Historic Resources Inventory
Building and Structures

State of Connecticut
Connecticut Historical Commission
59 south Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

1. Building Name (Common) (Historic)
   "The Lodge"
   "Cowles, Jr., Ezekiel, House"

2. Town City Village County
   Farmington
   Hartford

3. Street and Number (and or location)
   185 Main Street

4. Owner(s)
   Ballard, Norman S. and Ednalou C.

5. Use (Present) (Historic)
   Residence/commercial
   Residence

6. Accessibility to Public:
   Exterior Visible from Public Road
   Interior Accessible
   If Yes Explain

   Exterior Visible from Public Road: Yes No
   Interior Accessible: Yes No

7. Style of Building
   Georgian

8. Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)
   X Clapboard
   X Asbestos Siding
   X Brick
   X Other
     (Specify)

   X Board Shingle
   X Asphalt Siding
   X Fieldstone

   X Board & Batten
   X Stucco
   X Cobblestone

   X Aluminum Siding
   X Concrete
     Type: X Cut stone
     Type: brownstone foundation

9. Structural System
   X Wood frame
   X Post and beam
   X balloon
   X Other
     (Specify)

   X Load bearing masonry
   X Structural iron or steel

10. Roof (Type)
    X Gable
    
    X Shed
    X Hip
    X Round
    X Other
      (Specify)

11. Number of Stories
    Approximate Dimensions
    2½
    42 x 32; 14 x 57 porch; 32 x 38, 28 x 18

12. Condition (Structural) (Exterior)
    X Excellent
    X Good
    X Fair
    X Deteriorated

13. Integrity: Location
    On original Moved
    When
    Alterations
    If Yes Explain
    X Yes
    X No
    additions, window replacements

14. Related Outbuildings or Landscape Features
    X Barn
    X Shed
    X Garage
    X Other landscape features or buildings
      (Specify)

15. Surrounding Environment
    X Open land
    X Woodland
    X Residential
    X Scattered buildings visible from site

16. Interrelationship of Building and Surroundings
    Located at the south end of Main Street, the Ezekiel Cowles, Jr. House sits on an open
    spacious lawn trimmed with stone walls. Rattlesnake Mountain rises to the east of the
    property. The surrounding area, which was once actively farmed, is now experiencing
    rapid commercial and residential development.
Extensive research indicates this late-Georgian-style dwelling was constructed in 1795. Capped with a ridge-to-street gable roof, the five-bay facade exhibits an ornate entry portico and leaded semi-circular fanlight. Two-over-two sash replace the original windows. A denticulated cornice elaborates the roofline. Three symmetrically placed dormers provide additional light to the attic story. Note the twin interior brick chimneys, a common characteristic of Georgian-style architecture. The shed-roof, Colonial Revival-style porch on the south elevation has been enclosed and a number of large additions extend from the east elevation.

