

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
(203) 566-3005

Town No.	Site No. 187
UTM	
QUAD:	
DISTRICT	IF NR SPECIFY
<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> NR	<input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Potential

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME (Common)	(Historic)	
New Place	New Place	
2. TOWN CITY	VILLAGE	COUNTY
Farmington		Hartford
3. STREET AND NUMBER (and or location)		
53 Main Street		
4. OWNER(S)		
Miss Porter's School, Inc. <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private		
5. USE (Present)		
Dormitory/Apartment		
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC:		
EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD	INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE	IF YES, EXPLAIN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION		
Colonial Revival	1907		
8. MATERIAL(S) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding	<input type="checkbox"/> Brick	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding	<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone	
<input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten	<input type="checkbox"/> Stucco	<input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone	
<input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding	<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cut stone Type: brownstone foundation	
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wood frame	<input type="checkbox"/> Post and beam	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> balloon	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Load bearing masonry		<input type="checkbox"/> Structural iron or steel	
10. ROOF (Type)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Gable	<input type="checkbox"/> Flat	<input type="checkbox"/> Mansard	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gambrel	<input type="checkbox"/> Shed	<input type="checkbox"/> Hip	<input type="checkbox"/> Round
			<input type="checkbox"/> sawtooth
			<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
(Material)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> Roll Asphalt	<input type="checkbox"/> Tin	<input type="checkbox"/> Slate
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Asphalt shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> Built up	<input type="checkbox"/> Tile	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
11. NUMBER OF STORIES	APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS		
2½	52 x 41; 30 x 41		
12. CONDITION (Structural)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated
			(Exterior)
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY (Location)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On original site	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	WHEN?	Alterations
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES			
<input type="checkbox"/> Barn	<input type="checkbox"/> Shed	<input type="checkbox"/> Garage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other landscape features or buildings (Specify)
			patio
<input type="checkbox"/> Carriage house	<input type="checkbox"/> Shop	<input type="checkbox"/> Garden	
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT			
<input type="checkbox"/> Open land	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood-land	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential	<input type="checkbox"/> Scattered buildings visible from site
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Indus-trial	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS
 "New Place" is prominently located on an elevated site at the northeast corner of Main Street and Mountain Road. A well-manicured lawn and large maple trees enhance the setting. Located in the heart of the Miss Porter's School campus, New Place is bordered on all sides by historic buildings dating from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. New Place as well as a majority of the school's other large buildings lie in Farmington's historic district.

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

17 OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior)

This large, well-preserved, Colonial Revival-style building is capped with a gambrel roof with two interior brick chimneys. The four bay facade features a central projecting cross-gambrel with an ornate balconied entry porch. Note the classical columns and turned balustrade. The entry door is embellished with sidelights and an elliptical fanlight. The building is further enhanced by full-height corner pilasters, window hoods, and multi-paned sash. Other notable features include the greenhouse and a balconied front terrace.

18 ARCHITECT

BUILDER

R.F. Jones

19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

SIGNIFICANCE

"New Place" was built in 1906 on the site of the Old Rev. Samuel Whitman House. Mrs. Elizabeth V. Keep, the headmistress at Miss Porter's School, purchased the lot in April of 1906 from Ethel M. Gruman (FLR 73:679). During the following summer the old house was torn down and a new dormitory/residence was erected by R.F. Jones of Hartford. Mrs. Keep lived here until her death in 1917 and the property was willed to Miss Porter's School, Incorporated (FLR 74:336). Mrs. Keep's son, Robert Porter Keep II, came to Farmington to act as headmaster in 1917. He and his wife Rose Anne (Day) Keep resided here until 1929 when they moved into the house at 47 Main. Today the building continues to be used as a dormitory.

New Place is architecturally significant as one of the village's best examples of the Colonial Revival style, which was the dominant mode of vernacular buildings in the early twentieth century. Historically the building is notable for its association with Miss Porter's School, an important Farmington institution.

SOURCES

Farmington Land Records; Farmington Probate Records; Farmington Vital Records; Farmington Cemetery Inscriptions, W.P.A., 1934; Avon Cemetery Inscriptions, W.P.A., 1934; 1853 E.M. Woodford Map; 1855 E.M. Woodford Map; 1869 Baker and Tilden Map; 1878 O.H. Bailey & Co. Map. Prentise, Dudley. History of Farmington Houses. 9 vols., N.p., 1974; Farmington House File Collection. N.p., 1950-52. Brandegee, Arthur L. Farmington, Connecticut, The Village of Beautiful Homes. Farmington, Conn: Author, 1906.

PHOTO

PHOTOGRAPHER
N. Ainspan

DATE
4/86

VIEW
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NEGATIVE ON FILE
16:16A

COMPILED BY

NAME
Elizabeth R. Hart

DATE
2/86

ORGANIZATION
Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

ADDRESS
27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT



20 SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS

21 THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE

- None known
- Highways
- Vandalism
- Developers
- Other _____
- Renewal
- Private
- Deterioration
- Zoning
- Explanaton _____



OWNER'S NAME PORTER'S SCHOOL?MISS 1950-dorm. "New Place

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ADDRESS 53 Main Street and Mountain Road

DATE BUILT: 1906

FOR: ~~XXXXXXXX~~ Miss Porter's school

ARCHITECT

MASTER-BUILDER R.F.Jones- Hartford

FORMER OWNERS: Miss Porter's School from the Estate of

Elizabeth V.Keep,Trustee,by will 3|15|1919 Vol.74

p336: Keep,E.V. from Ethel M.Gruman,4|21|1906,Vol.

73.p.679,a warrantee deed.Land with an old house,at the corner of Main and Mountain Road. "New Place" was built on the site of the so-called Rev.Samuel Whitman house. See "Gruman-Whitman " card.

REFERENCES:

OWNER PORTER'S SCHOOL?MISS

AS OF: 1950

PHOTO NO.

FOLDER NO. 53 Main St.

17	18	19	20
			X



This house, known as "New Place", had not yet been built when the Farmington Book was published in 1906, but on its site stood the house pictured on page 25 of the Farmington Book, called "the Rev. Samuel Whitman place, property of Mrs. Robert Porter Keep, razed July 1906". It was designated as "J. S. Rice" in the 1869 Atlas of Baker and Tilden.

Mrs. Hurlburt said in "Church and Town" regarding Samuel Whitman, that he "accepted the invitation of the church in 1706" to be minister, and that the parsonage was in Pequabuck Meadows, on the present site of 145 Main Street. He was built another house later which she says was "built for him about 1710 and stood at the corner of Mountain Road and Main Street. "According to tradition, some of the timbers used in the first church building went into the frame of this house".

Julius Gay on pages 19 and 20 of the Farmington Book says: "Crossing the road up the mountain we find on the corner ~~the~~ square house (photo #42, page 25) with the pyramidal roof and the chimney in the center, owned and occupied by the Rev. Samuel Whitman during his ministry. Parts if not the whole of the building are much older than its well preserved walls would indicate. Tradition says the kitchen was built out of the remains of the old meeting house and the Rev. William S. Porter who knew more about the history of the town than any man who lived or is likely to live, says that the house, probably the front, was built by Cuff Freeman, a colored man of considerable wealth, of course after the death of Mr. Whitman".

The writer has found no actual record of ownership of the land on which this house is situated, nor a record of Mr. Whitman's purchase. Mrs. Hurlburt has a map on page xvi of "Town Clerks" which indicates most of the original settlers on Farmington properties, but for plot #13 at this site, does not show an ownership, unless the ownership by Thomas Orton of plot #11 could be stretched to here. On page 36 she names the seven houses which were ordered to be fortified against Indian attack, and one of these houses was "James Wadsworth's house which stood at the north corner of Mountain Road and Main Street".

Samuel Whitman was the first of the Whitman family to come to Farmington. His grandfather was John Whitman, born in England, perhaps in Norfolk, who was the first to come to America. He died in 1692.

John's

The Rev. Zechariah Whitman, his/son, 1664-1726, was born in America and married Sarah Alcock. He became the first minister of Point Alderton, Nantasket. Sarah was the granddaughter of Thomas Hooker's sister.

The Rev. Samuel Whitman, son of Zechariah, was born in 1676. His wife was the former Sarah Stoddard of Northampton, the daughter of Solomon Stoddard and Esther Warham. He took over the ministry here in 1706 after the post had been vacant, except for an occasional visiting minister, or a layman reading the psalms, since the Rev. Samuel Hooker's demise in 1697. It was during Mr. Whitman's ministry here that the second meeting house was built, its construction occupying five years from 1709 to 1714.

December 3, 1971

814

Mrs. Hurlburt states on page 373 of "Town Clerks", that two months after the birth of the Rev. Samuel Whitman's first child, Elnathan, on January 12, 1708/9, that he "married Mrs. Sarah Stoddard. Their son Solomon was born April 20, 1710", and that "when Solomon married Susannah Cole, December 17, 1736, his father gave him the Standly house on Mountain Road". That house would have been the house which was later called "The Old Red College". See more on that subject in the sketch of 50 High Street.

The writer had not known that the Rev. Samuel Whitman had had two wives, and must have taken erroneous notes from the Whitman Genealogy, which he does not presently have at hand.

March 14, 1974

The Whitmans had seven children: Elnathan, Solomon, Eunice, John, Samuel, Sarah and Elizabeth, all of whom lived until adulthood, which was unusual in those times. These children are mentioned separately in the following paragraphs.

Elnathan, born 1709, a Yale graduate in 1726, married Abigail Stanley, daughter of Col. Nathaniel Stanley and Abigail Whiting, in 1735. Elnathan's father bought for them the house on High Street built by John Stanley, and which is now the Farmington Museum. Elnathan had studied for the ministry and became the third minister of the second Congregational Church in Hartford. He died in 1777.

Solomon, born 1710, married three times. His first wife was Susannah Cole, who died in 1772. The second was Ruth Hooker, who died in 1777, daughter of John Hooker. The third was Ruth Hart who died in 1779, daughter of Thomas Hart. Solomon lived on the site of what is now 36 Main Street until his third wife's death, after which he alternated between the homes of his sons Elnathan and Solomon. He died in 1803. See 36 Main Street for more regarding Solomon and his family.

Eunice, born 1712, Married Col. John Strong, son of Asahel Strong and Margaret Hart. Col. Strong was a farmer and a Justice of the Peace, uncle of Cyperion Strong who was Town Clerk 1764-1767. Mrs. Strong died in 1777.

John, born 1713, moved to West Hartford and was a farmer there, and Deacon of the church whose minister was the Rev. Nathan Perkins, who coached young Timothy Pitkin of Farmington, preparing his for Yale. John first married Abigail Pantry, a descendant of the William Pantry mentioned on page 370 of "Town Clerks" as an original proprietor of Farmington. As his second wife he married Hannah Welles. He was the father of Sarah Whitman who married Thomas Hart Hooker of Farmington, lived for a time here at 66 Main Street, then lived in West Hartford. Their home there was the Sarah Whitman Hooker house at New Britain Avenue and South Main Street, and it was in her honor that the West Hartford D. A. R. chapter was named. John Whitman died in 1800.

Samuel, born 1713, was graduated from Yale in 1735, became a doctor, lived and practiced in Farmington, died unmarried at the age of thirty-five in 1751.

Sarah, born 1718, married the Rev. John Trumbull, brother of Governor Trumbull. They lived in Westbury where he was minister. After his death in 1787 Mrs. Trumbull lived with their daughter Mrs. Sarah Perkins, in West Hartford. She died in 1818.

Elizabeth, born in 1721, was the second wife of the Rev. Thomas Strong, and they lived in New Marlborough, Massachusetts. They had no children. She died in 1795.

Mr. Whitman was well loved in Farmington. See Mrs. Hurlburt's "Church and Town" for more regarding him and his ministry. See 24 Main Street for his relationship with John Hooker. Mr. Whitman was a Fellow of Yale College from 1726 to 1751, and at his death in 1751 he was buried in the old Main Street Cemetery and left the church all in harmony.

December 3, 1971

"Deacon Edward Hooker states", as quoted by Julius Gay on page 13 of the Farmington Book, "that John Hooker and the Rev. Samuel Whitman were the only men in town that were saluted with the title of Mr. Others were known as Goodman or Gaffer. Mr. Whitman, the minister, would always wait on the meeting house steps for Mr. Hooker (of 24 Main Street) to come up and enter the house with him on Sabbath morning, and share with him the respectful salutation of the people".

Some attempt was made in those days to provide schooling for Indians, and (as stated on page 36 of the Farmington Book) "as a result of a vote of the General Assembly of 1717, a school for the instruction of Indian children was established in Farmington, and under date of May 27, 1734, the Rev. Samuel Whitman wrote to Governor Talcott concerning that school". The letter is too long to quote, but it appears that the order to have them schooled was expiring, and Mr. Whitman told of the progress made and asked that the school be continued, as he considered it well worth while. This is again mentioned on page 62 of the Farmington Book.

Mrs. Hurlburt honors Mr. Whitman on page 50 of "Town Clerks" in these words:

"He led in civic as well as religious matters until his death in 1751, loved and honored by all", and goes on to say:

"Opposite the Skull and Bones fraternity house in New Haven stands Whitman Memorial Gate, erected in honor of Samuel Whitman, one of the first Fellows of Yale".

Samuel Whitman's widow, Sarah Stoddard Whitman, born in 1680, died in 1755.

For Mr. and Mrs. Whitman was erected a monument in the old Main Street Cemetery, one of four monuments to four pastors of the Church. Two of these are pictured on page 70 of the Farmington Book, together with the inscriptions thereon.

On October 4, 1758, John Trumbull purchased this house and barn and two acres of land, from Elizabeth and Solomon Whitman.

Title was passed to Zadock Orvis on May 15, 1761, and in addition to a deed from John Trumbull, another was given, this one by John and Elnathan Whitman. The three Whitmans mentioned in this and the preceding paragraph were children of the Rev. Samuel.

Israel Freeman, a Negro, purchased from Z. Orvis on August 10, 1762. Mr. Freeman was mentioned by Julius Gay as "Cuff Freeman, a colored man of considerable wealth". He was perhaps a blacksmith too, as the deed issued when he sold the place in 1780, included a blacksmith shop on the property, apparently built during his ownership.

December 3, 1971

817.

It was John North who purchased the property on April 13, 1780, from Mr. Freeman, including the blacksmith shop which he operated. The writer believes that it was this John North who was the father of Susan North, who in 1802 married Pomeroy Strong and lived at 1 Waterville Road.

John North kept this property only six years, selling it on October 17, 1786, to Elijah Cowles, merchant, son of the Elijah Cowles who lived on the site of the present house at 56 Main Street, across the street from here. Augustus Cowles, born 1803, the son of Elijah, Jr., inherited when his father died in 1826.

It appears that Augustus Cowles continued living in this, the former Whitman house, and his brother James built a new house north of here, which he had inherited.

Elijah, the father of the two boys, lived from 1755 to 1826. His wife was his distant cousin, Elizabeth Cowles, daughter of James Cowles and Abigail Hooker of "The Maples", almost at the south end of Main Street, opposite to where then stood road marker number XI, two miles south of the north end of Main Street, where marker number IX still stands. Elijah, Jr., lived on the east side of Main Street, just north of Mountain Road, and across Main Street from his father. Elijah Jr. was the head of the noted firm of Elijah Cowles and Company, which was made up of himself and his brothers, of whom Jonathan, Seth and Gad were active, but Martin perhaps did not enter the business. See more regarding this in the account of 56 Main Street, the home of his brother Seth.

Elijah Cowles, Jr., whose early trade was as shoemaker, was very close and saving, and although the business brought wealth, he kept his old habits regarding money. He was for a time director of the Hartford Bank.

Mr. and Mrs. Cowles had seven children. James born 1795, and Augustus, born 1803, were the only surviving sons. Harriet E. Cowles, born in 1808, was married in 1841 to Charles Thomson, a merchant of Fayetteville, North Carolina and New York City, born in 1788. They lived on the north part of her father's homestead, in the house known as 49 Main Street. Mr. Thomson was drowned in 1854, attempting to ford the Farmington River. Harriet Cowles Thompson, his widow, lived until 1874.

As stated in the third paragraph on this page, James Cowles built the house next north of this, known as 49 Main Street, in 1840, leaving Augustus sole owner of the old Whitman house. Augustus was married twice, his first wife being Lucy Norton Treadwell, born in 1806, granddaughter of Gov. John Treadwell and Dorothy Pomeroy. She died in 1833. He later married Eliza Wadsworth Langdon, born in 1813, daughter of Samuel Langdon and Lavinia Oaks. No children of either marriage survived.

Augustus Cowles was 2nd Lt. 4th Connecticut Militia Cavalry, 1833 to 1835, and Adjutant 2nd Connecticut Militia Light Artillery, 1837 and 1838.

December 3, 1971

818.

John North, mentioned at the top of the previous page, was worthy of more mention.

He was a descendant of the Samuel North who had a tavern on the north side of Farmington Avenue, a little way east of the present house at 2 Mountain Spring Road. Samuel's wife was the former Hannah Norton. More regarding them is written in the account of 679 Farmington Avenue.

John North's lineage from there is as follows:

John North, 1669-1745, Samuel's son,
m. Mary Seymour

Samuel North, 1708-1796
m. Lois Porter

John North, 1748-1840

John North was a blacksmith and the North Genealogy states that he lived "at the north end of Farmington Street". It is assumed that they meant Main Street. He was married to Rhoda Merrill, 1750-1819. Just where he lived is not known, except for the fact that from 1780 to 1786 he did own this house at 53 Main Street, and had his shop here. An entry in the old "day book" of Elijah Lewis who operated a general store in the building now known as 778 Farmington Avenue, dated April 1780, reads:

"John North Dr. to five hundred Continental Dollars".
Could that been a loan to help purchase this house?

John North's children were:

Susan 1776-1863
m. Pomeroy Strong, son of Col. John Strong and
Mercy Pomeroy, and lived at 1 Waterville Road,
Aaron 1777-
John Adna 1775-1865
Lucinda
Adna 1785-1822
Lucinda 1787-
m. (1) Solomon Curtiss
child: Cornelia
m. (2) John Strong of Charlotte, Vt.
child: John
Nancy 1789-1809

At the age of 80 John Strong watched the opening of the Farmington Canal, and George H. Carrington wrote, for the Connecticut Quarterly, Vol. 1, 1895, page 31, of this event:

"When the JAMES HILLHOUSE went up the canal all Farmington turned out to see the wonderful event. On the bridge at the north end of town, among many others, stood old John North, then some 80 years old. As the boat came along, horses covered with ribbons, flags flying, band playing, and guns banging, old John North lifted up his hands and said: 'My God, what would our fathers have said?' "

819.
August 28, 1973

Further in regard to John North, of the previous page.

When the preceeding page was written, the writer had overlooked the fact that John North had purchased in 1806 the house now standing at 776 Farmington Avenue. It is thought that perhaps sometime earlier than that, that he had built a blacksmith shop at what is now the rear portion of the house at 774 Farmington Avenue.

Where he actually lived from 1786, when he sold his Main Street property, until 1806, when he purchased 776 Farmington Avenue, is not known to the writer, but it seems likely that it was in this Farmington Avenue area. He owned, and probably occupied, 776 Farmington Avenue from 1806 until his death, which was in 1840. This may be what the North genealogy meant, when its said that he lived "at the north end of Farmington Street", as quoted on the previous page.

John North's daughter Susan mentions his involvement in the Revolutionary War, which the North genealogy does not mention. She says:

"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 hard work to get men enough for soldiers".

She says later:

"We were glad to have father come home last night. He, with others, had come home because it is winter, and they are discharged, or furloughed (according to terms of enlistment) until next spring. They walked from New York because the government had no money to pay its soldiers".

The transcript of Susan North's memoirs as written up by Mrs. Lydia Hewes, is given in full in the writer's account of the house at 1 Waterville Road, where Susan North lived after her 1802 marriage. They start with the date of 1775, June 6, which is the date of Susan's birth.

May 7, 1974

Augustus Cowles was also a merchant in Farmington, partner with his brother James, operating under the firm name of "J. & A. Cowles". Their store was the brick building across the street which now houses the library of Miss Porter's School. They were also interested in Unionville businesses. Together with the Youngs brothers, Abner Bidwell and John T. Norton, they built the feeder canal and dam which supplied power for manufacturing. The two brothers also built the warehouse pictured opposite page 330 of "Town Clerks", which warehouse served the canal trade. Prior to establishment of the Congregational Church in Unionville, under the ministry of the Rev. John R. Keep, some Unionville people came to church in Farmington via the canal. Mrs. Hurlburt says "Starting at the wharf at the store of James and Augustus Cowles, the church-goers rode down to the head of the canal. Here they passed through the headgates, mules were attached to the boat, and the company enjoyed a pleasant ride to the mother settlement".

Augustus Cowles died in 1851 and his widow on June 22, 1853, married John Strong Rice, 1816-1885.

The Hon. John S. Rice, whom we shall call "Judge Rice", as that was the way he was known in Farmington, had been born in New Haven. See his photo on page 86 of the Farmington Book. He had first entered the dry goods business, later studied and practiced law. He was State Senator for the 4th District in 1850, and was judge of probate in New Haven for some time. His wife had died in New Haven before he came to this area, which was perhaps around the year 1852. He represented Farmington in the General Assembly in 1862 and 1863, and had in 1853 been married to Eliza, the widow of Augustus Cowles, living in this house thereafter. He became first president of Continental Life in Hartford, and was a trustee of the Farmington Savings Bank. On May 5, 1871 he was appointed a member of a committee of five, "to devise ways and means to have a proper celebration of the 100th anniversary of the building of our church". It was held on October 16, 1872.

Julius Gay speaks of him on page 83 of the Farmington Book as follows:

"None of us can forget Judge Rice, with his long white hair and beard. Walking among the shadows of the large trees near his house, with cloak and cane, one was reminded of the stories of an elderly baron on his estates. I once had some papers drawn up by the Judge about a transfer of property. When I wished to pay, he replied in his large manner 'I am not practicing law now, but I am always happy to be of any assistance to my Farmington friends'. He was always active in affairs of the town".

After Judge Rice died on May 10, 1885, his widow became sole owner again. When she died on April 10, 1898, she left the property to Sarah L. Gruman, her niece, who was executor of the will and took title to the property on September 16, 1899.

December 3, 1971

Sarah L. Gruman died on March 11, 1904, and Ethel L. Gruman, administrator of her estate, sold the property on April 21, 1906, to Mrs. Elizabeth V. Hale Keep who was in charge of Miss Porter's School, her husband Robert Porter Keep having died in 1903.

As stated in the Farmington Book on page 25, under the photo of the house, called the Rev. Samuel Whitman place, Mrs. Keep had the house torn down in July 1906. On its site she built, as a combination residence and dormitory, the house which still stands here, "New Place", as it is still known.

Mrs. Keep lived in this house, and it was her residence until her death, which came suddenly in 1917. When her husband's nephew, Robert Porter Keep II, came from Andover, Massachusetts, to take charge of the school, he and his wife lived here for some ten years. They then chose as their permanent residence the house at 47 Main Street, the second house north of this. That house had been the home and property of Marguerite and Gertrude Cowles, both of whom had been married in 1926, after which they sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Keep. The Keeps remodeled it extensively before they moved in, and occupied it until their deaths.

"New Place" has not changed much over the years, at least externally. Plumbing and heating and wiring have been modernized of course, and the rooms may also have been changed to an extent, as since 1926 the house has been used solely as a dormitory.

Except for two small buildings just south of "Main", this appears to be the only building the school has built on Main Street, all the others having been built as private homes and later purchased by the school. It is certainly a credit to the school that in taking over these houses, and converting them to dormitories, and making additions to them, the school has always left the facades unchanged, so that the fine colonial appearance of Main Street has been retained.

December 3, 1971

Miss Elizabeth O. McCorkle was a house mother at "New Place" and later, in her retirement years, spent anywhere from three to six months each year at the Elm Tree Inn. She spent her winters as a guest of Miss Annie Burr Jennings at her New York home, and usually stayed a week in the spring and in the fall at Miss Jennings' home in Fairfield. Elizabeth McCorkle was the daughter of James H. McCorkle and Margaret Whitman, of the house which stood earlier on the site of the present house at 44 Main Street, and she was a descendant of the Rev. Samuel Whitman. It was fitting that she was for so many years associated with this house at 53 Main Street, built on the site of her ancestor's home. Wilmarth S. Lewis says: "I remember her well, a dear little old lady, who had been here at school (MPS) with my wife's Aunt Annie Jennings".

Ruby Burdet, house mother for seven years, retired June 1971.

May 30, 1973