

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Todd, Orrin, House
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 3369 Whitney Avenue NA not for publication
city, town Hamden NA vicinity
state Connecticut code CT county New Haven code 009 zip code 06518

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official *[Signature]* Date 11/7/91
State or Federal agency and bureau Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

[Signature] 12-26-91
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
COMMERCE/TRADE/general store
TRANSPORTATION/toll gate
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls asbestos
roof asphalt shingles
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Orrin Todd House is a gable-to-street building (23' x 32'), presently sheathed with asbestos shingles over clapboard, which is sited close to the east side of Whitney Avenue (Photograph #1). The house was moved in 1826 from its original location across the road, the site of the Farmington Canal. Since the land slopes away from the street at the new site, the new brick foundation of the main block is exposed for a full story at the rear (Photograph #2). A small one-story ell with a porch (now enclosed) on the north elevation was used as a general store in the late nineteenth century (Photograph #3). Also associated with the property is a toll house to the southeast of the house, moved in 1857 from a nearby location, and a nineteenth-century gable-roofed barn with vertical siding to the northeast (Photograph #s 4, 5). The east slope of the toll house roof is extended over an addition at the rear (east); the windows and interior finishes are modern replacements.

The Todd House has a three-bay facade highlighted by several Federal-style features: a Palladian window in the gable peak and a projecting open pediment over the doorway. The four pilasters that frame the windows of the gable display star carvings in the capitals and extend upward through the triglyphed frieze to end with a projecting molded cornice (Photograph #6). The center sash has a twelve-over-eight configuration and is surmounted by a demi-lune window with intersecting leaded tracery. Its molded cornice displays a keyblock that is detailed with a carved sun motif and guttae. Slender pilasters frame the main entrance on the left side of the facade. Above the doorway is a leaded fanlight and an elaborately detailed cantilevered pediment, which is hidden by overgrown evergreens (Photograph #7). The cornice of the pediment is enhanced with dentils and mutules, as are the main cornice of the house and the cornice returns. Except for the rear elevation, which still has multi-paned original sash, the rest of the windows contain two-over-two replacement sash.

The interior of the house and the store addition have retained their original framing, floorplan, and finishes. The roof of the house is supported by principal rafters that meet at a ridge beam. The gable end walls in the attic are plastered. There are indications in the cellar that the ceiling and some interior walls were also lathed and plastered, suggesting that there was a shop and/or tavern at this level, a possibility borne out by the fireplace in the chimney foundation and the full height door in the rear foundation wall.

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Orrin Todd House, Hamden, Connecticut

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Most of the interior detailing is displayed in the parlor. The fireplace surround, which frames a shallow brick firebox, has slim doubled turned columns and a high entablature, which displays an oval sunburst plaque (Photograph #8). The parlor windows are panelled below the sill and display a raised diamond carving, a feature also found under the window in the front hall. The inside wall in the kitchen is given over to the fireplace wall (Photograph #9). There are narrow panelled pilasters flanking the opening on the right and the beehive oven on the left; the latter feature is concealed behind a panelled door. Three similar cupboard doors are located on the right of the surround. The staircase in the hall is quite narrow and has a simple balustrade with square balusters and newel (Photograph #10). The fireplace opening in the parlor chamber has been blocked in but the Federal-style surround with narrow pilasters remains in place.

The interior of the store addition is also plastered and has a beaded board wainscot, typical of its later nineteenth-century period. There is an oversize outside door with four panels and a second door to the rear stairs of the house. The windows in this wing are multi-paned, with 12- or six-light sash. They match windows in the rear elevation of the house as well as those in the Palladian window in the gable, suggesting that when two-over-two sash was installed in front and side elevations of the house, the old windows were reused.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

c. 1800 - c. 1890
c. 1800 - 1857

Significant Dates

c. 1800, c. 1815

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Orrin Todd

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Considered to be the finest surviving example of the Federal style in Hamden, the Orrin Todd house is architecturally significant as an atypical well-preserved vernacular example of local craftsmanship which is enhanced with many Federal-style features.¹ The historical significance of the property lies primarily in its use as the tollgate on the former Cheshire Turnpike and the related, although indirect, association with the construction of the Farmington Canal along this route.

