

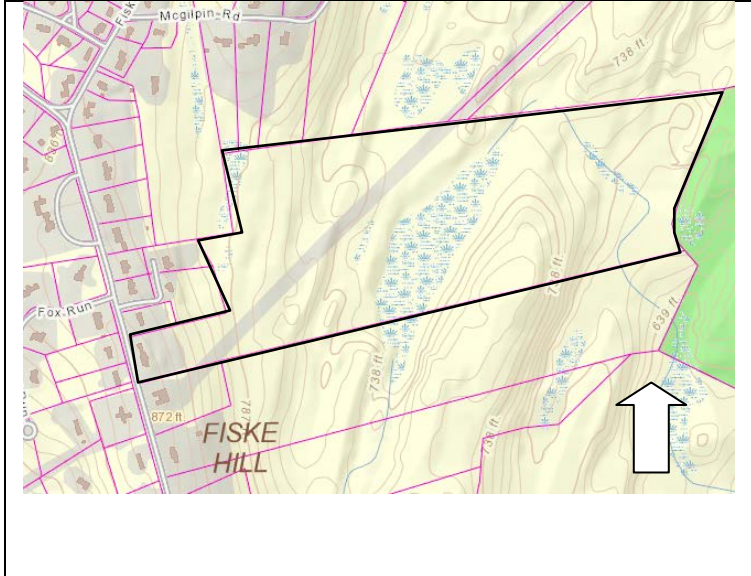
# FORM B – BUILDING

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

## Photograph



## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Shannon Walsh, PVPC

**Organization:** Sturbridge Historical Commission

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

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

280-03511-066

Southbridge

STU.F

STU.53  
STU. 258

**Town/City:** Sturbridge

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Fiske Hill

**Address:** 66 Fiske Hill Road

**Historic Name:** David Fiske House

**Uses:** Present: Classified as Motel in Assessor's Database

Original: Single Family Dwelling/Agricultural, Inn

**Date of Construction:** 1786

**Source:** Research by Agnes S. Wilkin (MHC.53), 1973

**Style/Form:** Federal with later alterations

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Clapboard/Wood

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Outbuilding for lodging

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): (dates unknown)

Alterations of form (early to mid-twentieth century)

Replacement windows

**Condition:** Fair to good

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 51.25 acres

**Setting:** Large, elongated partially wooded lot. Residence faces west along Fiske Hill Road between its intersections with Fox Run and Williams Road

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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 David Fiske House, at 66 Fiske Hill Road, is a Colonial style residence, with later alterations, which provides evidence of the early residential and agricultural growth and development along what was to become Fiske Hill Road in Sturbridge. The central section of this two and a half story high building is five bays wide by two bays deep, with adjoining secondary wings. It has a stone foundation and a clapboard exterior with wood trim. The main roof is side gabled and covered with asphalt shingles and has a minimal eave overhang and eave returns. There is a central, interior brick chimney set at the roof ridge and an exterior chimney on the northern elevation of a side wing. Windows appear to be a mix of older wood sash and newer replacements but would require closer inspection to determine their integrity. Previous research has noted that this building has had extensive compatible alterations, making it challenging to assess the age of some of the character defining architectural features.<sup>1</sup>

The main, western facing façade of the central section of the residence has a paneled door with divided lights towards the top, capped with a Federal style wood fanlight and flanked by side lights. Upper story windows are set right up to the cornice line, similar to Georgian style architecture.<sup>2</sup> This section of the building also has two pedimented dormers with 6/6 windows. The northern side elevation of the main section of the building has a second story casement window, with each side having eight divided lights, as well as an upper story 8/8 window, set within the gable.

The southern side wing has a gambrel roof with eave returns and a triple window, shed roof dormer on the western facing side. The southern first story elevation of this wing has triple windows flanked by rounded pilasters. There is a large, 8/8 window topped with an elliptical fanlight and keystone, set within the upper gambrel.

The northern side wing is side gabled with multi-level rooflines. There is a shed roof dormer on the western facing roof line, with what appears to be a casement window, set within the extension of the primary roof of this wing, which slopes down over an open porch, and is supported by rounded columns.

An arcade, with squared support columns, connects the main building to a smaller outbuilding, currently identified as living quarters.<sup>3</sup> This one and a half story building has a stone foundation, clapboard siding, and wood trim. It is two bays wide by two bays deep with a steeply pitched, side gable, asphalt shingle roof with minimal eave overhangs and slight eave returns. Corner boards define the edges of this square plan building. Windows are 6/6 with wood sills and lintels. One entry, on the southern facing elevation, can be accessed from beneath the arcade and a second, upper story entry is on the same elevation, accessed by stairs.

### 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.*

Fiske Hill refers to the "first permanent European agricultural settlement after circa 1725" which was established in the Eastern Upland area of Sturbridge.<sup>4</sup> In 1731, brothers Henry (1707-1790) and Daniel Fiske (1709-1778) settled on the hill, prior to the 1738 incorporation of the town of Sturbridge, and the area was known as New Medfield. These men and their descendants "were important not only on the hill as farmers and founders of the Baptist church there, but also in town government and, by the

<sup>1</sup> Wilkin, Agnes S. "6 Fiske Hill Rd" (MHC Inventory Form #WSG.53), 1973. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?MhclId=STU.53>, accessed October 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Virginia S. McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> "66 Fiske Hill Road," *Vision Government Solutions*, <http://gis.vgsi.com/sturbridgema/Parcel.aspx?Pid=1430>, accessed October 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Massachusetts Historical Commission. "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Sturbridge." 1984.

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1800s, in industrial enterprises in Globe Village, Westville, and Fiskdale.”<sup>5</sup> Fertile soil made the area ideal for agricultural use and by the late eighteenth century, Fiske Hill had also developed as a stagecoach road with a Baptist Meeting House, school, and inn. By the early to mid-twentieth century, development shifted from agriculture towards higher-end residential growth.

This residence was the home of David Fiske (1759-1817), son of Henry Fiske. David, “who settled on the highest point of the elevation,” was remembered as “a thrifty farmer, and an amiable and upright man,” who “as a neighbor, a townsman, a citizen and a Christian, he was kind, liberal and exemplary.”<sup>6</sup> It was noted that his family was “trained up in habits of industry and were favored with common school instruction requisite for the transaction of business.” Later residents of this property were David’s sons, Josiah (1785-1838) and Lyman Fiske (1799-1832) who, in the 1920s, transformed the mill at Globe Village, in Southbridge, into a cotton and woolen factory.<sup>7</sup>

Previous research has determined that this property was used as an inn along the stagecoach road, and also as a gathering space related to the Baptist Meeting House (1784-1832) across the street, constructed on land provided by Henry Fiske.<sup>8</sup>

Eli Brooks (1821-1897), related to the Fiske family by his mother, Esther Fisk (1780-1863), purchased the property in 1856 for \$7,000, leading to more than six decades of the site’s operation as Brooks Farm.(Figures 1 and 2)

The cottage outbuilding was constructed after 1898 as it is not shown on a map from that time. (Figure 3)

The building was altered around 1918, when it was purchased by Raymond Burnham (1887-1944) of Burnham Insurance Company, located in Southbridge. By the mid-twentieth century, the site operated as a guest house for the Treadway Inn (the Publick House on the Common, STU.36) and was owned by Publick House Inc. until it was sold in 1964.<sup>9</sup> By the early twenty-first century, it continues to be classified as commercial, motel space.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Agnes S. Wilkin, “Fiske Hill,” (MHC Inventory Form STU.F, 1973), <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?MhclId=STU.F>, accessed October 2017.

