

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

99 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: Joseph Danforth House
- 2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: _____ COUNTY: Middlesex
- 3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 122-124 College Street
- 4. OWNER(S): Farmer's & Mechanic's Savings Bank PUBLIC PRIVATE
- 5. USE: Present: Vacant Historic: Residence
- 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: Center Chimney Colonial DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1787
- 8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> clapboard under siding	<input type="checkbox"/> asbestos siding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brick storefront addition
<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt siding	<input type="checkbox"/> fieldstone
<input type="checkbox"/> board & batten	<input type="checkbox"/> stucco	<input type="checkbox"/> cobblestone
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> aluminum siding	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete: type: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cut stone: type: <u>brownstone</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____		<u>foundation</u>
- 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> wood frame	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> post and beam	<input type="checkbox"/> balloon
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> load bearing masonry	<input type="checkbox"/> structural iron or steel	
<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____		
- 10. ROOF: type:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> gable	<input type="checkbox"/> flat	<input type="checkbox"/> mansard	<input type="checkbox"/> monitor	<input type="checkbox"/> sawtooth
<input type="checkbox"/> gambrel	<input type="checkbox"/> shed	<input type="checkbox"/> hip	<input type="checkbox"/> round	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

 material:

<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> roll asphalt	<input type="checkbox"/> tin	<input type="checkbox"/> slate
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> asphalt shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> built up	<input type="checkbox"/> tile	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____
- 11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 30'x26' (original structure)
- 12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent good fair deteriorated
Exterior: excellent good fair deteriorated
- 13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site moved, when: _____
Alterations: no yes, explain: See #18
- 14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

<input type="checkbox"/> barn	<input type="checkbox"/> shed	<input type="checkbox"/> garage	<input type="checkbox"/> other landscape features or buildings: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> carriage house	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> shop to east	<input type="checkbox"/> garden	
- 15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

<input type="checkbox"/> open land	<input type="checkbox"/> woodland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> residential	<input type="checkbox"/> scattered buildings visible from site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> rural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This house faces south from the north side of College Street between Main and Broad Streets. Across the street is a variety of commercial buildings, recently proposed as the Metro South National Register District; and a vacant lot awaiting redevelopment. College Street slopes up from Main Street and the entrance to this house is raised from the street.

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

Panelled wainscotting and remnant of panelled fireplace wall in southwest chamber

Original fireplaces; one in cellar, three on first floor, two on second floor

Some original sash remain

Date "1787" painted on kitchen fireplace lintel

SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: _____ Builder: _____

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This house was built in 1787 for Joseph Danforth (1758-1788) on land he purchased from other heirs of his father, Thomas Danforth, II (1731-1782). Joseph Danforth was a pewterer of great skill, and had taken over the pewter making business established by his father in Middletown around 1755. The Danforth pewter shop stands just east of this house (see form for 120 College Street). Pewterware made by Joseph Danforth is highly valued by collectors and can be found in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Garvan Collection at Yale University. The Danforth family produced several generations of pewterers whose impact in the industry was far-reaching, due to the quality of their work and the wide distribution of their wares.

The Joseph Danforth House was originally of a four-bay, center-chimney configuration with the entrance in the third bay to the east. This type of construction was not uncommon in eighteenth century Middletown; however, few examples remain. Many subsequent additions and alterations have buried the original appearance of this structure. These include a brick storefront, a 2 1/2 story rear wing, and the division of the interior into seven apartments. site investigation has revealed the original fireplaces and other structural evidence which

(see continuation sheet)

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Robert Svec
date: 11/77 view: southwest
negative on file: Roll 5, #32A



(see continuation sheet)

COMPILED BY:

name: John E. Reynolds date: 8/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown Probate Court Records; E.P. Augur, "Jonathan Yeomans House 1749," Colonial Dames Monograph; J.C. Thomas, Connecticut Pewter and Pewterers (Connecticut Historical Society Publications, 1976); Ledlie I. Laughlin, Pewter in America:

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

none known highways vandalism developers other: _____
 renewal private deterioration zoning explanation: Farmer's & Mechanic's Savings Bank has purchased property for intended parking expansion: an on-site preservation effort is unlikely; however, bank will permit developer to remove the structure from the site.

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CONTINUATION SHEET
Item number: 18&19 Date: 8/78

Joseph Danforth House
122-124 College Street, Middletown, Ct. 06457

#18

demonstrate the plan of the house as it was built.

The Danforth family occupied four buildings in this area, and their neighbors included Joseph King, a silversmith, and Benjamin Henshaw, who sold copper and tinware. The survival of the Danforth House and Shop, together with the Benjamin Henshaw House at 138 College, presents a streetscape reminiscent of the area's eighteenth-century role as an artisans' enclave.

#19

Its Makers and Their Marks (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1940); 1825 Barnum Map; 1874 Beers Atlas