

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

28 2000

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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Castle, Dr. Andrew, House

other names/site number Castle-Russell House

2. Location

street & number 555 Amity Road  not for publication

city or town Woodbridge  vicinity

state Connecticut code CT county New Haven code 009 zip code 06525

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

John W. Shanahan 02/17/00  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
John W. Shanahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action  
3/31/00

Dr. Andrew Castle House  
Name of Property

New Haven, CT  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone  
walls weatherboard  
flushboard  
roof asphalt shingle  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Continuation Sheet**

Dr. Andrew Castle House, Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT

Section number 7 Page 1

The Dr. Andrew Castle House is a Greek Revival-style dwelling with an integral kitchen wing and extended rear ell. Situated near the crest of a hill, it faces west and overlooks Amity Road (Route 63) below. Just to the north is the intersection with Route 67. Access to the property is from a driveway that runs parallel to and above route 63, probably the original path of Amity Road. Stone retaining walls run along the west side of the driveway and also terrace the steep slope south of the house. Other site features include geometric beds of historic boxwood on the first terrace. A modern non-contributing garage is set to the rear and east of the house (see Exhibit A for site plan).

Built in the temple form, with the gable end facing the highway, the main block of the Castle House has a pedimented three-bay facade framed by corner pilasters (Photograph #1). A continuous frieze under the eaves has a boxed cornice. The walls are sheathed with clapboard and the gable roof has asphalt shingles. Most of windows here, and throughout the building, contain six-over-six double-hung sash with plain board trim set almost flush with the siding. The recessed flushboard tympanum of the pediment displays a rectangular window with a decorative stepped lintel embellished with applied scroll-sawn cutwork. A Greek Revival portico with a full entablature shelters the side-hall entrance (Photograph #2). Fluted Doric-order columns have early Corinthian capitals, with delicate, hand-carved acanthus leaves. The paneled door is flanked by narrow sidelights with recessed panels below.

The integral wing, set well back on the south elevation, has a flushboard façade, which features a shed-roofed portico at the inside corner (Photograph #s 1, 3). Greek Revival in style, it has cased posts set on square plinths and a plain frieze, and shelters a later double-leaf door. The façade windows there have projecting shallow pediments. On the end elevation, a full pediment contains another rectangular window, and there are two full-height windows in the exposed ashlar granite foundation wall.

In the elongated rear ell added in the late 1880s, there is a walkout basement on the south side with an open porch at grade. The projecting bay above is detailed with corner pilasters. The narrower section of the ell at the rear is three stories tall and sheathed with clapboard almost to grade on the east and north elevations (Photograph #4). An open Victorian porch with turned posts is found on the north side under an extension of the slope of the roof (Photograph #5).

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Dr. Andrew Castle House, Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT

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Inside the house, as expected, post-and-beam framing members are concealed by plastered walls and ceilings, except in the attic and cellar. The roof framing is typical of the period. Large purlins (7" x 7" ), supported on braced queen posts, run the length of the building. The light rafters (nominally 2" x 4" ) are spaced about 29" apart. The ridge board and the birdsmouth notches at purlins and plates are nailed. The hollow-square method of construction is used for the foundation of the main chimney stack (5' x 7'). The opening on the west side, which is six feet deep, has a narrow two-foot entrance that widens out to almost four feet inside. There is a fireplace with a baking oven in the cellar under the ell. Some of the walls in this section, which served as a summer kitchen, are plastered.

The side-hall plan of the main block is typical for a house of this period and style (Exhibit B). All the rooms are fully detailed in the Greek Revival manner. The most unusual feature is the suspended curved staircase in the entrance hall with its molded handrail terminating in a massive vertical volute (Photograph #6). Resting on a rectangular base block, it resembles a Regency table leg. Given the grain pattern of the lower part of scroll, this section is either veneered or originally was composed of two solid wood blocks. The smaller volute on top was carved as an integral part of the handrail. Two delicate turned balusters rest on the lower treads; there is only one baluster on the radiating treads above, each curved in a stepped pattern along the inside radius.

In the parlor, the most detailed of the rooms, raised square-edge molding trims the edges of the shouldered window and door casings, which have projecting molded cornices (Photograph #s 7, 8). The side casings of the windows act as pilasters and extend down to plinth blocks the height of the baseboard, and there are molded panels beneath the sills. The fireplace on the rear wall has a similar treatment, although there, the shouldered surround with its broad pilasters is set against plaster stop boards that extend from the top of the baseboard to the ends of the narrow mantel.

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Dr. Andrew Castle House, Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT

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The dining room at the rear of the main block is accessed from the front hall and the parlor, and there is a small chamber in the northeast corner. Passage doors here and throughout the house have four raised panels. The dining room fireplace, as well as those on the second floor, has a more typical Greek Revival surround with wide plain boards for the frieze and pilasters (Photograph #9). The width of the brick fireboxes varies slightly (30" to 33" ) and all are relatively shallow (13" to 16" ). The corner fireplace in the adjoining room has a much smaller opening (23" x 26" x 13" ).

The more vertical fireplace in the wing is quite small for a kitchen hearth (42" x40" x18" ; Photograph #10). An iron plate supports the brick lintel, as it does in all the fireplaces. The baking oven and wood box are concealed behind paneled cupboard doors to the right, and there is another cupboard above the mantel on this side.

Since the rear wall of the kitchen was removed when the ell was added, this room is fully open to another dining room. The fireplace there on the west wall is fitted with a wood stove and there are paneled cupboard doors on either side (Photograph #11). Plain-board trim is used throughout the addition. The servants' quarters, which are on the second floor, consist of a series of small bedrooms that open off a passageway that runs along the north wall.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1838 - 1950

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Attributed to George R. Sperry (builder)

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Andrew Castle House  
Name of Property

New Haven, CT  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.5

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	8
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6	6	7	1	5	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	8	2	3	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

2 

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3 

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

  
Zone Easting Northing

4 

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See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By                      Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

name/title Jan Cunningham, National Register Consultant

organization Cunningham Preservation Associates date 9/30/99

street & number 37 Orange Road telephone (860) 347 4072

city or town Middletown state CT zip code 06457

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Jones, Richard O. & Eleanor F.

street & number 555 Amity Road telephone (203) 389 8929

city or town Woodbridge state CT zip code 06525

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Dr. Andrew Castle House, Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT  
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**Statement of Significance**

Historically important for its association with three locally prominent physicians, the Dr. Andrew Castle House is a distinguished classic expression of domestic Greek Revival architecture, one of the best in the greater New Haven area. In Woodbridge, a community noted for the quality of its vernacular antebellum architecture, the Castle House stands out as a superior individual example of the joiner's craft, significant for its unusual degree of stylistic innovation and exceptional level of integrity.

**Historical Background**

Once part of the New Haven Colony and later known as the Amity Parish, the Town of Woodbridge was officially established in 1784. By the turn of the century, when the Straits Turnpike from New Haven to Litchfield was laid out, Amity Road became a shunpike, a route that locals used to avoid paying tolls. Much of the residential development there took place in the nineteenth century; the Castle House was just one of several Greek Revivals built before 1850. Most of the land on this side of Amity Road was owned by members of the David Hotchkiss family, community leaders since the 1790s. Henry Hotchkiss, one of their relatives, had a tavern just to the south of the nominated property. By the 1840s the family had disposed of most of their Woodbridge holdings and removed to Derby.

The property that Dr. Andrew Castle purchased in 1838 was part of the dower of Abigail Hotchkiss (1754-1845), the second wife of David Hotchkiss (1754-1823), who had served as a town selectman in the 1790s. According to the deed, it was the same parcel inherited by Abigail's daughters, Harriet Johnson and Martha Sperry, when their father died (Woodbridge Land Records [WLR] 17:45). Castle already owned some acreage, a back lot to the east just behind this lot, and the half-brother of Harriet and Martha, Deacon David Hotchkiss, Jr. (1779-1842), was the southern abuttor. Although the property was described as two undivided sixth parts of four acres with a dwelling house and barn, there is no indication that the present house incorporates an earlier building.

