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1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Nehemiah Royce House

Other Name/Site Number: The Washington Elm House

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 538 North Main Street Not for publication: NA

City/Town: Wallingford Vicinity: NA

State: CT County: New Haven Code: 009 Zip Code: 06492

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: x

Public-local:

Public-State:

Public-Federal:

Category of Property

Building(s): x

District:

Site:

Structure:

Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

 1

 1

Noncontributing

 buildings

 sites

 structures

 objects

 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National

Register: NA

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

PROPERTY NAME

Nehemiah Royce House, Wallingford, CT

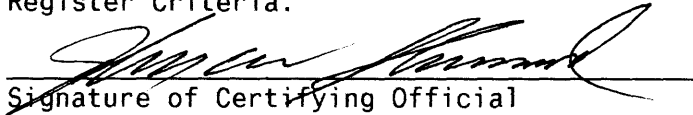
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United States Department of the Interior

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

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


Signature of Certifying Official

June 26, 1998
Date

John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- Entered in the National Register
- Determined eligible for the
National Register
- Determined not eligible for the
National Register
- Removed from the National Register
- Other (explain):

8/24/98

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

PROPERTY NAME

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling

Current: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: museum (work in progress)

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: COLONIAL/Postmedieval English

Materials: Foundation: STONE/sandstone
 Walls: WOOD/Weatherboard
 Roof: ASPHALT
 Other Description: _____

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Nehemiah Royce House is a 30' x 30' two-story frame Colonial saltbox originally built in 1672 (Wallingford Town Records, February 12, 1671) but with most of its now visible historic fabric dating from the early 18th-century and later (Photograph 1). The house faces south at 538 North Main Street, moved there in 1925 by Lucy and Helen Royce from its original location across the street to the east at 499 North Main Street. In the 1940s it was rehabilitated under the direction of William Sumner Appleton (1874-1947) of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities and J. Frederick Kelly (1888-1947), Connecticut's leading historical architect of the time.

Grade rises gradually from west to east on the site, giving the house a slightly elevated setting. Distinguishing features of the Royce House are five bays of 12-over-12 and 8-over-12 windows (originally casements) in 2-1-2 rhythm, central double-door entrance, overhanging gable ends, and central stone chimney. In the front elevation the four first-floor 12-over-12 windows are under flat window caps. Window frames are plain, probably replacements because they are nearly flat with the clapboards whereas 18th-century window frames generally projected (Photograph 3). Most clapboards are not original, although some are fastened with hand-wrought nails (Photograph 4), and some in the gable ends are riven (see below); all other clapboards are regular in size and finish, probably dating from the 1930s. The exposure to weather of approximately 4" is wider than usually associated with 18th-century siding. The clapboards are nailed directly to the frame without sheathing.

The front door surround is flat but wide with narrow band molding under seven-pane transom and flat molded cap. The two leaves of the door are embellished with two vertical raised panels over one large panel (Photograph 5). Second-floor windows

are 8-over-12, close under the eaves. The corner board at the west corner is beaded, as expected for mid-18th century, while at the east corner it is not. The roof is covered with wooden shingles in deteriorated condition. The central stone chimney is massive, with a band of two courses projecting at the top.

In the east side elevation (toward Main Street) windows in three floors are aligned under the gable peak: a 12-over-12 at the first floor, 8-over-12 at the second floor, and 6-over-6 in the attic. Two 6-over-6s are toward the rear under the saltbox roof. The third floor overhangs the second. (Photograph 1) In the east peak (and in the west gable end) the clapboards are riven, so may be original. The east gable end is about 9"/12" out of plumb to the east, probably as a consequence of a 1943 hurricane which did much damage to the house. At the former location across Main Street the house had a 19th-century one-story addition extending to the northeast, but it was left behind in the move. The wing is still extant.

The west elevation is similar, except there is a door of four raised panels near the front and no second-floor window toward the rear (Photograph 2). A consequence of the house leaning perceptibly to the east is that the west wall receives no rain protection from its gable. This circumstance may have contributed to structural deterioration evidenced by a bellied-out section of the west wall at first-floor level. An area of new cedar clapboards defines the bellied-out section. In the rear elevation the fenestration grouping, off-center to the east, consists of a 6-over-6 window, a door, and three 6-over-6s (Photograph 6). The window frames, with no window caps, are not original. The entire rear wall has been re-clapboarded.

