**BUILDING NAME** (Common): North Homestead

**TOWN CITY**
- Farmington

**STREET AND NUMBER (and or location)**
- 2 Mountain Spring Road

**OWNER(S)**
- Cady, Elizabeth Wheeler

**USE (Present)**
- Residence

**ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC:**
- Yes

**EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD**
- Yes

**STYLE OF BUILDING**
- Center-chimney Colonial

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION**
- 1696-1736

**MATERIALS**
- Clapboard
- Asbestos Siding
- Brick
- (Specify)

**STRUCTURAL SYSTEM**
- Wood frame

**ROOF (Type)**
- Saltbox

**NUMBER OF STORIES**
- 2

**APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS**
- 51 x 37

**CONDITION**
- Excellent

**INTEGRITY**
- Yes

**RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES**
- Garage (attached)

**SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT**
- Residential

**INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDING**
- High building density

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The house faces southwest onto the intersection of Mountain Spring Road and Farmington Avenue. It is set on a large lot highlighted by tall pine trees and a stone wall. Large single-family residences are visible from the site.
This three-bay, center-chimney Colonial-style house has remained generally intact and retains many of its original features, except for the doorway which was probably altered. The front facade features twelve-over-eight sash in the second-story windows that border the slightly overhanging eave line. Twelve-over-twelve sash are used on the ground-story windows. A one-and-one-half story lean-to extends off the rear of the house giving it a "saltbox" configuration. Six-over-six sash are found in the gable ends and a massive chimney rises from the center of the house.

The early history of this house and its occupants has been confusing and debatable. Early town records (FLR 1:19 and 1:20 and 1:23) indicate that it was built on a plot originally comprised of two adjoining lots granted to William Corby in 1666 and Abner Dibbel in 1672. Dibbel's plot was situated at the corner of the "highway leading to said Common" and the "highway leading to Hartford," presently Mountain Spring Road and Farmington Avenue. Corby's plot (with dwelling house) to the east passed to Samuel North (1643-1682), son of John North, Sr. (1615-1691), one of the original town fathers, in 1666 (FLR 1:20).

The next transaction was between Samuel North (Jr.) and John North (1647-1745), his brother, and included "one parcel of land... dwelling house now standeth and barn, orchard... belonging, formerly to his father Samuel North deceased" (FLR 1:20). Eventually John North acquired the plot originally granted to Dibbel after it had passed onto Zachary Seamor (FLR 1:23). There is no record of the transaction between Seamor and North. But by 1736 the size of the lot had grown to 7 acres from the original 5 acres. The main (south) section of the house was probably built sometime between 1696 and 1736 either by John, or his son Josiah (1705-1777). The smaller addition to the north may indeed be a part of the dwelling house mentioned as belonging to Seamor (FLR 1:23). John North had four wives, Josiah being born to his second, Mary Seamor. In 1761 Josiah willed the "homelot" to his wife Temperance and son Josiah, Jr. (1737- ?) (FLR 2:11). (SEE CONT.)

**Sources**


**Photographer**

A. Paredes

**Photograph Date**

5/85

**Negative on File**

2:3

**Compiled by**

Ruth A. Bedrosian/ K.J. Istok

11/85

**Address**

27 Washington Street, Middletown,
It passed out of the family in 1789, through Obed Gridley executor of Josiah Jr.'s estate, to Issac Buck (FLR 28:42). The next owner was John T. Norton (1795-1860) who acquired the property in 1834 (FLR 46:229). He was the son of Dolly (Treadwell) (1774-1860) and Romanta Norton (m. 1794). In 1820 he married Mary Hillhouse Pitkin of Farmington. He served as president of the New York Central Railroad and second vice-president of the Farmington Savings Bank from 1853 to 1860. He also joined the Youngs, Bidwell, and Cowles in building the feeder canal and dam in Unionville. In 1860 after Norton's death, his trustees, Hadsell and Gay, gained title to the property (FLR 57:110). During the same year, they sold the property to Thomas W. Olcott of New York (FLR 57:120). Olcott owned the property for two years before he quit-claimed it to Elizabeth (Cogswell) Norton, John T. Norton's second wife (FLR 57:275). Upon her death in 1876 it was inherited by her son Charles L. and daughter Melanie (FLR 71:90). They quit-claimed it to Danford Newton Barney III in 1895 (FLR 70:201). Barney was the grandson of Danford Newton Barney (I), a former president of the Wells Fargo Company. Barney III married Laura Dunham in 1890 and upon her death in 1940, the property passed to their son Austin D. Barney (FLR 94:12). Five years later it was sold to Elizabeth Wheeler Cady (FLR 98:511), who still owns it today.

