

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received JUL 20 1987
date entered JAN - 6

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

1. Name

historic Tarrywile

and or common The Mansion

2. Location

street & number Southern Boulevard and Mountain Road N/A not for publication

city, town Danbury vicinity of

state Connecticut code 09 county Fairfield code 001

3. Classification

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

street & number 155 Deer Hill Avenue

city, town Danbury vicinity of state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Danbury City Hall

street & number 155 Deer Hill Ave.

city, town Danbury state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Hist.Places has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date 1987 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission

city, town 59 So. Prospect St., Hartford state Connecticut

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Tarrywile is a former country estate located off Southern Boulevard in southern Danbury, Connecticut. The nominated property consists of a fifteen-room Shingle-style house, carriage house, and gatehouse built between 1895 and 1897, and a greenhouse, tool shed and root cellar erected c. 1920. All of the buildings on the nominated property contribute to its significance. The estate is enclosed by a fieldstone wall built in 1922. The buildings are set into and atop a sloping, landscaped hillside, except for the gatehouse, which is located at the foot of the slope on Southern Boulevard. An orchard and former garden area are on a plateau to the southwest or rear of the main buildings. The slope to the east of the main house, now conventionally landscaped, was originally the site of Japanese gardens, which consisted of reflecting pools with carp, bridges, and viewing pavilions (Figure 1). Shrubbery and tall conifers obscure the main house from view from Southern Boulevard. A paved drive extends southward through the property from the gate house on Southern Boulevard and leads to Brushy Hill Road at the property's southeast corner (See Map 1).

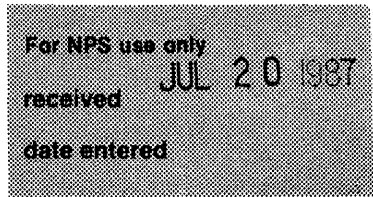
The main house, commonly known as the "Mansion," is cruciform in plan and rests on a foundation of rough-cut locally quarried granite. The exterior of the house is clad entirely in dark wood shingles. The main roof is hipped, pierced by hipped dormers on each elevation, which are irregularly placed, and by three brick chimneys with corbelled ridgebands and caps. The overall effect is one of multiple rooflines, reinforced in a different manner on each elevation. A pedimented gable projects from the east elevation, the pedimented south wing has a jurkin-head gable roof, a conical-roofed sunporch with arched windows and Gothic tracery extends from the main or west facade, and the hipped north dormer is framed by a shingled pediment (Photographs 1, 2, 3, 4).

On the south side of the west facade is an iron and tile Lord & Burnham Co. conservatory, added in 1920 (Photograph 5). The west elevation is the principal facade. A 123' circumambient veranda extends across this facade, the south elevation, and the east elevation as far south as its crossing gable. The veranda is 15' wide, and is circular around the south elevation. It is supported by Roman Doric columns on shingled bases and has turned balusters. From the main entry extends a pedimented porte cochere with a shingled tympanum (Photographs 1, 2, 3). The entry features an oak door with sixteen lights over a panelled base. It is flanked by wide, ten-light side-lights, and features original iron hardware which includes knob, lockplate and escutcheon plate with elaborate open strapwork, and a cornerplate of similar design. Similar but less elaborate hardware is also found on the south entry door (Photograph 6). Fenestration is mixed throughout the building, and includes double-hung sash; paired windows; and triple and Chicago windows of varying size. All windows have trabeated surrounds and are one over one, with the exception of multilight side panels used in the upper sash of dormers and in side panels of triple windows (Photographs 1, 2, 3, 4).

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Danbury Comprehensive Survey, Phase V

1986

State, Federal

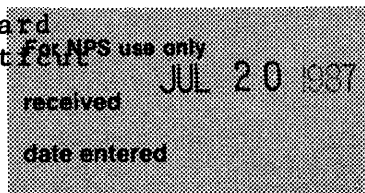
Connecticut Historical Commission

59 So. Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut

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The first floor of the interior features a 12' wide, 50' deep entry hall with a 4'6" dado of raised, fielded chestnut panelling. Parquet floors in the hall and throughout the house are of oak. A 4' wide grand mahogany staircase with turned balusters and fluted newel posts with globe finials ascends to the second floor, lighted by a triple window at the first landing. Behind the staircase is a recess with a bench, also lighted by a large triple window. The nook is defined by square, fluted Doric pilasters with fleur-de-lis in the frieze and egg-and-dart moldings. The bench features elliptical paterae and a floral motif (Photograph 7).

