

Stop #6: Charles B. Smith House

Charles and Eliza Smith's large red brick house (1875) is based on a design by Richard Upjohn. Smith was a senior partner at Smith, Bourn & Co., now Smith Worthington & Co., which has been in operation making saddles and leather goods since 1794. The company is presently located on Homestead Ave. in Hartford making items locally and selling them around the country. The World Affairs Council currently has office space here.



Smith House

Resume your walk from here to 36 Forest St., the former Burton family house.

Stop #7: Burton Family House

The Burton House has a carriage on the lawn out front and is now used for apartments. The original house, built between 1853-1870, was destroyed by a fire in 1870, and this one is listed as being completed in 1895. The Reverend Nathaniel J. Burton and his wife Rachel rented this home for several years.

Continue to the house located on the corner of Forest St. and Hawthorn St. between the last two apartment buildings.

Stop #8: John and Isabella Beecher Hooker House

John Hooker was a joint partner in the purchasing of Nook Farm. This house, built in 1853, was designed by Octavius Jordan of Hartford. Hooker, a lawyer, had a strong tie to Hartford because his family founded the city. He married Harriet Beecher Stowe's sister Isabella. She was a leader in the Women's Suffrage Movement working closely with key figures to earn women the right to vote. The house is the oldest original structure still standing today. It is currently being used as an apartment building.



Croquet at the Hookers



Perkins House

The Perkins family lived in a house directly across from the Hooker's house. Mary Beecher Perkins (Harriet Beecher Stowe's sister) resided there with her husband Thomas C. Perkins. The Perkins home was later a childhood residence to the famous actress, Katharine Hepburn and her family. The house was razed in the 1900s.

This now concludes your Nook Farm Walking Tour.

To return to the Stowe Visitor Center for more information please follow Forest Street back towards Farmington Avenue, and turn left at the Stowe Center Parking Lot. The Visitor Center is straight ahead. House tours are offered at both the Harriet Beecher Stowe House and the Mark Twain House to further your Nook Farm experience. We hope you enjoyed your walk through history.

The Harriet Beecher Stowe Center preserves and interprets Stowe's Hartford home and the Center's historic collections, promotes vibrant discussion of her life and work, and inspires commitment to social justice and positive change.



HARRIET
BEECHER
STOWE
CENTER

Her words changed the world.



Park River, by John Baker c. 1865

Harriet Beecher Stowe's Nook Farm Neighborhood *A Self-Guided Tour*

77 Forest Street • Hartford, Connecticut 06105
860-522-9258 • www.HarrietBeecherStowe.org

Welcome to the Hartford neighborhood of Nook Farm



Nook Farm, c.1890

This vibrant neighborhood was home to some of the most influential writers, artists, politicians, and social activists in the world during the mid to late 1800s. Harriet Beecher Stowe called this home.

Imagine: the idyllic landscape, the picturesque gardens, music spilling out from parlors and drawing rooms, games of croquet being played on the lawn, with carriages and trolleys traveling by. The residents' accomplishments, activities, and easy hospitality fascinated the public and made the neighborhood renowned.

The neighborhood began in 1853, when Stowe's brother-in-law John Hooker and Francis Gillette purchased 140 acres of pasture and woodland. Nook Farm was bordered on the east by Sigourney Street, on the north by Farmington Avenue, and on the west and south by the Park River.

There were a total of twenty-four houses on the property, and many lots were sold to various members and long time friends of the Gillette and Hooker families. Six of the original homes and two of the carriage houses remain standing today. They are an oasis of architectural beauty in a busy and diverse urban neighborhood.

Stop #1: In front of Stowe Visitor Center, on the lawn

Nook Farm residents made reference to the natural beauty of the land describing the area as a "giant forested park." Lots featured gardens of both utilitarian and aesthetic design with greenhouses outside and conservatories inside the homes.

Travel down the sidewalk to the left of the Visitor Center to the front of the Twain House.

Stop #2: Mark Twain House

Samuel Clemens, better known as Mark Twain, described Hartford as the most beautiful city he had ever seen. He had just completed *The Gilded Age*, which he co-authored with Nook Farm neighbor Charles Dudley Warner, when he and his family moved to this house, designed by Edward Tuckerman Potter, in 1874. Twain wrote his most famous novels, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, here.



Twain House

Continue traveling down the sidewalk towards the left onto Farmington Ave. Stop at the house on the corner of Farmington Ave. and Forest St.

Stop #3: Katharine Seymour Day House

This home, which took three years to build, was completed in 1884 for Franklin and Mary Chamberlin. It was



Chamberlin Day House

designed by Francis Kimball and built during the aesthetic movement which incorporated themes of nature within the architecture. Chamberlin was a lawyer and part of the Connecticut State Legislature. He owned 10 acres of land in Nook Farm and sold Clemens and Stowe their properties. The house is now named after Katharine Seymour Day, Stowe's grandniece, who was responsible for preserving the Twain, Chamberlin, and Stowe Houses.

Continue on the sidewalk and stop in front of the Stowe House on your right.

Stop #4: Harriet Beecher Stowe House

Nook Farm was home to Harriet Beecher Stowe for the last thirty-two years of her life, 1864-1896. This was not her first residence in Nook Farm. She originally lived in Oakholm, an eight-gabled mansion that she had built for herself in 1864. It was located where Capitol Avenue is today and was torn down in 1905.



Oakholm



Stowe House

In 1873, Stowe acquired this brick Victorian Gothic Revival cottage-style house from Franklin Chamberlin. Stowe lived here with her husband Calvin and her adult twin daughters, Hattie and Eliza until her death in 1896. Stowe was an accomplished author of 30 books, her most famous being *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Follow the sidewalk, continuing down Forest St. Stop in front of Hartford Public High School on your right.

Stop #5: Hartford Public High School

Hartford High is the second oldest high school in the country. Originally located on Asylum Ave, the current building was erected in 1963 and a renovation was completed in 2007. There was much debate over the construction of this school because eleven of the original Nook Farm houses were torn down to accommodate the construction. Two of the most prominent families of Nook Farm, the Gillette's and the Warner's, had houses on this site.

Francis Gillette was a lawyer and politician. He was also an abolitionist and involved in the Underground Railroad. Francis and Elisabeth Hooker Gillette were parents to the playwright William Gillette, most famous for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes.

The Warner House, originally built by George Warner in 1870, was located here. Their son, Charles Dudley Warner best known for his wit and humor, later lived here. He was a novelist, essayist and co-editor of the *Hartford Courant*.

Carefully cross Forest St. directly to 66 Forest St., the Charles B. Smith House.



Gillette House



Warner House