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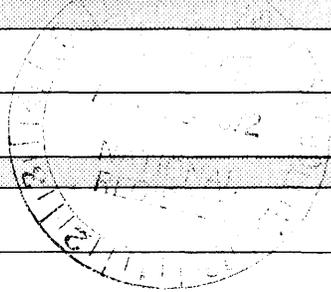
Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Connecticut	
COUNTY: Middlesex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER NOV 9	DATE 1972



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Dr. Pratt House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Pratt Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Chester

STATE: Connecticut      CODE: 09      COUNTY: Middlesex      CODE: 007

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Louis Bertelli

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Pratt Street

CITY OR TOWN: Chester      STATE: Connecticut      CODE: 09

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Town Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chester      STATE: Connecticut      CODE: 09

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Connecticut Historic Structures and Landmarks Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1966       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Connecticut Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:  
51 Pratt Street

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford      STATE: Connecticut      CODE: 09

STATE: Connecticut

COUNTY: Middlesex

NOV 9 1972

ENTRY NUMBER

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

21/91

This is a grand house of magnificent proportions. It is set back from a dead-end road in a clearing amidst trees. This is not the original site; the house was moved in 1966 from where it stood, eight hundred feet to the east on Route 9A, behind a white fence and large trees. It was saved by the present owners when the Catholic Church which owned it needed the land to build a parish house. The granite foundation and brick chimneys were moved with the structure.

The dominant feature is the large oval light in a spider web pattern in the upstairs hallway. In the center of the spider web is an eagle. The entire window opens by sliding upward into the casing. In the spandrels of the panel containing the window is a carved wood fan motif. Below the window is a portico with a triangular pediment supported on four Roman Doric columns. The bases of these columns are very thick granite blocks. The frieze of the portico has triglyphs and metopes and mutules are abundant on both the raking and return cornices. The doorway is flanked by pilasters on both sides of the sidelights. Here the bases are large blocks of wood. The semi-oval fanlight above the doorway is repeated in the sidelights whose muntins create small half-ovals. Flanking the entire center bay are pilasters matching those at the corners of the house. It is an imposing and well-proportioned facade.

The gable ends present three windows rather than the expected two, substantiating the impression of size one gets upon first sight. Here, as on the facade, the window headings on the first floor are extended to a flat cornice. At second floor level they extend to the plain frieze. Gable ends are treated as pediments, with flush boards and fanlight. There are mutules here too on the raking and return cornices. Behind the mutules around the entire frieze is a row of beading. The cornice is well-articulated with the mutules and beads and forms a strong horizontal element to complement the vertical emphasis of the pilasters. In total, the house shows "a sophisticated and well-developed design incorporating all the best characteristics of the Federal idiom in a restrained and coherent whole."<sup>1</sup>

The interior has many striking features, particularly the mantels of the eight fireplaces and the pediments over the doors. All are different. The mantels in the front parlors are both very decorative; it is said that the two builders, Bush and Silliman, competed in the carving of them. Bush carved the north mantel and Silliman the south. Elsewhere, mantels are decorative, even in the bedrooms of the second floor. The pediments above the doors are all different, their friezes being pulvinated, containing leaded glass, miniature modillions or dentils. The ceilings are very high and in the front hall is an oval design in bas relief with swags and beads.

<sup>1</sup>John O. Curtis, Director, Curatorial Department, Old Sturbridge Village.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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

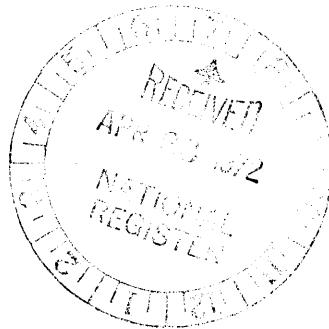
*(Continuation Sheet)*

STATE Connecticut	
COUNTY Middlesex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER NOV 9 1972	DATE

*(Number all entries)*

#7 Description

The Pratt House presents a pleasing and harmonious picture. Interior detail matches that outside for grandeur and craftsmanship. The present owners are very cognizant of the value of their house.



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

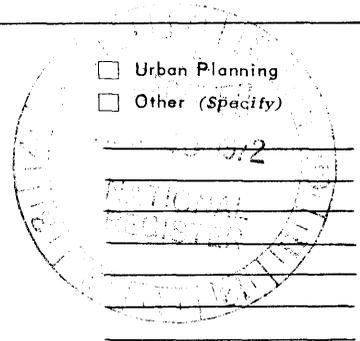
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1820

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |  |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Pratt House was built in 1820 by Abram Mitchell, a wealthy local man. It is said that Mitchell's father had bought large amounts of Continental money at a low price so that when it was redeemed he became wealthy. He gave to each of his two sons fifty thousand dollars—it is reported that Abram lost his endorsing a note. His intention was to build the house for five thousand dollars but at its completion it had cost ten thousand. It is sometimes attributed to Colonel Samuel Belcher; Talbot Hamlin, in Greek Revival Architecture in America suggests the possibility. It is known that Samuel Silliman and Fenner Bush were the builders and that it was Silliman's first job after his apprenticeship. The mantels in the south and north parlors were done by Silliman and Bush respectively, and are very different. The bas relief, carvings, beading and moulding on door and window casings show great care in design and craftsmanship.

