

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	LOW.21
Historic Name:	Lowell Old Market House
Common Name:	
Address:	40 Market St
City/Town:	Lowell
Village/Neighborhood:	Downtown;
Local No:	223; 45;
Year Constructed:	C 1837
Architectural Style(s):	Greek Revival;
Architect(s):	Howard, Horace; Rand, James H.;
Use(s):	Abandoned or Vacant; Courthouse; Market or Grocery Store; Other Commercial; Police Station;
Significance:	Architecture; Commerce; Community Planning; Law; Politics Government;
Area(s):	LOW.BC, LOW.BD, LOW.BE
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register District (06/05/1978); Local Historic District (12/13/1983); Nat'l Register District (07/15/1988);
Building Materials:	Roof: Asphalt Shingle; Wall: Brick; Granite; Stone, Cut; Foundation: Granite; Stone, Cut;
Demolished	No



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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: Sunday, November 26, 2023 at 8:13 PM

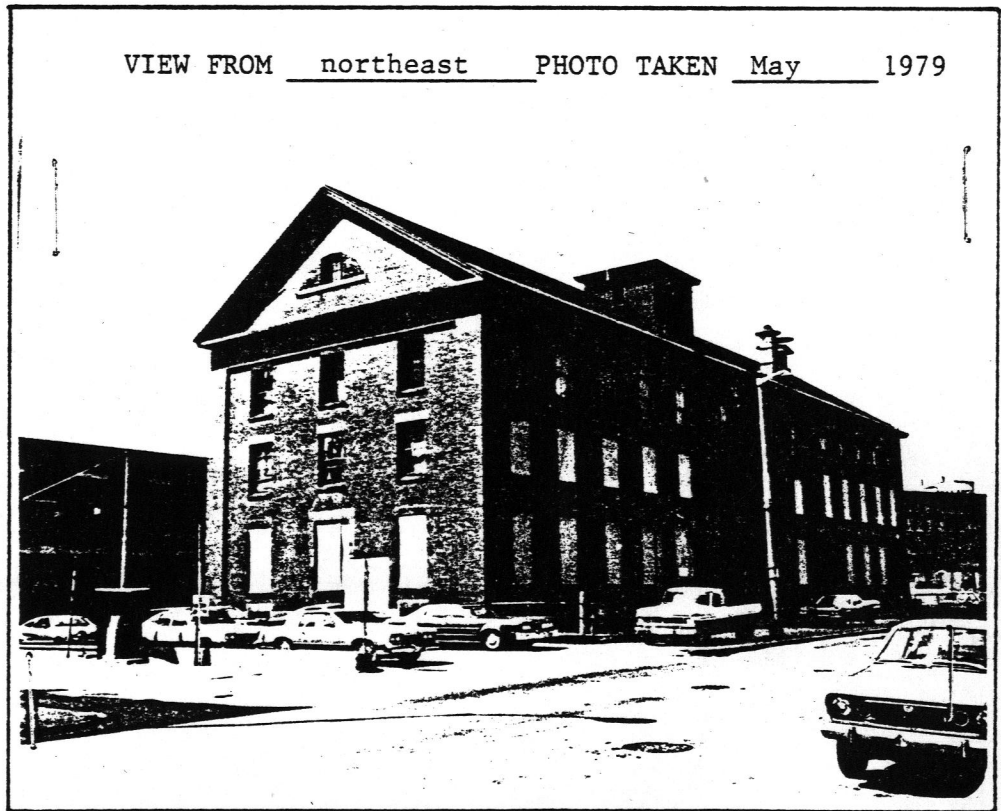
IDENTIFICATION 40 MARKET STREET MAP SHEET #12
 1) CURRENT OWNER David Glass and Harold Nagin OWNER OCCUPIED no
Heritage Canal Associates
 2) HISTORIC NAME Old Market House (later Police Station)
 3) CURRENT NAME Old Market House
 4) PROPERTY TYPE governmental 5) ZONING CLASSIFICATION 1A
 6) TAXES: PAYMENTS current STATUS clear
 7) WITHIN BOUNDARIES OF LHPD

HISTORICAL ABSTRACT

1) CONSTRUCTION DATE 1837
 SOURCE documented: Annual Report...City of Lowell, 1837
 2) ARCHITECT OR BUILDER Horace Howard
 3) HISTORIC OWNER City of Lowell
 4) ORIGINAL USE: GF commercial UF governmental
 5) PREVIOUS BLDGS ON PROPERTY no DATE _____
 SOURCE _____

