

**FORM B - BUILDING**

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 80 BOYLSTON STREET  
 BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA

F

FORM NO.

414



OWN ACTON

Address 129-131 Main Street

Historic Name Abram Jones

Use: Present two family residential

Original residential

**DESCRIPTION**

date ca. 1860

Source Nylander notes/"Mill Corner"

style Italianate

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric wood clapboard

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) entrance

porch and doors, rear ell

Condition fair/good

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage less than one acre

Setting East side of Main Street, situated

above the road and behind Exchange Hall at

the core of the commercial district among

other mid 19th c. commercial and residential

properties

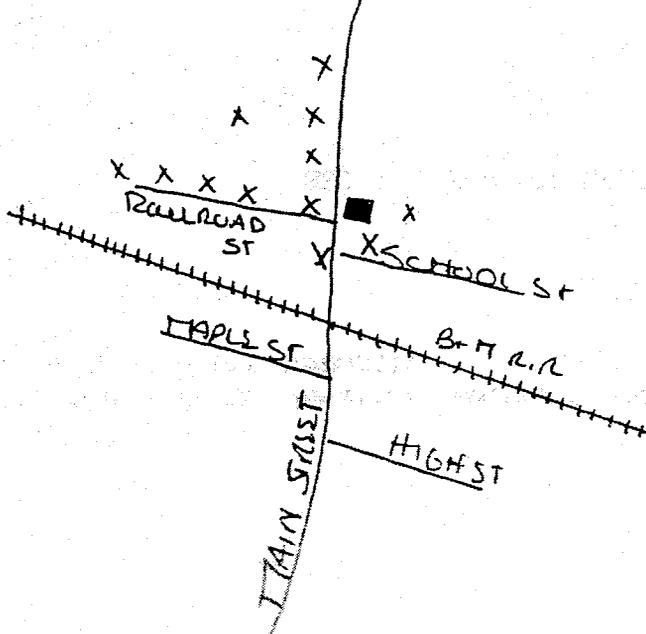
Recorded by Gretchen G. Schuler

Organization Acton Historical Commission

Date May 1990

**Sketch Map:** Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s). Indicate north

Assessor's Map # H-2A-11



UTM REFERENCE

USGS 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.

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 there were active mill privileges on Fort pond Brook at Mill Corner where Main Street (once known as Maynard Road) and High, Maple, and School Streets intersect. South Acton was the first village center, preceding Acton Centre, which became the institutional center. With the advent of the Fitchburg Railroad in 1844 came the major growth of South Acton as an industrial village.

Mill Corner, later known as Exchange Square was the heart of the 18th century mill and commercial village and of the 19th century industrial railroad village. The intersection of the main north-south transportation route and School Street which was the most direct route to Concord from the early 1700s also had the railroad with depot, several mid 19th century commercial structures, and Stow Street which ended at Railroad Street before the overpass railroad bridge was built in 1906.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Atlas/Birdseye/Map: 1870, 1875, 1886, 1889, 1892.  
Acton Historical Society, Jenks Library Files.  
Nylander and Forbes, "Mill Corner", 1989.  
Nylander, Robert, research notes, 1980s.  
Phalen, History of Town of Acton, 1954.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

ACTON

Form No:

F-414

Property Name: 129-131 Main Street

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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - 129-131 MAIN STREET

The substantial and well detailed mid 19th century house of Abram Jones is slightly diminished due to its location behind the imposing Exchange Hall. The L-plan dwelling displays a 2 1/2 story gable front side hall entry facade with a 2-story side ell. Extending behind the side ell is a newer rear ell, which is not visible from the public way. There are paired projecting bays on the south side, a hipped roof entrance porch on the main facade, and an enclosed porch within the ell. Built on a granite foundation the house retains its wood clapboards. There are two interior brick chimneys extending above the roof at the ridge of the main block and one behind the ridge of the side ell.

The 2-bay, gable front facade has a sidehall entry which now has two entrance doors, both of early to mid 20th century design with multi-lights in the upper panel underlined by long vertical wood panels. The doors are set in a plain surround and enclosed by a Colonial Revival 20th century hip roof open portico with panelled base, lattice foundation screening, and incised square posts. The second first story bay has paired 2/2 sash in a plain enframingent with a prominent projecting molded lintel. Second story fenestration include one single and one double window with 2/2 sash and simply molded surround. In the gable peak is a roundheaded window with 2/2 sash and a molded surround. The cornice and returns are wide and supported by panelled corner pilasters.

The side ell, which is recessed, has a 1-story enclosed porch with central door and two flanking windows with 1/1 sash or 2/2 with horizontal mullions. There is also a small 1/1 window in a molded surround tucked into the corner of the ell. Second story windows include three with 2/2 sash in molded surrounds. The cornerposts of the side ell are panelled resembling the main block.

The south side is the most prominent with two 1-story, polygonal bays on narrow panelled bases connected and enclosed by a pagoda style roof attached by fleur-de-lis bracket work. The bays have large 3/3 sash with vertical mullions flanked by narrow 1/1 sash. This large 3/3 window appears to be a local trait as it is repeatedly noted in Acton Centre and South Acton. The south side second story fenestration includes two 2/2 windows in molded surrounds abutting the narrow fascia board under the molded eave. The north side is only partially visible when travelling south on Main Street. The gable end of the side ell has one 2/2 first story window and one small replacement 1/1 window. In the gable peak there is the frame of a square window that has been filled. The corner pilasters, cornice and returns are the same as those on the front gable.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT

According to the 1856 Wallings Map, there was a house in this location for A. Jones. Abel Jones (1783-1872) had lived here while running the family cider mill on this site half of which he had purchased from his father Aaron Jones (of Jones Tavern) in 1818 and the half of which he inherited in 1837. In 1845 Abel Jones had moved to his new Greek Revival house at 34 School Street and this became the property of his son Abram Hapgood Jones (1819-1907), who purchased the mill, a house and surrounding farm from his father in 1851. Abram Jones, who was listed as a farmer in the 1883 Directory, rebuilt the cider mill in the 1860s and may have built this house or remodelled a pre-existing one in the Italianate style.

Staple to inventory form at bottom