

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

1581

AUG 21 1989  
1  
NATIONAL  
REGISTER  
S

AREA	FORM NO.
	103

WALTHAM, MA MRA

Town Waltham, MA

Address 38-40 Common Street

Historic Name Daniel French School

Use: Present Two-family residential

Original School

DESCRIPTION

Date 1847

Source Waltham Sentinel

Style Greek Revival

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric Clapboard

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) Enlarged

CA. 1860

Condition fair

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage 4,800 sq.ft. 0.11A 60-12-8

Setting On residential street with

mid-19th c. houses very close to

major business district

Recorded by Nancy S. Seasholes

Organization Waltham Historical Comm.

Date August 1986

revised by C. Jenkins 3/88

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 19/315790/4693900

USGS QUADRANGLE Lexington

SCALE 1:25,000

## NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Daniel French School possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and associations. Constructed as a schoolhouse in 1847, and converted to a residence c1860, it reflects the growth of the town center in the mid-19th century. It is also important as a well-preserved vernacular Greek Revival style cottage with features related to both its schoolhouse and residential uses. During its first decade, it had strong associations with Daniel French, local educator, public servant and activist. It meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

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

The Daniel French School is located on the west side of Common Street which runs north off central Main Street. Its lot is set off by a granite retaining wall and posts in a primarily mid-19th century neighborhood. It is a 1½ story, wood-frame Greek Revival style cottage facing gable end to the street. It is sheathed with clapboards and trimmed with paneled corner pilasters and a fascia/cornice. The gable end features two long windows at the first story and two standard windows in the attic. Both have thinly molded caps and 6/6 sash. The two first story windows may have replaced entries when the school was converted to residential use c1859-60. The last two bays of the five bay side elevation, which on the north include a window and an entry, also may have been added along with the gabled dormers.

### 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 appears to have been built in 1847 by Daniel French for use as a schoolhouse. Daniel French was born in Berkley, MA, then part of Taunton, in 1814. He began teaching school before he was 21 and at age 23 was a teacher of mathematics at the Chauncey Hall School in Boston where his students included Nathaniel J. Bradlee, the architect, Charles Francis Adams, and John Lowell. French came to Waltham in 1842 and for two years was principal of the High School. In 1844 he established a private school that was originally located in the vestry of Trinitarian Congregation Society. In 1847, however, he bought land on Common Street and built the schoolhouse, which opened June 21, 1847, and was described in an 1859 account as "very commodious . . . with all the modern improvements" (Waltham Sentinel April 1, 1859).

In November 1858 French had a leg amputated and had to give up teaching. When he had recovered he began spending time in the law office of Josiah Rutter (see 54-56 Lyman Street form) and in 1859 was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar. He spent the rest of his career as a lawyer in a practice devoted mainly to probate and chancery work.

(cont)

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Waltham Free Press-Tribune, February 3, 1906.

Waltham Sentinel, April 1, 1859.

Biographical Review

1898 Life Sketch of Leading Men of Middlesex County. Vol. 27.

Middlesex Deeds - 516:380; 813:122; 1465:505

Maps and atlases - 1854, 1875, 1886, 1900, 1911, 1915, 1923

Directories - 1871, 1886, 1901, 1923

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:	Form No:
Waltham, MA	103
Property Name: Daniel French School	

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

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

Daniel French was also active in public affairs. For many years he was Clerk of the Town of Waltham and in 1861 was the Representative to the General Court. He was an abolitionist before the Civil War and later an advocate of black women's rights; he was also a leader in the temperance movement.

After French stopped teaching, he sold the school in 1859 to William Clark, a grocer. The Clarks apparently lived in the house for some time, but by 1923 rented it. The occupants then were an assistant shipper, a machine operator, and a salesman.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

AUG 21 1989

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Waltham MRA  
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
31. Fitch, Ezra, School Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 9/28/89 Attest _____
32. Flagg, Frederick, House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 9/28/89 Attest _____
33. French, Daniel, School Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 9/28/89 Attest _____
34. Fuller--Bemis House Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Paul J. Savage</u> 3/9/90 Attest _____
35. Gale--Banks House Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Paul J. Savage</u> 3/9/90 Attest _____
36. Gibbs, William, House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 9/28/89 Attest _____
37. Gilbrae Inn Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 9/28/89 Attest _____
38. Grove Hill Cemetery Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 9/28/89 Attest _____
39. Hagar--Smith--Livermore--Sanderson House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 9/28/89 Attest _____
40. Hager--Mead House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 9/28/89 Attest _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY French, Daniel, School  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Waltham MRA  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 8/21/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/05/89  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/21/89 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/05/89  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89001581

