

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

280-02614-205

Southbridge

STU.F

STU.58
STU.261
STU.262
STU.915

Town/City: Sturbridge

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

Address: 205 Fiske Hill Road

Historic Name: Ebenezer Cutting/Edward Nichols House and Barn

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling/Agricultural

Original: Single Family Dwelling/Agricultural

Date of Construction: 1812

Source: Wilkin, STU.58, 1973

Style/Form: Georgian with alterations

Architect/Builder: Jacob Shepherd

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Asbestos Shingle/Wood

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Two barns, Pole Barn, Shed

Major Alterations (with dates):

Alterations to form, dates unknown

Condition: Fair due to alterations

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 20.08 acres

Setting: This large property has residential and agricultural buildings with the main residence facing east along Fiske Hill Road. The property is also bordered by Beaudry and Gifford Roads and located between Beaudry and McGilpin Roads.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

205 FISKE HILL ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

STU.F

STU.58, STU.261
STU.262 STU.915

☐ 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 Ebenezer Cutting/Edward Nichols House, at 205 Fiske Hill Road, is an early nineteenth century single family dwelling and later constructed, related outbuildings, which provide evidence of the residential and agricultural growth along this part of Sturbridge, which began during that time period. The two and a half story residence sits up on a hill, above a stone retaining wall which runs along Fiske Hill Road. It is five bays wide by one bay deep with a north/south aligned rectangular plan and a rear, east/west aligned ell. There is a stone foundation, asbestos shingle siding and wood trim, and a steeply pitched, asphalt shingle side gable roof with minimal overhanging eaves and eave returns on the gable sides. Windows are generally 6/6.

The eastern facing main façade has ten 6/6 windows and a central entry with an unpedimented entablature which includes side pilasters. The upper half of the paneled door is divided into nine lights. A cornice is present just beneath the roof eaves. There is a chimney which appears to be connected to the western downslope of the main residence roof. The northern and southern side elevations each have a first story, second story, and upper half story window set within the gable but the northern elevation first story window is a grouping of three with the two narrow side windows divided into eight lights and the larger, center window (partially obscured) appears to be divided into 16 lights. There is a rear, shed roof ell which projects to the west (possibly seen on an 1898 map) and two additional cross gable attached smaller sections to the west. (Figure 3)

Outbuildings on this property are identified as two, one-story barns, a pole barn, and a shed.¹

The barn to the north of the residence (which may be the barn on the 1898 map, Figure 3) is north/south aligned with a rectangular plan and a side gable, asphalt shingle roof with minimal eave overhangs. The exterior is wood planks with wood trim to include corner boards. The eastern facing side is six bays wide and has two wood paneled garage bays, a larger, opening which is either a door or infill of a former door and contains two, square windows (with one divided into two lights) and two additional windows, divided vertically into two lights, flanking a wood framed, board and batten style entry. (Photos 4, 5)

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.² 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. 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 1800s, in industrial enterprises in Globe Village, Westville, and Fiskdale."³ Fertile soil made this area ideal for agriculture 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 agricultural towards higher-end residential growth.

The construction date of this residence is documented to be 1812, and the building was said to have been "framed by old Jacob Shepherd."⁴ Ebenezer Cutting (1762-1825) and his wife, Elizabeth Cutting (1765-1851) were probably the first residents.⁵

¹ "205 Fiske Hill Road." *Vision Government Solutions*, <http://gis.vgsi.com/sturbridgema/Parcel.aspx?Pid=1365>, accessed October 2017

² Massachusetts Historical Commission. "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Sturbridge." 1984.

³ Agnes S. Wilkin, "Fiske Hill," (MHC Inventory Form STU.F, 1973), <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?MhclId=STU.F>, accessed October 2017.

⁴ Agnes S. Wilkin, "205 Fiske Hill Road." (MHC Inventory #STU.58), 1973. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?MhclId=STU.57>, accessed October 2017.

⁵ Ibid.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

205 FISKE HILL ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

STU.F

STU.58, STU.261
STU.262 STU.915

H. Horton (dates unknown) owned the property by 1857. (Figure 1)

Edward Nichols (1831-1908) (son of Liberty Nichols 1799-1872) and husband of Ann Eliza Nichols (1835-1888), owned the property by 1870 (Figures 2 and 3) In the 1855 state census, Edward is noted to be a merchant and ten years later lists his employment as a shoemaker.⁶ In 1860 and 1870 federal census reports, he is employed as a farmer.⁷

This building was formerly noted to have been extensively altered on the interior, prior to 1950.⁸

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

"205 Fiske Hill Road." *Vision Government Solutions*, <http://gis.vgsi.com/sturbridgema/Parcel.aspx?Pid=1365>, accessed October 2017

Ancestry.com (see footnotes)

Davis, George. *A Historical Sketch of Sturbridge and Southbridge*. West Brookfield: Power Press of O.S. Cooke and Co., 1856. *Archive.org*, <https://archive.org/details/historicalskech00davisgeo>, accessed November, 2017.

Wilkin, Agnes S. "205 Fiske Hill Road." (MHC Inventory #STU.58), 1973. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?Mhclid=STU.57>, accessed October 2017.

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

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>

Figure 4: "205 Fiske Hill Road, Sturbridge." *Google.com/maps*, accessed 2017.

