

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

173-01434-213

Warren

STU.232
STU.233

Town/City: Sturbridge

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Fiskdale

Photograph



Address: 213 Brookfield Road

Historic Name: Eliab and Fanny Marsh House

Uses: Present: single-family dwelling

Original: single-family dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1795

Source: Registry of Deeds

Style/Form: Georgian to Federal

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: clapboard

Roof: asphalt

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Barn

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Wing with an ell added, ca. 1990. Door surround possibly a later alteration, date unknown.

Chimney reduced in size above ridge, n.d.

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 3.18 acres

Setting: Large irregularly shaped parcel with the residential building facing east and set back from Brookfield Road. A low, stone wall runs parallel to the road, north of the residence. The rear perimeter of the parcel borders the Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90) and a wooded area.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Bonnie Parsons, PVPC

Organization: Sturbridge Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): October/2017

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

213 BROOKFIELD ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Area(s) Form No.

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☒ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Eliab and Fanny Marsh House is stylistically transitional between the Georgian and Federal periods. It is a center chimney house of two-and-a-half stories and a side-gable roof. The house is five bays wide and two deep. Eaves are clipped in the gables in Georgian fashion and there is an overhang or jetty in both the north and south gable ends between second story and attic levels, which is also a Georgian feature. There is an added one-story wing on the south elevation. It is two bays wide and one deep and a one story ell extends from its west elevation. The façade of the main block has a center entry with an open pediment surround above pilasters that are set on substantial bases. A Federal style fanlight with curved muntins rises into the pediment field. According to Holly Izard of Old Sturbridge Village, the door surround is a later alteration. The door is batten on strap hinges. Windows in the house have 12/12 sash and Georgian style crown molded lintels.

North of the house is a New England form, all-purpose barn. Its double leaf doors slide on an interior track below a 16-light transom. Above the doors in the barn's gable field is a single window opening with 1/2/12 sash. A pedestrian entry is at its northeast corner.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

In 1795 Eliab Marsh was sold sixty acres by his father Eli Marsh in order to begin a farm. Then, in 1805 Eliab married Fanny Lawton from Sturbridge, and it is from these two transactions that the Marsh House is dated. Fanny and Eliab farmed here for the next twenty-four years before selling the house to Jonathan P. Curtis in 1829. Between 1804 and 1829 Jonathan P. Curtis bought several hundred acres of land in Fiskdale. Piece by piece, he put together a 140-acre farm in the village on the east and west sides of Brookfield Road. Both **231 Brookfield Road** and **213 Brookfield Road** were part of his farm with their respective houses. Curtis then spent a quarter century working the farm. It is likely that he rented this, the Marsh House, and lived at 231 Brookfield Road. Curtis might have gone on longer, but he died of bilious fever in 1849 at 68. It is from his ownership that the farm took the familiar name quoted several times in deeds as being the "Curtis Farm".

Jonathan Curtis's son Jonathan, Jr. was living in Louisville, Kentucky when his father died, but he sold the farm in 1850 to another Curtis, William, who may have been a family member. Between 1850 and 1866 the farm changed hands three times as investors appear to have leased it out. William Richardson of Brookfield bought it in 1855 and it remained at 140 acres in extent. Apparently Richardson rented this house as the map of 1857 notes that Eliakim Adams was the resident of the house. Eliakim and Lucinda Adams with their children Helen, Charles and Daniel lived here while Eliakim worked as a lumberman. The lumbering industry was strong in Sturbridge during this period.

Though it appears the farm with the two farmhouses changed hands twice between 1855 and 1866, in the latter year it was bought up by Patrick King. King was an entrepreneurial farmer. He bought and sold land throughout Sturbridge from the 1860s after emigrating to Sturbridge from Ireland. King bought the farm in 1866, but he and Mary King lived at 231 Brookfield Road, while renting this house from 1866 to 1877. On the map of 1870 Owen Monahan and his wife Mary lived and farmed here. Owen and Mary were both immigrants from Ireland. Owen came to this country with his twin brother Patrick, and Patrick's wife Mary. By 1876 when Patrick King sold the farm to George and Hannah Adams it still contained the 140 acres which included a portion of land in Brimfield of Hampden County.

