



ACTON, MA

56 WINDSOR / CARRIAGE HOUSE

ROLL 4-27A-28

SCHULER

11/89

ACTON, MA

56 WINDSOR

ROLL 4-28A-29

SCHULER

11/89

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA

C

FORM NO.

275

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Town Acton

Address 56 Windsor Avenue

Historic Name Arthur Blanchard (1892)

Use: Present single family residential

Original single family residential

DESCRIPTION

Date 1892

Source Nylander research

Style Queen Anne

Architect Builder: John S. Hoar

Exterior Wall Fabric clapboards/shingles

Outbuildings carriage house

(see reverse)

Major Alterations (with dates) _____

none

Condition Good

Moved no Date _____

Acreage 1.5 acres

Setting Among a collection of late 19th century houses lining both sides of this residential street adjacent to the center of West Acton's commercial village.

Recorded by A. Dodson/Schuler and Johnson

Organization Acton Historical Commission

Date May 1988/ March 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

Indicate north

F-2B-45

PEARL

WINDSOR X X X X X X X X X X

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X XX
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Windsor
Green

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UTM REFERENCE _____

USGS QUADRANGLE _____

SCALE _____

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The property is eligible for National Register nomination as part of the Windsor Avenue Historic District for Criteria:

A - its representation of turn of the century expansion of West Acton Village with many substantial dwellings built for successful local businessmen.

C - its representation of well detailed late 19th century architecture and as an example of the work of local craftsman/builder, John S. Hoar, Jr.

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

See Inventory Continuation Form

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

See Inventory Continuation Form

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Nylander research

AHS Files/ Vital Records

Phalen, History of the Town of Acton; Fletcher, Acton in History.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: ACTON	Form No: C-275
Property Name: 56 Windsor Ave	

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

56 WINDSOR AVENUE / HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION:

This house was built, in 1892, for Arthur F. Blanchard (1864-1954) a prosperous businessman, philanthropist and active member of the Acton community. Mr. Blanchard ran the family apple marketing business and other ventures inherited from his father, Luke Blanchard (see 560-564 Massachusetts Ave). Among his contributions to the civic and social life of Acton, Arthur Blanchard built the Blanchard Auditorium in the Acton high school (1925), was a benefactor of the West Acton's Women's Club (in 1925), and with his son, Webster, founded (in 1946), the Blanchard Foundation, dedicated to the endowment of educational projects in the community (see 62 Windsor).

Windsor Avenue was extended south from the village and improved in the 1870s and 1880s. The Arthur Blanchard house is one of several elaborate residences built on Windsor Avenue in the late 1880's and early 1890s. This house was built by John S. Hoar, a gifted local builder who lived at 49 Windsor Avenue (see form). Mr. Hoar built the majority of houses on Windsor Avenue. These residences reflect the prosperity of local manufacturing and agriculture in West Acton during this period. After the 1845 arrival of the railroad, West Acton grew from a rural outpost to a thriving community that supported the surrounding apple business and several local manufacturies. In addition to the Blanchard's apple business, West Acton enterprises included the the Hall Brothers Pail and Churn Factory (230-236 Central), E.C. Parker and Sons cider and grist mills (see 239 Arlington), the Knowlton Cigar Factory (see 525 Mass Ave), and others.

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: ACTON	Form No: C-275
Property Name: 56 Windsor Ave	

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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION (CONT):

A carriage house is located south of the house at the back of the lot. The clapboard clad building has a slate gable roof and is sited with its long side to the street. A gable roof dormer, with a wide molded cornice and carved brackets, contains a hay door decorated with stickwork and topped by a sunburst panel. Two modern garage doors have been installed in simple enframements with multi-light transoms. Next to these is a replacement paneled wood door with its own three light transom. A wood stringcourse runs across the three openings; narrow corner boards frame the facade. The gable ends are filled with scalloped shingles. Set diagonally on the roof ridge, the square cupola is sheathed in shingles with diagonally placed vents and is topped by a conical slate roof and a weathervane at the peak.

Like the majority of houses built on Windsor Avenue, in the latter decades of the 19th century, this residence was constructed by the gifted local builder, John S. Hoar (see #49 Windsor).

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEETMASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

ACTON

Form No:

C-275

Property Name: 56 Windsor Ave

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

56 WINDSOR AVENUE / ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The large 2 1/2 story house at 56 Windsor Avenue is sheathed in clapboards and shingles, has a slate roof, and rests on a granite block foundation. This well preserved residence is the most elaborate of several Queen Anne style houses built on Windsor Avenue in the late 19th century. Its asymmetrical plan, varied shapes, multiple materials and applied ornament are all elements of Queen Anne design. In plan, the house consists of a central hipped roof block with a forward projecting tower, cross gables and a two story rear ell with a gable roof.

Windows throughout the house are 2/1 in molded enframements. Wood shutters have been added to the windows on the front facade. Clapboards face the walls of the first and second stories; these are divided by a wide band course of diamond shaped shingles that wraps the building. The main facade (west) is two bays wide with an elaborate first story wrap around porch, a projecting three story corner tower and a large gable-roof dormer.

The five sided tower has a conical slate roof topped by a copper pinnacle and weather vane. The shingled surface of the tower's third story is punctuated by windows on alternate walls; below, a section of applied banded panels separates the third from the clapboard clad second story where windows alternate with applied diamond shaped panels filled with shingles. The first story walls are punctuated by windows on each surface with a wide band course of shingles above. The tall gable-front dormer has carved brackets and a molded cornice; its shingled surface is punctuated by a standard size window topped by a sunburst panel, a common Queen Anne motif. The hipped roof porch is supported by turned posts and sunburst patterned brackets and decorated with a chinese chippendale style balustrade. Below is a pierced board skirt to the ground. Within the porch are two windows and an entrance with an applied molded surround and a Queen Anne style glass pane and paneled door.

The south facade of the main block has a projecting 2 1/2 story polygonal bay with clapboards on the first and second stories divided by a band course of shingles. Applied wooden panels top each of the second story windows. The enclosed gable end is supported by carved brackets and filled with a small 2/1 window surrounded by sunburst panels in each corner of the pediment. Wood shutters have been added to the window. Visible, beyond the gable on the south side of the rear ell, is a one story side ell with paired 2/1 windows and a recessed entrance marked by turned columns and a spindlework screen. The north facade consists of the wrapped porch then a square 2 1/2 story bay with a shingled band course, between the first and second levels, and a shingled gable end with sunburst panels identical to the south gable. A small two light louvered window is found in the gable peak.

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