

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	SBR.54
<b>Historic Name:</b>	Walker, Francis W. House
<b>Common Name:</b>	Mahoney, Daniel F. House
<b>Address:</b>	6 Main St
<b>City/Town:</b>	Southborough
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	Southborough
<b>Local No:</b>	54-65
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	c 1840
<b>Architect(s):</b>	
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	Greek Revival
<b>Use(s):</b>	Hotel or Inn; Single Family Dwelling House
<b>Significance:</b>	Architecture; Commerce
<b>Area(s):</b>	SBR.AG: Southborough Town Center SBR.Y: Park - Main Street Business District
<b>Designation(s):</b>	
<b>Building Materials(s):</b>	Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Asbestos Shingle; Wood Foundation: Stone, Cut; Granite



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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)

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## FORM B - BUILDING

Assessor's number

USGS Quad

Area(s)

Form Number

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

54-65

Marlborough

Y

54

RECEIVED

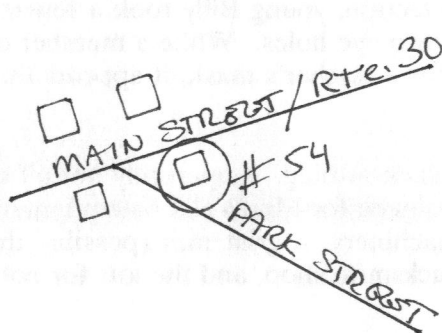
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MASS. HIST. COMM

Photograph



inventory forms have been completed. Label streets, including route numbers, if any. Attach a separate sheet if space is not sufficient here. Indicate north.

Town Southborough

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

Southborough centerAddress 6 Main StreetHistoric Name Francis W. Walker HouseUses: Present dwellingOriginal dwellingDate of Construction ca. 1840Source maps; visual assessmentStyle/Form Greek Revival vernacularArchitect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation graniteWall/Trim asbestos sidingRoof asphalt

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

none

Major Alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

20th-century entry hoodCondition goodMoved [x]no [ ] yes Date N/AAcreage less than one acreSetting Opposite former firehouse on SE cornerof Park St., at edge of commercial district.Recorded by Forbes/Schuler, consultantsOrganization Southborough Historical CommissionDate February, 2000

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 prominent asbestos siding, the Francis Walker House is one of the better-preserved buildings on lower Main Street, maintaining its mid-nineteenth-century form, doors, windows, and trim. It is a tall, 2 1/2-story, side-gabled house, five- by two-bays, and one-room deep. A large two-story, cross-gabled wing extends south from the center rear, abutted by a two-story flat-roofed east extension that overlaps the main house by one bay. A one-story rectangular entry bay fills the southwest angle of the house and wing.

The main, center entry is typical of the 1840s or 1850s, with a four-panel door with applied moldings, long five-pane sidelights, and flat-board pilasters. Instead of an entablature, a wide early-modern pedimented canopy, supported on square posts, and with a square-doweled balustrade, forms an entry porch. A secondary entry in the north facade of the east part of the rear wing has a four-panel door with glass in the two upper panels. The wing entry is sheltered by a small shed-roofed entry porch on the same type of square posts, with moldings at the top, that appear at the main entry.

The windows of the house are 2-over-2-sash, with molded surrounds. While the siding obscures any cornerboards or water table, the house retains its molded, boxed cornice, and a Greek Revival touch in the enclosed end gables.

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.*

This house is best-known as the home of Southborough's longtime blacksmith of the mid-nineteenth century, **Francis W. Walker**, known as "F.W." to the townspeople. Its location adjacent to the area along the railroad where a livery stable was located no doubt brought in considerable business. While a town blacksmith of F.W. Walker's time no longer made many nails and hinges, he did much more than make horseshoes. Mr. Walker, for instance, also carried on a brisk business as a wheelwright. A true jack-of-all-trades, the blacksmith was often called upon to devise ingenious solutions to a wide variety of problems. In the mid-1870s, Mr. Walker may even have taken part in the invention of the first baseball catcher's mask. In 1874 sixteen-year-old William Howe, catcher for the St. Mark's School varsity baseball team, broke his nose while playing ball. When the word came down from the headmaster that he could no longer play his position without protection, young Billy took a fencing mask to F.W. Walker, who reinforced it with copper wire and cut two eye holes. While a member of one of the opposing teams in 1875 later acquired the first patent for a catcher's mask, it appears that Mr. Walker and Billy Howe had actually created the first one.

Francis Walker pursued several other enterprises in addition to blacksmithing. Apparently not all of them were successful, as in 1870 Joseph Burnett appears as the assignee for Mr. Walker's equipment and his "industrial property," which at that time included his machinery, a grist mill (possibly the building at 21 Boston Road), a wheelwright shop and shed, the blacksmith shop, and the lots for both the mill and the shop.

By the mid-1890s 6 Main Street belonged to **Daniel F. Mahoney**, who still owned about a third of an acre adjoining the railroad and depot, and had a storehouse on the property. By 1905 Mr. Mahoney had apparently died, and the house was owned by his widow, **Mrs. Mary Mahoney**.

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community	Property
Southborough	6 Main Street
Area(s)	Form No. 54

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

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

Maps and Atlases: 1857 (F. Walker); 1870 (FW Walker); 1898 (Mahoney).

The Marlborough Directory. Various dates and publishers.

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

Westboro, Northboro, and Southboro Directory. 1905.

Town of Southborough: Vital Records; Annual Reports and Tax Valuations, various dates.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Community  
Southborough

Property Address  
6 Main Street

Area(s)  
A

Form No(s).  
54

## 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, Consultant

*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

This house is eligible for the National Register as a contributing property in a potential district encompassing the historic residential and institutional meetinghouse center of the town. Under Criterion A, it is significant at the local level as the home of Southborough center's longtime blacksmith of the mid-nineteenth century, **Francis W. Walker**. It meets Criterion C as an example of a vernacular Greek Revival house of the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

The property retains integrity of location, design, most of its materials, workmanship, feeling, setting and association.





PL SOUTH 54

502	MAR	Y
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Southborough  
6 Main St.

Original & present hotel/dwelling  
owner Mary Firmin  
public  
Style

Literature Indians Source of date  
Music Other  
Development of town/city Architect  
Architectural reason for inventorying:

P 52 1670

OR part of Area #

3. CONDITION Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Moved Altered Added

#### 4. DESCRIPTION

FOUNDATION/BASEMENT: High Regular Low Material Stone

WALL COVER: Wood Brick Stone Other Asbestos shingle

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 entrance portico Balcony

FACADE: Gable end: Front side Ornament

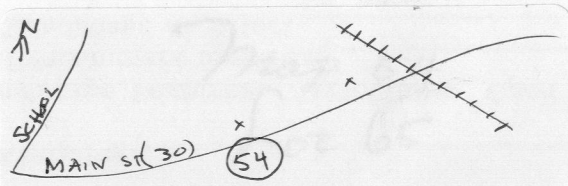
Entrance: Side Front: Center Side Details: side lights

Windows: Spacing: Regular Irregular Identical Varied

Corners: Plain Pilasters Quoins Cornerboards

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

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



Recorder

For

Photo # 2-23 Date 1971

SEE REVERSE SIDE

## RELATION OF SURROUNDING STRUCTURE

SBR.54

## 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)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY AND/OR REFERENCE

1870 Atlas -

1898 " D. F. Mahoney

## RESTRICTIONS

Original Owner:

Deed Information: Book Number 2709 Page 401 Worcester County Registry of Deeds