

FORM G - STREETSCAPE

Assessor's Sheets

USGS Quad

Area(s)

Form Numbers

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

70, 82

Marlborough

G;O

442-445

SPRUCE ST.

#442

#443

#444
Town

Marlborough

Place (neighborhood or village)

Howe Street Area

Addresses (inclusive) 1,3,4 Spruce Street,

41 John Street

Range of Dates or Period 1890

Predominant Architectural Styles/Forms

Queen Anne vernacular

Alterations All siding synthetic or asbestos;

some porch posts and rails replaced; window

General Condition fair

Acreage less than one acre

Recorded by Anne Forbes, consultant

Organization Marlborough Historical Comm.

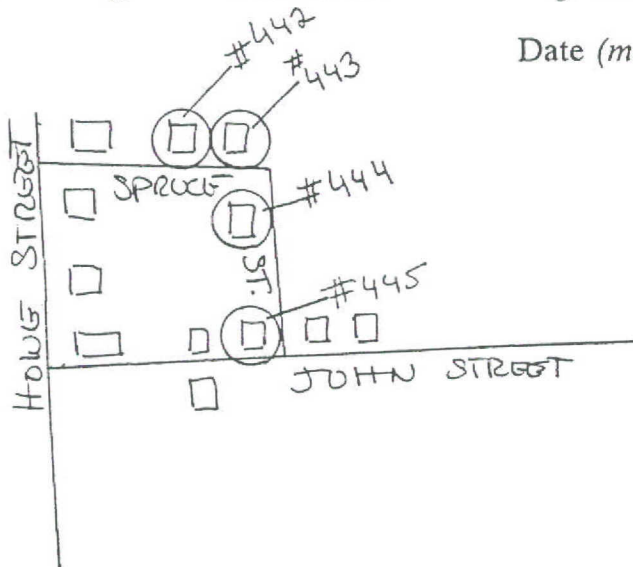
Date (month/day/year) 8/5/94



dash replaced at 41 John St., door at 3 Spruce.

Sketch Map

Draw a map of the streetscape indicating properties within it. Number each property. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient. Indicate North with an arrow.



STREETSCAPE FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION [] *see continuation sheet*

Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other streetscapes and similar buildings in the community.

Even in the low-cost residences that industrialists put up to house their factory workers, it is rare in Marlborough to find groups of identical houses. This cluster of four double-houses, together with four more of the same design just to the west on Irving and Cottage Streets, (see Area Form P) is an exception. Although considerable trim has been lost, surviving details, along with the identical form and proportions of the buildings, suggest that all four were virtually alike.

All the houses are 2 1/2-stories, with gabled roofs, and stand on parged foundations. In contrast to the "double-ended" appearance of the group on Irving and Cottage Streets, each of these presents its four-bay, gable-end facade, with side-hall entry and full-width veranda, to the street. The front porch posts at 3 Spruce Street (MHC #443) have been replaced, but lathe-turned posts remain at the other three. The veranda of 41 John Street (MHC #445) is bracketed, as well. All three houses on Spruce Street have a paired 1-over-1-sash window under the gable peak; the gable window at 41 John Street is a single 2-over-2-sash. Glass-and-panel doors with single square or larger colored-glass-surrounded lights are still in place at all but 3 Spruce. As on Irving and Cottage Streets, the windows here are predominantly 2-over-2-sash, with molded surrounds. Each building has a square colored-glass stair window at first floor level in its side elevation, and the original glass-and-panel doors, with a single large light surrounded by small colored glass panes, remain at #s 1 and 4 Spruce Street (MHC #s 442 and 444.).

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE [] *see continuation sheet*

Explain the history of this streetscape, and how it relates to the overall development of the community.

These four houses, along with at least two dozen others in the Howe Street area, represent the entrepreneurial and paternalistic outlook of one of Marlborough's major shoe-manufacturers of the latter part of the nineteenth century, John O'Connell. (See Form #92, 63 Maple Street). As fellow shoe-manufacturer Samuel Boyd did on Florence and Neil Streets, over the course of the 1860's and 1870's, John O'Connell acquired many acres near his first and second shoe factories on Howe Street, laid out streets, subdivided the land into houselots, and put up both single-family and multi-unit houses for his workers. While Samuel Boyd sold most of his properties, however, John O'Connell retained ownership of most of his as rental houses. To a far greater degree than with any other industrialist in the city, his long ownership of a sizeable local real-estate empire epitomizes company-owned "workers' housing" in Marlborough. In this century, even after O'Connell & Son's shoe company ceased operations and John O'Connell died, his sons, John, Daniel, and David (and possibly William) continued to make at least part-time careers out of managing their father's former real estate holdings.

These four houses were begun in December of 1889 and completed in 1890, as were their four companions on Irving and Cottage Streets. Not all the builders are known, but at least two of the eight buildings were constructed by David Nugent, and two others by the firm of McGee and Coburn. As was the case with the rest of the Howe Street area, the tenants of these houses were largely first- and second-generation Irish-American families, and the heads of the households were shoeworkers, undoubtedly in the O'Connell & Sons factory further north on Howe Street, next to the railroad.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES [] *see continuation sheet*

Maps, birdseye views, and atlases: Sanborns from 1896..

Marlborough directories and tax valuations.

Marlborough Enterprise, 12/27/1889.

[] Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

Marlborough

1,3, 4 Spruce; 41 John St.

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Area(s)
G; O

Form Nos.
442-445

STREETSCAPE DATA SHEET

MHC#	Parcel #	Street Address	Historic Name	Date	Style/type
445	82-110	41 John Street	J. O'Connell rental house	1890	Q. Anne vernac.
442	70-193	1 Spruce Street	J. O'Connell rental house	1890	Q. Anne vernac.
443	70-192	3 Spruce Street	J. O'Connell rental house	1890	Q. Anne vernac.
444	70-188	4 Spruce Street	J. O'Connell rental house	1890	Q. Anne vernac.



4 Spruce St. (#444)

JOHN STREET #445

#445

