

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Webb House

AND/OR COMMON Webb House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 211 Main Street

CITY, TOWN		VICINITY OF		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT	
Wethersfield		first			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE		
Connecticut	09	Hartford	003		

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Connecticut
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN STATE
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Town Hall

STREET & NUMBER Silas Deane Highway

CITY, TOWN STATE
Wethersfield Connecticut

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey (1 photograph)

DATE 1938 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress
CITY, TOWN District of Columbia STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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 main house, constructed by Joseph Webb, Sr., is a large five-bay, frame two-and-a-half story structure with a steep gambrel roof. The building's impression of height is increased by the graduation of its clapboards, which are very narrow at the bottom. The foundations are of brownstone and the simple but well-proportioned facade has only a narrow central pedimented porch, which is supported by two round Tuscan columns. The entrance is a Dutch divided door.

The house has the typical central hall floor plan for a Georgian residence with two interior chimneys. The floor of the hall is painted in the pattern of blocks, in imitation of marble, and a fine Georgian staircase leads to the second floor. Two rooms open off each side of the hall on both floors. To the left, on the first floor, are the south parlor and dining room and to the right, the north parlor and a chamber. The second floor has four bedrooms.

The paneling of the fireplace walls, on both the first and second floors, is excellent and typical of the period. The north parlor has arched cross-paneled doors flanking the fireplace and this is one of the finest examples of Georgian paneling in Connecticut. The south parlor, traditionally identified as the conference room used by General Washington and General Rochambeau in May, 1781, has been repaneled with slightly later paneling from another house.

The small frame two-story rear service ell, located at the southwest corner of the main house, was constructed by Major Samuel Wolcott, II in 1678 as a dwelling. This wing still has over-hangs of 3 to 4 inches on its north and south side clapboarded walls and is one room deep.

The red flock wallpaper in the bedroom used by George Washington is a French import said to have been installed by Mrs. Webb in anticipation of the visit of her distinguished guest. Washington's use of the house was arranged by his private secretary, Samuel Webb, son of the owner.

The porch on the northwest rear of the house was added during Webb's occupancy. In the early twentieth century Wallace Nutting supplied paneling from another house for the south parlor. In 1915 he supervised restoration of the two and one-half story back brick wall and added the kitchen ell.

Fire stairs have been constructed in the rear section of the house in order to comply with modern safety regulations. They replaced an original back stairway. In the front first floor room the fireplaces have been closed. In 1957 a hyphen was added to connect the house with the woodshed, an early structure only a few feet south the of main house. In 1970 a one-room office was constructed west of the shed and connected to 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 checked="" 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 1752,1781 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Erected in 1752, the Webb House is an excellent and little-altered example of the type of conservatively designed Late Georgian house that was widely utilized in colonial Connecticut. In May, 1781 this house was the scene of a five-day conference between General George Washington and Count de Rochambeau, the French commander in America, during which plans were begun which led to the Yorktown campaign.

HISTORY

In the spring of 1781, when the weight of active campaigning had shifted to Virginia and the Carolinas, Washington's army lay inactive in and about West Point. On May 22 Washington learned that a new French fleet was en route to the West Indies and, eventually, to the American coast to cooperate with Rochambeau's army in Newport. It was obvious that a combined offensive must be undertaken by the allies if the American cause was not to languish. Already war weariness had settled on the land and much of the Continental Army was scattered along the frontier and in the south.

Washington, fully aware of the gloomy prospect of Continental stalemate, determined to open an offensive in concert with Rochambeau. The old Connecticut town of Wethersfield, lying about half way between New Windsor on the Hudson, where Washington was quartered, and Newport where Rochambeau was posted, was selected as the place of meeting. On May 19 Washington arrived at Wethersfield and in his own words "lodged... at the house of Joseph Webb." Washington's diary for May 21 noted that the plan of campaign with Count de Rochambeau had been fixed. As a result of the conference Rochambeau brought his forces numbering almost 5,000 troops to join Washington in New York.

On August 14, Rochambeau heard from French Admiral de Grasse in the West Indies that the fleet, with a strong land force aboard, would sail for the Chesapeake where it would be available only until October 15. Washington acted quickly to take advantage of this substantial reinforcement, and de Grasse was notified that the French-American army would march south to cooperate with the fleet in cornering Cornwallis in Virginia.

Although it is too much to say that the conference in the Webb House laid the specific plans for the victorious Yorktown Campaign, it nevertheless marked the implementation of the Franco-American military alliance in terms

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Johnston, Henry P. The Yorktown Campaign and the Surrender of Cornwallis, 1781, New York, 1881, reprinted June 1958.

Lossing, Benson J. The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution 2 vols., New York, 1859.

Isham, Norman M., and Brown, Albert F. Early Connecticut Houses New York, 1900, republished 1965.

Connecticut--A Guide to its Roads, Lore and People (American Guide Series), Boston, 1938.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.45

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 695200 4620200
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

1960 Charles E. Shedd, Jr.

Blanche Higgins Schroer, Landmark Review Project; 1967 Charles W. Snell

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

2/28/75

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L. St. N.W.

TELEPHONE

523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

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.

SIGNATURE

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Landmark

Designated: Jun 20, 1961
date

TITLE

DATE

Boundary Certified:
Correllius Lewis 7-2-75
date

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Chief, Hist. & Arch. Surveys date

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

Boundary Attested:
W. Marlowe 7/5/75
Director, OAHPS date

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This small office is invisible from the street, and is the work space for the group which administers the three house museums.

The house is in excellent condition and contains some priceless colonial pieces. Soon the exterior will be painted red, the original color, and restoration of some interior rooms to the correct colonial shades is also planned. The house has been open to the public as a museum since 1919.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION #10

The Webb House is situated on a quiet tree-shaded Street between two other eighteenth century frame houses, the Silas Deane House (also a national historic landmark) to the south, and the Isaac Stevens House to the north. All are owned and excellently maintained by the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Connecticut, and their total property is nearly 8 acres, with long lawns and gardens running behind the houses.

As indicated on the surveyor's map included with this report, the Webb House, specifically, is located on town lot 30, about one and one-half acres. Behind the house is a garden and an early white clapboard outhouse and a large weathered barn. Originally Joseph Webb's property was much more extensive and probably included the land on which the Deane and Stevens houses are located. However, since they are individually protected, the boundary of the Webb House is determined to be that of town lot #30.

Beginning at the northeast corner on Main Street at the southeast corner of the Isaac Stevens lot #31, the boundary follows the west curb of Main Street in a generally southerly direction for 108 feet, then westerly along the lot line dividing the Webb and Deane lots for 570 feet, then northerly along the property bordering residential property at 45 Church Street for 95 feet, then easterly along the lot line of the Stevens House for 540 feet to the beginning point on Main Street.

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of actual field operations, and had the effect of uniting the American and French armies in time for them to move south in conjunction with the arrival of the French fleet from the West Indies.