The Daniel B. Johnson House is situated on a slight rise, facing east onto Lovely Street. Large trees stand south, west, and north of the house.
This modest, L-shaped house has been modified over time. The south wing and the porch may be later additions. A modern screened porch actually encloses an inner Classical-style porch with columns and a plain balustrade visible behind the screen. The overhanging eaves with sawtooth trimming along the gable sides and cut work bargeboards on the raking cornice add interest to the otherwise plain elevation. The south and east elevations display two first-story windows and one attic-story window, all with six-over-six sash. The north elevation reveals cross gables with a shed-roofed dormer.

Although the early history of this building is unclear it appears as though it originated with Daniel Johnson. Johnson was born in Manchester, Hartford County, in 1812 to Daniel and Phebe Johnson. It is unclear when Johnson arrived in the Farmington area, however, he was involved in a Unionville land transfer as early as 1839. His wife, Harriet N., daughter of Amos and Sarah Woodruff, was born in Avon in 1816. Daniel was one of the six men who formed the Congregational Church in 1841. In 1844 Johnson purchased a one-and-one-half acre lot on the west side of Lovely Street (FLR 48:508). The property was next described "with buildings" in a mortgage taken out by Daniel in August of 1849, just days after the birth of his son, Frederick W. (FLR 52:18). An 1853 map of Unionville also confirms the existence of Daniel's home and shop on Lovely Street in this location. Information on the exact nature of his employment is unavailable, other than an 1849 listing of his occupation as a mechanic. He died in 1879 leaving his estate to his wife Harriet; when she died in 1909 the land and house passed on to their former daughter-in-law, Celia Johnson Ryan (1851-1918) (FLR 14:549, 74:202). In 1918 the property then passed to Celia's daughter, Clara Johnson Osborn, and in 1942 Clara died leaving the property to her brother, Frederick B. (FLR 74:341,97:56). In 1945 Daniel Johnson's grandson, Frederick Blair Johnson (b. 1876), sold the property to Elliot F. Cook (FLR 95:264).

This house, although its history is quite unclear, is historically significant for its long association with the Johnson family.

The town assessor's record says that this house was built in 1890; that date makes no sense when the history of the Johnson family is considered. It is possible that this house is not the original one on the site. If it is, then it was built in the 1840s.

In 1844 William Griswold sold Daniel Johnson a 1 ¼-acre lot on the west side of Lovely Street, then another ¼-acre piece just north of the first lot (48-508, 555). In 1848 Daniel Johnson sold the northern ¼ acre of the combined property to Martin Woodruff, leaving 1 ¼ acres (49-550). In 1849 he mortgaged his "one acre and one rood with buildings" to Edward Woodford for $200 (52-18). One of the buildings was probably a house, because Johnson had a wife and three young children at that time; and he owned no other property in town after 1844, when he had sold a house on Farmington Avenue. He had been one of the six men who formed the Congregational Church in Unionville in 1841.
In 1868 Johnson sold the southern \( \frac{1}{3} \) acre of his land to Erasmus Ransom, reducing the property to its current 1-acre size. See the map for the land transactions. The Baker & Tilden atlas of 1869 shows a house belonging to Johnson on this property.

Map -- 1868

Daniel Johnson died in 1878 "of injuries received by a fall"; ownership of this property passed to his widow Harriett (P 14-659), but the house is not specifically mentioned in the will. In fact, the house is not mentioned in any documents until 1909, when Harriett Johnson died and her estate was settled (74-202). At that time ownership of the house passed to her daughter-in-law Celia MacDonald Johnson Ryan. When Celia died in 1918, she bequeathed it to her daughter, Clara Johnson Osborne, reserving life use for her widower, second husband Edward Ryan. Clara owned it until her death in 1941; her will left it to her brother Frederick Blair Johnson of New Haven, who sold it to Mr. Cook in 1945. During the days of the trolley, Mr. Cook ran the express car from Unionville to Hartford.

Genealogy

Daniel B. Johnson: b. 1812/13 in Manchester, son of Daniel & Phebe Johnson; m. Harriett N. Woodruff; d. 12-23-1878

Harriett Woodruff Johnson: b. 5-14-1815 in Avon, daughter of Amos & Sara Woodruff; d. 3-10-1909

S. Mortimer - b. --- (in New Haven, 1909)

Mary Jane - b. 1840; m. George Dunham (see 112 Lovely St.)

Frederick W. - see below

Frederick W. Johnson: b. 8-24-1849; m. Celia MacDonald; d. ---

Celia MacDonald Johnson Ryan: b. 1-20-1851 in Woodstock, New Brunswick, Canada, daughter of James & Eleanor Kirk MacDonald; m. Frederick W. Johnson; m. Edward M. Ryan 4-22-1908; d. 8-22-1918

Clara E. - see below

Frederick Blair - b. 3-2-1876

Edward M. Ryan: b. 5-10-1856; d. 9-22-1920
Genealogy (cont.)

Clara E. Johnson Osborne: b. 3-12-1873; m. Charles H. Osborne 7-27-1892; d. 3-20-1941 in Peru, Ill.

Charles H. Osborne: b. ---; d. 3-21-1918

no known children