

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JAN 24 1986

date entered FEB 20 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic David Mallett, Jr. House

and/or common The Mallett House

2. Location

street & number 420 Tashua Road N.A. not for publication

city, town Trumbull N.A. vicinity of

state Connecticut code 09 county Fairfield code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Kenneth B. and Elaine G. Hyland

street & number 420 Tashua Road

city, town Trumbull N.A. vicinity of state Connecticut 06611

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Trumbull Town Hall (Town Clerk's Office)

street & number 5866 Main Street

city, town Trumbull state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 South Prospect Street

city, town Hartford state Connecticut 06106

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The David Mallett, Jr., House is a center-chimney, post-and-beam-framed farmhouse built about 1760. It is located in the northwest corner of Trumbull in a section called the Tashua District. The building faces south onto Tashua Road at its intersection with Hiram Hill Road, and across from the intersection of Tashua Road and Madison Avenue. The property is bordered by low, dry-laid stone walls and mature trees. It slopes up and away from Tashua Road in a northerly direction. Directly across the street at the Madison Avenue intersection is the Tashua Burying Ground (1766) and the Tashua Christ Episcopal Church, a Carpenter Gothic-style, wood-frame building (about 1850). The surrounding neighborhood is rural residential with widely spaced houses dating generally from the early nineteenth century, including several houses built by members of the Mallett family.

The house is composed of several sections. (See attached Exhibit A for a schematic floor-plan.) The main block is a four-bay, clapboarded building (27'6" x 35'). Two-and-one-half stories in height, it has a gable roof and a full basement with mortared, rubble granite walls below grade and cut granite above (Photograph #1, 2). Set back on the west side of the main block is a small, one-and-one-half-story addition (18' x 16'), believed to have been a Sabbath Day House associated with an earlier church across the road. It was moved to the site in the early nineteenth century and placed on a cut granite foundation, which matches that of the main block (Photograph #5). A larger addition on the east side (20' x 25') is two stories in height with a less steeply pitched gable roof (Photograph #3, 4). This addition may also have been moved to the site. It appears to pre-date the main block, possibly as early as 1750; the roof is probably a later modification.

Several features of the plan and construction of the house are unusual. Although the front entrance is on the left (west) side of the facade, the staircase is not located along the west wall.² Instead, it is located along the longitudinal axis of the house to the west of the chimney stack and enclosed (Photograph #8). Access to the stairs is from the rear room of the main block, the original kitchen. It is possible that the original main entrance was located unconventionally on the west side elevation and moved to its present location when the west addition was added. A framed opening between these two sections is wide enough to accommodate an exterior door. Another unusual feature is the use of a single chimney girt, rather than the more typical pair of girts on either side of the stack. This girt is supported by a massive, cased gunstock post located between the two pairs of windows at the first-floor front. The rear post is no longer visible. A smaller post may have been substituted when twentieth-century additions were made to the rear of the house. In the attic the second-floor ceiling girt is tied into the roof-framing system by angled posts on either side, supporting a principal purlin, a method of construction more commonly used for the roof of load-bearing masonry buildings. The purlins run the length of the building and are braced at each end. The rafters, set four feet apart, are crudely hewn from small-bore trees and have exposed sections of peeled bark. The extended framed overhang of the roof should be a later addition,³ but there is no interior physical evidence to confirm this feature as a later alteration. A wide bed molding and 6-inch trim boards extend around the house under the eaves (Photograph #2).

The plan of the first floor of the main block is quite simple: two rooms which extend the full length of the building, separated by the staircase, the chimney stack, and a wooden

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partition. There is a passage door on either side of the stack. The rear room has a large brick hearth (now containing a cast-iron stove), the original kitchen fireplace. The present kitchen in the west addition also has a brick hearth with a granite lintel, lined with a frame of cast iron. The second floor of the main block is divided into several smaller chambers around the stack.