The interior was largely re-created, especially the two first-floor front rooms, in the 20th-century rehabilitation started by Lucy and Helen Royce when they moved the house but greatly increased in scope by Appleton and Kelly. Historic photos taken about the time the house was moved provide some basis for analyzing the extent of work done after the move. While most of the present first floor represents new work, there is a mixture of ages of fabric throughout the house that is difficult to delineate accurately. Little 17th-century material survives. Finishes from the 18th-century construction program and the mid-20th-century re-creation are difficult to sort out one from another. In all these rehabilitations components from other historic buildings may well have been introduced, as was the custom and general practice. The several occasions on which a program of changes was carried out and the likelihood that components were added from time to time from other buildings make it challenging to identify the provenance of any particular feature.¹

The front door of the house opens to a small stair hall. The stair rises from the left steeply in a double dogleg. Slender picket balusters, two per tread, and a small round handrail form the railing, along with newels which are light-weight, square, and tapered. (Photograph 7) The delicate nature of the railing suggests a late 18th-century/early 19th-century date. It is not as robust as would be expected for the 17th century. The new hall ceiling probably hides beams originally exposed. Some of the vertical front-wall sheathing may date to the 18th century, some does not; anomalies exist side by side here and elsewhere throughout the house.

The two first-floor front rooms are largely re-creations from the 1940s, except for their structural framing, which is original. The west room has a paneled fireplace wall, paneled dado with chair rail on the other three walls, an exterior door at the southwest corner, and summer running from the chimney girt to the west

wall. (Photographs 8, 9) The summer is enclosed by beaded casing, while the beaded joists above are exposed, the plaster ceiling which was in place below them having been removed. The profile of the window muntins is broader and deeper than 18th-century work, indicating that they, too, date from the 20th century, probably from the 1920s when the house was moved. Windows throughout the house are consistent with one another. The flooring is made of wide boards, sanded, and given a shiny finish. The flooring appears to be on furring over the original floor.

The paneling of the fireplace wall has crisp edges, no dents or gouges, and smooth painted surfaces with no paint accumulation at the edges of the moldings. The paneled wall may have been designed by J. Frederick Kelly. The dado and chair rail show a similar lack of evidence of wear that would be expected to develop over 200 years, indicating that like other finishes in the room they are of 20th-century origin. The plaster over the chair rail shows none of the undulating surface common in 18th-century work; it may be plaster board with a skim coat. The house has been re-plastered throughout.

Kelly planned the stone chimney and fireplace, which is large. The firebox is 6' 9" wide, 4' 9" high, and 3' 1" deep, the size of a kitchen fireplace, but it has no bake oven. The bolection molding surrounding the fireplace opening is robust in a sturdy profile but nonetheless is small in proportion to the size of the fireplace. The four-paneled door at the southwest corner has had its bottom rail reduced in height to make the door fit this opening, demonstrating that it is not original. Hardware on this and the front door is cut from sheet iron and textured to make it look historic.

The east front room is similar to the west, featuring a paneled fireplace wall and dado of horizontal boards with handrail on the other three walls. The handrail appears to be thicker than seen in a pre-1940s photograph, indicating that finishes in this room are also a 20th-century re-creation. (Photograph 10) A cupboard door has been moved since the picture was taken, and a former exterior door at the southeast corner is no longer in place. The fireplace opening is large, 8' 0" wide, 4' 8 1/2" wide, and 3' 9" deep, again too large for the room; it is a 17th-century size in an 18th-century room. Its wooden lintel is huge, as it should be for the 17th century, but has circular saw marks not of the 17th century. (Photograph 11) Vertical sheathing south of the fireplace varies in saw marks and bead from board to board. An east-west summer and accompanying joists are exposed in the ceiling.

In contrast to the large fireplaces in the two front rooms, the kitchen fireplace is small, 5' 0" x 3' 8" x 1' 9" (Photograph 12). It is without bake oven, apparently built simply to fill the space that was available after construction of the chimney stack and front fireplaces. The kitchen fireplace's wooden lintel was brought from another early Colonial house. The kitchen ceiling is low, 6' 1" to beam soffit, 6' 5 1/2" to plaster. Feather-edged vertical sheathing of good quality on the west wall has a quarter-round bead, but is different sheathing from that shown in the historic photograph, presumably indicating that it is one of many components in the house imported from other buildings. Equally confusing is the fact that the beads on two sides of a rear post do not match. The kitchen back door probably was created at the time the 19th-century wing to the northeast was built. A section of the rear wall below the ceiling is angled.