DESCRIPTIVE DATA

1) ARCHITECTURAL STYLE Greek Revival
 2) PRESENT USE:
 GF vacant
 UF vacant
 3) NO OF STORIES 3½
 4) PROP SQ FT 30,459
 5) PLAN rectangular
 6) ROOF end-wall gable
 7) STRUCTURAL SYSTEM
load-bearing masonry
 8) OUTBUILDINGS
none
 9) MATERIALS:
 FOUNDATION
granite blocks



FACADE F, S: red pressed brick in stretcher bond; R: red brick in common bond
 TRIM granite sills and lintels, steps

10) NOTABLE SURFACE & LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS none

VISUAL ASSESSMENT

- 1) CONDITION OF BUILDING FABRIC needs major repair
- 2) IF DETERIORATED, CAUSES vandalism; lack of maintenance
- 3) INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC BLDG FABRIC: GF intact with evolutionary alterations
UF intact original fabric
- 4) SURROUNDING LAND USES commercial, industrial, canal frontage
- 5) INTEGRITY OF PROP'S HIST SETTING moderately disrupted historic setting
- 6) IMPORTANCE OF PROP TO HIST SETTING focal point in area

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

See Research Report.

ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL INFORMATION

See Research Report.

ARCHEOLOGICAL COMMENT

Archeological work might prove fruitful on the sides and rear parking lot of the Old Market House. The present structure has been located here since 1837. The portion of the property fronting the Pawtucket Canal was the town landing in the mid-nineteenth century, and remains of that use of the site might be preserved there.

Research Report
40 Market Street
Old Market House (later the Police Station)
1837

Situated on the southern side of Market Street near Central is the Old Market House. This structure is similar to other Lowell Greek Revival public buildings such as the Old City Hall and the Coburn School in terms of its temple-like form, decidedly horizontal massing, and simplicity of surface embellishments.

Three-and-a-half stories high, it is thirteen bays long and three bays deep. Of brick construction, the main and side facades are faced with pressed brick and laid in common bond (eight to one). The rear facade is faced with common brick and also laid in common bond. Engaged pilasters (now missing their wooden capitals) are located at the corners and also divide the main facade into three large sections. The central section is three bays wide, while those flanking are five. This structure rests on a foundation of granite slabs, pierced with many basement windows.

The ground floor presently has three entrances on the main facade, enframed by granite posts and lintels. The entrance in the westernmost (right) bay, along with its granite steps, is original. The doorways in the sixth and ninth bays (counting from the east or left) were cut through at a later date. Originally, the fourth bay was the location of another entrance. The windows of the ground floor are double hung, as are those in the upper stories of the eastern and central sections. The tall window openings in the western section of the facade span both upper floors. These windows are divided by paneled spandrels. It is unclear whether these window openings originally spanned both floors. All the windows have finely dressed granite sills and lintels.

The eastern and western gable ends of the building are derived from the classical temple form. Engaged corner pilasters visually support a wooden cornice that forms a pediment of the gable end. Within the tympanum is a rectangular window set into what was originally a lunette opening. In the central bay of the eastern end is a tra-beated granite doorway, now half filled in with brick. The windows are double hung, with granite sills and lintels. However, some of the windows of the west end retain their original sash of twelve panes over eight at the second

story, and eight over twelve at the third.

The rear, or southern, facade repeats the window treatment of the main facade. A rock-faced granite stringcourse, located between the basement and ground floor, spans the length of this rear wall. Abutting the central section of this wall is a three-story rectangular brick addition with a flat roof. The windows are segmental arched, with rowlock lintels and granite sills.

The asphalt-shingled ridge roof of the main block has two chimneys. At the center of the roof is the base of a cupola which once housed fire bells for the city. (These bells are now located in the Central Fire House.)

Stylistically, this structure displays a vocabulary common to Lowell Greek Revival public buildings of the 1830s and 1840s. The temple-like form, brick construction, simple use of granite slabs, trabeated entrances and engaged pilasters are all hallmarks of Lowell's vernacular Greek Revival architecture. Needing major repairs, the building is presently vacant. Many windows are broken and others are boarded up.

