

HILL-STEAD
(Alfred Atmore Pope Estate)
35 Mountain Road
Farmington
Hartford County
Connecticut

HABS CT-472
CT-472

PHOTOGRAPHS

PAPER COPIES OF COLOR TRANSPARENCIES

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Hill-Stead (Alfred Atmore Pope home and estate) HABS No. CT-472

Location: 35 Mountain Road, Farmington, Hartford County, Connecticut

Present Owner: Hill-Stead Museum

Present Use: Museum

Significance: Hill-Stead house and estate is the result of a noteworthy confluence of architectural and landscape expertise. Built at the turn of the twentieth century as a country estate for a wealthy Cleveland family, this house in many ways follows the contemporary tradition of rural New England houses in this period. The Alfred Atmore Pope family hired McKim, Mead & White, the nation's première residential architecture firm to work on the design of the house, and likely consulted with Warren Manning, a leading landscape architect working in these same circles, to lay out the grounds of the estate and site the house. Within this typical framework for the social elite, Hill-Stead was exceptional in that these professional designers worked with Theodate Pope, daughter of Alfred Pope, to shape Hill-Stead. Subsequently Theodate Pope became a professional architect of some note; this house was her first architectural project. Other than a few renovation projects that preceded it, Hill-Stead is significant as the first manifestation of this female architect's design interests. The contributions of each designer are visible within the building and the landscape and were unified by Theodate Pope's continued involvement with the site. The house also reflects the stylistic preferences and social network of Alfred Atmore Pope and Ada Brooks Pope, parents of Theodate and primary clients of the commission. Several decades after the initial construction campaign pioneering landscape designer Beatrix Farrand provided a planting plan for the formal sunken garden on the estate.¹

This country estate was designed both as a functioning farm and as a potent social symbol. While rural in its setting and architectural vocabulary, Hill-Stead was closely integrated into the fabric of Farmington and was carefully crafted to accommodate the complex social patterns of the wealthy Pope family. The Colonial Revival mansion sits at the top of a hill overlooking the village of Farmington, the Farmington Valley and the Talcott Mountain Range. Its long, winding entrance drive creates a controlled, formal carriage approach to the mansion, while a grassy path rising up the slope from High Street to the front door of the house more directly links the estate on the hill to the town below. Originally boasting a six-hole golf grounds, tennis courts, a large greenhouse, formal sunken garden, wild garden, and wood-land trails, Hill-Stead was a completely-outfitted ferme ornée, with all the social and practical benefits of the nearby village of Farmington.

Through its evocation of a vernacular farm complex, Hill-Stead also participates in the period search for national architectural authenticity, a common role of the Colonial Revival in the late

¹ Theodate Pope and Beatrix Farrand collaborated on several other projects later in Pope's architectural career such as a courtyard and garden at Westover School.

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Despite formal elements of the façades, the house has an overall irregular and sprawling massing evocative of an early nineteenth-century New England farm complex, with a carriage house and barn attached at the rear. While the structure was designed and completed as a cohesive unit, its form deliberately gives the appearance of accretion with the passage of time. Theodate Pope was particularly interested in contemporary trends of designing in an “old” style. Her work on her own house, an eighteenth-century saltbox she called the O’Rourke, was a life-long exercise in modern renovation in old style. McKim, Mead & White were leaders in the rediscovery of Colonial-era architecture, and contributed integrally in the success of this “old-style” conceit at Hill-Stead. Both the architects and the clients of Hill-Stead were interested in creating a building that symbolized a more innocent rural national past through its entirely modern fabric. While the form of the house pays homage to vernacular structures, it is in reality the product of sophisticated design and modern construction ingenuity. In the same way, the fields, woodlands and watercourses on the site have a naturalistic form but were the product of careful design and planning.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical history:

1. Date of Erection: Construction of the mansion-house complex at Hill-Stead was begun in 1898, with the erection of the barns that would later be attached to the house. The construction of the mansion house itself was begun in early 1899 and completed by December 1900.² Landscaping for the estate was begun in 1898. The gardens abutting the house, as well as the interior furnishing of the house were completed over the course of the summer and winter of 1900, and the family finally spent their first night in the house on June 4, 1901.³
2. Architect: Hill-Stead was designed by the architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White, in collaboration with Theodate Pope, daughter of the clients Alfred and Ada Pope. The lead architect from the firm was William Rutherford Mead.⁴ Supervising architect for the project was Egerton Swartout at the firm, though W. R. Wilder seems to have succeeded him in this role toward the end of the construction process in 1899. The original concept plan for the house was provided by Theodate Pope and had been developed in consultation with her father. McKim, Mead & White created the elevation, revised the plan to accommodate the family’s needs and created all working drawings. A local

² The dates of construction are based on extant correspondence among members of the Pope family, employees at the architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White, and various contractors and artisans. Especially useful is the correspondence between Richard F. Jones, general contractor and builder for the house and W. R. Wilder at McKim, Mead & White. All of these records can be seen in the McKim, Mead & White Collection at the New York Historical Society (hereafter MMW collection, NYHS), in the two folders of information related to the Alfred A. Pope house.

³ See Theodate Pope diary entry, (5 June 5 1901), Hill-Stead Museum Archives (hereafter HSM Archive).

⁴ Pope family correspondence with McKim, Mead & White (MMW Collection, NYHS) contains repeated references to William Rutherford Mead, and a Theodate Pope diary entry from Oct. 29, 1901 mentions a visit by Mead to the house in which he offered advice about adding a portico to the front of the house. In *The Architecture of McKim, Mead & White 1870-1920: A Building List* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1978), Leland Roth attributed the house to Stanford White, but in a letter to HSM, he later stated that the house should be attributed to Mead.

builder named Henry Hall Mason provided on-site working drawings in consultation with Theodate Pope to change and supplement those provided by McKim, Mead & White.⁵ Mason also designed the dairy barns in the farm complex, the summer house in the sunken garden, and made significant adaptations to the design for the attached carriage barn.

No original landscape plan for the site has been located, but references in correspondence from the period of construction indicate landscape architect Warren Manning's involvement. Strong evidence also suggests that Manning's former employer, Olmsted, Olmsted, & Elliot, may also have played a consulting role in the design of the estate.⁶ Plans of the estate as completed, drawn by a local draftsman in 1908, show the completeness of the landscape design, and the manner in which each element of the estate was linked cohesively to its other elements. D. H. Potter a professional landscape designer, and another former employee of Olmsted, Olmsted, & Elliot, worked full-time for the Popes between 1898 and 1900. He may have been largely responsible for over-seeing the execution of Manning's general landscape plans, and also for determining many details of the site. Potter would likewise have been capable of designing features of the landscape, and was actively involved in many stages of the development of the landscape during the construction period. Although a sunken garden was built as part of the original campaign, around 1916 landscape architect Beatrix Farrand completed a gardening plan for the formal sunken garden that is now restored.

3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses: Hill-Stead was the home of Alfred and Ada Pope from 1901 until Alfred's death in 1913. From 1913 to 1916 Theodate Pope and her mother lived in the house when not traveling. After 1916 Theodate Pope Riddle and her new husband, John Wallace Riddle, became the primary occupants of the house, inheriting it upon Ada Pope's death in 1920. Theodate Pope Riddle occupied the house until her death in 1946, whereupon she left the property in trust to become a museum. Throughout the period of the family's occupation of the house, numerous servants inhabited the rear wing of the house. Prominent among these was the family's butler Earnest Bohlen, who occupied Hill-Stead from 1901 until his death in 1943, and managed the house and its lands during the family's extended absences.

⁵ In a letter of March 16, 1900 to McKim, Mead & White, the contractor Richard F. Jones mentions that H. Henry Hall Mason made several of the working drawings actually used in the construction of the house, suggesting that authorship of these portions of the building belongs to Mason, not McKim, Mead & White. MMW Collection, NYHS.

⁶ See a letter of January 14, 1899 from W. M. Shepardson to J. H. Whittemore, in the Files of Harris Whittemore, Jr., Trust c/o Bank of America 1 Exchange Place – CtEH 43102A, Waterbury, Connecticut 06702 (hereafter HWJ Trust). In this letter, Shepardson, who was the Whittemore's full-time landscape architect, and who was himself a former employee of Olmsted, Olmsted & Elliot, noted that Mr. Olmsted has been called to Farmington to help determine the site of the house. This attestation by Shepardson is without corroboration. Shepardson is a reliable source, however, as he was engaged in several stages of the Pope project, and was also a close acquaintance of all the landscape architects involved.

For a significant period of time after Hill-Stead became a house museum, its directors lived in the servants' wing of the mansion house. Today the mansion house is unoccupied, but the former servants quarters, and the entire third floor are used as offices.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: A large number of craftsmen, builders and artisans worked on the construction of Hill-Stead. Though the identity of many of the individual craftsmen and laborers remains unknown, rich archival records document the activities of many others.

Perhaps the most important individual in the building's construction was Richard F. Jones, general contractor and builder, based out of nearby Unionville, Connecticut. Jones was selected by the Pope family to be the general contractor for their house based on his proposal of November 24, 1899.⁷ Prior to hiring him to work on the mansion house, the Popes had retained Jones to construct the attached barn complex. While he was not involved in the original development of the design for the house, Jones made many of the on-site decisions over the course of the construction process. He maintained steady contact with McKim, Mead & White, especially while completing the final details of the house.⁸ He also worked closely with Theodate Pope to interpret the architect's plans and to make adaptations of these plans to the family's needs. Richard F. Jones' contract stipulated that he would supply "the Mason work above the first tier of beams, Carpenter, Outside Joiner, Plastering, Painting, Glazing, Iron and other works for completion of House at Farmington, Connecticut."⁹ Although Jones was hired for work on the house only, he noted that his workforce was employed more broadly across the estate, and stated that he and his workers had "done considerable work in the garden etc., have built brick walks, foundations for the summer house, man holes pier etc., etc."¹⁰ Jones ultimately sub-contracted some of the house-construction tasks to local craftsmen. Hiram Bessell of Hartford, Connecticut completed all brick-work and plastering. D. C. Hawley of Farmington, Connecticut completed all exterior painting. The Lincoln Company of Hartford, Connecticut supplied the I-Beams. Valentine Weidig, of Unionville, Connecticut, provided the copper-work gutters and roofs.¹¹

Other individuals employed at Hill-Stead were contracted separately from Jones. The construction of Hill-Stead was begun by H. Wales Lines Co. who excavated the cellar and built the foundation for the mansion house. William Paul Gerhard, a New York City-based Civil Engineer, consulted with Alfred Pope about the Hill-Stead estate, probably regarding the sewer treatment, in 1899. William H. Jackson, of William H. Jackson & Co. based in New York City, provided the

⁷ This proposal is in the McKim, Mead & White Collection, NYHS.

⁸ The correspondence between Richard F. Jones and McKim, Mead & White is in the MMW Collection, NYHS.

⁹ See the contractual document in the NYHS archive. The contract was drawn up by McKim, Mead & White between Alfred Pope and Richard Jones. It was signed not only by Alfred Pope and Richard F. Jones, but also by Theodate Pope.

¹⁰ Letter R. F. Jones to McKim, Mead & White, (8 March 1900), MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹¹ Ibid.

Franklin stoves and hob-grates for the Farmington home. W. B. McAllister and his assistant Mr. Leuber, provided all the interior wood-work for the house, which was shipped by train to Farmington from Cleveland, Ohio. L. B. Fulton, of New York City-based J. L. Mott Iron Works, supplied blueprints and fixtures for all the bathrooms. Paul C. Pape, of Cincinnati, Ohio's The Pape Brothers Moulding Company, seems to have provided some of the architectural details for the house.¹² A man referred to only as Col. Smith of Cleveland, Ohio, designed the original heating and cooling system for the house, as he had at the Pope family's Euclid Avenue house in Cleveland.¹³

When the family added the greenhouses to the estate between 1903 and 1908, A. B. Cook, then farm manager of Hill-Stead, superintended the construction of a Hitchings & Co. Frame B. W., 100' x 20' Greenhouse on the site.¹⁴

5. **Original plans and construction:** Other than a few exceptions noted under "Alterations and Additions" below, the exterior of the house largely retains its appearance from the original 1899-1901 building campaign. The design process for Hill-Stead is discussed extensively in the Historical Context section.

Floor plans, elevations, details, and roofing plans were drawn by Egerton Swartout of McKim, Mead & White. A complete set of these plans, dating from February 9, 1899, is in the McKim, Mead & White collection at the New York Historical Society. Original duplicates of the first, second and third floor plans are also in the possession of the Hill-Stead Museum archive. The copies of the plans in the possession of Hill-Stead museum have pencil sketch modifications, as well as comments on the plans reflecting changes to be made. While it is difficult to definitively determine the author of each of the comments, these drawings certainly contain notes in the hands of Richard Jones and Theodate Pope, and possibly also have notations written by Henry Hall Mason and W. R. Wilder at McKim, Mead & White.

Also in the archive at Hill-Stead are original sewer and drainage plans, drawn by C. B. Vorce, and 1908 maps showing the landscape and grounds of the estate as completed in 1901. The original landscape is much more heavily altered than the house itself and is much less well documented. These drawings, however, offer a good indication of the original form of the grounds.

6. **Alterations and Additions:** Between 1901 and 1918, the house underwent many gradual and some more extensive modifications, all commissioned and supervised by members of the Pope family. In October 1901 the Pope family, in consultation with William Rutherford Mead, of McKim, Mead & White, added a Mt. Vernon-

¹² A December 4, 1899 letter from Pope to McKim, Mead & White discusses drawings that he left in their office.

¹³ See the June 26, 1899 letter from Alfred Atmore Pope to McKim, Mead & White.

¹⁴ Only one photograph of this greenhouse has been located. The receipt for its construction along with the potting shed (garage) and foundations offer ample clues about its form. This is discussed in greater detail in the historical context section of this report.

style veranda across the front of the house.¹⁵ Prior to the construction of the portico, the house had an unelaborated façade, from which a large bay window protruded. When the veranda and portico were constructed they were overlaid in front of this façade. Between 1903 and 1908 the family also constructed an elaborate greenhouse complex.

From September 1906 to July 1907, a significant addition was made to the house, consisting of an expansion of the library and the construction of a new study for Alfred Pope as well as a large new fire-proof vault. This extension imposed a greater sense of symmetry on the front façade. A second bay window was added to the north side of the house and the library extruded from the mass of the building in a manner similar to the sun-porch to the south. The concurrent expansion of Mr. Pope's den to the north added another formal façade to the house and transformed the footprint of the house from a sprawling L to a truncated U-shape, reinforcing the rambling picturesque qualities of the plan. This new façade, which takes the form of a simplified Doric portico, offers a Greek-revival element to the house, which like the picturesque plan reinforces the overall impression changes over time characteristic of the early nineteenth century.

Following a fire in the attached carriage barns in May 1908, Alfred Pope had the barns reconstructed largely in their original form, beginning in June 1908. While they were rebuilt substantially along the same lines and by the same contractor, the reconstructed portions were made "slow burning" and "semi-fireproof." A new dormer extension was built above the laundry room at this time to give space for the addition of a private bathroom to the butler's quarters. In 1913 a new heating system was added to this same barn complex.

After her father's death in 1913, Theodate Pope seems to have taken a more active role in making changes and additions to Hill-Stead's form. In 1917, a motion-picture apparatus was set into the stable and Theodate Pope Riddle adapted the space accordingly, designing an attached public auditorium that she dubbed the "Makeshift" theater. This theater seems to have been Theodate's first project to memorialize her father.¹⁶ Since Alfred had completed a number of philanthropic acts for the community of Farmington, Theodate may well have thought of the Makeshift as a first, local, philanthropic project in his memory. In January 1918 Theodate oversaw the redecoration of the formal entertaining rooms of the house, and in May 1918 she added two small rooms on the third floor, at either end of the large billiard room. She may well have made many other changes, as she kept few records, and the only documentation for her activities of the period is in her correspondence with her mother.

A series of poorly-documented changes were made when the house became a museum. The second floor of the servants' quarters at the rear of the house was

¹⁵ Letter Alfred Atmore Pope to McKim, Mead & White, (26 October 1901).

¹⁶ See a letter of January 9, 1915 from Florence Marin to Theodate Pope, letter # 408 in the HSM Archive.

converted into an apartment for the museum's director in 1951. Subsequently, in 1952, the entire servants' quarters were transformed into living space. The most notable change was the removal of Hill-Stead's main kitchen in order to create a living room for the museum director. In the 1980s the former servants' quarters were converted into office space for the museum staff.

The outlying areas of the estate have changed more significantly since the estate's transformation into a museum. The tennis courts and golf course reverted back to nature over the years. The greenhouse frame was demolished sometime after Theodate Pope's death in 1946, with only its foundation and the stone potting-shed and garage that had formed the head of the green house left standing. A security officer's quarters built in 1962 was placed at the foot of the greenhouse. It echoes the shape of the head of the green house, but is a wood-frame structure instead of stone construction.¹⁷

The attached carriage barn also underwent significant, but poorly-documented renovation. The Makeshift Theater, carved from the family's stables c. 1917 by Theodate Pope, seems to be intact though no drawings are known that document either the form of the barn prior to 1917 or the exact nature of Theodate Pope's redesign of the space. Much of the attached barn area has been modified. A major alteration in 1979 added a gift shop, galley kitchen, and public restrooms to the structure.¹⁸

One change made to the estate after its conversion into a museum was the sale of Theodate Pope's own home, The O'Rourke, in 1975. In addition, the museum sold approximately 50 acres of land from around the edges of the estate. The O'Rourke property had been joined to the Alfred Pope estate in 1900, and the two houses were vitally linked through connecting paths, gardens and form. With the removal of the O'Rourke from the Pope estate, the role of the front entrance pathway connecting the estate to High Street in Farmington was diminished.

B. Historical Context

Introduction

“Your house cannot stand if you endeavor
only to pull out the imperfect stones.
Replace them instead with white ones
that the temple in which you live
may more nearly approach perfection.”¹⁹

These lines, written among other verse fragments in Theodate Pope's diary, can be interpreted as speaking metaphorically about the role of Hill-Stead in the Pope's family life. Hill-Stead, a large

¹⁷ Plans for the construction of this building are in the HSM Archive.

¹⁸ Plans for the renovations are in the HSM Archive.

¹⁹ Verse written by Theodate Pope in fragmentary, undated diary entry, HSM Archive.

white mansion, sits atop a hill in Farmington, Connecticut, and commands masterful vistas of the mountains and valleys beyond. While its architectural vocabulary is grand, as is its relationship with the surrounding landscape, Hill-Stead alludes to the humbler roots of rural Colonial New England architecture. Its sprawling footprint pays homage to the common New England farmhouse with attached barns and outbuildings. Such colonial vernacular form was employed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to invoke moral values. In the construction of this domestic retreat, a peculiarly modern phenomenon, the Popes sought to invoke a society and lifestyle that would “more nearly approach perfection,” and that would suggest their own moral and social standing through its form.

Hill-Stead was constructed for Alfred and Ada Pope as country residence and farm. After many years of urban life, in which they had experienced success in industry and the subsequent social pressures accompanying wealth, the elder Popes followed the example of many of their peers by retiring to rural life. For the Popes, building a house in Farmington meant at least symbolic retreat from society and the semblance of a life closer to nature, as well as an opportunity to live close to their only child. It also meant making a claim for traditional social values, and attempting to influence the values of their era through architectural form. The Popes lived in a period of rapid social change, typified by industrialization, immigration and increase in urban population. As a reaction to this sweeping social change, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were also characterized by growing sentimentality for the rural national lifestyle of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries, and increased nativism in the face of growing immigration by non-English speaking populations. The construction of a Colonial Revival country estate in the midst of these changes presented an overt social argument, taking a stance aligned with Anglo-Saxon colonization and traditions.

The Popes were conscious of the variety of architectural choices of the era, which ranged from the “modern” architectural vocabulary of the Prairie Style to the imported Anglo Arts and Crafts movement, and deliberately selected this nostalgic, and particularly “American” vernacular form for their house. This decision was in line with the larger social importance of the Colonial Revival, especially in the wake of the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893.²⁰ Richard Guy Wilson has written that the practice of reviving Colonial styles of architecture in the United States is typified by precisely this type of nostalgic and moralizing impulse. As Wilson noted:

Colonial Revival, in all its manifestations, acts as an instructive tool, informing people how to live – what their house and furnishings should look like – while providing models of behavior, community, and religious worship.... In some cases, its appeal comes down to a quest for simplicity and a yearning for the ‘good old days,’ while in others it is about having a protective barrier from modernism and present-day traumas. In all of its modes, however, Colonial

²⁰ The World’s Columbian exposition was intended to honor the 400th anniversary of Columbus’ landing in the New World, though a series of delays caused the fair to open in 1893 instead of 1892. The fair was held in Chicago, and its Neoclassical “Court of Honor” is thought by many to have changed the direction of American architecture of the era, reorienting it more directly toward Neoclassical architectural forms. The active role of McKim, Mead & White at the fair, as well as of Warren Manning in the supervision of its landscape, create a direct link between the architecture of the fair and of Hill-Stead. Also important is the fact that Alfred and Ada Pope spent about a week at the fair, and seem to have been impressed with it (See the correspondence between Alfred A. Pope and J. H. Whittemore, HWJ Trust, with selected photocopies at the HSM Archive).

Revival acts as part of the national memory and helps uphold our cultural identity.²¹

It seems a bit ironic that a man like Alfred Pope, so active in the expansion of industry and so entrepreneurial in his business approach, should select to build a house in a conservative and nostalgic style, yet it was precisely individuals of the social and economic status of the Popes who were driving the growing success and popularity of Colonial Revival architecture. While economically progressive, the Popes were socially conservative and their retirement home expresses their alignment with conservative social trends.

However, the importance of Hill-Stead was not solely symbolic to the life of Alfred and Ada Pope. For their daughter Theodate, the construction of Hill-Stead offered the opportunity to establish her adult position within the family as well as to begin to develop her professional interest in architecture. Theodate Pope had already expressed her independence by moving out from the protective shelter of her parents' house in Cleveland and setting up a household in Farmington, Connecticut. Though her endeavors were funded by an allowance that she received from her parents, Theodate's lifestyle was unconventionally independent for the period. With her father's assistance she had purchased an old house in Farmington and had supervised upgrades and its redecoration in an "old-fashioned" style. Because of this experience, when Theodate convinced her parents to build a home in Farmington she played an integral role in the purchase of the land, the negotiation with contractors, and even in the design of the house itself. Through the construction of Hill-Stead, Theodate was able to realize a long-held dream of creating an old-fashioned farm house for herself and her family, and at the same time could, with a generous budget, guaranty that the house and all of its furnishings maintained a cohesive old-fashioned look. Even more than her own house, therefore, Hill-Stead allowed Theodate to prominently display her prowess at interior decoration in a period style. Since Colonial Revival interior decoration was frequently linked to femininity and domesticity, Theodate was realizing her own feminine status through the decoration and design of these spaces even as she was also beginning to develop professionally-tuned design sensibilities. Contact with professional architects, landscape architects, and artisans during the design and construction of the house also gave Theodate a greater sense of the day-to-day practical aspects of design and construction, which a woman of her status would have been unlikely to gain in any other fashion.²²

The history of Hill-Stead is both individual (e.g., closely linked to the family and the professional designers by which it was formed) and general (e.g., tied to larger social and architectural trends of an era). It is also typical of contemporary trends as a professionally-designed rural estate for a wealthy family, but unusual in the degree of family involvement in shaping its design and construction. Its architecture reflects these binary categories behind its design, consisting of a historic architectural vocabulary merged with modern materials and

²¹ *The Colonial Revival House* (New York: Abrams, 2004).

²² While women could attend certain universities to follow their architectural programs, and could also apprentice in architectural firms at this time, a wealthy woman like Theodate Pope was in some senses more restricted in the directions she could choose to attain a professional education. This type of hands-on experience was, therefore, probably the most socially feasible manner for Theodate to attain knowledge of the practical aspects of design and construction. For a discussion of architectural education for women in this period see Elizabeth G. Grossman and Lisa B. Reitzes, "Caught in the Crossfire: Women in Architectural Education, 1880-1910," in *Architecture: A Place for Women*, ed. Ellen Perry Berkeley (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 27-39.

amenities. The layers of influence and history behind Hill-Stead are complex, and only careful study can reveal how such opposite elements combine harmoniously to create a single estate. In order to understand the form of Hill-Stead, therefore, it is necessary first to consider the background and knowledge of the individuals who created its form, then the larger social and architectural forces within which they were circulating, and finally how each of these elements merged together during the construction of Hill-Stead.

The Forces behind Hill-Stead

The creation of Hill-Stead was brought to fruition through the combined expertise and interests of a variety of individuals. The history of Hill-Stead house is most integrally linked to the lives of the individual members of the Pope family: Alfred Atmore Pope (1842-1913), Ada Brooks Pope (1844-1920), and Theodate Pope (later Theodate Pope Riddle) (1867-1946). Each member of the Pope family played an active and individual role in the design of Hill-Stead, and each likewise brought varied personal experiences and abilities to the task of creating their new family home. Also important to the design of Hill-Stead was the architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White. This firm is important both for its larger role within the national architectural community and its particular relationship with the social class in which the Popes circulated. Finally, the integral role of J. H. Whittemore and his son Harris Whittemore in the initial phases of decision and construction of Hill-Stead can only be understood by considering the relationship between these men and the Pope family, as well as between the Whittemores and McKim, Mead & White.

Alfred Atmore Pope

Alfred Atmore Pope was born into a Quaker family in Maine but moved as a youth to Ohio with his family. His father ran a series of textile mills and because of his limited success the family was never financially stable and moved several times. This childhood experience may have motivated Alfred Pope's life-long entrepreneurial ambition. Alfred Pope became a successful businessman, progressing from an entry-level position in the National Malleable Iron Company to presidency of the company in less than ten years.²³ His work kept him constantly traveling between the east coast and his home in Cleveland, Ohio. As the company expanded, he made frequent trips to plants in Toledo and then in Chicago, and ultimately to corporate connections in the far west as well. In his capacity as president of the company, Alfred Pope was constantly in contact with members of the building community. Some were his clients, working for railroad companies, others were involved in the construction of structures to house his business. Over the course of the 1880s and 1890s, Alfred Pope was involved in a number of building campaigns with his company. Records of Alfred Pope's work as supervisor of these projects are minimal, but references recur across his correspondence from this period with J. H. Whittemore. Alfred Pope's correspondence suggests that he was interested in all the pragmatic aspects of construction for industry, and that he was familiar with all stages of the design and construction process. In a letter from 1890, for example, Pope wrote in detail to Whittemore about the

²³ For more information about Alfred Pope, see Sandra L. Katz's biography of Theodate Pope Riddle, *Dearest of Geniuses* (Windsor, CT: Tide-Mark, 2003). The Hill-Stead Museum Archives also have extensive primary and secondary information on the life of Alfred Pope, including a portion of his correspondence. Also valuable to any study of Alfred Pope is the HWJ Trust's archival collection of extensive correspondence between Pope and J. H. Whittemore.

lighting, water supply, gutter, and sewer treatments of a new electrical plant in the Cleveland factory. Then, in 1892 Pope was involved in the purchase of land for the construction of the Chicago plant and wrote detailed notes to Whittemore about the various real estate opportunities, and the fact that the company was “considering several different plans for buildings as to the varying sizes of property which we may be able to obtain.”²⁴

Alfred Pope seems to have had more than a casual, or even a business-oriented knowledge of the architectural process. Whether from his various duties in commissioning and supervising architectural projects for the company, or because of personal interest in the question, Alfred Pope had a great deal of knowledge about architectural drawings and specifications. A brief extract from a much longer letter that he wrote to J. H. Whittemore, about a fence that Whittemore planned to construct around a chapel, gives some indication of Pope’s knowledge of the architectural process. In this passage, Pope instructs J. H. Whittemore about the elements necessary in a specification to communicate the needs of a commission:

Your specifications for a fence must be much more definite. You might give the detailed dimensions of each side, but you must get as well the detailed dimensions in this way, state the width of gates that you require in each location, and then give the measurements in detail from center to center of posts so that the manufacturer may be advised as to the exact length of his panels in making up the work; again you should give a larger and more definite scale drawing with these measurements on them, and if you conclude to set a gate way in on Meadow Street you should get a drawing of the sweep of the fence as it turns in, or give the description in a mathematical form so that it can be definitely understood. I would suggest that you have a mechanic with some experience, if not convenient to have a surveyor, make the drawing and put on the dimensions. You can then depend upon getting this correct by going over the ground and staking it out point by point.²⁵

In this passage, Pope describes to Whittemore the process for arriving at sufficient details for specifications, including the process for measuring and describing these measurements, as well as for checking the accuracy of figures through surveying methods. With such standard in the description of a simple fence, Pope must have had even more exacting interest and involvement in his company’s various large-scale building projects.

In addition to construction, Alfred Pope was increasingly interested in real-estate investments over the course of this period. In 1895 and 1896 he wrote a series of letters to J. H. Whittemore about various properties available in Cleveland. In the process, he provided information about the properties that he himself owned in Cleveland, and also about his methods for evaluating the investment value of a site. Some of his evaluation was based on aesthetics. In the case of one property quite close to his own house, he described the landscape in terms suggesting his appreciation of the formal values of the landscape, “The piece of property. . . is a ‘beaut’ – that is, it is a fancy piece of property; it lies so beautifully. I have cast my eye over it, many and many

²⁴ Letter Alfred A. Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (2 May 1892), HWJ Trust. Transcript available in the HSM Archive.

²⁵ Letter No# W-255 Alfred Atmore Pope to J. H. Whittemore, HWJ Trust. Transcript available in the HSM Archive.

a time. As I recall it, it runs pretty nearly level until you come to the Doan Brook on the Park side, when it drops right down like an abrupt terrace, to the brook.”²⁶ To Alfred Pope, however, beauty was not sufficient cause to purchase a property. Instead, it must also have substantial future investment possibilities. With regard to this same property, for example, Pope remarked to Whittemore:

The piece now offered involves so much that a party would want to be pretty well assured that they were going to get returns from it at an early date, through improvements or otherwise, as the interest and taxes would soon make it a very expensive property. I understood that Norcross Brothers (who as you know have been building in Cleveland), have thought of building a flat right out in that neighborhood of Fairmont and Euclid. It is a pretty big property to improve, but it is a stunning location for a big Apartment House.²⁷

This passage demonstrates both the financially pragmatic angle from which Pope regarded all real-estate investment, and his recognition of the fact that through proper manipulation, beautiful landscape could become profitable. In addition, Pope’s reference to Norcross Brothers demonstrates the knowledge that he and Whittemore shared about the building community. Norcross Brothers began as a small building firm run by O.W. Norcross out of Worcester, Massachusetts. Norcross became the preferred contractor of Henry Hobson Richardson. After Richardson’s death, the firm expanded to have branch offices throughout the east coast, and became the contractor of choice for McKim, Mead & White.²⁸ The fact that Norcross had expanded to Cleveland demonstrates the mobility and interchange of the building industry at this time, and the manner in which Pope’s network of acquaintances would serve him when he decided to build in Farmington.

Ada Brooks Pope

While Alfred Pope was well-connected to the business world, and knowledgeable about the architectural process, it was his wife, Ada Brooks Pope, who oversaw the daily functioning of their domestic world, and determined the interior and exterior environment of their house. Ada Brooks Pope grew up in Salem, Ohio, daughter of a lawyer who also was involved in the iron industry. She met Alfred Pope at age twelve, and they became engaged when she was fourteen. Her parents’ disapproval motivated sending her to boarding school in New Haven, Connecticut for a year, but ultimately the distance was not successful in dissuading Ada from marrying her suitor, which she did in 1866 at the age of twenty-two, once her parents had died. The couple had their first and only child, who they named Effie (later to re-name herself Theodate), in the first year of their marriage. As the family’s social status grew, so did Ada Pope’s household responsibilities. She interacted with the servants, determined home renovation projects, the selection of domestic furnishings, and the placement of these within the house. Relatively little

²⁶ Letter Alfred A. Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (9 December 1895), HWJ Trust. Transcript available in the HSM Archive.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ For the most thorough study of Norcross to date see James F. O’Gorman, “O.W. Norcross, Richardson’s ‘Master Builder’: A Preliminary Report,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 23, no. 2 (May 1973): 104-113. For the relationship between McKim, Mead & White and Norcross Brothers see Leland Roth, *McKim, Mead & White, Architects* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983).

documentation exists about Ada's domestic roles in the pre-Hill-Stead period of the family's life. Only later, in exchanges of correspondence between Theodate and her mother, do more specific references exist to the vital role that Ada Pope played in the family's domestic life. It is certain, however, that Ada had a discerning eye for the visual effect of interior environments and objects. In the same way that she carefully scrutinized Theodate's selection of fabric for her clothing, so Ada carefully selected materials for furniture coverings, and curtains, and worked to create a carefully-formed domestic environment.²⁹ In addition, Ada Pope like many upper-class women of her time, was an avid gardener. Her touch was evident, therefore, in both the interior décor and the exterior landscaping of their houses.

The Euclid Avenue Home

The joint architectural knowledge of Alfred and Ada Pope was first put to the test in the construction of their second family home on Euclid Avenue in Cleveland, Ohio. Constructed between 1883 and 1885, this new house marked a social coming of age for the Pope family. Their move from a more rural and modest home on the outskirts of the city to this house in the wealthiest portion of Cleveland signaled the considerable financial success that Alfred had achieved as president of the National Malleable Iron and Steel Company. Not only did the Popes build on an exclusive piece of real-estate, but they also hired a cutting-edge Boston architect, named William Ralph Emerson, to design the house for them.³⁰ Emerson practiced in Boston from 1857-1909, but the peak of his career fell between 1880 and 1885, precisely when the Popes hired him for this commission. He was well known by his contemporaries, and considered by some to be the inventor of the shingle style. Like McKim, Mead & White, Emerson was interested in Colonial American architecture, but unlike the New York firm, Cynthia Zaitevsky has suggested that Emerson used colonial forms more for eclectic innovation than for dogmatic emulation:

Emerson's relationship to the problem of revivalism is a complicated one. . . . He drew on the Colonial for inspiration but apparently never regarded it as inviolable dogma. Unlike many of his contemporaries, such as Charles F. McKim, Robert S. Peabody, and Arthur Little, all of whom had always had an antiquarian bent, Emerson never made a complete conversion to the archaeological Colonial Revival³¹

It is not known how the Popes came to meet Emerson and to hire him for this commission. While Emerson was well-known within the architectural community, he had few commissions outside of northern New England. Emerson's family ties connected him to Kennebunkport, Maine, and perhaps it was this Maine connection that ultimately brought Alfred Pope and William Ralph Emerson together. Whatever their relationship, it is clear that Emerson did not supervise the design and construction on-site and that the Pope relied on the local building community to transform the design of the distant architect into reality.

²⁹Katz, 2, 8-9.

³⁰ See Cynthia Zaitevsky, *The Architecture of William Ralph Emerson, 1833-1917* (Cambridge, MA: Fogg Museum of Art, 1969).

³¹ Zaitevsky, 26.

In their interaction with Emerson, the Popes immediately learned that clients must be aggressive if they want to achieve their desires in a building commission. After a summer spent negotiating details of the house, the architect delayed in supplying them with the necessary drawings. A frustrated Alfred Pope wrote to J. H. Whittemore in early September:

I have been so confoundedly bothered and hindered by that Boston architect, who has not yet given me complete working details so as to get a thorough estimate of the cost of the house, that I am satisfied that it is too late now to think of going ahead. I can get no estimate in regard to the building that is satisfactory, and I am not going ahead blindly. I can certainly build a great deal cheaper in the spring.³²

Alfred Pope rarely expressed himself with such vehement language, yet despite his anger he made little headway with the architect, and progress on the house did indeed slow for the winter. The subsequent spring, in March 1884, Julia Whittemore (wife of J. H.) sent a set of plans to Alfred and Ada Pope, perhaps plans of the Whittemore house or perhaps suggested changes that Mrs. Whittemore drew onto the current plans for the Pope house. Whatever the content of these plans was, it is clear that Mrs. Whittemore was offering advice to the Popes for their new house, because Alfred Pope had tracings made of the plans so that he could overlay them, and commented to J. H. Whittemore, “Her ideas are good. I will talk it over with you.”³³ The following year, the Popes would share the final plans of their house with the Whittemores, when J. H. and Julia would hire McKim, Mead & White to design their new home in Naugatuck, Connecticut.

After delays with the architect, the Popes then faced problems with the interior décor of the house. In fact, they were so disappointed with the quality of the workmanship that they ordered a large portion of it to be redone. Because Alfred Pope knew the brother of the man who oversaw the interior woodwork, he was “considerate” of him, but obviously frustrated. While Alfred was dealing with all the details of the structure, Ada was negotiating the logistics of the move and the interior decoration. New carpets were placed in the rooms, but the furniture was sent from their old house. As the day grew nearer for the family to settle in their new home, Alfred’s role in the new house diminished and Ada took charge.³⁴ In fact, Ada was so completely in charge of the project that Alfred left town, coming back a week later to be greeted by his family in their new home.³⁵

The Pope family mansion at 949 Euclid Avenue was the primary residence of the family from 1885 until 1901.³⁶ Yet even after Alfred and Ada Pope took up primary residence at Hill-Stead, they maintained their Cleveland home until shortly after Alfred’s death in 1913. Ada Pope sold the Cleveland home, with the help of Harris Whittemore, who gifted her with commemorative

³² Letter Alfred A. Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (4 September 1883), HWJ Trust. Transcript available in the HSM Archive.

³³ Letter Alfred A. Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (1 March 1884), HWJ Trust. Transcript available in the HSM Archive.

³⁴ In a March 10, 1885 letter to J. H. Whittemore, Alfred A. Pope noted, “We have prospect of getting into our house on Monday. Ada runs it all and relieves me.”

³⁵ Letter Alfred A. Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (17 May 1885), HWJ Trust. Transcript available in the HSM Archive.

³⁶ See the letters of November 26, 1913 and December 22, 1913 from Harris Whittemore to Ada Brooks Pope regarding the sale of the house, HWJ Trust. Transcript available in the HSM Archive.

photographs of the house after she decided to put it up for sale.³⁷ This album provides a reasonably thorough sense of the exterior and interior appearance of the Pope's Cleveland home. Every public space and family bedroom in the house was reproduced in large-format photographs, which allow for the clear study of all furniture and decorations in the house as well as its architectural form. **(Figure 1)** An exterior view of the house gives an overall sense of its appearance. The Euclid Avenue home was both eclectic in its stylistic allusions and picturesque in its massing. Richardsonian Romanesque forms merged with a Queen-Anne pointed gable, and shingled dormer windows. **(Figure 2)** The interior of the house was thoroughly decorated in a mode that similarly to the exterior emphasized juxtaposition of patterns and textures. It likewise presented a showing front of opulence for any visitor to the Pope family home. An ornate tile-fronted hearth acted as show-piece to the room, flanked by two recessed window alcoves that offered a picturesque counterpoint to its formal front. Chandeliers and gilded frames around large oil paintings increased the formality and luxuriance of the space. The fine art collection, however, had been moved to Farmington by this time, with prints subsequently hung in the Euclid Avenue house.

Despite the troubles in the initial stages of design and construction, the house was ultimately considered to be a success both by its occupants and its visitors. The Whittemores admired both its design and comfort. In 1892, when Alfred was contemplating refurnishing the upstairs rooms of the house, J. H. Whittemore expressed his surprise, "Am surprised to know that you think it necessary to overhaul your upstairs rooms. Julia and I have talked about it several times since we occupied one of them; how beautifully furnished and so complete in every respect."³⁸ Alfred and Ada's had collaborated successfully toward the creation of a home in which they could be proud, and that would successfully fulfill its role within upper-class Cleveland society.

Theodate Pope

Effie Pope, born in 1867 was raised in the family home in the semi-rural outskirts of Cleveland. Less than a year after the family moved into their new urban home, she already longed for the freedom of the countryside. In February 1886 Effie wrote in her diary, "I wonder why my mind occupies itself with nothing save thoughts of the country, nowadays. I never longed so to be in the woods, under the green leaves."³⁹ Then in March, almost exactly a year from when the Popes had taken up official residence in their new home, Effie reflected upon her nostalgia for the old home, and the relationship between that house and her desire to live in the countryside,

Papa and Mama and George and I talked about the good times that we have had at the old house. They want me to go and see it but I never will go out there again, I would rather remember the place and neighborhood as it was when I left it. Oh but those were happy years that I lived there. How I did feel when the place was sold. Mama and I were down street and Smith stopped the carriage to tell us, on

³⁷ In a letter of December 15, 1913, Harris told Ada, "I am sending you, under separate cover, photographs of the Euclid Avenue building, which I think will interest you." Since he was involved in the sale of the family home around this same time, it seems clear that Harris had photographs taken of the house during the sale process, and then sent them along to Ada as a memento.

³⁸ Letter J. H. Whittemore to Alfred Pope, (8 February 1892), HWJ Trust. Transcript available in the HSM Archive.

³⁹ Theodate Pope diary, (12 February 1886), HSM Archive.

the way home we stopped to get Perley to go out with us and in trying to tell Mrs Salisbury about it I burst out crying and cried and cried while she held me and tried to comfort me. Sometime I shall live in the country again. I love it so.⁴⁰

Already nineteen years old, Effie was at a difficult age to switch houses and lifestyles. She seems to have had trouble in school during this year and to have had increasing difficulties with her mother's social expectations. Moving into Cleveland proper meant socializing with a different set of individuals, and for Effie it also meant negotiating a new school and different classmates, in one of the final years of her education. Her release seems to have been dreaming of the countryside, and raising her "rural" childhood to a pedestal, such that she sought to preserve the old house and neighborhood in her memory keeping them sacred from the realities of new inhabitants and changes to the community after a year's absence.

Despite her reluctance, it was probably largely for Effie that her parents moved into downtown Cleveland. Only there could she move in the proper social circles for a young woman of her status, attain a well-rounded education, and be tutored in the fine arts. In addition to her regular school curriculum at Miss Mittelberger's School, Effie received private tutoring in drawing and painting from a local artist named John Kavanaugh. At school she seems to have been most stimulated by philosophy, specifically by questions of moral and aesthetic philosophy. On one day, for example, she had a debate with her philosophy instructor about whether "the Beautiful" could be definitively determined by human thought or whether it was divinely dictated. Meanwhile, in her painting classes she was learning the various genres of painting (one day trying her hand at landscape, the next at still life), and demonstrating her aesthetic sensibilities by her fascination with the color mixed on her palette.⁴¹ During this period of identity-formation Effie also changed her first name from Effie to Theodate, taking the name of her paternal grandmother.

