

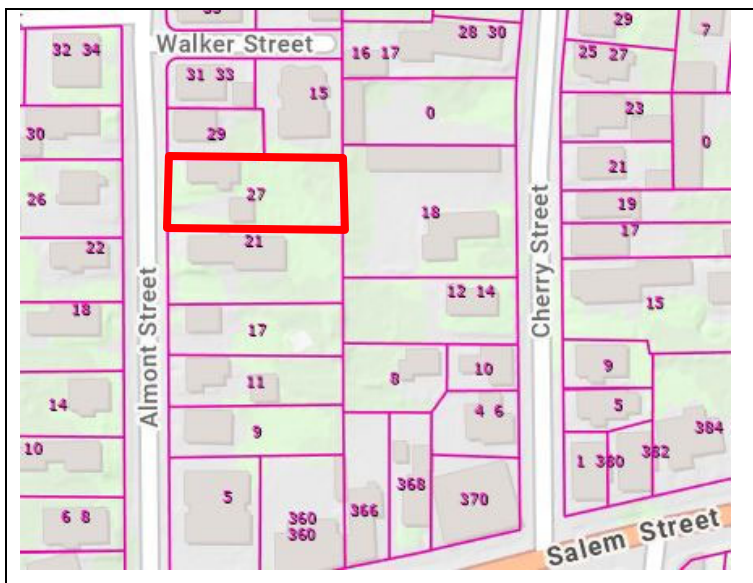
FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



Locus Map (north is up)



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

J-13-3

Boston
North

Town/City: Medford

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): East Medford

Address: 27 Almont Street

Historic Name: Henry G Crockett House

Uses: Present: single-family residential

Original: single-family residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1850

Source: deeds, maps

Style/Form: Greek and Gothic Revival/ end house

Architect/Builder: John Crockett, John J Beaty and Stephen H Bradlee, evident builders

Exterior Material:

Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard/ wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Detached garage, 1926.

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Ell enlargement, 1906; sash and door replacements, recent decades.

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.23 acre

Setting: Dense mix of 19th through early 20th century residential use.

Recorded by: John D. Clemson

Organization: Medford Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): December 2023

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MEDFORD

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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.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The Henry G Crockett House, built ca 1850, is an exceptionally well-preserved end house that retains stylistic elements related to both the Greek and Gothic Revival movements, which were often blended while both styles were popular during the second quarter of the 19th century. The end house type, characterized by a gable front with a main mass sited perpendicular to the street, is also characteristic of the period; the type is thought to have been popularized by temple fronts made fashionable by Greek-inspired architecture but became a common house type during the middle decades of the 19th century, being adapted to other styles such as Italianate and Queen Anne. The subject building is distinctive for its narrow but unusually deep dimensions of 18 by 44 feet. Medford Building Department records demonstrate that an originally narrower rear ell aligned with the right side was enlarged and expanded upward to meet the main roof ridge in 1906. A full second story is provided by a high gable with knee-wall massing, whereby the plate is placed a half story above the second floor, a common framing technique of the period that provided second-level space more economically than a full two-story building. The upper story is expanded by single gabled dormers centered on each slope. A shallow, open porch located near the rear on the right (south) side shelters a rear entrance.

The house appears to retain abundant original building fabric. Broad corner boards support a deep freeze below the projecting cornice with pronounced eave returns. These, combined with a trabeated and pedimented door surround in the left of three bays in the façade are suggestive of Grecian fashions. The rake of the front gable, however, is embellished by drip-like verge boards related to the Gothic Revival style, commonly known as "carpenter gothic." Other finishes include wood clapboard siding and casings with heavy molded lintels. Sash and doors appear to have been replaced in wood during recent decades.

Images of the interior available through on-line marketing material reveal a side-hall plan with a straight-run stair in the hall that winds to the upper hall near the top. Narrow openings access rooms that fill the right side of the building. The entrance hall terminates halfway through the building, where it evidently enters into a rear kitchen. The 40-foot depth of the building suggests there are additional spaces to the rear on both levels.

The house is sited near the north side bound on a wide lot facing west toward Almont Street. Landscaping includes an open lawn retained by a low cinderblock wall along the frontage. A concrete walk accesses a low brick stoop and an asphalt drive in the south side yard accesses a detached, wood-frame, two-bay, hip-roofed garage of mid-20th-century vintage.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The ownership history of the Crockett House has been traced to the purchase of a small lot on the east side of Almont Street "with the dwelling house and outbuildings thereon standing" in 1851. The grantors were John Crockett, John J Beaty and Stephen H Bradlee, all housewrights of Medford. Circumstances suggest the three built the subject house in partnership in a speculative venture. The grantee was Henry G. Crockett (also spelled Crocket), shipwright of Medford. Crockett (1820-1892) was a native of Searsport, Maine and a son of Ephraim (1779-1851) and Alice (Fowler, born ca 1789). He married a woman named Hannah ca 1842 and second to Martha A Smith in 1854. By 1855 their household included three children born between ca 1844 and 1853. The family later moved to 18 Lyman Street, Boston, where Crockett worked as a provisions dealer and his wife took in lodgers.¹

