

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

see continuation sheet

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

- * 81 Boston Road is a 2 1/2-story, side-gabled, 5x2-bay form with elements of the Greek Revival style; a 2-story gable-roofed ell is attached to the east side elevation and is oriented parallel to the house
- * Architectural features include the symmetrical fenestration, corner boards, wide eave trim, molded cornice and gable returns
- * Widows are 6/6 double-hung sash and are extended in length on the first story; window trim is plain except for the slim hoods over the first story openings
- * The center entry is flanked by pilasters and has an open gabled porch decorated with classical elements including Doric columns, denticulated cornice and tympanum
- * The addition is also clad in wood clapboards and is lit by 6/6 sash in the first and second stories; arched vehicle openings that have been filled in with wood and glass exist in the principal elevation near the junction with the main block of the building
- * The house is well-maintained and occupies a segment of Boston Road where residential construction of the center village gives way to modern commercial development

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

see continuation sheets

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.

The house is on or near the site of the house of Nicolas Cady, an original Groton proprietor in 1655. It was also the site of the house of James Prescott, a member of the Provincial Congress and Board of War during the Revolutionary War. By 1832, the building was described by Butler in his 1828-1829 field notes as having 2 stories, 1 chimney and 5 windows across the façade. While this configuration matches the current form and suggests the house was built prior to Butler's survey, both Dr. Green and Virginia May refute this. Green recalls the predecessor house being demolished in the late 1850s to make way for this house, located slightly east of the former house. The initial occupant was William Salisbury. A subsequent owner was Phineas G. Prescott (b. 1803) from c. 1845 until his death in 1882. Mr. Prescott worked as a farmer, served as Vice President of the committee to organize the town's bicentennial in 1855, representative to the General Court in 1851 and 1852 and justice of the peace in 1851. Census schedules from 1850 indicate he owned 174 acres, a horse, 14 cows, an orchard and that his property was valued at \$7500, somewhat above average for Groton, although the amount decreased over the ensuing decade, possibly due to the sale of 54 acres. Mr. Prescott's son George, a farmer, lived here into the 1900s and was followed by George Oakes who was the owner at the time the barn burned in 1923. The 1930 owner was Walter F. Canavan who was retired. By 1939, the property was in semi-agricultural use with surrounding land in pasture. Subsequent owners were named Davis and Drake.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

continuation sheet

1856 Walling map of Middlesex County; 1875 Beers atlas; 1889 Walker atlas; 1832 and 1847 Butler maps; 1939 WPA map; Butler's 1829 field notes; Federal census agricultural schedules, 1850-1880; S.A.Green, Chapters XIV, p. 4; XVIII, pp. 2, 5; Vol. ii, pp. 14, 16, 18, 20, 119; Butler, p. 291; Boutwell, Francis Marion. "People and Their Homes in Groton, Massachusetts in Olden Times"; 1930 Somes map; Resident directories; 1855, 1865 state census; May, "Groton Houses", p. 127; 1888 Resident Directory;

** *All properties mentioned in bold type are individually inventoried resources*

- Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement Form.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Massachusetts Archives Building
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Town
Groton

Property Address

Area(s)

Form No.



81 Boston Road