This house, now used as a library, stands on the west side of Main Street just south of Meadow Road. It is surrounded by tall trees and flower gardens in season. Its prominent position along Main Street adds character to the streetscape.
This five-bay building is typically Georgian in form due to its dentilculated cornice and decorative door surround. Its original roof may have been a gable or gambrel roof and altered to its present hip roof. The most prominent feature of the house is its open wrap-around porch which is supported by turned posts with a square base and decorative top. One of the original two interior twin chimneys exists, however, a later chimney was added into the interior wall of the north elevation. Note the six-over-six sash and louvered shutters.

Although the early history of this house is unclear, it was standing by 1786. It was mentioned in the will of Captain Solomon Cowles (1719-1793), which stated that his sons, Solomon, Jr. and Zenas, were to have the "house, store, and lot where they now reside" (FPR 3:355). Cowles and his sons Solomon, Jr. (1758-1846), Isaac (b. 1756), and Zenas (b. 1762) operated Solomon Cowles and Company, an import and export business. Cowles, Sr. had probably inherited his share of father's estate in 1763 after he and his four brothers divided the estate (see Cowles Family in America), although a descriptive distribution does not exist. Solomon, Jr. married Polly Gleason (1759-1803) and later married Mary Cowles (1771-1839). He attended Princeton (1775-76), Yale (1778), Harvard (1779), and later sought a military career reaching the rank of major general. In 1823 he served as a town treasurer. After Solomon Cowles, Jr.'s death, the house passed to his son Charles Cowles (1805-1851). He married Margaret E. Brooks who inherited the property upon his death (FPR 11:217). She in turn quit-claimed it for $198 to her brother-in-law Albert S. Cowles (FLR 54:97). Upon his death, Charles' children (Mary, Susan, Charles, and Elizabeth) inherited the house and land and in 1859 sold it to Amasa Holcomb for $8,000 (FLR 57:61). Holcomb sold it the following year to Julius D. Cowles (1810-1894), son of Gad and Anna (Deming) Cowles (FLR 58:75). He attended Norwich Academy in 1825 and married Mary Hull. In 1897 Julius Cowles' estate passed to his cousin Henry Augustus Cowles (1846-1911), son of Elijah and Mary D. (Levis) Cowles (FPR 25:121). Married to Mary Harmon in 1876, Henry Cowles later held several public offices in Farmington. In 1901 the estate was quit-claimed to their daughter Helen Harmon Cowles (b. 1880) (FLR 69:547). (SEE CONT. PG.)
She sold it in 1906 to Virginia D. Underwood (FLR 77:50), who sold it to Wells S. Hastings of Old Lyme in 1913 (FLR 77:459). Hastings sold it to Norman R. Moray in 1921 (FLR 80:284), who next sold it to Wilmarth S. Lewis in 1926 (FLR 80:653). Lewis, a scholar, author, collector, and editor, was born in 1895 in Alameda, California. He attended Thatcher School (1914) and Yale University (1918), where Farmington's Austin D. Barney was his roommate. In 1928 he married Annie Burr Auchincloss, daughter of Hugh D. Auchincloss of Hammersmith Farm, Newport. She attended Miss Porter's School from 1917-20 where she met her mother's good friend, Laura Dunham Barney, and consequently, Austin D. Barney and her future husband, Wilmarth S. Lewis. While the Lewises were on their honey-moon, architect William Adams of New York remodeled the house to accommodate Wilmarth's well-known collection of Horace Walpole works and memorabilia. Later he added to the house a fireproof library (1934), a second-floor bedroom and hall (1936), a library extension (1948), and a print shop (1953). In 1963 he bequeathed the property to Yale University (FLR 277:770). Since that time the university has added to the house a second and third library (1966, 1971).

Although it has extensive additions, the Captain Solomon Cowles House has architectural and historical significance due to its retainment of original features and association with prominent owners, the Cowles and Lewis families.
OWNER'S NAME  LEWIS, WILMARTH S.

1950-res.

ADDRESS: 154 Main Street and Meadow Road

DATE BUILT: 1784

FOR: Major-General Solomon Cowles

Additions: "Wilmarth S. Lewis

1928-9 - Hall, library, guest rooms, garage, squash court; 1934 - Fireproof Library (north)

1936 - 2nd floor bedroom, hall; 1949 - Extension of fireproof library

ARCHITECT: 1928-9 - Wm. Adams Delano, NYC; all others, Richard A. Kimball, NYC

MASTER-BUILDER

For Delano additions - R.G. Bent, Porteus & Walker

For Kimball additions - R.F. Jones


REFERENCES: "Farmington, Conn., 1906", p. 146

"Baker & Tilden Atlas, 1869, p. 33

"Colonial Dames Pamphlet" at State Library

"White Pine Series, 1926"

(OVER)
Former Owners, cont.:
The house at this address, photo of which is shown on page 146 of the Farmington Book as the residence of Mrs. W. A. Underwood, was built in 1782-84 for Major General Solomon Cowles, whose father lived at that time across the street in the house now known as 149 Main Street. This house is shown in Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas as the home of Julius D. Cowles. It was written up by Mrs. Mabel Hurlburt in 1947 for the Colonial Dames Society as the Cowles-Lewis House.