Simple flush-beaded vertical wainscot is used extensively throughout the house. It can be found above the fireplace in the original kitchen, in the enclosed staircase, and in the west addition, above the fireplace mantel. It is also used on several interior doors, although some of these doors are panelled with two or four sections (Photograph #7). With the exception of the front parlor, which was altered in the Federal period, plain board casings, some with a beaded edge, are used for trim throughout the house around the doors and windows (Photograph #8). Beaded casing is also used on the corner posts which protrude slightly into the rooms. The original plaster, applied over split lath, remains on all unpanelled walls. (The lath is visible in the attic spaces.) Much of the original wide-board flooring remains in place, face-nailed with large, hand-headed, wrought nails.

The front parlor is the only formal room in the house. The fireplace has a Federal-style surround, with narrow reeded pilasters and a high entablature. A band of molding and a central geometric design, both in the reed pattern, enhance the entablature (Photograph #6). A similar molding was applied to the aprons of the south and east windows in this room. They also exhibit Federal-period surrounds with a raised molding on the perimeter.

More than one pattern of sash is used in house. The original sash--generally twelve-over-twelve on the first floor and twelve-over-eight on the second--remains in the main block and the west addition and part of the east addition. New wooden, double-hung sash has been installed in several windows in the latter section, with a muntin configuration to match the original. In the front parlor the lower twelve-light section was replaced with one pane of glass, probably in the late nineteenth, or early twentieth century. The side rails of the lower sash are clearly replacements as they display spring latches that date from this period. Also at this time the hip-roofed Colonial Revival-style porch was added across the facade. The balustrade of this porch is a recent addition.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) rural history

Criteria A, B, and C

Specific dates 1760 **Builder/Architect** Probably built by David Mallett, Jr.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The David Mallett, Jr., House is an exceptionally well-preserved, center-chimney, colonial-period farmhouse which has an unusual floorplan and employs exceptional methods of construction (Criterion C). The evolution of the building during the builder's lifetime illustrates an important period in Connecticut's rural history (Criterion A). One of the earliest surviving buildings in the Tashua District of Trumbull, the house has considerable local historic importance for its 150-year association with descendants of the Malletts, the family who first settled the area (Criterion B).

Historical Background:

The Malletts of Trumbull were all descendants of John Mallette (original spelling), a French Huguenot who left France following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV. After a brief period in England, he came to the colonies, where he purchased land in South Carolina, Boston, and New York. He eventually settled in Fairfield, now Bridgeport, in a mansion on Division Street. Listed on the land records as a shipwright, he was also a merchant trader and wealthy landowner. In the early 1700s he purchased extensive acreage on Tawtashua Hill, the present Tashua District of Trumbull. In 1739–1740 he deeded 230 acres of his Tashua land to his eldest sons, John and David, the first members of the family to actually live in Trumbull. Throughout the eighteenth century their descendants were active in town affairs, serving as appointed colonial officials. In the nineteenth century several Malletts were elected to positions in the local town government. The family continued to live and build homes in the Tashua District for 200 years; by 1867, 13 of the 36 homes in Tashua were owned by members of the family.

John Mallette's grandson David Mallett, Jr. (1735–1822), built this house about 1760, the year he married Rhoda French. Following David's death, the property was inherited by his son Aaron (1771–1857), who had married Eunice Beach in 1805. Their son Aaron B. inherited the property. His unmarried daughter Lydia Beach Mallett received the property at her father's death in 1907 (her mother had predeceased him). She died very shortly thereafter in a gun accident and the house passed out of the family. Several owners have occupied the house in the twentieth century.

Architectural Evaluation:

A modest dwelling with a minimum of architectural detail, the David Mallett, Jr., House is nevertheless a valuable example of domestic vernacular architecture. It provides an unusual, perhaps unique record of the evolution of a farmhouse during the early nineteenth century, a dynamic period in Connecticut's history. It also provides a tangible record of one man's lifetime which spanned this period. Not a wealthy or prominent man, but a product of his times, David Mallett, Jr., was a subsistence farmer who left no written record, but through his house illuminates the economic and social conditions of the period.

