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Old Houses in Farmington.

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OLD HOUSES IN FARMINGTON

AN

HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

Annual Meeting

OF

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY

OF

FARMINGTON, CONN.

*May 1, 1895*



BY JULIUS GAY



HARTFORD, CONN.

Press of The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company

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## ADDRESS.

*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of Farmington :*

I have been requested to speak this evening of the old houses of Farmington and of some of the people who lived in them. If my paper be not very profound with great events and much learning, it may perhaps none the less, for a passing hour, revive the fast-fading picture of our ancestors, their virtues and their foibles.

In the winter of 1639, when the town of Hartford had been founded three and one-half years, and Windsor and Wethersfield about the same time, all three towns began to think their broad acres too limited, and applied to the General Court "for some enlargement of accommodation." A committee was appointed to view the valley of the Tunxis and report on the 20th of February, but Windsor was busy building a bridge and a meeting house, and their neighbors of Wethersfield objected to the wintry weather; so the Court added to the committee Capt. John Mason, who had recently rid the colony of 600 or 700 Pequots, and who brought the Court on the 15th of June following to order the Particular Court "to conclude the conditions for the planting of Tunxis."

Five years thereafter, in 1645, the village of Tunxis Sepus, literally the village at the bend of the little river, became by legislative enactment the town of Farmington.

The settlers found the natural features of the place much as we see them to-day. To the east of the main street their lots extended to the mountain, and on the

west to the river, beyond which fertile meadows spread away to the western hills, undisfigured for more than one hundred years by divisional fences, a broad panorama of waving grain and green corn fields.

The land was indeed owned in severalty, but annually the proprietors voted on what day in October they would use it for pasturage, and on what day in April all must remove their flocks and herds. Access to this common field was through the North Meadow Gate just west of the Catholic church, or through the South Meadow Gate near the Pequabuc stone bridge. Along the main street houses began to rise, log huts at first, each provided by law with a ladder reaching to the ridge to be examined every six months by the chimney-viewers. In 1711 the town granted fourscore acres of land to encourage the erection of a saw-mill, but long before this time frame houses had been built, the sides covered with short clapboards split from logs. The oldest house of which we know the date of erection was built in 1700 by John Clark and stood until 1880 on the east side of High street, a little south of Mrs. Barney's. It had a leanto roof, the upper story much projecting, and ornamented with conspicuous pendants. Another, the last of this style, but with modern covering, still stands about seventy-five rods further south. Within, a huge chimney with its enormous fire-place and ovens, filled a large part of the lower story, barring all convenient access to the interior of the house by the front door. But this sacred portal was seldom used except for weddings, funerals, and days of solemn thanksgiving. Later on appears the gambrel roof, which was the approved style until the time of the Revolution, and which is even now being revived under the name of the Old Colonial style. The huge chimney was at length divided into two, and moved out of the way of the front door, which now, with its polished brass



knocker, welcomed the approaching guest. An old house was seldom pulled down, but, moved to the rear, it made a kitchen for the newer structure, so that in time the house had as many styles of architecture and dates of erection as an English cathedral.

As we first come in sight of the village, looking down upon it from the Hartford road, we see on the left one of our oldest houses long owned by Seth North, and built by his father Timothy or his grandfather Thomas. Mr. North did not take kindly to Puritan ways and never went to church, and so was universally known as "Sinner North." By the children he was pleased to be addressed in the most deferential manner as "Mr. Sinner." A most excellent authority, writing me about the old-time character of the village, mentioned "its universally genteel ways, where everybody went to church except Sinner North." He was otherwise so much in accordance with modern ideas, that as he drew near his end, he ordered his body to be cremated, the place a lonely spot on the mountain between two rocks, and his friend, Adam Stewart, chief cremator, who was to inherit the house for his kindly services. The civil authority, however, interposed and insisted on giving him what they deemed a Christian burial, but Adam Stewart got the house and it remained in the family many years. Nearly opposite stood in Revolutionary days the tavern of Samuel North, Jr. He, too, found his ways at variance with public opinion, bought, as he states it, his rum, sugar, tea, etc., in violation of the excise laws, in foreign parts, sold them for Continental money which proved worthless, and then was arrested on complaint of Thomas Lewis and Deacon Bull and fined £100, the General Court declining to interfere. A little east of Mr. North's tavern stood the home of the Bird family from whom the hill derived its name. They have all long ago taken their flight to other towns, but our old-

