

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	CON.BS
<b>Historic Name:</b>	Bedford Street Area VI
<b>Common Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>City/Town:</b>	Concord
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	Concord Center
<b>Local No:</b>	
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	
<b>Architect(s):</b>	
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	
<b>Use(s):</b>	Residential District
<b>Significance:</b>	Architecture; Community Planning; Ethnic Heritage
<b>Area(s):</b>	
<b>Designation(s):</b>	
<b>Building Materials(s):</b>	



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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: Thursday, October 22, 2020 at 10:52 AM

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
80 Boylston Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

H8

CONCORD

BS

1903/110

RECEIVED



CONCORD

Neighborhood or village) \_\_\_\_\_

Bedford Street

Area 208-264 Bedford Street  
(south side)Use \_\_\_\_\_  
residential

Construction Dates or Period ca. 1856-1900

Condition good

Intrusions and Alterations \_\_\_\_\_

#256--modern house

ca. 3 acres

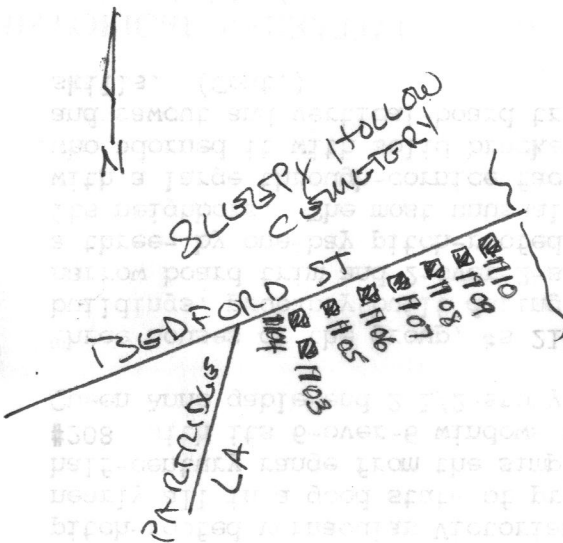
Acreage \_\_\_\_\_

Recorded by A. Forbes; research and his-  
torical statement by Carla Garbarino  
Organization for Concord Hist. Comm.

Date (month/day/year) June, 1991

## 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.



## AREA FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION ☐ *see continuation sheet*

*Describe architectural, structural and landscape features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.*

The residential area on the south side of Bedford Street opposite the eastern section of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery is one of Concord's most intact small neighborhoods of the second half of the nineteenth century. Located here are eight modest, simply-detailed, pitch-roofed vernacular Victorian houses. In spite of some additions over the years, nearly all in a good state of preservation. Stylistically, they cover the full half-century range from the simple late-1850's 2-story three- by one-bay house at #208, with its 6-over-6 windows and near absence of architectural trim, to a large Queen Anne gable-end 2 1/2-story clapboard house with shingled gables at #248.

Three houses of the group, #s 210, 214, and 222, are small two-bay gable-end buildings, probably built during the 1870's and '80's. They have the brick foundations, narrow board trim and 2-over-2-sash windows typical of those years. #220, like #208 a three- by one-bay pitch-roofed house, stands sideways to the street tucked in between its neighbors. The most unusual house of the group is #236, a 2-story three-bay house with a large through-cornice facade gable. Built in 1883 by carpenter Martin Powers, who adorned it with solid brackets, scalloped-shingle skirting, banding in the gables and sawcut and vertical-board trim at the eaves, it is a showcase for its owner's skills. (Cont.)

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE ☐ *see continuation sheet*

*Explain historical development of the area. Discuss how this area relates to the historical development of the community.*

In the 1850's Henry David Thoreau laid out the line of a new road connecting Concord center with the old road to Bedford. He may have been working for Samuel Staples who planned to develop real estate at the foot of the new road, which was to be called Bedford Street, (also called, at least informally, the "new" Bedford Road.) By 1852 several houses were standing on the earliest section west of the intersection of Court Lane. As it turned out, no lots were sold for new houses on the north side of the lower section, however. Instead, in 1856 the town created a new cemetery there, east of the 1823 "New" Hill Burying Ground, on the site of the former Middlesex County Fairgrounds, calling it Sleepy Hollow Cemetery after the old name for the fairgrounds. In 1865 and 1868, the town acquired the land between the new and old, joining the two sections to form one long cemetery stretching east from Court Lane to the edge of the Great Meadows.

