50 p. 26  
Book 1 p. 495, Lincoln Town Hall

Statewide Preservation Report P-L-1: Lincoln, Rhode Island, The Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Providence, 1982.

Steere, Thomas. History of the Town of Smithfield, 1730-1871, Providence, Rhode Island, 1981.



Whipple-Cullen House + Barn

Old River Road

Lincoln, Rhode Island

Photographer: William Bradshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: Exterior, west elevation.

Photo # 1



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

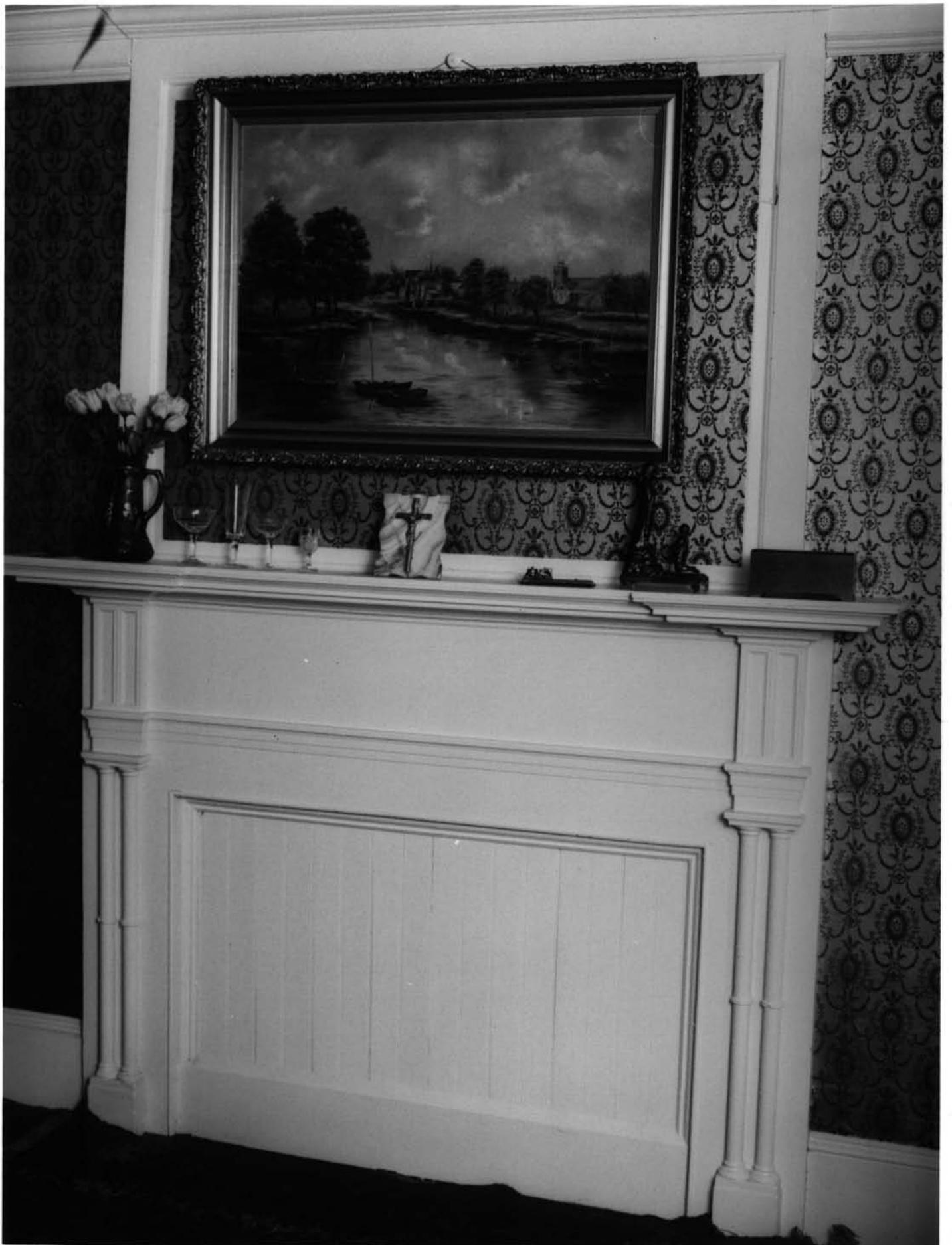
Photographer: William Bralshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: staircase.

Photo # 2



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Photographer: William Bratshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln,

View: North parlor, mantel.

Photo #3



Whipple - Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Photographer: William Bratshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: North parlor, detail of corner post,  
ceiling molding and door.

Photos # 4



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Photographer: William Bratshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: South parlor fireplace.

Photo # 5



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Photographer: William Bratshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: South parlor, detail of enclosed corner post  
and Adamesque cornice.

Photo #6



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Photographer: William Bradshaw

Date: November 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: Rear central room fireplace.

Photo #7



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Photographer: William Bradshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: Rear central room, detail of bakeoven.

Photo # 8



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Photographer: William Bradshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: North, front chamber, second floor fireplace.

Photo #9



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

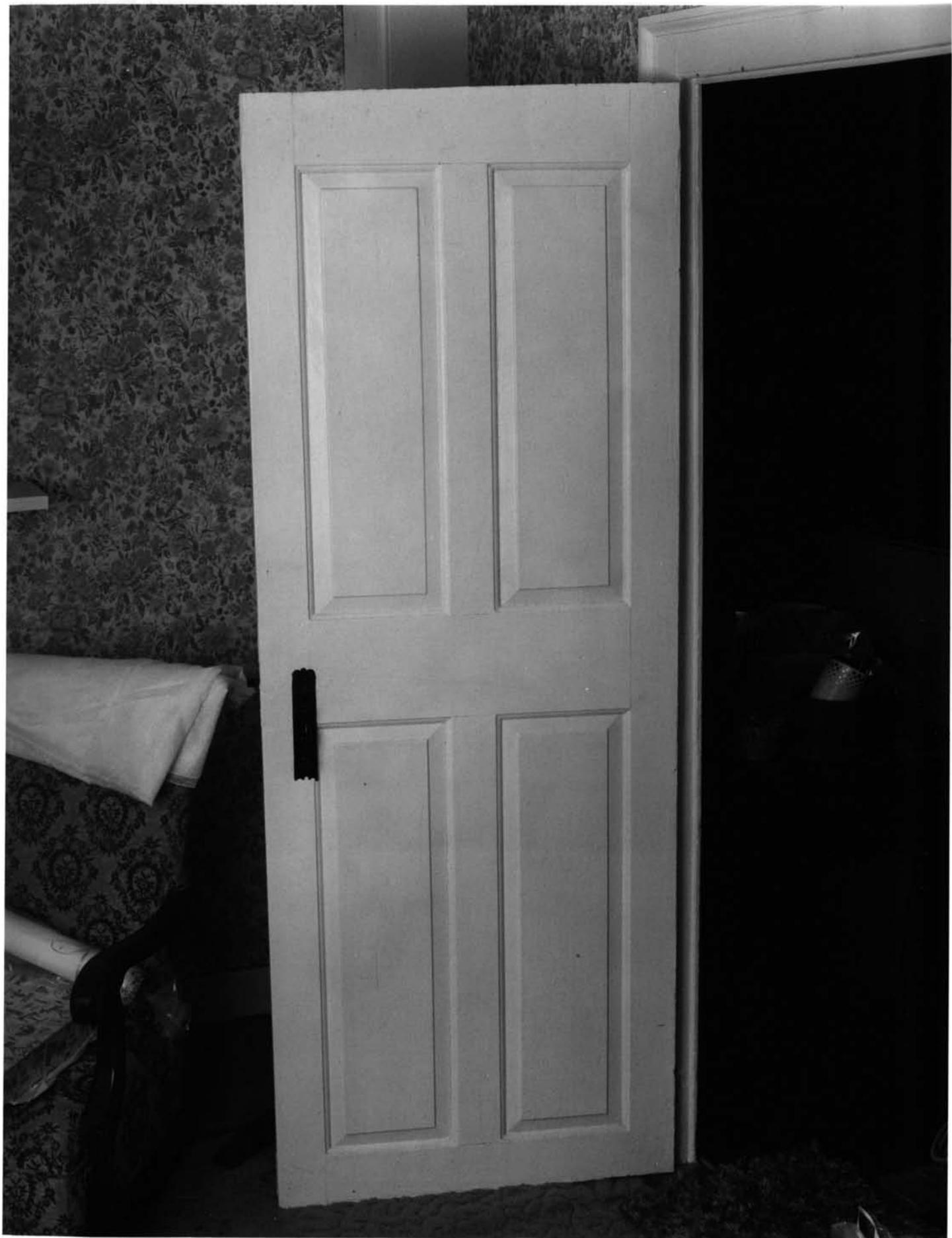
Photographer: William Bradshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: South front chamber, second floor  
window, with interior blinds.

