

## Church Street

There was no Church Street until about 1824 when the Guilford and Durham Turnpike, now Route 77, was built. The new road paralleled the West River to its source at Lake Quonnipaug, went past the lake for several miles, and then joined the road from New Haven to Middletown, just as it does today. The section in town on the west side of the First Congregational Church was, naturally enough, called Church Street. Because it was built so much later than the other streets that branch off from the Green, the houses, with one exception, all date from the nineteenth and twentieth century and include a fine collection of Queen Anne homes.

*The walk begins at Church and Broad streets and ends at the Post Road, a distance of approximately two-tenths of a mile. Start with No. 19 on your right.*

### **Guilford Academy, 19 Church Street, Federal, 1794.**



For sixty years the children of the First Congregational Society and the Fourth Congregational Society attended separate schools built side by side on the Green. One can imagine the rivalry that must have existed between them. In 1793 the societies decided to unite and in 1794 they “voted that this Society will build a schoolhouse two stories high,” which is this one. In 1827 it was moved here from

the Green and became a secondary school known as the Guilford Academy. When the Guilford Institute, the ancestor of the present high school, opened in 1855, the academy closed and the building eventually became a private home. The porch, a late-nineteenth-century addition, may have been built then.

### **George W. Seward, 33 Church Street, Queen Anne, 01880; Builder: George W. Seward.**

Built in a style not common in the borough, this Queen Anne house is an especially elaborate structure. Not only does it reflect the builder’s skill but it also shows his familiarity with trends derived from the aesthetic movement, popular in the 1880s, which were borrowed from the Japanese. The sunburst on the porch entrance has an oriental feel as does the curve of the roof to the left of the front gable. Rising behind that is a cross-gable with brackets topped by a slate roof, rare in Guilford. The wraparound porch with spindlework detailing is supported by delicately tuned



posts. The gable with a three-part window at the top is decorated with patterned shingles. Seward, (see page v) whose shop was next door at No. 39, succeeded William E. Weld as Guilford's outstanding builder. A member of a large and well-known family, he was very active in town affairs and served on the board of the Guilford Institute until his death in 1928.

He was often chosen as chairman or moderator at meetings because of his thorough knowledge of parliamentary law.

**Frederick A. Fowler, 49 Church Street, Italian Villa, c1848.**

A villa on a small scale, its frieze, wide eaves, and low-pitch roof are characteristics of the Italianate style. The large granite block foundation and the square columns on large square bases which support the simple portico give it an air of importance. The side porch is an addition. Fowler was married to Laura Brooks, a sister of Captain Oliver N. Brooks, lighthouse keeper at Faulkner's Island from 1851 to 1882, who also lived here at one time.

**Eli Parmelee, 72 Church Street, Italianate, c1860 and Queen Anne, c1880.**

One of three similar houses on Church Street, the Parmelee house combines both Italianate and Queen Anne features, a popular treatment during the late nineteenth century. They have in common unusually heavy cornices with strong returns, Italianate windows, and decorative Queen Anne wraparound porches added later. In 1868 Eli Parmelee served as a Republican deputy to the General Court from Guilford and as a deacon of the First Congregational Church from 1852 until his death in 1882.

**Dr. Joel Canfield, 78 Church Street, Federal, 1829.**

This house was built four years after Church Street was opened, making it the earliest building on the block. A modest example of the Federal style, its portico displays plain pilasters, an undecorated fanlight over the door, and a simple gabled roof supported by slim round columns turned by George Seward's father, Martin. Dr. Canfield settled in Guilford in 1824. For a time he lived in North Guilford, where he married Lucretia Benton, but "removed to First Society" in 1828, making a \$200 contribution towards the new church building. That same year he was awarded an honorary M.D. from Yale. He died in 1877, aged seventy-six.

### **Frederick W. Lee, 91 Church Street, c1840.**

A simple, mid-nineteenth-century frame residence, the location of this house close to the road adds character to the entrance of the town's historic district. Research by Joel Helander reveals that Lee bought the land from Dr. Joel Canfield in 1839 and by 1842 had mortgaged the property "together with the buildings thereon standing" to Nathaniel Griffing. Samuel Hulburt, a landscape gardener formerly from Huxbury, Upton, England, bought the house in 1866 and lived here until his death in 1909, aged eighty-eight. Also of note is the shingled bungalow set back from the road between the Lee house and No. 105. [2012-razed October 28, 2010]

### **96 Church Street, Italianate and Queen Anne, c1880.**

Here is another vernacular residence, in which Italianate and Queen Anne features have been combined and applied to a basic gable-fronted house. The cornice is even heavier than the one on No. 72, and the returns bolder. Below the returns, at the corners, are two flat boards resembling brackets. A stained-glass window in the Italianate style appears at the staircase level. The two-story bay and wraparound porch are also present.

