| 1. BUILDING NAME (Common) | Williams, Austin F., House |
| 2. TOWN CITY | Farmington |
| 3. STREET AND NUMBER (and or. location) | 127 Main Street |
| 4. OWNER(S) | Hoffman, Emily Pope |
| 5. USE (Present) | Residence |
| 6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC | Exterior visible from public road |
| 7. STYLE OF BUILDING | Greek Revival |
| 8. MATERIALS (Indicate use or location when appropriate) | Brick, Other (specify) |
| 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM | Wood frame, Other (specify) |
| 10. ROOF (Type) | Flat, Other (specify) |
| 11. NUMBER OF STORIES | 2 |
| 12. CONDITION: Structural | Excellent |
| 13. INTEGRITY: Location | On original |
| 14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES | Barn, Other landscape features or buildings (specify) |
| 15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT | Residential |
| 16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS | Set back from the east side of Main Street, the Austin F. Williams House sits on a slightly elevated site partially obscured from view by overgrown shrubs. Located in a pleasant residential area within Farmington’s National Register district and state-enabled local district, this building’s neighbors are primarily other historic eighteenth- and nineteenth-century dwellings. |
This grand Greek Revival-style house, with low-pitched gable roof, was erected in 1842. The three-bay facade, which faces north away from the road, exhibits an ornate, single-story open porch and fully pedimented gable end. Other Greek Revival-style elements include the heavy corner pilasters supporting a wide entablature which extends around the house beneath the eaves. Note the decorative eyebrow windows in the frieze with elaborate wrought iron grids. The original roof balustrade remains and resembles a coastal "widowswalk". A rear open porch, similar to the one of the facade, extends from the south elevation. An integral two-and-one-half-story ell extends from the east elevation. The first floor of the main block contains intricate hand-painted, wall murals. A two-story, wood-frame building with Greek Revival-style characteristics including pedimented gable end, corner pilasters, and wide entablature sits to the northeast of the main house. The building, (see cont. pg.)

Austin Franklin Williams erected this house in 1842 on a four-acre parcel of land acquired from Richard Cowles (FLR 48:178). Chauncey Wells was hired to build the house for a sum of $2000. The contract, signed in December of 1841, states "the house is to be ready for use by September 1, 1842 -- all work is to be done in a proper manner and no alcoholic drinks shall be brought into the building". The original building specifications and other related construction documents are in the possession of the present owners. Williams enlarged the lot by an acre in the fall of 1843 (FLR 48:451). Born in East Hartford to Ozias and Anna (Smith) Williams, Austin (1805-1871) came to Farmington as a young man to work as a clerk in Gen. George Cowles' drug store. He and General Cowles eventually became partners in the business. Later, Williams and Henry Mygatt opened a "general store" in the stone store (no longer extant) along Main Street. In 1836 he sold out to the firm of Cowles and Rowe and opened a dry goods store in New York City. Mr: Williams also operated a successful stone and lumber yard in Plainville. In 1841 Williams was instrumental in bringing the freed Mendi Negroes to Farmington. Kidnapped from their native land in the spring of 1839 to be sold into slavery, the Mendi Negroes rebelled during passage and took control of their ship, Amistad, off the coast of Cuba. The ship's captain was killed and the slave owners were taken prisoner. Due to the lack of navigational skills and trickery of the imprisoned slave owners, the Africans ended up off the coast of Long Island instead of their homeland. The Mendi Negroes were again taken captive and held in prison until the courts decided their fate. The captives were eventually brought to New Haven, where many felt they were the rightful property of the men who had purchased them. (see cont. pg.)

Photographer: L. Hart
Date: 4/86
View: SE
Negative on file: 22:30

NAME: Elizabeth R. Hart
Date: 4/86

ORGANIZATION: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
ADDRESS: 27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT

No subsequent field evaluations.
Opposition was strong and a number of abolitionists insisted it was the Negro right to have rebelled. Eventually the case appeared before the United States Supreme Court and on March 9, 1841, the slaves regained their freedom. While waiting for a return passage to Africa, they were brought to Farmington and housed in a building on the property of Austin F. Williams. This building, which has been converted to a modern residence, stands a short distance to the north of the Main House. The Africans left Farmington in November of 1841. Said to have been active in the underground railroad, Williams was appointed after the Civil War as an agent to the Freedman's Bureau which assisted freed Negroes in finding employment.

In 1828 Austin married Jennette Cowles (1810-1828), the daughter of Major Timothy and Catherine (Deming) Cowles, and they raised two daughters. Catherine D. (Williams) Vorce, Austin's youngest daughter, took title to the property in 1872 (FLR 64:44). Her husband, whom she had married in 1863, was Allen Dunning Vorce, a jeweler. The house remained in the Vorce family until 1948, when it was sold to its present owner, Emily Pope Hoffman (FLR 102:530).

Architecturally notable as one of the few Greek Revival-style residences in Farmington's historic district, the Austin F. Williams House derives further historical significance for its association with its first owner, a prominent nineteenth-century abolitionist, and his action on behalf of the Mendi Negroes.

17. cont. which now serves as a carriage house, was the "quarters" used by the Mendi Negroes during their stay in Farmington.
OWNER'S NAME: HOFFMAN, EMILY POPE

ADDRESS: 127 Main Street

DATE BUILT: 1841

FOR: Austin F. Williams

ARCHITECT

MASTER-BUILDER: same builder who built A.D. Barney homestead?

FORMER OWNERS: E.P. Hoffman from Est. Catherine D. Vorce 11/16/1948, Vol. 102, p. 530; C.D. Vorce from her father, Austin F. Williams, Robert M. Treadwell & Anna M. Treadwell, the Old Homestead, bounded n. on land of A.F. Williams (now Cotter) e. on the Case lot, s. on highway (Hatters Lane) and w. on Main St., also the water from the mountain 8/17/1872, Vol. 64, p. 44; A.F. Williams from Richard Cowles, 4 acres & bldgs., n. on Asa Darrow, etc., Vol. 48, p. 178, 4/1/1841, for $2200., (mortgaged back same day to R. Cowles for $2200., 4/1/1841, Vol. 48, p. 179); the bldgs. on this land when bought by A.F. Williams are not identified.

REFERENCES: "Farmington, Conn., 1906", p. 96
127 Main Street

The house at this address is pictured in the Farmington Book on page 96 as the residence of Mrs. A. D. Vorce, and is shown in Baker and Tilden's 1869 as one of three houses of A. F. Williams. Of these three the one to the north was the Squire Mix house, shown on page 20 of the Farmington Book, the one to the rear was probably the Henry Davis house, pictured also on page 96.

Mrs. Hurlburt shows the original settler on this lot (#54 on page xvi of "Town Clerks"), to have been Benjamin Barnes. He was the son of Thomas Barnes (see account of 123 Main Street), probably a son by his first wife. Benjamin is mentioned very briefly on page 357 of "Town Clerks" as "bunjiyman barns".

Austin Franklin Williams, who built this present house in 1841, purchased the site from Richard Cowles. It was four acres, bounded on the north by Asa Darrow, west on Main Street, south on highway, east on Richard Cowles. From this it appears that it extended all the way south to Hatter's Lane.

An account of Mr. Williams' business life is given in the following words by Julius Gay, on page 83 of the Farmington Book:

"Austin F. Williams was born in East Hartford in 1805. Coming to Farmington as a young man he engaged as clerk in the drug store of Gen. George Cowles (note; on site of present 126 Main St.), and was afterward a partner, the firm being Cowles and Williams. When the stone store was completed Williams and Mygatt (Henry Mygatt) occupied it as a general store, stocked with dry goods, groceries and various goods sold in country stores. In after years Mr. Williams started a stone and lumber yard in Plainville. The raging canal was then in operation and canal boats James Hillhouse, No. 1, and Henry Farnam carried passengers, wood and produce to New Haven, loading with groceries and pine lumber on return trips. The stone and lumber yard was on the margin of the canal basin where, nearby, was the Timothy Steele Tavern. Mr. Williams was leader of the church choir in Farmington for many years. In 1841 he was very efficient in caring for the Mendi Africans. The business at the stone store was transferred to Cowles and Rowe in 1836, Mr. Williams having organized a company (Williams, Camp and Abbe) and opened a wholesale store for the sale of dry goods in New York city, so several of our former residents left the quiet country place for the activities and bustle of the city. Mr. Williams was in infirm health for a considerable period and died December 18, 1885, at the age of 80 years."

It was in February 1841 that the case of the Mendi Negroes came before the Supreme Court of the United States, and it was ruled that "they must be declared free, and be dismissed from the custody of the court". It was then that they were brought to Farmington, and this was just about the time that Mr. Williams' house was being built, so on this same lot he built adequate quarters for the Mendi men and women. These quarters are pictured on page 174 of the Farmington Book, and they still stand there, on the north edge of the lot, but considerably altered from their original design.

March 5, 1972
In January 1842, largely through the charity of local citizens and the Missionary Society, they were sent back to Africa. See a separate account of the Mendi Negroes Incident, appended to this account. The A· F. Williams place was sometimes called "Cinque Park", so named for the leader of the Mendi Negroes.

Mr. Williams was married around 1830 to Jennette Cowles, born in 1810, the daughter of Major Timothy Cowles and Catherine Deming of 87 Main Street. Major Cowles was involved in many business operations in Farmington and Unionville, and probably aided his son-in-law, although Mr. Williams' business instincts appear to have been usually accurate. Mr. and Mrs. Williams had four children:

Eliza Cowles Williams, 1831-1832,
Horace Cowles Williams, 1833-1835,
Anna Maria Williams, 1836-1892, who in 1859 was married to Robert Treadwell, and
Catherine Deming Williams, 1838-1913, who in 1863 was married to Allen Dunning Vorce.

More regarding the latter two daughters will be found later in this same account.

Many references to Austin F. Williams in Mrs. Hurlburt's "Town Clerks" indicate his interest in civic affairs. Some of these are given in the following paragraphs.

December 1843. On committee to see to improving the road between Farmington and some point in Berlin "for travel and the transmission of the mail in all weather".

November 1846. On Committee to protect and promote the interests of Farmington in connection with locating the line of the New Haven and Northampton Railroad.

November 1847. On committee to meet with the Ecclesiastical Society in regard to a new town house or records office.

May 1861. On committee to make provisions for aiding families of men in Civil War service.

December 1870. On committee to see if passway now called Maiden Lane could be made a town highway.

Austin Williams believed in modernization. In 1853 he was given permission by the town to lay pipes for conducting water, primarily to his house, and in 1860 he completed this project. Adrian R. Wadsworth, Sr., on page 181 of the Farmington Book says:

"The most notable, largest, and by far the most expensive of these private water conduits was the two-inch conduit constructed about the year 1860 by Austin F. Williams, from the "Gin Still Brook" to his residence on Main Street, some two thousand feet!"

March 5, 1972
Mr. Williams was very proud of his water system, and in a letter of July 5, 1884, to Chauncey Rowe, he extolled its virtues and its value in the following words:

"I know by experience and observation and views of others using flowing water, that you pay a mere trifle, compared to its value. Would I surrender my supply

at my barn for $25
at my kitchen door for $25
at my washtubs for $25
at my kitchen sink for $25
at my bathing tub for $25
at my furnace for $5
at my hen yards for $5
at my garden for $10
at my water closet for $50?

"Ask Mrs. Vorce if she would have the water shut off at her house for $150?

"People that have never enjoyed these conveniences know not their value and the save of labor attending them".

Mr. Rowe had had the water piped to his "old cow house" and into the watering trough, but never into his house, considering that such a convenience would be an undue luxury. The figures given by Mr. Williams were per annum.

March 7, 1972

Mr. Williams' involvement with Negroes from the South did not end with the Emancipation Proclamation, at which time all slaves were freed and the Underground Railroad was not needed, but later on he aided the freed slaves in finding employment. Mr. Hoffman, the present occupant of the house, has copies of a printed handbill, or flier, which tells of his participation in this aid.

The flier states that A. F. Williams was appointed by Major General O. O. Howard as agent of the Freedman's Bureau, to aid in procurement of homes for the destitute and unemployed Freedmen and Refugees, and he issued a bulletin stating how these people could be aided. The bulletin was headed:

FREEDMEN'S and REFUGEES' HOME AGENCY
for
NEW ENGLAND and NORTHERN NEW YORK
Headquarters, Farmington, Conn. 186

It amounted to a combination employment and housing agency, and while it probably took up quite a bit of Mr. Williams' time, it may have had financial benefits in that it provided laborers for lower rates than northern workmen would have been paid.

August 27, 1972
Some of Mr. Williams' business ventures have already been mentioned, but he was also in the clock business in Unionville, together with Edward H. Seymour, Unionville's first postmaster, and Timothy Porter of Farmington, probably of the house which formerly stood on the site of 100 Main Street. This was the firm of Seymour, Williams and Porter, but it never fully recovered from a fire in 1837, and ceased operations not long after. Another clock company however, Williams, Orton and Preston still operated at the upper end of the village. This latter business had been started by Eli D. Preston in 1820, in the building which in 1906 housed the Catholic Church, and stood just west of the old Gay Store in Farmington Avenue. See photo on page 113 of the Farmington Book.

Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas shows several buildings in a group on Garden Street designated as "A. F. Williams, Trustee". These were the buildings of the Phoenix Manufacturing Company, operating under the presidency of Samuel Deming of 66 Main Street, in the manufacture of forks, hoes, garden tools and related items. The main building of this factory complex, which was built in 1848, is the building now known as 120 Garden Street, operated for years as the laundry for Miss Porter's School, and now enlarged to provide quarters for many of the Porter School employees. Mr. Williams was perhaps in 1869 serving as trustee during re-organization or possibly dissolution of the company.

In addition to aiding the Mendi Negroes, Austin Williams was also active in aiding escaped slaves to travel north to freedom. He is mentioned in the book "Underground Railroad in Connecticut", by Horatio Strother, 1962. A cellar on his property, either in a barn to the rear, or in the building on the north side of the lot, has been reported as having been the hiding place for the refugees.

Elizabeth Eels Sheffield, of New Haven, who taught school here in 1844-45, and later married Thomas Cowles and became the mother of Admiral Cowles, said in a letter to her future husband in 1845: "Austin Williams is a good and respectable authority. You must make an extraordinary bow the next time you meet him. He was the first gentleman who ever spoke of you to me, and his remarks were made prior to our acquaintance". Thomas Cowles mentioned Mr. Williams to her in another 1845 letter: "A small party at Mr. Williams' on account of his having some fine strawberries to offer his guests".

March 5, 1972
Mrs. Williams died in 1871 and in 1872 the title to this house was transferred to their daughter Catherine, who was by that time the wife of Allen D. Vorce. Mr. Williams probably continued to live here however until in 1874, when he gave his other daughter, Mrs. Robert Treadwell, the house next door (123 Main Street). As Robert and Mrs. Treadwell had no children Mr. Williams perhaps lived over there with them. It has been stated that he was in infirm health for a considerable time before his death in 1885. When he gave the house next door to his daughter, he reserved the right of "use and improvement of the property during my natural life".

Anna Maria Williams, as has been stated, was married in 1859 to Robert Treadwell. He was the son of Thomas Treadwell and was born in Albany, where his father had spent most of his business life, although born in Farmington, the grandson of Governor John Treadwell. When Thomas Treadwell returned to Farmington, or a few years later, he built the house at 92 Main Street for his home. Not much is known at present regarding Robert Treadwell. He did most of the town clerk's work for his father, during his father's last year in that office, in 1879. He was a musician, and in 1876 organized the Cornet Band of Farmington. In 1879 he was elected to be one of the town auditors. The couple had no children. Anna Treadwell died in 1892. Robert Treadwell died in

Catherine Deming Williams was married on June 24, 1863, to Allen Dunning Vorce, 1836-1906, born in Penn Yan, New York, the son of Perrander Vorce of New York City and Lutia Pratt of Rushville, New York. Their children were:

- Amy Clare Vorce born 1864
- Clarence Browning Vorce 1866
- Walter Herbert Vorce 1871
- Jennette Cowles Vorce 1877

A child who might have been theirs also, was Albert E. Vorce, born in 1878, who lived only one year.

It appears possible that the Vorce family, since Mrs. Vorce's parents had owned the house at 123 Main Street since the 1850's, lived in that house for some time during the earlier years of their marriage. Allen D. Vorce had an importing business in New York, where they lived part of the time, but Mrs. Vorce preferred Farmington so they alternated between the two homes. Mrs. Vorce was the organist for St. James Church for many years. Mr. Vorce kept a few cattle, pastured in the rear, a small herd of Guernseys, cared for by Henry Davis, a Negro, who lived in the rear and was man-of-all work for the Vorces. Henry Davis, whose father was reputed to have been a slave, was born about 1857. He was a deacon in the Shiloh Baptist Church in Hartford and, all dressed up and with a gold-headed cane, took the trolley to church each Sunday. He was married in 1908 to Martha Johnson, born around 1882. A granddaughter of Mr. Davis, by a prior marriage, lived with them for some time, played with children of the neighborhood, later moved to New York.

Amy Clare Vorce, who attended Miss Porter's School from 1881 through 1883, never married, and spent most of her adult life in this house. She died in 1948.

March 5, 1972

106,
Clarence Browning Vorce was married to Virginia Osborne of New Hampshire, probably in the mid or late 1890's. They lived in Farmington for a time around the turn of the century, 1899 to 1903 perhaps, and rented for a time the house at 16 Main Street. Mr. William Hooker of Mountain Spring Road and Mr. Birdseye of Birdseyeview, were among those who visited the Vorces in the evenings and sometimes played cards. The Vorces later moved to New York. They had two children, Charlotte, who died in infancy in 1902, and Virginia, who spent many summers visiting her grandmother and her Aunt Amy here in Farmington. She remembers playing hide and seek with the neighboring children, Tom Mason among others, among the cemetery stones, especially those pictured in the center photo on page 70 of the Farmington Book. She later married William Grant Gleason, son of Thomas William Gleason. See more regarding the Gleasons in an account of the house at 25 Hatter's Lane.

Clarence Browning Vorce died in 1918, and his widow Virginia Osborne Vorce, later built the house at 11 Hatter's Lane on some of the family property. She died in 1944.

Walter Herbert Vorce married Mabel Newell and they moved to St. Albans, Vermont, where Mr. Vorce was an electrical engineer.

Jennette Cowles Vorce, who attended Miss Porter's School from 1898 to 1902, was married in June 1915 to Stewart Henry Hartshorn, of Short Hills, New Jersey. They had two children. Mrs. Hartshorn died in April 1945.

Allen Dunning Vorce died in 1906 and his widow, Catherine Williams Vorce, died in 1913. Miss Amy Vorce continued her residence here until her own death in 1948.

Another couple with the Vorce name, William S. Vorce, 1838-1898, and Mary Zoeller Vorce, 1850-1921, are buried in Riverside Cemetery. Their relationship to the Vorces of 127 Main Street is not presently known. They may have been the parents of Albert E. Vorce, 1878-1879.

This house at 127 Main Street was sold on November 12, 1948, by Ernest H. Cady, Jr., successor trustee under the will of Catherine D. Vorce, who died on February 16, 1913, to Emily Pope Hoffman. The title to the house had been in the name of Catherine D. Vorce, or her estate, for the 76 years since 1872. The Hoffmans still own and occupy the house.

March 5, 1972

Allen Dunning Vorce, mentioned on the previous page as an importer, was also an art dealer, and the second following page is a clipping from a magazine of December 1892, showing some of his wares.

Stewart Henry Hartshorn, mentioned above on this page, advertised his self acting window shade rollers as "new groove tin rollers", in a quarter page ad in the New England Magazine of March 1900.

For a year or so prior to her death Miss Vorce was in a nursing home. Tenants during six or eight months just prior to the Hoffmans' purchase were Mr. and Mrs. Walter Blackler and two children, later to live on Talcott Notch Road.

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Mrs. Allen Dunning Vorce was said to have been strongly Congregational in her religious beliefs. Two of her children, Amy and Clarence, were influenced by a visiting relative, and became Episcopalians, but Jennette and Walter remained loyal to the Congregationalists.

Amy Vorce was usually called "Aunt Amy". During her last years at 127 Main Street she had only her maid, Anna Brookings, with her. Anna acted as a sort of working housekeeper, nurse, and anything else that was necessary. When the nursing became too difficult Miss Vorce was placed in the Belleswood Convalescent Hospital on West Avon Road, and Anna returned to Hartford.

