

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  
 renewal     private     deterioration     zoning  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 explanation: \_\_\_\_\_