### HISTORIC RESOURCES

**Building Name (Common)** Rawls, Waite, III, Farmstead

**Building Name (Historic)** Pierce, Joshua/John/Seth, Farmstead

**Street Address or Location** 22 Popple Swamp Road

**Town/City** Cornwall  
**Village** Cornwall Bridge  
**County** Litchfield

**Owner(s)** Waite Rawls III, 22 Popple Swamp Road, Cornwall Bridge CT 06754

**Record No.** 33908

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### BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

- **Agricultural Heritage Multiple Property Submission - State Register**
- **State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Name (Common)</th>
<th>Rawls, Waite, III, Farmstead</th>
<th>Record No.</th>
<th>33908</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Town/City</td>
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<td>Village</td>
<td>Cornwall Bridge</td>
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</table>

**Owner(s)** Waite Rawls III, 22 Popple Swamp Road, Cornwall Bridge CT 06754  
**Public** ☐  
**Private** ☑

**PROPERTY INFORMATION**

**Present Use:** Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling

**Historic Use:** Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling

**Accessibility to public:** Exterior visible from public road?  ☑ Yes  ☐ No

**Interior accessible?**  ☑ Yes  ☐ No  
If yes, explain ________________________________

**Style of building**  
Extended English bank barn, Vernacular Italianate style

**Date of Construction** c. 1875

**Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate):**

- ☑ Clapboard
- ☑ Asbestos Siding
- ☑ Brick
- ☑ Wood Shingle
- ☑ Asphalt Siding
- ☑ Fieldstone
- ☑ Board & Batten
- ☑ Stucco
- ☑ Cobblestone
- ☑ Aluminum Siding
- ☑ Concrete (Type ______________)
- ☑ Cut Stone (Type ______________)
- ☑ Other (Vertical wood siding)

**Structural System**

- ☑ Wood Frame
- ☑ Post & Beam
- ☑ Balloon
- ☑ Load bearing masonry
- ☐ Structural iron or steel
- ☐ Other ________________________________

**Roof (Type)**

- ☑ Gable
- ☐ Flat
- ☐ Mansard
- ☐ Monitor
- ☐ Sawtooth
- ☐ Gambrel
- ☐ Shed
- ☐ Hip
- ☐ Round
- ☐ Other ________________________________

**Material**

- ☑ Wood Shingle
- ☐ Roll Asphalt
- ☐ Tin
- ☐ Slate
- ☑ Asphalt Shingle
- ☐ Built up
- ☐ Tile
- ☐ Other ________________________________

**Number of Stories:** 1 1/2, B  
**Approximate Dimensions:** 40' x 80'

**Structural Condition:**  
☑ Excellent  ☐ Good  ☐ Fair  ☐ Deteriorated

**Exterior Condition:**  
☑ Excellent  ☐ Good  ☐ Fair  ☐ Deteriorated

**Location Integrity:**  
☐ On original site  ☑ Moved  When? ________________

**Alterations?**  
☑ Yes  ☐ No  
If yes, explain: ________________________________

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**FOR OFFICE USE:**

- **Town #_______**
- **Site #_______**
- **UTM______________________**

**District:**  
☐ S  ☐ NR  
If NR, Specify:  
☐ Actual  ☐ Potential
PROPERTY INFORMATION (CONT’D)

Related outbuildings or landscape features:

- Barn
- Shed
- Garage
- Carriage House
- Shop
- Garden

Other landscape features or buildings: Stone walls, brook, cupola, silo

Surrounding Environment:

- Open land
- Woodland
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Rural
- High building density
- Scattered buildings visible from site

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

See continuation sheet.

• Other notable features of building or site (Interior and/or Exterior)

See continuation sheet.

Architect ___________________________ Builder ___________________________

• Historical or Architectural importance:

See continuation sheet.

• Sources:


See continuation sheet.

Photographer Charlotte Hitchcock _______________ Date 7/13/2012

View Multiple Views ___________________________ Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock _______________ Date 9/25/2012

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude: 41.842903, -73.348138

Threats to the building or site:

- None known
- Highways
- Vandalism
- Developers
- Renewal
- Private
- Deterioration
- Zoning
- Other ________________
- Explanation ________________
• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The 25-acre farmstead is located on both sides of Popple Swamp Road, which runs west from Cornwall Village, then curves southward around Dean Hill to meet Furnace Brook Road (Route 4) in Cornwall Bridge. Prior to 1932, Furnace Brook Road branched off from Popple Swamp Road west of the farm on what is now West Road, and all traffic between the two villages would have passed along this way between the farmhouse on the north side and the barn on the south. In 1932 a new section of Furnace Brook Road was constructed along the south side of the barn and pasture site, connecting with Popple Swamp Road further east near the corner of Pierce Lane, and creating the current view of the south side of the barn with the farmhouse in the background. The site slopes down gently from north to south.

In the northern part of Cornwall there are several historic sites recognized by listing on the National Register of Historic Places. These include: the Red Mountain Shelter on the Mohawk Trail (a former route of the Appalachian Trail) north of its Route 4 crossing; the Major John Sedgewick House at 52 Hautboy Hill Road; and the Cream Hill Agricultural School, a mid-19th-century pioneering institution to train farmers in scientific methods of agriculture. Additional Cornwall farmsteads and barns are included in this thematic nomination to the State Register. These include 7 Pine Street in Cornwall Village, 332 Kent Road and 99 Warren Hill Road in Cornwall Bridge, 12 Popple Swamp Road, and 25 Bunker Hill Road in Cornwall Center.

The Farmhouse is a 2 ½-story five-bay center-chimney Colonial-style dwelling with its ridge-line oriented east-west parallel to the road. The front entry, in the south eave-side, is a six-paneled door in the central bay of the main floor. The entry has five-pane sidelights and a Georgian-style surround framed by fluted pilasters, with an entablature and shallow cornice. Windows are 16-over-16 double-hung sash with simple molded casings. The roof has simple eave and rake fascias with minimal overhangs, and asphalt shingle roofing. Walls are narrow wood clapboards with corner boards. The foundation is fieldstone. A 2 ½-story ell projects northward from the rear of the house and a garage abuts the ell at its northwest corner.

An unpaved driveway runs north from the road along the west side of the farmhouse, curving eastward to form a parking area and garage access. An unpaved drive runs south from the road, extending downslope to the barns.

The main barn (Barn I), which has its own address of 23 Popple Swamp Road, is oriented with its gable roof east-west parallel to Popple Swamp Road, and is set some distance to the south from the road. Barn II is a pole barn open on the east side, with a gable roof oriented north-south. Its northeast corner abuts the southwest corner of Barn I. Barn III is a small 1-story gable-roofed structure with its ridge-line oriented north-south, constructed of sawn dimension lumber framing. A cupola or monitor vent on the ridge suggests possible use as a sugar house in the past; its current function is as a wood shed. It is located in an open pasture north of Barn I and east of the drive.

Stone walls line the driveway and pastures. The barn is surrounded by pastures to the east, west, and south, with areas marked by wire electric fencing. A pasture area north of the barn is delineated by stone walls. West Road connects Popple Swamp Road with Route 4 and forms the western boundary. Scattered trees are also located near the west and east property boundaries. The house is surrounded by a lawn, along with scattered trees and an inground pool northeast of the farmhouse. Woodland is located to the north of the house.

• Other notable features of building or site (Interior and/or Exterior):

Architectural description:

Inventory of structures (C – contributing, NC – non-contributing):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>c. 1768</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn I</td>
<td>c.1875</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silo</td>
<td>c. 1930</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn II – pole barn</td>
<td>20th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn III - shed</td>
<td>20th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
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</table>
Barn I:

This is a large nine-bay ½-story eave-entry bank barn, 40’ x 80’, with a gable roof oriented with its ridge-line east-west. The main loft level is entered on the north side, while the basement level is entered at the east and west ends and south side.

Exterior:

Two main entries are located in the north eave-side. These entries consist of two pairs of over-sized hinged wood plank doors, located in the third bay in from each corner. Each is accessed by a slightly inclined earthen ramp. A horizontal pair of six-pane windows is placed along the floor centered within each of four bays on this eave-side – the first, fourth, sixth, and ninth bays. A smaller top-hinged access door is located in the center bay. Grade begins to slope down toward the west and east corners, exposing a course of fieldstone masonry foundation topped by a granite slab. Stone retaining walls aligned with the east and west gable-ends extend northward, bringing the ramped surface to meet the natural slope.

The east gable-end exposes the full basement level. A circular concrete silo is located adjacent to the northeast corner, attached by a small wooden connection to the main barn at this corner on the basement level. This connection features a pair of six-pane windows on its south side; the north side appears to be blank. The east gable-end of the barn includes a centered interior-mounted sliding wooden door on the basement level and a six-pane rectangular window near the southeast corner. A pair of six-pane windows is located within the sliding door. The first floor is blank, however, a long downspout angles from the eave of the façade diagonally down the east gable end to the southeast corner, where it ends. A small paired louvered vent is centered in the gable-attic.

The south eave-side also exposes the full basement level along its full length. A hinged wooden pass-through door is located at the southeast corner on the basement level. Continuing to the west from this door, there is a stable window in each of the nine bays, each either a single or pair of six-pane barn sash. At the far southwest corner is a sliding wooden pass-through door, mounted on an upper track. The first story contains two six-over-six double-hung windows, corresponding to the main entries on the north side. A similar lengthy downspout drains water from the northwest corner of the barn, running diagonally down the west gable-end, then wrapping around the southwest corner and continuing across the width of the first bay before ending at the sill of the first story.

The west gable-end resembles the east end, with a fully exposed basement level with centered interior-mounted pair of sliding doors flanked by six-pane windows. A small access door is located on the upper portion of the first story near the northwest corner. As with the opposing gable-end, a long downspout drains water from the gutter along the façade eave, which then drains diagonally down this gable-end toward the southwest corner. A small paired louvered vent is also located in the gable-attic, centered beneath the roof ridgeline. A girt-line siding divide is present on this end, echoing the dropped girts in the side aisles and the raised tie-girt at the center aisle with a similar pattern on the exterior. This is emphasized by sawn corner brackets in the upper angles of the siding divide.

The exterior walls of the main barn are clad in vertical board siding with molded battens typical of late 19th-century carriage barns, painted red. The basement level has plain flush-board vertical wood siding.

The roof has deep overhangs and is covered in asphalt shingles. Centered on the ridgeline of the main barn is a rectangular cupola. It is mounted on a horizontal base and has a cross-gable roof. The two gable-end sides of the cupola contain a pair of tall arched louvered vents. The two eave-side sides of the cupola contain three arched louvered vents, with the center vent taller. A rooster weathervane is mounted at the apex of the cupola roof.

Interior:

The interior of the main hay loft level consists of a square rule post and beam frame of circular sawn timbers with pegged mortise and tenon joinery. Nine bays – ten bents – are arranged with wider fourteen-foot spacing at the third and seventh bays, where the door openings are located, and twelve-foot width at the others. Each bent has two interior posts which rise the full height from the floor to the rafters. The posts are braced to the outer walls with dropped tie-girts and are connected across the center by a tie-girt just below the rafters, leaving a tall open aisle at the center. This structural configuration is typical of some New England barns of the period, with the entry doors at
22 Popple Swamp Road, Cornwall CT    Record No. 33908      5

the gable-ends. In this case it is adapted to an eave-entry barn with two pairs of doors in the north wall opening to
the up-hill grade. Above each bent is a pair of heavy principal rafters, meeting against a ridge-board at the peak.
Purlins run between the principal rafters slightly inward from the posts, and support common rafters of dimension
lumber. At the outer walls, a series of five or six wall girts span between outer posts and carry the vertical siding. A
hay track is suspended from the center span tie-girts.

Along the north wall there is a series of four multi-pane windows close to floor level. Each of these lights a shaftway
constructed around an opening in the floor to bring light into the north side of the basement. Two stairs connect
the loft and basement levels along the north and south walls, a convenient feature not found in many barns.

The basement level is constructed with heavy timber posts below the postlocations in the upper level. The posts are
chamfered along the lower half to form octagonal columns. These sit on stone piers. Heavy timber girders span in
the north-south direction over the posts; a few of these appear to be recycled hewn beams but most are sash sawn,
both indicating re-use from an older barn structure. In the narrow bays the floor joists sitting on these girders run
east-west, spanning between girders. In the third and seventh bays, which are wider and built to support hay wagons,
there are intermediate minor girders supporting joists oriented north-south. The basement floor is a concrete slab
and there are doorways in the gable-end walls for the cows to go out to pasture. Calf pens are now located along the
south wall, which has a row of stable windows providing light. The north wall is of fieldstone masonry, with a top
course of roughly-cut granite slabs. The westernmost bays are partitioned for storage and office space. The
basement is whitewashed.

Silo:

The silo, located adjacent to the east gable-end, near the north corner, is a concrete silo of the type formed of
stacked precast circular concrete rings. An attached half-circular shaft on the west side contains the access to the silo
interior. The roof is a cast-in-place concrete dome with a vent at the center.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criteria:

1. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
2. Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

This monumentally-scaled barn is an exceptional example due to its size, detailing, intact condition and its position
in a landscape that resembles its original setting, including the continuation of working agriculture. This barn, built
for dairy, must have been a model exemplar of Victorian-period modern farming. The setting, in conjunction with
the open fields of nearby 22 Popple Swamp Road, remains a rural pasture landscape and, as both properties
belonged to related Pierce family members, the two houses with their barns, gain significance from the larger
landscape setting. The site gains added significance from its association for 150 years with the Pierce family, locally
prominent over a span of seven generations, active in local politics and the military.

Historical background:

The house is roughly a century older than the barn.

This residence … was likely erected c. 1768 by John Pierce and remained in the family for several generations.
The land had been owned originally by Joshua Jewell of Plainfield, who sold it to Joshua Pierce in 1748. In the
early nineteenth century Seth Pierce resided here, until he relocated to a house formerly at 48 Jewell Street in the
village (Rossano).

The Pierce family were prominent long-time Cornwall residents (see also 12 Popple Swamp Road), dating back into
the 18th century, and their ownership over a 150-year period lends significance to the site. Their ancestor Daniel
Pierce immigrated from England in the 17th century to Newbury, Massachusetts, where the next generations
remained. Joshua Pierce (1704 – 1794) moved to Cornwall, Connecticut, where he purchased the Popple Swamp
Road farmstead. One of his sons John (b. 1734) married Lucy Howe, and built the house, while son Joshua lived
nearby (see nomination for 12 Popple Swamp Road). Another son Seth (1742-1833) married Amy Hart. They had nine children including Captain Seth Pierce (1785-1878) who took over the property and apparently built the barn. Gold’s history identifies Pierce family members as representative to the Connecticut General Assembly in the 1760s, and 1770s, and in the army during the Revolution.

Captain Seth Pierce, the youngest son, inherited the homestead. He was a very liberal man. When the old meeting-house was moved down to the plain, he put on one bent at his own expense. He was a large and thrifty farmer, breeding horses and cattle in large numbers, having at one time eighteen horses. At this time Captain Pierce and Noah Rogers were the largest landholders in town, each listing over one thousand acres.

He had sons, Major Seth and John H.; and daughters, who married Franklin Gold, Oliver Chapin, and Ezekiel Birdseye. Major Seth inherited the homestead, which he still holds at the age of ninety-two. He graduated at Yale in the class of 1806, and, having been born May 16, 1785, is the oldest living graduate of the college. A bachelor, his life has been that of a quiet farmer, and he still enjoys good health in his green old age, and is much respected by his fellow-citizens. John H., second son, was a farmer; -built the corner house, so called, which he occupied; and was killed about 1825, having been crushed by a cart (Gold, p. 245).

The Beers Map of 1874 shows S. Pierce still as the named owner, with Major S. Pierce also shown in Cornwall Village. The main barn may date from the Pierce ownership.

The farmstead remained in Pierce family ownership until 1906, when it was acquired by the Chamberlain family. The 1910 census shows Henry Chamberlain, age 42, a dairy farmer, with wife Ethel M. and two sons. Son Paul, who was later listed as an electrician in the 1930 census, remained in Cornwall with his wife Dorothy and two children Dorothy and Paul, Jr. The Chamberlains retained ownership until 1970; during their tenure electricity and indoor plumbing were installed, along with a rear wing, porches, and cedar shake siding, later covered with aluminum siding. The interior of the house retains original features including paneling, doors, and fireplaces.

The Chamberlains increased the size of the farm to about 500 acres and operated a dairy farm until 1963. The silo is of a type commonly constructed in the mid-20th century, and must have been constructed during the Chamberlain ownership.

