

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	CON.189
Historic Name:	Dowd, Francis House
Common Name:	
Address:	128 Bedford St
City/Town:	Concord
Village/Neighborhood:	Concord Center
Local No:	H8-872
Year Constructed:	c 1887
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	Italianate; No style
Use(s):	Boarding House; Multiple Family Dwelling House
Significance:	Architecture
Area(s):	
Designation(s):	
Building Materials(s):	Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Wood; Wood Clapboard Foundation: Brick



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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: Thursday, October 22, 2020 at 10:50 AM

FORM B - BUILDING

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Assessor's number

H8-872

USGS Quad

CONCORD

Area(s)

Form Number

189

CON.189

NOV 17 1992

Town CONCORD SECT B

Place (neighborhood or village) _____

Bedford Street

128 Bedford Street

Name Francis Dowd House

Present 2-family dwelling

Original dwelling,

boarding house

Construction ca. 1887

date on gable

Form Italianate vernacular

Builder unknown

Material: _____

Foundation brick

Wall/Trim wood clapboard

Roof asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures garage

Major Alterations (with dates) 20th c.:

enclosed front porch; 1-story sun

room at SW rear; fire escape

Condition good

Moved ☐ no ☒ yes Date N/A

Acreage less than one acre

Setting At SW corner of Bedford Court,

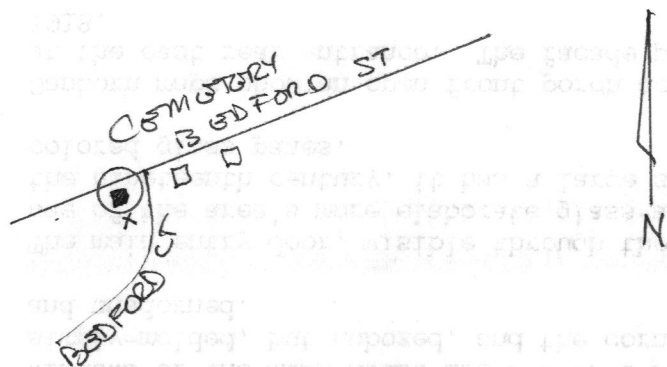
close to street, in line of 18th-19th-

century houses. Opposite Sleepy

Hollow Cemetery.

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.



Recorded by A. Forbes
research by Tedd Osgood

Organization for Concord Hist. Commission

Date (month/day/year) June, 1991

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION ☐ *see continuation sheet*

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

In spite of some changes in form, including the clapboarded porch enclosure on the facade, this is a well-preserved two-story, three-bay late-nineteenth-century house. One room deep, it has a two-story rear wing. Its facade is dominated by a gabled central facade "pavilion" which projects over the porch at second-story level. The detail here is typical of the 1887 date that is carved into the pavilion gable: the windows of the main house are 2-over-2-sash with plain surrounds, the cornice is simply-molded, but unboxed, and the cornerboards, frieze- and rake-boarding are narrow and unadorned.

The main entry door, visible through the sidelighted entry of the central vestibule, is one of the area's more elaborate glass-and-panel combinations. Typical of the end of the nineteenth century, it has a large single glass light surrounded by rectangular colored glass panes.

Sanborn maps show an open front porch across the facade until at least 1909, and another at the east rear entrance. The facade porch was enclosed some time between then and 1918.

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.

Deed research would be necessary to clarify some mysteries about the evolution of this building. It stands on the site of a house built by John Dowd (b. 1813 in County Galway, Ireland,) in about 1860. Its style and brick foundation, however, are more indicative of the 1887 date shown on the facade. It is certainly not the "story-and-a-half" Dowd house that Keyes says was here in 1885. John Dowd's son Francis (Frank) W. Dowd appears to have inherited the property after his father's death in 1880, and it may have been he who enlarged or replaced the house.

The house today is significant for its association with what appears to have been Concord's first licensed saloon, and its history, the little we know of it, sheds some light on social attitudes toward liquor at the end of the nineteenth century. John Dowd had two sons, Frank, and John H., and either the sons, or father and sons, built a store just west of the house where according to Keyes groceries "of the worst sort" were sold during the 1870's and early 1880's. The Dowds were prosecuted more than once for selling liquor, and the store was discontinued by 1885. By then they were renting out an apartment over the store and running a livery stable in the barn at the rear of the property. (It was apparently the store building that was moved down the street and made into a house, today's #86 Bedford Street, probably in about 1892-3.) (Cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES ☐ *see continuation sheet*

Interview with owner, 4/91.

Maps and atlases: 1889, 1906; Sanborns from 1909.

Town Directories.

Richardson. Concord Chronicle.

Cemetery records.

Town Report, 1885.

Keyes/Tolman II, 189.

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

CONCORDFrancis Dowd House

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Area(s) Form No.

189

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

What Keyes tells is obviously not the whole story, however, for in 1885, Town Meeting voted 166-99 in favor of having the Board of Selectmen issue licenses for the sale of liquor. They granted one first class license--to John H. Dowd--and one third class license, to his assistant. They then proceeded to close down unlicensed establishments. Both Frank Dowd and John H., who boarded at #128, are listed in the 1886 Directory as "saloon keepers," and were advertising their recently-opened saloon and billiard parlor in the 1881 Union Block, (8-18 Main Street).

In 1891, however, their business was again in trouble. A perennial transgressor of the liquor law, one of the Dowds, (apparently Frank, as John had died in 1886 at the age of 30,), was fined and sentenced to three months in prison for "keeping a rum nuisance." By 1892, Frank Dowd also was dead, at 39. His widow continued to live here for at least a few years, but the house and store property was divided, and in 1905 sold to James J. and Annie Mara. James Mara was a house painter with his brother, Mark (see #76 Bedford Street,) and lived here until his death in 1941. The property remained in the hands of his heirs until 1978.