The accretions to the building over time evoke a period when the state's farming economy was

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.5

Quadrangle name Botsford

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8	6	4	5	6	8	5	4	5	7	1	9	5	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification See continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries N.A.

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jan Cunningham, Preservation Consultant; Edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization Cunningham Associates date May 20, 1985

street & number 98 Washington Street telephone (203) 347 4072

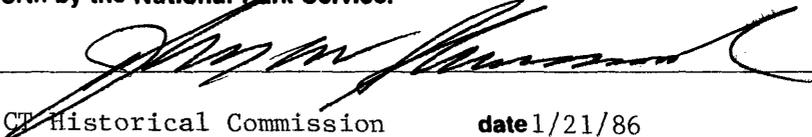
city or town Middletown state Connecticut

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

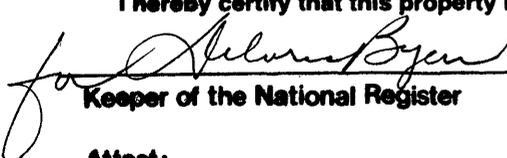
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title John W. Shannahan, Director, CT Historical Commission date 1/21/86

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

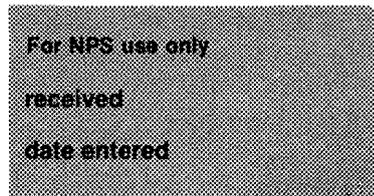
 date 2/20/86
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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at its nadir. Farms all over the state were abandoned by families moving west to upper New York state and the Northwest territories. Farmers who stayed behind like David Mallett were hard pressed to make a living on the small amount of acreage left from family land that had been divided over three generations. It was also a period of rapid social change, characterized by a growing class differentiation and, most notably, the distintegration of religious orthodoxy. Some churches closed their doors, some for the last time; Congregationalism as the state religion was disestablished.

In a very tangible way the building history of the Mallett House echoes these changes. It is clear that David Mallett, Jr., remained a subsistence farmer all of this life, never having enough of a surplus to accumulate additional real estate to pass on to his children during this lifetime. At age 72 he was unable to provide his youngest son, Aaron, with a house or a farm of his own when he married. When the Sabbath Day House had outlived its usefulness (probably a reflection of the decline of the church), with characteristic Yankee thrift, he reclaimed the building to enlarge his small farmhouse to accommodate two families. At first his son and his wife may have lived in the addition and used the attic for a sleeping loft, which would account for the chimney stack and the narrow stairs behind it. Although the provenience of the west addition has been fairly well established through oral tradition, in and of itself an interesting footnote to the church's history, it has not been definitely determined that the second addition on the east side of the original house was another building moved to the site. It seems probable, however, given its age and size, that it was an abandoned farmhouse sold off the land by a family who left the area. With this latter addition, room was made for three generations, a typical living pattern in rural Connecticut in the early nineteenth century.⁴

All of these changes took place in the lifetime of the original builder, a man who had already demonstrated a penchant for economy when he built the original farmhouse. He built soundly, but economized wherever possible, clearly evidenced by the reduction in the size and finish of the timbers, and most noticeably in the simplicity of the building. For example, not only are the stairs in an unusual position for either entrance, he virtually eliminated all architectural embellishment--choosing instead to provide the most functional form of enclosed staircase--a type used as a secondary access to the upper floors of larger, more formal houses.

The addition of Federal-style detailing in the front parlor attests to an improvement in his fortunes near the end of his life, as well as a general improvement in the economy in this period. Most of the surviving houses in the area were built at this time, or somewhat later. In contrast to the David Mallett, Jr., House, they are quite conventional in form and plan, although they are somewhat more detailed on the exterior.

Subsequent owners have added their own additions to the house, most of these in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, giving the rear of the building, with its jutting planes and angles, a very New England appearance. The essential core of the Mallett House has retained its character, however, leaving an important record of early-nineteenth-century rural life in Connecticut.