### **George L. Weld, 102 Church Street, Greek Revival, c1848; Builder: William E. Weld.**

Although this main entrance to the town's historic center is now threatened by increasing commercialization, the Weld house, a very well preserved example of the Greek Revival style, still maintains the residential character of an important street. The portico with fluted columns, full entablature, and dentils, as well as the pedimented roof are especially strong features. The sidelights have been closed but the original rectangular gable window and door remain. George Leander was the brother of William Edwin Weld, the builder (see 45 Boston Street) and Frederick Alonzo Weld, the sea captain (see 65 Boston Street), and the first son of George and Mabel Fowler. George and his wife, Sarah Bartlett, had a daughter and twin sons. Their daughter and one of the twins died in 1865 just a month apart.

### **105 Church Street, Italianate and Queen Anne, c1875; porch c1910.**

Like its counterparts down the street, this house has a heavy projecting cornice with bold returns repeated, in this case, in the square two-story bay. A very small Italianate window appears in the side gable. The Colonial Revival porch with slender Doric columns may have replaced an earlier one which probably resembled those at No. 72 and No. 96.

## State Street

Originally called Crooked Lane, State Street was one of the four original streets that bordered the Green. At the time it was laid out, in the earliest days of the settlement, it went through to Boston Street, then called East Lane. That section disappeared when, in 1675, the town gave land on the Green to a blacksmith and by doing so also created the jog in the road. (For the full story see page 1.) Back Lane was the old name for a small portion of Union Street which is included in this walk. Union Street now runs from State Street to Boston Street and beyond.

*The walk begins at the corner of State and Broad streets, turns right into Union Street, left onto Market Place; rejoins State Street, and ends at the Post Road, a distance of approximately three-tenths of a mile. Start with No. 1 on your right.*

### **Leonard Chamberlain, 1 State Street, Federal, 1803; Architect: Abraham Coan.**



This house was built for Leonard Chamberlain and his bride, Mary Ann Collins, daughter of Friend Collins who lived next door at No. 7. Although the original clapboards are now covered with aluminum siding, the elegant trim at the windows and doorway is still visible. The columns and pilasters on each side of the door, ornamented with carved rosettes, support a triangular pediment over a semicircular, delicately decorated fanlight.

In c1817, the Chamberlains sold their house to Samuel Eliot and his bride, Mary Butler Baldwin. Eliot was a prominent merchant, active in town affairs, who served as warden of the borough from 1822 to 1825. He was also one of three Guilford men involved in planning the Hartford Turnpike which was laid out by the state legislature in 1825. For the first time, stagecoaches were able to travel between Hartford and Sachem's Head where, weather permitting, passengers could continue by boat to New York. This led to the establishment of the first hotel at Sachem's Head which became a popular vacation spot.

### **Friend Collins, 7 State Street, Colonial, 1787.**

Friend Collins and his wife, Philena Norton, had been married for two years and were the parents of the first of their nine children when they built this sturdy Colonial house with narrow overhangs on both sides. A splendid Greek Revival



portico was added in the 1840s. With its fluted columns standing assertively close to the sidewalk, with its pilasters and its broad entablature, the house and portico make a striking and altogether satisfying sight on the street. John Jackson, who bought it in 1851 from a later owner, operated a meat market in an addition where the porch is now. Later, the addition was taken away to Mulberry Point for use as a summer cottage.

**Abigail Leete, 15 Union Street Colonial, c1715; Daniel Bowen, 19 Union Street, Colonial, 1734.**



Before Guilford's outlying districts had their own churches, it was necessary to travel what were then long distances from home to the meeting house. As services were all-day affairs and the church was not heated, many families or groups of families were given permission to build houses near the church with fireplaces for warmth and refreshment. These two small buildings, called "Sabbath Day" houses, are fine surviving examples. No. 15 has small windows and a steeply pitched, appropriately sagging roof of hand-cut shingles. It has lost its original chimney; a modern section and a shed dormer have been added at the rear. No. 19, on the National Register of Historic Places, has a gambrel roof which also provided more space and a lean-to added later at the back. Its tall chimney has been rebuilt probably very like the original; the outside chimney is an addition.