est men can easily remember the old house and the tragic end of Noadiah Bird, one of the last of the family who dwelt there. He was killed by an escaped lunatic on the night of Sunday, May 15, 1825, and the attempt to capture the lunatic resulted in the death of still another citizen. Descending the hill toward the west, we find on the corner where the road, formerly called the road to Simsbury, runs northward, an old house once the home of Josiah North, and soon after his death in 1784, passing into the hands of Capt. Isaac Buck, who there lived and died at an advanced age. But we must not linger on the site of the numerous houses that once looked over the valley from this hill, only at the foot we must stay a moment, though the little red house of Gov. Treadwell, just north of Poke brook and west of the big rock can only be remembered by the oldest of our people. Dr. Porter and Professor Denison Olmsted have both written worthy memorials of this eminent patriot, scholar, and Christian, but any exhaustive account of his public services must be a history of the common school system of Connecticut, of the rise of foreign missions, and of much of the political history of the State in the days of the Revolution.

Crossing the brook and walking on the line of the old road which once ran where the south gate of the premises of Mr. Barney stands, we come upon the house of Mr. Elijah L. Lewis, built for his grandfather Elijah in 1790, the family living while it was building in an old house just west. Going southerly about thirty rods, we find on the corner next south of the North schoolhouse an old gambrel-roofed building with the end towards the street, and, in some far-off time, painted red. In 1752 it was the property of Daniel Curtis, who, twenty years thereafter, sold it to his son Gabriel, who, after another twenty years, found it necessary to pay Capt. Judah Woodruff for new windows and for twenty days' labor in

making the old structure habitable. Gabriel was a tanner and shoemaker, and in 1812 sold out to Frederick Andrus of the same trade, removing to Burlington, Vermont. The old house now became the noisy abode of journeymen shoemakers pounding leather under the direction of Mr. Andrus, thereafter known as Boss Andrus. He died in 1845, and the old house followed the usual dreary fortunes of a tenement house until, in 1882, we find it transformed by the subtle magic of a genial philanthropy, into the home of the Tunxis Library. Entertaining books fill every nook and corner, and antique furniture ranged around the vast old-time fireplace welcome readers young and old to a free and healthful entertainment.

The old house next west, in 1752 the residence of Daniel Curtis, became thereafter the home of his son Solomon until he died in the army in 1776. In 1822, his heirs sold it to Frederick Andrus. The brick blacksmith shop and the white house adjoining were built soon after 1823 by Charles Frost. The land on which the house next west stands was successively owned by the families of Norton, Rew, Judd, North, Smith, Whitmore, and DeWolf. I do not know who built the house. The Elm Tree Inn, where Phinehas Lewis once kept a famous tavern in revolutionary days, was built at various times.

Just across the line on what was once the garden of Col. Gay and of three generations of his descendants, stood the little red shop now removed to the east side of the Waterville road just north of Poke brook. In 1795, Gabriel Curtis pays Capt. Judah Woodruff thirteen shillings for making for it a show window of thirty-two sashes (you can count them to-day if you like) for his son Lewis Curtis. Lewis advertises in the *Connecticut Courant* under date of 1799, "that he still continues to carry on the clock-making business, such as chime clocks that play a number of different tunes and clocks that exhibit the

moon's age," etc., etc. A few steps down the hill westward bring us to the house built by Col. Fisher Gay in 1766 and 1767, as appears by his ledger account with Capt. Woodruff. Col. Gay died early in the war, and some account of his public services can be found in H. P. Johnston's "Yale in the Revolution."

Crossing the Waterville road, we come to the house opposite the Catholic Church, some parts of which are very old, the upper story of the front, however, having been built by the late Capt. Pomeroy Strong, soon after he bought the place in 1802. There was, as early as 1645, one more house to the west, and then came the North Meadow gate.

Returning now to the main street, the highway committee in 1785 sold to Deacon Samuel Richards a strip out of the center of the highway, 26 feet wide, where, in the year following, he built the little shop in which traffic has been carried on successively by himself, Horace and Timothy Cowles, James K. Camp, William Gay, and by his son, the present owner. Crossing the trolley track, we come upon the lot on which Daniel Curtis and his youngest son, Eleazer, had in 1783, as the deed reads, "mutually agreed to build a new house, . . . and have large provision for the same." As they held it until 1794, it is probable that the present edifice was built by them. The next house south, where Mr. Abner Bidwell lived many years, was built by Deacon Samuel Richards in 1792 as he records in his diary.

