

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

Wyllys Eliot, 20 Water Street, Colonial, 1763.

Originally one room deep, this house was enlarged by the addition of a lean-to. The Greek Revival doorway was added later, a usual way, in Guilford, to update an old house. Eliot married Abigail Ward Hull and built this house the same year. She was the widow of Dr. Giles Hull, who had died of measles at Ticonderoga during the French and Indian Wars. Wyllys and Abigail had nine children and there is a passing mention of a child by Dr. Hull. Eliot is best known today for one brief act: in 1772 he bought Henry Whitfield's great stone house from the English landlords who still owned it, and two weeks later he sold it in Guilford, thus returning it to local ownership after nearly 125 years. (For the rest of the story, see 248 Old Whitfield Street.) The Eliot home is also known as the Leverett Griswold house because of his long occupancy. In 1898 it was bought by Mrs. Addie A. Chittenden, who named it "Four Elms" and kept a boarding house here.