MISTURIC RESUURCES INVENTORY 1842 FOR OFFICE USE ONLY BUILDING AND STRUCTURES Town No .: Site No .: HIST-6 NEW 5 STATE OF CONNECTICUT UTM CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION 59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106 QUAD: (203) 566-3005 DISTRICT IF NR. SPECIFY Annex South 24-920-28 S NR Actual Potential 1. BUILDING NAME (Common) (Historic) Raynham Kneeland Townsend House 2. TOWN/CITY VILLAGE COUNTY New Haven DENTIFICATION New Haven 3. STREET AND NUMBER (and or location) 709 Townsend Avenue 4. OWNER(S) X Private Public Henry Hotchkiss Townsend, Jr. 5. USE (Present) (Historic) Residential Residential EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE IF YES, EXPLAIN ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: X Yes X No No DATE OF CONSTRUCTION Gothic Revival 1804; remodelled 1856-58 8. MATERIAL(S) (Indicate use or location when appropriate) X Other (Specify) Flushboard Clapboard Asbestos Siding Brick Wood Shinale Asphalt Siding Fieldstone Board & Batten Stucco Cobblestone Aluminum Siding Concrete Cut stone Foundation Type: STRUCTURAL SYSTE X Wood frame Post and beam balloon Load bearing masonry Structural iron or steel Other (Specify) 10. ROOF (Type) X Gable Flat Mansard Monitor sawtooth Other Gambrel Shed Round (Specify) DESCRIPTION (Material) Roll Wood Shingle Asphalt Slate Other Built up (Specify) X Asphalt shingle Tile APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS 40 11. NUMBER OF STORIES 38'; Northeast Wing: X 28' 40' x 32' 2 Southeast Wing: 1/2 CONDITION (Structural (Exterior) Excellent Fair Excellent Good Fair Good Deteriorated Deteriorated INTEGRITY (Location) (Alterations) On original site See #17 X Yes No 14 RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OF ANDSCAPE TURES X Shed Other landscape features or buildings (Specify) See #17 Barn Garage X Carriage

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

Scattered buildings visible from site

High building density

Shop

Wood-

land Indus-

trial

15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT

6 INTERRELATIONSHIP OF

Open land

Commercial

Garden

X Residential

BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS

other notable features of building or site interior and of exterior)
The following text is derived in full from the sources below) Building: Raynham, the familial home of the Townshends, is located at 709 DESCRIPTION (Continued) 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 S ARCHITECT 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 Sutherland, Noel S. Unpublished National Register Nomination Form, July, 1978 (Copy on file at Connecticut Historical Commission). PHOTOGRAPHER 6-82 Dorothea Penar NEGATIVE ON FILE Place CHC Sheet #A6 BY Photograph 5/31/82 Paul Loether ED ORGANIZATION The New Haven Preservation Trust 114 Whitney Ave., New Haven, CT 06510 20 SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE None known Highways Vandalism Develop Zoning Explanation Private Deterioration

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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INSTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM

For Buildings and Structures

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Annex South

24-920-28

709 Townsend Avenue

Item #17

Building: Airport.

In 1804, Kneeland Townsend built a small Federal style structure facing West on land that he and his brother Isaac had purchased from Joseph Tuttle in 1797. The Federal structure had a three bay pillared portico with barrel vaulting in the center of a triangular gable. This portico had a two story tall balustrated balcony. The front door had a decorated fanlight and sidelights. The Federal structure was remodelled in 1856-8. It is in this remodelled form today except for three dormers added in 1925.

Raynham is a two and one half story wood frame structure. The building has planked wood siding which is painted tan and a roof with red shingles. The foundation is stone, probably traprock, a common local building material. There is evidence that the foundation was redug during the remodelling.

Raynham's west facade remains the front of the house and faces Townsend Avenue. The facade holds the majority of the early Victorian Gothic details. A three bay porch spans the front of the structure. The stilted segmented Gothic arches are supported by clustered columns which form ten piers. The porch is topped by a gingerbread balustrade. The front door in the central bay is arched in a fashion similar to the porch, and the heavy double doors are surrounded by more Gothic piers and details on the surface of the building. The front entry is flanked by very large, shuttered rectangular windows. At both ends of the facade are semi-hexagonal bays whose windows are detailed with arches and balustrades which echo those of the porch.

The second floor has three windows with shutters. The central one is smaller and has a hood with gingerbread trim which restates the design of the balustrade below. Above this window is an even smaller and narrower attic window which is under the peak of the gable. The gable is flanked by hipped roofs that rise above a bracketed overhang. The gable has an elaborate gingerbread vergeboard and is topped by a finial.

The south elevation is nearly as rich in detail as the west facade. These are the two elevations which present themselves first to visitors coming onto the property through the south gate, and the impression they impart is certainly that of luxury. A masonry terrace has been built along most of the length of the foundation. It is slightly elevated to be at the same level as the floor of the dining room. It is nestled within the space created by the semi-hexagonal bay to the West and the southern end of the east wing, forming a U-shaped area screened by hedges.

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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 frong entrance of 1804. The porch and rear entrance were, however, part of the 1925-30additions. 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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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 faum. 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 shurbs 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 washvard. 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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Historical: Raynham -- the property and the structure -- is a center of the Annex section of the City of New Haven. The Annex, the only predominantly residential neighborhood on New Haven's waterfront, is also known as the East Shore. It was part of the original New Haven Colony, purchased in 1638 from the Quinnipiac Indians.

On part of the land was established the first known Indian reservation in North America. Artifacts found on the land indicate that it was used by the Indians who, for many years, hunted and farmed it. The artifacts include projectile points, tools, agricultural implements, objects received in trade with the colonists and an entire burial ground on "Grave Hill", a few hundred feet north of Raynham. This small hill has been renamed twice: first, Beacon Hill in 1775 when a signal was installed atop it and later, during the Revolutionary War, Fort Wooster. It was on this site that New Haven's residences successfully resisted a British landing attempt on 5 July 1779. Further to the south of Fort Wooster and Raynham was Black Rock Fort, known now as Fort Nathan Hale Park, where a skirmish between local revolutionists and loyalists from Long Island took place in 1781. 1864 new fortifications were built, some of which remain. Fort Nathan Hale and a nearby structure, the Morris House, are in the National Register of Historic Places.

Part of the East Shore area was given in 1640 by the New Haven Colony to William Tuttle. The farm was sold by his descendent, Joseph Tuttle, to Isaac and Kneeland Townsend in 1797. The Townsend brothers were prosperous merchants. The family has since included merchants and bankers, a Yale professor and a sea captain who also studied the history of the Quinnipiac Indians. The Townsends built much in New Haven during the nineteenth century. The Townsend Block, at the corner of Chapel and College Streets, right off the New Haven Green, is one of a trio of Greek Revival commercial structures which, built in the 1830's, still survive in the downtown area. A member of the Townsend family was first to be buried in the Grove Street Cemetery when it opened in 1791. The family has remained among the prominent families of New Haven.

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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". 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, <u>Early Connecticut Houses</u>, 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. 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.

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The farm still operates although production is much reduced. A full-time gardener/caretaker and his wife live in the caretaker's cottage and maintain the land that is still farmed. The kennels are operating, the coop keeps fowl and wine is produced from the vineyards. A variety of vegetables are cultivated annually, and hay is still grown on approximately one acre. Several nineteenth century farm tools remain; some are in use. Raynham is the largest single parcel of privately-owned property in the City of New Haven and is the City's only remaining farm.

- 1. Townshend, Doris B., <u>Townshend Heritage</u>, New Haven Colony Historical Society, New Haven, 1971, Page 87
- 2. Isham, Norman and Brown, Albert, Early Connecticut Houses, Dover Publishers, New York, 1965
- 3. Vaux, Calvert, Villas and Cottages, New York, 1857

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Architectural: "Raynham" is among Connecticut's best preserved Gothic Revival estates. The growth of the main hosue, originally built in the Federal period, and the landscaping of the gardens reflect changing taste in architectural and landscape design during the mid-nineteenth century. In addition it is also significant to the property's integrity that the house has remained in the ownership of the same family for seven generations.

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