19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE
This house was built by Ezekiel Cowles, Jr. around 1795 on land owned by his mother and father, Martha (Hooker) and Ezekiel Cowles, Sr. In 1792 when Ezekiel, Sr. transferred an interest in this eight acre parcel of land on the east side of Main Street to his wife, no buildings were standing on the lot (FLR 29:231,232). In 1813 when Ezekiel, Jr. and his brother William divided their father's estate, Ezekiel received this parcel with "dwelling house, barn, corn house and tan house" (FLR 37:551). Engaged in farming, Ezekiel, Jr. (1757-1850) served in the Revolutionary War and held numerous public offices including justice of the peace, state legislator, deputy sheriff, and state tax collector. He married in 1784, Rachel Woodruff (1759-1834), the daughter of Samuel and Elizabeth (Norton) Woodruff of Farmington. In 1850 the homestead was willed to Cowles' youngest son, Ebenezer (FFR 11B:74). Ebenezer resided in Georgia and sold the property to his eldest brother, Egbert in 1851 (FLR 52:322). Egbert (1785-1885) operated a large farm and held a number of public offices including state senator, judge of probate, justice of the peace, and state representative. He also served as quartermaster of the 7th Connecticut Militia Calvary. Some local historians believe this house may have been a "station" in the Underground railroad. In 1811 Cowles married Sophia Sarah Woodruff (1789-1875), the daughter of Samuel and Esther (Sloper) Woodruff. In 1850 the homestead was willed to Cowles' youngest son, Ebenezer (FPRI 1B:74). Ebenezer resided in Georgia and sold the property to his eldest brother, Egbert in 1851 (FLR 52:322). Egbert (1785-1885) operated a large farm and held a number of public offices including state senator, judge of probate, justice of the peace, and state representative. He also served as quartermaster of the 7th Connecticut Militia Calvary. Some local historians believe this house may have been a "station" in the Underground railroad. In 1811 Cowles married Sophia Sarah Woodruff (1789-1875), the daughter of Samuel and Esther (Sloper) Woodruff, and they raised eleven children. John Egbert Cowles (1824-1905) purchased the homestead from his father's estate in 1886 (FLR 66:560). Oliver B. Jennings owned the property between February and June of 1887 (FLR 68:294). The Farmington Lodge Society acquired the house and its surrounding 36 acres from Jennings (FLR 68:313). A non-profit organization established in 1885 (see cont. P8.)

by alumni of Miss Porter's School, the Farmington Lodge was a retreat for working city girls. For a few weeks girls relaxed in country life for a modest fee. The lodge was owned and operated by former pupils of Miss Porter's School and Miss Sarah Porter. The first managers of the lodge were Phillip E. Cowles and his wife Louise (Palmer). Mr. Cowles was the youngest son of Egbert Cowles, the former owner. As managers, the Cowles were responsible for maintaining the grounds and buildings as well as supervising the girls. They resided here until Mr. Cowles' death in 1896. Mrs. Stimson served as matron from 1901 to 1920 and from 1928 to 1948. Mr. and Mrs. Salvatore Carvana managed the lodge. Because of decreasing attendance, the lodge closed in 1949 and was sold to private owners. Today the building houses a financial planning center.

A well-preserved example of a late-Georgian-style dwelling, the Ezekiel Cowles, Jr. House derives historical significance for its long association with the Cowles family and the Farmington Lodge Society, a prominent nineteenth- and twentieth-century philanthropic organization.
CHEARADIA ARISTOKIO

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

DATE BUILT: ca. 1763 FOR: Ezekiel Cowles

ARCHITECT

MASTER-BUILDER

FORMER OWNERS: John Fitzgerald from

(FOOTER)
Former Owners, cont.:

is the land I lately purchased of Daniel Gridley, e. on Dr. Samuel Porter, n. on passway leading up the mountain, s. on Ezekiel Cowles & w. on highway" 4/13/1767, Vol. 15, p. 302;
Samuel Deming from Daniel Gridley, acres "s. on land I (Daniel Gridley) now sell to Ezekiel Cowles together with a dwellinghouse standing on said land" 3/26/1763, Vol. 14, p. 171;
No entry or deed is found for the said conveyance from Daniel Gridley to Ezekiel Cowles but it evidently was made as Ezekiel Cowles owned & conveyed the property. The Gridley home which had come to Daniel Gridley by purchase of his brothers' shares stood, according to Julius Gay, nearer the road. Samuel Gridley died 1712, leaving 1/3 to his widow, Mary, 1/3 to his son, Joseph, and 1/9 each to Thomas, Nathan & Hezekiah, his sons. Daniel, born 1711, was not mentioned in his father's will. He later acquired all of the property & married Mary Woodruff. Ezekiel Cowles evidently had purchased the Gridley house & 4½ acres of land in 1763 as the deed from Daniel Gridley to Samuel Deming indicated adding the 2 acres from Samuel Deming. It is not known who planned the evident changes & additions. The house was no doubt a central chimney type when first built & may have been changed into the two-chimney & central hallway style just after 1800 when several other Farmington houses were changed similarly.
This house, pictured in the Farmington Book on page 194 as "The Lodge", was shown in Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas as the house of Egbert Cowles.

