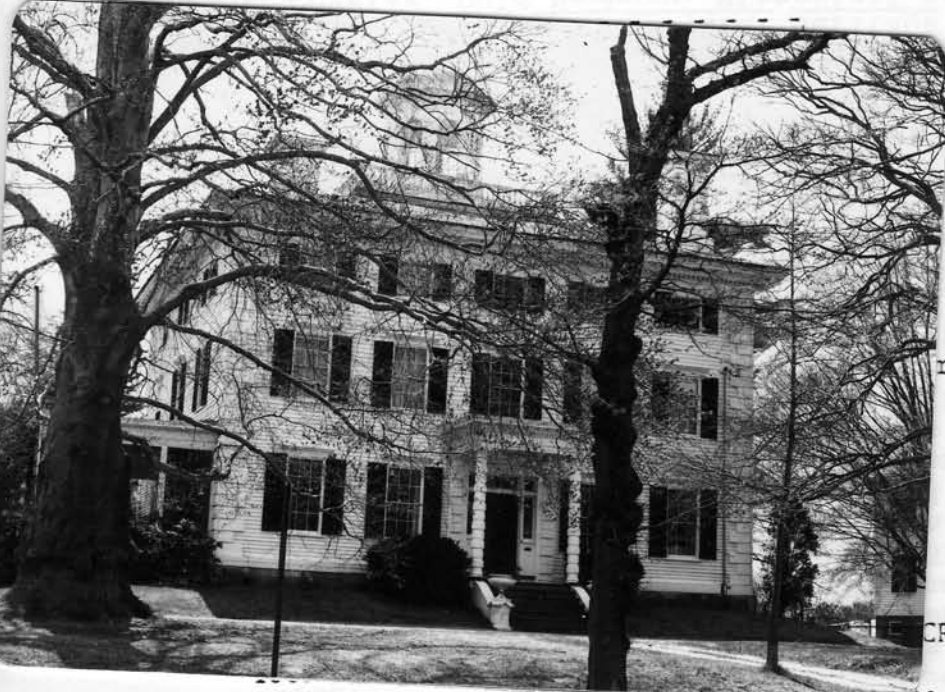


FORM B - BUILDING

Area A	Form no. 39
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108



Newburyport
201 High Street/9 Dexter Lane
 Name Jackson-Dexter House
 Original Residence
 Present Residence
 Ownership: Private individual
 Private organization _____
 Public _____
 Original owner Jonathan Jackson

cross streets and other buildings or geographical features. Indicate north.

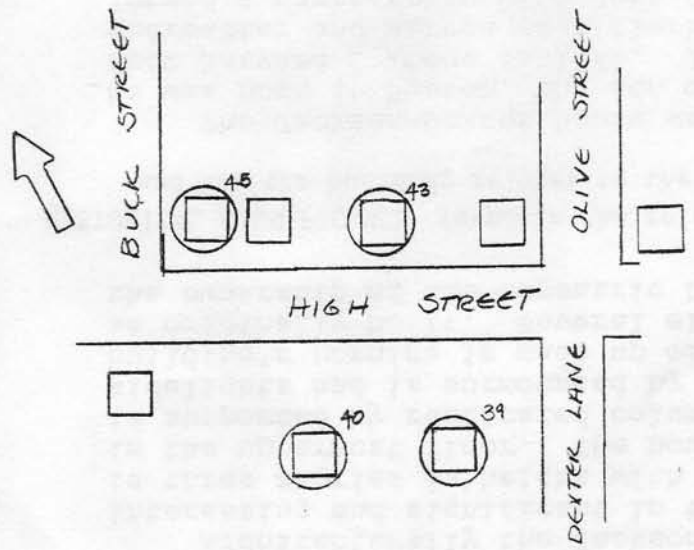
DESCRIPTION:
 Date 1771
 Source Currier, "History of Newbury"

Style Georgian
 Architect Unknown
 Exterior wall fabric Clapboards
 Outbuildings Greenhouse

Major alterations (with dates) cupola added (1799)

Moved _____ Date _____
 Approx. acreage 39,693 sq. ft.

Setting on Newburyport's main thoroughfare noted for its excellent examples of domestic architecture dating from the Colonial period through the early 20th century.



