State of Connecticut
Connecticut Historical Commission
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

1. Building Name (Common)
   Porter, Sarah, Faculty House

2. Town City
   Farmington

3. Street and Number (and or location)
   88 Garden Street

4. Owner(s)
   Miss Porter's School, Inc.

5. Use (Present)
   Two-family residence

6. Accessibility
   Exterior visible from public road: Yes
   Interior accessible: No

7. Style of Building
   Nineteenth-century vernacular

8. Materials
   - Clapboard
   - Wood Shingle
   - Board & Batten
   - Aluminum

9. Structural System
   - Wood frame
   - Load bearing masonry

10. Roof (Type)
    - Gable
    - Gambrel

11. Number of Stories
    - 2½

12. Condition
    - Excellent

13. Integrity
    - Yes

14. Related Outbuildings or Landscape Features
    - Barn
    - Carriage house

15. Surrounding Environment
    - Open land
    - Commercial

16. Interrelationship of Building and Surroundings
    Sited on the west side of Garden Street, the Sarah Porter Faculty House is bordered on the south by a parking lot. An old foundation is visible to the northwest.
This nineteenth-century vernacular house is fairly modest. Its two-story open porch features Victorian-period details. The two-over-two sash found throughout display window hood moldings. A shed-roofed dormer extends from the southern and northern elevations.

In 1866 Raymond H. Seeley sold a three-and-one-half acre piece of land with the "New Road" or Garden Street, running through it for $8000 to Sarah Porter (FLR 60:356). Sarah Porter, the founder of Miss Porter's School, Inc., probably had this building constructed shortly thereafter to house some of the faculty. (For more information on Sarah Porter, see 7 Mountain Road). In 1885 she sold the house and its surrounding one acre to Charles S. Mason, a florist, for $2200 (FLR 68:202). Mason was born in England in 1825 and died in 1908. Before his death he sold the property to his son George Mason (FLR 77:180). Mason kept title of the property for only two years and then sold it to Elizabeth V. Keep. Miss Keep assumed the role of headmistress of Miss Porter's School upon Porter's death (FLR 77:313). The house remains part of Miss Porter's School today.

The Sarah Porter Faculty House contributes to the streetscape due to its association with the development of Garden Street.

**Sources**

This house is pictured on page 110 of the Farmington Book, just at right center in the photo, with its large barn and greenhouses showing at the left, at the rear of the lot. Nothing appears on Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas at this location.

One acre of land and buildings were deeded to Miss Sarah Porter by R. H. Seeley, Trustee, on April 9, 1866. It was in this same year that Miss Porter purchased her main building, the former hotel, from the granddaughter of Mrs. Timothy Cowles. R. H. Seeley was the father of that granddaughter, the former Jennette Cowles Seeley. This property then, had apparently been previously owned by Major Timothy Cowles.

Miss Porter sold this Garden Street property on October 26, 1885, to Charles Stanley Mason, bounded on the south by White property (104 Garden Street), and on the north by Susan Ward (78 Garden Street). She reserved "the right to enlarge my present steam pump house".

It appears from this that the greenhouse had been built by Miss Porter, altho the house may already have been there when she purchased the property.

William Gallagher, later of 776 Farmington Avenue, is said to have lived here at one time, and possibly his son George was born here, but dates are not known.

Charles Stanley Mason, whose photo appears on page 108 of the Farmington Book, the son of George Mason and Keziah Stanley, had been born in Leightonstone, England, in 1825. His first wife, the former Harriet Hall who died in 1883, had also been born in England. Mr. Mason is said to have been apprenticed on the garden staff of a royal family in England, coming to Vineland, New Jersey, and working there before coming to New England. In Hartford he was employed at the Colt Estate, "Armsmear", on Wethersfield Avenue. His two sons were Charles Stanley Mason, Jr., 1855-1941, born in England, and Henry Hall Mason, 1856-1922, born in West Hartford. See 3 Maiden Lane and 122 Main Street for more on these two men.

Mr. Mason advertised his florist business in the Farmington Magazine in 1900 and 1901.

Mr. Mason's second wife, whom he married in 1891, was the former Emma M. Patmore, daughter of Elkanah Patmore and Adeline Plum, born in Honesdale, Pennsylvania, in 1843. Mrs. Mason died on April 12, 1908, and Mr. Mason on August 26 of the same year.

Charles Stanley Mason, Jr., took title to the property on April 25, 1908, stated then as 1½ acres and buildings, and bounded on the south by Harriet White and on the north by Cadwell. Mr. Mason, Jr., had been married since 1875, had lived for some years at 3 Maiden Lane, and now was living at 174 Main Street. He kept title to the Garden Street property only until 1910, selling it on May 11 to Elizabeth V. Hale Keep, at that time Headmistress of Miss Porter's School.

November 15, 1973

4/5,
The greenhouse was operated under the ownership of Miss Porter's School for many years.

One of the men who lived there and was in charge of the greenhouse was Harry Day, father of William Day who presently lives at 158 Main Street. He is in charge of the grounds of the Wilmarth Lewis property, which includes his residence, and he also does some grounds maintenance for other clients. Two other children of Mr. Day were Margaret and Clara, who moved from Farmington.

One of Harry Day's employees while he was there was Robert I. Sperry of Farmington Avenue.

After Mr. Day's demise the greenhouse was worked for some time by Raymond Haworth, presently of 51 Garden Street. Easter lilies and Christmas poinsettias were grown in great quantities, as were many other flowers distributed to the many houses and dormitories and dining room of the school.

It is not known by the writer exactly how long the greenhouse was operated, but its use fell off gradually. By 1967 it was no longer in operation and by 1971 it was torn down entirely. The house of course has always been occupied by school employees, since its purchase by Mrs. Keep.

Leonard Brown Weaver, who has been mentioned as one-time occupant of 108 Garden Street, employed by Miss Porter's School for many years, lived here for several years. Born in New Brunswick, Canada, he lived in Farmington for 45 years. He was a resident in this house at the time of his death in April 1972, at the age of 91, his wife having died a few years previously. He left three children; Joseph, of Bangor, Maine, Mrs. Thelma Mosely of Framingham, Massachusetts, and Mrs. Esther Barber of Farmington.

Mrs. Barber's husband is Fred W. Barber of the Department of Grounds Maintenance of Miss Porter's School, and the couple live in this house.

November 15, 1973