STATE OF CONNECTICUT

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
or Buildings and Structures

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME: Common: John M. Douglas House Historic: same

2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: Middletown COUNTY: Middlesex

3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 258 Court Street

4. OWNER(S): Wesleyan University PUBLIC X PRIVATE

5. USE: Present: Student housing Historic: Residence

6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: X yes no
   Interior accessible: X yes, explain with permission no

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Queen Anne (Stick Style and Eastlake decoration) DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1880-81

8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   X clapboard ___ asbestos siding ___ brick
   ___ wood shingle ___ asphalt siding ___ fieldstone
   ___ board & batten ___ stucco ___ cobblestone
   ___ aluminum siding ___ concrete: type: _____
   ___ cut stone: type: brownstonefoundation
   ___ other:

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
   X wood frame; ___ post and beam X balloon
   ___ load bearing masonry ___ structural iron or steel
   ___ other:

10. ROOF: type:
    X gable (jerkin flat ___ mansard ___ monitor ___ sawtooth
        gambrel headed) shed ___ hip ___ round ___ other
    material:
        ___ wood shingle ___ roll asphalt ___ tin ___ slate
        X asphalt shingle ___ built up ___ tile ___ other:

11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 31'x71'

12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent X good ___ fair ___ deteriorated
    Exterior: excellent X good ___ fair ___ deteriorated

13. INTEGRITY: Location: X on original site moved, when:
    Alterations: no X yes, explain: Rear wing added; second story porch enclosed; inte-
    rior divided into four apartments

14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    ___ barn ___ shed ___ garage ___ other landscape features or buildings:
    ___ carriage house ___ shop ___ garden

15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
    ___ open land ___ woodland X residential ___ scattered buildings visible from site
    ___ commercial ___ industrial ___ rural ___ high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This house is typically sited for the upper Court Street area; back from the street with side yards and a yard in the rear. The John M. Douglas house reflects the closing phase of the gradual development of the area throughout the 19th century.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Parquet floor in entrance hallway
Pressed tin wall coverings

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: John Mansfield Douglas was the first to live in this house, occupying it a year after its construction in 1880/81. A prominent man in Middletown, he was President of the W. & B. Douglas Pump Works, one of Middletown's major manufacturing concerns whose reputation for quality and innovative products was known worldwide. He also became President of the Farmers & Mechanics Bank and President of the Middletown Street Railway, and served in the State House and Senate. The house was sold by his widow in 1900, and passed through a series of owners until acquired by Wesleyan in 1959.

The house is of particular significance due to the fine Eastlake details such as the curved roof brackets with pendants and the elaborately turned porch columns. With its neighbor to the east (250 Court Street) it typifies the distinguished character the upper Court Street area had attained as a residential neighborhood by the late nineteenth century.

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown Probate Records; Middletown City Directories; Middletown Tribune: Souvenir Edition (Middletown: E.F. Bigelow, 1896)