Facing west onto Colton Street, this dwelling sits on a small lot with a well-shaded lawn. The surrounding neighborhood contains a variety of dwellings dating from the early eighteenth century to the present.
This dwelling was originally constructed as a 1½ story, gable-to-street cottage. It was enlarged sometime after 1906 during the ownership of Miss Porter's School. Today the 2½ story, gable-to-street facade exhibits three bays on the first floor and two bays on the second story. The location of the off-center front door is original. A single-story, enclosed porch extends from the southern elevation. Another entry is accessible through a second door off the porch. Note the modest overhanging eaves and diminutive brick chimney. Six-over-six sash and two-over-two-sash are featured throughout.

This house was originally constructed about 1867 as a 1½ story worker's cottage by Chauncey Deming Cowles. He inherited the land from his mother's estate in 1860 (FPR 12:230). Mrs. Cowles' inventory lists the parcel as the "6½ acre Bull Lot with one house" (FPR 13:88). The one house mentioned is the building at 11 Colton Street (FPR 13:88). This house appears on the 1869 Baker and Tilden Atlas, attributed to C.D. Cowles. The son of wealthy merchant, Major Timothy Cowles and his wife Catherine (Deming), Chauncey D. Cowles (1812-1880) was a successful farmer. After his graduation from Yale's Theological Seminary, Cowles served as pastor of Plainville's Congregational Church from 1841 to 1843. He was forced to retire because of a weak voice. Cowles then moved his young family to Buffalo, New York, where he manufactured starch. In 1853 he returned to Farmington to operate his father's farm and resided in the grand family homestead at 87 Main Street. In 1879 Cowles sold the property to Miss Sarah Porter, the headmistress of Miss Porter's School for Girls (FLR 65:414). Miss Porter used the cottage to house employees of the school. Richard Lewis, a former slave, who was the cook at the school, lived here during the early twentieth century. In the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, Fritz Pasler, the school's dairy farmer, and his family resided here. Miss Porter's School sold the building in 1974 (FLR 234:225).

Although architecturally undistinguished, the Chauncey D. Cowles Cottage is an important link to the development of Colton Street.

Sources:
FORMER OWNERS: Keep and Hale from Estate of Sarah Porter
4/9th(now entire) identified on dist.as "L" and
known as the Bull Lot and Cottage.4/21/1906. vol.74,
414:Cowles from Est.Catherine Cowles, his mother.
Cowles from father Chauncey Deming(no record)
Chauncey Deming from Elijah Porter deed dated 3/23/1827
and recorded 4/16/1827 vol.43 p 183:E.Porter from
Martin Bull Bassett,6 acres & bldgs dated 1/6/1827
and recorded 3/24/ 1827. Est.Chauncey Deming's Est. (over)
REFERENCES: "Farmington,Conn. 1906" p.130 'residence of
Richard Lewis. The house later was raised to a
full story height. See "Baker&Tilden Atlas 1869
p.33 "C.D.Cowles"
This house is pictured on page 130 of the Farmington Book as the residence of Richard Lewis, and is designated on Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas as C. D. Cowles.

Just when the house was built is not known. A tenement was on the property when it was transferred in 1660, and the next mention of a house here was in 1708 when Thomas Bull wrote his will dated May 7, in which he left to "son David my house and home lot and all buildings on said lot."

Mention of the earliest settlers on this property is in Mrs. Hurlburt's "Town Clerks". On page 359 she says:

"William Corbe bought land on Hartford Path (on the north side of the road to Hartford, east of Mountain Spring Road) from Richard Jones......Before buying the Hartford Path lot, Corbe owned land on Mill highway, Colton Street, which he sold to Richard Jones. Corbe removed to Haddam in 1660".

She follows this with more on page 365:

"Richard Jones and William Corbe exchanged house lots about 1660, Richard Jones taking Corbe's house lot on the Mill highway (Colton Street) and Corbe taking the former Jones house lot on the Hartford road...... Jones took Corbe's land, of three acres, with a tenement standing on it, on the north side of Mill highway, about where the Bull lot now is. Richard Jones removed to Haddam. A Mary Jones married Thomas Barnes in 1690. Probably both were children of the original settlers".

Although Thomas Bull was listed in 1672 as one of the original proprietors of Farmington, his name was not included in the group of sketches of original settlers of whom 87 appear on pages 356 through 378 of "Town Clerks". This is probably because he was an absentee owner, being as Mrs. Hurlburt says on page 42, "the famous Capt. Thomas Bull of Hartford, equally fearless in the face of Indians on the warpath, or a would-be Governor from England. For thirty years he was the strong right arm of the colonists in Hartford and at Saybrook".

It was Capt. Thomas's son Deacon Thomas, who inherited the property on Colton Street, and Capt. Thomas may never have lived here. Mrs. Hurlburt says: "Deacon Thomas Bull lived in Farmington on land inherited from his father on the 'ould road leading to the mill', now Colton Street, and the homestead lot is still known as the Bull lot. The site of his house may be found by diligent searching just beyond the new home of Miss Elsie Deming. His near neighbors were the Samuel Cowles family with their seven sons who lived in the house now owned by Miss Margaret Brady. This house was built about 1697".

It will be noted that the above was written around 1943, three years after Miss Elsie Deming's house was built for her at 15 Colton Street, just east of this house. The Margaret Brady house is much nearer Main Street. It is the house now known as 9 Colton Street.

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// 7.
It appears to the writer that there is no indication at all as to when the present house standing here was built, except that it had to be prior to 1906, when the Farmington Book was published.

Mrs. Hurlburt's notes on file in the library regarding this house give the following sequence of ownership.

"Deacon Thomas Bull, son of Capt. Thomas Bull of Hartford, had five acres and a home recorded to him in 1660, Vol. 1, p. 60, on this location, as checked with abutting property and the road to the mill".

"Daniel Bull from father Deacon Thomas Bull, whose will was dated May 7, 1708, to son David 'my house and home lot and all other buildings on said lot'. David born 1687 married Sarah Ashley 1717, died January 17, 1762".

"Probate Vol. 4, p. 201, Jonathan Bull by inheritance from father David Bull. Jonathan born 1718 died 12/5/1795, married Elizabeth Bull, left to son Martin all estate both real and personal".

"Martin Bull by inheritance from Father Jonathan Bull 7 acres and buildings 10/17/1780".

"Martin Bull Bassett from grandfather Martin Bull by will 1815, Elijah Porter executor of will".

Martin Bull Bassett will have been the last of the Bull family to own this property, so before leaving them, we should perhaps identify those whom we can.

Deacon Thomas Bull had been married to Esther Cowles on April 29, 1669, a marriage which had been very difficult to effect, as is told on pages 43 and 44 of "Town Clerks". Their several children were:

John, died 1705 leaving six sons,
Samuel,
Jonathan,
David, inherited this homestead,
Thomas, 1672-1689,
Esther, 1674-1689,
Susannah,
Sarah, married Josiah Hart.

Deacon Thomas Bull's wife Esther died in 1691, and the Deacon re-married, marrying the widow of Capt. William Lewis, the former Mary Cheever.

Deacon Thomas Bull was the 4th town clerk of Farmington, serving from 1690 to 1704. Deacon Bull owned a prosperous farm, was by profession a gunsmith and silversmith, also worked in iron. One item made of the latter, was the pikes which guards carried on their sentry duties.

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Deacon Thomas served in many other civic posts, including constable, selectman, tax collector, and school committee man.

Not much is known of David Bull or Jonathan Bull, his son and grandson, who successively inherited, but Jonathan's son Martin was very well known.

The following paragraph is made up from information found by the writer on pages 83, 87, 120, 122 and 208 of Mrs. Hurlburt's "Town Clerks", and an interested reader could find much more than is here quoted, or rather, told.

Martin Bull made silver spoons, some of which are treasured by Farmington families today. In December 1774 he was on a committee to take care of matters relating to the Continental Congress, and in March 1775 he was on the committee to license the use of tea. He joined with John Treadwell in producing saltpetre for use in the manufacture of ammunition. In 1795, when the Library of the First Society of Farmington was formed, with Deacon Elijah Porter as the first librarian, Deacon Martin Bull was a member of the library committee, with John Mix and Isaac Cowles. He was also a member of another committee, with John Mix, John Treadwell and Noadiah Hooker, to "digest rules and regulations for the benefit of schools". He was town treasurer nine years, clerk of probate court 39 years, led the music in the church on Sundays. On November 6, 1799, young Miss Julia Cowles of Oldgate said "and then to Mr. Bull's to get a pair of earrings".

Mrs. Hurlburt's notes continue.

Elijah Porter from John Bull Bassett, Jan. 6, 1827.

Chauncey Deming from Elijah Porter, March 23, 1827.

Catherine (deming) Cowles from her father Chauncey Deming, no date given.

Chauncey Deming Cowles from the estate of his mother, August 4, 1860.

Sarah Porter from Chauncey Deming Cowles, June 28, 1879.

It would appear that from 1827 all the owners purchased for business or investment reasons, as none of these owners were at likely to have lived here. Some of them probably planned to house employees here, and this would definitely be the case with Miss Sarah Porter, who was employing more and more people at the time of her purchase.

Robert Porter Keep and Dorothea (Keep) Hale inherited from their great-aunt Sarah Porter, taking title from her estate one April 21, 1906.

The final transfer of ownership of this house was reported in the Commercial Record of December 13, 1968, from the estate of Robert Porter Keep to Miss Porter's School, thus finally making the school the complete owner.

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In effect of course, the house had been the property of the school since Miss Porter's purchase, as it had always been her plan to use it for housing of school employees.

Richard Lewis, said to have been a former slave, the occupant with his wife in 1906, was employed by the school, thought to have been the chef. Their daughter Delia was with them. Richard Lewis's son was Reuben Lewis, who lived in the old south school, and whose son was another Richard. See page 194 for photo of the grandfather, and 149 for photo of the grandson.

Sometime after 1906 this house was extensively remodeled and a second story was added.

Several families perhaps have lived here, but the writer knows only of three.

From sometime in the 1930's, and continuing into the 1950's, Fritz Pasler and his wife Freda lived here. Mr. Pasler worked at the Porter School dairy farm at the foot of Maple Street for many years, later went into a trucking business of his own. The Pasler's daughter Lydia Anne was married in 1946 to Theodore Horace Jones, born in Winsted, the son of Harold Jones and Hazel Blodgett.

The Rosati family, Mr. Rosati being the gardener, lived here for a time before building their own home on Carrington Lane.

John P. Collins, maintenance man, and his wife Emma T., lived here for some years, but as of 1973 they were gone and the house was vacant, at least for a time.

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