

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

33 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
for Buildings and Structures

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

IDENTIFICATION

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

DESCRIPTION

- 7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Federal DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: Before 1825
- 8. 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
- 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
 wood frame: post and beam balloon
 load bearing masonry structural iron or steel
 other: _____
- 10. 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'
- 11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: Rear Ell: 16'x24'
- 12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent good fair deteriorated
 Exterior: excellent good fair deteriorated
- 13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site moved, when: _____
 Alterations: no yes, explain: Two-story porches across facade
- 14. 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
- 15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
 open land woodland residential scattered buildings visible from site
 commercial industrial rural high building density

16. 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 the rear by the rambling St. John's Cemetery grounds. Clearly the oldest house in the area, the 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: _____