I have spoken at some length in my last paper of this very worthy man and of his honorable service all through the revolutionary war. He was a Puritan of the Puritans, of the strictest integrity, kindly of heart, precise in manner, and with a countenance grave, not to say solemn, as became a deacon of the olden time. It is related that a small boy once sent to his store, was so overpowered by

the gravity of his demeanor, that instead of asking for a pair of H and L hinges, he demanded of the horrified deacon a pair of archangels. He was the first postmaster of Farmington. On the 22d of July, 1799, he advertises in the *Connecticut Courant* :

“Information. A post-office is established at Farmington for public accommodation. Samuel Richards, D. P. Master.”

The post-office was in the front hall of his house, and the half dozen letters that sometimes accumulated were fastened against the wall by tapes crossing each other in a diamond pattern. Five years later he records in his diary, “Kept the post-office, the proceeds of which were forty dollars, the one-half of which I gave to Horace Cowles for assisting me.” The year after he obtained this lucrative office, instead of recording as heretofore the “continuation of distress in my temporal concerns,” he deploras “my unthankfulness to God for his great goodness to me. He is now trying me by prosperity.”

Immediately to the south stands a house which, before it was modernized by the late Mr. Leonard Winship, I remember as an old red, dilapidated structure, built by I know not whom. During the Revolution it was owned by Nehemiah Street, who, as I told you at the opening of this library, was fined along with many of the young people of the village, because, being assembled at his house, they refused to disperse until after nine o'clock at night. Mr. Street was frequently in similar trouble until disgusted with Puritan ways, he converted his goods into money and sought the freedom of the far West. Poor Nehemiah! He soon found something worse than New England justice. Having invested his money in a drove of cattle, he sold them at Niagara Falls for six hundred pounds and fell in with a certain James Gale of Goshen, N. Y., who during the war commanded a plunder-

ing party on Long Island. This treacherous companion followed him from Niagara, and watching his opportunity while Mr. Street was bending over a spring of water by the roadside, struck him from behind with a tomahawk, and all the troubles of Nehemiah were ended.

The land to the south once belonged to Rev. Samuel Hooker and remained in the family for four generations. Here stands the house where Major Hooker lived and died, and where, under a great elm tree in front, most genial of story-tellers, he was wont to sit of a summer evening and entertain his youthful friends. On this locality lived his father, Roger, and his grandfather, John. The latter was an assistant, a judge of the Superior Court and a man of note in the colony. Deacon Edward Hooker states that John Hooker and the Rev. Samuel Whitman were the only men in town that were saluted with the title of Mr. Others were known as Goodman or Gaffer. Mr. Whitman, the minister, he says, would always wait on the meeting-house steps for Mr. Hooker to come up and enter the house with him on Sabbath morning and share with him the respectful salutation of the people.

Passing over the site where once stood the store of Samuel Smith, we come to the brick building erected in 1791 by Reuben S. Norton for a store, and which has since been used for divers purposes—store, tailor's shop, tenement house, post-office, church, groggery, and now, much enlarged, for a savings bank. Where my house stands, there stood, until I removed it in 1872, the very old house of Solomon Whitman. At the northeast corner was a square addition in which Miss Nancy Whitman presided over the post-office. I remember calling on the way from school and seeing through the small delivery window a huge dining-table covered with methodically-arranged letters and papers, and Miss Nancy, with gold-rimmed spectacles, bending over them. By this little

window, on a high shelf, to be out of reach of mischievous boys, stood a big dinner bell to call the postmistress, when necessary, from regions remote. Sometimes an adventurous youth, by climbing on the back of a comrade, succeeded in getting hold of the bell, but I never knew the same boy to repeat the offense. The next buildings are modern, so let us hurry on past the drug store built somewhere between 1813 and 1818 by Elijah and Gad Cowles, and past the brick schoolhouse of Miss Porter, built by Major Cowles as a hotel to accommodate the vast concourse of travelers about to come to the village by the Farmington canal. Next comes a house built by Capt. Judah Woodruff for Thomas Hart Hooker in 1768, and very soon passing with the mill property into the possession of the Demings. It was said during the days of fugitive slave laws to have been an important station on the underground railroad. It is best known to most of us as the residence of the late Samuel Deming, Esq., for many years a trial justice of the town, who fearlessly executed the law, whether his barns were burned, or whatever happened. We did not suffer from that curse of society, a lax administration of justice. The house next north of the post-office, now owned by Mr. Chauncey Deming, is said by the historian of the "Hart Family" to have belonged to Deacon John Hart, son of Capt. John, and if so, must be about 150 years old. The land was in the Hart family for five generations. Near the site of the post-office stood the house of Sergeant John Hart, son of Deacon Stephen, the immigrant, in which he with his family were burned on the night of Saturday, December 15, 1666, eight persons in all, only one son, afterward known as Capt. John, escaped, he being absent at their farm in Nod, now Avon. From this point southward to the road down to the new cemetery, all the houses were destroyed by the great fire of July 21,

