

Baseline Documentation

(Massachusetts Historical Commission Inventory Form B cover sheet prepared 1980 by Mary Jane Stirgwolt. Continuation sheets prepared in 2022 by Essex Preservation Consulting.)

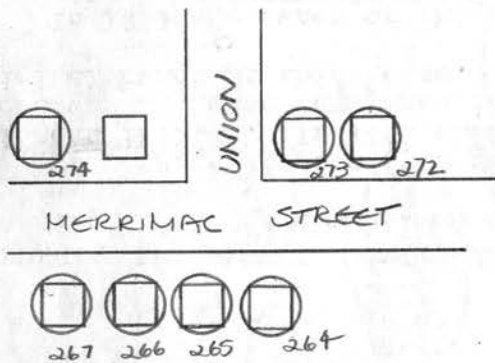
FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION



SKETCH MAP

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



NWB.273

Area I+L	Form no. 273
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USGS - Newb W

Newburyport
 Address 344 Merrimac Street
 Historic Name Levi Carr House
 Original Residence
 Present Residence
 Ownership: Private individual
 Private organization _____
 Public _____
 Original owner Levi Carr

DESCRIPTION:
 Date c. 1805
 Source Essex County Registry of Deeds
 Style _____
 Architect Unknown
 Exterior wall fabric Clapboards
 Outbuildings Garage and shed
 Major alterations (with dates) several additions at rear (dates unknown)
 Moved _____ Date _____
 Approx. acreage 14,373 sq. ft.
 Setting in residential area of late eighteenth and nineteenth century houses on the banks of the Merrimack River.

Recorded by Mary Jane Stirgwolt
 Organization Office of Community Development
 Date 01-04-80

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

This two story house with pitched roof and symmetrical, five bay facade is an excellent example of the vernacular architecture built in Newburyport around the turn of the nineteenth century. Noteworthy features of the house include a large central chimney, simple Federal cornice moulding, and unusual, eared window lintels. The doorway is simple but is detailed with the pilasters and simple entablature characteristic of the period.

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 was purchased from George Burroughs by Jacob Whitmore in 1793. In 1801 when Whitmore sold the property to Levi Carr there was no house mentioned in the deed of sale. Carr was probably the original owner of this house.

In 1851 the owner of this house was Levi Carr, probably the son of the builder of the house. He was a shipcarpenter who was employed as a foreman by John Currier, Jr. for many years. The Currier shipyard was located on the riverbanks adjacent to this house. Carr was also part-owner of Carr's Island.

In 1872 Levi Carr still owned this house. Also in residence at that time was Charles H. Carr, also a shipcarpenter. Levi Carr died in 1876 at the age of eighty. At that time the house was willed to his heirs.

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
- Deed Research compiled by Mrs. Nancy Flynn and Mrs. Kathy Horden.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

TOWN

ADDRESS

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

NEWBURYPORT

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Architectural Description

According to the Massachusetts Historical Commission Inventory Form B for the property, the Levi Carr House at 344 Merrimac Street was constructed circa 1805. The house design is consistent with New England late Georgian style residences, with its rectangular plan, gable roof, symmetrical five-bay facade, center entry with prominent surrounds, and large central chimney (Photo 5). The Carr House (constructed ca.1805) is located roughly one mile to the northwest of the Newburyport downtown commercial district and sits just 700 feet southwest from the Merrimack River. Merrimac Street is the principal thoroughfare between the downtown center and Route 95 near the western edge of the city. The stretch of Merrimac Street in the vicinity of the Carr House is characterized by single-family historic homes from the 18th and 19th centuries (Photos 1 and 2). The same is true for Union Place, a narrow short lane running along the northwest side of the Carr House property (Photo 4), and Merrimac Court, another narrow lane leading to a cluster of houses behind (northeast of) the Carr House (Photo 3). Most of the homes in the immediate area of the Carr House are single-family residences, although a few, including the Carr House, have been converted to multi-family occupancy. The long narrow lot on which the Carr House stands includes 14,373 square feet of land and runs from Merrimac Street, along the length of Union Place, to Merrimac Court (Photo 32). The house is situated at the southwest end of the lot, fronting on Merrimac Street; the setback from Merrimac Street is roughly 15.5 feet (Photo 34). The property includes the house and two small outbuildings - a non-historic guesthouse (Photos 28 and 29) and a deteriorated shed structure Photos 30 and 31). Although the house was converted to two condominiums, the exterior still reads as a single-family dwelling. The house has an irregular footprint due to several additions. The original rectangular main block is five bays wide, three bays deep, and enclosed by a gabled roof. As early as 1884 there was a small ell extending off the northwest end of the rear elevation (see attached map from 1884). This is likely the existing two-story gabled section with the granite ashlar foundation (Photo 13). A break in the foundation between the original main block and the ell suggests that the ell was not part of the original construction but was an early addition. A map from 1914 shows a second two-story rear addition, this one running the width of the main block (see attached map from 1914). This second addition was later enlarged widthwise (date unknown) to create the two-story rear addition with flat roof that exists today (Photo 22). The 1914 map also shows a single-story porch at the southeast elevation, located toward the rear of the house and adjoining the two-story rear addition. This porch is no longer extant, instead a one-story enclosed porch (likely a circa 1920s feature) runs along the southeast elevation of the main block (Photo 17). Finally, there are two more recent one-story additions projecting from either end of the rear elevation, creating a roughly U-shaped footprint for the building as a whole (Photo 22 and 23).

Main Block

The original main block rises two and one-half stories from a rough-cut stone foundation and is finished with painted clapboard siding with wood trim elements, in the form of narrow corner boards, roof cornice, water tables, window trim, and entry surrounds (Photo 5). The gabled roof of the main block is currently finished with asphalt shingles and features a prominent broad central chimney, which is centered on the roof ridge (Photo 7). The chimney is parged with concrete but is likely of brick construction. The roofline at the facade is defined by a shallow box cornice and prominent fascia (Photo 8); the eaves at the rear are obscured by the two-story addition. The side gables of the main block are defined by compound fascia boards with shallow returns (Photos 14 and 17). Modern aluminum gutters and downspouts were installed around the building. Windows of the main block are trimmed with painted flat wood trim (Photo 15), except at the facade where windows are topped by shallow hood moulds (Photos 10 and 11). Window openings hold a combination of historic wood double-hung windows and modern replacements, as noted below. All windows are covered by modern storm windows.

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Principal Facade (Southwest Elevation)

The principal facade (southwest elevation) is five bays wide and laid out symmetrically around a central entry (Photo 9). The entry is framed by what appears to be the original surrounds, which consists of wide Tuscan pilasters supporting a tall entablature with dentil molding. The existing door is a fairly recent replacement. Access to the entry is by way of a modern poured concrete step. Window openings in the two northernmost bays of the facade hold modern replacement windows, while the remaining windows retain historic wood windows in a nine-over-six pane configuration at the first floor (Photo 10) and a two-over-one configuration at the second floor (Photo 11). Two small basement window openings (one on either side of the central entry) were likely added and are set within poured concrete window wells; the openings hold modern windows.

Side Elevations

The northwest elevation is three bays wide and finished with painted clapboards (Photo 13). Fenestration is asymmetrically arranged, with windows (two per floor) in the easternmost bays only. All window openings hold modern replacement windows (Photo 15). A modern vent is centered beneath the gable peak within an untrimmed opening.

The southeast elevation is finished with painted clapboards and is partially covered by a one-story enclosed porch and the two-story rear addition (Photos 17 and 18). Fenestration at the exposed upper levels of this elevation are similar to those at the northwest elevation, with a vent in the gable and windows in the two easternmost bays of the second floor. Here, the window opening in the central bay holds a historic two-over-one window, while the second opening has a one-over-one window that appears to be a replacement (Photo 20). The enclosed porch at the first floor was added after 1914. The porch is largely made up of grouped windows separated by slender mullions - two windows on the southwest wall and four on the southeast wall (Photo 19). These adjoining windows hold older wood two-over-one sashes. The porch is enclosed by a hip roof finished with asphalt shingles. The roof edge has shallow overhanging eaves with painted flat wood soffit and fascia boards.

