STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
9 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM

for Buildings and Structures

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME: Common: __________________________ Historic: Edwin Rockwell Homestead
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: South Farms COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 41 Silver Street (corner of Silver Drive)
4. OWNER(S): Henry C. Miller and Henry Miller, IV PUBLIC X PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Residence Historic: same
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: X yes no
Interior accessible: X yes, explain with permission no

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Gothic Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c. 1855
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   - clapboard
   - wood shingle
   - board & batten
   - aluminum siding
   - X other: Wooden bargeboards
   - asbestos siding
   - asphalt siding
   - stucco
   - concrete: type:____________
   - X brick
   - fieldstone
   - cobblestone
   - cut stone: type: brownstone foundation
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
   - wood frame: X post and beam balloon
   - load bearing masonry structural iron or steel
   - other:____________
10. ROOF: type: X gable X fiat mansard monitor sawtooth
   - gambrel shed hip round other
   - material: wood shingle roll asphalt tin slate other
   - X asphalt shingle built up tile other
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 60'x31'
12. CONDITION: Structural: X excellent X good fair deteriorated
   Exterior: X excellent X good fair deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site moved, when: no
   Alterations: X on original site moved, when: Extensive additions to rear
   X yes, explain:
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
   - barn
   - carriage house
   - shed
   - garage
   - shop
   - garden
   - other landscape features or buildings:____________________
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
   - open land
   - woodland
   - residential X scattered buildings visible from site
   - commercial
   - industrial
   - rural X high building density
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: A broad expanse of lawn separates this fine Gothic structure from the north side of Silver Street. Several large trees add to the picturesque qualities of the site which complement the architecture of the house. Silver Street in this area displays several houses from the mid-nineteenth century; however, the early Gothic Revival architecture of this house is unique to the street.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Decorative bargeboards in gables
Color scheme: purple walls with yellow trim
Balcony canopy with consoles

SIGNIFICANCE

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This house was built around 1855 for Edwin Rockwell, who operated a Main Street store dealing in "books, stationery, pianos, organs, and sheet music." Rockwell was also involved in the development of the South Farms area in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. He laid out and sold lots on Silver Avenue and Rockwell Street, now Evergreen Avenue.

The picturesque qualities of this property are derived from a compatible relationship of the architecture to the site. Steeply pitched gables accentuate an asymmetrical arrangement of facades and are framed by nearby shade trees. The trees add texture to the relatively-flat surfaces of the walls. A broad lawn leading up to the house from Silver Street establishes a horizontal plane which balances the verticality of the Gothic design.

As an example of early Gothic Revival architecture in Middletown, this house, with its well executed decorative elements, compares favorably with the Duane Barnes House (1848) on High Street.

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Roger Sherman
date: 6/78 view: south
negative on file: Roll 27, #30

COMPiled BY:

name: John E. Reynolds date: 6/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown City Directories; 1874 Beers Atlas; 1877 Bailey Map

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

X none known  ____highways  ____vandalism  ____developers  ____other: __________
____renewal  ____private  ____deterioration  ____zoning  __________

explanation: __________________