

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	CON.404
Historic Name:	French, Daniel Chester Studio
Common Name:	
Address:	324 Sudbury Rd
City/Town:	Concord
Village/Neighborhood:	Hubbardville
Local No:	G10-47417
Year Constructed:	1879
Architect(s):	French, Daniel Chester
Architectural Style(s):	Queen Anne
Use(s):	Art Gallery; Photography Or Art Studio; Single Family Dwelling House; Warehouse
Significance:	Architecture; Art; Social History
Area(s):	CON.AL: Hubbardville CON.DZ: Hubbardville Historic District CON.EA: Hubbard - French Historic District
Designation(s):	Local Historic District (04/27/1998); Nat'l Register District (06/15/2000)
Building Materials(s):	Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Wood; Wood Clapboard; Wood Shingle Foundation: Stone, Uncut



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on: Friday, October 30, 2020 at 1:27: PM

FORM B - BUILDING

Assessor's number

USGS Quad

Area(s)

Form Number

G10-474

CONCORD

AL

404

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116



CONCORD

(neighborhood or village)

Hubbardville

324 Sudbury Road

Owner Name Daniel Chester French Studio

Present dwelling

Original artist's studio

Year of Construction 1879

Bartlett.

Form Queen Anne

Architect/Builder Danl. Ch. French, designer

Exterior Material:

Foundation fieldstone

Wall/Trim wood clapboard
and patterned shingle

Roof wood shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

garage, shed

Major Alterations (with dates)

20th C:

greenhouse attached at south side

South porch glass-enclosed. East

facade entry and hood removed.

Condition excellent

Moved ☒ no ☐ yes Date N/A

Acreage less than one acre

Setting In residential area, at curve

Recorded by A. Forbes

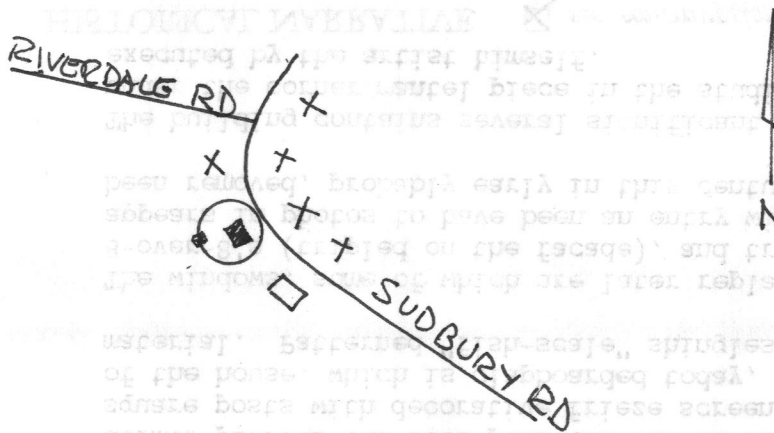
Organization research by Cathie Sur
for Concord Hist. Comm.

Date (month/day/year) May, 1991

of Sudbury Rd. 18th-century house
to south; modern houses to north and
opposite. Mature evergreens around
house.

Sketch Map

Draw a map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Attach a separate sheet if space is not sufficient here. Indicate North.



ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION ☐ see continuation sheet

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community. #324 Sudbury Road, now converted to a cottage, is unique in Concord as a building type. Built in 1879, it is a very early incidence of the Queen Anne, which would have been the most avant-garde architectural style of the time. It is a small 1 1/2-story artist's studio with clipped gable-ends, a 1 1/2-story rear wing, and a one-room shed-roofed ell on the north end. A one-story extension, probably of the twentieth century, extends west from the rear of the rear wing. A long shed-roofed dormer pierces the roof plane of the facade. At the south end is a porch on chamfered square posts with decorative frieze screen and a Japanesque balustrade. The first story of the house, which is clapboarded today, was originally clad in "mastic", a stucco-like material. Patterned "fish-scale" shingles cover the upper sections of the main walls.

The windows, some of which are later replacements, include both 6-over-6-sash and 8-over-8's (tripled on the facade), and triple casements under both gables. What appears in photos to have been an entry with a shed-roofed hood on the street facade has been removed, probably early in this century when the building was converted to a house.

The building contains several significant interior details, including a figured frieze under the corner mantel piece in the studio's reception room that was designed and executed by the artist himself.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE ☒ see continuation sheet

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.

This little building is extremely significant, not just as the studio of a renowned American sculptor, but as an example of his work, as well. It was designed by Daniel Chester French (1850-1931) and built in 1879 next door to his family home at #342 Sudbury Road, (see Form # .) The parcel on which it stands was formerly the orchard of his father's farm.

