

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>SEE INVENTORY FORMS</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Summary

This thematic resource of 18 houses includes all known 18th-century houses in the town of West Hartford, Connecticut, which appear to meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Except for one brick house, they are of post-and-beam timber-frame construction and nearly all have clapboarded exteriors. Most are of center-chimney plan with large brick chimney stacks visible. Most have symmetrical five or, less common, three-bay facades along the broad side of the house, with the entrance in the center. All have gable roofs with the ridgeline oriented parallel to the road; some are of lean-to or "saltbox" form, with the roof sloping down in the rear to a one-story rear elevation. Many are framed so as to have a double overhang, in which the second and attic stories protrude about 4" beyond the story below. Nearly all have paneling or other interior decorative treatment around the first-floor fireplaces and other original interior fabric such as stairways and feather-edged wainscoting. Most exteriors are simple with little beyond a molded surround to distinguish the doorways. There are, however, a few elaborate entrance treatments which show a Georgian influence, and several houses have entries which are later attempts at stylishness and show a Federal or Greek Revival influence. The houses have been dated from c.1750 to c.1800. Some of the later houses have a center-hall, two-chimney form.

None of these houses are adjacent to each other or are thematically related to groups of buildings which might constitute National Register historic districts. In fact, because of the intensive residential and commercial development of West Hartford, most of the houses are isolated within extensive neighborhoods of 20th-century structures. Most are sited close to the street, and occupy small knolls created when present roadways were leveled and lowered. With only a few exceptions, the lots presently associated with these houses are small, typically 1/2 or 3/4 acres, and historic outbuildings are limited to old barns with two of the houses. The old houses from 239 to 253 North Main Street are consistently set far back from the street, apparently reflecting a realignment of the road in this section.

Information on the Survey

The nomination is based on a comprehensive survey of the historical and architectural resources of West Hartford compiled in three phases from 1982 to 1985 by local historical records researcher Elizabeth Hatheway and architectural historian Sherrill Foster. The area of the survey included the entire town. The survey, sponsored in part by the

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

MAR 21 1989

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 1 Page 1

Subject: Historic Name Change, 253 North Main Street, West Hartford
(18-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource), CT

This addendum outlines the reasons for changing the historic name of the above property from "Butler House" to "Daniel Hosmer House." The inventory form included as part of the nomination documentation (Item 19, Historical or Architectural Importance) related that the house was built about 1774 by Daniel Hosmer. In 1803 it passed into the hands of the Butler family, where it remained until recent times.

Ms. Elizabeth Hatheway, the town's most knowledgeable historian of old houses, informs us that the house is never referred to as the Butler House, but is known by the name of its original owner, i.e., Daniel Hosmer House. She requests that the National Register listing be changed to reflect this information. The survey form is the only place in the nomination where the Butler name appears.

Ms. Hatheway is a credible source on this point: the original survey forms were compiled using information she had assembled (although she herself was apparently not responsible for giving it its historic name), and the nomination's bibliography cites her material at the Noah Webster Foundation as a major source for land-records research on the town's old houses.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received JUL 30 1986
date entered

Continuation sheet 18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource
West Hartford, CT Item number 2 Page 1

Location (continued):

The following street addresses are included in this thematic

- 37 Buena Vista Road
- 11 Flagg Road
- 505 Mountain Road
- 537 Mountain Road
- 061 1168 New Britain Avenue
- 1237 New Britain Avenue*
- 114 North Main Street
- 208 North Main Street
- 239 North Main Street
- 253 North Main Street
- 291 North Main Street**
- 847 North Main Street
- 410-412 Park Road
- 567 Quaker Lane South
- 81 Rockledge Drive
- 25 Sedgewick Road
- 202 South Main Street
- 227 South Main Street*

*National Register listed

**National Register listing pending

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received **JUL 30 1986**

date entered

18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource

Continuation sheet

West Hartford, CT

Item number

4

Page 1

Property Owners:

PROPERTY ADDRESS

OWNER & ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT)

37 Buena Vista Road

Town of West Hartford
28 South Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06107

11 Flagg Road

John M. McGann, Jr.

