

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	CON.100
Historic Name:	Old Academy, The
Common Name:	Channing, William Ellery House
Address:	25 Middle St
City/Town:	Concord
Village/Neighborhood:	Concord Center
Local No:	G9-762-1
Year Constructed:	c 1821
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	Federal
Use(s):	Multiple Family Dwelling House; Private School; Single Family Dwelling House
Significance:	Architecture; Community Planning; Education
Area(s):	
Designation(s):	
Building Materials(s):	Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Synthetic Other; Wood Foundation: Granite; Stone, Cut



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

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FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

PI-CONCORD
USGS-CONCORD
SECT-B

AREA

FORM NO.

100

CONCORD

25 Middle Street

Address

The Old Academy

Historic Name

William Ellery Channing Residence

Present

dwelling

Original

school

Description

ca. 1821

Style

Fenn.

Type

Federal vernacular

Architect

unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric

synthetic
siding

Outbuildings

none

Major Alterations (with dates)

att. garage, early-20th C. entry porch

Condition

fair

Moved

yes

Date 1850

Acreage

less than one acre

Setting

On side street of primarily mid-

19th century wood-frame houses.

UTM REFERENCE

Parcel G9-762-1

USGS QUADRANGLE

SCALE

Recorded by

A. Forbes

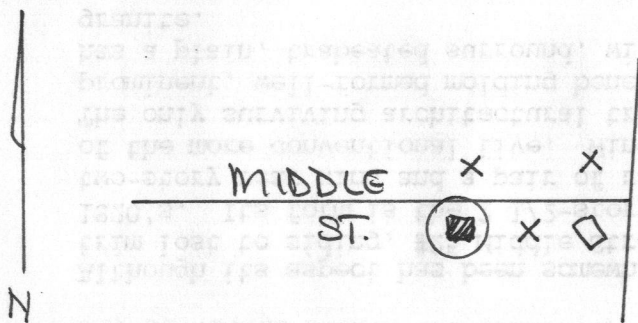
Organization

Research by Cathie Sur
for Concord Hist. Comm.

Date

July, 1990

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s). Indicate north



NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

Although its aspect has been somewhat altered by twentieth-century additions, and some trim lost to siding, #25 Middle Street is still instructive as a school building of the 1820's. Its form is the 2 1/2-story, two-room-deep Federal vernacular house, with a two-story rear wing and a pair of ridge chimneys. It is six bays wide, however, instead of the more conventional five. Windows are 6-over-6-sash, with unadorned surrounds. The only surviving architectural trim is the boxed, molded front cornice with a prominent, well-formed molding beneath, typical of the Federal period. The main entry has a plain, trabeated surround, with full-length sidelights. The foundation is dressed granite.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

Middle Street was laid out in 1850. It extended from Academy Lane, ("Cross Street,") to the one-block section of today's Thoreau Street that had been built in front of the Fitchburg Railroad depot. Henry Thoreau made the first plan of the street, showing its division into house lots. Later in the nineteenth century it was called Centre Street; the name was changed by the early part of this century.

#25, known as "The Old Academy," was one of Concord's early private schools. It was organized in 1821 by William Whiting, Samuel Hoar, Abiel Heywood, Nathan Brooks and Josiah Davis, and opened in 1823. The impetus for its creation points up some of the problems of small-town schools in the early nineteenth century, where discipline was often so difficult that effective teaching became nearly impossible. In this case, the center district school had been under the charge of two out-of-town teachers, and pupils were coming home black and blue from both the bullying of older boys and the punishments inflicted by the masters. The Academy was formed as a coeducational school; the first teacher was George Folsom, followed by Josiah Barnes and Phineas Allen, who had the longest term, until 1836. Among the school's pupils were Henry Thoreau and his brother John. After graduation from college in 1837, Henry taught at the center school, but in 1837 became so alarmed at its discipline policies that he resigned, saying later, "I have ever been disposed to regard the cow-hide as a non-conductor." (Cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Walcott. "Concord Roads." 1938.
- Keyes.
- Fenn. (Cont.)

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: CONCORD	Form No: 100
Property Name: Old Academy	

Indicate each site on this form which is being continued below.

The ~~the~~ Academy closed that same year, and Henry and John Thoreau started their own school in the building in 1838. It, too, soon closed, however, with the sudden ^{illness and} death of John Thoreau in 1841.

After Middle Street was cut through, the building, which formerly faced Academy Lane, was turned half around and moved back to its present location. It was converted to a double house, and became the property of poet and biographer William Ellery Channing. (1818-1901.) He appears to have lived here from 1875 to 1886, at least, but later made his home with Franklin B. Sanborn. (See #106 Elm Street.) It was subsequently owned and occupied by Charles Emerson, who gave the land and endowment to start Emerson Hospital. Among the early-twentieth-century tenants of the house was artist Charles Hovey Pepper. Some time between the late 1890's and ca. 1910 the house was bought and renovated by Philip McManus, who continued to operate it as a rental property.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, cont.

Wheeler, Concord, Climate for Freedom.
Canby, Henry S. Thoreau.
Town directories.