STATE OF CONNECTICUT

HISTORICAL RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM

1. BUILDING NAME: Common: ___________________________ Historic: Robert Johnson House

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

3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 13-15 Johnson Street

4. OWNER(S): Lillian Aaron

5. USE: Present: Residence Historic: same

6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: x yes no
Interior accessible: x yes, explain with owner's permission no

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Federal DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: Before 1825

8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):

_x_clapboard
_x_wood shingle
_x_board & batten
_x_aluminum siding
_x_other:

_x_asbestos siding
_x_asphalt siding
_x_stucco
_x_concrete: type:

_x_brick painted
_x_fieldstone
_x_cobblestone
_x_cut stone: type: brownstone

_x_load bearing masonry
_x_structural iron or steel

_xother:

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:

_x_wood frame: x_post and beam
_x_load bearing masonry

_x_flat
_x_gambrel
_x_shuffle
_x_roll asphalt

_x_asphalt shingle: built up
_x_tile

_x_mansard
_x_hip
_x_round
_x_monitor
_x_others:

_x_sawtooth

10. ROOF: type:

_x_gable
_x_gambrel
_x_shed
_x_wood shingle
_x_asphalt shingle: built up

_x_material:

_x_roll asphalt
_x_tin
_x_slate
_x_other:

_x_lintels, sills and foundation

11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: Rear Ell: 16'x24'

12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent x good
Exterior: x excellent

13. INTEGRITY: Location: x on original site moved, when:
Alterations: no x yes, explain: Two-story porches across facade

14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

_x_barn
_x_carriage house

_x_shed
_x_shop

_x_shed
_x_garage

_x_carriage house
_x_shop

_x_garden

_x_other landscape features or buildings: bluestone and brownstone walk in front and around side; south passway exits on Spring Street

15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

_x_open land
_x_woodland
_x_residential

_x_commercial
_x_industrial

_x_high building density

_x_scattered buildings visible from site

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This imposing Federal house has a dominant site set well back from Johnson Street on the crest of Prospect Hill. Located in Middletown's residential North End, the building faces east toward the river, and is bounded at the rear by the rambling St. John's Cemetery grounds. Clearly the oldest house in the area, the structure is flanked by modest late nineteenth century dwellings.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Fanlight over front door
Three remaining end-wall chimneys (southwest one removed)

SIGNIFICANCE

ARCHITECT: 

BUILDER:

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: In 1822 Robert Johnson bought land and build-
ings from Isaac Bacon, west of the intersection of Prospect and Spring Streets. An 1825
map shows a house on this site similar to the one now there; and an 1851 map names R. John-
son as the owner of the building. Johnson was a man of means, engaging in city-wide real
estate activity, and holding a partnership in a rifle factory on the lower Pameacha River.
After Johnson, C.H. Griffin, a trotting park owner, held the property; he is remembered by
Griffin Lane, a short distance north of the estate. Following a succession of owners, the
house is now owner-occupied on the first floor, with a rental apartment above.

Rare in Middletown, this five-bay brick Federal house stands 2½-stories high, and origi-
nally had tall paired chimneys on the gable ends. The sills, lintels, and foundation are
brownstone. An elliptical fanlight graces the center front doorway, now partly obscured by
later two-story porches across the facade. A sizeable two-story rear ell has been part of
the house at least since 1851. Surrounded by houses of a modest character, the prominent
siting, large mass, and clean lines of this Federal house combine to make it a dignified
reminder of earlier years.

PHOTOGRAPH
photographer: Elizabeth Loomis
date: 6/78 view: east
negative on file: Roll 25A, 98

COMPILED BY:
name: Roger Sherman date: 9/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
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19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; History of
Middlesex County (New York: J.B. Beers, 1884);
Karl Harrington, Background of Wesleyan and Middle-
town, Connecticut (Middletown: Wesleyan University,
1942); Willard Wallace, "Middletown 1650-1950" (City
of Middletown, 1950); 1851 Clark Map, 1874 Beers Atlas

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

- [x] none known  [ ] highways  [ ] vandalism  [ ] developers  
- [x] renewal  [ ] private  [ ] deterioration  [ ] zoning  
- [ ] other: 
  explanation: 