

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

013-0032 Salem WNH.165

**Town/City:** Wenham

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

## Photograph



Façade (south) and east elevations.

**Address:** 13 Perkins Street

**Historic Name:** Nathan and Nancy Jones House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

**Date of Construction:** 1856

**Source:** deed, 1856 Walling map

**Style/Form:** No style

**Architect/Builder:** Not known

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Stone, uncut

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboards and trim

Roof: Asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** open shed/garage

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): Open shed addition at west elevation (after 1940); west extension (L 19<sup>th</sup> C); shed dormer (20<sup>th</sup> cent.); replacement window sash and skylight (L 20<sup>th</sup>/E 21<sup>st</sup> c)

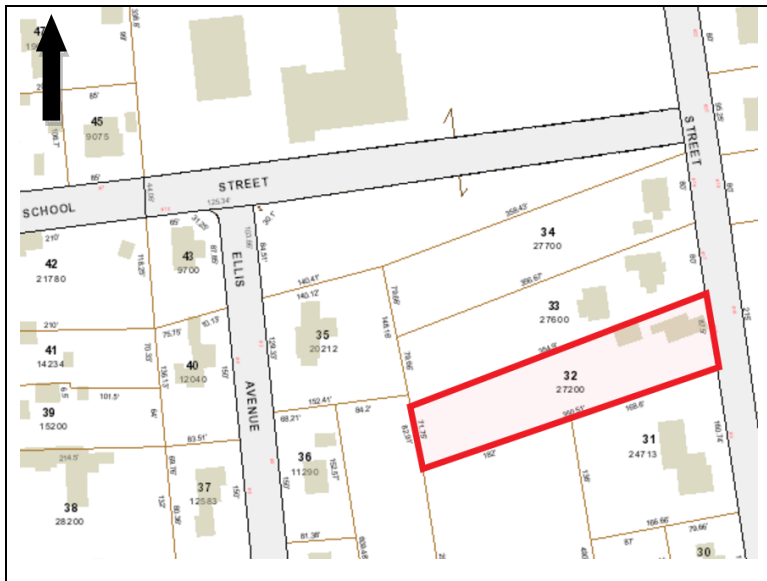
**Condition:** Very good

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

**Acreage:** 0.62 acre

**Setting:** Densely built streetscape with small-scale residential buildings at edge of village center. Located on a side street connecting Main Street (Route 1A) to secondary roads.

**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

13 PERKINS STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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.*

The house at 13 Perkins Street stands very close to Perkins Street at an angle to the roadway, unlike all other houses on the street that are sited parallel to the street. The house is located at the northeast corner of a narrow, deep lot. The parcel is maintained largely in lawn, with scattered shrubs and trees. A paved driveway extends along the south elevation of the house to the garage bays in the shed. The building consists of a main block at the east end with a lateral ell extending to the west. The stone foundation differs in the east and west sections of the building, indicating that the house was constructed during two phases.

Measuring 38 feet long by 17 feet deep, the building has four bays and an off-center entrance at the east end and two bays at the west end. The main block rises 1½ stories to a side gabled roof with close eaves. An interior brick chimney is centered over the entrance. A one-story, shed roof addition is located along the northwest corner of the house. Walls are sheathed with clapboards and trimmed with sill boards and corner boards. Windows are 6/6 replacement sash flat casings.

A gable-roof porch supported by jigsaw brackets and square-section wood posts shelters the main entrance on the south elevation. The two-bay extension at the west end of the main block likely dates from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and shares design features with houses of a similar date on Arbor Street. It features a shed dormer that breaks through the cornice line and is edged with curved brackets. A second shed dormer located at the center of the south roof slope appears to have been added during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A shed dormer also runs the length of the north elevation roof slope.

This vernacular dwelling appears to have always been modest in decoration. The close eaves and rough fieldstone foundation indicate a modest beginning. The addition of the jigsaw brackets reflect a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century updating of an older dwelling. The well-maintained building is an outlier in this suburban neighborhood and although it has been altered, it represents the neighborhood's early 19<sup>th</sup> century agricultural history.

## 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.*

Through the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Perkins Street was a private drive leading from Main Street to the First Period Henry Perkins House, 75 Arbor Street (WNH.112) (NRIND/NRTRA 1990), demolished in May 2011. Perkins Street was officially laid out as a street by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

13 Perkins Street was likely constructed as a modest Greek Revival cottage in 1856, with late 19<sup>th</sup>-century renovations that give it its present appearance. In 1856, 62-year-old physician Nathan Jones (1794-1860) married Nancy Groves (b. 1818) and made their home on Perkins Street. Just one year later, Jones sold the dwelling house to George and Lucy Frost in 1857. (Essex South Deed Book 560, p. 229) Born in Maine, George Frost came to Wenham after the death of his first wife and married his second wife, Lucy). The 1860 census includes 33-year-old shoemaker George, Lucy A., boarder Addison Center, and shoemakers Edwin Grafton, George Harwell, and John Huddle.

Photographer Benjamin Conant captured an image of the house in 1891, identified at that time as the Center house. (*Wenham in Pictures and Prose*: Page 106) At that time, a large barn and several outbuildings were attached to the diminutive house. In addition, it appears that the house had not yet been extended to the west. The picture demonstrates that this was the only building on the west side of Perkins Street and the only homestead on several acres of land.

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Lakeman Southwick, "Gentleman," purchased the property in 1868. (Essex South Deed Book 756, p. 180.) The 1872 map indicates that Southwick was the owner of this property. Levi Hamm appears on 1884 map as the owner of the property. Farm hand Albert W. Dodge lived here beginning in 1904.

The house is an early outlier in this suburban neighborhood. This modest house was once part of a much larger farm complex and was a lone house amid extensive farmland. Suburban growth, as well as the school complex, came to surround the dwelling.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

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- Wenham Historical Association & Museum, Inc. *Wenham in Pictures and Prose*. Wenham: Wenham Historical Association & Museum. 1992. (Conant photograph No. 113, dated 1891 is illustrated on page 106.)
- Wenham Tax Assessor records.