This house is located on the north side of Maiden Lane just west of Main Street. An open lot exists to the east. Other historic buildings are visible on all other sides.
This gambrel-roofed colonial-period house is unusual due to its gambrel-to-street orientation. Its three-bay facade with a Greek Revival-style doorway possibly suggest an alteration before 1845, as the doorway existed on this (south) elevation in a 1906 photograph. Its wood-shingled exterior, rear one-story ell, and small center chimney also existed by 1906. Its original appearance, however, is unknown.

### 19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

In 1754 the Reverend Timothy Pitkin (1727-1812) purchased two ½ acres of land from Elisha Lewis (FLR 9:352). One of the pieces is the site of this house. Pitkin built a "mansion house" in 1758 and probably built this house to live in while the larger house was being constructed. Later it might have been used to house his domestic help. Pitkin was a graduate of Yale College and in 1752 became pastor of the Farmington Congregational Church. He married Temperence Clapp, daughter of Yale's president, the Reverend Thomas Clapp, in 1753 and in 1773 married his second wife, Eunice Strong, daughter of Hartford's First Church pastor, the Rev. John Strong. Upon Timothy's death in 1812 his son Charles (1759-1830) received title of his mansion home located on Colton Street and "all other buildings" on the homelot (FPR 7:37). which includes this building. Charles married Cynthia Wells and after his death, his brother the Honorable Timothy Pitkin, Jr. (1766-1847), sold the property to Catherine D. Cowles, the widow of wealthy Timothy Cowles (FLR 46:166). After Catherine's death in 1859, the house passed to her son, Chauncey D. Cowles, and sons-in-law Austin F. Williams and the Rev. Raymond Seeley (FPR 12:230). Williams later quit-claimed his interest to Chauncey (FLR 54:447). In 1867 Thomas Treadwell purchased the property for $1500 (FLR 60:549) and after his death, his executor sold it to Joseph W. Backus for $3800 (FLR 70:535). Two months after this purchase, Backus sold it to Henry H. Mason (FLR 71:121) who then sold it in 1910 to George D. Mason (FLR 77:327). From this time on, its ownership has changed several times. (CONTINUED BELOW)

### SOURCES


### PHOTOGRAPHY

- **PHOTOGRAPHER:** N. Ainspan
- **DATE:** 4/86
- **VIEW:** N
- **NEGATIVE ON FILE:** 18:14A
- **NAME:** Ruth A. Bedrosian
- **DATE:** 1/86

### CONTACT

- **COMPILRED BY:** Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
- **ADDRESS:** 27 Washington St., Middletown, CT

### SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS

The cottage is architecturally and historically significant. It remains one of the few gambrel-to-street houses in Farmington. It derives historical significance since it was associated with the Pitkin family.

### THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE

- **None Known:**
- **Highways:**
- **Vandalism:**
- **Developers:**
- **Other:**
- **Renewal:**
- **Private:**
- **Deterioration:**
- **Zoning:**
- **Explanation:**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OWNER'S NAME</th>
<th>MASON, GEORGE D.</th>
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<tr>
<td>ADDRESS</td>
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<tr>
<td>DATE BUILT</td>
<td>ca. 1754</td>
<td>FOR: Rev. Timothy Pitkin</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORMER OWNERS</td>
<td>G.D. Mason from H.H. Mason, 7/13/1910, Vol. 77, p. 327; H.H. Mason from J.W. Backus, 6/1/1893, Vol. 71, p. 121; Backus from Est. Thomas Treadwell, 4/30/1895, Vol. 70, p. 535; bounded e., s. &amp; w. on highways, n. on Barbour; Treadwell from Chauncey D. Cowles, 5/18/1867, Vol. 60, p. 549, &quot;a portion of the lot lying northerly of the Stone Store, so-called, and the south part of said lot with the buildings thereon&quot;; C.D. Cowles from mother, Catherine D. Cowles; Catherine D. Cowles from Timothy Pitkin &quot;a little south of the Meeting House south on a two-rod passway lately the property of my brother, Charles Pitkin&quot;, 10/21/1833, Vol. 46, p. 166; Charles Pitkin from father, Rev. Timothy Pitkin; Rev. Timothy Pitkin from Samuel &amp; Elijah Porter, 4 acres, no house, 3/14/1754, Vol. 10, p. 102, and Vol. 9, p. 352.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>&quot;Farmington, Conn. 1906&quot;, p. 126.</td>
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This house is pictured on page 126 of the Farmington Book as the residence of Mrs. Alfred Butler, and is shown on Baker and Tilden's Atlas of 1869 as one of three houses belonging to T. Treadwell.