Early settlers on this property are mentioned by Mrs. Hurlburt in "Town Clerks". On page 358 she says: "David Carpenter was an original proprietor and settler of Farmington. He died 1650. He sold a house lot to Samuel Gridley, about where the Farmington Lodge now stands."

George Orvis (or Orvice) was an original settler and is mentioned on this same page: "More land in that vicinity was sold to Gridley by Carpenter's widow Elizabeth, who married as her second husband George Orvis, and sold Orvis land there to Gridley also."

On page 360 she says of Gridley: "Samuel Gridley, second son of Thomas and Mary (Semmor or Seymour) Gridley and brother of Thomas Gridley, lived at the south end of Main Street on land purchased from George Orvis. The Gridley lot extended from the east side of Main Street to the mountain. The Farmington Lodge is now about on the site of the Gridley house. Samuel died in 1712 aged 54 years, leaving a widow Mary to whom one-third of the homestead was given. The remainder was divided between sons Joseph, Thomas, Nathan and Hezekiah, but not equally."

The house was built in 1763 for Ezekiel Cowles #117, son of Isaac Cowles #16, born in 1721, perhaps on High Street. The Cowles genealogy states that Isaac Cowles lived on High Street, between William Porter and John Stanley. Ezekiel was married in 1752 to Martha Hooker, daughter of Giles Hooker and Martha Cooke. In 1763 they purchased the property on which they built this house, probably using Ezekiel's share of his father's estate which was distributed that year to Isaac's sons: Solomon, Ezekiel, James, Elijah and Amos. The greater part of the property was purchased from Daniel Gridley.

Julius Gay states the following regarding the Gridleys (see page 103 of the Farmington Book): "The Gridleys were the blacksmiths of the village. Samuel, son of the first Thomas (The Settler) lived where now stands the house of the late Egbert Cowles, and his shop was on the highway, as was the custom". Samuel died in 1712 and left the property to his wife and several sons, and it was all acquired later by one son, Daniel. It was from Daniel that Ezekiel purchased all but two acres. These two acres he bought from Samuel Deming who had purchased them earlier from Daniel, who married Mary Woodruff. Ezekiel farmed the property.

One of Ezekiel's sons was Giles Hooker Cowles #307, who became a minister and settled in Ohio. He was married to Sally White of Stamford, and was a minister in Bristol when certain citizens of Western Reserve in Austinburg, near Ashtabula, Ohio, needed a minister. They sent Mrs. Austin with a babe in arms and on horseback, to plead with Mr. Cowles to help them.

February 25, 1972

185 Main Street
The Rev. Mr. Cowles took his wife and eight children and his horses and carriage, oxen and wagons, and went west. They left Bristol on May 14, 1811, visited friends in Farmington until the 16th, when they left here and made Winsted that night. His journal shows the following stops along the way, among others:

- Albany, N. Y. May 20
- Buffalo, N. Y. June 6
- Utica 24
- Chautauqua 10
- Onondaga 28
- Erie, Penn. 12
- Geneva 30
- Austinburg, Ohio 14
- Batavia June 3

Mr. Cowles reported that they had some rain but mostly pleasant weather, he preached sermons in two separate localities, bad roads encountered twice but wagon only tipped over once, Mrs. Cowles was very unwell and in great pain one night and the children unwell twice, but on the whole a very successful trip. When arrived in Ohio they lived first in a log cabin, but in 1815 built a large, sturdy house which still stands and is still in the family. It was visited in 1970 by Farmington descendants of the Rev. Giles Cowles family, Mrs. Randall Williamson and her daughter Ruth, accompanied by Mr. Williamson.

Another son of Ezekiel was Ezekiel #303, who with his brother William #308, inherited this property upon their father's death in 1806. William, in 1809, married Olive Peirce of Bristol, and apparently sold his share of the estate to Ezekiel. William was married in Bristol and spent his life as a farmer in Plainville. He and his wife are buried in the cemetery at Scott Swamp.

Ezekiel married Rachel Woodruff, daughter of Samuel Woodruff and Elizabeth Norton. He was a soldier of the Revolutionary Army, serving in the Battle of Long Island, in the attack of the fort at Kingsbridge, and at the defeat of Burgoyne in Saratoga. He came home a sergeant major. He was later a farmer, a public official and a very active man. He was at various times collector of state taxes, deputy sheriff, state legislator and justice of the peace.

One of his boys, Alfred #679, moved to San Diego, another, Ebenezer Mix Cowles #681, settled in Huntsville, Alabama, and another, Egbert #678, stayed in Farmington. Title to the property appears to have passed to Ebenezer in 1850 upon his father's death, but in 1851 passed to Egbert, who lived here until his death.

Egbert was married in 1811 to Sophia Sarah Woodruff and she bore him eleven children. The Cowles Genealogy states that she was the daughter of Samuel Woodruff and Esther Sloper of Southington. It also states the claim by Hinman, that she was the daughter of the Hon. Samuel Woodruff of Windsor, judge of county court and agent to Greece, who later published a book on his travels.

One former resident of Farmington believes that this house was a station of the underground route for the escape of slaves from the South. He says "Cousin Elijah told us of one slave who was brought from another station, which was a house at the south end of the village street, and I think it was the Egbert Cowles house, now the Lodge".

February 25, 1972
Further information regarding the Rev. Giles Hooker Cowles, mentioned on the two previous pages, was contained in a letter received by the writer in April 1972 from Virginia McCormick of Ashtabula, Ohio. Part of the letter is quoted below:

"I am working on a research project for the History Department at Kent State University. I have access to a large collection of papers belonging to the descendants of Rev. Giles Hooker Cowles, who was the first minister in the Western Reserve area of Ohio. About 300 of his sermons dating from 1792 until the 1830's are in the possession of one of his descendants living in the original house that he built in 1815 in Austinburg, Ohio. Along with his sermons there is a large collection of other of his papers, including his journal, recording a day by day account of his trip from Farmington, Connecticut, to Austinburg, Ohio, in 1811. Also there is a letter of recommendation to the people of New Connecticut from the people of the "Church's Monthly Convention" at Canton, Connecticut, dated May 23, 1811......"

"The parlor of Rev. Cowles' home has been preserved intact since his death in 1835, so there is a wealth of information available. Several of his sons, and his daughter Betsey Mix Cowles, gained positions of prominence during their lifetime, so there has been a good bit of interest in this collection. Mr. K. E. Melder of Smithsonian Institute has compiled several volumes concerning the descendants of the Rev. Cowles, but apparently I am the first to do anything toward compiling information on Rev. Cowles himself".

"A number of the sermons Rev. Cowles wrote in the 1790's and early 1800's were delivered at N. Cambridge, Northbury, Farmington and Gull Mountain, Connecticut"....

"I hope later to do more research concerning the Cowles family, and Kent's history department hopes to micro-film the entire collection of papers that are available before something happens to destroy them. We know that through the years some of them have disappeared, so we are hoping to get a complete record as soon as possible".

This letter was written by the mother of the Rev. John McCormick of Canton, Connecticut, who maintains an office at St. Albans Church, Simsbury, Connecticut. She asked for some information regarding the Rev. Giles Hooker Cowles and his background, and the writer made up for her brief genealogies showing his ancestry in the Cowles and Hooker families, and was very pleased to have been able to be of service. The Rev. Giles H. Cowles had been born in the house next door to the apartment building in which the writer was living at the time of this correspondence.

Mrs. McCormick also said "I would be happy to give you any information I might have access to concerning the Cowles family that settled in this area", but the writer felt that he could not include much more information on this subject. Interested parties however may wish to pursue this subject further, and could probably get information from Kent State University.

March 31, 1973

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The children of Egbert Cowles and his wife Sophia Sarah Woodruff were the following:

Esther Rachel, 1813-  m. Haynes Lord, merchant, New York City,
Arthur, 1814-1822,
Edgar, 1816-1817,
Edgar, 1818-1831,
Lucius, 1819-1821,
*Lucius Samuel, 1821-1887, m. Louise Sarah Whitman, 1827-1879, dau. of Congressman Lemuel Whitman of Main Street (see 7 Waterville Road). Capt. Lucius was a wholesale drygoods merchant in Galena and Freeport, Illinois, in the 1850's and 1860's, later returned to Farmington,
Arthur Ezekiel, 1823-1826,
John Egbert, 1824-1905, traveling salesman for a New York clothing company, returned to Farmington by 1893, single,
Alfred, 1826-1914, m. Harriet Tourtelotte, 1832-1903, the former Harriet Hill. He lived in Hartford from 1856 or earlier. He was in the Union Army in 1862, wounded at Laurel Hill in 1864, discharged in 1865. Moved to Willington around 1905. His varied work included grocery clerk, bookkeeper, postal clerk and farmer. Their three children were: Charles Sumner 1857, moved to Willington, Harriet Jane, 1859, m. John Himmel of Willington, and Arthur Woodruff, 1860,
Arthur D., 1828-1857,
Philip Edgar, 1831-1896, (or Egbert) was a private in Co. A, 25th Conn. Volunteer Infantry 1862 and 1863, m. in 1873 Louisa J. Palmer, 1840-1915. Managed the Farmington Lodge and its property (where he grew up) and his wife was its matron. After his death she moved to Unionville.

*The children of Captain Lucius were: Florence Sophia, 1850, m. Henry Martin Wood, commission merchant, New York, Josephine, 1851, Egbert, 1858, from bank messenger in Chicago in 1872 to cashier and manager in Minneapolis in 1895, and John Clifford, landscape artist of national reputation, resided New York and wintered in Venezuela or Southern California.
Egbert Cowles farmed on quite a large scale, having property on both sides of Main Street. He was active otherwise also, being a member of 7th Connecticut Cavalry Militia, deputy sheriff, state representative, state senator, justice of the peace and judge of probate. He was conspicuous in public life and useful to his fellow men. He was also very knowledgeable of Farmington history and wrote a small book which is in the Village Library. He died at the age of 100 in 1885.

William Potts, an instructor in Miss Porter's School in the 1890's, and builder of the house called Underledge (see photo on page 184 of the Farmington Book) describes the Egbert Cowles house and its location as follows: "At the extreme south end of the village upon a low mound at the foot of a beautiful green slope, below one of the finest points of the ledge, which is here as at most points masked by fresh trees, there stands a large farmhouse built about 100 years ago. It is painted white, with green blinds".

The property was inherited by the surviving children of Egbert Cowles and sold through one of them, John Egbert Cowles #1687. John Egbert is not known to have been married. He was for some years a traveling salesman for a New York clothing firm, but apparently spent his later years in Farmington.

The property was sold in 1887 to the Farmington Lodge Society, a non-profit organization sponsored by Miss Sarah Porter. The following three quotations show the esteem in which it was held.

The Connecticut Quarterly, Volume 1, No. 1, 1895, contains a short article entitled "Tunxis, Which is Farmington", which states on page 19: "at the south end of the street may be seen the Lodge, owned by the pupils past and present, and maintained by them for the benefit and pleasure of working girls who fill the house during the summer months".

The Farmington Book, published in 1906, states that it is "a home for working girls, established and maintained by Miss Porter's pupils, was dear to Miss Porter's heart. Professor Sloane of Columbia University said there is nowhere in the world a more beautiful scheme than Farmington Lodge".

Mrs. Hewes says in her 1935 History of Farmington: "Farmington Lodge Society was formed in 1884 to provide a resting place for city working girls who are recommended by Farmington "old Girls" and makes it possible for them to enjoy country air for a few weeks during the year".

The Lodge continued in operation for many years and its fame and popularity continued on the increase through the twenties and the thirties. It is not known when the first alteration was made in the house, perhaps to change its chimney from one to two, and to make a central hallway. It was probably just after 1800, when several other Farmington houses were thus changed. It is evident that after 1906 an extensive addition was made to the rear of the house. This shows in the comparison of a 1950 photograph with the one of 1906. Also sometime subsequent to 1906 a large ell was built on the north side.

