

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only
received **MAR 8 1982**
date entered **APR 12 1982**

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

1. Name

historic Jedidiah Dudley House

and/or common John Whittlesey, Jr. House

2. Location

street & number Springbrook Road N/A not for publication

city, town Old Saybrook N/A vicinity of congressional district 2nd

state Connecticut code 09 county Middlesex code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 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 checked="" 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 J.V.Peters, Inc., c/o Joseph Trantino

street & number 34 Cedarwood Lane

city, town Old Saybrook N/A vicinity of state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Town Clerk, Town Hall

street & number 302 Main Street

city, town Old Saybrook state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission

city, town 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 type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Ludley House is located on Springsbrook Road in Old Saybrook, immediately adjacent to Interstate 95. The house faces southeast, and is built on a sloping rise. Constructed sometime after 1750, the 1½-story frame building is sided with clapboard. The house features a steeply pitched gable roof, a prominent central chimney, and rests on a foundation of coursed rubble, with brick replacing the stone in front. The front doorway is flanked on either side by symmetrically placed windows with 6-over-9 double-hung sash. (Photograph 1).

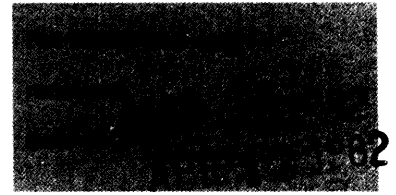
The side elevations reveal two windows on the first story, also 6-over-9 double-hung sash, two openings on the second floor with 6-over-6 sash, and an attic window at each of the gable ends. No garret windows, common in houses of this style, are evident. The symmetry of the house is broken by the addition of an ell at the rear northern end of the house, and the insertion of an additional window in the northeast elevation, probably replacing a door opening. (Photograph 2). The ell has two small windows placed over a modern kitchen, with a door and 6-over-9 double-hung sash window on the opposite side. At the rear of the main house, an additional window has been placed beside an existing one. Shutter hardware is evident, but shutters have been removed and are lying on the ground nearby. Much of the sash has been removed or badly damaged, and aluminium storm windows have been added recently.

The interior displays a conventional 18th-century floor plan: an entrance hall with stair flanked on either side by a parlor and a chamber. The rear of the main house is occupied by a kitchen with a room to the left, the entrance to which has been altered to the rear of the parlor. To the right of the kitchen is a modern bathroom, sharing a common entryway with the ell.

Mantelpieces in both parlor and chamber are **Federal** in style. (Photograph 3). The kitchen fireplace is framed by panelling extending to the ceiling. (Photograph 4). Tapered, beaded casings enclosing corner posts are evident throughout the first floor. Walls and ceilings of the first floor are plastered entirely with a very hard, smooth plaster of evident 20th-century manufacture.

The second floor has two rooms flanking the chimney with garrets occupying the space between the rooms and the steeply sloping roofline. Plaster in this area is far older than that of the first floor, with the exception of the upper hallway. Traces of wallpaper, and perhaps even stencilling, appear on the plaster. The mantelpiece around the left fireplace is missing. (Photograph 5). The right room has an opening once designed for a stovepipe, but no fireplace.

Structural evidence indicates re-use of timbers from an earlier building: the chimney foundation contains several pieces of timber clearly used once before. The most profound alterations to the house were the addition of the rear ell and placement of a modern bathroom and window in the main body of the house adjacent to the ell. It is likely that an exterior door was located at this corner, but the evidence has been removed. The original joists under

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the bathroom floor have been cut and beaded with standardized modern lumber. Beneath the bathroom and ell, milled lumber has been used for joists. This fact, and the stylistic evidence of the bathroom and ell, indicate an early 20th-century date for these alterations. The impact of the alterations is minimized by the restriction of the most radical changes to the rear of the house, and the use of appropriate window sash, except for the small paired windows in the ell.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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			

Specific dates post 1750 Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Jedidiah Ludley House is one of a group of houses which once clustered about the ferry landing on the west bank of the Connecticut River in the Town of Old Saybrook. Two families, the Ludleys and the Whittleseys, shared the operation of the ferry in the 17th and early 18th centuries. The history of the house is intimately connected with the fortunes of its owners, Jedidiah Ludley and, later, his brother William. Conflict over customs revenues collected by Jedidiah Ludley resulted in the financial ruin of the family and the loss of real estate holdings, including the house itself. (Criterion E) An example of the 1½-story frame dwelling prevalent throughout the coastal area of Southern New England during the 18th- and early 19th-centuries, the Ludley House exhibits features in common with at least one other house in the Saybrook area. Early 20th-century restoration of the house was sympathetic to its character and is representative of preservation at that time. (Criterion C).

In 1662, John Whittlesey and his brother-in-law William Ludley were authorized by the Connecticut General Court to operate a ferry across the Connecticut River between the towns of Saybrook and Lyme. In return for operating the ferry and constructing wharf and highway facilities, they were granted large amounts of land in the area of Tilley's Point, known later as the Ferry District. During the colonial period, the operation of this ferry was essential to the lower Post Road between New York and Boston, which followed the shoreline. A small settlement grew near the landing as a result of ferry activities. The advent of improved transportation systems, notably steamboat and railroad travel, in the early 19th-century, relegated the role of the ferry to transport of local traffic. Construction of a highway bridge in 1911 ended ferry service.

Increased accessibility of the area in the early 20th-century resulted in the opening of antique shops in several Ferry District homes. A concomitant of this activity was the restoration of homes in the area. The construction of Interstate-95, however, caused demolition of many homes and the removal of others. Ferry Road and Springbrook Road, once connected, are now divided by the highway. The relationship which once obtained between the houses and road system of the Ferry District has been obscured.

The history of the house is complex. It appears to have been constructed on a portion of the land granted to William Ludley in the mid-17th-century as part of the privileges appertaining to his operation of the ferry with John Whittlesey. 1. From descriptions in the probate records, this writer believes that the site of the house was assigned to Jedidiah Ludley about 1720 from his father's estate. Jedidiah's holdings were incremented either by transfer from others in his family, or from the purchase of lands from the Town Commons when sold in 1742. 2. In 1752, Jedidiah Ludley and his wife Mary consigned

9. Major Bibliographical References

Connecticut State Archives, Transportation and Maritime Series, I; Finance and Currency Series, IV. In Connecticut State Library, Hartford, Ct.
Gates, Gilman C. Saybrook at the Mouth of the Connecticut. New Haven: Wilson H. Lee, 1935.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 1 acre

Quadrangle name Old Lyme

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	8	7	2	0	62	6	4	5	76	6	50
Zone		Easting				Northing					

B

Zone		Easting				Northing					

C

Zone		Easting				Northing					

D

Zone		Easting				Northing					

E

Zone		Easting				Northing					

F

Zone		Easting				Northing					

G

Zone		Easting				Northing					

H

Zone		Easting				Northing					

Verbal boundary description and justification

A verbal description of the boundary of the property may be found in Old Saybrook Land Records, Vol. 137, page 273 at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, 302 Main Street, Old Saybrook, Ct. Only that portion of the property

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 Tale S. Plummer, National Register Nominations Consultant

organization Connecticut Historical Commission date 3/21/80

street & number 59 South Prospect Street telephone 566-3005

city or town Hartford 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission date February 19, 1982

For HCRS use only

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

 Entered in the National Register date 4/12/82

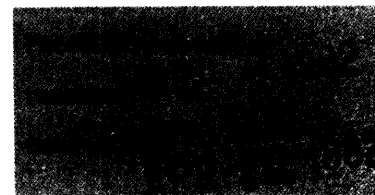
for Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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property with a dwelling house to his brother William, undoubtedly referring to the house described here. The estimate of this writer is that the house was built sometime after 1750. The basement framing indicates reuse of timbers garnished from an earlier structure, perhaps on the same site or nearby.

Jedidiah Dudley was a grandson of William Dudley, the original co-proprietor of the ferry. Jedidiah's brother William continued to operate the ferry with the Whittlesey family. William occupied a large house, since demolished, near the ferry landing. In 1720, a protracted feud emerged between William Dudley and the Whittleseys over the joint operation of the ferry and the location of the ferry wharf. A committee appointed by the General Assembly ruled in favor of Dudley, but the controversy continued for several years thereafter. 3.

A collector of customs for the Colony of Connecticut, Jedidiah Dudley became a subject of scandal when accused of misappropriating customs receipts. Dismissed from office, he was then sued by Ambrose Whittlesey, acting as agent for the Governor and Colony of Connecticut, for the recovery of the lost revenues. 4. William Dudley bound himself to the support of his brother in the suit for a sum of more than £ 4,000! In return for this support, Jedidiah and his wife granted their house and land to William in 1752. On William's death in 1755, the property was sold with others to meet the debts encumbering his estate. Jedidiah died in 1758, leaving only a small estate of 3 acres of land worth £ 7. 5.

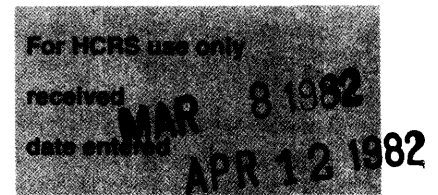
The ruin of the Dudley family may have been exacerbated by the previous conflict with the Whittleseys over the ferry. The appointment of Ambrose Whittlesey, a leading member of that family, as the Colony's agent for the retrieval of the lost customs receipts, cannot have been mere coincidence. Further research may yield information on the complex issues involved. The house itself, of modest proportion and design, stands as a valuable document of the Dudley family. Larger homes in the same area were owned by both the Whittleseys and others. The John Whittlesey, Jr. house, a 2½-story home on Ferry Road, and the Samuel Buckingham house, of similar size and style, at Mystic Seaport, are both extant, although larger and in a less vernacular style.

Architecturally, the Jedidiah Dudley house is a good example of the vernacular 1½-story frame dwelling common throughout Southern New England. Garret windows, often found on such structures, are not present. The simplicity of the house is noteworthy. Decoration is confined to the parlor and chamber mantelpieces of the first floor. Walls are plastered rather than panelled, except for panelling about the kitchen fireplace. Despite early 20th-century restoration, this appears to be representative of the original scheme.

The addition made in the early 20th-century to the rear of the Dudley House was evidently done at the same time as the replastering of the interior and

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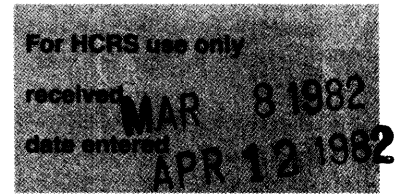
installation of the modern bathroom. Effort was made to integrate the new bathroom and ell with the older structure. The new construction made use of appropriate window sash and interior features such as the cased corner posts were duplicated in the entry to the ell. Unlike the nearby Buckingham House, where panelling was placed on every wall of the front rooms, care was taken to replaster walls in the Dudley House rather than attempt to improve the original interior.

Footnotes

1. For Dudley's original grant in 1663, see Saybrook Land Records, Book 1, page 108 at the Office of the Town Clerk, Deep River Town Hall, Main Street, Deep River, Ct. 06417.
2. See "A Division of the Estate of Wm Dudley Late of Saybrook Dec^d," April 9, 1720, New London Probate District, on file at Connecticut State Library, 231 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Ct. 06115.
3. For the controversy between the Whittlesey and Dudley families over the ferry, see Connecticut State Archives, Transportation and Maritime Series, I: pages 127, 132, and 141, in Connecticut State Library.
4. For consignment of property from Jedidiah and Mary Dudley to William Dudley see Saybrook Land Records, Book 7, page 203, Town Clerk, Deep River, Ct.
5. For records of Jedidiah Dudley's relations with the Colony, see Connecticut State Archives, Transportation and Maritime Series, I, pages 145, 146, 147, and 148; and Finances and Currency Series, IV: 30, at Connecticut State Library.
6. Estate of William Dudley, Town of Saybrook, 1755, Guilford Probate District and Estate of Jedidiah Dudley, Town of Saybrook, 1758, Guilford Probate District, both in Connecticut State Library.

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visible from the public highway is intended to be nominated.