

FORM B - Building

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

Map and Lot # 114 2 USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number 552

Town Groton3
Place (neighborhood or village)

Photograph

(3"x3" or 3-1/2x5" black and white only) Label photo on back with town and property address. Record film roll and negative numbers here on form. Staple photo to left side of form over this space. Attach additional photos to continuation sheets.

Roll Negative(s)

Address 29 Old Ayer Road
Historic Name Dr. Earland Gilson House
Uses: Present Residential
Original Residential
Date of Construction 1887

Source "Groton Houses", p. 141

Style/Form Victorian Eclectic

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Split granite

Wall/Trim Wood Clapboard, wood shingle

Roof Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/secondary structure

Major Alterations (with dates)

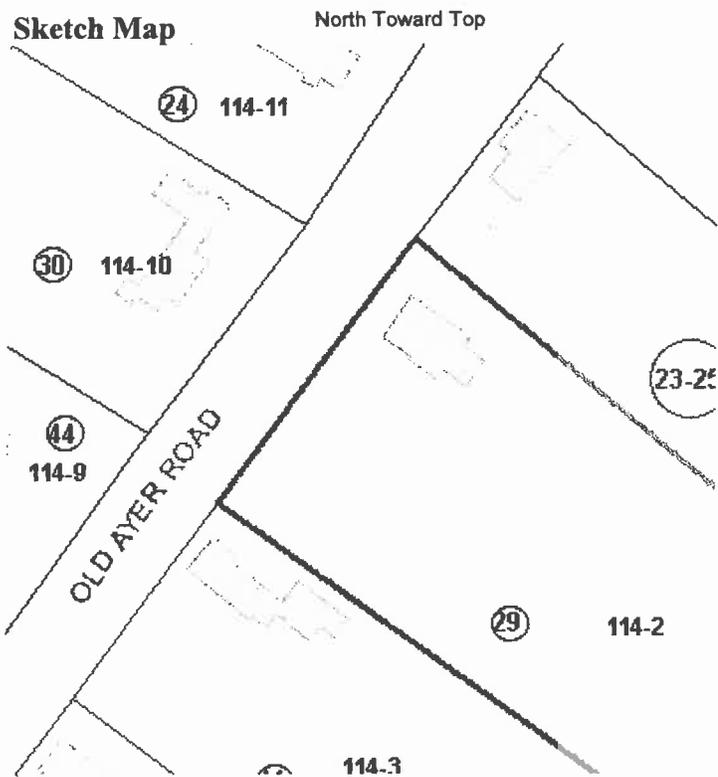
Condition Good

Moved no yes Date

Acreage 5

Setting Rural

Sketch Map



Recorded by Sanford Johnson

Organization Groton Historical Commission

Date (month/year) 12/08

Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

see continuation sheet

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

- * The Victorian Eclectic style house at 29 Old Ayer Road is a cross-gabled form of 2 1/2 stories and 2x4 bays with a hipped open porch across the façade and on the north and south sides of the main block
- * Architectural details include the bargeboard, wood shingle cladding in the gable peaks laid in multiple patterns, corner pilasters, molded cornice and beltcourses dividing the second story from the attic level
- * Windows are double-hung units with Queen Anne style sash above single panes; molded hoods surmount the openings; an oculus occupies the front gable peak
- * The main entry is located at the junction of the front-gabled main block of the plan and the side-gabled secondary block on the north side and has relatively simple trim to match the windows
- * Two brick chimneys rise from the roof ridge
- * The house is of a scale, materials and refined design quality typical for this section of Old Ayer Road and is similar in form and detail to its neighbors at 24 and 44 Old Ayer Road

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 appears on the 1889 Middlesex County atlas and is labeled with the name Gilson. This is Dr. F. (Franklin) Earland Gilson, an uncle of the Groton historian Virginia May, and the house is the subject of an historic photo on p. 140 of her book "Groton Houses". Mrs. May quotes a newspaper article from September 3, 1887 stating the house was under construction. She also indicates Dr. Gilson owned several other rental properties in town at different times including 293 Chicopee Row (MHC #174). The photo depicts a large carriage barn in the rear of 29 Old Ayer Road which is now gone. Dr. Gilson was a Groton native, born in 1852, studied at Lawrence Academy and then dentistry at the Colton Dental Institution in Boston. He began his practice at 148 Main Street (MHC #144) in 1880. As a teenager, Dr. Gilson assumed his middle name which he used as his given name and lived in the house until his death in 1936.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

continuation sheet

"Groton Houses", p. 140, 141; Resident directories, 1918, 1929; 1889 county atlas; 1939 WPA map of Groton; Dr. Green, Groton Historical Series, Vol. ii, p. 69;

**** 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.
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Massachusetts Historical Commission

Community
Property Address

Groton
29 Old Ayer Road

Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Area(s)

Form No

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

Individually eligible

Eligible only in a historic district

Contributing to a potential historic district

Potential historic district

Criteria: A B C D

Criteria considerations: A B C D E F G

Statement of significance by: Sanford Johnson

The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The Victorian Eclectic Style house at 29 Old Ayer Road is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level. Dr. F. (Franklin) Earland Gilson was the initial owner of the house which is the subject of an historic photo on p. 140 of Virginia May's Groton history "Groton Houses". Mrs. May quotes a newspaper article from September 3, 1887 stating the house was under construction. Dr. Gilson was a Groton native, born in 1852, studied at Lawrence Academy and then dentistry at the Colton Dental Institution in Boston. The building's associations with historic professional and medical activity in Groton establish its significance under Criterion A. The design of the building's architectural details including the bargeboard, wood shingle cladding in the gable peaks laid in multiple patterns, corner pilasters, molded cornice and beltcourses dividing the second story from the attic level make the property eligible under Criterion C. The house retains integrity of design, materials, setting and workmanship.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
Groton

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Massachusetts Archives Building
Boston, MA 02125

Photos Taken 3-6/08

Area(s)
Form No.



29 Old Ayer Road