

FORM B - BUILDING

Area	Form no.
H	225

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION



Newburyport

Address 12-14 Strong Street

Historic Name Joseph Wilson House

Use: Original Residence

Present Residence

Ownership: Private individual
 Private organization

Public

Original owner Joseph Wilson

Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings or geographical features. Indicate north.

DESCRIPTION:

Date c. 1800

Source Building Fabric

Style Federal

Architect Unknown

Exterior wall fabric Clapboards/asphal shingl

Outbuildings

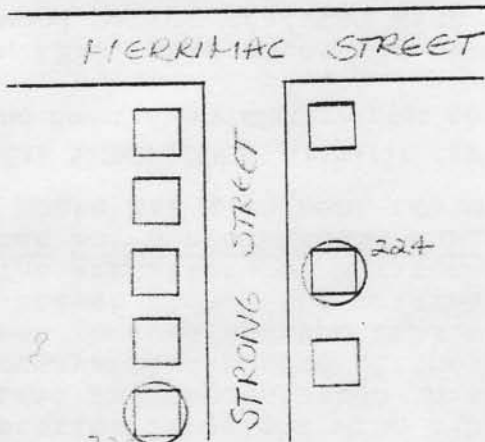
Major alterations (with dates) one half of building has been resided, bay windows added (dates unknown)

Moved _____ Date _____

Approx. acreage 16,460 sq. ft.

Setting in residential area of eighteenth and nineteenth century

dwellings, adjacent to Merrimac Street and the banks of the Merrimac River.



Recorded by Mary Jane Stirgwolt

Organization Office of Community Development

Date 12-08-80

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

This house is a good example of the three story Federal homes built in Newburyport around the turn of the nineteenth century. The house is three stories in height with a hipped roof. The architectural detail is minimal and concentrated in the front entrances and the cornice moulding. The doorways retain some of their original detail but the flanking pilasters have been removed and the fanlight and door have been replaced on the 12 Strong Street side. The original design is shown in a photograph in Howells book, The Architectural Heritage of the Merrimack. The upper side of the house has bay windows added during the mid-nineteenth century. This half of the house has also been resided with asphalt shingles.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

In 1851, this house was owned by Joseph Wilson and John Balch. Wilson was a wood carver credited with the carvings that once graced the Lord Timothy Dexter mansion on High Street in 1801. These statues represented George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams as well as other notables. According to John Mead Howells, Wilson also carved an eagle for Saint Paul's Church and the bishop's mitre, which was placed over the altar.

Wilson owned the lower half of this house, then 10 Strong Street. His business was located next door at 8 Strong Street. Joseph Wilson was in partnership with his son Albert in the firm of Joseph Wilson and Son.

In 1851, John Balch owned the upper side of this house, then 12 Strong Street. Balch was an agent for the Bartlett Steam Mills.

It appears that 10 Strong Street remained in the Wilson family until 1904. At that time Mary R. Wilson sold this half of the house to Don D. Sargent.

In 1872 William H. Swap, master mariner, was the proprietor of 12 Strong Street.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Assessor's Records 1890-1980
1851 Plan of Newburyport, Mass. H. McIntire
1872 Map of the City of Newburyport, Mass. D. G. Beers and Co.
1851, 1871 City Directories