Photo # 10



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

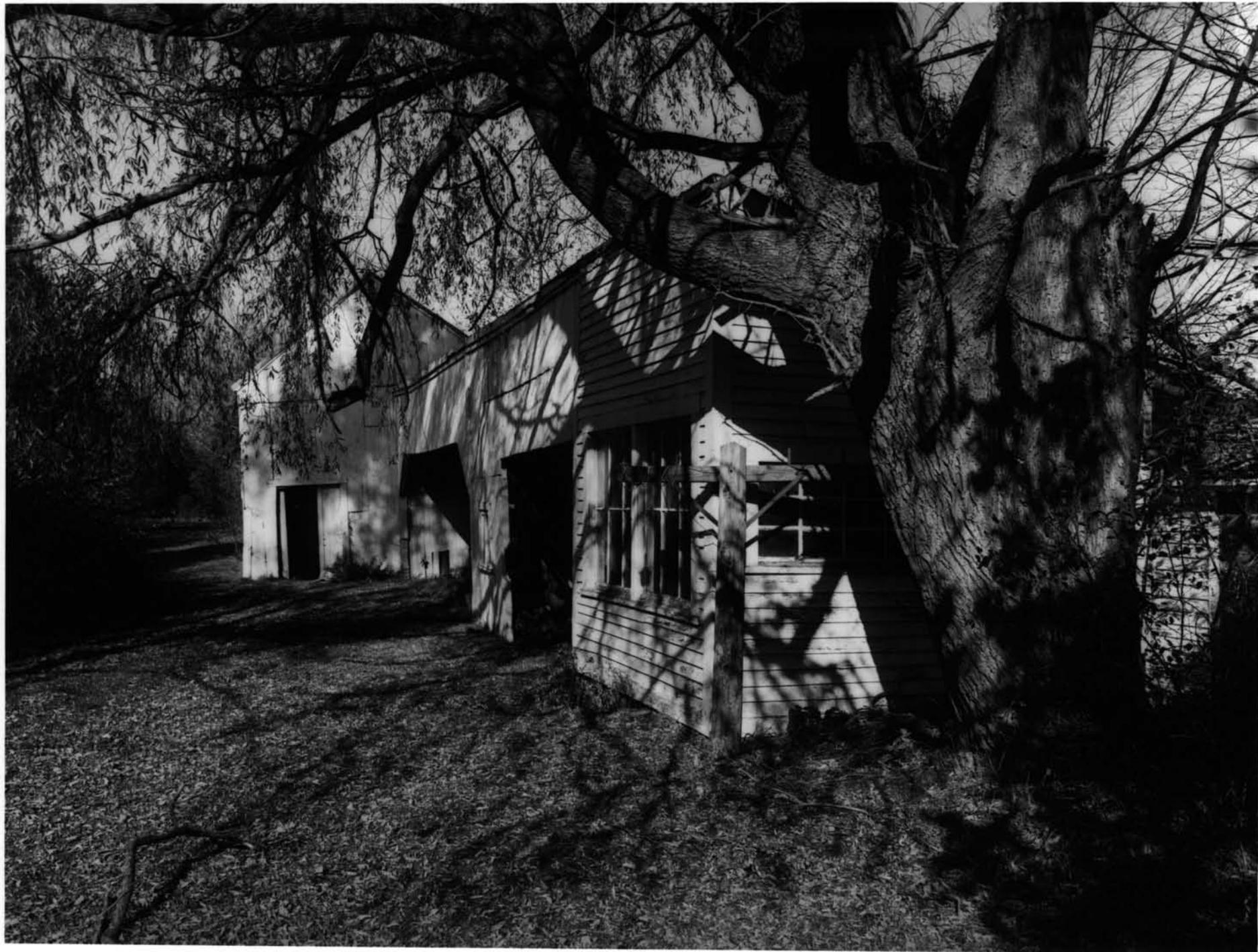
Photographer: William Bradshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln,

View: South, front chamber, second floor doorway.