In the summer of 1886, Theodate and Ada Pope took a trip that would prove to be formative for the young woman's future. In order to select the college or finishing school that Theodate would attend the following year, they took a trip out to the east coast. They visited Miss Porter's School in Farmington, Connecticut, Wellesley, Oxford Female College, and Miami University.⁴² This trip was important because it brought Theodate to Farmington for the first time. She felt an immediate affinity for the town, and remarked in her diary that "Farmington is one of the prettiest places I ever was in." Perhaps because she was so well impressed with Farmington, or because college curricula seemed too challenging, or because Ada felt that she should attend Miss Porter's School, Theodate decided to attend school in Farmington in the fall.

On another level this trip to the east coast was important because it exposed Theodate thoroughly to the contemporary nostalgia for colonial life-styles and architecture. In New York, Alfred Pope even took Theodate to a saloon to see two William Michael Harnett still lifes.⁴³ Of the two,

⁴⁰ Theodate Pope diary, (28 March 1886), HSM Archive.

⁴¹ Theodate Pope's earliest diary entries date from this period, and many speak of her experiences at school.

⁴² Perhaps they visited other schools as well; these are the places mentioned by Theodate in her diary.

⁴³ The fact that Alfred would bring Theodate to a saloon is remarkable in and of itself, as this was not a respectable environment for a young woman. Alfred was actively cultivating Theodate's artistic sensitivities and must have felt that the opportunity to view Harnett's remarkable paintings trumped the inappropriate nature of the setting.

Theodate was particularly fascinated by the iron hinges in *After the Hunt*. Harnett would have intended these hinges to suggest an old-fashioned setting. Harnett was a contemporary of the Pope family, and his paintings consistently evoked a bygone era in a manner well in tune with the contemporary trend of evoking the Colonial in architecture. On this same trip Theodate also visited several of the key buildings that had sparked the interest in Colonial architecture and triggered the Colonial Revival. In Concord, Massachusetts, Theodate visited the homes of “Emerson, Alcott, Hawthorne,” making a literary pilgrimage, but also visiting a town famous for its Colonial architecture, as well as for the nostalgic writings of its authors. In fact, it was the architecture that most struck Theodate, who remarked, “I was most impressed with the beauty of the town. The quaint old houses the sweetness of everything.”⁴⁴ Two days later the Popes visited Salem and Marblehead, and saw the House of Seven Gables, the Salem Custom house, and the First Protestant Church.⁴⁵

Theodate spent the majority of her time during the next two years in Farmington studying and cultivating this appreciation for rural life, aesthetic beauty, and old ways of living. On their free days, Theodate and her friends took walks through the countryside, stopping to picnic at farmhouses. Meanwhile, Theodate continued to develop her interest in aesthetic theory, and was encouraged by her favorite instructor to read Edmund Burke’s *Philosophical Enquiry into the origin of our ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*.⁴⁶ Throughout this period her dream of owning a farm became more persistent and developed. In her mind this farm would be a dairy farm, and she would bring adopted children there to recuperate from urban poverty in the prosperity of rural life. Despite her continued satisfaction with this vision, however, Theodate was troubled by this prospective future because it went directly against social values and her parents’ wishes. In her diary she lamented,

Oh that I could see my way clear. Is it my duty to always stay at home because Papa and Mama wish it or start for myself on my farm where I could be of so much more use. But before I have my farm I must grow in wisdom, and to grow in wisdom I must have patience and of patience I have none.⁴⁷

Theodate was determined not to live the life of a society housewife like her mother did, and she never seems to have dreamt about married life at all, but she was uncertain what routes were available for her to follow outside of this socially-prescribed course. Her struggle between her own personal goals, and society’s expectations kept her in a state of heightened emotions. This emotional turmoil resulted in bouts of malaise, and despite being quite happy at Miss Porter’s school, Theodate spent much of her time at the school under close supervision because of her emotional state. Her parents visited regularly, and even took their daughter out of school to New York and back to Cleveland for lengthy stretches of time. These lengthy stints away from Miss Porter’s school were certainly triggered by her parents’ concern about her well being.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Theodate Pope diary, (18 May 1886), HSM Archive.

⁴⁵ Theodate Pope diary, (20 May 1886), HSM Archive.

⁴⁶ Theodate Pope diary, (1 December 1886), HSM Archive.

⁴⁷ Theodate Pope diary, (8 March 1887), HSM Archive.

⁴⁸ Katz, 20-22.

After two years at Miss Porter's school, Theodate prepared to leave for a grand tour of Europe. Reflecting on her time at the school, Theodate jotted in her diary, "Will any thing else in life ever be a[s] lovely as these Farmington days? If I could only live here always!"⁴⁹ This statement rather ambiguously seems to eulogize both Theodate's school girl days as well as her years spent in the quaint beauty of Farmington itself. Certainly it reflects her on-going desire to live a quiet rural life. Her parents accompanied Theodate on the grand tour of Europe as did Harris Whittemore, son of Alfred Pope's friend and business associate J. H. Whittemore. Harris had eagerly been courting Theodate, and was hopeful that by the end of the tour they would be engaged. During this European tour, when she was not writing in her diary about the ongoing courtship with Harris, Theodate was critiquing the art objects and historic sites that they visited. Her education in painting is evident through the manner in which she critiqued art objects in these passages, and she also made frequent allusions to her father's interaction with the larger European and American expatriate artistic circles. Unlike the journal entries discussing her travels to Concord and Salem that focused on buildings, however, Theodate made very few mentions about architecture in her European diary entries. After Theodate finally decided that she was not interested in marrying Harris, her long-time dilemma of determining a professional future became more pressing.⁵⁰ She again battled with her emotions.

It was in the midst of this period that Alfred Pope suggested to his daughter that perhaps architecture would be a viable professional activity for her. Prior to this moment Theodate had been interested in pursuing a literary or an artistic career, in tandem with her long-term goal of running a small farm and taking in foster children, but she was unsure if she had the talent or passion for either art or literature. While in Rome, in January 1889, Theodate first reflected on her father's career suggestion:

I wish I could look into myself and into the future far enough to see if I am capable of and if it is intended that I shall do something in a literary way. If I have no talent for it I ought to know it now and stop fooling forthwith. I am quite interested in Papa's suggestion of my studying architecture.⁵¹

Rather than believing that she had a particular talent for architecture or being driven by a strong desire to study architecture, it seems that Theodate perceived her father's suggestion as representing one of the possible respectable professional options available to a woman of her class. Likewise, it is uncertain if at this point Theodate and her father were discussing a career in architectural design, or if Alfred Pope thought that his daughter would make a good architectural critic, which would have been easily feasible with her education and may have been a more viable career option in his mind.⁵²

⁴⁹ Theodate Pope diary, (10 July 1888), HSM Archive.

⁵⁰ For a more extensive discussion of Harris Whittemore's courtship of Theodate, see Katz, *Dearest of Geniuses*, Chapter 3.

⁵¹ Theodate Pope diary, (26 January 1889), HSM Archive.

⁵² There was ample precedent for upper-class women to write about architecture, but less precedent for them to practice it. The writings of Mariana Van Rensselaer offer, for example, a body of architectural criticism from this period, written by an accepted female critic, who also came to be a correspondent of Theodate's in later years. For a discussion of Van Rensselaer's architectural criticism and its context in this historical moment, see Lisa Koenigsberg's essay "Mariana Van Rensselaer: An Architecture Critic in Context," in *Architecture: A Place for Women* (Ellen Perry Berkeley, editor), Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press: 1989. Another upper-class

In February she again mentioned the possibility of architecture as a career choice, this time pairing it in her mind with the idea of running a farm. She wrote, “My interest in architecture has lasted perhaps two weeks (may it last as much longer). I mean to read up on the subject. Papa talks quite a little of having a farm in Cleveland so that we can have eggs butter and milk of our own. I am quite anxious that he buy in Bedford; have a man and wife on it and give to me there keeping of accounts.”⁵³ Perhaps under the influence of her father, Theodate’s dream of planning a farm had now become administrative – she would hold the accounts, while hired help would actually live on the farm and do all of the work. At this point, her diary mentions more architectural sites (the Pantheon, the Forum, the House of the Vestals) and begins to mention fewer art objects. Rome was a city to which many aspiring architects traveled, and the traditional finishing of an architectural education consisted of a grand tour to exactly the same sites that Theodate and Alfred Pope were visiting.⁵⁴ Perhaps indicative of Theodate’s interest in architectural criticism versus practice is her comment that she must “read up on the subject,” as well as a casual note five days later, querying, “How would the studies of philosophy & architecture go together? The study of both ought to make my mind well balanced.”⁵⁵

After this burst of interest in architecture, however, Theodate’s comments about it subsided, and her diary entries again focused on other topics. Likewise, mentions of her dream farm ceased. It was not until two months later, upon the family’s arrival in England during April 1889, that Theodate began to mention architecture again with more frequency. Perhaps this resumed interest was triggered by her association of the British landscape with that of New England. She reflected, “The country is so lazy and homelike looking. We passed field after field with sheep dotted over them. The farm houses are of brick or stone and are very picturesque.”⁵⁶ While in Italy, her mention of architecture had largely revolved around grand public buildings and cultural sites, many of them ancient ruins. Apparently the contemporary domestic architecture of Italy and France had not interested her. England’s domestic landscape, however, much like New England, appealed to Theodate’s predilections toward the rural picturesque. Her comments about the much-anticipated farmhouse in Cleveland resumed as well, becoming more frequent and concrete. On April 14, 1889 she first mentioned drawing plans of this farmhouse, then on April 20 she decided to stay inside all day and continue her work on these plans. The following day she, “spent all day over my plans. Asked Papa if he were letting me follow a will[o]-the-wisp and he said no, not if I would keep the house plain and inexpensive and if his business went well.”⁵⁷ While Theodate had returned almost obsessively to the question of constructing a farm house, it is unclear if her father was as committed to the plan as her. His hedging comments of

women of this period who offered architectural criticism and advice in this period was an author that Theodate particularly admired – Edith Wharton. Her book *The Decoration of Houses* was published in the same period that the Popes were completing the design and construction of Hill-Stead, and offers useful parallels in thought and approach to the work completed by the Popes.

⁵³ Theodate Pope diary, (13 February 1889), HSM Archive.

⁵⁴ This finishing tour was conventional through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, though it was more common for European architects than for their American counterparts. Importantly, Charles Follen McKim and Stanford White made a similar finishing tour of European architecture before settling down to full-time practice in New York City.

⁵⁵ Theodate Pope diary, (18 February 1889), HSM Archive.

⁵⁶ Theodate Pope diary, (12 April 1889), HSM Archive.

⁵⁷ Theodate Pope diary, (21 April 1889), HSM Archive.

requiring a “plain” house, and only if his “business went well” suggest that Alfred was attempting to placate his daughter by indulging her interests, but also to ultimately allow the idea to pass as many of Theodate’s interests did. However, in this case Theodate was persistent, spending another day drawing plans for the house, and ultimately copying these to tracing paper, at which point she decided to “rest for a while until new inspiration comes.”⁵⁸

Finally Alfred Pope decided that his daughter was actually serious about building a farm, and so he spent an evening discussing it with her. Theodate’s diary entry from this day is particularly important, because it reflects a conversation in which her father laid out the differences between a “farm house” and a rural estate (like the one the family would eventually construct in Farmington). The ultimate conclusion of this conversation was that Theodate did, indeed, want a farm house, not a rural mansion, however it seems that perhaps she had been designing a home that reflected the later rather than the former. Because of its future relevance for considering the origin of Hill-Stead in the minds of the Pope family, this paragraph-long diary entry is worth quoting in full:

Before dinner Papa and I had a solemn talk about the farm. He said as I was taking it so much in earnest he felt that he ought to talk with me about what kind of a house it should be. We both want to have it very simple and plain. He pointed out to me that there was a difference in my running it than if he and Mama were to live there and entertain. In the latter case we would need a larger house than otherwise would be necessary. And I want a real farm and I believe that is what I will get as papa does not want to put much money into a house. I only wish that I could have a farmer’s wife with me who knew how to make good butter and cheese then we might possibly sell some. But that means business and if I succeed in doing that I shall consider myself rather clever.⁵⁹

It is clear that Alfred Pope had some reservations about the concept of his daughter settling down to live in a farmhouse on her own. The fact that their conversation centered largely around the difference between a house for the family to occupy and a true farmhouse, suggests that in Alfred’s mind, he was already considering the question of a second rural home for the family, perhaps largely triggered by Theodate’s eagerness, and that he likewise was unconvinced of Theodate’s own plan. Meanwhile, Theodate charged forward with her vision of the plan as a business endeavor and was confident that she could get her father to invest in the project as long as the house was simple and inexpensive. Theodate was so absorbed in this dream-house that she began to buy furnishings for it. In May she bought a print for one of the upstairs rooms in the farm, and a few days later she purchased five auto-types, all with the interior of her farmhouse in mind.⁶⁰ The family returned to France, and Theodate continued building the farmhouse in her mind. At Fontainebleau she developed a scheme for decorating the drawing room, inspired by the color palette of the palace. She recognized the irony in planning a farm based on a palace, but yet believed that it was the perfect scheme and wrote in her diary:

⁵⁸ Theodate Pope diary, (23 April 1889), HSM Archive.

⁵⁹ Theodate Pope diary, (27 April 1889), HSM Archive.

⁶⁰ Theodate Pope diary, (3, 5 May 1889), HSM Archive.

Got several ideas for my farm. That sounds rather odd doesn't it getting ideas for a farm from a palace but they were things that would not necessarily cost much or be decorative. For instance we saw there a beautiful room in brown and how fine a living room would be done in that color; dark oak, brown carpet and paper with ecru colors in it. Then have tulips in the window ledges wouldn't that be an ideal room?⁶¹

Back in London, Theodate again returned to drawing her plans, cutting the size of the house in one-third, further evidence that the farm house she had originally planned confused the scale of a rural mansion with that of a functioning farm house.⁶² While visiting Kew Gardens she longed for her "country home," and returned to the family hotel room to make a plan, "much smaller than the others."⁶³ While throwing herself fully into these plans for her country house, Theodate also returned to thinking about whether a career in architecture would suit her. It is evident that she was worried about the social implications of such a professional choice, and ultimately she decided to reject architecture as a career, noting, "I really do not think I had better take up architecture as I would not be satisfied unless I studied practically and to do that I should have to go to an office and then I would be rather mannish. And of all the unlovely things in the world an unwomanly woman is the worst."⁶⁴ She was content to live a single life, however she preferred to do so within socially-accepted modes. Setting up a rural house, making crafts there, and charitably taking in needy children were certainly viable (if eccentric) options for a wealthy single woman. Training within a firm to practice architecture, and ultimately opening an office would be activities likely to receive censure from her peers. Certainly if Theodate had any uncertainty about what general response to anticipate, her mother's own conservative and socially-conscious perspective would have reassured her that professional architectural practice was not a viable option.

Alfred Pope, however, encouraged his daughter to continue contemplating a career along some lines. Perhaps he was eager to distract her from her farm house scheme, which neither he nor Ada saw as a good choice for Theodate. In another evening of conversation with his daughter, this time focusing on her professional future, Alfred "suggested several things, art, architecture, studying to be his book keeper and the study of practical economy."⁶⁵ This seemingly random group of suggestions from Alfred possibly represents his sense of two types of possible options for a professional woman in the period. One line of work (art and architecture) represents careers in the arts, which a woman could practice from the shelter of her parents' home, and which would not require excessive physical or commercial labor. The second two options (book keeper or practical economist) would both have allowed Theodate to work underneath her father's wing in his business, possibly even from the family home rather than from an office. It is likely that Alfred would have preferred any of these options over Theodate simply become the head of a farm. A few days later, Alfred who had obviously been thinking about his daughter's dilemma, suggested that she pursue furniture design as an option, perhaps inspired to think of this suggestion by the many women who were successfully participating in the Arts and Crafts

⁶¹ Theodate Pope diary, (13 May 1889), HSM Archive.

⁶² Theodate Pope diary, (17 May 1889), HSM Archive.

⁶³ Theodate Pope diary, (20 May 1889), HSM Archive.

⁶⁴ Theodate Pope diary, (24 May 1889), HSM Archive.

⁶⁵ Theodate Pope diary, (30 May 1889), HSM Archive.

movement in England at that time. Theodate, however, was not interested in what she considered to be simply a craft and that did not employ a higher level of thought. Rejecting her father's suggestion, she wrote in her diary, "that seems anything but soulful work & I do want to work at something that will satisfy me in many ways. If I took to designing I should feel that I was leaving the greater part of myself uncultivated."⁶⁶ The issue was tabled, as Theodate and her family spent the next two months on a whirlwind finale of the grand tour.

Returning to Fontainebleau in August, however, the question of the farm re-surfaced, possibly because of Theodate's earlier inspiration at the castle about the interior décor for the farmhouse. In uncharacteristically terse terms, Theodate noted simply in her diary, "This evening we had a hot discussion about where to build a country house etc."⁶⁷ Two things are interesting about this statement. First, it reveals that although in Theodate's diary she seemed confident in her plans for a farmhouse, perhaps her parents were less enthusiastic or supportive than she had previously believed. In addition, it is interesting that here Theodate uses the term "country house" instead of "farmhouse," and that the location of this building in the rural area around Cleveland is no longer certain. Perhaps her parents had been thinking about the Whittemore family's new rural estate, which they had toured thoroughly shortly before departing for Europe, and were contemplating a completely different sort of country house than Theodate. Whatever may have been said over the course of this argument, Theodate's references to her farmhouse cease in her diary at this point and do not resume again until several months after her return to the United States with her parents.

While she no longer continued to express her dreams about her farm in her diary, it seems likely that she did raise the question again with her parents periodically. By November she was again drawing plans for the farm, and in December planning to invite one of her friends to live there with her.⁶⁸ However, little progress seems to have been made toward her goals. May found her attempting to design a combination writing desk and book case, with the goal of at least making a bit of money so that she could donate her earnings to Miss Porter's school.⁶⁹ Finally, in May 1890, Ada Pope devised an idea that would reconcile Theodate's wishes for her future with that of her parents. In a quiet conversation between her own sister Effie and Theodate, Ada Pope expressed her feeling that

. . .she thought the best thing for me [Theodate] to do would be to rent a house in Farmington and stay there until I got tired of house keeping & tired of the town. We had quite a talk about it as nothing would please me better. I told her I was afraid that Papa would not consent but she says he will if she talks to him. Think what supreme fun it would be to have a simple little house with a rag carpet, make my own butter, & have a pig & chickens. It is too good to happen.⁷⁰

By proposing that Theodate rent a house in the small town of Farmington, and that she essentially set up housekeeping there in an old-fashioned manner, Ada Pope was proposing a

⁶⁶ Theodate Pope diary, (11 June 1889), HSM Archive.

⁶⁷ Theodate Pope diary, (18 August 1889), HSM Archive.

⁶⁸ Theodate Pope diary, (18 November, 29 December 1889), HSM Archive.

⁶⁹ Theodate Pope diary, (4 May 1890), HSM Archive.

⁷⁰ Theodate Pope diary, (20 May 1890), HSM Archive.

mode of living popular and even accepted for young women at that time.⁷¹ Since women were considered to be the experts on the domestic sphere, Ada's proposition would allow Theodate to practice the female craft of interior decoration, while under the watchful eye of Miss Porter, and in a community with which her family was also comfortable. Essentially an extension of her finishing-school years, this would allow the Pope family to avoid the awkward situation of their young and eligible daughter setting up a farming life in the outskirts of Cleveland, which could certainly have raised some eyebrows, so soon after Theodate's official entry into society. Also, Farmington was within the sphere of influence of the Whittemore family, and Harris was again living in Connecticut near his parents, so Ada Pope may have hoped that this living situation would allow the romance to rekindle between Harris and Theodate.⁷²

Theodate was elated with the plan and spilled out all the details of it to her diary:

It is decided. I am to have a little house in Farmington! Mama and Papa think I have been longing for the country that now I can have it. And they also think it will be good for my health to have the quiet out-of-door life I would have there. Farmington is of course the place for me to go as I have so many friends there. I am to see about renting a cottage when I am there on this trip then I am to see to the furnishing of it myself, bearing in mind of course that too much money must not be spent on it. I am to have a Guernsey cow, a pig & chickens, also a garden & perhaps bees. Sara will in all probability go with me, as she can cook & will do anything for me that she can.

In place of building her own farm house, Theodate was renting a small in-town cottage. She would be allowed to purchase all of the trappings of the rustic life – live-stock, furnishings, etc – but would bring along her servant to do all of the cooking, and any other work around the house that Theodate might need. Meanwhile, Theodate would have a built-in social network with the students and instructors at Miss Porter's school, and would rest her weary physique in healthy country air. Theodate had more plans for her new home than she let on to her parents. She planned to make butter and sell it to the urban residents of Hartford, and she also planned to take in an orphaned child from New York City to visit in the house for a few weeks. She felt that these actions would fulfill her own vision of the farm-scheme, but lest it jeopardize her parents' support of the plan, she decided to refrain from sharing it with them and to present it to them as a *fête accomplie*.⁷³ Theodate and her father agreed that she would try to rent a furnished house (presumably because of Alfred's desire to reduce the expense and on-going commitment to the new house). While Alfred attempted to temper the depth of commitment to the house, Theodate jumped full-force into the plan, figuring out what types of outfits she would wear at the farm, and imagining how her "large plan of Europe will look so well on the wall of the hall in my little farm. Shall trace our trip on it in ink just as I've been planning to do for a long time."⁷⁴ Wearing simple attire appropriate for work, Theodate would have a servant to actually complete any of

⁷¹ There are numerous sources that consider the female role in determining interior decoration during this period. One particularly apt, and well-footnoted source is Jean Dunbar's essay "Candace Wheeler and the New Old-Fashioned Home," in *Re-creating the American Past*, eds. Richard Guy Wilson, Shaun Eyring and Kenny Marotta (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 40-52.

⁷² Katz, 35.

⁷³ Theodate Pope diary, (25 May 1890), HSM Archive.

⁷⁴ Theodate Pope diary, (7 June 1890), HSM Archive.

the manual tasks while she decorated her house with mementos of her travels and sophistication. She was creating a rural setting, but one carefully framed by her own educated and cosmopolitan background.

In July 1890, Theodate Pope visited Farmington without her parents and went in search of the house that she would rent for the upcoming year. Her friend Betty, still a student at Miss Porter's school, accompanied Theodate on her afternoon of house hunting. By the end of the day, the two had selected the house that Theodate would rent starting in the fall. In searching for a house, Theodate seemed to be interested primarily in "age," as she sought out the quaint brown houses, as opposed to the more recent white clapboard structures. Other qualities that she looked for were sufficient size, room for gardens, and cleanliness. Ultimately, Theodate became "enchanted" with an "old brown house" on High Street and decided that it would be the house she would rent. Theodate's account of her housing search gives a more complete sense of her interests and her approach to the endeavor:

I then went to the Treadwell house opposite Miss Porter's thinking I could rent perhaps half of it. But I couldn't have it. Then I went to the other end of town to see Mr. Jones & the Norton place about the Carrington house but they had just taken it for the summer. Then we, for Betty was with me, went to see if Mrs. Miles would rent her brown house on High street. The house & grounds look in such good order but dear me the inside was dreadful, small & untidy. On our way home we tried to look in the windows of an old brown house down the hill from Mrs. Miles & while we were there I had heard it was for rent & asked if we could go through it. He took us all over it and I was enchanted with it. In fact that is the house I have rented for ten months beginning next September. I can begin work on it any time so I go East in August to begin to get it in order. There is a great deal to be done, painting, papering, putting in furnace, building a back shed etc.⁷⁵

If Alfred Pope had been anticipating that Theodate renting a house would be a relatively small endeavor with few commitments, he was mistaken. Theodate intended to completely remodel the house and update its heating system, ensuring that while living a casual rural lifestyle she would not be far from any of the modern comforts. Within a few days, Theodate had negotiated a lease with all of the terms that she desired, including to being able to begin the remodeling of the house prior to the beginning of her lease in September. In her diary entry for July 8, 1890, she reveled at the image of herself, the model of efficiency dressed in a white gown and checking off items from her list, as the illiterate farmer James O'Rourke from whom she was renting the house listened intently, trying to follow the terms of the lease through the lawyer's dialog. Within a week of signing the rental lease, Theodate had already consulted a local builder, Henry Hall Mason, about adding a shed to the rear of the house. She provided him with a plan of her intended addition.⁷⁶ Mason would become a key figure in the construction of Hill-Stead, and in the architectural education of Theodate Pope. Mason (1857-1922) was a native of Farmington who began his professional life as a cabinet maker. Later, he learned the building trade, and

⁷⁵ Theodate Pope diary, (8 July 1890), HSM Archive.

⁷⁶ Theodate Pope diary, (14 July, 17 August 1890), HSM Archive.

seems to have started his full-time work as a designer and contractor around 1895, thus his project at the Theodate's house in 1890 would have been one of his first commissions.⁷⁷

After renting the house, Theodate returned to Cleveland for a few weeks. By mid-August she was back in Farmington but planning a trip to Boston (perhaps to purchase furnishings for her house). Before she left on the trip, she started the workers full-force on the home renovation, with this list of tasks to complete:

I left written orders with the painter as to tearing off old paper, whitewashing all the ceilings & putting first coat of paint on kitchen scullery & pantry. Then I talked with Mr. Gaylor who I have decided to let put in my furnace, marked out places for registers & decided on kind of furnace & authorized him to have one sent up from New York.⁷⁸

With O'Rourke still living in the house, Theodate's workers started renovating its interior. When she returned from Boston, she found much of the work completed:

I found the shed nearly finished, the ceilings all whitewashed, paper off and first coat of paint in the kitchen. I was greatly surprised as I had really thought I might come back and find that no one had been near it. Yes even the holes were cut for the registers & one set. Tomorrow I shall get measures of floors & windows for mattings & curtains.⁷⁹

She set to work itemizing the tasks remaining for the carpenters before the house could be fully painted. In the process of completing their work, however, the builder and his assistants had discovered an infestation in the house – it would have to be fully fumigated and extreme measures taken in order to rid the house of lice. In the meanwhile, Theodate Pope visited Henry Hall Mason's house to see a Richmond stove of the style that her mother had recommended for the new residence.⁸⁰

In less than a month, Theodate had the new house thoroughly furnished. She kept a close eye on the decoration of each room, selecting wallpapers and paints carefully to match one another, and coordinating the rooms as well. She also monitored the progress of each of the craftsmen as they worked on the house. Remembering the color scheme inspired by Fontainebleau, Theodate created a living room in brown hues. Throughout the process, Alfred Pope kept track of her progress as best he could from afar, and his friends J. H. Whittemore provided updates from the Whittemore estate in nearby Naugatuck. On August 25, J. H. wrote to Alfred that Theodate had visited the Whittemores for a meal. He reported that she was, "Very full of business getting that house in order. We enjoyed her visit very much indeed and cannot but admire her enthusiasm & the good judgment she is showing in the work in hand."⁸¹

⁷⁷ Biographical information about Mason taken from an "Interview with Paul Mason Ingram," (4 January 2001), the summary of which is in the "Research files" at the HSM Archive, under "Henry Hall Mason."

⁷⁸ Theodate Pope diary, (17 August 1890), HSM Archive.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Theodate Pope diary, (18 August 1890), HSM Archive.

⁸¹ Letter, J. H. Whittemore to Alfred Pope, HWJ Trust. Transcript available in HSM Archive.

If Alfred and Ada had hoped that Theodate's residence in Farmington was going to be a passing fancy, they were disappointed. She became comfortably settled in the house, and entertained both her own friends and friends of the family in a steady stream. J. H. Whittemore, for example, visited her in October 1891, and reported to her father, "It was a pleasure for me to see Theodate in her attractive house. She has shown good taste in furnishing it and is very happy there."⁸² Theodate dubbed her home "The O'Rourke" as a play on the name of James O'Rourke, its former inhabitant and her landlord. This name remained firmly associated with the house for the duration of Theodate's involvement with it, and all her friends and acquaintances referred to the house affectionately by this name. In 1892 the property became available for purchase and Alfred bought it for his daughter. She immediately launched into an even more extensive renovation campaign, which kept her so absorbed with life in Farmington that she failed to return home for vacations. Her parents started visiting Farmington to check up on Theodate and to see the improvements she was making to the property.⁸³

When the house was only a rental property, Theodate had been content to hire a local builder for its renovations. Now that the house was her own, however, Theodate consulted a Hartford architect to complete the renovation that she envisioned. The man she selected for the work, Melvin H. Hapgood, had trained in architecture at the Massachusetts Normal Art School, and in drawing at the Lowell Institute Drawing School. He then had an apprenticeship before settling in Hartford to practice architecture.⁸⁴ Melvin Hapgood was talented at architectural rendering, having received an award for drawings submitted to at least one design competition.⁸⁵ Hapgood's work may have appealed to Theodate because he had a predilection for designing in an Old-English or colonial style. An 1893 article in *The Hartford Courant*, for example, found the firm of Hapgood & Hapgood designing one house in the "English half-timber" style, with a matching garage, and another in a "colonial design" of red brick with a shingled third story.⁸⁶ The firm was also interested in producing interiors designed to a certain historic period as when, for example, a newspaper writer noted that a house under construction by the firm in 1896 was "a handsome specimen of old English architecture, modernized to nineteenth century interior accommodations."⁸⁷ Since Theodate desired to create a house with a colonial or old time feel, it was natural for her to select Hapgood & Hapgood to create the necessary exterior and interior conceits, as they specialized in precisely this type of architectural effect. When decorating the house initially on her own, Theodate had attempted to give it an "ancient" feel and had been quite successful. Miss Porter, for example, had remarked that it was "an exact duplication of the farmhouse of eighty years ago."⁸⁸ With this new renovation of the house, she carried her

⁸² Letter, J. H. Whittemore to Alfred Pope, (5 October 1891), HWJ Trust. Transcript available in HSM Archive.

⁸³ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (2 May 1892), HWJ Trust. Transcript available in HSM Archive.

⁸⁴ The best source for information about Melvin Hapgood is the exhibition catalog, *The Architecture of Melvin H. Hapgood and Edward T. Hapgood*, catalog essay by David T. Ransom (Hartford, CT: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1992).

⁸⁵ See *The American Architect and Building News* (18 March 1882): 126. Melvin Hapgood received one of three \$50 awards for a design for a country hotel. His submission was entitled "Canterbury."

⁸⁶ "Building in Hartford," *The Hartford Courant*, 25 July 1893, 4.

⁸⁷ "Handsome Residence," *The Hartford Courant*, 4 May 1896, 3.

⁸⁸ As quoted by Theodate in a letter to Agnes Hamilton. The original letter is in the Schlesinger Library, with a copy at HSM Archive.

aspirations to the next level, using the expertise of Hapgood & Hapgood to increase the authenticity of the house's old-fashioned appearance.

The next several years were busy for Theodate. She taught art history at a regional women's school, boarding there during the term. In 1894, and again in 1895, Theodate lived for several months in Princeton, New Jersey, where she followed courses in art and architectural history. This period of her life is poorly documented.⁸⁹ She returned to Europe with her family in 1894, and took a railroad trip to Alaska, during which she explored much of the western portion of the United States, and kept notes in her diary that included observations about the architecture and urban-planning of the western territories.⁹⁰ In 1896 she purchased the neighboring McCahill property, bringing her total real estate holdings to forty-six acres. At some point in this same year, Theodate moved the McCahill house from its original location, and attached it as a wing to the O'Rourke, she named this new wing of the house the "Gundy."⁹¹ She seems to have been quite protective and secretive about these building operations. At the least, she did not want to be disturbed during the process. A somewhat disheartened Alfred Pope wrote to his friend J. H. Whittemore:

We have been somewhat influenced in not coming East at an earlier date, (We hoped for a short driving trip in June with Theodate) by the fact that Theodate was so confined by her building operations that she could not leave to take a trip with us, neither could we have the privilege of visiting her at Farmington. That was tabooed. We are hoping that she will have her place completed by the time we can arrange to go East. For some reasons I would rather like to go on the very last of the month for a few days, but I am afraid Theodate's work won't be far enough along then for us to have any visit with her.⁹²

Perhaps growing in her independence along with her professional capacity, Theodate Pope no longer relied as closely on her parents for guidance during these renovations. Likewise, while she had turned to J. H. Whittemore and Harris Whittemore a few years earlier with regard to problems she was having with her property, she does not seem to have consulted any of them about the changes she was making in this period. Since Theodate was always an intense personality, and prone to becoming thoroughly absorbed in a project, Alfred Pope was certain that if he and Ada were to visit during renovations they would not to have any sort of a visit with their daughter.

⁸⁹ See Chapter 3 of Sharon Smith's *Theodate Pope Riddle: Her Life and Architecture* (Web-published 2002, <http://www.valinet.com/~smithash/theodate/index>) for a more complete discussion of Theodate's activities during this period. A notebook compiled from art history lectures shows that Theodate followed a term of art history from ancient through Medieval art. This course focused largely on painting and sculpture, with architecture only as a minimal backdrop.

⁹⁰ These observations in her diary strongly resemble the tone of Margaret Fuller's travel diary, *A Summer on the Lakes*, published in 1844.

⁹¹ It is unknown who completed this work for her. If she turned again to Hapgood & Hapgood it was a difficult time for their firm, since Melvin was dying of cancer. Perhaps she asked Henry Hall Mason, to whom she would later turn during the construction of Hill-Stead, to complete the addition in the style already set into place through her cooperative efforts with Hapgood & Hapgood in 1892.

⁹² Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (1896), HWJ Trust. Transcript available in HSM Archive.

In 1898 when the Pope family first began to purchase land in Farmington for the construction of their country estate, the three family members each brought a unique set of skills to the process. Alfred Pope knew a large network of designers and builders, and had already overseen the construction process for a number of large architectural commissions. Ada Pope had furnished the interior of their large Cleveland mansion, knew how to create an interior space that would reflect her aesthetic interests, and how to communicate particular social messages through interior décor. Together Alfred and Ada had overseen the design and construction of their Cleveland mansion and knew how the design process worked for a house, what types of spaces they needed for their social obligations, and how to negotiate with artisans. Theodore Pope, then a resident of Farmington for nearly ten years, knew the local building community due to her various construction projects. Likewise she had close personal experience with over-seeing architects and contractors, and had experimented with the creation of a ‘period’ house. The combination of their experiences and interests offered a rich pool of resources to draw on as they began to plan their new home.

McKim, Mead & White

Charles Follen McKim, William Rutherford Mead and Stanford White were the principal architects for what became probably the most influential and prolific architectural firm of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the United States. All three architects had worked with Henry Hobson Richardson before his demise and had completed their architectural education by touring European architecture. McKim and Mead formed a firm in the late 1870s, as McKim, Mead & Bigelow, an association that included McKim’s brother-in-law. During this period they developed an interest in the colonial architecture of the United States. As a group, they made a ground-breaking tour of the old architecture of the eastern seaboard. This tour, later described by Mead, would influence not only their own architectural practice but also the design trends of the entire nation:

In 1877 we made what we always called afterward our ‘celebrated’ trip to New England, for the purpose of visiting the towns of Marblehead, Salem, Newburyport, and Portsmouth. The party consisted of Messrs. McKim, Bigelow, White and myself. We made sketches and measured drawings of many of the important Colonial houses, which still remain in our scrapbook. I think these drawings represent some of the earliest records of the Colonial period, through native drawings. . . . I think the leaning of this office toward the classic form dates from this trip.⁹³

As Leland Roth has noted, the study of colonial architecture made by McKim, Mead, White and Bigelow was more general than a similar tourist trip would be today. They blended “seventeenth-century picturesque informality and regional variation with the more formal eighteenth-century Georgian,” and eventually began to be very influenced by the “geometrical logic of Georgian Classicism.”⁹⁴ While the firm’s earliest work was derived from this close and creative study of architectural precedents from the United States, by about 1880 their work had become more strongly rooted in Classicism. The firm associated this change in their style with the architecture

⁹³ From Charles Follen McKim’s reminiscences as quoted in Roth, *McKim, Mead & White: Architects*, 46.

⁹⁴ Roth, *McKim, Mead & White: Architects*, 67.

of the early national period in the United States. This has been clearly explained by Leland Roth, “Classicism, the firm came to believe, was allied with a national building tradition evolved in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but even more, it was part of the rich European architectural tradition to which the United States considered itself heir.”⁹⁵ As the firm’s work matured toward the end of the nineteenth-century they again slightly shifted the emphasis of their designs, now combining classicism with regionally and chronologically-specific architectural designs. Again, Leland Roth has succinctly described this phase of the firm’s career:

McKim, Mead & White continued to expand on their use of Georgian models. Now, however, these eighteenth-century references were combined increasingly with allusions to native Federalist architecture, that severe and attenuated conservative variant of Georgian Baroque which flourished in New England after the Revolution up to about 1815. As before, plan arrangements were determined far more by functional requirements than by emulation of the past, and the historical allusions were determined by regional associations or the influence of the immediate environment.⁹⁶

Hill-Stead belongs to precisely this set of ideas within the scope of McKim, Mead & White’s career. Its appearance, in both architectural form and interior décor, is based on a precedent from a specific historical moment and drawn from regionally pertinent models. Its plan is derived from drawings developed by the family, and based on client need and social function rather than historically significant research.

McKim, Mead & White gained prominence through their upper class clientele. They were well connected with the elites of the east coast, and gained a number of their first commissions through McKim’s wife. Roth has argued that their clients also had a significant impact on the nature and quality of the firm’s work:

When one designed, as they did, for the Amorys, the Astors, the Coolidges, the Fishes, the Goelets, the Stuyvesants, or the Vanderbilts, one was given the means to procure the very best in materials and craftsmanship. Such clients came from the old established Brahmin and Knickerbocker families of Boston and New York, customarily conservative, they had money to spend on houses or corporate structures, but these were to impress more through restraint and finesse in design than through sheer display. Significantly, even the comparatively *nouveaux riches*, the Oelrichs, the Pulitzers, and especially the Villards, also desired the same classical sobriety in the buildings, although few went as far as did Katherine Mackay in dictating to White a specific historical reference; and seldom did White, much less McKim, accede to such mandates.⁹⁷

In order to maintain their clients, the firm had to design in a manner that appealed to the social standing of their clientele, and that reinforced the self-image that these families cultivated. These requirements necessitated the firm’s having a large, quality network of craftsmen on which they

⁹⁵ Ibid., 115.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 147.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 67-68.

could rely. Likewise, they needed to design in a fashion that was conservative, refined and subtly tasteful. Also important to note here is the direct (if perhaps not common) influence that clients could have on the stylistic form of a project. With Katherine Mackay, as they also did with Theodate Pope, McKim, Mead & White worked closely to develop a particular historical period of reference for the house.⁹⁸ In such situations the firm was in direct and frequent contact with its client about large and small aesthetic decisions for the project, and also provided its clients with books, visual references, and touring advice should they wish to develop design ideas on their own.

Perhaps the single most influential late-nineteenth-century project for McKim, Mead & White was the design for the White City at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Through the collaborative efforts of a number of architects and the landscape architect Frederic Law Olmsted, the World's Columbian Exposition firmly established neoclassicism as a popular trend in the architecture of the United States. When they visited the World's Columbian Exposition the Popes may well have been aware of the integral role that McKim, Mead & White played in the design of the fair (and perhaps also have known of the efforts of Warren Manning, then employed by Olmsted, Olmsted & Elliot, on the fair's landscape design). The Pope family would also have had ample opportunity to visit houses designed by McKim, Mead & White during their vacations to Newport, Rhode Island, and their frequent trips to Boston and New York.

It is uncertain how Alfred Pope came to know the principal architects of the firm of McKim, Mead & White personally. Certainly by 1885, however, Alfred not only knew William Rutherford Mead, but felt confident enough in his abilities that Pope recommended the firm to J. H. Whittemore, who had recently purchased land in Naugatuck, Connecticut, and was planning to build a country home there.⁹⁹ Alfred Pope was also familiar with Norcross Brothers, the principle contractor employed by McKim, Mead & White.

While Alfred recommended Mead to J. H. Whittemore, evidence suggests that Whittemore already had a standing relationship with Mead.¹⁰⁰ Whittemore turned to McKim, Mead & White for no less than thirteen design projects between 1888 and 1907 and in each instance seems to have had Mead as the supervising architect with whom he worked. This is somewhat of an anomaly within the firm's history. McKim and White are generally considered by historians to be the design principles of the firm, while Mead maintained a more low-profile office presence, supervising junior architects and over-seeing office affairs and finances. McKim, Mead & White each brought different skills to the firm. Mead has been described as the mediating force and voice of reason in the firm's design projects:

[Mead] was the balance wheel, the governor of the engine, shrewd, level-headed, with good judgment and an equable temperament; he modified McKim's severity

⁹⁸ For a fascinating study of the firm's work with Katherine Mackay, see Lawrence Wodehouse, "Stanford White and the Mackays: a Case Study in Architect-Client Relationships," *Winterthur Portfolio* 11 (1976): 213-233.

⁹⁹ The first reference to this introduction is made by Alfred Pope in a letter to J. H. Whittemore of September 12, 1885. HWJ Trust. Transcript available at HSM Archive. In a letter of September 20, Alfred Pope asked his friend to remind the firm that Pope should get a commission for directing the work to them.

¹⁰⁰ While I have not been able to trace this acquaintance to its origins, Whittemore was exchanging correspondence with Mead well before his house at Naugatuck was constructed.

and checked White's enthusiasm. His taciturnity around the office earned him the affectionate nickname Dummy, but it was not for want of knowledge or sensitivity. He was said to possess a critical faculty which mitigated eccentricity in the firm's designs; his counsel was always sought by his partners, his suggestions on plan arrangement and construction carrying great weight.¹⁰¹

Mead's balanced temperament, and shrewd business-like demeanor may have made him particularly attractive to J. H. Whittemore as a primary contact and designer on his various projects. The long-standing amicable rapport between Whittemore and Mead may well have been what influenced the Pope family to approach McKim, Mead & White for the design of their own country house, and is almost certainly the reason for Mead acting as principal architect on the Pope family's commission instead of one of his more prolific partners.

Popularity, refined design quality, interest in early national architecture, connections within the building community, and personal connections all made McKim, Mead & White an attractive firm to the Pope family. These same qualities would also help the firm to achieve success in its project with the Popes despite distance, difficult personalities, and limited design freedom. William Rutherford Mead's own design experience and moderate personality must likewise have contributed to the successful completion of the project, though relatively few documents actually give hints at the role that he played in the design process.

The J. H. Whittemore Family

It is possible that Hill-Stead would never have existed, or would have assumed a very different form, without the interaction between J. H. Whittemore and Alfred Pope. As already noted, when the Popes were constructing their Cleveland house, Alfred shared design updates, and Julia sent plans and suggestions that helped the Popes during the process. Whittemore and Pope began as business associates, but by the mid-1880s, they were also close personal friends. They shared a network of acquaintances, watched after each other's children, and seem to have consulted on nearly every aspect of business and personal life. While many of their important conversations about architecture certainly happened in person, enough references exist throughout their correspondence to know that they strongly influenced each other with regard to what, where, and how to build.

