Built close to the road above a brownstone retaining wall, the Thomas Lee, Jr. House faces west onto Colton Street. The surrounding neighborhood contains a variety of Colonial- and Federal-period dwellings dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Some modern homes are visible from the property. Colton Street is included in Farmington's local historic district and is part of the village's National Register district.
**DESCRIPTION (Continued)**

**17 OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (INTERIOR AND/or EXTERIOR)**

Capped with a gambrel roof, this one-and-one-half story, Colonial-period house exhibits a five-bay facade and large central brick chimney. The modest central entry door is flanked by four-paned sidelights. Note the "coffin" door on the south elevation. The original sash have been replaced with six-over-six windows and three shed-roofed dormers are featured along the facade. A twentieth-century ell extends from the east elevation.

| 18 ARCHITECT |  |
|  |
|  |

| 19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE |  |
|  |
| This house was erected by Thomas Lee, Jr. around 1792. In September of 1791, Lee purchased an empty, quarter acre of land "a few rods south of the meeting house" from Jonathan and Martin Bull (FLR 29:119). The Bulls' home lot bordered this parcel to the south. Thomas Lee, Jr. (1717-1806) was born in Farmington to Thomas and Mary (Camp) Lee. A shoemaker by trade he married Ezbal (Isabel) Sedgwick of Hartford in 1792. His second wife was Martha Forward of Simsbury. This house may have been built for one of Lee's newly married sons; Thomas, Miles, or David. In 1795 Joel Lankton acquired the property "100 rods south of the meeting house" with buildings (FLR 31:191). Dr. John Hart bought the house in 1797 (FLR 31:495). A 1776 graduate of Yale, Hart (1753-1798) was the son of Deacon Ebenezer and Elizabeth (Lawrence) Hart of Kensington. After the Revolutionary War, he settled in Farmington and practiced surgery. Hart married Hannah Williams in 1786 and raised five children. Due to poor health, Dr. Hart took a sea voyage shortly after purchasing this house and died while aboard the U.S. Navy Schooner Retaliation in 1798. Selah Porter bought the house in 1807 from the heirs of Dr. Hart (FLR 35:530). The son of Timothy Porter, Selah (1772-1847) was a house builder by trade and for many years served as the village librarian. His wife was the former Sophia Cook. The house lot was enlarged in 1810 and 1823 by two purchases from Martin Bull (FLR 37:154, 41:502). Upon Selah's death, half of the homestead was distributed to his son, John C. and the other half devised to son, Thomas L. (FPR 11B:54). In 1862 Thomas quit-claimed his portion of the property to the heirs of John C. Porter (FLR 54:505). Thomas Porter, the son of John C. and his wife, the former Mary Root, owned the property until moving to Nebraska City, Nebraska (see cont. pg.). |

**SOURCES**


**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Nathan Ainspan

**DATE**

4/86

**VIEW**

NE

**NEGATIVE ON FILE**

15:8A

**NAME**

Elizabeth R. Hart

**DATE**

3/86

**ORGANIZATION**

Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

**ADDRESS**

27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT

20 **SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS**

- [ ] None known
- [ ] Highways
- [ ] Vandalism
- [ ] Developers
- [ ] Other
- [ ] Renewal
- [ ] Private
- [ ] Deterioration
- [ ] Zoning
- [ ] Explanation

**HIST-6 NEWS 77 (BACK).**
in 1878. The next owner was a farmer, John Brady (FLR 65:315). In 1921 John's children, Phillip and Margaret Brady, inherited the house (FLR 74:430). The house was willed to Rev. John A. Kelly of St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in April, 1958 (FLR 138:29). The church sold it to private owners in June of 1958 and since then it has passed through various owners.

Architecturally important as a well-preserved, gambrel-roofed, Colonial-period dwelling, this building derives added significance for its association with the Lee, Hart, and Porter families.

**OWNER'S NAME** (BRADY, MARGARET) BAKER, Ashton H. & Helen N.

**ADDRESS:** 7 Colton Street

**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1690

**FOR:** Thomas Bull

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**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**ARCHITECT**

**MASTER-BUILDER**

**FOREROWNERS:**

M. Brady from Est. of her father, John Brady, 5/8/1925, Vol. 714, p. 130, n. on land formerly of C. Carrington, s. on land of Mercy Thompson, e. on Est. of Sarah Porter, w. on highway; also by quit claim from her brother Philip of his interest; John Brady from Thomas Porter of Nebraska City, Neb., by Geo. Cook, Attorney, 1 acre with dwellinghouse & other blds., n. on Carrington, e. & s. on C.D. Cowles, w. on highway, "being the former Homestead of my father John C. Porter", 4/15/1878, Vol. 65, p. 315; Thomas Porter (son of John Cook Porter and grandson of Selah Porter) from heirs of John C. Porter & heirs of Selah Porter (Thomas L. Porter) by quit claim, of their interest in 3/4 acres & homestead, 2/24/1862, Vol. , p. 505; being an undivided 1/2 int.; Thomas Porter from the Est. of his father, Thomas Cook Porter, an undivided 1/2 interest 10/8/1858, Vol. 13, p. 64, and 12/7/1858, Vol. 11B, p. 266, Prob. Rec.; the will of Selah Porter, not recorded in Farmington, Conn., 1906", p. 23 - 'Capt. Selah Porter Place - Residence of Philip J. Brady' (OVER)
Former Owners, cont.: mington Records but on file at the State Library gives, after life use to his wife "I give all the rest and residue, real and personal to my three sons, Timothy, John C., & Thomas L. Porter", dated 1/21/1843, will probated 3/24/1847. The inventory shows Homestead and other bldgs., and 3 acres, 17 rods. Timothy died leaving a widow Mary and a son Thomas. The distribution of the estate of Selah Porter gave to John C. an undivided 1/2, and an equal undivided 1/2 to Thomas L., who later quit claimed to his nephew Thomas see above. The will of Sophia Porter, widow of Selah "to my son Thomas L. Porter, 1/2 of all monies I die possessed of and to Mary, the mother of my grandson Thomas, the use of the remainder half of all monies and at her death to my grandson Thomas Porter." Sophia had no real estate as she had only the use of the homestead during her life time. Mary Porter married (2) William Hart. The will of Sophia was recorded 7/15/1864, Vol. 13, p. 301, Prob. Rec.; Selah Porter from Hannah Hart, widow of Dr. John Hart & guardian of their minor heirs, 1 piece of land adjoining the back lane, so-called, containing 1 rood with the bldgs. thereon standing, w. on highway, s. on Martin Bull, n. on Timothy Pitkin jr., running to a point on the e., and reserving to Thankful Street now in the Province of Upper Canada, life use, 6/6/1807, Vol. 35, p. 530; Dr. John Hart from Joel Langdon, "about 100 rods, south of the Meeting House, containing one rood, with the house, barn & other bldgs., s. & e. on Martin Bull, w. on highway, n. on Timothy Pitkin jr., 4/14/1797, Vol. 31, p. 495; Joel Lankton from Thomas Lee jr., about 100 rods s. of the meeting house containing 1 rood with all bldgs., e. & s. on Jonathan & Martin Bull, n. on T. Pitkin jr w. on highway 4/6/1795, Vol. 31, p. 191; Thomas Lee jr., from Jonathan & Martin Bull, 1/4 acre, a few rods s. of the meeting house, being part of the homelot on which the said Jonathan & Martin Bull now live 3/27/1792, Vol. 29, p. 119; bound n. on Timothy Pitkin, s. on J. & M. Bull; Selah Porter also from Martin Bull 2 roods, e. & s. on Bull, w. on highway, n. on said Porter's land 11/17/1823, Vol. 41, p. 502; Selah Porter also from Martin Bull "on n. side of my (Bull) homelot, 1 1/4 rods & 7/10 rod, n. on Porter's own land & part on land of Timothy Pitkin, e. & s. on Bull land & part on highway 7/24/1810,
ACME S .... ,·.P

OWNER'S NAME: BRADY, MARGARET (Card #2)

ADDRESS: Colton Street

DATE BUILT: FOR:

ARCHITECT

MASTER-Builder

FORMER OWNERS: cont.: Vol. 37, p. 15¾; Martin Bull from father Jonathan Bull, ½ of the homestead of 7½ acres and dwellinghouse 10/17/1780, Vol. 23, p. 26¾ E., w. on highway, n. on land of Phinehas Cowles, Thomas Lewis & Deacon Noah Porter, part on each, s. on Enos Cowles, e. on N. Porter; Jonathan Bull from father David Bull, by inheritance; David Bull from father, Deacon Thomas, by inheritance, whose will was dated 5/7/1708. See Manwaring Vol. 2, p. 31 - "I give my son David my house and home lot and other bldgs., upon said lot." The Bull lot, originally 5 acres, was increased to seven acres and later subdivided.

REFERENCES:
This house is pictured on page 23 of the Farmington Book as the Captain Selah Porter place, residence of Philip C. Brady. Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas shows it as Mrs. John Porter. This house has been known sometime prior to the 1970's as 7 Colton Street, and was listed that way in the 1969 City Directory.

Julius Gay introduced this house to readers of the Farmington Book with the following words on page 19 of that book:

"Next south (speaking of the Timothy Pitkin house) is the gambrel roofed house formerly the home of Capt. Selah Porter, and immediately beyond this once stood the house of Deacon Martin Bull and his father before him."

An ancient right-of-way from "way to ould mill" (now Colton Street) to the mountain, was mentioned as the northwestern boundary of this lot in 1671. This old right-of-way passed fairly close to this house and the left side as one faces it, and led up through the rear of the Pitkin house next door, and into what is now Carrington Lane and probably over to what is now Church Street. Only faint traces of it can now be seen.

The library card for this house gives the following sequence of ownership:

Built 1690 for Thomas Bull, father of David Bull, 1708 date of will by which David inherited, David's son Jonathan inherited 1780 Martin Bull inherited from Jonathan 1792 Thomas Lee purchased from Martin Bull 1795 Joel Lankton " " Thomas Lee, Jr 1797 Dr. John Hart " " Joel Lankton 1807 Selah Porter " " widow of Dr. John Hart Thomas Cook Porter from his mother, widow of Selah 1858 Thomas Porter from est. of father T. C. Porter 1862 Thomas Porter, grandson of Selah, from other heirs 1878 John Brady from Thomas Porter 1925 Margaret Brady from est. of father, John

The writer believes that the first six ownerships stated above should perhaps apply to the Deacon Martin Bull house which Julius Gay mentioned above.

Mrs. Hurlburt wrote up this house in 1952 for the Colonial Dames Society, and in the pamphlet which she prepared, and which is on file at the State Library as the Cowles-Brady House, she gives the date of 1686 for this house, and says it was built for Samuel Cowles.

On page 359 of "Town Clerks" she says: "Samuel Cowles was the son of John Cowles and Mehitable (Hart) Cowles. He lived on the north side of the 'highway to the ould mill' now Colton Street, in the house now belonging to Miss Margaret Brady". see next page

April 23, 1972
Mrs. Hurlburt goes on to say of Samuel Cowles: "he was married June 17, 1660, to Abigail, daughter of Timothy and Elizabeth Standly. Seven sons were born to them and grew to manhood. They were: Samuel, the eldest, Timothy, John, Nathaniel, Isaac, Joseph and Caleb."

The following statement from the "Cowles-Brady" pamphlet follows the above in sequence of time:

"In 1691 it was willed to the eldest son Samuel who in 1685 had married Rachel Porter, and it was in the Cowles family until 1795, when purchased by Dr. John Hart."

Although preceding statements still leave some unanswered questions, they do permit us to trace the sequence of Cowles ownership. Samuel Cowles, #9, 1662-1748, is the one who inherited in 1691, whose wife was Rachel Porter. The children of Samuel and Rachel were:

- #69 Thomas
  - 69a Ruth, who married Joseph Root,
  - 70 Rachel, who married Joseph Langdon,
  - 71 Samuel, who married Sarah Wadsworth,
  - 72 John, who married Mary Porter, and
  - 73 Esther, who married Thomas Stanley.

Samuel Cowles gave this property to his son Thomas, and then moved to Kensington.

Thomas Cowles, 1686-1751, married Martha Judd of Waterbury, the daughter of Capt. Thomas Judd and Sarah Freeman.

Thomas and Martha had only three children who lived to adulthood. They were:

- Josiah, born 1716, who was twice married, first to Jemima Dickinson, and second to Mary Scott. He moved to Southington, died in 1793,
- Phinehas, born 1730, who married Sarah Hawley and moved to the Great Plains (Plainville) and died in 1812, and
- Thomas #169, born 1719, who was married to Ruth Newell (who died 1753) and then married Mary Williams of Waterbury.

Thomas Cowles had seven children, all by his first wife, of whom four survived infancy. They were:

- Eneas, 1740-1809 m (1) Esther Bird, 1738-1784,
  - m (2) Phebe Dickerman, dau. of Joseph Dickerman of Hamden Plains,
- Sarah, 1746-1793 never married,
- Gideon, 1749-
- Thomas, 1751-

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A letter which is quoted below, a tribute to Thomas Cowles #169, was written in the early 19th century by the Rev. Asa Packard to his grandson. The latter at that time was a student in Farmington, possibly at the Old Red College of Deacon Edward Hooker, or possibly at the Farmington Academy. A mention of this can be found on page 91 of the published Cowles Genealogy. The letter reads as follows:

"In 1777, early in January, I was passing through Farmington, returning from the Army in New York to my parents in Bridgewater (Massachusetts, near Taunton). I was sick. The wound I had received in battle was not healed --- On a Sabbath morning I was in Farmington and could go no farther --- I looked around and selected a neat, snug looking house not painted -- a Mr. Thomas Cowles was its owner. The venerable, aged man had his great Bible before him on a small table before the fire. His red worsted cap, brown coat and small clothes with blue stockings, I well remember. I was in tears -- his daughter about forty or fifty came in --- both consented to take in the sick boy, and greater kindness than theirs was never realized by a sufferer. I was very ill and delirious for days. An elderly physician attended me and when my brother came for me, both Mr. Cowles and the doctor refused to take any remuneration. I wrote Mr. Cowles often, and he answered me. After my ordination I, having a direct conveyance, sent him two books a little before his death, and wrote in each of them: "I was a stranger and ye took me in". He was a man of eminent piety".

The Reverend Asa Packard was a minister in Lancaster, Massachusetts, somewhat north of Worcester.

In 1795 the property is said to have been purchased by Joel Lankton, and in 1797 it was purchased from him by Dr. John Hart. The weak point in our ownership record is that it does not show any transfer from a Cowles to either of the above men.

Dr. John Hart who purchased in 1797, was descended from original settler Deacon Stephen Hart, through the following lineage, which starts with Deacon Stephen's son:

Captain Thomas Hart 1644-1726  
m. Ruth Hawkins  
Deacon Thomas Hart 1680-1773  
m. Mary Thompson  
Deacon Ebenezer Hart 1705-1773  
m. Widow Elizabeth Lawrence  
Dr. John Hart, b. Kensington 1753  
m. Hannah Williams.

See more regarding Dr. Hart in the sketch of 16 Main Street, his later home. He died at sea on October 3, 1798.

Mrs. Hart took up residence at 16 Main Street and the widow Mrs. Nehemiah Street, who had owned it, occupied this house. After Mrs. Street's death in Canada this house was sold to Selah Porter in 1807.

April 23, 1972  
[签署]
Captain Selah Porter, born on July 30, 1772, was the son of Timothy Porter, direct descendant of Thomas Porter, tailor, who had lived on Main Street just opposite the intersection of Colton Road and Main Street, who had married Sarah Hart. Thomas Porter had been the brother of Robert, head of the branch of the Porter family which had produced the Rev. Noah Porter and his daughter Sarah.

Selah Porter (the writer does not know of what he was captain) was a house builder and it was he who built the Major Timothy Cowles house, now known as 87 Main Street. Capt. Selah Porter's wife was Sophia Cook, and they had three sons. Capt. Porter was the village librarian from 1826 to 1835, presiding over the merged Village and Phoenix Libraries. The three sons were John, Timothy and Thomas.

John Cook Porter married Mary Root, and their son was Thomas,

Timothy Porter lived in the old Thomas Porter homestead across Main Street from his father, in the house which burned in the great fire of July 1864,

Thomas Lewis Porter, born ca 1820, married the widow Emeline Woodford Deming, and in 1879 became 21st Town Clerk of Farmington. See sketch of 25 Main St.

Selah Porter died ca 1847 and his widow in 1865. She had deeded this property quite a while prior to her death, because her grandson Thomas took title from her son Thomas Cook Porter in 1862.

Thomas Porter, having moved to Nebraska, sold this property on April 15, 1878, to John Brady, who is stated on page 191 of "Town Clerks" to have been living near "Flood's Landing" on the road east to Hartford. John Brady farmed in a small way, owning some other pieces of land south of Colton Street. His wife was Bridget. John Brady died in 1902 and his widow in 1903. They left two children who never married, Philip and Margaret, who inherited and occupied this house. This house appears to have been damaged by fire in 1920. It destroyed part of the rear of the house, including a fine old door. It was then that a newer kitchen was built on, somewhat more modern. Philip Brady followed his father's practice of small farming, and he did some outside work with his yoke of oxen.

Mrs. Quincy Blakely, in a pamphlet which she wrote of Farmington in 1954, spoke of Philip Brady, saying:

"There was the proverbial country boy, the butt of fun, always a silent member of the crowd, but liked by them all. He was devoted to his mother and when she died the boys were trying to comfort him, and his appreciative reply to their words was this cryptic sentence, 'I hope it will never happen again!'".

"He went to the drug store one day, handed Miss Adgate a bottle to have the prescription refilled. Miss Adgate said to him, 'How much do you want, Phil?', and he said 'The full of the bottle, if it will hold it'. How such people give color to a village and how much we appreciate them. Surely they have not lived in vain".

April 23, 1972
Mrs. Blakely continues: "Phil had a pair of oxen that the village was proud of. They proved very useful in blizzard days and when the first automobiles were so temperamental and refused to go, the oxen were often called to the rescue and I always felt they assumed a proud and triumphant air when they rescued the car from permanent inactivity".

Philip Brady died in 1925 and his sister continued her residence here for some years. She did housework for various local families, but later on moved to West Hartford and rented this house.

Tenants here for a few years sometime prior to 1940 were John Bradford Sanborn of Germantown, Pennsylvania, and his wife, the former Helen Walrath of Evanston, Illinois. John B. Sanborn, born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1894, the son of Edward Hall Sanborn and Harriette Pierce, was an electrical engineer for Pratt and Whitney. Shortly before 1940 the Sanborns purchased land on Willow Lane and built a house, the first one on the lane, facing about south, now almost hidden by trees. They moved into the house probably in 1940, but Mr. Sanborn died very shortly after that, leaving his wife with four children. When they were older Mrs. Sanborn joined with Mrs. Henry Shepherd of 49 High Street in the venture which they called the "Village Shop", at 767 Farmington Avenue. It was a shop carrying casual leisure clothes for all ages. They operated until 1959 and sold it as a going business to Joseph Whitney. He did business there for a time as "Robin Hood's Barn", not very successfully, and closed after a time. As of 1968 Mrs. Sanborn lived in the Lawrence house on Waterville Road, wrote a newspaper column, and exhibited dresses occasionally.

Tenants following the Sanborns were Howard L. Tibbetts and his wife, the former Julie Sherman, having been told of the availability of the house by the Sanborns. Rents were hard to find in those days of pre-war activity. They later built a house on Willow Lane also, born in Lowell, Massachusetts, Mr. Tibbetts was graduated from Hill School, Pottstown, Pennsylvania, and from Harvard. He served in the navy in World War I. He was employed as production engineer at Pratt and Whitney, East Hartford, until his retirement in 1965. Mr. Tibbetts was a member of the School Building Committee for West District School of Unionville. Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts had two children, Sherman Tibbetts presently of Easton, Pennsylvania, and Mrs. Alfred C. Gilbert of North Haven, Connecticut. Mr. Tibbetts died on December 18, 1973.

Mr. and Mrs. Winthrop Wadsworth and their three children lived here for parts of 1957 and 1958.

Margaret Brady lived out her later years in West Hartford, dying in 1957 at the age of 83, and left this house to St. Patrick's Parish Catholic Church, it being her hope that they would use it, possibly as a school. The church could find no good use for it, and it was sold on July 2, 1958, to Ashton H. and Helen Baker.

April 23, 1972
The Bakers lived here six years and did a little in the way of restoration of the house, chiefly the restoring of the paneling around the fireplace. They have kept up an interest in the house and have re-visited it occasionally.

Howard F. Whitney III and his wife Jane R. Whitney, purchased from the Bakers on March 2, 1964. Mr. Whitney was an instructor at Miss Porter's School.

The house was purchased on August 6, 1969 by Drew P. and Shirley B. Langhauser. Mr. Langhauser's parents were George Langhauser, born in Holyoke, Massachusetts (his father having come from Germany around 1870), and Isabel Ferguson Purvis, whose father was of Scotch descent, a manufacturer of wire mesh for paper mills. George Langhauser was an executive in the Holyoke firm of White and Wyckoff, later moved to Chicago. Drew Langhauser is a 1951 graduate of Amherst, taught at Choate School in Wallingford three years, obtained his M.A. in History from Trinity College in Hartford. He has taught at Kingwood School in West Hartford 16 years, where he is head of the History Department, helps with varsity football, and does college counseling.

Mrs. Langhauser is the former Shirley Buchwalter, daughter of Paul Buchwalter of Pennsylvania Dutch descent, and Katharine Marr of Scotch ancestry. Paul Buchwalter was president of National Blank Book Company, now merged with Dennison Paper Company. He and his wife still reside in Holyoke. Shirley was born in Evanston, Illinois, and started school there, but her parents moved to Holyoke in 1946. She is a graduate of Vassar 1952 and has done some graduate work at Wesleyan. She started part-time teaching of Asian History at MPS in 1965, is presently teaching there full time.

When the Langhausers moved from Wallingford to this area they came to Canton and lived there 13 years before coming to Farmington in 1969. Their children are Andrew, a student at Kingswood, and Amy and Derek, both in Farmington schools.

There are said to have been three fireplaces on the main floor and a smoke chamber on the second.

The Langhausers have made one comfortable room out of what were formerly two small rooms, one of which had in it what probably was the kitchen fireplace, although one fireplace is still covered up, so they cannot be quite sure.

They have removed the plaster and exposed and re-finished the original wide board paneling in the den, but have left the plaster on two of the walls. All plaster is in very good condition, held together by hair of horses and swine.

September 12, 1972
Mr. Langhouser drew for the writer the following quick sketch of both the downstairs and upstairs floor plans of the house to show its rather unusual arrangement. If it is not clear to the reader, blame the writer for not having given the draftsman more time to prepare it.

Their first major job was to shore up the foundation and put in additional support for the floor joists -- resulting in the placing of 33 lally columns in the basement. It took 22 gallons of paint to cover inside walls to their satisfaction, but the result justified the cost. There are two staircases, the front one very narrow. The mantel presently over the fireplace is definitely of the John Adams period, ca 1820, much smaller than the others, but will probably be left that way to exemplify the two periods. Ceilings downstairs are very high for a 17th century house, those upstairs are quite low. There are small dormers in the gambrel roof, and casement windows in the dormers -- considered very rare for houses of this date.

The Langhousers are especially proud of the smoke chamber upstairs, accessible through a small door in the hall wall alongside the chimney. They expect to continue the study and restoration of their house and are proud of it and of its former owner Thomas Cowles the Samaritan.

September 12, 1972