February 25, 1972
Mr. and Mrs. Philip Egbert Cowles were the first couple to manage the lodge for its owners. Philip Cowles had grown up here as he was the son of Egbert Cowles. Born in 1831 he served in the Civil War, thought to have been a private in Company A, 25th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry, from September 1862 to August of 1863. Mrs. Cowles was the former Louisa J. Palmer, born in 1840. Mr. Cowles took care of maintenance of grounds and buildings and of farm operations, and Mrs. Cowles was the matron. They served until the death of Mr. Cowles in 1896, and Mrs. Cowles lived thereafter with her niece Mrs. Levi Risley in Unionville.

Mr. and Mrs. Salvatore Caruana were at The Lodge from 1928 until 1948, with their son Joseph. Salvatore, born on the island of Malta, had worked on passenger ships for some years. His wife, the former Johanna Buschbell, had been born in Geestemünde, Germany, and the had been married in Germany. Salvatore had charge of the farm and the house at the Lodge, and Johanna was cook and waitress. They moved from Farmington to New York City where they operated for eight years the B & B Luncheonette at 125 Grand Street. Mr. Caruana is now deceased. Joseph Arthur Caruana served in the Air Force. He married Mary Hardt and they presently live in Houston, Texas, where Joseph is a sales representative.

A swimming pool and small recreation building were constructed to the rear of the lodge in 1924 in memory of Ethel Saltus Ludington, a Miss Porter School pupil from 1888 to 1891, a steadfast friend of the lodge, who died in September 1922. At that time she had been president of the Philadelphia branch of the Lodge Society for 19 years. The pool is still in fine condition.

An old smokehouse still stands in the rear, now used for storage of garden tools and equipment, and a bird bath remains on the premises, inscribed: "In memory of Mrs. Stimson, Matron 1901-1920". It may be noted that the wooden fence pictured in the 1906 photo has been replaced by a low stone wall, otherwise the appearance of the front yard has not changed greatly.

Rachel Field's mother and aunt were guests here in 1931 while Miss Field was arranging for the purchase of the house at 5 Carrington Lane. She owned that until her death in 1943, and wrote several of her books while there.

A lady who is at present a resident of West Hartford, and was at that time an employee of Steiger's in Hartford, was one of the working girls who were guests at that time. She was recuperating from an illness. She so enjoyed it that she came again for the next two years, after which she was married. Two weeks was the limit for a visit as their were more applications than could be filled. Room and board were furnished at a very modest fee, the food was abundant and good, and the house was clean and well furnished. Mrs. Dakin was the matron at that time, assisted by Josephine Burns. One cow was kept on the premises, Lindy Ann, named for Charles Lindberg and his recent bride, Ann Morrow. Most of the guests were professional women, among them Miss Green, state librarian, and Lena Vought, a blind pianist. The swimming pool, the country walks, the clean air, fine food and good company were great attractions and brought many guests. Local residents called the guest "fresh airers".

February 26, 1972
Among the strong supporters of the "Lodge", financially and spiritually, was Miss Annie Burr Jennings, born in 1856 and a former student at Miss Porter's School. She was the aunt of the former Annie Burr Auchincloss, who became Mrs. Wilmarth Lewis. One of Miss Jennings' gifts to "The Lodge" was the gate at its front entrance, designed for her by architect Richard Dana. It is pictured below.

Miss Jennings was of a very wealthy family and had houses in Fairfield and New York. She was a strong backer of Mrs. and Mrs. Robert Porter Keep when they came to Farmington after the death of Miss Porter, and aided them greatly. Her interest in the school continued for her lifetime. One of her guests twice each year, in New York in the winter and Fairfield in the spring, was Miss Elizabeth McCorkle, a Farmington Whitman descendant, who in her later years was house mother at "New Place", and lived at Elm Tree Inn.

