

FORM B - BUILDING

MAY 15 1989

AREA

AREA	FORM NO.
D	405

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

Town SouthbridgeAddress 28-30 Dresser StreetHistoric Name H.C. Wells Double HouseUse: Present residentialOriginal residential

## DESCRIPTION

Date ca. 1888-1894Source mapsStyle Queen AnneArchitect unknownExterior Wall Fabric clapboards & wood shingleOutbuildings carriage house/garage(1870-1878) (C)Major Alterations (with dates) noneCondition ExcellentMoved no Date n/aAcreage less than one acre

Setting tree-lined residential street,  
mostly late-19th century single and multi-  
family houses.

Recorded by E. Woodford, S. Ceccacci

Organization Southbridge Historical Com-  
mission

Date May 1986

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

UTM REFERENCE 18/745 200/4662 020USGS QUADRANGLE Southbridge, Mass-Conn.SCALE 1:25,000

## NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The H.C. Wells Double House is significant as an example of multi-family housing constructed by the Wells family for the workers of the American Optical Company 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.

This well preserved two family residence is unusual for late-19th century multi-family housing in Southbridge in its use of high style design elements and quality construction. Built in the up-to-date Queen Anne style it is simpler than most single family Queen Anne houses in its basically rectangular plan and its symmetrical design. However, its broad, ample proportions and high quality materials are typical of the best Queen Anne style construction. Distinguishing features include the granite foundation, stained glass windows, diamond paned transom windows, large bay windows, swag ornamented window trim, end gable pent roofs, broad faceted roof dormers and the curved skirt at the lower edge of the second floor shingling.

## 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 was built on one of two vacant lots left on this section of Dresser Street after it had been almost completely developed. It appears to have been built by Hiram C. Wells, who lived nearby on the corner of Everett and Chapin Streets. Wells, like his brother George Washington Wells, was involved in the American Optical Company. During the same general period that he built this house, Wells also built at least two other houses, apparently intended as income properties. These other two were single family houses directly behind his own house. The 1898 atlas shows that the house built next door to the west of this one at about the same time was also owned by Wells. He also owned an earlier house across the street from it. Some years later (ca. 1898-1904), his brother, George, also built or purchased houses near his own home on Main Street (e.g., forms #B-212 and #B-211).

By the early-20th century (ca. 1930's and/or 1940's?), this house served, along with many other houses scattered all over town, as official housing for company employees. This was also true of several other houses known previously to have been owned by members of the Wells family or by other persons who had had an interest in American Optical. During this latter period, they seem to have been the property of American Optical rather than that of individuals.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

maps, atlases

Card file of Houses Rented by American Optical to Employees,  
Southbridge Historical Society Collection

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 Southbridge MRA  
State Worcester County, MASSACHUSETTS

- | Nomination/Type of Review                            | Date/Signature   |
|--|--|
| 71. Tapin, Eugene, House                             | Entered in the National Register <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keeper <u>Melores Byers 6/22/89</u><br>Attest _____ |
| 72. Tiffany--Leonard House                           | Entered in the National Register <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keeper <u>Melores Byers 6/22/89</u><br>Attest _____ |
| 73. Twinehurst American Optical Company Neighborhood | Entered in the National Register <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keeper <u>Melores Byers 6/22/89</u><br>Attest _____ |
| 74. Upper Chapin Street Historic District            | Entered in the National Register <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keeper <u>Melores Byers 6/22/89</u><br>Attest _____ |
| 75. Vinton--Boardman Farmhouse                       | Entered in the National Register <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keeper <u>Melores Byers 6/22/89</u><br>Attest _____ |
| 76. Vinton--Torrey House                             | Entered in the National Register <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keeper <u>Melores Byers 6/22/89</u><br>Attest _____ |
| 77. Wells, George B. and Ruth D., House              | Entered in the National Register <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keeper <u>Melores Byers 6/22/89</u><br>Attest _____ |
| 78. Wells, H.C., Double House                        | Entered in the National Register <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keeper <u>Melores Byers 6/22/89</u><br>Attest _____ |
| 79. Wells, John M., House                            | Entered in the National Register <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keeper <u>Melores Byers 6/22/89</u><br>Attest _____ |
| 80. Wheeler, Albert H., House                        | Entered in the National Register <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keeper <u>Melores Byers 6/22/89</u><br>Attest _____ |

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Wells, H. C., Double House

MULTIPLE NAME: Southbridge MRA

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: 89000531

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

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CLASSIFICATION

count       resource type

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STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

