

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
Massachusetts

COUNTY:
Essex

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE
OCT 1 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:
The Gedney and Cox HousesAND/OR HISTORIC:
same

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
19 and 21 High StreetCITY OR TOWN:
SalemCONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
6thSTATE
Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY:

Essex

CODE

009

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ BuildingS ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object	☐ Public ☒ Private ☐ Both	Public Acquisition: ☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered	☒ Occupied ☒ Unoccupied ☒ Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
☐ Agricultural ☐ Commercial ☐ Educational ☐ Entertainment	☐ Government ☐ Industrial ☐ Military ☒ Museum	☐ Park ☒ Private Residence ☐ Religious ☐ Scientific	☐ Transportation ☐ Other (Specify) ☐ Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
The Society for the Preservation of New England AntiquitiesSTREET AND NUMBER:
141 Cambridge StreetCITY OR TOWN:
Boston

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Essex County Registry of Deeds, South District

STREET AND NUMBER:
Federal StreetCITY OR TOWN:
Salem

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Inventory of Historic Assets of the CommonwealthDATE OF SURVEY: 1974 ☐ Federal ☒ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Massachusetts Historical Commission

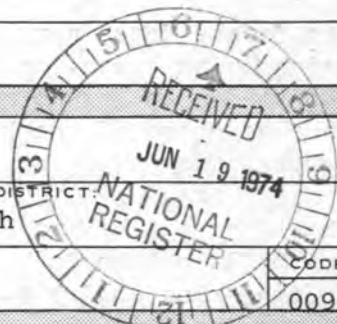
STREET AND NUMBER:
40 Beacon StreetCITY OR TOWN:
Boston

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

HIS E 344080
2419 N 4708860

STATE	Massachusetts
COUNTY	Essex
ENTRY NUMBER	OCT 1 1974
DATE	

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☐ Excellent	☒ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	☒ Altered	☐ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Gedney and Cox Houses sit on a quarter-acre lot in a high-density residential area of Salem, just to the south of the city's main historic district. The north elevation of the Gedney House faces High Street, separated from it by a wooden picket fence. The Cox House is set farther back from the street; its facade faces north. The lot is bounded on the east by the wall of a neighboring house, on the southeast and south by a wire fence, and on the west by a hedge and stone retaining wall. The bounds of the house lot are the same as those of the house lot as originally purchased in 1664 by Eleazer Gedney.

The older of the two houses is the Gedney House, the original portion of which was built by the Salem shipwright, Eleazer Gedney, c.1665, a date confirmed by tree-ring analysis. The frame of this house has been stripped of most of its original and later trim, and in this form it has been preserved by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) for study purposes.

The evidence thus exposed clearly indicates that the house, as originally constructed, consisted of two rooms on the ground floor with a central chimney. To the left of the chimney, the house was 2½ stories high and covered with a north-south ridge roof from which a gable dormer projected on the east facade side. To the right of the chimney, however, a lean-to roof, at right angles to the gable roof, covered a 1-story high room. Furthermore, there is evidence that the house contained some kind of rear lean-to construction. (All the rooms in this original house are mentioned in Eleazer Gedney's 1683 estate inventory.)

C.1700, the room at the right was raised to a full 2½ stories, creating the roof slope as seen from the street today, and the rear roof slope as it can be seen from the attic. The facade gable dormer was probably removed at this time. C.1800, whatever had existed at the rear of the house was shorn away, and a full 2-story lean-to was built across the whole west rear of the house with separate stairs and a separate chimney.

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries there were the usual changes of trim, but the final alteration of the house is noteworthy because it has given the house its present form. In the early 1960's, the property was purchased for investment purposes and the builder, as noted earlier, tore out most of the original and later trim in the Gedney House. He also removed all of the brickwork of the second chimney except for its front wall, and it was in this form that SPNEA acquired the house.

cont'd



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE OCT 1 1974

(Number all entries)

7. DESCRIPTION

Gedney and Cox Houses, Salem

the house into overseer's quarters. Fireplaces were opened, revealing original cranes and an oven. The north facade has 3 bays with a central front entrance having a simple door casing. All of the windows are double-hung sash of 6/6 and are regularly placed on the facade. A brick chimney projects from the south plane of the asphalt shingled roof. The foundation is brick. All elevations of the house are covered with red clapboards.



