Located on the west side of High Street, the Mrs. Jane L. Gallagher House sits on a small open lot adorned with gardens. The surrounding neighborhood includes other historic residences dating from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. High Street is contained in Farmington's local and National Register districts.
Oriented gable-to-street, this nineteenth century vernacular-style dwelling exhibits some Victorian-period ornamentation including the two-story bay window with decorative cut-out frieze above the windows. Note the slight overhang between the first and second floors, an uncommon characteristic of buildings from this period. The windows either display one-over-one or two-over-two sash, although an original six-over-six window is found in the gable peak. A modern single-story enclosed porch has been added to the north elevation and a two-story ell has been incorporated onto the west elevation.

**Significance**

In 1853 Mrs. Jane L. Gallagher (1793-1880) purchased a quarter-acre parcel of land along the west side of High Street from Samuel S. Cowles (FLR 52:576). The deed stipulated that Cowles reserved "a certain large apple tree standing on the said premises and the right to have it remain where it now is and to enjoy its products forever without molestation" (FLR 52:576). This house does not appear on the 1855 Map of Farmington village and it is most probable that Mrs. Gallagher built it shortly afterwards. A native of Ireland, she was the widow of William Gallagher (1798-1850), who died shortly after the family arrived in Farmington. The Gallaghers had nine children, all of whom were born in Ireland. Jane Gallagher lived in this house with her youngest daughter, Susan, a dressmaker. In 1881 Susan took title to the house through a third party (FLR 66:133; 64:530). Harry C. Ney purchased the house in 1905 shortly before his marriage to Florine Schenherr (FLR 77:21). The Neys lived here for three years before moving to a larger house along Waterville Road. It was most likely Harry Ney who gave the house its Queen Anne-style ornamentation. The house was rented until Harold M. Holderness, an insurance agent, acquired it in 1921 (FLR 80:226). The Holderness family later moved to #36 High Street in 1924 (FLR 80:540).

Historically important for its association with the Gallagher family, early Farmington Irish immigrants, their house derives added significance for its contribution to the historic character of High Street.

**Sources**


**Photographer**

N. Ainspan  
**Date**

4/86

**Negative on File**

17:14

**Photograph by**

Elizabeth R. Hart

**Date**

4/86

**Organization**

Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

**Address**

27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT

**Threats to Building or Site**

- [x] None known
- [ ] Highways
- [ ] Vandalism
- [ ] Developers
- [ ] Other

- [ ] Renewal
- [ ] Private
- [ ] Deterioration
- [ ] Zoning
- [ ] Explanation
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mrs. Margaret Gallagher Peters says that when her grandmother lived there, the front door was a large, old-fashioned one, with a double door.

ARCHITECT
MASTER-BUILDER
Additions & changes made by H.C. Ney

FORMER OWNERS:
being ½ acre & bldgs. on westerly side of High St., n. on A.A. Pope, e. on High St., s. on Keron Manion & w. on land now or formerly of N. Wallace; Gallagher from Richard H. Gay 9/22/1881, Vol. 64, p. 530, being ¼ acre, dwellinghouse & barn, bounded n. & w. on other land of Susan Gallagher, s. on K. Manion & e. on High St. 6/23/1891, Vol. 68, p. 538
Susan Gallagher bought ½ acre from Geo. Gallagher & wife in the rear of her home lot, increasing her land to ½ acre; Richard H. Gay (a third person) from Susan Gallagher, Admx. of Est. Jane Gallagher, for $480 to raise cash to pay debts 9/22/1881, Vol. 66, p. 133; J. Gallagher from Samuel S. Cowles ½ acre near house of Augustus Bodwell, e. on highway, s. on Martin Wells, w. & n. on my own land, 4 rods on highway, 4 rods rear & 10 rods deep, re-

REFERENCES:
"Farmington, Conn., 1906", p. 157
"Baker & Tilden Atlas, 1869", - 'Gallagher'
Former Owners, cont.:

serving to my own use a large apple tree and to my heirs and assigns the right to have it remain where it now is and to enjoy its products forever without molestation" 2/12/1853, Vol. 52, p. 576, the price of the land being $87.50; Samuel S. Cowles from Samuel S. Cowles, Treas. of Farmington School Society, same ¼ acre 2/12/1853, Vol. 50, p. 437, for $25.
This house is pictured in the Farmington Book on page 157 as the residence of H. C. Ney. It is shown on Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas as "Gallagher".

The library card on this house states that it was built by Jane Gallagher in 1853 on land bought from Samuel Smith Cowles, who was of 27 Main Street.

The writer believes that Jane Gallagher was one of nine brothers and sisters who came from Ireland together, all children of William Gallagher, 1798-1850, and Jane Lamb, 1798-1880, who are buried in Riverside Cemetery. The brothers and sisters were:

- Mary, 1820-1905, see 5 Waterville Road,
- Robert, 1822-1899, see 170 Garden Street,
- Thomas, 1826-1909, married Susan Southergill in 1854, their son Thomas, 1860-1925, never married. No further information,
- William, 1829-1914, no information on him,
- Rebecca, 1832-1914, see 37 Main Street,
- George, 1834-1907, see 16 Mountain Road,
- Jane, 1836-1914, see 28 Mountain Road,
- Henry, 1839-1922, see 14 Mountain Road,
- Susan, 1843-1916, see 18 High Street.

All these nine brothers and sisters lived their adult lives in Farmington and died here.

Jane Gallagher and her sister Susan lived in this house. Jane married Joseph Rhodes in 1860, apparently leaving Susan here alone. Susan became a dressmaker, continued living here, never married. Title record on the library card shows that Jane transferred ownership of this house in 1881 to her sister Susan.

Susan Gallagher sold the house in 1905 to Harry C. Ney, who was perhaps already planning to be married the next year. The writer believes that it was probably he who altered the house and enlarged it to the appearance shown in the photo in the Farmington Book. It does not appear that Jane Gallagher would have built such an ornate house in 1853.

Susan Gallagher's residence from 1905 until her death in 1916 is not known to the writer, but perhaps it was with one of her relatives. Henry was the only one of her own generation who outlived her, he living at 14 Mountain Road.

Harry C. Ney, the son of John M. Ney and Sarah Beckwith, was married in 1906 to Florine Schenherr, daughter of Herbert Schenherr. They did not live here long, as in 1908 Mr. Ney purchased the larger and more pretentious house at 33 Waterville Road. He did not sell this house until 1921 however, probably using it as rental property until then.

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January 20, 1973

Ann Gagnon thinks that Susan Gallagher perhaps lived with her sister, Mrs. Miles, at 37 Main Street, but the latter died in 1914, and Miss Gallagher may have moved then to live with her nephew Isaac in New Britain.
In 1921 Mr. Ney sold this property to Harold W. Holderness of whom a full account is written under the address of 36 High Street, where he and his family lived later.

The house was sold by Mr. Holderness in 1924 to Henry Izard Bacon Rice. Mr. Rice had been born in Charlotte County, Virginia, was a graduate from Yale, where he received BA and MA degrees. Mr. Rice joined the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company in 1905. His progress in that company was:

- Associate actuary 1917
- Actuary 1923
- Vice-president and actuary 1931
- Vice President 1946
- Retired 1951

Mr. Rice never married. He was an artist and a member of the Connecticut Watercolor Society, and his friends were usually the recipients of his excellent paintings. It has been said that he had a sister who was a writer. He served as Captain in the American Red Cross during World War I, and was well liked in Farmington. He died in mid May, 1972, having been in a convalescent hospital since around 1968. He left a brother, stated to have been Theodore Prior Rice of West Hartford. They were not relatives of the Rices who had lived on Mountain Spring Road.

Mr. Rice had sold this house on May 16, 1969, to Hilda B. Lockwood, a great friend of Mrs. Arthur Parsons of 11 Waterville Road, but after the deaths of both Mr. and Mrs. Parsons she sold the house in November 1970 to Carol G. Anderson, wife of Bruce P. Anderson, Dr. Bruce F. Anderson, dentist, whose office is at 775 Farmington Avenue.

Mrs. Anderson is editor of Book-Ends, the quarterly bulletin of the Farmington Village Library, is very active in library assistance, and was Chairman of the Library Open House on April 8, 1973. On June 9, 1972, it was reported that she had been named Vice-President of the Capitol Region Library Council, an association of 33 area libraries from which all card-holders of any of the 33 can borrow.

August 23, 1973