Several generations of the Adams family then began their ownership of the farm. Between 1876 and 1888 George and Hannah Adams worked the farm and Hannah is mentioned in the 1888 deed as a full owner rather than having dowry rights only. The 140 acres remained through the 1920s when the farm began to change hands rather frequently. In 1925 Ephraim and Albina La

Continuation sheet 1

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Flamme bought it and kept it until 1952. They farmed the 140 acres as a general farm but when they sold it in 1952 they divided it, and 213 Brookfield Road was sold with 7.6 acre house lot and adjacent open land, and 231 Brookfield was similarly divided with a house lot and farmland. This house was sold between 1952 and 1977 three more times with its 7.6 acre homelot and additional farmland in both Brimfield and Sturbridge. But from 1955 the farm was greatly reduced in size to its current 7.6 acres as Massachusetts took farmland for the Massachusetts Turnpike, and in 1959 the United States took land for the East Brimfield Dam and Reservoir.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

George Van Fleet Book 08534 Page 0351 pre 1992

Maps

Bailey, O. H. & Co. Bird's eye view *Sturbridge and Fiskdale*, Massachusetts, 1892.

Beers, F. W. *Plan of Towns of Sturbridge and Southbridge*, 1870.

Walling, H. F. *Map of Worcester County*, Wm. E. Baker, Boston, 1857.

Primary Sources

Chase, Nelly M. *Photograph Album*, Joshua Hyde Public Library, Sturbridge.

Secondary Sources

Burns, Brian. *Sturbridge: A Pictorial History*, Norfolk, 1988.

Clark, Joseph. *Historical Sketch of Sturbridge, Massachusetts*, Brookfield, Massachusetts, 1838.

Corey, Charles F. "Old Houses in Sturbridge" *Quinebaug Historical Society Leaflets*, vol.1, no. 5, 1900.

Davis, George. *A Historical Sketch of Sturbridge and Southbridge*, West Brookfield, 1856.

Hurd, D. Hamilton. *History of Worcester County, Massachusetts*, vol. 1, Philadelphia 1889.

Izard, Holly. *Old Houses of Sturbridge*, scrapbook, n.d., Joshua Hyde Public Library, Sturbridge.

Digital Resources

www.Ancestry.com for federal censuses 1790-1940 and Massachusetts State Censuses 1855, 1865.

<https://dp.la/> Digital Public Library of America

www.masslandrecords.com for deeds

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National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- ☒ Individually eligible ☐ Eligible **only** in a historic district
- ☐ Contributing to a potential historic district ☐ Potential historic district

Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Statement of Significance by Bonnie Parsons

The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The Eliab and Fanny Marsh House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C.

Meeting criterion A, the Marsh House was the center of a 140-acre farm for over 150 years, mirroring Sturbridge's greater agricultural history. Its ownership history from the late 18th century also contributes to the town's agricultural history as it was divided off from one of the early Sturbridge families' property for a successive generation's farming. By the 1820s it became part of a movement among some of Fiskdale's more prosperous farmers to consolidate several farms into one, rent out the extra houses and barns, while lumbering woodland and cultivating the enlarged acreage for dairy purposes until such time as it would be divided and sold to the expanding Fiskdale residents. This farm took part in the agricultural success of several Irish immigrant families.

Meeting criterion C, the Marsh House is a fine example of a rural, Georgian style farmhouse with Federal stylistic features illustrating the continued use of plans and elevations that were suited to the conditions and tastes of central Massachusetts and its residents. Together with its barn and surrounding fields, it represents the appearance of 19th century Sturbridge.

The Eliab and Fanny Marsh House has local significance. It has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.