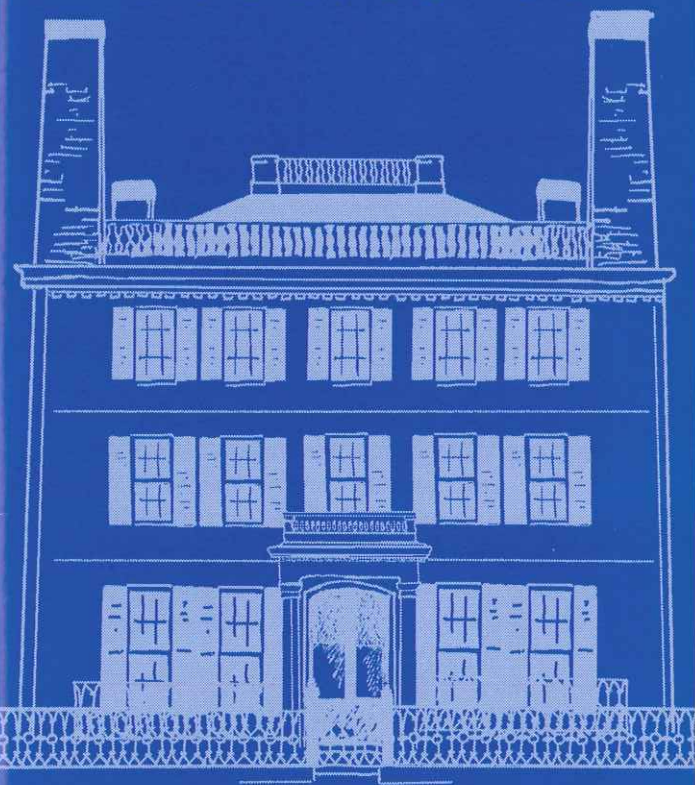




Walking Guide to Historic

Washington & Broad Streets

N O R W I C H • C T



Approximate length • 1.25 miles
Estimated time to complete • 1 hour

Throughout the 19th century, Norwich flourished as a leading industrial center of Connecticut. Several large mills, producing everything from textiles to firearms, occupied the banks of Norwich's rivers. The Ponemah Mills, in the Taftville section of the City, was reputedly the largest cotton mill complex in the world. The Yantic Falls section was the center of industrial growth in Norwich in the 1600s. The picturesque waterfall provided power for a variety of factories and mills. After 1760, Chelsea or Downtown, housed many retail stores and businesses, while the harbor bustled with trade. Together this activity generated great wealth for the community's leading mill owners, merchants, and businessmen.

Washington Street was attractive to many of Norwich's prosperous entrepreneurs because it, along with Broadway, comprised one of the two main arteries into the downtown and harbor area. It was also in close proximity to the industrial area by the Yantic Falls. Successful businessmen built their homes beside the busy road and pushed for sidewalks to be installed in the 1870s. These houses reflect both an era of immense fortunes and the will of modern day Norwich to protect and preserve its illustrious history. The houses listed on this brochure are representative of architectural building styles. Visitors are encouraged to stroll along many of the side streets to observe additional examples.

This tour follows a loop which begins at the Benedict Arnold Birthplace Marker, at the corner of Arnold Place and Washington Street. Proceed south along right hand side of the road, to Broad Street. Walk along Broad Street, down one side and up the other, and go north back onto Washington Street. Take right onto Chelsea Parade South.

Buildings are witnesses to change through the decades. These houses reveal their stories through design, location, and maintenance. What tales do they tell you?



296 Washington St. - 1913

An excellent example of bungalow styling, this building was home to Dr. Robert A. Agnew's family for 50 years. Dr. Agnew was a general practitioner at William W. Backus Hospital. In 1972, Lee Memorial United Methodist Church purchased the home for use as a parsonage. **Craftsman** - The building resembles the chalet and pastoral homes admired by turn of the century romantics. Tapering posts hold up the porch over which is a shed dormer. Mix of construction materials is typical of this style.

276 Washington St. - Captain Jonathan Chester House - c.1755

This house was built by Captain Jonathan Chester of Groton. His grandfather, Samuel Chester, was a sea captain in New London in 1663, and was engaged in trade with the West Indies.

Jonathan was married to Freelove Waterman, a descendent of Sgt.

Thomas Waterman, one of the founders of Norwich.

English Colonial - Note the wooden clapboards, gabled roof, and lights along the doorway, all typical of the style.



270 Washington St. - c.1890

Local architect, James Hiscox, designed this residence for Charles R. Butts. Mr. Butts served for 67 years at the Norwich Savings Society and as its president from 1923-1938. He began there as a clerk in 1871, and steadily moved through the ranks until he was elected president in 1923. In 1931, Mr. Butts became president of the Thames Bank and Trust Co., making him the chief executive of two of Norwich's largest banks. Thus, Mr. Butts earned his reputation as the "dean of Norwich bankers." **Colonial Revival** - The fanlight in the pediment provides detail and the perfectly proportioned porches add symmetry to the structure.



268, 264, 262, Washington St. - c.1880

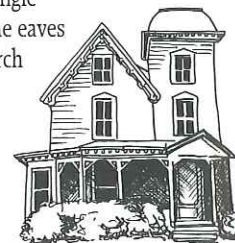
These three houses were bought and sold often with no single family residing in them for a long period of time. It is interesting to note that they were all built around the same time, yet each represents a different style of architecture. These houses are good examples of where an average middle-income person living in Norwich, may have resided.



268 - French Second Empire - The tremendous arch in the roof line, and Mansard roof with curled leaf columns supporting the entry jetty, give this house an elegant look.



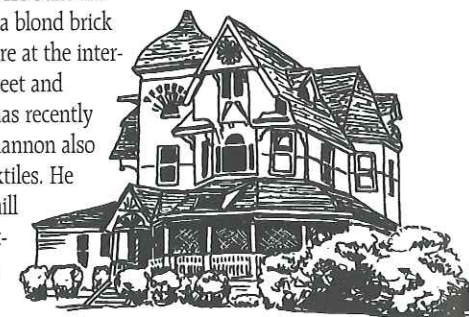
264 - Italianate - The center gable with its single arched window and the dental work under the eaves add detail. The double columns under the porch are matched by the double arched-windowed front doors.



262 - Queen Anne - The flathead tower, the gabled roof with quatrefoil wood cut outs and the porch supported by rafters, are features of this style.

242 Washington St. - James B. Shannon House - c.1890

The original owner, James B. Shannon, was a wealthy Norwich businessman. He made his fortune as a liquor and cigar dealer and in real estate. He constructed the first apartment building in Norwich at Marguerite Corner. He built the Shannon Building, a blond brick commercial structure at the intersection of Main Street and Broadway, which has recently been renovated. Shannon also had interests in textiles. He owned a woolen mill in Baltic and invested in several other local mills. At one



Mansard Roof

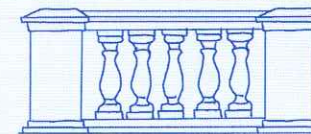


Portico



Ionic Columns

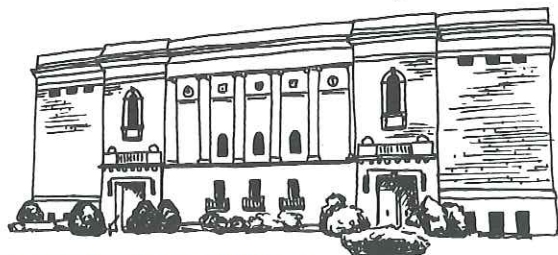
Cupola



Balustrade



point, Shannon was the largest tax payer in Norwich. **Queen Anne** - This three story structure has no two sides alike. It boasts typical features of the period from its wide veranda to its varied facades, overhangs, windows, and roof lines. Notice the oriental look of the tower roof. Stick style woodwork decorates the house, and is most noticeable in the sunrise motif gracing the front door overhang. This house is featured on the Tourism Commission's official Norwich poster.



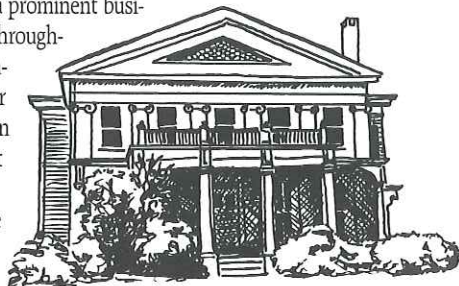
Masonic Temple - Corner of Sachus and Washington Streets

Cornerstone of this imposing structure was laid in 1927. The Masons are a fraternal organization which evolved from Medieval guilds. A social and benevolent society, they raise money for Shriner's Children's burn centers. The interior has a full auditorium and banquet facilities.

Roman Temple/Mix - Ionic order pilasters are set off by Masonic Symbols. Building reflects a movement away from pure Roman Revival and excessive ornamentation.

188 Washington St. - H.B. Norton House - 1840

Henry B. Norton was a prominent businessman in Norwich throughout the nineteenth century. He was the senior executive of the Norton Bros., Grocery Store, at the time one of the largest in the State. He was also the president of the Norwich



Bleaching, Dyeing, and Printing Co. Mr. Norton took a profound interest in educational matters, and was an original Corporator of the Norwich Free Academy. **Greek Revival** - The large pediment with the four Doric columns supporting the portico, and the Ionic pilasters on the corners and between the windows, illustrate the Greek Revival style.

172 Washington St. - C.M. Huntington House - c.1870

This home was built by C.M. Huntington, a leading clothing retailer of Connecticut. The Huntington family occupied the home until 1919. During Prohibition, 1920-1933, the home became a "speak easy," and had a full-sized bar installed in the basement. **French Second Empire** - Note the Mansard roof with its three dormers, the paired brackets under the eaves, and the balustrade over the porch.



154 Washington St. - Pinehurst - c.1860

Edward N. Gibbs lived in this house, dubbed Pinehurst, during the late 19th century. Mr. Gibbs was president of the Thames National Bank from 1892-1896. Thames National Bank, like many others of its day, was located on Shetucket Street in Chelsea in an area known as "banker's row". Few of the banks, begun in the 1830s, operate today. In 1897, Mr. Gibbs left the bank and served as treasurer of



the New York Life Insurance Co., until his death in 1900. **Italian Villa (Tuscany)** - The low-pitched hip roof top, loggia (upper story porch), and the tower are features of this style. This house was built to resemble the stucco homes which dot the Italian countryside. Houses received additions as families grew, resulting in the rambling style home.

15 Broad St. - Lucy H. Smith House - c.1845

Lucy H. Smith, for whom the house was built, was the wife of Albert Smith, an employee at the Phenix Foundry Co. formerly located on Franklin Street. After her husband's death, Mrs. Smith's financial matters were handled by Captain Erastus Williams, the mayor of Norwich from 1853 - 1855. **Greek Revival** - The high gable roof, with the fluted columns in front, highlight this impressive home.



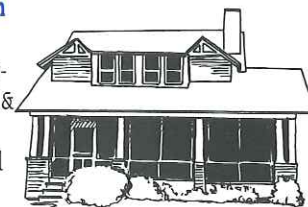
17 Broad St. - Frances Johnson House - 1923

The original occupant, Mrs. Frances Johnson, was the widow of Robert C. Johnson. Mr. Johnson was the assistant treasurer at the textile mill, Aspinook Company. **Colonial Revival** - The arched shape of the fanlight over the front door is repeated in the Palladian second story window and the cross dormer in the roof. These features along with the swan's neck wooden decoration over the front door, the decorative brackets and dental work under the eaves, add detail to this home.



23 Broad St. - Henry Church House - c.1920

Henry E. Church was an employee of the funeral firm of Church & Allen which was located at 15 Main Street. The business is still in operation at 136 Sachus Street. **Craftsman** - The matching gable roofs of the extended shed dormer add depth to this design. Note the large screened-in porch, typical of this style.



24 Broad St. - Lewis Edwards House - 1860

This sixteen room home was built by Lewis Edwards, owner of a book and stationery store. Several other prosperous merchants and mill operators also owned this home. Among them was George Hall, who with his brothers Joseph and Benjamin, owned Hall Bros., a woolen factory located on Commerce Street. William A. Slater, who donated the funds for the construction of the Slater Museum, also lived in this home. **Italianate** - The cupola, double front doors, and repetition of the arch shape in the windows and carved roof brackets under the eaves, lend distinction to the design. The decorative wooden lace under the arched roof line, and the iron balustrades over the porch also add to the rich detail.



Dentil Work



Hip Roof

Fanlight



Pediment



C H E L S E A P A R A D E

Granted to public on April 5, 1797 - Triangular shaped plot of land

What is now known as Chelsea Parade was originally an undeveloped plot of land formally used by the Mohegan Tribe as a burial ground. After the colonists settled in Norwich, this land sat untilled while all along its borders building lots were purchased and houses erected. Realizing that this area would be well-suited as an open space for public use, Joseph Perkins, Thomas Fanning, and Thomas Lathrop bought the land at their own expense and donated it to the City. Nearby roads are named for these Norwich benefactors. One of the earliest uses of the public green was as a space for military exercises. Military reviews such as the one given by Colonel Elisha Edgerton's cavalry regiment, on Sept. 4, 1798, led to the land being designated **The Parade**.

Most of Chelsea Parade is used as a gathering space for the public. The pointed end and the annex, across the street, are used as remembrance sites for residents and war heroes. The following memorials serve to remind us that Norwich citizens have played their parts gallantly in the struggles of this nation.

Columbus Monument: Dedicated by the Italian Heritage and Cultural Committee of Norwich on October 11, 1992, to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage to the Americas. Designer Richard Comolli included the names of 400 Italian immigrants who came to Norwich in the early part of this century. The inscription translates to "honor thy parents". The monument is made of alabaster granite. It was financed through private contributions and from local organizations named on the benches encircling it.

U.S.S. Maine Monument: Cast from a portion of the recovered remains of the U.S.S. Maine, this stone and metal plaque is dedicated to those who died when the battleship blew up off the coast of Cuba. This incident is cited as the catalyst for the U.S. declaring war on Spain.

Civil War Statue: Cut from granite in Westerly, Rhode Island, this monument was erected on April 14, 1873. The figure is 12 feet high and stands atop at 27½ foot high pedestal on which the names of all those who fell while in active duty are inscribed. Connecticut sent 54,000 men, of whom 1,500 were from Norwich, to fight in what was then known as the **Great Rebellion**.

WWI: This monument is dedicated to the men and women who served during the first World War, of which 700 were from Norwich. Nearly 50 Norwich men gave their lives during the **Great War**.

WWII and Korean Conflict: Sponsored by the Norwich Area Veteran's Council, this is a memorial to those who served in World War II, the Korean Conflict, and later Vietnam. It was installed on Memorial Day, May 1968. Norwich's contribution to World War Two included 4,500 men serving in the armed forces. Of that group 250 were wounded and 123 died, including two men who were on the USS Arizona when it was attacked at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941. The Korean War cost Norwich 18 men and Vietnam claimed another 15 Norwich lives.

POW-MIA: The design of this monument, to prisoners of war and soldiers missing in action, was taken from the flag which is the symbol for these war heroes. It was placed here in 1992 by the MIA-POW Monument Committee and Norwich Area Veterans Council.

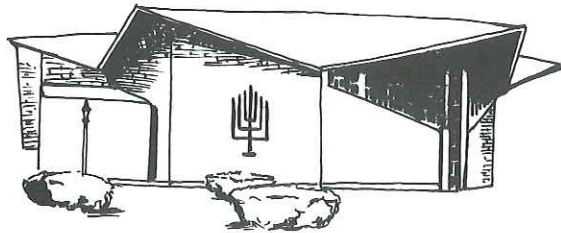
Cannon: This Howitzer Cannon, manufactured in Germany, is from World War I. Norwich also produced munitions for many of America's armed conflicts. At one point 30 firearms manufacturers existed in the City. The production of sail cloth, uniforms, and other battlement materials provided a boon to Norwich businesses beginning with the American Revolution through World War I.

Samuel Reid: The child of a former soldier who left the British army to marry a colonist, Samuel Chester Reid gained distinction during the War of 1812 when he sank three British warships which were blocking the Portuguese Port of Fayal. During the Battle of New Orleans, Reid out maneuvered the British, lost his own ship, but saved Andrew Jackson's men. He has left his legacy in the design of the American flag. The original "stars and stripes" added a star and bar for every new state entering the Union. Reid suggested, and Congress approved, adding only a star for each new state and keeping the bars to thirteen, to represent the original thirteen colonies. A Norwich native, navy captain, and statesman, Samuel Chester Reid is no longer the "forgotten hero". This bronze and stone plaque was positioned here in 1932 during the bicentenary of George Washington by the Samuel Chester Reid Memorial Association.

Horse Watering Trough: When horses were the primary means of transportation it was necessary for the drivers to provide them with plenty of fresh water. This fancy trough, which once had a gas powered beacon for a top, was originally located in Franklin Square. It was moved to Chelsea Parade around 1910. Today it has been adapted as a flower planter and welcomes visitors to the Rose City.

2 Broad St. - Congregation Brothers of Joseph - 1964

This is a modern building but it traces its origin back to 1886, when Orthodox Jews on the west side of Norwich erected a new temple. It was named for Mr. Kieve Lahn's son, Joseph, who was born the same week as the dedication of the synagogue. As the members of the Jewish faith prospered and grew in number in Norwich, this building was created to meet their needs. The land on which it was built belonged to the Osgood family who were prominent pharmacists. **Modern/Linear** - Narrow windows, dark stain, and asymmetrical roof lines are stylistic elements of architectural design in the mid-1960s through the 1970s.



157 Washington St. - Learned-Aiken House - c.1799

This house was built by master carpenter Ebenezer Learned, in the federal style. In 1862, Connecticut's Civil War Governor and Norwich resident, William A. Buckingham, purchased the house for his daughter, Eliza Buckingham-Aiken. Eliza's husband, General W.A. Aiken, enlarged the house and most likely added the Greek Revival details. **Federal/Greek Revival** - The monumental portico and the gable end facing the street are principal features of the Greek Revival style. Also note the small flower details, lights around the front entrance, and carved wooden door. Symmetry is a principle feature of these building styles.



173 Washington St. - Leonard Ballou House - c.1857

This mansion was built by Leonard Ballou, the same man who constructed the neighboring house at 181 Washington St. The home remained in the Ballou family until the early 1900s when it was sold and converted into apartments. It has since been converted back into a single family residence.

French Second Empire

The keystones above the windows, pediments above the center window and doorway, dental work under the eaves, as well as the multi-colored paint, add flare of this illustrious home.



181 Washington St. - c.1850

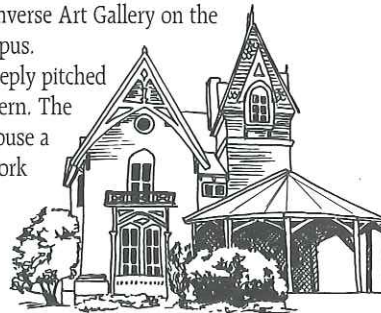
Leonard Ballou owned the cotton mills in the Ballouville section of Killingly, Connecticut. **Italianate** - The pediments over the lower windows are reminiscent of the Greek Revival style. The boxy shape, long narrow windows, low pitched roof, and neutral painted brick and trim give the house its Italianate look.



185 Washington St. - Charles A. Converse House - 1870

In 1853, Charles A. Converse bought and developed valuable mill property at the Yantic Falls where he made files and augers used for carpentry and fine metal work. He died in 1901, leaving funds for the establishment of the Converse Art Gallery on the Norwich Free Academy campus.

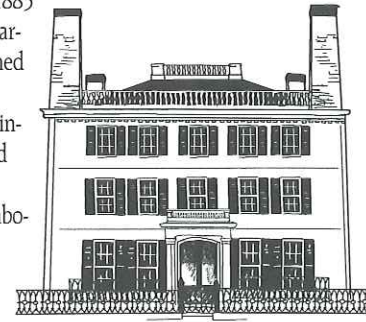
Tudor-Gothic - Note the steeply pitched roof's red and gray slate pattern. The peaked windows give this house a skyward thrust. The stonework in the front wall, with its pointed posts and star pattern, mimic the pointed designs on the house.



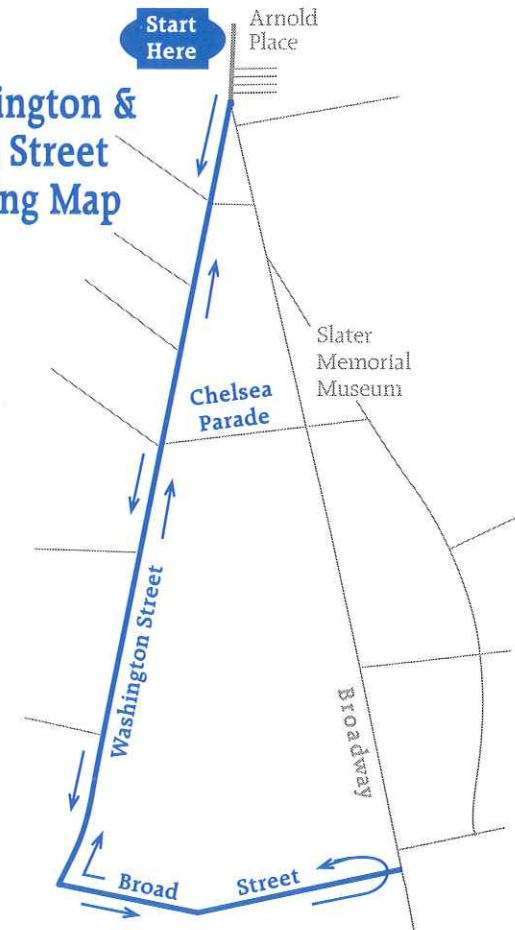
9 Chelsea Parade South - Teel House - c.1789

Advertised as "The Teel House, sign of General Washington," this former hotel drew wide acclaim for its fine third-floor ballroom, which provided varied forms of entertainment, and a meeting place for local clubs and lodges. It is rumored that George Washington once danced on the spring-supported ballroom floor. The house was the residence of General William Williams until 1885 and served as the Park Church parsonage until 1945. It is now owned by the Norwich Free Academy.

Federal - The Teel House is distinguished by its four chimneys and the double balustrade at the top and over the front entry. The elaborate iron fence in the front is an example of the period's fine craftsmanship.



Washington & Broad Street Walking Map



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This brochure courtesy of the Norwich City Council, Norwich Tourism Commission, and private contributors. Published 1996.