

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
(203) 566-3005

Town No.: _____ Site No.: _____

UTM: _____

QUAD: _____

DISTRICT: S NR IF NR, SPECIFY Actual Potential

Annex South 24-920-28

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME (Common) Raynham (Historic) Kneeland Townsend House

2. TOWN/CITY New Haven VILLAGE _____ COUNTY New Haven

3. STREET AND NUMBER (and or location) 709 Townsend Avenue

4. OWNER(S) Henry Hotchkiss Townsend, Jr. Public Private

5. USE (Present) Residential (Historic) Residential

6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD Yes No INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE Yes No IF YES, EXPLAIN _____

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING Gothic Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1804; remodelled 1856-58

8. MATERIAL(S) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)

Clapboard Asbestos Siding Brick Other (Specify) Flushboard

Wood Shingle Asphalt Siding Fieldstone

Board & Batten Stucco Cobblestone

Aluminum Siding Concrete Type: _____ Cut stone Type: Foundation

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM

Wood frame Post and beam balloon

Load bearing masonry Structural iron or steel

Other (Specify) _____

10. ROOF (Type)

Gable Flat Mansard Monitor sawtooth

Gambrel Shed Hip Round Other (Specify) _____

(Material)

Wood Shingle Roll Asphalt Tin Slate

Asphalt shingle Built up Tile Other (Specify) _____

11. NUMBER OF STORIES 2 1/2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS 40' x 38'; Northeast Wing: 28' x 22'; Southeast Wing: 40' x 32'

12. CONDITION (Structural) Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated (Exterior) Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated

13. INTEGRITY (Location) On original site Moved WHEN? _____ (Alterations) Yes No IF YES, EXPLAIN See #17

14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Barn Shed Garage Other landscape features or buildings (Specify) See #17

Carriage house Shop Garden

15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT

Open land Wood-land Residential Scattered buildings visible from site

Commercial Indus-trial Rural High building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS

Located on the eastern side of Townsend Avenue across from Raynham Road.

17 OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior)

(The following text is derived in full from the sources below)

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

Building: Raynham, the familial home of the Townshends, is located at 709 Townsend Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut. It is in the East Shore area, more commonly known as the Annex. The annex was a part of the original New Haven Colony, before it became part of the Town of East Haven and was later reannexed by the City of New Haven.

Raynham is surrounded on three sides by the only remaining residential neighborhood on the New Haven waterfront. It dominates the mostly frame and masonry one and two family houses which comprise the immediate neighborhood. Nearly all the land on which these smaller houses stand was once a part of Townsend family holdings, but, over the years, much has been sold off and developed. The fourth side of the property is bounded by Tweed-New Haven

18 ARCHITECT

BUILDER

19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

National Register of Historic Places

(The following text is derived in full from the source listed below.)

See continuation sheets

SIGNIFICANCE

SOURCES

Sutherland, Noel S. Unpublished National Register Nomination Form, July, 1978 (Copy on file at Connecticut Historical Commission).

PHOTO

PHOTOGRAPHER

Dorothea Penar

DATE

6-82

VIEW

W

NEGATIVE ON FILE

CHC Sheet #A6

Place

COMPILED BY

NAME

Paul Loether

DATE

5/31/82

Photograph

ORGANIZATION

The New Haven Preservation Trust

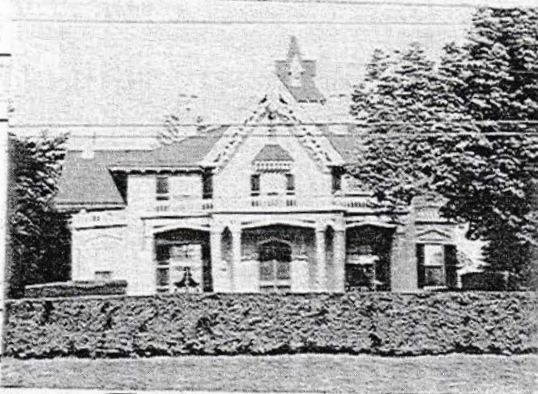
ADDRESS

114 Whitney Ave., New Haven, CT 06510

20 SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS

21 THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE

 None known
 Highways
 Vandalism
 Develop

 Renewal
 Private
 Deterioration
 Zoning
 Explanation


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 HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
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UTM: 18/	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

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 709 Townsend Avenue

Item #17

Building: There are five windows on the second floor. The hipped roof has a bracketed overhand similar to that on the facade. The chimney, which can be seen in the south parlor, the dining room and in two second floor bedrooms, emerges through the roof and is surmounted by tall, fancy chimney pipes. To the right of the chimney is a balconied dormer with gingerbread gable. The design of the balcony and vergeboard matches the rest of the house's Gothic style trim. Further east are two small rectangular attic windows located below the third floor gable of the east wing. A chimney, which protrudes above the gable, services the kitchen. Although this may be the site of the kitchen in the original structure, the two subsequent renovations and the uniformity of the foundation make speculation moot.

The east elevation, the longest of Raynham, was created by the 1856-58 enlargement. The ground level extends slightly forward of the foundation of the rear wing. There is a screened, gingerbread-trimmed porch off the kitchen, the cellar stairwell with similarly trimmed double glazed door and a central rear door. The door is crowned by a fanlight and flanked by sidelights which are in the design of the Federal front entrance of 1804. The porch and rear entrance were, however, part of the 1925-30 additions. Next to the door is a sitting area which has a brick floor and a full awning.

The second floor has four rectangular, shuttered windows, two on each side of a screened porch. The attic is located over the central rear door.

A bracketed overhang begins on the third story roofline, reiterating the overhand on the south elevation. There are chimneys at either end of the sloped roof which is punctuated by three dormers and a tower. The dormers, one to the right and two to the left of the tower, were added in the 1920's to give more air and light to the rooms on the third floor. Each dormer has two rectangular windows to achieve this purpose. The tower rises two stories skyward. It has a small gingerbread-balconied window at the dormer level. Above is a heavily bracketed widow's walk with a wooden railing in a repetitive ex pattern. There are pairs of pointed windows on all four sides of the tower. The roof has a bracketed overhand matching the trim found on the rest of the structure. The four-sided, sloped roof has still smaller, pointed windows whose tops are set out from the roof itself. The tower ends in a finial.

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709 Townsend Avenue

Item #17

Building: The piggery and caretakers house face the barnyard. They were built with batten siding, are two and one half stories and look quite similar to one another. The piggery contains both a well and the root cellar. A dirt floor remains, although it was converted in 1925 into a servant's apartment. The wooden, fanlike trim over the door resembles that over the west door to the carriage house.

East of the caretaker's house, facing the gate near the kennel, is the pigeon coop and quail house. It is a small one and a half story wood structure built as a corn crib. Next to the coop is a one story wood structure used as a woodshed.

On the north side of the estate is the Gardener's Cottage. The two and one half story structure is built on a slight slope. It is, in effect, a simple, shuttered house. Parts of the interior have recently been remodelled, but most of the building remains unaltered since it was constructed.

There is a tennis court near the Gardener's Cottage. Between it and the residence is a small one story wood structure called Spider Inn used at one time as an office. There is a vineyard and a large garden in the area.

All the structures are painted the same color, which Calvert Vaux labeled a shade of faun. This beige color is offset by an earthy terracotta red which adorns the trim and shutters throughout. The main house, barn (with washyard), piggery and corncrib were part of the original 1804 farm. The carriage house, caretaker's house, gardener's cottage, kennel extension and woodshed were part of the 1856-8 additions. The gazebo (Summer House), Spider Inn and tennis court were part of the 1925-30 alterations.

The extensive grounds of Raynham are picturesque. Behind the house is a large cast iron fountain. There are urns that match this fountain along one of the several serpentine walkways. The paths are surfaced in either herringbone patterned brick or finely textured gravel. They wander about cultivated flower beds, decorative shrubs and ornamental shade trees. The entire estate combines to give a very real sense of another time. (For a description of Raynham's interior architectural features, see original copy of Noel S. Sutherland's National Register Nomination on file at the Connecticut Historical Commission.)

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Building: The east elevation is the most massive and, overall, the least decorated. Only the porch, tower and a few details contain the Gothic designs. This is the side of Raynham which faces the farm land and out buildings and is clearly utilitarian. However, there is a visual balance which is enhanced by the addition of dormers and which may have been lacking before they were added and only a tower rose from the roof.

The north elevation is shaded by trees and hidden by bushes. Stylistically, it is not as elaborate as the south elevation or the facade, but it is of the same design. The foundation is stone, and, as in the south elevation, it extends forward below the east wing. This part of the wing has a shuttered window on each side. A small, raised, open porch with arches, piers and a balustrade is similar to the front porch in design. There are three windows between the porch and the semi-hexagonal bay at the western end of this elevation.

The second story has three large rectangular, shuttered windows. The roofline, which is part of the third story, is decorated with the same bracketed overhang as on the other elevations. There is a tiny attic dormer window set into the roof on this story and the fourth chimney of Raynham which is for the fireplaces in the Glory Room, den and two bedrooms. This chimney, too, is capped by fancy fluepipes.

The grounds of the Raynham estate contain nine other structures which enhance both the beauty and the function of the estate and farm. Near the southwest gate is a small, roofed gingerbread gazebo called the Summer House.

Directly behind the main residence is a long connected set of structures which include a carriage house, a barn with extending wing and a kennel. The carriage house was built as part of the 1856-8 remodelling and was built to hold three carriages. In 1925 the second floor was remodelled into an apartment for the chauffeur. The entrance to the second floor is on the west elevation of the building. Two more bays for carriages extend this structure to connect with an ell-shaped barn. The barn has two large sets of doors. On the far side of the barn, out of view, is a fenced-in area known as the wash-yard. The other section of the ell is animal stalls located on a level below. This wing had a new foundation of cinderblock added to support the original timbers. The stalls are entered from the east. The kennels extend down a slope beyond the barn.

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Item #19

Historical: In 1804, Kneeland Townsend built a small Federal style structure on the land that he and his brother had purchased seven years earlier. This residence had a three-bay pillared portico with barrel vaulting in the center of a triangular gable. The portico had a two-story balustraded balcony. The front door had decorated sidelights and fanlight. "The Federal structure was perhaps the work of Peter Banner, a master from Boston and formerly of London. Banner lived in New Haven for about ten years around the turn of the century and built a brick row at Yale across from Kneeland and Isaac's store. The house resembled other structures thought to be designed by him".¹ The Federal farm of 1804 was named 'Prospect Hill', renamed 'Bayridge' and finally named Raynham in 1882 after the estate of the English Townsend family from which the American branch is descended.

The floor plan of the Federal structure closely resembled what Isham and Brown in their book, Early Connecticut Houses, called the Late Connecticut Plan.²

The Federal farmhouse was enlarged and remodelled in the Carpenter Gothic style in 1856-58. It was not uncommon for a family that had fared as well as the Townsends to both enlarge and to keep up with the current styles. The details on the building closely resemble those to be found in Calvert Vaux's pattern book, Villas and Cottages, which was issued in a new edition in 1857.³ Marked similarities can be noticed between Raynham and two designs in particular: #19, the "Irregular Wooden Country House" and #21, the "Simple Picturesque Country House".

The Victorian Gothic style, which was very popular elsewhere, never quite took hold in New Haven. Very few Gothic Revival structures -- and especially those as elaborate and detailed as Raynham -- were built and maintained. The Townsend family has continuously, through seven generations of ownership, maintained the structure and the integrity of Raynham.

The landscaped grounds of Raynham still capture the sense of large picturesque scale and grandeur of the provincial Victorians. Clipped hedges and vast, rolling lawns are punctuated by decorative shrubs, ornamental trees and flower beds. Well-groomed serpentine walkways in a herringbone pattern of brick and fine gravel wander over the grounds.

