Surrounded by large trees, the David R. Hawley House sits on the west side of Main Street, just south of Pearl Street.
Almost identical to 21 Mountain Spring Road, this house is of the Colonial Revival style. Its gambrel roof and shed-roofed dormers accentuate the wide overhang found between the first and half stories. The windows are wide and several featured diamond-shaped panes. The entry porch, perhaps its most unique feature, displays two benches and plain posts.

In 1895 David R. Hawley purchased a 50 rod piece of land from James L. Cowles for $500 (FLR 71:141). Hawley operated a painting and decorating service and married Margaret E. Cummings in 1883. Probably during 1895 he constructed this house, living there or renting to tenants until 1925 when he sold it to Kenneth L. Ruic (FLR 83:281). Ruic (1896-1969) lived in the house until his death in 1969. It is believed that the house was built by H.H. Mason, although no documentation has been found.

The David R. Hawley House is architecturally significant as a good example of the Colonial Revival style.


Alex Paredes
5/85
SW
13:11A

Ruth B. Matteson
3/86
Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT

None known.
OWNER'S NAME  RUIC, KENNETH L.

1950-res.

ADDRESS:  126 Main Street & Pearl Street

DATE BUILT:  1896 FOR: David R. Hawley

ARCHITECT

MASTER-BUILDER  H.H. Mason


REFERENCES: "Farmington, Conn., 1906", p. 96
The house at this address is pictured on page 96 of the Farmington Book as the residence of David R. Hawley. It was built for him in 1896 by Henry H. Mason of 122 and 118 Main Street, on land purchased from James Lewis Cowles in August 1895.

The house stands on the site of the drug store which was owned and operated by Gen. George Cowles who had lived at 130 Main Street. General Cowles was the first employer of Austin F. Williams when he came here as a young man, probably around 1825. Mr. Williams later became a man of considerable note in Farmington, and built and occupied the house across the street from here, at 127 Main Street.

David R. Hawley advertised in the Farmington Magazine during its short period of publication, in and around 1901, as "Decorating and Painting". He and his brother Frank were both house-painters, and worked in partnership as the "Hawley Brothers". Frank Hawley lived at the base of the mountain in the house now known as 44 Mountain Road. Both were descendants of Joseph Hawley of Scott Swamp Road, whose homestead stood on the site of the Robert Hall Store on the southeast corner, at the junction of Routes 6 and 177 toward Bristol.

David Hawley was a member of the committee appointed on January 20, 1904, to study plans for a new steel bridge to take the place of "The Old Red Bridge" across the Farmington River. See photo on page 51 of the Farmington Book for the bridge that was to be replaced. Mr. Hawley's photo appears in that same book, on page 206, as Burgess of the Borough. He was born in 1855, the son of Ara Hawley and Mary Green. Ara Hawley's residence shows on Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas as on what is now Route 177, Plainville Avenue, a little way north of the Scott Swamp Mill, which is designated as Hiram Hills saw mill.

David Hawley's wife, whom he married in 1883, was the former Margaret E. Cummings of Hartford. They had a son, Benjamin Rawles Hawley, born in 1887, and a daughter Esther, whose photo is on page 37 of the Farmington Book. She is at the extreme left in the photo of Mr. Bushnell's class of 8th and 9th graders.

The Hawleys moved to Hartford probably soon after their daughter was out of high school. Much of Mr. Hawley's work was in Hartford, and he planned to move there and do only work in the city.

Benjamin R. Hawley was graduated from Yale as a civil engineer, married a girl from Buffalo, lived and worked at East Aurora, New York, died in his late forties.

Esther Hawley was married in August 1917 to Kendall A. Sanderson, son of Howard Sanderson and Carrie B. Flanders. They had two daughters, lived in either Lynn or Swampscott, Massachusetts, and Esther died there, fairly young.

March 6, 1972
David Hawley did not sell his house for some years after moving to Hartford, perhaps thinking that he might return, and rented the house during this period. Several families lived here as tenants, but all are not known, and neither are dates and the sequence of occupancy.

Lawrence Humason lived here a while, returned to New Britain, later bought, under his wife's name, a house on Mountain Spring Road, from John R. Edwards.

The McArdles, with a son born around 1912 and a daughter perhaps in 1914, lived here in the late teens or early 1920's.

The Merriams, A. Ware Merriam and wife, lived here after the McArdles, later built a fine house on Waterville Road back of the golf course. He was the image of health, and very wealthy, with no children. A great golfer, tennis player, and driver of Marmon cars. He died, believed to have been of cancer, somewhere in his early fifties.

Kenneth Lasher Ruic and his mother, the widowed Mrs. Charles Ruic, purchased this house in 1925 from David R. Hawley. See the earlier history of the Ruic family in the sketch of the house at 90 Main Street.

Kenneth Ruic was born in Farmington, attended school here until the seventh grade, and is in the photo of Miss Burwell's fourth and fifth grade class on page 37, the seventh boy from the left, of those standing. He attended High School for a year in Hartford, then left school due to his father's illness, to go to work.

He served in Company B of the 29th Engineers in World War I, in what was actually intelligence work, hunting German guns with a machine which located them by means of sound waves. He was later a member of Farmington's James Palache Post #53 of the American Legion.

At the time of Mr. Ruic's return to Farmington in 1925, when he and his mother purchased this house, he worked for the Hartford Electric Light Company in a subsidiary called Electric Transportation Company. He was in the department handling storage batteries and related equipment. When HELCO sold this business in 1928, he went into a similar business in partnership with Edward S. Lawrence of Ansonia Street. They called their business the S O S Battery Service, and he was a partner in this business for the rest of his lifetime.

Mr. Ruic was married in 1930 to Mabel Margaret Harris, the daughter of Myron Harris of Ely Road, Farmington. Miss Harris also grew up in Farmington, attended local schools, and worked for her lifetime for the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, retiring in 1965.

March 6, 1972
Mr. Ruic's mother, serving as assistant in the post-office, later as postmistress, and still later again as the assistant under Thomas Collins, continued living with her son and his wife until her death on Christmas Day, 1948.

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Ruic continued living in this house until 1967, when at the death of Mrs. Ruic's sister, Mrs. Paul Munson of 254 Farmington Avenue, they moved to her sister's home to help a surviving sister, Mrs. James McManus, and to care for the very elderly Miss Harriet Waterman, who was ill and in their charge.

Kenneth Ruic, although having been told in 1918 that his heart was no good, and having been wounded in World War I, lived to the mature age of 73, when he died very suddenly at his home in June 1969.

Mrs. Ruic and her sister still live there, although the progress in the building up of businesses along Farmington Avenue, and residential areas such as Talcott Village to the rear, are pressing them very heavily to sell.

Mrs. Ruic still owns the property at 126 Main Street, renting it to David Holmes and his mother Hildur Holmes. Mrs. Holmes is the former Hildur Sundgren, daughter of Nicholas Sundgren of Batterson Park Road. She had been married to Carl Holmes of Lakeview Farm, South Road, Farmington, and lived there many years. Her husband is now deceased. When their home on South Road was condemned as being in the way of I-84 they let the state have possession, and they rented this house and moved here. It now develops that the house was not as close to the right-of-way as thought, and it still stands, boarded up and unused, awaiting whatever fate is in store for it. See more about this house in the account of the McKenney house, South Road.

David Holmes and his mother still live here at 126 Main Street.

March 6, 1972