Notes:

1. A Sabbath Day House, a name commonly corrupted to "Sabbaday House," was usually a small one-room building erected near the church by the congregation, or in some cases by

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particular families. Equipped with some source of heat, it provided a place where families who lived at a distance could repair to warm and refresh themselves between services on Sunday. Eventually the "outliers" would be successful in their petitions for their own church and the building would be torn down. In the Tashua case, the church was built by an outlying community, but the area the church served was relatively large.

2. Kelly considers any position for the stairs other than in front of the stack very rare in the eighteenth century. He makes no mention of a location like the one found in the Mallett House. See J. Frederick Kelly, Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut (New York: Dover Publications, 1963), p. 173.

3. From the inside the existing roof appears to be original. The exposed underside of the roofers displays the same tool marks found on the exposed side of the sub-flooring in the main block. They were both cut by the same type of saw--an early, up-and-down, water-powered blade. In addition there is no evidence of rafter extensions in the attic although the overhang on the long walls could have been box framed from the outside.

4. Research by the author in several similar rural communities in central Connecticut confirms that the majority of farms supported several generations, all living under one roof, and that ultimogeniture was a common practice for poorer families. In this type of inheritance practice, the last-born son lived on the family farm after he married, but did not inherit the property until both parents died. See Janice P. Cunningham and Elizabeth Warner, Portrait of a River Town: The History and Architecture of Haddam, Connecticut and Janice P. Cunningham, The History and Architecture of Middlefield, both published by the Greater Middletown Preservation Trust. See also Janice Cunningham, "From Fathers to Sons: The Emergence of the Modern Family in Rural Connecticut, 1750-1850," 1979, master's thesis on file, Wesleyan University.

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9. Major Bibliographical References:

Beach, Merrill E. Trumbull: Church and Town. A History of the Colonial Town of Trumbull and of its Church. The Trumbull Historical Society, Inc., 1955.

Bridgeport Probate Records

Kelly, J. Frederick. Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut. New York: Dover Publications, 1963.

Mallett, Anna S. John Mallett, The Huguenot and His Descendants. Harrisburg, PA: Harrisburg Publishing Co., 1895.

Seeley, Dorothy M. Tales of Trumbull's Past. Trumbull Historical Society, Inc., 1964.

Stratford Land Records

Trumbull Land Records

Wachenheim, Lora M. Freer. Trumbull People and Friends, Vol. II, Ed. I. Bridgeport, CT: Brewer-Borg Corp., 1965.

Wachenheim, Lora M. Freer. Trumbull Churches and People, Vol. I, Ed. I. Bridgeport, CT Brewer-Borg Corp., 1966.

1867 Map, Town of Trumbull

10. Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:

All that certain piece or parcel of land, together with the buildings and improvements thereon, situated in the Town of Trumbull, County of Fairfield and State of Connecticut, being known and designated as Lot 3R on a certain map entitled "Resubdivision of Lots Nos. 2 & 3 Map of "Dorothy P. and Keith E. Bulkeley" (T. C. #1690) Trumbull, Conn. for Kenneth B. and Elaine G. Hyland and Peter Calandro, Jr. Scale: 1" = 40' April 2, 1979" and to be recorded in the Trumbull Town Clerk's office coincidentally herewith. Said premises being bounded and described as follows: NORTHERLY: by Lot 2R, as shown on said map, 380.94 feet; EASTERLY: by land now or formerly of Anthony & Josephine Veckerelli, as shown on said map: 202.63 feet; SOUTHERLY: by Tashua Road, as shown on said map, 205.26 feet; SOUTH-WESTERLY: by the intersection of Tashua Road and Madison Avenue, as shown on said map, 176.90 feet; and WESTERLY: by Madison Avenue as shown on said map, 68.95 feet.

The property described above comprises the core of the historic farm owned by the Mallett family since 1760. Modern subdivisions have reduced the property from 16 acres in the nineteenth century to approximately 1.5 acres in 1979.

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420 Tashua Road
Trumbull, Connecticut

EXHIBIT A: Schematic Diagram