1864, including the long yellow house, just north of the present parsonage, which was the home of Rev. Timothy Pitkin during his sixty years' residence in our village. In my last paper I spoke of him as a patriot in the War of Independence. Of his high character and fervid eloquence as pastor and preacher, we have the testimony of Dr. Porter in his "Half-Century Discourse." Professor Olmsted says of him: "Do you not see him coming in at yonder door, habited in his flowing blue cloak, with his snow-white wig and tri-cornered hat of the olden time? Do you not see him wending his way through the aisle to the pulpit, bowing on either side with the dignity and grace of the old nobility of Connecticut?" Immediately south of the road to the new cemetery stands the brick house built by Dr. Porter in 1808, the year of his marriage. We need not linger in our hasty progress to speak of the manifold virtues of one too well known to us all, and personally to many of us to need any eulogies here. The next house, now the residence of Mr. Rowe, was built by the Rev. Joseph Washburn on a lot purchased by him for that purpose in 1796. This healer of dissensions and much-loved pastor, after a settlement of eleven years, while seeking a mild southern climate in his failing health, died on the voyage on Christmas day, 1805, and was buried at sea. A few years later his house became the home of this library under the care of Deacon Elijah Porter. The large brick house on the top of the hill, with its imposing Roman façade looking southward, was built by Gen. George Cowles. The house on the corner, long the residence of Zenas Cowles, and now owned by Lieut.-Commander Cowles of the U. S. Navy, of a style of architecture much superior to all houses of the village of that time and perhaps of any time, is said to have been designed by an officer of Burgoyne's army sent here as a prisoner of war. The house next north of it



was bought by the late Richard Cowles in 1810, and must have been built by its former owner and occupant, Coral Case, or by his father, John Case.

But it is high time that we crossed the street and commenced our return. Nearly opposite the last-mentioned house stood the dwelling of the Rev. Samuel Hooker, second minister of Farmington, of whom I have formerly spoken. On this site, and probably in the same house, lived Roger Newton, his brother-in-law and the first pastor of this church. On the 13th of October, 1652, he stood up with six other Christian men, and they known in New England phraseology as the "Seven Pillars of the Church," seeking no authority from any intermediary church, consociation, bishop, priest, or earthly hierarch, but deriving their powers from the Word of God alone, as they understood it, declared themselves to be the First Church of Christ in Farmington. Probably during the pastorate of Mr. Newton there was no meeting-house. The Fast Day service of December, 1666, we know was held at the house of Sergeant John Hart, two days before the fire, and there is a carefully transmitted tradition, that the services of the Sabbath were held on the west side of the main street a little south of the Meadow Lane, and, therefore, probably at the house owned by Mrs. Sarah Wilson, sister of Rev. Samuel Hooker, where now stands the house of T. H. and L. C. Root. We hear of no meeting-house until 1672, when the record called the New Book begins, the "ould book" having been worn out and lost, and with it all account of the erection of the first house. In September, 1657, Mr. Newton was dismissed from this church and went to Boston to take ship for England. What befel him by the way is narrated by John Hull, mint-master of Boston, he who coined the famous pine-tree shillings. After waiting on shipboard at Nantasket Roads six or eight days for a favorable

wind, the commissioners of the colonies and the Rev. John Norton sent for him, desiring a conference before his departure. The captain of the vessel and his associates, of a race always superstitious, thinking this divine another Jonah and the cause of their detention, hurried him on shore, and, the wind immediately turning fair, sailed on their way without him. He remained in Boston several weeks, preaching for Rev. John Norton on the 17th of October. After this date, we lose sight of him until his settlement in Milford on the 22d of August, 1660.

Crossing the road formerly known as "the highway leading to the old mill place," and a century later as "Hatter's Lane," we come to the house next south of the old cemetery, owned and probably built by John Mix. He was commonly known as Squire Mix, a graduate of Yale, an officer of the Revolution, ten years Judge of Probate, thirty-two years town clerk, and twenty-six years a representative to the General Assembly. He was, as I am told by those who knew him well, tall in stature, dressed as a gentleman of the time, with silver knee-buckles, formal in manner, of quick temper, punctilious, very hospitable, a good neighbor, a member of no church, and bound by no creed, and in politics a federalist. In his latter days, when old age and total blindness shut him out from the busy world, when the political party of his active days had passed away, and new men who hated the names of Washington and Hamilton filled all the old familiar places in the town, the State, and the nation, he is said to have sometimes longed for a judicious use of the thunderbolts of the Almighty. Here, too, for much of his life lived his son Ebenezer Mix, universally known as Captain Eb., who made voyages to China and brought back to the merchant princes of the town, tea, spices, silks, china tea-sets, marked with the names of wealthy purchasers, and all the luxuries of the Orient.

Passing the house adjoining the burying-ground on the north, the home of this library and of Deacon Elijah Porter until his marriage in 1812, we come to the house built by Mr. Asahel Wadsworth, and which was reported unfinished in 1781 when the General Assembly, dissatisfied with its treatment by the inn-keepers of Hartford, proposed to finish their winter session elsewhere, and requested the selectmen of Farmington to report what accommodation could be obtained here. The next house, from which the stage coach goes its daily rounds, was once the residence of Mr. Asa Andrews, and after 1826, of his son-in-law, the late Deacon Simeon Hart. In the brick shop next north, Mr. Andrews made japanned tin ware. He was the maker of those chandeliers, compounds of wood and tin, that long hung from the meeting-house ceiling. Crossing the street formerly known as the Little Back Lane, we come to the house built by Asa Andrews on land bought in 1804, and where Deacon Simeon Hart for many years kept his well-known school. About twenty rods south, on the east side of that street, we come to the gambrel-roofed house built by Hon. Timothy Pitkin, LL.D., on a lot bought by him in 1788. He was a son of the Rev. Timothy Pitkin, a graduate of Yale, a lawyer by profession, five times speaker of the Legislature, a member of Congress from 1806 to 1820, and the author of a "Political and Civil History of the United States," of great value as a book of reference. Next south is the gambrel-roofed house formerly the home of Capt. Selah Porter, and immediately beyond this once stood the house of Deacon Martin Bull and of his father before him.

Returning to the late residence of Deacon Simeon Hart, and crossing the now vacant lot where once flourished the famous inn of Amos Cowles, we reach the house with Ionic columns built by the late Major Timothy

Cowles. Chauncey Jerome, in his "History of the American Clock Business," says, under date of 1815:

"I moved to the town of Farmington . . . . and went to work for Capt. Selah Porter for twenty dollars per month. We built a house for Major Timothy Cowles, which was then the best one in Farmington."

The meeting-house next on our way need not detain us. He who would attempt to add to the graphic and exhaustive history by President Porter would be presumptuous indeed. The next house of brick was built by Gad Cowles within the century, and the three-story house of Dr. Wheeler on the corner, by Jonathan Cowles in 1799.

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

Leaving the main street and ascending the hill to the east, we come at the dividing line between the grounds about Miss Porter's schoolhouse and the late residence of Rev. T. K. Fessenden to the site of the house of Col. Noadiah Hooker, known as the "Old Red College" during the days when his son, Deacon Edward, there fitted Southern young men for college. Commander Edward Hooker of the United States Navy sends me a plan of the old house, which he of course well remembers. He says, "the part marked kitchen was floored with smooth, flat mountain stones, and had a big door at the eastern end,

and originally at each end, and my father used to say that when his father was a boy, they used to drive a yoke of oxen with a sled load of wood into one door and up to the big fireplace, then unload the wood upon the fire and drive the team out of the other door." Of the building of the house on the corner eastward, we have the most minute account from the time when in January, 1811, Capt. Luther Seymour drew the plan to the 25th of May, 1812, when Deacon Hooker took possession with his youthful bride. We even know the long list of those who helped raise the frame and of those who came too late for the raising but in time for the refreshments.

