

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no.

NW CAMB.

Form no.

NWC

IIC1

1. Town Cambridge

Address 181-83 Sherman Street

Name Abraham Watson House

Present use residential

Present owner Edward P. Poirier

3. Description:

Date c. 1750

Source deed records

Style Georgian

Architect unknown

Exterior wall fabric clapboard

Outbuildings (describe) -----

Other features mid-18th century farm-house of substantial design, two-room center hall plan, gambrel roof.

Altered: No ----- Date -----

Moved Yes ----- Date 1847-48

5. Lot size:

One acre or less X Over one acre -----

Approximate frontage 100 feet

Approximate distance of building from street
5 feet

6. Recorded by Arthur Krim

Organization Cambridge Historical Comm.

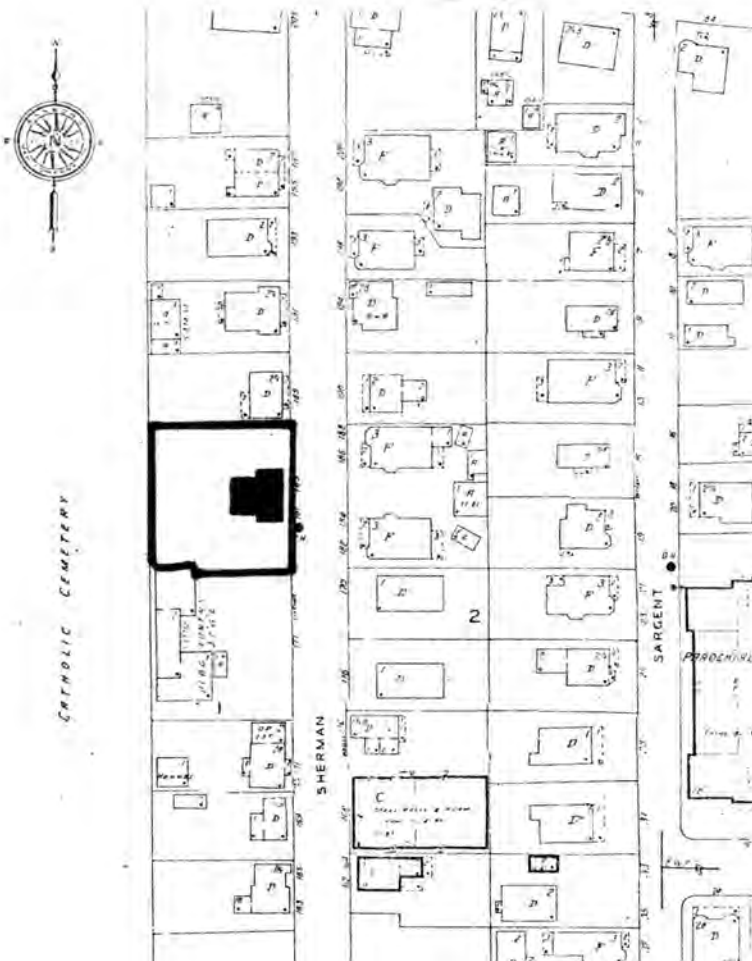
Date 1972

2. Photo (3x3" or 3x5")

Staple to left side of form

Photo number 1105-37

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



Assessor # 194-7

UTM-LEXINGTON

19/325360/4695300

7. Original owner (if known) Abraham Watson

Original use residential

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates same

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	☐	Conservation	☐	Recreation	☐
Agricultural	☐	Education	☐	Religion	☐
Architectural	☒	Exploration/ settlement	☐	Science/ invention	☐
The Arts	☐	Industry	☐	Social/ humanitarian	☐
Commerce	☐	Military	☒	Transportation	☐
Communication	☐	Political	☒		
Community development	☐				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

NOV 1 4 1980

The Abraham Watson house is of great importance as the oldest surviving example of Georgian architecture beyond the bounds of Old Cambridge, and is one of two surviving houses in Northwest Cambridge built before 1775. It originally stood at 2140 Massachusetts Avenue and was moved to its present site in 1847 due to pressure for new development.

The history of the Watson house encompasses many diverse events in the development of Northwest Cambridge. Its owner, Abraham Watson Jr. (1729-1781), was involved in the early years of the Revolution as a member of the Committee of Correspondence (1772) and a Representative to the Provincial Congress (1774), and later served as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention held in Cambridge (1779-1780). A skirmish with British troops retreating from Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775 took place very near to the house, which may have served as a hospital immediately afterwards.

The design of the house speaks of the owner's prosperity. This is evident in the symmetry of the five bay facade, the cornice over the second story windows, and most particularly in the elegant moulded sills and crowns of the remaining window frames.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormFor NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 16 of 17

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Cambridge Multiple Resource AreaState MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

151. Day, Anna, House

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

152. Kingsley, Chester, House

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

153. Watson, Abraham, House

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

154. Wyeth Brickyard Superintendent's
House

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

155. Greek Revival Cottage

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

156. ✓ St. James Episcopal Church

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

Donna Lee Dangel 6.30.83

Attest

157. Kidder-Sargent-McCrehan House

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

158. Henderson Carriage Repository

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

159. Soule, Lawrence, House

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

160. Wyeth-Smith House

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

Property: WATSON, Abraham, House
(Cambridge Multiple Resource Area)
State, County: MA - Middlesex
Federal Agency: _____

Working No. 11-14-80-2862

Fed. Reg. Date: _____

Date Due: 4-17-82

Action: ☒ ACCEPT 4/13/82

☐ RETURN _____

☐ REJECT _____

photos 1

maps _____

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☒ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

1 of earliest surviving Georgian houses in its immediate location.

Recom./Criteria C

Reviewer Braham

Discipline Arch/HS

Date 4.5.82

☐ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☐ technical corrections cited below
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered	☐ moved
☐ fair	☐ unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- _____ summary paragraph
- _____ completeness
- _____ clarity
- _____ applicable criteria
- _____ justification of areas checked
- _____ relating significance to the resource
- _____ context
- _____ relationship of integrity to significance
- _____ justification of exception
- _____ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UNIT References

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Title

Date

13. Other

- _____ Maps
- _____ Photographs
- _____ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: 202 272 - 3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



1105-37

NOV 14 1980

Cambridge MA
Watson, Abraham, Harz

049C

181-83 Sherman St.

1105-37

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000275