**H. Arthur Cook, 34 Union Street, American Foursquare, 1917; Builder: Walter Beckwith.**

According to *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester, the American Foursquare, or Prairie Box as it is also called, is an indigenous American style—a vernacular cousin of the architect-designed houses associated with the Prairie School of Chicago. Disseminated by pattern books and magazines, it became popular throughout the country in the first decade of the twentieth century. With its two-story, square-shaped, hipped roof on both house and dormer, its full-length front porch also with hipped roof and its two-toned exterior sheathing—half shingles, half clapboards—the Cook house is a classic example of the style. Walter Beckwith, who was in business with his sons, was the builder. Together they also built the bungalow at No. 20-22, and the house next to it which used to be a bakery.

**Joseph Clay, 37 Union Street, Colonial, 1670.**



Familiarly known as the Acadian House, and on the National Register of Historic Places, this house is frequently mentioned by architectural historians as an outstanding example of seventeenth-century building techniques. Originally it had two rooms each, on the first and second floors, and the attic ran straight across. The chimney stack is an interesting T-shape, while a break in the steeply sloping roof indicates the later addition of the lean-to. The door is made of boards placed horizontally instead of vertically; the five windows with 8/12 sash are irregularly spaced. Joseph Clay and his bride, Mary Lord, came from Saybrook in 1670 and built this house the same year. Their daughter Sarah, who married John Chittenden, inherited it and it remained in the Chittenden family for 144 years. It was one of their descendants, Samuel, who is reputed to have given shelter to a group of about sixteen Acadians from Grand Pré, Nova Scotia, allowing them to live in his then- empty house. Captured by the British during the French and Indian War, the Acadians were put ashore in various towns along the Connecticut coast. They arrived in Guilford in the spring of 1756, where they became charges of the town and were “put out to service.” Sixteen years later, with the town’s financial help, a few eventually returned home.

**Darius Collins, 56 Union Street, Colonial, 1769.**

This house was built on land inherited by Darius's wife, Hannah Spencer, from her father, plus a half-acre sold to Darius by her brothers, Obadiah and Mindwell. Like its neighbor, almost one hundred years older, it has an irregularly spaced five-window facade. The doorway is framed by a simple molding. Notice the stone chimney and the lean-to which is an integral part of the building. Collins's daughter inherited the house "during the time Hannah remains unmarried" and lived here until her death in 1849. Milo Cooke and his wife, Lucy, bought it in 1876 and the house is also known by their name.

**Joy Benton, 2 Market Place, Colonial, 1805.**

A late five-bay, center-chimney Colonial design, this prominent house on the corner of Market Place and State Street has a paneled door much like the one at 56 Union Street, framed with a simple moulding, untouched by any Greek Revival trim. Notice also the 12/12 sash and the stone foundation. Joy Benton lived here with his wife, Cleodelinda Evarts, and their two children.

**Chloe Munger, 35 State Street, Federal, 1828.**

Miles Munger and his wife, Rachel Grumbley, gave the land on which this small house was built to Miles's unmarried sister Chloe. Following her death in 1842, the house was deeded back to the Mungers and occupied by their daughter Emmeline and her husband, Franklin Phelps, who was Guilford's postmaster from 1856 to 1861 and again from 1865 to 1869. Unusual is the fact that the property was inherited by women for four generations—from Munger's mother-in-law to his wife, to his sister, and then to his niece Henrietta Bennett in 1873. The doorway has a slightly curving arch found in several of Guilford's houses built in the 1870's, a product of later remodeling. The building was the home of the Visiting Nurse Association for many years. The wing was added in 2002.

**Nathaniel Hall, 48 State Street Colonial, 1770.**

A typical center-chimney Colonial plan combined with the lower roof pitch and fancy door and window treatment of the Federal period suggests there may be more to this building's history than meets the eye. A former owner has written that the house was originally only one story high, that a second floor and porch were added around 1810 (and presumably the door and triple window too), and that other additions followed through the nineteenth century. In the 1980s he stripped off porch, shutters, and Victoriana in an effort "to bring back at least an impression" of the house's period.

**Nathan Bradley, 72 State Street, Colonial, 1665.**

One of the earliest on the street, this house was extensively (some say ruthlessly) remodeled in the late 1800s. Paneling, old doors, sash, flooring, even the chimney were removed in an attempt at modernization. In the early 1900s a restoration was begun and every effort was made to return the house to its seventeenth-century look. Nathan Bradley, aged twenty, had come from England in 1658 with his sixteen-year-old brother and settled in Guilford. He soon built this house but only two years later sold it. Perhaps he didn't enjoy the responsibilities of a homeowner, for it is said that he was a great hunter and explorer. In 1712 he traced the Hammonasset River to its source at "Nathan's Pond." From Nathan Bradley the house passed to Sergeant John Chittenden, son of William, one of the original settlers. John left it to his son Abel in whose family it remained until about 1809, and it is often referred to as the Abel Chittenden house.