Presently this structure appears isolated on the southern side of Market Street. The Bigelow Mill buildings, once adjacent to the west, are no longer extant, leaving a void across from the solid wall of late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings which line Market Street's northern side. A parking lot is located between the Market Building and the Pawtucket Canal.

The present building was the first to occupy this site. The Market House, later known as the Police Station, was built in 1837 through a joint effort by city and county [1]. The block was purchased in 1835 and 1836 from a group of local businessmen. "A parcel of land, two hundred and eight feet by ninety feet was obtained for \$.75 a square foot, for a total of \$14,055.00" [2].

The architect, or master builder, of the Market House was apparently Horace Howard. Traditionally, this structure's design has been attributed to Kirk Boott, but recent research seems to point to Howard as the designer. Howard was listed in the 1830's Lowell directories as "Horace Howard, Housewright." The city's expenditures for the Market House construction included payment to "Horace Howard for plan, \$11.00" [3].

Two quite different figures are listed for the cost of the building. Mayor Bartlett on June 12, 1837 declared "that the total cost was \$36,796.17, while ten months earlier, John Robinson, legal attorney for the savings institution in Lowell, contended the cost was \$66,986.25" [4].

The Market House opened March 5, 1837. On the lower floor there was originally located "twenty-two stalls occupied by dealers in meat, butter, cheese, eggs and vegetables. Efforts were made to induce all the provision dealers to locate here" [5]. The popularity of a central location for provisions was short-lived. Soon "street markets and butcher's carts competed with the public market... Only those who were best accommodated in its vicinity, sought the Market House for their dinners and after awhile the stalls became vacated" [6].

The upper floors "were used for county and police courts. The police court for many years occupied the east end, and the Supreme and common courts, the western end.... Daniel Webster, Rufus Choate and other great orators of the time were heard in the chambers of the old Market House" [7]. In 1852 the courts were relocated to the courthouse building on Gorham Street. The city then bought out the county's interest in the building for \$10,000.00 and carried out drastic internal changes [8]. After the courts vacated the building "...the police station moved into the lower floor and basement of the west end. The police offices and courts were placed on the second and third floors. The offices of C. P. Talbot and Company, a law firm, moved from the basement to the east end. The center of the building was fixed to house the liquor agency" [9].

In 1858 James H. Rand, a Lowell architect, was paid for plans and specifications for alterations to the Market House [10], including a "bell deck." On the night of June 22, 1859, a severe fire "broke out beneath the bell tower and burnt off the roof and damaged the building otherwise badly, particularly the part occupied by the Police Court.... It required over \$4000 expense to put the building in good shape again" [11]. The cupola was rebuilt after the fire [12].

In 1874-75 funds were voted to remodel a portion of the Market House as a Police Court [13] and the west end of the second floor was so altered. In 1873 mention is first made of extending the building southward "for a city government building" [14], but the plan was not carried out. The

present small rear addition does not appear on the Lowell atlases until 1906.

The 1879 and 1896 Lowell directories list commercial concerns as well as the Police Station as occupants of this building. "C. P. Talbot Chemical Company," "R. O. Adams Wood Dealers," "Noble and Hallowell Machinists" and "George E. Crosby Provisions" are listed as being housed in the old Market House. In 1896 the Police Station and job wagons of various owners are listed at this address. Apparently the building was used exclusively as a Police Station from the early twentieth century until 1972. The building is presently vacant.

During the 1820s and 1830s many American cities, in an attempt to centralize market facilities, built large temple-like structures in the newly popular Greek Revival style. Lowell's Market Building, although not a long-term success as a market building, housed other services for the city of Lowell, functioning variously as a court house, armory and police station. This structure is a fine example of a brick vernacular Lowell public building, reflecting the housewright and mason's craft.

Footnotes

- 1) National Register Nomination, "The Old Market House" (1977), p. 4.
- 2) Ibid.
- 3) First Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Lowell, (1837), p. 16.
- 4) National Register Nomination Form, op. cit.
- 5) Newspaper clipping dated June 12, 1868 in scrapbook at U. of Lowell, Special Collections, labelled "Selections, Historical and General, mostly concerning Lowell and Vicinity (1894.)"
- 6) Ibid.
- 7) National Register Nomination Form, op. cit.
- 8) Ibid.

