

## FORM B - Building

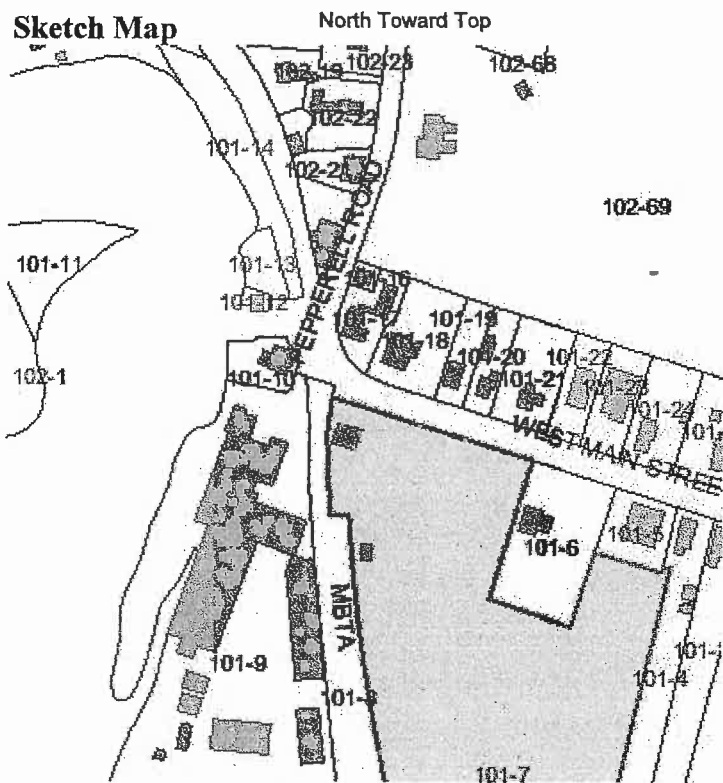
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

### 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)

### Sketch Map



Recorded by Sanford Johnson

Organization Groton Historical Commission

Date (month/year) 6/06

Map and Lot # 101 7  
USGS Quad  
Area(s) W  
Form Number 124

Town Groton

Place (neighborhood or village)

West Groton

Address 16 West Main Street

Historic Name Tarbell, Abel House

Uses: Present Residential

Original Residential-agricultural

Date of Construction c. 1800

Source Butler map of 1832

Style/Form Federal

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Granite

Wall/Trim Brick

Roof Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/secondary structure

Major Alterations (with dates)

19th c. barn demolished, 20th c.

Condition Good

Moved no  yes  Date

Acreage 10.36

Setting Rural mill village

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.*

- \* 16 West Main Street is a brick 5x3-bay, side-gabled, Federal style, 2 1/2-story house with a rear ell of 1 story
- \* Decorative features are the symmetrical fenestration in the façade, molded cornice, four tall brick chimneys at the corners of the roof and gable returns
- \* Windows are 6/6 double-hung sash with plain trim, stone sills and no lintels or arches over the openings
- \* The center entry has simple trim and a transom; a secondary entry exists at the southwest corner of the west side elevation
- \* The rear ell is a wood clapboard, 4-bay, gable form with a single brick chimney near the center of the roof ridge
- \* A 19th century barn was attached to the rear of the wood frame rear ell in 18967 but has since been demolished
- \* The house is well-maintained and is a locally rare brick Federal style example
- \* The setting is adjacent to the railroad, just west of which is largest building in West Groton, the former Groton Leatherboard factory, now in use as senior housing; west of the factory is the Squannacook River

