

6/27-4

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

PHOTO (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)  
Staple to left side of form  
Photo number \_\_\_\_\_

## SKETCH MAP

Draw map showing property's  
location in relation to nearest  
cross streets and other buildings  
or geographical features.  
Indicate north.

See attached map.

Boston South Quadrangle  
UTM Reference: 19/325350/4690350  
Map #: 18

Recorded by Leslie Larkin, Flora  
Greenan

Organization BHC

Date Feb. 1979, revised Fall 1980

Town Brookline MRA

Address 217 Freeman Street

Historic Name Emmett Cottage

Use: Original Residential

Present Unoccupied

Ownership: ☒ Private individual  
Private organization \_\_\_\_\_

Public \_\_\_\_\_

Original owner \_\_\_\_\_  
See Historical Significance

## DESCRIPTION:

Date See Historical Significance

Source \_\_\_\_\_

Style Gothic Revival

Architect Information not available

Exterior wall fabric Clapboard

Outbuildings Metal garage

Major alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

1903 - new bay window on first floor

Dates unknown - enclosed staircase  
at rear, side entrance porch.

Moved See other side Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approx. acreage 1/3 acre

Setting Set well back from the street  
on a small knoll and in the center of

an overgrown lot, this house is bor-  
dered by the backs of Craig Place  
houses on one side and St. Aidan's  
Church on the other.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

This Gothic cottage is reminiscent of some of A. J. Downing's designs. It is very simple, originally square with a cross-gabled roof. There are no label moldings or hoods, but the bargeboards sport a lively and detailed sawn trim, and the slate roof and chimney pots are handsomely done. In shape and size it is like the original designs for two gatehouses in the town (present 186 Warren St. and 248 Dudley St.) both of which have been extensively altered. Except for the enclosed outside staircase and bay window, and side entrance portico, all readily removable, this house has been little spoiled.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

Although deed research indicates that no house ever stood on this lot prior to 1871, and the tax list for that year mentions an "unfinished house" belonging to John J. Mahoney on Freeman St., its architectural style indicates a date in the 1830's or 40's. (See above). However, extensive research (comparison of houses on 1871 map and 1874 Atlas, review of tax lists for buildings possibly moved, etc.) has not revealed the existence of this house at any other location. It has been found that the mention of an unfinished house in the tax list does not necessarily mean a new house - it also refers to new foundations being laid, so it is possible that this was a gatehouse moved from a neighboring estate. The Sears family, including David Sears's daughter, Harriet Crowninshield, and Mesdames Amory, Rives and D'Hautville, all owned estates nearby, and much of the architecture was Gothic Revival - we know as well of other Gothic style houses nearby, including 16 Copley St., still standing. Also, the Ridgeway house and outbuildings, later owned by William Amory, stood on the land between Browne and Pleasant Sts. (In 1807 & 1810 Philip Ridgeway, a Boston tobacco merchant, bought 15 acres from E. K. Wolcott, who had inherited part of the Sewall farm by marriage. In 1855 Henry G. Clark, a Boston physician, bought lots 17 & 18 of the Ridgeway estate, on part of which this house stands, and in 1870 sold the lots to John J. Mahoney).

Mahoney that year was renting a shop in Brookline Village opposite the post office, where he pursued his trade of sign painter and glazier. (See attached Xerox). By 1873 Mahoney's shop was also on Freeman St., and that year he sold the front part of his lot, retaining a right of way to his house, to Michael Lemis, a hostler and laborer for William Amory. Lemis built a house there the next year (since demolished). The Misses Keegan, (see 120-122 Browne St.), whose grandfather John Keegan built the house

Continued

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Maps, 1871  
Atlases, 1874-1927  
Tax lists, 1870-74  
Brookline Directory, 1870-74  
L 395 f 261, 1870 - Deed, Norfolk County Courthouse, Dedham  
L 224 f 321, 1851 - Plan, Norfolk County Courthouse, Dedham  
Boston Directory, 1810, 1857

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

|                                                  |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Community:<br>BROOKLINE<br><i>Emmett cottage</i> | Form No:<br>6/27-4 |
| Property Name: 217 Freeman Street                |                    |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, continued

they live in in 1879, state that #217 Freeman Street was always called "Emmett Cottage," although they do not know the origin of the name. Mahoney's widow owned the house for some time, and then it was owned by her heirs until the early 1900s, when it was bought by John Keegan. By 1927, it was owned by William Keegan, John's son.

Although we cannot be certain of the building date and original owner of this house, its architecture, and long period of ownership by members of the Irish community in this area (see 142-144 Pleasant Street) make it significant in Brookline.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

217 Freeman Street meets National Register Criteria A and C, being a property with longstanding historical associations with the Irish community that settled in the area of Saint Aidan's church on Freeman Street and being a rare and well-preserved example of Gothic Revival architecture. Set on a rise and surrounded by a woodsy area of almost 1/3 acre, it has retained its mid 19th century suburban/rural character.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

9-4-85

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic GroupName Brookline MRAState MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Elliot, General Simon,  
HouseEntered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 10/17/85

Attest

22. Emmett Cottage

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 10/17/85

Attest

23. Fernwood

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 10/17/85

Attest

24. Fire Station #7

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 10/17/85

Attest

25. Fisher Hill Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 10/17/85

Attest

26. Francis, Dr. Tappan Eustis,  
HouseEntered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 10/17/85

Attest

27. Fuller, Peter, Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 10/17/85

Attest

28. Goddard, John, House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 10/17/85

Attest

29. Graffam Development  
Historic DistrictEntered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 10/17/85

Attest

30. Green Hill Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 10/17/85

Attest

85003263

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEETEmmett Cottage (Brookline MRA)  
Norfolk County  
MASSACHUSETTSWorking No. SEP 4 1985  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87  
Date Due: 10/3/85 - 10/19/85  
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 10-17-85  
☐ RETURN  
☐ REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐
- resubmission
- 
- ☐
- nomination by person or local government
- 
- ☐
- owner objection
- 
- ☐
- appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_  
Discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheetNomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

## 1. Name

## 2. Location

## 3. Classification

| Category | Ownership          | Status     | Present Use |
|----------|--------------------|------------|-------------|
|          | Public Acquisition | Accessible |             |

## 4. Owner of Property

## 5. Location of Legal Description

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

## 7. Description

## Condition

- ☐
- excellent
- 
- ☐
- good
- 
- ☐
- fair

- ☐
- deteriorated
- 
- ☐
- ruins
- 
- ☐
- unexposed

## Check one

- ☐
- unaltered
- 
- ☐
- altered

## Check one

- ☐
- original site
- 
- ☐
- moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐
- summary paragraph
- 
- ☐
- completeness
- 
- ☐
- clarity
- 
- ☐
- alterations/integrity
- 
- ☐
- dates
- 
- ☐
- boundary selection

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## 8. 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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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_

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## 13. Other

- ☐ Maps  
☐ Photographs  
☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet*



Emmett Cottage

217 Freeman St  
Brookline (MA) MRA



Emmett Cottage

217 Freeman St  
Brookline (MA) MRA



217 Freeman st  
Emmett cottage

Brookline (MA) MRA

2-25

217 Freeman ST. (6/27-4)  
Emmett Cottage  
BROOKLINE (MA) MRA  
Town of Brookline Map 1981  
1/2" = 200 FT.

