

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

MAY 15 1989

580 SOUTHBRIDGE MASS

MRA

AREA	FORM NO.
B	208

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 18/745 740/4662 010
USGS QUADRANGLE Southbridge, MA-CT
SCALE 1:25,000

Town Southbridge
Address 18 Walnut Street
Historic Name n/a
Use: Present residential
Original residential
DESCRIPTION
Date c.1898
Source maps
Style Shingle Style
Architect unknown
Exterior Wall Fabric wood shingles
Outbuildings none
Major Alterations (with dates) none
Condition Good
Moved no Date n/a
Acreage less than one acre
Setting residential/institutional
Recorded by E. Woodford, S. Ceccacci
Organization Southbridge Historical Com-
mission
Date May 1986

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

18 Walnut St. is significant as an example of 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 is one of two cottages on Walnut Street which, despite their small size, are high style versions of the Shingle Style. Built on very similar plans, but each distinguished by an individual roof type (one gambrel and one gable), the two houses have almost identical trim, window and door type and placement. While the overall appearance of the neighboring 24 Walnut Street has recently been altered by the unsympathetic addition of an attached garage on the north side, this house at 18 Walnut Street is little changed from its original appearance. Among its most significant features are its gambrel roof, gambrel facade dormer, front bay window with diamond panes, the slate roof and shingle siding.

The high quality of the design and materials of these two houses suggest that they were designed by an architect. No specific architect has, however, yet been linked with their design. It is possible that these houses and a two family house at 28-30 Dresser Street (form #D-405) were the work of the same architect. The Walnut Street houses were owned by George W. Wells and the
(see below)

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

Built across the street from the home of their original owner, these houses were likely built to serve as housing for employees of the American Optical Company. Although little is understood about the history of the company's housing policy, it seems that the company itself did not build or own houses for its employees before about 1910 or 1915. This survey has shown, however, that individuals with controlling interests in the company did build houses on their own property which appear to have been intended to house employees.

George W. Wells, who became president of the company in the 1890's built these two houses as well as houses at 64 Main Street (form #B-212) (1893-1904) and at 70 Main Street (form #B-211) (1893-1904). His brother built 28-30 Dresser Street and two houses at the back of his own house lot in the Chapin Street Area (form #D-409). The large estate of A. M. Cheney on Chestnut Street was developed in the late-19th and early-20th century with the cottages and three deckers which housed company employees. About 1915, the company built factory housing on nearby Maple Street (form #B-210) and at Windsor Court (form #B-204) and Twinehurst Place (form #A-103)

Some houses built before 1915, by individual stockholders, are known to have been owned by the company as recently as the 1940's. Because complete records of company housing are not available, it is not known whether either of these two houses ever became part of the company's early-20th century housing.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

maps, atlases
American Optical Housing File, J. Edwards Library

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

Dresser Street house was owned by his brother Hiram C. Wells. The family relationship of the owners and similarities in the style and date of construction of the houses suggest that a single architect may have designed all three.

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 18 Walnut 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: 89000580

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
___ 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 _____



House

10 Walnut Street (B. 208)

Southbridge, MA

Ceccacci, 1986

Southbridge Historical Commission

Roll # 6

SOUTHBIDGE MASS
MRA



18 Walnut Street

B-208

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000294