

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	CON.196
Historic Name:	Rice, Mary House
Common Name:	Staples, Samuel House
Address:	44 Bedford St
City/Town:	Concord
Village/Neighborhood:	Concord Center
Local No:	H9-849
Year Constructed:	c 1840
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	Federal; Greek Revival
Use(s):	Single Family Dwelling House
Significance:	Architecture
Area(s):	
Designation(s):	
Building Materials(s):	Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Wood; Wood Clapboard 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

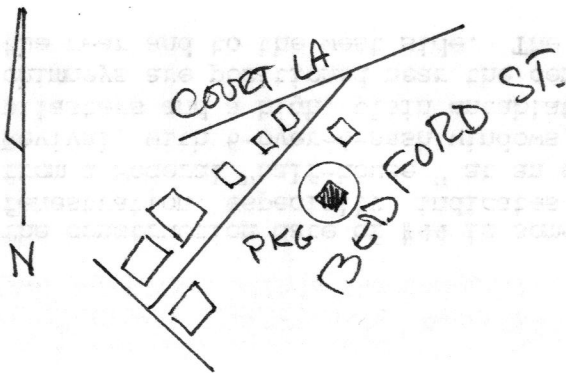
AREA

FORM NO.

196



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



UTM REFERENCE Parcel H9-849

USGS QUADRANGLE

SCALE

CONCORD
44 Bedford Street
Rice/Staples House
Present dwelling
Original dwelling
DESCRIPTION ca. 1840
Keyes, style.
Federal/Greek Revival
unknown
clapboard
Exterior Wall Fabric garage
Outbuildings rear wing
extended, 1984. Terrace across front.
Side wing--post 1918.
Major Alterations (with dates)

Condition good

Moved yes Date 1850

Acreage less than one acre

Setting Set back from street, in

neighborhood of 18th-19th-C. houses.

Fenced yard.

Recorded by A. Forbes
Research by Todd Osgood

Organization for Concord Hist. Comm.

Date July, 1990

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

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

The construction date of #44 is somewhat uncertain, and its irregular facade fenestration, especially, indicates that it underwent a radical change in form--possibly from a Federal "half-house," at an early date. Its aspect today is largely Greek Revival, with 6-over-6-sash windows, and a 6-panel entry embellished with paneled pilasters and a high, plain entablature with a deep, projecting lintel. Two corbeled chimneys are positioned near the center of the roof ridge, full-height wings extend to the rear and to the west side. The foundation appears to be granite.

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

This house is best known as the home of Miss Mary Rice, and may have been built for her. It was moved here ca. 1850 from the site of the town house, however, when the lower section of Bedford Street was put through, and Miss Rice may have acquired it shortly after that. (She is shown as the owner on the 1852 map; in 1856 "M. Rice" is shown as owning both this property and a house off the road, to the northeast.) Mary Rice was known as an ardent reformer and abolitionist. Her house was a stop on the underground railroad, she was a member of the Ladies' Abolition society, and she was instrumental in having the tombstone of former slave John Jack, (d. 1773,) erected ca. 1830.

Some time before 1875 #44 was acquired by Samuel Staples, the town constable known today for having put Henry Thoreau in jail. Staples was involved in the development of at least two parts of Concord center--the division into houselots of Hubbard Street in 1872, and Bedford Street itself in ca. 1845-50. He was largely responsible for the building of the Universalist Church, (now St. Bernard's,) at the base of the street, as well. Staples was one of the town's most prominent citizens, and was elected to the legislature in 1882. A forerunner of the modern real estate agent, he bought and sold property all over the center, acting frequently as auctioneer. He is known to have lived in the Orchard House [NR] on Lexington Road for some years, and at either 124 or 138 Devens in 1886. (Cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Interviews with owner, nearby residents, 1990.
 Keyes: entry "New Bedford St--#60."
 Maps, plans and atlases: 1852, 1856, 1875, 1889, 1893, 1906.
 Wheeler House File.
 Town directories.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: CONCORD	Form No: 196
Property Name: 44 Bedford Street	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

Thus he may not have actually occupied this house, especially as Keyes says the house had various tenants after Mary Rice's death, in 1885 being occupied by Mrs. Hall, widow of Peletiah Hall. (Later directories refer to both a "Mrs." and "Miss" Cynthia Hall--this may refer to a mother and daughter.)

"Miss Hall" is shown here in 1893 as well; the next known owner was a Mr. Silverman, from 1914 to 1933. At some time early in the century, however, both this property and #52, next door, were owned by members of the Hosmer family, who had an undertaking business here. (A map of 1918 shows a building marked "undertaker" in front of the house.)

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