The construction of the Whittemore family home, "Tranquility," in Naugatuck, Connecticut is, therefore, certainly the most important parallel example for understanding the development of Hill-Stead. Sharon Smith has explained the link between the two family houses in terms of a "healthy rivalry," in her words, "If John Whittemore erected a country house then Alfred Pope must have one too. If Whittemore put in a golf course, Alfred Pope would follow suit."¹⁰² Friendly rivalry may indeed have been one of the motivators driving Alfred Pope's decision to build in Farmington, but certainly the relationship between these two design projects was far from one-dimensional. In fact, between the mid-1880s and 1900, either the Popes or the Whittemores were nearly always involved in a construction project, sharing architects, plans, laborers, and advice back and forth between one another. The process began with Alfred and

¹⁰¹ Roth, *McKim, Mead & White: Architects*, 58.

¹⁰² Smith, *Theodate Pope Riddle: Her Life and Architecture*, Chapter 4, 1.

Ada Pope's Euclid Avenue home. A few months after the interior furnishing of the Euclid Avenue mansion was completed, the Whittemores began the process of designing their country home, and Alfred Pope promptly sent them the plans to his own house in case they would be of service. Alfred wrote to J. H., "I send you drawings of the house. Plans of floors & elevation. We changed them in some particulars. . . The drawings were used by builders and look rather tough."¹⁰³ The Whittemores, who apparently loved the Pope family home in Cleveland, even considered erecting a nearly exact copy of it on their site in Naugatuck and had a conversation about this possibility with Alfred Pope. In thinking this over, especially with regard to what an Mead might say about the Whittemore's property, Alfred Pope wrote to J. H. Whittemore,

I haven't an idea he would think well of our house on your lot. As I think it now I think a house adapted to your location would be quite different in style. Ours is adapted to our lot & location and to a city. Perhaps you will conclude to build in New Haven after all.¹⁰⁴

Together the two men were working to develop an understanding of rural versus urban domestic architecture, and J. H. Whittemore was obviously debating which of these two house types he actually would like to construct. The fact that he was wavering between constructing in rural Naugatuck or in more urban New Haven suggests that to J. H. Whittemore the architectural statement of his house was even more important than its geographic location. Alfred Pope understood this priority and was sympathetic to it. Before the Popes set off on their first grand tour of Europe with Theodate they visited the recently-completed Whittemore family home. The jaunt to Naugatuck was so important that the entire Pope family attended (not often the case), and that Theodate remarked upon the experience in her diary, "We wanted to see the new house before we sailed. We went all over it that evening after tea."¹⁰⁵

When the family returned to the United States, and Theodate began to set up her new life in Farmington the nearby Whittemores offered her all of the assistance that they could. In 1896, when Theodate was working on her renovations of the O'Rourke that included adding the Gundy to the property, she expressed concern about a tree to J. H. Whittemore, who promptly asked Warren Manning to stop by and give a consultation to Theodate on its condition. Apparently Manning then reported to J. H. Whittemore on his experience at Theodate's property, and J. H. in turn wrote a letter of near-fatherly affection to Theodate, complimenting her on what he had heard:

"Did you think strange my sending Mr. Manning to see you? I remember your anxiety about that tree and as he was to stay in Hartford, I suggested his calling upon you.

¹⁰³ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (25 September 1885), HWJ Trust. Copy available at HSM Archive.

¹⁰⁴ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (24 September 1885), HWJ Trust. Copy available at HSM Archive.

¹⁰⁵ Theodate Pope diary, (15 September 1888), HSM Archive. Between 1894 and 1896 J. H. Whittemore built a second house with a large accompanying farm in Middlebury, CT, also designed by McKim, Mead & White. Between J. H. Whittemore and Harris Whittemore, the family was involved in seven public and private commissions for which McKim, Mead & White were the architects. See Leland Roth, *The Architecture of McKim, Mead & White 1870-1920: A Building List* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1978) for information about each of these commissions.

I enclose a letter from him, which should make you feel very happy. I am so glad for it is indeed a high compliment. It is evident you do not need the professional services of anybody. I am anxious to see what you have accomplished and must do so before ‘snow flies.’”¹⁰⁶

The Popes and the Whittemores consulted about issues of property from the smallest to the largest decisions – the health of a tree, what plumber to employ, or what architect to consult in the design of a house. The casual manner in which J. H. Whittemore sent Warren Manning to stop by Theodate’s property, and the fact that he probably paid the landscape architect’s bill for this consultation, is an example of the close trust and exchange of information between the two families.

When the Pope family first began to think about constructing a home in Farmington, they had personal skills and knowledge to bring to the project, as well as a network of personal and professional acquaintances. Ada, Alfred and Theodate each had individualized skills that they could lend to the construction of the new family home. Ada was knowledgeable about interior design and gardening. Alfred knew how to manage construction projects, had experience with deciphering architectural drawings, and was acquainted with a network of designers and builders from the northeast west to Cleveland. Theodate was immersed in the local community and had worked with the network of builders in the area. She also had a certain degree of design knowledge, and was trained in aesthetic theory and criticism, on the basis of which she could develop a philosophy for building. The Whittemore family, meanwhile, had extensive local connections to offer to the Popes, as well as a long-standing relationship with McKim, Mead & White. McKim, Mead & White were the nation’s leading architectural firm, had already constructed an impressive portfolio of elite country houses across the eastern seaboard. They had a thorough collective knowledge of Colonial architecture, were adept at designing buildings in a period style, and a large network of highly professional builders and craftsmen on which to draw. The Pope family also had social convention to draw on as they approached the question of what they wanted in a rural home. In their period the concept of building a rural home was closely linked with the growing popularity of the Colonial Revival.

The Manifestations and Meaning of the Colonial Revival

“It is of the colonial order; it is going to be ‘a thing of beauty,’” Alfred Pope remarked after visiting a country house then under construction in the mid-1890s.¹⁰⁷ The 1880s and 1890s in the United States saw increasing interest in colonial architecture, both in terms of studying authentic examples of Colonial construction, and in building modern houses that imitated Colonial forms. There came to be several rather different manifestations of Colonial Revival architecture, equally popular in the period. Perhaps most studied today, the “shingle style” was developed by McKim, Mead & White for summer houses in Newport, Rhode Island, and soon became a common trope of rural country house architecture. The Whittemore’s house at Tranquility Farm, for example, joined the growing group of houses constructed in this style by the firm. The shingle style was developed after careful study of eighteenth century clap-board and shingled houses of the northeastern seaboard. Architects practicing shingle-style design created a contemporary form

¹⁰⁶ Letter, J. H. Whittemore to Theodate Pope, (3 September 1896).

¹⁰⁷ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (undated, c. 1895).

that alluded to earlier construction. Crucial was a hand-crafted feel, a certain color palette, and specific attributes of fenestration and wall treatment. The style, therefore, was a carefully balanced combination of the old and the new.

Another aspect of Colonial Revival architecture was the construction of houses in the “Georgian” style, which recalled the architecture of the later 18th and early 19th centuries, and allowed for the incorporation of classical architectural detailing. While the shingle style was consciously modern with allusions to colonial forms, the “Queen Anne” and “Georgian” ostensibly maintained a higher level of authenticity. Although in most cases these stylistic modes were much more extravagant than their colonial prototypes. While not chronologically accurate, both true colonial architectural forms and those of the early Republic were lumped together under the umbrella category of the “Colonial Revival.” In a brief article for the *Ladies’ Home Journal* Ralph Adams Cram spelled out what he felt were the most integral aspects of design in order to attain a truly authentic colonial house:

The essence of a Colonial building a hundred years ago was simplicity – simplicity of plan, of form, of decoration, of color.

It costs no more to build a cottage which is really good, artistically, than one which is intrinsically bad – less, in fact. Reserve, simplicity, dependence on the really good old models that have been left to us from the earlier periods of American building – these are the only qualities that are required, and generally they should not be hard to find nor to acquire. Arrange the rooms very simply, keep the lines of the plan as near a plain rectangle as possible, leave the roof alone, avoid many bay-windows, towers and dormers, make your chimneys just as large as is feasible, have nothing to do with yellow and white paint, and you will be pretty safe.¹⁰⁸

Rather than actually modeling these houses on authentic colonial designs, as Cram’s pointers suggest, those who wished to design in a colonial style, simply needed to think of the particular effect desired in their structures, rather than to obsessively copy all elements of earlier buildings. Keeping concepts like “simplicity,” “reserve,” and types of window, roof, and plan treatments would create a building automatically identifiable as “colonial” to a contemporary viewer. Of course, a designer did not have to follow Cram’s tenets to construct a building in the colonial style. Cram created his pointers on Colonial Revival form for the benefit of local designers and builders. A firm such as McKim, Mead & White might draw on similar concepts (such as featuring specifically identifiable colonial details, or simplistic and reserved decoration) but would follow an original combination of elements to create inventive variations on a colonial theme.

Many factors combined to make the colonial particularly popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century United States. The final quarter of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth were marked in the United States by drastically-increased rates of urbanization and industrialization. These demographic changes came coupled with a myriad of social transformations. The popularity of the Colonial Revival has been linked by scholars to those individuals who were resistant of these modernizing forces. The themes of “nostalgia” and “rural

¹⁰⁸ “A \$5000 Colonial House,” *Ladies’ Home Journal* XIII, no. 3 (February 1896): 17.

life,” already discussed at several points were common signals of this resisting mentality. As Richard Guy Wilson has written, “Colonial Revival has been interpreted as distinctly anti-modern in the sense that it offers a safe harbor from the pressures of modern urban life. . . . The Colonial Revival’s emphasis on home, hearth, and the image of the family offered a respite from the strain of change.”¹⁰⁹ The semblance of traditional or ‘old fashioned’ ways was more important than their actual recreation. For this reason, Theodate Pope could install modern heating systems in her colonial house, in addition to carving out spaces for contemporary social functions, without risking ruining the illusion of the recreated colonial interior. Likewise within these spaces individuals could shut out the contemporary world and could live in a style mannered after colonial life. To use Theodate Pope as an example again, at the O’Rourke she could gesture at a self-sustaining lifestyle, by maintaining a cow, chickens and gardens and at the same time, keep a servant to watch after these animals, as well as to do all of the cooking and cleaning. Likewise, her rustic interior decorations, which maintained an appearance of simplicity, were in fact carefully selected and frequently valuable contemporary artisan-made or antique pieces.¹¹⁰

Coupled with or in place of these anti-modern feelings, the Colonial Revival was also linked to feelings of nationalism, in fact, as William Rhoads has noted, “much of Colonial architecture’s popular appeal was based on patriotic sentiment.”¹¹¹ Two factors in particular are behind the force of this colonially-oriented patriotism in the late nineteenth-century. First, in the wake of the severe ruptures caused by the United States Civil War, increased patriotism came to be a way of reuniting the country. In some instances, this was consciously achieved through the evocation of colonial identity. Another pressure point was the increased immigration of non-English speaking populations. Economic pressures, labor problems, and rising urban strife brought the issue of immigration to the headlines again and again during the final decades of the nineteenth century. Reviving colonial architecture, which was associated with purely anglo-immigration, was a patriotic statement linked to a particular view of nation. A society paper’s description of a party held in Newport in 1902 demonstrates the manner in which the Colonial Revival in all of its forms could be employed to amplify anglo-patriotic sentiment. This passage describes a party held in one of Newport’s elite mansion houses, in which architecture, attire and interior décor work together to heighten patriotic colonial sensibilities:

Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish gave her Colonial ball, and it was Colonial in every respect. Of course, the Colonial architecture of ‘Crossways’ added wonderfully to the general effect. . . Old-fashioned paintings crayons and steel engravings of George and Martha Washington greeted the eye on all sides, while American flags, shield, and coat-of-arms of the United States were seen to advantage.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ *The Colonial Revival House*, 9.

¹¹⁰ In a diary entry of July 10, 1890, for example, as she was out-fitting the O’Rourke, Theodate Pope mentioned going to Ed Brooks’ “Household Art Rooms” in Hartford to buy a dining room table. On several other instances she wrote about a particular antique clock that she was very eager to possess, and finally obtained after prolonged bargaining with its proprietor.

¹¹¹ William B. Rhoads, “The Colonial Revival and American Nationalism,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 35, no. 4 (December 1976): 239.

¹¹² “Town and Country Life,” *Town and Country* (August 30, 1902):20.

In this description the Colonial Revival house acts as a stage on which pseudo-period décor is the prop for a whole cast of twentieth-century Americans to return nostalgically to the Revolutionary War era. This entire pageant was a carefully-orchestrated proclamation of social status and pedigree, of which the Colonial Revival house would serve as a daily reification. In order to play out such colonial fantasies, individuals had to be of proper breeding (preferably Anglo-American, and of sufficient social status). Adhering to the Colonial Revivalism as linked to patriotism meant believing in a carefully circumscribed sense of nation, and recreating purist memories of British colonial life. These sentiments also enabled such individuals to recreate the imagined perfect union of the post-revolutionary war period, and in so doing to erase the significant political and social unrest of the post-bellum era.

Another important aspect of the Colonial Revival was the association of women with recreated domestic colonial designs. As Wilson has noted, “Influencing many Colonial Revival projects, especially the American house and popular notions of it, is the image of the woman of the house. An argument can be made that women played a substantial role in the development of historic preservation in this country and also in creating the ideology that lay behind the Colonial Revival.”¹¹³ Such associations could range from the deliberate display of women within Colonial Revival interiors (as in the photography of Wallace Nutting), to the complete creation of ‘colonial period’ interior spaces (and gardens) by women. Candace Thurber Wheeler, among other influential women of the period, was particularly integral in the development of a cult of female colonial domesticity.¹¹⁴ Colonial Revivalism was especially prone to linking the domestic sphere with female identity due to its nostalgic lens on historic lifestyles. Such conservative associations linked part of the happiness of colonial life to the constant presence of women within the domestic sphere, and encouraged modern women to at least play at this more traditional role.

Hill-Stead as constructed presented a very different manifestation of the Colonial Revival phenomenon than did the O’Rourke, though both projects can be linked to these larger overarching themes of the Colonial Revival. Both Hill-Stead and the O’Rourke were anti-modern architectural expressions, and both were nostalgic representations of an earlier time. In addition, both houses were carefully aligned with an anglocentric conception of colonial history (e.g. neither contained references to French or Spanish colonial influence, nor did they incorporate more lavish Renaissance motifs that might have pointed to Italian cultural origins). The Pope family certainly could have built a French-style chateau, or a true Queen-Anne replica, but instead they selected a style that drew from the everyday architecture of the British colonial era. In doing so, they linked themselves closely with both the anti-modern and the patriotic strains of the Colonial Revival. In addition, Theodate’s role in the design of both of these houses centered, in part, around the image of the home as a realm for female domesticity. While this link was more pronounced in the image that she chose to present of her life in the O’Rourke, Hill-Stead also set the stage for socially prominent displays of female domestic prowess.

¹¹³ Wilson, 7.

¹¹⁴ Jean Dunbar, “Candace Wheeler and the New Old-Fashioned Home,” in *Re-Creating the American Past: Essays on the Colonial Revival*, eds. Richard Guy Wilson, Shaun Eyring and Kenny Marotta (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006).

The Design and Construction of Hill-Stead

The Farmington Scheme

The first mention of Alfred and Ada Pope's intention to construct a new home in Farmington, Connecticut occurred in a casual reference within an 1898 letter from Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, in which Alfred stated that he had "spent Saturday and Sunday in Farmington. No progress in land matters"¹¹⁵ It is uncertain exactly what motivated Alfred and Ada to make the decision to build in Farmington. Several factors seem especially likely to have influenced the decision. First, Alfred Pope's business endeavors had been exceptionally successful in recent years, and he may have felt more financially secure than he had in 1890 when Theodate first began to argue for the construction of a rural residence. Second, Theodate, their only child, had been living happily in Farmington for nearly ten years and her reluctance to leave Farmington or even to visit her parents in Cleveland may have made them decide that they needed to retire closer to her. Finally, their friendship with the Whittemore family had grown increasingly close, and they may have desired to be in the geographic vicinity of their closest friends.

Certainly moving to Farmington did not mean risking social isolation. In Cleveland their neighbors were of the highest social standing, but in Farmington, they would continue to have elite neighbors. Anna Roosevelt Cowles, for example, was from the prestigious Roosevelt family and her brother Theodore Roosevelt would become president of the United States shortly after the construction of the Pope's new home. In addition to this high-profile family, Miss Porter's school attracted a consistently upper-class student body, whose parents and relatives frequently visited the town and participated, if peripherally, in its social life. It is probable that Alfred Pope was the wealthiest man in Farmington when he built his home there, and so, simply by shifting residences to Farmington, Connecticut, the Popes could change from being one of several extremely wealthy families in Cleveland to being the highest crust of society in Farmington.

The first challenge that the Pope family faced in the construction of their new home was the accumulation of sufficient real-estate in a desirable location. Instead of selecting a site on the outskirts of the town where the purchase of a large tract of land for a reasonable price might have been relatively easy, the Popes seem to have desired a more central location for their farm. They targeted the hill-side above Theodate's house, which was dotted with smaller farms and was adjacent to the more suburban residential lots on High Street, as the future location of their residence. In order to acquire this particular tract of land the Popes had to persuade several reluctant families to sell their land in full, and a number of other land-owners to move barns, houses and other structures to different locations on their lots and to sell the remaining portions of their property to the Popes. The approach that the Pope family used to land purchasing was holistic – they considered not only the total area needed to accommodate a mansion house and functioning farm, but also the optimum quality of the vistas from this property and the water sources within the property.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Letter, Alfred Atmore Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (26 April 1898).

¹¹⁶ In a letter of July 18, 1898 from Harris Whittemore to Theodate Pope, for example, Harris discussed the question of having several property owners move their barns, but then noted "I am not familiar enough with the proposed location [of the moved barn] to know whether it would be a blot on the landscape or not." Another example of these considerations was an August 16, 1898 letter from Harris Whittemore to Theodate answering a question about water rights on the property. In this letter, Harris noted to Theodate "in case you shut off or diverted the course of the water running through Barney's property, he would have redress by law, but Shipman thinks that after you had

While Alfred Pope was actually purchasing the property, he spent little time in Farmington during the summer of 1898. Instead, Theodate seems to have developed the initial ideas for the farm (such as which land to buy and how much land they would need), and Harris Whittemore dealt with all the land purchase transactions. In fact, most of the brunt of negotiations and decisions seems to have fallen on Harris. Alfred and Ada left for a European trip on August 3, with Alfred jotting off a quick telegraph to Theodate telling her “be sure and act freely about buying in Farmington your judgement and Harris will be mine without question.”¹¹⁷ Shortly thereafter, Theodate herself left on a camping trip, leaving Harris to negotiate matters in Farmington. Theodate worked with a real-estate agent, Franklin G. Whitmore, who scoped out possibilities for the Popes and made initial propositions to land owners. Harris did a great deal of leg-work to negotiate the nuances of the land deals, and also handled the particularly grudging land-owners. He communicated frequently with Alfred about the negotiations, and kept Theodate updated as well. When Theodate returned from her camp in mid-August, however, she completely took over from Harris. While Harris may have continued to deal with the logistical and legal aspects of the purchases, he wrote to Alfred, “I suppose Theodate has kept you fully advised, as since she returned the matter has been more out of my hands than in them.”¹¹⁸ By August 29, the bulk of land negotiations were completed, with \$44,050.90 already expended, and a few thousand dollars more pending toward land purchases. The entirety of the property was surveyed in August and September, as per arrangements made by Theodate.

Although Alfred and Ada were far away from the day-to-day activities in Farmington, their influence was still strong. Alfred, in particular, wrote several lengthy and detailed letters to Theodate about his vision for the property. Upon receiving a letter from Theodate relating the purchase of the property, her father quickly jotted off a heady letter filled with ideas about the property.¹¹⁹ First, he noted that it should be physically and legally linked with Theodate’s own property, to create one large estate rather than two separate Pope family properties. This he hoped Theodate would achieve initially by means of a cohesive survey, after which the lands could be legally linked at some point when Alfred was in town to negotiate the logistics. Next, Alfred commented on the approach to the landscaping of the estate, noting that he wanted the focus of Theodate’s efforts to be on the future house and its immediate surroundings rather than on creating an extensive garden estate, “I would figure to improve the ‘home lot’ as we talked[,] not to ‘park’ the place we may ‘clump’ trees later in the landscape.” He next advised Theodate to turn to professional help in the decision of where to place the house in the landscape, and he recommended that she approach McKim, Mead & White for this consultation, a natural choice given the familiarity that he already had with the firm through J. H. Whittemore. He suggested to Theodate that a collaborative approach be used in the design and placement of the house – they would use the plan that she had devised, but would turn to the professionals in order to develop and refine this plan, “I would advise you going to McKim Mead and White now with your plan not with idea of starting foundations this autumn but to get them to assist on deciding on location. If they can influence you in the minor details that. . . will satisfy us.” Alfred and Ada also discussed details of the house plan and features. Accordingly, Alfred advised Theodate that

secured all the property and went to him, explaining exactly what you desired to accomplish, he would be entirely agreeable.” HWJ Trust, copies available at HSM Archive.

¹¹⁷ Telegraph, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, (3 August 1898), HSM Archive.

¹¹⁸ Letter, Harris Whittemore to Alfred Pope, (29 August 1898), HWJ Trust. Copy available at HSM Archive.

¹¹⁹ Letter, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, (5 September 1898). Quotations in this paragraph are from the same letter.

her mother wanted, “to make back porch of house a little more roomy and the butlers pantry.” Meanwhile, Alfred’s mind was on plumbing, “After the delights of a combination bath tub, shower and needle baths at Hotel Ritz Paris I would like one if they are properly made in America.” In recognition of Theodate’s exceptional efforts, and his pride in her, Alfred concluded his letter with the affectionate remark, “My distinguished daughter.”

About a week later, Alfred wrote a longer, more detailed letter to Theodate about the property.¹²⁰ He elaborated on the brief ideas he had stated in his earlier letter, but also gave Theodate instructions on a large set of issues. First, he returned to the question of laying out the land, and a timeline in connection with this, telling Theodate, “Yes I should say go ahead with road making, wall building and tree planting this autumn taking advise of Mr. Manning in so doing, if he is the best one to consult. McKim, Mead & White might tell you about this. I believe I told you before to look to the improvement of the home lot and treat the balance of the place in a large way, meadows &c –.” These directions from Alfred suggest that while Theodate could supervise and guide the design and construction of the house, Alfred and Ada wanted to entrust the large decisions to top-notch professionals. Alfred suggested that a dam be constructed that fall in order to form a pond as one of the first stages of improvement of the property. By flooding the land, they would find out the widest extent of the stream’s flood plain, and also clear unwanted overgrowth. He told Theodate that Manning should “locate” the pond, but that a hydraulic engineer should be consulted to examine the property and also to construct the dam and consider issues of water-flow etc.

While Alfred was happy that Theodate was invested in the project, he also did not want her to make too many quick decisions, commenting “I was glad to see you could speak enthusiastically of our property when you viewed it – now go ahead and ‘lick it into shape’ but don’t plunge and make more than necessary expense.” He also urged Theodate to turn to J. H. Whittemore for advice and support on every major decision, especially with regard to anything that involved the expenditure of money, “all the time keep advising with Mr. Whittemore and Harris about improvements. getting Mr. W’s experience and about arrangements with men &c &c.” In addition, Alfred suggested that Mr. Whitmore (the real-estate agent) could help identify a workman for the site, preferably a strong man, capable in his craft who would also “have the wagons, carts, plows, tools and horses and be accustomed to ‘handling mire.’” He also advised Theodate to get a relative to help her to set up accounts for the estate, and was concerned that all the money be kept track of in a systematic manner.

Alfred and Ada were also concerned with the social aspects of their new home. Alfred reflected on the anticipation that he and Ada shared for the new property, remarking specifically that “Mother is happy in considering settlement of schemes for our Eastern home. She joys to think of escaping lunches, dinners, etc. the receiving and giving of them.”¹²¹ This comment implies that the Farmington home would relieve Alfred and Ada of many social obligations, but Ada also seems to have been thinking about the impression that their new home would have on local Farmington society. After receiving a letter from Miss Porter, Ada wrote to Theodate “I can see in my ‘mind’s eye’ Ami driving the three [Porter] sisters quite often on the high road to watch

¹²⁰ Letter, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, (11 September 1898), HSM Archive. All quotations in this and the next paragraph are from this letter.

¹²¹ Ibid.

the improvements. I suppose the town is agog by this time.”¹²² If Ada was, indeed, looking forward to an escape from Cleveland society, she was also enjoying the impression that their extensive purchases and improvement projects were going to make on Farmington society.

In fact, their purchase was already making a substantial social splash. On August 25, 1898, even before Alfred Pope had received news of the closure of the land deals, *The Hartford Courant* featured a story about the purchase. This article considered the prominence of the land purchased, as well as the social impact that the arrival of the Popes would have on Farmington. The reporter wrote:

The entire hill this side of Farmington village, overlooking the Elm Tree Inn, the Country Club and Miss Porter’s school, has been bought by Mr. Pope of Cleveland, O., who intends to build on the crest of the hill a fine residence. He will also conduct, if his present plans do not miscarry, a large stock farm, on the principle of Levi P. Morton’s farm at Ellerslie on the Hudson. The purchase includes, roughly estimated, about 250 acres, and the site is one of great beauty. The extensive improvements that are projected will make Mr. Pope’s purchase of large interest and profit to the old town of Farmington and add one more to the pleasant associations of the place.¹²³

The extent of the Pope’s property was so vast, and the improvements planned for it so thorough, that the writer anticipated it alone would be enough to cause significant profit for the town of Farmington. His predictions would prove perceptive, as the Popes consistently employed a significant number of Farmington residents throughout their tenure on the estate. Italian immigrants cared for the gardens and joined in the construction project, local builders helped with the various renovations needed for the estate, and laborers were always needed to attend to the gardens and livestock.

It is also clear that Ada considered the new home in Farmington to be more Theodate and Alfred’s project than her own.¹²⁴ When writing to Theodate, Ada said she knew her daughter must have gone “to camp with a high heart and a happier one than you have had since you have you have had this project for a home for us at Farmington.”¹²⁵ She then offered only one suggestion to Theodate about the house, proposing that Theodate contact the New York vendor with whom they had been in touch earlier that year about furnishing the house to let him know that, “you have bought the property and will wish the furniture you selected this spring. I doubt if you find any that you like better – and he has been holding it er [sic.] long.” As if this might be taken as too aggressive a suggestion, however, Ada then added, “This is only a suggestion.” Not only did Ada, as matriarch of the family, cede her right to select all the furnishings for the house to her daughter, but she also worried that she might offend her daughter even by the suggestion that it might be time to follow-up on her furnishing decisions. Ada and Alfred did, however,

¹²² Letter, Ada Pope to Theodate Pope, (14 September 1898), HSM Archive.

¹²³ “Big Farmington Deal: 250 acre of land changes hands,” *The Hartford Courant*, 25 August 1898, 6.

¹²⁴ Sandra Katz has discussed the difficult relationship between Theodate and Ada at length in her biography of Theodate *Dearest of Geniuses*. The manner in which Theodate treated her mother in these early years may have effected how Ada thought about the Farmington project.

¹²⁵ Letter, Ada Pope to Theodate Pope, (n.d. September 1898), HSM Archive. Next two quotations are from the same letter.

begin the process of acquiring some of the new furniture for the house during this trip, though they thought of Theodate's taste in the process. Ada wrote to her daughter, "He [Alfred] bought five fine old Sheraton chairs for his room, yesterday. I feel sure you will like them."¹²⁶

One final, somewhat casual remark in a letter from Ada also hints at the lengthy period of negotiation and possibly of family strife that preceded Alfred and Ada's decision to build in Farmington. In the same letter in which Ada remarked upon the purchase of the land, she also referred to Theodate's designs, and to her state of mind. Speculating about her daughter's happy vacation at a camp-site, Ada reflected, "I wonder if you have been altering the plans of the house while at camp. In London you were so discouraged that we scarcely looked at them, but I fancy life looks differently to you now."¹²⁷ Ada's comment suggests that the decision to build Hill-Stead may have taken a leap of faith for she and her husband.

Designing Hill-Stead

Theodate Pope was at the helm of the design and construction process of Hill-Stead in this period. If she kept any organized records of her activities, however, they remain unlocated. Snippets of correspondence among Harris Whittemore, Theodate Pope, and Alfred Pope offer the only clues into the sequence of construction and the individuals consulted. Having closed the deal on the land in late August, by the third week in September Theodate was already eager to start meeting with designers. While Harris Whittemore remarked that he was as yet "barely recovered" from the dramas of the land negotiations, he good-naturedly replied to a query from Theodate about meeting with one of the men who was then working on designing Harris' house.¹²⁸ Theodate was also eager to get started on the landscape design of the estate. She had consulted with Warren Manning about a tree on her property a few years earlier, and turned to him again, via the Whittemores, for consultation at Hill-Stead.¹²⁹ In addition to consulting Warren Manning, there is some evidence that Theodate may also have consulted with Olmsted, Olmsted and Elliot during the siting phase of the landscaping project.¹³⁰ Theodate seems to have hired a man named D. H. Potter to oversee the landscape construction on the estate.¹³¹ Such

¹²⁶ Letter 554, Ada Pope to Theodate Pope, (2 October 1898), HSM Archive. There is no receipt for these chairs in the HSM archive, however there are several other "antique" furniture purchases from this exact time period. While the Popes could have been purchasing all of these objects for their Euclid Avenue home, it seems possible, given the context of this quotation, that they were thinking toward the future of their new home. The receipts show the purchase of an "old corner mirror" by Ada Pope (from Arthur Edwards, Cavendish Square London on October 25, 1898, Receipt 2056), a pair of "Old English Chairs" and a "Tulip wood semi-circular table" (from W. Dickinson, London, Receipt 2058), and "a second hand Old English Bracketed Clock in black wood case" (from Edward White, London on October 31, 1898).

¹²⁷ Letter 541, Ada Pope to Theodate Pope, (14 September 1898), HSM Archive.

¹²⁸ Letter, Harris Whittemore to Theodate Pope, (17 September 1898). Harris writes, "Regarding Mr. McGonigal. I can't tell exactly when he will be up. They are at present at work on the plans for my house, which they promised to have completed by or before October 1st, at which time he will probably be up for a day." He worked for McKim, Mead & White in this period, but later went on to be an architect of some note himself. It is unknown if Theodate and McGonigal did ever meet in October.

¹²⁹ A September 19, 1898 letter from Harris Whittemore to Warren Manning notes that he is forwarding a letter to Manning from Theodate.

¹³⁰ See footnote 5.

¹³¹ Potter was recommended to Theodate from Shepardson via Harris Whittemore in a letter of September 19, 1898. Harris noted that Potter was a resident of Fair Haven, MA, had worked under Warren Manning, and would probably work for a salary of \$75.00 per month. While there is no documentation of Theodate having hired Potter or of his

work would have included the creation of the pond, construction of stone walls, and the general laying out and maintenance of different sections of the grounds.

While Theodate's letters to her father have for the most part been lost, she was evidently corresponding with him throughout the process about the improvements. In an important letter of September 25, 1898, Alfred Pope responded to a query from Theodate about the entrance road to the house. Theodate was planning only the road currently used to access Hill-Stead via a lengthy drive winding from Mountain Road. Her father, however, wanted her to reconsider:

You speak of determining about the entrance drive through the Potts place questionably. I supposed that is what would be determined upon and yet perhaps you recall that I thought there should be a more direct way in addition from the northerly direction or northerly & westerly – say after coming up from the Gays corner and Hotel or from Hartford and particularly after stopping at your house, by opening up a drive through the low part of Riley place where he has a lane (I think) Would like you to consider this. It may be best not to have two but consider it with whomever you have as advisers.¹³²

Ultimately Alfred's second entrance was indeed constructed. While today it is merely a casually mowed greensward, it was constructed as a secondary formal entrance path to the house, as is evident in the plan of the estate completed by C.B. Vorce in 1908. A photograph of the main façade of Hill-Stead shows this entryway as it was maintained by the Pope family (**Figure 3**). Ultimately, Hill-Stead would have three entryways – the first the winding entrance road from Mountain Road (referred to by Alfred as the road through the Potts place), the second the path connecting Hill-Stead with High Street, and also directly with Theodate Pope's home, and the third a service entrance running past the farm complex, and feeding directly off of Hartford Road. This last entrance, while primarily a service entrance, was also used by the family when they went out for carriage rides, and was given an increased monumental presence by an allée of trees flanking either side of the road.

Alfred Pope gave Theodate few other detailed written instructions while on the remainder of his trip to Europe. In fact, he remarked that he had made, “so many suggestions and intentionally so general ones that I can't think of more to say – I don't care to direct details.”¹³³ He did, however, offer two important interventions about the form of the house itself. First, he informed Theodate, noting that he was having to repeat himself, that he wanted the house to have fireplaces in the principle rooms, “I have only thought about the house what I expressed before that seemed to me that the large living room would be better with a mantel and that I like fireplaces in the important bed rooms – I don't say this to redirect but for consideration.” Alfred's desire for fireplaces is important, however, because this denotes his desire to have a slightly old-fashioned house. With modern heating developments fireplaces had become obsolete, and it seems that Theodate,

work on the estate, further evidence suggests he did, indeed, work on the estate for two years. A December 7, 1900 letter from J. H. Whittemore to Alfred Pope, discussing Pope's interest in finding a new man to work on his estate, noted “I did not tell Shepardson that you were dissatisfied with Potter,” demonstrating that at least until that point, Potter was employed at the site. HWJ Trust, copy available at HSM Archive.

¹³² Letter, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, (25 September 1898), HSM Archive.

¹³³ Letter, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, (29 September 1898), HSM Archive. The other quotations in this paragraph are from the same letter.

despite her on-going interest in old styles of architecture, had elected to eliminate them from her plan. Next, Alfred makes an important observation about the interior décor of the house: “[I] Am satisfied with plan to grain the woodwork down stairs except possibly the the [sic.] large living room and wing. It seems to me that then in an 1830 house such rooms were dignified by being plain color or white. I don’t like to say white. These are points to think of.” His remark is important first because it demonstrates his interest in the overall effect of the interior, and second because it shows that at this early moment in the design of the house the Popes had already decided to make their new house appear in the mode of an 1830s farm house.

Theodate meets McKim, Mead & White

While no direct correspondence has as yet been found between Warren Manning and Theodate Pope, her rocky relationship with McKim, Mead & White is reasonably well documented. She first approached the firm in an undated letter (written sometime during the summer of 1898, though perhaps before the purchase of the land had been completed). In this initial proposal, she offers a description of her site, and a basic sense of the family’s program:

We are considering building a country house in this town and want plans to look at. It is my father who persuaded Mr. J. H. Whittemore of Naugatuck, Conn. to have his house planned by you and as a result all the other buildings he has since put up. (This is simply an aside, as an introduction.) Do you think you would better send some one up to see the site or can you work to good advantage after my description of the location which I will give you.

We are very accustomed to seeing plans and know at a glance if they have had much real *thought* spent on them. The location is a knoll with the land sloping away in a valley to the *west* which the house will face. The drive to the house is from the south. The house is to be frame – one very large living room very large dining room also a study and bedroom and little sitting room – the two last connected, then pantrys kitchen scullery and laundry *all* on ground floor. Do what you can for nice guest rooms up stairs besides servants rooms have two guest rooms with baths connecting also a general bath room and one connected with first floor bed room. Now the important thing to be born in mind is not to make a *pretty* looking drawing – that does not take with us at all – we want a beautifully planned house in thoroughly good style and *self* contained and dignified. Will you furnish plans according to this *not an elevation* at present and then furnish working plans and a man to oversee it but have it built by Hartford builders? And please – what time you have spent on this preliminary plan have the man spend in thought and not in lines with fancy lead *coloring*. We know all that.¹³⁴

The house that Theodate describes resembles Hill-Stead as constructed on several levels, including the number of guest bedrooms, the scale of the living and dining rooms, and the basic orientation of the house. Likewise, the family did ultimately hire a Hartford-area contractor for the construction of the house, and the description of a “self contained and dignified” house describes Hill-Stead rather well. Other aspects of this letter, however, only hint at the Pope

¹³⁴ Letter, Theodate Pope to McKim, Mead & White, (n.d., c. 1898), MMW Collection, NYHS.

family's evolving requirements for their program. Theodate remarks, for example, on the need for servants' rooms, as well as a scullery, but does not mention the large number of servants that the Popes employed. Her emphasis on plan versus elevation, and thought versus deceptively beautiful drawing is a bit curious. Perhaps it reflects skepticism persistent in the Pope family after their difficulties in dealing with Emerson long distance during the construction of their Cleveland family home.

Theodate wrote a second letter to Mead on September 17, 1898 in response to the firm's reply. She stated that she was displeased with the idea that if her family employed the firm, the house "was to be in the hands of a very young man."¹³⁵ In order to avoid a situation not to her family's liking, Theodate changed her vision of the firm's role in the project, and told them that she and her father "have now decided instead of having you submit sketches to us, to send you the plans that I have been working over at intervals for some years to draw to your scale and make an elevation of in the event of our coming to a mutual agreement." Theodate is presumably referring to the plans that she began to develop while on her first European tour with her family. Unfortunately none of these drawings have been found. She then explained the role she intended to play in the design and construction process, noting "as it is my plan, I expect to decide in all the details as well as all more important questions of plan that may arise. This must be clearly understood at the outset, so as to save unnecessary friction in the future. In other words, it will be a Pope house instead of a McKim, Mead & White."

This proposal by Theodate was unconventional, but perhaps not entirely unheard of within housing commissions at the time. McKim, Mead & White offered graduated levels of participation in domestic commissions, ranging from complete design and supervision of the project to simply supplying drawings and occasionally "checking in" with a full-service contractor.¹³⁶ They were particularly careful to state that projects outside of New York City would receive only lower levels of attention. It is unclear how fully Theodate was aware of the standard operating policy of the firm. Perhaps instead she was presenting these qualifications in order to maintain the control of the project, especially in terms of on-site design questions, in the hands of her family. Had the commission been entirely a McKim, Mead & White design, even the smallest questions about plan and details would have to be referred to the firm in New York for the contractor to avoid having to re-do elements that did not fit the design vision of the firm. Likewise, this qualification would also allow the Pope family to remain in control of the costs of the project. Rather than being locked into a design vision that would increasingly cost them more money, as frequently happened in commissions overseen by Stanford White, the family would control these decisions.

Theodate next acknowledged her awareness of the professional risk to the firm's reputation in such an agreement. In order to allay such fears, she mailed her plans to Mead with the letter so that he could determine whether or not they were sufficiently suitable to consider accepting the

¹³⁵ Letter, Theodate Pope to McKim, Mead & White, Walker Cain Collection, Avery Library, Columbia University, as transcribed by Sharon Dunlap Smith in Appendix B of *Theodate Pope Riddle: Her Life and Architecture*. At a later point in this letter, she hints that the concerns about the ability of this young draughtsman might have been her father's, not her own. The other quotations in this paragraph are from the same letter.

¹³⁶ See "Professional Practice and Charges" in the William Rutherford Mead papers, Archives and Special Collections of Amherst College, Amherst Massachusetts.

terms as described. While Theodate acknowledged that the project would be overseen by a junior member of the firm, she asked Mead to take the first steps himself, and also to select the project supervisor carefully, writing, “father wants me to ask you to make a trip here yourself and see the place and talk with the landscape architect as to the exact location of the house. After that, the work could be turned over to someone in your office who has more experience and is very solid on construction.”¹³⁷ Theodate also noted that while Magonigle (who was then over-seeing Harris Whittemore’s house) had been recommended by Harris, she did not want Mead to assign the job to him until she herself had been able to meet him and to evaluate his work in order to “satisfy myself as to how much ability he has.” In a businesslike manner, Theodate instructed Mead that if his firm accepted her family’s proposal, then he should write her “very explicitly” about the exact way the firm would charge for the project. She closed the letter with a brief acknowledgement of her unconventional approach to the commission, and her unusually frank language. Ironically, these closing phrases were perhaps the least genuine of the letter, reflecting Theodate’s attempt to bend to social conventions, “In conclusion, I will say that I am not nearly as difficult to deal with as this would seem, for I am very tolerant of advise [sic.] and always open to suggestions and good reasoning. Hoping to hear favorably from you when we can arrange a date for your coming up.”

Despite the deferential closure of her letter, when Theodate had not received a response from Mead after twelve days, she sent an anxious letter to the firm, perhaps especially concerned because she has sent all of her own plans for Mead to peruse. This brief letter expresses both her impatience and her concern,

Kindly let me know if Mr. Mead is absent and if so when he will return. I am anxiously awaiting an answer to the letter I sent him the 17th of this month. Please forward if you can the letter and a roll of plans I sent him at the same time. The delay in hearing from him is causing me quite a little trouble. That is my own fault however, of course, for writing him personally as I preferred.¹³⁸

It is unclear what trouble could have been caused at this early point by not hearing promptly from Mead. Perhaps Theodate was especially determined because of her father’s suggestion that she get McKim, Mead & White to help “locate” the house on the site that fall. This anxious letter got immediate results, and a personal reply from Mead, who set up a meeting with Theodate at the firm’s office in New York City a few days later.¹³⁹ Unfortunately, however, Mead was about to set out on a trip and would not be able to visit the Pope’s estate within Theodate’s time-line.

It is worth noting that Theodate, as a matter of social convention, was writing in her father’s name as well as her own. When Alfred received a copy that she sent him of her September 17 letter to McKim, Mead & White, he was not pleased. While he did not object to its overall content (he had, after all, urged his daughter to send her plans to McKim, Mead & White), he did

¹³⁷ Letter, Theodate Pope to McKim, Mead & White, Walker Cain Collection, Avery Library, Columbia University, as transcribed by Sharon Dunlap Smith in Appendix B of *Theodate Pope Riddle, Her Life and Architecture*. The other quotations in this paragraph are from the same letter.

¹³⁸ Letter, (29 September 1898), MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹³⁹ While Mead’s letter has not been located, a reply of Sept. 30, 1898 from Theodate Pope to William R. Mead confirms a meeting for October 3. MMW Collection, NYHS.

not appreciate the tone in which she expressed herself. He was a particularly gentle father, but chastised her firmly on this point writing, “Thee was pretty plain in writing Mr. Mead. Such definiteness must be made very subtle and sugared in writing – its to be recognized that ‘said’ things don’t ‘flush the game’ as directed written shots do – I hope Mr. Mead made favorable reply and appointment.”¹⁴⁰ Despite his criticism of her aggressive language, however, Alfred also seemed proud of the behavior and encouraged it. Later in the same letter he instructed Theodate, “Be a good quiet girl but hit that farm in the “plexus” & knock it into shape.” Alfred instructs his daughter to be a model (good, quiet) woman, but at the same time to act with the physical aggression and firmness of a man. In another letter, thoughts of the new farm caused Alfred to reflect on his jaded state as a middle-aged businessman, and in comparison with the enthusiasm of Theodate’s youth, “For me the old world seems to be conquered – and no new horizon appear – I suppose thee thinks thee has that new horizon surrounding our new acquisitions. Well it has to be conquered. Now be not only prescient brave & strong – but gentle and patient especially in proper actions.”¹⁴¹

The plans that Theodate Pope originally sent to McKim, Mead & White do not survive. A small pencil sketch of a plan, drawn on the back-side of one of Alfred Pope’s letters, however, may reflect the rough form of the house that Theodate proposed.¹⁴² This plan sketches out a house with strong formal presence. The main body of the house is a large rectangle (160 feet in length), with rectangular wings flanking either side of the body. A long, thin rectangular arm (20 feet wide) moves perpendicular to the bulk of the house, bending at two points, creating a stair-like effect. No written notes accompany this sketch, but it offers a tantalizing hint at the different plan formations that may have preceded the final construction of Hill-Stead.

Breaking Ground

By the first week in October, just over a month after the land deals were finalized, the surveyor completed his work on the Pope property. Since Alfred and Ada were still traveling in Europe, Harris mailed them a tracing of the maps that had been drawn by A. D. Vorce after the survey. Harris remarked that these maps would explain the appearance of the property pretty well to the Popes, “This will give you acreage and a general bird’s eye view of the whole lay of the land.”¹⁴³ C. B. and A. D. Vorce made multiple maps of the Alfred Pope estate over the course of the next few years. These maps offer a useful supplement to the written record both about the scope and appearance of the grounds at its various stages, and the subterranean interventions made throughout the Hill-Stead estate to prepare it for occupation by the Pope family.

William Rutherford Mead’s meeting with Theodate Pope in New York City at the beginning of October must have gone smoothly, since by the end of the month she was corresponding on a regular basis with Egerton Swartout, a draftsman at McKim, Mead & White about the sewer

¹⁴⁰ Letter 547, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, (4 October 1898), HSM Archive.

¹⁴¹ Letter 549, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, (12 October 1898), HSM Archive.

¹⁴² Letter 543, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, (19 September 1898), HSM Archive.

¹⁴³ Letter, Harris Whittemore to Alfred Pope, (7 October 1898), HWJ Trust, copy available at HSM Archive. It is not certain who actually completed the survey. In a letter to Alfred Pope of July 19, 1898 Harris Whittemore referred to “Mr. Woodard, the surveyor,” but no other references to this name seem to exist in the records. It is also possible that either A. D. or C.B.Vorce were trained surveyors and completed the ground work as well as the map-making.

drainage on the site, as well as the specifications that the firm was preparing for the barn.¹⁴⁴ In an undated letter from shortly after her initial conversation with Mead, Theodate wrote to Swartout asking him to start preparing drawings for the excavation of the cellar for the house and its attached barn:

Will you please get out specifications for the cellar work right away? in talking with Mr. Manning and Potter we thought it possible to get the cellar this autumn if it was advisable.

Please ask Mr. Mead to give the matter his consideration and see if it is advisable. If he has sailed will Mr. McKim give his opinion. I return the cellar plan with this and kindly notice that I have written 4 foot cellar under laundry. We will need no cellar there except for pipes unless we decide to put coal in there.

Please make the specifications very exactly and if possible give me an idea of the cost of excavating and building walls, separately.¹⁴⁵

There are several important pieces of information in this letter. First, Theodate was working with Warren Manning and with D. H. Potter as a team of advisors. These two men were consulting with her not only on the overall landscaping of the estate, but also about matters pertaining to the construction of the house. Second, although she was consulting with Manning and Potter, she was treating McKim, Mead & White as the supervising architects, and turned to them to ascertain if beginning the excavation was ‘advisable’ or not. Finally, by the time this letter was written, the firm had already taken the ‘roll of plans’ that Theodate had given them in mid-September and produced viable-enough floor plans and elevations for each level of the house that Theodate was able to return the cellar plan with comments accompanying this letter.

By the end of October, in anticipation of her parents’ imminent return from Europe, Theodate plunged fully into her construction process. Not only was she concerned with the placement and excavation of the cellar, but she also communicated detailed points about the treatment of the sewer, her opinions about the house plans, her comments about preliminary renderings of the house, and her requirements for the carefully-worked renderings still to come. Her letters to Egerton Swartout reveal that she was receiving and processing a great deal of information from different individuals. She expressed legal, pragmatic, and aesthetic concerns all of which factored into her comments to the firm. The placement and plan for the drainage of the sewer pipe, and its relationship to the drainage of the cellar seems to have been particularly difficult to negotiate with the firm at a distance and in such an early stage of the design of the house. This also seems to have been one of the features of house design that McKim, Mead & White outsourced to expert consultants, as we learn from Theodate’s comment, “We’ll have the discharge pipe placed where your plumbing expert advises. But we cannot drain the cellar into the sewer at any point as the law here will not allow it.”¹⁴⁶ Theodate left the responsibility for the functionality of the discharge pipe to the professional experts, but concerned herself with its

¹⁴⁴ While it is never directly stated whether the barns referred to were the barns attached to the house or not, it is clear as the references are studied sequentially that the barns referred to in this stage of construction are those attached to the house.

¹⁴⁵ Letter, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (n.d. October 1898), MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁴⁶ Letter, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (26 October 1898), MMW Collection, NYHS. The existing records do not indicate which plumbing expert McKim, Mead & White consulted with for this project. The other quotations in this paragraph are from the same letter.

legal implications. In addition, she advocated for simple, pragmatic treatment of the pipes within the cellar, allowing for easy replacement or repair in the event of any malfunction. Her pragmatic solution also had the advantage of being aesthetically simple, and rustic, “I am at present very much of the opinion that I will have the iron discharge pipes in cellar hung on the stone walls of cellar – thus in plain sight and easy to get at or discover any leak.” While Theodate attempted to be knowledgeable on every point and to maintain strict control of the design and construction process, it is evident that the success of the endeavor was reliant largely on good advice, and good luck. It may have been for this reason that Alfred Pope had cautioned his daughter to move slowly and methodically forward with the project, not to plunge headlong into construction in his absence. One such close-call occurred when Theodate nearly ordered the surveying and excavation of the cellar to begin, based on a simple floor plan by Swartout, rather than one indicating proper construction specifications. She faulted Swartout in a round-about way for not providing sufficient guidance:

I return the map of cellar as I am told that it seems to be the size of excavation but if I am here advised wrongly please return as soon as possible with dotted line around the present outline to show the size of excavation. It is very fortunate you happened to mention that there was no note on the plan to indicate it and I might have had the surveyor place stakes and excavation begun according to this.

Having learned from the near-mistake, she offered more specific instructions to Swartout about her requirements for the next set of drawings that he would provide for her: “Am looking for the barn specifications soon, could you send me a cellar plan for that right away. Stating carefully if the plan is just the size that the excavation is to be or a foot smaller. We wish to get that started right away and I will be greatly obliged if you will help us by sending it.”

Theodate also included commentary on a specific feature of the first floor plan in this letter, and accompanied her comments with a detailed drawing (perhaps adapted from the plan that Swartout had sent to her). She wrote, “I enclose a drawing of front hall and porch. . . I would like very much to have the two closets worked to open into the hall instead of the library to living room if you will have space besides the door or windows. Do not mind having porch still narrower, prefer it if you can.”¹⁴⁷ Above the drawing itself, she wrote “Putting these closets out of rooms onto porch makes porch narrower & consequently much better when we use only two posts to support the roofs. Please make this change. Am afraid even 11 feet is too wide for the porch.”¹⁴⁸ This drawing and its accompanying text are important, because they allow for the analysis of the degree to which Theodate was competent as a designer. Her drawing, presumably adapted from the version supplied by McKim, Mead & White, uses proper visual vocabulary to indicate wall thickness, window wells, etc., but her lines are not always straight, or parallel, demonstrating an amateur rather than professional level of competence with drafting tools (see, for example, at the left-hand corner of the hall, where the lines indicating the junction of the two walls are detached from the walls themselves). Most indicative of her design capacity at this stage is the fact that she can not create a viable drawing for the change that she desires to make in the plan. Her drawing does indeed show two closets pushed out of the body of the house into the porch area. She also indicates that the width of the porch is now nine feet due to these

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Letter enclosure, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (26 October 1898).

changes (a one foot deep closet extended on either end into an 11 foot wide porch). However, the dilemma remains, as Theodate poses it to Swartout, that these closets still open into the library and living rooms, and she would like them to open into the hall. With the indicated width of the front door and of its two flanking windows, it is impossible for the doors of the closets to open into the hallway. It is clear from this exchange that the firm was supplying much more than simply working drawings based on a plan by Theodate Pope. While the initial allocation of spaces and rough proportions of rooms may have been based on Theodate's plan, McKim, Mead & White's firm was responsible for solving all the practical and spatial details of the plan, elevations, and structure.

What Theodate seems to have been particularly well-educated to evaluate was the aesthetic vocabulary of the renderings the firm provided for the house. In the discussion of these drawings, Theodate's comments are astute and calculated. She is seeking a very particular visual message in the presentation of the house, and is especially controlling of the appearance of these drawings. She told Swartout that he had neglected to send her a first draft of one of his renderings, but that it was necessary for her to see it before he did further work on it, "You did not send me the rough perspective of house from the North East which I wish to see before you begin on the 'pretty' perspectives."¹⁴⁹ Then, commenting on a drawing that he had sent to her, she noted "In drawing the 'pretty' perspective can you have barn doors open at both sides barn so as to show green meadow beyond?" With this comment Theodate suggested a change to the rendering that would enhance both its picturesque and its rustic appeal. Instead of a drawing that focused entirely upon the mass and details of the building, she asked Swartout to craft a rendering that would evoke the rural spirit of the house that he was helping her to create. Despite her many years of training in painting and drawing, Theodate did not attempt to create such renderings herself. She called upon her training in art historical technique and theory from her years of study at Princeton to tell Swartout the effect she wanted in the drawing, and how to achieve this, but she left the execution of the task up to him.

Meanwhile, having committed herself to a significant role in the design of the house, Theodate hired Henry Hall Mason, who she had previously employed during the renovation of her own home, to produce drawings of the changes that she wished to make to the house plan. Her arrangement with Mason echoed the typical hierarchy of lead architects directing draftsman in a firm such as McKim, Mead & White. These drawings were then mailed to McKim, Mead & White to be incorporated into the over-all design of the house. Mason would continue to work for Theodate in this capacity throughout the entire design process at Hill-Stead. The first recorded work by Mason was completed in October 1898, when he made changes to the drawings of the barn at Theodate's request. In a letter to Theodate, Mason explained the revisions he had made to the drawings:

I have added the lean-to at the rear of the barn. I think that such views will be improved thereby but the large East-door is destroyed. In order to slope the drive shed roof on the main house roof, it was necessary to raise the shed in front – in a manner often used in old days - , I find by measuring Mr. Woodward's tally-ho coach that it would take a shed 25 ft wide to wholly cover it (the coach safely from a storm. If the shed was widened to the dimension (25 ft.) probably the

¹⁴⁹ Letter, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (26 October 1898).

upper story could be dispensed with, and retain the slopping [sic.] of the shed roof on the barn roof¹⁵⁰

It is clear from Mason's comments that Theodate had asked him to make changes that were both practical and aesthetic. He made changes that reflected building technique of the "old days," demonstrating that Theodate was communicating her desire to construct an old-fashioned home to her designers. Again, however, as in the drawing that Theodate herself sent to McKim, Mead & White, Mason sends a drawing that only incompletely answers the design issues at hand.. He notes that the lean-to improves some views of the barn, but that with its addition "the large East-door is destroyed," likewise, while the space must be made to accommodate a specific scale of carriage, Mason's drawings do not make the necessary changes. Instead he mentions somewhat casually that if the dimensions of the shed are increased accordingly, various other modifications could be made to the design.

Theodate's interest in creating a seemingly old and vernacular complex of buildings arose again in her response to a letter that Egerton Swartout wrote to her with questions about the vision for the barn's appearance and structure. She described the interior appearance of the barn that she desired in the following terms: "The upper part of barn open and just like old fashioned barn lofts over the stalls but open up to rafters and no floor over the central part of barn."¹⁵¹ Theodate's description of the space she desires is rather vague. It is to be an "old fashioned barn," but with not particular indication of what sort of old-fashioned barn. Her description of the lofts, rafters and space above the center of the barn offers guidelines to McKim, Mead & White, but she leaves it up to them to fill in the details. As always, she is clear on the visual appearance of the space that she desires, while less certain about all of the physical details. With regard to the exterior appearance of the barn, for example, she had a very clear vision of designed irregularity, instructing Swartout, "Have clapboards same material as house only spaced unequally." Her letter suggests both that she is trying to retain close control of the appearance and design of the structure, and that she is fully reliant upon McKim, Mead & White to make the project successful. At moments she asserts her independence from them, stating for example, that there is no need for them to write specifications for the barn yard, she herself will handle that. At other points, however, she shows her uncertainty. In the matter of preparing specifications for the barn's cellar, for example, first she states that the firm's assistance is unnecessary, but then she changes her mind, stating:

The cellar need not be included in these specifications unless there is something special in regard to it you would suggest to me. Just send outlines of actual excavations and proper width of wall. Well on after thought I think you would better specify for it but make it entirely separate from the other so it can go right into the hands of masons, for estimates.

¹⁵⁰ Letter, Henry Hall Mason to Theodate Pope, (18 October 1898), MMW Collection, NYHS. It seems that the "drive-shed" probably corresponds to the section of the barn known today as the "open barn," which is the connecting link between the house and the barn.

¹⁵¹ Letter, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (28 October 1898), MMW Collection, NYHS. The other quotations in this paragraph are from the same letter.

Swartout's reaction to Theodate's imperious, yet needy, tone remains unrecorded, and his end of the Theodate-McKim, Mead & White correspondence has not been preserved. However, at least in these initial stages of the process he seems to have been relatively patient with Theodate, as her letters do not express frustration or annoyance with his work, but are simply impatient, but business-like. This attitude would change over the course of the next year.

Theodate's urgency to move the planning process forward and her insistence on the attainment of a certain appearance in the drawings is explained by a particularly telling letter that she sent to Swartout on October 31, 1898, only a few days after she sent him all of her remarks upon the specifications for the barn:

Mr. Swartout

Dear Sir

I have received the excavation plan for house and the North elevation of house. I consider the latter perfectly satisfactory in every detail so you can proceed to make the water color perspective of the house from the South West as soon as it suits your convenience. You know I am sure how I earnestly I desire it by next Monday November 7 for on that day I am expecting my father and mother to land. I will be in to see you that day at one o'clock and may I then bring back with me the completed sketch of the house?

I am trying to bring every thing up to a certain point on that day to show father just what our plans are. You can then let me have also the working plans of the house – that is the 1/8 inch plan of the two floors with possibly cellar and garret. You know, do you not, from what I have said, what a gratification it will be to me if you will see that I have these on that day.

When am I to have the plans elevation and specification of barn? Shall send this by special delivery in order to give you all the time possible.

I should explain why I consider it so important and am consequently perhaps troublesome in my urging for that day, father and mother go west immediately on landing and I do not know when they will come East and so if we can have one full day on the plans before they leave we can decide a good deal will help me in furthering the work.

Hoping you will have them for me, I am,

Very Sincerely

Theodate Pope¹⁵²

Perhaps Theodate was attempting to impress her parents with all that she had achieved in their absence. In addition, by preparing as many finished drawings as possible, and by having commenced to lay-out the cellars for the house, she was presenting their new house virtually as a fully designed *fête-accomplit*. It is interesting that instead of trying to set up a meeting at the office of McKim, Mead & White with her parents, Theodate decided to have this conversation with her parents without one of the architects present. Although Theodate had known the return date of her parents for quite some time, she chose to only explain this timeline to Swartout a week before her parents' arrival. The fact that Alfred and Ada were only planning to spend a single day in New York City also suggests that their plans may have differed from Theodate's,

¹⁵² Letter, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout , (31 October 1898), MMW Collection, NYHS.

and certainly that, in combination with her father's assumption that the work on the site would not really begin in earnest until after the winter, Theodate was now over-seeing the project in a manner that suited her own time-line and agenda rather than that of her parents.

Three undated documents probably were compiled at about this same time: a sheet of notes written by Theodate, which she titled "Architect's Notes," another sheet entitled "Mason's Notes," and a third entitled "Notes on Water-proofing provisional." These sheets reflect extensive commentary upon a set of house plans. Most of the comments concern small details of the overall plan: blinds, number of closets, cupboard placement and size, etc. One particularly interesting comment reflects Theodate's vision for the house as an early-nineteenth-century style building versus a colonial structure. She brought this critique to the front, when she commented on the style of the blinds that Swartout had drawn in his elevation of the dining room: "I do not like treating door and windows of dining room as drawn – too colonial want blinds to widen."¹⁵³ This comment reiterates the fact that while Hill-Stead is broadly categorized as a Colonial Revival structure, Theodate intended more specifically for it to assume the appearance of an early nineteenth-century structure rather than of a true colonial-period building (pre-1776). Architects of her era grouped a range of eighteenth and early-nineteenth styles under the umbrella of "Colonial Revival," and Theodate's directions indicate a sophisticated understanding of the variations within this broad category. In general other comments in these lists reflect practical aspects of the design or, more frequently, elements that would effect the integrity of the appearance of the house that Theodate wished to achieve. In all likelihood the practical elements derived from advice she received either from Henry Hall Mason, or Mr. Potter while the aesthetic comments were Theodate's own priorities.

Given the combination of this barrage of new stipulations with the short timeline that Theodate allowed for preparation, the firm was unable to finish the drawings and renderings in time for Theodate's meeting with her parents. Apparently Swartout informed Theodate almost immediately that her requests would be impossible to follow, since on November 3 in a letter containing more specifications for the barn, Theodate wrote, "Am so sorry you could not get my house plans ready. Can you not have my corrections on the old plans drawn over neatly? That will make something to show father and mother. Will be in the office Monday morning at 2.30 instead of 1 o'clock. You will have the pretty perspective all ready wont you."¹⁵⁴ No further mention was made of whether or not Swartout was able to prepare the "pretty perspective" in time for Theodate's meeting with her parents. Activity regarding Hill-Stead slowed considerably for several months after this flurry of exchange. The arrival of winter may have had some effect on the process, but it seems likely that Alfred and Ada wanted to spend some time thinking about the plans themselves and could not do so sufficiently in a day-long meeting with their daughter before heading west on business.

The first phase of construction at Hill-Stead was the barn that would eventually be attached to the house. This was also the most poorly documented phase of the construction process. Swartout and Theodate had worked through the specifications for the barn during the course of the fall, and he had made drawings to guide its construction following her instructions. McKim, Mead & White do not seem to have played any further role in its construction, however, and

¹⁵³ "Architect's notes," comments on the east elevation. MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁵⁴ Letter, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (3 November 1898), MMW Collection, NYHS.

therefore no further correspondence remains documenting its construction. The last notice of McKim, Mead & White's role in the preparation of drawings for the construction of the barn is a note from Theodate, regarding the fact that errors had been identified in the McKim, Mead & White drawings for the barn, and that she had asked Henry Hall Mason to redraw these plans in order to correct the problems. Theodate cuttingly remarked to Egerton Swartout, "You will remember the barn plans were made when you were out of the office. Well I have had to have the drawings showing the construction sill drawn over again by a practicle [sic.] man here. There were two very egregious errors in them. I thought it would take less time and cost to have them redrawn here."¹⁵⁵

The Popes decided to hire a local contractor to work on the barn. An entertaining, though perhaps fabricated, story tells of how they went about selecting the firm for the job:

Here Theodate's great and life-long interest in old-fashioned methods dictated the use of such things as pegs versus nails, and hand-made shingles. The Popes decided this was a job for a country builder. Three were invited to discuss the job at the family's temporary residence at the old Elm Tree Inn. Of the three invited one went fishing and one fortified himself with alcohol more than adequately. The third, known as R. Jones, Builder, age twenty, got the job to build the barn.¹⁵⁶

It is important to note from this narrative, that Richard F. Jones, Jr., son of the contractor, was told about the decision process as involving the Pope family, not just Theodate. A meeting at the Elm Tree Inn would certainly have entailed a conversation with Alfred Pope rather than only with his daughter (who would have held a meeting at her O'Rourke's, instead of renting quarters at the Elm Tree Inn). Even though written record of Alfred's involvement in the construction process is scarce for this period, his frequent trips to Farmington, and his certain knowledge of every business and financial aspect of the process, are important reminders of his role throughout the process. The construction process must have gone relatively smoothly, as no complaints were made by Theodate or the builder to McKim, Mead & White. By the end of May 1899, Theodate commented as a side-note in a longer letter to Swartout, "The barn is up and being shingled, and is fine."¹⁵⁷

The role that Richard Jones (1875-1951) played in the construction of Hill-Stead can not be overestimated, and thus it merits a brief pause in the construction narrative to consider Jones' qualifications. Richard Jones began working at age fourteen as a clerk in the shipping room of a mill in Unionville, Connecticut. Unionville, a neighboring town to Farmington, is a working-class counterpart to Farmington's comfortable upper-middle class community. While holding this job, he followed a correspondence course on the rudiments of architecture and building construction, offered through the American Correspondence Schools. He followed up this correspondence-school training by becoming an apprentice to a carpenter at age 16. His first stand-alone building commission was in 1893, when he built a school. His largest local commission was the Unionville town hall, which was completed in 1901, a year after Hill-Stead. Jones' father did millwork for the building company, and one of his sisters acted as secretary in

¹⁵⁵ Letter, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (n.d. – pre-May 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁵⁶ Richard F. Jones, Jr., *A Jones Family History* (Bloomfield, CT: Print Craft Corp. and Richard F. Jones, Jr., 1962).

¹⁵⁷ Letter, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (26 May 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS.

his office. Being hired to construct the barn at Hill-Stead led to a long-lasting relationship between R. F. Jones and the Popes, and he seems to have had a particularly close working relationship with Alfred Pope.¹⁵⁸

Construction Begins

On February 9, 1899, McKim, Mead & White had plans for each floor of the house prepared. These plans closely resemble the form of the house as constructed, with only discrete changes made to the plans and elevations during the construction of the building. This fact suggests that the overall vision for the house was completed by this time.¹⁵⁹ These plans, however, lack many of the details of completed construction-ready drawings. Very few details are indicated about interior finishing, built-in furniture, or fixtures, for example. While the firm later drew details of window frames, fireplaces, paneling and doors, they do not seem to have returned to fine-tuning the plans and elevations of the house to present a set of construction drawings for the contractor.

Three period duplicates of the first, second and third/attic floor-plans, dated February 9, 1899 and now in the Hill-Stead Museum Archive, perhaps offer a hint as to why such finished plans were never completed. These three plans have been written-on in pencil and colored pencil. Sketches of some details are drawn in the margins of the drawings, while corrections of other features are drawn over elements of the plans, and verbal notations indicate further instructions for changes. Multiple hands are identifiable in these notations, but most notable is the writing of Richard Jones and of Theodate Pope. Significant decisions about the appearance of the house can be identified in these sketchy notations. One drawing in the margins shows the form of a typical window-seat in the house. Another set of comments and sketches adds details to the butler's pantry that make it more streamlined in its functionality. More mundane features of the house (including heating and cooling vents) are sketched onto these plans in colored pencil as well. These worked-over plans show the collaborative effort that went into determining the form that Hill-Stead would take and demonstrate some of the multiple hands involved in negotiating individual features of its design. They also show that while much of the drawing and design work took place in New York City at the firm, perhaps even more discussion and sketching took place on the work site in Farmington. Richard F. Jones and Henry Hall Mason would prove to have a crucial influence on all of these local decisions, and these revised plans suggest some of the direct ways that their influence might have entered into the design process.

Between March and early April, McKim, Mead & White received eight bids from different contractors to construct the basement of the mansion house. The specifications to which these contractors were responding may not have been as definite as usual. The bids each contain many different options, and there is a sense that the contractors were uncertain about all the points on which they were estimating. One contractor, who had been in direct touch with Mr. D. H. Potter in Farmington, expressed his frustration on this point directly to McKim, Mead & White, "there has been so many changes and I do not like to make new Figures every day, did not wish to give any until everything had been settled and under the circumstances don't think you can lay much blame on me."¹⁶⁰ On May 5, 1899 H. Wales Lines, Co. wrote a letter to Alfred Pope, accepting

¹⁵⁸ The biographical details about Richard Jones are taken from *A Jones Family History*.

¹⁵⁹ A complete set of these plans is in MMW Collection, NYS. Duplicate copies are in the HSM Archive.

¹⁶⁰ Letter, F. A. Cadwell, contractor to McKim, Mead & White, (25 April 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS.

an order from Theodate to “furnish all labor and material required to complete the Masonry of cellar,” on the terms that they would “commence work on Monday or Tuesday or next week and complete part of the cellar ready for sills within three weeks from above date. The entire cellar to be complete ready for sills within four weeks from above date. The remaining work in contract to be completed in such time as you may direct.”¹⁶¹ This contract, more than other documents, seems to reflect the forceful role that Theodate was taking with the commission. The H. Wales Lines representative notes that they have agreed to complete the contract to Miss Pope’s liking, and also refers to having negotiated with her on the details of the commission. A letter from Theodate to McKim, Mead & White also accentuates her role. In it, she notes that she was able to bargain a better deal with H. Wales Lines than the firm had negotiated.¹⁶² The selection of H. Wales Lines as contractors for the first stage of the house was not surprising, since they had previously worked for the Whittemores.¹⁶³

Also between March and April 1899, Henry Hall Mason worked extensively on the plans for the dairy barn at Hill-Stead, located on the northern edge of the property in the farm complex near Hartford Road. On May 2 he billed the Popes for 132.5 hours of work on plans, as well as supplies, with the bill totaling \$117.82. Between May and July, Mason billed the Popes for time spent on the dairy barn, including more than twenty hours of “inspection” at the end of May. These figures suggest that, while Mason certainly could have constructed the dairy barns himself, he must have been acting in a designer/consultant role for this project. In all likelihood, then, R. F. Jones constructed both the barns attached to the mansion house, and the outlying dairy barn, as no other contractors are known to have been working at Hill-Stead during this period.

While the work on the cellar progressed, Theodate pushed McKim, Mead & White to complete the detailed drawings and plans of the house in order to be able to send them out to contractors for bids. She became increasingly frustrated with her efforts to get McKim, Mead & White to provide the drawings in a timely manner. This frustration may have been amplified by her annoyance that the house cellar did not proceed as efficiently as she would have expected. Ultimately, she took out the brunt of her frustration on McKim, Mead & White. On May 8, 1899, she sent the firm a telegraph, stating that they must send the plans for the house to her immediately, and that she had already written twice requesting the plans without receiving a response. Then on May 16, Alfred Pope telegraphed the firm, reiterating that they “really must send the detail plans and specifications immediately.”¹⁶⁴ Two days later, Theodate completely lost her patience, and sent McKim, Mead & White a telegraph, terminating the firm’s services on the house. She wrote a seething message, “Send 4 sets of prints from 2 to 9 inclusive of our house immediately you need not continue work on details and specifications they have been so long coming my patience has entirely given out and I shall have the rest of the work done here. I shall settle my indebtedness to you in a way satisfactory to you and fair to us both. Theodate Pope for A. A. Pope”¹⁶⁵ While in general Theodate signed her letters and messages using her

¹⁶¹ Letter, L. A. Miller of The H. Wales Lines Co. to Alfred Pope, (5 May 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁶² Letter, Theodate Pope to McKim, Mead & White, (4 May 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy available at HSM Archive.

¹⁶³ H. Wales Lines and Co. was the general contractor for the construction of Harris Whittemore’s house in Naugatuck, Connecticut.

¹⁶⁴ Telegraph, Alfred Pope to McKim, Mead & White, (16 May 1889), MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁶⁵ Telegraph, Theodate Pope to McKim, Mead & White, (18 May 1889), MMW Collection, NYHS.

own name, this telegraph must have seemed extreme enough even to Theodate, that she signed it “Theodate Pope for A. A. Pope” in order to reiterate the finality and authority of the decision. Having sent off the telegraph, Theodate left Farmington for a social visit to Cleveland, Ohio followed by a shopping trip in New York City. Alfred Pope was not pleased by what Theodate had done. She described his reaction to Egerton Swartout, “Father kind of gasped when I told him I had decided to get on without the firm as things were going so slowly and I hadn’t confidence in the wisdom of the man who draws the specifications.”¹⁶⁶

Yet, Alfred gave Theodate permission to continue on the house without the firm, as long as Theodate was very nicely behaved toward Mr. Mead and Mr. Swartout. Accordingly, Theodate wrote the firm further explaining her actions – yet, oddly, adding further tasks that she hoped the firm would complete for the house. She explained her decision in the following manner:

I am wondering if I made it clear to you in the telegrams that what tried my patience to the utmost limit was the delay in the specifications knowing as I did that when they did come they would have to be all changed after a struggle with Mr. Watson.

You see the two things he insisted on and in fact wrote me a note in regard to was the damp proofing and floor a foot thick both of which I am told by men who have seen our cellar are totally unnecessary and Mr. Watson hadn’t any idea at all what our soil was like.

So I decided that if he were that impractical as well as troublesome in delaying and insistent on including his pet clauses I would just take the work out of his hands for I knew there would be similar foolishness in the house specifications.¹⁶⁷

Mr. Watson, who’s work was being supervised by Egerton Swartout, had apparently presented specifications that clashed with the opinions of Theodate’s consultants at Farmington (perhaps Henry Hall Mason and Mr. Potter), though Theodate protected her anti-Watson advisors, noting specifically to Swartout, “Please do not think that Mr. Potter has influenced me in the matter, from the unfortunate interview he had with Mr. Watson for he was amazed when I told him of sending the telegram.” She closed her letter with a final burst of exasperation, “I could stand everything but delay and delay caused by damp proof Watson was too much.”

Yet within this obviously irate diatribe against Watson, and even while proceeding with her intention to eliminate McKim, Mead & White’s role in the house, Theodate announces her intention to have Swartout design two more levels of the detailed drawings for the house. She noted to Swartout, “I shall greatly prefer having your framing plans if you can get them to me soon. And it will save me all the trouble of them here.” She then also added, “I may get you to draw the details of the interior finish – the idea has just occurred to me.” In a chatty manner, she

¹⁶⁶ Letter, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (26 May 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy available at HSM Archive.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.; All of the quotations in this and the next paragraph are from the same letter. For a thorough study of McKim, Mead & White’s client relationships, and for a discussion of their similar treatment of another female client, see Lawrence Wodehouse, “Stanford White and the Mackays: A Case Study in Architect-Client Relationships,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 11 (1976): 213-233.

also added that she was planning an architectural study-trip, about which she and Swartout must have been in dialog over the previous few months, “I am going next week to see old houses. I now expect to take that long delayed trip.” Since McKim, Mead & White were renowned for their knowledge about and promotion of colonial and early national architecture, it would have been natural for Theodate to have consulted them about what old houses she should view as a precedent for her own. In fact, educating their clients (both male and female) about relevant periods of architectural history was standard procedure for McKim, Mead & White. While other aspects of the Pope’s client relationship with McKim, Mead & White might have been rather out of the ordinary, this comment from Theodate suggests that the firm did attempt to treat her as a typical client. Essentially what Theodate seems to have been assuming at this point was that she could have the services of McKim, Mead & White in more or less an a la carte fashion. The firm’s response to Theodate’s missives has not survived. Despite the strong statements that she made in this letter, McKim, Mead & White’s role in the house construction seems to have escalated rather than diminished over the course of the next few months. They must certainly have valued the professional benefits that they reaped from a working relationship with Alfred Pope, J. H. Whittemore, and Harris Whittemore, to have continued the work on Hill-Stead despite any difficulties they experienced working with Theodate.

“The Farmington Operations”

In early June, Alfred and Ada decided to take a trip to Farmington, concerned that they were getting out of touch with the activities there. Alfred wrote to J. H. Whittemore that they were planning the trip in order to, “to get in touch with Theodate’s operations. We can’t do this by correspondence.”¹⁶⁸ Apparently Theodate was neglecting to communicate her activities sufficiently to her parents, since a few days later an increasingly concerned Alfred wrote to J. H. Whittemore, “I hear so little about Farmington operations that I have got to give considerable attention to matters of detail this trip.”¹⁶⁹ They headed out east soon thereafter, meeting with Theodate in New York and then heading up to Farmington. With the arrival of the summer’s heat, the elder Popes may also have been anxious for their new house to make substantial progress. Alfred remarked to J. H. Whittemore that Ada was particularly eager to inhabit their new abode. After remarking how nice it must be in June at Tranquility Farm (the Whittemore family home), Alfred commented, “Mrs. Pope is regretting that she cannot wake up on the hill in Farmington these beautiful mornings. She would enjoy the progress of the work there so much. I tell her she ought to go and remain for some time.”¹⁷⁰

Alfred was extremely involved in the house-planning activities after this trip to Farmington, perhaps triggered to assert a more aggressively active presence in the process after Theodate’s difficulties with McKim, Mead & White. He and the Whittemores had negotiated several modest additions of land to the estate in late April and early May, with Harris Whittemore again playing a particularly active role in this process. Alfred also took on several research tasks in relation to the design of the house, informing himself about issues of heating, deadening of floors, paint, and plastering, among others. He spoke with members of the building community in Cleveland, especially with individuals whose work he had admired during the construction of his Euclid

¹⁶⁸ Letter, Alfred Atmore Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (3 June 1899), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁶⁹ Letter, Alfred Atmore Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (8 June 1899), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁷⁰ Letter, Alfred Atmore Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (3 June 1899). HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

Avenue home in Cleveland. McKim, Mead & White stipulated in their contracts that their clients were required to attain high-quality professionals to install heating and cooling systems in their houses. Alfred Pope turned to a “Col. Smith” who had installed the heating and cooling system in the Pope family’s Euclid Avenue house, for consultation about the new home in Farmington. When he had succeeded in securing Smith’s availability to devise a heating plan for the new home in Farmington, Alfred wrote separate letters to McKim, Mead & White and to Theodate. He wrote to the architectural firm requesting copies of the house plans in order to pass them along to Smith, although he noted that these plans did not need to be the most accurate and update plans in the firms possession, “It is not necessary to have minor corrections made in the plans, such for instance as the change in the windows; as you will recognize, this would be immaterial.”¹⁷¹ He then elaborated on Smith’s credentials, by way of introducing Smith to the firm, “I have had a long and favorable acquaintance with him. His standing and recognition is such here that he is generally employed by the leading architects to prepare heating and plumbing plans for all class of structures.”¹⁷²

In his letter to Theodate, Alfred offered a much greater level of detail about Col. Smith. He wrote:

I had a long interview with Col. Smith, in relation to the steam heating. I feel that Col. Smith is the man of the largest experience, soundest of judgment and at the same time possessed of high character. My conversation with him led to the conclusion of employing him to make the plans and specifications for the heating. He has had such extended experience in heating by indirect radiation, the installing of settling chambers, the installation of air ducts and automatic regulators, that I consider myself fortunate in securing his services. I may say that I feel it a necessity. I have at this sitting written a letter to Messrs. McKim, Mead & White, asking them for a duplicate set of plans complete. He will need the elevations, as well as the plans, as in estimating he takes into account not only the cubic contents of a room but its exterior exposure and the quantity of glass in the window surfaces.¹⁷³

Alfred’s chatty discussion of Col. Smith’s credentials offers a much greater degree of detail to Theodate than he had to McKim, Mead & White. The tone is at the same time informative, but also firmly decided. He makes it clear to Theodate that while he will explain the rationale behind the decision to her, he has also decided without question to employ Smith, noting, “I may say that I feel it a necessity.” It is interesting that to McKim, Mead & White Pope professed that he had known Smith for an extended time, and that he could personally vouch for Smith’s capacities, while to Theodate, Alfred notes that he “interviewed” Smith and had been “led to the conclusion” that Smith was the right man for the job.¹⁷⁴ Alfred was also in contact with Samuel

¹⁷¹ Letter, Alfred Pope to McKim, Mead & White, (26 June 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Letter, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, c/o McKim, Mead & White, (26 June 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁷⁴ Perhaps at the root of this disconnect is the fact that at the end of May, Alfred Pope had asked J. H. Whittemore for the name of the man who had installed the heating system in the Whittemore family home. If indeed Smith was recommended to Alfred by the Whittemores, than Alfred would have felt justified in personally vouching for

Cabot, about a new product for insulating and “deafening” houses, a new form of quilted asbestos insulation. Alfred requested that Cabot send a description of his product to McKim, Mead & White so that the firm could determine its suitability for the house.¹⁷⁵

Alfred must have made a trip to New York City as well, because not only does he refer to conversations with William Rutherford Mead, but also in this same letter he told Theodate about his meeting with William Paul Gerhard, a hydraulic engineer whose office was on Union Square in New York City, and who had been recommended to the Popes by Mead. Alfred found Gerhard “a very interesting man,” and communicated Gerhard’s preliminary advice about a water control system for the Pope mansion to Theodate, “It was his opinion that a Rider engine would be the best power to install for our water pumping. He said there was a new ram, known as the Rife Hydraulic Engine. He gave me the address and I have written them for information.”¹⁷⁶ Alfred then noted that Gerhard would be making a trip to Farmington to look over the lay of the land, preparatory to presenting them with an estimate for the hydraulic work at their estate. Alfred suggested to his daughter that she might “take occasion to see him,” when he came to Farmington. This lengthy letter from Alfred to Theodate is one of the few indicators of a cooperative effort that Alfred and Theodate made during the design and construction process. Theodate was the point-person on the construction site, but Alfred was as engaged as his daughter with McKim, Mead & White and with the various other individuals employed at Hill-Stead. While in New York, Alfred also met with a man named Lorillard, who was devising the insulation specifications for their house, and Alfred talked with Lorillard about the various options that he had found for insulation techniques. Together they agreed that “we did not need a second system of insulation, as were shown in the plans Mr. Mason drew. He [Lorillard] recognized that this would be much more expensive and not a necessity.” It is evident from this comment, that Henry Hall Mason was indeed playing an active role in the design of Hill-Stead.

One other comment in Alfred Pope’s letter to Theodate of June 26, 1899 is particularly important for piecing together how decisions were made in the design of Hill-Stead, and which individuals were making them. Posed with the problem of deciding how to reduce the noise of wood floors (“deadening” the floors), Alfred turned to the men who had completed the wood finish at his house in Cleveland. Instead of going to see the woodworkers at their office, he went to find W. B. McAllister and his foreman Mike at a construction site.¹⁷⁷ There Alfred could speak directly with Mike, who had been the foreman of the woodwork at the Pope family’s Euclid Avenue home. At the construction site Alfred could also personally see the materials being set into place, and could be shown how the process of deadening was carried out. This interview was also advantageous to McAllister, who Alfred noted to Theodate, was “very interested in having the

Smith’s abilities to McKim, Mead & White, but would have been more open about his knowledge of Smith to Theodate.

¹⁷⁵ I have not been able to determine whether or not Cabot’s product was ultimately used on the house.

¹⁷⁶ Letter, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, c/o McKim, Mead & White, (26 June 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS. See also letter of September 1, 1899 from Gerhard to William Rutherford Mead. All of the quotations in this paragraph are from the June 26, 1899 letter.

¹⁷⁷ W.B. McAllister was a builder, whose specialization was “Interior Decorations in Fine Woods.” He had an office at 20-24 Newton Street, Cleveland. See the extensive communications between McAllister and McKim, Mead & White later during the construction of Hill-Stead, MMW Collection, NYHS.

finishing plans and specifications submitted, that he might have an opportunity to bid for the making and setting up of the finish.”¹⁷⁸

After visiting with Mr. Swartout at McKim, Mead & White’s office, Theodate replied to her father’s letter in a quickly written note. She set aside his suggestions about the hydraulic engineer in New York City, preferring to consult someone else that she had already met. Likewise, she put her own priorities for the house plans above his request to have a set sent out to Col. Smith in Cleveland. Instead, she remarked that first they would be sent out for bids to contractors, and only after their return would she send them along to Col. Smith. A single comment by Theodate suggests that perhaps her father’s increased involvement in the project was due to his critique of the manner in which it was proceeding. After responding to each of his points with brief statements, Theodate remarked, “I hope you will feel things are going better when you come on this time.”¹⁷⁹ She seems to have regarded the construction of the house as a way of proving herself to her parents, and any reproach from Alfred would certainly have triggered Theodate to attempt to improve the situation immediately. The fact that Alfred had personally met with McKim, Mead & White without Theodate may underline the fact that he was concerned about management of the project at this point.

In July 1899, as the construction of the dairy barn was being completed, the Popes were ready to determine which contractor would be responsible for the construction of the house. They apparently solicited bids very narrowly, and received one bid from Norcross Brothers, contractor for their Cleveland house and the preferred builder of H. H. Richardson, and McKim, Mead & White after him, and one from R. F. Jones, who had now built both barns at Hill-Stead. Norcross Brothers also was responsible for the construction of J. H. Whittemore’s house in Naugatuck. Theodate’s good rapport with Jones, and the fact that he was a local builder, in addition to the lower cost-estimate for his work, may have influenced the Pope family’s decision to accept Jones’ bid over that of Norcross Brothers. On July 20, 1899 the Pope family signed a contract with Jones, mediated by McKim, Mead & White. This contract was a standard form used by the firm, into which they typed the details of the particular commission. It seems that perhaps this contract was prepared in New York but then signed in Farmington, as a number of changes were made to it by hand. The firm, for example, had mistakenly typed “Albert” Pope instead of Alfred, and Alfred accordingly corrected his name. Details of deadlines and terms of the contract were also changed and supplemented in Theodate’s hand. This contract bound Jones to complete “the Mason work above the first tier of beams, Carpenter, Outside Joiner, Plastering, Painting, Glazing, Iron and other works for the completion of House at Farmington, Connecticut.”¹⁸⁰ This contract bound Jones to complete his work at Hill-Stead by November 15, 1899 (four months from the contract date), with the concession of “additional time ... for actual interruption of work occasioned by rain.”¹⁸¹ The contract was signed by Alfred Pope and R. F. Jones with Leonora A. B. Shepard and Theodate Pope acting as witnesses.