- 9) Ibid.
- 10) Twenty-third Annual Report...of City of Lowell, (1858),
p. 42.
- 11) 1868 clipping, op. cit.
- 12) Twenty-fourth Annual Report...of City of Lowell, (1859),
p. 89.
- 13) Fortieth Annual Report...of City of Lowell, (1875), p. 118.
- 14) City Documents, (1873), p. 12.

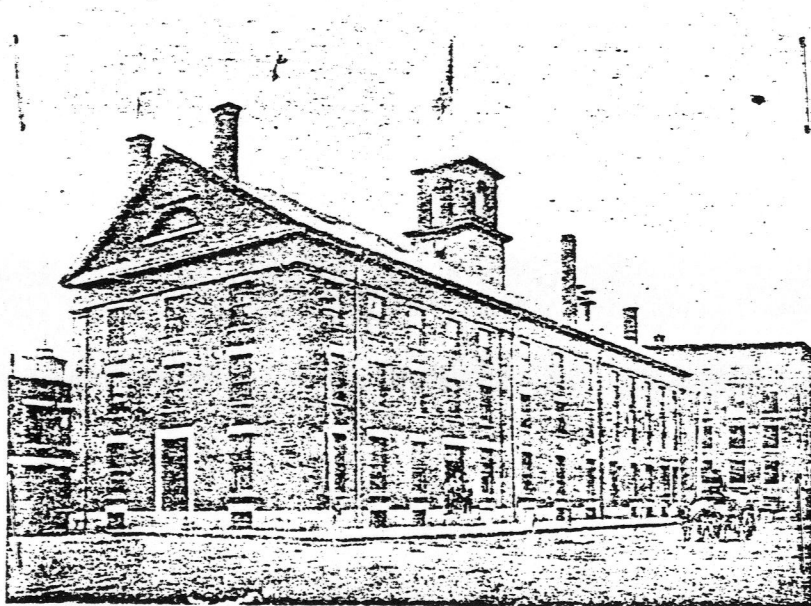
Other References

1841, 1850 Lowell maps.

1879, 1896, 1906, 1924 Lowell atlases.

Lowell directories.

Illustrated History of Lowell, 1897, p. 629.



POLICE STATION — OLD MARKET HOUSE.

Figure 1

From Illustrated
History of Lowell,
Mass, Courier
Citizen, published
1897, p. 629.

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

LDW.21

In Area no. <u>B</u>	Form no. <u>45</u> <u>223</u>
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21

NRDIS



Town Lowell

Address ⁴⁰ Market Street

Name (Old) Market House

Present use _____

Present owner City of Lowell

Description:

Date 1837

Source (Mill and Mansion)

Style Plain rectangular - with some Greek Revival.

Architect _____

Exterior wall fabric Brick

Outbuildings (describe) _____

Other features Granite sills

Altered _____ Date _____

Moved _____ Date _____

5. Lot size:

One acre or less _____ Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage _____

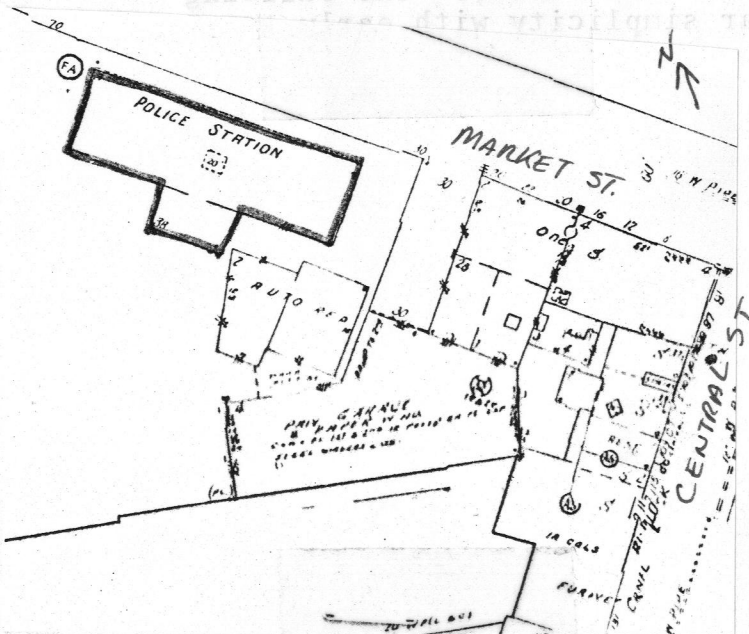
Approximate distance of building from street _____