The North Homestead remains a fine example of early colonial-period architecture and is historically important for its association with the North and Norton families.
Cady, Elizabeth Wheeler  
res. - 1951  
2 Mt. Spring  
Farmington Avenue

Date Built: ca 1673  
For: Thomas Hart

Architect: Added to in 1945 by Maxwell Moore

Former Owners:  

References:  
"Farmington, Conn., 1906" p 117 'The Red Cottage' property of D.N. Barney  
Colonial Dames pamphlet at State Library

Owner: Cady, Elizabeth Wheeler  
As of: 1951
Buck, Isaac from Obed Gridley, 2/23/1789 Vol. 28, p. 42, 9 acres and buildings
Gridley, Obed from Josiah North by will, Vol. 28, p. 397.

Woodruff, James from father James by will, my house and homelot 5/23/1789, File 3099 State Library; "Woodruff, James from father Samuel my house & homestead with the buildings, will dated Feb. 8, 1730/1-prob. Feb. 6, 1732/3.
Woodruff, Samuel from father Matthew by will, 12/19/1682. See Vol. 1, p. 20, Vol. 13, p. 111.
Woodruff, a house from Thomas art, 5 acres & dwellinghouse, s. on hghy to Hartford, w. on road to Duty Hole, e. on Samuel North, n. on Samuel Steele's land 1673, Vol. 1, p. 51.

According to J. Frederick Kelly, the north part of this house is older than the south part and was built with the south wall of the chimney as the outside of the house, the south half being added soon after. Oak window frames, oak sheathing between the studs on the north side all point to its being about 1675-80. (The oak sheathing was removed and used for paneling when the house was restored in 1945 by Maxwell Moore. The chimney was rebuilt and the fireplace in the south room, probably the original kitchen, was sealed.)

Upstairs was finished off and the rear rooms and garage added.

There are other deeds on record of transfers of the property by Charles L. Norton to his brother Edward, which were to ease temporary financial affairs, as were the transfers from John T. Norton to I. Hassell and F. Gay, and to ?Thomas W. Olcott of Albany, during financial embarrassment.

Matthew Woodruff married for his second wife Sarah North, daughter of Samuel North who lived next east. Matthew was born 1646, Sarah 1653. He died in Farmington 1691-
This house is pictured on page 117 of the Farmington Book over the following lengthy caption:

"The Red Cottage --- once the John T. Norton farm house --- with Seventeen Barns attached --- property of D. N. Barney".

It is indicated on Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas as "J. T. Norton".

Julius Gay introduces it in his discourse "Old Houses", quoted on page 9 of the Farmington Book as follows; and he was then coming down the hill on Farmington Avenue from the entrance to Hillstead Estate:

"Descending the hill toward the west we find on the corner where the road, formerly called the road to Simsbury, runs northward, an old house once the home of Josiah North, and soon after his death in 1784 passing into the hands of Captain Isaac Buck, who there lived and died at an advanced age".

Mrs. Hurlburt tells us on pages 359-360 of "Town Clerks" of the early ownership of the land and of the probable date of the building of this house. She says:

"Abraham Dibbell was the first owner of the corner lot where the Barney Red Cottage now stands on Mountain Spring Road and Hartford Road. He and his wife joined the Farmington Church April 20, 1663. He sold his homestead in 1672 to Zachary Seymour and removed to Haddam. Matthew Woodruff later bought this triangular lot with the pasture back of it known as Dirty Hole lot, and probably built the present house about 1716".

Further information regarding Matthew Woodruff and this site is given on pages 377-378 of the above book, where is stated:

"With no date of record but probably about 1670 Matthew Woodruff Jr., had recorded five acres of land with a dwelling house at the junction of Hartford Road and the road leading to Dirty Hole lot (now Mountain Spring Road). Samuel North lived next east. Probably the very old Red Cottage at the corner of Mountain Spring Road is not the original house of 1670 as the Woodruff house had belonged to Thomas Hart and must have been one of the earliest".

On May 17, 1947, this house was included in an extensive tour sponsored by the Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, and was described as follows:

"The Red Cottage, as it has long been known was owned and occupied in 1686 by Matthew Woodruff, Jr. During recent renovation, interior sheathing was found on the north side of the house, That with the end window arrangement and the exposed interior framing are excellent features of a true 17th century house of the central chimney type.....greatly beloved by Mrs. Barney, it was recently sold to Elizabeth W. and Ernest Hyde Cady".

