United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received APR | | 1985 date entered AUG 3 1987

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

1. Name

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historic	Whiting Homeste	ead		
and/or common	Whiting Homeste	ead		
2. Loca	tion			
street & number	291 North Main	Street		NAnot for publication
city, town	West Hartford	<u>NA</u> vicinity of		
state	CT code	09 county	Hartford	code 003
3. Clas	sification			
Category district building(s) structure site object	Ownership public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered NA	Status occupied X unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted X no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation tother: Vacant
4. Own	er of Proper	'ty		
name		ates Limited Par	tnership	
street & number	81 Sunset Farm	Road		
city, town	West Hartford	$\underline{\mathrm{NA}}$ vicinity of	state	СТ
5. Loca	tion of Lega	al Description	on	
courthouse, regis	try of deeds, etc. West	Hartford Land R	Records, Town Ha	11
street & number	28 South Main	Street		
city, town	West Hartford		state	СТ
6. Repr	esentation	in Existing	Surveys	
	Register of tic Places	has this pro	perty been determined e	ligible? yes \underline{X} no
date 1975			federal _X_ sta	ate county local
	rvey records Connect: South Prospect S			
	tford		state	СТ

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
excellent	deteriorated	unaltered	original s	site
X good	ruins	Xaltered	moved	date
fair	unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Whiting Homestead, built c. 1790, is a $2\frac{1}{2}$ -story, Colonial, frame, gableroofed, 5-bay, central-chimney, central-entrance house, covered with clapboards. The interior has fine raised paneling on both the first and second floors. The house faces east on North Main Street in a residential neighborhood of West Hartford, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of the town center and two blocks south of a shopping center at the intersection of North Main Street with Albany Avenue.

Exterior

The farm acreage that once surrounded the Whiting Homestead has been sold off over the years so that at present less than one-half acre of land goes with the house. Nonetheless, the many large shade trees still standing create an attractive setting. (Photograph 1)

The house is 39 feet wide by 29 feet deep, with a late 19th-century, 2-story, 9x13-foot addition at the northwest corner. The foundations of the structure are brownstone ashlar, and the roof is covered with wooden shingles. The brick chimney, rising from the roof line, is corbeled at the top.

Fenestration of the front elevation is regularly spaced. The windows are 12-over-12, with plain surrounds. The surrounds project slightly at the first floor and are flush with the wall at the second floor. There is a course of fine dentils under the crown molding at the eaves. The 10-paneled front door, approached by a brownstone step, is surrounded by a bold molding in the shape of an eared architrave. (Photograph 4) The house has ' narrow corner boards.

Fenestration in the south elevation, first floor, from the front consists of a 6-paneled door, window, 6-paneled door and two windows. The architraves of the doors are molded but flared at the top rather than eared, as on the front. There are two evenly-spaced windows at the second floor and one window in the attic gable end. (Photographs 2 and 5)

In the original wall of the north elevation there are windows at first and second floors, vertically aligned, and a window in the attich gable end. Windows in the addition are 1-over-1. On the north elevation of the addition there are two windows at each floor, not aligned. On the front of the addition there is a vestibule, now closed in, with bracketed roof, and windows on each floor, not aligned. The addition has a gable roof. Its molded eaves continue in brief returns. (Photograph 3) The addition has brownstone ashlar foundations, but the blocks are smaller than those used in the foundations of the principal structure.

Fenestration of the rear elevation is irregular. From the south, at the first floor, are a 4-paneled door and a window. At the second floor there

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Exp. 10-31-84

Continuation sheetDescriptionItem number7Page1is a window near the south corner, then one other window two-thirds of

the way toward the north corner, followed by an exterior, added, brick chimney. Beyond the chimney, in the rear elevation of the addition are found 1-over-1 windows at first and second floors, aligned. Adjacent to the house at the southwest corner there is a brownstone terrace, on cobblestone foundations, approached by broad brownstone steps from the south. There once was a 2-story porch structure in this location. (Photograph 5)

Interior

The interior surface of the front door is three, wide vertical boards. The door is suspended by long strap hinges on pintles. The stairway rises in front of the door, from the right, in a double dogleg to the left of three risers to a landing, six risers along the front of the chimney to a landing, and three risers to the second floor. (See floor plan.) The balusters of the railing, turned 45 degrees from the square, rise from a closed string that is faced with a bolection molding. Newels are plain like the pickets. (Photograph 6) There is paneling below the string. Four-paneled doors open from the hall to the front rooms. These doorways have casings of flat stock with band moldings that are typical of first-floor door and window surrounds.

The door from the hall to the south room forms part of the paneling that covers the entire fireplace wall of that room. The fireplace is 35 inches high, 51 inches wide and 11 inches deep with a modest bolection molding surround and no mantel shelf. The firebox and hearth are brick. (Photograph 7) A paneled dado runs around the other three sides of the room. The top of the dado serves as the window stools. The door at the southeast corner is like the front door, with wide vertical boards and strap hinges on pintles. There are no summer beams or other beams in the plaster ceiling. The corner posts are slightly flared, cased and beaded. Floor boards are wide, as they are throughout most of the house. (Photograph 8)

In the north front room the doors are similar, but there is no paneling other than in the doors. Floor and ceiling are similar. The fireplace is more elaborate, having an Adamesque mantelpiece. Fluted pilasters with recessed ellipses in their capitals support a broad architrave which has a dentil course, under the shelf. The shelf breaks out over the pilasters. The brick firebox is smaller than its counterpart in the south room, 40 inches wide, 28 inches high and 11 inches deep. It has a brick hearth. There is a cupboard above and to the right of the fireplace. (Photograph 9) **United States Department of the Interior** National Park Service

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The original kitchen, present kitchen, north bedroom, roof framing and stone chimney base are shown by Photographs 10 - 16.

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Whiting Homestead. West Hartford, CT Continuation sheet Significance Item number

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terrace may have replaced the porch) seems like an attractive idea, especially with the access from the second floor, and is a Victorian change whose subsequent reversal can be regretted.

Historical Note

The approximate age of the house has been determined by a study of the land and probate records. In 1671 when the West Division of Hartford, as West Hartford then was known, was partitioned to the proprietors, acreage including the nominated parcel was set off to Rev. Joseph Haynes, son of the first governor of Connecticut. His daughter, Mary, who inherited the land, married Roswell Saltonstall, son of another governor, and upon his death remarried to Thomas Clap, president of Yale University. She was living in New Haven when she died in 1769 leaving her West Hartford land, with no buildings, to her daughter, Mary Whiting. Mary Whiting deeded the land, still with no buildings, in 1778 to her son, Gurdon Saltonstall Whiting, then aged 14. It is presumed that Gurdon Saltonstall Whiting built the house upon becoming of age, c. 1790.

Gurdon Whiting, predeceased by his wife, died at the age of 40 in 1804, leaving two sons, Samuel and Jason, age 10 and 8. In 1817 Jason sold his share of the inheritance to Samuel, who occupied the house until he died in 1876. His daughter, Mary Cornelia Whiting, owned the house until her es tate sold it in 1920 to the Lawler family, who lived there until the 1980s. Over a period of almost two centuries, ownership of the house rested in only two familes. The house is now vacant and for sale.

1. The research of the land and probate records was carried out by Elizabeth C. Hatheway of West Hartford. The above account is summarized from her memorandum dated November 1, 1975.

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 X 1700–1799 1800–1899 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture x architecture art commerce communications	heck and justify below community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration settlement industry invention	landscape architecture law literature military music philosophy politics government	religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	c. 1790	Builder Architect Gurdor	n Saltonstall W	hiting

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criterion C - Architecture

The Whiting Homestead is an outstanding example of a late-18th-century house. Most of the original framing, floor plan and interior finish are still in place, giving the house an unusual degree of integrity. The interior paneling is important because there is so much of it and it is all in place.

Most of the architectural characteristics associated with houses built by the colonists are represented in the Whiting Homestead, which is largely unaltered since time of construction. The stone foundations, heavy-timber framing and rafter-and-purlin roof, all built around the massive central chimney, exemplify standard practice of the era. The fenestration of the front elevation is original, as are some of the windows of the side elevations. The floor plan reflects the basic framing of the house and like the framing is centered on the chimney. The small hall with stairway rising against the chimney, the front rooms on either side, the kitchen to the rear and the fireplaces in these three rooms all are consistent with the basic construction features. The fine raised paneling in the south first-floor room and north second-floor room add an element of quality to the interior decorative treatment.

The question of what features of the house are not original is subject to discussion. The boldness of profile of the molding surrounding the front door and its profile as eared architrave suggest that it may date from the 19th century, when the Federal style was popular. The Adamesque mantel in the north front room is more elaborate than anything else in the house, on the one hand, but, on the other hand, is representative of work generally being done at the time it was built and is consistent with the provision of above-average decorative finish for this house as evidenced by the abundant raised paneling. The second door on the south elevation is unexpected, but its surround matches the door from the front room, and it may be original. The south kitchen wall obviously has been removed and the back door from the kitchen has been closed up, although left in place. The addition at the northwest corner seems rather small in size, considering the effort and expense required to build it, but it may have been thought to be worthwhile in terms of providing an up-todate kitchen. The 2-story back porch on brownstone floor (the brownstone

9. Major Bibliographical References

Hatheway, Elizabeth C., memorandum dated November 1, 1975. Copy at Noah Webster Foundation and Historical Society of West Hartford.

10. Ge	ographica	al Data				
Acreage of nom	inated property 0.5	ō prox.				
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state	NA	code NA	county NA		code NA	-
11. Fo	rm Prepa	red By				
name/title	David F. Ra	nsom, Consu	ltant; edited	by John Herza	n, National Reg	ister
organization	Connecticut	Historical	Comm . dat	Coordinato e November		
street & number	59 South Pr	ospect Stre	et tele	phone 203 5	66-3005	
city or town	Hartford		sta	te CT		
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according to the	criteria and procedu	res set forth by the	National Park Serv	ice.	1	
State Historic Pr	reservation Officer sig	gnature	Em m	Alun		
title Direct	or, Connecticut		ommission	date	4/4/85	
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I hereby c	ertify that this proper	ty is i ncluided in the	e National Register			
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b Keeper of the	e National Register	2				
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