

BENCHLEY HOUSE
6½ King Street (Rear of #6/#8 King Street)
Worcester
Worcester County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-1269

HABS
MASS
14-WORC,
6-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Northeast Region
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

BENCHLEY HOUSE

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Location:

6½ King Street (Rear of #6 / #8) King Street) Worcester, Worcester County, Massachusetts

USGS Worcester North, Massachusetts Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 19.267880.4681760

Significance:

This is one of the earliest homes to appear during this area's initial development, and it stands out as the only Colonial style home in a predominantly Victorian style neighborhood.

Description:

The very simple exterior detailing of the main body of the wood framed, clapboard house appears to substantially retain the distinct characteristics of Federal-style Colonial homes of the early 1800s (1800-1830). The house is also surrounded on three sides by a porch which contains simple detailing consistent with the early Victorian era of approximately 1865-1875 (during which time the homes in the surrounding neighborhood were being developed and built). Review of the interior layout suggests that this home may have been converted to a multi-family use very early in its life. Evidence suggests that the central entry was shifted to its current asymmetrical position due to the enclosure of the central stairway for purposes of dividing the home into separate upper and lower units. There are also more recent attic dormer and porch infill additions to the house. All interior spaces and detailing have been substantially altered and/or removed over the years.

History:

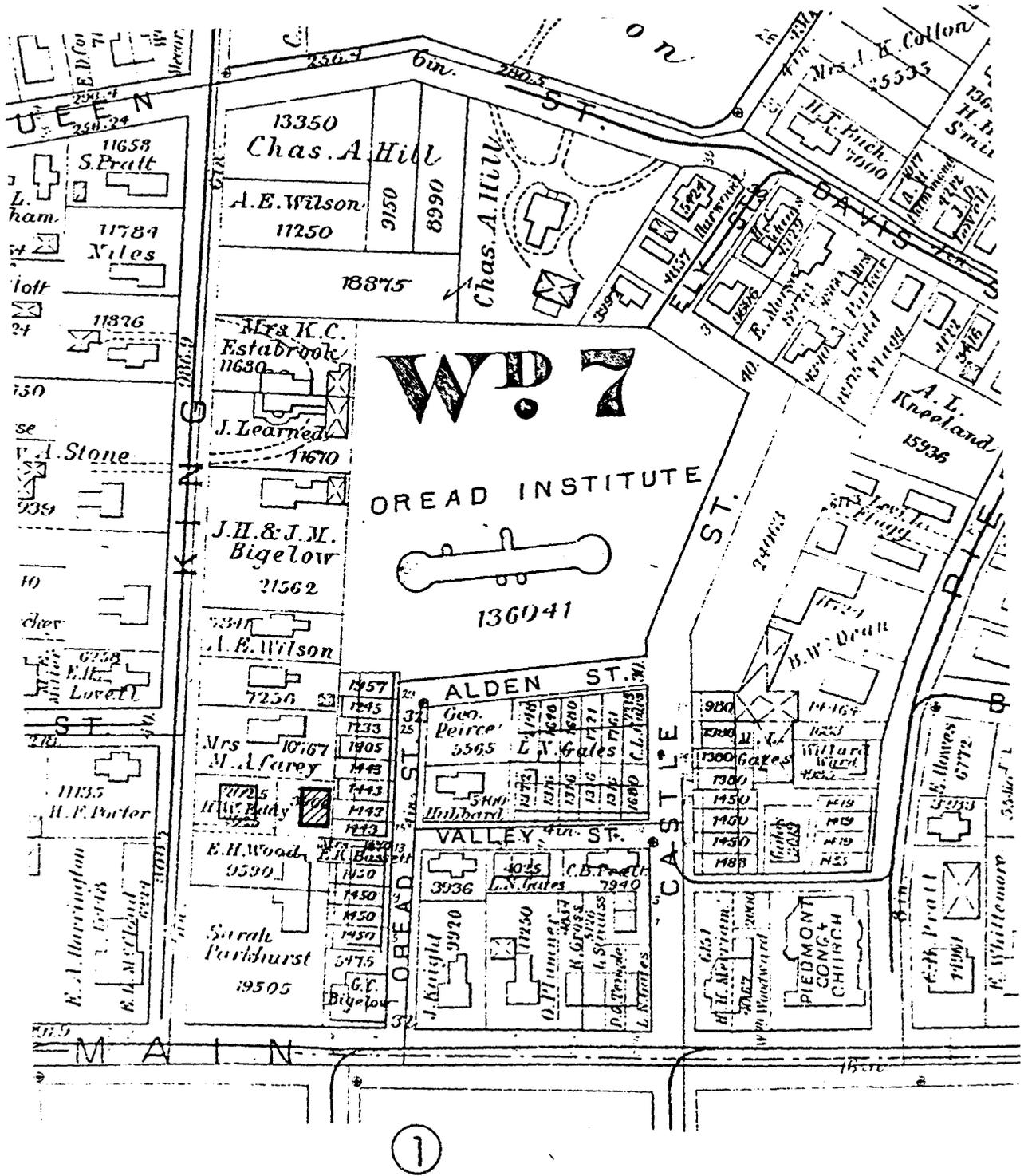
The Benchley House, occupied by James E. Benchley, a bookkeeper in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, is first shown in the Atlas of Worcester, Massachusetts of 1870 as located in its present position on the site (contrary to a notation in Massachusetts Historic Commission Survey Form No. 141-FF). However, as suggested in the survey form, and supported by the construction methods of the foundation of the house and the house's irregular site location, it appears this home was moved from another (undetermined) location at about the time of the initial subdivision/development of this neighborhood. The siting of this home at the far rear of the property allowed for the construction of the large brick, double-bay front, second empire home at the front of the site. This brick home is known as the Eddy Double House, #6 / #8 King Street.

Sources:

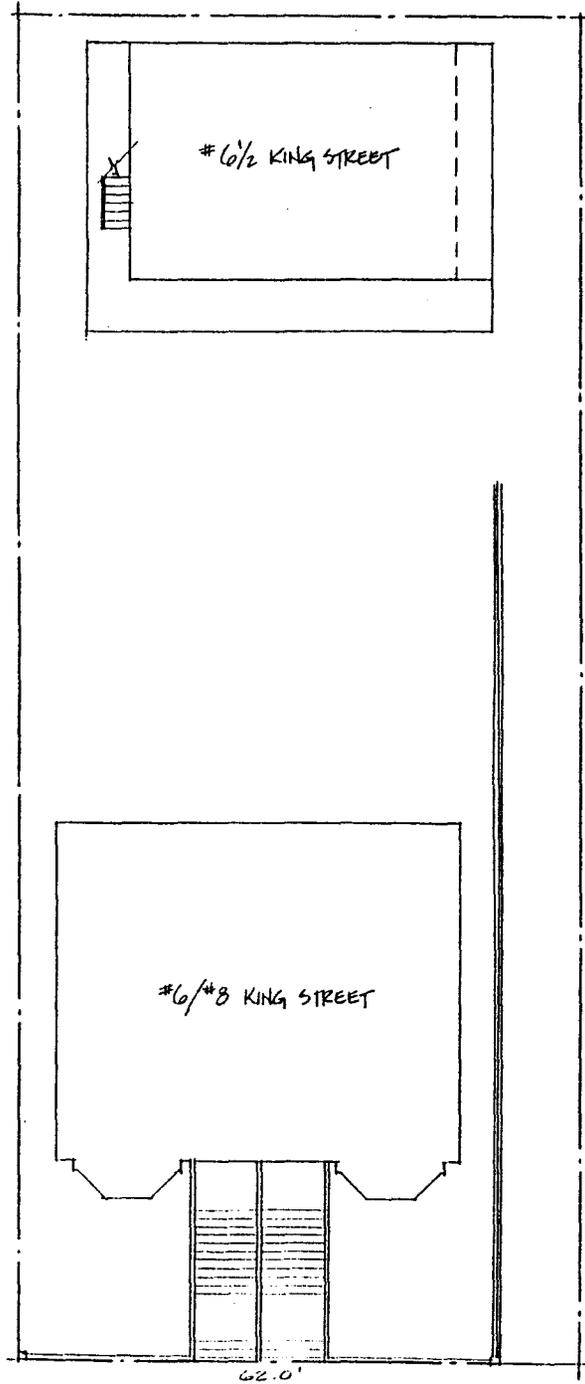
1870 Atlas, City of Worcester, MA
1886 City Map.
Massachusetts Historical Commission Historical Survey Form No. 141-FF,
Dated December 1977.

Historian:

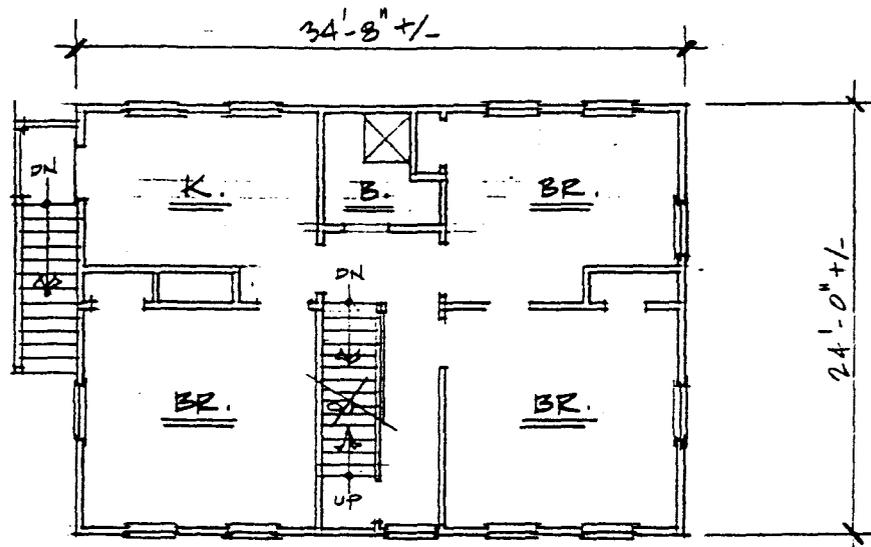
Lawrence Zdralewicz Reeves, Registered Architect.
November 15, 1994.



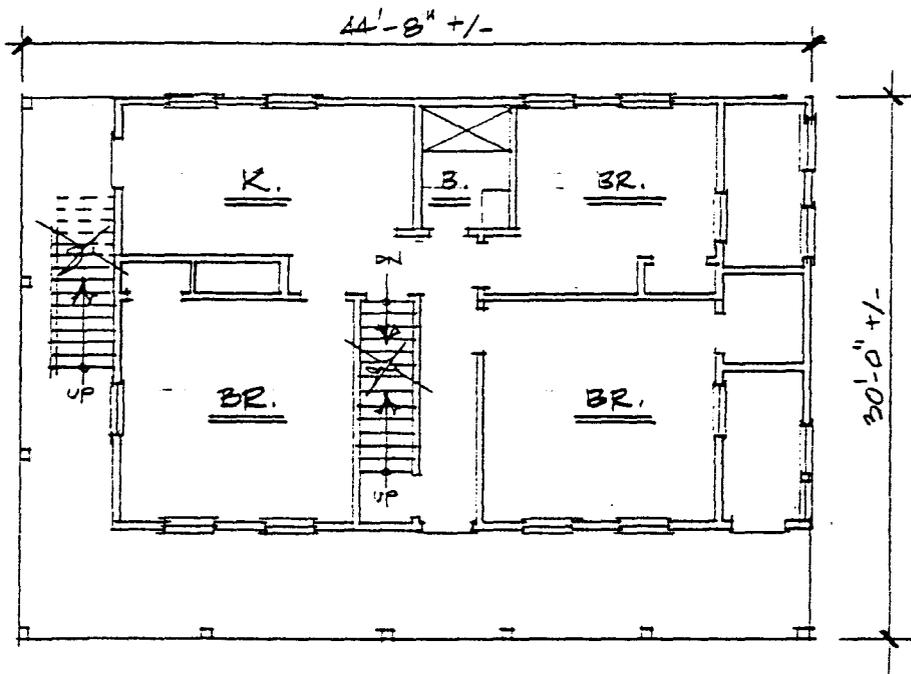
Map of Worcester, MA., 1886 - Hopkins.



SITE PLAN - 1992



UPPER FLOOR PLAN



MAIN FLOOR PLAN

BENCHLEY HOUSE

6 1/2 KING STREET
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS