

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

1. Name of Property

historic name Ward-Heitman House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 277 Elm Street not for publication _____
city or town West Haven vicinity _____
state CT code _____ county New Haven code _____
zip code 06516

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally X statewide _____ locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

John W. Shannahan 11/25/02
Signature of certifying official Title Date
John W. Shannahan, Director

Connecticut Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property X meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
X 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 _____

Robert A. Beall 1.8.03

____ other (explain): _____

Jan
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- X private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- X building(s)
district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: SINGLE DWELLING Sub: residence
SPECIALTY STORE antique shop
RESTAURANT tea room
SCHOOL private dame school

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: MUSEUM Sub: house museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL: Postmedieval English and Georgian

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
roof WOOD SHINGLES
walls WOOD CLAPBOARD
other

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Description Page 1 Ward-Heitman House, West Haven, New Haven County, CT

Architectural Description

The Ward-Heitman House is an early eighteenth-century residence located on its original site on a lot now 123' wide by 194' deep. At one time the property consisted of 12 acres, but was gradually reduced to 1/2 acre by sale of various sections. The neighborhood is residential, consisting primarily of two-family houses built in the late nineteenth century, but borders on the busy commercial district of Campbell Avenue. The house fronts on Elm Street, with a narrow yard in front and larger yards on the sides and rear of the property. There is a driveway on the east side which leads to a garage built around 1950 in the north east corner of the property.

The original block of the house consists of two first-floor rooms with two second-floor rooms, arranged around a central chimney and is of post-and-beam studded construction. This is typical of houses built in Connecticut from the seventeenth century through the first third of the eighteenth century. The three additions, a two-story rear addition that superseded a 1793 lean-to, a 1 1/2 story addition on the west rear and the mid- to late-nineteenth century ell, are balloon framed. The main part of the roof has a gable roof running parallel with the street. The first rear and west additions are covered by a shallow gable roof that runs perpendicular to the street. The ell addition, attached to the first rear addition, is only one story high and has a gable roof running perpendicular to the street. The entire roof is finished with wood shingles and the large square center chimney is made of brick above the roofline. The walls are clad with clapboard, much of which dates to the early nineteenth century. The foundations of the main house, rear addition, and the one story ell are of fieldstone, but the west addition lacks a foundation. The house is painted a yellowish green color matching the fifth layer of paint on the oldest clapboards, with off-white trim from the same period.

The interior of the house reflects its use over several centuries. The entry features the original staircase with turned balusters. The downstairs front rooms are finished in the Georgian style, with Colonial Revival additions. A seventeenth-century kitchen was created in the 1930's in the rear addition in space that had once been the lean-to. The west addition, built as a dining room, is finished in Colonial Revival style. The ell, originally used as a private schoolhouse, was most recently used to house the twentieth-century kitchen apparatus. The two front rooms on the second floor have always been bed chambers. Their finishes are Georgian/Federal/ Colonial Revival, with the west chamber having the most intact finishes. In the second floor of the lean-to the original exterior wall of the house is exposed. The second floor of the west addition, once a sleeping porch, is now storage space.

Exterior

The front façade of the house has a framed overhang of six inches between the first and second story and features five windows (photograph 1). The two on the first floor are 12/12's, with 6" by 8" panes, while the three on the second floor are 12/8's. The plain door architrave has a small molding around the outside. The door, which was reused from another property, is stained a dark brown color and has a diamond design picked out in rose headed nails. Currently, there is nothing above the door to provide

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shelter. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century there was a one-story porch across the center one-third of the front façade. This had been removed and replaced by a small hood over the door by 1936 (HABS drawings). The hood was removed in 1999. While the front façade and two sides were covered with shingles early in the twentieth century, the old clapboards remained underneath these. Many of these were repaired in situ. The clapboards on the front are old ones salvaged from the sides of the building. Nailing evidence shows that these clapboards are probably the second set for the house. They are sawn with a water-powered saw and unbeaded; have a 4" exposure, are bevelled and average seven feet in length. There is a wide, plain 14 1/2" water table board between the foundation and the clapboards, with plain trim boards at the corners. The top plate overhangs the front and is cased. There is a trim board between the windows and the bottom of the top plate.

The west side of the original block of the house is clapboarded (photograph 2), with three windows, aligned vertically in the center of the end gable. The first story window is a replacement based on a circa 1895 photograph. The original had been replaced with a three-window grouping about 1910. The first and second story windows are 12/12's with 6" by 8" panes. The attic window is smaller, with six panes. The windows have simple 3" board trim, with projecting sills. There is a 10 1/2" wide board between the top of the water table board and the first clapboard.

The east side of the 2/2 portion is similar to the west side. In this case, the clapboards begin at the top of the water table board, as they do on the front. The clapboards at the top of the gable are wider than the others on the house.

The rear addition conforms to the footprint of one added in the late eighteenth-century. Its construction postdates the earliest known photograph, which is thought to have been taken c.1890, but predates a photograph dated c.1895. While the old lean-to, constructed in 1793¹, conformed to a typical lean-to profile by starting at the second story rear plate and ending at the level of the first story (photograph 3), the new addition is two full stories (photograph 4). It extends across the rear of the house and is clad with clapboards. There are two 12/12 windows in the east side, one in each story, and two at the east end of the rear of the structure, again one in each story. There are two diamond paned windows in the center of the first story with a 12/12 directly above it on the second story. There is small transom window just to the west of the schoolhouse peak. At the west end of the second story there are two thirty-paned windows. These were probably moved from the sleeping porch, as they match those in pre-1930 photograph. The HABS drawings show a 12/12 window in this location. The back door, now covered by a small hood, is directly below these windows. The roof of the addition was originally a shed style, whose angle can be seen in the trim on the east side. This roof is still in place, but it was covered with a gable roof that runs perpendicular to the street and extends to cover the dining room/sun room addition.

An addition was made to the west side of the rear addition around 1910. Currently this is a 1 1/2 story shingled structure, with groups of three 12/12 windows on the south, west and north sides. There is a

¹ Ledger, Captain Thomas Ward, New Haven Colony Historical Society, p. 9.

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smaller window on the south side of the second story. This structure has pine sills laid directly on the ground. Originally it was two stories high topped by a flat roof, with the second floor used as a sleeping porch. The top of the sleeping porch was removed before the 1938 hurricane. Photographs of the structure prior to the change show it with two 30-paned windows which opened out from the bottom on both the south and west sides.

The ell addition (photograph 5) has a stone foundation; a wood shingled gable roof, and vertical board sheathing on the walls. In the schoolhouse section, the windows, which had been changed to paired six-pane casements around 1937, have been returned to the two-over-two style found in the late nineteenth century photographs. There is a door on the east side. The one-car garage has been converted to small room with a door on the east side and windows on the north end and west side. A continuous roof now covers both structures.

Interior-Cellar

The cellar is under the east front room and the rear addition. The areas under the west front room, the ell, and the west addition are unexcavated. The original joists, which are nineteen feet in length, run from north to south. There are five of these joists, with the last one being at the edge of the chimney base. The original rear sill is 19'2" from the front wall, while the rear edge of the chimney foundation is 20 feet from the front wall. Not surprisingly, this support system has required supplementation. A system of three 2" by 12" boards held up by three posts each runs east to west under the original joists. This work had been completed by 1936. The stone walls are mortared, as is the chimney base. The hearthstone for the east room fireplace is visible, but that for the kitchen is not. The visible subfloor under the east room is of wide pine or poplar boards and that under the lean-to is of 3" pine boards. A small room has been partitioned off in the southeast corner. Stone steps lead from the southwest corner to the outside. A set of wooden steps lead to a small area between the pantry and the kitchen. The part of the cellar under the lean-to has 2" by 6" joists that run north to south.

Interior-1st Floor

The front entry measures 8' wide by 7'9 1/2" deep. The front stairway is positioned in the back of the entry and takes up its entire width. The closed stringer stairway is in three runs. The original turned balusters (photograph 6) are still in place as is the beaded sheathing at the front of the stairway. The newel posts are square, with square tops. By 1936 the walls between the entry and both the parlor and hall had been taken down. The first floor entry newels, balusters, applied half balusters, railings share the same paint history,² and are presumed to be original to the structure. According to the paint evidence, changes in the entry were made in at least two phases. The edge moldings of the front door and second floor window

² Ward-Heitman House 277 Elm Street West Haven, Connecticut, Paint Study, Building Conservation Associates, Inc, 1999, p. 5.

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architraves match those on both sides of the door architrave leading from the southeast parlor to the pantry, those on the pantry window and on the single surviving window edge molding on second floor of the lean-to. The paint history on this group matches that of the sheathing on the back wall of the staircase.³ While this sheathing appears to be of eighteenth century origin, it was installed in its current location much later. From the attic it can be seen that there is a layer of lath and plaster under the sheathing. At a slightly later time (one paint layer later), the walls to the hall and parlor were removed, exposing chamfered girts, and the balusters and railing on the open east side of the staircase were added. At the same time, the upper portions of the entry posts were exposed and the bottom portions were clad in reused sheathing. All of the entry changes, with the exception of the front door, were in place by 1936. The first floor trim is painted the original red.

The southeast room measures 19'8" by 14'6". This room and the southwest room are the most elaborate spaces in the house. The southeast room is trimmed with crown moldings, carved firebox surround, wainscoting and a corner cupboard. The walls are lath and plaster. The old plaster ceiling was removed and the spaces between the joists filled with plywood, painted white and finished with a strip of molding along the intersections with the joists. The 14 1/2" chamfered summer beam, running east-west is now exposed, but was cased as late as 1936. Hand written notes by Elmer Keith on the copy of the WPA survey at the Connecticut Historical Society indicate that Fred Fennessey removed the casing. There is a wooden canopy attached to the ceiling over the hearthstone that post-dates the HABS drawings. The posts and girts are cased and crown moldings run along the ceiling on all sides of the room. The corner cupboard (photograph 7), which appears in the HABS drawings, has fluted pilasters, with a single door covering the bottom portion and three shelves, curved with a round section in the center of each, and wooden doors with five glass panes in each door on the top. The firebox surround has pilasters topped by scalloped ovals, with a narrow mantel shelf attached to the entire surround. Parts of it show wear, but other parts, specifically the broad field between the mantel shelf and the firebox, seem to be newer. The simple wainscoting, topped by a moulded dado, has been installed over the original plaster. It was thought that Thomas Ward added the casings, wainscoting, corner cupboard and firebox surround after his purchase of the house in 1788. However, the corner cupboard appears from the paint study to have been made of reused material and the firebox surround has been so aggressively stripped that it is not possible to prove its relationship to other elements.⁴ The firebox, with brick sides and a stone back, has been made smaller. It measures 3'10 1/8" by 1'3 1/4" and has a stone hearth. The firebox surround in the HABS drawings is without ornamentation, but the mantel shelf appears to be the one now in place. The HABS drawings indicate that the original door to the kitchen was located in the north wall, next to the west wall. The current door is labeled "new door" in the HABS drawings. There are three layers of floorboards in this room. The top layer is of wide pine. The

³ Ward-Heitman Paint Study, p. 5.

⁴ Ward-Heitman Paint Study, p. 6.

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trim in this room is currently painted a greenish yellow, which is very similar to the oldest sample found in the room. This room has been used as a parlor, a public tea room and a dining room.