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 9/28/89 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 \_\_\_\_\_

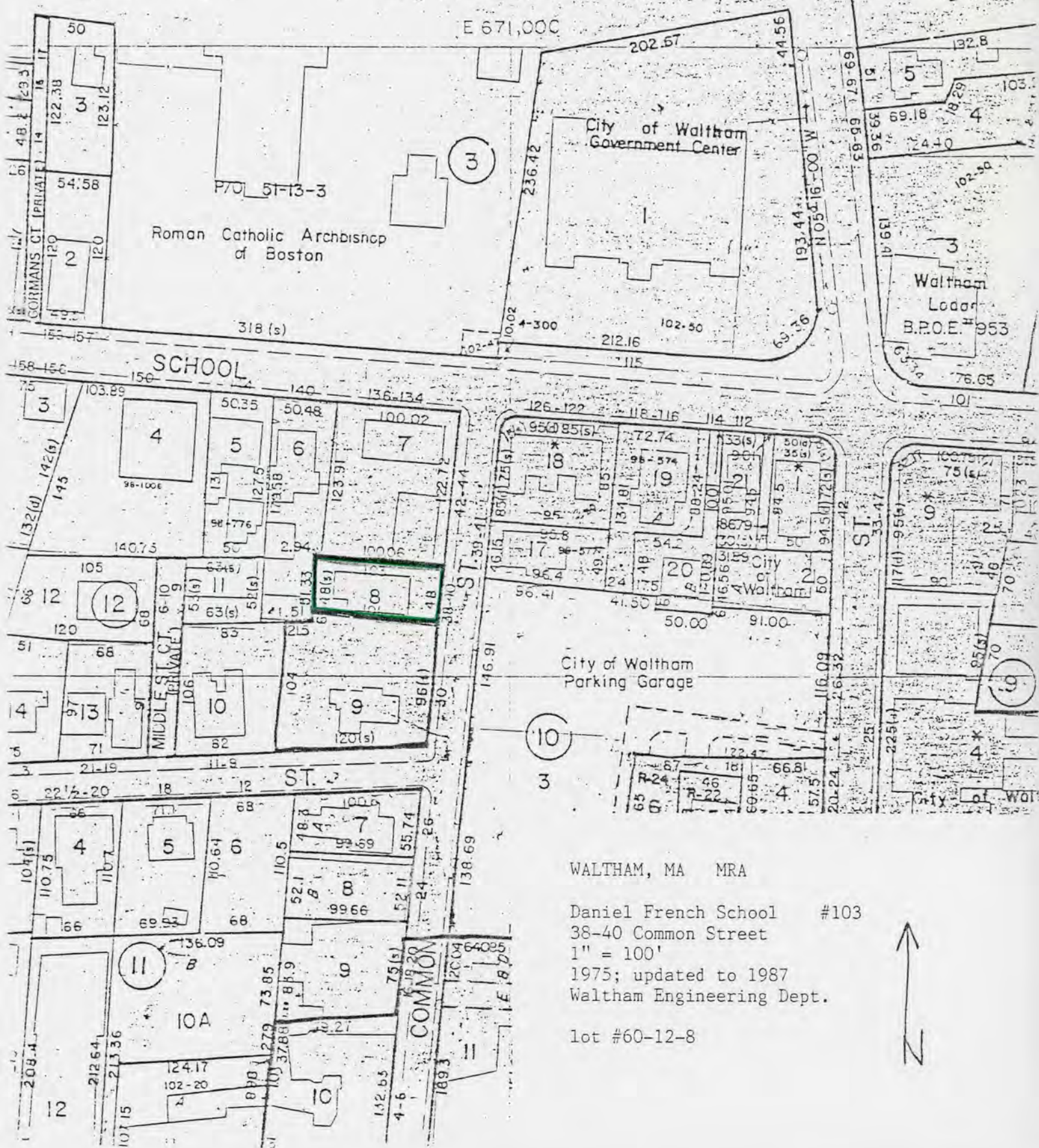
Date \_\_\_\_\_



38-40 COMMON ST

WALTHAM, MA MRA

# 103 Daniel French School



WALTHAM, MA MRA

Daniel French School #103  
 38-40 Common Street  
 1" = 100'  
 1975; updated to 1987  
 Waltham Engineering Dept.

lot #60-12-8





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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000301