

Gould-Potter House  
486 Main Street  
Greenfield  
Franklin County  
Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-642

HABS  
MASS  
6-GREF  
3-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction  
143 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

## GOULD-POTTER HOUSE

HABS  
MASS  
6-6-66  
57

Location: 486 Main Street (northwest corner of Main and High Streets), Greenfield, Franklin County, Massachusetts

Present Owner: Radio Station WHAI (John W. Haigis, Jr., owner and manager), 486 Main Street, Greenfield, Massachusetts

Present Occupant: Radio Station WHAI

Present Use: Broadcasting studios and offices; art exhibition gallery in one room.

Brief Statement of Significance: A finely detailed and constructed, well-preserved large house, representative of the nineteenth century, lived in by three prominent Greenfield families, in turn.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Artemas Gould. Purchased by H. W. Clapp in 1835, by Arthur Potter in 1892 [Shumway, "The Potter House, Greenfield, Massachusetts"]. Purchased by present owner in August 1954 [Statement by John W. Haigis, Jr.].
2. Date of erection: Begun June 1827; roof raised August 25, 1827 [Shumway, "The Potter House, Greenfield, Massachusetts"].
3. Architect: Elijah T. Hayden, draftsman, was probably designer, following general instructions of owner Artemas Gould [Shumway, "The Potter House, Greenfield, Massachusetts"].
4. Builder, suppliers, etc.: Elijah T. Hayden, draftsman. David Taylor and Fidelio Patch, joiners, apprentices to T. Hayden. Pliny Mann and Cyrus Howard, joiners. Maj. Ora Sheldon, Samuel Dyke, Joel Peckham, Nelson Peckham, carpenters. Zebina Billings, (mason) foreman; Samuel Bradley, Simon Field, Mr. Winch, masons, apprentices to Zebina Billings [Shumway, "The Potter House, Greenfield, Massachusetts"].
5. Original plans:
  - a. Tracing paper studies in possession of Mr. Haigis, dated November 1, 1904, by Jas. A. Clough, architect, Holyoke, Mass. Although these plans are not precisely like the service wing, they indicate that alterations were being considered and that comparable ones were probably used.

- b. Full-size (blueprint) detail, in possession of Mr. Haigis, of dining room mantel, by Jerome R. Allen, architect, New York, dated September 2, 1910.
6. Notes on alterations and additions: Alterations in early twentieth century, particularly in service wing Tracing paper studies by Jas. A. Clough, some in dining room Detail by Jerome R. Allen, stairway, bathrooms, and attic rooms finished off Observation of writer.
7. Sources of information:
- a. Harry I. Shumway, "The Potter House, Greenfield, Massachusetts," The House Beautiful, vol. XLV, no. 2, pp. 61 ff., giving contents of a paper found nailed to the ridgepole of the house. Contains illustration.
- b. Statement by John W. Haigis, Jr., owner, on September 2, 1959.
- c. Tracing paper studies in possession of Mr. Haigis, dated November 1, 1904, by Jas. A. Clough, architect, Holyoke, Mass.
- d. Full-size (blueprint) detail, in possession of Mr. Haigis, of dining room mantel, by Jerome R. Allen, architect, New York, dated September 2, 1910.
- e. Kenneth E. Stinson, "Massachusetts Revival of Greek Revival," Country Life, vol. LXXI, no. 5, pp. 40 ff. (with illustration).

Prepared by Harley J. McKee, Architect  
National Park Service  
September 1959

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A finely detailed and constructed, well preserved large house of the early nineteenth century.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent. (Note: This house was long owned by wealthy families who maintained the building well. They must have made improvements from time to time, but as a general rule the house appears to be substantially original. Principal areas of change appear to be the dining room, stairway, and service wing.)

### B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Two-story main section, with one-story flanking wings and rear service wing; 94' x 110' over-all.

2. Foundations: Faced by heavy granite blocks. Main portico has granite foundations and floor; other porticoes have modern concrete floors, on granite foundations.
  3. Wall construction: Brick, load bearing. Soft bricks, lime mortar, painted. Ionic columns of built-up wood; soffits between columns are paneled.
  4. Chimneys: Brick, six stacks. Hearths and some chimneys supported on parallel brick foundation walls spanned by stone slabs.
  5. Openings:
    - a. Doorways and doors: Three elliptical-arched entrance doors with coupled colonnettes, leaded fanlights and sidelights, six-panel solid doors. Granite steps at entrances.
    - b. Windows and shutters: 6/6 double-hung sash. Shutters with fixed louvers. Stone sills. Main section with stone lintels, others with flat brick arches. (Note: First-floor windows also have interior shutters.)
  6. Roof:
    - a. Shape, covering: Gable. Slate, with copper cap on ridge.
    - b. Framing: Small ridge pole, sawn rafters. Heavy hewn and sawn trusses and purlins, pegged joints.
    - c. Cornice, eaves: Entablature of Ionic orders carries around as cornice. Gables treated as pediments.
    - d. Dormers: Modern shed dormers, principally on service wing.
- C. Technical Description of Interiors:
1. Floor plans: Central transverse hall; parlor in front, dining room behind. Wings at right and left sides, with service wing extending toward the rear at the left side. Second floor over main section, ballroom being over the parlor.
  2. Stairways: A modern alteration, probably from about 1900-1910.
  3. Flooring: Narrow oak finish flooring throughout; apparently later additions. First floor structure supported on brick bearing partitions in basement.
  4. Wall and ceiling finish: First floor--plaster ceilings; wall background is plaster, with paneled wood wainscoting, and wood mouldings dividing wall surfaces into panels. Most second-floor rooms have plaster cove and plaster walls.

MASS  
6-GRBF

5. Doorways and doors: Heavy, wood, eight-panel and four-panel. Some modern French doors in parlor and dining room.
6. Trim: Moulded wood, with corner blocks carved. Wood cornice throughout first-floor rooms. Interior shutters on first-floor windows. Two fluted Ionic columns in hall. Several pilasters, especially recalling interior columns. Marble mantels in parlor, with Ionic colonnettes, which may be later additions.
7. Hardware: Brass door handles; brass butts.
8. Lighting: No old fixtures. Electric.
9. Heating: Originally by fireplaces; now central steam heating.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Large lot on main street of a once-small town. Now some threats of commercial encroachment. The front of the house faces south on Main Street.
2. Enclosures: None.
3. Outbuildings: None.
4. Walks: Modern black-top and concrete. Modern concrete terrace behind dining room.
5. Landscaping: Hedges, bushes, trees, lawn. A plan or plans have apparently been followed in different times, for landscape treatment; no indication of the original plan of the gardens.

Prepared by Harley J. McKee, Architect  
National Park Service  
September 1959