**Porter-Williams House**

**Town City:** Farmington

**Address:** 118 Garden Street

**Owner(s):** Miss Porter's School, Inc.

**Residence:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Accessible to Public</th>
<th>Interior Accessible</th>
<th>If Yes Explain</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Yes</td>
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**Style of Building:**

- **Cape:** Yes
- **Post and beam:** No
- **Balcony:** No
- **Other (Specify):**

**Material(s):**

- **Clapboard:** Yes
- **Asbestos Siding:** No
- **Wood Shingle:** No
- **Asphalt Siding:** No
- **Board & Batten:** No
- **Stucco:** No
- **Aluminum Siding:** No
- **Concrete Siding:** No

**Type:**

- **Brick:** Yes
- **Foundation:**

**Structural System:**

- **Wood frame:** Yes
- **Post and beam:** No
- **Cobblestone:** No

**Roof:**

- **Gable:** Yes
- **Mansard:** No
- **Monitor:** No
- **Hip:** No
- **Round:** No
- **Other (Specify):**

**Number of Stories:** 1½

**Approximate Dimensions:**

- **32 x 24; porch 7 x 16**

**Condition:**

- **Excellent:**
- **Good:**
- **Fair:**
- **Deteriorated:**

**Integrity:**

- **On original site:** Yes
- **Moved:** No

**Relationship of Building and Surroundings:**

- **Sited on the west side of Garden Street, the Porter-Williams House is bounded on the south by the Phoenix Manufacturing Company. Other historic residences are visible from the site.**
This modest Cape-style house is rectangular in form. Its front facade displays three bays, a small shed-roof entry porch, and two shed-roofed dormers. Six-over-six windows are found throughout. Note the addition on the southwest elevation.

The early history of this building is unclear although it probably dates from around 1866. In a quit-claim deed (FLR 62:13) dated 1868, it was mentioned as part of the "Phoenix" property owned by Marcia Porter of St. Paul, Minnesota. This house was probably built to accompany the building located to its south that functioned as a manufacturing company and later the laundry facilities of Miss Porter's School. It was purchased by A.H. Williams and passed to his daughter, C.D. Vorce in 1872 (FLR 64:44). She, in turn, sold it to Sarah Porter in 1886 (FLR 66:524). Sarah Porter, the founder of Miss Porter's School, a female boarding school on Main Street, probably used the building to house the school's employees. It eventually was sold to a private party.

The Porter-Williams House is historically significant due to its association with the Phoenix Manufacturing Company and Miss Porter's School.
OWNER'S NAME: KEEP, ROBERT PORTER & DOROTHEA K. HALE

ADDRESS: 118 Garden Street

DATE BUILT: ca. 1835

FOR:

ARCHITECT

MASTER-BUILDER

FORMER OWNERS: Keep and Hale from Est. of Sarah Porter; S. Porter from Allen D. and Catherine D. Vorce, 1/4 acre and bldgs., n. and s. on land of grantee, e. by New Rd. and w. by Canal Bank, 4/1/1897, Vol. 71, p. 286; Catherine D. Vorce from Father, Austin F. Williams, the Phoenix property, n. on Mill Lane and George Gallagher, s. on C.D. Cowles, e. on highway & w. on Farmington River, 8/17/1872, Vol. 64, p. 141; A.F. Williams Est. to Sarah Porter 2 small double tenements & Phoenix, w. by Mill, e. by New Rd., n. by C.D. Vorce, s. by land of S. Porter, 8/2/1866, Vol. 66, p. 523; A.F. Williams from Deming & Carrington, who had a foundry in the 'Phoenix'.

REFERENCES:
This house is pictured on page 108 of the Farmington Book as the residence of Henry Isserman.

The house was built in 1835, according to its card in the Village Library. On the 1869 Baker and Tilden Atlas, four buildings appear at approximately this site, and a bracket appears to join all of them together under the name of "A. F. Williams, Trustee". He was trustee at that time for the former Phoenix Manufacturing Company. The bracket is somewhat indecisive however, and may or may not include this house.

The resident here in 1906, Henry Isserman, was in charge of the laundry of Miss Porter's School, housed in the one-time Phoenix Manufacturing Company building. It is not known how long Mr. Isserman was here. From that time until termination of the operation of the laundry it has been the custom to have this house serve as the home of its manager.

The last manager known by the writer to have lived here was Charles L. McLaughlin, with his family. The writer was always interested, when passing here on foot, to take a longer look at all the knick-knacks displayed in the street-side windows.

Title to the house had been in the name of some members of the Porter family for many years, and finally, on December 13, 1968 it became totally the property of Miss Porter's School, a 2/3 ownership by the estate of Robert Porter Keep being passed to the school at that time.

Laundry operation was terminated sometime in the early 1970's, and in early 1973 the occupant, with his family, was Richard P. Norris, an employee of the school.

November 16, 1973

Henry Isserman served as constable at President "Teddy" Roosevelt's visit to Farmington on October 22, 1901.

On June 7, 1913, Mr. Isserman sold to Elizabeth V. Hale Keep, headmistress at that time of Miss Porter's School, some land across the street, on which Mrs. Keep built the house now known as 117 Garden Street, built to house the kindergarten which she had started a few years prior to that.