On the second floor the west front room again is more elaborate than the east. Finishes include a paneled fireplace wall (Figure 1, Photograph 13), a floor of wide boards, the 1940s stone firebox, paneled dado and chair rail on three sides, and front-to-rear summer. The stone fireplace is sized appropriately for the 18th century, 3' 6" x 3' 3" x 1" 4". The fireplace surround, or parts of it, may come from another house of the period. The wide raised panel over the mantel may be different work from the rest of the wall paneling. There is no suggestion of a mural on this panel; the surface in an angled light is entirely smooth. The stylized crest molding over the fireplace is raised from the paneling in a rectangular shape more often found in Rhode Island than in Connecticut. The bolection molding around the fireplace opening dates from the 18th century, before 1750. Delicately molded pilasters on either side are without bases or pedestals. Removal of the present flooring, which is on top of the original, would expose another inch or two of the pilasters. Other walls have paneled dados whose chair rails are extensions of the window sills. A cornice crown molding breaks out around the corner posts. The summer runs north-south.

In the center of the paneled wall a clothes closet double door was cut in half in the mid-20th century and the upper half of the closet opened up to accommodate a television set. Hinges on the remaining lower half door are of 18th-century origin, before 1750, suggesting that this wall may have been in place from the 18th century. The missing half door was stored in the attic, so is available for reversing the change. This second-floor west front room may be the least altered space in the house.

The second-floor east front room has a small fireplace measuring 3' 6" x 3' 2" x 1' 5" in a paneled wall, floor-to-ceiling horizontal sheathing on the other three walls, and plastered ceiling (Photographs 14, 15, 16). The boards of the horizontal sheathing are 20" wide, in excellent condition, and probably date from the 17th century. There was a double window in the east wall, off-center to the north, when the house was moved. A formerly exposed front-to-rear summer suffered major deflection seen in a historic photograph but not now visible. It is likely that the summer was framed into the plate relatively high up by a tongue-lap joint and is still in place under the plaster, its belly having been flattened out. Vertical boards in the paneled wall show inconsistent beading and planing and are different from those in the historic photograph. It appears that the sheathing was opened up to make a place for the fireplace. The room perhaps did not have a fireplace until Kelly built his stone chimney.

A hall two steps down (because of the shed roof) runs across the house behind the two bedrooms. The stair to the attic leads up to the south from the middle of the hall. The door to the stair if hung conventionally could not swing open because of the saltbox's sloping roof. The problem is solved by an ingenious use of double hinges, permitting the door to fold up on itself and then up against the sloping ceiling, out of the way. Since Helen Royce wrote to William Summer Appleton, March 30, 1942, that she moved the attic stair to this location from the east bedroom fireplace wall, and there is a further reference to a possible second move in the early 1940s, the fold-up door presumably dates from that time.

The attic floor sags in the location over the deflected chamber summer below. In the attic framing horizontal purlins support wide roof boards which run vertically from the ridge to the plate (Photograph 17). All roof framing, except for some

purlins, appears to be original, demonstrating clearly that the house was a saltbox from the first. Original purlins are square, while replacements after the 1940s storm are half-round, indicating Colonial Revival emphasis on features rather than context. The year 1944 is inscribed in the chimney. The west end wall shows signs of the 1943 hurricane damage which tore the wall apart.

In the basement the front sill is seen to be a pine replacement for the original hardwood. Girders are framed into the west sill with mortise and tenon, indicating they are original. The large size of the timber support for the kitchen fireplace hearth sustains the analysis that the original kitchen fireplace was larger than the present replacement. On the west side, original subflooring is visible plus building paper and existing hardwood flooring. On the east the first (lowest) layer of flooring is plywood, suggesting that total replacement of the floor has occurred.

¹The analysis and observations expressed in this description are taken from a videotape of a walk-through of the house made by John O. Curtis on November 11, 1996.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Nationally:___ Statewide:x Locally:___

Applicable National Register Criteria: A___ B___ Cx D___

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A___ Bx C___ D___ E___ F___ G___

Areas of Significance:	Period(s) of Significance	Significant Dates
<u>ARCHITECTURE</u>	<u>1672 1945</u>	<u>1672, 1925, 1945</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Significant Person(s): William Sumner Appleton, George Seymour, Bertram K. Little Dudley

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: Richard Henry Dana, Jr., J. Frederick Kelly

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Summary

The Nehemiah Royce House, an early Colonial saltbox, is significant architecturally because its framework and the finishes of one bedroom date from the 17th century, and whose latest rehabilitation received the attention of prominent figures in the historic preservation movement during the Colonial Revival period. The original framing of the house and many of the changes in details and finishes made over the centuries are well-defined. The 20th-century work is an unusual example of a documented program, intended as a restoration, carried out by early 20th-century professionals.

Historical Note

The Town of Wallingford was set off from New Haven in 1670. According to Wallingford Town Records, on February 17, 1671, a lot of six acres was granted to Nehemiah Rise/Royce (1634-1706) at a location shown by an early map to be present day 499 North Main Street (Figure 2). The date is not unequivocal because the map dated 1670 already shows Royce's name. In any event Royce presumably built his house soon after acquiring the parcel, giving credence to the year 1672 commonly used as the date for the house. Land records show that the land and building passed through many generations of the Royce family. Whether the nominated house is the one built ca.1672 or a replacement is a matter for discussion. The present historic interior finishes appear to be early to mid 18th-century work with some 17th-century provenance. The position was summed up by Elmer D. Keith (1888-1965), director of the Works Progress Administration Federal Writers' Project Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut, in the words, "I am perfectly prepared to accept [the Royce House] as a 17th century house with later additions, or to consider it if need be a house of perhaps 1720 with some 17th century features surviving" (Keith to Appleton, March 15, 1938).

The building acquired its secondary name of the Washington Elm House because of association with the Revolutionary War general and with a large elm tree. General George Washington is credited with a visit to the house in the Fall of 1789 while en route from Boston to New York (*New Haven Register*, August 27, 1933). An elm tree renowned for its size and great age of 225 years, grew in front of the house; it fell to high winds about March 1, 1896.

Other 19th-century changes included a new one-story kitchen at the northeast corner of the house, which was left behind in the 1925 move. Also, the chimney of the house, which was brownstone to the roof line and brick above, was taken out in 1866 for reasons unspecified.

In November 1924 two sisters who were Hartford, Connecticut, schoolteachers, Lucy Atwater Royce (-1928) and Helen Elizabeth Royce (1873-1962), visited their ancestral home for the first time only to discover that it was about to be demolished to make way for new construction. The house could be purchased, providing it was moved away by April 1, 1925. The sisters, or specifically Lucy Royce, purchased the house and moved it in late 1924/early 1925.

Lucy and Helen Royce were knowledgeable about Colonial houses. They already owned two (in addition to their Hartford home), one, the Barbour-Seth Young House in Windsor, Connecticut (later sold to be dismantled and re-erected in Washington, Connecticut), and the other, the Acadian House in Guilford, Connecticut. They had used the services of a well-known restoration architect, Richard Henry Dana, Jr. (1879-1933), in connection with these two houses and consulted him again before purchasing the Royce House. After a visit, Dana rendered an opinion that the Royce House was "unusually interesting" and encouraged them to go ahead with their plans (Royce, 1927, p. 2).

The sisters' knowledge of Colonial architecture was demonstrated in an article written about the Wallingford house by Lucy Royce in 1927 for *Old-Time New England*, the publication of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), but not published until 1934. In the article Lucy Royce

described the house expertly, remarking about the usual small entry with large room on either side, both with no paneling or wainscotting which "apparently had been removed some time ago" (Royce, 1927, p. 1). She identified the horizontal wall boards still in place on the second floor of the entry hall and the "entrancing old pine paneling" in the west chamber with bolection molding around the fireplace and beautifully paneled chimney breast flanked by delicate fluting. The verbal description was supported by a measured drawing of the paneled wall made by Dana (Figure 1). She described landscaping features as well, including tall lilac bushes in both white and purple and *Rosa rugosa* bushes.

After moving the house, the sisters began their restoration by reshingling the roof and replacing the windows. Next the plaster ceilings came down and chamfered joists thus revealed were painted black-brown. In the east chamber wallpaper was removed from the horizontal pine boards, in some cases 20 inches wide, exposing wood which never had been painted, giving the room a warm mellow color. In one interior wall a 17th-century casement window was found in use as a transom.

An old-fashioned garden, planted south of the house, connected by stone steps to the front terrace, which was surrounded by a picket fence. A low stone wall shielded the house from the highway on the east, while a long hedge of *Rosa rugosa* bounded the north side of the land. "Lilacs lean against [the east] end of the house," Lucy wrote, "and hollyhocks and trumpet creeper follow the lines of the house and the old fence" (Royce, 1934, p. 49).

Lucy Royce also prepared the Nehemiah Royce House report in the Connecticut Society of Colonial Dames in America series on Old Houses of Connecticut, which was accepted by the State Library on January 1, 1929. In it she says the house was moved in 1924, but since the initial visit came in November 1924, it seems unlikely that necessary real estate transactions and actual move could have occurred by the end of the year. Consequently, 1925 is taken as a more likely year for the move. Left behind were an associated red barn, well, shop, cider mill, and tan yard, all no longer standing, and a kitchen ell, now serving as a storage building. A floor plan sketch labels the west front room on the first floor the parlor, the east room the hall. She records that the (exterior, east) side door to the hall was "removed at some time" and confirms that the windows are new (Royce, 1929, p.9). She reports that the house originally had five fireplaces, in the kitchen, living room (hall), parlor, and two bedrooms. Physical examination does not confirm the existence of a fireplace originally in the east chamber, but this seeming discrepancy may be explained by the possibility that the sheathing of the fireplace wall post-dates the move.

Lucy Royce died in 1928; Helen carried on. She furnished the house with antiques collected over the years by the sisters and starting in 1930 opened it in the summers as a museum. The *New Haven Register* for August 27, 1933, devotes two full pages to an illustrated account of the house museum. The *Register* gives many details about the interior, including the measurements of all the oak framing members, and refers as well to the oak clapboards "rent from seasoned trees and smoothed with a shaving knife." If accurate, the description means that present clapboards are post-1933. The fireplace in the west chamber is said to be the only source of heat for the second floor, reinforcing the observation that the east chamber had no fireplace. Furniture and furnishings in the house were said to be

enough for several homes. For example, the hall/living room "is jammed full of crockery, china, metal goods, and curios of bygone days."

Helen and Lucy Royce were in correspondence with William Sumner Appleton, who had founded SPNEA in 1910, as early as 1926, describing the house, inviting him to come for a visit, and discussing the rehabilitation. Appleton in turn wrote to Dana asking his opinion of the house because SPNEA was thinking of acquiring it from the sisters (Appleton to Dana, December 20, 1926).

One subject of correspondence between Helen and Appleton concerned her predilection for a large cat population in her house, which he abhorred. In his May 25, 1938, letter he threatened not to assist her further if the cats came to stay for the summer in Wallingford. Kelly felt equally strongly in the matter, writing to Appleton, August 21, 1941, "The house swarms with cats, of all sizes, colors, and ages, and the quintessence of CAT that pervades the house is simply nauseating. But this poor, sick old lady loves them, and I suppose nothing can be done about it as long as she lives."

In 1939 title to the house finally passed to SPNEA, a gift from Helen Royce. In 1940 Abbott Lowell Cummings (1923-), then a member of the SPNEA staff, later director, sent a contribution as a descendant of Nehemiah Royce to support the rehabilitation. Kelly took an active role in the early 1940s, engaging the services of Andrew Ibsen of North Haven to repair the roof and cornice in 1942. The hurricane that ripped off the northwest corner of the roof occurred on June 14, 1943. Kelly and Appleton decided to remove not only all the paneling on the west first-floor room fireplace wall, put in by Lucy from the 1737 Abiel Elliot House in Guilford, but also many other details. Appleton informed Helen on August 24, 1943, "...all of the paneling and mantel woodwork are wrong for the house.... It has no relation to the house...." Helen's response was to hope that Mr. Kelly was not planning a lot of new wood throughout the house.

In the same patronizing vein Appleton, himself a bachelor, informed Elmer Keith, "She [Helen Royce], poor lady - again speaking strictly between you and me - is not only a school teacher but a spinster, and has, in the place of a husband and babies, acquired a houseful of cats.... But what can we do about it? It is she who has given us the house and everything in it - a gift certainly worth \$5,000.00 or more, and she is not at the end of her gifts."

The new chimney was built in Spring 1944 by the Berner Lohne Company of the Westville section of New Haven to the design of Kelly. The stone was Weymouth granite left over from construction of the Harkness Quadrangle at Yale University, augmented by stone from a North Guilford chimney. Helen's reaction was plaintive; "I am wondering whether the house will be so changed that it will seem most unfamiliar. They have taken out two china closets and moved the attic stairs," she wrote to Appleton on June 13, 1944. After Appleton's death later in 1944, she wrote to Bertram K. Little (1900-1993), his successor as director of SPNEA, on March 20, 1948, "I was never consulted about the Royce House chimney. I think it is a magnificent job, but in my opinion the stones should have been anything but granite. I think the original was some sort of brownish stone like the original door step."

William Sumner Appleton proposed use of a \$500 donation from George Dudley Seymour (1859-1945) of New Haven for paneling, adding still another important name

from the historic preservation community to the list of those participating in the Royce House rehabilitation. Seymour was a cousin of Helen Royce.

The year 1959 was the last in which Helen Royce was able to open the house during the summer months. Concurrently, SPNEA's interest in the house began to wane. In 1960 Helen Royce arranged for removal of the furniture and its donation to the Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford, where it remains in the collection. Royce wrote to Little on October 12, 1960, "The time has come for us to part.... Saving the Royce House has been a glorious adventure and I am glad to have experienced it thanks to my sister's effort in saving it from destruction."

Upon Helen Royce's death in 1962, SPNEA solicited and received several offers regarding the future of the property from various individuals and organizations, in due course deciding in 1965 to deaccession the house for transfer to Choate School, which is nearby. Choate, after improving the mechanical systems of the building, first used it as a guest house for visitors to the school, then as a faculty residence. In 1995 the school, now Choate Rosemary Hall, transferred title to the Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust. Charles Royce of Greenwich, Connecticut, a descendant of Nehemiah Royce and a former Choate trustee, provided valuable assistance in securing the transfer of the house from the school to the trust. The Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust plans to open the house as a museum.

The social history of the Royce House rehabilitation in the 1920s/1940s is significant for two reasons. First, it is a demonstration of an achievement in historic preservation by two knowledgeable, determined women, Lucy and Helen Royce. They were able to evaluate the importance of their ancestral home and quickly take appropriate bold steps to safeguard it.

Second, in their relationship with the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities they were relegated to a secondary position consistent with the Brahmin attitude associated generally with SPNEA as outlined at length by James M. Lindgren in his book *Preserving Historic New England*. The SPNEA board was dominated by men of wealth from well-established families, augmented by a few women who were capable of major gifts. In the treatment of the Royces and their house as evidenced by the correspondence, the men made the decisions without seeking or considering the women's judgement.

Architecture

The presence of 17th-century fabric in the Nehemiah Royce House seems reasonably certain. The great age makes the house unusual in Connecticut architecture. The number of buildings in the state reasonably well authenticated to the 17th century is quite small. It appears that the Royce House belongs in this group. The integral saltbox framing and the finishes in the east chamber may be ascribed with some degree of confidence to the 1672 date commonly associated with the house. As assessed by Elmer Keith, "...the sheathed room on the east side...is one of the most beautiful 17th-century rooms that I know...." (Keith, March 15, 1938, writing as director of the Federal Writers' Project).

The mid-18th-century paneling of the west chamber is fine. Question arises as to whether the fireplace mantel was done all at one time, since the large panel over

the firebox appears to be work of a different hand from the rest. A likely analysis is that periods were mixed by the craftsman since such provincial vernacular work often did not keep up with style changes in 18th-century common practice. The delicate front stair, intact, is probably from the same period.

No explanation has come to hand of why the two first-floor rooms were stripped of their finishes sometime prior to the Royce sisters acquisition of the house. The replacements engineered by Appleton and Kelly appear to be new wood in the west room, carved to the design of Kelly, and salvaged wood in the east room, probably purchased from a dealer, mixed with a little new wood. In both rooms the finishes are satisfactory, but are not outstanding in the house.

The heavy granite chimney and five fireplaces can be justified only in number; they are re-creations suitable in a general way to the Colonial period but are not specifically sensitive to this house. For instance, there is no bake oven despite the customary presence of this feature in Colonial houses.

The general approach to rehabilitation of the Royce House adopted by Kelly, the leading Connecticut historical architect of the day, was to find or create features considered to be of the period of the house. Assembly of disparate or individual features was the order of the day. The fact that each was right, in some fashion, for the only vaguely identified period of the house was controlling. Such assembly of disparate individual features was at the heart of the Colonial Revival movement in architecture. Overall authenticity was not a factor. The same guiding principal which was the dominating influence in new construction carried over into historic preservation. The notion that changes made over the years could take on significance in their own right, and therefore should be preserved, had not been born.

The prominent figures associated with the 1930s/1940s rehabilitation of the Royce House is an impressive roster of leaders in the historic preservation movement in New England. The list includes Richard Henry Dana, Jr., William Sumner Appleton, Elmer Keith, J. Frederick Kelly, George Dudley Seymour, and Bertram Little, a distinguished group.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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PROPERTY NAME

Nehemiah Royce House, Wallingford, CT

Page 15

United States Department of the Interior

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other: Specify Repository: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 141 Cambridge Street, Boston, MA 02114

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreege of Property: .55

UTM References: Zone Northing Easting Zone Northing Easting

A	<u>18</u>	<u>4592620</u>	<u>682620</u>	B	___	_____	_____
C	___	_____	_____	D	___	_____	_____
E	___	_____	_____	F	___	_____	_____

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the nominated property is the lot line of the parcel which it occupies as described in Wallingford Land Records, volume 832, page 325.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary is determined on the basis that it encompasses the parcel onto which the house was moved in 1924 plus a 25-foot strip added to the north in 1940.

RECEIVED 2280

AUG 31 1998

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

Name/Title: David F. Ransom, Consultant, reviewed by John F. A. Register Coordinator

Org.: Architectural Historian

Date: October 1997

Street/#: 334 Avery Heights

City/Town: Hartford

State: CT

ZIP: 06106

Telephone: 860 953-8626

List of Photographs

Photographs were taken by David F. Ransom on September 14, 1996, and November 11, 1996. Negatives are on file at the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106.

Photograph 1
View northwest

Photograph 2
View northeast

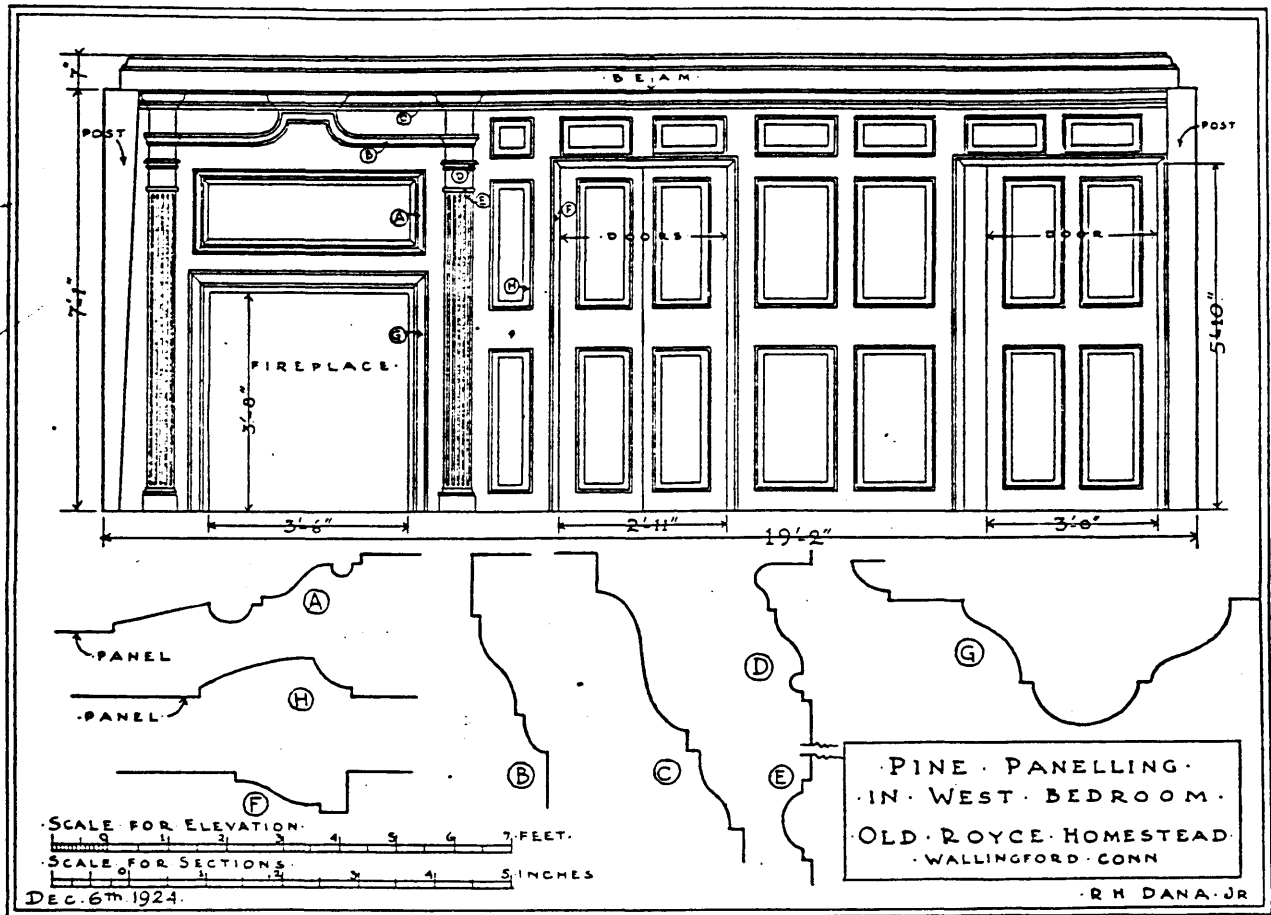
Photograph 3
Window in front elevation,
view north

Photograph 4
Hand-forged nail in
front elevation, southwest
corner, view north

Photograph 5
Front door, view north

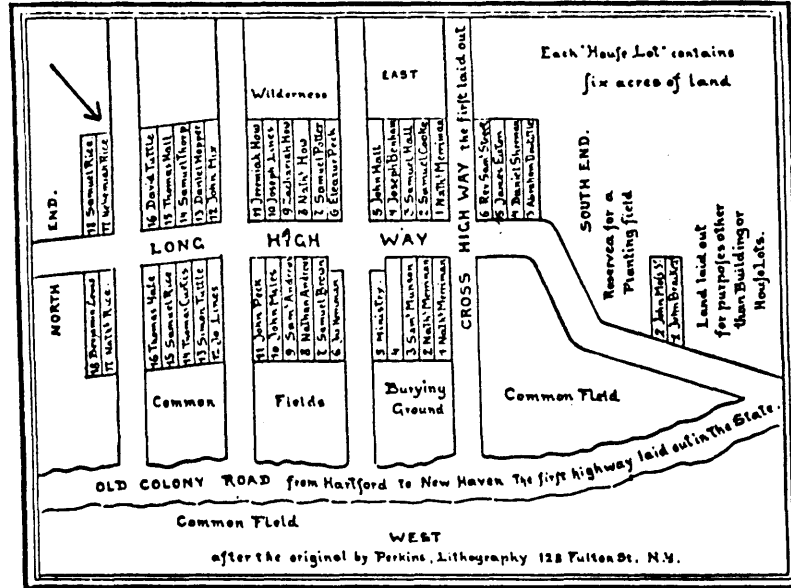
Photograph 6
View southeast

Photograph 7
Front stair, view
northwest



Nehemiah Royce House
 Wallingford, CT
 Figure 1

25(October 1934)2



Original Plan

of the Town of Wallingford.

with the name of each owner of the House Lots as distributed by New Haven Committee

A.D. 1670.

as Copied from The Records

Map of the Village of Wallingford, Conn.

A COPY, THOUGH NOT A FACSIMILE, OF A VERY ANCIENT MAP BROUGHT TO JOSEPH P. BEACH OF CHESHIRE, BY ELIHU YALE, IN 1852, TO BE LITHOGRAPHED. THE ORIGINAL MAP HAS DISAPPEARED FROM THE TOWN HALL IN WALLINGFORD. THE NAME NEHEMIAH ROYCE IS ON THE MAP SPELLED RICE, A CHANGE MADE FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY IN THE MID-19TH CENTURY

Nehemiah Royce House
 Wallingford, CT
 Figure 2