¹⁷⁸ Letter, Alfred Pope to Theodate Pope, c/o McKim, Mead & White, (26 June 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁷⁹ Letter, Theodate Pope to Alfred Pope, (28 June 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁸⁰ “Agreement for Mason, Carpenter, Joiner, Plastering, Painting, Glazing, and other Work and Materials,” MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

Between July 14 and August 31, Henry Hall Mason spent 201.5 hours preparing detail drawings for the Pope family, which along with the price of drawing ink, cost them \$80.60.¹⁸² In addition, he billed them \$7.38 for 61.5 pounds of detail paper. Unfortunately, none of Mason's drawings for Hill-Stead have been located. Because of the chronology of these notes in his account book, as well as the evidence of the extant plans and detail drawings from the McKim, Mead & White archive, it seems clear that Mason was preparing working drawings for the contractor, as well as making any changes that the Popes desired, or clarifying any ambiguous details in the plans. McKim, Mead & White provided beautifully drawn floor plans, elevations, and ultimately details of the interior of the house. They provided a roofing plan, and both attic and basement plans. The practical implementation of these designs, however, was up to the Pope family in conjunction with their contractor. It is likely that Mason took on responsibility when he and Jones consulted about details of construction.

The Popes consistently hired highly-specialized firms and artisans to complete individual elements of their house. Around the same time that they hired R. F. Jones to complete the construction of the house, they turned to a renowned New York-based company, William H. Jackson & Co., to design and prepare the fire-places for the house.¹⁸³ This seems to have been a task begun by Ada Pope, as noted in correspondence between the firm and McKim, Mead & White.¹⁸⁴ With the dialog about the fireplaces opened, Theodate took over the project. The firm mailed a series of photographs of their products to Theodate, from which the family then made their selections.

Interior Finishing and Theodate's Health

During the course of the summer, Theodate headed off on an extended camping trip. While on this trip she seems to have distanced herself mentally as well as physically from the work then underway at Farmington although she did keep up at least a limited correspondence during the period. Particularly important from this camping trip is a letter that she wrote to Alfred Pope updating him on the progress of construction at the time of her departure. She praised Richard Jones, noting, "When I left Jones had the sills all on and many of the joists and both Mr. Potter and Mr. Root think him an excellent framer and manager."¹⁸⁵ From this comment we learn both that Jones was making steady progress, and that Theodate was relying on Potter for more than just landscape advice. She also updated her father on the on-going complications of getting sufficient and accurate drawings from McKim, Mead & White. Both Jones and Mason were helping, in different way, to ensure that building could go forward from the drawings provided, "Mr. Jones has furnished duplicates of the plans he took away – blue prints but they were not signed and the set is not yet in the savings bank as I simply had to let Mr. Mason have part of it in making detail drawings."

¹⁸² Henry Hall Mason account book, Personal Collection of Paul Mason Ingram of Farmington, CT, with select photocopies at the HSM Archive.

¹⁸³ William H. Jackson & Co. specialized exclusively in fireplaces. Their letter-head describes them as "Designers and Manufacturers of Mantels, Open Fire-Places and Grates, importers of Tiles." Like the hydraulic engineer William Gerhard, their office was located on Union Square. See the correspondence between William H. Jackson & Co. and McKim, Mead & White, MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁸⁴ Letter, William H. Jackson & Co. to McKim, Mead & White, (8 August 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁸⁵ Letter 718, Theodate Pope to Alfred Pope, (8 August 1899), HSM Archive. The quotations in this and the next paragraph are from the same letter.

Theodate also informed Alfred of one of the drawing projects upon which Mason had been working in that period, taking the opportunity yet again to critique the abilities of the draftsmen who had been assigned to her at McKim, Mead & White. As if it was too much bother to explain the whole situation to her father, she commented, “I will not now enter into detail of the actual structural mistakes made by the architects in the working drawings of the dormers, which I had to have Mr. Mason correct.” It seems unlikely that Mason, a self-trained and local designer, would have been better able to produce accurate architectural drawings than the highly professional firm of McKim, Mead & White. Instead with McKim, Mead & White having restricted authority at the site, and with numerous local individuals being consulted for opinions on many different features of the plan, many small changes probably led to larger inaccuracies in the drawings for which the firm was not entirely to blame.

Theodate also remarked in this letter that she was enclosing a note from Mr. Potter to Col. Smith, suggesting revisions to the heating plan that Smith had drawn up for the house. Potter took issue with several features of Smith’s plan, and Theodate, while unsure of what advice to follow, felt that probably some mixture of the two men’s ideas should be adopted. It is evident from this letter, then, that Potter was serving as a general consultant, and was also supervising the progress of construction in Theodate’s absence. When she returned from camping, Theodate launched immediately back into making arrangements for the house. She telegraphed Swartout to send the drawings of the fire-proof vault, which her father had left in the firm’s office.¹⁸⁶ She also requested a meeting with the representative of Graves elevators.¹⁸⁷

The pace of construction and decision making was increasing at Hill-Stead. Alfred Pope visited several times in September, perhaps jointly out of concern for the house and for his daughter. In late September, Mr. Wilder of McKim, Mead & White, who seems to have assumed the duty of overseeing the work on the Pope house from Egerton Swartout, paid a visit to Farmington. During this visit, he met with Theodate and they consulted about details of the ¼ inch scale drawings for the interior finish of the house. He also corresponded with William Rutherford Mead about what local suppliers might be appropriate for Theodate to approach for estimates for the interior finishing of the house, stating that she had requested recommendations for “reliable firms in both New Haven and Hartford from whom she could get estimates. She prefers to have the work done there as it is so much nearer but is willing to have a New York firm too if you think best.”¹⁸⁸ Theodate detained Mr. Wilder at Hill-Stead for longer than the agreed-upon amount of time, but sent a letter of explanation to Mead that also praised Wilder’s working ability, “We are accomplishing a great deal – and I am so glad he could come. Let me know if it is not convenient for you to let him stay just now.”¹⁸⁹ In addition to taking advantage of the firm’s design expertise and professional connections, apparently Theodate also availed herself of the architectural library, and requested books from it for Richard Jones as well.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ Telegraph, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (25 August 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁸⁷ Telegraph, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (28 August 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS.

¹⁸⁸ Letter, Wilder to William Rutherford Mead, (21 September 1900), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁸⁹ Letter, Theodate Pope to William Rutherford Mead, (n.d.), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁹⁰ In this same note she commented to Mead, “I wrote a note to Mr. Swartout explaining that I had not telegraphed for the Colonial books the builder spoke of – I had no idea they could be sent but said ‘All right telegraph if you think there is any chance.’”

Less than two weeks after Wilder returned to New York City, Theodate wrote to Swartout requesting that either he, or someone else competent from the office, come back up to Farmington to make changes to the house plans. She noted, however, that she would strongly prefer if Swartout himself were to come, "I have a great many things to talk over and would greatly prefer to have you come if possible."¹⁹¹ Meanwhile, over the next two weeks Henry Hall Mason worked long hours on the pergola, dairy barn and garden house, and over the course of the month Mason also billed the Popes for work on the house plans. Since there is no indication that a member of McKim, Mead & White did actually visit Farmington upon Theodate's request in October, perhaps she turned to Mason to make the corrections to the house plans.

The plans for the interior finishing of Hill-Stead were sent out to a select group of firms at the beginning of November 1899. This may have been done in a rather piece-meal fashion. Several comments indicate this. First, the library plans dragged behind those for the rest of the house, as a note from Theodate Pope to Mr. Wilder indicates:

The library suits us exactly, you can make the drawing for it and please get them off to the men to bid on as soon as possible. Also please send me a tracing of them. . . You have the address of the men who are to estimate have you not? if not let me know and I will send them.¹⁹²

On November 4, Theodate wrote to Wilder at McKim, Mead & White, complaining that insufficient information had been provided by McKim, Mead & White to the bidding firms. She became convinced of this fact after even Richard Jones was uncertain about aspects of the plans. Frustrated, Theodate wrote an emphatic note to Wilder:

Don't you think there should be some few specifications to accompany the drawings. Jones has asked me more questions since they arrived!

He did not understand standing trim in the pantry and closets etc. and shelves drawers etc by day's work. Hardware is to be furnished by owner and set by contractor.

Nothing is specified about floors. I want the floors from and including kitchen all through to laundry that is Pantry Store room (little back hall by same) and laundry to be of random width oak also all porch floors the same, and the linen closet and back stairs tread leading to loft room. Please send this word to all others bidding: and should there not be specifications in regard to the way the woodwork is put together. This must be done well and they must all bid on the same thing. They would have had no idea at all about hardware and what my intentions are.¹⁹³

It must have been particularly difficult for Wilder and others at the firm to compile specifications at a distance for exactly what Theodate Pope envisioned for her house. The specifications that she outlines in this note, for example, could easily be features of the house that she had never

¹⁹¹ Letter, Theodate Pope to Egerton Swartout, (3 October 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁹² Letter, Theodate Pope to Wilder, (n.d.), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁹³ Letter, Theodate Pope to Wilder, (4 November 1899), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy in HSM Archive.

discussed with Wilder. Certainly, these statements do not fully inform Wilder of Theodate's wishes, and on the basis of these few sentences he would have been hard-pressed to devise a series of specifications thorough enough for contractors to bid upon. Not surprisingly, and perhaps in part because of the inner-circle of knowledge needed to accurately prepare an estimate for the work in question, the Popes settled on individuals who had worked for them in the past. McAllister of Cleveland would design, cut, and ship the wooden interior details to Farmington, and Richard F. Jones would continue his work on the house, installing the pieces of wood provided by McAllister that arrived by the train-car full, and coordinating the various individuals who were adding finishing touches to the interior of the structure.

Theodate's poor health may have caused the Popes to select a craftsman in Cleveland with whom Alfred could work closely and to maintain Richard Jones, who was already quite familiar with the site, as general contractor. The bids for the interior finishing came in at the end of November, but by mid-December Theodate was in a rest-home in New Jersey.¹⁹⁴ Her worried parents were there with her. Even though her cure was not complete, Theodate insisted on returning to her home in Farmington for Christmas, and by the day after Christmas had sent her parents off to New York, with Alfred writing to J. H. Whittemore, "Theo has things to do she can work off better & faster alone." But by early January, Theodate's condition had worsened severely. On January 6, her worried father wrote from New York to J. H. Whittemore, "I hoped to go home this week. I intend to go next week. It's Theodate's condition which has kept me. Can't see as she has gained much of any on the whole. . . . Its her nervous system that's so overwrought."¹⁹⁵ Two days later the condition had worsened, as tonsillitis set in on top of Theodate's weak nervous state:

Since Thursday Theo has had tonsillitis, just came on because of her weak condition I suppose. Dr. Bosworth is heading it off, but that doesn't give conditions for her to rest. We have many hopes & promises of improvement, but something comes in to prevent. I have been waiting ever since I came east for conditions to improve & settle. They are not encouraging now.¹⁹⁶

By January 10, Alfred found Theodate's condition a bit improved, as she had started to sleep a bit at night. Alfred told J. H. Whittemore about their difficulty finding a place for Theodate to stay. They had wanted to hospitalize her, but when Alfred had visited St. Lukes Hospital he had found it too noisy a place for his sick daughter. They had settled instead upon staying with her at the Buckingham Hotel in New York. This decision was also based on the condition of Theodate's own house in Farmington. Theodate had started a home renovation project in addition to the construction project at Hill-Stead. Alfred described the situation to J. H.

¹⁹⁴ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (19 December 1899), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive. It was commonly believed at this historical moment that professional practice caused nervous collapse in women. In the architectural profession, this most prominently occurred to Sophia Hayden during the construction of the Women's Building at the World's Columbian Exposition. Subsequent publications in the architectural press argued against female capacity to practice architecture without emotional damage to them. Alfred and Ada's subsequent protective behavior toward Theodate during the remainder of the construction of Hill-Stead, and the instances in which Alfred seems to have actively kept Theodate from attending to work on the house suggest that Theodate's parents may have become convinced that these social worries were justified after their daughter's breakdown.

¹⁹⁵ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (6 January 1900), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁹⁶ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (8 January 1900), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

Whittemore: "Theodate has an irruption [sic.] at her house, she had floors fixed, papering & painting, carpeting (the latter nor fully provided for) all going on, not yet quite all done but now provided for so we couldn't go there. She must have Dr's attention for a time. We are now hoping this is a climax & she is going to be better. There is a promise."¹⁹⁷ Although Theodate's condition stabilized, she remained under medical supervision in New York until March, and she was kept at a distance from all of her activities in Farmington until that time. Finally, on March 4, 1900, Alfred was able to give a positive report on his daughters' condition and to suggest that she might soon be back to work on the house, "Theodate lunched with us yesterday. She says the doctor is about ready to discharge her & she feels much better, quite like taking up her work."¹⁹⁸

Despite Theodate's hospitalization, construction continued at a steady pace in Farmington, but responsibilities seem to have shifted to make up for her absence. In December and January, Henry Hall Mason billed the Popes for nearly full-time work on their house plans and hours spent on the site. With Theodate absent, Richard Jones began corresponding directly with Wilder at McKim, Mead & White. Jones assumed the role of supervising contractor, funneling his own questions, as well as many of those from McAllister's firm to McKim, Mead & White. Meanwhile the architects kept in regular contact with the two New York-based firms closely involved with the house: William H. Jackson of William H. Jackson & Co., which was providing all details related to the mantels, and L. B. Fulton at J. L. Mott Iron Works, which was providing the plumbing for the house.

In general, the questions that Richard Jones directed to the firm had to do with design issues related to the interpretation of the drawings that they had provided to him. In a letter of January 22, for example, he asked the firm a number of questions about the correspondence between details on interior doors and paneling (e.g., do doors facing #2 details of trim always have #2 details in their paneling?), how trim in rooms corresponds to treatment of closets, and how to negotiate the fact that the window seats had been prepared for a different base trim than that provided.¹⁹⁹ In addition to these formulaic questions, Jones also consulted McKim, Mead & White about more noticeable design issues. He drew a sketch of the handrail for the third-floor stairway, and asked them, "In regard to the hand rail around the well hole in 3rd floor. Do you want the rail to curve or to mitre at the corner?"²⁰⁰ It seems certain that at least these design-related questions would have been directed to Theodate Pope had she been in Farmington, with her absence, however, the firm assumed its primary design role.

By mid-March 1900, as Theodate was in convalescence, the assembly of the interior of the house was nearing completion, though the installation of the mantels was yet to come, and several shipments of wood trim were not yet on their way to Farmington. McKim, Mead & White began to close accounts on the house, and asked Richard Jones to send them a summary of payments, tasks completed, and the outstanding commitments of his contract. Richard Jones's reply offers valuable information about the costs of the house, as well as the subcontractors employed for its construction:

¹⁹⁷ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (10 January 1900), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁹⁸ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (4 March 1900), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

¹⁹⁹ Letter, Richard F. Jones to W. R. Wilder, (22 January 1900), MMW Collection, NYHS.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

Total for contract and extras \$18, 316.00 on which I have received the following payments: Aug, 25th, 5000.00 Sept, 20th \$5000.00 Oct, 18th \$2000.00 Nov, 22nd \$3000.00 Dec, 27 \$3000.00 the total of which is \$18000.00 balance \$316.00

Sub Contracts

Brick Work and plastering let to Hiram Bissell of Hartford Conn
I Beam columns etc [let to] the Lincoln Co. [of Hartford Conn]
Copper work gutters roofs etc let to Valentin Weidig Unionville CT
All outside painting let to D. C. Hawley Farmington CT
All of the sub contractors have been paid in full except the painter who has a balance of \$135.00 which will be paid when the last coat of paint is on.²⁰¹

The sub-contractors listed by Jones in this letter were not mentioned in prior correspondence between the firm and the Pope family. It appears that Jones had sufficient power in his own contract to determine elements as integral to the house's form and stability as the I-beams, without consulting the supervising architectural firm. Perhaps either Theodate or Alfred Pope was aware of these sub-contracts, but no further records have survived of their role. Jones included a revealing note to McKim, Mead & White in addition to this expense summary. He noted that it was difficult to draw distinctions between the work that he had done for his contract on the house, and all the other work that he had completed on the Pope estate, "It is some what difficult to get at the exact amount on the house as we have done considerable work in the garden etc., have built brick walks, foundations for the summer house, man holes piers etc., etc. However I give you the total amount from which it will be safe to deduct \$500.00 for work that does not belong to the house."²⁰² It is also apparent that, while McKim, Mead & White were involved solely in design aspects that involved the mansion house, Jones was deeply involved in multiple aspects of the entire estate. A week later Jones returned all of the detail drawings to McKim, Mead & White, though he noted that there were "a few other which were made by Mr. Mason some of which were used in the building."²⁰³ These were not returned to the firm.

On April 20, 1900, Jones wrote to Wilder that, "We have finished painting the exterior and have hung the blinds and I think that the effect is very good indeed."²⁰⁴ Alfred and Ada Pope were in Farmington the week that the exterior painting was finished. Ada instructed Jones to notify McKim, Mead & White when "the bath rooms are ready for you to come up and make the drawings for the same," and Alfred Pope paid \$2500.00 toward the finish of the house. On April 28, Jones received "a car of trim for the front part of the house, containing window finish cornices etc.," and moved from basic structural needs of the house to applying decorative features.²⁰⁵ Alfred returned to Farmington in early May, and convinced Jones to travel back to Cleveland in order to meet with McAllister about questions involving the wood trim. Otherwise, he reported, that "Every thing is progressing smoothly here."²⁰⁶

²⁰¹ Letter, Richard F. Jones to McKim, Mead & White, (8 March 1900), MMW Collection, NYHS.

²⁰² Letter, R. F. Jones to Wilder, (8 March 1900), MMW Collection, NYHS. Copy in HSM Archive.

²⁰³ Letter, R. F. Jones to Wilder, (11 March 1900), MMW Collection, NYHS.

²⁰⁴ Letter, R. F. Jones to Wilder, (20 April 1900), MMW Collection, NYHS.

²⁰⁵ Letter, R. F. Jones to Wilder, (28 April 1900), MMW Collection, NYHS.

²⁰⁶ Letter, R. F. Jones to Wilder, (10 May 1900), MMW Collection, NYHS.

Mason continued to work at Hill-Stead during this period as well. He designed gates for the garden, prepared details for the barn, and oversaw the work. The barn had initially been left incomplete in order to allow a large open space to accommodate a construction workshop, as Theodate had explained to McKim, Mead & White. Now, presumably, Mason redesigned its interior in order to prepare the barn for the arrival of farm animals, carriages, and all the accoutrements of the Pope family. In March, Mason also constructed a shed for the farm house, and made a weathervane for the Popes.

Finishing and Furnishing Hill-Stead

During this period the family also began to make plans for the interior decoration of the house. Ada became much more involved with the house project at this point. On March 18 she wrote to Harris Whittemore, asking him to take the measurements on his Mother's dining room table at Naugatuck, including how many leaves the table had, and how long it extended, as she was negotiating with Davenport to have a table built for the new house of roughly the same scale.²⁰⁷ At the end of April, all three Popes took a trip together in order to select furnishings for the new house. While it caused yet another delay in his business affairs, Alfred wrote to J. H. Whittemore that he felt the trip was necessary and had to take place at that time, "We all go to Philadelphia & Baltimore about furniture, carpets, drapes &c, a trip we think but to take before going to Boston, when we expect to decide many questions. Can't well put off trip."²⁰⁸ Only one receipt remains from this furniture-shopping expedition, although the Popes certainly purchased a great deal more. On May 3, 1900 in Philadelphia, Alfred Pope bought an "Antique Mahogany Sofa" and a "Bureau" from J. M. Wintrob Antiques.²⁰⁹ In Boston later that summer, the family purchased more, though again, only one receipt offers tangible evidence of their finds. They bought an eclectic assembly of old and new items from a single Boston furniture dealer, H. C. Alley & Co., who sold them a "china cabinet, mirror, bureau, four post bed, old eight legged table, new eight legged table."²¹⁰

The Popes were slow and methodical in purchasing the furniture for Hill-Stead, and seem to have been particularly carefully because of their goals for the appearance of the house. That the Popes did go through special effort in order to furnish the interior of their house in accordance with its architectural language is corroborated by a letter written by Theodate many years after construction. When Ada Pope died the entire estate had to be appraised, and Theodate wrote a note to Mr. Swenton describing the provenance of the interior furnishings of the house. An excerpt from this letter characterizes the family's approach to decorating the interior of Hill-Stead:

The appraisers will wish to know what articles in the house belong to me. Generally speaking the old furniture belongs to me as I was the one in the family most interested in collecting good pieces. I designed and superintended the building of the house and it was my desire to have it furnished in keeping – that is in an old fashioned way. . . .Much of the furniture is a reproduction of old designs

²⁰⁷ Letter, Ada Brooks Pope to Harris Whittemore, (18 March 1900), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

²⁰⁸ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (27 April 1900), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

²⁰⁹ Receipt # 2061, HSM Archive.

²¹⁰ Receipt # 2062, HSM Archive.

and a great deal of that was brought on from our Cleveland house when we moved – having been made by Davenport in Boston. These pieces are not mine.²¹¹

The reference by Theodate to the fact that the furniture in the family's Cleveland home was largely made by Davenport, underlines Ada's subsequent influence in the decoration of Hill-Stead. All the interior decoration of the Cleveland family home was selected by Ada, and she guided the decision to turn to Davenport a second time for the design of the family's new dining room table for Hill-Stead. Ada was knowledgeable about the decorative trades, and a regular client of both artisans and antique dealers across the eastern seaboard of the United States and in Europe. It is natural that she would have guided the interior decoration of the house at this point, especially since Theodate's nervous collapse caused her parents to carefully monitor her activities. The dining room table was not the only furniture for the new house that Ada ordered from A. H. Davenport. Further evidence of her use of his services can be found in a letter from Davenport to McKim, Mead & White, in which he speaks of another commission from Mrs. Pope. Davenport sent an employee of his office to the firm, with the following request, "Will you kindly permit bearer to copy (for Mrs. Pope) the color of old cabinet in your office? Also, to take eagle on top of same in order to have one cast similar? We are reproducing this cabinet for Mrs. A. A. Pope with Mr. White's permission."²¹² Having modeled some of the Colonial architectural ideas for Hill-Stead on prototypes learned from McKim, Mead & White the Papes now also emulated their collection of "old" furniture in order to maintain a specific decorative look. Perhaps Ada reproduced this particular cabinet at Theodate's request, since Theodate certainly spent much larger quantities of her time at the firm's office than did her mother.

Although Theodate's condition was improving during this period, she does not seem to have been actively involved with the process of design and construction after her breakdown in December 1899. She joined the family for the trips to select interior furnishings for the house, but no longer corresponded with McKim, Mead & White, or the other various firms involved in the process. Jones continued to send his inquiries to McKim, Mead & White rather than to get constant on-site feedback from Theodate. Alfred seems to have become the primary family contact for the project, stepping into Theodate's shoes, but playing a much different role in the process. He met with McAllister in Cleveland, and made relatively frequent trips to the east coast in the first half of 1900. His more frequent mention of the house and activities in Farmington within his correspondence to J. H. Whittemore reflects this increased level of mental investment. In June, he expressed his jealousy that Whittemore was already comfortably established in the country, and shared his dreams about the tranquility of rural life with Whittemore, "I haven't the faculty of anticipating but my gizzard is a little tickled with the thought that I may some time spend a few days quietly on the hill at Farmington – just basquing [sic.] in the shade."²¹³ Such a vision of summer rest must have seemed particularly appealing to Alfred as he dealt with a sickly daughter, a demanding career, and coordinating a long distance building project. The pressure and frustration began to wear on Alfred as well, and he shortly thereafter expressed his worries about the success of the new house to Whittemore, "It makes me sick to think of Farmington –

²¹¹ Letter 1021, Theodate Pope to Mr. Swenton, HSM Archive.

²¹² Letter, A. H. Davenport to McKim, Mead & White, (29 October 1900), MMW Collection, NYHS.

²¹³ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (14 June 1900), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

the pleasure it would be to be there, but more especially the thought that things are probably going ‘galley west’ for want of attention.”²¹⁴

The next mention of Theodate’s role on the Pope family estate refers indirectly to her involvement. In February 1900, Alfred had invested in a large machine to help in moving mature trees from one part of the estate to another. The work was carried out some time in the spring. By July, Alfred wrote to J. H. Whittemore about Theodate’s concerns for the conditions of the trees that had been moved. He requested that Whittemore send Shepardson, his landscaper, to check on their condition. Then he commented that he was making these arrangements because Theodate had “announced” her intention to take care of the problem, and Alfred did not think that it was appropriate.²¹⁵ The summer of 1900 seems to have been largely spent on work for the estate and fine-tuning the interior of the house. No record of work by Jones or Mason dates to after June 1900, so it is likely that their respective duties were largely completed by that time. Alfred and Ada made several trips to Farmington over the course of the summer of that year, presumably addressing individual details of their new household and estate.

Theodate, meanwhile, was back to living in her house in Farmington, except for a lengthy camping trip with her friends. Theodate was better rested but was undergoing an existential crisis, brought on by her stress-induced collapse. In particular, she seems to have been worried that the strenuous experience of overseeing the construction of her parents’ house had left her without professional aspirations or enduring attachment to architecture. From December 1899 through August 1900, Theodate wrote nothing about the new house, her experiences in its construction, or its implications for her future. Finally, in September 1900, after a sleepless and restless night, Theodate wrote about the impact the experience had made upon her emotional state,

For years I have been keen on architecture and felt that the ugliness of our buildings actually menaced my happiness and felt breathlessly that I must help in the cause of good architecture. But I have wrung my soul dry in that direction over father[’s] house, in my great fatigue last summer when I had so much to decide I felt at the end – when my sickness came, that all power of decision was forever dead to me. And now I find that my material world is losing its power to please or harm me – it is not vital to me any more. I am turning in on myself and am finding my pleasure in the inner world which was my constant retreat when I was a child. That world then was meagerly furnished from my own imaginings but now I bring maturer thoughts and eager fancies and it promises to be a goodly habitation. I used to feel a frantic anxiety to uphold the best expressions in material art and felt that that was in itself enough to occupy ones life with. . . . My interest in architecture had always been more intense than my interest in any other art manifestation, and on my word I think it is not dead yet – not quite. If I only knew how to help the cause of good architecture! But I am tired of seeing these fluted flimsy highly colored hen houses going up – and am tired of gnashing my teeth over them. I am just tired and sick of this work a day world which we see with our eyes and am turning to the world that I can be gate keeper of and admit

²¹⁴ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (28 June 1900).

²¹⁵ Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (16 July 1900), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

what I choose. And nothing is too fine the dread question I ask myself now is anything fine enough, is the best thought of the best ages satisfying.²¹⁶

It is apparent from this passage that Theodate was not only interested in architecture for possible professional reasons, but also felt involved in it emotionally. Yet she did not see the cause of good architecture as being a battle that she could fight beyond the sphere of influence of her own acquaintances. Frustrated by society's "fluted flimsy highly colored hen houses," she felt the only answer was to turn to the realm in which her own principles could reign supreme, i.e. property that she and her parents owned. However, she also wondered if all of this was a futile endeavor to begin with. When her own interests passed so easily away from her, and she was not even convinced that her fascination with architecture could outlast the experience of the construction of her parents' new home, Theodate wondered, "is anything fine enough"?

Theodate's parents visited her in Farmington at the end of September. Reflecting in her diary about their visit, Theodate wrote, "Daddy came last evening so he & Mother and I are busy discussing house matters. We cannot possibly get in for Christmas as we had hoped to."²¹⁷ On October 9, Alfred made a trip to Farmington while the rest of the family was in New York City, in order to meet with a man about "moving large trees."²¹⁸ Theodate also began to plan the garden, writing in her diary, "I went to see Mrs. Will Boyle in the afternoon to talk garden with her as her husband knows so much about flowers."²¹⁹ Comments on the house were few and far between in these final stages. In November, Theodate recorded in her diary that she had resumed her usually vibrant social life, and that when a number of her female relatives visited they had passed a delightful day in Farmington together, "We staid up at my house all morning & went up to see the Hill house after dinner then down to my house again and had afternoon tea."²²⁰

In December 1900 Ada spent some time with her daughter in Farmington. This was partially a social visit, but it was also necessary in order for Ada to oversee the activities at the house. She and Theodate spent at least some time together working on Hill-Stead affairs, as Theodate noted somewhat apathetically in a diary entry, "Mother & I drove around the place this morning telling Potter the things we wish attended to & which he of course won't get around to – it is waste of breath."²²¹ Since Potter's primary role on the Pope estate was landscape related, Theodate and Ada must have been discussing question of the grounds with Potter. In December a limited range of points must have been at issue – perhaps cleaning certain areas, working on fences or walls, or enhancing features of the barns or barnyards. Whatever the points under discussion it is clear that Potter, who was lavishly praised the previous summer by Theodate, had fallen out of favor with the Pope family. In fact, at this very moment, Alfred was busily searching for a new landscape architect to manage his estate. His inquiries with J. H. Whittemore helped him to identify a new professional man for the job, recommended to him by Whittemore's landscape architect Mr. Shepardson:

²¹⁶ Theodate Pope diary, (14 September 1900), HSM Archive.

²¹⁷ Theodate Pope diary, (30 September 1900), HSM Archive.

²¹⁸ Theodate Pope diary, (9 October 1900), HSM Archive.

²¹⁹ Theodate Pope diary, (15 October 1900), HSM Archive.

²²⁰ Theodate Pope diary, (25 November 1900), HSM Archive.

²²¹ Theodate Pope diary, (9 December 1900), HSM Archive.

I was over to Middlebury this afternoon and asked Shepardson if I was correct in understanding from him that his brother-in-law was engaged to return to Manchester, Conn. next spring. He said there was no positive engagement, but that Olmsted & Elliot, landscape people were very much pleased with what he did for them and promised to secure another position for him at an early date. I did not tell Shepardson that you were dissatisfied with Potter. In case you want to know more about Cook, I would advise that you write Mr. Shepardson.²²²

Having completed the fabric of their house to exacting standards, the Popes now devoted themselves to crafting a certain look for the estate, while they also worked on the furnishing of the interior of the house. As always the Popes looked to the top tier of design professionals to provide the expertise and credentials that they desired to have in workers on their estates.

Now that she was steadily recovering, Theodate also became a bit nostalgic for the experience. In recognition of the efforts that he had given to the construction of her parents' house, and the camaraderie she had felt working with him, Theodate presented Richard Jones with an architectural memento. She also marked the occasion by reflecting on his hard work in her diary:

I gave Mr Jones a set of the 'Georgian Period' & sent a note with it saying it would serve as a reminder of the many busy worried pleasant hours we had spent over the details of the house. He seemed very pleased. It isn't often I fancy that one feels a real liking and friendship for the contractor who has worked for one for two years. We have not a word of criticism to say of Mr Jones and every thing in his praise. He is bound to succeed else there is no kind of justice in this world. He is clever and ambitious, sincere, honest sweet natured and clever again.

The Pope's relationship with Jones did indeed remain positive, and he worked for the Pope family again on a number of occasions, and also acted as contractor on at least one of Theodate's later design projects.²²³

In January 1901, Ada was either still in Farmington or in Farmington again. She had to get the house completely arranged and decorated before the family could move in, and they were all getting anxious for the arrangements to be completed. Theodate, who had now moved on to different priorities tried to convince her mother to go on a trip with the Whittemore family to Nassau, but Ada demurred stating that, "she could not get in the house this spring if she went and she says if she isn't in then. . . she will be so discouraged."²²⁴ Theodate's apathy with the project persisted, even as her parents tried to get her to re-engage. In February Ada and Theodate decided definitively that the home would be called Hill-Stead, but Theodate was not even excited that her preferred name was selected. As she wrote in her diary:

²²² Letter, J. H. Whittemore to Alfred Atmore Pope, (7 December 1900), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive. For many years the Popes had a man named Allen B. Cook managing their estate. It is possible that this is the same man, but I have not been able to confirm definitively that this is the case.

²²³ According to *A Jones Family History*, Alfred found several jobs for Jones in Cleveland. Jones also rebuilt the Pope family stable after it burned. He was also the contractor for Westover School.

²²⁴ Letter, Theodate Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (16 January 1901), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

This evening mother came down to my room & we planned how our note paper for the new home will be stamped. We have decided to call the place Hill Stead – I thought of it early in the building & mother has always liked it while father is luke warm but suggests no other. Mother has taxed me many times lately of having no interest in the farm any more. It is simply because nothing lately has aroused any interest in me.²²⁵

Ada's efforts to prepare the new home for habitation took the better part of six months. It was not until May that Theodate commented that the house was nearly ready, "The house begins to look very settled. All carpets down & furniture in place. It will not be long now before we are in I hope. A Miss Talcott is cataloguing & placing the books in the library."²²⁶ Until each item that the family desired, whether a necessary or a luxury item, was in place, the family could not move into the new house. Only Ada seems to have had the exacting eye and persistent energy to see the project through to completion.

Finally, in June 1901 the preparation of the house was completed and the family moved in. Moving into the new house caused Theodate to shed her lethargy, and she became overwhelmed by her contentment with the house. On May 30, 1901, she wrote in her diary at from Hill-Stead for the first time, clearly demarcating this importance by starting the entry "The Library. Hill-Stead." The successful visual effect of the space was especially inspiring to Theodate and she wrote about its effect: "I am writing in the new house and see it for the first time by gas light. This room & the dining room look so beautiful to me it is hard for me to settle down to writing."²²⁷ A few days later the house was finally deemed fit for full-time occupation. Alfred Pope was in town and so the family happily made an occasion out of their first night in the house. The experience marked the end of an era for Theodate, and she reminisced about the past few years of her life in terms of the saga of Hill-Stead:

Dear mother is very tired from settling the house. The servants are all in. Ernest & Belle the laundress came Thursday. We go up to the house tomorrow for dinner – we four and spend the first night in the house.²²⁸ About two years and three quarters it is I think since we began work on the grounds. Three years ago now we were agitating the purchase of the property. We were sailing in June & cabling wildly back & forth with Harris in regard to the land during our stay at Browns' in London.²²⁹

Even after this first night at Hill-Stead the family continued to sleep for some time in Theodate's O'Rourke before settling more fully into life in the mansion house. For Theodate the entire process of moving into the house and making a new home there with her parents was delightful. The first month was a steady stream of curious visitors and a constant shifting from one house to the other. After many months in which she had barely referred to Hill-Stead, Theodate reveled in her diary with regular exclamations over the experience of the new house:

²²⁵ Theodate Pope diary, (3 February 1901), HSM Archive.

²²⁶ Theodate Pope diary, (19 May 1901), HSM Archive.

²²⁷ Theodate Pope diary, (30 May 1901), HSM Archive.

²²⁸ "We four" refers to Theodate, Ada, Alfred and Theodate's close friend Mary Hillard.

²²⁹ Theodate Pope diary, (5 June 1901), HSM Archive.

The day has been absolute perfection in every way! When I wakened I realized that the sunlight was of that intense clearness we get only a few days in the year. . . . father & mother and I came up here about ten o'clock. We laughed walking up the lane – thinking we should have been photographed – carrying a work box note paper time tables and salad etc. The sunlight made our coming seem so auspicious – and I think we all felt blessed. I went into the garden soon to pick flowers, as I have set myself the task of flower arranging. . . .It seemed strange to return here at half past seven – twilight – instead of going back to the O'Rourke. . . . how radiantly happy I am and full of peace now that we are living here.²³⁰

After years of whirlwind activity and countless design decisions, the Popes now had the opportunity to experience their newly-created estate and to share it with their acquaintances. The demands of the house were far from finished. Ada, though still exhausted from six months of steady activity preparing the interior of the house, now had to organize all the day-to-day activities of the house with a full staff of servants still unfamiliar with the new space. Alfred now had a farm yet to be filled with animals, and an estate to manage and oversee. For Theodate, however, the obligations of the project were now complete and she could focus on enjoying the new home.

At Home in Farmington

As they settled into the house, the family made a few changes that have had a lasting effect on its appearance. In August 1901, two months after moving into the house, the Pope family summoned Richard Jones to Farmington so that they could plan an “arbour” for the south porch.²³¹ The resulting addition was the porte-cochere entryway, which would be the primary entrance to the house for any visitors arriving in a carriage. Visitors arriving on foot from the town of Farmington may well have used the most direct entrance, which led up a wide pathway from Theodate’s house on High Street, directly to the front entrance of Hill-Stead.

By October 1901 the family was discussing what would be the most significant early change to the appearance of the house. On October 29, William Rutherford Mead visited the Popes, and Theodate recorded in her diary that the purpose of his trip to Farmington was “to help us with suggestions about the porch we are going to put across the front of the house.”²³² As originally constructed, Hill-Stead was without any exterior porches, other than a porch attached to the serving wing of the house, and two small porches in the wings flanking the central façade. These small porches were convertible into sun-rooms during the winter, but because of their placement, at a slightly receded line from the main façade, they probably received relatively little in the way of cross-winds. Certainly these smaller porches did not offer a grand social space within which the elder Popes could entertain visitors. The Popes must have realized almost immediately in a warm summer that shady exterior porches would greatly enhance the experience of the house. No further records have been located about the construction of the front porch at Hill-Stead. It

²³⁰ Theodate Pope diary, (20 June 1901), HSM Archive.

²³¹ Theodate Pope diary, (12 August 1901), HSM Archive.

²³² Theodate Pope diary, (29 October 1901), HSM Archive.

seems likely that it was constructed by Richard Jones. When Mead spent a day with the Pope family thinking about this front porch, he probably brought images of Colonial and Colonial Revival examples for them to look through. The porch as it was ultimately constructed makes direct reference to the grand portico of Mount Vernon, George Washington's house. The Popes could have admired a replica of this house in the Virginia State Pavilion at the World's Columbian Exposition. Mead could also have shared with them drawings by Stanford White of the James L. Breese house "The Orchard" then under construction in Southampton, Long Island. This house, although much more grand and formal than Hill-Stead, implemented a similar vocabulary of Colonial Revival form, and was greatly enhanced by its Mount Vernon portico. In addition, the Popes could easily have been familiar with Mount Vernon itself, both in published form and in person. They had traveled extensively and visited many historic buildings, and Mount Vernon would have been a natural site for them to visit. Theodate herself had visited Mount Vernon in March 1900.²³³ **(Figure 4)**

By the end of 1901, then, the Pope's Hill-Stead project was fully implemented. The mansion house was completed, and a new grand exterior portico increased its formality. The barns attached to the house were occupied by carefully-selected horses and several carriages. Purpose-built routes entered the estate from three different directions – a grand tree-lined driveway from Mountain Road, a boxwood lined walkway directly connecting High Street to the front façade of the house, and a winding road through the outlying farm complex and cow barns connecting the stables at Hill-Stead to Hartford Road. To the north of the house, a man-made pond was formed at the lowest point in the landscape, with a six-hole golf grounds laid out around it.**(Figure 5)** To the south of the house the sunken garden, with a summer pavilion at its center, was fully planted and abundantly blossoming.**(Figure 6)** Contiguous to the sunken garden was a walled wild garden with rustic benches. Paths had been delineated throughout the wooded area behind the mansion house in order to allow for pleasant afternoon strolls and hikes. In addition to the ornamental aspects of the estate, the Popes also had a fully planted orchard, pastures, and a large dairy barn already in use. Beneath the surface of the ground, an extensive drainage, water pumping, and sewer system was set into place by hydraulic engineers and landscape architects to increase the modern efficiency of the house. While changes would be made over the course of time to the main house as well as to the surrounding lands, the estate had substantially reached its complete form.

Ideals in wood & mortar²³⁴

Hill-Stead was built in the tradition of country houses of the wealthy elite. As such it was intended to evoke a rustic ideal for the Pope family, but also to function as a social symbol. Hill-Stead would symbolically evoke the wealth of the Pope, their "taste," and their culture. As an immense estate, assembled and purpose-built in only a few years, it was also a symbol of their power. The effort put into the creation of this house was not wasted because Hill-Stead did indeed have its desired effect on its visitors, and on the surrounding town of Farmington. The discerning eye of contemporary viewers easily identified the lengths to which the Popes had

²³³ See Smith, *Theodate Pope Riddle: Her Life and Architecture*.
<http://www.valinet.com/~smithash/theodate/Ch04.html>

²³⁴ Theodate Pope diary, (21 July 1901), HSM Archive.

gone to create an ideal estate, and house that was harmonious in its aesthetic vision, both in terms of overall architectural form and with regard to interior decoration.

Perhaps the first to spread the word about Hill-Stead's success was J. H. Whittemore. He and his wife visited Hill-Stead the very week that the Pope family moved into the house and he promptly wrote about his perception of the house in a letter to one of his relatives, "Julia and I were over to Farmington for a couple of days; the first guests in the Pope's new home, which is the most complete and beautiful one I was ever in. I don't mean the most expensive, but the taste displayed is certainly exceptionally good."²³⁵ Unlike clients who relied on architects to create the entire interior and exterior feel to their houses, the Pope family had been particularly involved and attentive throughout the process. Whittemore's praise of the "taste" of the house is, therefore, particularly well-chosen, as it clearly recognizes the efforts that the Pope family put into the house.

Hill-Stead also had an impact on the town of Farmington. Talk about Hill-Stead was so prevailing that even Theodate got wind of it. In her diary, she wrote about the social impact of Hill-Stead. Her family had constructed the house in part to make a statement about wealth and power, but Theodate's reflections on the question suggest that perhaps she was not entirely prepared to deal with the effect of the symbols she had created:

This home seems strangely unreal to me. I feel as if I were walking in a dream and not in Farmington. It all seems so unlike the Farmington I have always known, every thing up here, but it is all so very restful and beautiful I feel so at peace with the accomplishment of it. . . . I feel as if the whole thing would disappear like a dissolving [sic.] view. . . . Miss Roberts told me Sunday that once when she called on Miss Porter up in her bedroom that overlooked the valley she spoke of what a lovely view it was. Miss Porter said 'Theodate has a finer one. Theodate has every thing.' And Elizabeth said once when I was showing her my new-old watch, 'You are being tried by prosperity Theodate.' Help me to benefit by it. Give me a clear understanding and the power to do right. And be thou the inspiration of my thoughts.²³⁶

While she had planned to build a farm for many years, and in some versions of this plan had thought about what a farm for her whole family would entail, in the aftermath of the formation of Hill-Stead, Theodate was perhaps learning that while her family's new home could *pretend* to be a typical farm, its reality was in fact far removed from working class (or even middle-class) rural life. She had borrowed vernacular forms, imitated traditional aesthetics, and even taken tours of colonial architecture, but all these efforts did not change the underlying fact that the architectural form was a social pretense. Theodate's friends and mentors in Farmington let her know that they understood the social impact of her family's new home. Theodate, thoroughly contented with beauty of the house, resigned herself to dealing with any social burdens that might arise because of it. Her solution was to pray for understanding and sufficient power to act upon such knowledge.

