The William A. Hitchcock House faces east onto Lovely Street. An expansive front lawn, free of trees, suggests a sizeable lot and permits the east elevation to remain visible and imposing. Trees are set back to the south and west.
This large house, modestly adorned in the Queen Anne style, features steeply pitched cross gables and a wrap-around porch. Fish scales cover the third story throughout. The windows are one-over-one sash. The east elevation is oriented gable-to-street with plain bargeboards on the gable end. A third-story tripartite window with a wood fan is set in the gable peak. The second story below is denoted by four windows joined by projecting and patterned clapboard. The one story L-shaped, Colonial Revival-style porch features a pedimented gable. The porch is supported by paired Tuscan columns, grouped in three at the corners, and a plain balustrade. Both the north and south elevations have first-story cutaway bays, second-story paired windows, and single third-story windows in the gable ends. There is a narrow brick chimney and Victorian-period porch on the west elevation.

Historical or Architectural Importance

William A. Hitchcock was born in Cornwall, Connecticut in 1859 to Elmer and Mary (Gorman or Van Deusen) Hitchcock. His father, a tailor by trade, had resettled the family in Unionville in 1869 when William was age 10 years old. At age 15 William was hired as an office boy by the Union Nut (later Upson) Company, beginning an illustrious career with the company. After successive promotions, he was appointed president in 1912. In 1890 William married Emily E. Boyle (1863-1930) of Gaspe Basin, Quebec. In the spring of 1891 he purchased one acre of land from Henry A. and Helen M. Cowles (FLR 68:522). That fall William took out two mortgages on his land, "with all buildings thereon standing..." thus indicating a house had been built that year (63:490,492). At some time after the birth of his daughter Ada M. in 1892, William became a travelling salesman for the company and in 1897 he was appointed secretary. Upon Samuel Frisbie's death, he remained closely associated with the company, as president and later vice-president from 1913 until 1920, when the company was sold to the Bourne-Fuller Company. In 1914 he sold the property with the house to Frank S. Brewer (FLR 77:522), who in turn left the property to his widow Grace H. in 1936 (FLR 91:254).

The well-preserved Hitchcock House contributes to the historic architectural character of Lovely Street and derives local historical significance from its association with a prominent Unionville family.

Sources


Photographer

Alex Paredes

DATE

5/85

View

NEGATIVE ON FILE

3:35

Compilied By

Gilbert Ramos

DATE

6/85

Organization

Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

Address

27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457

Threats to Building or Site

☐ None known. ☐ Highways ☐ Vandalism ☐ Developers ☐ Other

☐ Renewal ☐ Private ☐ Deterioration ☐ Zoning ☐ Explanation
79 Lovely Street

Built: 1891

For: William Hitchcock

Owners

--- Henry A. & Helen M. Cowles land only
4-11-1891 William A. Hitchcock 68-522
6-1-1914 Frank S. Brewer 77-522
8-4-1936 Grace H. Brewer 91-254
7-10-1939 Harrison K. Simonds & Frances Dorman 92-360

William Hitchcock bought this land in April 1891, soon after he was married; this house was built that summer and is mentioned in two mortgages taken in late 1891 (63-490,492).

William Hitchcock was born in Cornwall in 1859; when he was ten years old, his father moved the family to Unionville. Called Billy, the young man attended Unionville High School; at the age of 15 he went to work as the office boy for the Union Nut Co. He was promoted to invoice clerk, bookkeeper, and then traveling salesman. In 1897 when Samuel Frisbie died, Mr. Hitchcock was elected Secretary of the company, now the Upson Nut Co. He held this position until 1912, when he became the President of the company. However, when Bourne and Fuller took control of the company in 1913, Fuller replaced William Hitchcock as President. Hitchcock was Vice President from 1913 to 1920, when the company was officially sold to Bourne-Fuller Co. Bourne-Fuller later became a part of Republic Steel Corp.

"...In 1919 a firm in Cleveland became interested and offered to purchase the (Upson Nut) Company. The story that
came back from Cleveland was that Wm. Hitchcock, President, and the husband of Mary (Upson) Rose had an appraisal made to settle on the price. In a taxi on the way to the meeting with the interested principal, they felt that some leeway should be established for bargaining so they doubled the appraisal price. Much to their surprise Bourne & Fuller accepted same with no comment, and the sale was made in 1920...”
(from "Early Manufacturing in Unionville", Raymond K. Brooks)

William Hitchcock was also Secretary of the Union Electric Light & Power Co. from at least 1904 to 1916, one of the first directors of the West End Library Association in 1914, and the President of the Farmington Savings Bank from 1931 to 1941. He served on the Town Hall building committee in 1899. In 1914 he sold this house on Lovely Street and moved his family to 27 Main Street in Farmington. The Prentice Collection sketch #161-7 about him is copied and attached to this narrative. A biography of William Hitchcock appears in "Commemorative Biographical Record of Hartford County", p. 706, in the Farmington Room, Village Library.

William Hitchcock sold this house to Frank Brewer, the son of Albert and Mary Graham Brewer and grandson of Joshua Brewer, who had worked with Lambert Hitchcock (no relation to William Hitchcock, so far as this writer knows) in the furniture-making business in Unionville during the 1840s. Frank Brewer was a salesman for the Clark Nut & Bolt Co.; when he died, the house became the property of his widow, Grace Hall Brewer.

Genealogy

William Arthur Hitchcock: b. 7-30-1859 in Cornwall, son of Elmer & Mary Van Deusen Hitchcock; m. Emily Boyle 9-25-1890; d. 3-17-1943

Emily Boyle Hitchcock: b. 1863 in Gaspe, Quebec, Canada; d. 4-5-1930

Ada Taylor - b. 9-20-1892; m. poet Archibald MacLeish 6-21-1916 in Waterbury

Frank S. Brewer: b. 9-26-1867; m. Grace M. Hall; d. 12-26-1935 son of Albert J. & Mary Graham Brewer

Grace Hall Brewer: b. ---; d. ---