STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
3 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

STORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
For Buildings and Structures

IDENTIFICATION
1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Alumni Guest House Historic: Prof. Caleb Winchester House
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 284 High Street
4. OWNER(S): Wesleyan University __PUBLIC × PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Guest rooms Historic: same
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: × yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain × no

DESCRIPTION
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Shingle Style Colonial Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1889
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   × clapboard × asbestos siding
   × wood shingle × asphalt siding
   × board & batten × stucco
   × aluminum siding __ concrete: type: x brick first story and northeast
cobblestone
× cut stone: type: brownstone
   __ other: foundation
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
   × wood frame: × post and beam × balloon
   __ load bearing masonry × structural iron or steel
   __ other: __
10. ROOF: type: flat
     × gambrel/cross × shed north
     __ mansard __ monitor __ sawtooth
     __ other: __
     material: × wood shingle × roll asphalt
     __ asphalt shingle __built up __ tile
     __ other:
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 38' x 49'
12. CONDITION: Structural: × excellent × good __ fair __ deteriorated
    Exterior: × excellent × good __ fair __ deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: × on original site __ moved, when:
    Alterations: no × yes, explain: Minor interior changes; stained glass window re-
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES: moved
    __ barn __ shed __ garage __ other landscape features or buildings: __
    __ carriage house __ shop __ garden __
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
    __ open land __ woodland × residential __ scattered buildings visible from site
    __ commercial __ industrial __ rural __ high building density
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This house faces west from the east
    side of High Street. High Street in this area consists of 19th century high-style homes
    and the institutional buildings of Wesleyan University.
1. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

2. SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: ____________  Builder: ____________

8. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: Professor Caleb T. Winchester erected this structure in 1889. An 1869 graduate of Wesleyan, Winchester was at various times the school's librarian, and Professor of English. He was a nationally known English critic and lecturer. "Winch," as he came to be known, was extremely popular locally; at one point it was suggested that the name of Wesleyan University be changed to Winchester College. He was a member of the Board of Trustees and considered one of the most influential people on the campus. He died in 1920, leaving the house to his wife with the stipulation that upon her death the house should be deeded to Wesleyan. Wesleyan University acquired the house in 1937 and has used it for residential purposes since. It is currently the Alumni Guest House.

This building is a fine example of the Shingle Style of the 1880s. The influence of the Colonial Revival is seen in the gambrel roof, free Palladian window, dormers, and porches. The interior has been adapted to accommodate its guests comfortably. A notable feature of the plan is the placement of the kitchen fronting on the street and the parlors in the rear facing the eastern hills. Mr. Winchester designed the house this way and often remarked about "the advantage of living away from the street side of the building."

9. PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Elizabeth Loomis
date: 2/78  view: west
negative on file: Roll 12, #19

10. COMPILED BY:

name: Elizabeth Loomis  date: 11/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

11. SOURCES: "Professor Caleb Winchester House,"


12. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

x none known  __ highways  __ vandalism  __ developers  __ other: ____________

_ renewal  __ private  __ deterioration  __ zoning  __ explanation: ____________