

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	SBR.13
<b>Historic Name:</b>	Fay, Dea. Jonas House
<b>Common Name:</b>	Father and Son House - Cowern, John House
<b>Address:</b>	25 Jericho Hill Rd
<b>City/Town:</b>	Southborough
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	
<b>Local No:</b>	80-2
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	c 1827
<b>Architect(s):</b>	
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	Federal
<b>Use(s):</b>	Agricultural; Dairy; Orchard; Single Family Dwelling House
<b>Significance:</b>	Agriculture; Architecture
<b>Area(s):</b>	
<b>Designation(s):</b>	
<b>Building Materials(s):</b>	Roof: Asphalt Shingle; Asbestos Shingle Wall: Synthetic Other; Wood Foundation: Stone, Uncut; Granite; Brick



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

This file was accessed on:

Friday, July 08, 2016 at 1:06: PM

Massachusetts Historical Commission

80-2

Marlborough

13, 636-639

Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125

Town Southborough

Place (neighborhood or village) \_\_\_\_\_

Address 25 Jericho Hill RoadHistoric Name Jonas Fay HouseUses: Present dwellingOriginal dwellingDate of Construction ca. 1827Source tradition; visual assessmentStyle/Form FederalArchitect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

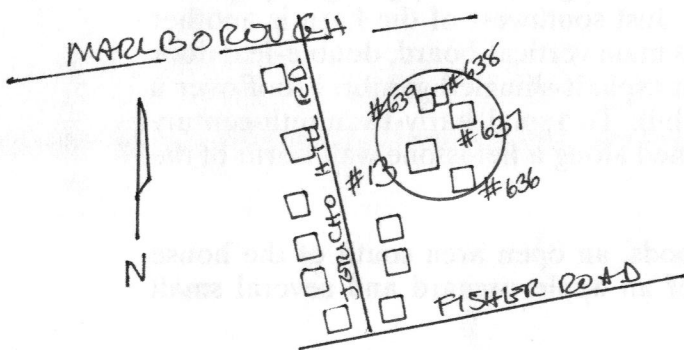
Foundation granite and brickWall/Trim wood shakesRoof asphalt

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures \_\_\_\_\_

19th-C. barn, storehouse; 2 sheds (see text)Major Alterations (with dates) extension onebay north, early 20th C. Barn expanded withgarage bays, early 20th C. (see text)Condition goodMoved [x] no [ ] yes Date N/AAcreage 69 acresSetting On lower slope of hill, back from roadon large acreage. Woods to N., across stonewall. Early 19th-C. house across road.

## Sketch Map

Draw a map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets, including route numbers, if any. Attach a separate sheet if space is not sufficient here. Indicate north.

Recorded by Forbes/Schuler, consultantsOrganization Southborough Historical Comm.Date JUL 03 2000 December, 1999

MASS. HIST. COMM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION [ ] *see continuation sheet*

*Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

In spite of its early-twentieth-century expansion, this house is one of Southborough's best-preserved houses of the Federal period, and retains some high-style features that are unusual in this rural town. It is a large 2 1/2-story building, two rooms deep, with two large chimneys piercing the ridge of the roof that is side-gabled on the south end, hipped at the north. While it has the appearance of a traditional five-bay house, historic photographs indicate that the building had a four-bay facade through the nineteenth century, and that it was later expanded north under the present hipped corner to include a full fifth bay along the north end. The large 2 1/2-story rear wing on a brick foundation dates to the nineteenth century, but the one-story side-gabled sun room abutting the south gable end apparently dates to about 1930. The paired Tuscan pilasters at the corners of the sun room mimic the columns that support the corners of a much earlier pedimented, projecting entry "porch" at the center entry. The entry has a 6-panel door flanked by 4-pane sidelights over paneled aprons. The north side elevation of the house, since its expansion, is five bays deep, and abuts a cross-gabled two-story rear wing that projects one-bay north from the main house. The projection is salt-box in profile, one-room deep, and displays an open porch at the rear. At the east end of the earlier 2 1/2-story rear wing is a one-story extension, apparently originally a woodshed, with a 4-panel door and a wider double-leaf vertical board door in the south side.

Most of the windows in the house are 6-over-6-sash, with flat surrounds. A 6-over-9-sash appears at attic level in the south end gable, and several more are located at the second story on the rear (east) wall of the building. The windows of the south sun room are multi-light casements. An entry on the north side of the house is sheltered by a modern shed-roofed hood; behind it to the east is a twentieth-century double-hung triple kitchen window.

One outstanding feature of this house is the high-style Federal doorway on the rear facade--the second of the two so-called "father-and-son" doorways. This entry has a 6-panel Federal door flanked by flat Tuscan pilasters, and is surmounted by a finely-detailed entablature with frieze and crown molding. Another entry, in the south side of the rear wing, has a late-nineteenth-century gabled hood supported on large flared braces, and a 4-panel Victorian two-part "Dutch" door, visible through a present vestibule.