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Massachusetts	
COUNTY	
Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
OCT 1	1974

(Number all entries)

Gedney and Cox Houses

7. DESCRIPTION

Today the Gedney House has a five-bay east facade; the front entrance has only a simple door casing. The fenestration of 6/9 and 6/6 windows is regular on the facade and on the back elevation, and is irregular on the side elevations. A back entrance is located in the north half of that elevation. The peaked roof rises steeply on the east side, but reaches out obliquely to the west to cover the 18th c. addition, giving the house a salt-box profile. A cemented brick interior chimney projects from the west roof plane. The house sits on a brick foundation. Its facade and side elevations are covered with yellow clapboards and the back elevation with wooden shingles.

The one-and-a-half story gambrel salt-box Cox House was built circa 1775, probably by Benjamin Cox, to whom the ownership of the Gedney property has passed by this date. When SPNEA acquired it in 1967, along with the Gedney House, a back room was lengthened to make the house into overseer's quarters. Fireplaces were reopened, revealing original cranes and an oven. The north facade has three bays with a central front entrance having a simple door casing. All of the windows are 6/6 sash and are regularly placed only on the facade. A brick chimney projects from the south plane of the asphalt-shingled east-west gambrel roof. The foundation is also brick. All elevations of the house are covered with red clapboards, this probably having been the original color of the house.



8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian

☐ 16th Century

☒ 18th Century

☐ 20th Century

☐ 15th Century

☒ 17th Century

☐ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) c.1665, c.1700, and c.1800.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal

☐ Education

☐ Political

☐ Urban Planning

☐ Prehistoric

☐ Engineering

☐ Religion/Phi-

☒ Other (Specify)

☐ Historic

☐ Industry

losophy

local history

☐ Agriculture

☐ Invention

☐ Science

☒ Architecture

☐ Landscape

☐ Sculpture

☐ Art

☐ Architecture

☐ Social/Human-

☐ Commerce

☐ Literature

itarian

☐ Communications

☐ Military

☐ Theater

☐ Conservation

☐ Music

☐ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The earliest part of the Gedney House was constructed c.1665 and changes were made to it c.1700 and again, c.1800. It was, however, the final alteration to the house, made in the early 1960's, which determined the major importance of the house today. At that time, the property was purchased for investment purposes and the builder tore out most of the original and later trim. Only the frame of the house remains and, according to Abbott Cummings, this fact has made the Gedney House the most important study house of 17th c. Massachusetts, rivalled only by SPNEA's Boardman House in Saugus. This makes the house very important in the area of architectural study.

The property is also significant in local history as the homestead of Eleazer Gedney, a prominent figure in 17th c. Salem. While the Cox House was constructed later, c. 1775, after ownership of the property had left the Gedney family, it is an integral part of the small house lot whose bounds are the same as those of the original lot which Gedney purchased in 1664.

Eleazer Gedney (1642-1683) was the 6th child of John Gedney, who immigrated to Salem from Norwich County, England in 1637. The younger Gedney became a shipwright and in 1664, he purchased his house lot near the South River in Salem. There he constructed Gedney's Wharf and built the original part of the Gedney House structure.

Gedney served as Salem juryman in 1670 and as grand juryman in 1675 and 1676. He was Clerk of the Market in 1667/68 and a Fence Surveyor for the North Field in 1678/79. He acted as Salem constable in 1671, the same year that he became a freeman. Upon his death in 1683, his widow conveyed the house to their eldest son, Eleazer, Jr. who occupied it with his wife until about 1690.

The property changed hands several times until Benjamin Cox acquired it sometime before the American Revolution. It was apparently he who constructed the second house on the lot c.1775. Cox's heirs owned the property until 1874, after which time it passed through many owners until it was purchased by SPNEA in 1967.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Perley, Sidney, History of Salem, Mass., 1924.
2. Essex County, South District, Registry of Deeds.
3. Cummings, Abbott Lowell, Book manuscript on 17th c. architecture, in preparation, April 1974.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		42°	31'	06"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		70°	53'	53½"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1 acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
For Elizabeth Amadon, State Survey Director, By Barbara Chapin, SPNEA

ORGANIZATION
Massachusetts Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
40 Beacon Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Boston

STATE
Massachusetts

DATE
5/7/74

CODE
025

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☒ State ☐ Local ☐

Name John F. X. Davoren
Honorable John F. X. Davoren
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Title Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission

Date 6/11/74

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

A. R. Mortensen
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 10/1/74

ATTEST:

Charles H. H. H.
Keeper of The National Register

Date 9.18.74

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

PROPERTY The Hedney and Cox Houses STATE Mass.

