

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

018-0014 Salem WNH.144

**Town/City:** Wenham

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

## Photograph



Façade (south) and east elevations.

**Address:** 31 Cherry Street

**Historic Name:** Batchelder House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1856

**Source:** visual; Walling 1856

**Style/Form:** Greek Revival

**Architect/Builder:** Not known

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Granite, cut

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards and trim

Roof: asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** garage; secondary house

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):

Front porch (E 20<sup>th</sup> c); rear wing (L 20<sup>th</sup>/E 21<sup>st</sup> c)

**Condition:** Very Good

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** 1.5 acre

**Setting:** Densely built residential neighborhood, principally developed from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> through early 20<sup>th</sup> c. Located at eastern end of main thoroughfare between Wenham village and western part of town.

## Locus Map



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

**Recorded by:** Stacy Spies and Wendy Frontiero

**Organization:** Wenham Historical Commission

**Date:** June 2017

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

WENHAM

31 CHERRY STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

WNH.144

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.*

31 Cherry Street occupies a large, irregularly shaped parcel on the west side of the intersection of Cherry and Cedar Streets. Situated in the middle of the lot, the building is a short distance from Cherry Street but faces southeast towards Cedar Street. The lot is generally flat and maintained in lawn, with scattered trees on the interior of the site and denser trees and shrubs along the street edges. The building consists of a rectangular main block and a small rear ell. A garage is set to the northeast of the main house and a small auxiliary dwelling stands to the southwest.

Measuring 34 feet wide by 24 feet deep, the main block rises 2½ stories from a granite block foundation to a side gable roof with gable returns and asymmetrically-positioned, twin interior chimneys. (The west chimney is on the end wall.) A 1½ story gabled ell extends from the back of the house, flush with the east wall. Walls are sheathed with clapboards and trimmed with flat sill boards and corner boards and a narrow fascia with bed molding. Windows typically have 6/6 double hung sash and flat casings outlined with rectangular molding strips that form abstract corner blocks on the lintels.

The façade (south) elevation is spanned by a shed-roofed porch across the entire first floor; it is elaborated with a wood railing and Tuscan columns. The five bay façade has a center entrance containing a single-leaf door with ¾ height sidelights, channeled architrave, corner blocks, and center panel above the door. The symmetrical east elevation has three window bays on the first and second floors and two smaller windows in the half story. Visibility of the rear elevation is limited: two windows are observable on the second story, west of the rear ell, and a very small shed dormer with two small horizontal windows rises above the roofline.

The modern, 1 ½ story rear addition is clad and trimmed like the main block. Its two-bay east elevation includes a recessed porch in the outer bay, supported at the corner by a Tuscan column, sheltering an offset doorway. The end gable is 6/6 double-hung sash, square windows with 4-paned sash, and a pair of 9-paned vertical sash in the half-story.

An early garage stands to the northwest of the house and features a front gable roof without gable returns, wood shingle siding, and double-leaf hinged doors centered in the street façade. The auxiliary dwelling on the site is located to the southwest of the house and is not clearly visible from the street. It is 1 ½ story with regular 6/6 fenestration. According to the assessor's records, the L-shaped building was constructed in 1967, measures 40 feet long and 18 feet deep at its widest, and is sheathed with wood clapboards.

Well preserved and well maintained, 31 Cherry Street is a handsome example of rural Greek Revival architecture in Wenham. Notable features include the substantial massing, conservative 5-bay/center entrance façade, vernacular but ambitious center entrance trim, unusual window casings, and full-length front verandah (possibly a Colonial Revival-period addition). The large lot and the orientation of the building to the south, rather than towards the nearest street, are remarkable site features. Alterations—the front verandah and more modern rear ell—are sympathetic with the character of the original design.

## 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.*

The land that now comprises 31 and 35 Cherry Street was part of a larger parcel owned by the local, and numerous, Batchelder family. In 1872, it appears that 31 Cherry Street was owned by "Mrs. E. Batchelder." In 1884, 31 Cherry Street was owned by "Mrs. G. Gage." In 1898, the Gage family sold the property to local real estate developer Lester Libby, who promptly sold it within a few months to Ephraim Dane. (Essex South Deed Book 1546, p. 556, p. 559). The neighborhood changed around the

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turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when real estate developer Lester E. Libby began to purchase large areas of land on speculation in the Wenham center area. Further research is recommended to ascertain the history and significance of this substantial house.

During the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it appears that 31 and 35 Cherry Street were owned and operated as a poultry farm. In 1909, Ephraim A. Dane sold property at the corner of Cedar and Cherry Streets to Harland J. Brown. (Essex South Deed Book 2007, p. 350). Brown appears in the 1910 census as a 30-year-old poultry farmer with his wife, Jessima. In 1902, Ephraim Dane had also sold a piece of his property to Emmeline Standley, who was married to Elbridge Standley, also a poultry farmer. (Essex South Deed Book 1680, p. 279). Both couples appear in census and city directory listings on Cherry Street near Cedar Street. Without further research, it is unclear in which house each couple lived. In 1936, widow Jessima Brown sold the property to Harold and Nellie Dodd. However, it does not appear that the Dodds made either house their residence, as they appear in Beverly census records from the time.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Beers, D.G. & Co. *Atlas of Essex County, Massachusetts*. 1872.

City Directories. 1870, 1888, 1901, 1909, 1918, 1932. Ancestry.com.

*The Naumkeag Directory for Salem, Beverly, Danvers, Marblehead, Peabody, Hamilton, Wenham, Middleton, and Topsfield*. 1901.

United States Census for 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940. Ancestry.com.

Walling, Henry Francis. *A Topographical Map of Essex County, Massachusetts...* Smith & Worley, 1856.

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

Walker Lithography and Publishing Company. *Atlas of the Towns of Topsfield, Ipswich, Essex, Hamilton and Wenham, Essex County, Massachusetts*. Boston: Walker Lithography & Co., 1910.

Wenham Tax Assessor records.

## SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Photo 2. East and north elevations.



Photo 3. Garage. Façade (east) elevation.

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**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 17<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, residents, in addition to shoe workers, included streetcar drivers, laborers, and teamsters.