June 23, 1974
Mrs. Hurlburt wrote up a sketch of this house for the Colonial Dames Society in 1950, under the title of the "Woodruff-Cady House". A few notes were written down regarding this sketch, not quoted verbatim, but somewhat as follows. Built for Matthew Woodruff, Jr., 1646-1691, and his second wife Sarah North, 1653-1692, about 1686 on land of Zachariah Seymour. Owners: Ephraim Treadwell, Governor John Treadwell, John T. Norton, D. N. Barney, A. D. Barney. The last one of 17 barns stands just east of the house, well to the rear. Ell added 1946. All fireplaces and chimney stack rebuilt ca 1890. A bridle closet under the stairs. Sarah Woodruff died in February 1692. John Woodruff (Matthew's uncle) died May 1692.

Marguerite Allis mentioned this house briefly in her book entitled Connecticut Trilogy. She said:

"The early red 'Salt-Box' of the Norton family was built nearby in a day when the long rearward slope of these roofs was designed to fool the tax collector into thinking the house less commodious than it really was, taxes being imposed according to the pretensions of the domicile".

The listing of the owners of this house as given on the library card is given as follows, showing only names and dates with no other details:

1673 Built by Thomas Hart,
1673 Matthew Woodruff acquired,
1671 Samuel Woodruff inherited
1730 James Woodruff
    James Woodruff Jr
    Josiah North appears as next owner
    Obed Gridley from above by will
1789 Isaac Buck acquired
1834 John T. Norton
1860 Thomas W. Olcott
1862 Elizabeth C. Norton
1876 Charles L. and Melanie Norton acquired
1890 D. N. Barney acquired
1940 A. D. Barney inherited
1945 Elizabeth Cady purchased.

The gap in the record is not explained, but it is the writer's opinion that in some manner the above record starts with the wrong set of owners, and that they are owners of property on the west side of Mountain Spring Road. Mrs. Ernest Cady planned to do some research regarding this matter, but the writer does not know of the result.

John T. Norton, John Treadwell Norton, who purchased this house and its accompanying land, was the grandson of Governor John Treadwell whose home had been across the road from here, near the Great Rock, which is still there. One can still see a depression near it which is said to have been the cellar of the old home of Governor Treadwell.

June 23, 1974
Before going farther regarding the Nortons it may be well to tell something of the Woodruffs who have been mentioned several times on the first pages of this sketch.

Matthew Woodruff, Jr., numbered THREE in the Woodruff Genealogy, was born in Farmington in 1646 and died here in 1691. He was first married in the 1660's, to Mary Plumb, and lived in Milford, Connecticut. After the death of his first wife, which was some time after 1673, he returned to Farmington, married Sarah North, and could have built this house around 1686 as stated by Mrs. Hurlburt.

One of Matthew's sons was John Woodruff, #8, who was born and lived in Milford, married to Mary Pratt. They were the ancestors of Rollin S. Woodruff, 1854-1925, who served as Governor of the State of Connecticut from 1907 to 1909.

Another of his sons was Matthew Woodruff, #7 in the genealogy, also born in Milford. He may have come to Farmington in his later life, but it appears evident that his sons Matthew #26 and Sylvanus #27 did live in Farmington. Both these sons were ancestors of the last generation of Woodruffs to live in East Farms, the generation of William Woodruff's children, one of whom had a daughter who presently resides in Farmington. See the account of the George Woodruff house on Woodruff Road, for more regarding this family.

Now we shall proceed with the Norton forebears.

Governor Treadwell died in 1823. His son George Treadwell received title to the property across the road and in 1824 sold it to Erastus Perry as he (George Treadwell) was at that time a very successful business man in Albany, New York, and apparently not very interested in Farmington property.

John Treadwell Norton was the son of Governor John Treadwell's daughter Dorothy (Dolly), who had in 1794 become the second wife of Romanta Norton of Bristol.

John T. Norton's background is told on page 79 of the Farmington Book. He had already amassed a large fortune before the purchase of his late grandfather's property, and by 1830 was the president of the New York Central Railroad. He built, around 1832, the house which is now the property of Mrs. Austin D. Barney and wished to build up a larger estate, so purchased this house and land also, in 1834. See much more regarding the Treadwells and the Nortons in the sketch of the Barney house at 11 Mountain Spring Road.

The Elizabeth C. Norton who took title to this property in 1862 was the former Elizabeth Cogswell, second wife of John T. Norton. The Charles L. Norton next mentioned was Charles Ledyard Norton, son of John T. Norton by his second wife. The writer does not know the identity of Melanie Norton, although it is assumed that she was the wife of Charles.

