



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

The attached property, the Welles – Shipman – Ward House, in Hartford County, Connecticut, reference number 77001418, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register on 09/19/1977, as evidenced by the FEDERAL REGISTER/WEEKLY LIST notice of Tuesday, February 6, 1979, Part II, Vol. 44, No. 26, page 7441. The attached nomination form is a copy of the original documentation provided to the Keeper at the time of listing.

  
\* Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

2/12/2009  
Date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FILE COPY

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RECEIVED

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

Welles-Shipman-Ward House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

972 Main Street

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

South Glastonbury, Glastonbury

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First (William R. Cotter)

STATE

Connecticut

VICINITY OF

Hartford

CODE

09

COUNTY

Hartford

CODE

003

**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

The Historical Society of Glastonbury

STREET &amp; NUMBER

P. O. Box 46

CITY, TOWN

South Glastonbury

VICINITY OF

Connecticut

STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Glastonbury Town Hall

STREET &amp; NUMBER

2108 Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Glastonbury

Connecticut

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

CT Statewide Inventory of Historic Resources

DATE

1967

\_\_FEDERAL  STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Conn. Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Hartford, Connecticut

STATE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Historic American Buildings Survey

1937  
Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Welles-Shipman-Ward House is situated in South Glastonbury on the east side of Main Street. This street was laid out in 1698 and along it are many of Glastonbury's late seventeenth and eighteenth century houses. It would be difficult to find a more compatible setting for an eighteenth century house since neighboring buildings are of fine architectural quality, are well-maintained, and have attractively landscaped yards.

The house sits serenely on a gentle hillside several feet higher than the road. Its informally landscaped yard has several handsome trees and an herb garden is at the rear of the house. This garden was recently planted according to the designs of Rudi Favretti.

At the north side of the rear (east) yard are two frame outbuildings. Both of these buildings have rectangular plans and gable roofs. One, currently covered with weatherboards which are painted white, originally was a corn crib with basement icehouse. It is now used for artifact storage. The other, which has vertical siding painted red, was formerly a barn. It is now used for storage and display of carriages. The dates these buildings were erected is not known, but they are of more recent origin than the house. They are important to the total ambience of the rural surroundings of the house.

The main building, erected in 1755, is a good example of a Connecticut Georgian frame house of the two-story type with large central brick chimney. It has a rectangular shaped plan. Above the stone foundation, the walls are covered with clapboards. The main (west) facade and the north and south sides are painted white. The rear (east) facade is painted red. Paint sampling dictated these colors. The low gable roof is covered with shingles.

The carefully ordered main facade has five bays. The center bay containing the entrance is larger than the others. The entrance, approached by three stone steps, is an impressive feature. Its paneled door, a recent restoration, is surrounded by trim with dog-eared corners which is enframed by fluted Doric pilasters supporting an entablature with a frieze with triglyphs. First story windows have very handsome cornices with cushion fizes and dentils. Second story windows have plain trim except the central windows. This opening has trim with dog-ear motif at corners and a keystone in the center of the lintel. Another outstanding feature of the main facade is the finely executed modillion cornice.

All windows of the house have 12/12 double-hung sash. Some of this sash, especially that of the rear (east) side, is replacement.

The side and rear facades do not have elaborate woodwork. The exception is the doorway located in the southwest corner of the south facade. It has architrave trim and a cornice. The doorway in the rear facade is a recent restoration since a wing was attached to the rear until the 1960's when it was removed. The north and south facades each have two windows on the first and second stories and a single window in the gable. The irregular arrangement of the windows of the east facade may not be accurate.

The first floor plan consists of a central front stairhall flanked by two generously proportioned rooms and a rear kitchen flanked by small rooms. The second story has two front bedrooms flanking the stairhall and three rear rooms. The attic contains a single open space.

See Continuation Sheet

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Welles-Shipman-Ward House 7. Description Page 2

The boxed string stairs are quite cramped and are surprisingly crude in comparison with the rest of the woodwork in the house.

The imposing southwest room has outstanding woodwork. Some of the upper panelling of the entirely panelled north wall which has two tiers of panels and fluted pilasters was restored about 1935 by Alvah Russell. The panelling above the mantel and to the dado is original and unrestored, as is the handsome cupboard in the southeast corner. An impressive feature is the cornice which has over two hundred miter cuts. The summer beams are encased.

The northeast room has a similar cornice and encased summer beams. It has a handsome panelled wall although elements of it suggest that the existing closets replaced earlier china closets. This room is the only one in the house which has sliding shutters, a typical feature in early Glastonbury architecture.

The kitchen fireplace with its mammoth mantel with bolection molding has grandiose proportions. It is 9' 5" in width, 4' 6" in height, and 3' deep. This fireplace has two brick ovens and is the only fireplace in the house that was not rebuilt in the 1920's. Partitions and twentieth century panelling have been removed from the kitchen.

The second story rooms also have interesting features. The southwest and northwest rooms have some panelling. The northeast room has writing on its walls which is thought to date from the days when school boys boarded in the house.

The heavy frame roofing system can be clearly seen in the attic. There is no ridgepole, but rather a paged rafter system. The chimney was rebuilt about 1955.

The restoration of the house beginning in the 1960's has been based on research and structural evidence. Several doorways have been relocated and the front door and some window sash and interior trim replaced. Paint testing has lead to restoration of earlier colors and of some graining. The rear wing has been removed and the kitchen door and basement stairs reconstructed. Other changes include the removal of bathrooms and the installation of a small bathroom and pantry in the northeast section of the first story. Some structural work has been done including installation of metal columns in the basement.

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

The Historical Society of Glastonbury, "the Welles-Shipman-Ward House," brochure, no date.

Interview with Alvah Russell, April 23, 1976. Notes in files of T. R. Brown.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/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 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

1755

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Welles-Shipman-Ward House is an important example of mid-eighteenth century Connecticut domestic architecture. The restrained exterior of the central chimney, two-story frame building reflects the conservatism of Connecticut builders in the eighteenth century. However, there are a number of Georgian refinements on the main facade such as a handsome modillion cornice, enriched window trim, and a frontispiece doorway with fluted Doric pilasters supporting an entablature with a frieze with triglyphs. The interior has numerous notable features including high ceilings, panelling, an attractive cupboard, rich cornice treatment, and encased summer beams. The house, which has been relatively little altered, is being carefully restored to its late eighteenth century appearance. The town of Glastonbury is architecturally very rich since it retains about one hundred seventy houses which were erected before 1800. The Welles-Shipman-Ward House is notable among these because of its elaborate woodwork, especially its cornices, and because of the generous proportions of its high-ceiling rooms.

The house was erected in 1755 probably as a wedding gift for John Welles, a member of a prominent Glastonbury ship building family. Unfortunately Welles' assistance to the patriotic cause during the Revolutionary War bankrupted him. Two of his creditors, Stephen Shipman, Jr., a shipbuilder, and Nathaniel Talcott, Jr., attached his house and home lot. Shipman purchased Talcott's interest about 1789 and became owner of the house. The house remained in his family for many years. During part of this time the Shipmans probably boarded students who attended the nearby school where Noah Webster and Elihu Burritt taught.

In 1925 Dr. and Mrs. James Ward purchased the house. It remained a residence until 1963 when the Historical Society of Glastonbury received it as a bequest of Mrs. Berdena Hart Ward.

Careful historical research has been done and the house is being restored under the direction of Alvah Russell, restoration craftsman. Documents such as John Welles inventory of 1775, Jerusha Welles Dowry Rights of 1776, and later inventories of distribution of property have aided the Society in appropriately furnishing their museum-house.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

J. Frederick Kelly, Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut. New Haven: Yale, 1924; reprint ed. New York: Dover, 1963, pp. 73, 140, and plate  
 J. Bard McNulty, "The Welles-Shipman House in Glastonbury, Ct." The Connecticut Antiquarian, XIX no. 2 (Dec. 1967), 14-19  
 Ronna L. Reynolds, "The Towns of Glastonbury, Rocky Hill, and Newington," Antiques, CIX (March 1976), 518-21.

see Continuation Sheet

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY about four acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	8	6	9	9	6	50	4	6	1	5	5	8	9
ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING						

B 

ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING								

C 

ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING								

D 

ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING								

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

T. Robins Brown Consultant in Architectural History

ORGANIZATION

Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

May 1976

STREET & NUMBER

59 South Prospect St.

TELEPHONE

203-566-3005

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE

S.H.P.O.

DATE

12/17/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER