

FORM B - Building

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

Map and Lot # 112 46 USGS Quad Y Area(s) Form Number 35
 Town Groton
 Place (neighborhood or village) Groton Center

Photograph

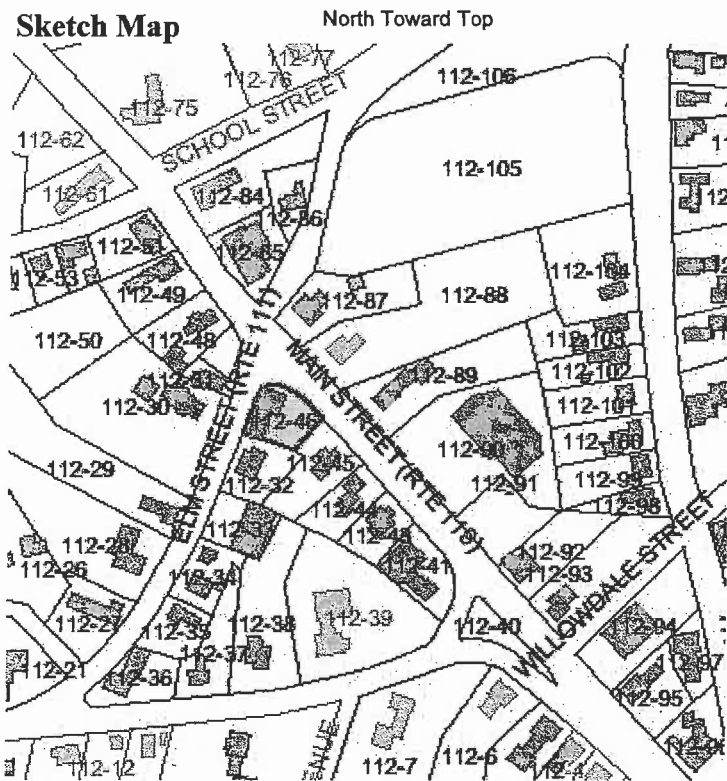
(3"x3" or 3-1/2x5" black and white only) Label photo on back with town and property address. Record film roll and negative numbers here on form. Staple photo to left side of form over this space. Attach additional photos to continuation sheets.

Address 255 Main Street
 Historic Name Prescott, Abijah House
 Uses: Present Residential
 Original Residential
 Date of Construction c. 1780
 Source Previous GHS research

Roll Negative(s)

Style/Form Georgian
 Architect/Builder
 Exterior Material:
 Foundation Granite
 Wall/Trim Wood clapboards
 Roof Asphalt shingle
 Outbuildings/secondary structure Attached modern garage

Sketch Map



Major Alterations (with dates)
 Restored, c. 1990; rear additions may have been built at this time

Condition Excellent
 Moved no yes Date
 Acreage .22
 Setting Town Center

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.

- * 255 Main Street is a Georgian style, 2 1/2-story, 5x2-bay, side-gabled form with a rear addition of 1 1/2 stories
- * Decorative features include the corner boards, molded cornice, gable returns and symmetrical fenestration in the façade
- * Windows are 12/12 double-hung sash with projecting beaded trim in the first story of the façade and 8/12 in the second
- * The center entry is trimmed in classical detail including entablature with modillions and dentils, pilasters and transom
- * A stout brick corbelled chimney rises from the center of the of the roof ridge
- * The house is typical of Federal style residences in Groton Center in terms of scale, deign quality and materials although it is more well maintained than the average; the setting is immediately adjacent to the corner of Main Street and Elm Street
- * The diagonal position of the house relative to the road is unique in Groton Center and is a result of the change in the alignment of Main Street around 1797; at that time, the segment between this house and the corner of Main and Hollis Streets was built on farmland in order to straighten the crook that took travelers down the southern part of Hollis Street and back to Main Street northwest of the house

