

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PHO.677043

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 26 1979 JUN 4

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Samuel Smith House

AND/OR COMMON

Hurlbut House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

82 Plants Dam Road

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

East Lyme 0219

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

2nd-Christopher Dodd

STATE

CT

CODE

09

COUNTY

New London

CODE

011

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE

BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Stephen T. and Carol L. Huber ✓

STREET & NUMBER

82 Plants Dam Road

CITY, TOWN

East Lyme, CT

— VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Town Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

East Lyme Town Hall

CITY, TOWN

East Lyme

STATE

CT

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

W.P.A. Federal Writers' Project "Census of Old Buildings"

DATE

1937

— FEDERAL STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Library of Connecticut 231 Capitol Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Hartford

STATE
CT

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Hurlbut House, located one mile north of Connecticut Route 156 just west of Bride Brook Road in East Lyme, is a simple 1-and-a 1/2 story, gambrel-roofed structure dating from the late 17th-or early 18th-century. Set in a rural, lightly wooded section of Plants Dam Road, quite close by the road, the low house, with unpainted clapboards and split cedar shingles, faces south. A tiny, early 18th-century, shed, with an added 20th-century lean-to, stands nearby. To the rear is a small 1-story ell, c. 1810, while just outside the back door sits the original 16' well, with a modern well-sweep, and back from that, an outhouse, c. 1810. Further removed from the house to the west is a larger, more recent barn. A portion of the acreage is used to pen the owners' animals, while much of the remainder, once farmland, is now thickly overgrown. Several houses and a dairy farm nearby are not visible and do not affect the setting or scale of this quaint and primitive grouping.

In its original plan, the Hurlbut House was half its present size, with an end chimney and pitched roof. C.1730, the house was enlarged along the west wall when a nearby house, or portion thereof, was moved onto the site. At the same time the roofline was re-framed to a gambrel. Hence, the facade is asymmetrical with two pairs of windows spaced unevenly across it; the brick chimney, too, rises off-center. The windows are reproduction 6-over-6 sash, using some old glass, while the door is a simple batten type reproduction.

The main room of the original house, east of the present central entrance, is the hall with its rough fieldstone chimney and low beamed ceiling. The fireplace has been made smaller and apparently never had a bake oven. The unchamfered summer beam, 18" wide, was cased perhaps 5 to 10 years after the house's construction, as, beneath its beaded casing, it is only slightly blackened by soot. The joists also are beaded, indicating they were finished to be exposed. Featheredge panelling on all four walls survives.

Originally, the entry to the house was directly into the hall, so that what is now the porch of the Hurlbut House was once a second, small bedroom off the hall. A small square fireplace there indicates that the area was heated. Its odd, straight sides and back suggest that the builders had not yet realized that angled sides and a sloping back cast heat more efficiently, or could not construct such a fireplace. As no staircase was ever built into it, the porch is also unusually large. The date "1762" is scratched into the featheredge panelling there; the posts are widely flared and uncased.

Beneath the hall, the cellar is excavated to sufficient depth for a man to stand upright. A rare cellar fireplace exists in the chimney, indicating that the cellar once served as a summer kitchen for the house. A door in the east wall gives outside access to the cellar, also once accessible

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CONTINUATION SHEET Hurlbut House ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

from the hall. A well-worn crescent in the panelling there testifies to numerous hands steadying the way downstairs. The area across the rear (north) of the house, unheated, was used for storage, with a buttery partitioned off. Above the hall, the attic was open sleeping space, reached at first by a ladder, evidence of which remains in worn spots in an attic beam. (Later, a staircase was added.) This area was heated by a small fireplace. Thus, the hall, porch and storage room, with the cellar below and open loft above comprise the Hurlbut House as it originally stood. (See Floor Plan.)

When the house was enlarged, this configuration changed. With the addition, the floor plan became that of a central-chimney structure, with a porch, flanking parlor and hall, and a long kitchen, with burning room and buttery, across the rear. A large fireplace was added to the chimney and the storage room became the kitchen. In the parlor, the plate, flared posts and summer beam, which measures 15", are all cased. The north wall is featheredge panelled. The small burning room behind the parlor is panelled all around. In the kitchen, a casement window, long since removed and boarded over, is clearly outlined.

The roof was re-framed during the enlargement though beams sandwiched between the rafters and the roof indicate that the pitch of the gambrel was insufficient and was later inclined more steeply. The northeast section of the attic is open and several figures pertaining to the sale of flax and wool are chalked onto the plank boarding between the rafters.

Still more alterations took place, c. 181, as part of a major "modernization" effort. Three dormers were set in the gambrel across the front and a fourth added at the northwest rear corner making possible the enclosure of the attic into 4 small rooms. The original door was replaced with a more stylish side-lit model and the 1-story ell was added at the rear, but the floor plan itself changed little. The alterations were primarily cosmetic; fortunately, the owners were not wealthy enough to have the interior "gutted" and most of the original fabric was simply re-located or covered over. The present owners have found pieces of molding from a corner cupboard which once stood in the parlor used as lath in the ceiling above the parlor, while the doors of the cupboard were in a wall in the attic and shelves in the rafters. The fireplace in the porch was plastered over and a closet placed before it. Carved wooden mantels were added in both the parlor and the hall and upstairs,

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CONTINUATION SHEET Hurlbut House ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

in the hall chamber. Some of the original featheredge panelling was removed, much of it going to the construction of the dormers. More feather-edge was plastered over as were the ceilings in the hall and parlor. Shelving from the buttery and even worn clapboards, showing traces of red paint, can be seen in the ceiling in various places throughout the house.

The house altered little after the renovations and, until recently, the c.1810 outhouse (a 5-holer for which, in the 1930s, the previous owner is said to have been offered \$300.00 by the Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan) was in regular use. The present owners are restoring the house and have uncovered and re-installed much of the panelling and wood-work. In addition to removing the dormers and side-lit door, they have replaced large 19th-century windows with smaller reproduction sash set with early glass panes. The roof has been re-covered with cedar shingles and the house is being re-clapboarded. Despite modern sheathing, virtually all of the chestnut framing members are original and extant and most of the interior woodwork survives. Though flooring in portions of the attic is original, most of the flooring, which is oak, dates from the 18th-century. Unfortunately, most of the hardware was removed by a previous owner.

In addition to the pine outhouse mentioned previously, there is a small 18th-century shed on the property. It, like the house, is chestnut-framed. The beams are carefully chamfered with lamb's-tongue stops. The original wide door is gone, and, in the 1930s, a wood-frame lean-to was added along the south wall, but otherwise, the framing survives intact. On one wall in the shed, the intricate drawing of a square-rigged ship has been etched. Etchings of several other sailing ships exist on the walls in the house, but none are as carefully detailed as the square-rigger. Presumably, they were drawn by the children of Captain John Johnson, a sea-captain who owned the house late in the 18th-century. An Indian gravesite is said to be located on the property and several Indian grinding stones have been found near Bride Brook, where it flows through the property.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

Criterion: C

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Hurlbut House is significant primarily for its great age and excellent state of preservation. The majority of its original fabric, in particular, its interior woodwork, survives. It is also significant as an illustration of the evolution of the floor plan from end to center-chimney. Moreover, the Hurlbut House is a rare surviving example of the type of simple, primitive structure which would have been common for the average early 18th-century family.

Though the original owner is unknown, Samuel Smith is believed to be an early resident. Nehemiah Smith, an early settler of New London, was granted land in 1652 at Poquonock (Groton); it was there, in 1676, that his son, Samuel, was born. Samuel later in 1698, received title to a large tract of land at Niantic (East Lyme) though the Smith genealogist states, "doubtless he was married and located there previous to that date since his father had made the purchase several years previous and was not living there himself."¹ Samuel and his wife Elizabeth had 8 or 9 children, his second son, also named Samuel, born in 1696. Despite confusion over which generation built the house, it would seem likely that it was the father, Samuel, and not the son as the property passed from four other sons, Simon, Joseph, Paul and Daniel, to John Johnson, Junior, the next owner in 1746. It is possible that the enlargement of the house was made when the property changed hands. Similarly, 69 years later, in 1815, the house left the Johnson family when William Eldridge purchased it. He quickly sold it, one year later, to Winthrop Hurlbut suggesting perhaps that the later alterations were completed during that time. The alterations made illustrate the development of the house from an end- to a central-chimney floor plan.

In addition to evidence suggested by the land records, several architectural features about the house indicate its great age. The boarded-up casement window, and an odd, straight-sided porch fireplace are two such evidentiary pieces. There are several other noteworthy features about the house, including the cellar fireplace, beaded joists, and nautical wall-etchings. The abundance of featheredge panelling extant is also significant.

1. Smith, H. Allen, A Genealogical History of the Descendants of the Reverend Nehemiah Smith of New London County, Connecticut, Albany, Joel Munsell's Sons, 1889. Page 72.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Lyme Land and Probate Records, also Interview, Owners, Nov. 1978
 Keith, Elmer D., "Write-ups", accounts of buildings of historical or architectural interest, on file, Connecticut State Library Archives 1937, p. 119,120.

Kelly, J. Frederick, EARLY DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE OF CONNECTICUT, NewYork, Dover Publications Inc, 1963

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA / 3

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 30 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Niantic and Old Lyme Quadrangles QUADRANGLE SCALE 1: 24000

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	7	30	4,40	4,5	80	1,80	B	18	7	30	5,00	4,5	80	0,50
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	18	7	30	7,80	4,5	80	0,00	D	18	7	30	8,00	4,5	80	1,20
E	18	7	30	8,50	4,5	80	1,30	F	18	7	30	8,50	4,5	80	0,00
G	18	7	30	9,00	4,5	80	0,40	H	18	7	30	9,00	4,5	80	1,80

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Volume 160, page 12A, East Lyme Land Records

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Sarah Zimmerman, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Connecticut Historical Commission

STREET & NUMBER

59 South Prospect St

CITY OR TOWN

Hartford

DATE

December 1978

TELEPHONE

203 566-3005

STATE

CT

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

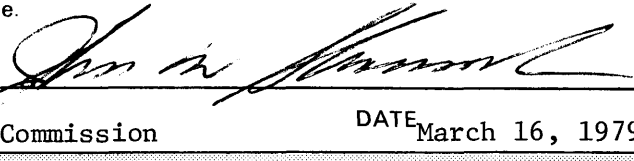
NATIONAL

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 March 16, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bill [unclear]
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 ATTEST: [unclear]
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE June 4, 1979

DATE 6/1/79