

MAY 15 1989

585

SOUTHBRIDGE MASS

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

MRA	
AREA	FORM NO.
B	220

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

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

Town SouthbridgeAddress 34 Benefit StreetHistoric Name n/aUse: Present residentialOriginal residential

DESCRIPTION

Date ca. 1870-1878Source mapsStyle Greek Revival VernacularArchitect UnknownExterior Wall Fabric clapboardOutbuildings None

Major Alterations (with dates) dormer window
(late-19th c.) stone facing on facade foundation
(late-20th c.)

Condition GoodMoved No Date n/aAcreage less than one acre

Setting dense workers' neighborhood, row
of similar 1½ story houses of same period

UTM REFERENCE 18/745 740/4662 210
USGS QUADRANGLE Southbridge, Mass. - Conn.
SCALE 1:25,000

Recorded by E. Woodford, S. Ceccacci
ed. S. Ceccacci
Organization Southbridge Historical Com-
mission
Date May 1986

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

34 Benefit Street is significant as an early example of worker housing constructed during the growth of the town's eastern section late in the 19th-century. It meets National Register criteria A and C at the local level and retains integrity of setting, location, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association. The boundaries indicated on the attached assessors map are those of current ownership.

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

The best preserved of a row of nine nearly identical workers' cottages built on Benefit Street in the 1870's, this narrow one-and-a-half story cottage retains its clapboard siding and its bracketed porch with jigsaw-cut ornament. Sitting gable end to the street, it has its entrance under the porch which runs along the side. Simple, but dignified in appearance, the cottage is a vernacular expression of the Greek Revival style which was at its height of popularity between 1830 and about 1850. Simplified versions of the basic rectangular Greek Revival house form persisted in working class neighborhoods in central Massachusetts until as late as the 1890's. Greek Revival elements seen here are the substantial gable cornice with a narrow frieze and returns and the wide plain window frames. The porch, typical of the 1870's, is Italianate in flavor.

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

This house and its eight companions on the west side of Benefit Street were among the very first workers' houses to be built near the newly opened (1872) American Optical Company factory on Mechanics Street. The developer of this row of cottages was William Edwards, who also owned three other houses on the east side of Crystal Street. With the exception of Williams' row and two houses opposite it on the east side of Benefit Street, the land between Crystal and Foster Streets was still entirely undeveloped in 1878. During the late-19th and early-20th centuries, the area on and around North Street became densely developed with housing and a few commercial buildings. Almost all of that development was related to the prosperity of the American Optical Company.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

maps, atlases
photo C.F. Hill Collection, July 1889, Jacob Edwards Library
(shows house nearby 4 Benefit Street)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Southbridge MRA
State Worcester County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
41. High--School Streets Historic District Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
42. Hodgson, William, Two-Family House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
43. House at 18 Walnut Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
44. House at 3 Dean Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
45. House at 34 Benefit Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
46. House at 59--63 Crystal Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
47. House at 64 Main Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
48. House at 70--72 Main Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
49. House at 91 Coombs Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
50. Judson--Litchfield House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byers</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY House at 34 Benefit Street
NAME:

MULTIPLE Southbridge MRA
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 5/15/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/31/89
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/16/89 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/29/89
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89000585

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 6/22/89 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
 UTM's boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

 sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Signed _____ Phone _____

Date _____



^{Here at}
34 Benefit Street (B 220)

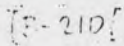
Southbridge, Mass 4RT

1986

Southbridge Historical Commission

Roll # 5

MCA



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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000294