505 Mountain Road

Eliza A.W. Quarrier

537 Mountain Road

David E. Krum

1168 New Britain Avenue

Harold deGroff

1237 New Britain Avenue*

Town of West Hartford
28 South Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06107

114 North Main Street

S. Stephen Kegeles et al.

208 North Main Street

Gregory and Norine Burns

239 North Main Street

Joyce Gray Witik

253 North Main Street

Russell Hatheway

291 North Main Street**

Vincent A. Roserti

847 North Main Street

Jay M. and Susannah Forgotson

410-412 Park Road

R.W. Lindstrom et al.

567 Quaker Lane South

Richard Camargo

81 Rockledge Drive

William and Marsh M. Bansavage

25 Sedgewick Road

George Guimond

202 South Main Street

William E. and Carole W. Carlson

227 South Main Street*

Town of West Hartford
28 South Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06107

*NR listed

**NR listing pending

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

JUL 30 1986

Continuation sheet 18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource
West Hartford, CT Item number 6 Page 1

Representation in Existing Surveys (continued)

State Register of Historic Places

1985 - State

Records deposited with Connecticut Historical Commission
59 South Prospect Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

The following properties included in the thematic resource are listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

NOAH WEBSTER HOUSE (National Historic Landmark)

227 South Main Street
West Hartford, Connecticut

SARAH WHITMAN HOOKER HOUSE

1237 New Britain Avenue
West Hartford, Connecticut

The following property has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and an Inventory/Nomination Form has been submitted (listing prevented by owner objection):

WHITING HOMESTEAD

291 North Main Street
West Hartford, Connecticut

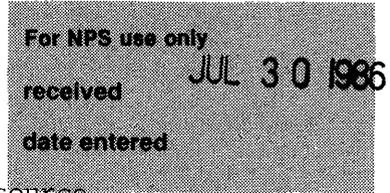
The following was recorded by Historic American Building Survey (Federal - 1935; records deposited with Library of Congress, Washington, DC):

NOAH WEBSTER HOUSE (HABS No. CT-16)

227 South Main Street
West Hartford, Connecticut

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource

Continuation sheet West Hartford, CT Item number 7 Page 1

Description (continued):

Noah Webster Foundation and conducted according to the guidelines of the Connecticut Historical Commission, identified 31 18th-century structures, out of a total of 700 inventoried sites. The preparers of the nomination discovered no omissions to the universe of eighteenth-century houses and believe the survey to be inclusive. No attempt was made to locate archeological resources; this limitation has no effect on the comprehensiveness of the nomination, which is based upon architectural and historical themes as shown in a particular type of structure.

Selection Criteria for Nominated Sites

National Register criteria of eligibility were applied to all 18th-century houses identified in the comprehensive survey activity described above. Of the 31 18th-century houses identified, 18 were judged to meet the criteria; three of these have already been nominated and two are listed. The following have already been nominated to the National Register and form part of the thematic group:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1237 New Britain Avenue | Sarah Whitman Hooker House
Photograph 6. |
| 291 North Main Street | Whiting Homestead (listing blocked
by previous owner's objection)
Photograph 13. |
| 227 South Main Street | Noah Webster House (National
Historic Landmark) Photograph 20. |

Thirteen houses identified in the survey were dropped from consideration because they lacked integrity: they had altered fenestration, modern exterior materials, numerous additions, or else they appeared to be primarily from a later period (e.g., Federal or Greek Revival houses with some part alleged to have been made over from an 18th-century predecessor). Houses were not dropped simply because they had later modifications: they were judged by whether or not the present appearance of the house allowed it to support the themes of the nomination. Some of the houses not included may in fact be eligible as examples of 19th-century architectural styles, but not as part of this thematic nomination.

