This house sits along the south side of Mountain Road shaded by large pines and overgrown shrubs. The surrounding neighborhood primarily contains historical residential buildings. St. James Episcopal Church and buildings belonging to Miss Porter's School lie just to the west.
The original appearance of this house has been obscured by many nineteenth- and twentieth-century additions. Today, the house exhibits an intersecting gambrel roof with an interior brick chimney. The original block of the house, which is oriented gambrel-to-street, features an exterior brick chimney and replacement sash. The gambrel-roofed ell which extends from the east elevation is modern. On the south and west elevations are similar one-and-a-half story gambrel ells, which were most likely nineteenth century additions. The shed-roofed dormers are also later modifications. The present entry door is found on the rear elevation and is not visible from the road.

In 1698 John Hart sold his cousin, Sgt. Thomas Hart, a half acre parcel of land on the "highway running up Mountain" (FLR 2:152). On this parcel was the "dwelling house and barn of Thomas Hart". It appears that Sgt. Hart (1666-1727/8) built this house around 1690 at the time of his marriage to Elizabeth Judd (1670-1743) on land granted to the Hart family. Thomas was the second son of Stephen Hart, Jr. and grandson of Deacon Stephen Hart, one of the town's earliest settlers. The dwelling is mentioned again in a 1709/10 deed, which enlarged the lot by 2½ acres (FLR 2:151). In 1724 the house was sold to Stephen Hart III (1693-1773) the eldest son of Sgt. Thomas Hart (FLR 4:221). Stephen III had married Eunice Munson (1701-1793) in 1720 and they raised six children. In 1757 "one half of the homelot and dwelling house (which) now standeth a little easterly of ye Meeting House" was sold to David Hart, the young son of Stephen Hart III (FLR 11:295). Shortly thereafter, David (1734-1776) married Elizabeth Porter (1737/8-1809), the daughter of Ebenezer and Anna Porter. David inherited the other half of the house and lot from his father's estate in 1772 (FPR 1:155). The house was passed to Asa Hart, David's eldest son, in 1783 (FPR 2:303). Asa (b. 1754) and his family resided in the house until 1806 when they moved to Lorraine County, New York. John and Chauncey Deming purchased the lot with buildings in 1806 for $666.67 (FLR 35:123). The Deming brothers were wealthy local merchants, who presumably rented this small dwelling. The property was inherited by Samuel Deming, John's son, and continued to be rented. Edwin W. Phelps acquired the house in 1854 for $450 (FLR 53:163). He emigrated to Delavan, Wisconsin, and sold the property in 1858 to Erastus W. Washburn, who resided here many years. (See Cont PG.)

**Sources**

with his wife Julia (FLR 57:17). Edward and Adah Cook lived here between 1873 and 1889 (FLR 61:544, 70:186). In 1890 Mabel (Baggett) Brandegee bought the house from the estate of Adah Cook (FLR 70:186). Mrs. Brandegee was the wife of Charles Brandegee, who served as Farmington Town Clerk from 1896 to 1925 as well as judge of probate. Mrs. Brandegee was a talented musician and wrote for the Farmington Magazine. The house was sold out of the Brandegee family in 1927 and has passed through a number of owners since then.

Although the original appearance of the building has been altered dramatically, the house is historically significant as one of the oldest remaining dwellings in Farmington and for its long association with the Hart family, one of the town's founding families.
OWNER'S NAME: (KING, JOHN P.) to CURTISS, Marjorie T.

ADDRESS: 22 Mountain Road

DATE BUILT: ca. 1750 FOR: Stephen Hart?

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: David Hart, s. of Stephen, b. 7/21/1734. "Stephen Hart & His Descendants," p. 168, states that Stephen Hart "lived on his father's place, opposite the Female Seminary in Farmington Village." The Stephen branch of the Hart family had lived there from choice since Stephen 2nd, son of Deacon, the settler, had located there "had his house east of the meeting-house opposite the residence of John Hooker (now G. Jones)."

