

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JUL 17 1989

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hampton Inn
other names/site number The Maples Inn

2. Location

street & number 179 Oenoke Ridge NA not for publication
city, town New Canaan NA vicinity
state CT code CT county Fairfield code 001 zip code 06840

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	2	1 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		objects
		2	1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official John W. Shannahan, State Historic Preservation Officer
Date July 13, 1989
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:)
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/hotel

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne/Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls wood

roof asbestos shingles

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Hampton Inn is located half a mile north of New Canaan's business center on the east side of Oenoke Ridge, a main north-south road (Route 124). Next door is the Roger Sherman Inn and across the street are the New Canaan Nature Center and the Presbyterian Church. Built in 1908, the inn is a frame 3-story gable-roofed Colonial Revival structure set well back from the road and surrounded by 1.6 acres of pleasant grounds with shade trees in front and two auxiliary buildings to the rear. (See Photograph 1 and site plan.)

With overall dimensions of approximately 79' x 93', the irregular plan of the inn has a variety of projecting and recessed sections under a high gable roof with many cross gables and dormers. The first two stories are covered with clapboards, while the third-floor gable ends are shingled and flared. (Photograph 2) The front elevation is in the shape of a shallow U with a wide section at the right projecting slightly under a wide gable. A portion of the first floor at the right corner, now enclosed, originally was an open recessed porch. Windows at the first floor are 12-over-1, at the second 9-over-1 (arranged in two groups of three), and at the third 6-over-1 (in two pairs), all with blinds. A radially glazed semi-elliptical window under tall key block occupies the gable peak. Bargeboards are paneled and a single course of shingles is laid parallel with the bargeboards under the roof edge. (Photograph 3) The building is painted yellow with white trim and green blinds.

The recessed central section of the facade has similar fenestration. The window surrounds there and elsewhere in the building are flat and plain, except for molded caps. The left section of the front elevation is dominated by a large wraparound porch which starts at the main entrance and runs around the north side of the building. It has plain bracketed posts. The porch floor extends out beyond the roof, forming an uncovered platform with balustrade of square balusters and posts. (Photograph 4)

Fenestration of the north side elevation is similar to that of the front, but at the second floor there is a screened sleeping porch and at the third floor a row of four 10-over-1 windows. (Photograph 4) Viewed from the rear, two ells which make up the north two-thirds of the rear elevation become apparent, while the south third has a broad gable with paired windows and semi-elliptical window (Photograph 5), repeating the window arrangement of the front gable of the same section.

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In the grounds, the cottage northeast of the inn is an ell-shaped vernacular 2-story frame structure having a wide front porch and a round-arched attic window. (Photograph 6) Probably built c. 1890, it was moved to this location when the inn was built to provide a residence away from the main building for the innkeeper. Because of its long association with the inn, it is considered contributing. The 2-story structure behind the inn, c. 1940 has garages in its concrete-block first floor and apartments in the shingled second floor. (Photograph 7) It is non-contributing.

The interior of the inn is substantially unaltered. The main entrance opens from the front porch to the lounge, which has a beamed ceiling. A fireplace is canted across the southwest corner of the room. (Photograph 8) A dogleg stairway with ramped handrail rises in the opposite corner (Photograph 9) to the second floor where rooms and suites are laid out to take advantage of the multiple windows. (Photograph 10) On the third floor, wooden bumpers continue to protect the corners in the hallway, and the channeled door jambs with molded cornices are still in place. (Photograph 11) Bedrooms in the dormers, smaller than on the second floor, retain a cozy atmosphere with their lower ceilings. (Photograph 12) There are approximately 20 bedrooms. There is no longer a dining room in the inn; it was discontinued in mid-20th century.

Comparison of the present appearance with a picture from an early advertising brochure (Photograph 13) demonstrates how little the inn has changed since it was built. Even the porch extension is original, albeit originally with an awning. The picture suggests that the third-floor shingles were a dark color, and paint scrapings confirm that the original color scheme was a light green for the clapboards of the first two floors, dark brown for the attic-shingles, and white for the trim. Interior views show that the beams of the lounge (called the reception room) were dark but the ceiling between them white, and the walls and the fireplace mantel dark. The trim was natural cypress. The grounds, then larger (13 acres), are depicted as carefully tended, featuring fruit trees, flower gardens, and neatly trimmed hedges.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1908

1908-c. 1925

Significant Dates

1908

1908

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

Architect - Robert Elwood

Builder - Elwood Brothers

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

An early-20th-century country inn constructed in the Colonial Revival style, which continues in its original use, the Hampton Inn is the only example of its building type in New Canaan. The structure possesses fine integrity, having been little altered on either the interior or exterior since it was built. (Criterion C) In its function as a resort, where guests spent leisurely summer days, the inn reflects a way of life that was important in Connecticut and the northeast, but now has almost entirely disappeared. (Criterion A)

History

New Canaan began to attract summer visitors soon after the Civil War. As early as 1869 homes were opened to boarders from New York City drawn by the alleged special, magical quality of New Canaan's air and "nearness to salt water, thus in a measure combining both seaside and mountain."¹ Until the end of the century, boarding houses continued to offer the only accommodations for vacationers, with the exception of the New Canaan Hotel (also known as the Birdsall House), a commercial hostelry near the center of town whose porches were filled with summer people.²

The William E. Bond House, c. 1874, next door to the Hampton Inn, was one of the boarding houses. It was enlarged to become the Holmewood Inn, and in 1960 became the Roger Sherman Inn. The Roger Sherman now functions primarily as a restaurant. In 1906, a home two blocks from the railroad station was converted into a year-round boarding house called the Ardsley Inn, continuing in business to 1934.

In 1908, Mrs. W.H. Thompson of New York City, an experienced inn keeper, bought property on Oenoke Ridge, demolished the existing house, and built the Hampton Inn, which she named for her son. She managed the inn until the mid-1920s, during the era when guests made the trip from New York by train, or perhaps "motored" up, with a trunk or two, a lady's

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Hampton Inn." New Canaan Messenger (no month or day), 1908.

Hampton Inn advertisement. New Canaan Messenger, June 6, 1908, 3:5.

"Hampton Inn." Brochure, c. 1908.

New Canaan Historical Society Annual, 1982, v. 9, no. 2.

"New Canaan, Connecticut," view. Boston: O.H. Bailey, 1878.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.6

UTM References

A 18 | 625860 | 4556770
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____ | _____ | _____

B _____ | _____ | _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____ | _____ | _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is described in the New Canaan Land Records at volume 275, page 592.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary is the limit of the land that now goes with the inn.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David F. Ransom/Consultant, Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization Connecticut Historical Commission date November 25, 1988

street & number 59 South Prospect Street telephone 203 566-3005

city or town Hartford state CT zip code 06106

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maid, and possibly a chauffeur. Suites on the first and second floors provided appropriate living for the guests and the smaller rooms on the third floor accommodated their staffs. Leisurely meals in the comfortable dining room, sleepy afternoons on the wide veranda under brightly colored striped awnings, and enjoyment of the spacious grounds with a splendid view of Long Island Sound were the order of the day. Mme. Chiang Kai Shek, Lillian Gish, and the artist Ernest Albert were among the distinguished guests over the years.

In its heyday, the Hampton Inn was an early form of "destination resort" that provided a full program of low-key activities then in popular demand. While built as a hotel, the atmosphere was domestic. Guests had their own tables in the dining room, greeting one another when entering the room. The menu was table d'hote. Some stays were prolonged, providing interim residence between major moves. This pattern of usage was commonplace along the eastern seaboard, but has now declined to close to the vanishing point.

Patronage of the Hampton Inn declined during the 1930s Depression years and the World War II period. By the 1950s, few vacationers were willing to spend their summers in rocking chairs. The fortunes of the Hampton Inn declined accordingly, with the property changing hands several times while maintenance and upkeep of the premises suffered for lack of attention. In 1982, to signal a reversal in conditions, the name was changed to The Maples Inn when the present owner acquired the property and began its rehabilitation. The inn is significant because it is the only structure built in New Canaan as a summer inn and the only structure continuing to function as an inn.

Architecture

In architecture, the structure reads as the Colonial Revival style articulated by its relative symmetry, gable roofs, and 12-over-1 window sash. The present color scheme of yellow with white trim is appropriate to the style. Several individual Colonial Revival features, such as the radially glazed attic windows and paired and triple windows, add to the effect. The row of four 10-over-1 windows at the third floor in the north elevation (Photograph 4) reflect influence from the Shingle style.

Some components of the structure, however, are lingering features of the Queen Anne style, which enjoyed great popularity toward the end of the 19th century but was retardataire by 1908 when the inn was built. The irregular ground plan of projecting and receding sections (see Site Plan),

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use or varied sheathing materials (clapboards and shingles), and the steep pitch of the asymmetrical gable roofs all bespeak the Queen Anne. The paneled bargeboards are unusually late. The sleeping porch on the north elevation is a function of turn-of-the-century preoccupation with the perceived benefits of fresh air. Also, the original darker color scheme of green and brown is more characteristic of Queen Anne than Colonial Revival buildings.

A similar mixture of styles prevails on the interior. Again, the first impression, in the lounge, is of the Colonial Revival. The beamed ceiling, simple fireplace mantel, and wide stairway with ramped handrail are up to date for 1908. Yet the channeled doorway surrounds and hallway corner bumpers found on the upper floors are holdovers from 19th-century practice. The layout in the rooms, with more bedrooms than bathrooms, still in effect today, is another feature that dates the inn.

The contractor for construction was the New Canaan firm of Elwood Brothers. It is presumed that Robert Elwood, the architect, was associated with the contractor.

¹New Canaan Historical Society Annual, 1982, v. 9, no. 2, p. 7.

²An 1878 O.H. Bailey view depicts the Birdsall House as a three-story Second Empire structure with central mansard-roofed tower. The building was demolished, c. 1951, as being unsafe.

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Front elevation
View east
Photograph 1

Copy of picture from
1908 brochure
Photograph 13

Front and south side
elevations
View northeast
Photograph 2

Detail of Photograph 2
Photograph 3

Photographs were taken by
D. Ransom in August 1988.

North side and front
elevations
View southeast
Photograph 4

Negatives are on file at the
Connecticut Historical Commission

Rear elevation
View northwest
Photograph 5

Cottage
View east
Photograph 6

Garage and apartments
View northeast
Photograph 7

Lounge
View southwest
Photograph 8

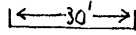
Lounge
View northeast
Photograph 9

Second-floor suite
View west
Photograph 10

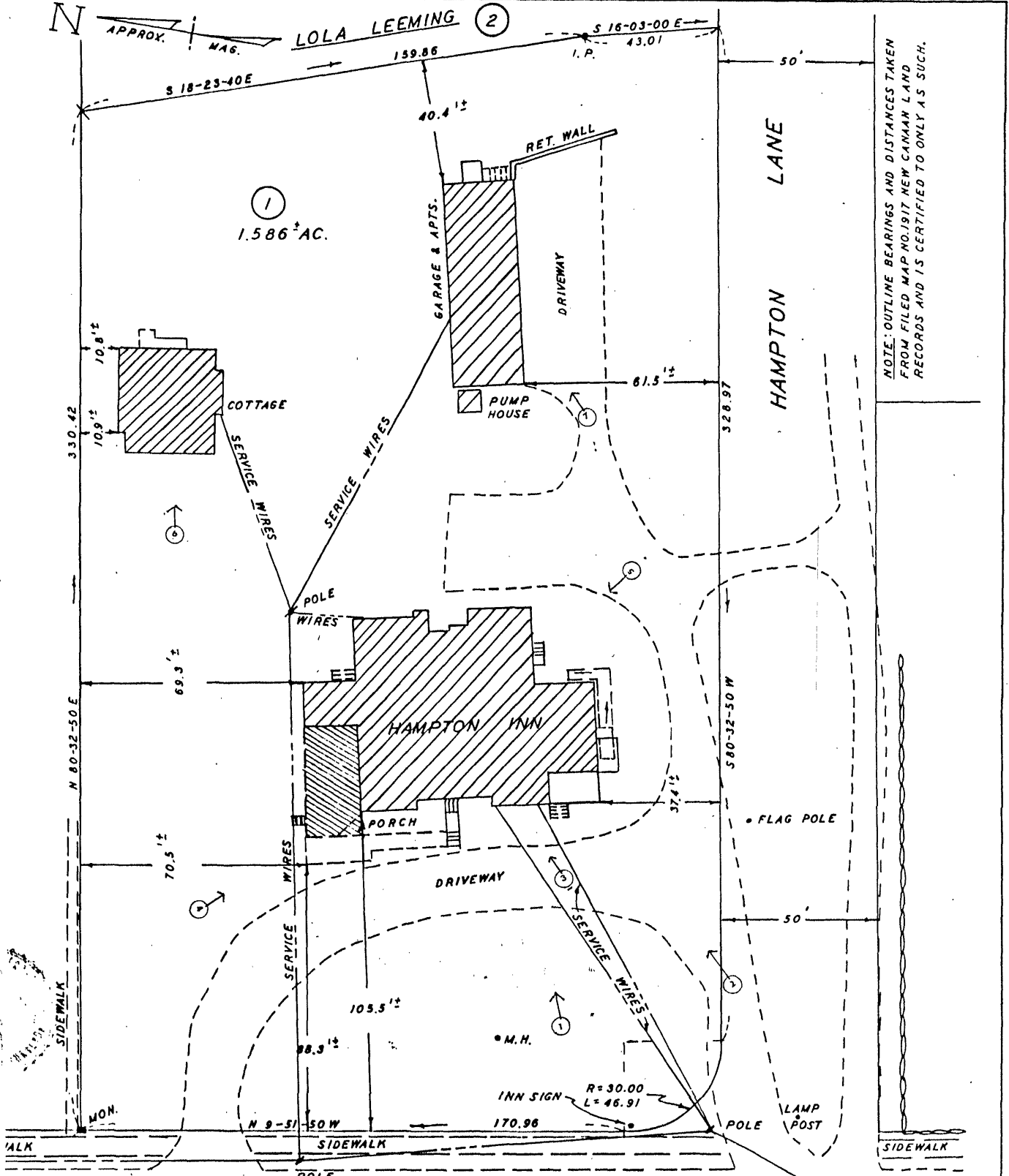
Third-floor hall
View north
Photograph 11

Third-floor bedroom
View west
Photograph 12

SCALE: 1"=30'



DATE: FEB. 14, 1975



NOTE: OUTLINE BEARINGS AND DISTANCES TAKEN FROM FILED MAP NO. 1917 NEW CANAAN LAND RECORDS AND IS CERTIFIED TO ONLY AS SUCH.

OENOKE AVENUE

Hampton Inn
New Canaan, CT

Photo key