

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	CON.270
<b>Historic Name:</b>	Hosmer, Thomas Jr. House
<b>Common Name:</b>	Dovecote, The
<b>Address:</b>	586 Main St
<b>City/Town:</b>	Concord
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	Concord Center
<b>Local No:</b>	F9-3861
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	c 1820
<b>Architect(s):</b>	
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	Altered beyond recognition; Second Empire
<b>Use(s):</b>	Single Family Dwelling House
<b>Significance:</b>	Archaeology, Historic; Architecture
<b>Area(s):</b>	CON.DU: Main Street Historic District
<b>Designation(s):</b>	Local Historic District (03/12/1962)
<b>Building Materials(s):</b>	Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Wood; Wood Clapboard Foundation: Brick; Concrete Unspecified



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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)

This file was accessed on: Friday, October 30, 2020 at 11:32 AM

## FORM B - BUILDING

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
80 Boylston Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Assessor's number

F9-3861

USGS Quad

CONCORD

Area(s)

DU

Form Number

270

CONCORD

LHD - 3112162  
DEPT B

Neighborhood or village)

Concord Center

586 Main Street

Name "the Dovecote"  
Hosmer cottage  
dwelling

Present dwelling

Original 1820; parts may be  
earlier

Construction Wheeler

Mansard Cottage

Form unknown

Builder

Exterior Material:

brick and concrete

Foundation

wood clapboard

Wall/Trim

asphalt shingle

Roof

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

2-car garage

Major Alterations (with dates)

many re-modelings: mansard roof probably ca. 1870. 20th C.: shed-roofed enclosed facade porch. Former attached barn removed.

Condition

fair

Moved ☒ no ☐ yes Date N/A

Acreage

less than one acre

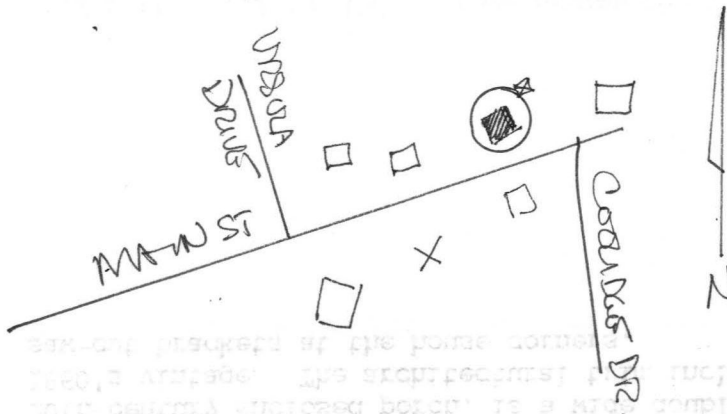
Setting

In residential district of

18th- and early-20th-century houses at town center.

## 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.



Anne Forbes;

Recorded by

research by Susan Alatalo

Organization

for Concord Hist. Commission

Date (month/day/year) July, 1992

## BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION ☐ see continuation sheet

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

This little house has been so altered that its original appearance is only a matter of speculation. Today it is mainly significant for its striking mansard roof. It is a two-story, three-bay building, one-room-deep, with a central projection on the facade, and 2-over-2-sash windows. The main entry, visible through the center of a 20th-century enclosed porch, is a wide double-leaf glass-and-panel door of ca. 1860's vintage. The architectural trim includes narrow cornerboards and solid saw-cut brackets at the house corners.

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.*

Although this house is best known for its very brief association with the Alcott family, its main significance in the context of the town as a whole has to do with the Hosmer family. An old house was standing on the site in 1740, when it was acquired by Thomas Hosmer, Jr. It eventually fell to his son Benjamin, who was to see action as a Minuteman on April 19, 1775, at the North Bridge. Benjamin's wife Sarah died during the smallpox epidemic of 1792 at the time of the birth of their first child. Burial for smallpox victims in the public cemeteries was frowned upon at that time, and both mother and baby are buried some distance behind the house in a grave marked by a table tablet. It is said that the family horse and wagon that carried them there are buried with them.

Benjamin Hosmer and his sister Dinah lived in the old house until they were quite elderly. In 1820 the house was replaced, apparently by other Hosmer family members, who may have incorporated part of the former structure into the new building. Benjamin and Dinah lived in the new house until they died--Dinah in 1831 at the age of 90, and Benjamin in 1832 at 82. (Cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES ☐ see continuation sheet

Maps, atlases: 1830, 1852, 1856, ca. 1871, 1875, 1889, 1893, 1906.

Keyes/Tolman.

Wheeler House File #M21

Sanborn, F.B. American Men of Letters.

Swayne.

Fenn.

Brooks, Paul. The People of Concord.

Street directories.

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

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

CONCORDHosmer Cottage/  
Dovecote

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
80 Boylston Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Area(s) Form No.

270

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

The succession of ownership after that is not clear, but it was still referred to as "the Hosmer Cottage" when Bronson Alcott and his family came to live here in 1840. This was their first residence in Concord, and they stayed here three years, before relocating to Harvard for their brief utopian experiment at Fruitlands. Their youngest child, May, was born here, and Louisa Alcott as a child wrote her first poem here at the age of eight. She later used the Hosmer Cottage as the model for the "Dovecote," in Little Women, the first house where Meg and her husband John set up housekeeping.

Maps indicate that by 1852 the house belonged to J.F. Barrett, probably Jonathan Fay Barrett, who evidently rented it out. By 1871 it was the property of Charles S. Callender; his widow is still shown as the owner in 1889. In 1893 a Mrs. Cook was living here, and in 1906 the owner was artist Robertson James, who owned several pieces of real estate at the center. By the late 1930's it was owned and occupied by John H. Loftus and his family.





HD? (CON. 270) **26** ✓  
n Concord  
et 586 Main St  
ne Dovercote cottage  
ginal Use \_\_\_\_\_  
sent Use \_\_\_\_\_  
sent Owner private  
e c. 1850 Style Mansard circa 1850 R. Wheeler  
rce of Date \_\_\_\_\_  
hitect \_\_\_\_\_

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: cutstone

WALL COVER: Wood clapboard Brick Stone Other \_\_\_\_\_

STORIES: 1 2 3 4 CHIMNEYS: 1 2 3 4 insignificant to architecture Center End Cluster Elaborate Irregular

ATTACHMENTS: Wings Ell Shed Dependency \_\_\_\_\_ Simple/Complex

PORCHES: 1 2 3 4 Portico Balcony \_\_\_\_\_ Recessed entry

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

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

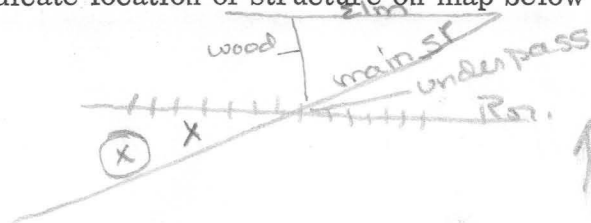
Entrance: Front/Side Centered Double Features: \_\_\_\_\_

Windows: Spacing: Regular/Irregular Identical/Varied \_\_\_\_\_

Corners: Plain Pilasters Quoins Obscured cornerboards

OUTBUILDINGS \_\_\_\_\_ LANDSCAPING \_\_\_\_\_

5. Indicate location of structure on map below 6. Footage of structure from street 30'  
Property has \_\_\_\_\_ feet frontage on street



Recorder \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

Photo VIII-4 68-585 E.09.065.1.026

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

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)

One of Alcotts houses. The model for Megs house in "Little Women"

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

CAS

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Original Owner:

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