**Noah L. Phelps House**

The Noah L. Phelps House is situated on the west side of Waterville Road. To the north and south stand other historic houses. The Farmington Country Club is located across the street to the east and the Farmington River is to the west.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. BUILDING NAME (Common)</th>
<th>Phelps, Noah L., House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. TOWN CITY</td>
<td>Farmington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. STREET AND NUMBER</td>
<td>5 Waterville Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. OWNER(S)</td>
<td>S &amp; D Associates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. USE (Present)</td>
<td>Residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. MATERIALS (Indicate use or location when appropriate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Clapboard</td>
<td>[X] Brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wood Shingle</td>
<td>[ ] Asbestos Siding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Board &amp; Batten</td>
<td>[ ] Fieldstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Aluminum Siding</td>
<td>[ ] Cobblestone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Concrete Siding</td>
<td>[ ] Cut stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. STYLE OF BUILDING</td>
<td>Transitional Colonial/Federal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. ROOF TYPE</td>
<td>[X] Gable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM</td>
<td>[X] Wood frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. ROOF MATERIAL</td>
<td>[X] Concrete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. ROOF SHAPE</td>
<td>[X] Hip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. ROOF MATERIALS</td>
<td>[X] Roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. ROOF SHAPE</td>
<td>[X] Asphalt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. ROOF MATERIALS</td>
<td>[X] Tin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. ROOF SHAPE</td>
<td>[X] Slate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. ROOF MATERIALS</td>
<td>[X] Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1809

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17. CONDITION (Structural)</th>
<th>Excellent [ ] Good [ ] Fair [X] Deteriorated [ ] Excellent [ ] Good [ ] Fair [X] Deteriorated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18. INTEGRITY WHEN MOVED</td>
<td>On original [ ] Moved [X] Yes [ ] No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Barn</td>
<td>[ ] Shed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Carriage house</td>
<td>[ ] Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Commercial</td>
<td>[X] Industrial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Open land</td>
<td>[X] Residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Commercial</td>
<td>[X] High building density</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS** 26 X 35
In 1906 this house featured a full-length, open, Victorian-period porch and a gable roof which capped the building's two stories. Today the house appears differently due to the removal of the porch and the addition of a half story, giving the gable roof a steep pitch. The front facade boasts four bays and twelve-over-twelve sash. Note the new, but Federal-Greek Revival-style, door surround and west addition. Two gable-roofed dormers, also twentieth-century additions, extend from the roof as does the brick chimney. The north addition was probably added during the 1800s.

In 1807 Pomeroy Strong, William F. Hill, and Noah L. Phelps (1778-1861) divided land jointly owned by them (FLR 35:528). The land consisted of four acres bounded by "Town Street", now Farmington Avenue, on the south and a highway "not yet opened" on the east, today's Waterville Road. Phelps received a one acre, one rood, 80 rod piece of land lying between pieces owned by Strong and Hill. In April of 1807 he mortgaged this piece for $300 to the State of Connecticut (FLR 35:357). By June of 1809 Phelps had completed the construction of this house which he again mortgaged to the Estate of Thomas M. Norton (FLR 36:270) and to Levi Clark (FLR 36:287). Apparently several of the mortgages were foreclosed as by 1817 Abner Bidwell, a merchant, had quit-claimed the property to Leonard Winship for $640 being "the same transferred to me by decree of the Supreme Court of Hartford County" (FLR 39:118). Winship (1792-1872), who lived on Main Street, probably rented this house, may have enlarged it, and in 1856 sold it to Fanny M. Steele for $1200 (FLR 55:132). Steele next sold it to Robert Lawrence, a farmer, for $1400 (FLR 60:256). Lawrence, born in 1821, was from Ireland and his wife was Mary Gallagher (1821-1905) also from Ireland. They raised eight children over ten years. This fact suggests that the house may have been enlarged a second time to accommodate Lawrence's growing family. Upon Lawrence's death in 1912 the estate was divided between his three daughters: Emeline (1849-1926), Isabella (1857-1942), and Electa (1862-?). It remained in the family until 1952. (see below)