<sup>6</sup> George Davis, *A Historical Sketch of Sturbridge and Southbridge*. West Brookfield: Power Press of O.S. Cooke and Co., 1856. *Archive.org*, <https://archive.org/details/historicalsketch00davisgeo>, accessed November, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Wilkin, Agnes S. “6 Fiske Hill Rd” (MHC Inventory Form #WSG.53), *Ibid*.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>9</sup> “Publick House Inc,” Book 04530, Page 0051, 1964. *Masslandrecords.com*

<sup>10</sup> “66 Fiske Hill Road,” *Vision Government Solutions*, <http://gis.vgsi.com/sturbridgema/Parcel.aspx?Pid=1430> , accessed October 2017.



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Figure 1: Walling, Henry Francis. "Map of Worcester County." Boston and New York: Wm. E. Baker & Co., 1857. *Library of Congress.org* <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3763w.la000320/>

Figure 2: Atlas of Worcester County, F. W. Beers & Co. 1870  
<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:x059cb92c>

Figure 3: Richards, L.J. "Charlton-Sturbridge-Southbridge-Dudley Towns." *Topographical Atlas of the County of Worcester*, 1898. *HistoricMapWorks.com* (site). Accessed on-line October 2017.  
<http://www.historicmapworks.com/Atlas.php?cat=Maps&c=US&a=6717>



Photo 1: Western facing main façade and southern side elevation

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Photo 2: Western facing main façade



Photo 3: Western main façade and northern side elevation, arcade, and outbuilding



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Figure 1: 1857 Map showing E.T. Brooks ownership of property

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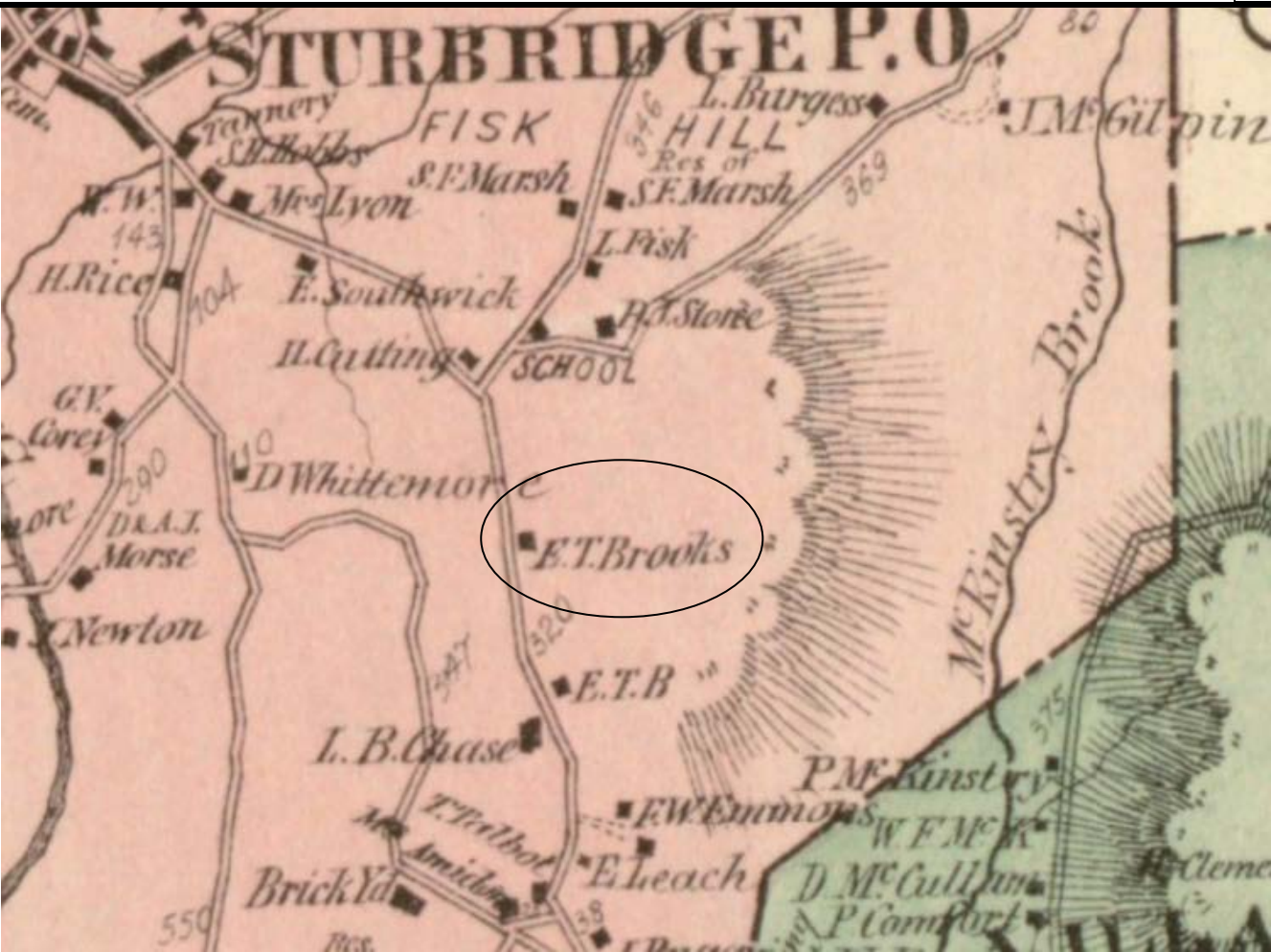