6. Recorded by _____

Organization _____

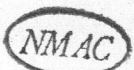
Date _____

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant _____
MHC Photo no. _____

(over)



7. Original owner (if known) _____

Original use Market house

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates Armory; police station

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	_____	Conservation	_____	Recreation	_____
Agricultural	_____	Education	_____	Religion	_____
Architectural	<u> X </u>	Exploration/ settlement	_____	Science/ invention	_____
The Arts	_____	Industry	_____	Social/ humanitarian	_____
Commerce	<u> X </u>	Military	_____	Transportation	_____
Communication	_____	Political	_____		
Community development	<u> X </u>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

The County and City built this marketplace jointly in 1837. Stalls in the basement and on the first floor were rented to tradesmen and merchants. The Police Department and Courts were on the upper floors. The market failed, however, since consumers preferred neighborhood stores and tradesmen who delivered to their doors. The building was built in traditional rectangular simplicity with early traces of Greek Revival details.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

Mill and Mansion
Illustrated Hist. of Lowell p. 629
Lowell & Vicinity of Today p. 94



A

Lowell (Middlesex County)

Address Market Street at
Perescott St.
City Market House

Original & present Commercial building;
Police station & court.

owner City of Lowell

public Yes.

827 Style Early
Greek Revival

source of date J. Coolidge, Mill and Mansion

Architect Unknown.

Literature _____ Indians _____
Music _____ Other _____

Development of town/city
Architectural reason for inventorying:

Style value and historical associations. OR part of Area # _____

3. CONDITION Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Moved Altered Added _____

4. DESCRIPTION

FOUNDATION/BASEMENT: High Regular Low Material Block Stone

WALL COVER: Wood _____ Brick Stone Other _____

ROOF: Ridge Gambrel Flat Hip Mansard (Asphalt Shingles)
Tower Cupola Dormer windows Balustrade Grillwork (Only base remaining)

CHIMNEYS: 1 2 3 4 (Once more than 2) Center End Interior Irregular Cluster Elaborate

STORIES: 1 2 3 4 ATTACHMENTS: Wings Ell Shed (Attached to rear facade)
(Plus attic)

PORCHES: 1 2 3 4 None. PORTICO None. Balcony

FACADE: Gable end: Front/side Ornament Pilasters (Raised brick) and broad brick frieze.

Entrance: Side Front: Center/Side(s) Details: (Post and lintel framing)

Windows: Spacing: Regular/Irregular Identical/Varied (limestone lintels)

Corners: Plain Pilasters Quoins Cornerboards _____

5. Indicate location of building in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings

6. Footage of structure from street 20±
Property has 100± feet frontage on street



Recorder Bryant J. Talley, Jr. Special
Consultant

For M.H.C.
2 1/4 neg.
Photo # 70-2798 Date 7/12/70

SEE REVERSE SIDE

RELATION OF SURROUNDING STRUCTURE

- 1. Outbuildings None
- 2. Landscape Features: Agriculture Open Wooded Garden: Formal/Informal
 Predominant features Urban surroundings (no landscaping)
 Landscape architect _____
- 3. Neighboring Structures
 Style: Colonial Federal Greek Revival Gothic Revival Italian Villa Lombard Rom. Industrial
 Venetian Gothic Mansard Richardsonian Modern
- Use: Residential Commercial Religious _____ Conditions: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated
Industrial

GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF SITE (Refer and elaborate on theme circled on front of form)

STORIES: 1 3 3 4

CHIMNEYS: 1 3 3 4

FOUNDATION (BASEMENT): High Basement Low _____

DESCRIPTION

3. CONDITION Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Modern Vintage Wooded

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND/OR REFERENCE

Development of Lowell
 Other
 Religion/philosophy
 Ministry/Virtue
 Travel/communication
 Science/Invention
 Commerce/Industry

1. of teaching a philosophy of life to...

RESTRICTIONS

Original Owner: _____
 Deed Information: Book Number _____ Page _____, _____ Registry of Deeds

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

LOWELL


40 MARKET STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

	LOW.21
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Undated inventory card from MHC files, probably ca. 1970



Lowell, Mass. Site #27
45

27. Market House Market Street. Constructed in 1837, it was one of the first public buildings built in the city using the basic Federalist style.