Integrity of Included Houses

The houses which make up the thematic resource have all been altered

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

JUL 30 1986

date entered

Continuation sheet 18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource
West Hartford, CT Item number 7 Page 2

Description (continued):

over time: unlike the 13 18th-century houses which were not found eligible for the nomination, those included have not been so drastically altered so as to obscure their historic appearance. To a large extent the theme of 18th-century architecture is one of simplicity and form. Thus the post-and-beam framework, the arrangement of windows and the entry on the facade, the location of the chimney, the shape of the roof, and the interior paneling are more important than exterior materials. Indeed, relatively little genuine exterior material from the 18th century has survived anywhere: wooden roof shingles, clapboards, and small-pane window sash in this thematic group (as elsewhere) are primarily the result of replacement-in-kind over a long period, coupled with conscious historic restoration.

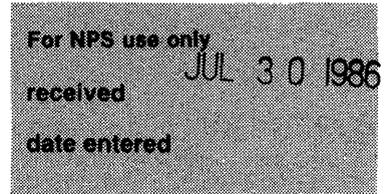
The houses in the thematic group have been changed through two processes of alteration: one is the updating of doorways, cornices and other areas subject to stylistic embellishment with elements drawn from later architectural styles; the other is the attempt to restore the houses to their historic appearance. Federal-period and Greek Revival doorways are found on 7 of the 18 houses, including two already nominated to the National Register (Photographs 2, 5, 6, 7, 13, 17, and 19). These in every case do not distract from the characteristic form of the original house (none would be mistaken for a 19th-century dwelling). Some, in fact, are notable in their own right, such as the portico at 1168 New Britain Avenue (Photograph 5). Their preponderance in West Hartford suggests that early 19th-century doorways on Connecticut 18th-century dwellings are more the norm than an aberration.

Restoration activity has in general been carried out in a way which enhances the essential form of the houses with appropriate siding, door treatment, rebuilt chimneys, and window sash. In some cases the houses have been through more than one phase of restoration. Some of the work done early in this century was heavily influenced by the Colonial Revival movement and reflects the high-style tendencies of the period (the doorway in Photograph 3 probably represents such an alteration). In other cases the work, while not entirely inappropriate, does not represent typical 18th-century practice; examples include the wide clapboards on 208 North Main Street (Photograph 8) and the unpainted exterior and doorway lights on 567 Quaker Lane South (Photograph 16). The house at 25 Sedgewick Road, which now appears almost perfect with its paneled door, simple molded doorway surround, and small-pane sash, is in fact a restoration which reversed a 1930s restoration which had installed six-over-six sash and a doorway with a broken scroll pediment (Photograph 18). In all cases the distinctive framing, fenestration,

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet 18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource
West Hartford, CT **Item number** 7 **Page** 3

Description (continued):

roof profile, and chimney size and arrangement (though less commonly the actual bricks themselves) remain as telltale signs of the houses' historic origins, and all of the houses retain either through survival or restoration much of their historic appearance.

Format of the Nomination

The nomination form follows the instructions in "How to Complete National Register Thematic Group Nomination Forms - Interim Guidelines." Individual inventory forms from the survey are included for the 15 houses not already nominated to the National Register. These are "Historic Resources Inventory - Building and Structures" forms devised by the Connecticut Historical Commission, and include a physical description, identification of alterations, and statement of significance for each property. For the nomination the property owner was verified in West Hartford records (as of October 1985), the acreage and deed reference were added to the identification section, and UTM map coordinates were filled in. Additional information and analysis, where relevant, was added to the Subsequent Field Evaluations section by the preparers of the nomination. All sites, including those already nominated, are illustrated in 8 x 10" photographs accompanying the nomination, and all are plotted on a general location map and the four U.S.G.S. quadrangle maps which cover West Hartford. (UTM references for nominated properties were re-computed by the preparers; slight differences appear compared to interpolations on previous nomination forms.)

Inventory forms for the following properties are included:

37 Buena Vista Drive, 2 1/2 stories, lean-to form, 3-bay facade, c.1752, modern entry vestibule. Photograph 1.

11 Flagg Road, 2 1/2 story, "half-house" form, 1766, Greek revival entry, extended eaves (19th-century). Photograph 2.

505 Mountain Road, 2 1/2 stories, double overhang, 5-bay facade, 1766, modern wing; doorway appears Colonial Revival. Photograph 3.

537 Mountain Road, 1 1/2 stories, 3-bay facade (asymmetrical), c.1790, original molded entry surround. Photograph 4.

1168 New Britain Avenue, 2 1/2 stories, 5-bay facade, second-story overhang, Greek Revival portico. Moved, 1955. Photograph 5.

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received JUL 30 1986

date entered

Continuation sheet 18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource
West Hartford, CT Item number 7 Page 4

Description (continued):

114 North Main Street, 2 1/2 stories, 5-bay facade, c.1775, Greek Revival doorway, Victorian side porch. Photograph 7.

208 North Main Street, 2 1/2 stories, lean-to form, 5-bay facade (extended c.1813), c.1764. Original doorway with fluted pilasters and carved foliate and Ionic scroll motifs. Photographs 8 and 9.

239 North Main Street, 2 1/2 stories, center-hall/two-chimney form, 5-bay facade, transomed entry, c.1800. Aluminum siding. Photograph 10.

253 North Main Street, 2 1/2 stories, double overhang, 5-bay facade, transomed entry with double paneled doors, 1774. Old barns to rear. Photographs 11 and 12.

847 North Main Street, 2 1/2 stories, overhanging attic story, 5-bay facade (center window missing), center-hall/two-chimney form, pilastered entry with pulvinated frieze. Eaves extended. Photograph 14.

412 Park Road, 2 1/2 stories, brick, end chimneys, 3-bay facade, c.1770, modern entry vestibule. Photograph 15.

567 Quaker Lane, 2 1/2 stories, lean-to over two-story rear portion, 5-bay facade, c.1760. Photograph 16.

81 Rockledge Drive, 2 1/2 stories, double overhang, 5-bay facade, c. 1760. Federal-period doorway with modern vestibule attached. Moved c.1935. Photograph 17.

25 Sedgewick Road, 2 1/2 stories, double overhang, 5-bay facade, c.1775. Photograph 18.

202 South Main Street, 2 1/2 stories, lean-to form, 5-bay facade, c. 1760; Greek Revival doorway, extended eaves, additions to rear. Photograph 19.

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 type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates See inventory forms **Builder/Architect** See inventory forms

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Summary

Each of the 18 houses in the 18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic resource is significant because it represents a locally rare survival which embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction, the 18th-century vernacular domestic architecture of Connecticut (Criterion C). With their symmetrical facades on the broad side of the house facing the street, their gable roofs (many with lean-tos at the rear), their large central chimneys, their clapboarded exteriors, and their interior fireplaces and paneling, these houses typify the 18th-century Connecticut house, both the common forms and some important variants. Moreover, each of these houses is historically important as a link back to the town's origin as a farming community established in the 1700s (Criterion A). Today, with West Hartford densely developed as a residential suburb of Hartford, its neighbor to the east, there are few tangible connections to the early days of settlement. These 18 houses stand as the principal physical evidence that the town's history extends further back than an initial glance would suggest.

Historical Development of West Hartford

Until its incorporation as a separate town in 1854, West Hartford was part of the town of Hartford. It was in its earliest days known as the "West Division," a sparsely inhabited section of once-common land which had been divided up among the proprietors of Hartford. These proprietors were distinct from the mere residents or even the freemen (voters) of Hartford: they were descendents of Hartford's first settlers and represented a self-perpetuating group of generally well-to-do families. According to their understanding, they alone had rights to undivided land belonging to the town. Consequently, when the area which became West Hartford was divided up and distributed to individual landholders in 1672, the lots came into the possession of the Gilletts, Goodwins, Hookers, Steeles, Whitings, and others among Hartford's oldest and wealthiest families.

Settlement of the West Division was limited till about 1700, but by 1711 enough people had built houses and made their holdings into homesteads that they were granted permission to form an independent Congregational society. The church was established in 1713. As a separate parish within the town of Hartford, the Fourth Society of Hartford assumed a more autonomous existence. According to the common practice of Connecticut in the 18th century, the parish was granted not only ecclesiastical status but also a certain amount of civil autonomy as well, with responsibility for its

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received JUL 30 1986
date entered

Continuation sheet 18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource
West Hartford, CT Item number 8 Page 1

Significance (continued):

own schools and highways.

Like most areas of Connecticut in the 18th century, West Hartford was almost entirely an agriculturally based community. Subsistence farming occupied most people full-time and even people with other trades were part-time farmers as well. In addition, many people practiced the traditional crafts and small-scale industries which were part of the agricultural economy - blacksmithing, shoemaking, and saw, grist and fulling mills. No doubt the proximity of a large riverport made for more opportunities for export commodities than existed in many areas, but the influence of Hartford should not be overestimated: in the middle of the 18th century Hartford was smaller than Windsor, Farmington, and most of the important coastal towns, not becoming an economically vibrant port until the Revolutionary period. West Hartford, then, can be assumed to have had a largely subsistence agricultural economy, self-sufficient as a community, with little money to import goods and only limited surplus to market.

The houses in the thematic resource reflect West Hartford's earliest identity as an agricultural community. The group includes houses not only of farm families, many of them built for descendants of the first proprietor families who received lots, but also houses built for fulling-mill owner Samuel Stanly, sawmill operator Daniel Hosmer, and shoemaker Elisha Seymour, Jr. The houses are mostly in what now are suburban settings, but two houses have what appear to be 19th-century barns associated with them, of which those at 253 North Main Street are the older and convey a fine impression of a farm dwelling and outbuildings (Photograph 12).

The town changed somewhat toward the end of the 18th century as trade with other coastal cities and with the West Indies prospered. More people made their living from commerce, farms (especially larger ones) were turned to raising export commodities, and imported goods and fashions made their way into areas once culturally isolated. The occupant of one of the houses, Asa Gillett, supplemented earnings from his farm with trade, dealing with the Webbs of Wethersfield. But by and large West Hartford remained an area of farms. One area of West Hartford, the Elmwood section at the south end of town, bordered on a railroad line running from Hartford to Waterbury and beyond, and this section in the late 19th century and early 20th century experienced industrial growth based on bearings and other precision metal related enterprises.

What made West Hartford what it is today was suburban residential growth from Hartford. Beginning in the late 19th century, and especially in the first decades of the 20th century, West Hartford became the home of many people drawn from Hartford's upper middle class. Tudor and Colonial Revival

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received JUL 30 1986
date entered

18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource

Continuation sheet

West Hartford, CT

Item number

8

Page

2

Significance (continued):

houses abound, occupying tracts which once were farmland. The process of intensive subdivision and development has relegated the town's early homesteads to the status of rare relics. Since development has subsequently continued at a rapid pace, commercial uses and heavy traffic now mark the major thoroughfares in town. These thoroughfares - New Britain Avenue, Mountain Road, North and South Main Street - are precisely those which have served the town since its earliest days and thus have the highest proportion of old houses.

Architectural Significance

The houses in this thematic resource typify house construction in Connecticut in the 18th century. They all have the characteristic post-and-beam structural system (with the exception of the brick house), and their exteriors mostly are clapboarded, understandably common practice for a society which had abundant timber resources. Their floor plans in general represent the most common arrangement, that of grouping the major rooms around a large central chimney, allowing fireplaces for rooms on either side, with another for the kitchen at the rear. As a consequence of this plan, the facade of the building, oriented in every case so that the broad side of the house faces the street, is a symmetrical arrangement of windows around a center doorway. The doorway, opening up on a small winding stairway, thus served both front rooms and the second story. Both three and five-bay facades were common, with the latter perhaps having a slight edge in frequency, and the houses in this thematic resource include examples of each.

Common variants on the basic plan are represented in the group. One is the "half-house" plan (Photograph 2) in which there is only a single large front room on one side of the chimney, resulting in an asymmetrical facade. Another variant is the small house (Photograph 4) with a two-room plan: a room to either side of the central chimney but no back room. Story-and-a-half versions of this plan have been identified as a particular late 18th-century type found throughout the Connecticut Valley; they are also common along the shore, and in both cases probably represent homes of people from less well-to-do economic groups.

