

FORM B - BUILDING

NRDIS 8/2/1984

Assessor's number
47-18

USGS Quad
Newburyport

Area(s)
L

Form Number
2014

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

Town Newburyport

Place (neighborhood or village)

Address 78-84 Pleasant Street

Historic Name Healy Block

Uses: Present Commercial

Original Commercial

Date of Construction 1902

Source Mass. Div. of Inspection

Style/Form

Architect/Builder J.N. Littlefield

Exterior Material:

Foundation Brick

Wall/Trim Wood Clapboard

Roof Tar

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

none

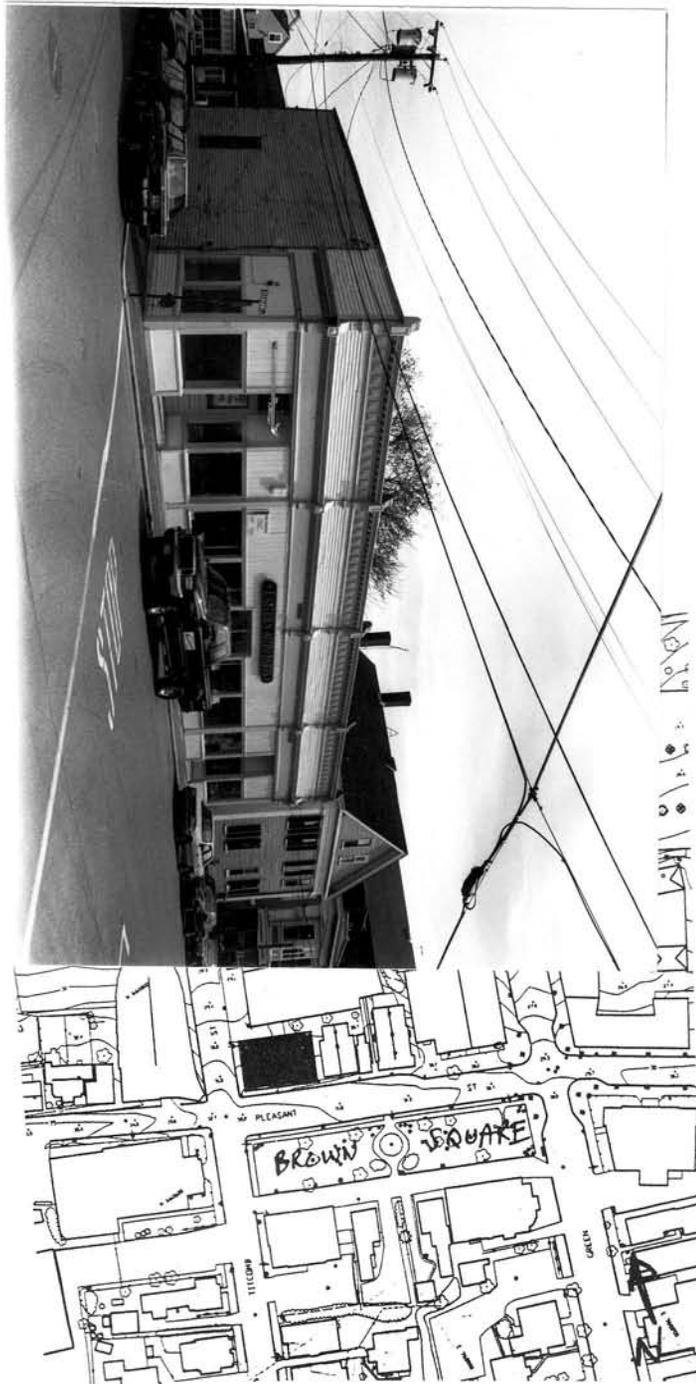
Major Alterations (with dates) damaged by fires in 1907,
1913 & 1915 and finally rebuilt without second story;
c.1980 - T111 installed over storefront transoms

Condition good

Moved no yes Date

Acreage 5135 SF

Setting corner location opposite Brown Square Park and
Central Congregational Church



Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Newburyport Historical Commission

Date (month/year) April 1999

BUILDING FORM (78-84 Pleasant Street)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

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

Located at the northeast corner of Titcomb and Pleasant Street, 78-84 Pleasant Street is a single-story, wood-frame commercial building constructed in the early 20th century. Originally two stories in height, the building was reduced to a single-story after a fire in 1915. The building retains its original four-storefront division although it is occupied by a single tenant. Each of the two end storefronts retain their original glass-and-panel door, fronted by a wooden step and capped by a gridded transom window. The two entrances on the ends are recessed between display windows. All of the storefront windows consist of a large single-pane window resting on a simple wooden bulkhead with the transom area covered with T111 siding. The two middle storefronts display thin metal posts inside the storefronts and slightly later c. 1920 glass and wood doors fronted by a concrete ramp.

Above the storefronts is a wide frieze band topped by dentils and a band of clapboarding, nine boards wide. Overlaying the frieze and sheathing are four consoles with fluted details and raised pyramids marking the ends of each of the storefronts. The facade is capped by a cornice consisting of modillions and raised pyramids. The tops of the consoles extend above the level of the flat roof.