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 at 255 Main Street was built c. 1780 by Col. James Prescott (b. 1720/21) for his son Abijah (b. 1755) according to previous research and to Butler's history of the town. Among other things, Col. Prescott served on Groton's Committee of Correspondence during the Revolutionary War and was state senator from 1780-1784. James also had care of French neutrals or Acadians in 1756 based on the existence of an account submitted by Groton selectmen to the General Court for their support that includes Mr. Prescott's name. According to Dr. Green, the house was owned by Alpheus Richardson in 1815 who operated a book store and bindery until c. 1846. This was one of at least two book store/bindery operations at the time; the other was on the opposite side of Elm Street. Mr. Richardson published works on flowers and the New Testament that were distributed as far as 50 miles away, mostly to the north and west. Additional publishing activity was carried out in Groton Center by the firm of Stacy & Roberts, first publishers of the Groton Herald for a short time in 1829. The 1832 Butler map shows Daniel Shattuck as the occupant although Butler's field notes from 1828-29 indicate Mr. Richardson was here in the house which was painted yellow. Maps of 1847 and 1856 depict E. S. Clark as the occupant. This is Eusebius S. Clark who worked as a copper and tin template maker employing 25 men and two women, deputy sheriff and lived with his wife Mary, a daughter and 6 boarders, 2 of whom were bakers. Mr. Clark who was killed in the Civil War was also the namesake of the G.A.R. Post No. 115, founded 1874, that met at the I.O.O.F Hall which is the former Groton fire house at 20 Station Avenue. By 1875, the house was occupied by W. Chase, who, according to 1865 census records and to 1875 tax records, was William Chase, a farmer who owned a house, barn, storehouse and slaughterhouse. By 1889, he owned a building on Hollis Street and this one on Main Street and was listed in the resident directory of 1888 as a provision dealer. Sanborn fire insurance maps from 1906 depict an attached barn, now gone, at the west end of the building.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

continuation sheet

Previous GHS research; Dr. Green, Vol. 1, No. XIII, pp.6-7, No. XIV, p. 32, Vol. 2, pp.1, 93, 179; Tercentenary Booklet, p. 71; Butler, pp. 117, 120, 122, 293, 429; Butler maps of 1832, 1847 and field notes; 1856 Walling map; 1875 Beers atlas; 1889 Walker atlas; 1889; Sanborn fire insurance maps, 1896-1906; Account submitted by Selectmen of Groton to the General Court for Support of French Neutrals, January 1, 1757; Non-population Census Schedules;

**** 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.

255 Main Street



Massachusetts Historical Commission

Community Groton

Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Property Address
255 Main Street

Area(s)Y

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

The Federal Style house at 255 Main Street is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as an individual resource at the local level. The house was built c. 1780 by James Prescott (b. 1720/21) for his son Abijah (b. 1755) according to previous research. Among other things, Col. James Prescott served on Groton's Committee of Correspondence during the Revolutionary War and was state senator from 1780-1784. James also had care of French neutrals or Acadians in 1756 based on the existence of an account submitted by Groton selectmen to the General Court for their support that includes Mr. Prescott's' name. According to Dr. Green, the house was owned by Alpheus Richardson in 1815 who operated a book store and bindery until c. 1846. This was one of at least two book store/bindery operations in town at the time; the other was on the opposite side of Elm Street. Mr. Richardson published works on flowers and the New Testament that were distributed as far as 50 miles away, mostly to the north and west. The 1832 Butler map shows a member of the Shattuck family as the occupant although Butler's field notes from 1828-29 indicate Mr. Richardson was here in the house which was painted yellow. Maps of 1847 and 1856 depict E. S. Clark as the occupant. This is Eusebius S. Clark who worked as deputy sheriff and lived with his wife Mary, a daughter and 6 boarders, 2 of whom were bakers. Mr. Clark who was killed in the Civil War was also the namesake of the G.A.R. Post No. 115, founded 1874, that met at the I.O.O.F Hall which is the former Groton fire house at 20 Station Avenue. The building's associations with the French Canadian ethnic group, early industrial and commercial activity establish its significance under Criterion A. The refined design of the well-maintained house's symmetrical facade and the surviving historic exterior materials make the property eligible under Criterion C. The house retains integrity of design, materials, setting and workmanship.