

60

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

Photos

- 27:26 facade
- 27:22 summer tie joining rear plate
- (27:24 detail, second floor rear plate)
- 27:15 attic, looking west
- 27:18 west end of attic, detail:
stud lapped behind collar beam

Town Topsfield 009

Address 109 North Street

Historic Name Stephen Foster House

aka Greenwood Kennels

Use: Present Residence and Kennel

Original Residence

DESCRIPTION

Date ca. 1680-1700

Source Visual analysis

Style First Period

Architect None

Exterior Wall Fabric Clapboards

Outbuildings Barn and two sheds - 20th-c.
all in disrepair

Major Alterations (with dates) Chimney bay
rebuilt at attic, 19th cen.; ell added
right rear, date unknown.

Condition Good

Moved No Date less than one acre, part of a

Acreage single parcel of 27.01 acres

Setting Rural, isolated, amid farm fields

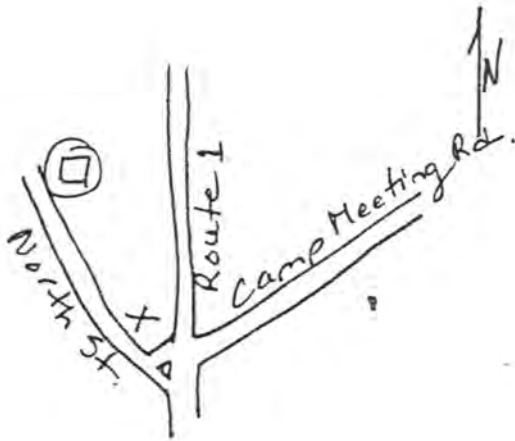
set back from road - no surrounding buildings
office park and Rt. 1A nearby.

Recorded by Anne Grady

Organization Boston University

Date October, 1985

Sketch Map:



UTM REFERENCE Z E N
19/341-490/4724-630

USGS QUADRANGLE Georgetown (now Ipswich)

SCALE 1:25,000

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: TOPSFIELD	Form No: 60
Property Name: Stephen Foster House	

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

SIGNIFICANCE

The Stephen Foster House has integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and setting in its First Period frame, which embodies distinctive characteristics of form and construction under Criterion C. Its single cell, two story plan is typical of a larger number of First Period houses. The house is unusual in that it retains on the exterior the First Period single cell massing usually obscured by later additions. The retention of a branch on the rear plate to serve as a brace is an unusual example of vernacular carpentry practice. While related to the occasional use by First Period carpenters of ships' knees to strengthen the frame, the branch brace represents the inventive solution of a single carpenter.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Stephen Foster House is a two and one half story house, three bays wide and one room deep, with several small additions to the right rear. The clapboard structure is currently embellished with 19th century vernacular trim: a one story porch supported by square posts, and simple surrounds on the asymmetrically placed windows. The extremely steep pitch of the roof is the only exterior clue to the First Period origin of the building.

MAJOR FIRST PERIOD FEATURES

The massive oak frame of this house is only exposed on the second floor and in the attic. Framing on the first floor is concealed behind later finishes, although nail evidence indicates ceiling joist spacing of 21" on centers. A straight-run staircase has replaced the original chimney in the chimney bay at the right hand end. On the second floor, the summer tie beam is embellished with 1 3/4" flat chamfers and a stylized variant of the lamb's tongue stop. The stops are not fashioned in a continuous cyma curve, but are formed of two distinct concave curves (see photograph). The substantial corner posts, jowled about 2' above the floor, have flat chamfers. Pegs indicate rising braces of considerable length in the outer walls. Studs were pegged to the tie beam and plates only centrally to these two long braces. Instead of a framed brace between the rear plate and chimney girt, a tree branch left on the plate serves as a brace (see rear closet).

Roof framing visible in the attic is comprised of principal rafters bridle jointed at the ridge, four large purlins per slope and a purlin at the ridge. The purlins, 5 1/2"-6" wide and 3" deep, are hewn, like the major framing members. The roof over the chimney bay was rebuilt probably at the time that the central chimney was removed in the late 19th century. The cut off ends of the purlins which spanned the chimney bay remained trenched behind the rafters over the chimney beam. The

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remaining three sets of original rafters either have or show mortise evidence of having had collar beams. The collar beam over the chimney tie was lapped and was a foot lower than the tenoned collar beams which remain in the two left hand-most sets of rafters. In the left end wall, the studs are lapped behind the collar beam.

Although traditionally dated c. 1700, the house has a completely oak frame of substantial dimensions. These characteristics of the frame might suggest either an earlier construction date or retardataire methods. Deed research would be useful to determine which is the case.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Stephen Foster House is located at the northwest corner of the property with a line of convenience drawn to include the nearby barns and kennels due to their close proximity.

1/24/90

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR
State _____

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

~~21. Foster, Stephen, House~~

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

sub 22. Foster, William, House

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

Attest

23. Fowler, Rea Putnam, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

24. French--Andrews House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

sub 25. Friend, James, House

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

Attest

26. Frye, Samuel, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

sub 27. Fuller, Joseph, House

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

Attest

28. Fuller, Lieut. Thomas, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

29. Giddings, George, House and Barn

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

30. Giddings--Burnham House

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

Attest

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Foster, Stephen, House

MULTIPLE NAME: First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Essex

DATE RECEIVED: 1/24/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/07/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/23/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/10/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000262

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3/9/90 DATE Entered in the National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

count resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

historic current

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification
 materials
 descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage verbal boundary description
 UTMs boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



North Street, Topsfield, MA
Stephen Foster House
Arched facade

1985

27126

1st Period Buildings of E. Ma., MRA



Topsheld, VA
Stephen Foster House
109 North Street
attic
1985

1st Period Buildings of F. E. Ma., M.A.

27:15



Topsfield, TIA
109 North Street
Stephen Foster House
summer tree → rear plate
1985

27:22

1st Perce Building of E. May 1924

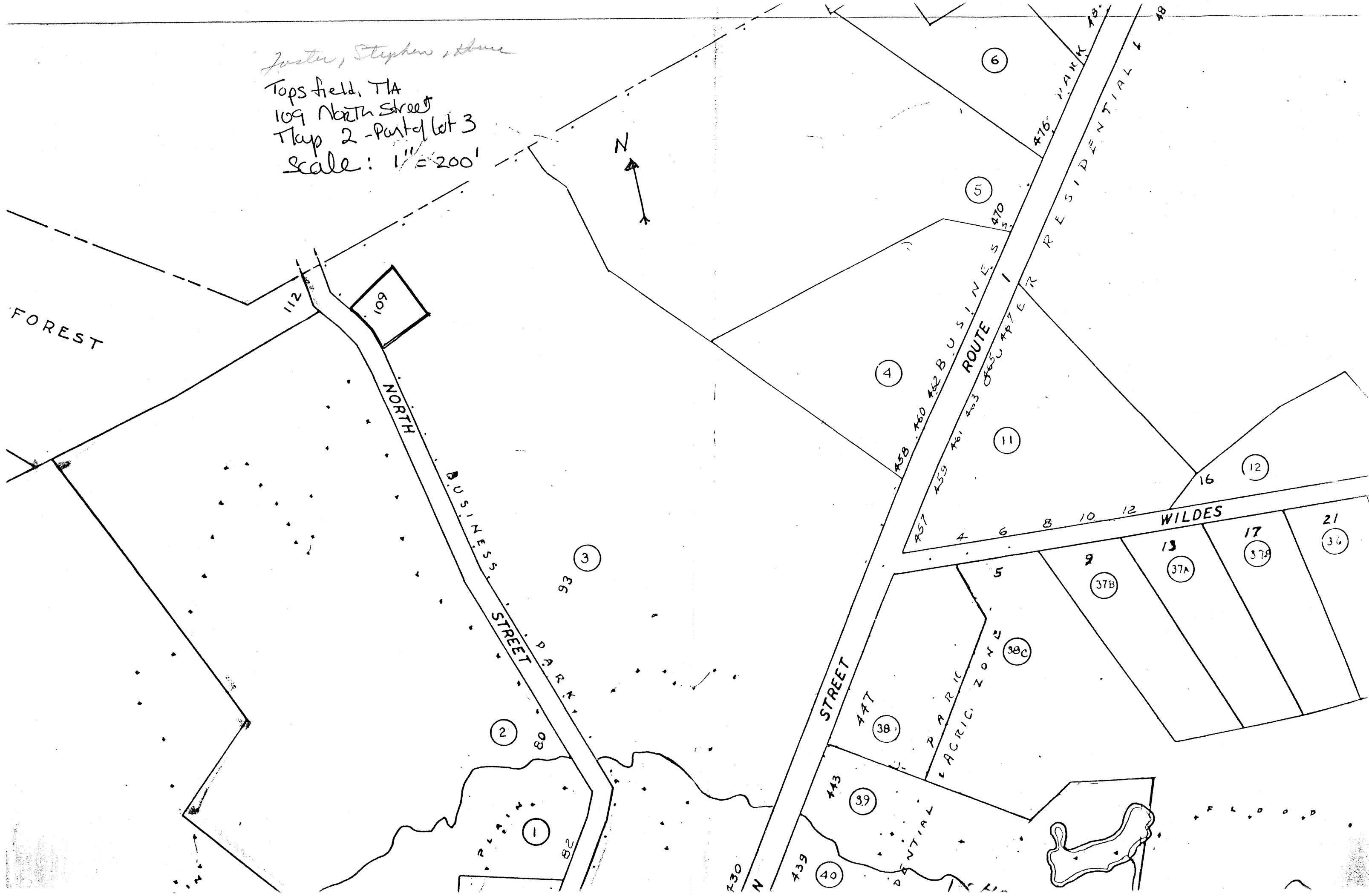


Topstfield, TIA
Stephen Foster House
109 North Street
west end of attic
1985

27:18

Juster, Stephen, Home

Tops field, TA
109 North Street
Trap 2 - Part of lot 3
Scale: 1" = 200'



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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000281