The houses in the thematic resource include two typical 18th-century features which vanished from common building practice by the beginning of the 19th century: the lean-to roof and the use of overhanging stories. The lean-to made for a smaller (and presumably less costly) house by omitting the back upstairs rooms, and both added lean-tos and originally framed lean-tos are a common part of 18th-century Connecticut housebuilding. The use of

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

JUL 30 1986

date entered

Continuation sheet

18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource
West Hartford, CT

Item number

8

Page

3

Significance (continued):

slight overhangs at the second and attic stories is also found in many areas of the state. Although some have seen this practice as a vestige of the dramatic framed-out overhangs of the 17th century, the 18th-century use of overhangs appears to have no direct geographical or temporal continuity with the older custom, and in no place or period was it universally followed. Although it may have had some benefit in offsetting some of the mortises for the frame, the preparers of the nomination believe the overhangs to be primarily a decorative custom.

The houses in the group are also representative of vernacular 18th-century architecture in the simplicity of their exteriors. Although many doorways have been changed or are restorations, there are good examples of the typical 18th-century entry: a transomed doorway surrounded by a frame of simple molded boards, with a larger crown molding across the top. The door itself was usually of paneled construction, and in this group both single and double doors are represented (Photographs 4, 10 and 11). The influence of more formal architecture is evident in the fine doorway at 208 North Main Street (Photograph 9): it is a typically Georgian combination of Classical form with more traditional motifs (the foliate carving).

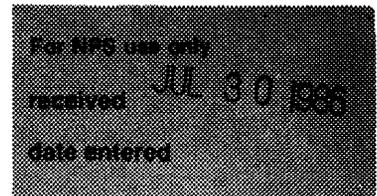
Most of the houses have additional significance because they have substantial original interior features characteristic of their period of construction. One member of the thematic resource which is already listed on the National Register, the Sarah Whitman Hooker house, had its interior completely destroyed by fire, but more typical of the group is the Whiting Homestead at 291 North Main Street: its interior includes both a complete wall of raised paneling on the fireplace side of the south front room and a Federal mantel in the north room, probably dating from the period of the house's doorway and cornice dentils. Raised paneling represents the typical interior decorative treatment of the 18th-century. In addition to paneling, other characteristic 18th-century interior woodwork found in the houses in this group include corner cupboards, original stairways with turned balusters, and in the back rooms, feather-edged boards applied to the walls.

Some of the houses in the group incorporate features which represent a transition at the end of the 18th century away from traditional practices. Among the notable changes are the advent of brick construction, practically nonexistent before the 1760s except for foundations and chimneys, and the greater use of the central-hall plan, in which four rooms open off a central stairhall-corridor, and there are two chimneys near the ends of the long axis to serve fireplaces in these rooms. Both these changes probably result from the influence, albeit remote, of formal architecture serving the more gracious lifestyle of the English gentry. At the same time, interior decorative elements incorporated more Classical motifs. These changes are

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource

Continuation sheet

West Hartford, CT

Item number

8

Page

4

Significance (continued):

associated with reduced cultural isolation in late 18th-century Connecticut. Nevertheless, even the two-chimney, center-hall plan houses in the thematic group retain much of the appearance of their earlier neighbors, with five-bay facades and transomed entries.

Moved Buildings

Two of the houses in this thematic group have been moved. The primary cause of relocation of historic properties in West Hartford is commercial development along the town's major thoroughfares, particularly New Britain Avenue, one of the oldest roads in town. The Stanly House at 1168 New Britain Avenue was moved from a location approximately a block to the east and bears a similar relation to the street as was evident at its former location (Census of Old Buildings photograph). The house at 81 Rockledge drive was also moved from nearby; until the 1930s it stood around the corner on South Main Street, but was relocated when the farm was subdivided as a housing venture. These relocations in each case have necessarily affected the siting of the resource. However, the primary significance of each house in the thematic group is as an example of 18th-century architecture and as a reminder of the town's origin as an 18th-century farming community. These attributes remain with the house even when moved, so they have been included as eligible resources within the thematic group.