Photo # 11



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Photographer: William Bradshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: Cowbarn and shed, looking north.

Photo #12



Whipple-Cullen House and Barn  
Old River Road,  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

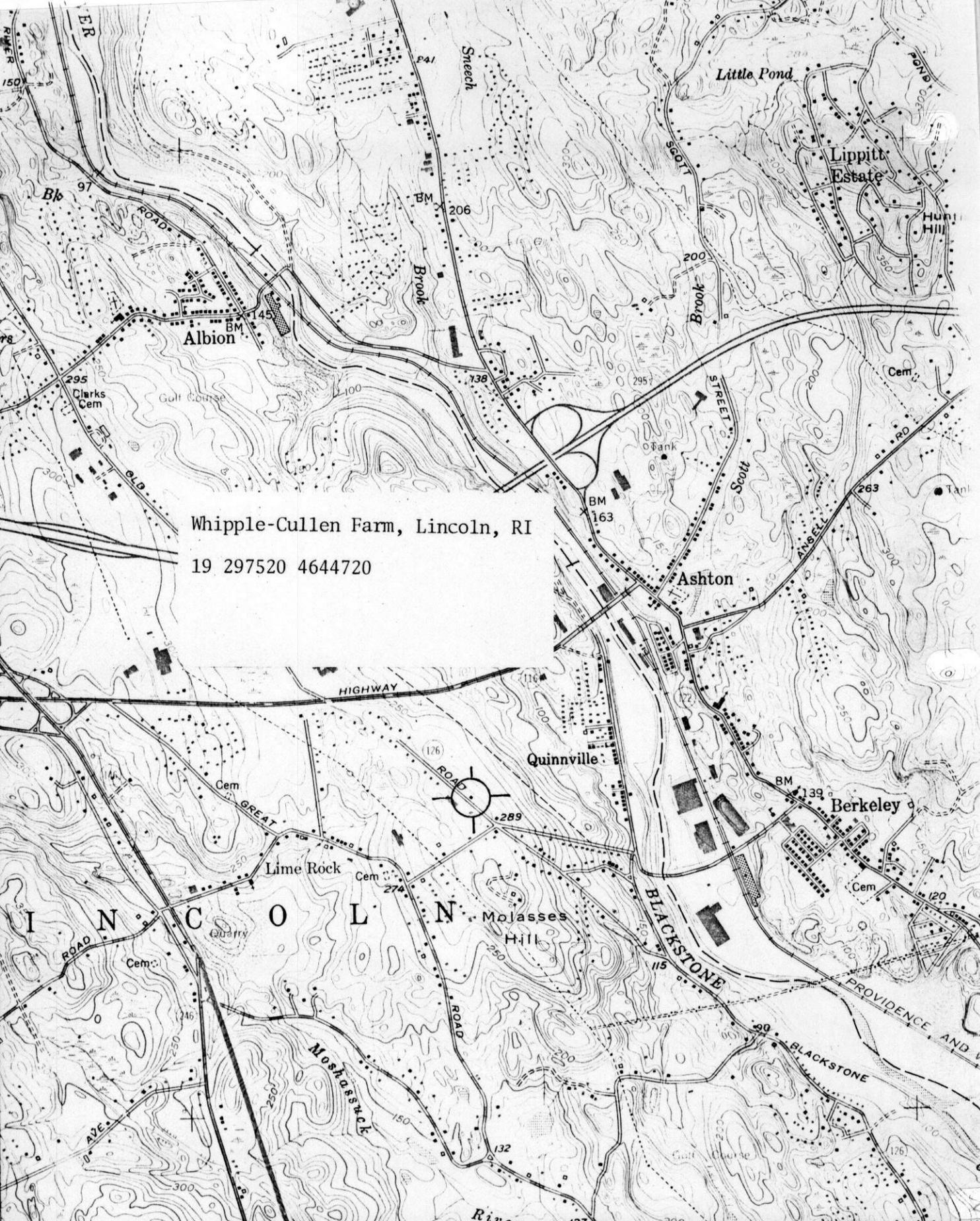
Photographer: William Bradshaw

Date: November, 1989

Negative: John Cullen, Old River Road, Lincoln

View: Cowbarn, interior, milling stall.

Photo # 13



Whipple-Cullen Farm, Lincoln, RI

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