Waite Rawls III, the current owner, has owned the property since 1984, and has worked on restoring the house and maintaining the barn. For several years, he has rented the barn and pastures to Debra Tyler, whose Local Farm is a raw milk dairy, selling milk from Old World Jersey cows, and who also teaches dairy and homesteading skills through a non-profit organization, Motherhouse.

Architectural significance:

The construction and style of this monumentally-scaled barn, with its sawn timber three-aisle nine-bay layout, octagonal basement-level posts, well-lighted lower level, molded batten exterior siding, deep eave and rake overhangs, and elegant cupola, are consistent with a construction date c. 1875 (see nominations of similar barns at 1209 South Street, Coventry). It was the era of growing industrial cities whose residents needed dairy and eggs, resulting in both a rise in commercial-scale dairy farms and simultaneously the class of gentleman farmers who built high-style barns in the most technologically advanced fashion. This barn is an exceptional example due to its size, detailing, intact condition and its position in a landscape that resembles its original setting, including the continuation of working agriculture. It appears to have been purpose-built with the ground level dairy stable below the hay loft. It was a leader in incorporating that configuration, which became the standard by the early 1900s, with many older barns jacked up and retrofitted with new basements. This one, built for dairy by design, must have been a model exemplar of Victorian-period modern farming.

The setting, in conjunction with the open fields of nearby 22 Popple Swamp Road, remains a rural pasture landscape and, as both properties belonged to related Pierce family members, the two houses with their barns, gain significance from the larger landscape setting.

The site gains added significance from its association for 150 years with the Pierce family, locally prominent over a span of seven generations, active in local politics and the military.
Sources (continuation):

Photographs and field notes by Waite Rawls, Charlotte Hitchcock 7/13/2012.

Map resources:
Cornwall Assessor's Records: Parcel ID: 60/479.
Aerial views from:
Historical aerial photography and maps accessed at UConn MAGIC:
   http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934.html
   http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps_connecticut_towns.html.
Beers Atlas of Litchfield County, 1874.
USGS Historical Maps accessed 6/22/2012 at http://historical.mytopo.com/
UTM coordinates: http://itouchmap.com/latlong.html

Print and internet resources:
Clouette, Bruce, Cream Hill Agricultural School National Register Nomination No. 76001986, National Park Service, 1976 (Note: the school building was moved to the Connecticut Antique Machinery Association site in Kent in 1994 and re-assembled for use as exhibit space, http://ctamachinery.com).
Connecticut State Library online: iconn.org or http://www.cslib.org/iconnsitemap/staff/SiteIndex.aspx#directories
Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010,

3. Detail Site Plan Sketch showing contributing resources – base image from [http://maps.google.com/](http://maps.google.com/).

4. Southwest view from West Street, camera facing northeast. Left to right: Farmhouse, Barn III, Barn I, Barn II.
5. Southwest view of Farmhouse, camera facing northeast.

6. Southwest view of Barn and Farmhouse from West Street, camera facing northwest.
7. Northwest view of Barn II, camera facing southeast.

8. Southwest view of Barn II, camera facing northeast.
9. Interior view of Barn II, camera facing south.

10. Southwest view of Barn III, camera facing northeast.
11. Northeast view of Barn III with Barn I at rear, camera facing south.

12. Interior view of Barn III, camera facing south.

15. North view of Barn I east bays, camera facing southeast.

17. East view of Barn I, camera facing southeast.
18. South view of Barn I, camera facing northeast.

20 a-b. East view of Barn I, camera facing west. Note connector to Silo at the basement level, far right.

21. Interior view of Barn I basement level, camera facing east. Note floor joists of loft above, oriented east-west across the major girders.
22. Interior view of Barn I basement level, camera facing southwest. Note floor joists at threshing bay above, oriented north-south; chamfered posts supporting girders at basement level.

23. Interior view of Barn I basement level, camera facing northwest; note clerestory windows in north wall.
24. Interior view of Barn I main loft level, camera facing southeast; note hay track suspended below collar tie girts.

25. Interior view of Barn I main loft level, camera facing northeast; note major and minor rafters.
26. Interior view of Barn I main level, camera facing northeast; clerestory window in north wall with shaft to light the basement level.

27. Southeast view of Barn II at left and Barn I with Silo, Farmhouse at right rear, camera facing north, photograph courtesy of Alec Frost.