Planning Activities

All of the nominated houses are listed in Connecticut's State Register of Historic Places and thus are part of the statewide planning process for historic sites. Locally, the Noah Webster Foundation and Historical Society of West Hartford has conducted public information activities identifying these houses as important historic resources and expects to continue such activities once the houses are listed.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

JUL 30 1986

date entered

18th-Century Houses of West Hartford Thematic Resource

Continuation sheet

West Hartford, CT

Item number

9

Page

1

Bibliography (continued):

Hall, William. History of West Hartford. Hartford: West Hartford Chamber of Commerce, 1930.

Hatch, Franklin S. "West Hartford." In Memorial History of Hartford County, Connecticut, 1633-1884, vol. 2, pp. 415-24. Edited by J. Hammond Trumbull. Boston: Edward L. Osgood, 1886.

Keith, Elmer D. Some Notes on Early Connecticut Architecture. Hartford: Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, 1938.

Kelly, J. Frederick. Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1924.

Lewis Thomas. "'To Planters of Moderate Means': The Cottage as a Dominant Folk House in Connecticut Before 1900." In Settlement in New England: The Last 100 Years. Edited by Timothy J. Rickard.

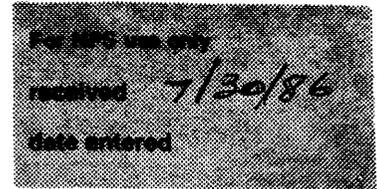
Manuscripts:

Hatheway, Elizabeth. Unpublished historical information on West Hartford houses, Noah Webster Foundation, West Hartford.

Works Progress Administration. Census of Old Buildings, West Hartford folder, c. 1935. Connecticut State Library. Includes photographs.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1 of 2

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Eighteenth-Century Houses of West Hartford TR
State Hartford County, CONNECTICUT

Cover Patrick Andrews 9/10/86

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Beardsley--Mix House

Entered in the
National Register

fu Keeper
Attest

Shelover Byers 9/10/86

2. Brace, Moses--Cadwell, Uriah,
House

Entered in the
National Register

fu Keeper
Attest

Patrick Andrews 9/10/86

3. Butler House

Entered in the
National Register

fu Keeper
Attest

Shelover Byers 9/10/86

4. Butler, James, House

Entered in the
National Register

fu Keeper
Attest

Shelover Byers 9/10/86

5. Colton, Benjamin, House

Entered in the
National Register

fu Keeper
Attest

Shelover Byers 9/10/86

6. Farnsworth, Samuel, House

Entered in the
National Register

fu Keeper
Attest

Shelover Byers 9/10/86

7. Gillett, Asa, House

Entered in the
National Register

fu Keeper
Attest

Shelover Byers 9/10/86

8. Goodman, Timothy, House

Entered in the
National Register

fu Keeper
Attest

Shelover Byers 9/10/86

9. House at 847 Main Street, North

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper
Attest

Shelover Byers 9/10/86

10. Seymour, Elisha, Jr., House

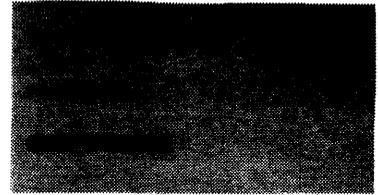
Entered in the
National Register

fu Keeper
Attest

Shelover Byers 9/10/86

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 2

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Eighteenth-Century Houses of West Hartford TR
State Hartford County, CONNECTICUT

Nomination/Type of Review

Determined Eligible Date/Signature

11. Stanly, Samuel, House

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrews 9/10/86

BOE/OWNER OBJECTION

Attest

12. Stanley--Woodruff--Allen
House

for Keeper

Shelous Byers 9/10/86

Attest

13. Steele, Allyn, House

for Keeper

Shelous Byers 9/10/86

Attest

14. Wells, John, Jr., House

for Keeper

Shelous Byers 9/10/86

Attest

15. Whitman House

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrews 9/10/86

Attest

16.

Keeper

Attest

17.

Keeper

Attest

18.

Keeper

Attest

19.

Keeper

Attest

20.

Keeper

Attest