WORKING NUMBER 6.19.74.985

Essex

TECH REVIEW
PHOTOS 2
MAPS 1

CONTROL REVIEW

cm
6.19.
74

HISTORIAN Heavy restoration of exterior bothers me, but
Accept
W.R. Luce
9/8/74

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN I spoke to Mindy Arbo 8/7. She will send
continuation sheet. 2nd of means that there is no interior - it's all
zone, leaving only the structural frame visible -
Accept
JCT
8/7/74

ARCHEOLOGIST

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF
Accept
Colk
9/12/74

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER
Heim
for Munk
9.18.74

National Register Write-up October 29. 74

Send-back _____

Federal Register entry 11/5/74

Re-submit _____

Entered _____

OCT 1 1974



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 0671	DATE 1974

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME		
COMMON: The Gedney and Cox Houses		
AND/OR HISTORIC: The Cox House same		
2. LOCATION		
STREET AND NUMBER: 19 and 21 High Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Salem		
STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025	COUNTY: Essex
3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
PHOTO CREDIT: SPNEA		
DATE OF PHOTO: April, 1974		
NEGATIVE FILED AT: SPNEA, 141 Cambridge Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116		
4. IDENTIFICATION		
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Looking southeast, and showing north facade and east elevation of Cox House		

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

1. NAME

COMMON

The Gedney and Cox Houses

AND/OR HISTORIC

same

NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)

OCT 1 1974

2. LOCATION

STATE

Massachusetts

COUNTY

Essex

TOWN

Salem

STREET AND NUMBER

19 & 21 High Street

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

SPNEA

DATE

April, 1974

NEGATIVE FILED AT

SPNEA

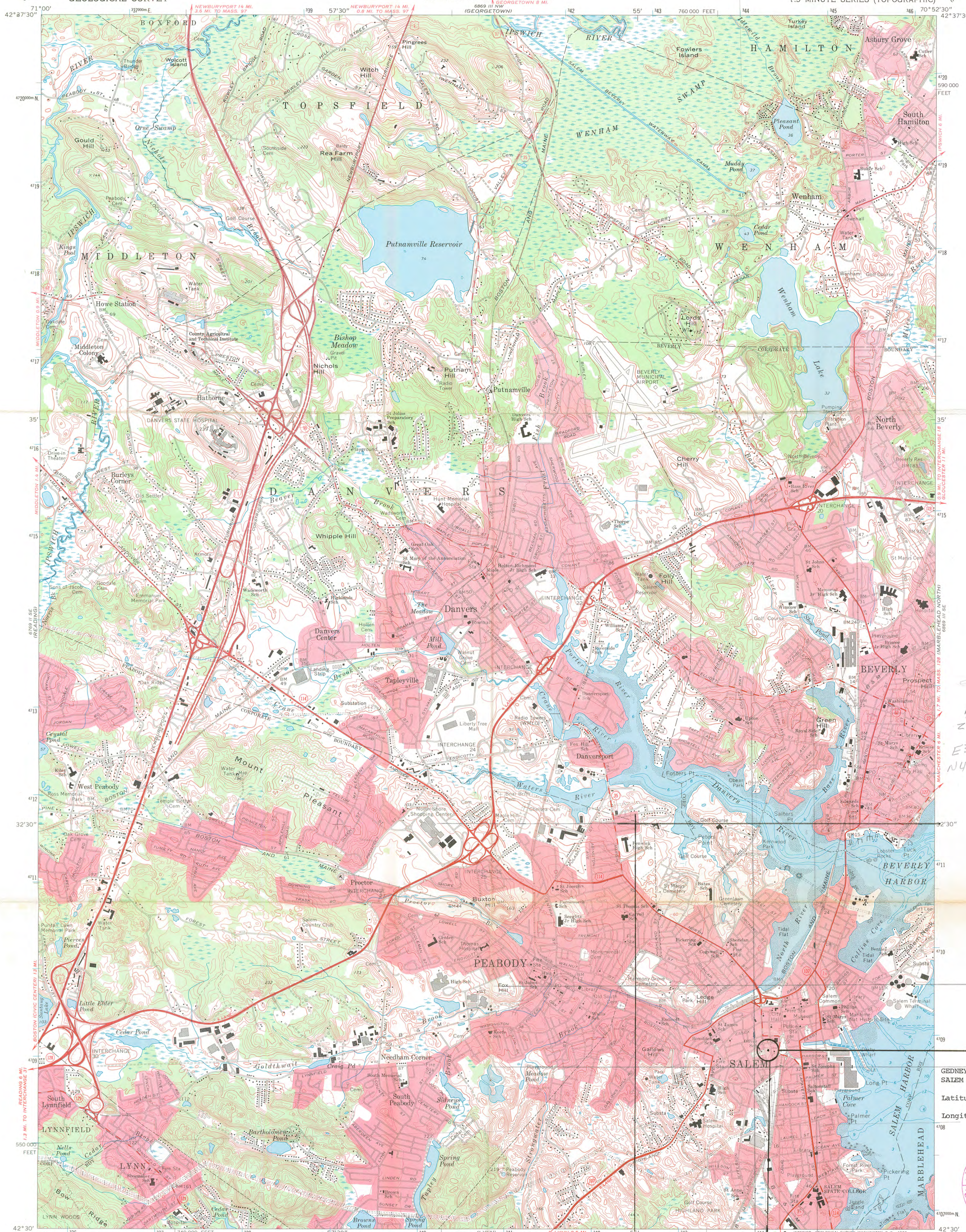
4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Looking southwest, and showing east facade and north elevation of Gedney House

2062

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



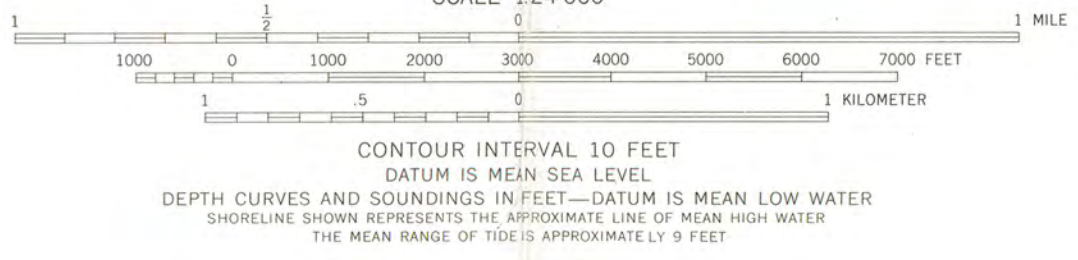
43
2419
E344080
N4708860

GEDNEY AND COX HOUSES,
SALEM

Latitude 42° 31' 06"
Longitude 70° 53' 53½"



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1938. Topography by planetable surveys 1942
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 240 and
241 (1970). This information is not intended
for navigational purposes.
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
Boundaries in tidalwater areas from information supplied
by Massachusetts Department of Public Works
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

SALEM, MASS.
N4230—W7052.5/7.5
1970

AMS 6869 III SW—SERIES V814

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered

Name

Location

Gedney and Cox Houses, ~~The~~

Salem
Essex County

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
Hon. Edward W. Brooke
Hon. Michael J. Harrington
Regional Director, North
Atlantic Region

State Historic Preservation Officer
Hon. John F.X. Davoren
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical
Commission
40 Beacon Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

PR

MMott/cha

10/4/74

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Gedney and Cox Houses

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Essex

DATE RECEIVED: 4/28/11

DATE OF PENDING LIST:

DATE OF 16TH DAY:

DATE OF 45TH DAY:

6/13/11

DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 74000389

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___DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Approved

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER

DISCIPLINE

TELEPHONE

DATE

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

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

74000389
Gedney House (Gedney and Cox Houses HD)
Salem (Essex), MA

Section number 2009 supplemental information Page 1

Re-evaluation of construction date due to dendrochronology

As a result of the dendrochronology testing of Phase I and Phase II of Gedney House in November of 2001, the construction date of Phase I has now been identified as the middle of 1664, or possibly into 1665, and the date of Phase II as 1706. The research team consisted of Daniel Miles and Michael Worthington of the Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory, England, with Anne Grady of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) acting as liaison. Their report, cited below, presented the following results and conclusions. Eight timbers from the first phase were sampled including various studs, a rear girt from the rear (east) lean-to, a story post, and a chimney girt. The front story post and two studs matched one another and were dated to the spring of 1664. The rear girt in the ground-floor wall-framing of the east lean-to was felled in the winter of 1664/5. The other four timbers were not dated successfully. Five samples were taken from Phase II, the south end lean-to that later was raised to two full stories. The samples came from the front girt, two studs, the rear wall plate, and a principal rafter in the upstairs. Three of these timbers were dated individually but cross-matching among them was poor. The front girt was felled in the spring of 1703, a stud was felled in the winter of 1704/5, and the wall plate was felled during the winter of 1705/6. The construction date of Phase II is not as conclusive as Phase I, but construction was not commenced until 1706.

The full results of the analysis are presented in: D. W. H. Miles, M. J. Worthington, and Anne Andrus Grady, *Development of Standard Tree-Ring Chronologies for Dating Historic Structure in Eastern Massachusetts, Phase II*, Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Completion Report, Interim Report 2002/6, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities and Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory, May 31, 2002. An abridged version of the report can be found on the website www.dendrochronology.com. The full report can be found at SPNEA, now known as Historic New England, and at the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

A note on dendrochronology dating

In recent years tree-ring chronologies have been developed for eastern Massachusetts and adjacent regions, and a number of buildings or parts of buildings have been evaluated and given new construction dates due to tree-ring dating, or dendrochronology. The principle behind tree-ring dating is a simple one: the seasonal variations in climate produce variations in growth which are reflected in the varying width of the annual rings of the tree. The rings in timbers from historical houses are compared with previously dated ring sequences from old-growth trees and from timber from structures with well-established dates to allow precise dates to be ascribed to each ring. Computer comparisons quantify how good the match is between the two. A dendrochronologist then analyzes the results and establishes the date the tree was felled. Some caution must be used in interpreting these dates to determine the construction date of a building.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Gedney House (Gedney and Cox Houses HD)
Salem (Essex), MA

Section number 2009 supplemental information Page 2

Sometimes timbers from the same construction phase of the same building have been felled one, two or more years apart. However, it was common practice to build timber-framed structures with green or unseasoned timber, and it is likely that construction was completed within twelve or eighteen months from the felling date.

(end)



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

April 19, 2011 William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Mr. J. Paul Loether
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye Street NW, 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find supplementary information for 34 properties previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places, reflecting recent scholarship regarding their dates of construction, based upon dendrochronological techniques.

These properties include:

Boston (Suffolk County):

James Blake House (NRIND, 5/1/74)
Pierce House (NRIND, 4/26/74)

Cambridge (Middlesex County):

Cooper-Frost-Austin House (NRIND 9/22/72)

Dedham (Norfolk County):

Fairbanks House (NRIND, NHL, 10/15/66)

Deerfield (Franklin County):

All properties are located within the Old Deerfield Village HD (NRDIS, NHL 10/15/66)

Allen House (MHC # 20)
John Ashley House (MHC #31)
Eldad Bardwell House (MHC #23)
Bull-Williams House (MHC #47)
Childs House (MHC #53)
Frary House (MHC #13)
Eliezer Hawks House (MHC #58)
Hinsdell-Williams House (MHC # 24)
Jonathan Hoit House (MHC # 9)

Little Brown House (MHC #79)
Moors House (MHC #39)
Nims House (MHC #12)
Russell House (MHC #49)
Saxton House (MHC #48)
Severance House (MHC #19)
John Sheldon – Hawks House (MHC #32)
Stebbins House (MHC # 36)
John Williams House (MHC # 50)

Essex (Essex County):

Cogswell's Grant (NRIND 4/19/90)

Gloucester (Essex County):

White-Ellery House (NRIND, NRTRA 3/9/90)
[First Period Buildings of Eastern MA, TRA]

Ipswich (Essex County):

Paine-Dodge House (NRIND, NRTRA, 3/9/90)
First Period Buildings of Eastern MA, TRA

Merchant-Choate House (NRDIS, NRMRA, 9/17/80)
[High Street HD]

Lexington (Middlesex County):

Hancock – Clarke House (NRIND. NHL, 7/17/71)

Millville (Worcester County):

Chestnut Hill Meeting House (NRIND 11/13/84)

Newbury (Essex County):

Tristram Coffin House (NRIND, NRDIS, 5/24/76)
[Newbury HD]

Salem (Essex County):

Eleazer Gedney House (NRDIS, 10/1/74)
[Gedney and Cox Houses HD]

Pickering House (NRDIS 8/28/73)
[Chestnut Street HD]

Sandwich (Barnstable County):

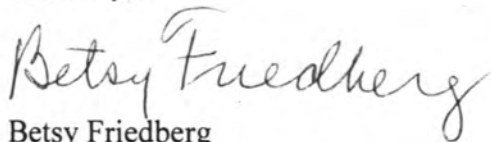
Wing Fort House (NRIND 6/3/76)

Winthrop (Suffolk County):

Deane Winthrop House (NRIND, NRTRA 3/9/90)
[First Period Buildings of Eastern MA, TRA]

Please add the enclosed continuation sheets to the existing National Register nomination files.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosures