STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
CONNECUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
50 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
(203) 566-3005  
HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM  
For Buildings and Structures  

1. BUILDING NAME: Common:  
   Historic: Benjamin Butler House  
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown  
   VILLAGE:  
   COUNTY: Middlesex  
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 160 Washington Street  
4. OWNER(S): Kalman Palmer  
   Historic: same  
5. USE: Present: Residence  
   Interior accessible: yes, explain:  
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes, no  
   Interior accessible: yes, no  

DESCRIPTION  
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Second Empire  
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):  
   X clapboard  
   asbestos siding  
   wood shingle  
   asphalt siding  
   board & batten  
   stucco  
   aluminum siding  
   concrete: type:  
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:  
   X wood frame:  
   post and beam  
   balloon  
   load bearing masonry  
   structural iron or steel  
10. ROOF: type:  
    gable  
    flat  
    X mansard  
    monitor  
    sawtooth  
    gambrel  
    shed  
    hip  
    round  
    other  

11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½  
12. CONDITION: Structural:  
    excellent  
    X good  
    fair  
    deteriorated  
    Exterior:  
    excellent  
    X good  
    fair  
    deteriorated  
13. INTEGRITY: Location: X on original site  
    Full length veranda added to front entrance porch; some interior alteration; slight fire damage 4/78  
    Alterations: no X yes, explain:  
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:  
    barn  
    shed  
    garage  
    carriage house  
    shop  
    garden  
    other landscape features or buildings:  
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:  
    open land  
    woodlands  
    X residential  
    scattered buildings visible from site  
    commercial  
    industrial  
    rural  
    high building density  
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This house is situated on a large corner lot, well set back from a wide and busy street. Its immediate neighbors are late 19th century houses of similar size, with the exception of the 1931 Renaissance Revival Church of St. Sebastian across the street to the southeast.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

SIGNIFICANCE
Architect: Builder:  

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This house was built by William D. Willard between 1867 and 1870. Willard was a well known dealer in building supplies and apparently built the house for immediate resale. Benjamin Butler was the first occupant. Butler, who began his career making canvas boat sails on Cherry Street, developed a thriving ship's chandlery business. This enterprising man occupied the house until his death in the 1880s. It remained in the Butler family until 1899.

The house retains most of its original exterior detail (with the exception of storm windows and a later but sympathetic veranda), and is a good example of a relatively modest and unfanciful version of the Second Empire style. It displays typical Second Empire features such as cubicile form, slate mansard roof, and pedimented dormer windows, but not the often seen boldly modeled decorative forms.

PHOTOGRAPH
photographer: Robert Svec  
date: 3/78  
negative on file: Roll 20, #10  
view: southeast

COMPiled by:
name: Elizabeth Loomis  
date: 4/78  
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust  
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Conn. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown City Directories; J.H. Beers Atlas 1874; Bailey Perspective View Map 1877

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:  

X none known  __highways  __vandalism  __developers  __other:  
__renewal  __private  __deterioration  __zoning  __explanation:
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CONTINUATION SHEET
Item number: ____ Date: ___1/90____

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