**HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY**
**BUILDING AND STRUCTURES**

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
(203) 566-3005

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1. **BUILDING NAME**
   - Hart, Chauncey, House

2. **TOWN CITY**
   - Farmington

3. **STREET AND NUMBER**
   - 24 Mountain Road

4. **OWNER(S)**
   - Howard, Joseph G., Jr. and Ann D.

5. **USE**
   - Private

6. **ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC**
   - Yes

7. **STYLE OF DATE OF**
   - Nineteenth-century vernacular/Colonial Revival
   - DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1843/1915

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**DESCRIPTION**

8. **MATERIAL(S)**
   - Clapboard
   - Bricks
   - Other (Specify)

   - Wood Shingle
   - Asbestos Siding

   - Board & Batten
   - Stucco
   - Cobblestone

   - Aluminum Siding
   - Concrete
   - Cut stone

9. **STRUCTURAL SYSTEM**
   - Wood frame
   - Post and beam
   - I Beam

   - Load bearing masonry
   - Structural iron or steel

10. **ROOF**
    - Gable
    - Flat
    - Mansard
    - Monitoring
    - Sawtooth

    - Gambrel
    - Shed
    - Hip
    - Round
    - Other (Specify)

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**INTERFERENCE OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS**

This house sits on the south side of Mountain Road east of the intersection of Main Street. Other historic residences are visible in all directions.
Erected in 1843, the Chauncey Hart House originally displayed characteristics of the Greek Revival-style, including a fully-pedimented gable end, modest corner pilaster supporting an entablature and classical door surround. The building was remodeled to its present Colonial Revival-style appearance in 1915. Oriented gable-to-street, the three-bay facade exhibits six-over-six-sash and an elliptical fanlight in the gable end. The east elevation features a 2' x 13' two-story projection with tripartite windows. The arched entry portico is surmounted by a Palladian window. The rear two-and-one-half-story ell displays a full-length, single-story enclosed porch. A two-story enclosed porch is found on the west elevation.

### Architect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chauncey Hart</th>
<th>Builder</th>
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Chauncey Hart erected this house in 1843 on land he purchased from Edward Hooker (FLR 48:421). A mortgage from Hart to Hooker, dated the same day as the purchase, lists unfinished buildings and building materials on the lot and stipulates that all buildings on the parcel be insured "particularly the dwelling house about to be built" (FLR 48:422). Chauncey Hart (1810-1883) was born in Farmington to Zenas and Rachael (Lewis) Hart. In 1832 he married Sarah Jane Hooper (b. 1814), the daughter of Philip and Phebe (Whaples) Hooper of Newington, and they raised eight children. Hart was a blacksmith by trade and an active member and deacon of the Methodist Church. In 1851 he sold the house to Mark Gridley (1783-1864) and moved his family to Unionville, where he operated a successful shop which manufactured cutlery, steel traps, and tools (FLR 52:243). After Gridley's death, his widow Dorothy remained in the house until she died in 1873. The house was sold to Frederick A. Ward of New York City in 1873 (FLR 61:558). Ward, the son of Augustus and Susan (Cowles) Ward of 56 Main Street, was a New York Supreme Court Justice and probably used this residence as a summer house. In 1887 Carrie J. and Albert W. Porter acquired the house for $2200 (FLR 68:311). Mrs. Porter's parents, Lucius and Julia Dorman lived next door to the east. During their ownership the house was rented to various people including Miss Sarah Porter who used the building as a studio for her girls boarding school. Mrs. Edith King Skinner, the wife of William C. Skinner, Jr., bought the property in 1914 (FLR 77:549). A year later the Skinners hired builder R.F. Jones, who completely remodeled the house to its present Colonial Revival-style appearance. Born in Hartford to William C. and Florence (Roberts)

### Sources


### Photography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photographer</th>
<th>E.R. Hart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>4/86</th>
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<tr>
<td>View</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Negative on file</td>
<td>22:35</td>
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### Compiled By

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<thead>
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<th>Elizabeth R. Hart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>1/86</th>
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### Organization

Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

### Address

27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT

### Threats to Building or Site

- None known
  - Highways
  - Vandalism
  - Developers
  - Other

- Renewal
  - Private
  - Deterioration
  - Zoning
  - Explanation
Skinner, William, Jr., was a real estate broker. His wife Edith was a native of Essex and the daughter of Joseph and Gertrude (Lewis) King. The house was sold out of the family in 1941.

