

FORM B - BUILDING

NRDIS 8/2/1984

Assessor's number  
11-26

USGS Quad  
Newburyport

Area(s)  
L,W

Form Number  
2381

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

Town Newburyport

Place (neighborhood or village)

Address 1-5 Water Street

Historic Name

(now known as the Ferry Wharf Building)

Uses: Present Commercial/Residential/Offices

Original Commercial

Date of Construction c1815

Source visual inspection

Style/Form Federal

Architect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation Granite

Wall/Trim Brick/Sandstone

Roof Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

none

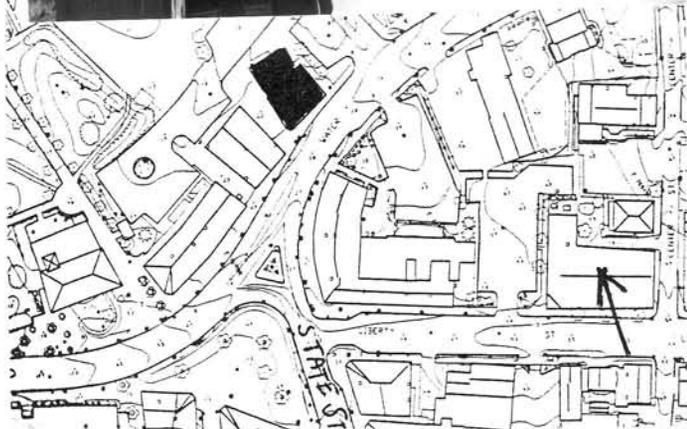
Major Alterations (with dates) c.1970 - rehab of building  
and removal of rear Ferry Wharf buildings

Condition good

Moved  no  yes Date

Acreage 3621 SF

Setting commercial area adjacent to Market Square



Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Newburyport Historical Commission

Date (month/year) June 1999

## BUILDING FORM (1-5 Water Street)

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

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

The present Ferry Wharf building represents only the front fragment of the rambling brick structure which once extended to the north with eight additional stores, out onto Ferry Wharf. The three-story, hipped roof building is constructed of brick laid in a common bond alternating seven courses of stretcher brick to a single course of headers and appears to have been sandblasted. Underneath the eaves of the asphalt-shingled roof is a brick modillion cornice. Two brick chimneys rise from the front roof slope.

The three first floor storefronts were constructed on a trabeated system with granite posts and lintels of differing heights. The modern six-panel doors are capped by transoms with adjacent multi-paned display windows. The upper stories of the facade measure eight bays wide with a rounded bay at the southwest corner of the building. With the exception of the 3/1 windows of the corner bay, most of the openings contain 6/6 sash with smaller windows on the top floor, all topped by brownstone splayed lintels. The former loft opening near the center of the second floor is capped by a granite lintel and now contains glazed double doors. Above the westernmost second floor facade window there is a marble tablet inscribed "Water Street".

The east elevation is fronted by a concrete stairway leading to the rear building (originally 9 Ferry Wharf). On the west elevation, the first floor openings are set into arched openings. A glass connector with stuccoed roof projections links the front building with the rear building which is only a single bay wide consisting of 6/6 windows and a 9-panel first floor door with three-light transom. The rear of the building displays a gabled profile with flush eaves. It is punctuated by modern hinged windows with a stuccoed wooden deck on the third story.

### 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 building was constructed after the great fire of 1811 destroyed much of Market Square and the downtown. The first directory published for Newburyport in 1849 indicates that the building was then occupied by Eben Sumner and William H. Swasey, merchants of goods, grain and meal. (By 1854 Sumner, Swasey & Currier had relocated to 45 Water Street.)

In 1860 Peter Romily operated an eating house at 1 Water Street. A number of lodging and entertainment establishments were located here over the years. In the 1870s and 1880s, the Chester House was located at 1 Water Street, at the Ferry Wharf, while liquor merchants occupied much of the remainder of the block. At the turn-of-the-century a pool room and saloon were located in the building, as well as a barber. In the 20th century tenants included Almon Reed's stove store, and in the 1940s to 1960s, the Knight Grain Company.

Much of the rear portion of this building, including 5-8 and 10 Ferry Wharf, was demolished between 1924 and 1946. The buildings at the north end, formerly 1-4 Ferry Wharf, were demolished as part of Urban Renewal, as was the single-story, wood frame section which formerly housed a printing office (9-11 Water Street). The building currently houses a combination of stores, residential units and offices.

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