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The Old Hemingway Tavern
East Haven, Connecticut

HABS No. Conn. 11

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Connecticut

Historic American Buildings Survey
Harold H. Davis, District Officer
29 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, Conn.

HEMINGWAY TAVERN

East Haven, New Haven County, Connecticut

This structure was demolished in September, 1936.

Date of erection: 1773

Architect: Not known

Builder: Samuel Hemingway

Number of Stories: Two and one-half

Materials of Construction: Stone foundations
Clapboard sidewalls, 3-1/2" to 3-3/4" widths
Brick central chimney
Pitched roof covered with shingles
Interior paneling, mantels, etc. of pine

Other Existing Records: Photographs and history contained in booklet:
"Old Houses of East Haven" by D. V. Chidsey.

List of Photographs:

1. Northwest Elevation
2. View from Southeast
3. Detail of Stairs
4. Detail of Fireplace Original Parlor (West Wall)
5. Mantel in Original Parlor (East Wall)

THE OLD HEMINGWAY TAVERN
EAST HAVEN, CONN.

At 262 Main Street, East Haven, stands the Old Hemingway Tavern, known in later years as the Atwater House. This house was built in 1773, one year before the completion of the Old Stone Meeting House just across the Post Road to the North. The house which has always been owned and occupied by a descendant of the early Hemingway family, was for many years used as a tavern.

It is believed that Samuel Hemingway, born in 1748, was the first to occupy this house. The son of Samuel, Eleazor, was a man of considerable importance in East Haven and was the founder of the Hemingway Inn. Back in the days of the stage coach there was much activity around this old house. There is a long room on the second floor of the house which was used as a ballroom in which many of the social affairs of the town in that by-gone day were held.

According to the Hughes History of East Haven, Honorable Eleazor Hemingway was elected eleven times to represent East Haven in the General Assembly.

It is reported, an old custom existed about one hundred years ago in all of the Connecticut Towns known as the annual May Master of the Militia. On Training Day, it was usual for all freemen in the town between the ages of 18 and 45 years to meet early on the morning of the first Monday in May at the Hemingway Tavern. Drum roll was sounded and the battalion was formed by First Sergeant Lucius Linsley along the sidewalk on the south side of the street backed up against the stone wall west of Hemingway's Tavern. Here the soldiery were drilled preparatory to their taking up their line of march to the Green. After the long and envolved military manouvers were completed on the Green, the company partook of a lunch to strengthen them on their long march. After this parade, the company went to the Hemingway Tavern to sit down to a much deserved dinner.

For many years after the death of Eleazor Hemingway, the duties of carrying on the affairs at the Inn were conducted by his daughters Polly and Mehitable. Edward Hemingway conducted the Tavern next and when his work became too arduous for him in his old age, he was in turn, relieved by his cousin Stephen Hemingway. Charles Hemingway and Charlotte Hemingway Atwater, children of Stephen Hemingway, were the last of the family to occupy the house up to within a few years of the present date.

About forty years ago the house had two, one story ells to the rear forming a small court yard between the two additions. At that

time the addition on the edge of the walk was torn down and the remaining addition was raised to two full floors in height. Ever since that time, the tavern feature has been out of existence.

As per the attached newspaper clippings, the Hemingway Tavern was razed on September 25, 1936.

Source of information: "Old Houses of East Haven", D. V. Chidsey.

Author: *Margaret M. Blake*

Approved: *Harold H. Davis, Dist. Officer*

Oct. 30, 1936

Rev. Jan 7 '37 TWC

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From The New Haven Register, New Haven, Connecticut June 28, 1936

EAST HAVEN
OPPOSITION
DEVELOPS ON
GAS STATION

Hearing Scheduled Tomorrow Night in East Haven on Petition for Permit

Opposition is developing among some of the residents of East Haven to a petition due before the Board of Selectmen tomorrow night from Frederick J. Bashaw of Providence for a permit for a gasoline filling station on the southwest corner of Main Street and Thompson Avenue.

Gillis Opposes

William E. Gillis, superintendent of schools, has sent a letter to Town Clerk Chauncey T. Warner telling him that there are parents of school children who feel the establishment of a gas station on that corner would increase the hazards for school children. Many of the children attending Tuttle and Union Schools reside in High Street and must cross Main Street to and from school. The present traffic light affords protection but parents, Mr. Gillis says, feel concern about the situation if a filling station goes on the corner.

The site selected is on one of the principal corners of East Haven. The Town Hall is on one corner, the Old Stone Church on another, and the Masonic building on the third corner.

May Raze Landmark

If the permit is granted, it will probably mean the razing of the present two story frame house on the land which is one of the old landmarks in the town. The house was known as the Hemingway tavern and in later years came to be known as the Atwater house. It was built in 1773, one year before the completion of the Old Stone meeting house. The house has not been occupied in two years. The present owner is Harry Hemingway of Albany, N. Y. The property is valued on the assessors books for approximately \$17,000.

Famous East Haven Tavern
May Be Torn Down Soon



The old Hemingway Tavern at corner of Main Street and Thompson Avenue, East Haven, once a famed hostelry, may be razed if a permit is granted by the selectmen for a filling station. It was built 163 years ago, was the meeting place of the town militia and important social functions held there.

From the New Haven Journal Courier, September 24, 1936, New Haven, Conn.

EAST HAVEN

House Razing Starts Today

Historic Atwater Place to Make Way for Gasoline Station.

It was reported yesterday that work will be started today on the tearing down of the historic old Atwater place at the corner of Main street and Thompson avenue, formerly known as the Hemingway tavern. Yesterday morning deeds were filed in the office of the town clerk transferring title of ownership of the premises from Harry S. Hemingway of Albany, N. Y., to Nina J. Anderson of Newport, R. I.

The property, it is said, was sold for \$13,000 and will be leased to the American Oil company for a gasoline service station, a permit for which has already been issued. The house which dates back to Revolutionary times, has been in the Hemingway family since 1833. The last member of the family to occupy the place was Charles T. Hemingway, former town clerk of East Haven and the father of Harry S. Hemingway, of Albany.

As a part of the transfer of the property a triangular piece of land measuring 13 feet on Main street and running back to a point 70 feet on Thompson avenue is deeded to the town for highway purposes and this will enable the town to straighten the intersection here so that Thompson avenue will be more in line with High street.