One of the oldest dwellings standing in this portion of Unionville, the Omri C. Ford House faces north onto Farmington Avenue. The house is set on a small rectangular lot which slopes to the south towards the Farmington River. The surrounding neighborhood contains primarily Queen Anne- and Italianate-style dwellings erected when Unionville was developing as an manufacturing center.
The main block of this small Greek Revival-style cottage exhibits a three-bay facade capped with a ridge-to-street gable roof. The small single-bay, shed-roofed ell added in the nineteenth century gives the first floor a four-bay appearance. A modest, full-length, open porch with square posts and lattice skirt spans the facade. Greek Revival-style embellishments include the flushboarded entablature with four-paned eyebrow windows set below the raking cornice. Two gable-roofed wall dormers provide light to the second floor and the gable ends feature slight cornice returns and raking cornice. Note the six-over-six sash and central brick chimney. A large 13' x 27' ell extends from the rear elevation.

In September of 1844, Virgil C. Goodwin sold Omri C. Ford a half-acre piece of land for $350 "with an unfinished dwelling house, which is to be completed according to a contract between parties" (FLR 48:528). There is little historical information available concerning Ford, except that he later moved to Burlington, Connecticut. In April of 1851 he sold the house to Nelson Morey (FLR 52:357), who only owned the property for eight months before selling it to Philip Gaylord (FLR 52:357). Gaylord remained in the house for two years before moving to Burlington in 1853. In March of that same year he sold the house to Salmon (Solomon) Gridley for $600 (FLR 52:594). A native of Burlington, Gridley was most likely engaged in farming. His wife, the former Mary W. Brown, was also born in Burlington. Upon Gridley's death in 1874, the house was willed to his son Norman with the following stipulation that Norman shall pay or cause to be paid to each of his surviving sisters a cash settlement in lieu of their share in the property (FLR 15:243). It appears that Norman failed to honor his father's request, for in October of 1882 his three sisters sold their interest in the "old homestead of the late Salmon Gridley" to Romeo Elton of Burlington (FLR 65:647). It is unclear how Elton received Norman's % interest in the property, but in 1885 he sold the house to his daughter Helen E. Ripley, wife of Dr. Edwin M. Ripley (FLR 68:197). The Ripleys, who resided at 1767 Farmington Avenue, owned the property until 1893 when they sold it to Franklin P. Thorpe (FLR 68:664). A native of New York, Thorpe (1855-1909) was the son of Harvey and Teffa (Ball) Thorpe. Employed as a track supervisor...


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foreman by the railroad company, he was married to Ida M. Rossiter of Salisbury, Connecticut. In 1907 Thorpe sold the house to Lawrence Gorry (FLR 77:104) who five years later sold it back to Thorpe's widow, Ida M. Thorpe (FLR 77:444). The house remained in the family until 1983. Relatively unaltered since its construction in 1844, the small Greek Revival-style farmhouse stands as an important link to Unionville's agricultural past.