**Ambrose Benton, 94 State Street, Colonial, 1798.**

This was originally a one-story house which, during Benton's residency, sheltered his wife, Mary Evarts, and seven children. The second story is a twentieth-century addition (1909), but the overhang and rebuilt center-chimney are faithful to the eighteenth-century Colonial style. In 1982 modern sash was replaced by 12/12 sash like the original.

**Jabez Benton, 101 State Street, Colonial, 1730.**

This house is attractive in its simplicity, with a doorhood that is an extension of the roof slope, much like the one at 68 Water Street. Jabez Benton was born in Guilford in 1680, married Hannah Stone in 1726, and had seven children. In 1853 George Walter Hinckley, a minister and the founder of a farm school in Maine for homeless boys and girls known as Good Will Farm, was born here. He was a Baptist minister in Bangor, Maine, when he eventually realized his dream of providing help for needy children. He always maintained close ties with his native town but refused to solicit funds in Guilford. Nevertheless the townspeople raised a large sum of money which was used to help build a Guilford Cottage, one of several cottages which housed fifteen orphans and a matron. He died in 1950, aged ninety-seven.

**Samuel and Thomas Scranton, 107 State Street, Federal, 1787.**

When Samuel and Thomas Scranton, brothers and farmers, built their fine house, only Thomas was married and two of the four children he and his wife, Damaris



Seward, would eventually have were already born. Samuel married Luthena Bell in 1792 and had five children, and both families made this their home for many years. The triple window balances the large door, which is apparently a Greek Revival addition, and the approach up an unusually high and broad flight of steps gives added importance to the entrance. The crown moldings over the windows repeat the Greek Revival entablature over the door. Thomas Scranton, Jr., inherited the house and deeded it to three of his children in 1867. They sold it two years later to Joel Benton.

**Thomas Scranton, Jr., 110 State Street, Federal, c1810.**

Thomas Scranton, Jr., also a farmer, built his equally fine house across the street from his parents' home with the same triple window but with fine ornamental carving on the cornice and windowheads and with a refined and elegant doorway, all characteristic of the Federal period. A flight of steps leads up to the door topped by a semicircular fanlight decorated with swags, making this a most charming entrance. The side wing is an addition, but the old barns still stand behind the house. Thomas and his wife, Elizabeth Parmelee, had twelve children and were living in East Guilford, now Madison, when they died.

**Upper State Street**

Some of Guilford's oldest and rarest houses are here, mixed in with the substantial homes that prosperous landowners built at the edges of the expanding town after the Revolution. Curving gently, lined by white houses on ample grounds, Upper State Street is one of Guilford's loveliest streetscapes—part town, part country. From the corner at the Post Road you are immediately aware of the striking house standing at what seems to be the end of the street. The Guilford Survey states that its position at the intersection of North and State streets “closes the long view from the town and gives definition to the intersection.” State Street then jogs off to the right, illustrating the accuracy of its old name, Crooked Lane.

*This walk takes you from the corner of the Post Road and State Street north to the Connecticut Turnpike overpass, a distance of about four-tenths of a mile. Start with No. 133 on your right, but first try to look at it from across the street to get a good view of its hipped roof with center chimney, unusual for the period.*

**Jonathan Starr, 133 State Street, Colonial, c1732.**

This house was built on an acre of land deeded to Jonathan Starr, a tailor, by his father Comfort, also a tailor, whose house is across the street. With its center chimney rising from a square house with hipped roof, it is unique in Guilford. (J.

Frederick Kelly thinks that hipped roofs were not common until about 1750 which casts some doubt as to whether the roof is original.) The triple window, pedimented doorway, and fanlight are later additions, perhaps done at the end of the eighteenth century. Apparently this fine house was too much for young Jonathan to support, for he deeded it and the land back to his father a year later and moved to East Guilford, now Madison. Of his four children, only one, Lucy, survived past her twenties and she outlived four husbands.

### **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.

### **Abraham Fowler IV, 149 State Street Colonial, 1777.**

This house began as a traditional five-bay, center-chimney Colonial design. Later, like so many of Guilford's Colonial houses, it was updated by the addition of a Greek Revival doorway. The dormers and side porch are later additions (probably

twentieth century) as is the roof in the form of a broken pediment over the handsome door. Abraham Fowler, the fourth of that name, was a descendant of Deacon John Fowler, an earlier settler. He married Lois Fowler in 1776, had five children, and died in 1848.