Known today as one of the most important sculptors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Daniel Chester French spent his most formative years in Concord. He moved to #342 with his family at the age of 17 in 1867. Having shown his talent for sculpture early, he was given his first instruction in drawing and clay modeling by May Alcott, (sister of Louisa, and the model for "Amy" in *Little Women*..) He worked in the New York studio of John Quincy Adams Ward in 1870, and studied with William Rimmer in Boston 1871-72. (Cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES ☐ see continuation sheet

Maps and atlases: 1893, 1906.

Town Directories.

Keys. P. 437.

Interview with owner, spring, 1991. (Cont.)

☒ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

CONCORDD.C. French Studio

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Area(s) Form No.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

In November of 1873 he received his first major commission--from the town of Concord, to execute a statue of a Minute Man to be placed at the North Bridge in honor of the 100th anniversary of the "Concord fight" in 1875. He rented a room on the third floor of the Studio Building in Boston, where he executed the plaster cast for what was to be his first full-sized statue. The work was based on the likeness of Capt. Isaac Davis of Acton, first officer to fall in the Revolution, and the artist used live models from Concord (among them were his friends Charles Baird and Charles Hoar, and Patrick Harrington, who worked for the French family for most of his life.) The statue was cast in bronze by the Ames Foundry of Chicopee from pieces of condemned cannon said to have been captured by New Englanders in the battle of Louisburg. It was mounted on a 7-foot high granite pedestal cut by John Cole of Westford from the same boulder used for the base of the 1836 monument that stands across the river at the east end of the bridge. Today French's "Minute Man" remains one of the most well-loved statues in America.

The "Minute Man" was the sculptor's earliest important work, and the one which made his reputation. The acclaim it received led swiftly to other public art commissions. After a sojourn in Italy the young sculptor moved to Washington (where his father was serving as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury,) to begin work on three sculptural groups for the U.S. Custom House in St. Louis. Upon their completion in 1878 he returned to Boston, then Concord, and began designing his studio. It was completed in the spring of 1879, and it was here that he worked on both government and non-government pieces alike, including work for the US Court House and Post office in Philadelphia and a bust of Ralph Waldo Emerson. In 1880 he began work for his third government commission, a sculpture for the U.S. Post Office and Subtreasury in Boston.

Other works that may have been executed at the Concord studio include a statue of John Harvard, and the first studies for "Memory". He spent nearly a year in Paris in 1886-87, and after his return he purchased a home and studio in New York in 1888. He married his cousin Mary French that same year, and for the next decade appears mainly to have spent only parts of his summers in Concord at work in the studio. (Their first child, Margaret, was born in Concord in the summer of 1889.)

In 1897 the Frenches purchased their well-known summer home and studio, Chesterwood, in Stockbridge, Mass., and through the first part of this century the Concord studio was rented out as a cottage or used for storage. (Cont.)

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

CONCORD

D.C. French Studio

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Area(s) Form No.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

Daniel Chester French went on to execute some of the great works of public art in America. Numbered among his early mature works are three large pieces for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, the "Richard Morris Hunt Memorial" in New York City, and two collaborations with architect Charles F. McKim--for the "Theophilus Walker" relief at Bowdoin College (1892), and the doors of the Boston Public Library (1897). He also collaborated with other architects, most notably with Henry Bacon on the "Melvin Memorial" (1908,) "Abraham Lincoln" in Lincoln, Nebraska (1909-12,) the "Alger Memorial" in Detroit (1913-21), and the "Trask Memorial" in Saratoga Springs (1913-15.) With Cass Gilbert he executed the "First Division Memorial" in 1921-24. Early in this century he also made sculpture for the Manhattan Bridge in New York (1914-16). Along with the "Minute Man," French is probably best known for his statue of Abraham Lincoln for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, which was completed in 1922.

Among his other accomplishments Daniel Chester French was a member of the Society of American Artists (elected 1882), and appointed a member of the Commission on Fine Arts, Washington, in 1910.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, cont.

Bartlett, George. Concord, Historic, Literary, and Picturesque. Lathrop & Co., 1893. P. 118.

Robbins, Roland W. The Story of the Minute Man. Stoneham, Ma.: George R. Barnstead & Son, 1945.

For further information on Daniel Chester French:

Administrator,
Chesterwood
P.O. Box 248
Stockbridge, MA 01262
413-298-3579

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Community

Property Address

CONCORD

324 Sudbury Road

Area(s) Form No.

AL 404

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form



Recommended:

☒ Individually ☐ District ☐ Contributing to a Potential Historic District

Criteria:

A B C D

☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

Statement of Significance by Anne McCarthy Forbes

The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

As the 1879 studio designed by sculptor Daniel Chester French, and used by him for a number of years in the early part of his career, this little building is eligible for individual listing on the National Register under Criterion B. In spite of having been converted from a studio to a dwelling, it retains integrity of location, design, materials, feeling, association, and workmanship (even including several interior details executed by the artist.)

CON.404

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

RECEIVED

MAR 7 1997

MASS. HIST. COMM.

Concord

324 Sudbury Road
Daniel Chester French
Studio

Area(s)
AL

Form No.
404

Additional material by Anne McCarthy Forbes, March, 1997:

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION, cont.

During the past several years, considerable research has been done on the Concord studio of Daniel Chester French. The most detailed account is to be found in the Historic Structure Report for the Studio at Chesterwood, prepared for the National Trust for Historic Preservation by Mesick-Cohen-Waite Architects in 1992, for which the authors had access to French's own plans, letters, and written narratives about the building and its use.

French designed and built the studio very quickly, between March and May of 1879. His letters describe some of the original decor, including a southern pine floor, shelves for casts, and the colors for the walls of the work room--Pompeian red, with olive green woodwork. He repeatedly emphasizes the importance of the reception room, which was located in the one-story, shed-roofed section that extends from the building's north wall and originally projected east toward the street. The main exterior door was in the east wall of the reception room, and beside it was a built-in "nook" fitted with a comfortable sofa with many cushions where visitors could sit while they contemplated sculpture on display. The walls of the reception room were greenish gray, the floor was hardwood with a painted border, and the room was separated from the main working room by a large opening hung with yellow curtains.

There was at least one roof skylight on the building. Photos and sketches in the Concord Library show a large multi-light awning window in the north gable (later replaced by casement windows). It would have lit the "working room", which apparently occupied most of the main part of the building. The shed-roofed dormer on the front plane of the roof was added in the mid-twentieth century, as was the triple window on the facade.

The design of the Concord studio, while it illustrates the type of work, living, and display space that the young sculptor found desirable, also forms a strong precedent for the studio that French commissioned Henry Bacon to design at Chesterwood nineteen years later. In both, a high-roofed work space with abundant natural light forms the main block of the building. Both were built with a low-ceilinged reception room as an adjunct to the north side of the work room, with large windows in the middle of the main wall. The outer door occupied the same location in both reception rooms. Both buildings also had a rear wing or ell for casting space, a rear chimney, and an open porch on the south end. French even had the special seating nook of the Concord studio repeated in a corner of the Chesterwood studio.

In later years, in conjunction with its conversion to a dwelling, the French studio underwent a series of alterations. An early-twentieth-century photograph shows it with a high rear wing extending from the northwest corner, with what appears to be a sleeping porch on the second story, and a lattice-screened open porch underneath.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

Massachusetts Historical Commission
 Massachusetts Archives Building
 220 Morrissey Boulevard
 Boston, Massachusetts 02125

RECEIVED

MAR 7 1997

MASS. HIST. COMM.

Concord

324 Sudbury Road
 Daniel Chester French
 Studio
 Form No.
 404

Area(s)
 AL

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, cont.

The Sudbury Road studio quickly fulfilled the sculptor's hope that it would be "better as an advertisement than anything else I could do." (Waite, et al, 10). It was not only a workspace, but by the summer of 1879 French had declared it a "pleasant place to dwell in" and it had become the gathering place for "many visitors distinguished and otherwise." Like other fashionable artists of his time, French used the building as a gallery for both display and sales, often sending out printed announcements to invite visitors to view his latest work. (Waite, 10). The studio was also a source of pride to the Concord community--the Concord Directory map of 1893 even singled out the studio, along with the Revolutionary and literary sites, as "a place of public and historic interest". All French's major portrait busts, including those of Emerson, Bronson Alcott, and Rockwood Hoar, were created here, as well as the preliminary work for his five major works commissioned before 1888.

Although French's daughter, Margaret French Cresson, implies that difficulties in heating the Concord studio led her father to rent a series of studios in Boston beginning in 1880, it is likely that it was the desire for contact with a larger artists' community that was behind his need to work both at home and in the city, and eventually led him to purchase a townhouse in New York City in 1888 that would be both home and studio for many years. Nevertheless, the Concord studio remains the heart of the most pivotal decade in French's career, and he continued to use it in the summer months through at least 1890.

Like the homes architects design for themselves, studios designed by artists provide an abundance of information about the artists' attitudes, thought processes, and value systems. In very rare instances, as is the case with French's Concord studio, the visual information is enhanced and interpreted by the artist's own words. French's letters and written descriptions of the studio provide an invaluable insight into the mind, and hence the work, of the man who was to become America's leading public sculptor of the early twentieth century.

ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bigham, Brad. "The story behind the Statue". Concord Journal. April 12, 1990.

Concord Free Library: Pamphlet files, Photograph files.

Cresson, Margaret French. Journey into Fame. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947.

Daniel Chester French, an American Sculptor. Exhibit catalog, 1976.

Gillette, Jane B. "The Art of Living", Historic Preservation. March/April, 1992.

Waite, John G., et al. "The Studio at Chesterwood" Unpublished Historic Structure Report. Washington: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1992.

Richman, Michael. Daniel Chester French: an American Sculptor. New York: Metropolitan Museum, 1976.

_____. "The Early Public Sculpture of Daniel Chester French." American Art Journal, Nov. 1972.



Original yellow form: Eligibility file _____
Copies: Inventory form ☒ _____
Town file(w/corresp.) _____
Macris _____
NR director _____

CON. 404

Community: Concord

MHC OPINION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER

Date Received: 2/1/96

Date Due:

Date Reviewed: 2/7/96

Type: ☒ Individual ☐ District (Attach map indicating boundaries)

Name: Daniel Chester French Studio

Inventory Form: 404

Address: 324 Sudbury Road, Concord

Requested by: Larry Paul Cox, property owner, and the Concord Historical Commission

Action: ☒ Honor ☐ ITC ☐ Grant ☐ R & C ☒ (planning) ☐ Other:

Agency: Staff in charge of Review: bf

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

☒ Eligible
☒ Eligible, also in district
☐ Eligible only in district
☐ Ineligible
☐ More information needed

DISTRICTS

☐ Eligible
☐ Ineligible
☐ More information needed

CRITERIA: ☒ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D

LEVEL: ☒ Local ☒ State ☐ National

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE by Betsy Friedberg, 2/8/96

This Queen Anne-style cottage was built in 1879 as the studio for sculptor Daniel Chester French. French had lived since 1867 in the house next door (342 Sudbury Road, MHC #405) and built this small studio sited close to the road in the early years of his career. French worked here year-round until the late 1880s, when it became his summer retreat, and produced a number of important works here; after 1897, he divided his work life between New York and Chesterwood, his house and studio in Stockbridge (NHL).

Under Criterion A, the studio is historically significant for its associations with Concord's development in the mid to late 19th century as a center of intellectual activity, particularly in the arts and humanities. Under Criterion B, the studio is significant for its associations with French, arguably one of the most important sculptors of his time. And under Criterion C, the property is significant architecturally as an early example of the Queen Anne style in Concord which despite 20th century changes retains a number of exterior elements representative of its style, most notably its patterned shingling and porch with ornamental balustrade. The building was apparently designed by French, and perhaps was a modification of a patternbook design. The building included reception area and a workroom; the reception area retains a frieze done by French.

FORM B - STRUCTURE SURVEY
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

1. Is this structure historically significant to:
Town _____ Commonwealth _____ Nation _____

Structure has historical connection with the following themes: (See also reverse side)

Agriculture	Commerce/Industry
Architecture	Science/Invention
<u>Art/Sculpture</u>	Travel/Communication
Education	Military Affairs
Government	Religion/Philosophy
Literature	Indians
Music	Development of Town/City

2. Town Concord

Street 324 Sudbury Rd

Name Daniel Chesley French Studio

Original Use studio

Present Use home

Present Owner private

Date 1840-50's Style Victorian collage

Source of Date _____

Architect _____

3. CONDITION: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Moved Altered _____

IMPORTANCE of site to area: Great Little None SITE endangered by _____

4. DESCRIPTION

FOUNDATION/BASEMENT: High Regular Low _____ Material: _____

WALL COVER: Wood shingle + clapboard Brick Stone Other _____

STORIES: 1 2 3 4 CHIMNEYS: 1 2 3 4 Center End Cluster Elaborate Irregular

ATTACHMENTS: Wings Ell Shed Dependency _____ Simple/Complex

PORCHES: 1 2 3 4 Portico Balcony S. side Recessed _____

ROOF: Ridge Gambrel Flat Hip Mansard communicated
Tower Cupola Dormer windows Balustrade Grillwork _____

FACADE: Gable End: Front/Side Symmetrical/Asymmetrical Simple/Complex Ornament
in shingling

Entrance: Front/Side Centered Double Features: _____

Windows: Spacing: Regular/Irregular Identical/Varied _____

Corners: Plain Pilasters Quoins Obscured _____

OUTBUILDINGS _____ LANDSCAPING _____

5. Indicate location of structure on map below 6. Footage of structure from street
Property has _____ feet frontage on street

Recorder _____

For _____

Photo Polaroid 8-09-065.1. 104

NOTE: Recorder should obtain written permission from Commission or sponsoring organization before using this form. (See Reverse Side)

FOR USE WITH IMPORTANT STRUCTURES (Indicate any interior features of note)

Fireplace

Stairway

Other

GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF SITE (Refer and elaborate on theme circled on front of form)

This was where the Minuteman statue was created -
DCF notable 19th c. sculpture

REFERENCE (Where was this information obtained? What book, records, etc.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY



Original Owner: _____
Deed Information: Book Number _____ Page _____, _____ Registry of Deeds