Historical Significance

Improvements in transportation marked the early nineteenth century in Hamden. The Cheshire Toll House, the earliest building on this property, was built as a tollgate on the Cheshire Turnpike, chartered in 1800, which was one of two turnpikes that passed through the town. (The other was the New Haven-Hartford Turnpike.) In typical fashion townspeople avoided paying toll by taking alternate routes; one now along Shephard Avenue became known as the Shunpike. The General Assembly was petitioned to eliminate the tolls to no avail. It was not until 1855 that the turnpike companies released their charters to the town. Two years later the Cheshire Toll House was moved as a condition of sale of the former Orrin Todd property. Until then it was actually located on, or very near to, the roadbed of the turnpike.

Soon after Orrin Todd built his house, plans were begun for the Farmington Canal. It was chartered in 1822 and work began in 1828. It was completed to Northhampton, Massachusetts, by 1835 at a cost of \$12 million. The construction in Hamden had a considerable impact on the town. A number of houses had to be moved from its path along the west side of the Cheshire Turnpike. Orrin Todd sold out to the Farmington Canal Company and migrated West; his house was moved directly across the street, probably by Butler Sackett. It is doubtful that Sackett bought the place for his own use since he had purchased and moved other houses along the canal route. Later in the nineteenth century, a small general store was added to the Todd House, purported to be the only commercial enterprise of its kind on this highway. By mid-century a steam railroad to the west of the turnpike had replaced the canal,

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Becker, Martha May and Sasche, Nancy Davis. Hamden: Our Architectural Heritage. Hamden, Connecticut: Whitney Press, 1986 (for the Hamden Historical Society).

Blake, William P. History of the Town of Hamden, Connecticut with an Account of the Centennial Celebration June 15th 1886. New Haven: Price, Lee & Co., 1888.

Dickerman, J. H. "Hamden." Connecticut Quarterly Vol IV. (January to December, 1898): 377-390.

Hartley, Rachel M. The History of Hamden, Connecticut, 1786-1936. Hamden, 1943.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property less than 1 acre

UTM References

A 18 675250 4586980
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is described in the Hamden Land Records Vol. 1116, page 142, located in the Town Clerk's Office of the Hamden Town Hall.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes remaining land and buildings formerly associated with Orrin Todd and the former Chester Turnpike Toll House.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

name/title Jan Cunningham, National Register Consultant

organization Cunningham Associates Ltd. date March 12, 1991

street & number 37 Orange Road telephone (203) 347-4072

city or town Middletown state CT zip code 06457

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which had gone out of business in the 1840s; in this section of town the railroad bed followed the path of the canal. Later in the century the streetcar ran along what had become Whitney Avenue (State Route 10).

Architectural Significance

Although it is clearly Federal in style, the Todd House is basically a vernacular farmhouse embellished with a surprising degree of elegant detail. In an era when most architectural details were hand-carved or shaped with hand tools, these embellishments demonstrate a high level of craftsmanship, but it is evident from the overall design that the house was executed by country builders. Since both Orrin Todd and his father Simeon were carpenters, it is probable that one or both of them designed and built this house.

They may have drawn upon one of the many carpenter's handbooks of the period for the design or proportions of the various exterior architectural elements, but overall the interpretation is unsophisticated. The essence of this style as it was derived from the work of the Adam brothers of England was not simply the application of attenuated elegant detail but a concern for proportion and scale. For example, there is a subtle naivete at work between the delicacy and elegance of the elements of the Palladian window and its scale and placement. In addition, the refinement of its detailing also contrasts with the heavier and more massive scale of the detailing of the open pediment over the door.

The interior is well-preserved with its original floorplan and finishes but it has less obvious features which betray the vernacular origins of the design of this house. The centerpiece of the house is the fireplace surround in the parlor. It is here that the Todds' skill as craftsmen is most evident, but its level of detail contrasts with the plain board trim in this room and throughout the house. Of particular note is the size of the main staircase, which is excessively narrow even for this period. The kitchen fireplace surround is another example. There the pilasters are an unusual element in an otherwise very functional feature.

1. Historic and Architectural Survey of Hamden, Connecticut, 1985. The facade details, which are relatively rare in the region, are similar to those found on the William Pinto-Eli Whitney House in New Haven, Connecticut, attributed to David Hoadley (National Register of Historic Places, 9/12/85).

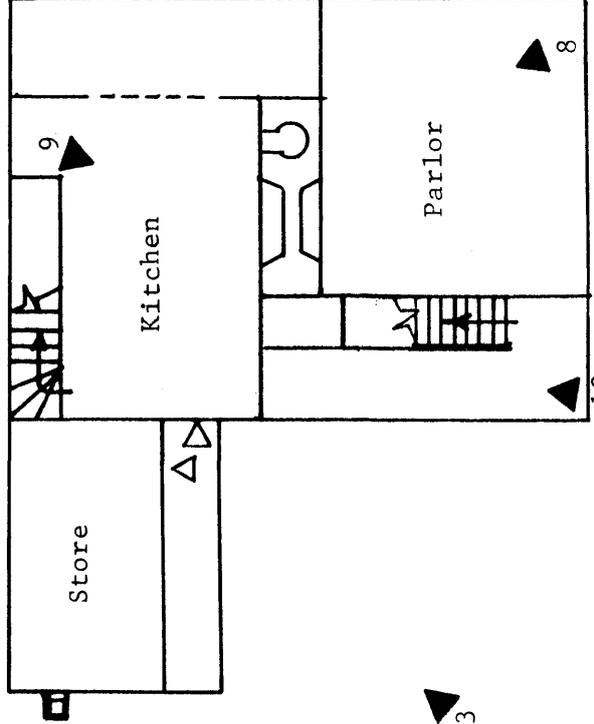
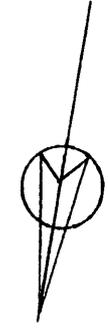
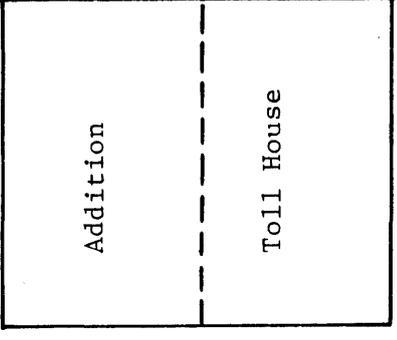
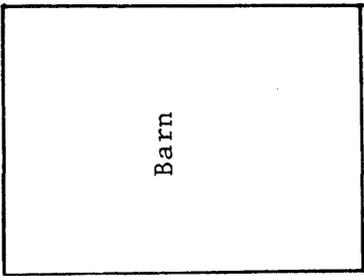


Exhibit A

Orrin Todd House
Hamden, Connecticut

Site Plan & Schematic Diagram
of first floor of house

Photograph views numbered

Cunningham Associates 3/91

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Continuation Sheet**

Orrin Todd House, Hamden, Connecticut

Section number Photos Page 1

List of Photographs

Property: Orrin Todd House, Hamden, Connecticut

Photographer: Cunningham Associates Ltd.

Date: 2/91

Negatives on File: Connecticut Historical Commission

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. House and Site
Facing: E | 2. Rear elevation
Facing: SW |
| 3. North elevation with store
Facing: SE | 4. Barn
Facing: NE |
| 5. Toll house
Facing: N | 6. Facade detail
Facing: E |
| 7. Doorway Pediment
Facing: E | 8. Parlor fireplace
Facing: E |
| 9. Kitchen fireplace wall
Facing: W | 10. Front hall and staircase
Facing: SE |