

FORM B - BUILDING

Area	Form no.
A	3

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108



Newburyport

Address 47 High Street

Historic Name Pierce-Knapp Healy House

Original Residence

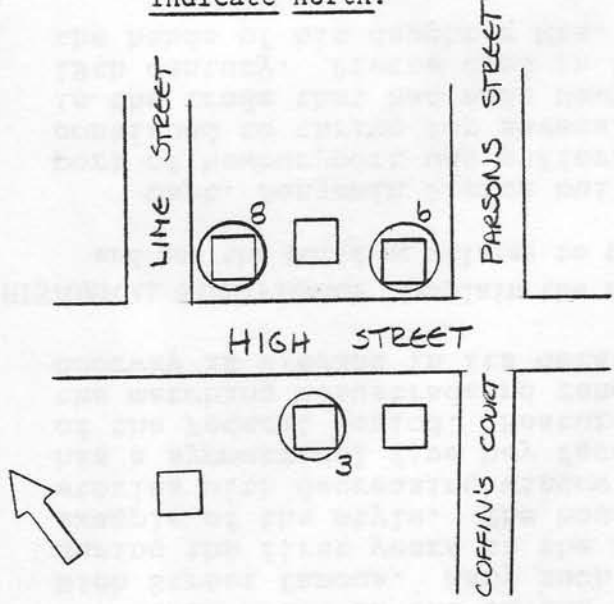
Present Residence

Ownership: Private individual
 Private organization

Public

Original owner Capt. Benjamin Pie

Location in relation to
 cross streets and other buildings
 or geographical features.
 Indicate north.



DESCRIPTION:

Date 1811

Source Historic American Bldg. Sur

Style Federal

Architect Unknown

Exterior wall fabric Clapboards

Outbuildings Garage and shed

Major alterations (with dates) additions
at rear (dates unknown)

Moved _____ Date _____

Approx. acreage 2.60 acres

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

Recorded by Mary Jane Stirgwolt
 Organization Office of Community
Development
 Date 8-4-80

(Staple additional sheets here)

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

This house is one of the fine Federal mansions which has made High Street famous. Many such homes were built along High Street during the first years of the 19th century. This is an excellent example of the style. The house has the typical Federal form, three stories with decreasing window size in the upper floors. The house has a symmetrical five bay facade and hipped roof, also characteristics of the Federal period. Features which are particularly noteworthy are the matching balustrade and fence, window caps and entrance portico. The doorway is elegant in its detail and retains the original delicate tracery

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

Capt. Benjamin Pierce built this house in 1811. At that time the port of Newburyport was suffering a decline, but some mercantile interests continued to thrive for several decades. Pierce was undoubtedly involved in the trade that had made Newburyport so prosperous at the turn of the 19th century. Pierce died in 1831. At that time the house passed into the hands of his daughter Mrs. Joseph Knapp.

Joseph J. Knapp and his wife lived in this house until the turn of the 20th century. Knapp was listed as a dealer of flour and grain in 1851. His business was located on Ferry Wharf. In 1871 Knapp was registered in the city directory as secretary of the Merchants Mutual Insurance Company. Knapp was also a merchant and importer. He backed the only factory that supplied the many vessels with the flags that were necessary. The firm occupied the building at the head of Ferry Wharf in 1865.

Knapp was also an incorporator of the Ocean National Bank, established on March 20, 1833, and he owned part interest in several ships built in Newburyport. These included the "John Currier" the "Merrimac", the "Clarissa Currier" and the "General Harrison".

Today this house is owned by James K. Healy the great-great grandson of its original builder.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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Scribner Historic Buildings Series, Historic Buildings of Massachusetts, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1976.
J.M. Howells, The Architectural Heritage of the Merrimack, New York, 1941.
A. Hale, Old Newburyport Houses, Boston, 1912.
1851 Plan of Newburyport, Mass. H. McIntire
1872 Map of the City of Newburyport, Mass. D.G. Beers and Co.
1851, 1871 City Directories
Boston Sunday Herald, July 21, 1963.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newburyport	Form No: 3
Property Name: Pierce-Knapp Healy 47 High Street	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

in the elliptical fanlight above. This is worthy of note because so many of Newburyport's fine doorways were updated during the Greek Revival or Victorian periods. The house also has an exceptional terraced garden that dates from the period of the construction of the house (c. 1815).

Staple to Inventory form at bottom