Between 1856 and 1858 the property was held by short-term owners, including Medford sailmaker William L Pratt and his wife, Mary, Alfred French of Boston, and Andrew Wellington of Lexington, farmer. Only the Pratts may have occupied the house briefly in 1856-1857. Between 1858 and 1868 the property was held by absentee landlord Charles K Darling of Boston. Charles Kendall Darling (1822-1882), a son of Eliakim Darling and Mary (Grover), was a successful Boston stationer who resided at 436 Columbus Avenue in the South End. He was associated with Oakes & Darling, 20 State Street and later under

¹ MCSRD 618:518 (1851); 708:167 (1855); Ancestry.com: vital records, marriage, death; 1850-1880 Federal Census, inclusive; 1855 Massachusetts State Census.

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his own name at 15 Exchange Street. In 1870 his large Boston household included his wife, Mary F (Barnard) seven children (five survived to adulthood) and three domestic servants.²

In 1868 Darling sold the subject property to his sister Maria E (Darling) Redman "to her sole and separate use" (vital records demonstrate Maria Darling's father was Eliakim Darling). The 1865 state census placed her and her family on Almont Street based on a comparison of neighbors listed on the 1875 Beers county atlas. She had married Eli F Redman (1836-1876) in 1860, a native of England who was a painter of frescos. An 1866 advertisement identified his company, Hancock & Redman (in partnership with Zachariah Hancock) as "fresco, sign and house painters, 84 Sudbury Street, Boston, particular attention given to the decoration of public buildings, churches, halls, lodges, and private residences, in all the various styles of decorative art, in encaustic, oil and distemper." By 1870, however, the census return placed the family in Malden in a house valued at \$8,000 owned by Maria, who controlled a personal estate valued at \$10,000, suggesting the Redmans had become landlords of the subject property by that time.³

Between 1899 and 1905 the property was owned by Arthur B Perkins of Medford. In 1900 the building was occupied by two families: the five-member immediate family of Charles Crockett (born Dec., 1859) and Alice Crockett (it could not be ascertained whether Charles Crockett was related to the original owner – Henry Crockett did not have a son named Charles according to period census returns), and the five-member family of William Perkins (born 1852) and Susan B Perkins. William Perkins worked as a photographer and his son, Arthur (born 1874), was a machinist.⁴

Since 1905 the property has been owned by multiple generations of the Lecomte family. It was acquired by Julius M Lecomte of Boston that year from Arthur Perkins. Lecomte (1868-1923) was a native of Bruges, Belgium, immigrating in 1890. Throughout his career he worked as a cook at hotels and private clubs, but it has not been possible to identify his employers. In 1896 he married Marie Legi (1873-1964), a native of France, also employed as a cook in Boston. In September of 1906 Lecomte (spelled Lecompte) received a building permit to "cut off 6 ft. from ell, raise roof of rest of ell, and make alterations to 1 family wooden dwelling, estimated cost \$250." By 1910 their household in Medford at the subject house included four sons born in Massachusetts, a lodger and Lecomte's sister Elizabeth (born ca 1870). In 1926 a building permit was awarded to build a two-car garage. In 1941 Marie Lecomte and three sons conveyed the property to fourth son Lucien L Lecomte. The most recent conveyance among the current owners of record in 2013 indicates they are heirs of Lucien Lecomte.⁵

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- 1875 F. W. Beers, *County Atlas of Middlesex, Massachusetts*.
- 1880 O. H. Bailey [Bird's Eye View of] Medford.
- 1889 Geo. H. Walker & Co., *Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts*.
- 1898 Geo. W. Stadly & Co., *Atlas of the City of Medford....*
- 1900 Geo. W. Stadly & Co., *Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, Volume 1*.
- 1892, 1897, 1903, 1910, 1936, 1936-1950 Sanborn Insurance Atlases.

Ancestry.com: see footnotes

Charles Brooks and James M. Usher, *History of the Town of Medford, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, From its First Settlement in 1630 to 1855; Revised, Enlarged and Brought Down to 1885* (Rand, Avery & Co., 1886)

Middlesex County South Registry of Deeds, in notes as MCSRD book:page (date).

² MCSRD 754:83-85 (1856); 778:334-335 (1857); 786:290 (1858); 797:187 (1858); Ancestry.com: vital records, death; 1870 Federal Census; *Boston Daily Globe*, Sep. 9, 1882, obituary; *Annals of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association, 1795-1892* (for the association by Rockwell & Churchill, 1892) pp. 349-350, obituary.

³ MCSRD 1027:257 (1868); Ancestry.com: vital records, marriage, death; 1865 Massachusetts State Census; 1870 Federal Census; 1866 Boston city directory.

⁴ MCSRD 2754:143 (1899); Ancestry.com: 1900 Federal Census.

⁵ MCSRD 3169:523 (1905); 6568:135 (1941); 61805:515 (2013); Ancestry.com: vital records, marriage, death; 1900-1920 Federal Census, inclusive.