Several outbuildings enhance the rural aspect of this property. A large gable-front, clapboarded barn (#637) with a shed-roofed tie-up bay along the south side stands directly behind the house. It has 6-over-6-sash windows, and an overhead-mounted sliding wagon door. Projecting forward from its southwest corner is what appears to be a small cross-gabled milk house. Extending west from the barn's northwest corner is a long 1 1/2-story garage/equipment shed with a series of sliding tongue-and-groove doors. Just southwest of the barn is another barn or storehouse (#636), built into the hillside, with its main vertical-board, double-leaf door facing north toward the barnyard. This building has an asphalt-shingled gambrel roof over a clapboarded lower story that extends southeast from the hill. Two small early-twentieth-century novelty-sided sheds or poultry houses (#s 638, 639) aligned along a fieldstone wall north of the house complete the array of buildings.

While much of this large property has grown up to woods, an open area south of the house below a long fieldstone retaining wall has remnants of an apple orchard and several small gardens.

- [x] Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, a completed National Register Criteria Statement form is attached.*



## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

Southborough 25 Jericho Hill Rd.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Area(s)

Form No.  
13, 636-639

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE [ ] *see continuation sheet*

*Explain history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

Although the traditional date for this house is placed at 1827, the Federal style and form of the building would be consistent with a date as early as 1815-1820. Also, at times it may have been confused with an older house of an earlier Jonas Fay which stood nearby. As its best-known owner, Jonas Fay, would probably not have acquired it until after his marriage to Charlotte Morse in 1843, further research will be required to find who its first owner was. Deed research might be conducted to determine whether it might have been built for Jonas's father, farmer Dea. Brigham Fay, who died in 1851 at the age of 79.

Jonas Fay (b. 1817), owner of the hundred-acre farm here from at least 1856, was the son of Brigham and Becca (Nichols) Fay. His much older brother, Lovett Fay, had a farm across the road at 30 Jericho Hill Road (see Form #14). Jonas Fay was one of the more prominent citizens of Southborough in the middle of the nineteenth century. He was at various times a Selectman, Assessor, Fence Viewer, member of the School Committee, and Representative to the General Court. Like his father, he was also a Deacon in the Pilgrim Church. After the Civil War the extent of his farm was still nearly a hundred acres, and on it was this house and barn, plus a carriage house, storehouse (probably the building built into the hillside), and an old house, apparently the home of William and Jerusha (Parmenter) Fay, which was removed sometime after Mrs. Fay's death in 1874 at the age of ninety-six. Jonas was primarily a dairy farmer, with a herd of a dozen cows and a bull. Like many of his neighbors, he also had a sizable orchard.

Jonas Fay died in 1883, at the age of sixty-five. The farm was subsequently owned, into the early years of the twentieth century, by **John Cowern** (also referred to as John Cower). It was still 80 acres under his ownership, and he worked it as a dairy farm, with 22 cows, and five horses. He died in 1911 at the age of seventy. After his death, his son, **H.G. Cowern**, continued to operate the farm. Today most of the Cowern land--69 acres-- is still associated with the house, and is one of Southborough's largest surviving privately-owned parcels.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES [ ] *see continuation sheet*

Maps and Atlases: 1831; 1857 (Jonas Fay); 1870 (J. Fay); 1898 (J. Cowern); 1937 WPA maps. The Marlborough Directory. Various dates and publishers.

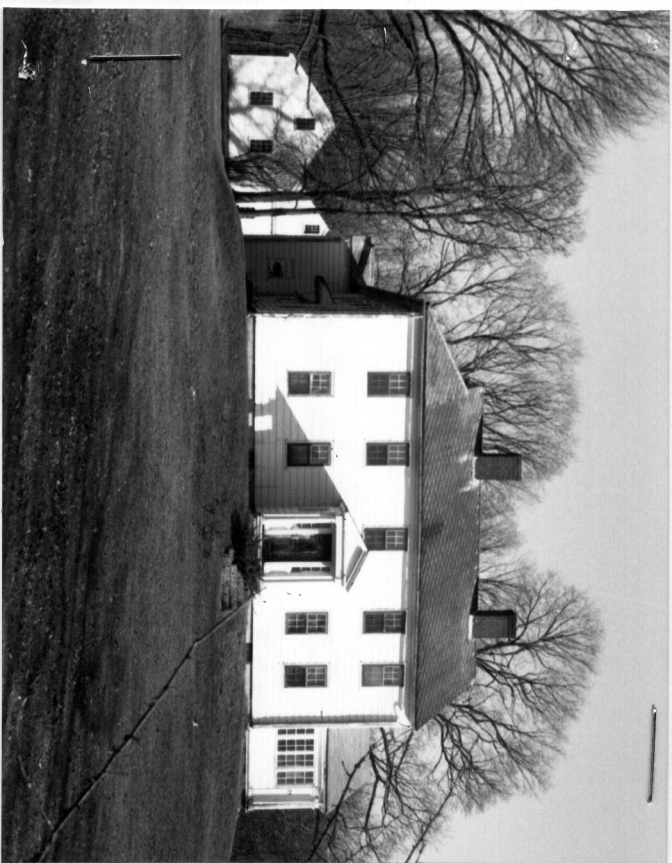
Noble, Richard. Fences of Stone: a History of Southborough, MA. Portsmouth, NH: Peter Randall, 1990.