Although the house has been drastically altered over time, it derives historical significance due to its association with the Hart family.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OWNER'S NAME</th>
<th>FREEMAN, PAULINE S.</th>
<th>ADDRESS:</th>
<th>24 Mountain Road</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DATE BUILT:</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>FOR:</td>
<td>Chauncey Hart</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alterations made in 1915 by R.F. Jones for W.C. &amp; E.K. Skinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</td>
<td>Chauncey Hart. Hart later had a varied manufacturing plant in Unionville. See &quot;Stephen Hart and His Descendants&quot;, p. 296. He married Sarah Jane Hooper, a descendant of Hooper who signed the Declaration of Independence. Hart probably did not live here. Carrie J. Porter was a daughter of Lucius and Julia Dorman, whose home was next east, and is now the Salmonsden home.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Former Owners, cont.:
The place where I have resided for some years past", 3/29/1851, Vol. 52, p. 243;
Chauncey Hart from Edward Hooker, ½ acre, 29 rods n. & s., and 4½ rods wide, no house
mentioned, 8/12/1843, Vol. 48, p. 421; on the same day, 8/12/1843, in Vol. 48, p. 422,
Chauncey Hart mortgaged to Edward Hooker for $400. the above ½ acre with all unfinished
bldgs., and all building materials that shall be brought upon said land in the course
of building.
24 Mountain Road

The house on this site in 1906 is pictured on page 172 of the Farmington Book as the residence of Harry Baker and George Leopard. It is shown in the Baker and Tilden Atlas of 1869 as "Mrs. Gridley", whose husband, Mark Gridley, had purchased it in 1851.

The house is stated to have been built in 1843 for Chauncey Hart, on land purchased from Edward Hooker of 50 High Street. Chauncey Hart, born in 1810, was married to Sarah Jane Hooper, daughter of Philip Hooper of Newington. While living in Farmington he was a blacksmith, having learned the trade from Ira Stanley of New Britain. His shop was on the site of what was later Bysner's meat market. He moved to Unionville and sold this house in 1851. He led quite a varied life in Unionville, living about 80 rods south of the Unionville Depot. He was a drum major in the militia, an ingenious blacksmith and fork maker, and also made hoes and rakes. He had a water-powered plant on the south bank of the river. His son Hubert Chauncey Hart was a skilled mechanic and inventor, holding some six patents.

Mark Gridley, who purchased the house in 1851, apparently died before 1869, as Baker and Tilden show the owner at that time to have been Mrs. Gridley.

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It was purchased from her/in 1873 by Frederick C. Ward.

In 1887 it was purchased from Mr. Ward by Carrie J. Porter, who was the daughter of Lucius Dorman and his wife Julia A. Reed, whose home was next east. In fact this house can be seen to the west of the Dorman house, in the photo of the latter on page 169. The boy in that photo is one of the Harris boys from 30 Mountain Road. Carrie Dorman and Albert S. Porter had been married on October 7, 1882, and probably had lived with her parents prior to the purchase of this house. They had no children.

The caption under the photo of this house in the Farmington Book reads "Formerly used as a studio by Miss Porter". It is not clear that this meant Miss SARAH Porter, but it probably did, as the Albert Porters had no children. If it was used by Miss Sarah Porter, it was probably during the years just prior to 1885, as in that year the Memorial Studio was built at 7 Mountain Road. In this case it was probably rented from Frederick C. Ward.

Tenants here from the early 90's were Thomas Hart and his wife, the former Catherine Gallagher of 16 Mountain Road, and their daughter Rae. They lived here only a short time, moving first to 99 Main Street and in 1895 to a house purchased from James L. Cowles at 6 Pearl Street. They lived there until 1901, when they moved to West Hartford, making it their permanent home. See an account of this family under 16 Mountain Road.

Tenants from 1896 to 1900 were Samuel Hart Deming and his wife the former Lena Gaylord and their son Chauncey, born here in 1898. They moved to Warner Street in Hartford in 1900.

October 27, 1971

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The writer wonders, on the hot afternoon of August 22, 1974, if the Frederick Ward who purchased this house in 1873 might have been the Frederick Ward, son of Augustus Ward of 56 Main Street. The latter was born in 1841, was interested in Farmington people, but the middle initial was not the same. See sketch #176, page 5.
Samuel Hart Deming, 1872-1947, was the son of Chauncey Deming and Ellen Maria Hart. He was married around 1896 to Lena Gaylord, 1871-1955, daughter of William E. Gaylord and Julia Hurlburt. It is believed that the Gaylords were of French ancestry and that the name has been changed somewhat, perhaps from Gaillard, or something similar to that.

Samuel had attended local schools and the Agricultural college in Storrs. He worked as drug clerk in Lowell, Massachusetts, and in Hartford, before his marriage. When they were first married they lived on Mountain Road in what they called "the old Porter house", and which the writer assumes was the house on the site of the present 24 Mountain Road, pictured in the Farmington Book on page 172 as the "former studio of Miss Porter". This was purchased by Carrie J. Porter from Frederick C. Ward in 1887, and owned by Mrs. Porter and her husband Albert S. Porter, until sold in 1914 to the Skinners.

The Demings lived on Mountain Road for four years and their son Chauncey was born there in 1898. In 1900 they moved to Hartford and took up residence on Warner Street in the south end. In 1917 they moved to Vine Street, and later to Morningside, where they lived some thirty years.

Samuel worked first in Hartford for Billings and Spencer, the manufacturers of drop forgings, in their plant which was at that time on Broad Street. He was laid off during a lull in business in 1907, and worked later at Colt's Manufacturing. He really preferred outside work however, and having studied horticulture at Storrs, he went to work at Keney Park, then privately owned, operated by trustees. He was a foreman there for some nine years. When it was taken over by the City of Hartford, and he thus became employed by the city, he was transferred to Elizabeth Park, became outside foreman there, and stayed with them some nineteen years or so.

Mr. Deming died in 1947, his widow in 1955.

Chauncey Deming, their son, has been in the house construction business for most of his working life, either as carpenter, or building houses himself. One job which he did for his aunt, Elsie Deming, was to build in 1940 the house in which she lived some sixteen years on Colton Street, the house at number 15.

Mr. Deming is presently on the maintenance staff at Avery Heights, in the southwest section of Hartford near Newington, and resides in a cottage on their grounds.

October 27, 1971
Two tenants are mentioned in the Farmington Book, Harry Baker and George Leopard.

Harry Wilder Baker, born in Lynn, Massachusetts, had come to Farmington with A. J. Parker of 778 Farmington Avenue, as his assistant in the plumbing business. He was married in 1904 to Katherine Chidsey. They lived a while in this house then later moved to Garden Street, to a house pictured on page 111, later torn down to make way for the brick apartment buildings now there.

George Leopard was the blacksmith, "Polly" Leopard, pictured in front of his shop east of Meeting House Square in the photo on page 147. His family had lived at 30 Colton Street. Now married to Anne Louise Nelson, he and his wife and children lived here until they moved to 8 Maiden Lane which he built in 1910, and in the rear of which had his shop.

It is easy to see the source of the nickname "Honeymoon Flats", as all four of the couple just mentioned as living here had been newly married couples.

It would appear that Mrs. Porter may have died sometime prior to 1906, as the house was occupied at that time by two tenant families.

The property was purchased by William C. Skinner. A mystery of several years' standing as to what had actually happened to this house, was cleared up on October 21, 1971, by Mrs. Franklin Kearney, the former Sally Skinner. She said "My family bought it about 1915. They did it over. It was apparently a two-family house when Dad bought it". They certainly did it over, and extensively, as even local residents of that time have not presently recognized that it was the same house ——— remodeled. Mrs. Skinner told her daughter Sally that the house had had an outside stairway. It was converted by Mr. Skinner and his builder to a very fine house. Library records show the purchase to have been in 1914 and the remodeling in 1915.

William Converse Skinner was born in Hartford, the son of William Converse Skinner and Florence Roberts. His wife, Edith King, was born in Essex, the daughter of Joseph Handy King and Gertrude C. Lewis. Mr. Skinner was of the Hartford real estate firm of Skinner Brothers, and he continued in this business all through his Farmington residence, although he did some local business also.

They had lived a few years in the house at 18 High Street just prior to occupying 24 Mountain Road, and their first child, Calvin C. Skinner, was born during that residence. Their two daughters, Sally and Susanne, were born on Mountain Road. Among their neighbors was the Thomas Hewes family of 50 High Street, very special friends, as Mrs. Skinner and Mrs. Hewes had been schoolmates at Hartford Public High School.

Mrs. Kearney was surprised when told that the old Lucius Dorman house had once stood on the site of the Skinner garage, and was moved from there to its present location to the rear of the Old Grange Hall. She recalled that she had spent her third school year in that old hall, as it was used for the overflow from the outgrown Noah Wallace school in the earlier 1920's.

October 27, 1971
Although already married and with two children when World War I broke out, Mr. Skinner was a machine gunner in France, with the 101st Yankee Division, and was one of the charter members of the James Palache Post No. 53 of the American Legion, chartered on October 22, 1919. He served again in World War II, in Procurement this time, coming out with rank of major.

Mrs. Skinner died in April, 1937, and in August of that same year Sally Skinner was married to Franklin P. Kearney, who had also lived in Farmington since childhood. The newly married couple moved into a new house at 32 Mountain Road, the "Red House", built on a three-quarter acre lot which Sally's parents had given her as a pre-wedding gift in March of that year. More regarding the Kearneys will be found in an account of the house at 763 Farmington Avenue.

Calvin Converse Skinner married Marchen Thompson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Thompson of 50 High Street. They reside in Dorset, Vermont. Mr. Skinner is presently semi-retired, having worked many years for the Orvis Manufacturing Company of Manchester, Vermont, makers of fine fishing tackle. They have two children, Peter and Margaret.

Susanne Skinner served three years in military service in England during World War II, under General Doolittle of the 8th Air Force, and General Eisenhower. In 1948 she married John Mix Deming, son of Edward Hooker Deming, Jr., who was the son of Judge E. H. Deming of 100 Main Street. They presently reside on Talcott Notch Road. See more regarding them in the account of 100 Main Street.

In 1938 Mr. Skinner re-married, this time to Eleanor Bartlett Phelps, who had some years before lived at 93 Main Street. They lived until 1941 on Mountain Road, then Mr. Skinner sold this house and they moved into 1 Waterville Road, a property which Mrs. Skinner had inherited some years before. She was a descendant of the Strongs, owners of the Waterville Road property since 1807. Among Mr. Skinner's activities while living there was the development of a small portion of the property toward the west, building two small business buildings on what is called Canal Path.

Around 1956, Mr. Skinner semi-retired by then, they moved to a house which they purchased in Colebrook. After Mr. Skinner's death in 1962 Mrs. Skinner moved to Norfolk. In February 1963 she sold the property at 1 Waterville Road to Richard H. Russell of New Britain and in October 1971 she has just moved to California, where she expects to stay.

October 28, 1971