Wilmarth Lewis speaks of Miss Jennings in "One Man's Education", saying that she was "A Yale Woman". Yale reserved several seats for her and her friends at the annual Princeton of Harvard football game, and he says: "She was a certain to be in the seats reserved for her...as were the goalposts to be on the field". He speaks of other interests too, when he says:

"Other of her major interests were Mt. Vernon, of which she was Vice-Regent for Connecticut, (succeeded later by her niece), The Republican Party, the State of Connecticut, and France. To all of these she gave her unswerving loyalty, which was the connecting word that explains her life". She aided Farmington too, in the campaign for the Farmington Cut-Off. Mr. Lewis says also: "Aunt Annie Burr... in her later years kept up her unflagging pursuit of the activities she believed in, unobtrusive concern for welfare of family and friends".

June 3, 1973

1307
The vegetable garden for the Lodge was south of the house yard, just about where 191 Main Street now stands, one of the four buildings of the Birch Hill Apartment group.

During the 1940's various factors reduced the demand for this sort of an institution and its attendance decreased to a point at which it was quite a financial loss, more than the Society could finance. The last full year of operation resulted in a loss of over twelve thousand dollars, and this was much too large to be covered by contributions.

Mary Quincy Blakely, widow of the Rev. Quincy Blakely, who was the Congregational minister here from 1905 until 1937, and died in 1945, wrote in 1954 a discourse entitled "Thirty-two Years of Farmington from the Parsonage", and it was published in pamphlet form. In it she said of "The Lodge":

"The 'old girls' of Miss Porter's day established a summer vacation home for working girls. For years this met a long felt need, but, as in the case of all the changes that have taken place during the years, a quiet restful village ceased to meet that need. The excitement of beaches and mountains were desired and the doors to the big house, which had given much of rest, refreshment, new hope and courage to so many, were closed. If only the big old house could talk, what a wonderful story it could tell. How often we wish inanimate things could talk!"

The Lodge was closed on March 15, 1949, the Lodge Society was dissolved, assets were turned over to Miss Porter's School to be put into the school's pension fund, and the property was sold.

The purchaser in 1949 was John Fitzgerald, who, with his mother, was owner and operator at that time of the Elm Tree Inn.

The Fitzgeralds sold in 1958 to Aristokio Chiaradia, who had owned a restaurant in a re-developed area of Hartford. He bought the house as an investment but did nothing with it.

Dr. Kimmich
A doctor, a psychiatrist associated with the Newington Veteran's Hospital, lived here for a time, perhaps renting, as there appears to be no record of his ownership. His wife is said to have been Nancy, a former MPS student. They were friends of the Robert Porter Keeps. They had three children.

Richard A. Seymour, who purchased this house in 1960, had always been fond of fine colonial houses. He thought this a good example of such, and spent considerable time and effort in improving it, bringing the wiring, plumbing and heating up to date. By the time he had owned it two years however, he was married, and the house being much too large for them he sold it again. Mr. Seymour bought the house without the knowledge that one of his own ancestor's descendants had been the wife of its builder, Ezekiel Cowles. Mr. Seymour is a descendant of the Rev. Samuel Hooker. The wife of Ezekiel Cowles was Martha Hooker, his great-granddaughter. Mr. Seymour is also a descendant of Thomas Seymour, first mayor of Hartford. His wife is the former Sarah Cooley. He is in the brokerage business and resides with his wife and children in West Hartford.

March 29, 1973

Sarah Seymour
Purchasers from Richard A. Seymour in 1962 were Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth MacKay.

Kenneth S. MacKay is the son of Kenneth T. MacKay, former florist in the Bond Hotel, and his wife the former Marion Whipple, whose father was of the "Olds and Whipple" store on State Street, Hartford.

Mrs. MacKay is the former Jean Boynton of West Orange, New Jersey, daughter of Howard Boynton and Millie Schonberg.

Mr. and Mrs. MacKay were childhood neighbors in the Catskills where both sets of parents had summer homes. They lived in Hartford and West Hartford before coming here. Mr. MacKay has worked for trucking firms most of the time, except for a brief fling at the real estate business, and is presently employed by Schuster Express Company.