Three rooms open onto the hall, each with molded surrounds and either panelled or French doors. The surrounds have denticulated cornices and corner blocks with paterae. Also in the hall is a similarly framed panel with a mural in oils.

To the north of the main hall is the study or library, a 19' x 20' room, with a fireplace in the west wall with denticulated mantel, Ionic columns with volutes, egg-and-dart moldings, and swags. Beyond it is a living room, 13' x 23' with a similar fireplace and French doors which open onto the veranda. (Photograph 8).

To the south of the hall is a 16' x 26' sitting room which features large wall panels and a fireplace with cream and ivory fireplace tiles and a mantel carried on consoles with carved oak and acanthus leaves. A large mirror with an acanthus leaf surround surmounts the mantel. A basket-handle arch flanked by round arches opens into the conservatory (Photographs 5, 9).

To the rear of the sitting room is the dining room, 17' x 22', which features raised, fielded oak panelling throughout and a coffered ceiling with a diamond light well with oak cluster ceiling medallion. It is lighted by a bank of four large windows in the east elevation. A fireplace is surmounted by a denticulated cornice with swags and features a roaring lion in the center, and scallop shells to each side (Photograph 10). A small butler's pantry leads to the 23' x 12' kitchen in the south wing. To its west is a small corridor with a coat room, small water closet and rear stairs, and a rear entry. All of the first floor rooms except the hall have crown moldings.

Four bedrooms open onto the spacious second-story landing (Photograph 11). One bedroom on the east side of the house is 17' x 18' with a small bath, and the other bedroom on the same side has a south-facing sunporch, lit by casement windows, with tongue-in-groove wainscoting and a concrete floor. Two large bedroom suites share the west side of the house. Both open onto the sunporch over the porte-cochere. One bedroom is 23' x 23', lit by double windows, with a bath and French doors to the sunporch, as well as sliding wooden doors

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to the master bedroom. The master bedroom is 28' x 19', with a bathroom and a brick-faced fireplace with mantel and overmantel panel, flanked by built-in cabinets and bookshelves (Photograph 12).

The sunporch has arched windows with Gothic tracery and fluted surrounds with bull's eye corner blocks and is lined with coarse linen with Arts and Crafts geometric prints. This fabric has faded and been damaged by water infiltration (Photograph 13).

Also on the second floor are linen cabinets and a rear stairs to the third floor, where are located three small servants' bedrooms (Photograph 14) and a large unfinished library 24' x 30', with built-in bookshelves and a Japanesque Franklin stove in the fireplace.

To the southeast of the "Mansion" is a hip-roofed, Shingle-style carriage house known commonly as "Norfolk House," within which an apartment has been constructed. Standing at Southern Boulevard at the south entry to the grounds is a rustic caretaker's cottage, constructed of rough fieldstone, with a hip and gable roof with exposed rafter ends and gabled dormers. Round-arched windows suggest a Richardsonian influence (Photograph 15). Southwest from the "Mansion" are located an apple orchard and a garden equipped with a Lord & Burnahm Co. greenhouse and several toolsheds, constructed about 1920 (Photograph 16).

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Wile was also an organizer of social events for the many organizations of physicians to which he belonged. According to his obituary in the Danbury Evening News, "he was never happier than when acting as host... when he had parties or individuals among his personal friends as his guests."³ The obituary also states that he "gave many brilliant social affairs" at Tarrywile, a statement confirmed by the survival of many invitations in family collections and by numerous newspaper accounts of parties. It would appear that Tarrywile's spacious veranda, wide and grand entry hall and staircase, and large first-floor rooms were designed with Dr. Wile's social needs in mind.

In 1909 Mrs. Wile was permanently crippled by a fall down the back stairs. An exterior elevator was installed for her but the relative isolation of the house led to Wile's sale of it in 1910 to Charles Darling Parks.

Parks, owner and resident of Tarrywile from 1910 until his death in 1929, was a major force in the industrial and business life of Danbury during the early twentieth century. Born in New Jersey in 1869, he was orphaned at the age of 3 and was raised by relatives in North Dakota. He returned to Danbury in 1888 to live with a sister and as a young man, he engaged in fertilizer, glue and hide and tallow businesses in Danbury and Brooklyn, N. Y. before entering the hatters' fur business. In the early 1890s, with the backing of a New York partner, Joseph McGovern, Parks founded American Hatters & Furriers Co., of which he served as president until his death. The company grew rapidly, and in 1898 it purchased the Danbury fur processing plant of W. A. and A. M. White, one of the nation's largest, which had discontinued operations. In 1920, American Hatters & Furriers acquired the other large fur processing plant in Danbury, that of P. Robinson & Co. The company also owned Danbury's only extensive bloc of company-owned worker housing, adjacent to its main plant on Beaver Street. American Hatter, the main trade journal of the American hat industry, called Parks "one of the outstanding forces in the hatters' fur industry, blazing his own trail and keeping all other factors of the trade speculating on his moves."⁴ An experimenter, Parks fostered the development of new fur-cutting processes and of a nonmercuric carroting solution that eliminated the risk of mercury poisoning to employees.