The first recorded owner of land at this site was Governor Edward Hopkins, an absentee owner.

Some interesting history regarding Governor Hopkins is noted by Mrs. Hurlburt on page 364 of "Town Clerks" as follows:

"Edward Hopkins was the second elected Governor of Connecticut and served alternately with John Haynes, no man being allowed to serve continuously, this being too much like the royal right of kings, from which the colonists were determined to escape. Mr. Hopkins was one of the original purchasers of the Town of Farmington but did not live here. He was an original proprietor and settler in Hartford. His land in Farmington was recorded in his name as original proprietor. It was located on Town Path, now Main Street, where the Root homestead and the Wilmart Lewis home now stand, and had a farm house, fruit trees and garden. It was left by Hopkins in his will at his death in 1657 to Sarah (Hooker) Wilson, daughter of the Rev. Thomas Hooker. According to tradition it was used as a meeting place for the members of the First Church after the resignation of their pastor, the Rev. Roger Newton in 1657. Sarah Hooker Wilson never lived there, having settled in Medfield, Massachusetts in 1651 when her husband, the Rev. John Wilson was ordained as the first pastor of the first church there, where he served forty years until his death in 1691. In 1662 Sarah and John Wilson sold the Hopkins farm to John Roote.

There was a "menage, or tenement" on it when Mrs. Wilson inherited, and this building is believed to have been used as the first meeting house until the first church was built in 1661.

"Governor Hopkins returned to England and to lucrative positions there. He died in London in 1657, and left bequests for education of children in Hartford. Hopkins Street and the Hopkins High School (later known as Hartford Public High School) were named in his honor. He was also generous with the surviving members of the Hooker family. Besides the farm to Sarah, he left cash bequests to Samuel, the eldest child of Roger and Mary Newton, and such debts as were due from Mrs. Susannah Hooker to him. Genealogists have tried to find a family connection which would explain the close friendship between the Hooker family and Governor Hopkins, but there seems to be none". This also is quoted from "Town Clerks".

The writer does not know when this particular bit of the property purchased by "John Roote" passed out of his ownership, nor when it passed into the ownership of the Cowles family, but a list of owners starting with Major General Cowles will be found on the next page.

June 10, 1972
This list of owners, taken from records at the library, shows dates of acquisition, except for General Cowles, and shows genealogical numbers for the various Cowles owners:

- Major General Solomon Cowles #298
- 1842 Charles Cowles
- 1855 Albert Sinclair Cowles
- 1859 Amassa Holcomb
- 1860 Julius Deming Cowles
- 1897 Helen Harmon Cowles
- 1906 Virginia D. Underwood
- 1913 Welles S. Hastings
- 1921 Norman R. Moray
- 1926 Wilmarth S. Lewis

General Solomon Cowles, born in 1758, was in his first year at Princeton College at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. He was an ardent patriot, and with others of the student body, formed a company of volunteers. This company began active duty in 1776, joining Washington's army in Morristown, New Jersey. The young soldier served actively throughout the war, in many engagements. After the war he entered Yale, later attended Harvard.

He married Polly Gleason, who bore him eight children, and after her early death in 1803 he married Mary Cowles, who bore him five children. He was a man of note in the community, an officer in the state militia, director of a Hartford bank, town treasurer, and in 1795 joined with 48 others to purchase one million acres of land in the Western Reserve. He was the son of Solomon Cowles of 149 Main Street. See his earlier ancestry on page 3 of 148 Main Street. He died in 1846.

In the late 1820's the Farmington Canal was built, passing through this property at the rear, next to the Pequabuck River.

Mrs. Hurlburt, in "Town Clerks", mentions many of the civic activities of Gen. Solomon Cowles, among them the following:

- 1791 Elected tithing man,
- 1796 Appointed to school committee,
- 1799 On committee to study layout for the new Litchfield Road,
- 1810 On committee to confer with neighboring towns regarding a common house for the accommodation of the poor,
- 1823 Elected town treasurer,
- 1828 On committee to inspect roads and set up office of Road Commissioner,
- 1830 On committee to confer with Avon and Hartford regarding new boundaries between these towns and Farmington.

June 10, 1972
Children of Maj. Gen. Solomon Cowles and his first wife were:

George, 1780-1860. See 130 Main Street, his home.

Fanny, 1783-1859. m. Charles Curtiss, son of Major Peter Curtiss. See 8 High Street. They moved to Madison, Ohio, in 1811, traveling with four children by oxen and horses from Buffalo. Built a log house on 600 acres three miles from Lake Erie. Could hear the firing on the lake at the time of Perry's victory there. They were parents of eleven children.

Child, died in infancy.

Charity born in 1788, married William Lewis Cowles. See 59 Main Street, their home.

Mary Ann born in 1791, was married in 1809 to Judge John A. Hubbard of Sheffield, Mass. Later moved to Madison, Ohio.

Charlotte, 1793-1881. Married Alfred Cowles, son of Ezekiel Cowles of 185 Main Street. A law school graduate, he was in practice here from 1814 to 1821, left for the West the next year on horseback. Settled in Kaskaskia, Illinois, and took the family there. Practiced later in Belleville, Alton and Chicago, then moved to San Jose, California, in 1854, and on the Paway Valley in 1869. After wife's death moved to San Diego. Had seven children.

Martha Seymour, 1796-1876, m. in 1824 the Rev. Amzi Benedict of New Canaan, Yale 1824 and Theological student at Andover, became pastor at Vernon, Conn. Both died in Brooklyn, N. Y. at the home of their son-in-law, leaving five children.

Sarah Gleason, 1803-1833, m. George Robinson of Southington, merchant of New Haven and Northampton, had six children. He re-married.

Children by second wife were:

Charles, 1805-1851, inherited this house.

Elizabeth Maria, 1807-1833.

Albert Sinclair, 1810-1857, also inherited this house.

Franklin, 1811-1813.

Franklin, 1813-1849. Was in business with brother, Albert, in Ohio. Died of cholera at Fort Laramie, Wyoming, on his way to California. He was a physician and "a man of enterprise".

June 10, 1972

1206.
This property was inherited at the death of Gen Solomon Cowles in 1846, by his son Charles, born in 1805, the first son of Gen. Cowles' second wife. Charles served as quartermaster in the state militia 1829 to 1831, and operated as a trader in Ohio, perhaps on the Western Reserve, for some years. His wife was the widow Margaret E. Brooks, born 1814 in Maine. They had six children, none of whom lived in Farmington as adults. He returned to be a farmer in Farmington, this move perhaps made at the time of his inheritance of this property. He died in 1851 and his widow Margaret is shown on the records as owner of the property for a time. In 1858 she re-married, becoming the wife of John Stewart, born in 1801.

In her later years Mrs. Edwin W. Tillotson, who was born in the house next south of this in 1851 as Mary Lewis Root, tells of some of her next-door neighbors. Of Mrs. Charles Cowles she said:

"Mrs. Margaret Brooks Cowles, formerly of Sandusky, Ohio, had four children about my age; Mary, Susan, Charlie and Lizzie. They came and lived here for quite a while. Mrs. Cowles had the house painted inside and Mr. Adam Stewart did the work and painted a turtle on the inside of the big front door. She married him and he was lying on the couch one noon when his son Jack appeared and shot him with a pistol. He was not injured."

Title was passed in 1855 to Albert Sinclair Cowles, born 1810, the third son of Solomon and Mary Cowles. He received a law degree from Yale around 1830 but never practiced law. Instead he went to Ohio in 1833 to engage in a mercantile career with his brother Franklin as partner. In 1850 he returned in ill health to Farmington, dying of apoplexy in Hartford in 1857.

Mrs. Tillotson said of him:

"Mr. a Cowles, a pompous man, was not married and lived by himself with a colored man named Montgomery Weeks. Mr. Asahel Lewis, a brother (although much younger) of my grandmother, came down the sidewalk one early evening in cherry time, and saw the tree just full of boys. His two nephews (my father Samuel and uncle George) among them. Slipping around quietly he went to the door and told Mr. Cowles what was happening. Mr. Cowles came out the back door and called 'Gomery, get the gun Gomery --- Gomery!!!' Now Gomery was as high in that tree as any of the boys but it did not take long for each one to drop and slip away. Gomery came running to see what was wanted. The gun was forthcoming but no boys were to be seen. Uncle Ashbel was fond of boys and of joking but he looked sharply at his nephews and they had to acknowledge that they were there with the other boys."

Amassa Holcomb acquired title to the estate in 1859, perhaps as an investment.

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The title passed again, in 1860, this time to Julius Deming Cowles, also born in 1810, the son of Gad Cowles and Anna Deming, of what is now 63 Main Street. Julius had entered Norwich Academy in Vermont in 1825, and was graduated in 1828. He was married to Mary Hull but they had no children. He lost his eyesight early in his postgraduate years and never engaged in active business, although he lived to old age, dying in 1894. Mary Hull was the daughter of Alfred Hull and Huldah Brockway.

Mrs. Tillotson also speaks of him, saying:

"Julius Cowles, son of Gad, married Mary Hull, a very beautiful girl. His father was one of the wealthy men of Farmington but Julius lost much of his money. When Julius was about 50 years of age he bought the house next door to my father, Samuel H. Root, and came to live there. His eyesight was very bad --- he could only read the newspaper by holding it close to his nose --- but I don't think he was ever quite blind. He was 'Uncle Jule' to all us children and was very likeable and sociable, but an inveterate tobacco chewer. Once he gave it up --- and what a time for all of us! His custom had been to come in the front door --- a big heavy, thick door --- shut it, not always softly, and perhaps bring the daily paper (we took it together through the Civil War) and often, almost always, had some news or a witty saying, or at least a 'Good Afternoon' --- but now, without his tobacco, he would rush through the house and out the back door and never say a word --- but he finally conquered it!"

She goes on to say:

"He was very fond of dancing. The Cowles family were quite gay people and had many parties. He was always to the fore. One time there was a masquerade, with out of town friends. Uncle Jule was masked himself, and he walked up to a lady and remarked 'Harriet, you look like the Devil'. The lady, Mrs. Kilbourn of Litchfield, said: 'Why Julius, I've unmasked'. I think he told this himself. I do not think any one laid up anything against him. For quite a long while Mrs. Cowles took summer boarders. There were Yale students rusticating, who recited to Mr. Paine, our minister, and to whom the money received was probably very acceptable. The students fairly infested my father's shop to use the tools. They made stilts, with which they could walk over fences, or wherever they chose".

The property was acquired after the death of Julius Cowles, by Helen Harmon Cowles, born in 1880, the daughter of Henry Augustus Cowles and Helen Mary Harmon. The ancestry of Helen H. Cowles is given below, starting with Gad Cowles, son of Elijah Cowles of Main Street, who lived on the site of "Ward", at 56 Main Street.

Gad Cowles, #326, 1768-1845, son of Elijah #119, was an active merchant in Farmington, whose home was just north of the meeting house, and is now known as "Humphrey", 63 Main Street. He married Anna Deming, the daughter of John Deming, merchant, and Susannah Cowles, the latter of whom had been born in the house now known as 400 Main Street, the home of Mrs. Percy A. Cowles.

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Elijah Cowles, #764, 1808-1859, son of Gad #326, was married to Mary D. Lewis. He started his business life in the mercantile business in Farmington, perhaps with his father, then was in Sandusky, Ohio, and returned to Farmington. His wife died in 1848, after only three years of marriage. Mr. Cowles went into business in Syracuse, New York, and there married his second wife, Evelinia Beatrice Robinson, in 1850. In 1856 they moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where Mr. Cowles died in 1859 of a ruptured aorta.

Henry Augustus Cowles, #1825, 1846-1911, son of Elijah's first wife, either stayed in this area as a youngster, or returned later, as he was married here in 1876. His wife was Helen Mary Harmon, born on Bloomfield or Suffield, daughter of Harmon and Sarah Jane Bliss, who later was to become the wife of Anson Porter and live in Farmington at 149 Main Street. It is not known where Henry A. Cowles lived in Farmington, but of July 3, 1882, he purchased a house in Unionville from Jane B. Stocking, on Main Street, just east of the A. S. Upson house. He was Registrar of Voters for the years 1876 and 1877, a bookkeeper in 1880, Treasurer of Upson & Hart Company, Unionville in 1885, constable 1878-81, notary public 1893-1900. In 1903 his address was in New York City, and he lived in Brooklyn in 1907 and perhaps died there. His widow was living in Brooklyn in 1912 and in Norfolk, Virginia by 1927. Their two children were Julius D. Cowles, born 1877, and Helen Harmon Cowles, born 1880.

It was Helen Harmon Cowles, granddaughter of Elijah Cowles, and grandniece of Julius Deming Cowles, who came into possession of this property in 1897, three years after her great-uncle's death. She was married in 1927 to a Dr. Whitehead, and they lived in Norfolk, Virginia, where her mother was also living at that time. They had a daughter, whose name is not known to the writer, and a son Henry, who is said to have become conductor of an orchestra in the Norfolk area.

Julius Deming Cowles, II, the brother of Helen and three years older than she, was in theater, married Adeline, and they had a daughter who lived in Richmond, Virginia. Mrs. Adeline Cowles later married a Thomas Cox.

The writer does not know who occupied this house from the time of the death of Julius Deming Cowles, I, in 1894, until the sale of the house by Helen Harmon Cowles in 1906, but he has spoken with at least one Farmington resident who remembers a Julius Cowles as living here. This would then have been Julius D. Cowles II, and of course this would have been possible.

It was Virginia Deas Underwood, widow of William Allen Underwood, who purchased the property in 1906 from Helen Harmon Cowles. Mrs. Underwood was wealthy, and had two daughters. She had the house renovated and modernized, and she and her daughters lived and boarded with the Timothy Root family next door while this was being accomplished.

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Julius Deming Cowles' daughter may have been Adeline Cowles, and his wife's name unknown. Adeline Cowles married James Bertrand Cox of Richmond, Virginia.
Mrs. Henry Spafard, the former Ruth Root, who lived next door, remembers that Mr. and Mrs. Alsop, Joseph W. and his wife Corinne, the latter of whom was the niece of the wife of Admiral Cowles, were great friends of Mrs. Underwood, and visited here often. Mrs. Underwood's daughters were Elizabeth and Virginia. During their residence here Elizabeth Garland Underwood was married to Oliver Posfay, son of Ignatius Stephen Posfay and Mary Lidonia Fintal. For altar decorations for the wedding they engaged young Maurice Root to pick all the daisies he could find, for the huge sum of five dollars. Maurice's cousin Ruth remembers that some pranksters locked the bride in the Root bathroom, and she was for some time unable to get out.

Owner and occupant of the house from 1913 to 1921 was Wells Southworth Hastings, 1878-1923, a 1902 Yale graduate. Yale's obituary record of graduates gives the following on Mr. Hastings:

"Born June 24, 1878, in New Haven, Connecticut. He spent the year of 1902-03 in Paris, and the next two years in New York City. Since then he had lived at various times in Englewood, New Jersey, Old Lyme and Farmington, Connecticut, Westerly, Rhode Island, and Los Angeles. He had devoted most of his time since graduation in writing, and in addition to verse, essays and many short stories, which had appeared in numerous magazines, he had published two novels, one of which was written in conjunction with his classmate, Brian Hooker. He was one of the first magazine writers to identify himself with the motion picture industry. He had been associated with D. W. Griffith for some years, his most successful scenario being "The Ghost in the Attic". He was a director of the Hampshire Paper Company of South Hadley Falls, Massachusetts, and of the Phoenix-Hermetic Company, the Metallic Decorating Company and the Phoenix Cork Company, all of New York City. In 1917 he served on the District Exemption Board of Hartford County, Connecticut. He was a member of the Episcopal Church".

It was probably Brian Hooker who influenced him to come to Farmington, Mr. Hooker residing here at that time. Mr. and Mrs. Hastings had several children, among them Betty and Isabel. Mrs. Hastings was a semi-invalid. Mr. Hastings also owned for a time some property on Middle Road, near or part of the Greenberg and Cadwell properties. They moved from here to California sometime before they sold this property (154 Main St.) in 1921. Mr. Hastings died in Los Angeles in 1923.

Purchaser of the property in 1921 was Norman R. Moray, the number two man in the Hartford Fire Insurance Company under Richard M. Bissell, Sr.

It is known that this house was vacant at various times between the occupancy by the first Julius D. Cowles and the ownership by Wilmarth Lewis, who purchased in 1926. It is believed also to have been occupied at various times by tenants. Up to the date of this writing no reliable information has been obtained regarding these tenants.

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1210.
The property was sold in January 1926 to Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis, the present (1972) owner.

Wilmarth Lewis is very well known as a scholar, author, collector, and editor. He was born in Alameda, California, on November 14, 1895, the son of Azro Nathaniel Lewis and Miranda Wilmarth Sheldon. He was a 1914 graduate of Thacher School in Ojai, California, and was graduated from Yale with the class of 1918. He served in World War I as Second Lieutenant 144th Field Artillery, California National Guard.

While at Yale he was room-mate of a Thacher school-mate, Austin Dunham Barney, and spent many weekends in Farmington, making friends and becoming familiar with the village. While still an under-graduate he made his plans to live here when, as, and if he could. The opportunity came in 1922 after two years with the Yale University Press in New Haven. The Brandegee house at 36 High Street became available, Robert Brandegee having died and his son living elsewhere. The Barneys, who were cousins of the artist, arranged for Mr. Lewis to rent the house.

It was at Oldgate, Mrs. Cowles' house, now 148 Main Street, that he met his future and beloved wife, Annie Burr Auchincloss, the daughter of Hugh D. Auchincloss, Sr. Annie Burr ("A. B." as her intimates often called her) was born at Hammersmith Farm, the Newport, Rhode Island, summer home of the Auchincloss family. She knew Farmington well, having attended Miss Porter's School, as had her mother, Emma Jennings. Miss Jennings had there formed a lifelong friendship with Laura Dunham, later to become Mrs. D. Newton Barney, mother of Austin D. Barney, the room-mate of Wilmarth Lewis at Yale. Wilmarth and Annie Burr were married in New York in January of 1928. While they were on their ten-week wedding trip to Brazil and Europe, extensive alterations and additions to Mr. Lewis's Farmington house at 154 Main Street, which he had purchased in 1926, were begun. The long hall and library, two guest rooms, a garage and a squash court were added. The architect for this improvement was William Adams Delano of New York, a man pre-eminent in his field.

The previous owners of this house had never allow its interior to be photographed. Shortly after its purchase by Mr. Lewis the Weyerhauser Timber Company asked for permission to photograph it for their "White Pine" series. After the number devoted to the house had been published, Mr. Lewis was asked by the Metropolitan Museum if he would sell the hall and morning room for their newly opened American Wing. He declined, but asked in his turn for samples of the colors that should be used on the walls of a Connecticut house of its period. He followed their suggestions with highly satisfactory results.

One of the distinctive features of this house is its new (1928-1929) hallway. It is a very long hall and perfect for the display of the paintings of the many people and places connected with Walpole and his friends and associates, and Strawberry Hill, Mr. Walpole's home.

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An article by Richard Pratt in the Ladies Home Journal shows a photo of the house and also of the fireplace in the morning room. Another photo shows a portrait of Strawberry Hill, done in needlepoint by Mrs. Lewis. This also appeared on a six-page article in LIFE, on the Walpole Collection, October 23, 1944. The house was opened for exhibit by the Antiquarian and Landmarks Society on May 17, 1947, introduced as follows: "Built about 1782 for Gen. Solomon Cowles along lines of spaciousness then unknown in Farmington, with a wealth of detail in door, window, fireplace, and cornice ornamentation, this lovely house is especially rewarding for study. The porch is considered to be the oldest in Connecticut. It is original to the house, a fact not usually recognized. The addition to the rear was built about twenty years ago".

The beautiful garden was laid out by Miss Amy Cogswell of Norwich, Connecticut, a garden formal and conservative, in keeping with the house and its atmosphere.

As his principal life work, Mr. Lewis, aided and encouraged by his wife, has made the largest collection of Horace Walpole, 1717-1797, in existence, a collection in fact larger than all other Walpole collections put together. It includes the originals, or photostatic copies, of all his located manuscripts, six-sevenths of the known letters written by him and to him, eighty percent of the located books from his library, the output of his private press at his house (Strawberry Hill, Twickenham), and the drawings for his house, which was a landmark in English taste.

Walpole was engaged all his life in the writing of contemporary history ---- history written day by day as events were happening, much of it being written in letters to his multitude of correspondents. He covered a very wide range of subjects, wrote learnedly and brilliantly. Much of his writing was directed purposely at posterity, whom he knew would be seeking the knowledge that he was recording. His writings covered sixty years, covered them fully and completely, and are of infinite value.

Mr. Lewis and Yale University have been closely allied over the years, and began the Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence in 1933. It is the first comprehensive edition of Walpole's letters, and because of the wide range of his interests, constitutes an encyclopedia of his time. Thirty-four volumes have been published to date (1972), and sixteen more are in preparation. A staff of about a dozen people is divided between Farmington and the Walpole Room in the Yale Library. The magnitude of this work has necessitated several more additions to the house to provide room for the staff and for the filing of the data. In 1934 the first fireproof library was added, designed by Richard Kimball, then of New York. In 1936 a second-floor bedroom and hall were added, in 1948 the fireproof library was extended, and in 1953 the squash court was converted to a print room and stacks for 20,000 books. The print room houses the largest collection of pre-1800 English caricatures in the world, and the second largest collection of the prints of William Hogarth. Another library, designed by Richard Butterfield of Farmington, was added in 1966. An addition to the print room had to be built in 1971.

June 11, 1972
Mr. Lewis has made some thirty trips to England, besides many to other parts of the world, in the never-ending search for Walpole memorabilia, and for consultations with other Walpole enthusiasts. He early became acquainted with the leading English booksellers and students of 18th century literature, and obtained their aid in the continuous search for Walpoliana.

An interruption of the Walpole work was the period of World War II. Six months before Pearl Harbor the Lewises went to Washington where Mr. Lewis became Chief of the Central Information Division, Office of Strategic Services, and Mrs. Lewis the head of two of the Red Cross volunteer services. They returned to Farmington in 1944 to attack their interrupted work with new vigor.

During all of her wedded life Mrs. Lewis aided her husband and helped with the planning of his activities, and also carried on many of her own. She was interested in, and loved the old houses of Farmington. In the early thirties she purchased the Hart Homestead at 80 Main Street to save it from being commercialized. She restored it to its former fine state and ultimately gave it to Miss Porter's School. In the early fifties she embarked on the project of cataloguing all the houses of Farmington Village, recording on cards the data regarding their construction and changes in ownership, and gave the file to the Village Library. The file has been of inestimable value in research on these matters and, combined with the Farmington Book, has been the basic source for the writing of this report. Mrs. Lewis died in the spring of 1959 and Mr. Lewis has never ceased feeling the loss of her wonderful companionship, but he carries on his research and trusteeships and other activities as she would have wished. A fine portrait of her by Ellen Emmett Rand graces the wall of their library where Mr. Lewis spends much of his time, and while he engages in conversation with visitors they can note his glances toward her and the spirit which shows itself clearly in her portrait.

Mrs. Lewis had been a student at Miss Porter's School from 1917 until 1920, and had never lost her interest in it. The school appreciated Mrs. Lewis's work for them and in 1963 honored her memory with a citation which read as follows:

"Mrs. Lewis died four years ago but it would be unthinkable to make an award of this kind without feeling that she should head the list of Ancients. In 1936 Mrs. Lewis chaired the organizational committee of the Alumnae Association which came into being on October 21, 1937. She became its first president. Without her overwhelming concern for the school and its ancients, we wouldn't be here. She served as our president for seven years, until 1944, guiding it over its early bumps and gaping holes until it became the relatively smooth organization it is today. Her interest in Farmington was endless. Nothing was too big or too little for her to do. She was an early member of the Library Committee, the House Committee, and any other committee that was formed and dissolved in the early years. She entertained hundreds of girls, many teachers, and parents. She was the person one turned to for advice, time, and sympathy. Her gifts to the school are legion. There is no phase of the school life in which she did not play some part. Her enthusiasm was contagious, especially so in her own family, for her husband, Mr. Wilmarth Lewis, has been a Trustee for many years. This award is given with love and gratitude from the Ancients".

June 11, 1972
A notable discovery was made by William Day, who became the Lewises' gardener in 1948, in the field behind 164 Main Street, which the Lewises had reserved when they sold 164 Main Street to the Hoppin family in 1950. Mr. Day and his family unearthed a large cache of Indian artifacts that the Peabody Museum of Yale verified as going back ten thousand years. This collection is now in a house that was built about 1754 by Andrew Curcump, one of the Indians who settled in West District after they were moved from their old home near or at the site of the Riverside Cemetery. In 1960 that house had belonged to Dr. Walls Bunnell, standing as part of the Talbot house near the site of the old Farmington depot. Dr. Bunnell gave this old portion of the Talbot house to Mr. Lewis, who moved it to its present location on Mr. Lewis's property. The Peabody Museum is using the field as a "dig" for Yale students. See next page for a more detailed report on this archaeological find.

Mr. Lewis's connection with Yale has not been related solely to Walpole. In 1938 he was elected to the Yale Corporation as a "Successor Fellow", one of ten chosen by the Fellows of the Corporation themselves, and who remain in the corporation until the commencement following their 68th birthday. Ownership of the property of Mr. Lewis, which includes the house and land at 158 Main Street, which his wife had purchased from the Root family in 1941, and the land behind 164 Main Street, will go to Yale University at the death of Mr. Lewis. It will become a center for the advanced study of the English 18th Century, thus preserving the continuity of the life work of Mr. Lewis.

A Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Mr. Lewis was chosen to give in 1960 a series of six lectures in the auditorium of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C. This was the ninth of an annual series of the A. W. Mellon Lectures.

In 1968 he was given the award which recognizes collectors who have sought out and preserved records that might otherwise have been lost, the Donald F. Hyde Award, Princeton, and the medal of the Gleeson Library Associates of the University of San Francisco.

In late 1971 a new book of Mr. Lewis's was published, entitled "See for Yourself". It is an extremely interesting exposition of his own unique manner of enjoying paintings, a very unusual approach, but one which responds best to his type of mind, a researcher's mind, questioning and agile.

In May 1972 Mr. Lewis was awarded a Doctor of Laws degree by the University of Hartford, which recognizes him as one of New England's most distinguished men of letters.

This brief account of the lives and activities of Mr. and Mrs. Wilmarth Lewis is not intended to be a complete account, but is merely meant to be an introduction to them. Interested readers should certainly follow this up by the reading of Mr. Lewis's works, especially "One Man's Education", which is his autobiography. It will be very rewarding, and will stimulate you to read farther.

October 10, 1972
The Lewis-Walpole Site of Farmington

A Preliminary Report

by

U. Vincent Wilcox, III

Within the past several years Mr. Wilmarth Lewis of Farmington, Conn., a renowned authority on the life, times and works of the 18th century English literary figure Horace Walpole, became aware of the possibility that the increasing number of Indian artifacts being discovered on his property might carry considerable archaeological significance. He informed Yale University, with which he has maintained a long, close association and to which his Lewis-Walpole library will some day belong, of the probable existence of an Indian site upon his property. Prof. Irving Rouse of the Anthropology Department visited Mr. Lewis and made a brief examination of the material. The impressive amount and variety of the artifacts thus far collected from the surface indicated that the site was indeed worthy of further research, and that excavation might help fill some gaps in the archaeological record of Connecticut.