The sidewalls of the building are clapboarded and rest on a brick foundation. Falsefronts on each end of the building obscure the level of the roof which is actually somewhat lower. There is a single 2/2 window on the end facing Titcomb Street and several doors on the rear elevation including a four-panel and six-panel. Two tall brick chimneys, one stuccoed, rise from the ends of the roof.

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.

In 1902 Mary V. (Mrs. James) Healy erected a two-story block on this site combining first floor stores and an upper story music hall. According to the State Division of Inspection records the building was designed by J.N. Littlefield of Haverhill who also designed 31-35 Pleasant Street (MHC#2005) in 1889 and the addition to Newburyport City Hall (MHC#354) in 1881. Located on the second floor of the Healy Block was a popular dance hall. The building was partially destroyed by fires in 1907 and 1913 and both times was rebuilt. When fire struck again in 1915, the building was rebuilt without the second story. In the 1913 fire eighteen members of the fire department were injured. The tenants of the building at that time were Ajax Clothing; Brown Square Provisions (run by M. Kerkian); George Stickney, undertaker and the restaurant of Calvin Hart. In 1915 the building was occupied by the tailor shop of George Karas; S.M. Krikorian, provision dealer; George Stickney, undertaker and the restaurant of A.R. Reed. A shoe repair shop and undertaker continued to occupy two of the stores until the 1940s. Beginning about 1945 three of the storefronts were rented to Eastern Auto Parts while the shoe shop remained into the 1960s. Today Eastern Auto Parts occupies the entire building.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Newburyport Directories, 1900-present.

Massachusetts Division of Inspection. Building Inspection Plans. Card File. [Massachusetts State Archives, Boston].

Newburyport Daily News: February 1, 1907; March 8, 1913; December 27, 1915.

Photographic collection, Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, E.I. Neg. #11,586.

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
78-84 Pleasant St.
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Undated photograph taken prior to 1915.

Source: Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, EI Neg. #11,586.

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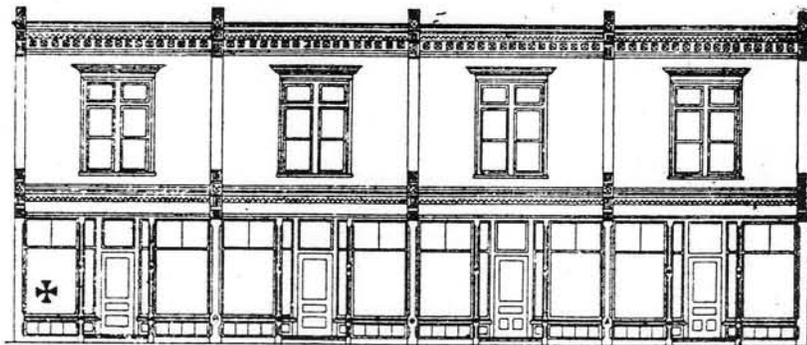
PORT DAILY NEWS.

NEWBURYPORT HERALD.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1915. —EIGHT PAGES.

NO. 299.

MUSIC HALL AGAIN VISITED BY A DESTRUCTIVE FIRE



*Where the Fire Started.

MUSIC HALL BLOCK.
 Scene of Christmas Eve Fire.

Blaze Started in Tailor Shop on Titcomb Street Corner and Spread Rapidly.

Dancing Party Was Being Held in the Hall, But as Fire Started During Intermission, Most of the People Had Left the Building—The Few Remaining Forced to Make a Hasty Exit—Second Story of the Structure Completely Ruined, the Roof Falling in—Loss to the Block Alone Will be Over \$10,000.

Music Hall block, opposite Brown square, Pleasant street, was for the third time since it was built, visited by a destructive fire just before midnight Friday night.

The handsomely appointed public hall, the scene of so many social functions, was completely gutted by the flames that burned like a raging furnace.

The fire started in the corner store under the stage, kept by George Kauras, a tailor, and in a very short time burned its way through the ceiling and the walls into the hall above.

Dance in the Hall.

Mrs. Frank M. Mottram was conducting a 2 o'clock dancing party there and just previous to the bursting out of the sheet of flame in the tailor store, the hall was filled with dancers, all having a merry time with light hearts and lighter feet keeping step to the popular tunes of the orchestra.

Fortunate it was indeed, that the time came for intermission and the hall was practically cleared before the discovery of the blaze, otherwise it

not there, having gone to a harness shop. He does not know just how the fire originated. Everything was apparently all right when he left the store at about 11 o'clock, according to his statement.

At present there is no explanation as to the cause, but an investigation is to be made.

The property is owned by Henry Healy, who places the damage on the building at approximately \$10,000, a part covered by insurance. The building was partially burned about three years ago and also about seven years ago, and all three fires started in the same store. The above loss is not all, for the hall was engaged for nearly all winter for social events.

The other stores were occupied by S. M. Krikorian, a provision dealer; George E. Stickney, undertaker, and A. R. Reed, restaurant keeper. All of these stores were wet down thoroughly. The provision store adjoins the tailor shop and suffered from fire.

Kauras was insured for \$800 and his loss will be about \$250. The others were more or less insured against loss and Mr. Reed made early adjustment in order to resume business with as little delay as possible.