STATE OF CONNECTICUT

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

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
For Buildings and Structures

IDENTIFICATION
1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Connecticut Valley Hospital Historic: Connecticut Hospital for the Insane
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): Silver Street; east of Eastern Drive
4. OWNER(S): State of Connecticut x PUBLIC PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Psychiatric care facility Historic: Insane Asylum
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: x yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain: x no

DESCRIPTION
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Institutional buildings and site DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: from 1867 to present
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
- clapboard - asbestos siding - brick
- wood shingle - asphalt siding - fieldstone
- board & batten - stucco - cobblestone
- aluminum siding - concrete: type: - cut stone: type:
- other: variety
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
- wood frame - post and beam - balloon
- load bearing masonry - structural iron or steel
- other: variety
10. ROOF: type:
- gable - flat - mansard - monitor - sawtooth
- gambrel - shed - hip - round - x other various types
- material:
- wood shingle - roll asphalt - tin - slate
- asphalt shingle - built up - tile - x other: various types
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: Variety APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 50 buildings on 200 acres
12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent x good - fair - deteriorated
Exterior: excellent x good - fair - deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: x on original site moved, when:
Altersions: no x yes, explain: A number of early buildings have been renovated;
also see #18
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
- barn x shed x garage
- carriage house shop x garden
- other landscape features or buildings: hospital reservoirs; early maintenance buildings; cemetery
- east of the site
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
- open land x woodland - residential scattered buildings visible from site
- commercial x industrial - rural x high building density
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This expansive site comprises the main section of the Connecticut Valley Hospital. Located in the South Farms district, it consists of a large concentration of early and contemporary buildings. The site, landscaped with broad lawns and large, shade trees, is at the top of a hill and offers panoramic views (see continuation sheet)
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

SIGNIFICANCE
Architect:  
Builder:  

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: The Connecticut Valley Hospital was formally opened in this city during 1868. Two years earlier, Middletown had granted the site to the State for the establishment of an asylum to accommodate Connecticut's mentally ill. By 1896, four groups of buildings had been erected and the institution, known as the Connecticut Hospital for the Insane, was one of the largest of its kind in the country.

The hospital consists of approximately eighty structures complemented by 650 acres south and east of the main site. It includes large institutional buildings constructed of brick and brownstone, frame and brick residences, and a number of maintenance buildings. The majority of these form a large group centered around Shew Hall. This site, which contains approximately two hundred acres, is illustrated by the accompanying map. It comprises many distinctive structures that evidence different periods of the institution's development.

Shew Hall, the original hospital structure, was built in 1867. It functions as the administrative building and is the focal point of the institution. This large structure is named in honor of the hospital's first superintendent, Dr. Abram M. Shew. Designed by (see continuation sheet)

PHOTOGRAPH
photographer: Robert Svec  
date: 12/78  
view: see continuation sheet  
negative on file: see continuation sheet

COMPiled BY:
name: Robert Svec  
date: 12/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Tax Assessors; History of Middlesex County (Chicago: H.F. Beers, 1884)

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

___none known ___highways ___vandalism ___developers ___other:

___renewal ___private ___deterioration ___zoning ___explanation: CVH plans to

to demolish the original sections of Woodward Hall and Weeks Hall in the fall or winter of 1979.
Connecticut Hospital for the Insane
Silver St. Middletown, Ct. 06457

BUILDING
A: Shew Hall
B: Stanley Hall
C: Woodward Hall
D: Smith Home
E: Shepard Home
F: Cottages on Eastern Drive

VIEW  NEG. ON FILE
northwest  Roll 55, #31
southwest  Roll 57, #13
west  Roll 55, #35-35A
south  Roll 57, #10
southwest  Roll 55, #25A
southwest  Roll 57, #21A
of the city. Silver Street and Bow Lane pass through the property which is bordered by Eastern Drive, west. Small drives, leading from these streets, traverse the grounds.

Addison Hutton of Philadelphia, it was constructed in the Second Empire style. The building was remodeled in 1939, when the interior was updated and a flat roof bordered by a parapet was installed on the main section. The three large wings display mansard roofs and details that are indicative of the main sections's former appearance.

Stanley Hall, built around 1879, is also designed in the Second Empire style. Now vacant, it was the hospital's maximum security facility in earlier years. This unimposing, rectangular building is plainly decorated and has a mansard roof with numerous dormers. The windows are screened by metal bars, reminiscent of its previous function.

Woodward Hall, erected about 1886, is of the Queen Anne style. It has an irregular profile that is accentuated by many eves. The structure exhibits multiple roofs capped by numerous chimneys, wide turrets, and large, gabled dormers. The interior has been recently remodelled.

Weeks Hall, built in 1894, is also constructed in the Queen Anne style and in addition, has features that suggest the influence of the Jacobethan Revival. Its appearance, similar to that of Woodward Hall, is highlighted by prominent, steeply pitched gables and floral designs in terra cotta. The building, presently unoccupied, served as a patient care facility.

Smith Home, constructed about 1909, is designed in the Colonial Revival style. It has a cross-gabled roof crowned by a slender, distinctive tower. The main entrance displays fluted pilasters and a large fan in relief above the door. Currently unoccupied, the structure once housed hospital employees.

Other notable early buildings are sited on the grounds. The police station, a distinctive cottage, was erected in 1895. Shepherd Home and Russell Hall are two similar structures that were built in the 1920s; they exhibit large, ornate porticos which are classical in design. There are also a number of small residences, constructed during the late nineteenth century, that have served as living quarters for the staff.

This site reflects the history associated with the care and treatment of the mentally ill in Connecticut. The buildings, reminiscent of different eras of the hospital's past, document its progressive growth and comprise a diverse collection that contributes to the architectural variety of Middletown.