### **Charles F. Leete, 158 State Street, Greek Revival, 1836.**

An interesting combination of styles in a formerly lovely setting, this house appears to be basically of Federal design with a Greek Revival door. If the door is original (which it may not be), it is one of the earliest in Guilford, parent of a long line. The two-story addition is obviously later. Charles Frederick Leete was a prominent man in the community, and in 1872 he served as a Republican representative from Guilford to the legislature. He also wrote creditable poetry from time to time. In 1889 the *Morning Journal* announced that as part of the festivities honoring Guilford's 250th anniversary "Mr. Charles Leete . . . will produce a historical poem." In 1924 some of his other poems were discovered and published in the *Hartford Courant*.

### **167 State Street, Bungalow, c1920.**

This is a good example of a style which became extremely popular all over the country from around 1900 until World War I. Supposedly derived and named for a type of house built by the British in India, it also owes its genesis to the Swiss chalet with a little Japanese thrown in. The roof is its most conspicuous feature, either appearing as a large gable with porch attached or as a long front slope with the porch incorporated in its great length. The dormer penetrating the roof has a sloping roof of its own (shed dormer). Rafter ends extend beyond the roof edges of the dormer, and brackets appear under the wide eaves of this house. There is clapboard siding on the first story and shingle siding on the second; the porch was probably enclosed at a later date. A one-and-a-half story addition in 1997 retains the bungalow's basic shape. Other versions of this style appear on Church Street and Market Place.

### **Eliphalet Hall III, 177 State Street, Late Colonial between 1783-1803.**

William Hall, one of the original founders of Guilford, bought this land in 1654 from John Linsley. It passed to Hall's son William and to two other Eliphalets before the third one built this small house with simple doorway which The Dorothy Whitfield Society dates as 1793. The peaked gable with its cut-corner window was added later and provides a charming Gothic touch. The position of the house on a rise of land gives it prominence on the street. Eliphalet III was born in 1747,

married Rachel Evarts in 1773, and died in 1803. When his will was probated that year, the house was valued at \$457.

**William Starr, 180 State Street, Colonial, 1757.**

The original house was a small one-and-a-half-story cottage, which was given a second story sometime after 1838 when the Starrs sold it. According to David Dudley, the legend is that the old house was raised and the new house slipped under it, and this may account for the fact that the older 12/12 sash is upstairs and the 6/ 6 sash downstairs. The large Greek Revival doorway was probably added at that time.

**Captain Samuel Lee, 1 North Street, Colonial, c1750 or c1763.**

Although the address is North Street, this house is an integral part of State Street, set, as it is, so prominently on the corner facing down the whole length of the street. The large Greek Revival doorway with wide pilasters and deep frieze is an important addition which makes the house stand out even more, especially as viewed from the Post Road. The paneled double door was handcrafted during its excellent restoration in 1970-71. Inside, much original work remains. Samuel Lee and Agnes Dickinson were married in 1763 and had three daughters, the last one born in 1776. Samuel's brother, Levi, a well-known fifer, also lived with them, and probably their mother. During the Revolution Samuel served in the Coast Guard and was promoted to captain just before the war ended. Many stories have been handed down about Agnes Lee's bravery during her husband's frequent absences. They tell about how she fired the cannon in their yard to warn the colonists that the British had landed at Leete's Island; how she protected their house many times from their Tory neighbors searching for contraband captured by Captain Lee; how she saved the house and the ammunition stored in the attic when sparks from a fire in the barn nearby threatened to ignite both; and many other acts of bravery. The Guilford chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution is named for her. In 1794 Levi and his mother sold the house to William Starr, Sr., and the Lees built a new one at 292 State Street.

**Jonathan Bishop, Sr., 191 State Street, Colonial, 1787.**

This is a simple yet striking Colonial home with overhangs on three sides. The wide eave of the front roof seems to shelter the door and the evenly spaced windows. Jonathan Bishop, the son of David Bishop who lived at 205 State Street, built this house on the south part of his father's land, and farmed it with his brother Jared who inherited the old homestead. After a brief career at sea, Jonathan Jr. carried on the large farm, sending his produce to New York in his sloop berthed at

Jones Bridge. He was always called “Captain.” William E. Pinchbeck bought the house and land in 1928 and erected the longest iron-frame greenhouse ever built, 1220 feet long and 81 feet wide, for his rose-growing business. The land that surrounds the greenhouse continues to be used as a farm and pasture, and the third generation of Pinchbecks is still growing roses.

**John Collins H, 205 State Street, Colonial, 1707.**

With its ample scale, side overhangs, and ornamental trim around the paneled door, this very early house was one of the finer ones in town. J. Frederick Kelly singled out the doorway for special mention: “Simple crown mouldings have been added and the whole composition, though of the utmost simplicity, is dignified and well-proportioned.” In 1723 John Collins II deeded the house to John Collins III “in consideration of fatherly love and endeared affection,” reserving half the land and the house for himself and his wife, Ann. In 1732, Collins III sold it to David Bishop, Sr. Bishop willed the home and land to his two sons, Jared and Jonathan. Jared inherited an old house and Jonathan built a new one, No. 191. Also known as the Philo Bishop house, it remained in the Bishop family for 185 years, until 1917.

**Henry Hull, 215 State Street, Greek Revival, c1840.**

This house is a good example of the expression of Greek Revival taste in Guilford. The basic traits of the style are here but with no flights of fancy. The temple front, the window in the gable, the simple doorway with pilasters and simple entablature (in this case, particularly tall and elegant), and 6/6 sash make it a classic. Henry Hull was married to Lydia Bishop, daughter of Philo Bishop, of No. 205.

**216 State Street, c1885.**

With its big barn out back and open space still around it, this house is a reminder of the farms that long bordered the center of town. The house itself is typical of vernacular farmhouses, using stylistic details from various periods on the basic gable-front house shape that was popular through most of the nineteenth century. Here the brackets and side porches are particularly vivid. This combination of styles is also found in several houses on Church Street. It is an arresting sight on an important street.

**Hall / Starr, 223 State Street, Colonial, c1778.**

The Guilford Survey notes that “This miniscule dwelling is one of Guilford’s important survivals... a reminder that many people in the early years of the colony

doubtless lived in far humbler houses than the large saltboxes that have come down to modern times.” A rare small house, it was thought to be of 17th C. origin but new research by Town Historian Joel Helander, and Architectural Historians James Sexton and Bryan Green, points to a later date and Benjamin Hall not Samuel as its original owner. Benjamin and Sarah Scott married in 1778, had seven children and sold the house to William Starr in 1803, whose family members lived here until 1995. 20th C. cobblestone fireplaces replace the original stone ones and a kitchen ell was added on the east side c1940. New owners have rehabilitated the rest to its 18th C. self, thereby saving an important Guilford landmark.

### **Joel and Lucy Griswold, 264 State Street, 1793.**

It is surprising for a house to be listed as belonging to a husband and his wife. In this case Joel Griswold built their house on a part of the homelot which belonged to Lucy's parents. She was born July 3, 1770, the second daughter of Samuel Lee, Jr., and his wife, Agnes Dickinson. The Lees are famous in the annals of Guilford history because of the stories passed down about their experiences during the Revolution (see 1 North Street). Lee descendants owned this property for many years. This story-and-a-half house is a type that appears in Guilford toward the end of the eighteenth century. Providing headroom for a fully finished room plus an attic, it marks a rising level of prosperity and amenity in American life after the Revolution. The Greek Revival door probably belongs to the 1840s or 1850s, and the paired windows beside it have the look of a later alteration.

### **Griswold-Davis, 276 State Street, Greek Revival, 1876.**

Long after more-urbanized areas had given up building houses in the Greek Revival style in favor of the more romantic styles of the Victorian era, Guilford, and indeed most of rural New England, persisted. This house is typical of that late period, the basic Greek Revival shape modified by taller proportions and a little touch of Italianate thrown in in the form of a segmental arch in the gable. The entry porch may be an addition of the Colonial Revival of the 1920s or 1930s. Since this is Lee property and the dates fit, it is reasonable to assume that the Griswold who lived here was Lucy Ann, who was the wife of Daniel Loper Davis, the granddaughter of Joel and Lucy Lee Griswold next door at No. 264, and the great-granddaughter of Samuel and Agnes Lee of 1 North Street.

### **Captain Samuel Lee, 292 State Street, Late Colonial, 1794.**

Captain Lee and his wife, Agnes Dickinson, built this fine house after their home at 1 North Street was sold. It is a late version of the Colonial style, conservative in form but with the ampler proportions and higher ceilings of the post-Revolutionary

era. 4.5 acres of its once-wide lawn were bought in 2000 by the Guilford Housing Authority, on which they have built apartments for seniors and residents with special needs called Sachem Hollow. A handsome nineteenth-century barn with a ventilating turret on the roof no longer stands. Samuel Lee returned to civilian life after the Revolution and became active in town affairs, helping to set up a saltworks when the town decided to go into the business in 1777. For three different sessions, between 1785 and 1800, he was a deputy to the General Court which met twice a year alternately in Hartford and New Haven. Captain Lee died in 1819, and his wife died ten years later.

## **Water Street**

On a map showing the layout of the original homelots, Water Street is called “Mr. Desborough’s Lane” because it bordered his property, an unusually large one of about ten acres. Samuel Desborough, or Desborow as it was sometimes spelled, was only nineteen when he came to Guilford with Henry Whitfield’s company of settlers, too young to sign the Covenant. He had studied law with his brother in England and despite his youth soon became prominent in the community, becoming its first magistrate, a pillar of the church, and a meticulous keeper of town records. It was a great loss to the little community when, in 1651, he decided to return to England. Thereafter, for obvious reasons, the street was referred to as West Lane until January 1816 when, at a borough meeting, it was officially named

Water Street. In his book about Guilford and Madison (1897) Bernard C. Steiner refers to it, appropriately, as Bridge Street but that name never seems to have been official.

*The walk, a distance of about two-tenths of a mile, begins at the corner of Water and Whitfield streets and continues to Jones Bridge at the West River which marks the boundary of the borough. Start with No. 16 on your left.*

## **Menuncatuck Odd Fellows Hall, 14 Water Street, 1894.**

Menuncatuck, which means menhaden river, was the name of the small Indian tribe whose sachem squaw, Shaumpishuh, sold their lands to the first settlers. The Menuncatuck Lodge, founded in 1849, met on Thursday nights in the hall over Henry Hale’s store on Whitfield Street. Active for many years, it was disbanded after the treasurer absconded with the funds. It was revived in 1880 and moved into its own two-story building in 1895. Notice on the facade the brick cornices and decorative corbeling around the arched gable window and, on the sides, the arched

windows separated by brick pilasters. The openings on the facade were bricked in later and the dormer is an addition. The building was sold in 1996 and remodeled.

**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.

**Ebenezer Bartlett, 25 Water Street, Colonial, 1728.**

A well-preserved example of a five-bay Colonial home, this has a stone center-chimney in the shape of a "T," from several fireplaces. The lean-to was added and the Greek Revival doorway is early nineteenth century. Ebenezer Bartlett was born in 1702, married Deborah Cruttenden in 1729, and had six children. He was one of four men chosen by the selectmen in 1744 to build a wharf at Jones Bridge "for ye free use of all Inhabitants of this Town, as they may be ocation for the Same in a Regular Manner, without Unnecessarily Incumbring the Same to ye Detriment of other Inhabitants of ye Town." In 1765 he became a deacon of the First Church and served until his death in 1775. Fitz-Greene Halleck, a well-known poet in the early nineteenth century who was awarded an honorary degree by Columbia in 1837, retired from his work in New York as confidential secretary to John Jacob Astor, and lived here with his sister Maria until his death in 1867. Two years later his many friends dedicated a monument to his memory at a ceremony in Alderbrook Cemetery on Boston Street where he is buried, which included reading a poem written for the occasion by Oliver Wendell Holmes. In 1877 his statue, the first to honor an American poet, was unveiled in New York's Central Park near the statues of Shakespeare and Sir Walter Scott. The poet William Cullen Bryant presided, President Rutherford B. Hayes formally presented the sculpture, and John Greenleaf Whittier wrote a poem especially for the event.



### **Increase Pendleton, 30 Water Street, Colonial, 1765.**

The asymmetrical facade of this five-bay, center-chimney Colonial house suggests that it may have been built in two sections. Pendleton married Phebe Kingman in 1764 and may have built a “half-house” first, enlarging it as money and time permitted. The Greek Revival doorway, added later, has a row of dentils along the cornice, guttae (like pegs) above the pilasters on each side, and a five-light transom over the door.

### **Abel Kimberly, 41-47 Water Street, Grecian Villa, c1840.**

For many years the provenance of this house was a mystery. But a recent title search by Joel Helander has disclosed that it was built by Abel Kimberly, who owned a large livery stable in Guilford center. In 1848 he deeded two and a half acres “with the buildings situated thereon . . . called the New Cottage Place” to the four minor children of his son, George A. Kimberly. As Elizabeth Mills Brown writes in the Guilford Survey, this is an early and perfect example of the Grecian Villa style and was probably built by Henry Austin or built from one of his published designs. She continues, “The restrained elegance of the Ionic portico, the perfect purity of the cubic form, the assurance with which the small building sits on its slightly elevated podium facing the street give it a miniature majesty that ranks it among Connecticut’s notable architectural work.” The basic form remains intact although details have been altered: a Greek parapet that edged the roof and little side porches with fringed canopies are gone, trellis supports have been added. According to Helander there is strong evidence that Fitz-Greene Halleck might also have lived here.

### **Joseph Parmelee, 54 Water Street, Colonial, 1765.**

Here is another fine five-bay, center-chimney Colonial house, a type prevalent on the street. But the large Greek Revival doorway, added later, makes this one stand out. Its double set of pilasters, with decorated sidelights in between, supports a band of small cut-out circles. The lean-to has been removed and additions made at the side and the rear. Parmelee was born in Guilford in 1721, married three times, had five children, and died here in 1804.

### **Elias Cadwell, 65 Water Street, Colonial, 1763.**

This house has three bays and one of the few gambrel roofs in Guilford. In 1958 it was moved here from its original location at the corner of Whitfield and Boston streets to make room for a parking lot behind The Guilford Trust Company, now

Page Hardware. In the process it lost its two chimneys but retains the 8/12 sash on the second floor and 12/12 on the first floor. The sturdy Greek Revival doorway is a later addition. The original clapboards are now covered with aluminum siding. Cadwell was born in Guilford in 1736, married twice, and had three children, all of whom died in early childhood.

**David Parmelee, 68 Water Street, Colonial, 1788.**

This house sits on a high foundation very close to the street. Its most distinctive feature is its roof which ends in wide eaves overhanging the front of the house, a style derived from the Dutch Colonial houses common on Long Island. The wide eaves shelter the double front steps leading to a plain board door frame. Parmelee's father, Joseph, lived down the street at No. 54.

**David Parmelee, Jr., 74 Water Street, Federal, 1807; Architect: Abraham Coan.**

The distinguishing feature of this house, built by the second David Parmelee next door to his father, is the four-bay facade with off-center door, an innovative type of plan in the Federal period. Combined with the delicate detail of the doorway, it is typical of Coan's work. The rear ell is thought to have once been a part of one of Samuel Desborough's outbuildings and may date to 1640. David Jr. was a blacksmith and a Whig-turned-Democrat, who was very active in town affairs. He married three times and had six children.

**David K. Parmelee, 93 Water Street, Federal, 1835.**

This house seems to have been raised from its original foundations and a simple stone stairway built to reach the now-high entrance. Notice the semielliptical window in the gable, a Federal fashion still hanging on well into the Greek Revival period. The triangular porch hood with pendants and delicate scrollwork is a late nineteenth-century addition. David Kirtland Parmelee was a direct descendant of John Permely, one of the founding settlers. He went to sea at a young age and was owner and captain of various small fishing vessels until his late sixties, sailing mostly between Guilford, Long Island, and New York. He and his wife, Sarah Stone, had five children, one of whom, Frank, began his career as assistant lighthouse keeper on Faulkner's Island. David died in 1903, aged ninety years and ten months.

**Harlow Isbell, 100 Water Street, Grecian Villa, c1850.**

Here is an interesting example of the Grecian Villa style with its cube form topped by a monitor. The quatrefoil openings similar to those at 119 Whitfield Street have

been changed and its modified Greek Corinthian columns are now joined by a railing. The front door has been replaced, as has the window on the second floor. Isbell came from Meriden, Connecticut, and was one of the founders of the Guilford Manufacturing Company, which stood next to Jones Bridge at the West River. Established in 1849 as a joint stock company to manufacture steam engines, various machinery, and iron castings, it was very successful at first but failed in 1856. Isbell, his wife, Sarah Snow, and eight children migrated to Kansas with the "Beecher Bible and Rifle Colony," leaving two married daughters behind. The Isbells helped to found the town of Waubensee, Kansas, and, with other settlers who took advantage of the government's offer of cheap land, accomplished the dual purpose of starting a new life and saving Kansas for the Union.

**Shore Line Electric Railway Car Barn, 129 Water Street, c1910.**

Formerly a maintenance barn for the Shore Line Electric Railway Company, this building which is set about a trolley's length back from the street had large doors through which the trolleys rolled, two at a time, to the inspection pits on its west side. At the north end there was a rotary converter which changed the current from alternating to direct. The small building on the east side housed an office, locker room, tool room, and the cable exit. The company began operations in 1910, running between Stony Creek and Ivoryton and expanding its services to New Haven, New London, and Norwich, until accidents and financial troubles forced it to suspend operations in 1922. Reorganized as the New Haven and Shore Line Railway, service resumed in 1924 and lasted until 1930. Today the building is a factory producing conveyors. [2012-currently houses Floor Craze, a carpet showroom]

**James Leete, Jr., 134 Water Street, Colonial, 1807.**

With its boxed cornice, 12/12 sash, slightly projecting window frames, plain framed doorway with five-light transom and crown molding, this house built in the Federal period looks more like late Colonial work. Leete may have continued his father's work as a shipbuilder here. His son James T. Leete inherited the house and sold it to the Guilford Manufacturing Company in 1849. (The two houses next door were made from half of the company's building. For what happened to the other half, see 69-75 Whitfield Street.) The house was purchased by George Parmelee in 1860 and later sold to the town for an almshouse.