Listed in the federal census of 1840 as a learned professional, a term reserved for clergymen and physicians, Castle was then 37 years old. It is not known exactly where he and his family of eight lived prior to building his new house, but Castle was no stranger to the community. Like his father before him, he had served as the Woodbridge town clerk (1832-1836). In 1850



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Dr. Andrew Castle House, Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT

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the federal census records him as a 47-year-old physician with real estate valued at \$5000. By then, his household consisted of his second wife, Phebe, and their two children. Three children from his previous marriage, including twin sons, still lived at home. Maria Ransom, probably his new mother-in-law, was also a member of the household.

By 1860, although Castle is still listed as a doctor, there are some indications that that he was no longer actively engaged in his profession. His health may have failed since he died the following year. Although few married women worked in this period, Phebe Castle, then 44, had turned to dressmaking to help support the family and all but one of their grown children were employed. Three sons gave their occupations as knife grinder, carriage trimmer, and bookkeeper. Frank, the youngest, was a farm laborer, which may indicate that the Castles farmed their adjoining land.

Dr. David Elwood, a clergyman as well as a physician, is identified with the house on the map of 1868. Hired as an interim pastor at the Congregational Church during the Civil War, he came to Woodbridge in 1861. Although his contract was not renewed in 1864, Elwood stayed on in Woodbridge and continued to practice medicine. Apparently he rented the house from Phebe Castle. In 1862 Castle's executors released two 40-acre parcels: one Phebe sold to Elwood, a back lot behind the house; the other went to her stepson, Andrew B. Castle, but Phebe held onto the homelot for almost 20 years. Elwood, his wife, Candace, and three children were listed in the 1870 census and the family may have stayed on when the property changed hands.

Phebe Castle mortgaged the then 10-acre homelot to Lauren Tyrell in 1875 (WLR 23:108). By 1881 Lyman Bradley held that mortgage and apparently foreclosed, since it was purchased by Hattie Todd that year (WLR 23:293). In 1887 Todd and her husband sold the property to Dr. Thomas H. Russell of New Haven (WLR 23:482).

Dr. Russell was one of many urban dwellers in this period who moved to more rural towns on the outskirts of major cities. For some of these first suburbanites, a country house was a seasonal retreat. For Russell, who had come here so his ailing infant son would benefit from Woodbridge's healthier atmosphere, it was a permanent family home for the next 70 years. It was the Russells who added the rear ell and made some additions to the landscape. They including the boxwood planted south of the house, which came from Russell Collegiate School, a private academy on Wooster Avenue in New Haven once associated with the family. Local tradition holds that the stand of

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Dr. Andrew Castle House, Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT

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pine near the present garage was planted upon the advice of Donald Grant Mitchell, that city's leading landscape architect.

Russell acquired considerable property in Woodbridge before his death. When his estate was probated in 1916, it included four other properties totaling more than 150 acres with dwellings on several parcels (WLR 28:212). His sons, William and Edward Russell, inherited the Amity Road house with life use to their mother, Mary K. Russell. In 1942 her daughter, Mary Talcott Russell, inherited life tenancy and by the terms of her mother's will, was required to live in the house at least four months a year (WLR 89:246). If she failed to do so, or upon her death, life use would pass to her married sister Eleanor, who lived in Hanover, New Hampshire. After Mary Talcott died in 1968, Eleanor released her interest to the executors, a New Haven bank, so the property could be sold (WLR 89:246). In 1969 it was purchased by Harold Stern, who subdivided the ten acres in 1976. The house on its 1.5-acre lot was conveyed to the present owners in 1981.

**Architectural Significance**

According to the architectural survey of Woodbridge conducted in 1995, at least 30 houses were built or remodeled in the Greek Revival style in the antebellum period. However, unlike the more vernacular interpretations of the Greek Revival found in more remote rural areas, which often just suggest a pediment with cornice returns, a number of these houses have the fully pedimented temple form of the Castle House, as well as its typical farmhouse kitchen wing. In such a stylistic context, only a house of exceptional integrity and architectural significance can be considered outstanding.