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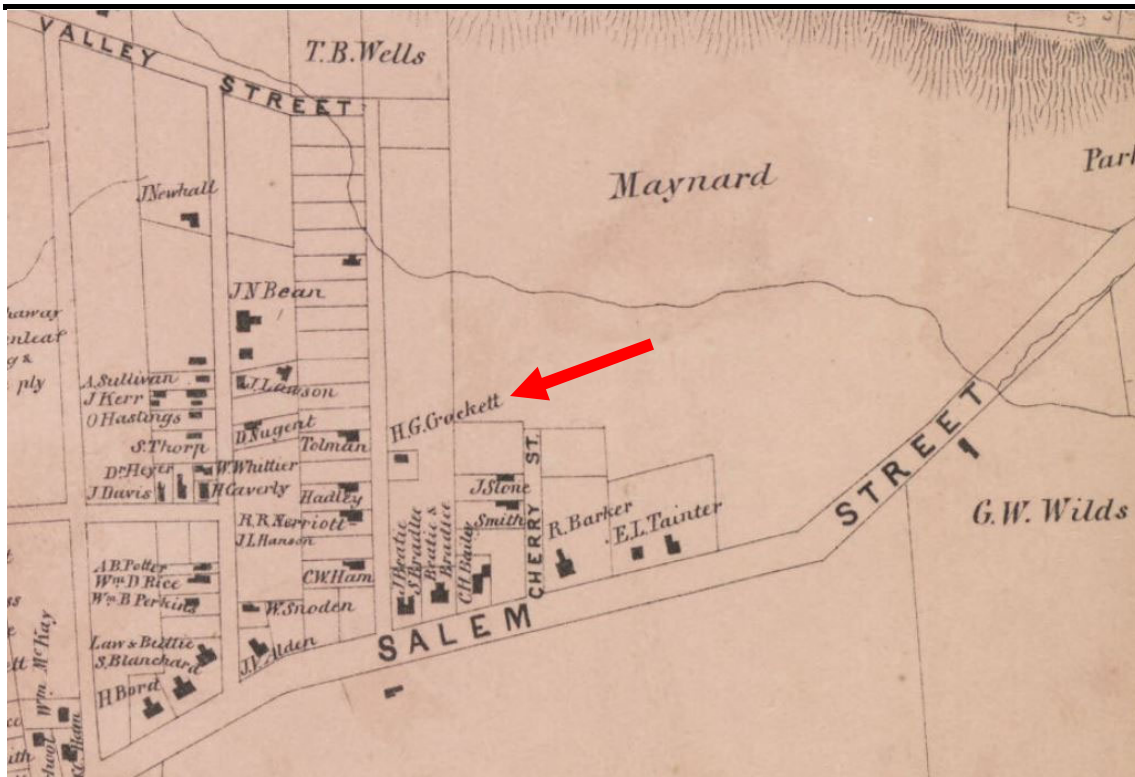
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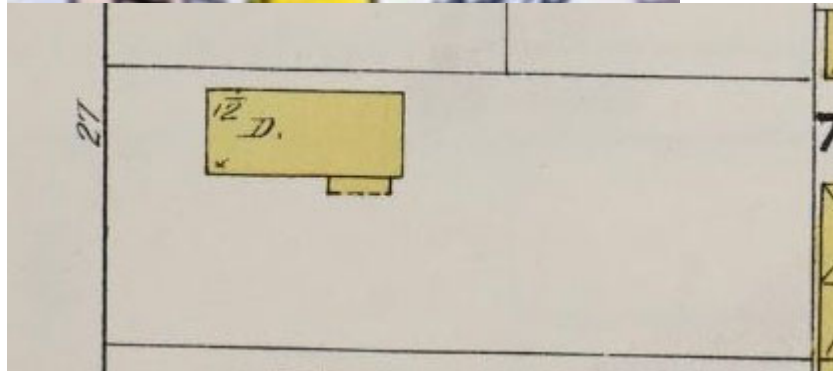
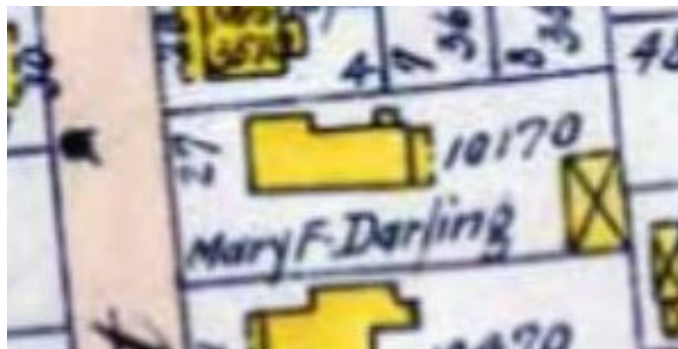
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1855 Walling map of Medford depicting the subject house labeled "H.G. Crockett," indicated by a red arrow. North is up.



1898 Stadly Medford atlas (top) and 1910 Sanborn map (bottom) depicting the alterations to the ell.



Front hall and original stair, left, and parlor interior with Grecian pedimented casings, right, captured from Zillow Dec, 2023.



Upper story chamber showing knee-wall configuration, Zillow, Dec, 2023.

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