Old Southborough: a Photographic Essay. Southborough Historical Society, 1981.

Simpson, H. Louise. Old Houses in Southborough. Unpublished manuscript, 1904.

Town of Southborough: Vital Records; Assessor's Reports, various dates.

Census records.



Rear



Rear doorway



Storehouse



Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Community  
Southborough

Property Address  
25 Jericho Hill Road

Area(s)

Form No(s).  
13; 636-639

## National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

☒ Individually eligible    ☐ Eligible only in a historic district  
☐ Contributing to a potential historic district    ☐ Potential historic district

Criteria: ☒ A    ☐ B    ☒ C    ☐ D

Criteria Considerations:    ☐ A    ☐ B    ☐ C    ☐ D    ☐ E    ☐ F    ☐ G

Statement of Significance by Forbes/Schuler, Consultants  
*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The well-preserved Jonas Fay House meets Criterion C of the National Register at the local level as one of several examples in Southborough of a double-pile, side-gabled, four-bay, or "three-quarter" house of the early part of the nineteenth century, as well as for its stylish late Federal style details.

The property is also significant under Criterion A as a sizable remnant of one of the many prosperous mid- and late-nineteenth century farms in the outlying agricultural areas of Southborough. Jonas Fay, owner of what was at that time a farm of nearly a hundred acres, was one of Southborough's more prominent citizens of his time, serving at various times as a Selectman, Assessor, Fence Viewer, member of the School Committee, and Representative to the General Court. He was also a Deacon in the Pilgrim Church.

The house retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association.



13

AB

USGS map

Location Southborough

Street address 25 Jericho Hill Rd

Final use dwelling

Sent use 21

Sent owner Mrs. J. Gay

n to public

Architecture  
Art/sculpture  
Education  
Government  
Literature  
Music

Science/invention  
Travel/communication  
Military affairs  
Religion/philosophy  
Indians  
Development of town/city

Date 1827 Style

Source of date hidden date discovered

Architect when remodeling

3. CONDITION: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Moved Altered Added

#### 4. DESCRIPTION

FOUNDATION/BASEMENT: High Regular Low Material: ledge and fieldstone

WALL COVER: Wood Brick Stone Other insulated siding

ROOF: Ridge Gambrel Flat Hip Mansard  
Tower Cupola Dormer windows Balustrade Grillwork

CHIMNEYS: 1 2 3 4 Center End Interior Irregular Cluster Elaborate

STORIES: 1 2 3 4 ATTACHMENTS: Wings Ell Shed

PORCHES: 1 2 3 4 PORTICO Balcony

FACADE: Gable end: Front Side Ornament:

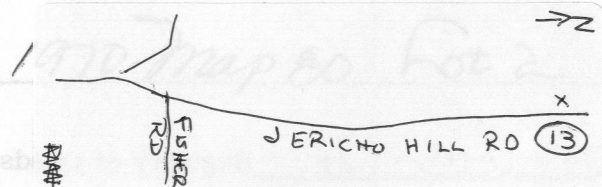
Entrance: Side Front: Center Side Details:

Windows: Spacing: Regular Irregular Identical Varied

Corners: Plain Pilasters Quoins Cornerboards

5. Indicate location of structure in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings

6. Footage of structure from street  
Property has feet frontage on street



Recorder

For

Photo 1-35A Date

SEE REVERSE



## RELATION OF SURROUNDING TO STRUCTURE

## 1. Outbuildings

## 2. Landscape Features: Agriculture Open Wooded Garden: Formal/Informal

Predominant features

Landscape architect

## 3. Neighboring Structures

Style: Colonial Federal Greek Revival Gothic Revival Italian Villa Lombard Rom.  
Venetian Gothic Mansard Richardsonian Modern

Use: Residential Commercial Religious

Conditions: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated

GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF SITE (Refer and elaborate on theme circled on front of form)

"Called the 'Father and Son House'. There are two entrances, one on each side, 2 sets of stairs, even 2 sets leading to cellar

## BIBLIOGRAPHY AND/OR REFERENCE

1870 - Josiah Fay

1898 Cowern

Other Jonas Fay

Leander W. Newton 3/24/1891

John Cowern (Probate records 49266B)

Alida &amp; Helen Masten 12/1935

Fay

1350-121 40  
~~2349~~ 326

## RESTRICTIONS

Original Owner:

Deed Information: Book Number 2657 Page 490, Dorchester co. Registry of Deeds