

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:  ACTON	Form No:  F-395
Property Name: 183 Main Street	

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

*ACT-395*

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - 183 MAIN STREET

One of several turn of the century dwellings on this part of Main Street, this house displays a substantial 3-bay, 2 1/2 story, gable front plan with 2 1/2 story cross gables and a 1-story rear ell. The house rests on a fieldstone and rubblestone with mortar foundation and is sheathed in asbestos shingles. There is a full width porch on the gable front facade.

The main facade has a near side-hall entrance with glass and wood panel door and a small 2/2 stairhall window between the door and the corner of the building. Within the hipped roof porch supported by round tapered columns and plain balustrade is a window bay of paired 2/1 sash. Frames of windows and doors are plain wood with a narrow applied molding. The steps to the porch are wide and tall accentuating the raised fieldstone foundation of the porch, which has narrow horizontal latticed openings. There are three second story windows each with 2/1 sash. In the gable peak are two 2/1 sash set in one frame. The boxed cornice of the gable front is wide with narrow returns.

Cross gables on the north and south side each have paired first story windows, a single second story and an attic window, all of 2/1 sash. The cross gables are one bay deep.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT

Situated opposite the first house (184 Main Street) belonging to Jacob and Adeline Priest, this may have been built for them at the turn of the century. Jacob Priest (1835-1912) is listed in Street Directories as a "farmer and veterinary" and Adeline Priest (1843-1922) was a dressmaker.

The house is one of many substantial gable front dwellings built at the turn of the century on this upper part of Main Street in South Acton.



**NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)**

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

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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

South Acton, once part of the 1000-acre farm granted to Concord's major Simon Willard in ca. 1654 and sold to Concord Iron Works Farm in ca. 1660, was purchased by Ephraim and Samuel Jones and Jonathan Knight in 1701. The first fulling mill was established and throughout the 18th and 19th century there were active mill privileges on Fort Pond Brook and at Mill Corner where Main Street (once known as Maynard Road), High, School, and Maple Street intersect. South Acton was the first village center, preceding Acton Centre, which became the institutional center. With the advent of the Fitchburg Railroad in 1844 came the major growth of South Acton as an industrial village.

Main Street was the north-south transportation route from the 1700s and connected South Acton with Acton Centre where the meeting house was located. The upper part of Main Street, north of Exchange Square was not developed until the late 19th and early 20th century with the exception of a couple of houses on the northern end. Most of the properties with the exception of infill are substantial Queen Anne and Colonial Revival dwellings.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Acton Historical Society. Jenks Library  
Nylander and Forbes, "Mill Corner". 1989.  
Nylander, Robert, research notes. 1980s.  
Phalen, History of Town of Acton. 1954.