According to Mrs. Hurlburt's chart on page xvi of "Town Clerks", and explained on page xviii, the land on which it stands was first owned by Thomas Porter. When the Rev. Timothy Pitkin purchased it no house had ever been built here, and he purchased from Samuel and Elijah Porter in 1753, to the extent of four acres. In 1754 he purchased additional land.

It is the belief of the present owners of this house, as expressed by Mrs. Price, that the Rev. Timothy Pitkin probably never lived in this house, except perhaps during the construction of his larger and more pretentious house farther east, facing Main Street. After the large house was built Mr. Pitkin probably housed his domestic staff in this smaller house.

That larger house was described by Julius Gay as "the long yellow house just north of the present parsonage, which was the home of the Rev. Timothy Pitkin during his sixty year residence in our village". That house was entirely destroyed by the great fire of July 1864.

Upon the Rev. Timothy Pitkin's death in 1812 this lot and smaller house became the property of his son Charles Pitkin, who had been born in 1759 and married Cynthia Wells. Whether he ever lived here is not known. The next title transfer was in 1833 when Catherine Deming Cowles (wife of Major Timothy Cowles) purchased it from the Hon. Timothy Pitkin, brother of Charles, so Charles was perhaps by that time deceased. The Hon. Timothy definitely never lived in this house, as his own home had been since 1788 the house now standing at 2 Colton Street.

After the death of Mrs. Cowles in 1859 the title to this house passed to her son Chauncey Deming Cowles. It seems quite certain that he did not live here, as he inherited at the same time the large house at 87 Main Street, and made it his residence. This brings up the probability that this house was occupied by tenants for the long period from 1833, or perhaps even from 1812.

In 1867 Thomas Treadwell purchased all of the land on the north side of Maiden Lane (altho it had not yet been thus named) from Main Street to Garden Street. Mrs. Hurlburt speaks of this on page 239 of "Town Clerks" as follows, speaking of Thomas Treadwell: "He purchased in 1867 the entire north side of Maiden Lane with its two ancient houses and the still empty site at the corner of the lane and Main Street, where the Pitkin house had stood before the fire of 1864". One of the "two ancient houses" was this, aged 113 years, and the other was the old house of Chauncey Warren, farther west, which later burned.

September 3, 1972
Thomas Treadwell did not live in this house, as he built for his own use the house now known as 92 Main Street, on the site of the Rev. Timothy Pitkin residence, so this house probably continued to serve as rental property.

The transcript of title records of this property, as available to the writer at this time, reads as follows:


The writer will assume that Backus purchased in 1893, although this assumption may not be correct. Thomas Treadwell died in 1883, his widow not until 1895. In that latter year Martha Backus, wife of the Rev. J. W., purchased the residence of Thomas Treadwell, at 92 Main Street.

To be consistent, the writer further assumes that Henry Hall Mason purchased this Maiden Lane house in 1895 from Backus. Henry H. Mason was the son of the Charles Stanley Mason who was at that time owner and operator of the greenhouse at what is now 88 Garden Street. Again this was evidently purchased as rental property, since Henry H. Mason's wife, the former Ottilie M. Dickinson, had been at the time of their marriage (1889) deeded a home at what is now 122 Main Street.

Mrs. Alfred Butler happened to be the tenant when the Farmington Book was published in 1906. She was the sister of Charles Hopkins Clark, editor (or publisher?) of the Hartford Courant at that time. A Mrs. Meggs is said to have lived here at one time, and also Mrs. Wilmerding, the latter shown on page 59 of the Farmington Book as the 1906 occupant of 9 Waterville Road. No dates are known for these latter two tenants.

George D. Mason purchased from Henry Hall Mason on July 13, 1910, recorded on page 327 of Volume 77 of land records. He was the nephew of Henry H. Mason, being the son of Charles S. Mason, Jr., the brother of H. H. Mason. George's father was at this time living at 174 Main Street.

George D. Mason had been helping his grandfather operate the greenhouse on Garden Street, and was living there at the time of his marriage in 1908 to Haidee Clara Griswold, born 1887, the daughter of Chauncey Griswold of Meadow Road at Garden Street. George's grandparents both died in the year of 1908 and he either inherited the Garden Street property, or purchased shares from other heirs. He continued his residence there, and the operation of the greenhouse until 1910, when on May 11 he sold the whole property to Elizabeth V. Hale Keep, Headmistress of Miss Porter's School. It was just two months later that he purchased this house.

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* Note: Charles Hopkins Clark was Vice-president of the Associated Press in 1906. From 1891 until January 15, 1906 he was Vice-president of the Hartford Courant, becoming president then, and serving as such until 1926.
George D. Mason worked as gardener for the Charles N. Lees of 31 Main Street, and at some other houses, and kept their grounds and his own in beautiful condition. He was handy with tools also, did some carpentry for others, and with the help of his own family did the remodeling of this house.

The George Masons had two children, Lorena Clara Mason and Elevun Stanley Mason.

Elevun Mason described the house for the writer:

"There are two living rooms, one having an old-fashioned fireplace with an oven alongside, and a wood-bin under the oven. The fireplace was very shallow and threw so much heat that 'snuggling up before the fire' was almost impossible. The oven was rounded inside. The living room in the front of the house was originally two parlors, the partition now having been removed. An extra wide front door has two wedge-shaped scars, said to have been made by Indian tomahawks. Beams in the attic are all pegged. Any nails used in the house are handmade'. This does not apply to nails used in re-modeling.

The large fireplace was discovered by Elevun Mason when he was twenty-one. He removed the mantel from the small fireplace to replace it with a better one, and in so doing found the large fireplace which had been partially filled in to reduce its size. They then restored the old fireplace to its original condition.

The Masons' daughter Lorena was married in 1940 to Allen A. Higbie, son of Allen H. Higbie and Florence Vaughn, and they lived in Hartford, presently residing in Manchester. Their daughter Barbara is now Mrs. Paul Benoit of Andover, Connecticut.

The Masons' son Elevun, whose wife is the former Elizabeth Wilson, daughter of William and Elizabeth Wilson of Uddingston, Scotland, both deceased, lives on Hawthorne Lane in Farmington. Their children are Scott E. Mason and Lynn E. Mason. Scott has been a student at the University of Hartford Art School for the past two years.

Elevun Mason, who was for a time an interior decorator, is associate manager of the D & L Store in the Farmington Valley Mall, Simsbury, one of a chain of progressive, family-owned stores based in New Britain, having served in a like position in the D & L store at Corbin's Corner.

George D. Mason and his wife lived here until 1960, their son and his wife also living here for a short time after their marriage, then sold the house to Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Price. Mr. and Mrs. George Mason then moved to Manchester, where he died in 1961 and his widow died during the following year.

May 13, 1974
Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Price are both from Kentucky, Mr. Price by way of Ohio however.

Edward Bayes Price, born in Waynesburg, Ohio, in 1891, is the son of Robert Francis Price and Adelaide Scott. He came of Welsh grandparents who had a large farm in Southern Ohio. Grandfather Bayes was the first importer of Percheron horses, had a large stock farm. Grandmother Nora Bayes sat in a large, black horsehair chair, dressed in black with a white fichu and a white cap, smoking a pipe and telling the children stories of Indian attacks. She was the one who as a small child saw George Washington. Grandfather Scott went into the Masonic Lodge at the same time as his good friend William McKinley. He was a chemist, operated a drug store, and was postmaster for 24 years. His summer vacations were spent fishing with Grover Cleveland on Star Island in Lake Erie, but when Cleveland was made President Mr. Scott resigned the postmastership --- he would not serve under a Democrat!

A maternal grandmother was Marie Adelaide Crevoisie, whose Huguenot parents brought her to America in a sailing vessel when she was three months old, during the Huguenot persecution. Robert Francis Price was a country doctor in Ohio. He visited his winter patients in a huge buffalo coat, traveling in a sleigh heated with stones and drawn by a "troica" team of three horses. Many times the livery stable men had to life him out of the sleigh half frozen when he returned from a patient.

Mrs. Price, the former Katherine Whiteside, is the daughter of Isaac Whiteside and Katherine Beatty, and grew up in Louisville, Kentucky. Her father was in the wholesale bakery business, but died when she was thirteen. Katherine was a student at Dana Hall in Wellesley, Massachusetts. She first became acquainted with the town of Farmington through a New Britain schoolmate whom she visited and who brought her to weekend dances in Farmington.

Mr. Price was a civil engineer, a graduate of Rose Polytechnic Institute of Terre Haute, Indiana, when he went to Kentucky, where he and Katherine met and were married. He went into her family's baking business and soon was manager. When it was sold to General Baking he became a Division Vice President. He later served as President of the American Society of Bakery Engineers, and was on the Board of Directors of the New York Bakers' Club.

Around the mid-1930's the business moved them to Cleveland, and from there to Kansas City. Mr. Price then went into business for himself as a wholesale bakery supplier. They moved several times in a short space of years. Bronxville, New York, to Farmington, was one move, and they lived at 27 Main Street from June 1946 to May 1947. Boston was next, and then Farmington again, at 19 Main Street from November 1948 to March 1950, then back to Bronxville. Never very happy in Bronxville they decided on Farmington for their permanent home. "This just seemed the natural place to come", says Mrs. Price.

They rented on Wolf Pit Road until the Elm Tree Apartment was ready to take them. In 1958 they were the first tenants in that newly remodeled old inn, climbing over ladders and saw horses to get to their apartment on the third floor, part of the old ballroom overlooking the golf course to the north.

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Mrs. Price was by this time in the real estate business, having received her salesman's license on August 20, 1955, the day of the great flood caused by Hurricane. She worked one year in Hartford, then yielded to Edward Deming's persuasion to join Deming and Luscomb, with whom she is still associated. Mr. Price is now retired.

In 1960 Mr. Deming told Mrs. Price that this house at 4 Maiden Lane was for sale and they bought it. They love the house for its historical connection with the Rev. Timothy Pitkin, the pastor during the Revolution, as well as for its wide, tomahawk-scarred door, its old fireplace and rum cupboard, and its comfortable vine-covered patio. They have not made many changes in the house except for modernization of the heating system, but they do expect to add a room to the west, and to build a garage.

The Prices have an 1870 photo of the house which does not show the second addition to the rear, nor does it show the second chimney. This was probably put in at the same time as the last addition, and between it and the previous addition to the north.

There is an immense white pine to the west of the rear half of the house, and there is an arbor to the east which shelters a small patio. The old well was close to the dining room door.

The front door does have the tomahawk scars, is a double door and extra wide, perhaps because there was no funeral door, and it seems to have the original hinges and hardware. The staircase was perhaps added by the Masons. It formerly rose out of the rear sitting room, but now leads up from the front room. It is narrow and not part of the original house, in which the unpartitioned loft was reached by ladder. The house is full of square-headed nails, and there are Hessians andirons, made (so it is said) so that the post-revolutionary Americans could spit on the Hessians.

Mrs. Price says: "We like the antiquity of this house".

The Prices have three children, all born in Kentucky. They are:

Edward Bayes Price, whose wife is the former Judith Thompson, is a medical doctor and pathologist practicing in Denver, where they live with their children, Scott, Steven and Carol Ann.

Katherine Whiteside Price is now Mrs. Richard Rose of Wilton, Connecticut, where her husband is a technical writer. Their children are Susan and Charles.

Robert Whiteside Price is a salesman for a Rhode Island company, and served in the Navy during World War II. He and his children, Timothy and Victoria, live here with his parents.

September 3, 1972.  


April 24, 1974