Such is the case with the Dr. Andrew Castle House. Elegantly conceived and executed, it clearly was the home of a person with sophisticated taste and considerable means. Perhaps more importantly, the design suggests the hand of a master builder, one with a thorough understanding of Greek massing and proportion, but secure enough to be innovative. The almost playful scrollwork of the window lintel in the pediment and the creative portico are cases in point. The portico is quite remarkable, both in its design and craftsmanship (Photograph #2). By eliminating the upper level of the Corinthian capitals and refining the scale of the foliation, a quite different architectural element was created, one that is nicely scaled to the portico itself as well as to the rest of the facade.

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Dr. Andrew Castle House, Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT

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Certainly the elegance and superior craftsmanship of the interior suggest that a master builder was involved. Few examples of this style are so finely detailed and rarely are they embellished with such a graceful staircase, more commonly featured in Grecian and Italian urban villas at mid-century (Photograph #6). The counter play of the attenuated railing and balusters against the dramatic dominant massing of the vertical volute that serves as the newel is most striking. At the very least, such an ensemble would require considerable woodworking skills. The clearly derivative Regency influence of the newel may indicate that this part was custom fabricated by a furniture maker. Since a careful perusal of Woodbridge censuses in this period failed to uncover a local man with this occupation, it may have been made in New Haven.

While actual records, such as contracts, have not been located, the architectural evidence is compelling that the house was built by George R. Sperry, a master joiner and a descendant of an old Woodbridge family. One of several nineteenth-century builders identified in the architectural survey of the town, Sperry specialized in the Greek Revival style. At least two houses and possibly a third were found to be his work. Although not recognized at that time, the Castle House also could be attributed to Sperry because of its similar features.

Two of these houses still bear the Sperry trademark, the scrolled lintel above the façade pediment window. Each lintel is individually designed, as it is on the Castle House. One is found on a Greek Revival built in 1834 when Sperry was just starting his career. It was erected for Charles Sperry, probably his brother, just south of the town center on Beecher Road. The other was joiner Sperry's own place, which he built in 1848 farther south on the west side of Amity Road. In addition, the Castle portico was replicated in 1845 on another of Sperry's houses, the George P. Morgan House, just down the street. There too the Doric and Corinthian orders are combined on the portico. Although somewhat bolder, the carved foliated capitals there are quite similar.

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Dr. Andrew Castle House, Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Cowdell, Nellie. *The Hotchkiss Family: First Six Generations*, Vol. 1. Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1985.

Cunningham, Janice P. A Historical and Architectural Survey of the Town of Woodbridge, 186 resources. Woodbridge Historic District Study Committee and the Connecticut Historical Commission, 1996.

Federal Census of the United States, MSS. 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870.

*Historic Woodbridge: An Historical and Architectural Survey*. Woodbridge, 1995.

Rockey, J. L., ed. *History of New Haven County, Connecticut*. New York: W. W. Preston & Company, 1892.

**10. Geographical Data**

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the nominated property are recorded and described in Woodbridge Land Records, volume 119, page 663, being the same property identified by the Woodbridge Tax Assessor as Map 903, Lot 30.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the nominated property encompass the remaining land associated with the house during its period of significance.

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Dr. Andrew Castle House, Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT

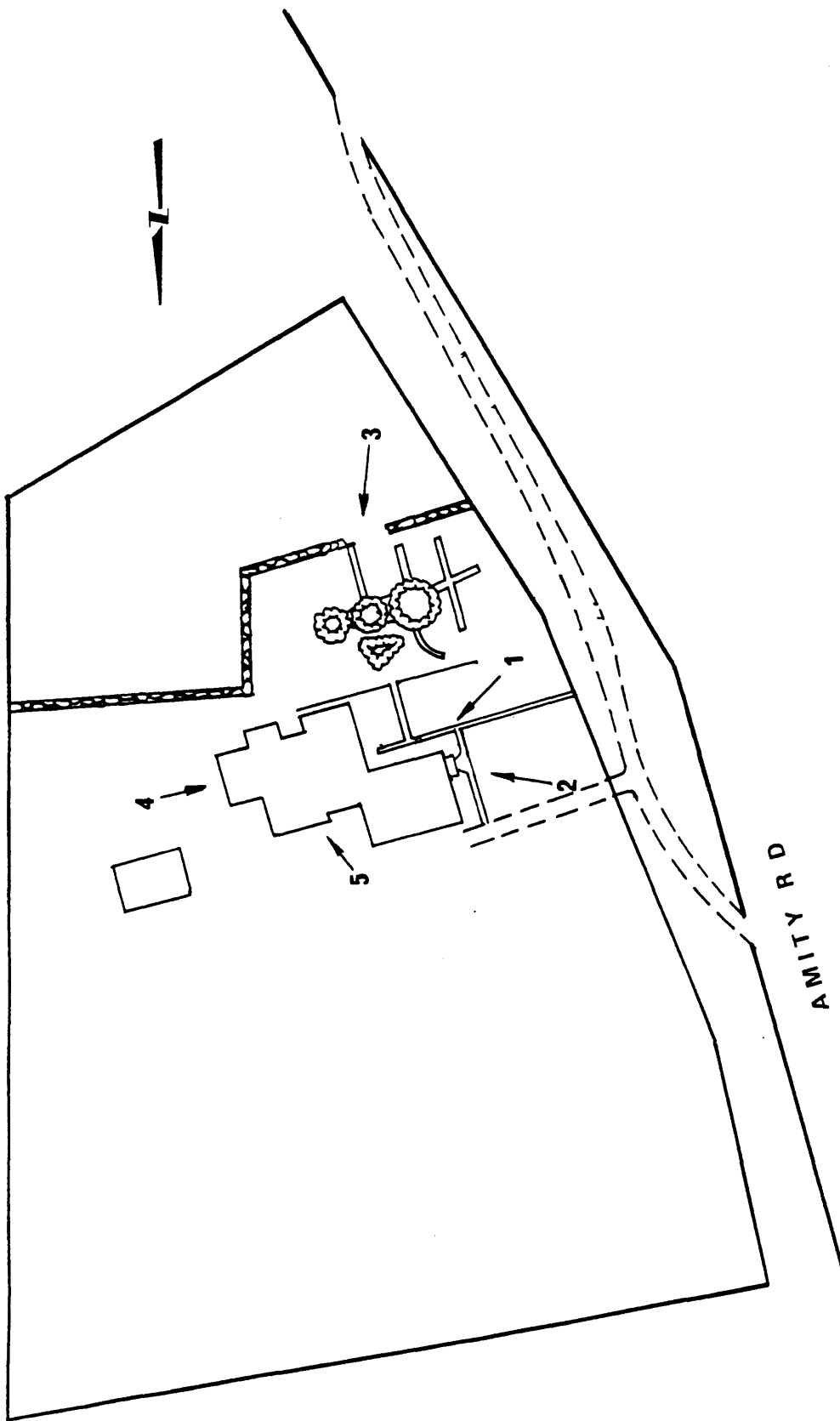
Section number Photo Page 1

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**List of Photographs**

Photographer: Cunningham Preservation Associates  
Negatives on File: Connecticut Historical Commission  
Date: 5/99

1. Façade, facing NE
2. Façade portico, facing SE
3. South elevation, facing NE
4. Rear elevation, facing W
5. Ell porch, facing SE
6. Staircase, facing SE
7. Parlor, facing NW
8. Parlor, facing SE
9. Dining room, facing NE
10. Fireplace in kitchen wing, facing SE
11. Fireplace in ell addition, facing NE