Plans were already in the offing at Yale toward the establishment of an undergraduate major in archaeology. The eagerness and generosity of Mr. Lewis made possible the foundation of an undergraduate course in archaeological field techniques that would include the excavation in the near future of this site to be known, at Mr. Lewis' request, as the Lewis-Walpole site of Farmington, Connecticut.

A one-roomed plank cabin which reportedly belonged to the last full-blooded Tunxis Indian has been moved to Mr. Lewis' property and now serves to house the artifact collection. It is known as the Day Museum in honor of Mr. William Day, the gardener who was responsible for the discovery of most of the material. This museum will serve as a focal point for the excavation of the site, and perhaps other Connecticut sites which may be investigated by the Yale anthropology department in the future.

Special acknowledgement and thanks should be given first of all to Mr. Lewis for his kind generosity and hospitality, and to Mr. William Day for his help in sorting and identifying the artifacts. Professors Irving Rouse and Michael Coe must be mentioned for their counsel & advice.

Farmington, a small prosperous town just west of Hartford, was first settled by colonists in 1640. Previous to that time the Farmington Valley was the home of the Tunxis Indians, a sub-tribe of the Saukiogs. They sold the land that borders the Farmington River and its tributary, the Pequabuck, to the colonists and were placed upon a reservation. This reservation was first located on the east bank of the Farmington River, but was relocated in 1658 to an area west of the Pequabuck on Fort Hill. Here may still be seen some of the stone markers for Indian graves. On the whole, relations between the Indians and the colonists were peaceful. The last full-blooded Indian in Farmington died in 1820 (Hewes, 1937: 7-11). The full significance of the Lewis-Walpole site remains to be realized by excavation. The surface collection appears most promising and excavation will certainly reveal more material that may help clarify the cultural sequence of Connecticut.


August 21, 1972
The writer has not in any previous case transcribed an account from "Who's Who", but in the case of Mr. Lewis it seems worthwhile to do so, as otherwise the reader cannot realize the full scope of his active, literary life. Here it is, practically in full, the first lines quoted:


From this point the content is given, but not in exact sequence:

LL. D. Yale 1965,
" University of Hartford, 1972,
Litt. D. Brown University, 1945,
" University of Rochester, 1946,
" National University of Ireland, 1957,
" University of Delaware, 1961,
" Cambridge University, England, 1962,
" University of Melbourne, 1972,
L. H. D. Trinity College, 1950,
" Bucknell University, 1958,
Associate, Yale University Press, 1920-1922,
Research Associate, Yale, 1933-1938,
Chief, Central Information Division,
Office of Strategic Services, 1941-1943,
Founder of John Carter Brown Library Associates
and Chairman, 1944-1947,
Chairman of Yale Library Associates, 1933-1945,
Trustee, Miss Porter's School, Farmington,
" Institute for Advanced Study,
" Watkinson Library, Hartford,
" Redwood Library, Newport, Rhode Island,
" Thacher School, Ojai, California,
" Henry F. DuPont Museum, Winterthur,
" Heritage Foundation, Deerfield, Massachusetts,
" John F. Kennedy Library,
Member National Portrait Gallery Commission,
Chairman National Collection Fine Arts Commission,
Founder of Librarian's Council, Library of Congress,
and Chairman, 1942-1946,
Second Lieutenant, 144th Field Artillery, U. S. Army, 1917-19,
Fellow, Yale, 1938-1964,
Recipient Yale Medal, 1965,
" Donald F. Hyde Award, Princeton, 1968.

March 16, 1973
Fellow, American Philosophical Society,
" American Academy of Arts and Sciences,
" Royal Society of Literature,
" Society of Antiquaries,
" Royal Society of Arts and Letters,

Member, Society of Colonial Wars,
" Society of Cincinnati (honorary),
" Phi Beta Kappa (honorary),
" Beta Theta Pi,
" Scroll and Key, Yale
" Pacific Union Club, San Francisco,
" Athenaeum Club, London,
" Century Club, New York City,
" Grolier Club,
" Yale Club,
" Tavern Club, Boston,
" Metropolitan Club, Washington, D. C.,

Author, Tutor's Lane, 1922,
" Three Tours through London in the years 1748, 1776 and 1797 (Colver Lectures), 1941,
" The Yale Collections, 1946,
" Collector's Progress, 1951,
" Horace Walpole's Library (Sandars Lectures), 1958,
" Horace Walpole (Mellon Lectures), 1960,
" One Man's Education, 1967,
" See for Yourself, 1971,

Editor, A Selection of Letters of Horace Walpole,
1926, 1951, and 1973,
" Horace Walpole's Fugitive Verse, 1931,
" Private Charity in England, 1947-1957,
(With Ralph M. Williams), 1938,
" Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence, 36 volumes, 1937-1973,

Contributor, Atlantic Monthly,
" American Scholar,
" Virginia Quarterly,
" Yale Review,
" Other magazines.

March 16, 1973