

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	CON.332
<b>Historic Name:</b>	Masonic Hall - Town School - Engine #1 Firehouse
<b>Common Name:</b>	Corinthian Lodge of Freemasons - Odd Fellows Hall
<b>Address:</b>	58 Monument Sq
<b>City/Town:</b>	Concord
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	Concord Center
<b>Local No:</b>	51, H9-1691
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	1820
<b>Architect(s):</b>	Bigelow, James F.; Dudley, William Northrop; Hurd, William F.
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	Federal; Victorian Eclectic
<b>Use(s):</b>	Fire House; Lodge; Meeting Hall; Public School
<b>Significance:</b>	Architecture; Community Planning; Education
<b>Area(s):</b>	CON.A: Concord Monument Sq-Lexington Road Historic Dist. CON.DV: North Bridge - Monument Square Historic District
<b>Designation(s):</b>	Local Historic District (03/05/1973); Nat'l Register District (09/13/1977)
<b>Building Materials(s):</b>	Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Brick; Glass; Wood; Wood Flushboard Foundation: Brick



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

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

H9-1691

Concord

A DV

332

9/13/77  
 NR: DIS; LHD 2/5/73

Town Concord

Place (neighborhood or village) \_\_\_\_\_

Concord centerAddress 58 Monument SquareHistoric Name Masonic Hall/Town SchoolUses: Present meeting hallOriginal meeting hall and schoolhouseDate of Construction 1820Source WheelerStyle/Form eclectic Victorian over Federal vernacularArchitect/Builder unknownExterior Material: James F. Bigelow, William A. DrelleyFoundation brickWall/Trim brick and wood flushboardRoof asphalt shingle

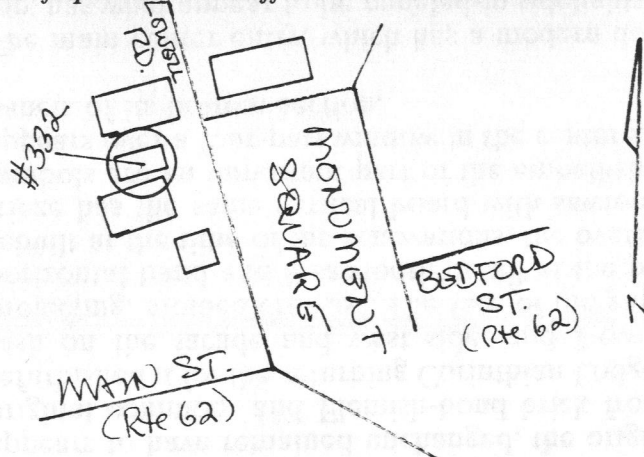
Outbuildings/Secondary Structures \_\_\_\_\_

none

Major Alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

remodeled 1878; rear addition 1920Condition good/fairMoved [ ] no [X] yes Date 1878Acreage less than one acreSetting Set back from street; lawn in front wconcrete walk and flagpole. Fills narrow lot,nearly touching Monument Hall to SE.

including some numbers, if any. Indicate north.  
 sheet if space is not sufficient here. Indicate north.

Recorded by Anne Forbes, consultant

research by Laurie Belton

Organization Concord Hist. CommissionDate 11/96

FEB 03 1997

MASS. HIST. COMM.

CON-332  
BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION [X] *see continuation sheet*

*Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

One of five buildings at the north end of Monument Square to contain a sizeable meeting hall or public space, the Masonic Hall appears from the street very much as the diminutive 2 1/2-story, three-bay, gable-end building that it was when built in 1820. A large rear wing of novelty textured brick, however, was added a century later, in 1920. Although the massing of the main building appears to have remained unchanged, the original belfry is gone, and much of the detailing of the original common- and Flemish-bond brick front section was updated ca. 1880, when W.F. Hurd refurbished it for the returning Corinthian Lodge. The windows, formerly 12-over-12's, are 6-over-6-sash on the facade and west side, and 2-over-2-sash on the east. Those on the facade have projecting, molded crowns. The face of the gable is clad in vertical flush-boarding relieved by one horizontal band and a sawtooth detail at the bottom. Both the roof and cornice were apparently rebuilt at the time of the renovations; the overhanging cornice is boxed, with deep returns, and the frieze has the same vertical board with sawtooth bottom edge as the face of the gable. Masonic symbols are an important part of the embellishment of the facade. A true sawcut window "crown" appears over a four-part window in the center gable which has masonic symbols in the colored glass panels of its bottom section.

The main center entry, which has a modern double-leaf four-panel door with bullseye glass at the top, has what appear to be paneled-in sidelights and flat pilasters. (The original entry was a narrow Federal type, surmounted by a semicircular fanlight. In front of the entry is a projecting, pedimented portico on two pairs of unfluted columns, with the Masonic symbol in the field of the pediment.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE [X] *see continuation sheet*

*Explain 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.*

The second-oldest building standing on the southwest side of Monument Square, the Masonic Hall (or Masonic Temple) not only signifies the long history of the Masons in Concord, but has also had other identities as a town schoolhouse and firehouse. It was built in 1820, shortly after a fire destroyed the old wooden schoolhouse of 1799 and a house that had been moved onto the property from near Brister's Hill. The town had owned this land since 1687, when Timothy Wheeler donated it in his will for the building of a schoolhouse. All the town schoolhouses were replaced in 1799, including the original one which stood here. Also standing on the land was the small house of Timothy Minot(t), the schoolmaster. The 1799 school was destroyed by fire on December 31, 1819, along with a relocated house belonging to David Page, the early-nineteenth-century schoolmaster, which had stood just to the southeast on what was apparently the site of the first county courthouse and town hall. The Minot house apparently survived the fire, and was moved to Bedford Street in the early 1850's (see Form #190--118 Bedford Street). (Cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES [X] *see continuation sheet*

Maps and Atlases: 1830, 1852, 1856, 1875, 1889 (new location), 1906. Sanborns from 1887.  
Caiger, E.B. History of the Corinthian Lodge. 1921.  
Charles, W.A. An Historical Sketch of the Corinthian Lodge. 1970.  
Concord Vital Records.  
Drake. History of Middlesex County. 1880.  
Hurd. History of Middlesex County. 1890. (Cont.)

[X] Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places\*. *If checked, a completed National Register Criteria Statement form is attached.* \*NR-listed 1977.



## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

Concord

58 Monument Sq.  
Masonic Hall

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

Area(s)  
 A

Form No.  
 332

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, cont.

The Corinthian Lodge of Freemasons received its charter in Concord in 1797, and for its first two decades it had no permanent home. In January of 1820 a committee of Masons offered funds to erect a brick building on the burned-out schoolhouse site, to be used for both a town school and a meeting hall for the Masons. The lodge contributed \$400 for the purpose, and by November the new building was standing, with space for the center school, called for years simply the "Town School", on the first story and rooms for the Masons on the upper story. Like the former schoolhouse, the new building was 40 x 30 feet, two stories high, with a cupola and bell. Until the Town House was built in 1851, the Town School served as the grammar school, and eventually housed the forerunner of the town High School. Each of Concord's school districts contributed part of its allotment to the support of the Town School, where older boys were sent from all over town, and where some were prepared for the university. Girls were admitted to the school as early as 1827.

The best-known teacher at the Town School was Henry David Thoreau, who was hired as schoolmaster in 1837 upon his graduation from Harvard. His tenure was brief, however, for he resigned that same year when School Committee member Nehemiah Ball criticized him for his lack of corporal punishment. Ironically, a few months later, during the anti-Masonic controversy of the 1830's, Phineas Allen, master of the private Academy on Middle Street, was dismissed from his post for his anti-Masonic views, and Henry Thoreau and his brother, John started a new school in the old Academy building. (See Form #100--25 Middle Street).

This building underwent a change in use in the middle of the nineteenth century. The anti-Masonic fervor led to a severe decline in the Masonic membership through the 1840's, and for many years the Corinthian Lodge held meetings only infrequently. The second-story hall was rented to the Odd Fellows from 1844 to 1852, with the Lodge renting back the space by the evening in order to hold their own meetings. Although when new the building had been called "large and elegant" by Dr. Ezra Ripley, for years the first-story schoolroom was criticized for overcrowding and bad ventilation, and in 1851 the grammar school and high school were both relocated to the new Town House. (See Form #302). The first floor of the building was then refitted by the new town Fire Department to house the Engine Company #1 fire engine.

The Masons continued in the upstairs hall through 1870. The next year they sold their interest in this building back to the town, and subsequently relocated to the hall in the new Garty's Block on the Milldam (see Form #2--3-13 Main Street). The building continued to deteriorate, and in 1877 the town sold it to the past Master of the Corinthian Lodge, **William F. Hurd**, whose family had inherited the adjoining property to the north. W.F. Hurd's main vocation of the 1860's-1890's was real estate development--including the conversion of another schoolhouse, the West Primary Schoolhouse at 440 Main Street, to a residence (cf. also lower Elm Street and River Street areas). He moved this building back from its old position close to the street, removed the old belfry, and added a wooden addition to the rear. Judging from the style of the ornamentation in the upper section of the facade, he apparently renovated the pediment, as well. The masonic lodge returned to the hall in 1882, where it remains today. In 1909 the Masons purchased the entire property from W.F. Hurd's heirs, along with additional pieces of land along the west side and at the rear. In 1920 they built a large brick addition to replace the wooden one built by Mr. Hurd, and re-dedicated the building in 1921.

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

Concord

58 Monument Sq.  
Masonic Hall

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

Area(s)  
 A

Form No.  
 332

## BIBLIOGRAPHY, cont.

Jarvis. "Houses and People in Concord, 1810-1820. 1882.

Keyes.

Fischer, D.H., ed. Concord: Social History of an American Town. 1983.

Seavey, MR. Concord Schools from Candles to Kerosene, 1799-1893. 1946.

Shattuck.

Social Circle Memoirs.

Surette, L. "Bylaws of the Corinthian Lodge of AF & AM of Concord, Massachusetts". 1859.

Concord Town Reports: 1849-1885; photograph in 1900-1901.

Wheeler House File.

Wheeler, Ruth. Concord: Climate for Freedom. 1967.





KEY  
MISSION  
Boston

Significant to:  
Location

Consistent with the  
Side side)

History  
in  
Location

Joseph

Literature  
Music

Indians  
Development of Town/City

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: brick + cut stone (To rear, building falls away creating full basement)

WALL COVER: Wood boarded gable Brick Stone Other

STORIES: 1 2 3 4 CHIMNEYS: 1 2 3 4 near - does not count in architectural composition

ATTACHMENTS: Wings Ell Shed Dependency 2 story - siding Simple/Complex

PORCHES: 1 2 3 4 Portico Balcony entrance, modified door Recessed

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

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

Entrance: Front/Side Centered Double Features: see "portico"

Windows: Spacing: Regular/Irregular Identical/Varied 6/6 - heavy cornice over front windows

Corners: Plain Pilasters Quoins Obscured decorative window + ornate cornice in gable end

OUTBUILDINGS

LANDSCAPING

5. Indicate location of structure on map below

6. Footage of structure from street 10'  
Property has c. 40 feet frontage on street\*  
\*including drive to N

Recorder Anne Wardlaw

For MHC

Photo I-8

2-09-065-1-051

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

\* heavy wood cornice with dentils at side and bldg. c. 20' x 30' deep (excluding ell)  
Dentils continue across gable end.

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)

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

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

Original Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Deed Information: Book Number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Registry of Deeds

CON-332

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town

Property Address

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Concord		52 Monument Sq	
Area(s)	Form No.		
0.11	332		

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
 DIVISION OF INSPECTION  
 PLAN RECORD

CASE *D* RACK *5* APART. *2* NO. *16073* ✓

BUILDING *Masonic Hall* STORIES *2B*

CITY OR TOWN *Concord* STREET *Lowell Road*

TO BE USED FOR *Social Purposes* CLASS

OWNER *Concord Masonic Hall*

ARCHITECT *Jas. F. Bigelow, Wm. N. Dudley*

CERTIFICATE APPROVAL *SECTY. IN CHARGE*

DATE *Sept. 14, 1920*

INSPECTOR *Beyer*

FORM 41, 2009, 2-11-20