

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

16/288	Reading		449
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

**Town:** Reading

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*) Downtown

## Photograph



**Address:** 75 Haven Street

**Historic Name:** Flat Iron Building

**Uses:** Present: commercial

Original: commercial

**Date of Construction:** c.1870

**Source:** *At Wood End*, p. 175

**Style/Form:** French Second Empire (alt.)

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

## Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: brick veneer, granite, wood

Roof: tar and gravel, asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
none

## Major Alterations (*with dates*):

date unknown – brick veneer

1971 – building remodeled after fire, new roof

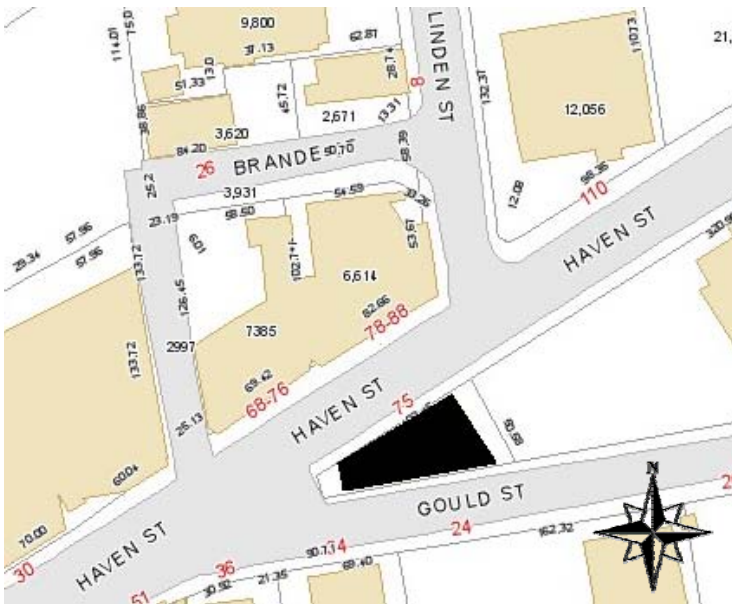
**Condition:** fair (due to addition of brick veneer)

**Moved:** no | x | yes | | **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acreage:** 0.07 acre

**Setting:** mixed downtown area

## Topographic or Assessor's Map



**Recorded by:** Lisa Mausolf

**Organization:** Reading Historical Commission

**Date (month / year):** July 2010

**RECEIVED**  
**AUG 20 2010**  
 MASS. HIST. COMM.

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

READING

75 Haven Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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:

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

Located between Haven and Gould Streets, the building at 75 Haven Street is a simple, utilitarian commercial block with a distinctive flat iron-shaped plan. Originally clapboarded, a brick veneer was installed prior to 1971. The brick veneer is in poor condition and has been subject to frequent and incompatible repointing. The original slate mansard roof was punctuated by numerous gable dormers with decorative trim. After a 1971 fire, the roof was rebuilt. It is sheathed in asphalt shingles and the dormers are fewer than the original design and recessed from the adjacent wall. The original paired bracket cornice has been removed in favor of a continuous corbel brick band.

Windows contain modern 1/1 sash with a row of brick set on end for the sill and lintel. There is an offcenter decorative brick panel on the second floor of the Haven Street elevation. There are three storefronts of varying sizes and two upper level entrances fronting Haven Street. All but the corner storefront have recessed entries and plate glass windows set in metal frames with panels above and plain bulkheads below. The Gould Street elevation has two additional doorways.

## 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.*

This building (originally 41 Street) was constructed about 1872. Prior to the construction of the three-story block, the terraced gardens of the William Balch estate occupied the site. In the 1880s the building was known as the Simes' Block.

The building was owned for many years in the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century by Benjamin, Hannah and Sophie Chalfen, who do not appear to have been Reading residents. The brick veneer appears to have been added at that time.

Following a fire in December 1971 the entire building was remodeled and the roof was rebuilt.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

*Reading Chronicle*, December 9, 1971.

Reading Directories, various dates.

Reading Historical Commission, photographic collection.

Reading 350<sup>th</sup> Book Committee. *At Wood End – Reading, Massachusetts 1644-1994, A Pictorial History*, 1994, p. 175.

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1894 view of the Flat Iron Building, looking east

Source: Reading Historical Commission

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