

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received DEC 04 1979

date entered FEB 12 1980

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic READE, MICHAEL, HOUSE

and/or common HUGHES - BECKINGHAM HOUSE

2. Location

street & number 43 Main Street not for publication

city, town Dover vicinity of congressional district First

state New Hampshire code 33 county Strafford code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Kathleen Beckingham (and) Lawrence Hughes

street & number 23 Garden Lane 55 Fourth Street

city, town Durham, NH 03824 vicinity of Dover, NH 03820 state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Strafford County Registry of Deeds
Strafford County Courthouse

street & number County Farm Road

city, town Dover state New Hampshire 03820

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NA has this property been determined eligible? yes nodate federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

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	<input type="checkbox"/> slightly	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Present appearance: The house is a central-chimney frame dwelling of two and a half stories, with eight major rooms and a compact front stairhall. The timbers of its frame are partly hand-hewn and partly sawn on a reciprocating saw. The central bay of the frame is unusually wide; the girts that extend through the building from front to rear are several feet outside the chimney stack, suggesting that the frame was constructed before the chimney placement was determined and possibly that a "double house," with a central hallway and two chimneys, was originally contemplated. Although the chimney is laid in clay and bears every evidence of an eighteenth or early nineteenth century date, local tradition, recorded by Lydia A. Stevens ("The Old Reade House in Dover," The Granite Monthly, Vol. 42, p. 174), states that "the old chimney has been removed." This statement, if true, may explain the lack of relationship between the house frame and the present chimney.

The roof frame is largely sawn rather than hewn, and the regular rafter placement bears no relationship to the supporting posts in the walls.

The facade has five-bay fenestration, with a central doorway that has been remodelled several times and presently bears a late nineteenth-century hood. This change, and the replacement of the original window sash with 2/2 sash, are the only major stylistic modifications to the exterior. The rear of the house formerly had a shed-roofed wing that had deteriorated and has recently been removed. This wing is illustrated in Lydia A. Stevens, "The Old Reade House in Dover," The Granite Monthly, Vol. 42, p. 175.

The interior of the house is remarkable for the high quality of its woodwork, which appears to fall into two stylistic periods. The first period is transitional between the Georgian and Federal styles. The Georgian style is strongest in the kitchen and the adjoining southwest room, where the woodwork retains a definite pre-Revolutionary character in its raised panels surrounded by plain ovolo mouldings and its cyma-moulded cornices. The same Georgian tradition is seen elsewhere in the house, especially in the double-cyma crown mouldings in various rooms.

The woodwork in the southwest front rooms of the house, while possibly of the same period as that in the rear, is more Federal in style. The most elaborate first-floor room, the southwest parlor, has a delicate dentilled cornice, a Federal mantelpiece supported on attenuated pilasters, six-panel doors with flat panels, and "double" door casings. The chamber directly above has a deep cornice (which nevertheless achieves a distinctly Federal appearance through its multitude of delicate mouldings), low flat-board wainscoting with an elaborated chair rail that intersects the window stools, and a delicate baseboard.

The front stairhall is an especially fine example of the transitional nature of the original woodwork of the house. The steep stairway achieves an impressive effect in a constricted space through the use of dramatically ramped handrails and correspondingly curved top rails on its flat-panelled wainscoting. The lower hall has especially refined detail, with delicate web-like stair brackets of a pattern that may be unique, and a modillioned cornice. The stairway angle posts are fluted, while the balusters take the form of attenuated colonnettes. The second floor stairhall has a dentilled cornice, and the wainscoting that flanks the hall window has upward-curving top rails.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

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READE HOUSE, DOVER

CONTINUATION SHEET 1

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DESCRIPTION (Continued)

In contrast to the Georgian/Federal transitional woodwork in most of the house, the northwest parlor and chamber both show strong Greek Revival characteristics, especially in their mantelpieces. Both rooms show evidence of remodeling, and this change introduced the second major architectural style seen in the house.

