

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
32 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: Alumni Guest House Historic: Prof. Caleb Winchester House
- 2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: _____ COUNTY: Middlesex
- 3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 284 High Street
- 4. OWNER(S): Wesleyan University PUBLIC PRIVATE
- 5. USE: Present: Guest rooms Historic: same
- 6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain _____ no

DESCRIPTION

- 7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Shingle Style- Colonial Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1889
- 8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
 clapboard asbestos siding brick first story and northeast
 wood shingle asphalt siding fieldstone corner
 board & batten stucco cobblestone
 aluminum siding concrete: type: _____ cut stone: type: brownstone
 other: _____ 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/cross shed north hip round other _____
 material:
 wood shingle roll asphalt tin slate
 asphalt shingle built up tile other: _____

- 11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2 1/2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 38'x49'
- 12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent good fair deteriorated
Exterior: excellent good fair deteriorated

- 13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site moved, when: _____
Alterations: no yes, explain: Minor interior changes; stained glass window re-

- 14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES: moved
 barn shed garage other landscape features or buildings: _____
 carriage house shop garden _____

- 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 house faces west from the east side of High Street. High Street in this area consists of 19th century high-style homes and the institutional buildings of Wesleyan University.

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

8. SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: _____ Builder: _____
8. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: Professor Caleb T. Winchester erected this structure in 1889. An 1869 graduate of Wesleyan, Winchester was at various times the school's librarian, and Professor of English. He was a nationally known English critic and lecturer. "Winch," as he came to be known, was extremely popular locally; at one point it was suggested that the name of Wesleyan University be changed to Winchester College. He was a member of the Board of Trustees and considered one of the most influential people on the campus. He died in 1920, leaving the house to his wife with the stipulation that upon her death the house should be deeded to Wesleyan. Wesleyan University acquired the house in 1937 and has used it for residential purposes since. It is currently the Alumni Guest House.

This building is a fine example of the Shingle Style of the 1880s. The influence of the Colonial Revival is seen in the gambrel roof, free Palladian window, dormers, and porches. The interior has been adapted to accomodate its guests comfortably. A notable feature of the plan is the placement of the kitchen fronting on the street and the parlors in the rear facing the eastern hills. Mr. Winchester designed the house this way and often remarked about "the advantage of living away from the street side of the building".

9. PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Elizabeth Loomis
date: 2/78 view: west
negative on file: Roll 12, #19



10. COMPILED BY:

name: Elizabeth Loomis date: 11/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: "Professor Caleb Winchester House,"
GMPT Report (unpublished, 1973)

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

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