The southwest room measures 19'6" by 13'4". It has an uncased, chamfered summer beam 14 1/2" wide and an uncased chimney girt where the entry wall was removed. These two framing members were cased in the 1936 HABS drawings. Crown moldings were installed where the ceiling and wall meet as in the southeast room, presumably by Thomas Ward, at the end of the eighteenth century. The ceiling has been finished like that in the southeast room to expose the joists. Wainscoting was installed over the original plaster on the west, south and north walls. The corner cupboard also covered earlier plaster. The paint study revealed that this cupboard was made of reused material and has relatively new doors. This cupboard has four shelves, curved with round sections in the center. The body of the cupboard has plain sides with small moldings at the edges. The bottom section has two one-panel doors. The top section doors have ten glass lights each. This cupboard was temporarily moved during the 1999 renovations, exposing the original plaster and whitewashed, chamfered post, indicating that the original finish of the architectural elements was whitewash. The firebox (photograph 8), located on the east wall, has been reduced in size, and is now lined with brick. Behind this can be seen the original firebox, with a bake oven in the back wall. The surround of the firebox, like the one in the south east room, was aggressively stripped, and thus does not have a paint history that matches the rest of the trim, although traces of the early blue found on the casings are found on the mantel. The HABS drawings do not include this surround, merely a note that the shelf, mantel, brick facings and returns are not original. There is a single large panel above the firebox, a door made of feather-edged sheathing leading to a closet is to the right of the firebox, and there is vertical feathered edge sheathing on the remainder of the wall. The HABS drawings show the vertical feather-edged sheathing that was there in 1936. Interestingly, the paint analysis revealed that the two northern most boards are replacements. Their paint history indicates that they are reused material whose life in the room began at the time the joists and summer beam were uncovered. The panel and sheathed wall predate the casings and cornice moldings, with their first color having been a dark red. The casings and cornice moldings begin with a deep blue color.⁵ As in the southeast room, there are three layers of floor boards, with the top ones being wide pine boards. The plaster walls are covered with wallpaper installed by the Milano family and painted white by the Ward Heitman House Museum Foundation. The trim is painted blue, which closely resembles the color used as the first coat on the casings and cornice moldings. This room appears to be the "Hall" of the eighteenth century and was the living room by 1936 and then the Fennessey parlor.

The kitchen, the middle room of the rear addition, measures 11'7" by 16'8 1/2". The partition between this room and the school house ell had been removed by 1936, with the first 6'5" of the ell being incorporated into the kitchen space. Stairs to the second floor and the cellar occupy a space at the east end of the kitchen. With Mr. Fennessey's remodeling of the kitchen, a staircase with balusters and a square

⁵ Ward-Heitman Paint Study, p. 8.

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newel post replaced the closed staircase. His remodelling was meant to return the kitchen to a seventeenth century look, based on the 1684 date he claimed to have seen on the chimney when the fireplace was opened.⁶ He added posts and joists, which were left exposed and which are nailed in place. Beaded sheathing covers the firebox and staircase walls, with the ceiling and remaining walls covered in a heavy stucco-like plaster. The firebox, which measures 7' long by 5' high by 33" deep, is made of stone with very straight sides, a bake oven in the back and a wooden lintel. The wall between the ell and the kitchen was replaced in 2001.

The pantry, the eastern room of the rear addition, measured 11'2" by 8' 0 1/2" in 1936. The HABS drawings date this section to 1909, but since we know from photographic evidence that the lean-to was raised to two stories during the Heitman ownership, this space was probably constructed in the 1890's. It has since been divided into a pantry and half-bath. The pantry has cupboards on both the east and west sides. The paint study revealed that the glass doors are newer than the cupboards, which were originally built with open shelves. The doors to the southeast room and to the cellar match and share a paint history with the pantry cupboards.⁷

The west end of the rear addition was incorporated into the 1910 addition and is variously known as the sunroom, dining room or library. The addition measures 12'1" by 12'4". With the part of the rear addition incorporated, the resulting room is 21' 7 1/2" long. The walls are papered over a combination of early drywall and plaster.

The ell was originally 19' 11 1/2" long by 12' 3 1/2" wide. The garage, constructed before 1936, added 8' 10 1/2" in length to this. The original space served as a schoolhouse and was later divided into a kitchen section and a laundry room. The garage, at the north end of the ell, had an extension to the east that made the total length of the garage 16' 9 1/2". The interior finishes of the ell were removed in 1999, showing that the structure is made of sawn lumber put together with cut nails. The HABS drawings indicate that the schoolhouse was once free standing and that the 6' 5" section was added in 1909. However, the construction details indicate one build.

Interior-2nd Floor

The second floor entry framing elements are covered with beaded casing with lath and plaster walls. The stairs from the first floor enter on the west side while the stairs to the attic begin at the east side. The attic stairs are walled off with sheathing and a batten door. When the post casing on the west post was removed for repairs, it could be seen that the post had never been whitewashed or painted, indicating the upstairs was unfinished for a considerable time period. The trim is currently painted gray to match the first layer of paint.

⁶ Guilford Keeping Society, Meeting Minutes, September, 1948.

⁷ Ward-Heitman Paint Study, p. 11.

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The southeast second floor room measures 20' 1" by 14' 6 1/2" and has always been used as a bedroom. The west wall of this room is covered with feather-edged sheathing, with a 5" baseboard, although the sheathing continues to the floor. The section above the firebox is covered with a two-panel raised panel (photograph 9). There is a simple molded firebox surround, topped by a later mantel shelf. A four-panel door opens to the upper entry and a two-panel door opens to a closet at the north end. The wall is attached to the front of the chimney girt. The firebox opening has been reduced in size by lining it with brick. The hearthstone is over the canopy in the southeast front room. The closet at the north end of the wall, which fills the space between the chimney and the lean-to, is constructed of plain sheathing and put together with wrought nails. The post casings, window architrave on the south wall, door to the lean-to and ceiling treatment are all modern. There is no summer beam; the framing consists of large north-south joists framed into the plates. The present ceiling is composed of sheets of wallboard held in place by narrow battens, with the whole arrangement painted white. The walls have several layers of paper; all from the twentieth century. The east end of the north wall, and the east and south walls retain their original lath and plaster. The floorboards are from 8" to 10" wide and have been painted with a wood grain treatment.

