

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 6 1976

DATE ENTERED APR 30 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

*pk*  
Peter Peirce Store

AND/OR COMMON

Middleborough Police Department

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

corner of North Main Street and Jackson St. NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Middleborough

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

10

STATE

Massachusetts

VICINITY OF

CODE  
025COUNTY  
PlymouthCODE  
025**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

 DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
 BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
 IN PROCESS  
 BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

 OCCUPIED  
 UNOCCUPIED  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 NO

## PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE  
 COMMERCIAL  
 EDUCATIONAL  
 ENTERTAINMENT  
 GOVERNMENT  
 INDUSTRIAL  
 MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 RELIGIOUS  
 SCIENTIFIC  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Town of Middleborough

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Town Hall

CITY, TOWN

Middleborough

STATE

Massachusetts 02346

VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Russell Street

CITY, TOWN

Plymouth

STATE

Massachusetts

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE

1975

—FEDERAL  STATE —COUNTY —LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

---

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Peter Peirce Store is located on the corner of North Main and Jackson Streets in the center of Middleborough. There are few buildings of this period remaining on Main Street, which is the major commercial street in town and contains a few late nineteenth century and many twentieth century buildings. The store is more monumental than other buildings on that section of Main Street, but does not overwhelm the streetscape in massing or height. The construction date of the building has not been conclusively proven but appears, by stylistic evidence, to have been c. 1825-30.

The building is composed of a large two-story rectangular structure, gable end to the street, flanked by two smaller, one and one-half story wings with ridge roofs perpendicular to the main block. The gable end of the center part of the building has a monumental two-story tetrastyle portico with Greek Doric columns. The pediment above the portico contains a segmental fanlight. The center door under the portico is reached by two granite steps, and is flanked by slender fluted pilasters and topped by a plain entablature.

A wash drawing executed about 1840 shows the main portion of the building just as it is today. The left wing, however, is portrayed as having two windows flanking a center door, while the right wing is shown as a stables with three wide segmental arched openings. When the building was acquired by the town in 1935, the left wing was changed so that four windows flanked the doorway, which remained the same; the right wing was altered into a mirror image of the left wing. Great care was taken in this alteration, and the new windows, 6/6 with a cornice, match the original windows in the main block. Each of the wings now has a center chimney, and shutters have been added to all of the windows. The interiors of the two wings are modern, and serve as office space for the Middleborough Police Department and other town offices. The large space in the main block serves as the Fourth District Court rooms, and contains some noteworthy late nineteenth century wood paneling.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

*c. 1825-30* <sup>1104</sup>

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Peter Peirce Store, a significant architectural focal point in Middleborough, has great historical significance in the development of the community because of its close association with Peter Peirce, a central figure in nineteenth century Middleborough. The Store has retained its integrity of location and design, and is one of the few original commercial buildings still standing in the community.

Peter Hoar Peirce, who lived from 1788 to 1861, was a leading figure in Middleborough society. By 1810 Peirce was operating a store on the site of the present building but left to fight in the War of 1812. After the war Peirce returned to Middleborough and became involved with many aspects of life in the community. His store was a large one, and by 1825-30 the present building was constructed to house all his retail functions. Records show that large numbers of customers came from outlying towns to shop at the Peirce store and that Peirce was constantly traveling to Boston to buy goods to keep his store well-stocked. Peirce was a money lender, owned a cotton mill and shovel works, and was elected to serve in the state legislature from 1826 to 1828. He was also a pioneer in bringing the railroad to Middleborough and was appointed from time to time to serve on a three member board of arbitration for the settlement of civil disputes. Because of his many financial interests, Peirce was a wealthy man and owned a great deal of land in Middleborough.

The store continued in operation as a retail store under the ownership of the Peirce family until 1901 when the last of Peter's sons, Thomas S. Peirce, died. The store was then sold to Herbert and Elton Pratt, who continued the same style of retail operation until 1935, when the last surviving Pratt brother died. The store was bought that year by the Town of Middleborough for the sum of \$13,000 and was remodelled into offices for the Police Department, the Fourth District Court, and public bathrooms, at a cost of \$22,000.