Rear Ell (Northeast Addition)

Much of the rear ell is covered by later additions, however it is clearly discernible on the northwest side (Photo 13). The ell appears to have been constructed as a one and one-half story structure with a gable roof. It rests on a rough-cut granite ashlar foundation holding two small modern basement windows (Photo 16). The northwest elevation is finished with painted clapboards and features three asymmetrical windows, all of which hold modern replacement windows. A portion of the upper level was raised to create a full second floor with a single small window opening, which now holds a modern window.

Only the upper portion of the ell's northeast elevation is visible; the remainder is covered by a single-story shed addition (Photos 22). The exposed gabled wall of the ell is finished in painted wood shingles and trimmed with narrow corner boards and a compound fascia (Photo 13). A single window set beneath the gable peak holds a modern window.

The shed addition is a relatively recent feature, resting on a poured concrete foundation and featuring painted flat wood trim, modern windows, and a modern door on its southeast wall (Photos 23 and 26). Access to the entry is by way of an unpainted wood porch. The shed addition is finished with painted clapboards on the northwest wall and painted wood shingles elsewhere.

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Most of the southeast wall of the ell is obscured by the two-story rear addition, however a narrow section of the wall remains exposed (Photo 26). This section of wall is finished with painted wood shingles and features a single window opening with painted flat wood trim and a modern window.

Two-Story Rear Addition

The two-story rear addition covers the rear (northeast) elevation of the main block and wraps around to cover a small portion of the southeast elevation as well (Photos 18 and 22). The rear addition has a flat roof, poured concrete foundation, painted flat wood trim, and a combination of painted wood shingle siding (northeast elevation) and painted clapboards (southeast elevation). A slender brick chimney projects from the roof (Photo 27). Fenestration at the rear elevation of the addition is asymmetrical, with window openings of varying sizes and configurations, including single and paired windows. Most openings hold older two-over-one wood windows, although two windows have one-over-one sashes (Photos 24 and 25). The southernmost half of the addition has a narrow fascia board at the roofline, while the northern half has no visible trim along the roof edge (Photo 25). A portion of the rear addition at the southernmost end is covered by a fairly recent one-story shed addition with a cross gabled bay (Photo 22). This small addition has a combination of painted wood shingles and clapboards, painted flat trim, and contemporary windows. The one-story addition has an entry at its southeast wall; the entry holds a modern door and screen door (Photo 21).