ARCHITECT

MASTER-BUILDER


Former owners, cont.:

being always ½ acre, dwellinghouse, barn etc., Samuel Deming from Chauncey Deming by inheritance, John & Chauncey Deming from Asa Hart 2 acres & bldgs., n. on highway leading from the main st. up the mountain, e. on Samuel Root, s. on land of Thomas Lewis & John & Chauncey Deming, & w. on land of J. & C. Deming, "reserving to my honored mother, the widow Elizabeth Hart, her right of dower", 2/11/1806, Vol. 35, p. 123; Asa Hart from Elizabeth (Hart) Goo, 3 roods set to her in the distribution of the est. of father, David; Asa from father, David Hart (Asa b. 1/4/1759, son of David & Elizabeth Porter).
This house is pictured on page 169 of the Farmington Book as "Century Cottage, Residence of Charles Brandegee", and is noted on Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas as "Washburn".

Library records show it as having been built in 1750 for Stephen Hart, inherited by his son Daniel (born 1734), inherited from David by his daughter Elizabeth, and by Asa Hart from Elizabeth.

Mrs. Hurlburt says on page 362 of "Town Clerks", in speaking of the Hart family, "There was one more brother, Stephen, who lived on the south side of Mountain Road, about where High Street intersects". That is exactly the site of this house.

The following bit of Hart Genealogy will explain the identity of the above-mentioned HarTs, they being numbers 681, 695, 764 and 760 in the following:

#670 Stephen Hart 2nd, son of Deacon Stephen the Settler, born in England perhaps before 1630, died 1689. Had his house east of the Meeting House, opposite the residence of John Hooker.

#672 Sgt. Thomas Hart, son of Stephen 2nd, 1666-1728, married Elizabeth Judd. Had west half of father's house lot, opposite Female Seminary.

#695 David Hart, 1734-1776, married Elizabeth Porter.

#764 Elizabeth Hart, inherited from father, David, married John Coe of West Stockbridge.

#760 Asa Hart, 1759- , David's son, inherited, but moved to Loraine City, New York.

It would appear from the above account of Hart Genealogy that perhaps this site was occupied by Hart's much earlier than 1750, as the description of the site of the home of Stephen Hart 2nd, #670, coincides with this site pretty well also. Mrs. Hurlburt had spoken of him also, on page 362 of "Town Clerks", as follows:

"Stephen, the second son, lived on Mountain Road east of the church, the name of his wife is unknown. He died in 1689, leaving 7 children".

John and Chauncey Deming purchased from Asa Hart in 1806, and Samuel Deming later inherited from Chauncey Deming. As far as residents are concerned, this ownership by the Demings does not mean very much. John and Chauncey were very wealthy merchants of Farmington, and lived at 66 and 80 Main Street, so we do not know who did occupy this house for the period of Deming ownership.

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The writer has found no personal identification of the following owners of this house, the first of whom purchased from Samuel Deming:

1854 Edwin W. Phelps,
1858 E. W. Washburn,
1869 David A. Rood,
1869 Erastus Washburn,
1873 Edward and Adah Cook.

It was in 1890 that Mabel D. Brandegee purchased from the estate of Adah R. Cook.

Mabel D. Brandegee was the wife of Charles Brandegee, who was Town Clerk of Farmington from 1896 until 1925. See 36 High Street for more regarding all members of the Brandegee family in Farmington.

This was the third purchase of land in Farmington by members of the Brandegee family. The first was the purchase by Mrs. D. N. Barney (the former Sarah Elizabeth Brandegee) of the property at 763 Farmington Avenue, which included the house presently standing there, in 1879. The second was of land on Farmington Avenue, west of what is now the Corner House, purchased by her half-sister Julia Brandegee, who lived with Mrs. Barney. Then came the previously mentioned Mrs. Charles Brandegee, purchasing this house.

The fourth was by Robert B. Brandegee, when in 1895 he purchased the land at what is now 36 High Street, and the fifth was Arthur Brandegee, purchasing the house at 18 Mountain Road in 1906. Charles, Robert and Arthur were nephews of Mrs. D. N. Barney, being sons of her brother Elishama Brandegee.

Mrs. Hurlburt, who succeeded Charles Brandegee in the office of Town Clerk, speaks of him and his official regime on pages 277 through 308 of the Farmington Book, and the narrative is well worth reading. For those who wish a shortened version, the following is taken verbatim from some of these pages.

Page 277. "Mr. Brandegee was fifty-two years old when he was first elected Town Clerk, October 5, 1896".

Page 306. "Charles Brandegee was the son of Dr. Elishama Brandegee and Florence (Stith) Brandegee and was born in Berlin (Conn.) December 12, 1845. His mother was born in Florence, Italy, daughter of Major Townshend Stith".

