

FORM B - BUILDING

AREA R2	FORM NO. 31-9
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108



Belmont
 Address 81 Clark Street
 Historic Name Widow Brown Cottage

Present residence
 Original residence

DESCRIPTION:
 Date c.1856

Source Belmont Historical Society Records

Style Gothic Revival
 Architect C.O. Holyoke
 Exterior wall fabric clapboards
 Outbuildings garage, 1931

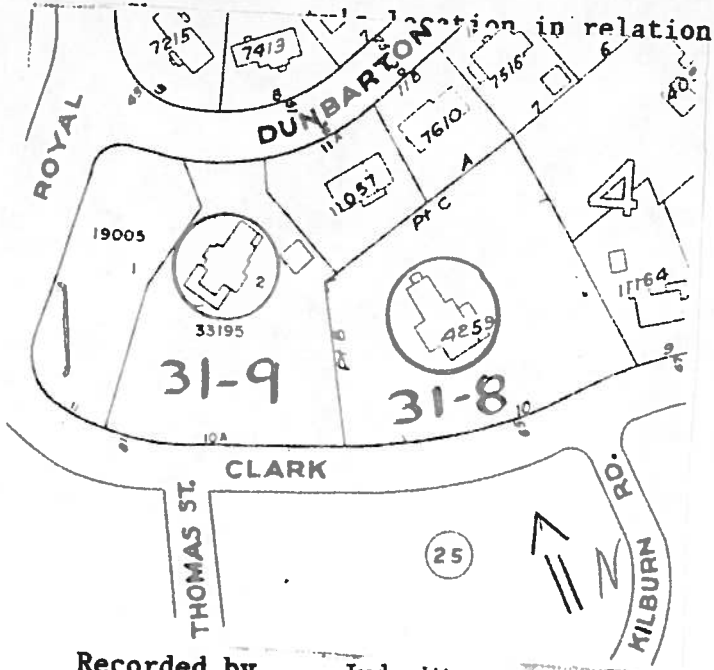
Major alterations (with dates) Colonial Revival alterations by architect Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow in 1886.

Moved - Date -

Approx. acreage less than 1 acre

Setting Tree-lined residential neighborhood of Clark Hill. Country setting.

SKETCH MAP



Recorded by Judy Williams

Organization Boston University

Date November, 1982

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

The Widow Brown Cottage is one of only a handful of Gothic cottages in Belmont. Built on a cross gable plan, the main facade is accented by a three-sided piazza with parlor-length windows below, and a bellcast hood over the second story window above. A mid 1880s alteration (thought to be by the important Colonial Revival architect A. W. Longfellow) removed some of the original Gothic trim, but the gables still feature decorative horizontal banding and a drop pendant at their peaks. The Colonial Revival renovation included changes in interior plan, entrance relocation, and the addition of a rear kitchen ell and dining room bay. Original clapboarding, a colorful

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

Designed by architect C.O. Holyoke and built by Lemuel Hatch, a builder who relocated to Belmont in order to have this contract, this cottage is representative of the romantic country house imagery of the mid-1800s. The house was built by Mary Ann Perry Brown as a summer residence following the death of her husband, James Brown, the wealthy co-founder of Little, Brown Publishing Company of Boston. Mrs. Brown moved to Cambridge for the winter months, giving the original Brown Mansion in Belmont to her son John Murray Brown.

The changes to the house were made in 1886 by the building's second owner, Judge Frederic Dodge, who lived there from 1877 to his death in 1927. An important local and national figure, Dodge was an 1869 Harvard Law School graduate who practised law in Boston for 35 years before being appointed by President Roosevelt to the U.S. District Court in 1908 and by President Taft to the U.S. Circuit Court in 1915. Dodge was also active in local affairs, serving nine years on the local school committee, 20 years on the Board of Trustees of the Public Library (the last 10 as chairman) and as vice-president of the Belmont Savings Bank from 1885-1927. He was also a founder of the Maritime Law Association of the United States in 1899 and served on its executive committee until 1911. The house remained in the Dodge family until 1947.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

- "The Widow Brown Cottage", Belmont Citizen, Mrs. Frank E. French, research.
- Interview with residents Richard and Janet Moore, September, 1982.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: <i>Belmont</i>	Form No: <i>31-9</i>
Property Name: <i>Widow Brown Cottage</i>	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Architectural Significance:

patterned slate steeply-pitched roof, and two original double stack chimneys help to convey the building's mid-19th century character. The house has had a limited number of owners and is in good condition. Architectural plans are available.

Relationship to the National Register Criteria: The Widow Brown Cottage is a significant building both for its architectural value as a Gothic Revival country house and for its association with prominent local families (Brown) and individuals (Dodge) who were contributed to the areas of business and politics, both locally and nationally. An exemplary structure, this building easily meets criteria A, B, C and D for individual listing in the National Register.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom