Sited on the west side of Main Street, this Post-Medieval Revival-style building once appeared as a late nineteenth-century vernacular building. To the south, east, and north lie other historic buildings built between ca. 1656 and 1935. To the west lies the Farmington River. The house lies in both the state-enabled local and National Register districts.
Although this house appeared as a late nineteenth-century vernacular building in 1906, today it exhibit features of Post Medieval architecture. Moved further north during the mid 1930s and turned 90°, changing the orientation of the house, the house features an overhang between the first and second stories decorated by large pendants. The five-bay facade exhibits a modest door surround and three bays on the second story. Note the center brick chimney and sash of both twelve-over-twelve and twelve-over-eight.

Although past theories have said that this building was originally part of 174 Main Street, more recent research (following) has found no factual support for the claims. Up until 1847 it is known that the Wyllis-Orton-Wadsworth House remained one house with an old and new part (FPR 8:70) (see 174 Main Street). This fact has been proven by examining the land records, probate records, and Grand Lists from 1818 to 1825. When Egbert Cowles purchased the Wadsworth property, it included 6 acres, a dwelling house, (174 Main Street), barns, cowhouse, cornhouse, and outbuildings (FLR 49:581). Cowles (1785-1885) married Sarah Woodruff and lived at 185 Main Street, so it is likely that the house mentioned was used as a rental property. Upon his death in 1885, his son Alfred Cowles, a traveling salesman, purchased the property (FLR 66:539). Three months later, trustee Erastus Gay sold the same property to Alfred's brother John Egbert Cowles (1824-1905) (FLR 66:560). Although individual buildings are not listed in the deeds, tenements are mentioned, so it is likely that this building was constructed around 1880 or it was a converted outbuilding. It is also likely that the building (if its interior does exhibit Colonial-period framing) may be the new part of the house mentioned in 1818. However, its date of separation from 174 Main Street would post date 1847, pre-date 1906, and be impossible to determine.

In 1901 Cowles sold the property to Frederick C. Rockwell, the man responsible for subdividing the land into lots and developing Tunxis Street. Rockwell of West Hartford sold lots 1, 2, 3, and 4, on which both 172 and 174 Main Street stood, in 1902 to Lena A. Mason (FLR 71:576). At that time John Egbert Cowles is said to have rented this (see cont. pg.)

Sources:
house and at one time started a fire inside the house. A historic photograph dated ca. 1906 shows both 172 and 174 Main Street standing separately. This building, oriented gable-to-street, appears as a typical late nineteenth-century building, with no evidence of Post-Medieval features. In 1930 Mrs. Mason and her husband Charles S. Mason, Jr. sold this house to their son Clarence A. Mason and his wife Gertrude (Delaney). Upon Gertrude's death in 1933, Clarence Mason received 2/3 interest in the property (FLR 74:595). It was during the mid-1930s when the building was moved further north and turned 90°. Mason then renovated the building giving it its present appearance. It remained in the Mason family until 1958.

More conclusive evidence of this building's history could be gathered by examining the framing of the building. Although its history is unclear, the Cowles-Mason House contributes to the development of the southern end of Main and Tunxis streets.
OWNER'S NAME: MASON, CLARENCE A. to Katherine to BIDWELL, Ellis M.

ADDRESS: 172 Main Street

DATE BUILT: ca. 1660 FOR: Thomas Orton (Isham & Brown) 1932 " Clarence A. Mason (moved & rebuilt)

ARCHITECT

MASTER-BUILDER 1932 - Clarence A. Mason & his father, Chas. S. Mason

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: This house is the north half of an old house divided while in the Wadsworth family. It was moved to present location from nearer old house and turned one-quarter around, being rebuilt into present house in 1932.

