

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

417-02554-017

Southbridge

STU.A

STU.6,
STU.338

NRDIS 11/9/1977

Town/City: Sturbridge

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

Photograph



Address: 17 Maple Street

Historic Name: Benjamin C. Weld House and Barn

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1850

Source: US Census 1850; Walling 1857; Izard 1994

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite Block

Wall/Trim: Wood Clapboard/Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Barn (mid-19th c.)

Major Alterations (*with dates*): enclosed porch, early 20th c.; windows replaced with vinyl, late 20th c.

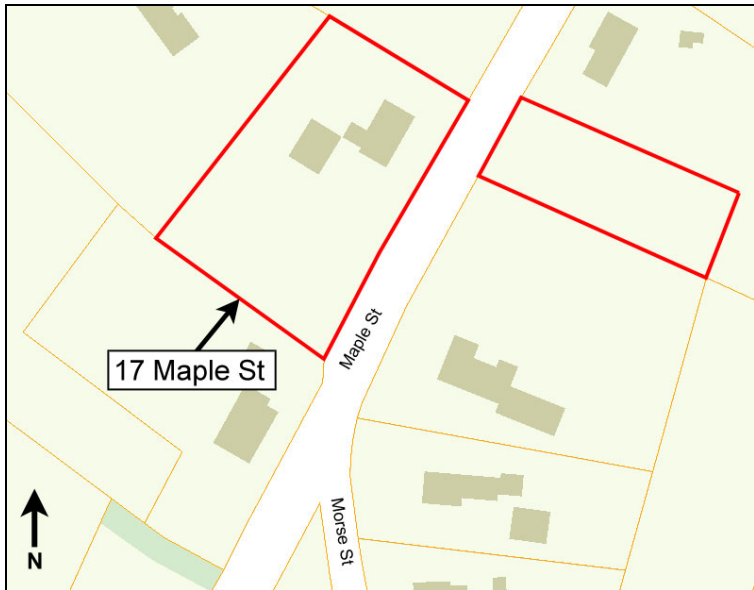
Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 1.09 acres

Setting: The building occupies a rectangular-shaped lot on the west side of Maple Street in a residential neighborhood northwest of the Sturbridge Town Common. The parcel is bounded by a dry-laid stone wall along the south and north edges and a post-and-beam wood fence along the east edge parallel to the road. The property also encompasses a vacant lot on the east side of Maple Street.

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

17 MAPLE STREET

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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.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Benjamin C. Weld House (ca. 1850, STU.6) is an east-facing, Greek Revival-style, one-and-one-half-story, three-bay-by-two-bay, wood-frame building with a granite foundation. The house has a side-gable roof with a shed dormer on the west slope and a central brick chimney. A one-story, side-gable ell extends from the south elevation, and a one-story, end-gable ell extends from the west elevation of the south ell. The walls are clad with wood clapboards, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The main entrance is in a one-bay-by-one-bay entry porch projecting from the center bay of the east (facade) elevation. The porch has a pedimented gable peak, flat pilasters, and a six-panel door with four-paned side lights. An enclosed, flat-roof porch spans the east elevation of the side ell in the interstice between the side ell and main block. It contains an eight-paned door and transom in the south elevation and tripartite windows with fixed twelve-pane lights. Fenestration on the rest of the house consists of six-over-six, double-hung wood and vinyl replacement sash.

The Barn (mid-19th c., STU.338) is located close to the southwest corner of the house and accessed via a paved driveway leading west from Maple Street. It is built into a small hill west of the building. The barn is an east-facing, astylistic, rectangular, two-story, two-bay-by-two-bay, wood-frame building with a side-gable roof; the foundation is not visible from the public way. A one-story shed-roof addition projects from the south elevation. The walls are clad with vertical boards, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A small, square cupola pierces the center ridgeline of the roof. A large arched, vertical-board, double door is in the west bay of the east elevation, and a half-light, three-panel door is in the same elevation of the addition. A high-drive entrance is in the west bay of the south elevation, accessed by an earth slope with stone retaining walls. Fenestration consists of six- and eight-light, fixed wood sash.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The Benjamin C. Weld House (ca. 1857, STU.6) first appears on the 1857 Walling map, facing east onto Maple Street, northwest of the Sturbridge Town Common.¹ The area was settled ca. 1725 by residents of Medfield, and Sturbridge was incorporated as a town in 1738 (MHC 1984:3–4).

Benjamin Cheever Weld (1823–1908) was a carriage maker who lived in Sturbridge with his wife, Lucy A. Weld (1827–1893), in 1850. The subject house may have been built for the couple shortly after their marriage in 1847. By 1860, the Welds had moved to North Brookfield (US Census 1850; US Census 1860; Find a Grave 2011). Prior to 1879, the house was owned by Francis A. Cooper (ca. 1823–1885), a shoemaker who lived on Charlton Street in 1857 (Walling 1857; WCRD 1058/23; US Census 1860). In 1879, Cooper sold the property to Abigail Hebard (1818–1890), the wife of Adrian Hebard (1814–1891), a joiner who worked on the Unitarian Church built in Sturbridge in 1872. The Hebards are shown at the property on the 1870 Beers map, which indicates they may have rented the house from Cooper prior to 1879 (Beers 1870). The 1870 US Census lists Abigail and Adrian as living with their two children, Lucinda (b. 1853) and John F. (b. 1859), along with 19-year-old carpenter Henry Holbrook, who may have been an apprentice (Ammidown 1874:110; Find a Grave 2017; US Census 1870).

The property stayed in the Hebard family until 1899, when Abigail and Adrian's son John sold the property to Eunice Locke (WCRD 1611/181). Eunice (1862–1943) was the wife of Dr. Horace Locke (1860–1934), a Sturbridge physician. The Lockes lived at the property with their two children, Dean and Louise (US Census 1900; Find a Grave 2017). By 1920, both Dean and Louise lived elsewhere, and the Lockes had a boarder who worked at a glass shop (US Census 1920). By 1930, Dr. Locke was retired, and the couple had a live-in housekeeper (US Census 1930). In 1934, Eunice sold the property to Elliot Clemence (WCRD 2617/334). Clemence worked in forestry and was later a superintendent at Old Sturbridge Village (Wilkins 1972).

¹ Previous documentation referred to the building incorrectly as the B. Wells House.

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Following Clemence's death in 1966, the property was transferred to John and Helen Kennedy (WCRD 4720/442). The Kennedys previously lived in Worcester, where John was a chief property officer in the US Air Force (Polk 1961). The Kennedys sold the property to Ann Smith in 1992; Smith sold it in 1995 to Daniel Donahue, who sold it to the present owners, Stephen and Joann Dupre, in 1997 (Sturbridge Assessor 2018).

The Benjamin C. Weld 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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