⁶ "Edward Nichols," *Massachusetts State Census*, 1855, 1865. *Ancestry.com*

⁷ "Edward Nichols," *United States Federal Census*, 1860, 1870. *Ancestry.com*

⁸ Agnes S. Wilkin, "205 Fiske Hill Road." (MHC Inventory #STU.58), 1973. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?Mhclid=STU.57>, accessed October 2017.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

205 FISKE HILL ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

STU.F	STU.58, STU.261 STU.262 STU.915
-------	------------------------------------



Photo 1: Main, eastern facing façade



Photo 2: Eastern facing façade and southern side elevation. Barn outbuilding visible to the north.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

205 FISKE HILL ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

STU.F	STU.58, STU.261 STU.262 STU.915
-------	------------------------------------



Photo 3: Stone wall along Fiske Hill Road and barn outbuilding to the north



Photo 4: Eastern facing façade and northern elevation of barn outbuilding

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

205 FISKE HILL ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

STU.F

STU.58, STU.261
STU.262 STU.915



Photo 5: Additional outbuilding



Figure 1: 1857 Map (H. Horton)

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

STU.F	STU.58, STU.261 STU.262 STU.915
-------	------------------------------------

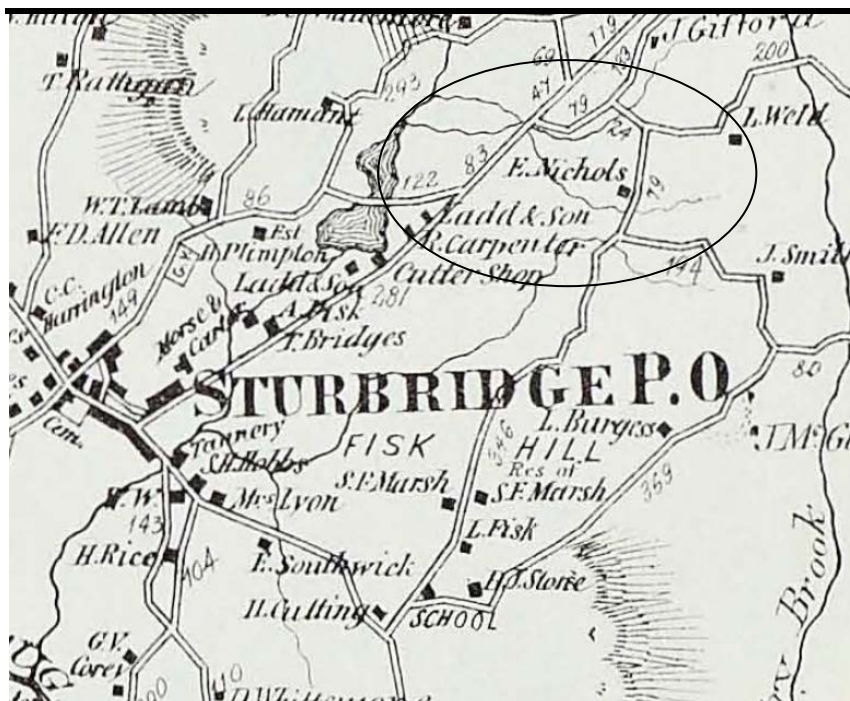


Figure 2: 1870 205 Fiske Hill, Nichols property

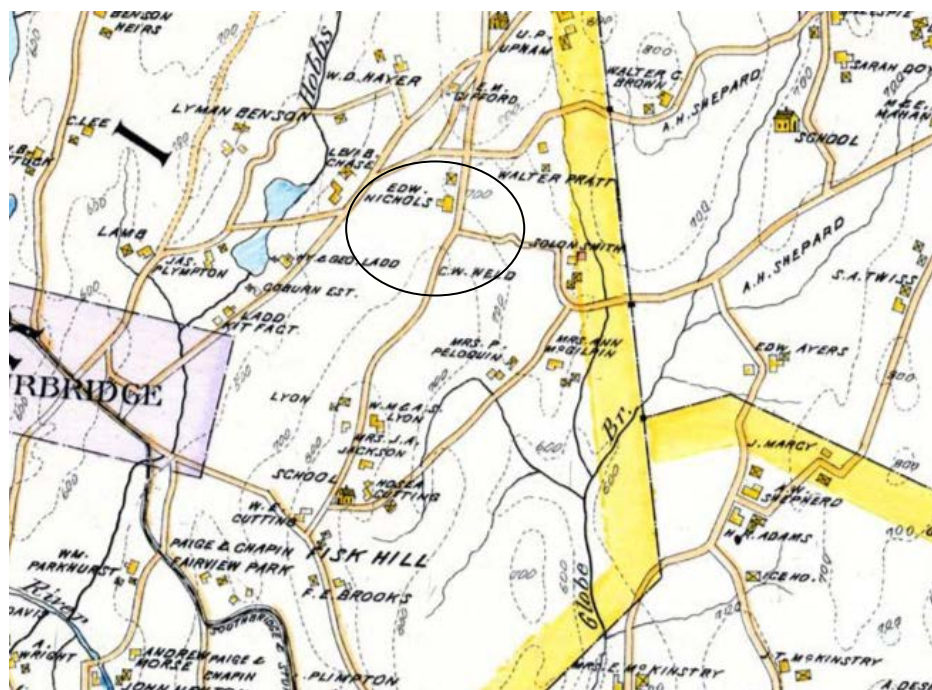


Figure 3: 1898, Nichols property showing a barn in general area of current barn and rear ell on residence

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

STURBRIDGE

205 FISKE HILL ROAD

Area(s) Form No.

STU.F	STU.58, STU.261 STU.262 STU.915
-------	------------------------------------



Figure 4: Twenty first century aerial perspective showing residence (circled) and outbuildings