Their children are: Richard, Barbara, Lynn, Douglas and Kimberly.

Richard is married to Bette Bennett of Southbury and resides in Miami, Florida. Barbara and her husband, Peter Fenn of West Hartford, are in Buffalo, New York. Lynn works in West Hartford, Douglas is a freshman at Hamilton College, and Kimberly a pupil at Noah Wallace School.

September 23, 1969.

Lynn Mackay was married on May 23, 1970, to Philip E. Johnson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Clinton E. Johnson, Jr., of Avon Road, Unionville. Kimberly A. MacKay was bridesmaid. The bridegroom is serving with the U. S. Army and Mr. and Mrs. Johnson will reside in Germany after July 1, 1970.

June 15, 1970
Mr. and Mrs. William B. Hunter have occupied an apartment in this house since 1968. This apartment is the two-story ell which extends northeast from the rear portion of the main house, and it consists of seven rooms which are heated by a separate system.

William B. Hunter is the son of John H. Hunter and Jessie L. Brown. John H. Hunter was born in Boston, the son of Scottish parents who had come to the U. S. sometime prior to the Civil War. The parents later moved to Lawrence, Mass., where the senior Mr. Hunter operated a rope walk. John H. Hunter moved from there to New Jersey and later to Fall River, where he met and married Jessie Brown, born in Paisley, Scotland, who had come to the U. S. with her parents around 1881.

Mrs. William B. Hunter, the former Doris Grace Dickerman, was born in Ayer, the next town to Groton, Massachusetts, the daughter of Sharon Bassett Dickerman and Grace March. Both parents were descendants of early Connecticut settlers. Thomas Dickerman, her first ancestor to come to America, came from England to Boston in 1626 and had settled in Hamden, Connecticut, prior to the birth of his first son Abraham in 1634. The writer has noted two marriages of Dickerman girls into Farmington families, one to a Whitman, and one to a Cowles. The first Connecticut settler of Grace March's ancestors was a Johnson who settled in Woodstock, and members of that family later settled in Colrain, Mass. Another was Mayflower passenger John Billington, whose granddaughter Mary was born in Killingly, Conn. Mrs. Hunter has many Dickerman and Peck and Alling ancestors who were of the Hamden and New Haven areas and served in the Revolutionary War. One of these was Jonathan Alling Dickerman, whose house is now the Historical Museum in Mt. Carmel, in Sleeping Giant State Park.

William B. Hunter attended Fall River schools and was graduated from M. I. T. in 1917, in the first class to graduate at the present site. Previously it had occupied various buildings in Boston in the Copley Square area. Mr. Hunter then became Second Lt. in the Rainbow Division and served in France and Germany in World War I. On being discharged he was employed by the President Suspender Company of Shirley, Mass., where he met his future wife, Doris Dickerman. This job entailed a sojourn in Australia for a year, and a sales trip to South American countries. After their marriage the Hunters moved to Lowell, Mass, where they lived for 10 years. He was then transferred to New York City. After living in Scarsdale a few years they moved to New Jersey, where Mr. Hunter was then employed by the Diehl Division of the Singer Company. This work required considerable traveling throughout the United States, and the last two years of his active employment were spent based in Zurich, representing the company in Western Europe, where they also traveled extensively.

The Hunters have been very interested in the history of the house in which they live. Built in 1763, the house has had at least two large additions. They have studied the matter, and believe that the original house is the front section, the rear of which was the wall in which is set the large fireplace in the present living room, since this is a kitchen-size fireplace. The portion to the rear of that was added later, and still later, the ell in which they live. Both of these additions were made prior to 1800.

It is refreshing to find tenants who take such an active interest in their lodgings. We hope their interest will not flag, it may even spread. Their two children are: Jean, now Mrs. Leonard Tomato, lives in Meriden with her husband and their son Andrew; and David Dickerman Hunter, married to Barbara Boylan. They live in Arlington Heights, Illinois, with their three children; Heather, William and Martha.

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