

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

630-02555-024 Southbridge STU.A STU.19  
NRDIS 11/9/1977

**Town/City:** Sturbridge

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 24 Taft Street

**Historic Name:** Isaac Child Jr. House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Dwelling  
Original: Single Family Dwelling

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1792

**Source:** Holley and Wilken 1970

**Style/Form:** Federal

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Fieldstone

Wall/Trim: Wood Shingle/Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** Small, non-historic shed

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): porch added, 1933

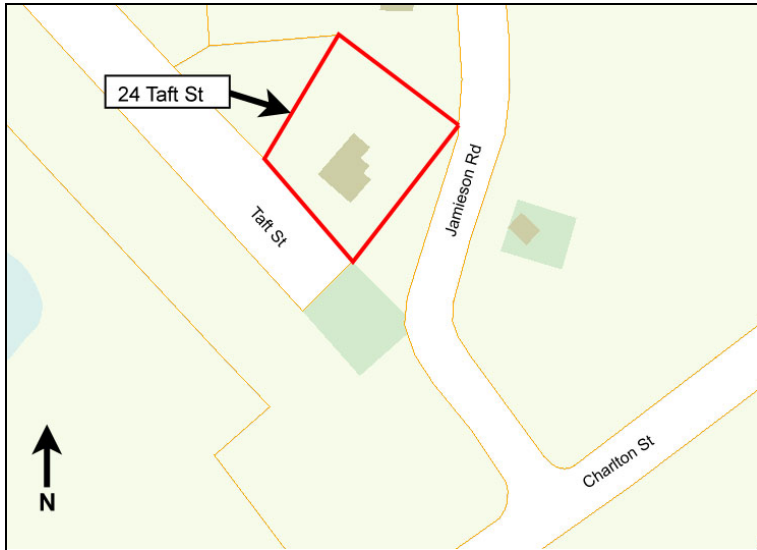
**Condition:** Good

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:** ca. 1865

**Acreage:** 2 acres

**Setting:** The building occupies a roughly square-shaped, sloping, two-acre lot on the northeast side of Taft Street in a residential area north of the Sturbridge Town Common and west of a Flood Management Area.

## 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

24 TAFT STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

STU.A

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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 Isaac Child Jr. House (ca. 1792, STU.19) is a southwest-facing, Colonial-style, one-and-one-half-story, three-bay-by-two-bay, wood-frame building with a gambrel roof and a fieldstone foundation. Two additions project from the northeast elevation: a one-bay-by-one-bay enclosed porch with a hip roof projects from the west end, and a one-bay-by-one-bay addition with a shed roof projects from the center. A shed dormer pierces the roof of the center addition. The walls are clad with wood clapboards, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles and is pierced by a central chimney. A garage is beneath the hip-roof porch, protected by a shed-roof overhang filled with double-leaf, vertical-board doors. The main entrance is in the center bay of the southwest (facade) elevation and is filled with a modern nine-light door. Fenestration consists of replacement six-over-six, double-hung vinyl sash in the house and one-over-one, double-hung aluminum sash in the enclosed porch.

An L-shaped, dry-laid stone retaining wall borders the lawn on the southeast side of the house. A small, non-historic, wood-frame shed with a gambrel roof is at the highest point of the property, at the northwest corner.

The Child House is a well-preserved, rare example of a gambrel-roof, Federal-style house in Sturbridge.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The Isaac Child Jr. House (ca. 1792, STU.19) is in the center of Sturbridge just north 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 built for Isaac Child Jr. (1763–1840) on Maple Street, where the North Cemetery is now located. The house was likely built as the first home for Child and his wife, Esther Bardwell, after their marriage in 1792 (NEGHS 1999). The Childs lived in the house for a short time before selling it to Cheney Allen, a horse trader (Holley and Wilkin 1970). In 1857, Jonathan C. Bacon lived in the house with his wife and their four daughters (US Census 1860). In 1850, Bacon was listed in the US Census as a shoemaker and owned 10 acres. By 1860, he was listed as a farmer and owned 41 acres, likely indicating that he had moved to the former Child property.

In 1865, Sturbridge needed to expand the North Cemetery (STU.800), which was established in 1840 after the town outgrew the Old Burying Ground on Main Street (STU.801). The Child House, which occupied land necessary for the cemetery expansion, was moved to its present location on Taft Street (Corey 1900:60; Wilkin and Holley 1970). The shoe manufacturing company of Amasa C. Morse and Hiram Carter, which operated from 1869 until about 1877, owned the lot where the building was moved (Chase 1889:118). In 1870, Morse and Carter sold the house to Cyrus Webber, a farm laborer; the house was then mortgaged back to Carter. Carter assigned the mortgage to farmer James Belknap, who subsequently foreclosed on the property. In 1895, the executors of Belknap's will sold the property to merchant Alvin B. Chamberlain (WCRD 826/50, 1502/570; US Census 1880).

The property stayed in the Chamberlain family until 1947, when it was sold to Richard and Winifred Tillyer. The Tillyers sold the property in 1958 to Albert C. and Sally L. Mach, who resided at the property until 2013, when they sold it to the current owners, David Hruska and Hazel Humphreys (Sturbridge Assessor 2018; WCRD 3984/229).

The Isaac Child Jr. 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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- Worcester County Registry of Deeds (WCRD), Book/Page (Year). 826/50 (1870); 1502/570 (1895); 3984/229 (1958).

## PHOTOGRAPH



Photo 2. Isaac Child Jr. House, 24 Taft Street, looking northwest.