

Stickney Hill

Notes on the Stickney house and excerpts from “A Daughter of the Puritans,” a memoir by Caroline Alatheia Stickney Creevey (1843-1920).

Notes researched & prepared in 2017 by Jon Roe, Vernon historian, and Susan Barlow, webmaster of www.manchesterlandtrust.org, website of the Manchester Land Conservation Trust, which owns the nearby 15.9-acre Stickney Hill property mentioned in the memoir.

Caroline grew up on Pine Street in Rockville, CT, went to Wheaton Seminary, became a teacher, mother, and author. She published her autobiography in 1916. It is available as a google book online, you can find it by typing *A Daughter of Puritans* in the search box. Reprints of the book are available online.

Among the letters of this time which have been preserved is one from mother to father. In it she tells of her struggles to convert her maids from the Roman Catholic faith. The feeling then of Protestants against Catholics was intense. I am sure my mother thought that the souls of her maids were committed to her care while they were with her, to be saved or lost as she did her duty by them. The letter says:

The priest came yesterday and last night the girls went to confession, and after they came back I had a long talk with them on the subject, in which they were completely used up, and I think have had their thoughts set in a new train. I hope it may do them some good. But I am sure nothing but the Spirit of God can fathom and enlighten such ignorance. I can pray for them and sometimes I feel that is all I can do.

Mother insisted that her maids should come to family prayers, but as this interfered with their breakfast hour, sometimes she compromised by making the rule applicable only on Sunday morn-

(excerpt continued from left column)

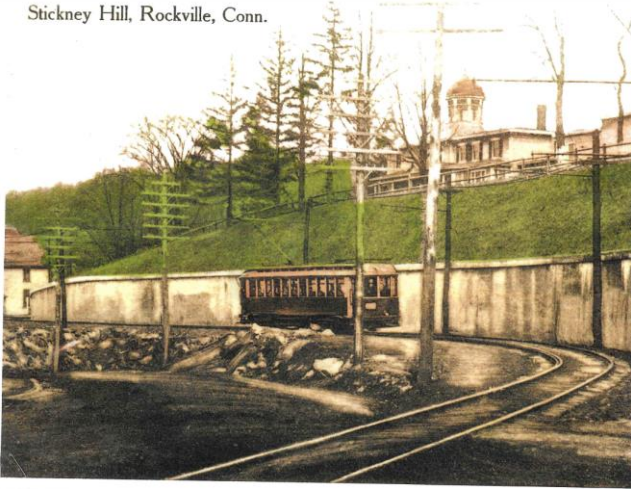
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ings. She was taking her maid to church with her one Sunday when the priest came up the hill, grasped the poor thing who had no voice in the matter, by the arm, and marched her down the hill to his own church. That morning he gave out notice that no one in his parish should live in service with Mrs. Stickney, and for some time after, mother was obliged to obtain her maids from her own denomination. The maid in question was taken to the priest's house and her clothes were sent for. She never came back to us.



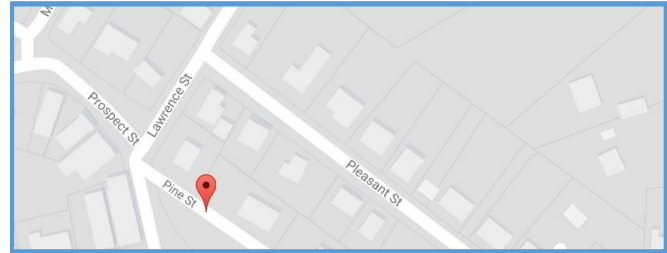
1853 map showing Stickney house, named “Evening Side” by Caroline’s mother. Note Paper Mill Pond with island.

Stickney Hill, Rockville, Conn.



← C. 1900 postcard of the Stickney house. Note cupola, which is no longer there. Pine Street was reconstructed in the 1970s, so the wall and hillside do not look the same today.

↓ Contemporary map: The house is between Pine, Lawrence, and Pleasant streets.



A Daughter of the Puritans

An Autobiography

By

Caroline A. Stickney Creevey

Author of "Excursions in Botany," "Flowers of Field, Hill, and Swamp," "Harper's Guide to Wild Flowers," etc.

Illustrated

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York and London
The Knickerbocker Press
1916

Title page of book.



The Stickney Home in Rockville, Conn.

Stickney house, about 1930. Note that the cupola is no longer there. Currently, the house is still there, painted light gray, and has been made into three apartments. The owner lives nearby.



Carol A. Stickney, Aged Fourteen

1856 photo of Caroline, in book.

Mother named our home "Evening Side," because it faced the west, and had a fine view as far as the Connecticut River and to the Meriden Hills beyond. In summer, the front veranda was our family meeting place, especially evenings, after tea, where we watched the sunsets. Showers came up from the northwest, in full view, big, black thunder-clouds which were the delight of our hearts. For we could see the whole grand scene.

Excerpt from book: house named by mother.



Mr. and Mrs. John Newton Stickney
From a daguerrotype taken about 1850

Caroline's parents, photo in book.

"There were rocks and hills all around us. One hill not far from the... house we called Mars Hill (spelled Ma's), because it was a favorite walking place for mother who often climbed there and sat looking long at the western sky. On all the fields and hills, lovely flowers grew, bushes clustered, spruces, pines, hemlocks, sassafras, willows, and chestnut trees were our friends. There was not a square foot in all the region with which we were not soon familiar.

This excerpt refers to the hill now owned by the Manchester Land Conservation Trust. The property is at the northeast end of Pleasant St.