Figure 2: 1870 Atlas



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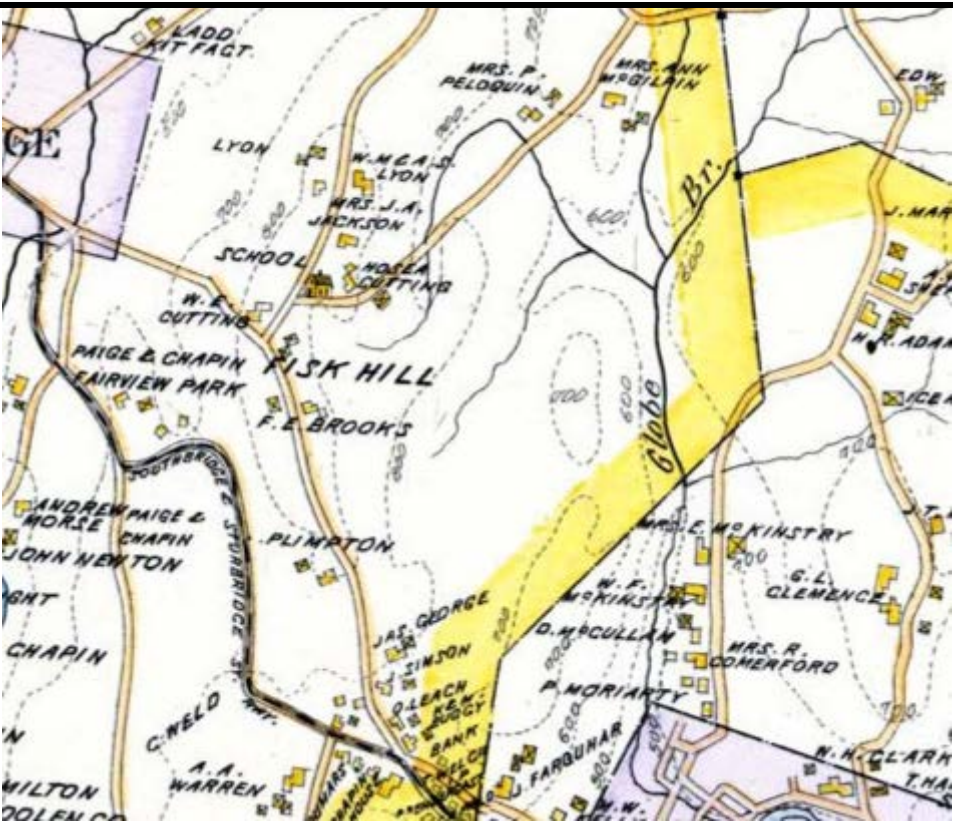


Figure 3: 1898 Atlas, showing Brooks family property