Sited on the north side of Farmington Avenue just west of Waterville Road is the Woodford-Newell-Strong House. A parking lot sits on the south and east sides of its grounds. Other historic residences are visible from the site.
This center-chimney Colonial-period building features several attached out buildings that are pictured in a 1906 photograph. Its five-bay facade features a Greek Revival-style doorway with sidelights. A large brick chimney extends from the roof and twelve-over-nine sash are found throughout the house. To the north is a gambrel-roofed addition original to the house. When restored in the 1950s by past owner, Eleanor B. Skinner, evidence surfaced that the house was actually made up of two former houses.

In 1807 Pomeroy Strong (1777-1861) purchased a four acre piece of land with an "old house" from five Cowles brothers: Elijah, Johathan, Seth, Gad, and Martin (FLR 35:301). The house mentioned is thought to be the Woodford House existing as early as 1665, however, it is impossible to be certain. Strong also purchased the Newell Homestead (ca. 1665) from Gad North (FLR 34:76) and shortly thereafter joined both houses together, remodeling them to give them a two story appearance. It is likely that the Greek Revival-style doorway was added then. This is evident due to the information reported by its past owner (1950) who restored the existing building and discovered the joining buildings. It is known that Pomeroy Strong married Susan North (1775-1859), the daughter of John and Merill North. Strong, perhaps a cooper, since he later purchased a cooper's shop, was the son of Col. John and Mercy (Root) Strong. Upon Strong's death his estate passed to his daughters: Julia (b. 1815) and Ellen Root (1822-1893) who had married John N. Bartlett (FPR 12:355). The Bartletts, in 1862, sold their interest in the property to Julia who at that time was married to Dr. Chauncey Brown (FLR 58:393). Dr. Brown died in 1879 leaving Julia with two children Philip and Julia. By 1931 Philip Brown had inherited his mother's estate. Next, his estate was devised to his second cousin Eleanor (Bartlett) Phelps (FLR 74:539) who owned it until 1963.

This house has an interesting evolution which makes it highly significant to Farmington's architectural history. It also derives significance due to its association with the Strong-North families who owned it for 156 years.

Sources:
DATE BUILT: ca. 1665 FOR: Thomas Newell
              ca. 1807 " Pomroy Strong

ADDRESS: 820 Farmington Avenue & Waterville Road

ARCHITECT: LESTER BARTLETT
MASTER-BUILDER

FOR: Thomas Newell from Gad North, 15 rods of land & dwellinghouse, bounded w. on old house lately the property of Widow Lewis & Miles Lee & Thomas Cowles 1/15/1803, Vol. 34, p. 76; G. North from Stephen W. Cornwell, same 15 rods of Land & dwellinghouse 2/20/1802, Vol. 33, p. 517; S.W. Cornwell from Seth Richards, 15 rods of land & dwellinghouse, bounded s. on the way to the North Meadow Gate, w. on an old house the property of Annah Lewis, Miles Lee & Thomas Cowles & thence eastward to make 15 rods of land 3/16/1797, Vol. 31, p. 472; there is no record of the sale of the Newel House to anyone: John & Chauncey Deming from Mary Silliman & her husband Gold Sillick Silliman of Fairfield, Ct., about 6 acres with the bldgs. thereon "being the same as sold by Thomas Cowles to Rev. Joseph Fisk & Mary Noyes (now Mary Silliman) 2/13/1788, Vol. 27, p. 471; Rev. J. & Mary Noyes Fisk of Stonington, New London Co., 5 acres, dwellinghouse where

REFERENCES: "Farmington, Conn., 1906", p. 12
            "Baker & Tilden Atlas, 1869", p. 33 - 'Dr. Chauncey Brown'
            "Farmington Town Clerks, 1943", Hurlburt, p. 34

Manuscript of "The Homestead" in folder

(OVER)
Former Owners, cont.:

Elisha Newel now dwells 4/15/1773, Vol. 19, p. 381, from Thomas Cowles; T. Cowles from

Elisha Newel, 5 acres where I now dwell, with dwellinghouse, barn & other bldgs., s. on

highway leading to North Meadow Gate, e. on land of Wm. Porter, w. on land of F. Gay,

1/5/1773, Vol. 19, p. 189; E. Newel from his father Nathaniel (there is no record of the
death of Nathaniel - no transfer of Homestead & no estate); N. Newel from his father Samuel
Sr., "where I now dwell, 5 acres, e. on my son Thomas, w. on Haynes, s. on Meadow Gate lane;

of est. 11/8/1689, see Manwaring Vol. 1, p. 491; T. Newel from Wm. Goodwin, Governor
Haines, John Stanley & John Crow, 5 acres on the lane leading to the North Meadow Ford with
a frontage of 182.4 ft. with sufficient depth"to make 5 acres". The deed was dated 1645 &
recorded 1666 with a"dwellinghouse, barns, orchards, gardens & other edifices together with
boards & palles for building." This first house was undoubtedly replaced at a later date
by the present house, with no indication on the records. Samuel Newel Sr. married Mary
Hart 12/20/1683 & they lived in this house 69 yrs. together, Mary dying in 1752 & Samuel
in 1753. It is not known when Pomroy Strong moved this Newel house from the corner of
his land to the front part of the old house which had formerly been the Woodford house.
When Mr. & Mrs. Skinner took possession of the place & did restoring, they discovered that
there were really 2 houses there, separately built, with one moved up in front of the other.
It had not been known before. The front house had originally been built in a style similar
to that of the rear house & Pomroy Strong had made of it the present two & one-half story
house.
**Owner's Name:** SKINNER, ELEANOR BARTLETT

**Address:** Farmington Avenue & Waterville Road

**Date Built:** ca. 1665

**For:** Joseph Woodford

**Architect**

**Master-Builder**

**Former Owners:**
- E.B. Skinner from her cousin Philip Chauncey Brown, by will (to Eleanor Bartlett Phelps) 3/25/1930, Vol. Prob. Rec. 38, p. 334; P.C. Brown from the est. of his sister, Helen Stanley (Brown) Benner by cert. of dist. 1/3 of her one-third int. in the Homestead 1/11/1927 Vol. 74, p. 448 (Helen Benner in her will also gave to her sister the other 1/3 of her one-third int. 3/12/1927, Vol. 74, p. 452; P.C. Brown, Julia Pomroy Brown & Helen Stanley Brown from the est. of their mother Julia M. Brown, widow of Dr. Chauncey Brown, by dist. of the intestate est. to each an undivided one-third int. in land & bldgs. as follows: n. on land of N. Wallace & L.N. Long, e. on Waterville Rd., s. on Bridge St. & w. on land of Harry Loomis 9/14/1926, Vol. 84, p. 11; Julia M. Brown from her sister Ellen (Strong) Bartlett, for $500. her right in the Homestead of the late Pomroy Strong 6/27/1862, Vol. 58, p. 393; J.M. Brown & E.S. Bartlett from their father Pomroy Strong by dist.: to Mrs. Julia

**References:**
- "Farmington, Conn., 1906", p. 12
- "Baker & Tilden Atlas, 1869", p. 33 - 'Dr. Chauncey Brown'
- "Farmington Town Clerks, 1945", Hurlburt, p. 34

Manuscript of "The Homestead" in folder

**Owner:** SKINNER, ELEANOR BARTLETT
Former Owners, cont.:

M. Brown, daughter, an undivided int. to the amount of $566.66 in Homestead, land & bldgs.,
also to Mrs. Ellen S. Bartlett, daughter, int. in the Homestead to the amt. of $266.66 and
the Pine Woods lot & the tan house & lot to total $566.66, and to each daughter, Ellen S.
Bartlett & Julia M. Strong, equally that part of the Homestead set as dower to their mother
Mrs. Susan Strong, 6/26/1862, Vol. 12, Prob. Rec. 12, p. 355; Pomroy Strong from Elijah,
Jonathan, Seth, Gad & Martin Cowles 4/6/1807, Vol. 35, p. 301, being their int. in the Home-
stead, excepting a small right of John & Chauncey Deming in all bounded 4 acres, house(old
house) & barns, s. on highway & land of P. Strong, w. on J. & C. Deming, n. on E. Gay and e.
on E. Gay; Cowles Bros. from Ashbel Moody 2/11/1807, Vol. 35, p. 315; Ashbel Moody from
Annah Lewis by inheritance 4/7/1806, P.R. Vol. 5, p. 555; Annah Lewis from her 2nd husband
David Portter 12/18/1762, Vol. 15, p. 397; (see distribution agreement below); David Portter
from John Smith 11/19/1742, Vol. 6, p. 354, being 4 acres for 380 pounds; J. Smith from
Stephen Root 5/31/1739, Vol. 6, p. 195; being 4 acres for 302 pounds; S. Root from Thomas
Newel 1/2/1738, Vol. 6, p. 166, being 5 acres for 327 pounds; T. Newel from brother Samuel
Newel 5/4/1725, Vol. 4, p. 265; S. Newel from Joseph Woodford 5/31/1706, Vol. 1, p. 100,
the deed being dated 8/10/1703 & being for 5 acres, homestead bounded s. on highway, w. on
Samuel Newel's own land; J. Woodford from Matthew Webster, "on which his dwelling house
stands, s. on highway to North Meadow Gate, w. on Thomas Newel's house lot, e. on William
Lewis, with yards, gardens, orchards, wood, 2/4/1666, Vol. 1, p. 18. Annah Judd married
(1) Ebenezer Moody & had 1 son by him, who later had a son Ashbel; she married (2) David
Portter & had a son William & a daughter Anna, who married Samuel Peck; she married (3)
Ezekiel Lewis. On 12/18/1767, Wm. Portter & his sister Anna Peck & her husband, Samuel Peck
executed a dist. of the est. of their father, David Portter, with dower rights to their
mother, Annah Judd Moody Portter, & they agreed as follows: Indenture: 12/18/1767 - Wm.
Portter & Samuel Peck & Annah Porter Peck have rec'd by descent from their father David
Portter, property, excepting dower right, to House & lot n. of highway leading to North
Meadow Gate & bounded s. on said highway, w. on land of Elisha Newel's land, n. on land of
heirs of Stephen Root, e. on Fisher Gay's land. Wm. Portter to have all of said homelot
OWNER'S NAME: SKINNER, ELEANOR BARTLETT

1951-residence, "The Woodford House" (card #2)

ADDRESS: Farmington Ave. & Waterville Road

DATE BUILT: FOR:

ARCHITECT

MASTER-BUILDER

FORMER OWNERS: except 15 rods at east end of house, and 2/3 of the house, viz. the west end with the east chamber & 2/3rds of the cellar. Anna (Portter) Peck shall have 15 rods of land & 1/3 of the house subject to dower. Two yrs. later Wm. Portter sold to his mother Annah Lewis for 200 pounds his part & int. in the house and the 4 acres, except the 15 rods of land & the 1/3 of the old house. the 1/3 part of the house, belonging to Anna (Portter) Peck & her husband Samuel Peck, was sold by them to Dr. Timothy Hosmer, Village physician "being 15 rods of land & 1/3 part of house being all the right, title & int. & demand of the said Annah to the house lot where the said Peck & wife now live, agreeable to the dist. of the est. of Annah, mother of Anna Peck, 3/19/1789, Vol. 28, p. 56 (Annah was still living - est. was that of David Portter); Dr. T. Hosmer, then of Ontario, N.Y., sold to Eliakim Hull 1/3 part of the old house & 15 rods of land bounded s. on North Meadow Gate

REFERENCES:

(OVER)
Former Owners, cont.
lane, w. on the line of the old house 12/16/1792, Vol. 29, p. 280; Eliakim Hull to Seth Richards, same 15 rods of land, s. on North Meadow Gate lane, w. on 1/3 of old dwelling-house & a line drawn parallel with the east end thereof to the aforesaid highway & thence eastward to make 15 rods 1/24/1794, Vol. 30, p. 290; S. Richards to Stephen W. Cornwell 15 rods of land "with a dwellinghouse thereon, standing bounded s. on the way leading to the North Meadow Gate, w. on an old house, the property of Annah Lewis, Miles Lee & Thomas Cowles, & thence eastward to make 15 rods of land" 3/16/1797, Vol. 31, p. 472, selling at the same time the 1/3 of the old house to Miles & Thomas Cowles. On 3/23/1802, John & Chauncey Deming foreclosed the int. of Miles Lee & Thomas Cowles in their 1/3 of the old house & the disposition made by J. & C. Deming of their claim, which was for a bill of $24.87, does not appear; S.W. Cornwell to Gad North of Berlin, same 15 rods of land with a dwelling-house 2/20/1802, Vol. 33, p. 517; Gad North to Pomroy Strong, 15 rods & dwellinghouse bounded w. on old house lately the property of Widow Lewis & Miles Lee & Thomas Cowles 1/15/1803 Vol. 34, p. 76. It would appear that sometime between 1/24/1794 and 3/16/1797 Seth Richards bought the old Newel house and moved it to the 15 rods of land which was made up mostly of the point of land still at the corner of Farmington Avenue & Waterville Road. See card for Newel House.
This house is pictured on page 12 of the Farmington Book as "Capt. Pomeroy Strong place -- Residence of Mrs. Chauncy Brown". Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas designates it as "Dr. C. Brown".

Julius Gay introduces us to this house on page 10 of the Farmington Book, and very briefly, as follows:

"Crossing the Waterville Road, we come to the house opposite the Catholic Church, some parts of which are very old, the upper story of the front however, having been built by the late Capt. Pomeroy Strong soon after he bought the place in 1802. There was, as early as 1645, one more house to the west, and then came the North Meadow Gate".

The Catholic Church to which Mr. Gay refers, is the one pictured, upper right, on page 113 of the Farmington Book, and in fact the old Pomeroy Strong house can be seen in that photo also, at the right, and seemingly even nearer than across the street.

The "one more house to the west", also mentioned above by Mr. Gay, had already been moved, and attached to this house and become a part of it, while the Farmington Canal was being built, as it stood in the canal's path.

Introduction to earliest owners, and sometimes settlers, on these two properties, is given by Mrs. Hurlburt in some detail on pages 375, 376 and 368 of "Town Clerks", and will be re-stated, verbatim, in following paragraphs. First, from page 375:

"John Webster, governor of Connecticut Colony 1656, prominent in the affairs of the colony, was an original proprietor and settler in Hartford and an original proprietor of Farmington. He left Hartford in 1659 following the dissention in the church after the death of Thomas Hooker, and settled in Hadley, where he died 1661. His land in Farmington was twenty cares of meadow which he gave to his son Matthew Webster February 1650. It was just north of "Indian Land".

"Matthew Webster, eldest son of Governor John Webster, had land in Farmington as an original proprietor, on Bridge Street or the road to North Meadow Gate, about on the site of the Dr. Chauncey Brown house, now the property of Mrs. Eleanor Bartlett Skinner. (Written 1943). Webster sold this house lot before 1666 to Joseph Woodford. Webster was made a freeman in 1645. He also had 96 acres in Great Meadow and 20 acres north of "Indian Land". In 1665 Webster conveyed his land (turn to page 376) in Great Meadow to Matthew Woodruff and as a consideration Matthew Woodruff was to 'maintain' Webster's son John, an impotent child, and it was stipulated that the deed should not be recorded. However the deed was recorded in the Farmington Land Records on page 11 of Volume 1. The Woodford Genealogy has this item as pertaining to that family".

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Continuing on page 376: "Joseph Woodford had land on the Hartford Road next to that of his father-in-law Thomas Newell, which he had bought of Matthew Webster in 1666. His dwelling house stood on 'the highway leading into the meadow', now the corner of Hartford Road and College Highway.

"Thomas Newell lived next west, the two houses probably being rather close together. Joseph Woodford married Rebekah, daughter of Thomas and Rebekah (Olmstead) Newell. In 1706 he sold his Farmington home to Samuel Newell, his brother-in-law, and removed to Avon where he founded the Woodford farm and family in that town. In his will he appointed his 'brother' Samuel Newell as one of the overseers of his estate. He had eight daughters and one son, Joseph. The son inherited the farm.

"Samuel Newell married 1683 Mary, daughter of Stephen Hart. Samuel had already received, by deed of gift, the homestead of his father Thomas, thereby giving him the entire lot of ten acres with the two houses. Joseph Woodford died 1710. His will was dated 1701".

