

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

202-02056-083

East
Brookfield

STU.240

Town/City: Sturbridge

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Fiskdale

Photograph



Address: 83 Cedar Street

Historic Name: Thomas Marsh Farm Building

Uses: Present: single-family dwelling

Original: barn (attributed)

Date of Construction: ca. 1860

Source: Registry of Deeds

Style/Form: no style

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: granite

Wall/Trim: faux brick

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Ca. 1910 converted to house from barn (attributed)
Wing added, ca. 2015

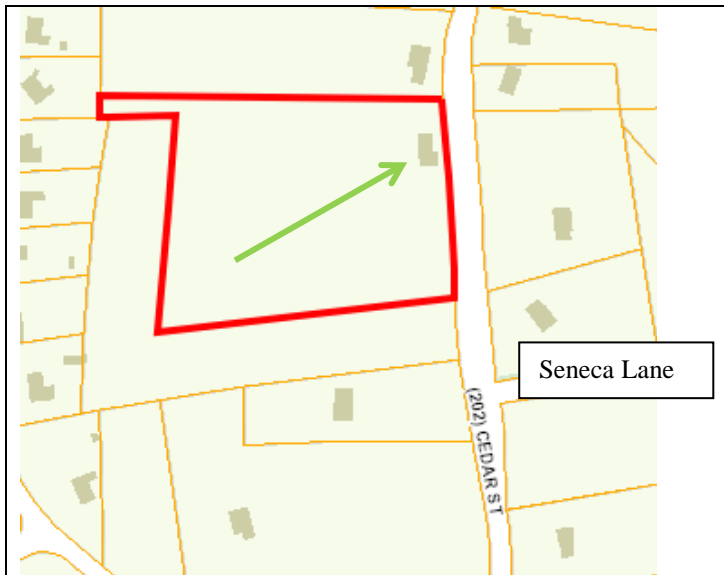
Condition: fair-good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 4.5 acres

Setting: Set close to the road, this house is east-facing and on its west is woodland.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Bonnie Parsons, PVPC

Organization: Sturbridge Historical Commission

Date : November/2017

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

83 Cedar Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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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.

83 Cedar Street is a two-story building on granite foundations. It is a simple house form that is relatively rare in Sturbridge. It has a front-gable roof with wide eaves that are thinly boxed. Set back from the road, the main block of the house on its north elevation has an added, two-story wing under a hipped roof. The wing has concrete foundations and vinyl siding. The older main block is sided in faux brick tarpaper, but is in the process of being vinyl-sided. Three bays wide the façade has a center entry within an unadorned surround. A wooden ramp leads to the entry. Windows are 1/1 vinyl replacements. The house is 4 bays deep and there is a small centered chimney on the roof ridge.

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 1824 Benjamin Bullock and his wife Louisa bought three tracts of farmland on Cedar Street amounting to about 46 acres. The tracts were from two different farms whose owners had died. From the Henry Plimpton farm came two tracts: one, a 36 acre tract, had a house on it, and the second, on the east side of the road had about 10 acres but no buildings were mentioned in the deed. From John Boyden the Bullocks then got an additional five acres with no frontage on the road. Benjamin and Louisa then farmed until 1836. In that year they sold their farm to Thomas Marsh who continued farming the land until his death in 1867. Part of his farm, 15 acres where this barn is located, was sold to Emory and Maria Bates, and on it the deed specifically mentioned the presence of a barn. It is possible that this building was the barn in question and was constructed post-1850 when both English and New England style barns were being constructed. Either barn form is consistent with the building's current appearance.

The division and sale of a farm's land often came about as neighboring farmers wished to buy a particular pasture or tilling land without taking on an additional house and barns. The house and outbuildings were then sold on a smaller parcel and the next owner would begin acquiring adjacent acreage as it became available, meanwhile leasing farmland. This process took place when Emory Bates sold part of the Thomas Marsh farm to Darius Harris with the house, and another neighbor sold Harris an additional 4 ½ acres of farmland. Harris was a blacksmith, operated a trip hammer in a local industry, and farmed with his wife Susan for the next two decades, eventually passing the property to their oldest daughter Alice. It stayed in the family until 1906. From 1906 to 1926 the property with buildings was passed from owner to owner, most living outside of Sturbridge, suggesting that it had become a rental property, possibly having been converted from a barn to a house by Darius Harris. Among the residents were George and Zelda Dumas – George worked as a grinder at a glass shop; Joseph Denno - who worked as a shop laborer; George Denno - who worked as a lens grinder at American Optical, and John Cadarette - who also worked in a factory. While they may all have done some farming on the property they listed themselves in the federal census as factory works in both Sturbridge and Southbridge.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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

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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