

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

415-02913-310 Southbridge STU.A STU.3
NRDIS 11/9/1977

Town/City: Sturbridge

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

Photograph



Address: 310 Main Street

Historic Name: Oliver B. Wight House

Uses: Present: Multiple Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling; General Retail Store

Date of Construction: ca. 1832

Source: Levine 1971; WCRD 289/227 (1832)

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Vinyl Siding/ Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: None

Major Alterations (*with dates*): shed dormer, 20th c.; new roof, new siding, and interior renovations, 2014–2015

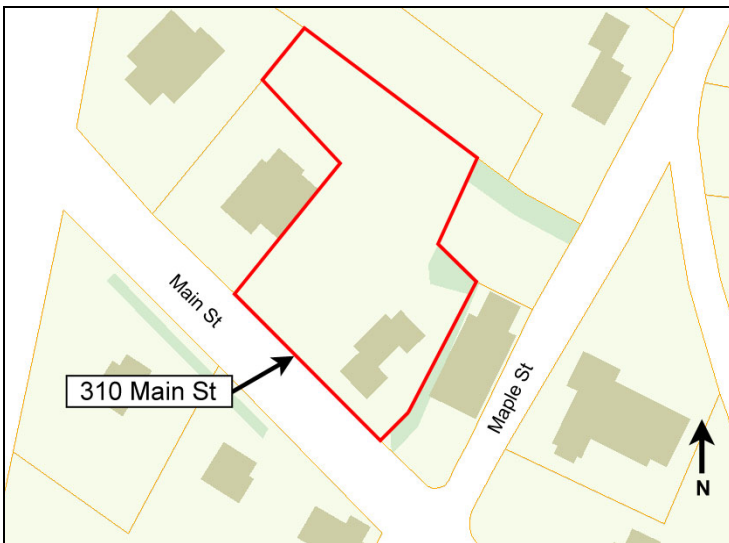
Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .62 acres

Setting: The building occupies a roughly square-shaped lot on the north side of Main Street. It is set slightly back from the street in a mixed-use area west of the Sturbridge Town Common. It faces southeast along a private drive leading from Main Street to a parking lot behind the Sturbridge Town Hall.

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

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

STURBRIDGE

310 MAIN STREET

Area(s) Form No.

STU.A

STU.3

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 Oliver B. Wight House (ca. 1832, STU.3) is a southeast-facing, Greek Revival-style, two-story, wood-frame building with a three-bay, side-hall plan and a stone foundation. A one-and-one-half-story, two-bay former outbuilding is attached to the northeast elevation via a one-story, three-bay hyphen. The main section and outbuilding have end-gable roofs with central brick chimneys, and the addition has a side-gable roof with a shed-roof wall dormer along the entire northeast elevation. The walls are clad with vinyl siding. An oval wood ornament is centered in the pedimented gable peak of the main block. The entrance in the main block is in the north bay of the southeast (facade) elevation and consists of a six-panel door with projecting wood door surround. An engaged porch supported by fluted columns spans the southeast elevation of the hyphen and shelters a secondary entrance in the south bay. Fenestration consists of symmetrically arranged, six-over-six, double-hung vinyl replacement sash.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The Oliver B. Wight House (ca. 1832, STU.3) is in the center of Sturbridge, west 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).

The house was constructed for local cabinet-maker Oliver B. Wight (1800–1885) about 1832 when he purchased the land from Hosea Wheeler (WCRD 1832). Oliver B. Wight was the son of Oliver Wight (1738–1837) and Harmony Child and the grandson of David Wight (1733–1822), who originally settled in Sturbridge in 1784 (Holewa 1987). Oliver B. Wight and his father made bureaus, tables, coffins, and cabinets. He married Louisa Walker in 1823; it is unknown where they lived before purchasing the subject property. By 1845, a barn was extant to the north, and by 1850, a second family, the Perleys, lived at the property with the Wights (Levine 1971; US Census 1850). In 1850, Wight sold the property to Warren Nichols, sold his business to an unknown buyer, and moved with his family to Springfield, Massachusetts (Find a Grave 2012; Corey 1910:230; US Census 1850; WCRD 471/75).

Warren Nichols (1818–1859) and his wife Louisa Fuller (1825–1870) had three children: Laura F. (1856–1858), Charles W. (1856–1891), and Chester W. (1858–1907). Nichols was a shoemaker and may have operated his shoe shop at the property, as the 1857 map shows a store in addition to the house (Walling 1857). After Nichols' death in 1859, the property remained in his family through the end of the twentieth century. The 1870 Beers map documents Mrs. Nichols at the house, and the 1898 Richards map documents C. Nichols referring to Chester (Beers 1870; Richards 1898). Chester Nichols likely rented the property to tenants after his mother's death, as the 1880 US Census records him residing in Rome, New York (Find a Grave 2013; Ancestry.com 2014; US Census 1880, 1900). In 1908, Alvin Chamberlain, the executor of Chester Nichols' will, sold the property to Adelia C. Seaton (WCRD 1885/436).

By 1920, Seaton had converted the house into a two-family home. One half was rented to John P. Kenfield (b. 1874) and his family. Kenfield worked as a mechanic at the Snell Manufacturing Company in Sturbridge and lived with his wife, Miranda K., and three of their children. The other half was rented to the Kenfield's daughter Eileen Farland (b. 1896); her husband, George E. Farland (b. 1898), a house painter; and their children (US Census 1900, 1920). In 1934, John and Miranda Kenfield purchased the property from Adelia C. Seaton's estate (WCRD 2631/154). The Kenfields sold the property in 1940 to Eileen and George Farland but reserved life tenancy for themselves (WCRD 2771/525).

The house stayed in the Farland family until 1991, when the estate of Gertrude Farland, daughter of Eileen and George Farland, deeded the property to Sandra L. LaTaille (WCRD 13324/226). The current owner, Michaela Prouty, purchased the property from Elisabeth Noeth-Tokaya in 2014 (Sturbridge Assessor 2018).

The Oliver B. Wight House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on November 9, 1977, as part of the Sturbridge Common Historic District.

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