Situated on an ample wooded lot, this house sits far off the west side of Plainville Avenue and is only accessible by a private driveway. Located south of Unionville's commercial center, the surrounding neighborhood contains a number of railroad-related outbuildings and other vernacular style dwellings dating from the mid-nineteenth century.
This cross-gabled asymmetrical house is simple in detail, but exhibits some Gothic Revival-style details. The most notable characteristics are the steeply-pitched gables, the cross-gable plan, and the dark wooden shingles adorning the house. The front facade has three bays with six-over-six sash which is common throughout. Two eyebrow windows exist in the second story of the large side ell. There is no detail in the gable ends. A small one-and-one half story ell addition extends off the rear elevation.

In November of 1844, Samuel Payne of Burlington quit-claimed to his son, Sidney Payne, 31 acres of land south of the Farmington River near Unionville (FLR 45:546). The deed also "reserved to Joshua and Thomas Youngs - a quarry of stone with privileges of digging said quarry". Sidney (1824-1906) came to Unionville from Burlington in 1853 and erected this house on the above mentioned piece of land. The building is clearly visible on an 1853 Map of Unionville drawn by surveyor, E.M. Woodford of Avon. Payne, a farmer married Sarah Ryan (1832-1917) of New York City and they had one daughter, Laura born in 1871. In 1908 the house was distributed to Laura, who had married Harry Mills of Meridan in 1891 (FLR 74:468). Employed as a grinder, Mills probably worked for one of Unionville's successful cutlery or tool manufacturers. The house was inherited by the Mills' daughter, Ruth Mills Hart (b. 1895) and the house today is owned by her son, Weston Hart (FLR 166:166).

Sited in relatively undisturbed surroundings, the Sidney Payne House is a unique interpretation of mid-nineteenth-century vernacular-style architecture. The house is historically significant as a link to Unionville's agricultural past and for its association with the Payne family, whose heirs retain ownership today.


Photographer: Nathan Ainspan

DATE: 4/86

VIEW: N

NEGATIVE ON FILE: 20:4A

NAME: Elizabeth R. Hart

DATE: 8/85

ORGANIZATION: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

ADDRESS: 27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT

Threats to Building or Site:

- None known
- Highways
- Vandalism
- Developers
- Other

- Renewal
- Private
- Deterioration
- Zoning
- Explanation