Page 307. "Charles Brandegee left Berlin when he was 17, to enlist in the Zouaves in the Fifth New York Regiment. Their uniform was red and white with blue trimmings. In service in the south the men marched until their shoes were worn off. Charles was taken prisoner on the third day of the Battle of the Wilderness, and sent to Andersonville Prison".

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"There his uniform soon wore to rags. The men dug holes in the ground for shelter and their food was salt pork and hard bread. Through friends in Wilmington, North Carolina, Zebulon Latimer, a cousin of Dr. Brandegee's, sent a letter through the blockade, telling of Charles' whereabouts, and his release was effected. He weighed less than 90 pounds when he returned home. However, he had no desire to remain in Berlin. He took Horace Greeley's advice, and enjoyed in later years telling of his adventures on the western plains. One summer he spent most of his time on horseback shooting buffalo, seeing sometimes a herd of 1,000. He received $1.00 apiece for all he shot. Many years afterward, when he visited those same plains, the bones of the buffalo were being taken away for fertilizer. Mr. Brandegee loved to tell tall tales of pulling up bushes near his camp and of how the gold dust would sparkle in the dirt -- of the big snakes -- and of how far he was dragged through the cactus by a frightened horse, and watch his listener's face as he spun his yarn. A credulous listener was his delight -- his stories would know no bounds. If he had a favorite author, among all those he knew so well, it was O. Henry. Mr. Brandegee and O. Henry were very much akin -- they loved people".

"When Charles Brandegee came to Farmington in 1894, to make his home, he was returning actually to the home of his ancestors. He was past the half-century mark; his life had been a series of war experiences and western adventure, before he took up his clerical pen as town clerk here. Mr. Brandegee had been in Farmington just long enough to establish residence when he was first elected. For the next 29 years he had little or no opposition, being usually the choice of both Republicans and Democrats.

"Mr. Brandegee not only commanded respect and loyalty -- his personality invited and retained the admiration and devotion of all who knew him. He had the rare gift of a quick sympathy -- an understanding and appreciation of the problems, joys, and sorrows of all. The children adored him. One small boy once said of him "He looks like Santa Claus, except that he only has a white mustache -- no beard". He was "Charlie" Brandegee to all. His hair and mustache were white as snow, his face round and ruddy, and his deep blue eyes usually had a friendly twinkle. But all of this was only a pleasant cover for a character of great strength, a determined mind, a ready wit -- and a political astuteness entirely unsuspected".

"At the State Election November 3, 1908, with the Town of Plainville still in the Farmington Probate District, the former judge, Frank S. Neal, was defeated by Mr. Brandegee, by the vote of 569 to 174".

It was thus that he became Judge of Probate.

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Mrs. Brandegee, the former Mabel Daggett, was a musician, as were her daughter Hildegarde and her sister-in-law Mrs. Robert Brandegee of 36 High Street. They played as a trio at some social gatherings. Mrs. Charles Brandegee also wrote several articles for the Farmington Magazine during its short life from 1900 to 1902. Hildegarde Brandegee's photo appears on page 8 of the Farmington Book with her good friend Elijah Lewis. She was a violinist. In 1914 it was stated in the Hartford Courant, that she was "evidencing remarkable musical ability as a pupil of Florence Wright". See 40 High Street. She also studied music in Belgium. She was married in August 1917 to Charles S. Livingston, son of James Livingston and Julia Roberts. After marriage they lived in Winchester, Massachusetts, having three children. As Mrs. Livingston she continued her musical career, and was in various concert groups in Boston.

Charles Brandegee resigned due to ill health on January 4, 1926, and the next town meeting accorded him a resolution thanking him for his years of devoted service to the town, and their appreciation, and their wishes for a long and happy retirement. He was 81. He and his wife moved to Somerville, Massachusetts, to be near their daughter. He died on September 22, 1927.

Mrs. Mabel Hurlburt succeeded him in the office of Town Clerk.

It is not known when Mrs. Brandegee died, but the writer has a note stating that this house was sold on March 4, 1927, by Mabel D. Brandegee, to Hildegard B. Ward.