²³⁵ Letter, J. H. Whittemore to Will C. Whittemore, (22 June 1901), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

²³⁶ Theodate Pope diary, (20 June 1901).

Hill-Stead came to national, if not international, attention in 1905 when Henry James published a description as part of a larger article entitled “New England: an Autumn Impression.” James devoted great attention to describing the town of Farmington. He qualified it as a place of “old houses” that “happen to show style and form and proportion, and the hand of time, further, has been so good as to rest on them with all the pressure of protection, and none of that of interference.” He then also described Farmington as a place of wealth and culture, and when thinking of the sensation of first glimpsing Farmington from the train station, he remarked, “What is it but the note of the aristocratic in the air that so often affects us as drained precisely, and well-nigh to our gasping, of any exception to the common?”²³⁷ Première within this congregation of old buildings and aristocracy, James remarked upon “a great new house on a hilltop that overlooked the most composed of communities; a house apparently conceived – and with great felicity – on the lines of a magnified Mount Vernon.” James, like Whittemore, praised Hill-Stead on the basis of the taste underlying its form:

One hadn’t quite known one was starved, but the morsel went down by the mere authority of the thing consummately *prepared*. Nothing else had been, in all the circle, prepared to anything like the same extent; and though the consequent taste, as a mixture with the other tastes, was of the queerest, no proof of the sovereign power of art could have been, for the moment, sharper. It happened to be that particular art – it might as well, no doubt, have been another; it made everything else shrivel and fade: it was like the sudden trill of a nightingale, lord of the hushed evening.

To be praised by Henry James, the learned expatriate and Anglophile, for consummate taste, must have truly delighted the Popes. Of course, Henry James had developed a friendship with Theodate several years before when she was traveling in England, but his words of praise still would have meant volumes to the Popes’ peers.²³⁷

Six months after Henry James wrote about Hill-Stead, the house was featured in a lengthy article in *The Hartford Courant*. The anonymous journalist described the effect of a visit to Hill-Stead in terms of vistas, and lifestyle. Hill-Stead is “an ideal summer home” because of “the sunken gardens, the golf links, and the grand scenery on all sides.”²³⁸ The author makes it clear that each view is contrived, and every inch of the estate carefully combed in order to achieve a particular effect. The first effect for an unfamiliar visitor in arriving at the house is surprise. The approach to the house is gradual and is lined with trees. During this ascent, “one does not realize the height until the Farmington Valley is seen below and the peaks of the mountains tower on either side.” It is particularly the coupling of natural scenery with colonial form that the author found striking – sitting beneath the Mr. Vernon veranda with the Farmington Valley spread beyond was the most striking experience on the estate. He also remarks on the “pure Colonial” style developed by collaboration between the architect and “all the members of the family.” The transplanted mature trees are a modern marvel, while the golf course is one of the chief luxuries of the estate. The sunken garden “will appeal to many as the chief charm of the beautiful grounds.” From the

²³⁷ “New England: an Autumn Impression – II,” in *The North America Review* 180, no. 5 (May 1905): 641-660. Quotations from pages 652 and 656. James repeated these same passages in his *The American Scene* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1907).

²³⁸ “A. A. Pope’s Home in Farmington,” *The Hartford Courant*, 18 September 1905, 11.

house, “the brick walk to the garden goes down gradually and at the foot the gardens and the surroundings will attract the visitor for a long time. High walls of rough stone surround it and in the background the chestnut trees of the forest loom up, adding to the artificial protection afforded by the walls of stone.” The grape arbor, summer house at the center of the garden, and sundial all offer attractive elements to the garden and demonstrate the degree of completeness of the Pope estate, even at this early moment.

In 1906, Hill-Stead was featured in *Architectural Record*. The only text in the article consisted of ten captions for the interior and exterior photographic views of the house. This article features Hill-Stead as a McKim, Mead & White house, with no reference to the assistance offered by Theodate Pope. It is presented as a “charming colonial house enhanced by an appropriate setting,” in which furniture and over-all interior decoration help to complete the feeling of its successful colonial aura. The two exterior views of the front of the house give a sense of the original landscaping that surrounded the building. Large trees were transplanted to the lawn in front of the house. These trees were placed in well-spaced out diagonal lines, so that they appeared to have been planted randomly on the lawn. Small ornamental bushes were planted along the front façade of the main body of the house, as well as in front of the two low-lying wings. Each bush stands as a discrete unit and is carefully trimmed. A walkway runs perpendicular to the house, leading directly to the front door, and two arched paths branch from this central walkway to lead visitors also toward the sun porches flanking either side of the house. In the formal front view of the house, the open door of the barn can be seen in the distance. This door is given a visual accent by two, neatly trimmed rows of four or five bushes that flank the drive at either side of the door. The view directly from the front of the house is formal, and rather austere. As the caption notes below the second photograph, taken at an angle from the front façade, from this perspective the “house presents a more animated appearance and gives the spectator better idea of its size.”²³⁹

While Hill-Stead was in every way a home designed for an upper-class family, it made an impression on visitors from all social strata. In 1907 Theodate hosted a gathering of the local pomological society at Hill-Stead. One of the results of this gathering was a verse published about the house in *The Hartford Courant*:

Shades of our sires, remind us now
That only one short life decade
Of human toil, and sweat of brow
Has all this stately grandeur made.
What prank of strange fatuity
That Yankee ingenuity
Should fashion in a dozen years
That work our fathers wrought with fears
Of fortune’s blows; and care and strife.
A century back it would have meant
The fruitage of a human life.
Long months and years of discontent

²³⁹ “Mr. Alfred A. Pope’s House at Farmington, Conn.,” *Architectural Record* 20, no. 2 (August 1906): 122-129. Quotations in this paragraph from page 122.

To build an edifice so grand
So shapely, firm, with columns tall
And yonder elm's spreading hand
O'ershadows window, roof, and wall,
Dear Hostess recollections fraught
With pleasure in our minds will stay.
And give us all a kindly thought
Of you whose guests we are today.
And though all homes may not attain
To all the splendor extant here.
Yet by this visit, ours the gain
For as we work with mind, and will,
Our efforts, born of toil's duress.
Will stronger be and help to fill
The farmer's cup of happiness.²⁴⁰

This poem expresses the awe the visitor felt upon contemplating Hill-Stead's man-made grandeur. What for a colonial-era resident, or even for a common man like this farmer, would have entailed a life-time of labor and income to produce, the Pope family had created over the course of few years. Even the trees, which this farmer's experienced eye could identify as mature specimens, were replanted. The poet also gained a social lesson from this experience, claiming that the visit to the Pope's house would encourage these workers to strive toward an ideal. Even if this goal would be unattainable, they would be stronger and happier for having sought to reach it.

If public reception of Hill-Stead was positive, that of the Pope family was even more so. Alfred and Ada maintained their house in Cleveland, and Theodate maintained the O'Rourke, but the whole family was devoted to the new home. Ada loved her garden at Hill-Stead, pouring many hours of tender maintenance into it. After visiting Ada at Hill-Stead, Susan Fennimore Cooper wrote her a fond letter, which noted "a garden like yours seems so much a 'garden of the heart,' that those having the pleasure of seeing it cannot help feeling the touch of your personality."²⁴¹ Alfred, meanwhile, found great relaxation and contentment in his golf grounds, even thinking about it while working in Cleveland. At one point, he wrote J. H. Whittemore, "I want to get a lot of things off my hands so that my brain will be level enough to keep my eye on the ball when I strike Farmington."²⁴² Hill-Stead was an oasis from the urban working world for Alfred and Ada and a sanctum from the trouble of society for Theodate. Its beauty and tranquility was a gift to the whole family, one that amply made up for the several years of negotiation and struggle to bring it into existence. In a 1907 letter to her parents, a finally more peaceful Theodate, described the aesthetic and emotional effect of their estate:

²⁴⁰ Verse written by an anonymous fruit-grower "enthusiastic over his day's outing to A. A. Pope's Hillstead Farm," published in "The Pope Home in Farmington, Appreciative Verse Written by a Visiting Fruit Grower," *The Hartford Courant*, (10 August 1907), 13.

²⁴¹ Letter 255, (9 July 1914), HSM Archive.

²⁴² Letter, Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (1902), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

And the quiet hours do come. I had an hour and a half in the summer house yesterday toward evening – all alone and I thought I must take up some tapestry work in order to reproduce a very beautiful view in the garden. Start with the red of the green house chimney – the grey roof and stone walls the blue curtain in window the green in the trees to come down straight from the chimney, making a long picture, to the grass walk with flowers at either side.

That will stay in my mind if I never wash it out.²⁴³

“Dear farm & home”²⁴⁴

While the major building campaign at Hill-Stead was completed between 1898-1901, the family did not hesitate to make changes to the house and grounds, and in fact it seems that they were nearly always at work on one aspect of the property or another. None of these changes are well-documented, and it is likely that others went completely unnoted. In 1903 the Popes contracted with a well-known horticultural firm, Hitchings & Co., to build a greenhouse on the property.²⁴⁵ The greenhouse was 100 ft. in length, by 20 feet in width. It had iron framework, and an even span on its pointed roof. This was a greenhouse on a large scale for a private estate commission, as can be determined from looking at equivalent examples in the Hitchings & Co. catalogs; however it was also of a modest design.²⁴⁶ Most greenhouses of its dimensions on private estates were given a more ornate form. The Pope family selected the most modest of the design options with few ornamental details. The interior of the greenhouse may well have been divided into four rooms, each c. 25 ft in length, which would have allowed the spaces to accommodate plants at different temperatures, and each room would have had bedding tables flanking the edges, and perhaps three aisles separating the beds in each room. While Hitchings & Co. may have provided plans for the attached workhouse, they probably would only have constructed the greenhouse structure itself. The stone walls of the workhouse, and the stone foundation upon which the greenhouse sat would have been constructed by a local contractor.²⁴⁷ A subterranean chamber underneath the workhouse would have housed the boiler and underground pipe systems would have run the length of the greenhouse to provide heating, cooling and a water supply to the plant rooms. The construction of the greenhouse was not finished until 1908 when Alfred Pope finally paid Hitchings & Co. for their work, but no records indicate if the construction process was continuous over this five year period. As originally built, the workhouse was one-third of its final size, consisting only of the northernmost bay. The remainder of the structure was probably constructed as part of the “garage annex” addition described below.

²⁴³ Letter 738, Theodate Pope to Alfred and Ada Pope, (30 June 1907), HSM Archive.

²⁴⁴ Theodate Pope diary, (16 June 1901), HSM Archive.

²⁴⁵ Receipt # 1953, HSM Archive.

²⁴⁶ Especially helpful is: *Hitchings Iron Frame Greenhouses* (New York, Hitchings & Co., 1910), available in the Rutgers University Special Collections Library, New Brunswick, NJ.

²⁴⁷ See “Concerning Estimates,” *Hitchings Iron Frame Greenhouses*, 3, “Our estimate, *unless you desire it*, does not include the masonry as the local contractors can generally handle it to better advantage. We do, however, furnish, without cost, the masonry plans for contracts placed with us.” No records in the Hill-Stead archive indicate who this contractor may have been. It seems reasonable that either Henry Hall Mason or Richard F. Jones might have completed this work for the Popes. Sharon Smith attributes the work room to Theodate Pope, but there seems to be no evidence to support this attribution.

Between 1906 and 1907 the Alfred and Ada worked with McKim, Mead & White on the design of an addition to the house. They had determined that the library space was insufficient and that Alfred needed a larger office. They apparently first began to think about the question in August 1906, when Ada wrote to J. H. Whittemore asking for the dimensions of his fireproof safe since she and Alfred were “seriously talking about making this change in Library and office and need suggestions.”²⁴⁸ The Whittemores had paid a recent visit to Hill-Stead, and the two couples had discussed the possibility of modeling Alfred’s enlarged study on J. H. Whittemore’s study in Naugatuck.²⁴⁹ Accordingly, the Whittemores sent copies of the plans of the relevant portions of their house for the Papes to peruse. By the end of December 1906, Alfred and Ada were preparing the house for the new construction and finalizing details of the addition. They both were thoroughly absorbed in the project. After a stint of several days spent preparing the house, Alfred wrote to J. H. Whittemore, “Mrs. Pope & I are just off after three as busy days as we ever spent here. We have had lots to do about building matters. I have been through vault & Desk as I never get time to do in summer.”²⁵⁰ McKim, Mead & White drew plans for the addition, and Tide Water Construction Company completed the construction, but no correspondence or records exist documenting the construction process.²⁵¹

It is interesting that Theodate seems to have had no degree of input in this addition, especially since by 1906 she was seriously aspiring to a career in architecture. Sharon Smith has noted that Theodate was uninvolved in this addition because she had “started a new architectural project in nearby Middlebury,” Westover School, yet this would hardly have kept her from contributing to the remodeling project. Alfred was very active in Theodate’s Middlebury project, as were J. H. and Harris Whittemore. Each of these men exerted great efforts to arrange the finances for the project, negotiate with contractors, and offer suggestions and advice about every feature of the process. Certainly Theodate herself would have had time to contribute some sketches or advice to the Hill-Stead renovation project, yet her name is never mentioned in this context, and McKim, Mead & White charged their usual full-service fee instead of the reduced rate that they had given to the Pope family when Hill-Stead was originally constructed. She was absorbed in her own personal life (Westover was being designed for her dear friend Mary Hillard) as well as with her new professional aspirations, and apparently did not feel as invested in the changes to Hill-Stead as in its original building campaign. The high degree of personal involvement that Theodate later demonstrated in all aspects of the design of Avon Old Farms, does not seem to be her attitude toward Hill-Stead in this period.

This addition significantly altered the appearance of the house. Prior to the 1906 addition, the front façade of the house was almost completely symmetrical, with the only deviation from symmetry manifested in the projection of the drawing room’s bay window toward the front lawn.

²⁴⁸ Letter, Ada Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (30 August 1906), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

²⁴⁹ See letters, Ada Pope to J. H. Whittemore, 30 August 30 and 5 September 5, HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive. It is unclear which study and fireproof safe they are referring to. Tranquility Farm did not have an office and safe for Mr. Whittemore. Perhaps instead they are referring to a space in one of the Whittemore family properties in Middlebury.

²⁵⁰ Letter, Alfred Atmore Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (26 December 1906), HWJ Trust. Copy in HSM Archive.

²⁵¹ McKim, Mead & White billed Alfred Pope for their professional services on June 19, 1907 (Document #1950, HSM Archive). A bill from Alfred Pope’s New York Attorney, Delafeld & Longfellow, indicates that he consulted them with regard to his building contract with Tide Water construction company on June 26, 1906 (Document #1955, HSM Archive).

(Figure 7) With the expansion of the library, however, and the addition of Mr. Pope's den, the symmetry of the façade was broken. (Figure 8) A bay window protruded from the second library, echoing that of the drawing room, but acting as a counterpoint to the flat façade of the solarium. The mass of Mr. Pope's den projected northward from the bulk of the house, with no equivalent counter-balance added to the southern end of the body of the house. In addition, a Greek revival style porch was added here to allow Alfred direct access to his personal golf grounds. The ultimate effect of this addition was to increase the overall picturesque massing of the house in a manner true to the original concept of the design.

On May 19, 1908 a large fire broke out in the carriage barns burning the stables to the ground, and damaging the eastern-most end of the servants' quarters. A brick firewall that wisely had been constructed between the stables and the eastern end of the main house was all that prevented the fire from spreading further. In less than an hour from when the fire was first spotted by Earnest Bohlen, the Pope family's butler, from his room above the laundry, the stables were completely destroyed. The fire then "leaped the brick wall which separated the stables from the laundry, and got hold of the laundry roof," where it raged for another half hour or so before being put out by the volunteer firefighting companies that had rushed to the scene after Earnest's panicked alarm.²⁵² This catastrophe afforded the opportunity for a summary of the contents of the Pope family stables to enter the historic record. A reporter described the barn and its contents in the following terms:

The building was one of the finest of its kind in the state, being equipped with all the latest conveniences in stabling, lighting and fooding. In proportions it was a long, low structure of wood and of a colonial style to fit the architecture of the house, which is a model of the Washington residence at Mt. Vernon.

The buildings covered a large space of ground. In the stables were twelve or fifteen horses of which six were driving horses and all of these were saved. In addition two automobiles were got out safely. All the rest of the contents of the stables were a total loss, including probably a dozen fine carriages of all descriptions, surries, runabouts, coupes and a brougham.²⁵³

A follow-up article described numerous visitors coming to the Pope's house to commiserate on the loss, but also to congratulate them on having survived the disaster without greater losses. It also gave greater details about the fire damage, noting that several servants' rooms were destroyed, as was the laundry room. It also notes that at this time "an addition is being built to the garage," these additions almost certainly consisted in the portion of the greenhouse work shed that was used as a garage and car wash.²⁵⁴ In addition, the article discusses the fate of a storeroom space attached to the barn: "Connected with the stable and burned with it, was a storehouse in which household goods of considerable value were kept." No cause of the fire was identified, although the journalist noted that, "It is thought by some that it was caused by electric wires."²⁵⁵

²⁵² "Pope Stables in Farmington Burned," *The Hartford Courant*, 20 May 1908, 1.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁴ "Many View Ruins of Pope Stable," *The Hartford Courant*, 21 May 1908, 2.

²⁵⁵ "Pope Stables in Farmington Burned."

The Popes immediately began to reconstruct the stables. On June 9, Alfred described their losses and their progress to J. H. Whittemore:

We are having plenty to think of and plan for rebuilding the stables. We are to locate in same place but to make slow burning and semi fireproof construction. We were delayed by the fire adjusters and by them for time to make decisions and reproduce working drawings – Jones does the work will do it well but he doesn't know anything about making haste. Our laundry and Earnest's room have to be rebuilt in a measure. Not much of latter – broken ceiling etc. but a good deal in Earnest's room – new dormer extension to give him bathroom etc. The carpenters are at work at this but there isn't a stick of lumber here for stables yet. I got all my insurance in stables and contents & allowance for Earnest room, Laundry, etc. some \$13,300. Not half my loss because of oversight on insuring storage of winter goods overflow etc. in barn & extra cost of construction now.

Mrs. Pope is the one to be pittied. I am so sorry for her as she goes into details & gets disappointed continually in undertakings & expectations.²⁵⁶

It seems likely that Alfred Pope probably turned to Henry Hall Mason to reproduce the working drawings of the stables, just as he returned to Richard F. Jones to reconstruct the structure. No further details are offered as to what measures were taken to make the structure more “slow burning and semi fireproof,” but as Alfred's mention of the alterations to the servants' quarters suggests, the Popes probably made a number of other alterations, adjustments, and improvements to the structure since they were forced to reconstruct it. Alfred himself supervised the reconstruction of the stables, noting in a subsequent letter to J. H. Whittemore, “I wanted to go west but remained here. . . to plan & direct rebuilding of stables.”²⁵⁷ While Alfred was delaying his business affairs because of this catastrophe Theodate seems to have been removed from the project.

Hill-Stead under Theodate

The only other significant change to Hill-Stead made during Alfred Pope's lifetime was the installation of a heating system for the “Garage Annex” in the winter of 1913. After Alfred's death on August 5, 1913, Theodate seems to have taken control of all further projects at Hill-Stead. Ada sold the family home in Cleveland at this time, using Harris as an intermediary with the potential buyer as she was too grief stricken to administer the family affairs, and Harris was the executor of Alfred's will. The sale of the Euclid Avenue home did not mean that Ada made Hill-Stead her constant home. In fact, after Alfred's death Ada seems to have deliberately shied away from Hill-Stead, which was full of memories of her deceased husband. Instead, she divided most of her time between Georgia and California, though she still maintained close supervision over Theodate's actions in Farmington.²⁵⁸

Theodate married diplomat John Wallace Riddle on May 6, 1916, after which the newlyweds went on an extended honeymoon. When she returned to Farmington as a married woman,

²⁵⁶ Letter, Alfred Atmore Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (9 June 1908), HWJ Trust. Copy (W735) in the HSM Archive.

²⁵⁷ Letter, Alfred Atmore Pope to J. H. Whittemore, (12 June 1908), HWJ Trust. Copy (W736) in the HSM Archive.

²⁵⁸ See correspondence among Ada, Theodate and Harris Whittemore from 1913 and 1914, HSM Archive.

Theodate set about renovating Hill-Stead to fit her new life-style with John Wallace Riddle. These renovations are documented only through the correspondence between Theodate and Ada during this period. Theodate's 1917 renovations included changes to both the main house and the servants' quarters. Theodate was in general a poor correspondent, however since she kept a secretary in this period and could dictate her letters, she seems to have offered more extensive information than normal. On July 17, 1917, Theodate wrote Ada a lengthy letter, describing the plans in motion for servants' quarters of the house:

I would tell you at length how matters are progressing with the changes in the rear of the house.

The painters are putting on the second and last coat of paint in the dining room – the sink having been set. The cracks in the floor will be filled and the entire floor stained by the end of this week. There are one or two changes I have made which seem necessary in my daily supervision of the work, and I hope and trust they will meet with your approval.

The household are interested in the change and it is going to mean a great deal of happiness to them, I can see, as they have missed very much not having a little room to themselves for use in the evening after the work is over.

I have just had a talk with Hawley and spurred him on to renewed efforts about the kitchen and the two pantries. He is to engage one or two more men besides the two he has to help him push the work through next week. He understands that you want the woodwork the same color as that in the laundry.²⁵⁹

It seems likely that the dining room referred to in this passage is the servants' dining room rather than the large formal family dining room here. Theodate was monitoring the progress on the house daily, but was following Ada's wishes as to what the nature of the changes would be. The delicate nature of their mother-daughter relationship is hinted at by the fact that Theodate is unsure whether her mother will indeed approve of the deviations that she has made from her mother's specific instructions. After making these plans with the contractor, and arranging for the servants to have reasonably comfortable accommodations during the renovations, Theodate and John headed off for a vacation in New York.

In August the renovations were continuing, and Theodate was supervising the new paint job in the servants' quarters. Again, she shared her thoughts about the work with her mother, and wondered what Ada's opinion would be about it:

I do not know if you will like the color of the paint in the kitchen. I am quite disturbed about it in my own mind and have been ever since it was finished. For this reason, I did not have a finishing varnish coat, because leaving it flat, it can easily be painted over any time in the winter when we are away. I fear you may feel as I do – that there is almost too much of it. I think it is a great success in the laundry, but when one sees so many square yards of it, I seem to have my doubts. I am, however, uncertain and if you like it, I shall be perfectly satisfied.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁹ Letter 900, Theodate Pope Riddle to Ada Pope, (12 July 1917), HSM Archive.

²⁶⁰ Letter 901, Theodate Pope Riddle to Ada Pope. (21 August 1917), HSM Archive.

This passage suggests the collaborative manner in which Theodate and her mother may have generally treated the task of home decoration. While they had a difficult relationship throughout the duration of Ada's life, they were both very interested in the decoration of their houses, and seem to have acted as a team in creating Hill-Stead's interior appearance. It was probably during this period that Theodate and John moved into the master suite at Hill-Stead. In the process of this move, they opened up the arched doorway through a closet connecting what had been Alfred and Ada's bedroom to a spare bedroom, so that their suite included two entire bedrooms and bathrooms.

It was also in this period that Theodate altered the stables attached to the house with the addition of the space she called the "Makeshift Theater." Evidence suggests that the idea may have initially occurred to Theodate as a way to memorialize her father. As early as 1914, Theodate had developed a scheme for a "play house" in Farmington in Alfred's memory, and she shared this idea with her friend Florence Marin, who replied approvingly:

Your plan for a memorial to your father seems a beautiful and fitting one. He loved to see people happy and a "Play House" for Farmington under your influence and built by you should be full of his spirit too. It will interest you to make it beautiful – I cannot think of a greater pleasure.²⁶¹

The many distractions in Theodate's life between 1914 and 1917, including her courtship with Riddle, her taking in an orphaned boy named Gordon, her traumatic survival of the Lusitania disaster and finally her marriage, may have kept her from pursuing this dream. It seems that as soon as she began her alterations to Hill-Stead, however, she remembered her hopes of offering a public entertainment space to the town of Farmington in honor of her father's public-minded spirit.

In September 1917, Mr. F. W. Swenton, then the manager of the Hill-Stead estate, wrote a concerned letter to Harris Whittemore relaying Theodate's purchase of equipment for a motion-picture theater. Harris was equally concerned, but knew well that there was no possibility of dissuading Theodate from her project. Instead, he offered damage-control advice to Swenton:

I note your remarks regarding Mrs. Riddle's purchase of a motion picture outfit, and judge she proposes to install it in the old stable. Before she does this, I would suggest that you secure permission from the insurance people. These machines are generally considered dangerous, and I think you will find it will materially increase your insurance rate.²⁶²

It is uncertain whether Alfred would have approved his daughter's plans. It seems more likely that Theodate was fulfilling her own sense of social beneficence rather than that of her parents. From a young child, Theodate had wanted to share her home with under-privileged urban children or with orphans. As an adult, she had already taken in one orphaned child, and would foster two more in the coming years. In addition, she had run a sewing school in Farmington for

²⁶¹ Letter 908, Florence Marin to Theodate Pope, (9 January 1914), HSM Archive.

²⁶² Letter, Harris Whittemore to F. W. Swenton, HWJ Trust. Copy (W736) in HSM Archive.

poor urban women and participated in various other community-based charity projects. Theodate's commemorative project was perhaps also her way of connecting with the local community. Neither Theodate nor Ada discussed motivations or consequences of adding a theater to Hill-Stead's stables, but Theodate did express her contentment with the project to her mother:

I am enclosing two newspaper clippings both in regard to Movies, and one dealing with our own famous first appearance. Both performances were a great success. I do not know how we managed to heat the place, but we did, and it was perfectly comfortable, although it was the first of the bitterly cold days. The Movie has come to stay, so let us be modern and meet it.²⁶³

After finishing the changes to the buildings, Theodate turned her attention to the furnishings. Much of the contents of Hill-Stead had been either hand-crafted or purchased in 1900, though some pieces were antiques specially selected by the Popes. By 1918, Theodate and her mother had decided that much of the furniture, the draperies and other fabrics were ready to be overhauled. Accordingly, they consulted about which vendors to approach for the work and then Theodate corresponded with her mother about the progress. On January 5, 1918, in the same letter in which she briefly mentioned the movie premiere at the Makeshift, Theodate offered her mother an extensive explanation on the status quo of fabric selection for the reupholstering of the furniture:

I received of course the sample of red material of Johnson & Faulkner's letter, which you enclosed in yours to me. I am having a man from Robbins Bros. take the measurements for the furniture, as you suggest, and am having a man come from Sloane's to take the curtain measurements. I realize that they must get busy now. It is very good of you to leave the selection to me, but it is a great responsibility. I have thought it over now for two days and have come to the conclusion that we could not possibly regret the velvet with the square, and we might very easily regret using this other material, the latest sample, because, and this is important, when one's hand is on it on the arm of a chair it feels just like the covering of the seats in a railway train.²⁶⁴

In March, Theodate focused her attention specifically on the furniture in the ell sitting room:

The furniture covering in the Sitting Room Ell is of course disgraceful. It makes me laugh, but it would not make you laugh, dearest Mother, if you saw the white cotton sticking out, as it does, on the edge of every chair seat. However, all this will be corrected soon. I had a letter from Mr. Howie about a week ago, telling me he expected the material to be ready for shipment in ten days. This means that we may expect it any day now. I have instructed him to send 60 yards to W. & J. Sloane, and I am in touch with Mr. Estes there, who understands the order. Mr. Brown is no longer with Sloane's. They had a man here who took the measurements for the curtains. Robbins Brothers have the measurements for the

²⁶³ Letter 903, Theodate Pope to Ada Pope, (5 January 1918), HSM Archive.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

furniture and will attend to that and he window cushions. The fringe, cord and tassels are to be re-dyed by Sloane. They say this is perfectly feasible and is frequently done.²⁶⁵

This reupholstering project was completed in April, and Theodate was elated with its success, although she felt that she had to prepare her mother for the changes that she had made to the furniture coverings:

I must once more speak of the new furniture covering and curtains. It is altogether the best we have ever had and I would never wish to change it. Perhaps I should prepare you for the fact that it is a little darker than the old material and, consequently, a little more difficult to light the room in the evening, but where the light shines on it. It is the most beautiful shade during the day time and in the evening. It is a constant joy. The color is superb and the texture perfect; you cannot but be pleased.²⁶⁶

She made one other change to the building at this time, in that she added small sleeping chambers at either end of the billiard room in order to accommodate an increased number of servants. It seems that this need may have been triggered by Theodate and John's expansive social life, which far exceed the entertaining that Alfred and Ada ever did in Farmington. The fact that Theodate was fulfilling her own needs here, rather than those of her mother, is indicated by the fact that she funded this portion of the renovations on her own. It is also noteworthy that this special mention of funding suggests that Ada was subsidizing all of the other changes that Theodate made at Hill-Stead. Theodate described these final changes to her mother in a letter that probably also dates to the spring of 1918:

I had to make the two small rooms on third floor because Sophie the laundress refused to stay if she had not a room to herself and she would not live even at my cottage. . . . The partitions can be easily removed at any time. Sophie will take Annie's room and Annie will take one of the new rooms which she prefers to do as she can have her machine and be quiet. The other little room excellent for visiting maid. Need it this week with Mrs. Van Rensselaer coming. Strangely enough the billiard room looks much better – the partitions are of paneled white wood. I am paying for the work.²⁶⁷

After this renovation project, no records exist of either Theodate or Ada making substantial changes to Hill-Stead. Oral history also suggest that the house and gardens remained much as they had appeared in 1900, except for the changes outlined above.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ Letter 911, Theodate Pope Riddle to Ada Pope, (5 March 1918), HSM Archive.

²⁶⁶ Letter 912, Theodate Pope Riddle to Ada Pope, (25 April 1918), HSM Archive.

²⁶⁷ Letter 914, Theodate Pope to Ada Pope, (n.d., c. spring 1918), HSM Archive.

²⁶⁸ See the transcripts of interviews with Donald Carson, one of Theodate Pope's foster sons, which can be found in the HSM Archive. Henry Mason, a local Farmington resident, offered small details (such as the treatment of exterior hedges) that had changed from his childhood spent delivering newspapers to Hill-Stead, but otherwise found the property relatively unchanged. Interview with author, (3 August 2006).

Some time after 1916 Beatrix Farrand, who was a friendly acquaintance of Theodate, designed a new planting plan for the sunken garden at Hill-Stead. It is unclear whether or not her plan was set into place at that time, or at any point during Theodate's life-time. The garden, however, is now planted according to Farrand's design.

In 1940 Lloyd Westbrook, an architect whom Theodate employed to assist her generally with her work and specifically with her project at Avon Old Farms, helped devise a plan for the new air conditioning vents and ducts.²⁶⁹ In 1941 he may have overseen work on the plumbing at the farmhouse, and helped as well with elements of the O'Rourke.²⁷⁰

Hill-Stead's Role in Theodate's Architecture

Hill-Stead was the first architectural project in which Theodate Pope was involved from the earliest planning stages to the completion of the project. It also in many ways set the tone for her subsequent projects. Sharon Smith has identified twelve building projects that can be attributed to Theodate Pope (even after her marriage, Theodate maintained Pope as her professional surname rather than Riddle).²⁷¹ In almost all of these projects, with the exception of the workers' houses in Farmington which in many ways were constructed to support the Hill-Stead lifestyle, Theodate found her architectural commissions through the social and professional connections of her father and the Whittemores. "Highfield," the Chamberlain house in Middlebury, CT, for example, was built for neighbors and close acquaintances of the Whittemores. Harris Whittemore also directly commissioned projects from Theodate. Hop Brook School (1914-1915), for example, was commissioned by Harris and the project was fully funded by him. Theodate's reconstruction of the Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace in New York City (1920-22) was also made possible through these family connections. Anna Roosevelt Cowles, sister of Theodore Roosevelt, was a Farmington resident and close friend of the Pope family. It was probably through her influence that Theodate was awarded the commission.

Alfred Pope, J. H. Whittemore and Harris Whittemore played a significant role in Theodate's architecture beyond merely helping her get access to a network of clients. In the case of Westover School (1906-1909), which was constructed for Theodate's friend Mary Hillard, Alfred and J. H. Whittemore created a fund for the school's construction and a stockholder system to sustain it financially once it opened. Not coincidentally, they were also the largest stock holders in the project, and offered additional financial assistance throughout the construction process and the school's first years of operation. Harris Whittemore, meanwhile, became the financial advisor for the school and worked closely with Mary Hillard to ensure that it remained solvent.²⁷² In later years, Theodate also relied on Harris to organize the finances of Avon Old Farms School (1918-1929), which she designed and built in her father's memory.

²⁶⁹ Westbrook's plan for this new system in the HSM Archive.

²⁷⁰ No details about these projects are known, but tidbits of information are available in the Avon Old Farms archive.

²⁷¹ See Sharon Smith's informative "Catalogue of Buildings" in *Theodate Pope Riddle: Her Life and Architecture* [<http://www.valinet.com/~smithash/theodateCatalogueBuildings.html>]

²⁷² See Smith, *Theodate Pope Riddle: Her Life and Architecture*, for a summary of the Westover project. There is extensive correspondence among Alfred, Harris and J. H. between 1906 and 1909 about the school. A few relevant letters are in the HSM Archive, but the bulk of the correspondence is in the HWJ Trust.

The assistance that these men offered to Theodate's architectural endeavors also had a more practical direction. They met with contractors for her and looked over bids for various aspects of the construction process. They also consulted experts in order to be able to offer Theodate the best advice on relevant issues – for example, when they were discussing the sprinkler system to use for fire-protection at Westover, Alfred and J. H. met with experts and then jointly determined the best route to follow.²⁷³ In addition, they were always quick to offer the assistance of designers with whom they had worked in the past to Theodate's project. J. H. Whittemore, for example, got some form of consultation from McKim, Mead & White on the Westover project, and also enlisted Warren Manning's assistance in laying out the site for the complex. While these instances of assistance lessened as Theodate matured, they are indicative of the way in which she learned to practice architecture, and of how her father and his acquaintances enabled her professional design career.

Another way in which the design and construction of Hill-Stead was formative to Theodate's later career as an architect was the manner in which she relied on a local draftsman/architect to work through the details of the project. At the O'Rourke and later at Hill-Stead, Theodate worked closely with Henry Hall Mason, who completed all working drawings, and redesigned features of the house according to her wishes. This trend held for her entire career as a practicing architect, and she never completed a project without an assisting architect. While Theodate did not have formal architectural training, her assisting architects, with the possible exception of Henry Hall Mason, seem to have all received degrees from design schools. Few records survive that indicate her relationship with her draftsman. Some worked for her in a New York office, which she maintained off and on in New York City between 1913 and 1930.²⁷⁴ She also seems to have kept draftsmen in residence in Farmington, and after 1930 Lloyd Westbrook may have been her full-time employee and resided above her architecture studio, known as Underledge, adjacent to Hill-Stead on Mountain Road. Little research has been done into these men or their careers before and after working for Theodate Pope, and even the record of their names is somewhat incomplete. The assisting architects that Theodate employed over the course of her career were: Walter Cook, W. A. Welch, Walter McQuade, Simeon D. Smith, Warren Sherwood Bessell, Lee Atwood, Leland Lyon, and Lloyd Westbrook. She also employed professional renderers to complete the presentation watercolors of her projects; J. Floyd Yewell and Warren Sherwood Bessell seem to have fulfilled this role.

Finally, the construction of Hill-Stead also provided Theodate with an extensive local network of builders, contractors, and laborers with whom to work. After her experiences at Hill-Stead, mediated by the administrative assistance of McKim, Mead & White, and of course by the business knowledge of her father, Theodate had solid knowledge of how to create contracts with members of the building community, how to supervise their work, and also how to coordinate a large number of workers and builders within one project. These skills would prove extremely

²⁷³ See, for example, the letter of February 9, 1908 from Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, and the letter of March 24, 1908 from Alfred Pope to J. H. Whittemore, HWJ Trust.

²⁷⁴ James Ward's *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1900-1940*, records Theodate Pope as maintaining an office at 15 E. 40th Street, New York City in the following years: 1913, 1915, 1916-17. She probably kept this office without interruption between 1913 and 1917. In 1920 she opened a new office at 402 Madison Avenue, which official records show her inhabiting over the following intervals: 1920-1, 1929-30.

useful on subsequent projects, and she would routinely rely on the network of artisans with whom she was familiar throughout her architectural career.

Theodate Pope's feelings regarding the position of Hill-Stead within her architectural oeuvre are not entirely clear. In her later life, she referred to the house as being of her own design. In her letter to the estate appraiser Mr. Swenton after Ada's death, Theodate noted, "I designed and superintended the building of the house."²⁷⁵ However, when she had a lavish presentation-portfolio of her architectural work prepared, Theodate did not include photographs of Hill-Stead within the volume.²⁷⁶ As much as she may have been ready to claim the design of Hill-Stead as completely her own within social contexts, Theodate must have recognized that within the professional architectural community, the design of Hill-Stead would always belong only to McKim, Mead & White. In fact, the 1906 article featuring Hill-Stead within the *Architectural Record* had attributed the house entirely to McKim, Mead & White.²⁷⁷ Hill-Stead can be interpreted as the classroom in which Theodate Pope became trained in architecture. She had art historical and theoretical training from her formal education, but it was not until she became fully immersed in her parents' project at Farmington that she learned about the conventions of the professional design community, the practical details of architectural design, and the procedures of the building community. While the end result of this learning experience was a house with a design that was the result of a number of minds rather than solely her own, Theodate Pope's lessons from the construction of Hill-Stead would serve her for the remainder of her career.

Hill-Stead After the Popes

When Theodate Pope died in 1946 she left the house in trust to become a house museum, which she envisioned "as a Museum for the exhibition of the articles of artistic interest contained in the main house, and for the education and benefit of the citizens of the Villages of Farmington and Avon and the general public."²⁷⁸ It has maintained this function consistently since that time. The museum's property included the entire acreage of the Hill-Stead estate, and she planned for it to include both the "Gundy Museum" and "Hill-Stead Museum." Although Theodate Pope outlined in a nonbinding memorandum to her will that "the character and furnishings of The Gundy Museum are to remain unchanged as they are at the time of my death," the house was sold by the museum in 1975. Likewise, several of the other outlying houses, including Underledge (which Theodate referred to as "The Field Office"), were sold by the museum. The greenhouse was demolished after Theodate Pope's death. The tennis courts and golf grounds were allowed to return to nature, though Theodate herself may have ceased to maintain these landscape features after her father's death.²⁷⁹

Most importantly, with the transition from family home to museum, the servants' quarters of the house became the residence for the museum's successive directors. Two renovation campaigns

²⁷⁵ Letter 1021, HSM Archive.

²⁷⁶ This important volume of photographs is in the Avon Old Farms archive. It includes photographs from the studio of Frances Benjamin Johnston and Mattie Edwards Hewitt, as well as Richard Southall Grant and Floyd E. Baker.

²⁷⁷ "Mr. Alfred A. Pope's House at Farmington, Conn., McKim, Mead & White, Architects," *Architectural Record* 20, no. 2 (August 1906): 122-129.

²⁷⁸ Doc. # 972, "The Last Will and Testament of Theodate Pope Riddle," HSM Archive.

²⁷⁹ See the Donald Carson interviews in the HSM Archive.

changed the nature of these spaces and eliminated some historic features, although some original fixtures and finishes remain. In 1951, the kitchen, pantry and second floor bedrooms were transformed into an apartment for the museum's director. Later these areas were all renovated again into office space, including the third floor billiard room. The changes made by the museum are partially documented in plans from the architects who completed the renovations. Unfortunately, no records were made about the condition of the rooms before the renovations, thus little can be said about the servants' quarters before their transformation by the museum. The museum also changed portions of the attached barn by adding public restrooms, a welcome area and a gift shop. As in the changes made to the servants' quarters, the renovations themselves were documented, but the conditions existing prior to the renovations were not.

Conclusion

The history of Hill-Stead is both exceptional and typical of an upper-class rural family home built at the turn of the century. It is exceptional for the respect and attention given to the design role of Theodate Pope. Also unusual was the collaborative nature of the interaction between the Popes, the architectural firm, and the local builders and contractors. Hill-Stead was representative, however, in that it involved a prominent architectural firm, in this case arguably the 'best' firm for rural house design active in the country at that time. Likewise, the Popes followed many of their contemporaries in consulting professional landscape designers, and bringing professional experts to their estate in order to attend to any features of the house and estate. Like many other families, the Popes employed a large staff in order to maintain the house and the lands, and many of the changes that they might have wished to implement in the property could be carried out by such on-site laborers.

Hill-Stead has been one of the fortunate houses of its era to survive the demolitions of the mid-to late-twentieth century. It has outlived all of the Whittemore family homes, as well as many other of McKim, Mead & White's rural estates. While many features of its landscape have been changed since the early twentieth century, the appearance of the house and its immediate grounds are still intact enough to maintain the historic integrity and grandeur of the site. The archival holdings at Hill-Stead, studied beside the much larger extant collection of Whittemore family papers and the extensive McKim, Mead & White Papers at the New York Historical Society, offer an unusually thorough record of the building's history. Because of this record, Hill-Stead stands as an exemplar of the architecture of its period. Not only is its history rich for what it reveals about the Pope family and about McKim, Mead & White, but it also offers a valuable comparative example for other similar studies of turn-of-the-century rural estates.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Hill-Stead house and estate is a well-preserved example of a turn-of-the-twentieth-century rural estate. The house sits at a distance from the street grid of Farmington, Connecticut and is accessed via a long winding entry road, which moves northward from Mountain Road. The house is sited at the top of a hill and faces west looking down toward the village of Farmington in the valley below. While it is visually distanced from the town, a gently sloping grassy path connects the front façade of Hill-Stead to High Street below. The house is positioned such that the best vistas of the

countryside beyond can be appreciated from its grounds, as well as from the windows of the house. The Farmington Valley spreads out to the north of the house with the Talcott Mountain range visible in the distance; the Burlington Mountains to the south.

The house is a full-blown example of Colonial Revival architecture at the turn of the century. Both its clients and its architects desired that Hill-Stead take the form of an early nineteenth-century farmhouse, and the resulting building carries these ideas out on a grand scale. Neoclassical elements decorate its various facades, with a Mount-Vernon style formal portico clearly declaring the early-American aesthetic ties of the house. As a counterpoint to these formal elements, the house is rambling in plan and asymmetrical in each elevation. Like a quintessential New England farm house, it is connected via the rear wing to an attached open barn and stable.

The service buildings attached to the main house all were rebuilt eight years after the house was constructed due to damage from a fire. These spaces have the outer appearance of familiar farm structures such as an attached barn and carriage house. However they conceal a variety of non-traditional functions within such as a garage (c. 1908), the Makeshift Theater (c. 1917), and the more recent museum uses such as the gift shop, bathrooms, and galley kitchen. Other outlying buildings of the Pope's era include the greenhouse (now demolished except for its stone workroom), Theodate Pope's architecture studio in Underledge (no longer within the property), Theodate Pope's own house the O'Rourke (no longer within the property), the pump house, and the farm complex along Rt. 4 (Hartford Road).

2. Condition of fabric: Good. Most of the original materials and details are intact, remarkably so in the Pope family rooms of the main house. In the service areas of the house, many original built-in cabinets and details remain intact but the room functions have changed. A major exception is the current boardroom which does not contain any fixtures such as cabinets or sinks from its original function as the main kitchen. The landscape surrounding the house is less intact than the building itself. Sections of the estate were sold up to 1972, and elements of the landscape that defined the estate for the Pope family (e.g., extensive orchards, a large greenhouse, tennis courts and golf grounds) have not been maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Hill-Stead rises two-and-one-half stories above a basement. Wings extend from three sides of the main block, and these drop to a height of one-and-a-half stories. The building's height drops again in the transition to the attached outbuildings. The open garage, which joins the mansion house to the attached carriage barn is only a single story in height, though the high pitch of its gabled roof increases its vertical effect. The attached carriage barn again rises to two stories in height but drops to a single story in the abutting garage. The attached barn has a basement separate from that of the main house.

The massing of the mansion house complex can be understood in terms of three sections joined perpendicularly. The main block of the mansion house and its two flanking wings,

which comprised the living quarters of the Pope family, is arranged along a single axis with a few protruding bay windows and porches. The servants' quarters extend as a third wing, or ell, perpendicular to this primary axis. The open barn continues this line, linking the main house to the remaining outbuildings (barn and garage) which form a third section, perpendicular to the servants' quarters but parallel to the line of the mansion house.

2. Foundations: The house and attached outbuildings are set on stone foundations. The red sandstone foundations of the main house consist of neatly-aligned courses of large rectangular stone blocks (at most points two rows of stones are visible on the exterior of the house though at some points fewer).²⁸⁰ These blocks have thin mortar joints between them. The barn and garage foundations are constructed with rounded gray stone, probably fieldstone, set in courses with wide, irregular mortar joints. Along the manure shoot, which is located at the cellar level of the southern face of the attached barn, this foundation is exposed to a height greater than five feet.

3. Walls: The walls are faced with clapboard siding, painted white. Different treatment is used for this siding determined by the different zones of the house. The main house has very thin, evenly spaced, clapboards. On the servants' wing of the house the clapboards widen to twice the width of those on the main portion, but maintain even spacing. On the attached barn and garage, clapboards of differing widths are used, to give the effect of random selection of wall-covering. The clapboards vary from the thin boards used on the main house, to boards the thickness of those on the servants' wing, and some boards that exceed both of these widths. The clapboards are attached with distinctive round-headed wrought iron nails. The use of wrought iron nails gives a traditional, or old-fashioned, appearance to the house. These nails are in neat vertical rows on each exterior surface of the mansion-house complex. They are painted white to blend with the surface of the clapboards, and thus are visible as a textural pattern on the surface of the house.

The servants' and outbuilding wings have no exterior wall ornamentation, other than faux dovescotes on the gables of the stable roof.²⁸¹ The main house, however, has many exterior ornaments. The corners of the house are marked by two-story Doric pilasters. A strip of dentilated trim caps some of the walls, directly underneath the simple banded cornice line. Along the formal front façade of the house, simplified Doric pilasters two stories in height correspond to the line of columns along the front portico of the house. Two large bay windows protrude from the front façade of the house, breaking the symmetry of its formal portico. Simplified Doric pilasters mark the corners of these bay windows as well, and each has a simple cornice. Marking the roofline of both of these

²⁸⁰ No official record was made of where the stone for Hill-Stead was quarried. The Pope family provided all the stone to the contractors, however, as a money-saving technique. An oral interview with Henry Mason, grandson of Henry Hall Mason and long-time Farmington resident, revealed that a red sandstone quarry on the Farmington Reservoir was owned by Miss Porter's school in the early twentieth century and used by many local residents. It seems likely that given Theodate Pope's close connections with Miss Porter she would have had easy access to this quarry had she so desired.

²⁸¹ These may have been true dovescotes in the original barn as constructed in 1899. At the least, they were indicated as such on the McKim, Mead & White plan.

protruding bays, as well as of the grand front portico, is a decorative balustrade in a Chinese Chippendale-inspired pattern.

4. Structural system, framing: Hill-Stead is a wood-frame house on a stone foundation that also makes strategic use of structural metal. In addition to stone foundation walls and brick or stone interior walls throughout the basement, there are several rows of six inch round metal posts providing additional support in more open areas. I-beams are also visible in several areas of the ceiling. The wood-frame walls rest on four by eight inch wood sills capping the stone foundation. The roof structure was not visible, but is most likely a wood common rafter system.

5. Porches, porticoes:

Front Portico (Northwestern façade) “Mt. Vernon Portico”:

This large portico, added in 1901 after the initial building campaign, is one-bay deep and extends five bays across the main formal façade of the house. The porch roof extends from the principal roof in a shed form at a lower pitch. Six two-story square wood Doric columns support the roof and are ornamented solely by vertical rectangular recesses. The columns are hollow, and two of them conceal gutter down-spouts, which discharge water from the roof through a small circular pipe emerging from the base. A low wood balustrade in a Chinese Chippendale-inspired pattern runs around the edge of the portico roof on three sides. A single step along the front separates the portico from the expansive lawn beyond, while the sides are slightly higher with two stone steps. The floor of the porch is formed by large blocks of beige sandstone with contrasting red sandstone along the perimeter.

North Porch or Mr. Pope’s Porch (Northeastern façade):

This porch was built in 1906 during McKim, Mead & White’s addition of a second library and morning room at Hill-Stead. If the Mt. Vernon style façade pays homage to the architecture of the nation’s first president, this simple Doric temple front façade seems to bow to the architectural movement triggered in part by Thomas Jefferson’s Neoclassical architecture. This porch is integrated into the gable end and sandstone foundation of the one-story morning room wing and is one bay deep by three bays wide. Its form and detailing recall Greek Revival structures from the early nineteenth century. The porch roof is supported by four square columns, with the wall behind featuring a matching pilaster at either end of the porch. The pediment is ornamented with a half circle wood sash window with scalloped muntins. The beige sandstone porch floor features contrasting red sandstone around the edge, like the front portico. Four red sandstone steps provide access to the porch from a thin winding flagstone path in the lawn. This path connects the porch to the stone wall that bounds the front lawn from the field beyond (once Mr. Pope’s golf grounds), and three additional sandstone steps are flanked by two small wood fence posts that echo the Doric pilasters of the house.

Servants’ Porch (Northeastern façade):

The modest servants' porch is inset on the northeast façade of the far end of the service wing. It probably was used as a functional and leisure space for the support staff of the house. This porch provided access to the large open lawn formerly used as the kitchen garden and for line-drying of laundry. **(Figure 9)** A rough-hewn stone set into the turf of the kitchen garden acts as the bottom step to the porch, with four wood steps above. A trellis fills the space between the wood floor of the porch and the ground below. Simplified Doric pillars flank either side of these stairs and support the roof above. A simple railing is mounted along the edge of the porch floor.

Porte-Cochère (Southwestern façade):

This carriage entrance was the primary entryway for family guests. Its formal composition reflects this critical social role. Unlike a true porte-cochère, it was not designed to have a carriage drive underneath it. Instead, it provides a covered walkway from the carriage drive to the carriage porch. The porte-cochère has a low pitched front gable roof extending perpendicular to main block of the house. It is one bay wide, with a front pediment over a shallow elliptical arch, and two large bays deep. These large bays are formed by a pair of elliptical arches with a simple square wood Doric column at the center. These supports are each decorated solely by vertical rectangular recesses. Two narrow vertical trellises are attached to the arcade with curved supports. These trellises are painted green and offer a contrast to the brilliant white of the porte-cochere arcade. A low stone slab forms the floor of the porte-cochère.

6. Enclosed Porches

Carriage porch (Southwestern façade):

The porte-cochère connects perpendicularly to the center bay of the three bay wide, one bay deep carriage porch. This shed roof, one-story porch extends from the southwestern façade of the main house. Each bay is defined by a large elliptical arch opening framed by Doric pilasters and mainly filled with small panes of glass. This fenestration sits on a thick wood sill over a low wall composed of thin vertical boards, creating the appearance of a solid balustrade. The entrance consists of a modestly-scaled door of two wooden panels, with nine panes of glass above. Three over five sidelights flank the door.

Solarium (Northwestern façade):

This porch is inset within the one-and-one-half-story wing at the west corner of the main block. It is three bays wide and one bay deep, with large areas on fenestration on the two exterior walls. Each bay, including the center doorway, is framed by simple Doric pilasters. The two flanking front bays are nearly square and filled with twenty-four rectangular lights arranged in a four over six pattern. A central door is located between these two large windows. This door is flanked by five over one sidelights and is glazed on its upper half with nine rectangular lights in a three over three arrangement. The side bay has a pair of sixteen light (four over four) openings indicated only by a slightly thicker vertical mullion. This fenestration sits on a thick wood sill over a low wall

composed of thin vertical boards, creating the appearance of a solid balustrade. The entire porch is framed by a simplified cornice. The porch has a wood floor, and has heating and cooling vents to allow for full climate control when it is enclosed.

As originally designed this porch had removable windows and screens so that it could function as a sun porch in the winter and a screened porch in the summer. The porch originally constructed for the library was a mirror image of the solarium and functioned in a similar manner, but was completely removed during the renovation campaign of 1906, to make room for the enlarged second library and its bay window.

Stone porch (Southwestern façade):

The stone porch, or coal-chute porch, is one story high and covered by a shed roof projecting from the upper level of the servants' wing; the exterior wall of the stone porch is flush with the main block ell. This porch sits on a shallow slab formed by wide blocks of flagstone.²⁸² The width of its exterior façade is defined by two elongated elliptical bays, each with a fixed fanlight above a large rectangular opening. The left bay is fully fenestrated with small lights in a seventeen over five arrangement resting on a low wood wall approximately two feet in height. The other bay is divided into three sections below the arch. A square window (consisting of thirty rectangular panes, five over six) sits on a low wood wall on the south end. To its left is a smaller square window (consisting of twenty rectangular panes) above a wooden panel. Finally, to the left of this window is the entry, consisting of a door with a single wooden panel and sixteen panes of glass above. The entry door is painted a deep green, while the rest of the porch is painted white. All faces of wall on the exterior of this porch that are not fenestrated are covered with clapboard. A single simplified Doric pilaster marks the meeting of these two elliptical bays, and offers the only exterior decoration of this porch.

This porch was primarily a storage, circulation, and service space, and offered direct access to the scullery, the laundry, the kitchen, and the secondary pantry. During the 1951 alterations of the servants' quarters, a direct access door to the basement was also opened from this porch. Its floor is entirely composed of flagstones. Three doors on the east side of the porch give access to the laundry, secondary pantry, and stair to second floor of servants' quarters. A door centered with the main entrance door gives access to the servants' dining room, and is accessed via three red sandstone steps. A door on the west side of the porch gives access to the former kitchen of Hill-Stead (now the Boardroom). This is also accessed by three red sandstone steps and a sandstone stoop.

6. Chimneys: Despite the fact that it was constructed with radiant heat and a furnace, Hill-Stead had a working fireplace in each of the family living spaces of the house. The profile of the house is, therefore, dotted by stretcher bond brick chimneys. There are seven chimneys for the main house, and two on the attached barns. Like the other picturesque elements of the house, placement of the chimneys along the roofline of the house varies, some are perpendicular to the roofline, while others are parallel. There is a

²⁸² These flagstones also compose the roof of a hallway in the basement below, where their underside is sealed with a thin coating of cement, and then white-washed.

hierarchy of size and ornament to the chimneys. The largest chimneys are also the widest and have a corbelled brick cap that is composed of three courses of brick. Medium sized chimneys have a corbelled brick cap of two courses, and the smallest have only one course of brick as a decorative cap.

The chimney that is built into the firewall which separates the servants' quarters from the attached barn differs from the rest, perhaps due to its construction following the 1908 fire in the barns. Unlike the other chimneys, this one has a pointed arch brick cap placed above the top two brick courses.

The tall, thin chimney in the Makeshift Theater certainly dates to later than the main building campaign of the house. It may date to 1908 when the stables were reconstructed, or to Theodate Pope's 1917 renovation of the stables when she added the Makeshift Theater.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: (See enclosed porch section for exterior doors and doorways in those areas.) The primary entrances to the house are the front entryway through the northwestern portico, the port-cochere entrance inside the carriage porch on the southwestern façade, the entryway through the stone porch on the southwestern façade, and the entrance at Mr. Pope's porch on the northeastern façade. Entrances of secondary importance (both functionally and architecturally) are the two-door entryway through the solarium to the ell sitting room on the northwestern façade, the laundry room entrance (now the entrance to the Director's office) on the southwestern façade, the entrance to the scullery (now the reception area) via the servants' porch on the southeastern façade, the entrance to the dining room on the southeastern façade, and the direct entrance to the morning room (or Mr. Pope's den) facing southwest.

Each of these doors is slightly different but follows a hierarchical pattern. All exterior doors at Hill-Stead are solid wood doors painted green, many with divided light glazed openings on the upper half. The exterior doors for the family area at Hill-Stead are divided into an upper and a lower section, with separate brass dead-bolts on the interior to keep these two sections closed. Either the top or the bottom of the door can be opened individually, swinging into the house, to allow for air circulation. This feature is also repeated in some of the doors that are fenestrated (such as the southeastern entrance to the dining room, as well as the entrance to the dining room via the carriage porch). In several cases these hefty exterior doors are accompanied by a storm door, fully glazed with rectangular panels (as in the door to the Greek Revival porch opening into Mr. Pope's den). Each exterior door has ornate brass hardware and hinges.

In contrast to the doors of the main house, the exterior doors of the servants' quarters are modest. They consist of thinner wood doors, painted green, and most

have six recessed panels in each door. In place of the flashy brass hardware on the main doors, the servants' quarters feature a lesser metal, painted black.

The doors of the open barn and attached barn differ again. These assume a rustic look with vertical wood planks painted green. Some have iron nail-heads (painted over) to increase their rustic feel. All have large iron strap hinges, painted black, which increase their old-fashioned appearance. The garage has a pair of wood pocket doors in elliptical arch openings.

The wood trim surrounding most of the exterior doors includes simple Doric pilasters. Some of the exterior doors also have fixed sidelights and a pedimented hood. The most elaborate surround is found on the main door at the center of grand portico. Here the door is flanked by six over six wood sash windows, each with a louvered shutter on the outer edge. The door and windows are set into rectangular recess approximately two feet deep and framed by a wide entablature and Doric pilasters.

An endearing feature of many exterior doors at Hill-Stead is the presence of small cat doors. These take different shapes. In the open barn, arched cutouts, or squared-off cutouts are present in nearly all the doors. These appear even on some of the doors of the main house. The one on the solarium is particularly original, as it has a sliding mechanism and small pull-chain hardware to allow it to be suspended open or closed at will. There are cat doors for the basement as well.

b. Windows and shutters: (See enclosed porch section for windows in those areas.) There are several recurring types of windows at Hill-Stead with variations in size and trim. The main block and its wings feature six over six double-hung wood sash windows. On both the first and second floors most of these windows have a pair of green louvered wood shutters and simple wood moldings, both of which are original to the design. The first floor windows also have a decorative wood cornice. Smaller versions of these windows, either three over three or three over six, appear in the various dormers and servants' wing.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: Hill-Stead's roofline is composed of a deliberately asymmetrical and complex series of gable roofs of different heights and pitches developed specifically to give the appearance of additions over time. The main block of the house has a side gable roof with lower side wings featuring a side gable and an asymmetrical side gable, or saltbox, roof form. The main wing extends in an L-shape from the southeast side of the main block. Here the gable roof changes height two times to telescope down to the level of the "open barn." The northeastern pedimented porch adds an additional side-gable wing to the house, which is enclosed by a boxed eave. Copper flashing is revealed when sections of the cornice are removed (see field photo). The roof is covered with composite shingles.

b. Cornice, eaves: The eaves are either closed or very shallow boxed eaves. A short cornice return is located at most of the gable ends (except on the northeastern porch where the pediment is completed). Copper gutters and downspouts make a practical feature of the house into a decorative feature as well. Noteworthy elements of the gutter system include the downspouts concealed within selected monumental pilasters (see field photo) and also within two of the six monumental columns at the main portico.

c. Dormers:

Hill-Stead's twenty-two dormers can be grouped into two types. One type consists of pedimented gable-roof dormers with a single window (most commonly a full dormer, a few inset) appearing in the upper levels of the main block and wing. These pedimented gable-roof dormers are ornamented by small Doric pilasters. A second dormer type consists of shed roof dormers with pairs of windows (of varying size) that appear in service areas. In cases where multiple windows are connected within a single shed dormer, small simplified Doric pilasters, and sometimes clapboard siding, separate the windows. The center of seven dormers on the northwestern (or primary) façade is particularly noteworthy for its size, placement, and level of ornamentation. This pedimented gable dormer is in line with the main entrance and included a partially glazed door flanked by sidelights and pilasters. This door provides access to the balcony on top of the grand portico.

C. Description of Interior – Main House and Servants' Wing:

1. Floor plans:

a. Basement Floor plan

The basement is accessed via a stairway through a doorway inside the stone porch. An alternative entryway is accessed by descending six stairs on the west end of the open barn. The footprint of the basement follows that of the main house. It is a full basement except for an elevated crawl space underneath the solarium, and a long crawl-space corridor extending out from underneath the second library. The basement spaces are largely continuous, with periodic stone or brick support piers, with the exception of four enclosed rooms. One room, immediately to the south upon accessing the basement through the open barn entrance, is used to store the modern oil tanks, and its historic purpose is unclear. Immediately to the north are two joined rooms, closed off from the rest of the basement, that served as the wine cellar for the house. The final separate room is located beneath the scullery, and served as cold storage for foodstuffs.

b. First Floor plan

The first floor plan of Hill-Stead is characterized, in the front of the house, by large public rooms for entertainment and communal leisure. A large drawing room, dining room and smaller sitting room were the three most public spaces of the house, each accessible via the main entry hall, and via the side entrance from the porte-cochère. Two libraries, Mr. Pope's den, and a small guest bedroom

(called the parlor bedroom) offered slightly more private spaces on a reduced scale. These were spaces where guests could be welcomed and entertained, but accommodated more discrete gatherings than the larger spaces at the other end of the floor. In the back of the house, or servants' quarters, the first floor is characterized by a series of smaller interconnected spaces that historically were the working center of the house. Kitchen, laundry and pantry spaces were arranged between other living and working spaces for the servants. The plan of the back of the house is based around pragmatic and efficient distribution of space in order to facilitate service tasks.

It is most common to enter the front of the house through the porte-cochère, a fact that was true historically as it is today. Upon entry to the carriage porch through the porte-cochère, a central doorway directly ahead offers a secondary entrance to the house (directly into a service hallway). This door was probably primarily for use by the butler and other serving staff to enter the carriage porch, greet guests, and gather outer wear for storage in a closet down the hall. To the left of the entryway from the porte-cochère is the primary entrance to the house, through a fenestrated doorway. This entrance leads to the dining room, which is the largest room in the house. It offers both the spatial and functional transition between servants' wing and family rooms. A door from the dining room, on the same wall with the main entrance doorway, offers access to the servants' hallway beyond. Importantly, it also gives access to the butler's pantry, the one portion of the servants' quarters still attached to the main body of the house. In this same wall there is also an opening into the butler's pantry enabling the passing of food, and other supplies from the servants' quarters beyond into the grand living area. The butler's pantry is a transitional space between serving quarters and main living area, and a door nearly on axis with the passing opening, offers access to the more utilitarian serving quarters beyond. After traversing the shorter-length of the dining room, a ninety-degree turn counter-clockwise brings a visitor into the ell sitting room. Within the ell sitting room, a ninety-degree turn clockwise leads to the solarium, or with a one-hundred and eighty degree turn, access is given through a large cased opening to the drawing room, which is perpendicular to the ell sitting room.

An elliptical opening, slightly off-axis with the first, leads into the front hall. Perpendicular to this entrance into the front hall is the formal entryway to the house, a massive wooden door flanked by two windows. While the navigation of the first floor plan at first seems to be circuitous, a clear vista from the front door to the drawing room and butler's pass-through opening in the dining room shows that although the doors are slightly off-axis with one another, they are essentially arranged in formal enfilade. Traversing the front hall gives access to the first library through an unassuming wood door. The first library is connected integrally to the second library, though the two are perpendicular to one another. Consistent interior décor and particularly wide doorways maintain the connection between the two spaces. The second library gives access to the two other significant spaces on the ground floor. The parlor bedroom is accessed by a ninety-degree turn

clockwise at the opposite end of the second library from the first library. The parlor bedroom, in turn gives access to its own attached lavatory via a counter-clock-wise ninety-degree turn. It also gives access to the front hall, slightly off-axis from the entry via the second library. The final first floor space is accessed by turning ninety-degrees counter-clockwise in the second library, across from the entrance to the parlor bed-room, and descending three stairs. The space, alternately known as Mr. Pope's den or the morning room, has an attached lavatory, and also a door leading to the family vault. This room has two exterior doors, one facing the dining room across the yard, and the other giving access to the north porch overlooking the Pope family golf grounds.

The service quarters of the house are most commonly entered via the stone porch, though they can also be accessed through the servants' porch (near the kitchen garden) or through the laundry entrance (now the direct door into the director's office). The stone porch has six doors that lead to interior spaces. At opposite ends of the room, to the left and right as one enters the room from the outside are, respectively, the entrance to the kitchen (now the Pope Boardroom), and the entrance to the laundry room (now the director's office). The wall to the right of the entrance door has two additional doorways. One leads to the store room (or kitchen store room), now the office supply closet, the second leads to a stairway that offers access to the butler's apartment above the laundry room (now an office). To the left of the entryway to the stone porch, another door leads to the basement stairway. Finally, a door just off axis with the entrance door leads into the scullery (i.e. the servants' dining room), now the reception area for the offices.

Today this later doorway is the primary circulation route, but historically it is possible that the door into the kitchen (now the Pope Boardroom) may have been just as heavily used. Upon entering the reception area, two circulation routes are possible. A guest may turn ninety-degrees clockwise, the turn again, ninety-degrees clockwise, to enter a brief corridor. On the left along this corridor is the office supply room (formerly the kitchen store room), and at the end of the hallway, slightly below grade, is the director's office (former laundry). If instead, upon entry to the reception area, a visitor turns ninety-degrees counter-clockwise, and proceeds forward, then the next room arrived at is the staff kitchen (formerly the pantry). Continuing along the same trajectory one arrives in the boardroom (formerly the kitchen). While in the front half of the house, all doors are off-axis from one another, in the service quarters, rooms are organized around straight corridors, or along an axial string. Perhaps this contributes to the functionality of these spaces, or perhaps equally it is due to the decreased amount of imaginative energy spent on their design.

The main house and servants' quarters are physically joined on each floor of the house, but spatially visually disconnected. Access points between these two areas on the first floor are both via the kitchen (now boardroom). A door at the south-west end of the kitchen would have given access to the vestibule just inside the porte-cochère, and might have been used especially when guests were being

greeted. A second door at the northwest end of the kitchen gave access to a small serving pantry, and then to the butler's pantry beyond. The servants' and outbuildings wings of the house are attached, but a solid brick firewall between the laundry/butler's room and the open barn prevents direct access from the interior.

c. Second Floor plan

The second floor plan is characterized by a series of smaller, discrete private spaces versus large and interconnected public spaces. This is true both in the main part of the house and in the servants' quarters.

In the front of the house, the second floor circulation is unified by a large central hall at the top of the main staircase which provides access to each bedroom suite. This central hall commands expansive views to the front and rear of the house through large windows. A small sitting area at the west end of the hall provided a more intimate gathering space, perhaps used by the family or visiting guests, but probably not available for social events. This hallway also provides access to the third floor via a staircase that is generally hidden behind a closed door.

As originally used, this second floor hall gave direct access to the three guest suites of the house, each with a different layout. A secondary hallway feeding off of the central hall allowed entrance to the Pope family bedrooms (a two bedroom suite with a bathroom in the middle shared by Theodate Pope and her visiting female friends, and a master bedroom suite). The three guest suites each offered a slightly different layout. The Green guest bedroom, directly at the head of the stairs, had a single large bedroom with an attached bath. The Mulberry Suite and the guest suite that would later become John Wallace Riddle's bedroom and bath face each other across the west end of the central hall. The Mulberry Suite has a large guest bedroom, a bathroom and a small guest bedroom arranged enfilade. During the 1917 renovations, Theodate Pope connected John Wallace Riddle's bedroom to her own master bedroom suite, removing a closet and bureau and inserting an arched passageway. The master bedroom suite, which became Theodate's room, offers the largest bedroom in the house, with a large attached bathroom, closet and dressing room. Two other rooms on the second floor open from a hallway that connects the family bedrooms to the servants' wing beyond. These two rooms are a large clothing closet, and a large linen closet.

The second floor servants' quarters have been modified on a number of occasions. Their plan, however, still remains relatively true to its original form. The servants' second floor is accessed via three different stairways, an indication of its multifunctional nature even during the Popes' residence. In 1917 when Theodate Pope renovated much of the rest of the house, she also modified the servants' quarters, adding a central sitting and work room for the servants. This room is located just beyond the door that separates the Pope family's bedroom hallway from the servants' quarters. Today it serves as a meeting room for the offices,

maintaining its central and communal role. Individual servants' rooms spread out from this central space in a somewhat haphazard manner. Five servants' bedrooms are on the second floor. Each had a connected closet and washbasin (though some of the washbasins are now covered). Two full baths and two half baths remain in the servants' quarters.

A small, narrow passageway connects the main body of the servants' quarters of the second floor with the butler's room located above the laundry. This space has a full bath, a large bedroom, and a half bath connected to it.

d. Third Floor plan

Only the main block and part of the servants' wing have a third floor. There were two primary purposes to the third floor. A large room, which originally spanned the width of the main section of the house, functioned as a billiard room. In 1917 Theodore Pope added two small workrooms to this space by inserting paneled partitions at one end of the room.

A hallway runs from this front room, along the secondary axis of the house. A bathroom and a water closet open off of the north end of this hall. At the east end of the hall was another large room, which may have served alternatively as a servants' bedroom and/or a storage space depending on need.

2. Stairways:

Main staircase: While a number of stairways are located throughout Hill-Stead, only the main staircase connects the first and second floors in the main family wing. This wide, straight run staircase begins in the first floor entry hall and rises gently to the upstairs hall. The relatively simple details of this staircase are finely executed. Its highlight is the mahogany railing with a curtail and curtail step at the first floor. This curved rail guides the eye up the stairway. Its deep color is echoed by the treads, also of mahogany. The rises and thin unornamented balusters are covered by a toffee-colored paint matching the paneling in the surrounding entrance hall. At the foot and the head of the stair, a small Doric pilaster is set into the paneling, signaling the beginning and the end of the stairway. A continuation of the railing surrounds the stair opening at the second floor level.

Stair to Mr. Pope's Den/Morning Room: This staircase, consisting of only three steps between the second library and Mr. Pope's den (or morning room) reflects the grand staircase in miniature. It has a pair of mahogany railings with thin, painted toffee yellow balusters resting on curved curtail steps.

Stair to Third Floor: This utilitarian, straight run stair begins in the central hall on the second floor and rises to the third floor billiard room. It is concealed behind a door except when in use. This stairway would have offered family members and guests access to the third floor social space.

Central service stair: These are the only stairs that continue directly from the ground floor to the third floor. This half-turn staircase has wood tread and risers partially covered by a carpet runner. Located immediately behind the connecting door between front and back of the house, they probably were predominantly a servants' stair but may have been used on occasion by Pope family members because of their convenient location for access to and from the bedrooms as well as to the carriageway entrance below.

Service stair within servants' quarters: This simple straight run staircase connected the pantry to the second floor. It was probably the general use staircase within the servants' quarters.

Butler's stair: A door opening off of the stone porch gives direct access to a steeply slanting flight of stairs leading to the Butler's quarters. This stairway could also be accessed from the rest of the second floor servants' quarters, but only via a circuitous route.

Interior basement stair: A door opening off of the stone porch gives access to a steep flight of stairs down to the basement. The original entrance to these stairs was via a door through the kitchen. This door is still in place, but has been concealed by fabric wallcovering.

3. Elevator: A small (4 feet square) lift included in the original construction of Hill-Stead runs from the basement to the third floor servants' hallway. Its location in the servants' wing indicates that its intended use was primarily utilitarian (transfer of household goods between floors), although it is large enough to transport a passenger. Currently powered by an electric motor, its original power source is uncertain, although perhaps it was an earlier electric motor now removed. It was manufactured by Sedgwick of New York. Access to the lift on each floor is behind a wood door and frame matching the rest of the interior woodwork. The interior metal grate door and interior paneling appear to be later replacements (c. 1960s).

4. Flooring: The house has parquet wood flooring on the first floor and standard hardwood on the second and third floors, except in the case of specific exceptions mentioned below. All floors in Hill-Stead are either pine or oak, with oak having been used in the kitchen, vestibule and other high traffic areas. Thin floorboards, approximately 2 inches in width, are used throughout the house. The parquet floors are arranged in two patterns, which are varied depending on the room. The most common pattern consists of a series of large squares, set on end with four smaller squares inlaid within each. In rooms where the box pattern is not employed, a herring-bone pattern is put to use.

All rooms in the main house have large area rugs, which cover most of the floor space. The second floor rooms have wall to wall carpets with a pin and grommet tacking system holding them in place. Three of these rooms still have original carpeting. The main

room on the third floor (originally the billards room) also has an original rug with the same pin and grommet system. Other rugs are reproductions of those left in place by the Pope family.

The butler's pantry, and adjoining service pantry all have interlocking rubber tile flooring with a distinctive puzzle piece shape. In the butler's pantry the floor is maroon with a tan border and accents. In the service pantry the floor is gray-blue with crème border and accents. This type of flooring was patented by the Philadelphia architect Frank Furness in 1894. Available in a variety of colors, interlocking rubber tile became popular for service spaces, particularly kitchens, due its quietness, flexibility, and waterproof qualities.²⁸³

4. Wall and ceiling finish:

Most rooms have plaster ceilings, finished either smoothly or with texture. Visible ceiling beams in the living and dining rooms have decorative wood paneling giving a structural metal I-beam used to span large areas a decorative, Colonial Revival appearance.

The walls of most rooms have a combination of wood paneling and wallpaper, with painted crown molding. In most cases, a wood panel wainscot rises approximately 2.5 feet high, with wallpaper above. Some rooms are entirely paneled, such as the first library and the morning room. Other than the fine mahogany rail, all woodwork in the house is painted and varnished, either with solid colors or faux oak graining. On the first floor the dominant palette is the toffee yellow paint of the entry hall and drawing room woodwork. The dining room, first, and second libraries feature dark faux graining. The morning room uses a lighter yellow color that may have been part of Theodate Pope's 1917 renovations. The walls of the morning room and both libraries are entirely paneled or covered by built-in shelves and cabinets, while the fireplace wall in many rooms is also paneled from floor to ceiling.

The wallpaper is also distinctive. In some cases it is consciously Colonial Revival, most notably rectangular block pattern and floral pattern in the entry hall. In other areas, such as the dining room, the wallpaper features Classical motifs like putti and urns among the floral pattern. It was handblock printed in France. The color palette for wallpaper, although now faded, is largely beige or earth tones with blue accents.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors:

The typical interior door at Hill-Stead is wood approximately three inches thick, with four or six rectangular panels and painted to match the trim. In addition, on the second floor some of the doors have fixed louvers to allow for air circulation between rooms. In the servants' wing the six-panel wood doors are similar but thinner. In several of servants' quarters the upper most square panels of the doors are on hinges and open out to allow for air circulation.

²⁸³ Sharon C. Park, "Rubber Tile," in *Twentieth Century Building Materials*, ed. Thomas C. Jester (New York: McGraw Hill, 1995), 222-227.

One unusual door is the four-panel arched door, set into an arched opening, that separates John Wallace Riddle's bedroom from the master bedroom suite. This door was added during Theodate's 1917 renovations, after her 1916 marriage to John. Another noteworthy door is the swinging wood door between the butler's pantry and the hall outside the dining room. This door has a large rectangular opening in its upper half filled with frosted glass with a floral motif at the center.

The typical doorway trim is a simple surround with mitred corners, approximately 6 inches thick. More distinctive are the wide door frames covered with decorative wood panels echoing the rest of the interior paneling for walls and window seats.

This paneling continues with a series of large cased openings that are perhaps more notable than the actual doorways. The most prominent is an elongated elliptical archway that separates the main entry hall from the drawing room. This doorway is about a foot deep and framed by simple Doric pilasters below the arch. Another very wide and deep rectangular cased opening is between the drawing room and ell sitting room. This paneled opening is about fifteen inches deep.

Also noteworthy are the pair cased openings between the first and second libraries. Here two rectangular openings approximately seventeen inches deep and four feet wide flank either side of a central pier. Built-in bookshelves line the frame of these openings and all sides of the pier. An elliptical arch opening, similar to the entry hall arch, but on a smaller scale, marks the passage from the second floor central hallway to the smaller hallway leading to the master bedroom suite.

b. Windows:

The typical window in Hill-Stead has wood sashes and muntins painted to match the trim of each room. The window trim is usually a simple wood surround with mitred corners, while the thick frames in the main wing of the house feature paneling matching the door frames. The three part window on the west side of the second floor central hallway is noteworthy for the simple Doric pilaster in the frame between the central and side windows.

Many windows in the main wing of the house feature built-in window seats corresponding to the size of the window opening. Noteworthy window seats are located in the dining room, ell sitting room, drawing room, and second library, among other spaces. The seats have canted sides, drawing light from the windows out into the room and feature typical decorative paneling.

6. Built-Ins

In addition to the window seats and bookshelves already mentioned, Hill-Stead features many fine built-ins in both its public and private spaces. The walls of both libraries are lined with bookshelves and small cabinets while many of the fireplaces have small warming cabinets on the side. Perhaps the most prominent built-in is the tall cabinet in the dining room that includes a butler's pass-through concealed behind a pair of arched doors. From the dining room this cabinet is built flush with the paneled wall. Three drawers with two rounded brass knobs each form the bottom half of the cabinet. The arched doors on the upper half are set into a rectangular frame with spandrels in the two upper corners. When opened, these doors reveal a paneled interior, with a single shelf placed at the upper third of the inner space. The rear wall of the cabinet appears solid, but a square sliding door opens from the butlers' pantry.

The butler's pantry is fully lined with the original cabinets, adjustable shelves, and counters. Several cabinets have glass fronts to reveal the glassware, dishes, etc. behind. This room also has a built-in silver safe, warming oven, and ice chest. The second pantry is also lined with what appear to be original built-in cabinets. Particularly significant here are the bins for flour and other foodstuffs on along the east wall.

Mr. Pope's den, or the morning room, features built-in cabinets concealed behind the paneling. Nearly every panel opens to reveal a storage compartment behind, either a cabinet with wall pegs or shelves. The master bedroom closet and bath also have a series of built-in drawers and cabinets for storing clothing, accessories, and toiletries. The linen room on the second floor is also lined with custom built-in drawers and cabinets to store the large collection of household linens. Additional built-in drawers and cabinets for household storage are located in the second and third floor hallways of the servants' wing. It is also worth noting that Hill-Stead has closets in nearly every room, with either pegs and/or a rod for hanging clothing.

7. Fireplaces

Hill-Stead's fireplaces are mainly decorative because although they are functional, the house was built with a modern central heating system. They were custom-designed for the house by William H. Jackson & Co. of New York City, in consultation with Ada and Theodate Pope. The typical Hill-Stead fireplace has a cast iron grate with brass andirons, a marble or painted masonry surround around the rectangular opening, and a decorative wood mantelpiece.²⁸⁴ Important public rooms such as the first library and drawing room have decorative cast iron linings with Neoclassical motifs such as fluted engaged columns, floral festoons, and ovals with a sunburst pattern and fireplace surrounds of fine black marble with gold veining. Less important private spaces such as the upstairs guest rooms have plain painted masonry surrounds and brick fireboxes. The typical mantelpiece recalls early-nineteenth-century Neoclassicism, with Doric pilasters supporting an entablature. The most ornate mantelpieces have fluted or dentilated trim

²⁸⁴ See W. R. Wilder of McKim, Mead & White's drawing #131 "Three quarter scale of mantels House For A. A. Pope Esq.," (30 October 1899).

along the base of the cornice, but no other carving or ornament. In less important spaces the detailing of the pilasters and entablature is even plainer. Each mantelpiece is painted with a solid color or faux graining that matches the rest of the trim and paneling in that room.

8. Hardware:

Brass doorknobs, hinges, box locks, and keyhole reveals appear throughout Hill-Stead. The plain doorknobs are typically round and directly mounted on the door without an escutcheon plate. Some guest rooms and built-in cabinets and drawers (particularly in bathrooms) have glass knobs or painted wood knobs instead of brass. A few porcelain doorknobs appear in the servants' quarters.

9. Fire-proof vaults:

Hill-Stead has two fire-proof vaults -- the first original to the house and second constructed during the expansion of Mr. Pope's den and the second library. The original vault is a small brick-lined closet, roughly 2.5 feet wide by twelve inches deep, located in the first library. A small row of pegs now lines the upper edge of the closet. The interior of the closet has been painted to match the trim of the surrounding room. This closet is supported on an arched brick vault in the basement. A much larger vault was added to Mr. Pope's new den (morning room) in 1908. It has an exterior wooden door, which opens to reveal a large black metal door, secured by a large combination lock. This vault is also brick-lined, here with an exposed honey-colored brick. It is approximately 4 feet wide by 3 feet deep, with a vaulted interior.

10. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation:

Despite its many fireplaces, Hill-Stead was built with a modern central heating system. Two large coal-burning boilers heated the house. This original system has been replaced by an oil-burning forced air HVAC system. Only the boiler pits remain in the basement from the original heating system. Many radiators were removed during Theodate Pope Riddle's lifetime and it is not clear whether the original system was exclusively radiant and whether it operated with hot water or steam. Hot water is more likely for a residential application.

Particularly interesting and poorly documented is a form of passive air cooling that historically was in use at Hill-Stead. A series of tunnels underneath the floor of the basement, as well as circular ventilation pipes, can be traced throughout the basement. A long brick and turf-lined tunnel running underneath the second library seems to have funneled cool air into the basement, and then through a screening or rudimentary purification process in a series of tubular holding tanks. This system is not indicated on the 1899 Cellar Plan and perhaps was added during construction of the study/second library wing. Most of the duct work in use today dates from Theodate Pope Riddle's lifetime.

b. Lighting:

There is no record of when Hill-Stead first was lit by electricity. It may well have had a certain amount of electrical power from its construction in 1900, which is supported by the fact that one of the suspected causes of the 1908 stable fire was damaged electrical wires.²⁸⁵ In any case, the house was lit by a combination of gas and electric lighting throughout the Pope tenure in the house. Old-fashioned glass wall sconces and chandeliers were half lit by gas and half by electric power. A typical wall-sconce at Hill-Stead features a brass urn-shaped sconce, with an arm that reaches out to support an etched-glass globe. These globes are vertically oriented, spherical at the bottom, with a flared mouth at the top and are etched in a floral pattern. Many of the elaborate chandeliers at Hill-Stead were also both wired for electricity and piped for gas. The main house retains all of its original light fixtures.

c. Plumbing:

All original plumbing systems and fixtures at Hill-Stead were furnished by J. L. Mott Ironworks of New York City. Both the family/guest and servant areas of the house had modern bathrooms; all but one are still intact. The typical Hill-Stead bathroom includes a white marble sink with marble backsplash and shelf mounted on a painted wood vanity cabinet, a porcelain tub also set into a wood cabinet, and a wall-mounted chain pull tank toilet with a wood seat and base that includes a toilet paper compartment. All of the fixtures are polished nickel with white porcelain level handles. Of particular note are the cylindrical waste-water release valves for the tubs, which are mounted on a horizontal surface above the vertically mounted faucets. These have a ceramic knob that pulls vertically to release water.

The most elaborate family bathroom in the master suite has separate footbath and built-in linen cabinets in addition to a tub, sink, and toilet with wall-mounted tank. In this bathroom the original marble sink was replaced by porcelain, probably during the late 1910s or 1920s. The Mulberry Suite guest rooms share a full bath, while all other guestrooms have their own full bath. The servants' wing also features fine marble fixtures, but the bath arrangement is more communal. For example a full bath located in the third floor hall (with separate entrance to toilet) would have been shared by the servants resided in this area. Marble sinks concealed in closets in most servant rooms provided some semi-private facilities.

d. Servants' call system:

Each room in Hill-Stead was connected by an electrified servants' call system. The system was discontinued during the 1951 modifications of Hill-Stead by the museum. The call-bells are brass plates with a small semi-circular brass knob. An earlier call system may have functioned without electricity, as is suggested by a speaking tube in the butler's pantry.

²⁸⁵ See "Pope Stables in Farmington Burned," *The Hartford Courant*, 20 May 1908, 1.

11. Original furnishings:

All furnishings in period rooms of the house are original to the Pope family. In the servants' wing only built-in features are original. The goal of the Pope family in decorating Hill-Stead was to create a tasteful old-fashioned interior. In order to create an older feel for the house, the Popes commissioned custom-built pieces of furniture made to appear to be antiques. They juxtaposed these freely beside genuinely antique pieces. American, British, and French pieces of furniture predominate, and range from 18th century to twentieth century works contemporary with the Popes. The richly decorated interiors also highlight Mr. Pope's large collection of oil paintings (most dating to the French Impressionist period of the late nineteenth century) and prints of all origins. A large collection of ceramic pieces, mostly either from East Asia, England, or Italy, is also featured in the rooms.

D. Interior Description – Carriage Barn/Makeshift Theater Wing

1. Floor plans:

a. Basement Floor plan:

This wing does not have a basement, but a steep earthen ramp between the Makeshift Theater and garage allowed access to the manure pit for the barn.

b. First Floor plan:

The first floor plan of this wing has a number of noncontiguous spaces mainly accessed through exterior doors. There is a passageway through the carriage barn section of this area that provides access to a room at the northeast corner that may have originally been a tack room and to the visitor orientation area to the south. The Makeshift Theater can be entered through exterior doors on the east and south facades. The theater is internally connected to the visitor orientation area; from here there are internal doorways to several spaces housing functions added after Hill-Stead's conversion into a museum – a galley kitchen, bathrooms, and gift shop. The main garage is accessed from inside the gift shop or from the exterior at the west façade in the courtyard. The end section of the garage is separated by a brick firewall and only entered via the south façade. An additional storage area located in the northwest corner of this wing is accessed via an exterior doorway at the courtyard sheltered by the open barn.

c. Attic/loft Floor plan:

The carriage barn/theater/garage wing has several noncontiguous loft or attic spaces. The attic of the Makeshift Theater is a large unfinished space with exposed trusses and beams. This space is connected to a storage loft over the visitor orientation area and gift shop. Across the carriage barn passageway is another storage room located above the office at the northeast corner of the wing.

