

Tyler House reflects distinctive architecture



The John Tyler at 250 E. Main St. as it looked in 1921. Photograph by Van Dyke, courtesy of The James Blackstone Memorial Library.

One of Branford's outstanding Colonial structures is the John Tyler House at 250 E. Main St. Built about 1710 by the Tyler family, the house was purchased by Andrew Beach when he came from Stratford in 1737.

The house was occupied by his son, Ebenezer Beach, followed by grandson Asa Beach. The Beach family maintained a farm on the property but were also shoemakers and the Mill Plain section of Branford was well known for that industry.

The house was left to Louisa, daughter of Asa Beach and wife of Timothy Palmer.

Their son, James Goodrich Palmer, was the last of the family to occupy the house.

James was a nurse and worked throughout New Haven county caring for individuals in their home. "Uncle Jim" still maintained the family home and made cheese in the attic. The house then known as the "Jimmie Palmer Place" was sold to Paul Altermatt in

1905.

The Tyler House is a New England Colonial with a large stone center chimney and a steeply pitched roof. The original house was a Colonial two-room plan and the rear lean-to is a later addition.

Though simply trimmed, the house is distinguished by its hooded entrance and twin bench seats on the west stoop.

The John Tyler House has been included in many house surveys, including those done by the Colonial Dames, the WPA, and is described in J. Frederick Kelly's book *The Early Domestic Architecture of*

Connecticut.

The building is on the National Registry of Historical Places under Branford's Colonial House Theme. The house has been recently painted white and opened as a real estate office.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jane Peterson Bouley is town historian for Branford.



PICTURES OF THE PAST

Jane Peterson Bouley