We now flip the pages back to 368: "Thomas Newell was one of the original proprietors and was also a first settler. He bought a house lot with a dwelling house, barns and gardens, orchards and all the edifices together with boards and palles (paling) for building, from William Goodwin and John Crow in 1645. On January 7, 1686, his son Samuel Newell recorded this homestead as his own, as having been given him by his father. It was 'bounded south of the highway leading to the North Meadow Gate, north by Captain William Lewis, west on Mister Hains and east on Joseph Woodfords land'.

"Thomas Newell was the founder of the Newell family, famous for its leadership and attainments in every generation.

"Thomas' son Samuel married Mary, eldest daughter of Captain Thomas and Ruth (Hawkins) Hart, December 20, 1683. Mary (Hart) Newell died April 28, 1752, aged 86 years. Samuel died February 15, 1753, aged 92 years. They had seven children. Their eldest son Samuel, born February 19, 1686, married Sarah, daughter of John and Ruth (Moore) Norton, March 1, 1710, and lived at Newell Corners, Southington. They were parents of Samuel who married Mrs. Mary (Hart) Root, widow of Timothy Root, and who was the first pastor of the Congregational Church in Bristol.

"Thomas Newell gave his son Samuel a 15 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".

Thus are introduced the families who had been the owners and/or settlers on the two pieces of property on which stood the two houses which are now one, the house at 1 Waterville Road.

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Mrs. Hurlburt gives a more concise account of the history of this house on pages 34 and 35 of "Town Clerks", in the following words:

"The ancient red house, known as the Homestead, on the corner of Farmington Avenue and the College Highway, now (1943) belonging to Mrs. Eleanor Bartlett Skinner, has been in her family since purchased by Pomroy Strong in 1803. It was built by ancestors of Mrs. Skinner, and has been out of the family for only about 25 of its 280 years of existence.

"The rear part of the house is the original Joseph Woodford house built about 1666 or earlier. The front part of the house proved, during recent renovation, to be an entirely separate house, framed and beamed for a one-story house. It was the original Thomas Newell house, and was built just west of the Woodford house, probably about 1650, on land purchased of William Goodwin. Thomas Newell's daughter Rebekah (named for her mother Rebekah Olmstead) married Joseph Woodford, thus joining the two properties. Before the canal was built, the Newell house was moved to its present location and joined onto to front of the old Woodford house, the canal soon flooding the former Newell site. Later Pomroy Strong added the second story and a new roof. Here have lived four generations of the Newell family; William Porter bought the Woodford house in 1742 for his son David when he married Anne (Judd) Moody; and Dr. Timothy Hosmer, long a physician in town and with the army during the Revolutionary War, lived there from 1789 to 1793. For about ten years the house had several owners, obviously speculative, and in 1803 it came back into the family through the purchase by Pomroy Strong, whose mother was Mercy, daughter of Isaac Newell and Rachel Pomroy. The huge chimney is nine feet square in the cellar; the windows in the back part are set close to the eaves; a wide cornice hangs over the side of the house and during the years has worn grooves in the great drip stones which terrace the house.

"One of the outstanding features of the house was uncovered this year (ca 1943) when inside sheathing was found. In his pamphlet 'Some Notes on Early Connecticut Architecture' Mr. Elmer D. Keith says, of Seventeenth century houses: 'let us allude to two other clues -- the wooden interior walls of featheredge or beaded sheathing or matched boards, and the habit the early builders had of facing an isolated house toward the south. This was not as universal here as in neighboring colonies; in fact it was a rule never observed in settled communities like Guilford and Farmington' ".

Mrs. Hurlburt has shown an interesting photograph of this house, probably taken just prior to the publication of her book in 1943, on this page opposite page 36 of "Town Clerks". It is a much clearer photo than the one presented in the Farmington Book, and from it one can contrast its present appearance with that of former years.

One of Dr. Timothy Hosmer's duties during the Revolution, and while he was serving at West Point, was the "examining of Andre's pulse and declaring him dead", after his summary execution, which had been witnessed also by Farmington's Deacon and Captain Samuel Richards, Dr. Hosmer's neighbor. Dr. Hosmer moved to New York State, became a pioneer settler of Ontario County's western wilderness, and a judge there.
The Woodford House

Succession of Ownership.

Gov. John Webster, first owner
1650 Matthew Webster, his son
Feb. 1666 Joseph Woodford
May 1706 Samuel Newell
May 1725 Thomas Newell
Jan. 1738 Stephen Root
May 1739 John Smith
Nov. 1742 David Porter, whose wife complicated the succession due to the following:

She, Anna Judd, had married (1) Ebenezer Moody, and had had a son by him, who later had a son, Ashbel,

She married (2) David Porter, and had a son William and a daughter Anna, who married Samuel Peck,

She married (3) Ezekiel Lewis. The ownership between 1742 and 1806, which included Dr. Timothy Hosmer, may be studied by the reader from the text of the following two pages.

Apr. 1806 Ashbel Moody inherited
Feb. 1807 Elijah, Jonathan, Seth, Gad and Martin Cowles, all brothers, purchased
Apr. 1807 Pomroy Strong purchased
June 1862 Julia M. Brown and Ellen S. Bartlett, daughters of Pomroy Strong, inherited
June 1862 Julia M. Brown, wife of Dr. Chauncey Brown, who died 1879, purchased from her sister. Mrs. Brown died 1908.
Sept 1926 Philip Chauncey Brown, Julia Pomroy Brown and Helen Stanley (Brown) Benner, inherited. Note: Julia P. Brown had died April 1, 1926.
Mar. 1930 Philip Chauncey Brown died.
Mar. 1930 Eleanor (Bartlett) Phelps, niece of Mrs. Chauncey Brown, and cousin of Philip C. Brown, inherited, having been willed the property by Philip Brown.

The property was owned by the former Eleanor Bartlett, who in 1938 married William Converse Skinner, formerly of 24 Mountain Road, and was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Skinner, until she sold it in 1963.


The building is now the property of, and the office of, IDC, Industrial Design Consultants.

August 28, 1973
The Newell House

Succession of Ownership.

William Goodwin, Gov. Haines, John Stanley
and John Crow, apparently original owners

1645 Thomas Newell purchased from the above
1666 Above deed recorded
Jan. 1686 Samuel Newell, their son, recorded this
property as his own
Nov. 1689 Awarded to above by distribution of estate

Samuel Newell had been married on December 20,
1683, to Mary Hart, daughter of Capt. Thomas
Hart and Ruth Hawkins. They lived until 1753
and 1752 respectively.

June 1717 Nathaniel Newell from estate of father Samuel
no date Elisha Newell from father Nathaniel
Jan. 1773 Thomas Cowles purchased
Apr. 1773 Rev. Joseph Noyes and wife Mary Noyes purchased
no date Mary Fish Noyes inherited and married Gold
Sellick Silliman of Fairfield
Feb. 1788 John and Chauncey Deming purchased from the
above couple
Mar. 1797 Stephen W. Cornwell purchased from Seth
Richards, but no record of the Richards
purchase
Feb. 1802 Gad North purchased from Cornwell
Jan. 1803 Pomroy Strong, who on November 1, 1802, had
married Susan North, purchased

Ownership of this house from this point on
is the same as that of the Woodford house,
because Pomroy Strong moved the two houses
together and joined them, making one house,
sometime prior to the construction of the
Farmington Canal.