The southwest second floor room measures 20' 2 1/2" by 13' 3/8". It has the most consistent finish of any room in the house. Apparently, this room was left unfinished until the late eighteenth century. At that time, beaded post and girt casings, the window architraves, the four-panel door to the entry, the batten door to the closet and the sheathed fireplace wall were added. The only additions since that time to the trim have been the molding that forms the doorway to the entry architrave (post 1936), the simple board architrave on the closet door (pre-1936) and the door to the lean-to (pre-1936).⁸ The plain sheathed wall is attached to the front of the chimney girt. The trim in this room was originally painted a dark grey.⁹ From the attic it can be seen that a large, wooden lintel is in place about 6" behind the sheathed wall. It is apparent that the firebox was designed so that the wall would be fastened to the inside of the chimney girt. However, there are no signs that this was done. The current lintel is lower than the original one and touches the wall. A two-panel raised panel section is above the firebox, as in the southeast chamber. However, the bead on this one is much narrower. The firebox is about 6" lower than the one in the adjoining chamber (photograph 10). The mantel shelf has been reused from another location. The floorboards and ceiling in this room received the same treatments as those in the southeast chamber. The plaster walls are papered with several layers, all from the twentieth century. The inside of the west room closet is whitewashed (modern closets which covered this have been removed.) It is possible that this was used for access to the rear addition, as there was originally no door from this room to the former lean-to.

The rear addition space, once two bedrooms, a wardrobe, bathroom and sleeping porch, is now open in the middle, an office in place of the east bedroom and a storage area in the former sleeping porch. The outside walls and partition wall of the office are covered with sheet rock and painted white. The south wall,

⁸ Ward-Heitman Paint Study, p. 13 and p. 21.

⁹ Ward-Heitman Paint Study, pp. 21-22.

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originally the outside wall of the house, has been left open to show the changes that have been made over the years. While there are no clapboards in place, the posts show nailing evidence for two sets of them. The exception is a gable-shaped area in back of the chimney, where there are also carved out sections indicating that a one-story building with a gable roof perpendicular to the main house was once attached - presumably from the time of construction until 1793, when Thomas Ward's "citchen" was built. The center section, which was under the early gable roof and behind the chimney, never had lath. Two closets, which have been removed, filled this area. A section of the lath on the west end, starting 6" before the west edge of the door to the west chamber and continuing to the end of the rear addition, is whitewashed.

Interior-Attic

The attic is over the original block of the house. Although quite shallow for the time of construction, it is similar to that found on the Painter house (formerly in West Haven, now in Litchfield, dated 1685.) The roof is framed with pairs of principal rafters corresponding to the ends of the girts. Three purlins are framed into these on each side. The roof boards run vertically over the rafter and purlin system. A new wood shingle roof was installed in 1999. The stone chimney is topped out with brick, which begins about 12" below the peak of the roof. The only access to the attic is from the attic stairs in the upper entry.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ___ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
___ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
__X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
___ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ___ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
___ B removed from its original location.
___ C a birthplace or a grave.
___ D a cemetery.
___ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
___ F a commemorative property.
___ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1725-1938

Significant Dates 1725

1788
1938

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation NA

Architect/Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (See attached continuation sheets.)

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Section 8 Significance Page 1_Ward-Heitman House, West Haven, New Haven County, CT

Summary

Much of the significance of the Ward-Heitman House lies in its age. It is the earliest surviving in-situ structure in West Haven, Connecticut, and possibly the oldest within the original boundaries of New Haven. Ebenezer Clark, a third generation resident of the west side of New Haven, constructed the house about 1725. As such it provides valuable information about construction techniques and architectural practices used in domestic structures in New Haven. Subsequent changes reflect the impact of changing styles in West Haven--from Georgian to Colonial Revival.

Historical Background

The secondary sources that describe the early history of the house all indicate that Ebenezer Brown was the first to own the property, although most indicate that he did not build the house. Research in the New Haven Land Records did not disclose any deeds for Ebenezer Brown in Rockfield, the old name for the area where the Ward Heitman house was built. If he owned land in Rockfield, record of it is missing.¹

The first definite mention of the house later known as the Ward Heitman House is in January 1730/31, when Ebenezer Clark sells one mansion house and the 12 acres on which it stands, with another piece of land of 20 acres and one of 6 acres to John Humphreville, who had married his sister Rebecca. The 12 acre piece is bounded east on D. Thomas, west on Isaac Beecher, north on Zadok and John Clark and south on the highway. The total paid was £350. This may have been a mortgage, as Ebenezer mentions that he and John Humphreville are bound to pay to Jeremiah Atwater the sum of £350.² In 1736, the property is transferred back to Ebenezer for the same amount.³ It is likely that Ebenezer built the "mansion house"

¹ Ebenezer Brown left his estate to his children; daughters Mary Clark, Elizabeth Beardsley, and Eunice Thomas; sons Samuel Brown and James Brown; and grandchildren Benjamin Jones, son of my daughter Hannah, deceased, Hannah Trowbridge, Eleanor Hodge and Mary Brown, children of my son Ebenezer, deceased, and Ebenezer Clark, Rebecca Humphreville, Zadok, John, Anna, Deborah, and Elizabeth Clark, the seven children of my daughter Rebecca Clark, deceased. The estate is to be divided into eight parts; Ebenezer Clark as the eldest of the Clark heirs gets a double portion (2/8 of the 1/8 Clark share.)(NHLR 7 p 141.) The heirs divide the land on December 9, 1726. The Rebecca Clark heirs get 6 1/4 acres of the homestead next south to Hannah Trowbridge and Eleanor Hodge, 2 3/4 acres of meadow in Springfield (a part of the west side) and a 1/8 interest in the common and undivided lands that were due to Ebenezer Brown (NHLR 7 p 351.) While this 6 1/4 acres is supposed to be the land where the Ward Heitman house is built, it clearly is not as it is described as at Shepherd's Hill and near the sea, while the Ward Heitman House is on a plain and about a mile from the sea. The heirs sell this land to John Merwin of Milford on December 9, 1726, the same day they divided it. The total sold to Merwin is 28 acres, with no buildings, for £240(NHLR 7 p 353.) The land does not return to the Clark family. A search for land owned by the Clark family in Rockfield was more productive. Ebenezer Clark (1695 – 1742) was the eldest surviving son of Samuel Clark (1666 – 1712) and Rebecca Brown Clark (1672 – 1724/25.) Samuel Clark's probate inventory, taken in 1712/3, lists 19 acres of land at Rockfield – 13 acres valued at 26 shillings per acre and 6 acres valued at 21 shillings per acre, for a total of £38. In the distribution of his father's estate, Ebenezer Clark received one acre of land at Rockfield.¹ Rebecca Clark's inventory mentions 10 acres next to Ebenezer's house, although it does not say that the ten acres are in Rockfield. ¹

² New Haven Land Records, Vol. 8, p. 424.

³ New Haven Land Records, Vol. 10, p. 296. John Humphreville had received his father's estate, a message of 60 acres at Dog Run Plain on the Milford – New Haven line on February 12, 1723/24, the day of his marriage to Rebecca Clark, and was most likely living there (NHLR 6 p 399.)

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about 1725, as his own marriage to Anna Thompson took place in February, 1724/5, and their first child was born in September, 1726.

Ebenezer Clark died in 1742. An inventory of his personal estate survives, but that of the real estate is missing. The personal estate alone is valued at £147 13 11.⁴ Ebenezer II (1726 – 1773), the eldest son, apparently inherited part of the house and part of the land and purchased additional land from his sisters Lois Prindle and Martha Prindle and brother Thompson Clark. Ebenezer II died in 1773. His probate inventory indicates that he owned a house, a barn and home lot of 6 3/4 acres, except for a £20 right in the house owned by Samuel Clark; 8 3/4 acres of land north of the home lot, 6 acres in the orchard; and 5 1/2 acres at Long Hill. The estate is inherited by sons Ebenezer and Edmund and daughters Abigail and Martha. Ebenezer II's portion of the house was valued at £24 (Samuel Clark still owned a £20 right in the house, making the whole worth £44) and the total estate at £114 5 6.⁵

The inventories of Ebenezer I and Ebenezer II provide valuable information on how the house was furnished in the eighteenth century. The furnishings of Ebenezer I indicate a prosperous household of the "middling sort", and include luxury items, such as a set of chintz curtains valued at £7, two speckled flowered china cups, and a book with ivory leaves with a case and pencil. His books included a large *Bible*, *The English Pilot*, and a Service Book (perhaps a *Book of Common Prayer*.) The inventory of Ebenezer II shows a less prosperous household. The relatively low value of the house indicates an older structure, perhaps in need of work. The distribution of the estate calls it the "old" house. The inventory specifically names the chamber and lower room and implies a kitchen. It is interesting to note that a bed and bedstead are included in the lower room – a continuation of the tradition of having the best bed in the parlour. Because only two rooms are specifically mentioned, it is possible that Ebenezer lived only in his portion, and not in the part owned by Samuel. There is no mention of the spaces created when the lean-to was added. While the inventory does show an attempt at keeping up with fashion in such items as the four cups with handles and a tea canister, most of the furniture appears to be the same as in the inventory of Ebenezer I. There are some indications of maritime connections in this inventory, including a sea chest and maritime book.

The next chapter in the history of the house began when Thomas Ward purchased the property on November 5, 1788. In one transaction, he purchased the part of the land and house belonging to Edward and Abigail Croft and Ebenezer Clark for £39. The land is specified as being 11 1/2 acres at Rockfield bounded South by the highway (Elm St.), East by land belonging to Charles Prindle and Abigail Lankershire, North by land belonging to Samuel Candee and Nehemiah Smith, and West on the highway (Campbell Avenue).⁶ In a second transaction that day, Thomas Ward purchased part of the house and three acres of land from the heirs of Edmund Clark for £16. The three-acre piece was on Elm Street, on the east side of Charles Prindle's lot.⁷ On October 8, 1800, Thomas Ward purchased a piece of land from the estate

⁴ New Haven Probate packets, Connecticut State Library, packet 2676.

⁵ New Haven Probate packets, Connecticut State Library, packet 2677.

⁶ New Haven Land Records, Vol. 44, p. 385.

⁷ New Haven Land Records, Vol. 44, pp. 118-119.

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of Edmund Clark for £40 (NHLR 49 p 195.) This piece of 9 1/2 acres was used as an orchard, and was later known in the Ward documents as Edmund's orchard.

Thomas Ward, son of John Ward, who died at sea in 1785, and Sybil (Thomas) Ward, was born in 1769 and died in November, 1839. It is somewhat unusual that Thomas was able to purchase property when he was only 19 years old. Thomas had four brothers, John, who died at sea in 1800, Henry, who owned property on the west side of Campbell Avenue, James, who also owned property in the Elm/ Campbell neighborhood, and Jacob, a West Indies sea captain who also bought land near the Campbell Avenue and Elm Street intersection. Thomas's wife Martha died in 1835. Their only son Elliott was born in 1791 and their daughter Laura in 1793. The Ward brothers were involved in the merchant trade. In the late eighteenth century they traded primarily with the West Indies, but after 1820 were involved with packet service to New York and trade with Louisiana and other southern states. Thomas seems to have had some financial difficulty around the time of Jefferson's embargo in 1807, as his executors were still trying to collect under the French Spoilation Claims as late as 1886. These difficulties ended his active involvement in trade. Thomas purchased one hundred acres with a gristmill and other buildings from John Merwin in 1806. Financial difficulties are indicated in a dispute with his brother Henry in 1834. When Henry attempted to have Thomas sent to jail for a debt due to him the court ordered him to take a mortgage on Thomas's homestead. Thomas eventually redeemed the estate from Henry by mortgaging it to Stephen Trowbridge. Elliott Ward purchased the estate from Trowbridge in 1841. He died in 1843, leaving his estate to his daughters, Amanda and Olivia, and his widow, Margaret. They lived in the house until Amanda was of age and Olivia was eighteen, and then sold it to George Ward, a son of Jacob Ward, and thus first cousin to Elliott.

