

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

|        |         |  |     |
|--------|---------|--|-----|
| 16/293 | Reading |  | 376 |
|--------|---------|--|-----|

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

**Town:** Reading

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 175 Haven Street

**Historic Name:** Gowing Block

**Uses:** Present: offices

Original: commercial

**Date of Construction:** c.1870

**Source:** Barclay notes, Reading Hist. Comm. files

**Style/Form:** Italianate (alt.)

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

### Exterior Material:

Foundation: granite

Wall/Trim: brick, granite

Roof: tar and gravel

### Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

none

### Major Alterations (*with dates*):

late 20<sup>th</sup> century – redesign of historic facade

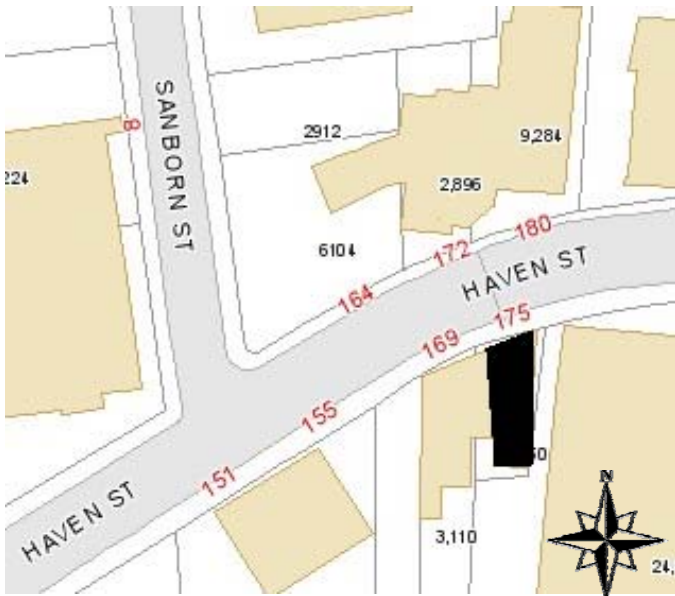
**Condition:** fair

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

**Acreage:** 0.04 acre

**Setting:** mixed downtown area

## Topographic or Assessor's Map



**Recorded by:** Lisa Mausolf

**Organization:** Reading Historical Commission

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

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

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

READING

175 Haven Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

376

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.*

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century brick commercial block at 175 Haven Street has been extensively remodeled in recent years and its historic character is no longer apparent. As originally constructed, the block had a wide, decorative brick cornice and three individual double-hung windows on the second floor of the façade, capped by segmentally-arched brick lintels. All of these features have been removed and the second floor is now punctuated by a large four-part multi-light picture window. A granite lintel is still visible over the first floor openings. The easternmost bay on the first floor of the façade originally contained an entrance to the upper level. This has been bricked in although the granite sill is still visible. The storefront originally consisted of a recessed entrance flanked by angled display windows with transoms and bulkheads. This area was rebuilt in recent years with brick and anodized metal. The former window openings on the side elevations have all been filled with brick.

## 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.*

It appears that this block was probably constructed in the 1870s as it was listed in the assessor's book for 1880 (Barclay). The first owner was Amos or Emma Gowing.

In March 1886 Edward F. Brooks opened a dry goods store here and according to the *Chronicle*, had "fitted up the premises in good taste" (Barclay). He rented the space until 1897 when he purchased the building from Mrs. Emma M. Brown (*Chronicle*, Dec. 4, 1897). After opening his store, Brooks took up the study of embalming in Boston, graduating at the head of his class in March 1894. The floor space of his store was subsequently divided, with a store on one side and an undertaker's office on the other. Ironically, E.F. Brooks died in a traffic accident in June 1902 when he was struck by an express train at the Main Street railroad crossing. The horse he was driving became frightened by the presence of three automobiles traveling at 10 miles per hour and bolted in front of the train (Barclay).

In 1907 the Reading telephone exchange was located upstairs in this block. In 1915 the Coop. Store moved its grocery store from this building to 210 Main Street (*Chronicle*, Oct. 8, 1915). Archie Levine, tailor, occupied the first floor storefront beginning in 1916 (Barclay). The property was sold by Rose Levine to Maurice Doyon in 1966 and Doyon's Appliance Store was located here for a time. Later occupants included Reading Haven Book Store and Passport Travel Agency. It is presently occupied by Crosby & Co., accountants.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Barclay, Miriam A. "Reading Reflections: It Happened On Haven Street", *Reading Chronicle*, July 31, August 1, August 14, 1958.

Palmer, Ed. *Reading, Massachusetts: Then and now*. Turner Publishing Co., 1999.

Reading Directories, various dates.

Reading Public Library, Historical Images Collection.

Reading 350<sup>th</sup> Book Committee. *At Wood End – Reading, Massachusetts 1644-1994, A Pictorial History*, 1994, p. 171.

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

READING

175 Haven Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
|  | 376 |
|--|-----|



Undated (between 1894 and 1902) photo of 175 Haven Street storefront during occupation by E.F. Brooks.

Source: *At Wood End*, p. 171.

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

READING

175 Haven Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
|  | 376 |
|--|-----|



Haven Street looking east toward Main – part of 175 Haven is visible at extreme right.

Source: Reading Historical Commission

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

READING

175 Haven Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
|  | 376 |
|--|-----|



Building at 175 Haven Street is brick, two-story structure at right center (Archie Levine over doorway).  
Note originally there were three windows on second story.

Source: Reading Public Library (photocopy from *Reading Chronicle*, June 1957)