But we must hurry back to the main street, lest with the rich materials at hand for an account of this most interesting man, we detain you beyond all proper bounds. The next old house to the north, the home of Col. Martin Cowles, was built and occupied by John Porter in 1784. Opposite the Savings Bank, the south part of the long house once the residence of Reuben S. Norton, merchant, was built by his grandfather, Thomas Smith, Sen., and the north third, by Deacon Thomas Smith, son of the latter. The next house, long the residence of Horace Cowles, Esq., was built by Samuel Smith, brother of the Deacon, in 1769, and is a good specimen of the style of houses erected by Capt. Judah Woodruff. The next old house, with the high brick basement, was built about 1797 by Capt. Luther Seymour, cabinet-maker and house-builder. Many choice pieces of old furniture in town, much prized by relic-hunters, were the work of his hand, but a large part of his work, thickly studded with brass nail heads, as was the fashion of the time, has been forever hidden from sight under the sods of the old burying-ground. Capt. Seymour was also librarian of one of the several libraries which divided the literary patronage of the village. The next house on a slight elevation stands

on a lot bought in 1769 by John Thomson, third in descent of that name, conspicuous about town with his leathern jacket and his pronounced opinions on Continental paper money. Here lived three generations of his descendants. Passing the house owned by Dr. Thomson, and before him by Mr. James K. Camp, and two other buildings, we come to a house built or largely renewed in 1808 by Nathaniel Olmsted, goldsmith and clockmaker. Here for twenty years were made the tall clocks bearing his name, which still correctly measure time with their solemn beat. He removed to New Haven to be near his brother, Professor Denison Olmsted, and there died in 1860, most genial and loveable of men. His funeral discourse was from the words, "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile." We will halt under the big elm tree, which overhangs the little house where Manin Curtis spent his life, long enough to say that his father, Sylvanus Curtis, in company with Phinehas Lewis in 1762, the year when Sylvanus was married, brought home from a swamp three elm trees. One was planted back of the Elm Tree Inn, one in front of the house of Mr. Curtis, and the third failed to live. The big elm tree is, therefore, 133 years old. (On the corner eastward stands the house, much improved of late, built in 1786 and 1787 by Capt. Judah Woodruff for Major Peter Curtiss, an officer in the Revolutionary War, who removed to Granby in 1790, and was the first keeper of the reconstructed Newgate prison, leaving it in 1796 in declining health, and dying in 1797. Omitting the other houses on the west side of High street, for want of time and information, we come to the house lately owned by Selah Westcott, built by Major Samuel Dickinson on a lot bought by him in 1813. Major Dickinson was a house-builder, and when the Farmington canal was opened, he commanded the first packet boat which sailed southward from our wharves on the 10th of

November, 1828, on which a six-year-old boy, afterward a gallant U. S. naval officer in the late war, made his first voyage, sailing as far south as the old South Basin. He writes me: "Long live the memory of the old 'James Hill-house,' and her jolly Captain Dickinson, who was not only a royal canal boat captain, but a famous builder, whose work still stands before you in the 'Old Red Bridge,' one of the best and most substantially built bridges of Connecticut." On the northeast corner of the intersection of High street with the road to New Britain, long stood the house of Capt. Joseph Porter, one of the three houses on the east side of High street, with much projecting upper stories and conspicuous pendants, built about 1700. This was moved some rods up the hill when Mr. Franklin Woodford built his new house, and was burned on the evening of January 15, 1886. So there remains but one of the three houses, the one bought by Rev. Samuel Whitman for his son, Elnathan, in 1735, and is the same house sold by John Stanley, Sen., to Capt. Ebenezer Steel in 1720. ) Descending to the low ground on the north and rising again, we come to the gambrel-roofed house where lived Dr. Eli Todd from 1798 until his removal to Hartford in 1819. Of this eminent man you will find appreciative notices in the two addresses of President Porter and in the article on the Connecticut Retreat for the Insane by Dr. Stearns in the Memorial History of Hartford County. He will probably be longest remembered as the first superintendent of the Connecticut Retreat for the Insane in Hartford, where his system of minimum restraint and kind treatment opened a new era for suffering humanity. At the northern end of High street, facing the road to the river, we make our last stop at the house of Mrs. Barney, built by Capt. Judah Woodruff about 1805 for Phineas Lewis. Between this house and the place from which we set out, there stands no house, old or

new, to detain us longer. Thanking you for the patience with which you have endured our long walk through the village streets, I am reminded that it is time we parted company with the old worthies whom we have called up before us for the entertainment of an idle hour, remembering that in times gone by they were wont to hale before his Excellency the Governor such as, having assembled themselves together, refused to disperse until after nine of the clock.







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