On the south side of Bedford Street opposite the cemetery newly-arrived Irish immigrants began building modest houses. Perhaps they chose Bedford Street because it was within walking distance of St. Bernard's Catholic Church [NR], which was founded on Monument Square at the foot of the street in 1864. In any case, the area was soon a thriving neighborhood of carpenters, masons, painters, coachmen, dressmakers, and other laborers and craftsmen. (Cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES ☐ *see continuation sheet*

Interviews with owners and neighbors, 1991.

Maps and atlases: 1856, ca. 1871, 1875.

Town Directories.

Richardson. Concord Chronicle.

Garrelick and Bailey, Concord in the Days of Strawberries and Streetcars.

Middlesex Registry of Deeds.

Keyes/Tolman.

☐ Recommended as a National Register District. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*



INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

CONCORD

208-264 Bedford St.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
80 Boylston Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Area(s) Form No.  
55 1903-1110

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

The next known residents of the property were the Feehan family, who lived there until the late 1920's. **Michael Feehan**, the owner, was a teamster and a jobber. At least four other male Feehans, one of whom was a policeman, are listed as living here at one time.

#220 - This little house was apparently built between 1890 and 1900. It was occupied, at least, by Bernard Culkin(s) as a young man (see #148 Bedford Street.) He was a coachman at that time, and it probably belonged to his father **Michael Culkin**, coachman for the Emerson family. Two other Culkin sons, John and Michael also lived here.

#222 - This house was also probably built in the 1890's. By 1913, **Mrs. Mary Rooney**, widow of Martin Rooney, owned the property. After her death her son **Michael Rooney**, a carpenter, owned the house.

#236 - Keyes says this house was built by **Martin Powers**, an Irish carpenter, in 1883. He remained here until at least 1913. Other family members who lived here over the years included **Thomas** (a mailman), **Margaret** (a piano teacher), and **Catherine** (an organist). Some time after 1913 the house was bought by **William Dee**. He was a mailman, and a cousin of one of Concord's most prominent Irish immigrants, **Joseph Dee**. William had boarded here with the Powers since 1906.

#s 248 and 264 - Records are confusing on these two houses. Keyes says that the first house at #248 was built by **James Finigan** in 1875, apparently out of an old schoolhouse, and that he then built #264 next door sometime before 1885. Tolman says that a new dwelling was built "later" at #248 and the school was used as a shed. Judging from the styles and foundations, however, both houses probably date to at least 1890. In any case, this is another incidence, like the Grimes, of an immigrant family prospering in Concord and moving up to a bigger house but keeping the old one for family members. **James Finigan** worked for A.P. Chamberlain.

Finigans are listed at both #248 and 264 through the 1929 Concord Directory. Among them were five sons--John and Martin (both clerks), James, and Thomas (a carpenter.) By 1906 the elder James Finigan was dead and his widow Catherine lived here with her children. #248 passed to **Michael Finigan**, a postal clerk, but his brothers John and Martin, along with sister Mary, still lived here, as well. By 1921 some of the sons had established their own businesses. John ran a tourists' livery and boarding stable on Bedford Street, and later became a real estate broker. Martin owned a men's clothing store. (Both Martin and Michael were also volunteer firemen, [see photo, p. 20, in Strawberries and Streetcars.]) #264 became the property of son **James Finigan**, (listed as a coachman, later a clerk,) and his wife Mary. A sister, Catherine, who was a teacher, lived there, as well. In 1899, the "Finigan brothers" bought John Raymond's market in the center of town. (Cont.)

CONCORD208-264 Bedford St.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
80 Boylston Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Area(s) Form No.

BS 1903-1110

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

The most altered house, #264, is a tiny 1 1/2-story gable-end grown to a complex form by the additions of ells, gables, and a projecting bay on the west side. It is the only one of the eight, however, to retain its late-Victorian, turned-column veranda.