June 24, 1974
Mr. and Mrs. Barney, who became the owners in 1890, were recently married, but had purchased at the same time the Norton property across the road, including the large Norton house, so this one was never occupied by them. They used it some of the time as a guest house, and sometimes for rental, usually to friends, and the turn-over appears to have been tremendous.

The writer will mention those of whom he knows, but they are probably a mere fraction of those who have lived there.

The earliest tenants known by the writer were Mr. and Mrs. John Rourke, before they moved to their home on Farmington Avenue, just below the Corner House. This tenancy would have been prior to 1896, as in that year they purchased their own house. John Daniel Rourke's wife was the former Kathryn Lawler, and their eldest son Maurice was born in this house in 1895.

Mountain Spring Road was at that time known as Cedar Street.

Mr. and Mrs. Hayden Eames could have been the next tenants after the Rourkes. They were of Hartford, but summered in Farmington for a few years, sometimes here and sometimes at Underledge. The sister of Mrs. Eames later married Hiram P. Maxim, also of Hartford.

Russell Lee Jones, who was married in 1904 to Harriet Ingersoll of Haddam, and had lived his youth in the Norton house, lived here for a time, perhaps for a summer. They were living at 4 Porter Road in 1906.

Four Blake sisters, classmates of Mrs. D. N. Barney at Miss Porter's School, live here for a short while. Two of them, Charlotte and Henrietta, later lived at 13 High Street.

Brian Hooker and his wife, the former Doris Cooper, granddaughter of Amasa Redfield of 45 High Street lived here for a time around 1910 or 1911, when they were first married. Brian Hooker was one of the four children of the William Hookers of "Pilgrim Path", now 29 Mountain Spring Road.

Danford Barney and his wife, the former Gertrude Wells of New Haven also lived here, perhaps for a few months, after their marriage in 1920, Danford being the son of D. N. Barney who owned the house.

The Newel Garfields lived here before they moved to 763 Farmington Avenue, Mr. Garfield having been a classmate of Austin D. Barney, and the Garfield son now the husband of the late Mr. Barney's daughter.

Mrs. N. David Thompson, who in 1968 had been widowed and was living at 23 Main Street, told the writer that she and her husband had for several years lived in the old Red Cottage, but dates are not known. Her daughter Elizabeth had been married in 1944 to William Stix of St. Louis, Missouri.

June 25, 1974
As the writer has said, the sequence of the preceding tenancies is not known, and many other people lived here, most of them at the invitation of the Barneys, who were always glad to provide accommodations for their friends.

On Armistice Day, November 11, 1938, the present owners and occupants of the old Red Cottage moved in here as tenants.

They are Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Hyde Cady, Jr., Mrs. Cady being the former Elizabeth Wheeler of Stratford, Connecticut. They had been married in Bridgeport on April 11, 1935. For the first three and one half years of married life they lived in Mrs. Merriam's house on Waterville Road, a property of 72 acres and a swimming pool, located on the east side of Waterville Road, at the second driveway past the golf course. That house later burned and a second one, the former Graves house, Tallwood, stands there now.

Mr. Cady is the son of the Ernest Hyde Cady and Ruth Holmes Gay who had come to Farmington in 1928 to live at 24 Main Street, Ruth Cady having been a Farmington girl, daughter of Erastus Gay of 44 Main Street. See the accounts of 24 and 44 Main Street for more on their backgrounds.

Ernest Hyde Cady had lived his early life in Hartford, and before their marriage had already taken employment with the Robert C. Buell Company, Investments.

Mrs. Cady is the daughter of William Mills Wheeler of Stratford, Connecticut, and his wife the former Ida M. Furness formerly of Meriden, Connecticut.

Mr. Cady is a descendant of many of the old families of Farmington, including among others the families of Cowles, Gay, Treadwell and Woodruff. Mr. Cady was a partner in his firm for forty years, but commencing a gradual retirement in May 1969, and had expected to be fully retired by the end of that year.

The Cady children are:

Ernest Hyde Cady, III,
Jane Cady, and
Marcia Wheeler Cady.

As of 1969 Jane Cady had become Mrs. Allen Nelson Fichen, and she and her husband were living in Chicago, the others living at home.

The Cadys purchased this house in 1945 from Austin D. Barney who had inherited in 1940, having rented it since 1938. After purchasing it they made extensive alterations, modernizing and enlarging it with the help of architect Maxwell Moore, but have maintained as much as possible the old architecture and exterior appearance.

June 25, 1974.