

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

Town No.:	Site No. 80
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) (Historic)	
Beecher's Shoe Shop	
2. TOWN CITY	COUNTY
Durham	Middlesex
3. STREET AND NUMBER (and or location)	
96 Main Street	
4. OWNER(S)	
Tucker, Allen & Ellen <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private	
5. USE (Present) (Historic)	
Residence (rental) Shoe factory/store/gas station	
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC:	IF YES, EXPLAIN
EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
with permission	

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION
Greek Revival	ca. 1837
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 Foundation	
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	APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS
2½	Main block 16'X36'; rear shed 18'X12'
12. CONDITION (Structural) (Exterior)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY (Location) (Alterations)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On original site <input type="checkbox"/> Moved	WHEN? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
IF YES, EXPLAIN: Shed attached to rear	
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 type="checkbox"/> Garden	
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT	
<input type="checkbox"/> Open land <input type="checkbox"/> Wood-land <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Scattered buildings visible from site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High building density	
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS	
This early nineteenth century commercial structure stands on the east side of Durham's Main Street, a few feet to the south of the Allen M. Tucker House-- with which it has been historically associated.	

DESCR: IN (Continued)

Its facade, surmounted by a full pediment, is fronted by a full open porch supported by square posts and boasting a simple pedimented gable in its center. The main entry, which is surrounded by plain molding, is flanked by two modern one pane windows. The second story contains two 9 pane casement windows. Within the pediment is a six pane square window with plain molding. The fenestration on the north and south sides of the structure is varied, ranging from modern one pane units to sixteen pane windows which may date from the nineteenth century. To the rear of the main block is a deteriorated gable roofed shed. It has a set of large double-hung doors.

18 ARCHITECT

BUILDER

19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

SIGNIFICANCE

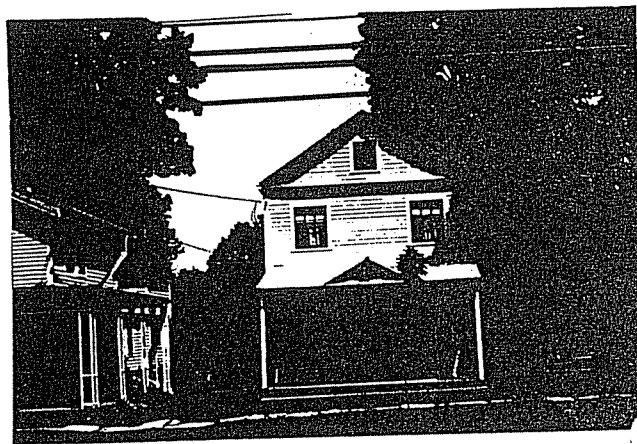
A commercial structure has stood on this site since the 1770s, the original one having been built by Jonathan Walkley, a cooper, who also built the adjacent house, 98 Main Street. Stylistic evidence suggests, however that the present structure does not date from the eighteenth century. Most likely, it was built by Bennett Beecher, a shoemaker from Woodbridge, Connecticut, who bought the property of Seth Seward in 1837. Beecher operated a boot and shoe factory in this building from 1837 to 1884, when the Middletown Savings Bank foreclosed on his mortgage. The structure subsequently served several commercial purposes, as a store, a pool hall, and, according to its present owner, as Durham's first gas station. It is presently used for residential purposes. This structure is historically significant as one of Durham's earliest surviving industrial buildings and as the center of its mid-nineteenth century shoe industry.

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	DATE
P. D. Hall	6/10/83
VIEW	NEGATIVE ON FILE
West elevation	III: 7
NAME	DATE
P. D. Hall	
ORGANIZATION	
Greater Middletown Preservation Trust	
ADDRESS	
27 Washington Street, Middletown, Conn. 06457	



20 SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS

21 THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE

- None known.
 Highways
 Vandalism
 Developers
 Other _____
 Renewal
 Private
 Deterioration
 Zoning
 Explanation _____