

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
31.566-3005

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
TOWN NO.: _____ SITE NO.: _____
UTM: 18/____/____/____/____
QUAD: _____
DISTRICT: _____ NR: _____ ACTUAL _____ POTENTIAL _____

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
Buildings and Structures

IDENTIFICATION

BUILDING NAME: Common: _____ Historic: Robert Johnson House
TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: _____ COUNTY: Middlesex
STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 13-15 Johnson Street
OWNER(S): Lillian Aaron PUBLIC PRIVATE
USE: Present: Residence Historic: same
ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain with owner's permission no

DESCRIPTION

STYLE OF BUILDING: Federal DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: Before 1825
MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate)
 clapboard asbestos siding brick painted
 wood shingle asphalt siding fieldstone
 board & batten stucco cobblestone
 aluminum siding concrete, type: _____ cut stone, type: brownstone
 other: _____ lintels, sills and foundation.

STRUCTURAL SYSTEM

wood frame post and beam balloon
 load bearing masonry structural iron or steel
 other: _____

ROOF: type:

gable flat mansard monitor sawtooth
 gambrel shed hip round other: _____
material: _____
 wood shingle roll asphalt tin slate
 asphalt shingle built-up tile other: _____ Main Houses: 34'x38'

NUMBER OF STORIES: 2 1/2

APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: Rear Ell: 16'x24'

CONDITION: Structural: excellent good fair deteriorated
Exterior: excellent good fair deteriorated

INTEGRITY: Location: on original site moved, when: _____
Alterations: no yes, explain: Two-story porches across facade

RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES

barn shed garage other landscape features or buildings: bluestone and brownstone walk in front and around side;
 carriage house shop garden south passway exits on Spring Street

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

open land woodland residential scattered buildings visible from site
 commercial industrial rural high building density

INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This imposing Federal house has a dominant site set well back from Johnson Street on the crest of Prospect Hill. Located in Middletown's residential North End, the building faces east toward the river, and is bounded at rear by the rambling St. John's Cemetery grounds. Clearly the oldest house in the area, structure is flanked by modest late nineteenth century dwellings.

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior)

Fanlight over front door
Three remaining end-wall chimneys (southwest one removed)

SIGNIFICANCE

Architect _____

Builder: _____

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: In 1822 Robert Johnson bought land and buildings from Isaac Bacon, west of the intersection of Prospect and Spring Streets. An 1825 map shows a house on this site similar to the one now there; and an 1851 map names R. Johnson as the owner of the building. Johnson was a man of means, engaging in city-wide real estate activity, and holding a partnership in a rifle factory on the lower Pameacha River. After Johnson, G.H. Griffin, a trotting park owner, held the property; he is remembered by Griffin Lane, a short distance north of the estate. Following a succession of owners, the house is now owner-occupied on the first floor, with a rental apartment above.

Rare in Middletown, this five-bay brick Federal house stands 2½-stories high, and originally had tall paired chimneys on the gable ends. The sills, lintels, and foundation are brownstone. An elliptical fanlight graces the center front doorway, now partly obscured by later two-story porches across the facade. A sizeable two-story rear ell has been part of the house at least since 1851. Surrounded by houses of a modest character, the prominent siting, large mass, and clean lines of this Federal house combine to make it a dignified reminder of earlier years.

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Elizabeth Loomis

date: 6/78 view: east

negative on file: Roll 25A, #8



COMPILED BY:

name: Roger Sherman date: 9/78

organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; History of Middlesex County (New York: J.B. Beers, 1884); Karl Harrington, Background of Wesleyan and Middletown, Connecticut (Middletown: Wesleyan University, 1942); Willard Wallace, "Middletown 1650-1950" (City of Middletown, 1950); 1851 Clark Map, 1874 Beers Atlas

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

none known highways vandalism developers other: _____
 renewal private deterioration zoning explanation: _____

137. 465 High Street (CBD)
E.B. Strong House (Giacco House) c. 1873
Late 19th C. Domestic-Queen Anne
138. 57 Highland Avenue (AO)
Hall-Stevens House, probably c. 1698
Center-Chimney Colonial
139. 131 Highland Avenue (AO)
Smith-Mathias House, c. 1872
Italianate
140. 399 Highland Avenue (AO)
William Wilcox Manufacturing Company (Hartford Club Beverage Company), c. 1850
19th C. Industrial
141. 1 Hillside Court (AO)
2 Hillside Court
3 Hillside Court
4 Hillside Court
5 Hillside Court
6 Hillside Court
7 Hillside Court
8 Hillside Court
Russell Company Houses
Late 19th-early 20th C. Cottages
142. 1 Hubbard Street (CBD)
Hubbard Street Firehouse, 1876
Victorian Institutional
143. 121 Hunting Hill Avenue (AO)
Hertzell-Hotchkiss House, 1869-1870
Second Empire
144. 13-15 Johnson Street (AO)
Robert Johnson House, before 1825
Federal
145. Kings Avenue; north side, corner of Main Street (CBD)
Trolley Barn (E.I.S. Main Street Building), c. 1894
Late 19th C. Industrial
146. Laurel Grove Road; west side, just south of Wadsworth Street (AO)
Nehemiah Hubbard House, c. 1744
Center-Chimney Colonial
147. 30 Laurel Grove Road (AO)
Robert Smithson House (Fanny Stone House), c. 1741
Center-Chimney Colonial
148. 9-11 Liberty Street (CBD)
Mission Chapel, 1853
Greek Revival

Mr. Tony Nelson ✓ → descendant of Joseph Rainey
Middletown, CT
347-6041

Robert Johnson House }
13-15 Johnson } listed in Survey not on
Middletown, CT } N.R.

Helen Prater 687-1575