Recorded by Mary Jane Stirgwolt
 Organization Office of Community Development
 Date 8-17-80

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

Architecturally the Jackson-Dexter house is one of the most interesting and significant in the City of Newburyport. The house is three stories in height with hipped roof and small square windows in the uppermost floor. The house has quoins and the entrance portico is supported by rusticated columns. The door itself is flanked by sidelights and is surmounted by a large oblong transom light. The building's cornice is made up of modillions. The house was elaborate as originally built. Several elements, it is assumed, were added during the ownership of the eccentric Lord Timothy Dexter. Dexter ornamented (cont).

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

The Jackson-Dexter house was built in 1771 by Jonathan Jackson. He was born in Boston, the son of a prosperous merchant, and graduated from Harvard College in 1761. Jackson moved to Newburyport shortly thereafter and served as a clerk for Patrick Tracy. In 1765 Jackson formed a partnership with John Bromfield. They specialized in the importation of British goods. Jackson married Patrick Tracy's daughter, Hannah and in 1774 he established a major mercantile house with his brothers-in-law John and Nathaniel.

Jackson was a member of the Committee of Public Safety at the beginning of the Revolutionary War and in 1781 and 1782 was a representative to the Continental Congress. Jackson was a leading citizen in Newburyport. He served on numerous committees and took a firm stand against British policies. His firm Jackson, Tracy and Tivey did very well before the Revolution. They fitted out a number of privateers during the War and suffered heavy losses. Unable to re-establish himself after the War, Jackson sold his house in 1795 and moved to Boston. He regained success becoming the president of the Boston Bank in 1806 and treasurer of Harvard in 1807.

In 1795 Capt. Thomas Thomas was the new proprietor of the Jackson House. Thomas also had active commercial interests. He was in command of one of the vessels that sailed from Newburyport in 1799 to attack the British posts along the Penobscot River. Thomas died shortly after acquiring the Jackson house. In 1798 the property was sold to Timothy Dexter.

(cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- A. Hale, Old Newburyport Houses, Boston, 1912.
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- J. J. Currier, Old Newbury: Historical and Biographical Sketches, Boston, 1896.
- B. Labaree, Patriots and Partisans: The Merchants of Newburyport, 1764-1815, Cambridge, 1962.
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20M-2/80

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newburyport	Form No: 39
Property Name: Jackson-Dexter Hse. 201 High St./ 9 Dexter Lane	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

the property with statues of famous individuals. The cupola was also added by Dexter.

It is exceptionally well proportioned with arched windows, a dome, and a Doric cornice of triglyphs and metopes. Originally this dormer was surmounted by the statue of an eagle.

The barn or coach house at the rear of the property is quite elaborate and is presently being converted for residential use.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

Timothy Dexter was one of Newburyport's most famous and certainly most eccentric characters. Dexter was born in Malden and moved to Newburyport in 1769. He was a leather dresser by trade. Dexter invested heavily in depreciated currency after the Revolutionary War and he became quite wealthy when the paper was redeemed at par value by the government. In 1791 Dexter purchased the Tracy Mansion, now the Public Library.

By the time Timothy Dexter moved into the Jackson House he was a man of substantial wealth. He was also a man of substantial eccentricities. He equipped the facade of the house with pedestals and statues of famous men supposedly carved by Joseph Wilson of Strong Street, Newburyport. His own statue bore the inscription "I am the first in the East, the first in the West, and the greatest philosopher in the known world". He gave himself the title of Lord. In 1793 Dexter was one of the five wealthiest men in Newburyport.

Several of the antics for which Dexter is noted were the staging of a mock funeral to observe the grief his death would, or would not, cause and the publication of his "Pickle for the Knowing Ones". This was published in 1802 and was a mixture of sense and nonsense without punctuation. In the second edition he added a page of punctuation marks that "they may salt and pepper as they please."

Dexter died in 1806 after making numerous public contributions. His household goods and the statues from the grounds of the house were sold in 1807.

In 1808 Samuel Richardson opened the house to accommodate travellers. The house was used as an inn and boarding house by the Dexter heirs until 1852. In that year the house was sold to Elbridge S. Kelley. Kelley was mayor of Newburyport in 1871 and 1872. In 1874 the house was again sold. The new proprietor was George H. Corliss, of Providence, R.I. Corliss was the inventor of the Corliss steam engine.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom