The Frank Sanford House faces east on Lovely Street and is prominently shaded by two tall pines on the north and other trees to the south. The southern property line is marked by a thick row of evergreens. A fence extends perpendicularly from the evergreens to the house to form a partially enclosed south yard. The deep lot is accented by a long dirt driveway on the north side which leads west from Lovely Street to a barn in the rear.

(OVER)
This example of nineteenth-century Stick-style architecture features a cross plan with a raised brick foundation and cross-gabled roof with wide overhanging eaves. The gable ends possess similar cutwork bargeboards, decorative trusses with a triangular attic vent, and paired windows. Board-and-batten decorates part of the second story and becomes diagonally and vertically patterned in the gable peaks. Windows are one-over-one sash. The front facade is symmetrically balanced by two side entry porches with decorative stick work, the southern one having turned balustrades. Second-story wall dormers with shed roofs lie directly above the porches. A bay capped by a shed roof projects from the first-story front facade and repeats on the south elevation. An unusual feature of this building is its mansard-roofed projection on the south elevation. The west elevation features one story additions on both sides.

Frank Sanford, son of Edmund and Mary E. (Tillotson) Sanford, was born in Avon in 1853. After schooling in Avon and Unionville and a period of farming, he joined the employ of his uncle Sherman Sanford in the lumber business. In 1883 he married Marion Hawley (b. 1851, Avon), daughter of Robert Hawley of Avon, who was killed in the Civil War battle at Antietam. In 1884 Frank formed a partnership with his uncle under the name Sherman and Frank Sanford; he acted as a dealer in lumber, hardware, and building materials. That same year he purchased a parcel of land measuring "203 rods and 269 ft." from Sarah W. Mills (FLR 68:96). Frank apparently built the dwelling that same year for himself and his new bride. His ties to the lumber and construction business probably enabled him to build this house without taking out a mortgage. At Sherman's retirement Frank joined his brother-in-law, C.R. Hawley in a similar business called Sanford & Hawley. After Frank's death in 1923 the land and house passed to his wife Marion (FLR 74:427). Upon Marion's death in 1934 Truman F., executor of the estate and Frank and Marion's son, sold the property to William Harding (FLR 74:664).

The Frank Sanford House is a good example of the Stick style and is historically significant through its connections with the Sanford family in Unionville.

Sources:

Photographer: Alex Paredes
Date: 5/85

View: NW
Negative on File: 3:34

Name: Gilbert Ramos
Date: 6/85

Organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
Address: 27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457

Threats to Building or Site:
In 1884 Frank Sanford bought "205 rods and 269 feet" of land (about 1 ¼ acre) from Sarah Mills. He promptly sold the northern half of the lot to Mrs. Helen Cowles (68-97), leaving himself about 5/8 acre, the current size of the property; see 79 Lovely Street for further history of the Cowles lot. Then Frank Sanford had Freeborn Alger built this house for him and his new wife, Marion Hawley Sanford. All three of their children were born in this house, starting with Marion Conklin Sanford in 1885. The Sanfords lived here for the rest of their lives.

Marion Hawley's father Robert had enlisted in Company A, 16th Conn. V.I. of the Union Army during the Civil War; he was killed at the Battle of Antietam. The rest of the family then moved to Guilford, except for Marion, who was brought up by Emily and Truman Sanford, Frank's aunt and uncle who lived on Main Street in Unionville.
Frank Sanford was the son of Edmund and Mary Tillotson Sanford; he grew up in Avon, and when old enough joined his father and uncle Sherman in their portable-sawmill lumber business. About 1882/3 Frank, with the financial backing of uncle Sherman, started the retail lumber business first known as S. & F. Sanford. Frank needed someone to help with the office work; so he convinced Marion's brother C. Robert Hawley, who was a bookkeeper, to return from the West Coast and join him in the business. Robert bought Sherman's share, and the firm became known as Sanford & Hawley. These two brothers-in-law ran the business until the 1920s, when they both died. It was then taken over by Frank's son Truman, who owned it until the 1940s; it is now operated by Truman's son Robert W. Sanford.

A more detailed history of the Sanford family and of Sanford & Hawley appears in the Prentice collection sketch #195 in the Farmington Room of the Village Library. The page about Sanford & Hawley is copied and included at the conclusion of this narrative. A biography of Frank Sanford appears in "Commemorative Biographical Record of Hartford County", p. 1267, also in the Farmington Room.

Architecture

This house has an interesting bargeboard pattern, seen in several houses in Unionville. An exact duplicate of this house, built a year later from the same plans, is at 25 Cottage Street.

Genealogy

Frank Sanford: b. 12-23-1853 in Avon, son of Edmund & Mary Tillotson Sanford; m. Marion Hawley 10-17-1883; d. 8-15-1923
Marion Hawley Sanford: b. 9-25-1851 in Avon, daughter of Robert & Maria Hamlin Hawley; d. 5-29-1934
    Marion Conklin - b. 6-22-1885; m. Walter MacNeill 7-10-1906
    Truman Frank - b. 7-8-1887; m. Helen Wadsworth 6-22-1915
    Robert Hawley - b. 4-10-1895
Sanford and Hawley has been a well known business name since 1883, and has aided many people in the construction of their homes. Its background may be of interest. Around the 1860's and 1870's, two sons of Jesse Sanford, Edmund and Sherman, 1835-1927, were in the logging and lumber business. They bought tracts of standing timber, moved a steam operated sawmill to the site, cut the trees, saved the logs into lumber. It was then hauled to the nearest railroad siding for shipment by rail, most of it being purchased by the railroad itself, for use as ties and bridge timbers.

Edmund and Sherman took Edmund's son Frank, 1853-1923, into business with them and they operated in many and various parts of the state. The last site on which Frank Sanford worked with them was in Lebanon, Connecticut, after which he, backed by a silent partner, his Uncle Sherman, started a retail lumber business in Unionville under the name of S. and F. Sanford. Frank soon needed an active partner however, to help him. This was in 1883 and Frank and his wife Marion, who lived at what is now 71 Lovely Street, were just recently married. He needed someone to do the office work, to save him from the need to do it in the evenings, after hard days of the work of handling the lumber. Marion's brother Robert had gone west, to the Seattle area, "to seek his fortune", but he did not really care for the shipyard in which he was working and wrote of his wish to return home. Frank and his wife suggested that he do so, and that he come into the lumber business with Frank. He did return, bought out Sherman Sanford's share of the business and became the office partner. They then adopted the name of Sanford and Hawley.

The business has had a steady growth over the years, and especially during the last decade. The redevelopment agency of Unionville took over part of their property on Cottage Road, off Farmington Avenue, so they have opened a much larger storage yard on a railroad siding off Old Farms Road in Avon.

Robert Hawley died in 1920, his place was eventually taken by Truman Sanford, and it has been wholly owned by the Sanfords since that time. The name of Sanford and Hawley, made up of both of Truman's parents' names, has been retained and is still used, a symbol of a responsible and lasting business. It is now under the management of Robert Sanford, son of Truman, who has been in the business all his working life.

July 12, 1972

On page 326 of "Town Clerks", Mrs. Hurlburt says, speaking of the Albany Turnpike, Route 44, says:

"Sherman Sanford (mentioned above) whose father Jesse Sanford, Jr., was a solder in the War of 1812, and whose grandfather Jesse Sanford, Sr., was in Capt. Wright's Company, Col. Enos' Regiment, during the Revolutionary War, tells us that his ancestors often spoke of soldiers and cannon passing over this King's Highway during the struggle with the mother country for our independence. Jesse Sanford, Sr., died May 28, 1840, aged 80 and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery. His uncle Ebenezer, also a Revolutionary soldier, was drowned while Washington's army was trying to lay a chain across the Hudson River to prevent the boats of the British from ascending the river".