National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received AUG 1 5 1985 date entered SEP 1 2 1985

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

1. Nam				
	ne			
historic	William Pinto House			
and∤or common	WILLIAM PINTO-EL	T WHITNEY HOUSE		
	ation	WILLIAM ROOM		
street & number	r 275 Orange Stree	et		$^{ m N/A}$ not for publication
city, town	New Haven	N/A vicinity of	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
state	Connecticut code	09 county	New Haven	code 009
3. Clas	sification			
Category district _X_ building(s) structure site object	Ownership public _X_ private both Public Acquisition in process being considered N/A	Status _X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible _X yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agricultureX commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park X private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	ner of Proper	tv		
J. — J.J.				
	Alan E. Silver			
name ²	Alan E. Silver			
name A	Alan E. Silver	N/Avicinity of	state	Connecticut
name A	Alan E. Silver 275 Orange Street	N/Avicinity of		Connecticut
name street & number city, town Loca	Alan E. Silver 275 Orange Street New Haven ation of Lega	N/Avicinity of		
name street & number city, town Loca courthouse, regi	Alan E. Silver 275 Orange Street New Haven ation of Lega istry of deeds, etc. 200 Orange St.	N/Avicinity of	on	
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street & number city, town 5. Loca courthouse, reginate & number city, town 6. Repl (See cont	Alan E. Silver 275 Orange Street New Haven ation of Lega istry of deeds, etc. Town/Cr 200 Orange St. New Haven resentation istinuation sheet for orange ster of Historic Pl 1975	N/Avicinity of I Description ity Clerk's Office in Existing (other entries)	state Surveys perty been determined el federal X state	Hall of Records Connecticut igible?yes ^X n

7. Description

Condition excellent deteriorated good ruins fair unexposed	Check one unaltered X altered	$\begin{array}{ccc} \textbf{Check one} \\ \underline{X} \text{ original site} \\ \text{ moved} & \text{date} \\ \end{array}$
unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Built in 1810/11, the Pinto-Whitney House is a 2½-story Federal-style post-and-beam frame house with a gable-to-street roof, cut-stone foundation and 3-bay-wide, side-hall facade-entry plan. The original portion of the building features a rectangular overall plan (28.02 feet wide by 50.4 feet deep). The building stands close to the eastern line of Orange Street on a narrow, level, rectangular site which is located a block and one-half northeast of the New Haven Green. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the area immediately surrounding the Pinto-Whitney House formed one of the city's principal upper-income residential neighborhoods. Although a few other houses built in the area prior to the mid-nineteenth century remain nearby to the north on Orange Street and to the southwest along Elm Street, the area is currently dominated by large post-1860 commercial structures and open parking lots. I

The original exterior features of the house are generally intact and well-preserved. features include above-grade foundation walls of dark-gray stone rubble faced with brownstone ashlar on the front (western) elevation, clapboard siding, delicately scaled architrave cornices above all but one of the shuttered first- and second-story double-hung window openings, and three chimney stacks, two of which rise above the central and rear portions of the roof ridge and one which rises above the roof near the structure's northwestern corner. Two of the more notable exterior features are the original Palladian window in the facade gable and the fanlight transom over the front doorway, which retains original trim moldings (photographs 1, 2, 3 and 4). The pilasters flanking the front doorway, and the uppermost portions of the extant door hood, which features a broken entablature and open-base pediment elaborated by denticulated moldings, are also original. The consoles which currently support this fixture probably replaced original columns in the latter years of the nineteenth century. The stairs from the street level to the porch stoop also appear to have been moved from the front to the south side of the stoop to accommodate the widening of Orange Street during this era. The filigreed-iron balustrade found on this porch also appears to have been added in the late nineteenth century (photographs 1, 3 and 4). 2

Notable exterior modifications in the twentieth century include the replacement of the two original double-hung window openings on the first story of the facade with the extant, cantilevered projecting single-story window bay in 1929 and the addition of a single-story concrete-block wing and multi-story metal fire escape to the rear elevation in 1953. While intrusive from an architectural standpoint, the 1929 front window bay does provide a tangible record vis-a-vis the structure's initial conversion for mixed commercial-residential use. The intrusive character of the masonry rear wing and fire escape system are minimized by their location, and in the case of the masonry wing, by a plain, low-profile design.