August 28, 1973

for more info on Sillimans

1808.
Mr. Suan Strong, 6/26/1862, Vol. 12, Prob. Rec., p. 55, from Elijah, Jonathan, Seth, & Martin Cowles 4/6/1807, Vol. 5, p. 51, being their int. in the Homestead, excepting a small right of John & Chauncey Deening in all bounded 4 acres, house (old house) & barns, s. on highway & land of P. Strong, w. on J. & Co. Deening, n. on E. Gay & s. on E. Gay; Cowles Bros. from Ashbel Moody 2/11/1807, Vol. 15, p. 15; Ashbel Moody from Annabah Lewis by inheritance 4/7/1806, P.R. Vol. 5, p. 555; Annabah Lewis from her 2nd husband David Porter 12/18/1762, Vol. 15, p. 397; (see distribution agreement below); David Porter from John Smith 11/19/1742, Vol. 6, p. 254, being 4 acres for 580 pounds; J. Smith from Stephen Root 5/31/1739, Vol. 6, p. 195; being 4 acres for 302 pounds; S. Root from Thomas Newel 1/2/1738, Vol. 6, p. 166, being 5 acres for 527 pounds; T. Newel from brother Samuel Newel 5/4/1725, Vol. 4, p. 265; S. Newel from Joseph Woodford 9/31/1706, Vol. 1, p. 100, the deed being dated 8/10/1703 & being for 5 acres, homestead bounded s. on highway, w. on Samuel Newel's own land; J. Woodford from Matthew Webster, "on which his dwelling house stands, s. on highway to North Meadow Gate, w. on Thomas Newel's house lot, e. on William Lewis, with yard, gardens, orchards, wood, 2/4/1666, Vol. 1, p. 18. Annabah Judd married (1) Ebenezer Moody & had 1 son by him, who later had a son Ashbel; she married (2) David Porter & had a son William & a daughter Anna, who married Samuel Pock; she married (3) Ezekiel Lewis. On 12/18/1767, Wm. Porter & his sister Anna Peck & her husband, Samuel Peck executed a dist. of the est. of their father, David Porter, with dower rights to their mother, Annabah Moody Porter, & they agreed as follows: Indenture: 12/18/1767 - Wm. Porter & Samuel Peck & Anna Porter Peck have rec'd by descent from their father David Porter, property, excepting dower right, to house & lot n. of highway leading to North Meadow Gate & bounded s. on said highway, w. on land of Elisha Newel's land, n. on land of heirs of Stephen Root, e. on Fisher Gay's land, Wm. Porter to have all of said homelot except 1/5 rod at east end of house, and 2/3 of the house, viz. the west end with the east end of her & 2/3d of the caller. Anna (Porter) Peck shall have 15 pds of land & 1/3 of the house subject to dower. Two yrs. later Wm. Porter sold to his mother Annabah Lewis for 200 pounds his part & int. in the house and 1 1/2 acres, except the 15 pds of land & the 1/3 of the old house, the 1/3 part of the house, belonging to Anna (Porter) Peck & her husband Samuel Peck, was sold by them to Dr. Timothy Hooser, Village physician, being 15 rods of land & 1/3 part of house being all the right, title & lot, & demand of the said Anna to the house lot where the said Peck & wife now live, agreeable to the dist. of the est. of Annabah, mother of Anna Peck, 3/19/1789, Vol. 23, p. 56 (Annabah was still living - est. was that of David Porter); Dr. T. Hooser, that of Ontario, N.Y., sold to Ellis Hall 1/3rd part of the old house & 15 rods of land bounded s. on North Meadow Gate.
Elisha Newel now dwells on the line of the old house 12/16/1792, Vol. 29 p. 230; Elisha Newel to Seth Richards, same 15 rods of land, s. on North Meadow Gate lane, w. on 1/3 of old dwelling-house & a line drawn parallel with the east end thereof to the aforesaid highway & thence eastward to make 15 rods 1/24/1794, Vol. 30, p. 290; S. Richards to Stephen W. Cornell, 15 rods of land "with a dwellinghouse thereon, standing bounded s. on the way leading to the North Meadow Gate, w. on an old house, the property of Annah Lewis; Miles Lee & Thomas Cowles, & thence eastward to make 15 rods of land" 3/16/1797, Vol. 31, p. 472, selling at the same time the 1/3 of the old house to Miles & Thomas Cowles. On 3/23/1802, John & Chauncey Deming foreclosed the int. of Miles Lee & Thomas Cowles in their 1/3 of the old house & the disposition made by J. & C. Deming of their claim, which was for a bill of $24,67, does not appear; S.W. Cornell to Gad North of Berlin, same 15 rods of land with a dwelling house 2/20/1802, Vol. 33, p. 517; Gad North to Pomroy Strong, 15 rods & dwellinghouse bounded w. on old house lately the property of Widow Lewis & Miles Lee & Thomas Cowles 1/15/1803, Vol. 34, p. 76. It would appear that sometime between 1/24/1794 and 3/16/1797 Seth Richards bought the old Newel house and moved it to the 15 rods of land which was made up mostly of the point of land still at the corner of Farmington Avenue & Waterville Road.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R.S. NAME SKINNER, ELEANOR BARLETT</th>
<th>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1851 - residence &quot;The Homestead&quot; (The Newel House)</td>
<td>Farmington Avenue &amp; Waterville Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILT:</td>
<td>ca. 1665</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOR: Thomas Newell</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ca. 1807</td>
<td>Pomroy Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWNER:</td>
<td>See card for &quot;The Woodford House&quot; back to Pomroy Strong from Gad North, 15 rods of land &amp; dwellinghouse, bounded w. on old house lately the property of Widow Lewis &amp; Miles Lee &amp; Thomas Cowles 1/15/1803, Vol. 34, p. 76; G. North from Stephen W. Cornell, same 15 rods of land &amp; dwellinghouse 2/15/1802, Vol. 33, p. 517; S.W. Cornell from Seth Richards, 15 rods of land &amp; dwellinghouse, bounded s. on the way to the North Meadow Gate, w. on an old house the property of Annah Lewis; Miles Lee &amp; Thomas Cowles &amp; thence eastward to make 15 rods of land 3/16/1797, Vol. 31, p. 472; there is no record of the sale of the Newel House to anyone; John &amp; Chauncey Deming from Mary Stillman &amp; her husband Gold Sillie Sillie men of Fairfield, Ct., about 6 acres with the buildings thereon, &quot;being the same as sold by Thomas Cowles to Rev. Joseph Fisk &amp; Mary Noyes (now Mary Stillman) 2/13/1768, Vol. 27, p. 471; Rev. J. &amp; Mary Noyes Fisk of Stonington, New London Co., 5 acres dwellinghouse where Elisha Newel now dwells 3/15/1773, Vol. 19, p. 381, from Thomas Cowles; T. Cowles from Elisha Newel, 5 acres where I now dwell, with dwellinghouse, barn &amp; other buildings, s. on highway leading to North Meadow Gate, e. on land of Wm. Porter, w. on land of F. Gay, 1/5/1773, Vol. 19, p. 189; E. Newel from his father Nathaniel (there is no record of the death of Nathaniel - no transfer of Homestead &amp; no estate); N. Newel from his father Samuel Sr., &quot;where I now dwell, 5 acres, e. on my son Thomas, w. on Haynes, s. on Meadow Gate lane 6/27/1717, Vol. 4, p. 421; S. Newel from his father Thomas Newell, by deed of gift by dist. of est. 11/8/1689, see Manwaring Vol. 1, p. 491; T. Newel from Wm. Goodwin, Governor Haines, John Stanley &amp; John Crow, 5 acres on the lane leading to the North Meadow Ford with a frontage of 102 4 ft, with sufficient depth to make 5 acres&quot;. The deed was dated 1645 &amp; recorded 1666 with a dwellinghouse, barns, orchards, gardens &amp; other edifices together with boards &amp; pales for building. This first house was undoubtedly replaced at a later date by the present house, with no indication on the records. Samuel Newel Sr. married Mary Hart 12/20/1683 &amp; they lived in this house 69 yrs. together, Mary dying in 1752 &amp; Samuel in 1753. It is not known when Pomroy Strong moved this Newel house from the corner of his land to the front part of the old house which had formerly been the Woodford house. When Mr. &amp; Mrs. Skinner took possession of the place &amp; did restoring, they discovered that there were really 2 houses there, separately built, with one moved up in front of the other. It had not been known before. The front house had originally been built in a style similar to that of the rear house &amp; Pomroy Strong had made of it the present two &amp; one-half story house. 1810.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Not many of the early settlers in either of these two houses are well known to the writer, but several have been mentioned by Mrs. Hurlburt in "Town Clerks".

Samuel Newell was chosen as "ordinary keeper" December 22, 1690, and in 1722 he was one of a committee to reject the request of Southington, then Pothorn, to have a separate church and town.

Several Newells were appointed to civic posts on December 14, 1741: Isaac and Nathaniel as highway surveyors, Capt. John as selectman, Simon as titheing man. Rezin Newell was called for the re-inforcement of Ft. Henry in 1757, and Elisha and John are listed as also having served in Colonial wars.

The Rev. Samuel Newell became first minister of Bristol and the second husband of Mary Hart who had first married Timothy Root. The Rev. Samuel joined the Rev. Timothy Pitkin in 1778 to lead the citizens taking the oath of fidelity to the new nation, administered to them by Solomon Whitman. Elihu Newell was among the pioneers who settled Windsor, Vermont.

Roger S. Newell was very active in the mid-1800's as chairman and moderator of three special town meetings:

- on December 4, 1843, to improve the road to meet the railroad in Berlin,
- on May 31, 1859, to oppose the annexation of part of Farmington by West Hartford, and
- on August 26, 1863, to grant aid to men drafted into the Civil War.

Daniel Cornwell, probably the son of Stephen Cornwell of the Newell house, was a guest at the Hospital Rock smallpox clinic in the early 1790's.

Thomas Cowles of course is well known as the farmer, lawyer, politician of Oldgate, and John and Chauncey Deming as the wealthy merchants of 66 and 80 Main Street.

Pomeroy Strong, who purchased the Newell house in January 1803, may possibly have occupied it earlier than that. He was married on November 1, 1802, and one Gad North, probably a relative of his wife, had owned the Newell house since February 1802. Pomeroy Strong was the son of Col. John Strong and his wife the widow Mercy Root. Col. John Strong was the son of Asahel Strong of Northampton and Margaret Hart, daughter of Thomas Hart of Farmington. Pomeroy's uncle was Capt. Asahel Strong whose wife was Ruth Hooker. They lived on the site of 36 Main Street, and their son was Cyperion Strong, who married Sarah Bull, was town clerk for a year or so, then moved to Chatham.

Pomeroy's father, Col. John Strong, had perhaps been an officer in the army during the colonial wars. He was active in civic affairs here during the period just prior to the War of the Revolution, and was moderator of the three following special town meetings:

August 29, 1973
On September 3, 1770, when encouragement was given to aid to American industry as opposed to imports of foreign goods,

On June 15, 1774, which moved to aid the people of Boston while the British had the port blockaded, and

On December 12, 1774, when the actions of the Continental Congress of September 5, 1774, were approved.

Julius Gay, who studied thoroughly the war records of men of Farmington, makes no mention of Col. Strong, so we believe that his active military service had been earlier than this.

Col. Strong kept his own personal record of his own family, and it was presented to the Farmington Village Library by his great-great-granddaughter Mrs. Eleanor Skinner in 1972. It reads as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 24, 1733</td>
<td>I was born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1, 1758</td>
<td>Married to Sarah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28, 1760</td>
<td>John was born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 8, 1764</td>
<td>Return was born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 27, 1765</td>
<td>Wareham was born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 22, 1765</td>
<td>Sarah, my wife, died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 15, 1769</td>
<td>Married Widow Mercy Root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 17, 1771</td>
<td>Eleanor was born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 16, 1772</td>
<td>Stephen &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 17, 1774</td>
<td>Elijah &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 9, 1777</td>
<td>Pomeroy &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 15, 1779</td>
<td>Oliver &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 28, 1781</td>
<td>Edmon &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 15, 1784</td>
<td>Mercy &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 4, 1784</td>
<td>My wife died, 42 years of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 28, 1786</td>
<td>Married Mrs. Annie Beacher of New Haven, born October 20, 1746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 5, 1801</td>
<td>My wife Annie died, aged 54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Col. John Strong died on November 15, 1816.

Pomeroy Strong, soon after he purchased his house, purchased the cooper's shop from Deacon Samuel Richards, which had stood on the west end of the little piece of land that the Deacon had purchased on which to build his store. Mr. Strong moved the shop to his own property. In 1825 he was appointed to a committee to examine and approve if satisfactory, the various section of road which had been built by the canal company to replace sections taken over by the canal. The canal of course ran very near his place, and in fact forced him to move the Newell house, so he joined it to the Woodford house which he had purchased later, in 1807. In 1833 he was appointed tax collector to bring in a 2½% tax levied to provide funds for the purchase of Riverside Cemetery. He himself was to receive 2½% of the collection for his work, which was to be completed by October 1, 1834.

August 29, 1973
Pomeroy Strong was a "leading spirit" of what was officially called the "Village Library", one of two libraries operating at that period, the other being the "Monthly Library Association". The Village Library's records date back to January 1817. Julius Gay says, quoted from page 15 of "Farmington Papers", the following:

"The leading spirits of the company were Capt. Selah Porter at the center of the village, Capt. Pomeroy Strong at the north end, and John Hurlburt Cooke at White Oak". The Village Library was dissolved in 1826.

As stated previously, Pomeroy Strong had been married on November 1, 1802, to Susan North, daughter of John North and his wife Rhoda Merrill. Mr. North had lived for a time, from 1780 until 1786, in the old Whitman house on the site of what is now 53 Main Street, and also had his blacksmith shop there. Mrs. Hewes has said that she lived "in a house that stood on Main Street not far from the village green", but exactly where that was is not known by the writer. See more regarding John North and his family in the account of 53 Main Street.

Susan North Strong was literate and articulate. Born in 1775 she had been a teacher for some years before she was married at the relatively late age of 27. Sometime in her life she wrote of her memories of early life and of things that had happened during her youth and early womanhood. Although she ends the writing with a comment on the fact that "yesterday was my wedding day", the writer leans toward the belief that the writing was actually done in her later years, but that she included in it only the pre-marital period of her life. She starts the manuscript, at least according to the published text, with the date of 1775, which was the date of her birth, and yet she writes of the times of the Revolutionary War, and even things prior to the Declaration of Independence, which was just one year after her birth, as if she were speaking of her own observations, which could hardly be entirely true. And on the second page, and speaking of the men who went to the aid of Boston, she mentions only one name, and it is the name of the man who 70 years later was to marry her daughter. That seems to the writer to be much more than a coincidence. Perhaps he was her son-in-law's grandfather.

The manuscript which she wrote was saved among the old family papers and was only brought to light by Mrs. William Skinner, who as the grandniece of Philip C. Brown, inherited the house in 1930.

A Xerox copy of the text of this manuscript, as edited by Mrs. Lydia Hewes as authorized by Mrs. Skinner, and was published in the Farmington Valley Herald, appears as the next five pages of this account.

August 30, 1973
Historic Letters Of 1775
Penned By Susan Strong
Published For First Time

By Lydia Hewes

Occasionally one reads of a person making a wonderful discovery of hidden treasure under the eaves of the attic or in an old trunk. It may be a yellowed letter, bearing a valued signature, on an ancient document. To most of us, such incidents read like fairy tales, yet such a one occurred recently to Mrs. William C. Skinner of Farmington, when, on looking through a bundle of old papers, she came across some delightful and intimate reminiscences of by-gone Farmington, written by her great-grandmother, Susan North Strong, who lived here in a house that stood on Main St., not far from the present village green.

These reminiscences, written before she was married, are now published by the Farmington Valley Herald for the first time, thanks to the courtesy of Mrs. Skinner, and in honor of the Tercentenary Celebration of Farmington, which takes place over the coming week-end.

Before presenting this picture of another day, a few details of history are appropriate.

Approaching Farmington from the south, west, or north, the first sight that meets the eye is the slender white spire of the First Church of Christ (Congregational), erected in 1771; but coming from the east, over the hill, one sees, stretched out beyond, the valley and the green meadows that were first settled by white men from Hartford and Windsor in 1640.

After buying the land from the Tunxis Indians and clearing the forest, perhaps an ancient document, until in the days directly preceding and following the Revolution, it reached such heights that it riddled Hartford in size and population.

During the War for Independence feeling ran high. Three regiments of men went to fight Burgoyne in New York state. Matthias Leaming, a Tory, was buried at his own wish in the old cemetery with his head facing east, in order that, when the last trumpet sounded, he might rise and face his persecutors. And the golden town was remodeled from the church spire to make way for a less hated emblem.