The scale, massing and set back of the building have not been altered since it was constructed. It still dominates the streetscape, and the monumental two-story Greek Doric portico contributes significantly to the visual effect of Main Street. It is one of the most architecturally significant buildings in Middleborough and has been maintained in good condition by the town.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Weston, Thomas, History of the Town of Middleborough  
"The Middleborough Antiquarian," November, 1959

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre  
UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	2	3	4	1	7	2	0	4	6	3	9	4	6	0
ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

B 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

C 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

D 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Christine Boulding, Preservation Planner,

ORGANIZATION

Massachusetts Historical Commission

DATE

March 1976

STREET & NUMBER

294 Washington Street

TELEPHONE

617-727-8470

CITY OR TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts 02108

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Elizabeth Reed Amador*

TITLE

Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission

DATE

3/31/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Noted*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

4/30/86

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

4.20.76

PUBLICATION DATA SHEET

State: IA MASSACHUSETTS

County/indep. city I06 plymouth county

City/vicinity I07 Middleborough

PRIMARY TITLE I08 PIERCE, PETER, STORE

(Secondary Title)

Address/location I09 N. Main and Jackson Sts.

Statement of significance including construction date, alteration date, present use, and style. I10 c. 1825--1830 Greek Revival store; altered; present use, police department.

Statement of significance including important peoples names; include key words for search of events and areas of significance. I11 Visual focus of Middleborough; built by prominent entrepreneur in town's commerce.

Other surveys, include number of habs or haer drawings #C

Ownership/agency #I Local Government.

Date of entry I12 (4-30-76)

Areas of Significance (circle those which apply to property) I13 1. historic archeology 2. prehistoric archeology 3. agriculture 4. architecture 5. art 6. commerce 7. communication 8. conservation 9. economics 10. education 11. engineering 12. exploration 13. industry 14. invention 15. landscape architecture 16. law 17. literature 18. military 19. music 20. philosophy 21. politics/government 22. religion 23. science 24. social/humanitarian 25. transportation 26. entertainment 27. health 28. recreation 29. settlement 30. social/cultural 31. urban and community planning

Indexing Items

CE  
 CE  
 CE  
 CE  
 CE  
 CE  
 CE  
 CE

Pierce, Peter, Store, MA: aCF

Property Peirce, Peter Store

Plymouth

State Massachusetts

Working Number 4.6.76.3019

**TECHNICAL**

Photos 2  
Maps 1

**CONTROL**

OK <sup>cm</sup> 4.9.76

**HISTORIAN**

*Good nomination.*

Accept  
E. Smith  
4-11-75

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

Accept 4/14/76  
OK *Lebovich* *Karol Huberman*

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_  
Review \_\_\_\_\_

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

Accept  
Cole  
4.19.76

**BRANCH CHIEF**

**KEEPER**

*Hung*  
4.30.76

tional Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_ Send-back \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Register Entry 6-1-76 Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

Entered **APR 30 1976**

INT:2106-74



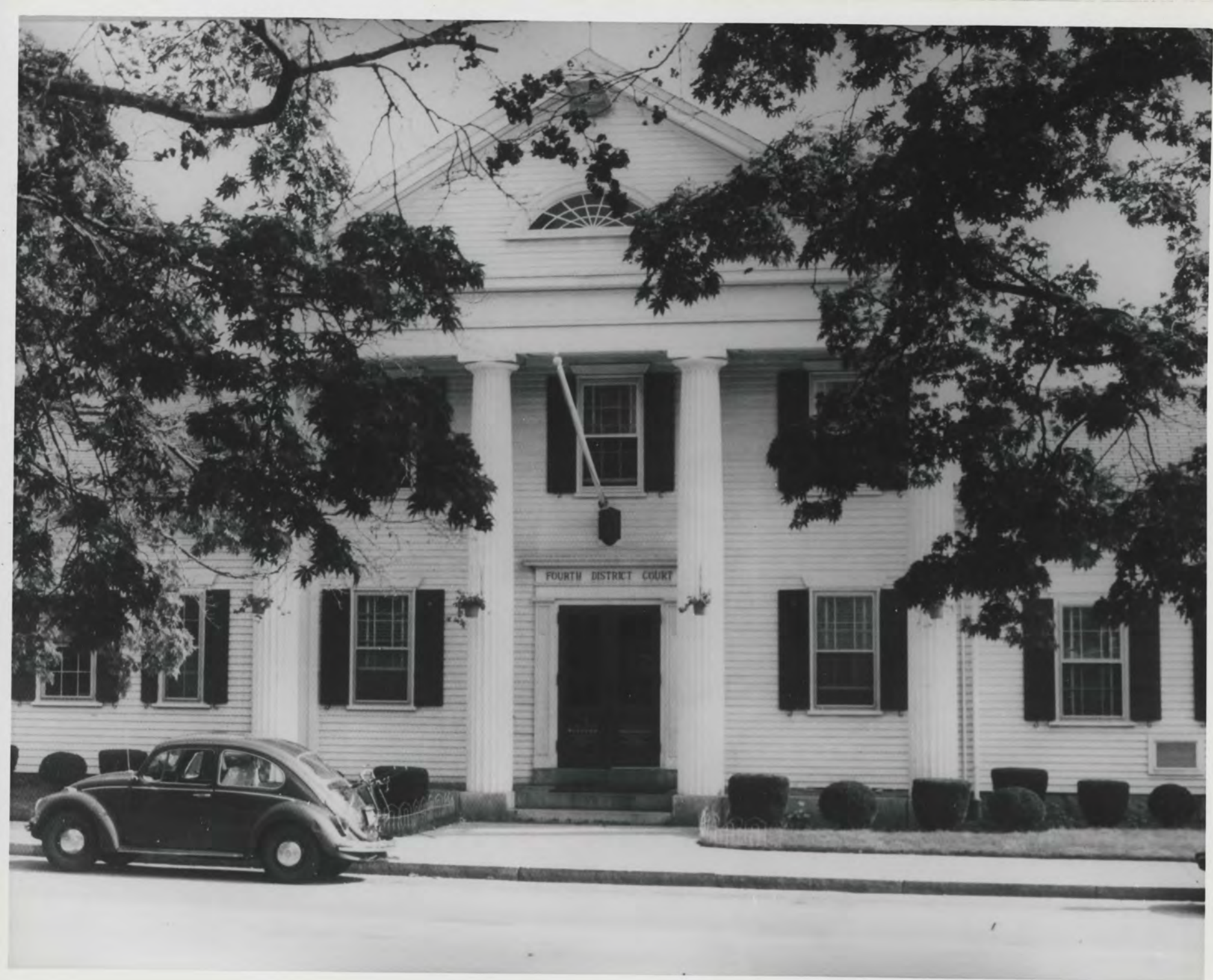
Peter Peirce Store, Middleborough, MA  
Linda Rowley, October 1975  
546 Washington Street, Duxbury, MA  
looking northeast at northwest facade  
photo #1 of 2

APR 6 1976

Date Entered APR 30, 1976

N. MAIN & JACKSON STS.

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Plymouth County

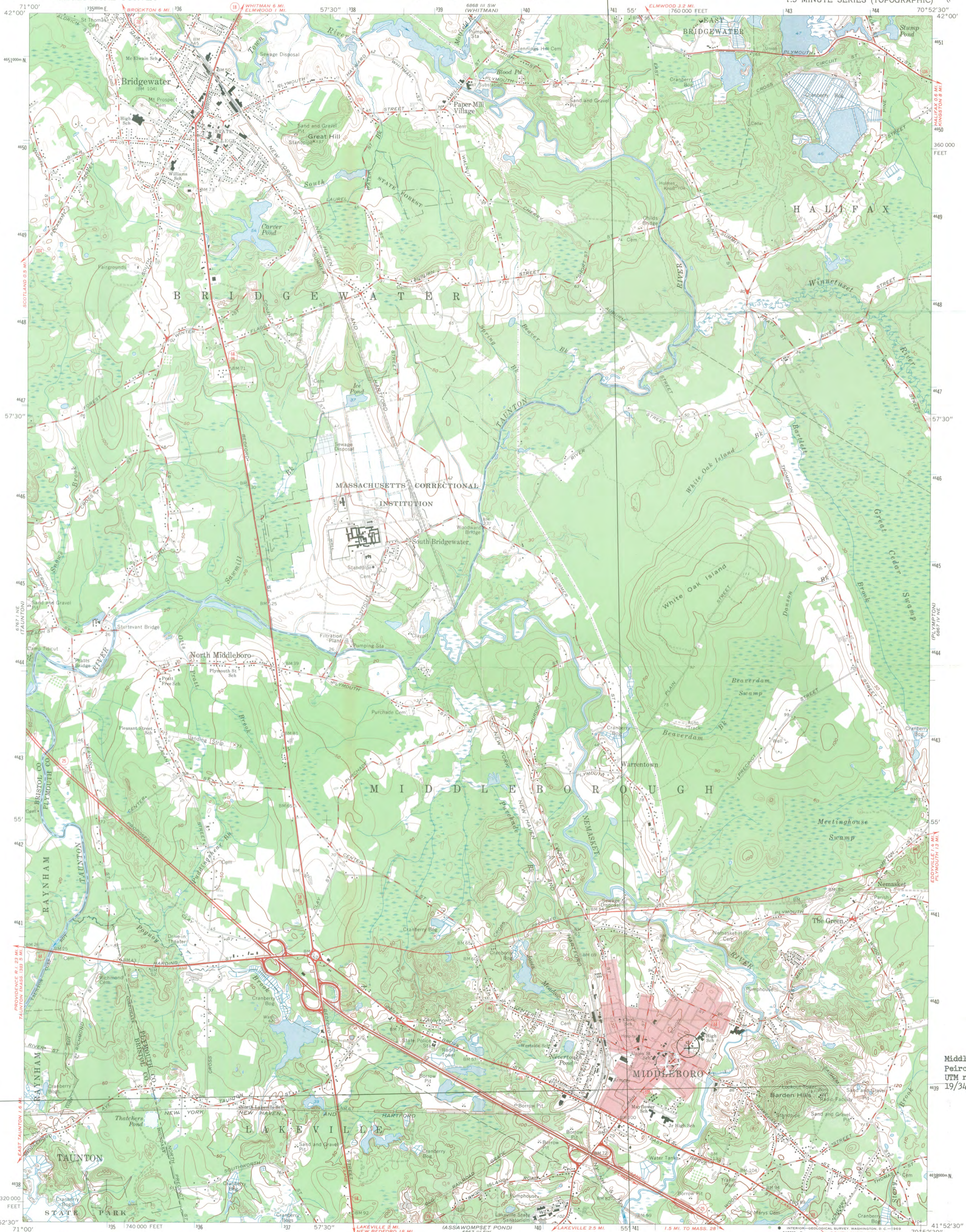
Peter Peirce Store, Middleborough, MA  
Linda Rowley, October 1975  
546 Washington Street, Duxbury, MA  
looking southeast at northwest facade,  
detail of portico  
photo #2 of 2

APR 6 1976

Date Entered APR 30, 1976

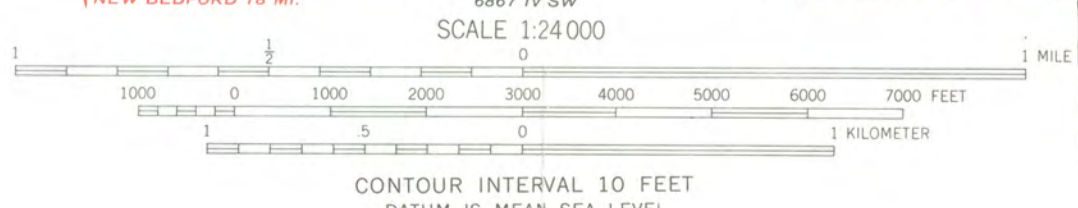
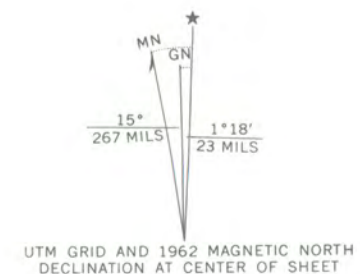


PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



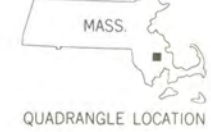
Middleborough, Peter Peirce Store  
UTM reference:  
19/341720/4639460

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey  
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
Topography by planetable survey 1936-1937. Revised 1962  
Polyconic projection: 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,  
mainland zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 19, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
U.S. Route	State Route



FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

BRIDGEWATER, MASS.  
N4152.5-W7052.5/7.5  
1962  
AMS 6867 IV NW-SERIES V814



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered APR 30 1976

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Peirce, Peter, Store	Middleborough Plymouth County
Belcher, Jonathan, House	Randolph Norfolk County
Fernald, George P., House	Medford Middlesex County
Albree-Hall-Lawrence, House	Medford Middlesex County
Smith Alumnae Gymnasium	Northampton Hampshire County
Putnam, General Israel, House	Danvers Essex County
Dillingham House	Brewster vicinity Barnstable County
Wellesley Town Hall	Wellesley Norfolk County

Also Notified

- Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
- Hon. Edward W. Brooks
- Hon. Margaret M. Heckler
- Hon. James A. Burke
- Hon. Torbert H. MacDonald
- Hon. Silvio O. Conte
- Hon. Michael J. Harrington
- Hon. Gerry E. Studds

State Historic Preservation Officer  
 Mrs. Elizabeth R. Amadon  
 Executive Director, Massachusetts  
 Historical Commission  
 294 Washington Street  
 Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Regional Director, North Atlantic Region

5/4/76

MOTT:djb

PR

MAY 20 1976

Now  
England  
Newspaper

# Courthouse building wins place in National Historic Sites Register

PAGE ONE

The Peter Peirce Store, Middleborough, nominated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, has been accepted. State Secretary Paul Guzzi, Chairman of the Commission, has been informed by Gary Everhardt, Director of the National Park Service in the United States Department of the Interior.

Now a town Police Station and Court House, the Peter Peirce Store is a significant architectural focal point in Middleborough and has great historical significance in the development of the community because of its close association with Peter Peirce a central figure in 19th century Middleborough. The Store has retained its integrity of location and design, and is one of the few original buildings still standing in the community.

Peter Hoar Peirce, who lived from 1788 to 1861, was a leading figure in Middleborough society. By 1810, Peirce was operating a store on the site of the

present building, but left to fight in the War of 1812. After the war, Peirce returned to Middleborough and became involved with many aspects of life in the community. His store was a large one, and by 1825-30, the present building was constructed to house all his retail functions. Records show that large numbers of customers came from outlying towns to shop at the Peirce Store and that Peirce was constantly traveling to Boston to buy goods to keep

his store well-stocked. Peirce was a money lender, owned a cotton mill and shovel works, and was elected to serve in the State Legislature from 1826 to 1828. He was also a pioneer in bringing the railroad to Middleborough and was appointed from time to time to serve on a three-member Board of Arbitration for the settlement of Civil disputes. Because of his many financial interests, Peirce was a wealthy man and owned a great deal of land in Mid-

dleborough.

The store continued in operation as a retail store under the ownership of the Peirce family until 1901 when the last of Peter's sons, Thomas S. Peirce died. The store was then sold to Herbert and Elton Pratt who continued the same style of retail operation until 1935, when the last surviving Pratt brother died. The store was bought that year by the town of Middleborough for the sum of \$13,000, and was remodeled into offices for the Police Department, the Fourth District Court and public bathrooms at a cost of \$22,000.

The scale, massing and set back of the building have not been altered since it was constructed. It still dominates the streetscape, and the monumental two-story Greek Doric portico contributes significantly to the visual effect of Main street. It is one of the most architecturally significant buildings in Middleborough and has been maintained in good condition by the town.

A wash drawing, executed about 1840, shows the main portion of the building just as it is today. The left wing, however, is portrayed as having two windows flanking a center door, while the right wing is shown as stables with three wide segmental arched openings. When the building was acquired by the town in 1935, the left wing was changed so that four windows flanked the doorway, which remained the same;

(Continued back of section)



Middleboro Courthouse and Police Station. (Gazette Photo by Charlie Perry)

86

KP

# NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

1 NAME as it appears on federal register: Peirce, Peter, Store  
 2 OTHER NAMES: Middleborough Police Department  
 3 date of entry: 4-30-76  
 4 county code: 023

5 LOCATION street & number: N. Main and Jackson Sts.  
 city / town: Middleboro  
 vicinity of: Middleboro  
 state: MA  
 county: Plymouth  
 6 NPS REGION: North Atlantic

7 OWNER  PRIVATE  STATE  MUNICIPAL  COUNTY  MULTIPLE  FEDERAL (agency name)  
 8 ADMINISTRATOR:  
 9 EXISTING SURVEYS  HABS  HAER  NHL  FUNDED?  YES  NO  CONGRESS DISTRICT: 10  SOURCE OF NOMINATION:  STATE  FEDERAL  LOCAL  PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

10 WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES  NAME:   
 11 WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?  YES  NAME:   
 12 ACRES: 1.1  
 LOCAL  PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

13 CONDITION  deteriorated  altered  original site  
 excellent  ruins  unaltered  moved  
 good  unexposed  reconstructed  unknown  
 fair  unexcavated  excavated  
 17 features: INTERIOR  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-4  NOT APPLICABLE-7  
 EXTERIOR  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-5  NOT APPLICABLE-8  
 ENVIRONMENT  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-6  NOT APPLICABLE-9

18 ACCESS  YES - Restricted  YES - Unrestricted  No Access  Unknown  
 19 ADAPTIVE USE  YES  NO  
 20 SAVED?  YES  
 IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT?  yes  no

21 AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:  
 ARCHEOLOGY - prehistoric-2  COMMERCE-6  
 ARCHEOLOGY - historic-1  COMMUNICATIONS-7  EXPLORATION-12  
 AGRICULTURE-3  CONSERVATION-8  HEALTH-27  
 ARCHITECTURE-4  ECONOMICS-9  INDUSTRY-13  
 ART-5  EDUCATION-10  INVENTION-14  
 ENGINEERING-11  ENTERTAINMENT-26  
 LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15  LAW-16  
 LITERATURE-17  MILITARY-18  
 MUSIC-19  PHILOSOPHY-20  
 POLITICS / GOVT.-21  RECREATION-28  
 RELIGION-22  SETTLEMENT-29  
 SCIENCE-23  SOCIAL / HUMANITARIAN-24  OTHER (SPECIFY)  
 SOCIAL / CULTURAL-30  TRANSPORTATION-25  
 22 CLAIMS: explain  
 'first'   
 'oldest'   
 'only'

23 functions  
 WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: STORE  
 CURRENTLY: COURTHOUSE, POLICE STATION  
 24 dates of initial construction: 1825-31/30  
 major alterations: 1935  
 historic events:  
 25 ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION

26 architectural style(s): Greek Revival  
 27 architect:  
 28 master builder:  
 29 engineer:

30 landscape architect / garden designer:  
 31 interior decorator:  
 32 artist:  
 33 artisan:  
 34 builder / contractor:

35 NAMES give role & date  
 PERSONAL: Peter Hoar Pierce (1788-1861), prominent community leader, merchant, state legislator (1826-28).  
 EVENTS:  
 INSTITUTIONAL:

36 NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP: Frame, clapboarding; 1/2 and 2 1/2 story sections, T-shaped, gabled roof, interior chimneys, front center double-door entrance with simple arcitraves, 2-story tetrastyle templeform portico with pediment lunette, 1/2-story flanking side wings each with center & end entrances, round-arched openings; alterations. Greek Revival.

Architectural focal point and one of the few remaining original commercial buildings of the town; built for Peter Hoar Peirce, prominent merchant, community leader and state legislator (1826-28).