

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

018-0022 Salem WNH.134

Town/City: Wenham

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Wenham Village

Photograph



Façade (south) elevation.

Address: 26 Cedar Street

Historic Name: Batchelder House

Uses: Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1840-1855

Source: stylistic

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Not known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Not visible

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboards and trim

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Not visible

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Shed dormers, ells and additions (ca. 20th c)

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:** after 1896

Acreage: 0.8 acre

Setting: Densely built residential streetscape, principally constructed in the 19th c. Located at northern end of a main thoroughfare between Wenham village and the southwestern part of town.

Locus Map



Map #s are last digits of parcel #s, not street #s.

Recorded by: Stacy Spies and Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Wenham Historical Commission

Date: June 2017

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

WENHAM

26 CEDAR STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

26 Cedar Street occupies an irregularly shaped lot on the north side of Cedar Street, where it bends away from its terminus at Cherry Street and headed toward agricultural lands in the southwestern part of Wenham. The parcel slopes gently down to the southwest, along with the road. Maintained chiefly in lawn, the front yard is enclosed by a wood picket fence along its long Cedar Street frontage. The property consists of a modestly sized main block (the original house), a long string of four side additions that terminates in an attached garage at the western end, and a number of rear additions that are not visible from the street but are documented in the assessor's records.

Measuring 26 feet long by 15 feet deep, the three bay by one bay main block rises 1 ½ stories to a side gable roof with narrow but pronounced cornice returns and a large chimney on the east end that rises from the back slope. Walls are sheathed with clapboard and trimmed with narrow flat corner boards and a wide fascia with a narrow bed molding. The fascia is ornamented with three panels of applied geometric fretwork, centered over the windows and doors. Windows typically have 6/6 double-hung sash and molded casings.

The three-bay façade (south elevation) has an offset entrance with a single-leaf door, anthemion-accented pilasters, high entablature, and granite block steps. A long, low shed dormer with square, 4-pane windows spans nearly the whole façade. The east elevation has a large angled bay window on the first floor and a single window centered in the half-story. The west elevation of the main block has only a small 6/6 window offset in the half-story. Three discrete, 1 and 1 ½ -story ells with a variety of fenestration extend westward from the main block. The attached 1 ½ story garage at the west end of the conglomeration has a front gable roof, flushboard siding, two separate segmental arch vehicle bays, and a small 6/6 window centered in the half-story.

Well preserved and well maintained, 26 Cedar Street exemplifies Wenham's evolution from a rural agricultural community to a modern suburb. The original Greek Revival cottage is notable for its conservative 3-bay, side gable form (although it does display a side hall plan) and harmonious proportions. It is remarkable for the elegant and unusual detailing of its entrance and wall fascia, notably the anthemion and fretwork embellishments. The side additions are compatible in scale, massing, and style with the main block. While the shed dormer on the historic façade is low in height, its massing detracts from the integrity of the original cottage form.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

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.

26 Cedar Street appears to have evolved as part of the far-reaching agricultural property owned by the Batchelder family in this neighborhood during the 19th century. Ownership of the property at 26 Cedar Street travels with that of 18 Cedar Street, the adjacent lot to the east. (See WNH. 133) 18 Cedar Street is thought to have been constructed by Edmund Batchelder (1765-1829) ca. 1790. Batchelder was married to Elizabeth Kimball (1761-1833) in 1786 and had six children. Their son Israel Batchelder (ca. 1799-1866) married Nancy Andrews. The 1850 census includes Israel, Nancy, and their three children. Israel worked as a farmer and, per the 1850 non-population census schedule, had 50 improved acres planted in corn and rye, 2 oxen, 4 milk cows, 2 swine, and 1 horse. His cash crop that year was valued at \$2,000. It appears that Israel Batchelder lived at 18 Cedar Street through the remainder of his life. The 1856 map notes a house on Cedar Street as the residence of I. Batchelder.

The house at 26 Cedar Street does not appear in any of the historic maps, although omission from the maps does not mean the house did not exist. The 1910 map, for example, frequently omits buildings that had been constructed by that time and are

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verified by other documentation sources. Of interest, however, are multiple references to the lot at 26 Cedar Street as "the barn lot" and, in 1896, the lot "upon which the westerly half of a large barn with a cow yard connected therewith formerly stood." (Essex South Deed Book 1755, Page 295) This same 1896 deed mentions the presence of a workshop on the lot. Given the refined Greek Revival detail on the main block of the house, it seems likely that the house was built in the second quarter of the 19th century and moved from elsewhere on the extensive Batchelder holdings in the neighborhood. This was not an uncommon practice in Wenham. The Solomon Caves house, for example, originally at 17 Cherry Street, is reported to have been moved elsewhere in the neighborhood at the turn of the 20th century.

During the 20th century the property at 26 Cedar Street was sold, in succession, to the Barnes, Cogswell, and Wiley families. These sales were often at the same time and to the same owners as 18 Cedar Street.

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Walker, George H. & Co., *Atlas of Essex County*. Boston: George H. Walker & Co., 1884.

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Wenham Tax Assessor records.

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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Entrance. Detail.



Outbuilding. South and east elevations.

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 Stacy Spies

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

The neighborhood located at the intersection of Cherry Street and Cedar Street is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district. The district retains integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association. Consisting of well-preserved houses dating from ca. 1790 through ca. 1915, the Cherry Street-Cedar Street district meets Criterion A for its association with the development as a neighborhood of farmers and tradespeople. Houses are typically well-preserved one and two-story frame dwellings on stone foundations. The majority of houses in the district feature vernacular Greek Revival, gable-front forms. Several of these houses retain Greek Revival details such as door surrounds. Vernacular forms of Federal, Georgian, and Colonial Revival styles are also represented. 10 Cedar Street is a contributing feature of this district.

Cherry Street developed during the 17th century as an east-west connector between two major north/south roadways: Main Street and present-day Topsfield Road. Eighteenth and nineteenth-century deeds refer to Cherry Street as "the road to Topsfield." With the growth of Wenham village during the 18th century, the village expanded westward along the "the road to Topsfield" between Main Street and present-day Monument Street. Cedar Street was laid out ca. 1825 and was known as "the road to North Beverly." The earliest residents were farmers. However, by the beginning of the 19th century, residents were more typically tradespeople, especially cordwainers, and, without a need for agricultural land, constructed their houses on small lots near the village center. During the late 19th century and into the first decades of the 20th century, residents, in addition to shoe workers, included streetcar drivers, laborers, and teamsters.