

FORM B - Building

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

Map and Lot # 107 5 **USGS Quad** **Area(s)** X **Form Number** 85, 209

Town Groton
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 133 Farmers Row
Historic Name Farnsworth, Abel House
Uses: Present Residential
Original Residential-agricultural
Date of Construction c. 1790
Source Previous GHS research

Style/Form Federal

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Stone

Wall/Trim Wood clapboard

Roof Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/secondary structure

Detached barn, detached shed

Major Alterations (with dates)

Two bays added to façade, c. 1840; Re-sided, c. 1995

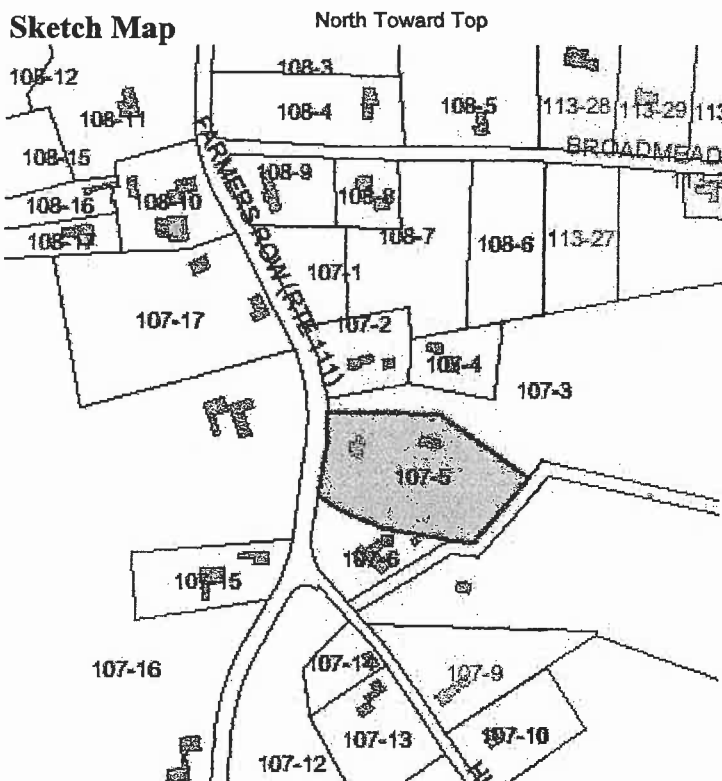
Condition Excellent

Moved no yes **Date**

Acreage 4.06

Setting Rural

Sketch Map



Recorded by Sanford Johnson

Organization Groton Historical Commission

Date (month/year) 6/06

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 Federal style Abel Farnsworth House is a 5x2-bay, 2 1/2-story, side-gabled form with a 2-story rear ell and 1-story addition at the east side; 2 gabled dormers mark the south or front slope of the roof and a flat-roofed entry porch covers the center entry; a roof deck is partially visible on the north slope of the roof of the main block
- * Decorative features include the entry porch with classical details including Doric columns, entablature, dentils and modillions, molded cornice on the house with dentils, rear and side ells, gable returns, corner boards, classical entry surround with transom and flanking pilasters and the symmetrical fenestration in the main block; two brick chimneys, one of which has an ornamental corbel, rise from the main roof ridge; a third chimney occupies the rear of the ridge over the rear ell;
- * Windows are 6/6 double-hung sash
- * The detached barn is not visible from the road
- * The house is well-maintained and is typical of the high style estate-scale properties common on Farmers Row

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 earliest known owner of 133 Farmers Row is Abel Farnsworth who lived here from c. 1832-c. 1847 according to maps and tax records from those years. Butler recorded in his field notes for the 1832 map that the house had only three windows across the front in 1828-29, suggesting it was enlarged afterward. Butler also notes that the house was painted yellow. He refers to Farmers Row in his 1847 town history, indicating the name had been applied by that time. Non-population Census Schedules from 1850 list him as a farmer with 118 acres and a farm worth \$5,000. From c. 1856-c. 1875, Mr. Farnsworth's relative George Farnsworth, who is listed in 1855 census schedules as a 45-year-old farmer living with his Irish house keeper Jane and three children, was the occupant. Mr. Farnsworth owned a house, barn, cow and a horse on 55 acres in 1875 according to tax records. Subsequent owners were the farmer Clifford R. Weld in 1889, John Lawrence (d. 1924) and his family members Geraldine and Harriet in the 1920s. Martha Lawrence (d. 1935), widow of John Lawrence and sister of Groton School founder Endicott Peabody, lived here 40 years and served as Groton Public Library trustee for 35. The 1939 WPA map of Groton indicates a semi-agricultural building surrounded by land planted in hay and orchards. John Lawrence's grandson Edward Harding lived here in 1967 according to previous GHS research.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

continuation sheet

see butler, 247; Previous research; Butler maps from 1832, 1847 and field notes; Walling map of 1856; Beers Atlas of 1875; Walker atlas of 1889; 1939 WPA map; Tax records, 1830-1889; 1888 resident directory; 1855, 1865 state census; Sawyer, "More People and Places of Groton", p. 73;

**** 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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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
Groton

Property Address

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

Area(s)

Form No.

133 Farmers Row



Massachusetts Historical Commission

Community Groton

Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Property Address
133 Farmers Row

Area(s)
X

Form No.

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

Individually eligible X

Eligible only in a historic district

Contributing to a potential historic district X

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 Federal Style Farnsworth House at 133 Farmers Row is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as an individual resource at the local level. The earliest known owner of 133 Farmers Row is Abel Farnsworth who lived here from c. 1832-c. 1847 according to maps and tax records from those years. Butler recorded in his field notes for the 1832 map that the house had only three windows across the front in 1828-29 and that it was painted yellow. From c. 1856-c. 1875, Mr. Farnsworth's relative George Farnsworth, who is listed in 1855 census schedules as a 45-year-old farmer living with his Irish house keeper Jane and three children, was the occupant. The building's associations with historic agricultural activity in Groton establish its significance under Criterion A. The design of the house's symmetrical façade and its setting with views across historic agricultural fields to Mount Wachusett make the property eligible under Criterion C. The house retains integrity of design, materials, setting and workmanship.