

MAY 23 1989

698

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA	FORM NO.
B	145

Town Wakefield

Address 5 Bennett St.

Historic Name NA

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Use: Present E. Boit Home for Aged Women  
Original Dwelling

DESCRIPTION

Date c. 1875-1881

Source Bird's Eye View, 1882

Style Italianate

Architect NA

Exterior Wall Fabric clapboard

Outbuildings None

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s). Indicate north

Major Alterations (with dates) porch slant north, cable additions post 1889

Condition Good

Moved NA Date NA

Acreage .77 acres

Setting Faces RR Tracks surrounded by low cornered granite wall laid in pattern.

UTM REFERENCE 19/329960/4707120

USGS QUADRANGLE Boston North, MA

SCALE 1:25,000

Recorded by Architectural Preservation Associates  
Organization Wakefield Historical Commission  
Date March 1985

### **NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)**

The E. Boit Home for Aged Women is notable as one of the largest and most elaborate houses in the Junction District featuring a later porch that is the best example of the Queen Anne style in the neighborhood. Originally a private residence, the building has been used as a retirement home for women since 1894 and is named after a Wakefield woman known for both business and charitable activities in the early 20th century. The building retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and meets Criterion C of the NRHP on the local level.

### **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.**

This is one of the largest and most elaborate houses in the Junction District. However, it is not clear that it remains as it was built, for the Bird's Eye View of 1882 shows only a 2½ story cross gabled element, rather than the current twin gabled peaks joined by a two story element. This may explain the simplicity of the central door and verandah, which were probably added when the house was expanded. The Italianate paneled pilasters and arched gable field windows were carefully copied when the house was expanded.

This 1½ story cross gabled house is a variation of the simple gable end side-hall plan which became so popular in Wakefield in the Greek Revival period. Displaying the best example in the neighborhood of a decorative Queen Anne porch, it features lathe turned posts and balusters, and jig-saw cut brackets, all machine powered.

### **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.**

This house may have been built for Marcus Simpson, who worked for the Wakefield Rattan Co., possibly as an executive. It was purchased in 1894 by the corporation of the Wakefield Home for Aged Women. This was a charitable group made up of Protestant citizens chosen by the churches from the town at large to administer the organization; it was probably this group which expanded the house as an old age home. In 1921 the name of the Home was changed to honor Miss Elizabeth Boit for her generosity to the institution. Miss Boit was a local resident and an active co-owner of the Harvard Knitting Mill on Foundry Street, an unusual job for a woman at that time. The institution was supported by private donations until 1944, when it became part of the Greater Boston Community Fund.

Bennett Street which appears on the map of 1857, was probably developed in response to the great influx of newcomers to town who were drawn by its rapid increase in industry. Industrial development was made possible by the opening of the Boston and Maine Railroad in 1844; raw materials could be cheaply imported from the port of Boston, and finished products as efficiently shipped to its markets. However, by 1874, only nine houses had been built on the street, of which this is one.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

- Maps, 1889, no name
- Directory, 1889
- Eaton, William, and History Committee. History of Wakefield, Wakefield, 1944
- Atlas 1889 H. Gaffey
- Directory, 1889 John B. Gaffey, iron moulder
- Frank T. Gaffey, rattan worker

## 5 Bennett Street Continuation: Architectural Significance

Otherwise, the house is extremely simple, with plain surrounds at the window and door surrounds.

## Historical Significance

Cyrus Wakefield, owner of the Boston and Maine Foundry and the more important Wakefield Rattan Co., owned the north side of the street up to Water Street. The Junction District, so called for the junction of rail lines on Main Street, was an attractive area for factory hands to settle, as it was near their work, and the land was relatively cheap. John B. Gaffey, who lived here in 1889, was an iron moulder; Frank Gaffey, who boarded with him, was a rattan worker.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Wakefield MRA  
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
51. House at 39 Converse Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Aloues Byun</u> 7/6/89 Attest _____
52. House at 40 Crescent Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Aloues Byun</u> 7/6/89 Attest _____
53. House at 42 Hopkins Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Aloues Byun</u> 7/6/89 Attest _____
<del>54. House at 5 Bennett Street</del> Entered in the National Register	<del>Keeper <u>Aloues Byun</u> 7/6/89</del> <del>Attest _____</del>
55. House at 509 North Avenue Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Aloues Byun</u> 7/6/89 Attest _____
56. House at 52 Oak Street <u>Substantive Review</u>	Keeper <u>Beth L. Savage</u> 7/6/89 Attest _____
57. House at 54 Spring Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Aloues Byun</u> 7/6/89 Attest _____
58. House at 556 Lowell Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Aloues Byun</u> 7/6/89 Attest _____
59. House at 6 Adams Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Aloues Byun</u> 7/6/89 Attest _____
60. House at 7 Salem Street Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Aloues Byun</u> 7/6/89 Attest _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: House at 5 Bennett Street

MULTIPLE NAME: Wakefield MRA

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 5/23/89      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/06/89  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/22/89      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/07/89  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89000698

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    7/6/89 DATE

Entered in the  
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

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CLASSIFICATION

count       resource type

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STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

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FUNCTION

historic       current

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DESCRIPTION

architectural classification  
 materials  
 descriptive text

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SIGNIFICANCE

Period      Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

summary paragraph  
 completeness  
 clarity  
 applicable criteria  
 justification of areas checked  
 relating significance to the resource  
 context  
 relationship of integrity to significance  
 justification of exception  
 other

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage       verbal boundary description  
 UTM's       boundary justification

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ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps       USGS maps       photographs       presentation

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OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



L.E. BOY  
1914

B 145

Here  
at

5 Bennett St

Wakefield MRT, Ma



Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000300