George Ward subdivided the property, which had become more valuable with the advent of the railroad and corresponding growth of West Haven as a manufacturing area – there was more demand for housing than for farmland. The portion of the property with the house (currently 277 Elm Street,) along with what later became 271 Elm Street, was sold to Susan (Otis) Perrin in 1861. She had several mortgages on the property, and eventually sold it to Louisa (Ward) Heitman, George Ward's sister, in 1868. It is likely that Susan Perrin owned this as an investment as she is listed in the New Haven City Directory for part of the time period in which she owned the house. Louisa's children, Henrietta, Laura Bush, and Adrian inherited from their mother. Through a variety of transactions, Henrietta ended up owning the property, now reduced to 277 Elm St (1898.) Adrian, with his family, and Henrietta apparently all lived there, as Adrian's address is given as 277 Elm in the New Haven City directory. Henrietta operated a small school in the north wing.

The property passed out of the Ward-Heitman family when Charles Pickett purchased it in 1910. He added the sun room/dining room and sleeping porch, which updated the house to early twentieth century standards. He sold the property in 1919 to Marie and Philando Armstrong.⁸ Mrs. Armstrong operated an antique shop, known as The Stepping Stone, in the house. The Depression impacted the antiques business to the extent that Mrs. Armstrong lost the house. George E. Hodson bought the property after the mortgage

⁸ Orange Land Records, Vol. 126, p. 162.

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foreclosure and apparently rented it to the Dwight Hamilton family. Mrs. Hamilton ran a tea room known as the Hamilton House in the southeast first floor room.⁹ The Historic American Buildings drawings were made in 1936, just prior to the purchase by the Fennessys, providing an excellent record of changes that had been made by that date.

The Ward Heitman house was purchased by Mrs. Arlette Armstrong Fennessy in 1937. While Mrs. Fennessy had been living in Montclair, New Jersey, her father, Lorenzo Armstrong, was reared in West Haven and had run a successful shipping business with his brothers Philando and William. She was a first cousin of Philando S. Armstrong, husband of Marie. Her grandson, Frederick Armstrong, consulted with Charles Montgomery, who became the leading authority on American decorative arts, on the restoration of the kitchen, and perhaps, on the restoration of the front downstairs rooms.¹⁰ According to the New Haven City Directory, Arlette lived here with her son, Andrew L. Fennessy Jr., his wife Evelyn, and their son Frederick and his wife Frances.

After Arlette Fennessy's death in June 1949, the property was sold to Dr. Nicholas Milano. He and his wife left the house to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, who sold it to the Ward-Heitman House Museum Foundation in 1995.

Architectural Significance

The house preserves early construction details that, when combined with the excellent documentary records, illuminate domestic building practices of the first third of the eighteenth century in New Haven. The heavy timber frame, while typical for a house from the first quarter of the eighteenth century, qualifies as a rare survival in urban West Haven. The posts, which are flared in the top section only are similar to those in the Thomas Painter House (c. 1685, originally located in West Haven, moved to Litchfield)¹¹ and to those in the Stevens House (c.1735)¹²—the only other documented dwellings from West Haven from this period. While posts and girts that have been uncovered are chamfered, the chamfers are plain and crude, with small, rather crude, lambs-tongue stops. These are quite different from the elaborate and well-executed chamfers and stops in dwellings of the same period and same relative value in Guilford and Branford, towns just to the east of New Haven. Traces of the original decorative finish, which survive under the later casings and wainscoting are also significant. The west front corner post, which had been covered by a corner cupboard revealed early white wash. Traces of this were also found on newly exposed portions of the summer beam and side girt. The original decorative scheme appears to have been very much like that of the 1728 portion of the Hempstead House in New London, in which both framing members and walls are

⁹ New Haven City Directory, 1935.

¹⁰ Harriet C. North, West Haven News, August 8, 1985. Fennessy bought most of the kitchen and lighting accessories from Montgomery. This occurred before Montgomery went to Winterthur in 1949. Fennessy, the Milanos, and Harriet North stressed the connection with Winterthur and Yale in their conversations about the house, but in fact, the purchases were made almost a decade before Charles Montgomery went to Winterthur.

¹¹ Norman Isham and Albert E. Brown, *Early Connecticut Houses* (Dover Press, 1965 [originally Preston and Rounds, 1900]), Plate VI.

¹² J. Frederick Kelly, *Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut* (Dover Press, 1963 [originally Yale University Press, 1924]), p. 29, figure 32.

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whitewashed. The joists between the first floor and the cellar, which run back to front for the full width of the house, are nearly unique among houses of this era. Only the Painter House shows a similar construction.¹³

The survival of evidence of an original one story rear addition the width of the chimney bay, with its own gable roof, is quite significant, as it indicates a greater diversity in early domestic structures than presented in the standard literature.

While the crown moldings, casings, and wainscot of the original block are typical for the late-eighteenth century they show an awareness of new decorative traditions. The two first floor rooms in the main block were updated in a cohesive way to cover the earlier features and to provide a balanced design. These changes were made to update the style of the house, while all subsequent changes to the main block were intended to bring back the Colonial origins.

