

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0685551
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RECEIVED OCT 2 1978
DATE ENTERED DEC 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Moses Andrews House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

424 West Main Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Meriden

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF Fifth - Ronald A. Sarasin

STATE

Connecticut

CODE

COUNTY
New Haven

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Meriden

STREET & NUMBER

142 East Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Meriden

STATE

VICINITY OF CT 06450

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Meriden Land Records, Meriden City Hall

STREET & NUMBER

142 East Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Meriden

STATE

CT 06450

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Federal Writers' Project, Works Project Administration

DATE

1930s

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Library

CITY, TOWN

Hartford

STATE

Connecticut

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

Moses Andrews's farm has been overrun by the city of Meriden, Connecticut. When he built his house about 1760 a mile west of the center of town, farming was the only purpose for which the surrounding land was used. Now his house has a school behind it, a fast food restaurant as the neighbor on one side, and an automobile dealer across the street. The house is on West Main Street at the point where the downtown commercial activity begins to give way to a residential neighborhood. The house is on the south side of the street, facing north, 30 feet from the street, essentially unchanged since it was built more than 200 hundred years ago, while around it all else has changed.

The Andrews House is a five-bay, center chimney, two-and-a-half story salt box, painted dark red. The siding is clapboards eight to ten feet long, with four inches exposed to the weather. The corners of the house are finished with plain facing boards. The second story overhangs the first six inches at the front and the ends, and the third story overhangs the second six inches at the ends. The tops of the windows are flush under the overhangs. The wood double-hung sash have panes 5 5/8 x 7 3/4 inches, twelve-over-twelve in the first floor and eight-over-twelve in the second floor. The imperfect light transmission of some of the panes in the second floor windows indicates that they may be original. While the site is small and hemmed in, it is enhanced by the presence of five good-sized trees.

The front doorway has a 19th century enframing of simple moldings capped by a flat cornice over dentil course. The door itself may be original; it has four sunken panels and a transom of four lights, in pairs. There is no porch or hood. The single step is a brownstone slab. The foundations are of squared stone and the chimney is built of stone, although that portion of the chimney visible above the roof is brick. The roof is now covered with composition shingles.

The five bays on the front are not evenly spaced. The two windows on either side of the front door are in pairs, an early arrangement, as is the presence in both end elevations of three windows placed vertically one over the other. The end elevations have additional windows to the rear, in the leanto. Moreover, there are narrow shed additions at each rear corner, forming in the south elevation a U-shaped court. At the southeast corner the addition projects to the side as well as to the back. These shed additions, each with a chimney, have brick foundations, and were added at a later date. They house a modern kitchen and an office.

The front door leads in to a small entrance hall with stairs rising in three runs from right to left in front of the exposed stone chimney. There are square landings between the runs, no winders. It is an open string stair with turned balusters and a molded rail. The small square newell posts have nearly flat tops. The step ends have scrolls, and the wall under the steps is panelled.

The room to the left (east) is the finest in the house. Its fireplace wall is completely covered with raised panelling. The small stone fireplace has a bolection molding. The other three sides of the room have panelled wainscotting. The floor is of broad oak boards and the ceiling is 85 inches high, with no summer beam. The west front room is similar but not so elaborately finished. Only the fireplace wall is panelled; the other three walls have a chair

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The Andrews House
Meriden, Connecticut

CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

rail. Both rooms have five-panel doors with HL hinges and with boldly designed thumb latches, similar to Figure 227 in Kelly's Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut.

Behind the two front rooms, the house has been opened up into a single space encompassing the kitchen and running from the outside west wall through the added shed on the east. This space is used for museum displays. The kitchen fireplace is relatively small; it has a stone lintel 69 inches long and a concrete hearth. There is a beehive oven to the left, just below the level of the lintel. The room has two summer beams.

Upstairs, the west room has a small brick fireplace with molded mantel. Over the fireplace, to the left and right, are cupboards with flush doors. The east room has no fireplace, but does have an exposed 10-inch summer beam running front to back. A 29 x 67-inch glass has been installed in the front wall near the corner of the house to show the wall construction, hand-split lath, and diagonal bracing. Upstairs floors are wide pine boards and ceiling height is 78 inches.

In the attic and cellar of the house the story of maintenance and repairs over the years is clearly recorded. The roof is constructed of rafters, purlins, and wide boarding, some of each having been replaced from time to time. In one case at the ridge line the mortise and tenon of two principal rafters started to pull apart and the damage has been arrested with a large angle iron. Rafters to the leanto roof are supported by posts, indicating that possibly the leanto was added after the front of the house was built. The three vertical windows in the end walls is consistent with this theory, as they often are found in narrow two-room plan houses (Kelly, page 97). Just below the roof the chimney changes from stone to brick, obviously a repair job. The girth of the brick section is smaller than that of the stone section below it. Carpentry has been done to fill in the opening in the roof and make it tight around the brick. The original cellar stairs are missing. They may have been in front of the chimney, as there is a door in the east room that would have led to them but now serves as the door to a closet. There are several brick piers and adjustable steel pipe columns in the cellar introduced to help support the main floor as it began to sag.

The house has been occupied for some years by the Meriden Historical Society, that operates it not only as a house museum but also as a museum for display of its collections of artifacts including muskets, dolls, Meriden-made pewter and silver, and models of mechanical devices submitted by Meriden inventors in connection with applications for patents. There is also a modest research library on Meriden history.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input 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 c. 1760

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Moses Andrews

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Good fortune has preserved the Andrews House in downtown Meriden for more than two centuries. Completely intact, it is a demonstration of the city's heritage. The integrity of its structure and the absence of major changes of any kind make it an important example of an 18th century Connecticut colonial house.