2. Stairways:

There are three stairways in this wing. A straight run wood stair goes from the north end of the Makeshift Theater to the attic. This stair is partially enclosed by a wall of wide horizontal boards. A second straight run wood stair goes from the south side of the carriage barn passageway to the loft space above. Its railing is formed by a low wall of vertical boards. A third straight run wood stair is enclosed at the north side of the northeast corner office and provides access to this loft.

3. Flooring:

The floor in this wing is either hardwood (Makeshift Theater, office) or cement (carriage barn passageway and tack room, garage). The floor is covered by commercial grade carpet or vinyl tile in the visitor orientation area, gift shop, bathrooms and kitchen.

4. Wall and ceiling finish:

The walls in this wing are generally horizontal wood boards stained a medium brown. The ceilings are generally plaster with exposed beams and braces in the carriage barn. The Makeshift Theater has exposed wood beams with visible tie rod anchors. The garage has an arched plaster ceiling.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors:

There are only a few interior doorways and doors in this wing and these are later alterations such as the horizontal wood plank bathroom doors, and the French doors between the carriage barn passageway and visitor orientation area.

b. Windows:

The Makeshift Theater, gift shop, northeast storage room, garages, and tack room all have wood sash divided light windows with simple molding. These vary in size from the six over six double hung sash in the Makeshift Theater to the six light fixed casements in the Makeshift attic.

c. Hatch:

There is a hatch opening in the ceiling of the Makeshift Theater that allowed large items to be hoisted up to the attic using a rope and pulley.

6. Built-ins:

The northeast storage room and loft above include a number of built-in storage cabinets for off-season clothing, linens, woolens, and other household goods. The east wall is lined with cedar closets.

7. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation:

A number of wall mounted radiators are still visible in the garage.

b. Lighting:

There are historic ceiling light fixtures in the garage and Makeshift Theater. The Makeshift light fixtures have a bell-shaped green metal shades.

9. Original furnishings:

The original wood benches for the Makeshift Theater are still either in the theater or stored in the loft areas. These benches were built at a variety of heights for better visibility. These deliberately simple furnishings added to the rustic appearance of the barn-like theater and meeting space.

E. Site:

1. Landscape character:

The Pope family estate once measured 200 to 250 acres, but now consists of 152 acres.²⁸⁶ Hill-Stead is set within this landscaped estate, of which it was the visual and functional center. The estate was carefully planned and maintained during the Pope's tenure in the house, and included a variety of practical and pleasurable elements.

Its most elaborate garden, the Sunken Garden, is located to the south of the house. This garden may originally have been designed by Warren Manning, but was redesigned by Beatrix Farrand c. 1916, and is planted today according to Farrand's garden plan. This formal garden was originally flanked by several other important landscape elements. To the east was a grape arbor, and a little farther beyond was the greenhouse of the estate, of which now only the foundation and workroom remain. To the west of the sunken garden was the wild garden, originally planted as a rambling, picturesque garden in the English style. These formal garden areas abutted a large sheep pasture that spread south from the garden walls almost to Mountain Road. Walking trails and woodlands now fill the land to the east of the mansion house. A kitchen garden was planted off the service wing. While the estate was much less wooded in the early twentieth century, these walking trails were an original feature of the estate, allowing the family and guests to take walking excursions without ever leaving the comforts of home. The pleasure grounds of the estate originally included a tennis court, which was placed to the west of the entrance road, behind a stone wall. A six-hole golf grounds was the landscape feature of the estate most prized by Alfred Pope. It was located in the pocket of a valley to the north of the house with a small man-made pond at the center.

Hill-Stead was also a functioning farm when it was originally constructed. A farm complex is at the northern boundary of the estate, located today along Connecticut Route 4. Pasture lands abutted this complex and were used for the cows, sheep and horses resident at Hill-Stead. The farm's apple orchards were located near the farm complex, and a peach orchard was between the sheep pasture and Mountain Road on the southern boundary of the property.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ See the *Hill-Stead Museum Historic Landscape Report* prepared by Allyson Hayward for Reed Hilderbrand Associates Inc. (July 2002): 3.

²⁸⁷ For more extensive details about each of the features of the landscape, see *Hill-Stead Museum Historic Landscape Report*.

a. Topography: The topography of Hill-Stead is defined by gently rolling hills and valleys. Other than the plateau on which the house and attached barns sit, there is no flat terrain on the site.

c. Walls and boundaries: Stone walls demarcate all landscape boundaries at Hill-Stead. The two main entrances are marked by stone piers capped with granite blocks. These flank the Mountain Road entrance, and a lower-profile pair mark the openings of the path connecting the front façade of Hill-Stead with High Street below. The walls across the estate are a combination of pre-existing farm walls and boundaries constructed by the Pope family. Pre-existing dry-stone walls run into more formally aligned walls added by the Pope family. Although these newer walls appear to be dry stone, they are held together by a concrete core and capped with granite blocks on the entrance piers.²⁸⁸ Each garden is bounded by stone walls, and the visitor is guided across the estate by means of this visual division. A 1933 photograph of the greenhouse complex shows that post and rail wooden fences also were in use, though the organic nature of such boundaries has not left any trace of where other such fences might have been placed.

2. Spatial organization and land patterns

a. Circulation and paths:

The original main entrance to Hill-Stead is a long winding entry road, moving north from Mountain Road. A back road, built predominantly as a service access road, connects the farm complex and attached barns of Hill-Stead to CT-Route 4 (known as Hartford Road when the house was constructed). A third entrance to the estate consisted in a walking lane that directly linked High Street in Farmington with the front façade of the house. This walking lane was a grassy field, with a pedestrian board walk running up its center.

When the Pope family inhabited Hill-Stead, they maintained a number of walking trails through the woodland areas. These trails may have been dirt, or gravel, and others may have been board walks, like the lane from High Street. The wild garden was characterized by meandering pathways in a picturesquely planted garden.(Figure 10)

b. Views and vistas:

Hill-Stead estate is defined by a number of carefully choreographed views. A stroll around the lawns of the house provides views of the countryside in all directions. The village of Farmington is itself completely hidden from view from Hill-Stead (though the reverse is not the case). This visual illusion causes the experience of the estate to be completely rural, even though it is so closely linked to the fabric of the town.

Particularly important are the vistas within the estate itself. The main entrance drive from Mountain Road offers constricted vision. It has always been densely

²⁸⁸ In summer 2006, Dr. Robert M. Thorson, a University of Connecticut geologist, completed a survey of the walls at Hill-Stead. The results of this study will be available in the HSM archive.

lined with trees, which obscure any view of the house. The road also curves slightly, heightening the anticipation of the path. Within a few hundred feet of the house, however, this road opens to provide a full view. The service road, connecting the main house with the farm complex and CT- Route 4 offers a more open vista. It rises and falls along two hills and a cleft in between. An allee of mature maple trees and a small wood bridge between the stone pump house and pond give this approach a formal, yet picturesque, quality.

3. Outbuildings:

Greenhouse/ garage:

The greenhouse at Hill-Stead was constructed between 1903 and 1908. Initially the workhouse of the greenhouse consisted of a small stone structure with a 100 foot by 20 foot iron and glass greenhouse on a stone foundation behind. In 1908 the stone work house was expanded by an additional two bays to include garage space and a rotating car wash. The greenhouse and garage is a field-stone structure held together with mortar. Granite lintels are set above the frame of each window and door. A brick chimney, now in disuse, would have supported the exhaust from the boilers that heated the greenhouse.

Pump House

The pump house is a small red sandstone building, with a shingled roof and small square windows.

The pump house was part of the original hydraulic workings of Hill-Stead. A custom designed water pump system controlled the water supply to the house and pond from this house. The original system was removed and a new system installed in 1940, shortly prior to Theodate Pope's death in 1946. The pump house no longer contains hydraulic equipment.

Timothy North Farm Complex

The farm complex is located along Connecticut Route 4. The farm house, known as the Timothy North house, predates the Pope tenure at Hill-Stead and has been traced to the eighteenth century (c. 1780). The horse barn dates to c. 1870. The hay barn dates to 1899 when Hill-Stead was under construction. A particularly notable interior feature of the cow barn was a large room that functioned as an ice house during the winter and summer months. The original dairy, silo, and sheep shed are no longer extant.

PART III: Sources of Information

Architectural Drawings

The complete set of McKim, Mead & White drawings of Hill-Stead, with the earliest drawings being floor plans dating from February 9, 1899 and drawn by Egerton Swartout, is housed in the New York Historical Society McKim, Mead & White Collection. Copies of these drawings are in the HSM Archives.

The HSM Archives also have extensive maps and plans from various stages of the property's history. Particularly significant are 1908 maps of the Hill-Stead property.

Archives/Repositories

Avon Old Farms School archive. Avon, Connecticut.

Files of Harris Whittemore, Jr., Trust, c/o Bank of America 1 Exchange Place – CTEH 43102A
Waterbury, Connecticut 06702.

Hill-Stead Museum Archive. Farmington, Connecticut.

New York Historical Society Archive. New York City, New York.

Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace Archive. New York City, New York.

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PART IV: Project Information

Hill-Stead was documented by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS, Catherine Lavoie, Acting Manager) during the summer of 2006. HABS is a branch of Heritage Documentation Programs, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Richard O'Connor, Acting Manager. The project was cosponsored by Hill-Stead Museum, Linda Steigleder, Director and CEO. Lisa Pfueller Davidson, HABS historian, served as project leader. Julia A. Sienkewicz (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), served as project historian. James Rosenthal, HABS photographer, completed large format photographs.

Appendix I

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
Date	From	To	Re:
April 26, 1898	Alfred Atmore Pope	J. H. Whittemore	“ . . . We spent Saturday and Sunday in Farmington. No progress in land matters..”
July 18, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Theodate Pope	Letter about available pieces of property in Farmington.
July 19, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Negotiations with Kern Manion and Miles about purchase of land. Also, question of the formation of a pond and water flow.
July 21, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Cable: updates on real estate negotiations, recommends judicious planting.
July 22, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Extensive discussion of real-estate negotiations, including his father’s recommendations for dealing with land situation as is.
July 22, 1898	Alfred Pope	Harris Whittemore	Cable reading: “Condition is worse – Do not buy Potts. Final determination Miles complete property or nothing.”
July 23, 1898	Alfred Pope	Harris Whittemore	Cable reading: “Might tell Miles importance Potts property because including our main entrance, and sale to others forever prevents deal with him.”
July 26, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Further discussion of real-estate negotiation.
August 3, 1898	Alfred Atmore Pope	Theodate Pope	Telegraph reads: “Good bye dear be sure and act freely about buying in Farmington your judgement and Harris will be mine without question . . .”
August 8, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Option purchased on Riley property, no further developments.
August 9, 1898	Alfred Atmore Pope	J. H. Whittemore	Enclosed letter to Mr. Whitmore (Real-estate agent), discussed Harris’ vital role in negotiations.
August 16, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Theodate Pope	Discussion of a stone-crusher, and brook rights, after purchase of property.
August 24, 1898	Alfred Atmore Pope	Theodate Pope	Letter, awaiting news about real estate endeavors in Farmington.
August 29, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Summary of properties purchased and costs, notes “[I] suppose Theodate has kept you fully advised, as since she returned the matter has been more out of my hands than in them. . .”
Undated letter (perhaps September 1898?)	Theodate Pope	McKim, Mead & White	Letter of introduction to the project and to herself.
September 5, 1898	Alfred Atmore Pope	Theodate Pope	Land deal has been closed. Alfred asks Theodate to talk to McKim, Mead & White to help offer advice for situating the house.
September ?, 1898	Ada Pope	Theodate Pope	Happy about the purchase of the land in Farmington. Asks Theodate if she might want to order the furnishings she had selected the prior spring for the house.
September 11, 1898	Alfred Atmore Pope	Theodate Pope	Lengthy letter discussing details of landscaping, water privileges, etc. for the new property. Several mentions of Warren Manning.

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Re:</u>
September 12, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Warren Manning	Miss Pope is not interested in any assistance at present.
September 17, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Theodate Pope	Regarding her communication with Warren Manning. Theodate has obviously inquired about McGonigal (arch.), currently working on the plans for Harris' house.
September 17, 1898	Theodate Pope	William R. Mead	Discussing her intent that the house be built along her plan.
September 17, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Warren Manning	Passing along communiqué from Theodate Pope to Warren Manning.
September 19, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Theodate Pope	Recommending D. H. Potter (a former employee of Warren Manning) to do landscaping work.
September 19, 1898	Alfred Pope	Theodate Pope	"I hardly know what to write you. We have not had any letter from you for some time to act as a stimulant (?) I have about exhausted my plain imagination in telling you thoughts about the new place and suggesting how to proceed in 'breaking ground' - "
September 25, 1898	Alfred Pope	Theodate Pope	Discussion of the entrance routes to the new house. Alfred wants a more direct route to the north, and perhaps a drive from Theodate's house up the hill.
September 29, 1889	Alfred Pope	Theodate Pope	Discusses desire for fireplaces, as well as the 'look' of a house in 1830.
September 29, 1898	Theodate Pope	McKim, Mead & White	Theodate is "anxiously awaiting" a reply from Mead about a letter she sent Sept. 17. Apparently she wrote directly to him instead of to the firm. Now fearing he is not in the office, she asks them to, "Please forward if you can the letter and a roll of plans I sent him at the same time. The delay in hearing from him is causing me quite a little trouble."
September 30, 1898	Theodate Pope	Mr. William R. Mead (of McLean, Mead & White - got name of firm wrong)	Request to meet with Mead at some point the following week.
September 30, 1898	Theodate Pope	William R. Mead	Brief note, "Will be in your office at 3:30 next Monday afternoon Oct. 3 rd . Am so glad I can see you before you sail but very sorry you cannot come up."
October 2, 1898	Ada Pope	Theodate Pope	Discussion of revisions made to the house plan (addition of fireplaces, enlargement of Alfred's library). Also, informs Theodate of Alfred's purchase of "fine old Sheraton chairs for his room."
October 4, 1898	Alfred Pope	Theodate Pope	A. A. Pope's reaction to Theodate's letter to Mr. Mead.
October 7, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Enclosed tracing of map by A. D. Vorce of the property, and notes "This will give you the acreage and a general bird's eye view of the whole lay of the land."

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Re:</u>
October 15, 1898	Henry Hall Mason account book		Full day of work and advice on Pope barn plans.
October 18, [1898?]	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Discussion of decisions made with regard to excavation of house cellar. Notes that she is coming down to New York City to have McKim, Mead & White make changes to the plans 'while she waits.'
October 18 (1898?)	Henry Hall Mason	Miss Pope	Construction of barn.
October 18 (1898?)	Henry Hall Mason	Miss Pope	Has sent the drawings he made for the barn to McKim, Mead & White. Discusses adjustments made to roof pitches, and remarks that one of them reflects "a manner often used in the old days."
October 22, 1898	Henry Hall Mason account book		Full day of work and advice on Pope barn plans.
October 26, 1898	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Discusses positioning of sewer drainage line, as well as placement and appearance of sewer pipes in the basement. Also discusses the size of windows flanking the front door, and the effect she desires for the rendering of the house.
Undated letter, c. October 1898	Theodate Pope	McKim, Mead & White	Discussion of the path of sewer drainage.
October 26, 1898	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Discussion of sewer pipes, also offers directions on the appearance she desires the "pretty perspective" to have.
October 28, 1898	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Replying to a letter from Swartout about barn specifications. Also discusses the effect she desires the appearance of the barn to have, noting, "The upper part of barn open and just like old fashioned barn lofts over the stalls but open up to rafters and no floor over the central part of barn."
October 29, 1898	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Discussion of barn specifications, direction that the clapboards of the barn should be the same as those of the house, except "spaced unequally."
October 31, 1898	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Excavation plan and North elevation are satisfactory, Swartout can now make the "water color perspective of the house from the South West."
October 31 1898	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Acknowledging receipt of the excavation plan of the house as well as the north elevation. Requests preparation of working plans in time for her father's brief sojourn in New York on November 7.
Undated c. October 1898?	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Requests cellar specifications, as conversation with Mr. Manning and Mr. Potter has guided her to begin excavation that fall.
Undated c. Nov. 1898	Theodate Pope	McKim, Mead & White?	"Architect's notes" Written while looking over plans and elevations. Consists of remarks about changes desired.

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
Date	From	To	Re:
Undated c. Nov. 1898	H. [Hal?] H. Mason?	Theodate Pope?	“Mason’s notes” Contains specific changes of details of the house. Including the dining room, butler’s pantry, and drawing room mantle.
Undated c. Nov. 1898?			“Water proofing provisional” Document containing details about many very specific elements of the house’s construction and furnishing.
Undated c. Nov. 1898?	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	“Notes on House elevation,” focuses especially on the windows – their placement, form, panes, etc.
November 3, 1898	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Discussion of the barn. Requests that even though he can not get the house plans ready to show her parents, could he possibly get the old ones ‘neatly drawn over’ so she can show them to Mr. and Mrs. Pope?
November 5, 1898	Henry Hall Mason account book		Two hours of advice to Theodate Pope.
November 17, 1898	Henry Hall Mason account book		Seven hours of advice to Theodate Pope.
November 28, 1898	Richardson & Burgess	McKim, Mead & White	Solicits consideration for construction of house at Farmington, Conn.
December 7, 1898	Purves & Malcolm	McKim, Mead & White	Solicits consideration for construction of house at Farmington, Conn.
December 17	Henry Hall Mason account book		One hour of advice to Theodate Pope.
December 24, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Further negotiations with Miles. Discusses the “disposal” of one of the houses purchased (“Potts” house), in form of making it a gift to Miles could be an incentive.
December 30, 1898	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Further negotiations with Miles.
Undated c. Jan 1899?	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Theodate has been strongly advised to include a fire-proof wall. Describes this to Swartout, and asks him to adjust the plan accordingly. Also, a question about storm (double) windows.
January 7, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		Four hours of advice to Theodate Pope.
c. January 14, 1899	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Two finished rooms desired over laundry, but no windows in the brick fire wall.
January 13, 1899	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Further negotiations with Miles.
February 9, 1899	Plans of Hill-Stead drawn by Egerton Swartout. Complete set at the New York Historical Society, some also in the Hill-Stead Museum Archive.		
March 11, 1899	H. Wale Lines	McKim, Mead & White (directed to Swartout)	Solicits consideration for contract work on Pope property.
March 11, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		Henry Hall Mason began work on Dairy barn plan.
March 14, 1899	McKim, Mead & White	H. Wales Lines	Contents unknown – seem to have directed H. Wales Lines to contact Alfred Pope directly.
March 15, 1899	H. Wale Lines	McKim, Mead & White	Notes that they have sent information to A. A. Pope.

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Re:</u>
March 28, 1899	Adam Purves	Mr. Watson (at McKim, Mead & White)	Soliciting the opportunity to place bid for house construction.
March 29, 1899	Harris Whittemore	Theodate Pope	Further negotiations via Mr. Whitmore for Miles property.
April 10, 1899	Hills & Fox	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for stone-work.
April 12, 1899	H. C. Thomson	McKim, Mead & White	Exchange of correspondence about their electric lighting.
April 12 1899	H. C. Thomson	Theodate Pope	Letter describing there electric gas lighting and burglar alarm systems.
April 15, 1899	Purves Malcolm	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for cellar with accompanying cover-letter.
April 15, 1899	Hills and Fox	McKim, Mead & White (mis-spelled)	Telegraph, reading: "We returned Popes plans and estimate by express April tenth"
April 18, 1899	Theodate Pope	McKim, Mead & White	Telegraph reading "Let me know by telegraph if you have sent the cellar plans to H. Wales Lines."
April 18 1899	Purves & Malcolm	McKim, Mead & White	Response to questions about their bid for the cellar.
April 19, 1899	Hills & Fox	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for cellar.
April 21, 1899	McKim, Mead & White	H. Wales Lines	Contents unknown, referred to in April 26 letter from Wales to McKim, Mead & White.
April 24, 1899	Purves Malcolm	McKim, Mead & White	Revision of proposal for cellar.
April 24, 1899	Hills & Fox	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for mason work to finish house to 1 st floor.
April 24, 1899	F. A. Cadwell	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for mason work to finish house to 1 st floor.
April 25, 1899	F. A. Cadwell	McKim, Mead & White	Letter re: the delay of his proposal.
April 26, 1899	H. Wales Lines	McKim, Mead & White	Intent to submit estimate for construction of Pope House when plans are received from McKim, Mead & White.
April 26, 1899	R. F. Jones	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for mason work to finish house to 1 st floor.
April 29, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		Mason completed work on dairy barn plan.
May 1, 1899	L. A. Miller	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for work on basement, mentions issues of damp-proofing, provision of materials, and issues concerning cracked stone and rubble stone brick trenches, and gravel filling.
May 2, 1899	J. Dally	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for work on basement, mentions issues of damp-proofing, brickwalls, and bluestone covering of trenches.
May 2, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		Popes paid the \$117.82 bill for Mason's work on the Dairy barn (including 132.5 hours spent over the plans).
Undated c. May 1899?	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Notes on the appearance and construction of the house after conversation with Mr. Whittemore. Request for working plans for house cellar, as well as specifications.

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
Date	From	To	Re:
Undated, early 1899?	Theodate Pope	William Rutherford Mead	Theodate will be detaining Mr. Wilder in Farmington another couple days, as they have been making great progress. Reference to getting the "Colonial books the builder spoke of" from the firm.
May 2, 1899	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Inquiring after the progress of the house plans.
May 4, 1899	Theodate Pope	McKim, Mead & White	Details about the H. Wales Lines Co. contract. Also trying to hurry the preparation of the plans.
May 5, 1899	L. A. Miller of The H. Wales Lines Co.	Alfred A. Pope	Acceptance of McKim, Mead & White's order (at request of Miss Pope) for H. Wales Lines Co. to furnish all labor and material necessary to complete the masonry of the cellar.
May 5, 1899	Theodate Pope.	McKim, Mead & White	Telegraph, reading "Do not draw up contract for house cellar see letter"
May 8, 1899	Theodate Pope	McKim, Mead & White	Discusses the H. Wales Lines Co. contract. Also impatient over the preparations of the house plans.
May 9, 1899	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Telegraph reading "Can you not send house plans immediately have written the firm twice and no response."
May 13, 1899	Theodate Pope	McKim, Mead & White	Requesting details for cellar window frames.
May 16, 1899	Moss Safe Co.	McKim, Mead & White	Solicit opportunity to furnish estimates and prices for relevant needs.
May 16, 1899	Alfred Atmore Pope	Egerton Swartout	Telegram reading: "You really must send the detail plans and specifications for my house immediately. A. A. Pope"
May 17, 1899	Alfred Atmore Pope	J. H. Whittemore	Thanking Whittemore for reference of the man who had put in his "heating apparatus"
May 18, 1899	Theodate Pope	McKim, Mead & White	Telegram, requesting print-offs of plan, and essentially firing the firm.
May 19, 1899	Albert Franklin	McKim, Mead & White	Soliciting the opportunity to place a bid on the heating systems of the Pope house.
May 19, 1899	J. H. Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Forwarding a letter to Alfred from the real-estate agent F. G. Whitmore.
May 23, 1899	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	"Memorandum of Agreement" drawn up by Harris between Miles and Pope for sale of Miles property.
May 24, 1899	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Enigmatic note, some degree of consternation about the property.
May 26, 1899	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Somewhat apologetic letter for her behavior toward the firm. Notes that her Father was angry with her. Discusses wanting the firm to draw up framing plans and drawings of interior details. Also notes that she is heading off for a tour of old houses.
May 27, 1899	Alfred Atmore Pope	J. H. Whittemore	Purchase of Miles property.
May 31, 1899	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Atmore Pope	Further land negotiations, regarding "east end of Miles lot."
June 3, 1899	Alfred Atmore Pope	J. H. Whittemore	"If we go east, it will only be for a few days, to

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Re:</u>
			get in touch with Theodate's operations. We can't do this by correspondence. . . . Mrs Pope is regretting that she cannot wake up on the hill in Farmington these beautiful mornings. She would enjoy the progress of the work there so much. I tell her she ought to go and remain for some time . . ."
June 5, 1899	Harris Whittemore	Alfred Atmore Pope	Regarding purchase of east end of Rice lot.
June 8, 1899	Alfred Atmore Pope	J. H. Whittemore	". . . I hear so little about Farmington operations that I have got to give considerable attention to matters of detail this trip. . ."
June 26, 1899	Samuel Cabot	McKim, Mead & White	Providing requested information re: insulting and deafening quilt.
June 26, 1899	Alfred Pope	McKim, Mead & White	Regarding house plans and heating system.
June 26, 1899	Alfred Pope	Theodate Pope.	Extensive details about the research A. A. Pope has done into features of the house, including heating, deadening of floors, paint, plastering, etc.
June 28, 1899	Theodate Pope	Alfred Pope	Has been to talk to Swartout. Detailed information about Cabot's plans for the insulation, as well as details about other aspects of the construction. Remarks, "I hope you will feel things are going better when you come on this time."
July 11, 1899	Norcross Brothers	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for extensive work on A. A. Pope house, including "mason work above first tier of beams, carpenter and outside joiner work, plastering, painting, glazing, and iron work"
July 11, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		Bill rendered by Mason to Popes for Inspection, Specifications, time and advice for work on dairy barn plans.
July 20, 1899	Agreement between R. F. Jones and Alfred A. Pope, mediated by McKim, Mead & White, for: Mason, Carpenter, Joiner, Plastering, Painting, Glazing and other work		
August 8, 1899	William H. Jackson	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White (directed to Swartout)	Measurements for fireplace openings to fit their stoves and grates.
August 8, 1899	Theodate Pope	Alfred Pope	Detailed letter (written from camp) about the current status of the construction. Refers to making contract with Philips, and praises Jones' progress. Complains about mistakes made by McKim, Mead & White in drawings of dormers.
August 16, 1899	William H. Jackson	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White (directed to Swartout)	Requests that McKim, Mead & White ignore measurements sent on the 8 th , pending further communication from Miss Pope in response to photographs submitted by Wm. H. Jackson & Co.
August 25, 1899	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Telegraph requesting Swartout to mail the "drawings of fire proof vault" given to him by A. A. Pope.
August 28,	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Telegraph reading "Father wishes representative

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Re:</u>
1899			of Graves Elevators to come see me.”
September 1, 1899	William Paul Gerhard	Mr. William Rutherford Mead	Thanks Mead for having recommended his services to A. A. Pope.
September 1, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		Bill rendered by Mason for 201.5 hours of time and materials, expended between July 14 and August 31, for “detail plans, etc.”
September 2, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		One day of work spent on detail plans.
September 21, 1899	Mr. Wilder	Mr. Mead	Quarter scale drawings of interiors are nearly finished. Passing along request from Miss Pope for recommendations of New Haven or Hartford firms to solicit estimates. She wants a local worker, but would go as far afield as New York if Mead recommended it.
October 1, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		Travel expenses, plus work on barn specifications.
October 3, 1899	Theodate Pope	Egerton Swartout	Requests that Swartout come to Farmington, or send someone else competent to make changes to the house plan. She notes, “I have a great many things to talk over and would greatly prefer to have you come if possible.”
October 7, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		16.5 hours of work on Pergola and Dairy barn.
October 14, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		21.5 hours of work on Pergola and garden house.
October 18, 1899	Ada Pope (in Farmington?)	Alfred Pope (in Cleveland)	Discussion of the arrangements Alfred has made for the kitchen sink.
October 28, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		15 hours of work on barns and house.
October 31, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		9 hours of work on barns and house.
Undated c October 1899?	Theodate Pope	Mr. Wilder	Library plans are completely satisfactory, please draw them up and then send them out to the bidders.
November 4, 1899	Theodate Pope	Mr. Wilder at McKim, Mead & White	Requests Mr. Wilder to make up specifications to accompany the plans sent out for bids for the house construction. Theodate seems impatient at being asked an excessive number of questions about the plans, and feels the firm needs to solve this problem.
November 10, 1899	Gascoigne at Norcross Brothers	McKim, Mead & White	Furnishing wood, wainscoting one wall of bedrooms 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7.
November 10 (year illegible, 1899?)	The Bridgeport Steam Stone Works	McKim, Mead & White	Requesting consideration for employment on stone work of new residence at Farmington, CT.
November 14, 1899	George Mertz’s Sons	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for paneling, doors, and other wood-work.
November 16, 1899	T. D. Wadeldon	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for paneling, doors, and other wood-work.
November 21, 1899	Norcross Brothers	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for laying finished floors in the A. A. Pope house.
November 22,	Norcross Brothers	McKim, Mead &	Returning plans for A. A. Pope house.

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Re:</u>
1899		White	
November 23, 1899	George Mertz's Sons	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for laying oak or pine floors in Mr. A. A. Pope House.
November 24, 1899	H. B. Sherwin of Waters, Sherwin & Crowninshield	McKim, Mead & White	Proposal for laying oak or pine floors in Mr. A. A. Pope House.
November 25, 1899	R. F. Jones	McKim Mead & White	Proposal for flooring, paneling, etc.
Undated, November 1899?	H. B. Sherwin of Waters, Sherwin & Crowninshield	McKim, Mead & White	Estimate for Cabinet work for House of A. A. Pope, Esq.
November 29, 1899	T. D. Wadelton	Mess. McKim, Mead & White	Proposals for laying oak or pine floors in Mr. A. A. Pope House.
December 1, 1899	William H. Jackson	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White	Regarding specifics of measurements for the Library, and Ell fireplace openings.
December 4, 1899	Paul C. Pape	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White	Note regarding a drawing he accidentally left with McKim, Mead & White.
December 14, 1899	Henry Hall Mason account book		Popes billed for 132 hours of time spent on plans, plus materials and travel.
January 1, 1900	Henry Hall Mason account book		Popes billed for 126 hours of time.
January 22, 1900	R. F. Jones	Mr. W. R. Wilder	Request for information regarding the interior doors at the Pope House.
January 24, 1900	Alfred A. Pope	Mr. W. R. Wilder at McKim, Mead & White	Question regarding correspondence between McAllister's method of treating combination joints and that planned by McKim, Mead, and White.
January 26, 1900	William H. Jackson	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White	Discussion of hearths for library, drawing room, front bedroom # 5, and north bedroom (#4).
January 27, 1900	McKim, Mead & White	William H. Jackson	(? – referred to in Jan. 31 letter, perhaps requesting marble samples and further details regarding fireplaces)
January 31, 1900	William H. Jackson	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White (referred to Wilder)	Discussion of marble and brick for the fireplace, as well as use of Portland cement for interior of hearths with marble fronts.
February 2, 1900	The J. L. Mott Iron Works	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White (referred to Wilder)	Notification that they have sent the blueprints for bathrooms at the A. A. Pope residence, in order to provide McKim, Mead & White with "dimensions."
February 10, 1900	L. B. Fulton at The J. L. Mott Iron Works	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White (referred to Wilder)	In response to McKim, Mead & White critique of blueprints. Notes that the parts have already been specially made and shipped to the site.
February 12, 1900	R. F. Jones	Mr. Wilder	Is service wing hand rail to be of mahogany with white pine newell? Please inform McAllister.
February 13, 1900	R. F. Jones	Mr. Wilder	Regarding communication with McAlister about main part of the house being ready for his work.
February 16, 1900	J. H. Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Letter discussing Alfred's purchase of a tree mover.
February 16, 1900	Henry Hall Mason account book		Popes billed for 74 hours of work, as well as barn details, oversight of work, and a garden gate.
February 22,	R. F. Jones	Mr. Wilder	Question regarding the door between the dining

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Re:</u>
1900			room and the south porch.
March 5, 1900	William H. Jackson	Mr. Wilder	Requesting that they can set their hearths and facings into place before wooden mantels are put into position.
March 5, 1900	Henry Hall Mason account book		Popes billed for 69 hours of work, including barn details and oversight of work.
March 8, 1900	R. F. Jones		Summary of payments received on contract, as well as sub-contractors used.
March 8, 1900	R. F. Jones	Mr. Wilder	Discusses the attached summary of payments. Notes, "It is some what difficult to get at the exact amount on the house as we have done considerable work in the garden etc., have built brick walks, foundations for the summer house, man holes pier etc., etc.," since McKim, Mead & White are trying to sort out house construction costs from other details.
March 15, 1900	William H. Jackson	Messrs. McKim, Mead & White	Concern regarding positioning of marble hearth, asking McKim, Mead & White if they have "heard from Miss Pope" on this matter.
March 15, 1900	H. Wales Lines	McKim, Mead & White	Has been paid in full by the Popes.
March 16, 1900	W. B. McAllister	W. R. Wilder, Esq. at McKim, Mead & White	McAllister is notifying Wilder that he has sent a car load of finish "for the rear part of the house," and of his concerns about the design of the main staircase and newel post.
March 16, 1900	R. F. Jones	W. R. Wilder	Returning detail drawings from McKim, Mead & White office. Notes that Mr. Mason (not of M, M & W) made some of the working detail drawings. Mentions 'checking off' various measurements, but unable to complete the task because the full-size drawings are in Cleveland.
March 18, 1900	Ada Brooks Pope	Harris Whittemore	Letter requesting dimensions and number of leaves of the Whittemore family dining room table at Naugatuck. Ada is talking to "Davenport" about making the table, and wants one similar to the Whittemores'.
March 21, 1900	R. F. Jones	W. R. Wilder	Specific questions about mantels, facings, etc.
March 1900	Henry Hall Mason account book		Popes billed from 37.5 hours of work, including oversight of barn construction, farm house shed, weather vane, etc.
April 2, 1900	R. F. Jones	W. R. Wilder	Conveying question from McAllister about the mantel in the dining room.
April 6 1900	W. R. Wilder	R. F. Jones	Unknown, sent drawing #158, and replied re: McAllister's question.
April 9, 1900	R. F. Jones	W. R. Wilder	Discussion of McAllister's question. Putting last coat of paint on the exterior of the house.
April 12, 1900	R. F. Jones	W. R. Wilder	Questions about the "finish of the stair from rear hall to servants hall, also stairs to third floor."
April 14, 1900	W. R. Wilder	R. F. Jones	Unknown, response to questions.
April 20, 1900	R. F. Jones	W. R. Wilder	Have finished exterior paint and hung blinds,

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<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Re:</u>
			also received shipping receipt of another “car of trim.” Requests specific drawings.
April 27, 1900	A. A. Pope	J. H. Whittemore	Pope family planning a trip to Philadelphia, Baltimore and Boston to look at “Furniture, carpets, drapes, &c.”
April 28, 1900	R. F. Jones	W. R. Wilder	Discussion of McAllister’s bill, and Mr. Parker’s work on the bathrooms.
May 5 1900	R. F. Jones	W. R. Wilder	Bathrooms ready to be measured Requests full-size drawings of cornices, etc.
May 10, 1900	R. F. Jones	W. R. Wilder	Discussion of bathrooms, as well as measurements. Notes that Mr. Pope has been there for 2 days, and has instructed Jones to go to Cleveland (to see McAllister?)
June 28, 1900	A. A. Pope	J. H. Whittemore	“ . . . It makes me sick to think of Farmington – the pleasure it would be to be there, but more especially the thought that things are probably going ‘galley west’ for want of attention. . . ”
July 16, 1900	A. A. Pope	J. H. Whittemore	Concerned about some of the recently-moved trees, requested Whittemore to consult his employee Shepardson about it.
July 18, 1900	J. H. Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Sorry to hear about the condition of the trees. Will ask Shepardson to stop by Hill-Stead on his way back to Naugatuck from vacation.
July 20, 1900	J. H. Whttemore	Alfred Pope	Letter discussing Shepardson’s availability for further consultation, and enclosing a letter from Shepardson to Pope with a summary of the condition of Hill Stead’s trees.
July 24, 1900	A. A. Pope	J. H. Whittemore	Pope wants to consult Shepardson more.
October 15, 1900	Theodate Pope		Diary entry notes visiting Mrs. Will Boyle to “talk garden with her as her husband knows so much about flowers”
October 29, 1900	A. H. Davenport	McKim, Mead & White	Copying some of the office’s features for Mrs. Pope.
December 7, 1900	J. H. Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Letter discussing landscapers. Alfred is possibly interested in Cook.
December 9, 1900	Theodate Pope		Diary entry mentions gifting Mr. Jones with “a set of the ‘Georgian Period’” as a memento of the hours spent working on the house.
February 3, 1901	Theodate Pope		Diary entry: Hill Stead officially will be the name of the house
May 19, 1901	Theodate Pope		Diary entry: The house is starting to look settled. “All carpets down & furniture in place”
June 5, 1901	Theodate Pope		Diary entry: Family will spend their first night in the house, “About two years and three quarters it is I think since we began work on the grounds. Three years ago now we were agitating the purchase of the property. We were sailing in June & cabling wildly back & forth with Harris in regard to the land during our stay at Browns’ in London . . .”
June 22, 1901	J. H. Whittemore	Will Whittemore	Reflects on his family’s perception of Hill-Stead

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Re:</u>
			as its first guests. Remarks that Hill Stead is, "is the most complete and beautiful one I was ever in. I don't mean the most expensive, but the taste displayed is certainly exceptionally good."
March 31, 1903	Alfred Pope	Hitchings & Co.	Estimate and proposal of Dec. 17 and 29, for Iron Frame B B.W. House.
December 1, 1904	J. H. Whittemore	Alfred Pope	Popes are having "trouble" with the walk in from of their house. J. H. Whittemore's employee Shepardson recommends coal-tar walk be installed.
August 30, 1906	Ada Pope	J. H. Whittemore	Requesting dimensions of his fireproof safe, because "We are talking seriously of making this change in Library and office and need suggestions"
September 1, 1906	J. H. Whittemore	Ada Pope	Plan of his study.
September 5, 1906	Ada Pope	J. H. Whittemore	Thanking him for the help he has given to their plans for the library. "We are planning for this change and have many schemes in process, and think we are going to work it out very satisfactorily although on different lines than we were thinking when you were here."
September 14, 1906	Theodate Pope		Diary entry reflecting on architectural sensibilities and interests.
October 26, 1906	Alfred Pope	J. H. Whittemore	". . . Mrs. Pope & I are just off after three as busy days as we ever spent here. We have had lots to do about building matters. I have been through vault & Desk as I never get to do in summer. . ."
June 19, 1907	Alfred Pope	McKim, Mead & White	Bill for professional services rendered on House at Farmington, CT
June 26, 1907	Delafied & Longfellow, Attorneys & Counselors-at-law	Mr. Alfred A. Pope	Bill regarding services "in the matter of building contract with the Tide Water Construction Company"
July 1, 1907	Delafield * Longfellow, Attorneys & Counselors-at-law	Mr. Alfred A. Pope	Payment received for services
April 22, 1908	Hitchings & Co.	A. A. Pope	Stamped Payment received for greenhouse.
June 9, 1908	Alfred Atmore Pope	J. H. Whittemore	Letter discussing the progress on the reconstruction of the barn complex, and changes to be made to the rooms above the laundry area.
January 1, 1913	A. J. Parker	A. A. Pope	Contract for Heat System in Garage Annex.
February 13, 1913	A. J. Parker	A. A. Pope	Payment received.
July 12, 1917	Theodate Pope	Ada Pope Brooks	Correspondence about renovations Theodate was completing at Hill-Stead.

Hill-Stead construction process & chronology.			
<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Re:</u>
September 6, 1917	Harris Whittemore	F. W. Swentston	Regarding Theodate's recent purchase of a "motion picture outfit" to install in "the old stable."

Appendix II



Figure 1: 1913 photo of the front façade of the Pope family home on Euclid Ave., Cleveland. Photo by Edmund Lay. Courtesy of Hill-Stead Museum Archives.



Figure 2: 1913 photo of the interior of the Pope Family's Cleveland home. Photograph by Edmund Lay. Courtesy of Hill-Stead Museum Archives.



Figure 3: Photograph of Hill-Stead by A. W. and G. E. Howes of Hartford showing the newly completed mansion house and porte-cochere in 1902. Courtesy of Hill-Stead Museum Archives.



Figure 4: Theodate Pope at Mt. Vernon, c. 1900. Courtesy of Hill-Stead Museum Archives.



Figure 5: Photograph by Allen B. Cook, estate manager showing lake, golf-course and north front of the mansion house in 1902. Courtesy of Hill-Stead Museum Archives.

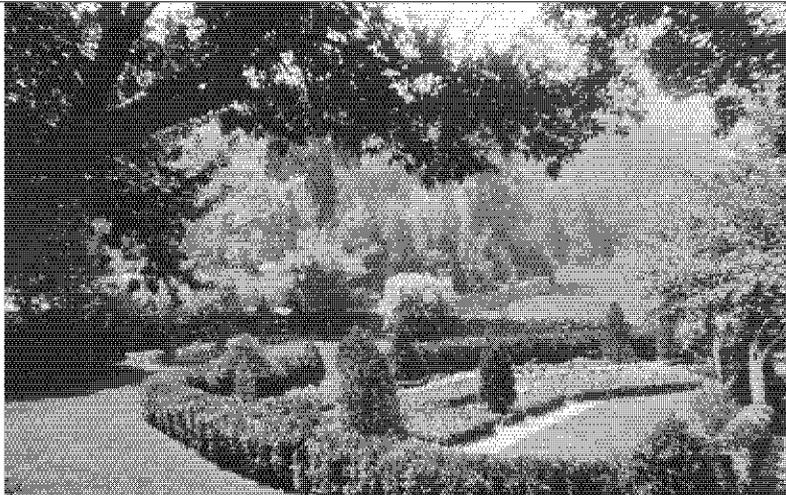


Figure 6: View of the Sunken Garden before the Beatrix Farrand plan, c. 1908. Courtesy of Hill-Stead Museum Archives.



Figure 7: View of Hill-Stead prior to the 1908 addition. Courtesy of Hill-Stead Museum Archives.



Figure 8: Photograph of the newly added second library and office for Mr. Pope, c. 1908. Courtesy of Hill-Stead Museum Archives.



Figure 9: View of the Kitchen gardens at Hill-Stead. Courtesy of Hill-Stead Museum Archives.



Figure 10: Historic view of the Walking Garden at Hill-Stead. Courtesy of Hill-Stead Museum Archives.