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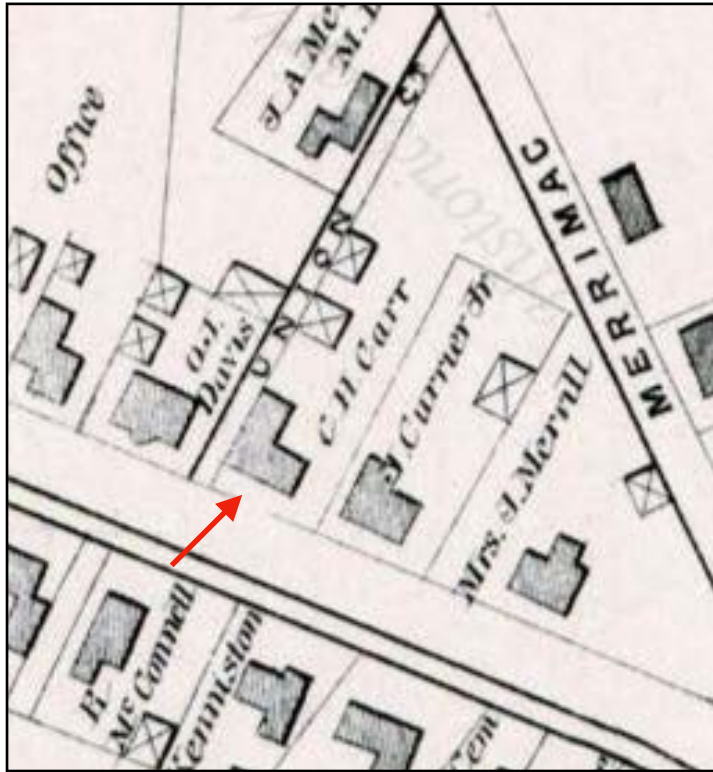
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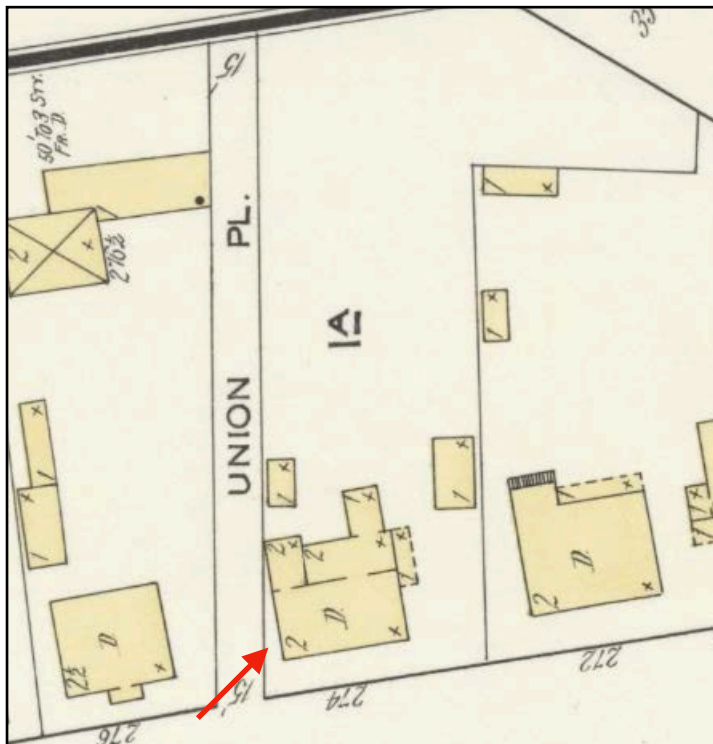
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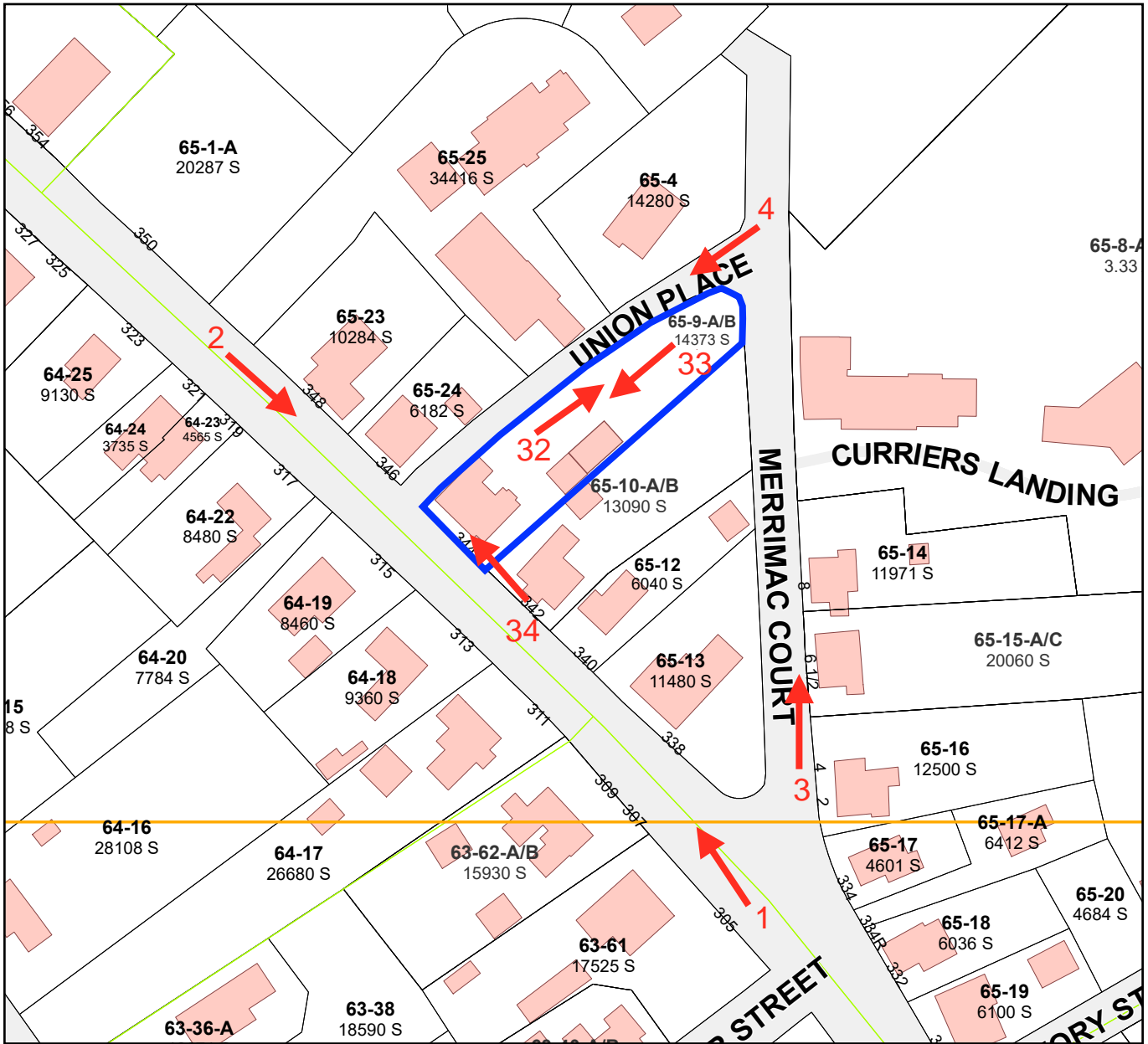
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1884 Map




1914 Map



 <p>ESSEX Preservation Consulting</p>	<p align="center">LEVI CARR HOUSE 344 MERRIMAC STREET NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS</p>	<p align="center">CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS PHOTO KEY</p>
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 <p>ESSEX Preservation Consulting</p>	<p>LEVI CARR HOUSE 344 MERRIMAC STREET NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS</p>	<p>CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS PHOTO KEY</p>
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1_ Setting - View northwest along Merrimac Street showing Carr House (center) and neighboring houses on northeast side of the street



2_ Setting - View southeast along Merrimac Street showing Carr House (left) and neighboring houses on northeast and southwest sides of the street



3_ Setting - View north along Merrimac Court showing houses along east side of the street



4_ Setting - View southwest along Union Place showing rear of Carr House (left) and neighboring houses on northwest side of the street



5_ View northeast showing principal facade (southwest elevation)



6_ View northeast showing principal facade (southwest elevation) - detail of foundation



7_ View northeast showing chimney on main block and asphalt roof



8_ View northeast showing principal facade (northwest elevation) - detail of cornice



9_View northeast showing principal facade (northwest elevation) - detail of main entry



10_View northeast showing principal facade (northwest elevation) - detail of first floor window at south end



11_View northeast showing principal facade (northwest elevation) - detail of second floor window at south end



12_View northeast showing principal facade (northwest elevation) - detail of foundation and basement window at north end



13_View southwest showing northwest elevation



14_View southeast showing northwest elevation - detail of corner board, fascia, and return at gable



15_View southeast showing northwest elevation - detail of typical window



16_View southwest showing northeast elevation - detail of foundation to ell and basement windows



17_View north showing southeast elevation from west end



18_View northwest showing southeast elevation from east end



19_View north showing southeast elevation - detail of enclosed porch



20_View northwest showing southeast elevation - detail of second floor windows



21_View northwest showing southeast elevation - detail of entry at east end



22_View southwest showing rear (southeast) elevation



23_View northwest at rear (southeast) elevation - detail of northeast addition



24_View southwest showing rear (southeast) elevation - detail of central bays at first floor



25_View southwest showing rear (southeast) elevation - detail of central bays at second floor



26_ View northwest showing southeast face of rear ell/
northeast addition - detail of porch, entry, and window



27_ View northwest showing chimneys on roofs of main block (right) and
rear addition (left)



28_View south showing northeast elevation of non-historic guesthouse



29_View northeast showing southeast elevation of non-historic guesthouse



30_View southeast showing northwest elevation of shed



31_View northwest showing rear (southeast) elevation of deteriorated shed



32_View northeast at rear of house showing rear yard



33_View southwest at rear of house showing rear yard and driveway



34_View north from south corner of property showing fence and landscaping along front of house (left)