The house is named for its most prominent owner, Dr. Ambrose Pratt. When he married Julia M. Spencer in 1844, her father, George Spencer, gave them the house. Ambrose Pratt was born in Saybrook on July 11, 1814, attended Yale Medical School and graduated from Columbia Medical School in Washington D.C. in 1843. He became well-known for his practice of hydropathology and used the house for a sanitarium known as the Chester Water Cure. In 1848 he went to Milwaukee but returned to Chester in 1853. From 1862 to 1863 he served with the 22nd Regiment of Connecticut Volunteers. His descendants lived in the house for many years. Recently it belonged to the Catholic Church, who, when it needed the land for expansion, sold it to the present owners, sensitive people who value the house greatly. The great grand-daughter of Dr. Pratt lives across the street from the present location of the old house and still takes a great interest in it.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Poster, Theodore. Old Homes of Chester, Connecticut. O.M. Walker, 1936.  
 Hamlin, Talbot. Greek Revival Architecture in America. Peter Smith  
 Publishing Co., Gloucester, Mass., 1944.  
 Notes of Harriet Pratt, November 16, 1907.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		41°	24'	01"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		72°	26'	43"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 3 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Susan Babbitt, Administrative Trainee

ORGANIZATION: Connecticut Historical Commission DATE: March 10, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:  
51 Pratt Street

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford STATE: Connecticut CODE: 09

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: *[Signature]*  
 Title: State Liaison Officer  
 Date: April 13, 1972

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

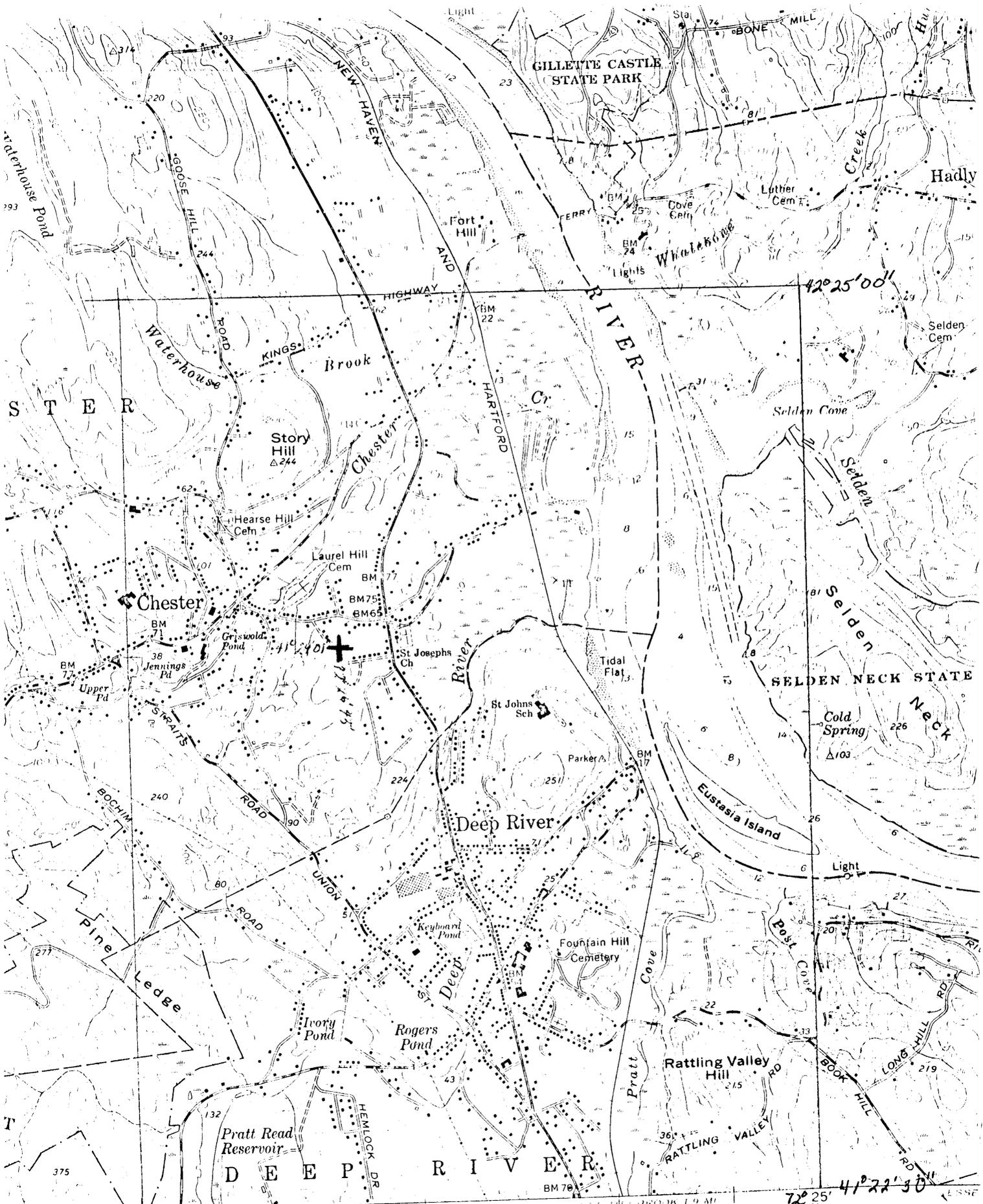
*[Signature]*  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 11/9/72

ATTEST:  
*[Signature]*  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 Date: Nov. 7, 1972

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Deep River Quadrangle



714 (ESSEX)  
6566 IV SW  
SCALE 1:24 000

72° 25' 00" W  
41° 22' 30" N

1 MILE  
↑