FORMER OWNERS: C.A. Mason from his mother & father, Lena & C.S. Mason 9/5/1930, Vol. 85, p. 594; Lena A. Mason from Frederick C. Rockwell 8/14/1902, Vol. 71, p. 576; being Lots # 1, 2, 3, 4 & all bldgs., this house then being on Lot #1; F.C. Rockwell from John Egbert Cowles, 39 acres & all bldgs., 10/3/1901, Vol. 71, p. 530; bounded n. on Levi Risley, s. on land of Erastus Scott & e. on Main St. (F.C. Rockwell developed Tunxis St. with aid of several Farmington residents); J.E. Cowles, Exec. of Est. of Egbert Cowles, sold to Alfred Cowles of Hartford for $1700. the Egbert Cowles Homestead & 36 acres & the Wadsworth lots & tenements with 31 acres, 9/21/1886, Vol. 66, p. 539; Alfred Cowles quit claimed the property back to the Est., refusing to pay $1700. for the land & bldgs. & by order of the Prob. Court to meet debts etc., Erastus Gay was appointed to sell the 2 houses & the homestead & land to John E. Cowles for $950., bounded the same as above, 1/1/1887; Egbert

REFERENCES: "Farmington, Conn., 1906", p. 101
"Farmington Town Clerks, 1943", p. 376

(OVER)
"Old Connecticut Houses" Isham & Brown, who date house 1660

FROM OVER:
by James and Amos, 8/15/1819, Vol. 40, p 377; Luke Wadsworth Est. Inventory "land & bldgs., $7994;" 1/7/1818, Vol. 8 p 70;

This house was divided from the original homestead, date unknown, and moved a few feet to the north, and later moved again by Charles Mason and his son Clarence to its present location - later remodeled to resemble the old house as it was supposed to have been built. Interior is panelled, original stone foundations from old house and stones from old chimney.
This house is pictured on page 101 of the Farmington Book as the residence of Mrs. August Bittner. Baker and Tilden's 1869 Atlas shows it under the name of Egbert Cowles.

This house and the one just south of it, 174 Main Street, were originally one house. Its story is recounted on page 32 of "Town Clerks", by Mrs. Hurlburt. Her remarks are quoted here:

"At the far south end of the Town Path (Main Street) beside the mountain brook, Governor George Wyllys had owned ten acres of land with a tenement thereon. In his will dated March 9, 1644, he gave this land in Tunxis to his son Samuel, who sold it to Thomas Orton in 1655. Isham and Brown have dated this house as 1660. In that event the house was built by Orton, who owned it until 1665 when he sold it to John Wadsworth. It was in the Wadsworth family until 1847 when sold by the estate of Sidney Wadsworth to Egbert Cowles. Originally it was much the type of the Whitman house, twice its present size, substantial and beautiful, with hand-finished panels and cupboards about its great chimney, a wide overhang and ornamental drops on four corners. It was divided in half while in the Wadsworth family, the chimney half now owned and occupied by Mrs. Harriet Mason and the rebuilt half owned and occupied by her brother, Clarence Mason.

John Wadsworth, the third owner of the property, probably did not live here, unless it was from 1665 to 1666, as in that latter year he is presumed to have built the house at 107 Main Street, which is known as the Wadsworth family homestead.

At the time of John Wadsworth's purchase of this south end property in 1665, none of his children were old enough of course to have lived here, so until 1689, when John Wadsworth died, we have no other Wadsworth name to connect with the place. At his death however, his son Samuel inherited, and he was married that same year, when he was twenty-nine years of age. His wife was Hannah Judson. Samuel was a lieutenant in the militia, fence viewer in 1690, representative to the general court 1699 to 1711, and his house was one of the seven fortified against the Indians in 1704. In 1722 he was a member of the committee to consider Southington's request for a separate church. Their children were:

Hannah 1693
Sarah 1695
Samuel 1698.

Nothing is known of the daughters. Samuel, Sr., died in 1731, and although the record does not show it, we will assume that Samuel, Jr., inherited the property. He was married in 1728 to Susannah Fenn. After two children were born, Susannah died in 1732, and Samuel was married to Rebecca Porter, by whom two more children were born. This Samuel has not been noted in Farmington's history books. His children were:

James 1729
Samuel 1732
Asa 1735
Hannah 1736

April 4, 1972

1279.
James inherited this property upon his father's death in 1745, although his title to it did not get into the records until in 1751. His brothers Samuel and Asa moved to Tyringham, Massachusetts. Samuel is stated to have had one child, Reuben, born in 1763, and Asa had no children. Hannah, in 1736, married Asahel Burnham. Samuel, the father of these four children, died in 1745.

James Wadsworth, 1729-1773, who inherited the house and property, married Abigail Lewis. Their children were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amos</td>
<td>1750-1775</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fenn</td>
<td>1752-1785, unmarried</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke</td>
<td>1754</td>
<td>died in infancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>1758-1775</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke</td>
<td>1759</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susannah</td>
<td>1764</td>
<td>died in infancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>married the Rev. Osgood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of Gardiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>1772</td>
<td>married a Mr. Langood,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>died at sea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amos and Fenn Wadsworth, the two elder brothers, as recounted by Mrs. Hurlburt in "Town Clerks" on page 93, "owned and operated a shop on the site of the present William Sheffield Cowles homestead at the outbreak of the (Revolutionary) war. Here they sold drugs, groceries, hardware and household necessities". In June 1774 Amos had been on a committee to collect grains and other provisions to ship to beleaguered Boston, and on May 18, 1775, he was an ensign in Noadiah Hooker's company, General Joseph Spencer's regiment, which began its march to Boston that day. Mrs. Hurlburt goes on to say: "We are indebted to journals and letters left by Amos and Fenn Wadsworth and others, for about all the information we have about our soldiers in the Revolution".

Ensign Amos Wadsworth had been made lieutenant by July and was in Roxbury that month receiving letters from Thomas Lewis, the Rev. Timothy Pitkin and Dr. Timothy Hosmer. Several letters which Amos had written home were letters of instruction to his brother Fenn as to how to handle certain things at the store. Lt. Amos Wadsworth died in Massachusetts on October 29, 1775, and was buried with high military honors in Brookline, Massachusetts.

"His brother Fenn", says Mrs. Hurlburt on page 94, "inherited the shop and house adjacent thereto, which a few years later became the property of the Cowles family, who have made it their homestead since that time. Fenn kept up the drug and general store business until the death of his brother, when he too joined the army. For several years he was one of the Committee of the Pay Table of Hartford. He died just after the close of the war, leaving his estate to his mother".

Luke Wadsworth, the only surviving male in the family, born in 1759, was given title to the property in 1771, according to library records, or perhaps his father's will was made then, as his father did not die until 1773, when Luke was at the age of fourteen.

April 4, 1972
At the time of his research regarding this house and this branch of the Wadsworth family the writer had access to the published family history of the Wadsworths. No mention was made in that history of the Amos Wadsworth about whom so much had been written by Mrs. Hurlburt and Julius Gay. By piecing various items together the writer came to the conclusion that Amos was the elder child of the James Wadsworth family, and he wrote the following to be appended to the Wadsworth family history:

"It is the writer's opinion that the name of Amos Wadsworth should head the list of children of James Wadsworth, 1729-1773, listed on page 196 of the Wadsworth family history, with the approximate date of birth as 1750, and date of death October 29, 1775. At present he does not appear at all in the Family History. The following are some quotations of works of two authors regarding his life. The first four are from Mrs. Hurlburt's 'Town Clerks':

"Page 79. On June 15, 1774 at a 'very full meeting of ye inhabitants of ye town of Farmington' with Col. John Strong as moderator, a committee of which Amos Wadsworth was a member, was appointed to 'take in subscriptions wheat, rye, Indian corn and other provisions of ye inhabitants of this town, and to collect and transport ye same to the Town of Boston'.

"Page 91. 'The first Farmington Company was complete and began its march to Boston on May 18, 1775, being the 6th Company of Gen. Joseph Spencer's Regiment' and was commanded by Capt. Noadiah Hooker. 'Among the officers was Amos Wadsworth, Ensign'.

"Page 92. 'We are indebted to journals and letters left by Amos and Fenn Wadsworth and others for about the only information we have of Farmington men in the Revolution'.

"Page 93. 'Amos and Fenn Wadsworth owned and operated a shop on the site of the present William Sheffield Cowles homestead at the outbreak of the War. Here they sold drugs, groceries, hardware and household necessities. The letters of Amos Wadsworth afford much detail of the life and varied activities of the Farmington men at camp'.

"The next two quotations are from 'Farmington Papers', a collection of some fourteen talks which Julius Gay had given before the Library Association during the years from 1890 through 1911'.

"Page 94. Speaking of the Farmington men who left here on May 18, 1775 for Boston: 'They were stationed at Roxbury and there remained during the siege'. This was the siege of Boston by the British'.

July 8, 1974
"Page 97. 'On the 4th of September (1775) Lieut. Wadsworth (Amos) was on the point of joining Arnold's expedition against Quebec, but was dissuaded by his friends. Almost the next we hear of him is the account of his funeral, celebrated with much military display on the 30th of October, the day after his death. The procession was headed by an advance guard of twenty men with reversed arms, followed by the Sergeants as bearers. The coffin was covered with black velvet and bore two crossed swords. Then followed the mourners, his mother and brother, the regiment under arms, and the officers of the other regiments. The musicians played 'Funeral Thoughts', and at the end of every line the drums beat one stroke. The march was a mile and a half long, and during the last half-mile the Brookline bell tolled constantly. His monument stands today in the old cemetery of Brookline. His brother Fenn soon entered the army, and was one of the Committee of the Pay Table in Hartford. He died just after the close of the War, and a monument in Saratoga marks his resting place.'

Signed Dudley Prentice,
June 6, 1972

July 8, 1974
Luke Wadsworth married one Abigail, surname unknown, of Litchfield, whose mother was of the Hooker family. Their children were:

- Suky 1783-1814
- James C. 1784-1876
- Amos 1786-1850
- Catherine
- Laura 1791-1808
- Fenn 1793 died in infancy
- Harriet 1796 m. in 1824 to Fisher Gay
- Eliza 1801 m. a Mr. Curtis

It appears that Harriet, born in 1796, who married Fisher Gay, one year her senior, in 1824, must have died early in their married life as Julius Gay, Fisher's son, was born in 1834, and his mother is stated to have been Lucy Thomson. This Fisher Gay was the grandson of the Col. Fisher Gay who built the house on Farmington Avenue, which later became the first home of the Farmington Country Club.

We do not have the date of the death of Luke Wadsworth, but in 1819 the property was sold as the "estate of Luke Wadsworth" by his sons James and Amos. James and Amos lived until 1876 and 1850 respectively, but it is not known where they lived. When they sold this property on August 15, 1819, they were recorded as living in Litchfield and Farmington, respectively.

The purchaser in 1819 was Sidney Wadsworth. Sidney was the son of William of the fifth generation. See earlier genealogy of the Wadsworths in the account of 107 Main Street. Sidney had already received title from his brother George, in May 1816, all the property of their father William, the property north of here at 164 Main Street. Sidney is recorded in the Wadsworth family history as having lived from 1786 to 1812. It appears that this was in error, and that he died just prior to 1847. His wife was Clarissa Buck, and their two children are stated to have died in early childhood.

Sidney Wadsworth accepted several civic responsibilities during the terms of four town clerks, from Deacon Samuel Richards through Deacon Simeon Hart, as noted by Mrs. Hurlburt in "Town Clerks":

Nov. 1823 named selectman, with Horace Cowles and George Norton,
Apr. 1832 an assessor, with Henry Lewis & Roderick Stanley,
Jan. 1837 clerk of the Town Meeting,
Nov. 1833 selectman with Samuel Dickinson & James K. Camp,
Apr. 1834 to General Assembly with Richard Cowles,
Feb. 1839 to examine flood damage to Young's Mill bridge,
1841 to consider fireproof records office,
1842 selectman, with Fisher Gay,
Dec. 1843 to look into possible elimination of expense of cleaning guns, and reduce expenses of assessors and Board of Relief.

April 4, 1972
As has already been mentioned earlier in this account, this house was divided into two houses sometime while under the ownership of the Wadsworth family, but we do not know just when this was done, nor by whom.

Sidney Wadsworth was the last of the Wadsworth family to own it. He left no children at all, and on January 28, 1847, the property was sold by the administrator of his estate, to Egbert Cowles, 1785-1885, who owned and lived in the house now known as 185 Main Street. He owned property on both sides of the street, across from here and south of here. The writer does not know who occupied the two houses that by now stood on this property while under the ownership of Egbert Cowles. The wife of Egbert Cowles was Sophia Sarah Woodruff, and their children were:

Esther Rachel, 1813-1857, m. Haynes Lord, merchant, New York City,
Arthur, 1814-1822,
Edgar, 1816-1817,
Edgar, 1818-1831,
Lucius, 1819-1821,
Lucius Samuel, 1821-1887, m. Louise Sarah Whitman, 1827-1879, dau. of Congressman Lemuel Whitman of Main Street (see 7 Waterville Road). Capt. Lucius was a wholesale drygoods merchant in Galena and Freeport, Illinois, in the 1850's and 1860's, later returned to Farmington,
Arthur Ezekiel, 1823-1826,
John Egbert, 1824-1905, traveling salesman for a New York clothing company, returned to Farmington by 1893, single,
Alfred, 1826-1914, m. Mrs. Harriet Tourtelotte, 1832-1908, the former Harriet Hill. He lived in Hartford from 1856 or earlier. He was in the Union Army in 1862, wounded at Laurel Hill in 1864, discharged in 1865. Moved to Willington around 1905. His varied work included grocery clerk, bookkeeper, postal clerk and farmer. Their three children were: Charles Sumner 1857, moved to Willington, Harriet Jane, 1859, m. John Hemmeler of Willington, and Arthur Woodruff, 1860,
Arthur D., 1828-1857,
Philip Edgar, 1831-1896, (or Egbert) was a private in Co. A, 25th Conn. Volunteer Infantry 1862 and 1863. m. in 1873 Louisa J. Palmer, 1840-1915. Managed the Farmington Lodge and its property (where he grew up) and his wife was its matron. After his death she moved to Unionville.

The children of Captain Lucius were: Florence Sophia, 1850, m. Henry Martin Wood, commission merchant, New York, Josephine, 1851, Egbert, 1858, from bank messenger in Chicago in 1872 to cashier and manager in Minneapolis in 1895, and John Clifford, landscape artist of national reputation, resided New York and wintered in Venezuela or Southern California.

The above details of Mr. Egbert Cowles' family are given in order to speculate upon who might have lived in this house, or houses, during ownership of Mr. Cowles. It appears that Capt. Lucius may have. He married a Farmington girl and lived here at least through 1851 before going west, and they also lived here during their later years. We know that John Egbert roomed here in the 90's and until 1902, but aside from these we do not know the occupants.

April 8, 1972

1284,
Egbert Cowles operated a large farm and was also very much to the fore in public life. For more on his life and activities see the account of his home, 185 Main Street.

Frederick C. Rockwell purchased the property from John Egbert Cowles, executor of the will of his father Egbert Cowles, in 1901. Egbert Cowles however had been deceased since 1885, and again it is not known who occupied the property, except for John Egbert, who roomed here, and Captain Lucius, who may have been here until his death in 1887.

Mr. Rockwell did not keep the property long, but sold it on August 14, 1902, to Charles Stanley Mason, Jr., the son of the Charles Stanley Mason of the greenhouse at 88 Garden Street. Charles S. Mason, Jr., was married to Elena Augusta Puffer, daughter of Samuel D. Puffer and Lucy Ann Harris, believed to have been of Meriden. Mr. Mason advertised in the Farmington Magazine of 1901 as a "Builder". He had been married probably around 1875, and had lived for some years in the house at 3 Maiden Lane. After buying this new home, they lived in the house to the south, now known as 174 Main Street. When they bought the property in 1902 John Egbert Cowles, son of Egbert Cowles, already 78 years of age, had a room in the house at 172 Main Street. When the new owners wished to rent that house to someone else, and asked him to leave, he set fire to his room. Fortunately there was not too much damage. Samuel Scott moved him and his belongings to Mrs. Risley's house, where the Hoppins now live, and he roomed and boarded there, probably until his death in 1905.