It is this period that Susan North Strong describes with enchanting details to revive life in those days in such a way that all of us may picture it. Her story is of interest not only to Farmington itself, but to all her daughter towns, Southington, Berlin, Bristol, Burlington, Avon, New Britain, Plainville, and to the other towns in the Farmington Valley which share her general background in history.

But now let Susan speak for herself:

FARMINGTON, 1775

"June 6th. Birthdays are usually the time to set about performing the good work which has had in mind for a long time. This is my birthday, but it is not bright and hopeful, for how can one feel happy when a terrible war is in prospect?"

News has just come that our men highest in authority, or Congress as they are called, have decided to be independent of England! What shall we do for almost everything we wear and use, comes from England, and then we really belong to them and I cannot make it seem right for these colonies to break away from such a really good government.

I suppose if I was not a girl, I should feel differently, and should think, it was something very grand to be willing to go away from the dear home and flight for one’s native land. But as it is I cannot help thinking we had better pay that miserable little tax they call the “Stamp Act” for these small colonies will never use very much paper, or lose many documents that would have to be written on stamp paper, and not very many new ones so that it would make but little difference to us, nor would there be much revenue to the government. But father says it is the principle of the thing—that taxation without representation is unjust, and that we are going to be a great country, and will not submit to anything like oppression. He says we cannot shout or sing “Long live the King,” for that would be disloyal to the great cause, and that everybody must be willing to suffer, yes, and to die for it. I am afraid much of the suffering will come to the poor women and children.

NEWS FROM BOSTON

How fast news travels! particularly bad news. The messenger came through here today from Boston. His horse was reeking with perspiration, and his sides flecked with foam because of the rapid driving. Four days only from Boston! think of it! He was bearing the news to New York of the outbreak which had occurred between the British troops and the people of Boston. It seems the inhabitants of that town, (I ought to say the men, for women would not feel so), had resolved to use no more tea, on which was a tax of three shillings arrived from England, with the much disputed article on board, so a small party disguised as Indians, went on board, and threw the tea into the water.

THE TOWN- CRIER

The consequence is, that our town-crier Mr. Bull has gone up and down the street, proclaiming the news and to each house he leaves a command from someone who seems to have authority, that no one is to use any more English tea. Everyone calls it “English tea,” I suppose because it is brought to this country from England, though I have heard that it does not grow there, but it comes from a land on the other side of the globe called China. The ships which bring it from there are many months making the voyage.

THE FIRST TEA

I have heard father say that he remembered the first tea brought to this town. His father kept a tavern on the south road to Hartford, (now the Colt Homestead, built by Samuel North in 1700)
One day two strangers, Englishmen I think they were, stopped at the house and wanted dinner. One of them took from his port- fectu a little package of dried leaves, and his grandmother he wanted tea made. She had never seen any before, and so carefully soaked and then boiled it all, threw away the water, and served the leaves as a dish of greens, most carefully prepared with a small piece of boiled salt resting quaintly in the middle. A disappointment all around.

They say they called for their horses, and made away muttering impressions upon such a poor country as this. Well, it was a lesson for grandmother, for father says she was very self-sufficient and independent, and would not have asked how those leaves should be fixed lest she should not be thought to know everything.

Uncle Solomon says I am like her, but I know he is mistaken, for I do not feel very independent, certainly, just now.

How I have wandered from my story. When the town-crier came to our house, and told us, that they must not have any more tea, mother sat down and cried—It was not really so much the loss of the tea, as what all this was leading to. Poor mother is very far from well, and she cannot eat some of our dinners of fat pork and turnips, (neither do I like them) and the cup of tea did help out very much. We are beginning to have potatoes now. They are very nice when they are baked in the hot ashes on the hearth, and they help our saltfish breakfasts too.

Then we have bread made of ground corn which is baked before the fire. Our tea is of sage or raspberry leaves, or sassafras roots, but we will have the little pot of real tea for mother—she sits at the end of the table where the drawer is, and keeps it in there. Yesterday the town-crier came when we were at breakfast. He goes around to the houses most unexpectedly to see if anyone is so disinclined as to be using English tea. I intended to have written that father remembers the first potatoes that were raised in that town. Before that turnips were the staple vegetable.

1776

How many days have passed since I wrote about the tea. A great deal has happened since. The war between the mother country and these colonies has begun and many of our friends have left their farms, taken their muskets, and have gone to Boston, where the British are in great force. One young man from Lebanon, John Bartlett, left his plough in the furrow, unyoked his oxen, and hastened with other volunteers for Boston. It was a long weary journey—he was only sixteen, but when he arrived at night-fall he with others helped to fortify a hill called Bunker's Hill. The grass had just been cut in the meadow below, and this was scattered on the road to deaden the sound of the carts which brought the earth for building the breastwork. He worked all night walking close to the head of the oxen whispering his words of command to them. How circumstances help to develop character!

This is only the beginning of our dark and anxious days. Every Sunday this same town-crier Mr. Bull, goes through the street beating a drum to call people to meeting, and it is arranged that in any sudden emergency growing out of this war, the drum-beat shall be the summons for all the men to come to the meeting-house. (This drum is now in the History of Connecticut at the Athenaeum in Hartford.)

My brother Aaron was born July 4th 1776 the day of our Independence was proclaimed. I am afraid it will be a long time before we are really independent. Father has gone with a company of Militia to New York. We cannot hear from him unless some soldier is sent back, and that we cannot expect as they have until to get men enough for soldiers, even if all should go. I only know of one family of tories in this town. They live the next house south of the burying-ground, and the name is Mix. The house is now occupied by Mrs. Stephen B. Lawrence. There was a supper given a few weeks ago to some society, and one of the toasts which was given was "perpetual itching, without the benefit of scratching to all enemies of America". Mr. Mix was present, and was very angry.

TUNXIS INDIANS

I must run down in the meadow across the bridge to see old Moosuc and his wife. These are the last of the Tunxis Tribe of Indians, and they live in a wigwam and raise corn and a few other things. The last full-blooded Tunxis, Thos. Curcomb, was buried here in 1820. They have the best samp (yellow corn cooked whole) that I ever have seen, and I seem to be quite a favorite with them, for they always have a good of samp for me to eat. In the river near their wigwam there is an island, and old Moosuc takes us to it in his canoe, and we get "ground nuts" there.

These (sometimes called wild artichokes) are nice in the spring. I feel very sorry for these poor Indians, for they see how the white men are spreading over their country, that the hunting is useless, and it is hard to get meat to eat. They do not think our way of living is the best.

ANIMAL TROUBLE

The other day a bear came into our cornfield, and I was glad I had not gone there that day for young ears of corn to boil for the dinner. My brother went there on Sunday to get corn to roast, and saw the bear. Mother told him he should not have been in the field on Sunday.

Now that father is away, I have to go north meadow for the cow. One day I saw a garter snake. It made itself into a hoop and came after me, and I ran as fast as I could, and got into the house exhausted, and Mother killed the snake on the door-step. They say they are not venomous, but I am very much afraid of them. There seems to be a natural aversion in the human race to all kinds of snakes, and we have a good many about the meadows. Mother says as the country becomes more cleared and settled we shall not have them in such numbers.

EARLY SETTLERS

My great-grandfather was one of the original "eighty-four proprietors" (John North) who settled here. They emigrated from Windsor and Hartford, striking out into the woods west of the latter place. When they reached the brow of the hill, we sat down, and looked off upon a beautiful valley, with the Tunxis River winding through it like a silver
FISH IS PLENTIFUL

A man comes on horseback every week with fish from the Connecticut river. We give him two-pence for a large shad, but we have to buy a salmon too, because these are so very plentiful that they must get rid of them, and shad only come in the spring. We have salmon in our river too. The mill, still grinding grain.

1777

We were glad to have father come home last night. He with Oxen were speedily yoked, the pulpit was ever built above it. Mr. Woodruff the builder did the work about the gallery. He carries his three-corned hat in his hand. Families come from quite a distance to church, and have to stay over the noon recess to attend the service in the afternoon. Back of the meeting house is the “Sabbath-day house” to accommodate these. It is a one story house, with two large rooms a chimney in the middle with a large fireplace in each room.

THE MEETING HOUSE

I must write about our meeting house. When our town was first settled, or rather before it was settled, and the land had been bought of the Indians, there was an Indian trail running north and south and this is our Main Street; near the corner of the lot was reserved for a house of worship, and a crude log house was built for that purpose. This after a time gave place to the building, with low seats in it without backs. Some of the women petitioned the authorities for permission to have backs put upon a few of the seats at their own expense, but they were refused, as those backs might be a source of envy and discontent to some, and might be looked upon as a mark of distinction in some, or perhaps be construed into a pride and wealth. They were asked to withdraw their request, and to be satisfied with such as the society provided for all.

Our new meeting house built in 1771 has been built on the site of these former ones, and is considered very nice. Two of our leading men (Judah Woodruff and Fisher Gay) went up to Maine and selected the lumber, which is of the very best; the breastwork about the gallery is said to be very remarkable for the broad panels, nearly or quite three feet are each one piece, and the shingles came from Maine also, and are nearly three feet long, and they have been put on with the greatest care, so as to last a great many years.

JUDAH WOODRUFF

Mr. Woodruff the builder did all the handsome carving about the pulpit with a knife. The vine of grape leaves which is painted green, is very natural on the white paint of the high pulpit. I wonder how the great, high sounding-board was ever built above it.

After meeting, Mrs. Cook takes her frying pan, cooks sausages, opens her basket of doughnuts, and the family feast and visit with the others who are doing similar things. Their social hour seems very short, and the long afternoon sermon a little duller than the morning, though I think it is because they have to help thinking of the long ride home in the short winter afternoon.

Sometime after this same Mr. Cook went into Duchess Co., which is in the state of New York just over the Connecticut line, and there saw the Dutch wagons used by the farmers. He thought how convenient one would be to bring the family to meeting on Sunday, and how great an improvement upon the saddles and pillows then in use.
He bought one, and on a Sabbath he really came to meeting, his wife, his children and himself comfortably enjoying the unusual ride, but greatly to the wonderment of the people, for it was the first wagon which had even been seen in Farmington. It all seemed very fine, but on Monday morning he was summoned before the authorities to answer to the charge of "breaking the Sabbath," because of the unseemly noise and disturbance to the peaceful quiet of the day.

There has been another call for soldiers, and as my mother is so ill, and there are so many dependent on father, he has hired a man to go in his place in the army. It has been hard to get the money, which had to be paid to the authorities to answer to the charge of the unseemly noise and disturbance to the peaceful quiet of the day.

Now that spring has come they will soon be on their way to headquarters in New York. I get but little time to write, but things of interest are constantly occurring.

1781

A portion (division) of Washington's army passed through here, and in it was a regiment of French soldiers. (under Rochambeau). I stood out by the gate to see them pass, and one of the men handed me an empty flat bottle, saying "no good, no good." This I shall keep. A part of the regiment were bivouacked in the south part of the town beyond the village, but there were many sick, and these were quartered upon the inhabitants, without leave or question.

We had eight of them, but we did not give them our nice comfortable beds, for we never should have wanted to use them again. An abundance of clean straw was spread upon the floors for them. They were not like our own people, who had left us but a short time before, for they were those who came from France with Gen. Lafayette. Mother was so troubled to have such miserable, dirty people in her always tidy house. I suppose their long march and lack of home comforts and convenience made them so. But they were really sick too, and so they were cared for very kindly. One of them was sick from personal neglect and uncleanness, more than from disease, and he was taken to the barn, and provided with an abundance of not water and soap, his hair cut close, his heavy beard removed, his clothes burned, and clean ones provided for him. After a good supper and a night of rest on the clean straw, he seemed bright and well, and when he left, although we could not understand his words, he looked his thanks most unmistakably.

A widow whom we call "Aunt Patty Curtis" is to take my plac as helper in the family, and I am to pay her 75c a week. This will be at least a change of work, for the oldest of a family of six child, ren, with an invalid mother has a pretty hard time, especially if she is a girl.

Miss Becky Thompson has been here to make me a calico dress, and the rest of my clothes I shall fix myself after I go to Middlefield. I shall have so much time, mornings, and evenings that I can accomplish a great deal. This Becky Thompson is rather old and very deaf. She comes at seven o'clock in the morning and works until nine in the evening and I am to pay her one shilling a day. She can tell when it is about nine o'clock and time to stop work, by the shortness of the tallow candle. She says she wonders what people do with their old pins when they buy new ones.

I have finished my teaching in Middlefield.

Sewing was one of the branches to be taught, and I soon learned it was an "hard" way for the mothers to get the family-sewing done. Small children would appear, boys as well as girls, with difficult parts of dresses to be made, also pantaloons both large and small.

Of course, "the teacher" was expected to know how to do all kinds of sewing, and little boys and girls could not put in pockets and make buttonholes, and that was a way to get it out of the teacher. One day I had fourteen pairs of pantaloons on my table waiting for me to do the hard part on each. I took garments home, and worked mornings and evenings at them instead of doing my own sewing. I understand they are very sorry I will not teach longer.

In the next house north of us lives my mother's sister, Aunt Barker. She is always kind and pleasant, although she has had a hard life, for her husband seems by nature cross and ill-tempered, both to her and to the children. She has kept a calm cheerful exterior at least, with a bright pleasant word for us children, though we are careful to time our visits while Uncle Barker is absent. Now a new calamity has befallen her. She was sitting by the window sewing, when sudden, total darkness shut out the world, and she has seen no ray of light since. Patient, calm and trustful she sits waiting for the next great change to come which will open for her the gates of eternal day. And we think she will not have to wait long, for she grows more and more feeble as the days go by.

We are glad she is so near us, and that we are such a comfort to her.

Uncle Barker seems to consider himself as the one who needs sympathy, not for the loss of sight, but for the loss of a patient worker in his home.

NOV. 2, 1802

I have written one more date in this imperfectly kept journal, for yesterday was my wedding day, and we came immediately to this house, which is henceforth to be my home. May our Heavenly Father bless us in this new life.

My father has been greatly interested in our arrangements and in helping in every possible way. His kind, generous nature longs for the ability to do more for his children. He says I have been a precious daughter, and he is thankful that I am to be settled so near...
A good many of the young people came here with us, most of them bringing some little useful article with their expressions of kindness and good-will. Among them were a Mr. Philip Judd and his wife who live quite near us. Mrs. Judd was Miss North, and is a sister of Seth North, (known as "Sinner North—because he wouldn't go to church), and they lived in the east part of the town in a parish called New Britain. All the people from that parish come here to church. Among the housekeeping supplies Mr. Strong (her husband) has bought two pounds of loaf sugar, which seems like a great deal for so small a family.

I intend to go to see my mother a little while after tea every night so that she will not feel so desolate without me. The oldest of a family of six must be missed. I have two sisters, Lucinda, who is soon to be married to a Mr. Curtis and is to go to Charlotte, Vt. to live, and the youngest of the family is Nancy. She is called the handsomest girl in Farmington. My brother John says she is the handsomest person he has ever seen. I have three brothers Aaron, John and Adna. My mother's name was Rhoda Merrills.

Grandmother North comes to make mother a visit every town meeting day. They live on the farm three miles east. The original tavern-stand. (Now the Colt Farm). She rides on a pillion behind Grandfather, and as soon as she takes off her red-riding hood, she asks for yarn, and begins a pair of stockings for one of the children, and always finishes them before she goes away at night.

They have great quantities of nice peaches on the farm, and from the east windows we look upon a beautiful landscape. Hartford lies almost at our feet, the Bolton hills beyond, and in the distance Mts. Holyoke and Tom are plainly seen.

And now with new cares, and an untried life, I close these random sketches of the days that are forever gone.

(signed) Susan North Strong
Farmington Conn.
November, 1802
The Pomeroy Strongs had six known children, one of whom died in childhood, to be followed by another who was given the same name, which was often done at that time. The children were:

- Susan Strong 1804
- Philip Strong 1805 died young
- Philip Strong 1809
- John M. Strong 1813
- Julia Strong 1815
- Ellen Root Strong 1822

Nothing is presently known of the three elder surviving children's later life.

Julia Strong was married in 1836 to Dr. Chauncey Brown. They perhaps lived for the first seven years with Julia's parents, since this was a large house. In 1843 Dr. Brown purchased the house lot on which they built the house now known as 25 Main Street, which still stands there. The purchase also included the house now known as 23 Main Street, but Dr. Brown probably used that, at that time, as a barn. He had his office in what is now the basement of the house, entering it through a door on that level. Their three children were: Helen Stanley Brown who was married in 1871 to Robert Brenner, Philip Chauncey Brown, born 1850, who was not married until very late in life, and Julia P. Brown, who was never married. See more regarding Dr. Chauncey Brown in the account of 25 Main Street.

Ellen Root Strong was married on September 7, 1846, to John H. Bartlett, born July 3, 1823, son of the Rev. John Bartlett and Jane Golden, of Bloomfield. It would not surprise the writer if the Rev. John Bartlett's father was the John Bartlett of Lebanon, mentioned by Susan North Strong on the second page of her paper about early remembrances. John N. Bartlett was in 1844 a teacher at West District in Farmington, probably in the old stone schoolhouse. Julius Gay, quoted on page 66 of "Farmington Papers", mentions him with the following words:

"I remember attending one (speaking of annual examinations of the first classes of all public schools) in the Meeting House on March 15, 1844, in which, with the exception of a fine display by the West District School under the instruction of John N. Bartlett, now (1892) Superintendent of Schools in New Britain, the exercises were not especially interesting". Julius Gay was 10 when he witnessed that event, and Mr. Bartlett had not yet married.

John Bartlett later taught in Collinsville and then took up permanent residence in New Britain in 1860, joining the church there on April 1 of that year. In 1836 he was a teacher in New Britain High School, excelling in vocal and instrumental music, and by 1892 was superintendent of the New Britain schools.

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John Bartlett and his wife had three children by 1863, perhaps more later. The three were:

John Pomeroy Bartlett, born 1858,
Ellen Strong Bartlett " 1848, and
Annie Golden Bartlett " 1862

It appears that Susan North Strong perhaps predeceased her husband, although she was only two years his elder. Mr. Strong died on September 13, 1861, at the age of eighty-four. The two daughters, Julia Brown and Ellen Bartlett inherited. Mrs. Bartlett had already taken up residence in New Britain and sold her share to Mrs. Brown.

At this time Dr. Brown and his family moved from 25 Main Street to this house. The Brown's elder daughter Helen married Robert Brenner on February 21, 1871, and they moved from Farmington. Dr. Brown died on August 9, 1879, leaving his widow and her son and daughter, Philip and Julia, living here.

Mrs. Brown lived until April 23, 1908. The house appears not to have been very well cared for, as shown in the 1906 photo in the Farmington Book, although those pictures sometimes did not show the best view of a house. Phil Brown is remembered driving around town with a horse and buggy, but is not remembered as ever having worked. He and his sister were teased by the neighbor children, as the elderly unmarried often were, and in reprisal would keep any ball that came into their yard.

Julia P. Brown died on April 1, 1926, and not long after that her brother Philip married a Miss Saunders from West District, a school teacher. Mr. Brown was already in his late seventies, and he died on March 13, 1930.

Philip C. Brown had obtained full title to this property in 1927, and he willed it to his second cousin Eleanor (Bartlett) Phelps, granddaughter of his mother's sister Ellen (Strong) Bartlett, and title was passed to her on March 25, 1930, twelve days after her cousin's death.

It is believed by the writer that the former Eleanor Bartlett is the daughter of the John Bartlett who was born in 1858, the son of John N. Bartlett, former teacher of West District.

According to Alfred Andrews' "History of New Britain", published in 1867, that John Bartlett's full name was John Pomeroy Bartlett, as stated at the top of this page, and born on June 4, 1858. One of the papers given to the library by Mrs. William Skinner, was a certification as agent for the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York dated April 1, 1880, but the name was given as John Bartlett only, with no middle name. It seems too bad that Eleanor Bartlett's parentage and birth date are not available, so that the lineage given on the following page cannot be verified.

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Chart of what the writer believes to be the North family ancestors of Eleanor Bartlett Phelps Skinner

John North, 1615-1692 #1
m. Hannah Bird

Samuel North, 1643-1682 #3
m. Hannah Norton 1649-

John North, 1669-1745 #6
m. Mary Seymour -1733

Samuel North, 1708-1796 #15
m. Lois Porter 1712-1796

John North, 1748-1840 #35
m. Rhoda Merrill 1750-1819

Col. John Strong, 1733-1816
m. Widow Mercy Root, 1742-1784

Pomeroy Strong, 1777-1861
m. 1802 Susan North 1775-

Ellen Root Strong 1822-1893
m. 1846 John N. Bartlett 1823- b. Bloomfield

John Pomeroy Bartlett, 1858-
m.

Eleanor Bartlett
m. (1) Carter Phelps
m. (2) William Converse Skinner

A copy of the North Genealogy is available in the Farmington Village Library, and more regarding the Norths may easily be found there.

At the time of Susan North's marriage to Pomeroy Strong in 1802 the writer believes that her father John North was perhaps living at 776 Farmington Avenue, and had his blacksmith shop at that time at the site of the house at 774 Farmington Avenue. In 1806 he purchased the house at 776 Farmington Avenue, and he was still living twenty years later, when the Farmington Canal was opened for canal boat traffic.

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John N. Bartlett (see above) born in Bloomfield, was the son of the Rev. John Bartlett and Jane Golden
Eleanor Bartlett first came to Farmington to live, in 1919, as the young wife of Carter Phelps, and they purchased in that year the house at 93 Main Street, living there for some four years. They sold that house in 1923, and it appears that shortly after that they were divorced. Mrs. Phelps is said to have worked in New York City for a travel agency after the divorce.

After her inheritance of this house at 1 Waterville Road in 1930 she did not take up occupancy immediately, but rented it out for a time. Henry Shepherd and his wife, the former Eliza Holderness may have lived here for a while, later living at 49 High Street.

The house may have been in quite poor repair at this time, as only her elderly cousins had lived there for many years, and they may not have done much toward maintenance.

In 1938 Mrs. Phelps married widower William Converse Skinner of 24 Mountain Road, whose wife had died a year or so earlier. They lived at 24 Mountain Road until 1941, when Mr. Skinner sold that house and they moved into this one, bringing with them Susanne Skinner, Mr. Skinner's only unmarried child at that time. They must have put in quite a lot of work in modernizing and re-furbishing and re-furnishing that large old house, but they thoroughly enjoyed it, and Mrs. Skinner was very proud of her inheritance. Mr. Skinner was in the real estate business then, and had been for some years.

In 1947 the Antiquarian and Landmarks Society put some 15 or 20 of Farmington's old houses on display for the day of May 17, 1947, of which this was No. 4, entitled the NEWELL-WOODFORD house. Its description in the Society's brochure read as follows:

"Just as the Newell and Woodford families were joined early in Farmington history by marriage, their houses were later joined together and made into this present single-family home. Thomas Newell acquired his property in 1645, while Joseph Woodford acquired his in 1666. The Newell house stood facing North Meadow Gate Lane, now Farmington Avenue. The Woodford house is gambrel-roofed and faces on Waterville Road. Thomas Newell's eldest daughter married Joseph Woodford, and so started the long line of ancestors of Eleanor Bartlett Skinner, the present owner. Susan North Strong, Mrs. Skinner's great-grandmother, tells in her reminiscences of news which came to her in this house that "terrible war is in prospect..... Congress has decided to be independent of England". Pieces of antique furniture, now heirlooms, may be seen in "The Homestead". Included are a pine cupboard which was Farmington's first library, a Windsor rocker, and an old musket which belonged to Col. Pomeroy Strong, a tambour desk, highboy, tables, lamps, etc".

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The Skinners lived here until 1956, and would have stayed here longer but for the din of heavy traffic on both Farmington Avenue and Waterville Road. In 1956, Mr. Skinner semi-retired, they purchased a house in Colebrook and moved up there, renting this one. After Mr. Skinner's death in 1962 Mrs. Skinner moved to Norfolk.

On February 15, 1963, Mrs. Skinner sold this house to Richard H. Russell of New Britain, and it is now the home and office of IDC, Industrial Design Consultants.

Mrs. Skinner moved to California in October 1971.

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