

FORM B - Building

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

Map and Lot # 113 7 USGS Quad Y Area(s) Form Number 9

Town Groton
Place (neighborhood or village)
Groton Center

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)

Address 142 Main Street
Historic Name Trowbridge - Robbins House
Uses: Present Professional Office-Legal
Original Residential

Date of Construction c. 1725

Source May, Groton Houses, p. 13

Style/Form Colonial/Victorian Eclectic

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Granite

Wall/Trim Wood clapboard

Roof Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/secondary structure

Major Alterations (with dates)

Front porch added, building raised, windows, bays and dormer altered, c. 1890

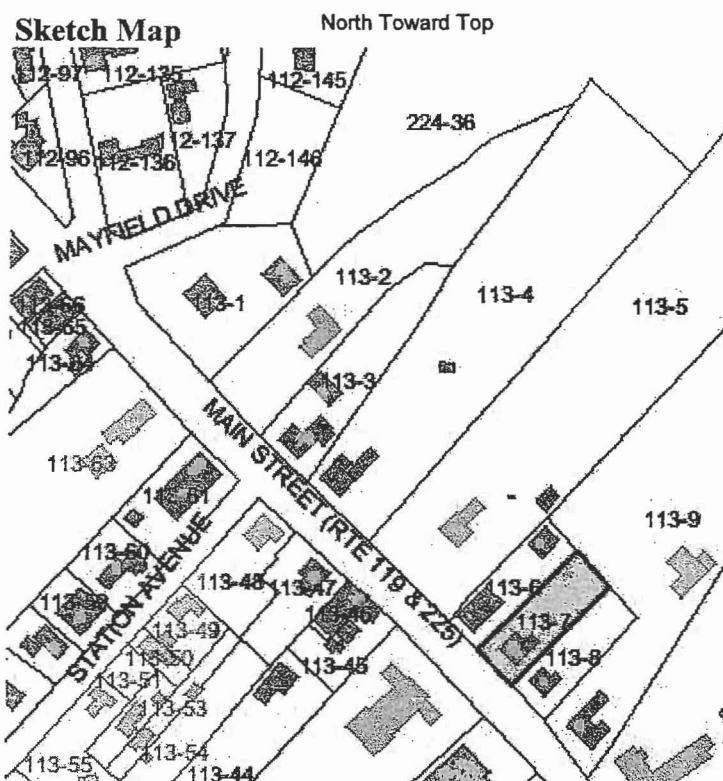
Condition Excellent

Moved no ☐ yes ☒ Date 1871, c.1890

Acreage .5

Setting Town Center-Main Street

Sketch Map



BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

☐ see continuation sheet

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

* 142 Main Street has at its core a Colonial Period house that has been altered by raising the roof during the Victorian Period; the 3x2-bay, 2 1/2-story, side-gambrel form is enlarged at the rear with a 1 1/2-story perpendicular addition lit at the upper level by a shed dormer; other secondary masses include the 1-story bay window lighting the southwest corner of the first story, the full-width shed porch attached to the façade and the central gambrel dormer on the front slope of the roof; two corbelled brick chimneys rise from the roof ridge

* Decorative features include the molded cornice with brackets at the corners, flanking the central bay and at changes in roof pitch, additional brackets at the molded cornice of the bay window, gable returns, vergeboard with quatrefoils on the roof dormer, beltcourses between floors, gabled pavilion projecting slightly from the front porch which is supported by paired colonettes on a combined knee wall/balustrade; central and side staircases access the porch; windows are 2/2 double-hung sash with projecting flat trim; the sash in the roof dormer has a crested top; the double leaf center entry has simple trim

* The detached barn in the rear is a side-gambrel, 2-story, 3-bay form of approximately 20'x50'; the front slope of the roof is articulated by a prominent gambrel dormer with a mow door within; additional shed dormers light the upper floor; the central vehicle door has been filled in with a modern pedestrian door; a pyramidal cupola occupies the center of the roof ridge; the exterior is wood clapboard and wood shingles

* The house and barn are more highly ornamented in the Victorian style than most others in Groton Center

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 at 142 Main Street, originally consisting of only the upper story, was built on Main Street c. 1725 at the site of the current Prescott School at 145 Main Street (MHC #147) according to GHS historians. It was moved 1/10 mile south to a site across from the Groton Inn, 130 Main Street, (MHC #11) in 1871 to make way for the first public high school built in that year, the predecessor to the Prescott School. Daniel C. Lovell was listed in the 1888 resident directory as a building mover and may have been involved in this project. It was later moved again between 1896 and 1901, this time across Main Street and to the north to its current site. The first owner was Reverend Caleb Trowbridge who ministered the First Parish Church from 1715-1760. Reverend Trowbridge later lived at 88 Champney Street (MHC #100). The second owner may have been Jonathan Loring who is supposed by May to have raised the roof to 2 1/2 stories. Butler's field notes from 1828-29 describe a white house owned by Mr. Loring as a two-story form with three windows across the front located near the site of the Prescott School. Interior examinations by the GHS indicate the lower posted rooms upstairs were of Colonial Period construction while the rooms on the first floor have higher ceilings and are of Victorian design. Non-population Census Schedules from 18850 list him as a farmer but had little in the way of agricultural equipment of produce. Andrew Robbins was a subsequent owner and was responsible for the first relocation of the house to the site opposite the Groton Inn according to the 1875 Beers Atlas and the 1889 Walker Atlas. Mr. Robbins' son John was the next owner and was responsible for the second move as well as additional improvements that may have included the bay windows and construction of the barn with its carriage turntable. Sanborn fire insurance maps from 1906 depict the house in its current form with a detached barn at the rear that is now gone. Robert G. May bought the house in 1938 after leaving 255 Old Ayer Rd. He died in 1954 and the house was occupied by Groton Historian Virginia May and her husband Robert until 1958. The Mays sold the property to Milton Estabrook in 1958 in order to move to Mayfield Drive.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

☐ continuation sheet

Previous research; 1832 and 1847 Butler maps; 1856 Walling map; 1875 Beers Atlas; 1889 Walker Atlas; Resident directories, 1888, 1918, 1929; Green, Vol. 1, Chapter 8, p. 4; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1896-1906; May, "Groton Houses", p. 13; Sanborn fire insurance maps, 1896-1906; 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.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Massachusetts Historical Commission
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Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Town
Groton

Property Address

Area(s)

Form No.

142 Main Street



Massachusetts Historical Commission

Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Community Groton
Property Address
142 Main Street

Area(s)
Y

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

Statement of significance by: Sanford Johnson

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

The Colonial and Victorian Eclectic Style house at 142 Main Street is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as an individual resource at the local level. The second story of the house was built on Main Street c. 1725 at the site of the current Prescott School at 145 Main Street (MHC #147) according to GHC historians. It was moved 1/10 mile south to a site across from the Groton Inn, 130 Main Street, (MHC #11) in 1871 to make way for the first public high school built in that year, the predecessor to the Prescott School. It was later moved again between 1896 and 1901, this time across Main Street and to the north to its current site. The first owner was Reverend Caleb Trowbridge who ministered the First Parish Church from 1715-1760. Reverend Trowbridge later lived at 88 Champney Street (MHC #100). The second owner may have been Jonathan Loring who is supposed by Virginia May to have raised the roof to 2 1/2 stories. Butler's field notes from 1828-29 describe a white house owned by Mr. Loring as a two-story form with three windows across the front located near the site of the Prescott School. Interior examinations by the GHC indicate the lower posted rooms upstairs were of Colonial Period construction while the rooms on the first floor have higher ceilings and are of Victorian design. Andrew Robbins was a subsequent owner and was responsible for the first relocation of the house to the site opposite the Groton Inn according to the 1875 Beers Atlas and the 1889 Walker Atlas. Mr. Robbins' son John was the next owner and was responsible for the second move as well as additional improvements that may have included the bay windows and construction of the barn with its carriage turntable. The building's associations with historic religious activity establish its significance under Criterion A. The design of the house, its early construction date, the surviving historic exterior materials and architectural details make the property eligible under Criterion C. The house retains integrity of design, materials and workmanship.