Hildegard B. Ward was the former Hildegard Butterfield, the wife of J. Carlton Ward, Jr. At the time of coming to live in this house Mr. Ward was Vice President and General Manager of the Hartford Machine Screw Company. The Wards had one child, J. Carlton Ward III, and they lived here until 1929. See more in regard to Mr. Ward in the sketch of 2 Colton Street, where he lived later.

The Hansen family, Theodore Lief Hansen and his wife Laura Wiley Hansen, lived here from the time of their purchase on August 17, 1929, until their sale in 1947, when they moved to Talcott Notch Road. Mrs. Hansen has been very active in Farmington, especially as head of the Bloodmobile Program, and it was perhaps for this activity that she received in 1963 the Book of Golden Deeds Award, given by the Farmington Exchange Club.

Purchaser in 1947 was John Pernot King, whose wife was the former Harriet Lourie Barney, daughter of the late Austin D. Barney and his wife, of 11 Mountain Spring Road. See more regarding Mr. and Mrs. King in the sketch of 29 Mountain Spring Road, which they purchased in 1953, after selling this house.

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Purchaser of this house in 1953 was Marjorie T. Curtis, wife of Paul R. Curtis. Prior to this they had lived for a time at 5 Church Street, renting that house. The writer believes that Mr. Curtis was a salesman for Plume and Atwood, and spent much of his time traveling. They sold this house in 1965 and moved to Stonington, where they presently reside, lovers of the ocean.

Richard M. Bissell, Jr., purchased the house in 1965.

Richard Mervin Bissell's father was president of the Hartford Fire Insurance Company, and had moved to Connecticut from Chicago. His mother was the former Marie Truesdale, whose father had been president of the D. L. and W. Railroad Company. They lived from 1922 until their deaths in the 1940's and 1950's respectively, in the house at 31 Colton Street, under which heading more information on them is given.

Mrs. Richard Bissell, Jr., is the former Ann Cornelia Bushnell of New Haven, daughter of Winthrop Bushnell and Harriet Scofield. Richard and Ann first met as members of her sister's wedding party. They themselves were married in July 1940.

Richard M. Bissell, Jr., was born in Hartford in the Mark Twain House on Farmington Avenue while his parents owned and occupied it during their early years of residence in Connecticut. That house later housed the Kingswood School to which he commuted from Farmington. While still in school he wrote a History of Farmington, really a rearrangement into an orderly sequence, of the material contained in "Farmington, Connecticut, Village of Beautiful Homes", to which this writer always refers as the "Farmington Book". Richard was graduated from Yale in 1932, did postgraduate work in the London School of Economics for the next year, and received his Ph. D. from Yale in 1939. He was an instructor at Yale from 1934 and by 1941, risen to assistant professor, he left there and joined the War Shipping Administration, where he continued taking on additional responsibilities until he left that service in 1945. He became Assistant Professor of Economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and then from 1948 until 1952 was full Professor. He was on the staff of the Ford Foundation from 1952 until 1954, and special assistant to the director of the GIA from then until 1959. Since 1964 he has been Director of Marketing and Economic Planning for United Aircraft in East Hartford. He has been a regent of the University of Hartford since 1965 and in 1968 was appointed to be Chairman of the University's newly formed Regents' Advisory Commission.

When first married the Bissells lived in New Haven for a few years. Since then their sequence of residences has been Washington, D. C., Cambridge, Mass., Washington, D. C., and now Farmington.

Mrs. Bissell has been kept busy with the rearing of their children and re-settlement in their various homes, but has always had time for some outside activities. In September 1968 she was named as an alternate to the Farmington Historic District Commission, and in October 1971 was elected member of the Board of Directors of the Visiting Nurses' Association. She is an active volunteer in providing transport for senior citizens and others who need such facilities.

The Richard Bissell family's five children are; Richard, Anne, Winthrop, William and Thomas, and as of late 1969 none of them were as yet married.

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The Bissell house is almost unidentifiable, in outside appearance, as the house which appears in the photograph of "Century Cottage" on page 169 of the Farmington Book.

Charles Brandegee is said to have once stated that the house had originally been closer to the street. The date of its having been moved is unknown. The north fireplace is thought to have been added quite early in this century.

The Bissells were asked about the house, and they said that the main part of the house is original, and that the "pimple on the front" (the library added by the Bissells) is less than five years old, but that the dining room had been added earlier.

As of 1973 Richard Bissell was president of the Farmington Historical Society, having earlier served as a director.

February 17, 1974