Like the exterior, the interior of the Pinto-Whitney House retains the bulk of its original fabric in a well-preserved state. The most notable of these features are the fireplace mantlepieces found in most of the rooms on the first and second stories (photographs 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 14). The fireplace mantels in the northwesternmost first— and second-story front rooms are flanked by original furniture niches framed by molded pilasters rising into simply detailed capitals at the bases of elliptical—arch moldings. These niches are currently in-filled with twentieth century bookshelves and storage cabinets (photographs 6 and 11). Other surviving original trim features include a number of panelled Federal—style doors, doorway and baseboard moldings and beaded—plank panelling along the walls of the rear and cellar stairwells, as well as the front staircase, which features raised moldings embellishing the northern stringer and a simply though gracefully detailed

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Representation in Existing Surveys (cont.)

Title: "The William Pinto (Eli Whitney) House." Historic American Buildings Survey, No.

CONN-277.

Date: 1964

Depository: Libarary of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Type of Survey: Federal

Title: New Haven Historic Resources Inventory, Phase I: Central New Haven.

Date: 1982

Depository: Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford, CT.

Type of Survey: Local

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Description (cont.)

balustrade (photographs 5, 10, 15 and 18). Significant historic fabric found in the basement level of the structure includes brick floor pavers, whitewashed cut-stone rubble foundation walls, large paired cut-stone piers infilled with later brick supporting massive, hewn-timber lintels upon which the upper stories of the chimney stacks rest, and a number of wooden beams and posts which appear to be reused timbers salvaged from earlier structures. These reused structural members include a post featuring a large lower half with chamfered edges and a large tenon cut and a narrower octagonally-shaped upper section, features which strongly suggest that it may have originally formed a gallery post for a meetinghouse or similarly scaled structure (photographs 16, 17 and 18).

The building's attic floor level, which was originally utilized as an unfinished storage area featuring exposed roof framing members, had finish-wall and ceiling surfaces installed when this area was converted for use as a residential apartment in the 1960s.

While the house has been altered on all floors, the basic original floor plans of the first and second story remain substantially intact. The first story features a 2-room-wide, 3-room-deep arrangement. The second floor plan essentially mimics this same arrangement. A scaled drawing of the building's first-floor plan delineated in 1964 under the National Park Service's Historic American Buildings Survey program is provided among the following pages as a visual and descriptive reference. Alterations made to the first floor plan since 1964 are noted. The existing second-floor plan continues to mimic the basic layout of the first floor, with the exception of modifications made in the front of the second-story front stairhall to provide stairway access to the extant attic story apartment.

End Notes

- 1. These houses include two structures on Elm Street currently listed on the National Register: the John Cook House (35 Elm Street), the Caroline Nicoll House (27 Elm Street).
- 2. Elizabeth Mills Brown. New Haven: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), pg. 115.

8. Significance

1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 X 1800–1899	X architecture art commerce communications	community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlement	music	science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater
	Built: 1810/11	Builder/Architect See	continuation Sheet	8:2, end note 10.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Pinto-Whitney House is significant for its association with two prominent figures in New Haven's late eighteenth/early nineteenth-century history: William Pinto and Eli Whitney. (Criterion B) The building is also significant as one of the earliest known and best-preserved extant examples of the locally rare, gable-to-street form of early nineteenth-century Federal-style residential frame architecture. (Criterion C)

Historical Summary

New Haven land records indicate that the Pinto-Whitney House was actually constructed in late 1810 and early 1811 for John Cook. Cook, a prominent New Haven "merchant tailor" of the period, had the house built on the northwestern corner of the one-acre homelot on the northeastern corner of Elm and Orange Streets which he had purchased from the heirs of former New Haven mayor Samuel Bishop as two separate tracts in 1805 and 1806. In October 1812, Cook sold the house along with the lot on which it now stands to William Pinto. 1

William Pinto (1760-1847) was a descendant of one of the earliest and most prestigious Jewish families to settle in Connecticut during the eighteenth century. He was the second son of Jacob Pinto, a Sephardic Jew who along with his wife Thankful moved to New Haven from Stratford, Connecticut in 1755. According to a letter written by former Yale president Ezra Stiles, the Pintos were the only family of Jewish descent to have lived in New Haven prior to 1772.²

