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: ___________________________________________ Historic: Robert W. Merriam House

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

3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 301 Washington Terrace

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

5. USE: Present: Residential Historic: same

6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: X yes no

Interior accessible: yes, explain __________________________________________________________

X no

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Colonial Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1909

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: ____________________________ X cut stone: type: brownstone

— other: __________________________________________________________

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:

X wood frame: X post and beam X balloon

— load bearing masonry __ structural iron or steel

— other: __________________________________________________________

10. ROOF: type:

X gable __ flat __ mansard __ monitor __ sawtooth

— gambrel __ shed __ hip __ round __ other

material:

— wood shingle __ roll asphalt __ tin __ slate __ other:

X asphalt shingle __ built up __ tile __________________________________________

11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 38'x38'

12. CONDITION: Structural: __ excellent X good __ fair __ deteriorated

Exterior: __ excellent X good __ fair __ deteriorated

13. INTEGRITY: Location: X on original site moved, when: __________________________________________

Alterations: X no __ yes, explain: __________________________________________________________

14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

— barn __ shed __ garage X other landscape features or buildings: Brick

— carriage house __ shop __ garden patio in rear

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 faces north to Washington Park from the south side of Washington Terrace. The heavily shaded park effectively screens the residences on Washington Terrace from the traffic on Rte. 66. A variety of residential structures are represented in the area, as well as the Wesleyan Center for the Arts complex, which neighbors this building to the east and south.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Carved fan in dormer pediment

SIGNIFICANCE

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: Robert W. Merriam, secretary of the Rockfall Woolen Co., built and occupied this house in 1909. The Merriam family had a long association with the textile industry, and their takeover of the Rockfall Woolen Co. in 1882 was directly responsible for the renewed success of that company. Robert Merriam sold this property to Wesleyan in 1966 for use as a faculty residence.

This house is a good example of Colonial Revival architecture in Middletown. The use of Georgian elements, such as fluted pilasters on the doorframe and Palladian windows in the gable peaks, embellish the tightly symmetrical form. A later screened porch on the east detracts from, but does not disguise, this symmetry. Other decorative details include a fan motif in the north dormer peaks; narrow clapboards (only 1 1/2" to weather); and a pedimented entrance porch. The larger scale of this house as compared to Georgian period houses is another typical feature of the Colonial Revival.

Located near the Colonial Revival T. MacDonough Russell House (1902) and the Timothy Powers House (1783) this house contributes to the Georgian feeling of the street.

PHOTOGRAPH
photographer: Elizabeth Loomis
date: 2/78 view: southwest
negative on file: Roll 14, #16

COMPiled BY:
name: John E. Reynolds date: 11/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
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19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown City Directories; Commemorative Biography of Middlesex County (Chicago: J.H. Beers, 1903); 1915 Aeroview Map

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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