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FUNCTION

historic       current

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DESCRIPTION

architectural classification  
 materials  
 descriptive text

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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

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage       verbal boundary description  
 UTM's       boundary justification

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ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps     USGS maps     photographs     presentation

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OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

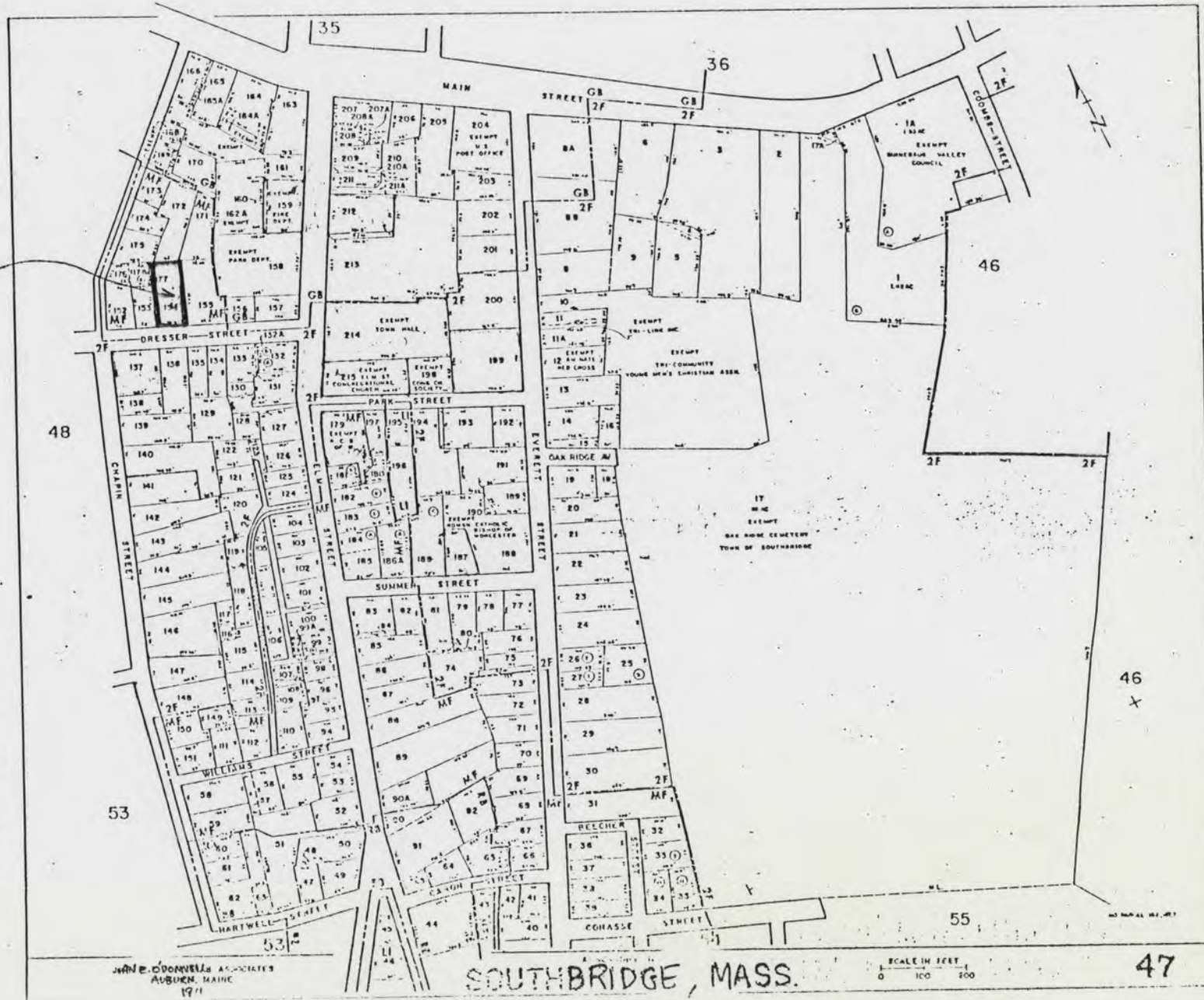
Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



H.C. Wells Double House, D.405  
Southbridge #MA *MAF*  
Ceccacci, 1986  
Southbridge Historical Commission  
Roll #4  
28-30 Dresser Street

28-30 Dresser Street

D-405



SOUTHRIDGE MASS  
M.T.A.

Wm. DONNELL ASSOCIATES  
AUBURN, MAINE  
1971

SOUTHRIDGE, MASS.

SCALE IN FEET  
0 100 200

46  
x

47

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000294