The house at 172 Main Street was then rented to Wilhemina Grosse Büttnner, widow of August Büttnner who had died in September 1897. They had lived since 1878 in the house pictured in the Farmington Book on page 144 as the residence of Mrs. Alexander Nicol, on a farm which at that time consisted of 55 acres. They had had a son Paul A. Büttnner, who had died in 1889. Their daughter Clara had been married in 1884 to Chauncey E. Griswold, the superintendent of the old Oldgate Estate for many years. They lived on Garden Street at Meadow Road. Mrs. Büttnner (although spelled "Bittner" in the Farmington Book) was the resident noted in 172 Main Street when the book was published in 1906.

Harriet Hall Mason, daughter of Charles Stanley Mason, Jr., of the house next door to the south, was married in 1906 to Charles A. Ericson, son of August E. Ericson and Marie Pearson. Harriet and her husband moved into this house shortly after their marriage, and worked the acreage to the rear, as her father, still engaged in his building business, did not use the land. The Ericson marriage was not successful however, and after some years, and no children, Mr. and Mrs. Ericson were separated and then divorced. Sometime prior to 1930 Mrs. Ericson moved back with her parents, into the house next south.

Clarence Arnold Mason, son of Charles Stanley Mason Jr., had been married in 1918 to Gertrude W. Delaney, daughter of William Delaney and Margaret Skinner. When first married they lived at 8 Maiden Lane, which Miss Delaney had purchased in 1917, formerly the George Leopard house. They had two children born there, neither of whom lived past infancy.

April 8, 1972
Clarence Mason had dropped out of high school before he had completed his four years, in order to help his father. Now, in 1930, having worked for several years, he purchased the house at 172 Main Street from his parents. He operated as a farm, the acreage to the rear, had a milk delivery route, and had several teams of horses with which he did contract teaming. After having purchased this house in August 1930, he and his father in 1932 moved it a little to the north, farther from his father's house, gave it a quarter turn clockwise, and extensively renovated and remodeled it, giving it much the appearance which it now has. The former front door is now at the south side. To the five rooms it had, they added two. The original kitchen with its oven, the hearthstone, and the stone foundations of the chimney, all were preserved, says Mrs. Hurlburt, in a memo now on file in the library. She also says "The original stone sink is in the yard near the north side of #174, the red stone hog trough is under the lilacs, six feet long, 14 inches wide on the outside and 9 inches on the inside". This was written in the early 1950's.

Unfortunately Mrs. Clarence Mason did not live long to enjoy the renovated house as she died the next year, in 1933. Mr. Mason continued living here and within a few years married again, this time to Katherine Muldey. Clarence Mason died in 1951 and his wife carried on some of the farm work for a few years, but sold to the present owner, Ellis M. Bidwell.

April 8, 1972

The second wife of Clarence Arnold Mason, who had lived her later years on Greenwood Street in Hartford, died on November 2, 1972. Her obituary read in part: "...died in a Hartford convalescent home. Born in Ireland she lived in Farmington many years, moving to Hartford for ten years ago".

January 8, 1973
Owners and occupants of this house since 1958 are Mr. and Mrs. Ellis M. Bidwell.

Ellis Minot Bidwell, born in New Boston, New Hampshire, is the son of Leslie Simon Bodwell of Littleton, New Hampshire, and Mary Jane Harvell of Amherst, New Hampshire. Mary Jane's father was born, was married, and died at the age of 86 in the old family homestead which had been in the Harvell family since it had first been purchased from the Indians. The Bidwell family moved to Mansfield, Massachusetts, in 1896, and a year later to Boston, where Ellis grew up. Leslie Bidwell had been a farmer in New Boston, but in Boston he worked with the New Haven Railroad and later with the Boston Elevated. While working at the Elevated he studied and obtained a degree in civil engineering. They then moved to New York City where he worked on the construction of elevated lines there, and became superintendent of such construction.