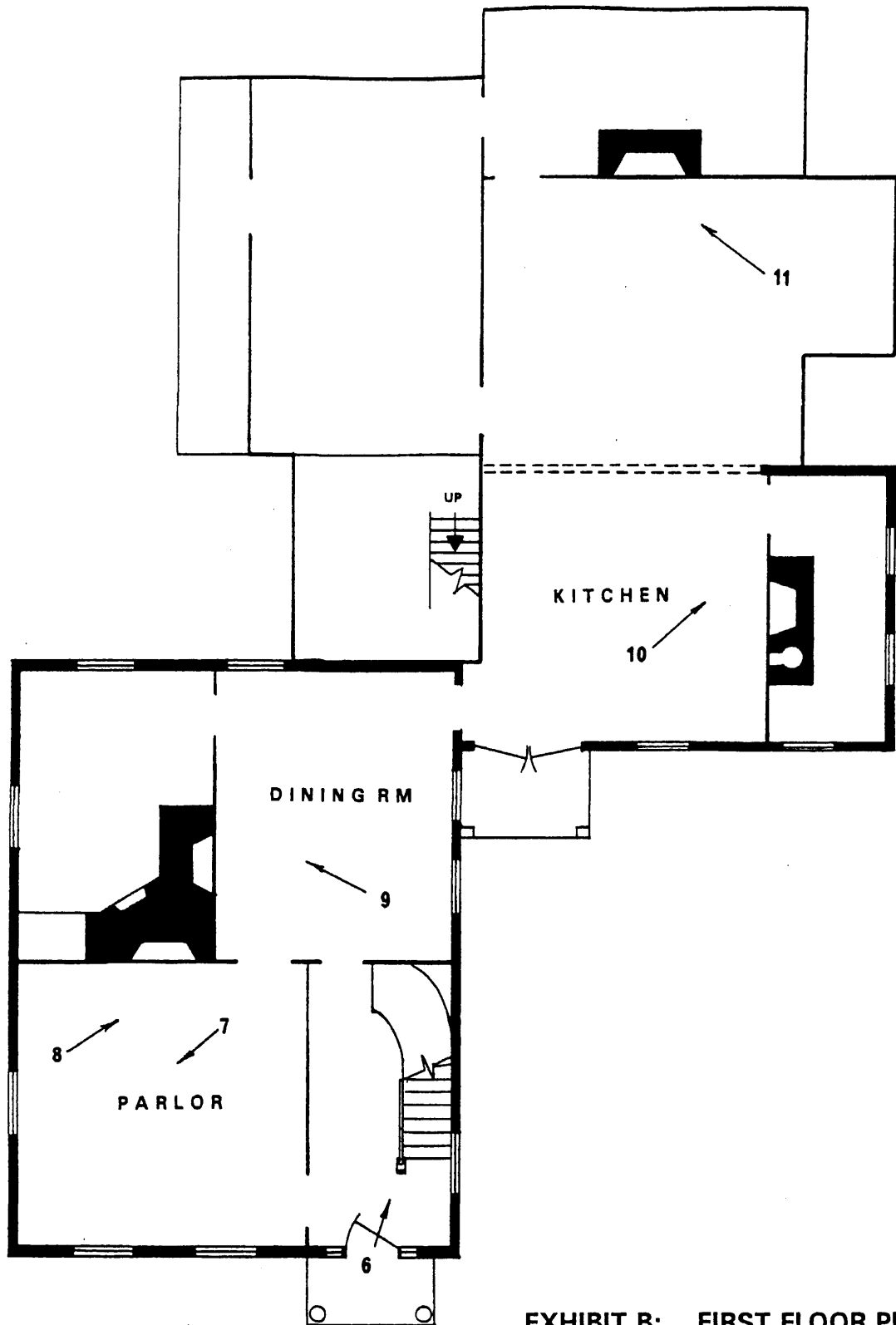
**EXHIBIT A: SITE PLAN**

**DR. ANDREW CASTLE HOUSE**

Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT

Nos. with arrows: photograph views

Scale: 1" = 30'      Cunningham, 9/99



**EXHIBIT B: FIRST FLOOR PLAN**

**DR. ANDREW CASTLE HOUSE**

**Woodbridge, New Haven County, CT**

Nos. with arrows: photograph views

Scale 3/32" = 1'

J. Cunningham, 9/99