

FORM B - BUILDING

NRDIS 8/2/1984

Assessor's number
4-7

USGS Quad
Newburyport

Area(s)
L,U

Form Number
2211

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125



Town Newburyport

Place (neighborhood or village)

Address 54-56 State Street

Historic Name

Uses: Present Commercial

Original Commercial

Date of Construction c.1820

Source visual inspection

Style/Form Federal/Greek Revival

Architect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation Granite

Wall/Trim Brick, Sandstone

Roof Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

none

Major Alterations (with dates) 1972 - rehabilitation
of building

Condition good

Moved no yes Date

Acreage 995 SF

Setting central business district, flanked by similar
early 19th century brick blocks

Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Newburyport Historical Commission

Date (month/year) May 1999

BUILDING FORM (54-56 State Street)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of the building in terms of other buildings within the community.

Dating to the early 19th century, 54-56 State Street is a three-story brick block with a facade which is four bays wide. The brick exterior is laid in a Flemish bond and displays areas which have been patched and others which have been sandblasted. Historic photographs indicate that the four second floor windows had been replaced by two tripartite windows in the early 20th century. They now contain wooden 6/6 sash. Several of the splayed sandstone lintels are in poor condition and several have been replaced. The building is capped by a low gable roof and there a molded brick modillion cornice at the eaves. A stepped brick parapet rising from the roof separates this building from the adjacent 58 State Street.*

The first floor retains a granite post and lintel storefront. The center entrance, containing a glass-and-panel door, is recessed slightly and is flanked on either side by a multi-light display window. The entrance to the upper floors contains a six panel door of which the upper four are glazed. The door is capped by a three-light transom.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Describe the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

This block, like its neighbors, appears to date to the early 19th century. It definitely postdates the 1811 fire. A "Reminiscences" article appearing in the Daily News in 1886 recalls that James Caldwell's dry goods store was located here sixty or seventy years earlier (c.1816-c.1826). The first published directory lists Caldwell here in 1849 and subsequent directories indicate that he remained here into the 1860s. H.T. Crofoot, box manufacturer, is listed upstairs at 54 State Street in 1851. Among the occupants of 56 State Street in 1869 were Dr. Charles Goddard, a dentist, and Colby Lamb, photographer. William Johnson had a fancy goods store here from about 1870 until at least 1900. This was succeeded by Harrington & Kiley, clothes, c.1910. Puritan Clothing was located at 56 State Street from about 1930 until about 1960.

Photographer George Noyes was located at 54 State Street in the early 1940s. In the early 1950s a tailor rented the space and in the 1960s and 70s this was a real estate office.

In 1972 this property (referred to as the old Berg property) was sold to William White who made various exterior improvements and restored the storefronts. The architect for the rehabilitation was Stanley Hutchinson. Part of what was known as Block 17, the project fell under Newburyport Redevelopment Authority jurisdiction despite its private ownership. The building now contains a bookstore.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Newburyport Daily News, 12/27/1886.
- Newburyport Directories, various dates.
- Newburyport Public Library, photographic collection.
- Newburyport Public Library, scrapbooks.
- Sanborn Insurance Maps, Newburyport, 1888, 1894, 1906, 1914, 1924, 1946.

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attached a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
Newburyport

Property Address
54-56 State Street
Area(s) Form No.

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

L,U	2211
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54 State



Historic photograph taken between 1866 and 1869.

Source: Photographic collection, Newburyport Public Library (S530A).