There is no ready explanation for why this particular house has survived when so many others have not. Moses Andrews, the builder, had no children so the house passed into other hands. A complete chain of title has not been done, but the City of Meriden bought the property in 1926 (Meriden Land Records 201/69) along with the land behind it, presumably motivated by the desire to have land on which to build a school. After renting the property as a two-family house for several years, the City entered into a lease arrangement with the Meriden Historical Society that continues to the present time.

The source of the "about 1760" date for construction of the house is page 22 of 150 Years of Meriden, a book published by the City in 1956. The matter of how the date was arrived at is not set forth. The small fireplaces and absence of winders in the stair make 1760 or a little earlier seem reasonable.

150 Years of Meriden also tells the story of the beginning of the Episcopal church in Meriden, at the home of Moses Andrews. During the Revolutionary War Andrews, because he was an Episcopalian, was suspected of being a Tory, and as such was forbidden to leave his farm without permission of the selectmen. When Andrews's petition to attend church in Wallingford was denied, he began services in his home. Formal organization of the Episcopal church in Meriden followed in 1789.

After the Meriden Historical Society took possession of the premises the house was restored in 1935 under the direction of Architect Lorenzo Hamilton, using Works Progress Administration funds. This may have been the occasion for repairing the chimney stack and shoring up the roof and attic.

Outstanding among the many Meriden artifacts in the house are portraits of John Yale and his wife Betsy. They were painted in 1828 by A. Patrick when John Yale, born in Meriden in 1757, was 71 and his wife was 42.

Most of the 18th century houses in Meriden have been demolished. The Andrews House is one of a handful that remain. Its central location makes it a highly visible reminder of the past. Its original condition makes it a valuable part of the city's heritage.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

150 Years of Meriden, Meriden: City of Meriden, 1956.

J. Frederick Kelly, Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut, New York: Dover Publications, 1963 (reprint of Yale University Press, 1924).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.26

QUADRANGLE NAME Meriden

QUADRANGLE SCALE _____

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 682060 46100770
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is lot 4, district 6, map 12, block 193D, as described in Meriden Land Records, volume 201, page 69.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

David F. Ransom, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

May 31, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

59 South Prospect Street

TELEPHONE

203 566-3005

CITY OR TOWN

Hartford

STATE

CT 06106

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

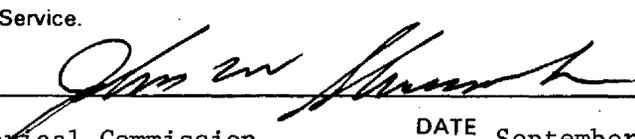
NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL x

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE

Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

September 21, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

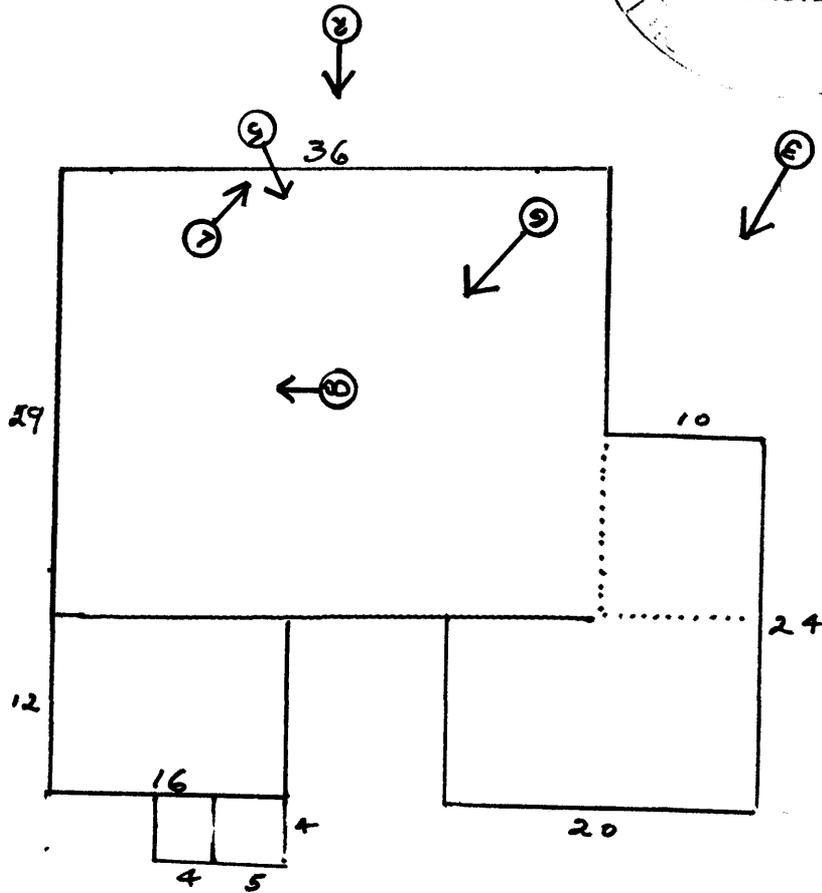
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: *Charles Atkinson*

DATE 12.1.78

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 12.1.78

WEST MAIN STREET



ANDREWS HOUSE

MERIDEN, CT

