

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY - BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

Please send completed form to: National Register and State Register Coordinator,
State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development,
450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 5, Hartford CT 06103

* Note: Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Building Name (Common) Sloan-Raymond-Fitch House

Building Name (Historic) Sloan-Raymond-Fitch House

Street Address or Location 224 Danbury Road

Town/City Wilton Village _____ County Fairfield

Owner(s) Town of Wilton Public Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Museum

Historic Use: Residence

Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? Yes No

Interior accessible? Yes No If yes, explain _____

Style of building Colonial Date of Construction 1760-1780

Material(s) *(Indicate use or location when appropriate):*

- | | | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clapboard | <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> Brick | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle | <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone | <input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten | <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco | <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone | <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete (Type _____) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | |

Structural System

- Wood Frame
 Post & Beam
 Balloon
 Load bearing masonry
 Structural iron or steel
 Other _____

Roof (Type)

- Gable
 Flat
 Mansard
 Monitor
 Sawtooth
 Gambrel
 Shed
 Hip
 Round
 Other Curved

(Material)

- Wood Shingle
 Roll Asphalt
 Tin
 Slate
 Asphalt Shingle
 Built up
 Tile
 Other _____

Number of Stories: 2.5 Approximate Dimensions 34'x38' plus ells

Structural Condition: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated

Exterior Condition: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated

Location Integrity: On original site Moved When? _____

Alterations? Yes No If yes, explain: Queen Anne elements added in 19th century.

FOR OFFICE USE: Town # _____ Site # _____ UTM _____

District: S NR If NR, Specify: Actual Potential

PROPERTY INFORMATION (CONT'D)

Related outbuildings or landscape features:

- Barn Shed Garage Carriage House Shop Garden
- Other landscape features or buildings: _____

Surrounding Environment:

- Open land Woodland Residential Commercial Industrial Rural
- High building density Scattered buildings visible from site

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

See continuation sheet.

• Other notable features of building or site (*Interior and/or Exterior*)

See continuation sheet.

Architect N/A Builder N/A

• Historical or Architectural importance:

See continuation sheet.

• Sources:

See continuation sheet.

Photographer Vision Appraisal Date August 2018

View Northeast Negative on File CTSHPO

Name Stacey Vairo & Lucas Karmazinas Date October 2017

Organization Stacey Vairo, LLC & FuturePast Preservation

Address 17 Hard Hill Rd., Woodbury, CT 06798 & 940 West Blvd., Hartford, CT 06105

• Subsequent field evaluations:

MBLU# 57/29 PID# 2943

Threats to the building or site:

- None known Highways Vandalism Developers Renewal Private
- Deterioration Zoning Other _____ Explanation _____

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CONTINUATION SHEET: 224 Danbury Road, Wilton, CT



Photograph of 224 Danbury Road, view facing southeast.

Interrelationship of Building and Surroundings:

The house sits on a small corner lot, behind which is a large low-rise office building of contemporary design. Plantings are informal and include two or three shade trees and shrubs along the low stone wall which runs along the periphery of the lot. Other than one small shed, there are no outbuildings.

Other Notable Features of Building or Site:

The house consists of a large 2 1/2-story gable-roofed part, with its 5-bay facade facing Danbury Road, and a smaller two-story ell to the rear. The main part is dated c. 1760-1780 and has relatively light framing members (8' x 9' straight posts) and no visible summer beams. The facade or east side has a central entranceway installed in the 1930s, a Georgian motif with fluted pilasters, rosettes and a complex series of cornice moldings. The door is large with crossbuck lower panels. The original door was a smaller, simpler eight-panel door; it was moved to the south side and enframed with a plastered treatment similar to that of the main entrance. Windows have old twelve-over-twelve sash with much old glass the muntins are 1 1/2" wide and the panes are mounted close to the outside. The exterior is covered with beaded clapboards of graduated exposure; though somewhat tapered, these are rabbetted on the lower edge to affect an overlap.

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Some of these clapboards are deteriorated and others have already been replaced, but the greater part of the exterior is still covered with this old siding. The roof is now cedar-shingled with no overhang and a slight return at the gable ends; in the 19th century it had been redone with severe gable end overhangs and tin roofing. The large central chimney is of fieldstone, like the underpinning; in the cellar are visible three niches built into the stack foundation. Above the roofline the chimney is of brick and has a simple shoulder along the top and a modern cap. The ell is thought to be older than the main house, but so much of the structure has been replaced or is hidden from view that it is difficult to judge. The ell is post-and-beam framed as two rooms, with a large hewn beam demarcating the two bays visible on the first-floor interior. There is a brick chimney at the west or rear end of the ell. The two-story addition has been given a lean-to with the extension of the roof over a modern addition to the north wall. Other modifications include a small shed-roofed addition to the ell's rear wall, a porch across the south side, and dormers along the north slope of the roof. For a description of the interior, please see the National Register Nomination Form completed by Bruce Clouette in 1980.

Historical and Architectural Importance:

The Sloan-Raymond-Pitch House has long been regarded as one of Wilton's pre-eminent 18th-century houses, and it has considerable importance for those interested in Connecticut's early domestic architecture. Although many of its features are the product of restoration, most represent genuine historical material which typifies 18th-century building customs (Criterion C). Moreover, several elements, particularly the siding and early sash, are quite rare and make the house an exceptional historic resource. The house is typical of dwellings built in the latter part of the 18th century. It has the standard gable roof, central chimney, five-bay form which was ubiquitous in the period. The framing is lighter than most earlier houses, with little or no flare to the posts, no visible summers, and generally reduced dimensions of members. The interior has two well-preserved panelled walls with the roll moldings which served to set off the fireplaces before mantelshelves became the custom. The porch or front hallway is also representative of the period, with its panelled wall surfaces, slender turned balusters, and simple scroll work along the sides of the stairs (though the grouping of the balusters in threes is odd). Other intact early features which illustrate 18th-century building practice include the several rooms with wide-board floors, the stone stack with its niches, the large kitchen fireplace with two ovens in the back wall, and the later country-Federal mantel in the ell.

The beaded and graduated clapboards are especially worthy of note, since the greater part of the exterior is covered with this early siding usually known only through remnants. Eighteenth-century siding materials were more diverse than is sometimes thought and included shiplapped flush boards, shingles, planed and beaded weatherboards, and the familiar clapboard. The siding of the Sloan House is somewhat of a cross between clapboards and weatherboards in that the boards are both slightly tapered in thickness and rabbeted to aid the overlap. Similarly, it is rare to find the wide-runnited 18th-century sash. Usually early houses have had their sash replaced with the narrower early 19th-century sash or else have modern reproduction windows. The house was restored in the 1930s according to the tastes of the time. In general, the decisions made then tended to be overly stylish and ornamental, inflating the status level which the house represents. Examples are the entrances and the kitchen mantel a similar criticism can be made of the elaborate corner cupboard. At the same time, some things were done too primitively: the exposed beams, or the feather-edged dado in the front room. The architectural integrity is compromised to a degree by the heavy hand of restoration: when viewing the facade, for example, one's eye is drawn to the elaborate pilastered doorway, appropriate to well-to-do Connecticut Valley homes, but a poor replacement for the modest transomed

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entrance which formerly graced the house. Nevertheless, the obvious changes to the house should not blind the observer to the significant genuine material which remains. Indeed, the overly sophisticated restorations are really no different than any other alteration or modernization except that they create a greater visual impact. Alexander Sloan built the first house on this site in 1732, but the impecunious weaver owned the house for only a few years before selling it to the Elmer family. The main part of the present house was built by Clapp Raymond sometime after 1757, perhaps incorporating the earlier house as part of the ell. Local opinion is that the ell is an earlier structure, and while it certainly is of hewn post-and-beam construction, little of the original fabric can be seen, either because it is concealed or because of alteration. Clapp Raymond was a militia captain and a prominent man in civic affairs, but the house has few traces of affluence. The north room's cupboard, for example, is entirely plain, with not a hint of an arch or pilasters. Similarly, the front stairs' scrollwork, while showing an awareness of more formal interiors is far less intricate or delicate than many contemporary examples. In the 19th century the house was owned by the Fitch family. Joseph Platt Fitch was a merchant and a locally prominent person who was largely responsible for arranging for the passage of the railroad through Wilton. His children and grandchildren occupied the house until 1936. At that time, the house came into the possession of Philip Van Wyck, who with Wilton architect Nelson Breed, designed and carried out the several changes noted herein, including the new entrance. The house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 29, 1982.

Sources:

Text was taken from the National Register Nomination Form completed by Bruce Clouette, February 26, 1980.

Adams, Mary E. "The Sloan House." Typescript, Wilton Historical Society 1972.

Qverand, Mrs. Edward et al. *The Colonial and Revolutionary Homes of Wilton« Norwalk.Westport Darien and Vicinity*. Pr. priv., Norwalk, 1901.

Wilton Historical Society. *Eighteenth-century Dwellings in Wilton*. Wilton, 1976.