

State of Connecticut
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 59 South Prospect Street, Hartford 06106

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY:
 Buildings & Structures

SURVEY OF GUILFORD, NEW HAVEN COUNTY, 06437
 June-December 1981

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY									
Town No.:					Site No. <u>434</u>				
UTM	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
QUAD:									
DISTRICT					IF NR SPECIFY				
<input type="checkbox"/> S	<input type="checkbox"/> NR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Actual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Potential

IDENTIFICATION

1. ADDRESS 248 (Old) Whitfield Street
(map 33, lot 14)
2. NAME
(historic) Rev. Henry Whitfield
NAME
(common)
3. USE
(historic) Private house
USE
(present) State Historic Museum
4. IF MOVED, WHEN AND FROM WHERE:



DESCRIPTION

5. ARCHITECT
6. DATE 1639 - (?) BUILDER
STYLE Late Medieval
7. ALTERATIONS Alterations, restorations, and re-restorations have been so extensive that little of the original fabric is now left. 19th century owners lowered the roof pitch, removed one chimney, enlarged the ell, altered fireplaces and partitions. The first restoration, by Norman Isham, took place (continued on next sheet)
8. NOTABLE FEATURES
Masonry construction--said to be the oldest stone house in the English colonies. Immense outside chimneys with sloped weatherings; steep roof, possibly for thatch, possibly for stone. Small casement windows, and one angled window on (continued on next sheet)

SIGNIFICANCE

9. ARCHITECTURAL-HISTORICAL
The date generally given is 1639, the year the colonists arrived, it being widely assumed that Whitfield readied his house instantly so he could move in before winter. But as the State's booklet (on sale at the museum) sensibly points out, it is not likely that people landing in New Haven in July would have been able to select the site of their town, lay it out, and complete a large stone house before freezing weather. Nothing is said about the house in the early records, and we can only guess when it was finished.
In its location on the edge of town and in its overall scheme of large landholdings adjacent to the house (unlike most of the colonists, whose lands were in outlots away from their homes), the Whitfield house recalls the small manor (continued on next sheet)

SOURCES

10. SOURCES
"The Henry Whitfield House," booklet available at the Whitfield House Museum, published by the Yankee Color Corporation, 1979; Isham, Norman M. and Albert F. Brown, Early Connecticut Houses; J. Frederick Kelly, article on the restoration, Old Time New England; (con't)

In all categories below, check more than one box if applicable.

If you have not actually made certain of the answer to a given question, either leave it blank or write "inferred" after the checked box; or, if drawn from a previous investigator, give source.

11. MATERIALS

- | | | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clapboard | <input type="checkbox"/> Brick | <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco | <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Shingle | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle | <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone | <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete | <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone | <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone | <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum/Vinyl | |

12. STRUCTURE

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Frame: | <input type="checkbox"/> Masonry | <input type="checkbox"/> Iron or Steel | <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Post & Beam | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balloon | | | | |

13. ROOF

- | | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> Pitched | <input type="checkbox"/> Gable-front | <input type="checkbox"/> Hip | <input type="checkbox"/> Shed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saltbox | <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-gable | <input type="checkbox"/> Flat Hip | <input type="checkbox"/> False Dormer | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gambrel | <input type="checkbox"/> Mansard | <input type="checkbox"/> Flat | <input type="checkbox"/> Sawtooth | |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> Tower(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor | <input type="checkbox"/> Cupola | <input type="checkbox"/> Dormered Gable | <input type="checkbox"/> Dome |
| c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle | <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Shingle | <input type="checkbox"/> Slate | <input type="checkbox"/> Metal | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

14. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2 1/2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: LOT SIZE: 9 acres

15. CONDITION: Exterior

- | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> Bad |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|

16. CONDITION: Structure

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> Bad |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|

17. OUTBUILDINGS (visible from public road)

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barn(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Carriage House | <input type="checkbox"/> Garage | <input type="checkbox"/> Shed(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Shop(s) |
| Other (well, stand, greenhouse, gazebo, privy, etc.): | | | | |

18. LANDSCAPING (visible from public road)

- | | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planted Grounds | <input type="checkbox"/> Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Terracing | <input type="checkbox"/> Plaza | <input type="checkbox"/> Court |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stone Wall(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pickett Fence | <input type="checkbox"/> Iron Fence | <input type="checkbox"/> Post & Rail | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

19. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Town Street | b. <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial | c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rural | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Wooded |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Semi-rural | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural | <input type="checkbox"/> Lakefront |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clustered Growth | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential | <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation, now or originally | <input type="checkbox"/> Salt marsh |
| d. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Of outstanding scenic/architectural value | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Of scenic/architectural value | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Of supportive value to contiguous scenic/architectural area | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |

20. ROLE OF BUILDING IN ENHANCING QUALITY OF ENVIRONMENT

- | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vital | <input type="checkbox"/> Important | <input type="checkbox"/> Supportive | <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|

21. OWNERSHIP

- | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public | <input type="checkbox"/> Private | <input type="checkbox"/> Interior accessible |
|--|----------------------------------|--|

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22. Name P. Odiseas

Date 7/23/81

Photographer P. Odiseas

Date 7/23/81

Negative Roll 17:6

Organization: Guilford Preservation Alliance
P.O. Box 199, Guilford, Conn. 06437

Slfd's Neg. Roll 17: 6A

23. THREATS TO BUILDING

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None Known | <input type="checkbox"/> Highways | <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism | <input type="checkbox"/> Developers | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Owner | <input type="checkbox"/> Deterioration | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

24. SUBSEQUENT EVALUATIONS

7. Alterations con't.

soon after the house was acquired by the State in 1897. In time the trustees came to feel that this restoration was not adequate and was even perhaps incorrect, and a new restoration was entrusted to J. Frederick Kelly between 1931 and 1937, bringing the house to its present form.

8. Notable Features con't.

the southwest corner--an unusual feature. Sloped exterior walls, 30" at the base, 18" at the top. Outside stair tower.

9. Architectural-Historical con't.

houses of England and tells us something of the image that Whitfield and his companions thought that they were going to recreate in the wilderness. Today its brooding presence makes a strong contrast with the light frame houses that later grew up around it--a reminder of the solemnity and power of Puritan authority.

It is generally assumed that the house was originally intended for use as a fortress. But nothing in the records suggests this and the house shows no signs of having been fortified. For defense against Indians, a wooden palisade was the common English practice.

The Whitfield House is on the National Register of Historic Places. Both the house and its museum are the town's most valuable historic assets.

10. Sources con't.

J. F. Kelly, Early Domestic Architecture; Dorothy Whitfield Society; Connecticut Historical Commission; Tercentenary Committee; Photo: Guilford Keeping Society; Guilford Library; Dana; Colonial Dames; Anthony Garvan, Architecture and Town Planning in Colonial Connecticut; Federal Writers' Project. Elmer Keith, Early Connecticut Architecture.