

History of Murdock-Whitney House

House is located at 151 Front Street. Built 1820-1830. Rear wings added and exterior remodeled in 1901. Moved several feet to the rear in 1901. Acreage .165.

Always the home of members of one of the most successful and longest standing families, this residence is among the most impressive remaining in town. Although principally Colonial Revival in its redesign, Victorian elements are also employed as in the angled, engaged tower on the east elevation and the continuous veranda which wraps from the façade to extend along the full length of the east elevation. Wall detail is elaborate including pilasters at the corners and between the trip art window of the pediment frontispiece which projects over the veranda and a projecting, bow front bay on the west elevation with banded windows.

The hip roof is broken on each elevation by pediment gable dormers. Eaves detail includes molded cornice with modillions and dentils on the main block. Try glyphs decorated the frieze on the porch. The ambling veranda is covered on the façade with paired, Roman Doric columns on paneled pedestals. The roof is trimmed with a balustrade topped with urns at the corners. The main balustrade consists of an elaborately-executed pattern. The door surround consists of oversized elliptical fan and $\frac{3}{4}$ sidelights with tracery sided by fluted pilasters on paneled pedestals. Fenestration is equally varied. Over sided 1/1 double hung sash overlooks the veranda on first floor. Cottage windows with tracery on the transom lights are surmounted with a pediment. Upper sash in the dormers have decorative, diamond-shaped lights. Tabbed oval windows are utilized in the pediment of the frontispiece and on the east elevation. Louvered shutters have been retained, but some are modern replacements.

This house was built by Elisha Murdock, son of Ephraim Murdock and founder in 1834 of E. Murdock and Company on River Street, Waterville.

E. Murdock and Company was the second oldest industry in Winchendon and became the oldest and largest woodenware manufacturing establishment in the country. Elisha Murdock was also the first president of Winchendon Savings Bank, chartered on March 31, 1854.

Mrs. Elisha Murdock continued to live here until 1889. William W. Whitney, the son-in-law of Elisha Murdock, had joined the firm of E. Murdock and Company in 1859. He inherited the business and this property which passed on to his son, Elisha Whitney, who had also joined the business with his father in 1890. Elisha Whitney lived here with his mother, Sophia, wife, Mary M. Whitney, and son, William W. Whitney, superintendent at E. Murdock and Company. In 1926, William W. and Adelaide H. Whitney moved from front Street to 16 Fairbank Street.