

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY
BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

HIST-6 NEW 5 77

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
 (203) 566-3005

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Town No.:	Site No. 127
UTM:	
QUAD:	
DISTRICT	IF NR SPECIFY
<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> NR	<input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Potential

IDENTIFICATION	1. BUILDING NAME (Common) <i>(Historic)</i> Swathel, John, House	
	2. TOWN CITY Durham	VILLAGE COUNTY Middlesex
	3. STREET AND NUMBER (and or location) West Maple Avenue	
	4. OWNER(S) Patterson, Ellen <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private	
	5. USE (Present) <i>(Historic)</i> Residence	
	6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No IF YES, EXPLAIN with permission	
DESCRIPTION	7. STYLE OF BUILDING Georgian/Federal	
	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1824	
	8. MATERIAL(S) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clapboard <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Brick <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Type: _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cut stone Type: sandstone	
	9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wood frame <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post and beam <input type="checkbox"/> balloon <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Load bearing masonry <input type="checkbox"/> Structural iron or steel	
10. ROOF (Type)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gable <input type="checkbox"/> Flat <input type="checkbox"/> Mansard <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor <input type="checkbox"/> sawtooth		
<input type="checkbox"/> Gambrel <input type="checkbox"/> Shed <input type="checkbox"/> Hip <input type="checkbox"/> Round <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____		
(Material)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Roll Asphalt <input type="checkbox"/> Tin <input type="checkbox"/> Slate		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Asphalt shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Built up <input type="checkbox"/> Tile <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____		
11. NUMBER OF STORIES 2½		
APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS 36' x 33'		
12. CONDITION (Structural) <i>(Exterior)</i>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated		
13. INTEGRITY (Location) WHEN? Alterations? IF YES EXPLAIN		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On original site <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Full to western elevation		
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES		
<input type="checkbox"/> Barn <input type="checkbox"/> Shed <input type="checkbox"/> Garage <input type="checkbox"/> Other landscape features or buildings (Specify) _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Carriage house <input type="checkbox"/> Shop <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Garden		
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open land <input type="checkbox"/> Wood-land <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scattered buildings visible from site		
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> High building density		
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS		
Set to the west of Main Street and included in Durham's Historic District, the John Swathel House is surrounded by open fields in a primarily residential neighborhood.		

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

Characteristics of the Georgian style are the twin interior brick chimneys and center-hall plan. Original features include the tripartite Palladian window over the main entry and the more Federal-period fanlights in the gable ends. The facade door, surmounted by a delicate leaded fanlight, is protected by a gable-roofed, cove-ceilinged portico supported by attenuated Doric columns. Twelve-over-twelve sash are featured throughout and the first-floor windows are capped by cornice window heads. A 2 story ell and single-story addition extend from the western elevation. Heavily victorianized in the late nineteenth century, the present owners have restored the interior and exterior to their original appearance.

18 ARCHITECT _____ BUILDER _____

19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

Facing east onto Maple Avenue, this 2½ story, five-bay, Georgian-style house has a wood-shingled ridge-to-street gable roof and sits on a sandstone foundation. John Swathel built this clapboarded post-and-beam-framed dwelling in 1824 and possibly incorporated a smaller and older dwelling house into the present structure.

In 1822 John Swathel purchased a large lot of land with buildings known as the "Talcott Place." Professor William C. Fowler states in the History of Durham that Swathel tore down the house of Hezekiah Talcott and rebuilt a new home on the lot. The Grand Lists of Durham indicate that Swathel built the house between 1823, when he owned one building (Swathel's Tavern) valued at \$1,800, and 1826, when he was taxed for two dwellings at \$3,700. John Swathel (1773-1857) was born in Haddam and moved here with his family at the age of ten. In 1797 he married Phebe Sears (1776-1841) by whom he had ten children: Hanna, John, Phineas, Margaret, Mary Ann, Elizabeth, Margaret, II, Phineas, Phoebe, and William. Swathel started farming at an early age and in 1794 purchased a quarter of the stage line company that ran between Springfield and New Haven. In 1802 he purchased the large tavern located at the corner of Main Street and Middlefield Road (no longer extant). Durham, being located on the shortest inland route between New York and Boston, became a popular stopover for travelers. The Swathel Tavern prospered and soon became the busiest tavern in town. A founding member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Swathel was active in local political affairs, serving as a town representative for many years. Tradition asserts that Swathel's wife Phebe went insane after her children had grown (SEE CONT. SHEET)

SOURCES

Durham Land Records; Durham Vital Records; Middletown Probate Records; Federal Census of 1820, 1850, 1880; Beers, J. B., History of Middlesex County, Connecticut (New York: J. B. Beers & Co., 1884); Durham History Committee, Durham, CT, 1866-1980: Century of Change (Durham: 1980); Fowler, William C., History of Durham (Durham: W. C. Fowler, 1866); Whited, Milton, Durham's Heritage (Durham: 1976); 1859 Walling Map; 1874 Beers Atlas.

PHOTO

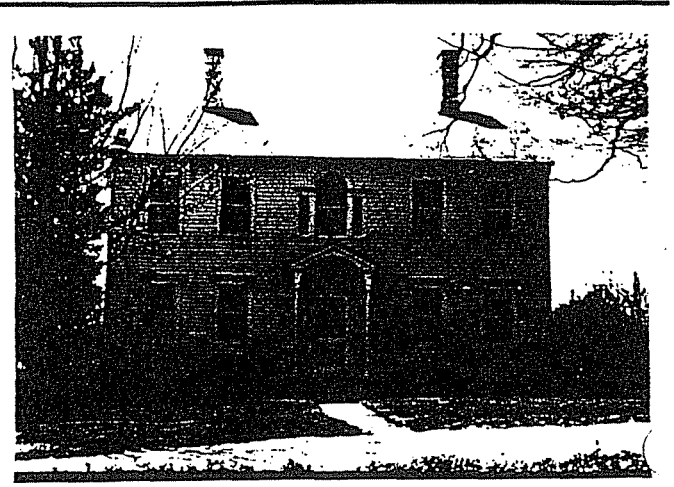
PHOTOGRAPHER Alex Parades DATE 5/84

VIEW West NEGATIVE ON FILE 14:11

COMPILED BY NAME E. R. Hart DATE 5/84

ORGANIZATION Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

ADDRESS 27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457



SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS

THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE

None known Highways Vandalism Developers Other _____

Renewal Private Deterioration Zoning Explanation _____

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
69 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
For Buildings and Structures

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:		SITE NO.:	
UTM: 18	/	/	/ 1 / 2 / 7
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

CONTINUATION SHEET

Item number: 19 Date: _____

JOHN SWATHEL HOUSE, Durham

19 (cont'd)

and he was forced to keep her locked in the tavern's attic because of her violent fits. Later Swathel built his wife a small cottage just to the west of the tavern, where she spent her remaining years. Shortly before his death Swathel sold the house to his daughter Mary Ann Fowler, the wife of Horatio N. Fowler. Mrs. Fowler willed the house to her daughter Mary F. Gatzmer, and the house remained in the Gatzmer family until 1922.

The John Swathel House is one of Durham's finest examples of Georgian-style architecture.