In addition to the activities which made him a force in the national hatters' fur industry, Parks had a far-reaching impact on Danbury's business life through a number of other companies he founded. Among these were a glue company, an oil dealership, the insurance firm of Parks-Mercier, and Tarrywile Dairy, one of Danbury's largest and most profitable dairies, which was in operation until the early 1970s. Through Parks-Mercier Co. and the C. D. Parks Co., the latter a real estate holding company, Parks acquired valuable commercial real estate in downtown Danbury, in addition to private holdings.

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The city's largest landowner at the time of his death and one of its wealthiest individuals, Parks was respected by his contemporaries as a self-made man. Parks had previously lived with his family in Dr. Wile's former Delay Street residence. His acquisition of the Tarrywile estate with its grounds and rural setting signalled a rise in social status which accompanied his increasing wealth and influence in business. Parks moved his family into Tarrywile, and his daughter occupied the house until its sale to the City of Danbury in 1985.

Parks made several changes to the house and grounds. He expanded the 110 acres included in the sale to him by Wile by acquiring dairy farms and long-abandoned woodlots, until the estate approached 1000 acres by the time of his death in 1929. A new drive was laid out by engineer Alfred Leslie Davis and a stone wall built to enclose the grounds facing Southern Boulevard about 1920. The Japanese gardens were removed, but one of the cedar viewing houses may survive as a shed in the present garden. Parks hired Alfred Fearn, a commercial gardener trained in England, as estate manager about the same time. The present conservatory and greenhouse were built for Fearn's own market operation based on the property, which sold flowers and fresh vegetables in New York City. Several changes were made to the interior of Tarrywile as well. Danbury architect Philip N. Sunderland designed a small two-story addition to the south wing, which reproduced its roofline, and enclosed the open porch on the second story of the north elevation. Later, after World War II, an apartment was built in the carriage house, although the rear sections of the four former horse stalls remain.

Tarrywile is the most significant example of the Shingle style in Danbury. Never a well-represented style outside of the coastal regions, there are nonetheless significant Shingle-style structures in inland industrial centers like Waterbury, Torrington, and Danbury. The only major structures in the style in Danbury which might rival Tarrywile have been demolished (the Benezet Hough House on Deer Hill Avenue) or severely compromised by alterations. The unbroken shingle ladding of the exterior, the basically smooth lines with rounded forms, such as the solarium on the west facade to give contour, and the horizontal emphasis are all hall marks of the style. The interior shows the influence of the Colonial Revival in the wall panelling and moldings, as well as in the use of sidelights and multi-light panes in the front doorway and elsewhere. Of even greater interest is the strong but subtle Japanese influence which pervades the house. This influence was originally reinforced the formal Japanese gardens and reflecting pools on the slope to the east of the main house, but can still be felt today. The roof eaves are slightly flared. The wide veranda not only helps to lessen the separation between interior and exterior space which is typical of the Japanese folk house or minka,

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but performs an important cooling function as well. Air is circulated under the porch and is cooled there before it enters the house. Tarrywile's cruciform design, too, with large windows, provides total cross-ventilation. Finally, the width of the entry hall is greater than is common for center-hall Colonial Revival residences, and is reminiscent of the H. Victor Newcomb Hall in Elberon, New Jersey, an early Japanesque residence designed by McKim, Mead & White. Moreover, the placement and shape of the grand staircase is similar to that of another pioneering Japanesque American house, the Knapp House in Fall River, Massachusetts.⁵

ENDNOTES

1. Interview with Jean Parks Davis, November, 1986
2. Interview with Timothy Ward, collateral descendant of William C. Wile, December, 1986.
3. Danbury Evening News, February, 1913.
4. Danbury Evening News, October 5, 1929
5. Lancaster, The Japanese Influence in America, pp. 58, 74.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-c. 1920	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> medicine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

(Criteria B, C)