William Pinto and his brothers Abraham and Solomon were the first children of Jewish extraction born in New Haven, as well as the first students of Jewish extraction admitted to Yale University. Upon his graduation from Yale in 1777, William received awards for his transcriptions of the Declaration of Independence from Yale's President Daggett and Connecticut's Governor Trumbull. William became an active participant in the remaining years of the war against Britain. His exploits included service as a member of the local militia assigned to repel the British invasion of New Haven in 1779; two years later, he carried the news of another British invasion led by former New Haven resident Benedict Arnold to the state's governor at Lebanon, Connecticut. Following the war, Pinto established himself locally as a merchant; by the early years of the nineteenth century, he had emerged as one of the city's most successful and prominent businessmen engaged in the West Indies trade. 3

William Pinto appears to have lived in the house which today bears his name for several years following his purchase of the property in 1812. In 1819, he mortgaged the house and lot to Eli Whitney (1765-1825), presumably to help finance the construction of a new dwelling in the city for himself and his recent bride, Laura Packard of New York City. 4

Eli Whitney appears to have contracted with Pinto to rent the latter's small Orange Street house sometime between 1819, when he granted this mortgage, and 1822 when, writing from New Haven to Josiah Stebbins, he noted that he was living with his family "in a small hired house." Other secondary and primary sources, such as probate records associated with Whitney's estate, confirm that this "small hired house" was the same which Pinto had mortgaged to Whitney in 1819.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

GPO 894-785

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10.	Geographic	al Data			
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S	see continuation shee	t			
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state		code	county	code	
11.	Form Prepa	red By			
	Fldon Scott/Resea	Edited by Joh	n Herzan, Nati	ional Register Coordinator ner/Director, Technical Service	
name/tit	,	ren Asse. and			:S
organiza	ation New Haven Prese	rvation Trust		date February 19, 1985	
street &	number P. O. Box 16	71	t	telephone (203) 562-5919	
city or to	own New Haven,		s	state Connecticut 06507	
12.	State Histo	ric Preso	ervation	Officer Certification	on
The eval	luated significance of this p	operty within the s	state is:		
	national	state	X local		
665), I h		y for inclusion in th	ne National Registe	toric Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law er and certify that it has been evaluated ervice.	89–
State Hi	storic Preservation Officer s	ignature	mm	flower	
title I	Director: Connecticu	t Historical	Commission	date August 12, 1985	
For I	NPS use only				
11	nereby certify that this prope	rty is included in tl /	+	ena / /	_
Keer	per of the National Register	jen	Rational Reg	gistes date 9/12/85	
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	of Registration			uuto	

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Significance (cont.)

After September 1822, Whitney began to suffer noticably from ill-health brought on by the disease which eventually claimed his life in January 1825. Often confined to bed during his final years, he soon turned the day-to-day supervision of the operations at his armory along Whitney Avenue nearby to the north to his nephew Eli Whitney Blake. However, Whitney's penchant for design and invention continued to remain strong during his final years. Perhaps as a result of his forced confinement, much of the work he produced during this period was associated with aspects of domestic life, such as planning the construction of a new family residence on the opposite side of Orange Street, and the design which he produced for a bureau in which all drawers could be locked by a single fixture mounted in the top drawer, beyond the reach of children...such as his young son, Eli, Jr.⁷

Following Whitney's death, his estate continued to rent Pinto's property until Whitney's widow Henrietta and their children moved into the newly completed house across the street (no longer extant) in 1828. Pinto finally satisfied his mortgage with the Whitney estate in 1832 and, just prior to moving to New York City, sold the house and lot to Jacob Scoville in 1834.

Architectural Summary

The Pinto-Whitney House is one of less than two dozen small early 19th-century gableto-street Federal-style frame houses still standing within the City of New Haven. also one of only four known houses of its type still surviving in the city's 140 acre coredowntown area. Of the houses forming this latter group, which includes the Leverett Griswold House at 459 College Street, Mory's at 306 York Street, and the Christ Church Rectory at 80 Broadway, only the Griswold House compares more favorably in terms of integrity However, despite the incorporation of a projecting firstof original exterior features. story window bay in 1929, modifications made to its original front porch in conjunction with the widening of Orange Street in the late nineteenth century, and the addition of a single-story masonry rear wing in 1953, the bulk of the historic exterior features and The well-crafted Palladian fabric of the Pinto-Whitney house remain remarkably intact. best surviving examples of this window found in its front gable remains one of the fenestration form within the confines of the City as a whole. Most major original interior features, such as mantelpieces, trim moldings and doors, as well as the basic floor plans of the original portion of the structure also survive remarkably intact, providing an important record of the kind of detailing and craftmanship originally found even in somewhat modestly scaled early nineteenth-century Federal-style urban houses. 10

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Significance (cont.)

