

FORM B – BUILDING

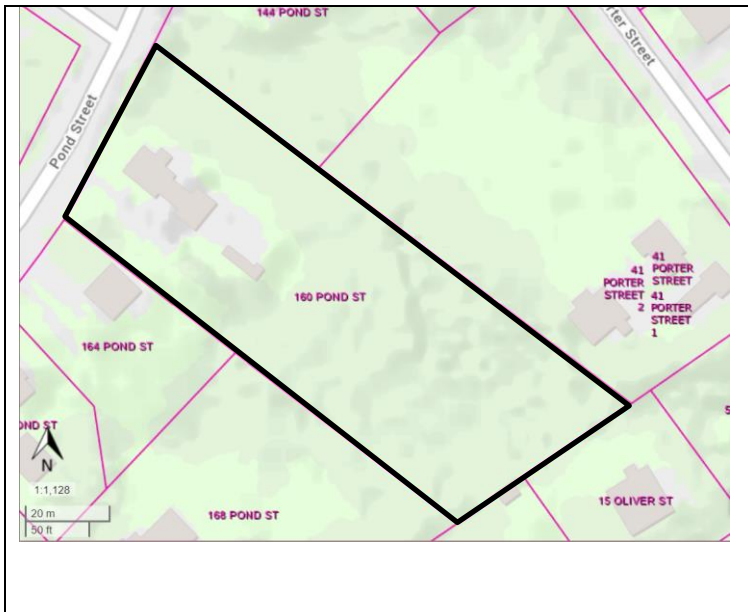
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View looking southeast.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: Avon Historical Commission

Date (month / year): December 2022

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

C5/ 4/ 7/ 1

Blue Hills

AVO.63

Town/City: Avon

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Address: 160 Pond Street

Historic Name: Orlando B. Crane Rental House; Hiram S. Crafts House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1858

Source: Map

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Not Known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, Cut

Wall/Trim: Vinyl Siding / Wood (?) Trim

Roof: Wood Shakes

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Shed

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Vinyl siding and replacement vinyl sash windows (late 20th C or early 21st C); Large addition at rear (late 20th or early 21st C)

Condition: Fair

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 1.5 acres

Setting: Residential suburban street.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

160 POND ST

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Area(s) Form No.

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

The house is located close to the road atop a small rise and oriented to the west (perpendicular to the street). A dry-laid stone wall with split-granite posts lines the Pond Street frontage. An asphalt-paved driveway leads past the west elevation. The frame house consists of a 1½-story main block with 1-story and 2-story ells. The main block rests on a cut stone foundation and rises to a side-gabled roof with overhanging eaves. Slender brick chimneys are located at the north and south ends of the roof ridge. The house is five bays wide and two bays deep with two windows in the gable peak. The house is covered with vinyl siding and trimmed with wood (or perhaps composite lumber) corner pilasters, box cornice, frieze, gable-end cornice returns, and skirtboard. A small gable-roof porch centered on the façade (west elevation) shelters a Colonial Revival-style paneled wood door with a fanlight. The porch is supported by two square-section posts that rest on plinths. A run of four cut granite steps leads from the driveway to the entrance. A small shed-roof projection centered on the rear (east) elevation rests on a poured concrete foundation. A sash window topped with a semi-circular window is centered in the projection's east elevation. The 1-story lateral ell is three bays wide with an entrance in the north bay. A run of four cut granite steps leads from the driveway to the entrance. The multi-light wood door is sheltered by a glass storm door. A wood deck fills the east elevation of the 1-story ell. The 2-story perpendicular ell is two bays wide with a semicircular window in the gable peaks. Windows throughout the house, unless where otherwise noted, are vinyl sash replacements with internal faux 12/12 muntins. The surrounds have shallow crowns and are framed by shutters and metal shutter dogs.

The building is a locally-common mid-19th-century Greek Revival dwelling. The building retains a low level of integrity due to a loss of original materials.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss 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.

The house at 160 Pond Street is part of a group of four houses owned by the extended Crane family in the nineteenth century (i.e., 129, 160, 167 and 185 Pond Street). 160 Pond Street was likely constructed circa 1858 for Orlando B. Crane, son of Ebenezer and Angeline Briggs Crane who lived across the street at 167 Pond Street (AVO.64), on land owned by the Crane family. Orlando B. Crane (1835-1914)¹ worked as a boot cutter before opening a general store on the east side of Goeres Square in 1866. Crane opened a grocery store in 1882; his business partners were Everett Crane and Benjamin Hunt. Orlando Crane also served in the state legislature in 1868.² In 1866, Orlando B. Crane married Ann Kimball.

Evidence seems to indicate that 160 Pond Street was the location at which Hiram S. Crafts hosted Christian Science leader Mary Baker Eddy, then named Mary Patterson, in 1866. Bootmaker Hiram S. Crafts (1834-1906)³ is reported to have been the first student of Mary Baker Eddy⁴ and, inversely, to have been the person who provided Ms. Eddy with writings of Francis Leiber that Ms. Eddy then allegedly plagiarized in her book, *Science and Health*.⁵ (The accusation is denied by Christian Science.)

¹ Findagrave.com Memorial #204426115. Accessed Sept. 22, 2022.

² Hurd: 407.

³ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/131975920/hiram-stevens-crafts>. Accessed Dec. 13, 2022.

⁴ <https://www.marybakereddylibrary.org/research/from-the-collections-mary-baker-eddy-and-the-wentworths/>. Accessed Dec. 13, 2022.

⁵ "Mrs. Eddy Purloins from Hegel: Newly Discovered Source Reveals Amazing Plagiarisms in Science and Health." *JAMA*. 1937;108(16):1368-1369. doi:10.1001/jama.1937.02780160060028. Accessed Dec. 13, 2022.

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The meeting of Mary Baker Eddy and Hiram Crafts is presented in *The Life of Mary Baker Eddy and the History of Christian Science*:

In the winter of 1866-1867 Mrs. Patterson met Hiram Crafts at a boarding-house in Lynn. Crafts was a shoe-worker of East Stoughton, who had come to Lynn to work in a shoe factory there for the winter. Mrs. Patterson...saw in the serious shoe-maker a prospective pupil. What she told Crafts of this new system of doctoring appealed to him strongly; he was a Spiritualist and was deeply interested in psychic phenomena. After he returned home, he sent for Mrs. Patterson to come to East Stoughton and teach him. She joined the Crafts, accordingly, in the early part of 1867, and lived for some months in their home at East Stoughton – now Avon – instructing Mrs. Crafts in the Quimby method of healing. Early in the spring Crafts went to Taunton, taking his wife and Mrs. Patterson with him and opened an office. He was the first of Mrs. Eddy's students to go into practice. Mrs. Patterson did not practice herself, but remained with the family to teach and advise Crafts.⁶

Census records indicate that the Hiram Crafts family was living in this house at the time of the 1860 census.⁷ A 1937 book that asserted the plagiarism stated that [Samuel] Minot Crane, "was a partner of Mrs. Eddy in an office for the practice of healing by mental means... Minot Crane lived across the street from Hiram Crafts"⁸ on Pond Street, which is supported by the 1858 map and by census records. "Mrs. Eddy had lived in the Crafts home in the city of Avon and during that period Crane was a confidant of Hiram Crafts."⁹ The Crane and Crafts families were also joined by marriage: Hiram Crafts' sister, Sarah, married George L. Crane and lived at 185 Pond Street (AVO.65). Ms. Eddy later lived with the Wentworth family at 133 Central Street in present-day Stoughton,¹⁰ a short distance from Pond Street. (More research is recommended.)

In 1866, William H. Felker purchased the house.¹¹ William H. Felker (1829-1897)¹² lived here with his wife, Mary, and family. William Felker worked as a bootmaker and, later, as a butter and cheese salesman. William and Mary Felker's son, Charles H. Felker, owned and operated the C.H. Felker & Co. grocery. William Felker, along with David H. Blanchard and Nathan Tucker, were appointed as Avon's first water commissioners in 1890.¹³

William W. Morse purchased the house from the Felker estate in 1915.¹⁴ A retired butcher, William Morse lived here with his wife, Jennie, and son, Fred. Fred Morse worked in a shoe factory and as a grocery store clerk. Census records show that the family also took in a number of boarders. The Morse family lived here until 1935, when they lost the house to foreclosure during the Great Depression.¹⁵

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⁶ Georgine Milmine, *The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy and the History of Christian Science*, New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1909, pp. 111-114. http://iapsop.com/ssoc/1909_milmine_life_of_mary_baker_g_eddy.pdf. Accessed Dec. 13, 2022.

⁷ U.S. Census. 1860.

⁸ "Mrs. Eddy...", Ibid.

⁹ "Mrs. Eddy...", Ibid.

¹⁰ <https://www.longyear.org/visit/historic-houses/stoughton-ma/>. Accessed Dec. 13, 2022.

¹¹ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 326, p. 328.

¹² <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/102190674/william-h-felker>. Accessed Dec. 12, 2022.

¹³ Hanna: 75.

¹⁴ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 1322, p. 594.

¹⁵ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 2095, p. 406.

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION



View looking south at rear (east) and north (side) elevations

1875	1102	Hiram S. Crafts	25 m	Boot Maker
		Mary W. "	30 f	
		Justice J. Spear	19 m	
1876	1103	Samuel Crane	65 m	Physician
		Rebecca "	63 f	
1877	1104	Samuel S. Crane	39 m	Grocer P.M.
		Henriette "	37 f	
		Samuel M. "	14 m	
		Charles P. "	12 m	
		William "	10 m	
		Bartholomew White	72 f	

1860 U.S. Census showing proximity of Hiram Crafts and Samuel Minot Crane residences.