

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

415-02924-271 Southbridge STU.A STU.34  
NRDIS 10/9/1977

**Town/City:** Sturbridge

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Sturbridge Center

## Photograph



**Address:** 271 Main Street

**Historic Name:** Fayette A. Eldridge House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

**Date of Construction:** 1918

**Source:** Wilken 1972

**Style/Form:** No Style

**Architect/Builder:** Lucian Vinton

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Wood Clapboard/Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** None

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): aluminum replacement windows, mid-20<sup>th</sup> c.; one-story porch addition, 1925–1948

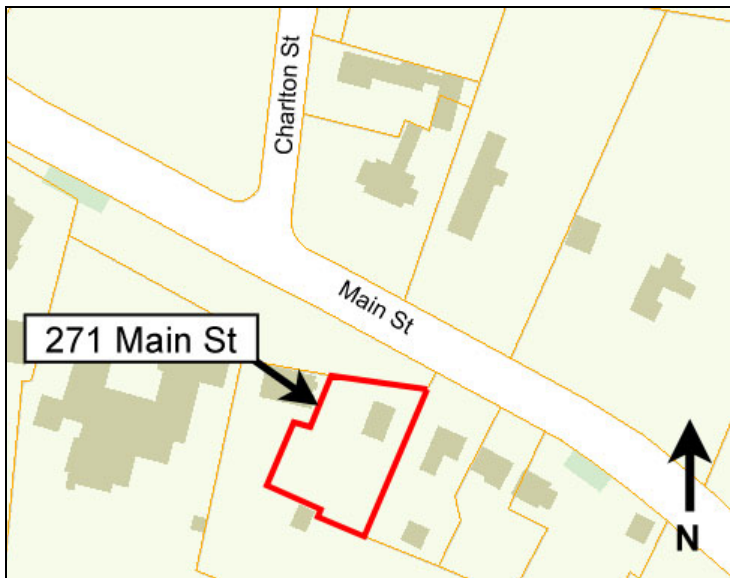
**Condition:** Good

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** .4 acres

**Setting:** The building occupies a roughly rectangular-shaped lot on the south side of Main Street in a mostly residential neighborhood surrounding the Sturbridge Town Common. It is set back from the road and has a paved driveway from the road to the east side of the house.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** L. Kline, G. Pineo, E. Giacomarra; PAL

**Organization:** Sturbridge Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): May 2018

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

271 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

STU.A

STU.34

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Fayette A. Eldridge House (1918, STU.34) is a north-facing, astylistic, one-and-one-half-story, two-bay side-hall plan, wood-frame building with a one-story addition on the south elevation. The house has an end-gable roof with two large gable dormers in each of its slopes and a brick chimney at the rear of the house. The walls are clad with wood clapboard siding and rest on a stone foundation. The roof is clad with asphalt shingles. The off-center main entrance is in the west bay of the north (facade) elevation sheltered by a wrap-around, hip-roof porch extending to the west elevation. The porch roof is supported by short, square, wood columns on wood clapboard-clad knee walls. In the entrance is a half-light modern door behind a storm door. A bay window projects from the east bay of the north elevation. Fenestration consists of replacement one-over-one, double-hung aluminum sash.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The Fayette A. Eldridge House (1918, STU.34) is in the center of Sturbridge, south of the Sturbridge Town Common. The area was settled ca. 1725 by residents of Medfield, and Sturbridge was incorporated as a town in 1738 (MHC 1984:3–4).

According to Old Sturbridge Village scholar Herbert Levine, lawyer J. Paine (likely John Paine, as the other J. Paine in the 1790 census was Joshua Paine, the town's minister) owned a house on the property at 271 Main Street in 1815 (Levine 1971; US Census 1790). Hiram Wheelock owned the property in 1825, and farmer George Corey owned it in 1845. The 1857 Walling map indicates the property was used as an office, and by 1870 it was owned by A. C. Morse (Walling 1857; Beers 1870). In 1884, farmer Aretas Hooker owned the property (WCRD 1182/167). The property remained in the Hooker family until 1904, when it was sold to Fayette A. Eldridge (1871–1948) (WCRD 1802/509; Ancestry.com 2013).

In 1918, a fire destroyed the former Hooker residence and the house to the west (subsequently replaced by 275 Main Street, STU.35). Eldridge likely hired local builder Lucian Vinton (1855–1931) to construct the Fayette A. Eldridge House (1918, STU.34) on the property. Eldridge, a machinist at the American Optical Company in Southbridge, lived in the house with his wife, Bernice, and they rented part of the house to Arthur and Anna Faneuf. By 1922, the Eldridges had moved to California; they sold the house the following year to Willard and Lily Sheldon (Find a Grave 2013; WCRD 2311/325; US Census 1910; Meek 1921:260). Willard Sheldon was a grinder at the Snell Manufacturing Company (see Wight-Snell Manufacturing Area, STU.N) (US Census 1930).

Charles F. Clarke (1893–1986) purchased the property from the Sheldons in 1931. Clarke was a Corporal in the US Army during World War I and worked as a chauffeur in the town of Sturbridge after the war. In 1940, he resided at the property with his wife, Olive (b. 1894); daughter, Barbara (b. 1926); and widowed mother, Elizabeth (b. 1870) (WCRD 2548/526; Wilkin 1972; Find a Grave 2017; US Census 1940). The property stayed in the Clarke family until 1987, when it was purchased by the Publick House (WCRD 10604/343). The current owners of the Publick House, Resurrection Realty, Inc., acquired 271 Main Street in 2003 (WCRD 31465/60).

The Fayette A. Eldridge House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on November 9, 1977, as part of the Sturbridge Common Historic District.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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271 MAIN STREET

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