

FORM B – BUILDING

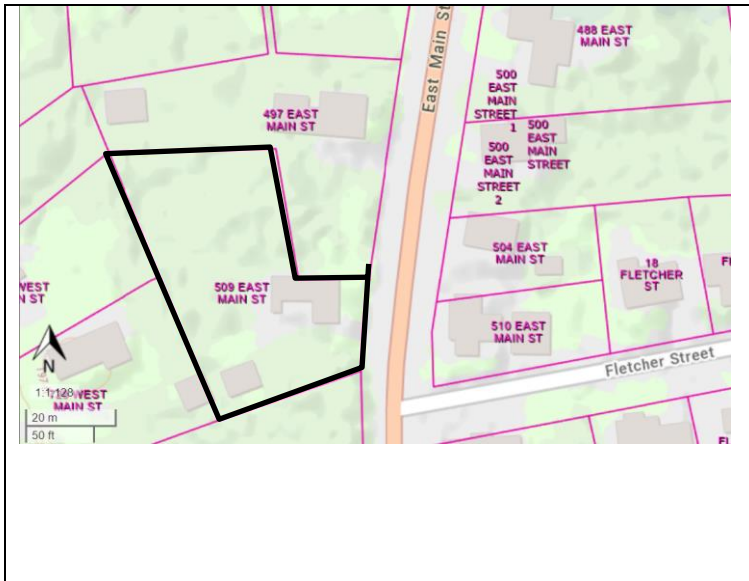
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View looking northwest.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: Avon Historical Commission

Date (month / year): December 2022

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

D3/ 5/ 26/ /

Brockton

AVO.41
AVO.42

Town/City: Avon

Place: (neighborhood or village):

Address: 509 East Main Street

Historic Name: John and Rebecca French House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1814

Source: Deed

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Not Known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, Cut

Wall/Trim: Wood (?) Shingles / Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Carriage House

Major Alterations (with dates): Rear ell (mid-late 20th C);
Replacement doors and vinyl sash windows (early 21st C);
Replacement shingles.

Condition: Fair

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.54

Setting: Located on a suburban street amid 1- and 2-story frame houses constructed in the 19th and 20th centuries.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

509 EAST MAIN ST

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

	AVO.41
	AVO.42

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

Located on level lot covered with lawn, the house is oriented to the east toward the street. An asphalt-paved driveway leads past the south (side) elevation to a frame barn located southwest of the house. Mature trees line the edges of the property. The 1-story house rests on a cut stone foundation and rises to a side-gabled roof with a shallow overhang. An interior brick chimney rises is located at the south end of the roof ridge. The building is clad with wood or cementitious shingles and trimmed with cornerboards and a wood skirtboard. Vinyl or metal trim lines the underside of the eaves. The four-bay façade contains a door with a single sidelight at the south end. Two stone slabs serve as steps at the entrance. The house is one bay deep with a single window centered in the gable peaks. Windows are vinyl or metal sash of recent construction. A perpendicular 2-story ell with a gable roof extends from the rear elevation. The ell, which is equal in size to the original house, rests on a poured concrete foundation. The building has been substantially altered and original exterior materials have been removed. Interior inspections were beyond the scope of this survey, but a closer examination of surviving framing, floorplans, and interior features and finishes by an architectural historian with expertise in early Massachusetts building technology could provide additional insights into a likely original construction date and on the physical evolution of the building over time.

The frame Carriage House (mid-late 19th century, AVO.42) has a front-gabled roof with overhanging eaves. The façade (east elevation) has been converted with the installation of an overhead wood garage door (last Q 20th C) and vertical boards at the ground level. The gable peak is enclosed with wood shingles.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the 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.

509 East Main Street was likely constructed circa 1814, the year in which John French purchased a parcel of land bounded by East Main Street and West Main Street.¹ John French III (1763-1830) was a member of the extended French family that lived along South Street in the 18th and early 19th centuries. In 1786, John French married his wife, Rebecca Linfield French (1765-1830). John French operated a store located "near the Oliver Howard house" [current location unknown] that he purchased in 1817 from Zephania French and Austin Howard.² In 1829, John and Rebecca French's daughter, Ruhama (1810-1884), married Ruel Wade (1797-1883) of Easton and the newlyweds came to live here with her parents. In 1834, John French sold the house and 8-acre property to his son-in-law, Ruel Wade.³ Ruel Wade worked as a farmer. In 1882, Ruel and Ruhama Wade sold the house to their son Alonzo Wade and his wife, Mary A. Wade.⁴ The property remained in the Wade family until 1951.⁵

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

City Directories.

Findagrave.com.

Hanna, William F. *The Story of Avon*. Avon: Avon Centennial Committee, 1988.

Hodges, Joseph. *Plan of the Town of Stoughton*. 1830. Massachusetts State Archives.

Hurd, D. Hamilton. *History of Norfolk County*. Vol. 1. Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis & Co., 1884.

Massachusetts Vital Records.

¹ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 53, p. 469.

² Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 54, p. 292.

³ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 103, 651.

⁴ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 539, p. 354.

⁵ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Certificate of Title No. 466624.

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Area(s) Form No.

	AVO.41
	AVO.42

Massachusetts Census. Ancestry.com.
Norfolk County Registry of Deeds.
Sherman, G.A. *Atlas of Norfolk County*. New York: Comstock & Cline, 1876.
Talbot, Newton. [Buildings standing in Stoughton in 1775]. 1929. <https://stoughtonhistory.com/1775map.htm>
Town of Avon. Tax Assessor records.
United States Census. Ancestry.com.
Walling, Henry Francis. *Map of Norfolk County, Mass.* Boston: Smith & Bumstead, 1858.



View looking southwest at façade and north elevations.



View looking west toward carriage house.