



AREA

FORM NO.

F

533

Town ACTON

Address 1 River Street

Historic Name George W. Worster

Use: Present residential / office professional

Original residential

DESCRIPTION

Year 1894

Source Nylander notes

Style Italianate - L-plan with Queen Anne features

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric wood clapboard

Buildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) refurbished

steps. paths. fence. plantings at foundation

Condition very good

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage less than one acre

Setting At village center - dense residential

area with r.r and brook behind - next to

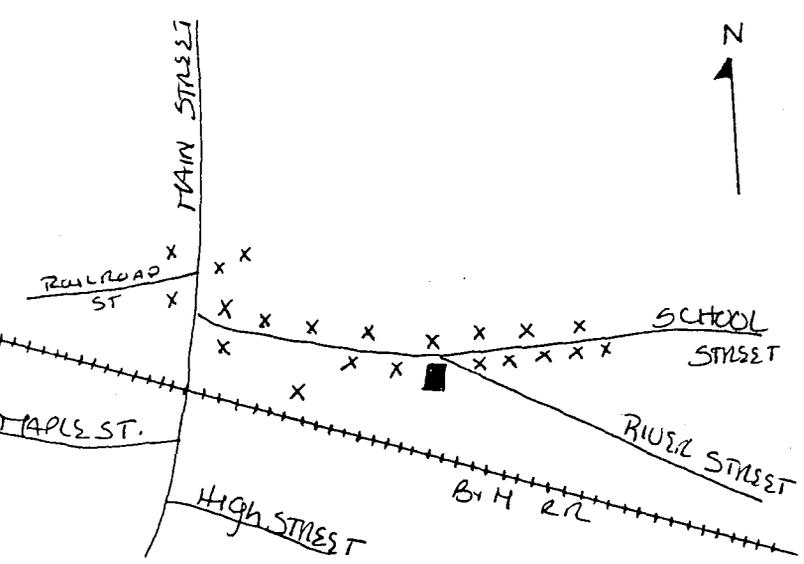
church - commercial and industrial properties

west of dwelling on south side of School.

Recorded by Gretchen G. Schuler

Organization Acton Historical Commission

Date January 1990



TM REFERENCE

SGS QUADRANGLE

SCALE

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The property is eligible for National Register nomination as part of the School-River-Main Mill and Commercial Historic District for Criteria:

A - its association with the development of the railroad community from the 1840s with thriving mills and retail businesses on School, River and Main, as well as the owners and workers housing.

C - its representation of the Greek Revival and Italianate architecture most popular in developing the community of South Acton.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Acton Historical Society. Library Files.
- Nylander and Forbes. "Mill Corner", 1989.
- Nylander, Robert. research notes.
- Phalen, Harold. History of the Town of Acton, 1954.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: ACTON	Form No: F-533
Property Name: 1 River Street	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - 1 RIVER STREET

Prominently located on the corner of River and School and next to the South Congregational Church, the substantial 2 1/2 story L-plan house with a 1-bay wide cross gable or projecting gable roof ell on the west side has been carefully renovated to accentuate the late 19th century architectural details. Built on a brick foundation, the house is clad in clapboards, and has an asphalt roof with one chimney with a flared corbelled top at the ridge of the main block and one below the ridge on the rear side of the long side ell. The dwelling has an intricate wrap porch in the Queen Anne style which has a wood deck, and steps, and lattice foundation screening. There is a 2-story rear ell and deck on the south side built into the slope and level with the first story of the ell. Due to the dramatic slope of the terrain the house is four stories at the rear, which is partially visible on the west side next to the Church.

The main facade has different facets when viewed from various points of the intersection. The dominant feature is the projecting gable front facade with clipped first story corners and the wrap porch that binds the house together visually. The gable front facade has three 2/2 sash constituting the wide gable first story bay. There are two second story and one attic level windows of 2/1 sash in flat enframements. The cornice overhang and returns are substantial and supported by narrow unadorned corner posts. The hipped roof porch is characterized by the turned posts, small pierced brackets and a nicely decorated balustrade reminiscent of a Chinese Chippendale design.

The 2 1/2 story side ell has a square projecting entrance bay with one clipped corner set within the L of the gable front facade and the side ell. A late 19th or early 20th century glass and wood panel door is located in this enclosed entrance porch and one at the rear of the side ell where an additional enclosed entrance porch is within the open porch roof. The long side ell has two first and two second story windows all with 2/1 sash and flat surrounds painted a contrasting color. The gable end of the side ell has two first story windows within the porch, and one second and one attic level window. The projecting 2 1/2 story gable bay on the west side is one bay deep and two bays wide. The basement is raised giving the impression of a three story house. The 2-story rear ell that projects from the southeast corner of the side ell has a raised basement with one 2/1 window and a modern oriel at the first story level (appearing to be the second story from the exterior).

There is a newly designed step and path pattern and a stone wall lining the frontage of the property. Part of this elaboration articulates the slope of the land and the added steps needed to approach the first story of the house from the sides.

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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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HISTORICAL STATEMENT - 1 RIVER STREET

South Acton, once part of the 1000-acre farm granted to Concord's Major Simon Willard, was sold to Ephraim and Samuel Jones and Jonathan Knight in 1701. The first fulling mill was established and throughout the 18th and 19th century mill privileges on Fort Pond east of Main Street were developed. South Acton became the first village center in Acton, preceding Acton Centre, which revolved around the Common, Meeting House, and school from 1806. With the advent of the Fitchburg Railroad in 1844 came the major growth of South Acton Village as an industrial village.

River Street, laid out in 1847 for access to the mills built along Fort Pond Brook, runs from School Street near Mill Corner to Parker Street in the eastern section of South Acton. Paralleling the railroad and the stream (Fort Pond Brook), River Street was the site of several important 19th century mills for woodworking and textile manufacturing. The road is only sparsely developed with dwellings that were for the most part associated with the 19th century mills.

Built in 1894 this was the home of George W. Worster (1859-1946) who married Mary E. Sherman in 1880 and had no children. Worster ran a livery and feed stable which was located behind #27 School Street (the Dwight Block). It was Mary Sherman Worster (1854-1899) who is said to have designed this house. According to the notes of Robert Nylander Worster was employed by Tuttle, Jones, and Wetherbee also. Following his first wife's death Worster married two more times; Grace C. Tuttle (1872-1922) and Sadie Belle Kimball of Newton (d.1940). There is a barn on the property which is said to have been used for Worster's business when he first began.

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