

FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Bonnie Parsons, PVPC

Organization: Sturbridge Historical Commission

Date (month / year): October/2017

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

415-03924-012

Southbridge

STU.272

Town/City: Sturbridge

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Address: 12 Main Street

Historic Name: Norval and Anna Newell House

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1869

Source: Registry of Deeds

Style/Form: raised Cape

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: brick, stone, concrete

Wall/Trim: vinyl

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (with dates):

Siding applied, ca. 2010; oriel added, two wings added, 1950s.

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: .12 acres

Setting: Triangle-shaped parcel between Main Street (131) and Old Sturbridge Road. House sits above Main Street.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

12 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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 Norval and Anna Newell House is a one-and-a-half story house under a side-gable roof with a center chimney at its ridge. Originally the house faced south on to Main Street, but its primary entry is now on the north, Old Sturbridge Road, as Route 131 enlargements appear to have cut the original lot by half on its south side. The main block of the house is typical of modest house construction around the time of the Civil War as a raised Cape [see also **77 Farquhar Road**]. It was approximately three bays wide with a center entry that has now been sealed on the south. An oriel has been added on the former south façade. The main block on the north is three bays wide and one-story wings have been added on east and west. Set into a hillside on the north, the basement level of the house is exposed on the south. Under the west wing is a garage, and beneath the main block is a full-height, exposed brick basement. Stone foundations support the main block and concrete is found on the wings. The house has been sided in vinyl and its windows are vinyl replacements with 1/1 sash. A stone embankment on the west end of the house lines a garden.

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.

Located near the Sturbridge town boundary with Southbridge, this house represents worker housing for the mills and industries in both towns. Individually-built rather than company-built, the house was long home to both skilled and unskilled workers in the two towns. Builders of the house, Norval and Anna Newell were married in Southbridge in 1861. Norval like his father Daniel was a machinist working in a factory in either Southbridge or Sturbridge. He left Sturbridge and fought in the Civil War as a private, and a few years after he returned his father Daniel bought the land on which this house was built and sold it to Norval. Norval and Anna then built this house ca. 1869 and lived here for the next nineteen years. In 1888 they sold to Irish immigrants Thomas and Mary Welch. Thomas worked at American Optical in Southbridge and the couple had children Thomas, Mary A., Bridget, and Julia all of whom were living with them in 1900. Thomas was not working but Thomas, Jr. was a day laborer and Mary, Bridget, and Julia all worked in the mills as tender or weavers. Thomas put the house in his daughter Mary's name in 1898 and in 1901 they sold it to their neighbors James and Catherine Curley (house now gone).

James Curley was a furniture salesman and Catherine was at home with their two children. The house was apparently only in James' name as at his death in 1928 it took a court order for the house to be put into her name as a widow. Catherine lived here for another twenty years. Her daughter Gertrude and son-in-law Nelson Noel lived with her in 1940 while Gertrude worked as an operator at the New England Telephone Company and Nelson worked as a funeral home embalmer. They had a teenaged daughter Patricia. Catherine sold the house to Gertrude and Nelson Noel in 1948 and Gertrude was in the house through 1981. It is likely that during the Curley and Noel ownership, the highway was widened, land taken from their lot, and the house altered on the south.

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

Briere, Robert J. *Recalling Main Street, Sturbridge*, transcript of oral history, 1994.

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.

Massachusetts Historical Commission. *Reconnaissance Survey Report*, "Sturbridge", typescript, 1984

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