Specific dates 1895-1897, c. 1920 Builder/Architect Childs & Degal, Philip N. Sunderland

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Tarrywile, the country estate constructed between 1895 and 1897 for Dr. William C. Wile, is significant for its associations with figures of local historical importance, namely Dr. Wile and the house's next owner, industrialist Charles Darling Parks (Criterion B). Tarrywile is equally significant as the best surviving example in Danbury of Shingle-style architecture. The "Mansion" or main house incorporates both Japanese and Colonial Revival influences and displays fine craftsmanship in such features as wall panelling, fireplaces and mantels, the conservatory, and the exceptionally ornate iron door hardware (Criterion C). Its significance is enhanced by the integrity of its semi-rural setting and by the presence of original outbuildings.

William C. Wile was born the son of a minister in Pleasant Valley, New York, in 1847. At the age of 15, he managed despite his age to enlist in the 150th New York Volunteer Infantry, in which service he saw action at Gettysburg and Sherman's March to the Sea. After the war he studied to be a doctor and also served in the Army Medical Corps. Following his graduation from New York University as an M. D. in 1870, Wile began a career which brought him increasing recognition and eminence as a surgeon and as an expert in mental and nervous diseases, upon which he lectured at the Medical Chirurgical College in Philadelphia during the early 1880s. Wile moved to Danbury in 1887, when he married Hattie Loomis of Newtown and became one of the first doctors on the staff of the newly organized Danbury Hospital. The same year he also was named the first medical examiner of the Town of Danbury. Wile also organized the Danbury Medical Society and served as an officer in the county and state medical societies. In 1897 he began to scale down his medical practice to devote time to business activities, which included the Vass Chemical Co., a patent medicine venture, and the New England Medical Monthly, a journal which attained a nationwide readership. Wile also established the Danbury Medical Printing Co. with an extensive plant on Foster Street in Danbury for its publication.

Wile and his wife first lived in Danbury in a former Episcopal parsonage on Delay Street in downtown Danbury. The coffered ceiling in the dining room at Tarrywile is said to be an exact reproduction of the dining room there. Wile's construction of Tarrywile corresponds with the beginnings of his success as a medical publisher. The site of the estate was originally known as Cedar Grove, a popular picnic and outing spot with springs and evergreens. The main house originally had a drive which encircled it to the east of the present drive, and to the east of the house was an elaborate Japanese garden with reflecting pools filled with carp and pagoda-like pavilions. Wile is known to have visited Japan (Figure 1)².

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 11

Quadrangle name Danbury

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References See continuation sheet

A

Zone	Easting			Northing					

B

Zone	Easting			Northing					

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheets.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William E. Devlin, edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization Danbury Preservation Trust date June 1987

street & number P. O. Box 2201 telephone 744-6202

city or town Danbury state Connecticut 06813

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

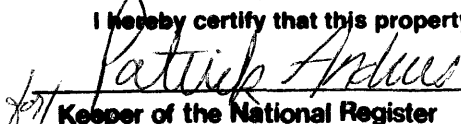
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission date July 17, 1987

For NPS use only

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

 date 1/6/88
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Southern Boulevard
Danbury, Ct.

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Other Sources

Danbury News articles: October 17, 1895, July 28, 1897,
February 23, 1913, January 28, 1929.

Danbury Tax Assessor's records

Danbury Town Clerk's records: Vol. 108:433, 138:326

Interviews

Donald and Jean Parks Davis, November, 1986.

Timothy Ward, December, 1986.

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Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the nominated property are shown on Map 1, the Danbury Tax Assessor's Map, and are described as Parcels 1 and 6 in Volume 138, page 326, of the Danbury Land Records. These parcels are also shown on Map 2, a 1910 survey of Tarrywile Farm, as Plots 1 and 6.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the nominated property are inclusive of Tarrywile estate's original buildings and its original grounds. All of the buildings and structures within these boundaries contribute to its significance. The boundaries are also physically well-defined. Southern Boulevard and Brushy Hill Road border the property to the north and east respectively. To the south and east adjacent properties were once owned by C. D. Parks but were sold to individual owners. To the west a steep cliff, created by a quarrying operation, separates the estate grounds from the dairy farm below, most of the buildings of which were rebuilt after a 1957 fire.

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UTM Coordinates:

Point:	Zone	Easting:	Northing:
A	18	629540	4581920
B	18	629520	4581860
C	18	629440	4581680
D	18	629360	4581660
E	18	629240	4581940
F	18	629260	4581980