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

Although the Irish immigrants in the Davis/Bedford Court neighborhood to the west were succeeded by Italians, this section of Bedford Street remained solidly Irish-American, with a scattering of other nationalities, well into the twentieth century.

Most of the houses built here in the 1870's, '80's and '90's were modest, Victorian vernacular structures, simple and functional, but neat.\* John Keyes, describing the neighborhood in 1885, notes that many of the residents planted pretty gardens outside their houses.

By 1900 Bedford Street had become a major through-route. At the turn of the century, track for the Lexington and Boston electric railway line was laid along Bedford Street to the center, where it connected with the Maynard and Hudson line. The streetcar ran from Concord to Lexington and points east until about 1925.

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#s 208 and 210 - shown on maps by 1856, #208 was built in the 1850's by Brian McDonough. One of the first houses built on the newly laid-out Bedford Street, it first stood close to the road, where #210 is now. Unfortunately, tragedy befell the McDonoughs. Keyes reports that his Brian McDonough's son was shot in the barn out back. Ghost sitings were supposedly so frequent afterward that Brian was forced to move to Carlisle. The next owner, by 1871, was Dennis Clark, also an Irishman, who sold it to a Mr. Peterson, who then sold it to an unnamed Norwegian who was the town lamplighter for a time.

According to directories and neighbors' information, a family from Nova Scotia named Grimes owned and occupied the property from at least 1896 to 1929. It was apparently Gilbert Grimes, a stonemason, who moved #208 back from the street and built #210 in front some time in the late 1880's. He moved his immediate family into the bigger house (#210), but relatives such as unmarried sisters and uncles always lived in #208. Gilbert Grimes' masonry skills are evident in the foundations of both houses.

#214 - This house was built between 1871 and 1875 by an Irish immigrant named John Battles, a "stone-layer." He added an L-shaped addition prior to 1885. John died around 1890, but his wife and children continued to live there for at least ten more years. His son, house-painter Bernard Battles, was involved in activities associated with St. Bernard's Church, as well as several athletic teams. (Cont.)

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\*NOTE: the Atlases of 1889 and 1906, which show no buildings on the south side of the street opposite Sleepy Hollow, are in error.

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

CONCORD208-264 Bedford St.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
80 Boylston Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Area(s) Form No.

BS 1903-1110

## AREA DATA SHEET

MHC/map # Map/parcel #	Siding, condition, outbuildings	Approximate date
1903 H8-889	208 Bedford Street - clapboard; good; 2-car garage.	1850-56
1904 H8-889	210 Bedford Street - clapboard; good; none.	late 1880's
1905 H8-890	214 Bedford Street - clapboard; good; none.	1871-75
1906 H8-891	220 Bedford Street - synthetic shakes; fair; none.	1890's
1907 H8-892	222 Bedford Street - clapboard; good; none.	1890's
1908 H8-893	236 Bedford Street - clapboard; fair (large rear addition); two garages.	1883
1909 H8-894	248 Bedford Street - clapboard and shingle; excellent; none.	late 19th century
1910 H8-895	264 Bedford Street - synthetic siding; fair; garage.	late 19th century



MHC INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MHC Inventory scanning project, 2008-2012

MACRIS No. CON. BS

AREA BS  
PL. CONCORD  
USGS. CONCORD  
SECTION B

1103 - 208 BEDFORD ST

1104 - 210 BEDFORD ST

1105 - 214 BEDFORD ST

1106 - 220 BEDFORD ST

1107 - 222 BEDFORD ST

1108 - 236 BEDFORD ST

1109 - 248 BEDFORD ST

1110 - 264 BEDFORD ST



208 Bedford Street (CON-1103)



214 Bedford Street (CON-1105)



210 Bedford Street (CON-1104)



220 and 222 Bedford Street (N/A and CON-1107)





222 Bedford Street (CON. 1107)



248 Bedford Street (CON. 1109)



236 Bedford Street (CON. 1108)



264 Bedford Street (CON. 1110)