

FORM B - Building

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

Map and Lot # 109 43 USGS Quad Area(s) X Form Number 87, 224, 225

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.

Address 108 Pleasant Street
Historic Name Dana, Samuel - Wharton, William Hous
Uses: Present Residential
Original Residential
Date of Construction c. 1815
Source SAG Vol. 4, p. 398

Roll Negative(s)

Style/Form Greek Revival

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Stone

Wall/Trim Wood clapboard, flushboard

Roof Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/secondary structure

Shed, barn, carriage house

Major Alterations (with dates)

Wings added mid 19th c.

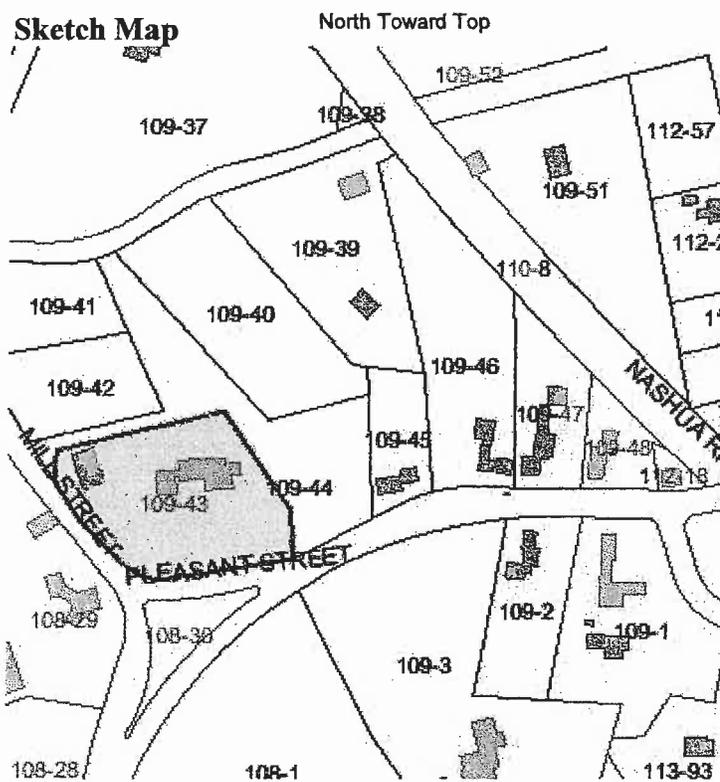
Condition Excellent

Moved no yes Date

Acreage 1.99

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 core of the mansion at 108 Pleasant Street appears to be the central front-gabled, 2 1/2-story, 3-bay Greek Revival style block with brick side walls that is flanked by 2 1/2-story side-gabled wings on both sides; the east wing is 3 bays in width while the west is 7; a porch with roof balustrade covers the first story of the main block and is supported by 8 Ionic columns; a small dependency on the west end of the west wing attaches a front-gabled carriage barn.
- * Architectural details include the patterns of fenestration that are symmetrical within each of the three major sections of the plan, the molded cornice which is of uniform height across all three section, corner pilasters in the central and east blocks, flushboard tympanum with lunette in the front gabled block, decorative balustrade with urns on the porch roof and closed gable with lunette in the east elevation of the east wing
- * Windows are mainly 6/6 double-hung sash except the triple-hung 6/6/6 sash in the first story of the east wing; the side-hall entry in the central block is trimmed with a broad fanlight and sidelights but an otherwise simple surround
- * The attached barn is a 2 1/2-story front-gabled form with 9/9 windows, wood clapboard walls and extremely wide corner boards; a second barn is detached and located west of the house; this is a wood clapboard, gable roofed building with a ventilator at the center of the roof ridge; access to the detached barn is through a break in a stone retaining wall
- * The deep front yard of the house is separated from Pleasant Street by a picket fence supported by granite posts
- * The house is a local landmark due to its size, excellent condition, rambling floor plan and dramatic site

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, known as "The Elms", was built on a 3x4-bay, Greek Revival style, front gabled plan in 1815 for Judge Samuel Dana, son of the First Parish minister at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. Judge Dana (1767-1835) was a native of Groton who practiced law in Groton Center and moved here from his house at 98 Main Street (MHC#23). He was a founder of Lawrence Academy and one of two lawyers in town in 1798 (the other was Timothy Bigelow, each with two students). Judge Dana operated the town's first post office in the building at 86 Main Street from 1800 until 1804, was the town moderator in 1794, a member of the Massachusetts State Senate in 1803, 1814-15, the committee to alter the state constitution in 1820-21 and was simultaneously the chief justice of the court of common pleas. In 1822, Judge Dana published a letter in the Boston Patriot newspaper concerning the prolific home-based straw hatmakers of Groton, the weak fibers they used in the trade and his efforts to begin the importation of seed for more durable Leghorn straw from Livorno, Italy. This is a very early reference to this type of straw for hats, most other references dating from the mid 19th century when it had become quite popular as a hat material. Butler's field notes from 1828-29 indicate the house had three windows across the front, an early version of a gable front form, and was painted white. Mr. Dana sold 108 Pleasant Street in 1833 to Timothy Fuller, another lawyer who moved here from Cambridge after visiting the town while his daughter, the future author Margaret Fuller Ossoli attended school at Miss Susan Prescott's School at 14 Main Street (MHC#20). Miss Fuller lived in the house as a young girl from 1833 to 1838, the year of her father's death. By 1847, the house was owned by Henry A. Richards who was taxed for ownership of a house and land worth \$5,500, an amount larger than the average. By 1856, C. Bigelow was depicted as the owner. The J. J. Graves estate was depicted as the owner on the 1875 Beers atlas and the 1889 Walker atlas. Mr. Graves was a butcher and grocer who amassed \$24,000 in personal assets by the time of his death and had lived previously at 287 Farmers Row (MHC#40) in the 1840s. In

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

continuation sheet

Frank, History of L.A., p. 49; 1832 and 1847 Butler maps and field notes; 1875 Beers atlas; 1889 Walker atlas; 1856 Walling map; 1939 WPA map; SAG Vol. 4, pp. 397-398; Tax records, 1830-1889; Previous GHS Research; Richardson, "The Community"; Samuel Dana, Article concerning the importation of Leghorn straw in the Independent Chronicle and Boston Patriot, March 9, 1822;

**** 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

Town
Groton

Property Address

Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
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Area(s) **Form No.**

108 Pleasant Street Historical Narrative

1893, the house was sold to William F. Wharton, a lawyer who served in the state house of representatives and from 1888-1892 as assistant secretary of state under President Harrison. The Whartons added wings to the Greek Revival style front-gabled building and lived here until at least 1930. Land was then planted in hay with orchards in the rear. William F. Wharton's son William P. Wharton (1912-1976) lived here for a time before acquiring the house at 152 Broadmeadow Road (MHC #93).

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108 Pleasant Street



INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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Area(s)

Form No.

108 Pleasant Street



Massachusetts Historical Commission

Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Community Groton
Property Address
108 Pleasant Street

Area(s) X

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:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D					
Criteria considerations:		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	

The Greek Revival Style house at 108 Pleasant Street is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as an individual resource at the local level. The house, known as "The Elms", was built on a 3x4-bay, Greek Revival style, front gabled plan in 1815 for Judge Samuel Dana, son of the First Parish minister at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. Judge Dana (1767-1835) was a native of Groton who practiced law in Groton Center and moved here from his house at 86 Main Street (MHC#23). He was a founder of Lawrence Academy and one of two lawyers in town in 1798 (the other was Timothy Bigelow, each with two students). Judge Dana was the town moderator in 1794, a member of the Massachusetts State Senate in 1803, 1814-15, the committee to alter the state constitution in 1820-21 and was simultaneously the chief justice of the court of common pleas. In 1822, Judge Dana published a letter in the Boston Patriot newspaper concerning the prolific home-based straw hatmakers of Groton, the weak fibers they used in the trade and his efforts to begin the importation of seed for more durable Leghorn straw from Livorno, Italy. This is a very early reference to this type of straw for hats, most other references dating from the mid 19th century when it had become quite popular as a hat material. Butler's field notes from 1828-29 indicate the house had three windows across the front, an early version of a gable front form, and was painted white. Mr. Dana sold 108 Pleasant Street in 1833 to Timothy Fuller, another lawyer who moved here from Cambridge after visiting the town while his daughter, the future author Margaret Fuller Ossolli attended school at Miss Susan Prescott's School at 14 Main Street (MHC#20). Miss Fuller lived in the house as a young girl from 1833 to 1838, the year of her father's death. The building's associations with legal and political activity establish its significance under Criterion A. The design of the gable front façade with Victorian wing additions, the surviving exterior materials and details make the property eligible under Criterion C. The house and barns retain integrity of design, materials, setting and workmanship.