

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

9 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: Jehosaphat L. Spencer Homestead
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: Farm Hill COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 253 Ridge Road
4. OWNER(S): Elizabeth B. Augustine PUBLIC PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Residence (double) Historic: Residence
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain with permission no

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Victorian Gothic DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: possibly 1861
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
 ___ clapboard asbestos siding ___ brick
 ___ wood shingle ___ asphalt siding ___ fieldstone
 ___ board & batten ___ stucco ___ cobblestone
 ___ aluminum siding ___ concrete: type: _____ cut stone: type: probably brownstone foundation (not discernible)
 ___ other: _____
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: _____
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 37'x25'
12. CONDITION: Structural: ___ excellent good ___ fair ___ deteriorated
 Exterior: ___ excellent ___ good fair ___ deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site ___ moved, when: _____
 Alterations: ___ no yes, explain: Siding added; south verandah enclosed; interior divided
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
 ___ 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 occupies the southwest corner of Ridge Road and Russell Street. Its long axis runs north-south, but because of projecting central block with cross gable on the east side, the building is oriented to both streets.

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

Steep alternating gables on east and north bay windows
Divided oculus windows in west and south gable peaks
"Rounded" dentils under bay window cornices

SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: _____ Builder: _____

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This house was built probably in 1861 by Jehosaphat L. Spencer. As Spencer is listed in an early directory as a carpenter, it is possible he constructed this house himself. Other sources identify Spencer as a farmer, and it is likely he worked at both occupations. Jehosaphat Spencer's heirs sold the property in 1895 to Sherman E. Bailey, a painter who later opened a meat market on the property. The property remained in the Bailey family until 1964 and has since been converted to a double residence.

The two-story bay windows on the east and south sides of the house serve to dress up its street facades. These bays feature three steeply pitched alternating gables in each roof; a treatment which is unknown elsewhere in Middletown. Two veranda's, one of which is now enclosed, fill in the angles created by the projecting central block and the main section of the house. The vernacular Victorian Gothic style of this house was one of the styles popular in Middletown during and after the Civil War. This house is an important illustration of the style as it retains its original appearance except for the application of new siding. As a former farmhouse it serves as a reminder of the area's traditional rural character prior to post World War II residential development.

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Elizabeth Loomis
date: 9/78 view: northwest
negative on file: Roll 45, #2A-3



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 City Probate Records; Middletown City Directories; 1874 Beers Atlas

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

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