Mrs. Bidwell is the former Vera Elizabeth Stearns, daughter of David Frank Stearns of Charleston, Massachusetts, and Lydia Salmon of Southold, Long Island. Her father was head of his department at the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company of Boston. Vera Elizabeth was born in Melrose Highlands, Massachusetts, and she and Ellis met while both were employed by the Bay State Belting Company of Boston. She has one sister, 1Ima S. Bacall.

Ellis joined the Navy in 1917 for World War I. He was in Naval Air Service and stationed at Rockaway, Long Island. Here they escorted ships in and out of New York Harbor, wading out to their amphibious planes for takeoff. Ellis's brother, Ralph L., was in the Spruce Corps in the State of Washington, cutting the lumber that was used extensively in the manufacture of planes at that time. Another brother, Charles C., was in the Army Ordnance Department at Bainbridge, Maryland. His sister Mary K., is a resident of Lynn, Mass., retired after 40 years as chief cataloguer of the Lynn Public Library.

After the war the Bidwells stayed in Brooklyn, New York, for a few years, then came to Connecticut in 1922, to live in East Hartford. Mr. Bidwell states that in 1928 they bought a lot on South Road in Farmington, the site of what is now 285 South Road, the residence of Chester Case. Here they built a two-car garage which they furnished and occupied several years until the depression tapered off and they were able to build a house. The big maple in the front yard was brought by them from Long Island as a tiny sapling. In 1932, after a frustrating year trying to sell cars, Mr. Bidwell bought a truck (which already had 100,000 miles), mounted an oil tank on it, and went into the oil business, selling and delivering kerosene. This business had its base of operations at his home, a business which ultimately became the successful Colonial Fuel Company. A new home was built for it around 1962, on Colonial Road off Route 44 in Canton. Mr. Bidwell retired from active participation in 1971 but still retains his interest in it.

June 12, 1972
In January 1952 the Bidwells sold their house on South Road and moved into one they had purchased on Bristol Road, or Scott Swamp Road, Route 6, a place which is now occupied by William E. King, who purchased it from Joseph Riccio in 1964. In September 1958 they purchased this house in which they still live, moving into it in early 1959.

When the Bidwells came into this house a pantry and the bathroom occupied a space at the north end of the kitchen. The bathroom has been moved, and its space and that of the pantry has been opened up to make a lighter and roomier kitchen. This house has one of those huge chimney-fireplace bases, said to formerly have had an open space inside it where the women and children could be hidden from an Indian attack. The house has been moved twice, keeping the base intact, but there is now no way to enter it. There is a small apartment upstairs, with a kitchen and bath, which was occupied as a rental unit when the Bidwells came here, and still is.

Mr. Bidwell has been very active in civic and political affairs of the town. He was a member of the charter revision committee when the present system of town management was drafted, justice of the peace for thirty years, first selectman for two years, member of Town Plan and Zoning commission six years of which four were as chairman and on the school committee several years. He is a charter member of the American Legion, and an active member and past commander of the local James Palace Post No. 53. Mrs. Bidwell has been and still is very active in Congregational Church work and attends the weekly meetings of the Friendly Group.

The Bidwells have two daughters. Leslie Stearns Bidwell, now Mrs. Weesner, is a graduate of Farmington High School and Emerson College of Boston. She was with the National Council of Churches several years. She and her husband, the Rev. Mr. C. A. Weesner, now reside in Indianapolis, Indiana. Patricita Ellis Bidwell, who was graduated from Farmington High School and attended the University of Connecticut, is now Mrs. Louis F. Pasqualucci, Jr. They live in Barkhamsted, Connecticut, and have two daughters, Linda and Donna.

June 12, 1972