

FORM B - BUILDING

Area A	Form no. 50
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108



Newburyport

Address 260 High Street

Historic Name Cartland-Whittier-Fitzgerald House

Original Residence

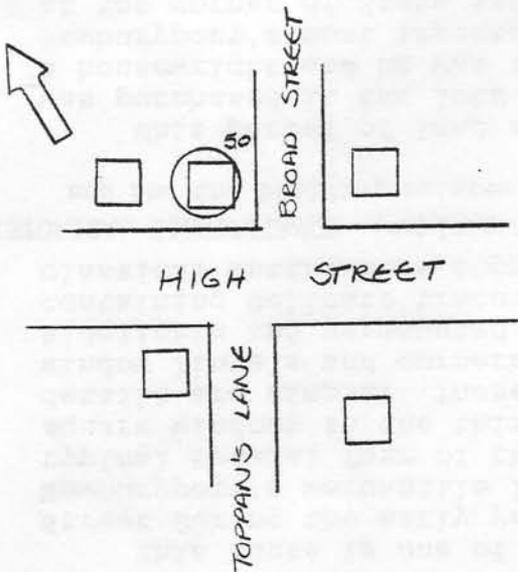
Present Residence

Ownership:  Private individual  
Private organization \_\_\_\_\_

Public \_\_\_\_\_

Original owner Stephen Toppan

location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings or geographical features. Indicate north.



DESCRIPTION:

Date c. 1800

Source Essex County Registry of Deeds

Style Federal

Architect Unknown

Exterior wall fabric \_\_\_\_\_

Outbuildings Garage

Major alterations (with dates) additions at rear

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approx. acreage 9,289 sq. ft.

Setting on Newburyport's main

thoroughfare noted for its excellent

examples of domestic architecture

dating from the Colonial period through the early 20th century.

Recorded by Mary Jane Stirgwort

Organization Office of Community Development

Date 8-17-80

(Staple additional sheets here)

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

This house is one of the fine Federal mansions built on High Street during the early years of the nineteenth century when Newburyport's mercantile interests prospered. The house has the typical Federal form of three stories with hipped roof and small square windows in the third story. Most of the house's architectural details are simple. These include the classically inspired cornice, window lintels and cornerboards. The door itself is flanked by sidelights and surmounted by an elegant semi-elliptical fanlight containing delicate tracery. The entrance portico has a flat roof with classical entablature supported by pillars of the Doric order.

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

This parcel of land at the corner of High and Broad Streets was purchased in two lots by Stephen Toppan in 1797 and 1799. Toppan was a housewright and he was involved in the building of several of Newburyport's most important buildings. These included the Town Hall at the corner of State and Essex Streets and the original St. Paul's Church built in 1809.

Stephen Toppan built this house prior to 1805 when it was sold to Jacob Greenleaf, a mariner. In 1807 John Pettingell purchased the house although Greenleaf, married to Pettingell's daughter continued in residence. Pettingell was a prominent citizen who also had mercantile interests. He was the owner of the Brig Hazard, fitted out during the Revolutionary War. He was also one of the original incorporators of the Newburyport Turnpike Corporation organized in 1803 to build a toll road from Newburyport to Boston.

In 1827 Pettingell's will left the house to the Greenleaf's during their lifetimes after which it was to pass onto Pettingell's grandchildren. In 1854 the house was sold to Capt. John H. Spring, a merchant. In 1876 the house was sold to Joseph Cartland.

Cartland was a member of the Society of Friends and his wife, Gertrude, was a relative and dear friend of John Greenleaf Whittier. According to Whittier's biographer Samuel T. Packard, Whittier lived his last years, for the most part, in the Cartland's stately home in Newburyport. Whittier himself wrote that the Cartland's lived "on the broad elm-lined High Street, the finest avenue I know of in New England." The Cartland's owned the house until 1898. Since that (cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Assessor's Records 1890-1980

Deed research provided by present owner.

J. J. Currier, History of Newburyport 1764-1905, vols I. and II., reprint, Newburyport 1977.

M. H. Shackford, Whittier and the Cartland's: Letters and Comments.

1872 Map of the City of Newburyport, Mass. D. G. Beers and Co.

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