End Notes

- 1. See New Haven Land Records: Vol. 54, pg. 260; Vol. 56, pg. 192; Vol. 59, pg. 472; Vol. 81, pg. 434.
- 2. Jews in New Haven (New Haven: Jewish Historical Society of New Haven, 1981), pg. 15.
- 3. Franklin Dexter, Yale Biographies and Annals: 1764-1777 (New York, Henry Holt and Co., 1907).
- 4. See New Haven Land Records: Vol. 68, pg. 59 and Dexter, <u>Yale Biographies and Annals:</u> 1764-1777. On file at New Haven Colony Historical Society, 114 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, CT.
- 5. See "Eli Whitney Papers," MS #554, Box 5, Folder 89 (letter from Eli Whitney to Josiah Stebbins dated January 2, 1822). On file at New Haven Colony Historical Society, 114 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, CT.
- 6. See "Eli Whitney Papers," MS #554, Box 9, Folder 166 (entries dated October 31, 1825 and November 3, 1825); MS #554, box 13, Folder 18 (1914 entry by John Douglass recounting discussion with George Basset in 1884 vis-a-vis Whitney having lived in house at 275 Orange Street, New Haven, CT). See also Constance Green, Eli Whitney and the Birth of American Technology (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1956), pg. 185 and New Haven Probate Records: Vol. 55, pg. 148; Vol. 38, pp. 138-39.
- 7. See New Haven Probate Records: Vol. 35, pg. 182 and Jeanette Mirsky and Allan Nevins, The World of Eli Whitney (Boston: The Macmillan Co., 1952), pp. 292, 295.
- 8. See New Haven Land Records: Vol. 81, pg. 133; Vol. 102, pg. 35.
- 9. For descriptions and photographs of the Leverett Griswold House, Mory's and Christ Church Rectory, see New Haven Historic Resources Inventory, Phase I: Central New Haven (New Haven: The New Haven Preservation Trust, 1982), Inventory Items 178, 1114 and 48.
- 10. Tradition holds that the Pinto-Whitney house was designed by early nineteenth-century builder/architect David Hoadley. Unfortunately, intensive research on the historical and architectural background of the structure conducted over a period of almost a year failed to effectively prove or refute this attribution. Following a site review of the structure on December 12, 1984, architectural historian and Yale University professor Abbott Lowell Cummings suggested that the Pinto-Whitney house may have been designed by an unknown disciple of Peter Banner, rather than by Hoadley. New Haven's noted local architectural historian, Elizabeth Mills Brown, also contends that the building is probably not the work of Hoadley. Given the lack of primary source documentation, and the fact that the traditional attribution of the structure's design to Hoadley remains highly questionable from the standpoint of available physical evidence, attributing the design and/or construction of the Pinto-Whitney house within the present text was considered to be inappropriate.

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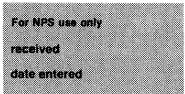
Significance (cont.)

End Notes (cont.)

University professor Abbott Lowell Cummings, who is currently involved in extensive research concerning the work and influence of the late eighteenth/early nineteenth-century architect Peter Banner, suggested that the Pinto-Whitney may have been designed by an unknown disciple of Banner, rather than by Hoadley. Given the lack of primary source documentation, and the fact that the traditional attribution of the structure's design to Hoadley remains highly questionable from the standpoint of available physical evidence, attributing the design and/or construction of the Pinto-Whitney House within the present text was considered to be inappropriate.

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Page

1

Major Biliographical References (cont.)

Primary Sources

- New Haven Assessors Records. On file at New Haven Assessors Office, 200 Orange Street New Haven, CT.
- New Haven Building Department Records. On file at New Haven Building Department Office, 200 Orange Street, New Haven, CT.
- New Haven Land Records. On file at New Haven Town/City Clerk's Office, 200 Orange Street, New Haven, CT.
- New Haven Probate Records. On file at New haven Probate Court Office, 157 Church Street, New Haven, CT.
- New Haven Tax Records for William Pinto, 1823. On file at New Haven Colony Historical Society, 114 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, CT.
- "Eli Whitney Papers ." MS#554. On file at New Haven Colony Historical Society, 114 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, CT.

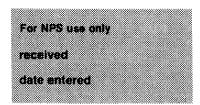
Secondary Sources

- Atwater, Edward, ed. A History oc the City of New Haven to the Present Time. New York: W.W. Munsell and Co., 1887.
- Brown, Elizabeth Mills. <u>New Haven: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design</u>. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976
- Dana, Arnold, G. "New Haven Old and New." MS. (Collection of photographs, newspaper clippings and other writings pertaining to New Haven's history and architecture).

 On file at New Haven Colony Historical Society, 114 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, CT.
- Dexter, Franklin. Yale Biographies and Annals. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1907.
- Green, Constance. Eli Whitney and the Birth of American Technology. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1956.
- Jews in New Haven, Vols. I, II, III. New Haven: Jewish Historical Society of New Haven, 1979-81.

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Major Bibliographical References (cont.)

Secondary Sources (cont.)

Mirsky, Jeanette and Allan Nevins. The World of Eli Whitney. New York: The Macmillon Co., 1952.

New Haven Historic Resources Inventory, Phase I: Central New Haven. New Haven: The New Haven Preservation Trust, 1982.

Maps and Atlases

"Plan of the City of New Haven." Anonymous, 1802.

Doolittle, Amos. "Plan of New Haven." New Haven: A. Doolittle, engraver.

Doolittle, Amos. "Plan of New Haven." New Haven: A. Doolittle, engraver.

Doolittle, Amos. "Plan of New Haven." New Haven: A. Doolittle, engraver.

Hartley and Whiteford. Map of the City of New Haven from Actual Surveys. etc. Philadelphia: Collins and Clark, 1851.

Miscellaneous

Cummings, Abbott Lowell. Site review and interview, December 12, 1984.

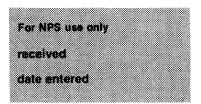
New Haven City Directories, 1840-1900.

"William Pinto (Eli Whitney) House." Historic American Buildings Survey. HABS No. CONN-277. Descriptive Review and Drawings of William Pinto House, 275 Orange Street, New Haven, CT (11 pages). On file at Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

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Geographical Data (cont.)

Verbal Boundary Description

West: by Orange Street, 46.9 feet, more or less.

North: by land now or formerly of George Bassett et. al., 162.3 feet more or less.

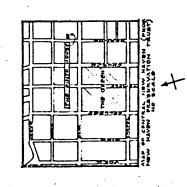
East: in part by land now or formerly of said Bassett and in part by land now or formerly of the heirs of Charles Nicoll, in all 43.85 feet more or less.

South: by land now or formerly of Clarence L. Beardsley, 162.3 more or less.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The above boundaries were drawn from the deed for the property granted to the present owner Alan E. Silver on May 2, 1975. (New Haven Land Records: Vol. 2529, pg. 55) These boundaries are the same as the boundaries for the property established by John Cook in the deed for the property which he gave William Pinto on October 10, 1812. (New Haven Land Records: Vo. 81, pg. 434)

THE WILLIAM PINT



THE WILLIAM PINTO HOUSE IS KNOWN AS THE HOME OF ELI WHITNEY AT HIS DEATH IN 1825, IT IS ATTRIBUTED TO DAVID HOADLEY, AND MAY DE DATED AS EARLY AS 1805, MOST OF THE EXTERIOR AND MANY OF THE INTERIOR, DETAILS REMAIN INTACT.

SERVICE PARK DY THE UNITED STATES NATIONAL RECORDED

CONNECTICUT, FIELD THIS PROJECT WAS FINANCED FROM AL PARK SERVICE - MEASURED AND C. MASSEY, SUPERVISING ARCHITECT, PROJECT SUPERVISION, BY STUDENT INST. OF TECH.), WILLIAM P. HEI

エロリル市

WHITNEY

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