August 26, 1972
Mr. A. D. Vorce, who has the unique collection of Oriental curios at the Victoria Hotel, and from whose collection this illustration is taken, will close his exhibition Wednesday, December 14. All art lovers who have not availed themselves of a visit to this museum of beautiful art should not fail to see it.

Chicago, Ill. The Elite News. December 10, 1892
A Weekly Magazine
department of child-life will be demonstrated in the most complete manner by the International Kindergarten Association.

The kindergarten under their management will be fitted up in the most attractive manner. All the latest apparatus necessary to the best exposition of the work will be provided by the Association. Little children developing their intellectual and moral faculties unconsciously, by means of most fascinating entertainments, will be an object lesson of great practical value to the mothers and others having the care of children.

Closely allied to the kindergarten is the kitchengarden. Miss Emily Huntington of New York, the founder of this system of education, will conduct a kitchengarden, where classes of little folks will be taught the useful arts of homekeeping. In so interesting and delightful a manner will sweeping, dusting, bed-making, and cooking be taught, that what might otherwise be an irksome task to children becomes a most delightful recreation.

For older children there will be a sloid, supported by Mrs. Quinney Shaw, and conducted by Miss Pingree, both well known workers in the charities of Boston. Here will be an exhibit of wood-carving.

Physical development will be ably illustrated by Charles Bary, President World's Fair Commission North American Turner-Bund. His interesting classes will inspire many a lad to seek after that physical perfection that was the pride of the Greeks and Romans.

Mrs. Clara Doty Bates, chairman of the committee of literature for children, of the Congress Auxiliary, has charge of the library, and will fit it up tastefully, providing a full supply of children's literature. A large number of portraits of the most eminent authors of children's books will adorn the walls. Here will be found the books of all lands, and in all languages, their newspapers, periodicals, etc.

A request sent out by the Board of Lady Managers to foreign countries, asking contributions of children's literature, met with a prompt response, and many volumes have already arrived.

Pennsylvania will equip and maintain a department in the Children's Building showing the wonderful progress that has been made in teaching very young deaf mutes to speak, Miss Mary Garrett, secretary of the Home for Teaching Deaf Mutes to Speak, will be in charge of this department. Daily demonstrations will be given.

There will be conducted a department of Public Comfort in connection with the Children's Building, intended especially for the benefit of children. Infants and small children will be received, and placed in the care of competent nurses, who will provide for all their wants while their mothers are visiting the various departments of the Exposition.

For the amusement of visiting children there will be a large playground on the roof; this will be inclosed with a strong wire netting, so the children will be perfectly safe. The playground will be very attractive, ornamented with vines and flowers. Within the enclosure butterflies and birds will fly about unconfin ed. Here, under cover, will be exhibited toys of all nations, from the rude playthings of Esquimaux children to the wonderful toys which at once instruct and amuse. Those toys will be used to entertain the children. This department will be maintained by the Illinois Woman's Exposition Board.

The building will have an assembly-room, containing rows of little chairs, and a platform from which stereopticon lectures will be given to the older boys and girls, about foreign countries, their languages, manners, and customs, and important facts connected with their history. These talks will be given by kindergartners, who will then take the groups of children to see the exhibits from the countries about which they have just heard. Mr. T. H. McAllister of New York has generously donated the use of the latest stereopticon for this purpose, and the services of an operator of the same for the entire Exposition. This audience-room will also be available for musical, dramatic, and literary entertainments, which will be carefully planned to suit the intelligence of children of varying ages.

The Children's Building has no appropriation from the Exposition authorities. The Board of Lady Managers has assumed the responsibility of raising the money necessary for the erection of such a building. A very desirable location has been secured, adjoining the Women's Building, and $5,000 has been paid, the Exposition Board paying the balance of the cost. The Board hopes to meet with generous contributions from mothers, educators, and all those who love children.

Contributions are strongly urged from all sources, and owing to the limited time allowed for raising the required amount, it is imperative that all donations should be sent without delay.

Checks should be made payable to Mrs. George L. Dunlap, Chairman and Treasurer of Children's Building Committee, 328 Dearborn avenue, Chicago, who will give all desired information.

Mrs. W. B. Howard gave a large reception to-day at five o'clock at her residence, No. 1733 Michigan avenue, the occasion being the début of her niece, Miss Ruth Dexter, daughter of Mrs. C. P. Dexter.

Mrs. Howard wears a gown of mauve satin and rare old lace and Mrs. Dexter's gown is of black satin and jet. The young and charming débutante appears in a toilette of white corded silk with a satin stripe and flounce and high corsage of embroidered chiffon. Miss Breck of Springfield, Mass., the guest of Miss Dexter, wears pale blue crépe and silver.


The tenth exhibition of the Palette Club is now on view in the galleries of the Art Institute. The work of the club shows growth on the part of the members, and is very creditable. While we regret any division of work in the arts or sciences which is made solely on the ground of sex, we note that the Palette Club of women is the oldest art club in the city. It now has a club room in Chickering Hall building, and proposes giving more small exhibitions of black and white or water colors. The number of water colors and their excellence in the present exhibition assures the success of an exhibition which will be confined to them.

Miss Dohn, the president of the club, shows a large canvas in oils, which is capitally painted in a straight-forward, conscientious manner. The children crowding to the mother's knee to see the baby are full of tenderness, and the square little back in blue is delightful in feeling. Mrs. Lusk, Miss Kellogg and our other well-known women artists have pictures in oil and water colors. Miss Fay of Joliet exhibits a picture which is of particular interest as being of the pre-eminent modern French school. Miss Fay, however, has not worked abroad, and it is her individual mode of expression, which in itself has reached the same point of view as the latest comers in the Paris world of art.

Dr. Julia Holmes Smith entertained the Saracen Club Thursday evening, December 1st. Mr. Rodney Welch was the essayist of the evening. The subject was "The Common Lot," and either from conviction or from a wish to promote discussion, Mr. Welch took a position which is the opposite of the government's stand, and results of dramatic entertainments, readings, and various other ways which their own inventiveness may suggest.

It is desired that children of the land will assist in raising a portion of the money for their building. Any child or club of children sending one dollar will receive a printed certificate of acknowledgment, stamped with the official stamp of the Board of Lady Managers.

The Board trusts that this appeal will meet with a ready response from mothers, educators, and all those who love children.
The Farmington Stage Coach

It will be noted in the photo of the Farmington Stage Coach, on page 21 of the Farmington Book, that the stage is posed in front of the Squire Mix house at 123 Main Street, but that the house which shows in the background is this house, the Vorce house, at 127 Main Street.

The photo shows William H. Parsons (known as "Pete") as the driver in 1906. Mr. Parsons lived in the house at the left, in the rear of the Frank Harris house, in the photo on page 169 of the Farmington Book. After 1912, when Mr. Parsons went into shop work in Bristol, he also moved to Bristol. His nephew John Blakesley, of the house pictured on page 127 of the Farmington Book, took his place. He made five round trips per day between Farmington Village and the Farmington Depot on New Britain Avenue. He handled Adams Express business, passengers to and from the train, their baggage, small packages, and the mail. In the winter he used a sleigh.

The job covered long hours. The 7:45 AM train had to be met, which meant that the horses had to be hitched up long before that. The 6:45 PM train finished the day, but any express still had to be delivered, and passengers, and the horses had to be unhitched and cared for. The horses also were changed at mid-day, but not the driver! He received $600 per year.

It must have been a healthy job however. John Blakesley, who now calls himself John Blake, is still very active. He lives at The Silo, cares for the grounds, parks cars, mows grass in the summer and plows snow in the winter, and makes himself generally useful.

April 17, 1969

Boys of the neighborhood, the Wadsworths, the Roots, and any visitors they might have in the area, the Roosevelts sometimes, used the stage coach whenever possible, holding onto the straps at the sides or the rear, eating the dust in the summer and slithering through the mud in bad weather, but never passing up the chance, if they could catch the stage.

The widowed Mrs. Quincy Blakely spoke of it as follows: "The old stage coach gave a picturesque touch to Farmington, especially at the opening and closing of school. All the vehicles possible were commandeered and the old coach, crowded inside and out, led the procession three miles across the meadows to the railroad station. The welkin rang with the singing of the school songs until the sound died away and Farmington settled down to quieter days. A warm welcome always awaited the opening of school. The old as well as the young enjoyed the stage coach. Many an elderly matron mounted to the top of the coach and renewed her youth".

11/10.
The episode of the Mendi Negroes was one which loomed quite large at the time that it happened, affecting in some manner and to some extent the lives and beliefs of all the people living in the village of Farmington in 1841.

The following is a condensed version which merely gives the major facts in the case so that readers will know what the case was about. Any reader whose interest may be aroused by this short sketch will certainly be more interested in reading the longer accounts to be found in the Farmington Book, starting on page 166.

In the spring of 1839 a number of Africans living near the west coast of their continent were kidnapped by some of their own countrymen, acting as agents of Spanish slave traders. The victims were shipped to Havana aboard a Portuguese slaver, the TECOVA. After a few days in Cuba they were sold to two Cubans. Four of them were sold to Don Pedro Monte~ and forty-nine of them to Don Jose Ruiz, who paid $450 each for those he purchased.

A little schooner of about 60 tons, the AMISTAD, was chartered to take the two owners and their new slaves to the port of Guanaja, another Cuban port. The Africans had been brought over on the TECOVA in irons, but it was thought unnecessary to chain them for this short coasting voyage. Their supply of provisions and water was scant, and two who went to the water cask were whipped for it. One of them asked the cook where they were being taken, and he answered that they were going to be killed and eaten. This was the last incitement needed to rouse the captives to strike for liberty.

The Africans were led by the chief of the captives, a tall and stalwart African called Cinque, a man of commanding presence and determined spirit. Cinque himself killed the captain of the schooner and its cook. The cabin boy was captured and bound, the rest of the crew escaped.

The two owners were captured, Montez severely injured and Ruiz securely bound.

The Africans planned to return to Africa but were ignorant concerning navigation, knowing only the direction by the position of the sun. It was necessary to save Montez and Ruiz for their knowledge of navigation and handling of the ship. The course steered was erratic, Montez and Ruiz doing all possible, especially at night, to circumvent the plans to return to Africa. On some occasions they were boarded by men from other vessels, but during these boardings the prisoners were kept below.

Finally, after much erratic sailing, the schooner approached the mainland shore not far from the tip of Long Island, near Culloden Point, where it was anchored while some of the men were ashore for food and water. The surveying brig WASHINGTON was working nearby, and its officers being suspicious of the strange actions of the men from the AMISTAD, sent a boarding party to investigate. When they found what had happened they freed the two owners and again placed the Africans in custody, taking them to New London.

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From New London they were taken to New Haven where they were confined for many months, while in the courts was being argued the question of their final disposition.

Slave holders and their northern sympathizers believed with the Spanish minister that the men were lawful property, while the anti-slavery men held that they were well within their rights when they had rebelled on the high seas. The lower court agreed with this, the district judge upheld that decision upon appeal, and the case was finally taken to the United States Supreme Court. There it was argued by John Quincy Adams of Boston and the Hon. Simeon E. Baldwin of New Haven. Justice Story, on March 9, 1841, finally delivered the opinion of the Supreme Court, affirming the freedom of the captives.

Arrangements for their return to Africa were going to be difficult, and time consuming. Mr. Lewis Tappan of New York, a noted philanthropist and one of the founders of the American Missionary Society, prevailed upon the community of Farmington to accept them and keep them in residence while arrangements were being made. Some protests were made but John Norton and A. F. Williams and others helped in influencing the community to accept them and the 37 remaining of the Africans were brought up from New Haven. They were quartered in a building on the property of Mr. Williams, a little to the rear and north of the house, and in some smaller buildings on the Wadsworth property.

The education of the negroes, started by students of Yale while in New Haven, Yale Divinity School that is, was continued in Farmington in a room above the Deming store on Main Street at Mill Lane. It had been anticipated that the Mendians would have to be under surveillance, but they soon proved their friendliness and were allowed the run of the town. Cinque was a born ruler and, seconded by his friend Grabbo, maintained good discipline. Three of the Mendians were girls and one of them, Tamie, was quartered with the Dr. Brown family during all of her stay here.

One of the men, Foone, was drowned while bathing in Center Basin of the canal (near 120 Garden Street), in August 1841. A stone marks his grave in Riverside Cemetery. Some think that it was a suicide, as on the day previous Foone was heard by Chauncey Rowe to say: "Foone going to see his mother". He was very homesick. The Mendians were very well accepted in the village, and with very few exceptions were well liked.

Eventually, through efforts of charitable local residents and the Missionary Society, the 36 survivors were sent back to their native Africa with a generous equipment of funds and teachers, and in January 1842 were established in a colony known as the Mendi Mission, near Sierra Leone.

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The following page is a Xeroxed copy of an article regarding the source of the name "Cinque" which was in 1974 used by one of the captors of Patricia Hearst, a kidnapping which was much in the news, and still is, in the spring of 1974. The writer does not agree with all the statements made in the following article, but reprints it as a current version of an over 130 year old episode.

May 21, 1974
Original ‘Cinque’ Stirred 19th Century Connecticut

By NANCY PAPPAS

The name “Cinque,” has gained national attention as the alias used by one of Patricia Hearst’s captors.

But incredible as it tale of the modern-day Cinque may be, it pales beside the saga of the original Cinque—a saga played out in large part in 19th-century Connecticut and known as the Amistad slave revolt.

The story began in August 1839, when a mysterious schooner was sighted off the eastern coast of the United States. It flew no flag, and witnesses reported its passengers were black.

On Aug. 28, the schooner was boarded by revenue officers from a Coast Guard revenue brig in Long Island Sound. The officers found a number of blacks and two terrified, Spaniards named Jose Ruiz and Pedro Montez on board.

The Spaniards said the schooner, the Amistad, had left Havana some months earlier bound for another Cuban port with a cargo of slaves.

Along the way, they said, the slaves had managed to free themselves from their chains and kill the captain and other crew members. Ruiz and Montez, the cargo owners, were spared in order to steer the ship. One slave, Cinque, was their leader.

Steer Northward

Cinque demanded the schooner be sailed back to his home in Africa. But Ruiz and Montez, exploiting the slaves’ lack of navigational skill, steered it northward instead.

The Coast Guard brig towed the schooner and its occupants to New London, and the slaves were removed to the New Haven jail.

Montez and Ruiz, promptly sued to regain possession of the schooner, its cargo and the 39 adult slaves. Three young children on board were exempted.

A preliminary hearing was scheduled for Sept. 17 in the U.S. District Court in Hartford under Judge Andrew T. Judson, who before his appointment to the bench had been a leading Democratic politician.

By this time, the plight of the Amistad’s (as they soon came to be known) had attracted the attention of the abolitionists, who looked upon the case as a heaven-sent means of dramatizing their position.

Lewis Tappan, a wealthy New York abolitionist, formed a defense committee for the Amistads and hired Roger Sherman Baldwin as their attorney (Baldwin was to become governor of Connecticut, and later a U.S. senator).

Public Curiosity

Meanwhile, the Amistads became the object of intense public curiosity. In one period as many as 5,000 persons a day visited the New Haven jail to have a look at the exotic captives.

Cinque was singled out for much admiration.

On Sept. 7, The Courant wrote:

“This Cinquez (sic) is one of those spirits which appear but seldom. Possessing far more sagacity and courage than his race generally do, he had been accustomed to command.

“His deportment is free from levity, and many white men might take a lesson in dignity and forbearance from the African Chiefman, who, although in bondage, appears to have been the Osceola of his race.”

When the Amistads came to Hartford for the hearing, they caused a great stir in the city. Some 3,000 persons visited the jail in three days, and The Courant reported the jailer charged the spectators 12½ cents a head.

Spaiards Backed

By this time, the U.S. government had got into the case, on the side of the Spaniards. President Martin Van Buren supported slavery.

But the case could not proceed until a way was found to communicate with the Amistads, who spoke an African dialect.

Finally, two linguists from Yale Divinity School determined the captives spoke the Mende language and managed to find a black sailor who knew it.

Through the interpreter, Cinque revealed that he and the others had been kidnapped from their homes in Sierra Leone and sold to a slave trader, who shipped them to Havana for sale.

On board the Amistad, Cinque had got hold of a nail, which he used to break the captives’ chains. He found some long cane knives in the hold of the ship and used them to kill the captain and crewmen.

With the facts in hand, the trial commenced on Jan. 8, 1840, in New Haven’s U.S. District Court.

Judge Judson ruled that since the Africans had been illegally kidnapped, they must be freed immediately and returned to their homes (Spain had outlawed the slave trade but it was carried on openly anyway).

Decision Appealed

The losers immediately appealed the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Amistad defense committee retained former President John Quincy Adams to argue the case before the high court. It feared the justices would rule against the captives, since seven out of nine on the bench were known to favor slavery.

But on March 9, 1811, the Supreme Court upheld Judge Judson’s ruling except for one thing: they said the Africans were free agents so it wasn’t necessary they be deported immediately.

Therefore, the defense committee decided to turn the Amistads into Christian missionaries before they went back home.

The Africans moved from their temporary quarters in Westville to a renovated barn in Farmington and started receiving six hours’ instruction each day.

While in Farmington, the Amistads cultivated a 15-acre farm and worshipped in the First Congregational Church, which still stands on Main Street. Their house is still in use today as a private residence, and their classroom building has become a Mill Lane grocery store.

To raise money for the mission, the defense committee sent Cinque and nine other Amistads on a nationwide tour which earned $1,200.

The Amistads had to endure some racial slights while in Connecticut.

Once, a Hartford innkeeper refused to put them up, so local families took them into their homes.

Another time, Cinque administered a beating to some Farmington rowdies who had pushed one of his comrades into a ditch.

But the Amistads won the affection of most of the townspeople. An eyewitness reported that when the Africans left the town in November 1841, 100 Farmington citizens turned out to see them off. Everyone sobbed at the parting.

Accompanied by some American divines, the Amistads eventually established a mission in Sierra Leone.

After a few years, Cinque left the mission to become a trader, though other Amistads stayed on.

He was not heard from for 20 years. Then, in 1879, he came back to the mission to die. He was buried there by an American minister who had himself been born a slave.
Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Hoffman, present owners of this property, came to Farmington from Chicago, or rather from Barrington, one of its neighboring towns. They first purchased 17 Main Street from the John Marshall Holcombs, lived there for four years, and sold it to George H. Williams.

Mr. Hoffman's paternal ancestors came from Germany in the Platinate Immigration, from the Bavarian area, around the early 1730's, settling in the Hudson River region of New York State. Mr. Hoffman's father, Robert Massoneau Hoffman, was born in Red Hook, New York, in 1868. The latter's mother was Lydette Manning, born in 1830 in Catskill, New York. It was only a few years ago that the present Robert M. Hoffman discovered that the Manning family had been very early New Englanders, that Lydette's grandfather had been a blacksmith in Tolland, had fought in the Revolution, and that the family had later lived as close to here as Willimantic. Lydette's grandfather lived until she was twenty and told her many tales of the Revolution. She lived until Robert was two, so he feels quite closely related to his Revolutionary forebear. Lydette married John W. Hoffman, a school teacher. Her son, the first Robert M. Hoffman, graduate of Yale in 1891, was for many years with William Skinner and Sons of Holyoke, a business similar to that of Cheney Brothers in Manchester, Conn.

Mr. Hoffman's maternal ancestors were Huguenots who had also settled in the Hudson River Valley, but much earlier. His mother was Elizabeth Stevens Perrine of Red Hook, New York, although her maternal grandmother was born in Dorset, Vermont.

Mr. Hoffman himself was born in Holyoke, Massachusetts, spent his youth in Cleveland, Ohio, was graduated from Williams College in Massachusetts, and began his working life in Chicago, Illinois.

Mrs. Hoffman, a fourth generation Chicagoan is "proud of it". Her Scots ancestor, James S. Kirk, had come to Canada on a hunting expedition, fell in love with "the innkeeper's daughter", and never returned to Scotland. Instead they came to Chicago to found the James S. Kirk Soap Company, once quite famous, but finally sold to Proctor and Gamble. There were seven sons and one daughter in the family and the one daughter married Charles Geer Haskin, his family being among the founders of Northwestern University of Evanston, Illinois. From this marriage came Helen Marr Haskin, Mrs. Hoffman's mother.

On the paternal side her great-grandfather Pope had his office in Chicago when the great fire of 1871 burned most of the city. It was said that his building had housed the first elevator in Chicago. All who could used pushcarts to wheel their belongings out of the way of the fire and north across the river. The first of the Pope family had come to Plymouth, Massachusetts, in the early 1600's, some said on the second voyage of the Mayflower. Mr. Pope's headquarters were in Chicago but most of his property was in West Virginia in the form of coal mines, of which he had extensive holdings. Mrs. Hoffman's father was Henry Pierce Pope, the Pierce ancestor being of Boston, and he married Helen Marr Haskin.

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Robert Hoffman and Emily Pope met in Chicago, at a dinner party, and were married there, living later in Barrington, Illinois. Mr. Hoffman worked many years for the Stevens, Davis Company, which dealt in employee motivation, a consulting company which promoted good relations between employer and employee through the medium of teaching.

The Hoffmans, as mentioned previously, came to Farmington in 1944, and in September of that year purchased the house at 17 Main Street. Mr. Hoffman was still employed by Stevens, Davis Company, and was their representative in this area. In fact, he brought their business into this area, being their first representative here.

By 1948 Mrs. Hoffman's mother, widowed and without any permanent home, wished to establish a base from which she could travel, but in which she could have permanent residence. Mrs. Hoffman started the search for a small house for her, but found the Vorce house instead, for themselves. She was struck with its possibilities -- as a home for all of them -- and they purchased it immediately. The Hoffmans' two children were at home at that time, and in order to give Mrs. Pope a separate home and her privacy, she converted the carriage house into a very comfortable small house for herself. The Hoffmans occupied the big house. Mrs. Pope lived until 1963, enjoying her residence here, although she also traveled extensively.

In 1960 Mr. Hoffman accepted employment with Marlin Firearms, in the same type of employee motivation work that he had been in, and is still in their employ. He has an outside interest in antiques and flea markets, which he finds very rewarding, but it sometimes seems that he is even TOO busy. Mrs. Hoffman also has a second interest, in the real estate field, and has been with Heritage Realtors for eight years.

The Hoffman children are Perrine and Pope.

Perrine Hoffman, having been a graduate of Oxford School and Colby Junior College, is now Mrs. Matthew McConnell. Mr. McConnell is the son of the late Murray McConnell who lived on High Street in Farmington for a time. He is a graduate of Yale, now in commercial photography in Meriden, New Hampshire. They have three children: Peter, John and Michael.

Pope Hoffman, after two years at Ripon, joined the Army and served his allotted time. He then entered and was graduated from Babson Institute. His wife is the former Elaine Walker, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Elisha Walker, Jr., a Porter School graduate as was her sister, mother and two aunts. She went on to Wheaton. Pope Hoffman operates his own business in Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, "The Marketing Company, Inc". They and their small daughter Kirke live in Sherborn, Massachusetts.

Note: Omitted from the sixth paragraph on this page was the name of Matthew McConnell's mother, widow of Murray McConnell, who is the former Helen Matthew.

September 2, 1972.
The portion of the sketch of this house, prior to that relating to Mr. and Mrs. Hoffman, was written prior to the writer's acquaintance with the house or the Hoffmans. A visit to the house and the Hoffmans, and perusal of some of Mr. Williams' papers concerning construction of the house provided the basis for the following text.

In regard to the construction of the Austin F. Williams house, copies of papers showing specifications and bids are in the possession of the Hoffman family. The general size of the house is indicated in the following quotation:

"Specifications for building a house for A. F. Williams in Farmington near the house occupied by Asa Darrow (note: 123 Main St.) of the following dimensions: 48 feet front by 37 feet rear, two stories high with attic, on a basement. Basement 8 feet high, principal story 11 feet 6 inches, second story 8 feet 6 inches in the clear, and attic about 6 feet, and from bottom of sill to top of rafter over plate, 27 feet 10 inches. All the floors of the principal and second story and basement except the cellar, to be laid with 1½ inch pine, planed, tongued and grooved, not exceeding 6 inches in width".

Timothy Porter of Farmington put in a bid with the price of $2598.35, but the work appears to have been let to Chauncey Wells of New Haven for $2200.00, the contract signed in December 1841 by Wells and Williams. Cephas Skinner of Farmington appears to have done the framing and raising, to be done by May 1, 1842, and also the fences. The main contract specified that the house be ready for use by September 1, 1842. The work was to be done "in a proper manner, for instance, as well as the work in the new house of H. Mygatt or J. T. Norton". (note: these houses stand at 29 and 11 respectively, on Mt. Spring Road). One clause read: "no alcoholic drinks shall be brought into the building". Leonard Winship contracted to make 8 mahogany doors, two of them 9 feet high by 4 feet wide, "all to be varnished and polished as well as the secretary and bookcase the subscriber made for the said Williams in 1840", for the sum of $240.00.

The house faced south toward Hatter's Lane, and the front door, sheltered by a wide, two-story porch, led to the lower floor on which were the dining room and kitchen, also a bathroom, cold storage room and space for the present furnace. The bathtub was full size, of copper, and with water connections, perhaps the first such in Farmington, although the J. T. Norton house, with a water tank on the third floor, supplied by a ram, could also have had one.

On the main floor are the living room, drawing room, a bedroom which was used in her later years by Miss Amy Vorce. A large front porch over the front entrance is not screened, but a larger porch, added later to the east side of the house, is screened on three sides, the copper screening being about 18 inches in from the edges of the floor.

This main floor, with its 11' 6" ceilings, is now entered from a north door, convenient to the driveway and garage. The south entrance is now hidden entirely by trees, and no longer accessible from Hatter's Lane, in fact land on that side has been sold, and a house built on it.

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11/16.
The second floor, reached by a stairway which seems too plain for the general size and quality of this house, contains bedrooms, baths and workrooms.

The attic is very large, and unpartitioned except for a room on each of the east and west sides, near the eaves, as called for in the specifications as: "two rooms to be finished very plain in the attic, doors to be hung and trimmed". These are with plastered walls, and were probably servants' quarters. A narrow stair leads to the widow's walk, or captain's walk, on the highest point of the roof.

The house is very well built, and with a brick interior frame, and an air space, so that in spite of its large cubic volume of space enclosed, it is not unusually expensive to heat. There are two air vents in the roof, covered by trap doors which can be opened or closed from the main floor, and the roof is still the original sheet metal. In spite of the comparatively recent construction of the house, pegs instead of nails have been used in some of the roof and attic joints and siding, and there is only one fireplace in the house. Mr. Williams must have been aware of the fact that central heating was soon to come.

The Hoffmans have not made many changes to the house, only such as needed for convenience and modernization, but these involved very little structural change. New steps lead to the front porch, and new foundations support it. The east end of the south porch had been enclosed for housing several birds. This screening has been removed. The kitchen has been modernized. A lower floor bath which was said to have been for Henry Davis, was converted to a storeroom. A partition on the second floor was removed, allowing a former hallway to become part of the master bedroom. The full bath for the main floor guest room has been modernized. Catherine Hanners, who usually does Christmas cards, decorated their large dining room with a mural which encompasses the whole room, depicting Hart House at 80 Main Street, the Meeting House, the old Grist Mill, the Whitman house on High Street, the old Lewis Curtis clock shop, and a rear view of this house.

When the Hoffmans purchased this house the murals on the walls of the main floor rooms were in a deplorable condition. There were nails in the walls and much of the space covered by pictures, bookcases and hanging clocks. With great good luck the Hoffmans found Eleanor Hatch of Maine, a recent graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design. Miss Hatch lived with the Hoffmans for three months, cleaning murals, twelve-inch square by twelve-inch square. When this cleaning was complete she mixed her "Tinta Tempora" solution of dry color, egg white and water, and restored two rooms, the drawing room and the entrance hall. The ceiling in the latter was not in keeping with the walls, so it was entirely repainted. It now depicts the Hoffmans' two children, one classical cherub, and Mrs. Hoffman's famous bear, "Brownie Rex", which, according to Steiff in Gingen, Germany, is probably one of the oldest toy bears ever made.

September 2, 1972
Miss Hatch later spent a month painting the dining room of the house across the street at 116 Main Street, the birthplace of Miss Sarah Porter, which was owned at that time by Mr. and Mrs. Warren Cook.

The building which may have housed the Amistad Captives, the Mendi Negroes, still stands to the northeast of the house, and appears to have had two additions made to it, both to the west.

The photo on page 174 of the Farmington Book, entitled, "Building used as 'quarters' by the 'Mendi Negroes'", includes what are believed by the writer to be two additions made to that building some time after the quarters were vacated by those visitors. The original building is the east section, to the right, of which only a portion of its gable end can be seen in the photo. It is 26 feet in width. The second section, west of the original, is about 19 feet in width. The third section, 22 feet in width, has a roof and gable end similar to the first, original, section. Part of the west section is now used as a garage, the rest of it as storage space. Inside this third section are two original "privies", one for first floor use, and one for the second floor, the latter believed to have been very rare, although one may be found in the restored gold-mining town of Nevada City, Montana.

The center section of the building is used only for storage.

The first, or east, section of this building appears to have served originally as a carriage house, and also had three stalls for horses. There were large front doors facing south, for carriage use. Attached to this section, at the northeast corner, had been a small cow shed. Just northeast of this shed, some twenty feet or so, had been a cow barn, and south east of the barn was the old house, the one pictured on page 96 of the Farmington Book as the Henry Davis house. The latter three buildings, the attached cow shed, the old barn, and the Henry Davis house, were all on the property when the Hoffmans purchased it, but in poor repair, and have now been razed. The foundation walls of the barn still stand, and enclose some flowers, forming an attractive part of the rear grounds of the house lot.

One of the intentions of the Hoffmans of course, when they purchased this property, was to provide a home for Mrs. Hoffman's mother. She accomplished this by converting the east section, the carriage house, to a residence. The large front doors were removed and that wall boarded up and provided with windows, a front entrance being provided by a door to the west of these new windows. The horse stalls were removed except for the upright timbers which marked the partitions between them. The random-width, heavy plank floors were retained and the west wall was paneled with wide boards, some of which came from the other old buildings. All this work was done by the old reliable house doctor Emmett Harris. Mrs. Henry Pierce Pope lived here comfortably for several years, and since that time it has been rented out by the Hoffmans, several different tenants having occupied it.

September 3, 1972
It will have been noted from a reading of the preceding page, that the Mendi Negroes are not stated to have lived in the west section of the building to the north of the house, but rather are stated to have possibly been quartered in the east section only.

The reason for this new version was found in a perusal by the writer, of original specifications made up by Austin Williams, for a wood-house which he was contracting to build north of his residence.

When Mr. Williams bought this property, only as early as April 1, 1841, the deed read: "together with buildings thereon standing". No evidence seems to point to any construction having been done by Mr. Williams during the remainder of that year.

Ellen Strong Bartlett, in her account of the "Amistad Captives" in the March 1900 issue of the New England Magazine, says: "A large new barn had been built on the grounds of Mr. Austin F. Williams, and this was re-arranged for the headquarters of the Africans". It is possible that the east section of the building north of the Williams house, had been recently built at that time, and that it had been built as a barn, converted at some later time to a carriage house. In that case it might have been the building which was stated to have been "re-arranged". Perhaps at that time a basement was dug and walled up, as there are two rooms in the basement, and apparently have been there for a long time, which is unusual for either a barn or a carriage house. This basement has a very good stairway leading to it, and a very thick trap door at the top of those stairs.

Proof of the fact that the center and west sections of the present large building did not exist at that time, appears in John Smith's contract for the construction of a wood-house to be built on the property to the north of the residence of Mr. Williams.

In was in December 1841 that Mr. Williams contracted for the construction of his residence, to be ready for occupancy by September 1, 1842.

It was on January 7, 1842, that he contracted for the construction of a wood-house near the residence, to be built by John Smith. The contract which he signed gives the dimensions of 28 feet on the front (the west side) and 22 feet on the south, and it was to be of two stories. The contract also has this clause: "also to take the windows from the Mendi house and affix them to the above named house, and have the house complete on or before July 1, 1842".

Another clause in this same contract reads: "Mr. Smith further agrees to frame an addition to the wood-house, between the two buildings, for $1.25 per foot, and to do the joiner work for $8.25".

The Amistad Captives had left the United States on November 21, 1841, therefore had been gone for six weeks before the wood-house contract was signed.

September 3, 1972
The west section of the building does measure exactly the 28 by 22 feet as stated in the contract. There is an addition to the wood-house, connecting it to another building, which is to the east, and measures 28 by 26 feet. It therefore could not have been the one contracted for, but it could have been the source of the windows to be transferred to the wood-house.

It has been thought that the two basement rooms under the east section of the long building, were for the hiding of slaves escaped from the South, and being transported north by the Underground Railroad. This could be possible also.

Most of the present thinking regarding the housing of the Mendi Negroes, the Amistad Captives, assumes that they were housed in the long building just north of 127 Main Street, but no special mention seems to have been made regarding which section of the building housed them.

It is quite possible too, that other buildings helped house them. Charles Ledyard Norton, who as a youngster was acquainted with these captives, wrote a long article on them for the Farmington Magazine of February 1901. His remarks regarding their housing will be found in the second column on page 175 of the Farmington Book:

"Barracks had been erected on land at the rear of the old Wadsworth house, now occupied by Mr. Dunning, and adjoining the cemetery, and here the late captives speedily made themselves at home. These barracks were still standing when I last visited the place, although I am under the impression that they have been moved somewhat from their original position."

Mr. Norton appears slightly in error in one part of his statement. Mr. Dunning was in 1901 living in the house at 123 Main Street, "adjoining the cemetery", but it was not a Wadsworth house. Wadsworth property was at the rear however, of both the houses, that at 123 and that at 127.

In any case, and wherever the Mendi Negroes were housed, the Robert Hoffmans still occupy the Williams house, and they do enjoy it.

Mentioned in paragraph 1 above, drawn to scale, end sections.