### 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 first known owner of the house was Abel Tarbell whose occupancy is depicted on the 1832 Butler map. Butler's field notes describe the house in its current form. An owner named A. Tarbell is shown on the 1847 and 1856 maps and likely refers to Abel Tarbell. Mr. Tarbell may have been a descendant of the Colonial Period miller Thomas Tarbell who operated a grist and saw mill across the future railroad right of way starting in 1744. Abel was taxed in 1830 for ownership of a house valued at \$2,500. By 1847, his property was worth \$3,000 and he had additional real property and personal assets worth \$5,000. Non-population Census Schedules from 1850 show he had 220 acres, a farm worth \$6,000 and earned \$1,200 from his hop fields, all greater than average sums. The 1855 census reveals that Mr. Tarbell was born c. 1773 and had the title "Esquire". He also served as Master of the Groton Masons Lodge and is given the title Colonel in Butler's history of the town. From c. 1875 to c. 1889, the occupant was Mrs. M. Tarbell according to atlases from those years. This is Martha Tarbell who was taxed in 1875 and 1889 for ownership of a horse, a carriage and a cow in addition to her house and barn on 150 acres. She is also noted as living in West Groton in the 1888 and 1918 resident directories. Local historians write that in 1930, Elsie (a Tarbell family descendant) and Clarence L. Thompson lived here. Mr. Thompson was the president of the business founded by his father called A. H. Thompson and Sons Company who, starting in 1885, were concerned with sawing lumber and staves as well as manufacturing boxes and reels, originally in northwest Groton at the 70 year old water-powered mill of John Scales. In 1896, Asa Howard Thompson bought land in the village of West Groton for a mill to build wooden boxes, reels for wire and coal screen frames. Clarence Thompson and his brother David joined the firm at the date of incorporation in 1919, by which time the mill was powered by steam instead of water and made mainly reels until at least 1955 according to the Tercentenary Booklet published in that year. Descendants recall in "Groton at 350" that the mill was enlarged in the early 1940s and ran three shifts of workers during WWII.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

continuation sheet

Groton at 350, p. 64; Tercentenary Booklet, p. 83; 1832 and 1847 Butler maps and field notes; 1856 Walling map; 1875 Beers atlas; 1889 Walker atlas; 1888, 1918 and 1929 resident directories; 1939 WPA map; Tax records, 1830-1889; Butler, p. 252, 302; Tercentenary, p. 81; 1855, 1865 state census; 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.**

16 West Main Street



Massachusetts Historical Commission

Community Groton

Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Property Address  
16 West Main Street

Area(s)  
W

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 16 West Main Street is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as an individual resource at the local level. The first known owner of the house was Abel Tarbell whose occupancy is depicted on the 1832 Butler map. Butler's field notes from 1828-29 describe the house in its current form. An owner named A. Tarbell is shown on the 1847 and 1856 maps and likely refers to Abel Tarbell. Mr. Tarbell may have been a descendant of the Colonial Period miller Thomas Tarbell who operated grist and saw mills across the future railroad right of way starting in 1744. Abel was taxed in 1830 for ownership of a house valued at \$2,500. By 1847, his property was worth \$3,000 and he had additional real property and personal assets worth \$5,000. The 1855 census reveals that Mr. Tarbell was born c. 1773 and had the title "Esquire". He also served as Master of the Groton Masons Lodge and is given the title Colonel in Butler's history of the town. From c. 1875 to c. 1889, the occupant was Mrs. M. Tarbell according to atlases from those years. This is Martha Tarbell who was taxed in 1875 and 1889 for ownership of a horse, a carriage and a cow in addition to her house and barn. She is also noted as living in West Groton in the 1888 and 1918 resident directories. Local historians write that in 1930, Elsie (a Tarbell family descendant) and Clarence L. Thompson lived here. Mr. Thompson was the president of the business founded by his father called A. H. Thompson and Sons Company who, starting in 1885, were concerned with sawing lumber and staves as well as manufacturing boxes and reels, originally in northwest Groton at the 70 year old water-powered mill of John Scales. The building's association with historic agricultural and industrial activity establishes its significance under Criterion A. The design of the symmetrical brick façade, the surviving historic exterior materials and central location in the village of West Groton make the property eligible under Criterion C. The house retains integrity of design, materials, setting and workmanship.