

From Sarah Brown McCulloch's *Guilford: A Walking Guide* (2012):

Kingsnorth-Starr, 138 State Street, Colonial, c1645.

This prize example of Guilford's Colonial architecture is, according to Professor Abbott Lowell Cummings of the Yale History of Art Department, a perfect laboratory for his students because it contains more original Colonial material than any house in town; some are unique and all are in a remarkable state of preservation. Under the clapboards is the original wattle and daub fill made of clay and marsh grass, also traces of lintels for original triple casements of traditional medieval type that were long ago removed; inside, rare examples of painted woodwork and ornamental pargeting have been uncovered. Henry Kingsnorth was the twenty-second signer of the Guilford Covenant, writing his name as Henry Kingnoth. He died childless and left the house to any of his brothers' sons who would come from England to claim it. Accordingly, in 1669, his nephew James Kingsnorth arrived with proper identification and lived in the house until his death in 1682. He too died childless and he too left the house to any of his brothers' sons who would come to claim it or to his aunt, Mary Kingsnorth, and her husband, John Collins. This time the nephews declined and in 1689, upon payment of three pounds to each brother or their sons, the Collinses took possession. Five years later they sold the house to Comfort Starr and it remained in that family for about 200 years. In 1940 new owners began a restoration using, in Cummings's words, "flawless sensitivity!" In 1988, the Guilford Preservation Alliance, concerned about the fate of the house when it went on the market, bought it, placed protective easements on both the inside and the outside, and resold it in 1989. The proceeds went into a revolving fund which is used by the alliance to preserve other buildings of historic importance.