Sources:

Photographer: Nathan Ainspan
Date: 4/86

View: W
Negative on File: 19:2A

Name: Ruth B. Matteson
Date: 3/86

Organizer: 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

19. cont. The Noah L. Phelps House built by 1809, contributes to the historic streetscape due to its association with the early development of Waterville Road.
OWNER'S NAME: (LAWRENCE ELECTA & EST. OF ISABEL) TO LAWRENCE, William
ADDRESS: 5 Waterville Road Mary L. Williams 9/20/57
DATE BUILT: ca 1807 FOR: Noah L. Phelps 10/17/58

ARCHITECT
MASTER-BUILDER

FORMER OWNERS: Lawrence from their Robert Lawrence by will, Farmington Prob. Rec. Vol. 31, p. 216, 8/20/1912: R. Lawrence from Francis (sic) M. Steele, 10/14/1865. Vol. 60, p. 256: Steele, Fanny M. from Leonard Winship for $1200, east on highway, north on own land, west on Timothy Cowles, south by land of Thomas Mygatt, with all buildings. L. Winship from Abner Bidwell of New York, for $640" at north end of Main St, 1 acre and 2 roods, all buildings on north and south on land of P. Strong, w. on C. Deming and e. on highway leading to Northington being the same as came to me by decree of the Superior Court of Hfd. County Sept. 1816, 10/2/1817, Vol. 39, p. 118:

A. Bidwell from Wm. Mather and Horace Cowles, Administrators on Est. of Thomas Norton and Martin Wells "main st. 1 acre 2 roods & buildings, n. on

REFERENCES: 
"Farmington, Conn. 1906" p. 79
Baker & Tilden Atlas, p. 32.
P. Strong, e. on new road to Northington, s. on Augustus Bodwell, w. on C. Deming. said land having been formerly conveyed to sd. William & Horace by Noah L. Phelps by deed of mortgage 6/10/1809" (no record of said mortgage) 3/7/1815, Vol. 38 p. 182: Phelps, Noah L. with P. Strong and William Hill had purchased four acres extending from Bridge Street, north and had divided their land by agreement of distribution 4/16/1807, Vol. 35, p. 528—see sketch on sheet of Eleanor B. Skinner. Noah L. Phelps had taken this section with no house on it, the only house on that four acres being the old house which is now the rear of the Skinner homestead. N. Phelps, P. Strong & Wm. Hill purchased the 4 acres 4/6/1807, Vol. 35, p. 301: they mortgaged same to State of Conn., 4/7/1807, Vol. 35, p. 303 and the agreement of distribution 4/16/1807, Vol. 35, p. 528.
This house is pictured on page 59 of the Farmington Book as the residence of Robert Lawrence. The chart on page xxi of Mrs. Hurlburt's "Town Clerks", shows this property to have been part of parcel No. 103, with original owners:

- Thomas Newell 1646,
- Matthew Webster 1660,
- Joseph Woodford 1666, and
- Samuel Newell 1717.

Of Joseph Woodford it is said on page 376 of "Town Clerks", that "his dwellinghouse stood on the highway leading into the meadow, now the corner of Hartford Road and College Highway". That would have been about on the site of 5 Waterville Road, presently the IDC building.

It also says: "Thomas Newell lived next west, the two houses probably being rather close together". These are now joined to make the building mentioned above, the IDC building.

On page 368 is stated: "Thomas Newell gave his son Samuel a fifteen acre parcel of land for plowing and planting, north of his homestead, with a convenient way for carts and carriages. This was probably the beginning of the present Avon Road, now known as College Highway".

The writer believes that the house at 5 Waterville Road probably stands on part of the land given his son by Thomas Newell.

For more on both the Newell and Woodford families, see the account of 1 Waterville Road.

The card in the Village Library regarding this house states that it was built, or moved here, in 1807, by Noah L. Phelps. See more regarding Mr. Phelps in the account of 122 Main Street.

On June 10, 1809, it appears that he mortgaged this property to a syndicate comprised of William Mather of Simsbury, Horace Cowles of Farmington, and Martin Wells, of Newburgh, New York.

On October 10, 1814, this same syndicate quit-claimed the property to Abner Bidwell. His claim to title was disputed, but in 1816 the court approved his claim. In 1817 Mr. Bidwell quit-claimed to Leonard Winship, formerly of West Hartford.

Leonard Winship was a cabinet maker and wood-worker. His granddaughter Mary Lewis Root, who married Edwin W. Tillotson of Town Farm Road, tells the following of Mr. Winship:

see following page

September 14, 1973
"The house the Winships lived in, now the Lawrence home, when they first came to town from Hartford, was not far from the canal, and grandfather had a turning lathe, now in Mr. Tim Root's cellar. The power to turn the lathe came from an outlet of the canal, the use of which he was allowed for the care of the overflow in high water. The brook which ran into the canal at this point was Poke Brook, sometime since named Boulder Brook, and his shop was built over it, and that must have been where he made the mahogany furnishings for the church. He afterwards moved up the hill on Main Street to the house now owned by Mr. John Thompson, south of Mr. Sneath's house."

Mrs. Winship had to jump into the canal one day to save her small son Franklin from drowning, as he had fallen in, as stated one time much later by her daughter.

Mr. Gay, in an address delivered at the Library Meeting of September 13, 1899, and quoted on page 135 of the Farmington Book, tells of Mr. Winship's involvement with the canal as follows:

"A considerable source of water was from the numerous brooks which emptied into the canal, and, lest the supply should, during a protracted storm, be in excess, a contrivance called the waste-gates was built on the line of Poke Brook. Hither, after every storm, Mr. Leonard Winship might have been seen hastening to raise the gates. In consideration for his services he was allowed to build a turning shop on the north bank of the brook adjoining the tow-path, and use the surplus water to turn his wheels. On some memorable occasion the water supply was so much in excess of his needs as to carry off his big overshot wheel well nigh to the river and threaten the whole establishment. I remember seeing the wheel standing under an apple tree where it had lodged all one summer. It was finally got back into place before the canal came to an inglorious end."

On May 7, 1831, Mr. Winship purchased from Abner Bidwell the house at 16 Main Street. He and his family moved up there, selling this house to Frances M. (Fanny) Steele.

Nothing is known of Fanny Steele, but she appears to have owned this for some time, as the next purchase listed is that of Robert Lawrence in 1865.

Robert Lawrence, 1821-1912, was the son of George Lawrence and Jane Potts of England, although it is not known that he was born in England.

Mrs. Lawrence was the former Mary Gallagher, 1820-1905, the eldest of the nine children of William Gallagher and Jane Lamb, all born in Ireland, and all nine said to have come to Farmington in the mid-1800's.

September 14, 1973
It has just occurred to the writer, as he is typing this, that Robert Lawrence and Mary Gallagher had perhaps met and married in New Haven, as it has been said that their son Alexander (Sandy) was born there, and that they then came to Farmington, perhaps being the first of both families to have come here. The first purchase of land by a Gallagher is thought to have been made around 1850.

It would seem that the Lawrences lived somewhere in the village of Farmington much earlier than their purchase of this house would indicate. This is brought out by Miss Elizabeth Eels Sheffield, who later married Thomas Cowles and was the mother of Admiral Cowles, as she spoke of rooming with a Mrs. Lawrence in 1843 and 1844, and no other Lawrences have been known to have been here around that time.

Mrs. Lawrence took in sewing and mending to do, especially for the girls who attended Miss Porter's School, and also took in boarders and roomers. Mr. Lawrence's occupation is not known.

The writer has no certain information as to the children of the Lawrences, but he believes they may have been the following, in sequence of birth, taken from grave markers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth-Death</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexander</td>
<td>1849-1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emeline</td>
<td>1851-1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth</td>
<td>1853-1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David W.</td>
<td>1855-1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>1857-1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabelle</td>
<td>1859-1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>1862-1926</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alexander Lawrence (Sandy) is said to have married twice, and that William Robert Lawrence was the child of his first marriage and Jane of the second. Sandy was Mr. Gay's right-hand man in the nearby store, and also was the telegraph operator, as the store was also the Western Union office. Russell Lee Jones speaks of this store and says: "here we bought our marbles and candy and visited with Mr. Erastus Gay and his assistant Sandy Lawrence, and listened to the ticking of the telegraph instrument". Mrs. Quincy Blakely says of him: "Sandy Lawrence was a silent person but he had various grunts which were expressive of approval or disapproval, and the grunts were noted carefully by the group which was discussing matters of note".

William Robert Lawrence, Alexander's son, was married in 1908 to Matilda (Tillie) Rossvall, 1881-1956, daughter of Nils Rossvall and Mary Nordstrom of Town Farm Road. The William Lawrences lived for some time at 23 Main Street, and Mr. Lawrence is thought to have died while they lived there. Mrs. Lawrence worked for many years for the Wadsworth family. Their children were Isabella, Robert (who died in infancy) and William Robert Jr. The latter married Nancy VanSiden Bailey-Gates of Brooklyn, New York.

Jane Lawrence, Alexander's daughter, was later Mrs. Jane Lange of Pachogue, New York.

September 14, 1973
Emeline Lawrence, 1849-1926, was a milliner, probably lived with her parents a long time. She was unmarried, but after 1897, when the old Maxwell house across from the Corner House was moved to become 7 Waterville Road, she lived and had her shop in that house. More regarding her is written in the account of that house.

Ruth Lawrence, 1851-1923, was married in 1874 to William Frazier, and they lived in Hartford. Their daughter, Jane Merrill Frazier, 1875-1952, is buried in the Riverside Cemetery.

David W. Lawrence, 1853-1892, unmarried, occupation not known.

Mary Lawrence, 1855-1898, is recorded in Town Records as having been a schoolteacher in Farmington 1884-85, with a salary of $9.00 per week. She later taught at Somerville, Massachusetts, and died there.

Isabelle Woodruff Lawrence, 1857-1942, was a graduate nurse, worked in a hospital for some time, and later did private duty nursing.

Robert Henry Lawrence, 1859-1943, is unknown to the writer.

Electa Richards Lawrence, 1862-1952, taught school in Farmington all her working life, her photo appearing on page 37 of the Farmington Book as teacher of grades 6 and 7.

Eliza Lawrence, whose name was omitted from the listing on the previous page, was married to Lawrence Carter, and lived in West Hartford. Their children were:

Blanche,
Florence,
Isabel and
William.

Of Blanche, Isabel and William, the only information known by the writer is that William Lawrence Carter died in 1960.

Florence Carter, born in West Hartford in 1884, married Lynnwood P. Randall. They had no children. She taught school in Hartford for 35 years, her husband apparently having died several years ago. Mrs. Randall retired from school work shortly before the Elm Tree Apartments were put up for rental, and she lived there for about a year and a half before moving back to West Hartford. The writer's last telephone contact with her was made in January 1970, at which time she was still active in church work and living in an apartment on South Main Street, West Hartford.

Electa and Emeline Lawrence probably inherited this house after their father's death in 1912. Emeline died in 1926 and Electa in 1952, and yet the next title transfer shown was in 1957.

September 14, 1973

1833.
The purchaser recorded in 1957 was Mary L. Williams, of whom nothing is known by the writer.

On October 17, 1958, the house was purchased by Dr. Charles S. Mirabile of 34 Mountain Road, who converted it to apartments.

In 1970 Mrs. John Sanborn was living here, but soon after that she moved to Maine. She and her husband had lived for some years in the Brady house on Colton Street, then built a house on Willow Lane, but her husband died shortly after that.

September 14, 1973

Note mentioned on page 3, second paragraph:

Yes, the writer did later find that Robert Lawrence purchased on February 16, 1856, the house at 28 Garden Street, selling it on October 10, 1865. Perhaps there was an even earlier purchase which has not been noted, or they may have rented.

September 19, 1973