Original Appearance: Recent investigation has revealed that the partitions between the southeast and southwest rooms on the first and second floors were moved toward the west at a time subsequent to the finishing of these rooms. These alterations resulted in an enlargement of the southeast (rear) rooms and a reduction in the southwest (front) rooms. The changes were skillfully made without damage to the elaborate woodwork of the front rooms.

It has been determined that a winding rear stairway ascended from the first to the second floor in the northeast corner of the house. This stairway was superseded about 1821 by an enclosed straight flight that rose from a point near the present back door of the house and terminated against the chimney, necessitating the bricking-up of the kitchen fireplace. This later stairway has now been removed and the kitchen fireplace has recently been reopened.

Evidence in the northwest parlor and chamber shows that these two rooms originally had Georgian/Federal woodwork which was removed at the time of the Greek Revival alterations. Framing posts in these rooms originally projected from the walls but were subsequently hewn back flush with the wall surfaces.

The windows of the house were originally fitted with sliding blinds, all of which were removed (except for fragments) when new sash were installed in the late nineteenth century.

Original HL hinges and box locks have been removed from most interior doors and replaced by modern hardware.

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 checked="" 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/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates C. 1780 **Builder/Architect**

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Architecture: The house is one of the few dwellings of the pre-industrial era surviving in downtown Dover. Located close to Dover Landing, the house represents an era when this section of the town was an important commercial center dominated by relatively few substantial homes, most of which were destroyed as the mills at the Lower Falls were built and expanded and as worker housing for the operatives was constructed in the area. The house retains some of the finest late-eighteenth-century woodwork to be found in Dover, and its distinctive features are important not only in a local context, but also as a significant expression of the early Federal style within the broader Piscataqua region of New Hampshire.

Archeology-Historic: Excavation to replace rear sill and bulkhead in the winter of 1977-1978 touched the edge of a historical midden available for future study.

Commerce: The house was built around 1780 by Michael Reade who was born in Ireland in 1741, immigrated to Dover and became one of Dover's principal merchants. In 1800 he was called "the principal merchant of the Landing," and it was said that he built his house to be near his business operations. The house was built on the brow of Main Street hill at what would have been a commanding point about the Cocheco River. Its prominent owner died in 1821 at the age of 70, leaving a considerable estate.

His unmarried son Michael Jr. continued to occupy the house and seemed to have occupied a position of prominence in the town; it appears he was able to live on his inheritance and his investments, one of which was the railroad, whose usage he would walk down to check on regularly. He objected strenuously when ledge on Main Street was blasted in the 1830's to lower the steep grade, ultimately requiring him to climb six more steps a day to reach his front door. He is said never to have walked on a sidewalk in Dover from that time until his death. His house was known as having an interior that presented fine specimens of the substantial and handsome work of the time it was built.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet #2

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 8,500 sq. ft.

Quadrangle name Dover, NH

Quadrangle scale 15'

UMT References

A 119 3478510 478421010
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

Tax Records, City of Dover, NH: Map #3, Lot #19

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 Kathleen Beckingham (&) Lawrence Hughes

organization date August 20, 1978

street & number 23 Garden Lane 55 Fourth St. telephone

city or town Durham, NH 03824 Dover, NH 03820 state

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Commissioner, NH Department Resources & Economic Development

title NH State Historic Preservation Officer date October 9, 1979

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

Sally G. Olsh
Keeper of the National Register

date 2/12/80

Attest: *Bruce M. Dwyer*
Chief of Registration

date 2/7/80

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CONTINUATION SHEET 2

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Northam Colonists, Dover, NH, Secretary Minutes, March 1950-1961.

Scales, John, Editor, "Historical Memoranda of Ancient Dover, NH", collected by Rev. Dr. Alonzo Hall Quint and others, and published in the Dover Enquirer from 1850 to 1888, Vol. 1, March, 1900.

Stevens, Lydia A. "The Old Reade House in Dover," The Granite Monthly, Vol. 42, p. 173-176, June, 1910.

Wadleigh, George, Notable Events in the History of Dover, NH, 1623-1865.