The Heitmans, although they replaced the lean-to with a very modern two-story rear addition, seem to have left the main block as it had been in Thomas Ward's lifetime. Charles Picket added windows in the first floor gable ends and is probably the person who took down the partitions between the two front rooms and the entry and that between the old hall and his new sun-room, but he retained all of the other details. Marie Armstrong, as an antique dealer is most likely to have been the one to have improved the cupboards, since both show signs of enhancement, and to have changed the firebox surrounds. The presence of the antique shop and later, the restaurant seemed to have increased awareness of the age of the house. The house acquired a seventeenth century provenance. Although this was refuted by Elmer Keith, Connecticut architectural historian, the owners continued to promote the house as having been built about the same time as the Painter House.¹⁴

Even though the Heitman replacement for the lean-to was balloon framed from cellar to garret, the Fennessey kitchen reintroduced the heavy timber frame to the kitchen. Fennessey was convinced that the house had been built in 1684 and wanted a kitchen to reflect that period. While the result was clearly not a 1684 kitchen, it is an excellent example of the 1937 ideal of the late seventeenth century and indirect documentation of the influence of Charles Montgomery at an early stage of his career. In this case, rather than being a post and beam construction, the timbers are nailed to the balloon frame -- a true creation of the Colonial Revival. Fennessey also removed the casings from the summer beams and exposed the joists in the ceilings of the two front rooms. As a finishing touch he added the wooden canopy over the parlor hearth—a supposed Dutch colonial detail. Finally, 1684 was painted on the chimney. The changes made by Fennessey revealed some of the early details of the house, but did not give any sense of what the house was actually like during its early period. The changes also destroyed the cohesive look of Thomas Ward's redecoration. The result is representative of early- to mid-twentieth century restorations and is the only such example to survive in West Haven.

¹³ Historic American Buildings Survey, Connecticut 62, Cellar Plan.

¹⁴ This may well be the case as the two houses share some uncommon features; however it is more probable that the Painter House is from the early 18th century than that the Ward-Heitman house is from the seventeenth.

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Ward-Heitman House, West Haven, New Haven County, CT

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

- 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
[X] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # Conn 22
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data

- ___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
[X] Other

Name of repository: New Haven Colony Historical Society, West Haven Public Library, Ward-Heitman House

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1/2 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Table with 2 columns: Zone Easting Northing. Row 1: 18 671 500 4571 220 3. Row 2: 2 4. See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sandra Rux, Principle
organization Leetes Island Enterprises, LLC date 7/1/02
street & number 575 Leetes Island Rd telephone 203 458-2897
city or town Guilford state CT zip code 06437

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

- 1. Sketch of floor plan of the house

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Section 2 Bibliography Page 1 Ward-Heitman House, West Haven, New Haven County, CT

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North, Harriet C. article in the *West Haven News*, August 8, 1985.

Powell, Brien, "Ward-Heitman House 277 Elm Street West Haven Connecticut, Paint Study", Building Conservation Associates, Inc., 1999 (unpublished typescript.)

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary description for the Ward-Heitman House is recorded in the Orange Land Records, Volume 76 p. 226, located in the West Haven Town Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT 06516.

Justification for Boundary:

While the original property covered 12 acres, the property was reduced to its current 1/2-acre size by 1910, when it was sold by Henrietta Heitman to Charles Pickett.

Ward-Heitman House, West Haven, New Haven County, CT

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Ward-Heitman House Museum Foundation

street & number PO Box 573 277 Elm St telephone 203 937-9823

city or town West Haven state CT zip code 06516

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Photographs Page 1 Ward-Heitman House, West Haven, New Haven County, CT

All photographs:

1. Ward-Heitman House
2. West Haven, New Haven County, CT
3. Sandra Rux
4. September, 2001
5. Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford, Connecticut

Captions:

South (front) and east elevations; camera facing northwest
Photograph 1 of 10

West elevation; camera facing east
Photograph 2 of 10

North (rear) plate of original 2/2 showing mortices for first lean-to rafters; camera facing south
Photographs 3 of 10

East and rear elevation; camera facing southwest
Photograph 4 of 10

Ell addition; camera facing southeast
Photograph 5 of 10

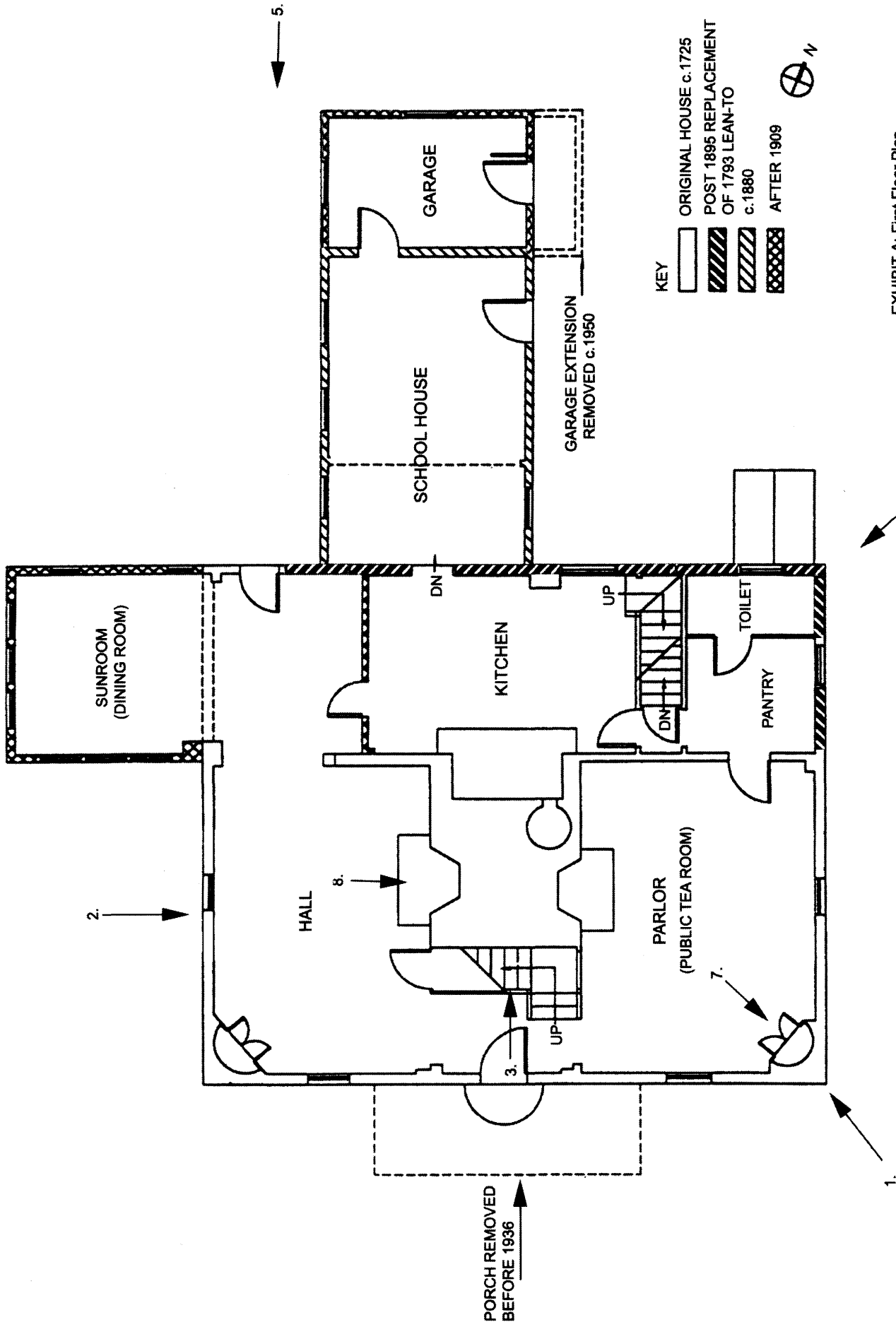
Front stairway balusters; camera facing north
Photograph 6 of 10

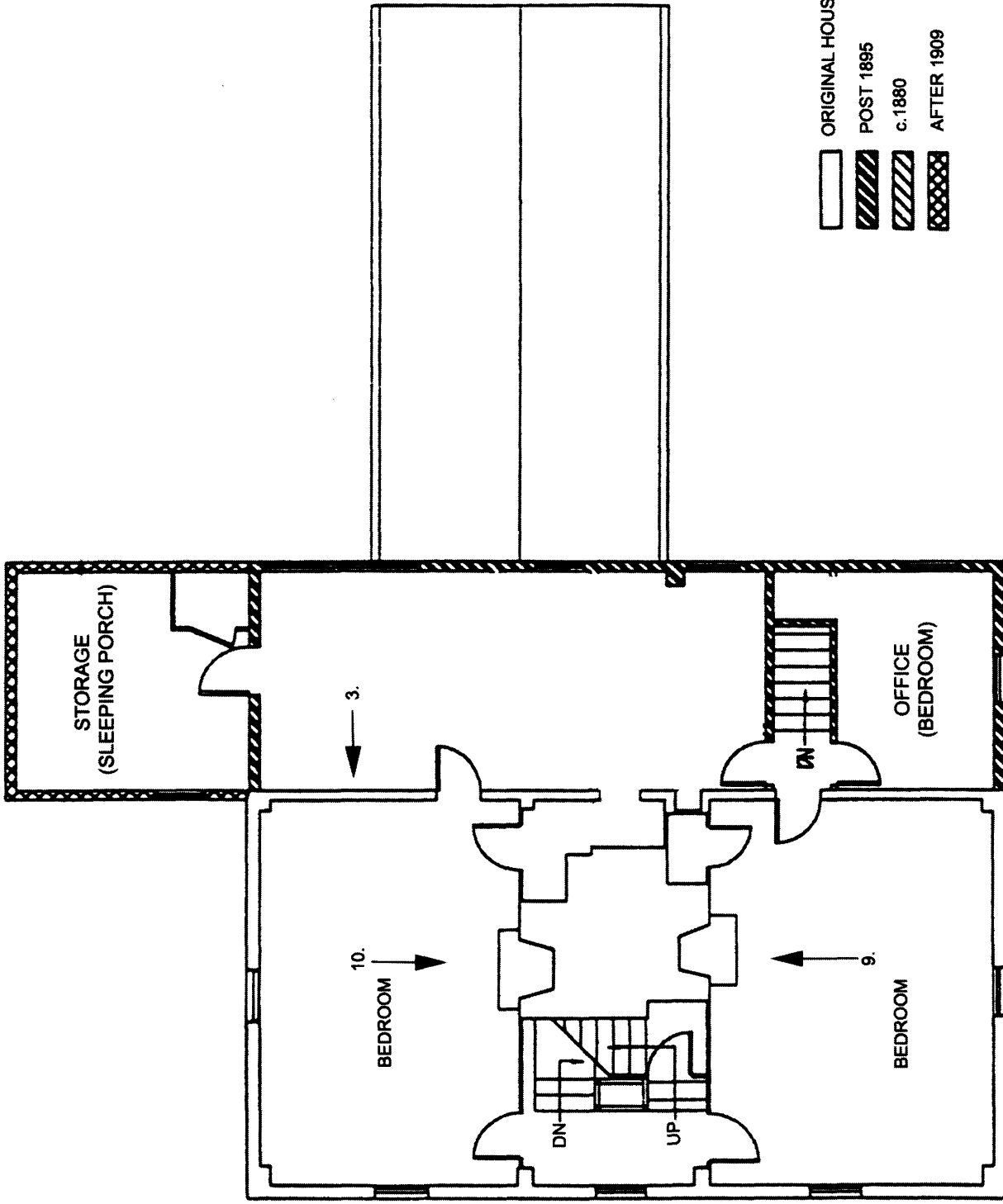
Corner cupboard first floor southeast room; camera facing southeast
Photograph 7 of 10

Firebox surround east wall of the first floor southwest room; camera facing west
Photograph 8 of 10

West wall of second floor southeast room; camera facing west
Photograph 9 of 10

Firebox surround on the east wall of the second floor southwest room; camera facing east.
Photograph 10 of 10





- ORIGINAL HOUSE c.1725
- POST 1895
- c.1880
- AFTER 1909



EXHIBIT B: Second Floor Plan
 Ward-Heitman House
 West Haven, New Haven County, CT
 Arrows with numbers are photograph views

