

**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.: 18

UTM

QUAD:

DISTRICT: S NR IF NR, SPECIFY: Actual Potential

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME (Common) (Historic) Johnson, Deacon John, House

2. TOWN/CITY VILLAGE COUNTY
Durham Middlesex

3. STREET AND NUMBER (and or location) Guilford Road (Rt. 77)

4. OWNER(S) Richard Spooner Public Private

5. USE (Present) (Historic) Residence

6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Yes No EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD: Yes No INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE: Yes No IF YES, EXPLAIN with permission

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING Georgian DATE OF CONSTRUCTION ca. 1780

8. MATERIAL(S) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)

Clapboard ext. Asbestos Siding Brick Other (Specify) _____

Wood Shingle Asphalt Siding Fieldstone

Board & Batten Stucco Cobblestone

Aluminum Siding Concrete Type: _____ Cut stone Type: sandstone foundation

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM

Wood frame Post and beam balloon Other (Specify) _____

Load bearing masonry Structural iron or steel

10. ROOF (Type)

Gable Flat Mansard Monitor sawtooth.

Gambrel Shed Hip Round Other (Specify) _____

(Material)

Wood Shingle Roll Asphalt Tin Slate

Asphalt shingle Built up Tile Other (Specify) _____

11. NUMBER OF STORIES 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS 38 x 18 (main block)

12. CONDITION (Structural) (Exterior)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated

13. INTEGRITY (Location) WHEN? (Alterations) IF YES EXPLAIN

On original site Moved Yes No Rear addition, porch

14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Barn Shed Garage Other landscape features or buildings (Specify) wine cellar

Carriage house Shop Garden

15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT

Open land Wood-land Residential Scattered buildings visible from site

Commercial Industrial Rural High building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS

Facing west onto Guilford Road, the Deacon John Johnson House is set in a rural residential neighborhood that developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the industrial development along Malt Brook.

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

DESCRIP: (Continued) The central-hall plan and interior end chimneys (the north chimney does not extend through the roof) are characteristic of Georgian-style architecture. The main block, which measures 18' x 36', is a doubled cube, another feature of the Georgian style. The most prominent addition to the facade is the single-story, hip-roofed, wrap-around porch supported by square posts which rise from a simple stick balustrade. The veranda roof is interrupted by a decorative pediment above the main entrance. The porch terminates on the north side in a single-story polygonal bay. The Victorian-period facade door, which is set in a plain frame, is capped by a dentiled course and thin projecting cornice. The door is flanked by six-paned sidelights. The large 1½ story addition has been attached to the northeast corner and features a "potting" room with a gravity-fed spring. Remaining interior features include the chair railing in the northwest front parlor (SEE CONT. SHEET)

18 ARCHITECT BUILDER

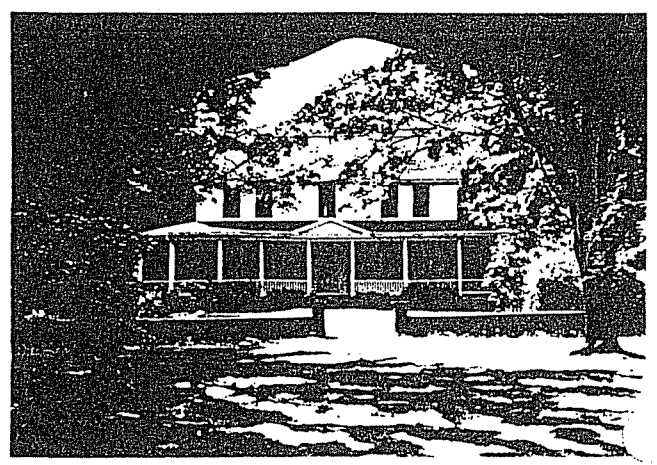
19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

SIGNIFICANCE Set approximately one-hundred yards southeast of the junction of Guilford and Cream Pot roads, this five-bay, 2½ story, early-Georgian-style house was built about 1780. Resting on a sandstone foundation, the clapboarded post-and-beam frame is capped by a ridge-to-street, asphalt-shingled gable roof.

This house was built ca. 1780 by Deacon John Johnson (1741-1819), the son of Benjamin and Eunice Johnson. In 1765 he married Concurrence Crane (1743-1803) who bore him seven children. After his first wife's death in 1803 Johnson married Lois Curtis (1761-1841). Johnson owned and operated a malt house along the stream to the rear of his house. The malt, used for making spirits, was prepared from rye and barley. He was also employed as a wheelwright and constructed most of the spinning wheels in town. For many years Johnson served as Deacon of the Congregational Church. Shortly before his death Johnson sold his homelot to his daughter Concurrence (Eunice) Tibbals, the wife of Deacon John Tibbals, with the following stipulation: "In the case the said Lois Johnson should outlive John Johnson, the widow will have life use of the north lower room, whole lower part of the kitchen with portions of the cellar, garret and garden" (14:405). In 1825 Eunice sold her father's house to Fairchild Camp "subject to the fulfilment of a jointer from John Johnson to Lois Curtis, now the widow of said Johnson" (16:148 & 149). Camp (1784-1854), who operated a saw mill and cider mill along Malt Brook, was listed as a "mechanic." Fairchild and his wife Melicent Coe had seven children: Curtis, Alva, Alexander, Enoch, Eliza, Cornelia, and Laura. In 1855 Camp's heirs sold the homestead (SEE CONTINUATION 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 P. D. Hall	DATE 6/83
	VIEW East	NEGATIVE ON FILE 7:18
COMPILED BY	NAME E. R. Hart	DATE 5/84
	ORGANIZATION Greater Middletown Preservation Trust	
	ADDRESS 27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457	



20 SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS

21 THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE

None known Highways Vandalism Developers Other _____

Renewal Private Deterioration Zoning Explanaton _____

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

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TOWN NO.: _____ SITE NO.: _____
UTM: 18/____/____/____/1/8/____
QUAD:
DISTRICT: B NR: ACTUAL
POTENTIAL

CONTINUATION SHEET

Item number: 17/19 Date: 5/85

DEACON JOHN JOHNSON HOUSE, Durham

17 (cont'd)

and upstairs bedrooms and wainscoting in the southwest front parlor. The cellar exhibits an interesting four-foot-deep and four-foot-high "cave" in the rear wall. Outbuildings include a large vertical flushboarded barn topped with a cupola. Built into the side of a small knoll behind the house is a large 2 story wine cellar. Built in the early twentieth century by the Arrigoni family, the wine cellar was blasted in solid rock and features a barrel-vaulted ceiling supported by curved wooden braces.

19 (cont'd)

to farmer Asahel Nettleton. The son of Joseph Nettleton and Esther Bailey, Asahel (1827-1900) never married. Italian immigrant Frank Arrigoni (1874-1943) purchased the Asahel Nettleton homestead in 1900. Arrigoni immigrated to America in 1894 at the age of twenty. His younger brother Dionigi soon followed his brother to Connecticut. The young brothers were first employed as lumbermen in North Branford and later worked for farmer Henry Nettleton in Durham. With money they had saved, the Arrigoni's bought 100 acres of woodland from which they burned charcoal. They were charcoal suppliers to Sargent Manufacturing in New Haven and to Winchester Repeating Arms Company. The hard work of these young immigrants soon paid off and they became the largest charcoal dealers in the State of Connecticut. With the growing popularity of the automobile in the early twentieth century, the Arrigoni's branched off into the road building and contracting business. By the 1930s they had become one of the State's largest and most prosperous contractors. Frank Arrigoni married Marrina Malacarne and they had three children, Chelso Lino, Alino Aldo, and Franklin William. As a wealthy man, Arrigoni updated the "Nettleton Farm" with twentieth-century conveniences and landscaped the grounds with foundations and sunken gardens. The pebble-rubble wall which surrounds the front of the house was built in 1914 with pebbles from the Arrigoni summer house on the beach in Branford. Arrigoni also had a miniature train track installed on the grounds, which he later sold to actor William Gillette. The Arrigoni family owned the property until recently. The present owners are in the process of restoring the house to its original splendor.

A fine example of the Georgian style, the Deacon John Johnson House derives its significance from its association to the Johnson, Camp, Nettleton, and Arrigoni families, all of whom contributed to the development of Durham over the last two-hundred years.