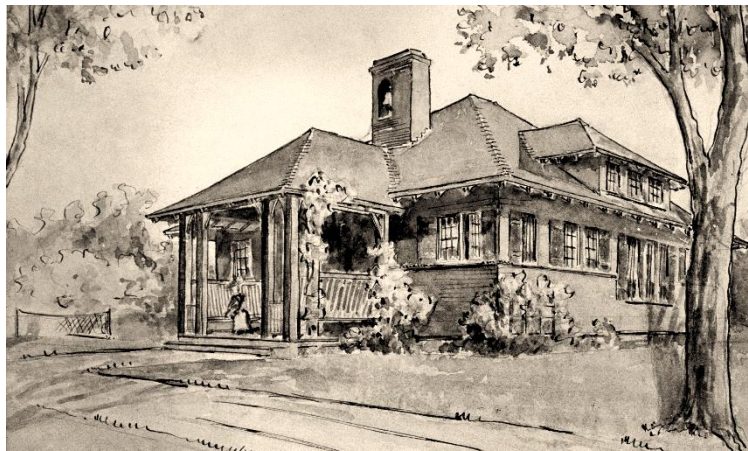


## FINAL LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

### Miss Markham's School (Markham Building) BB&N Lower School, Cambridge, Mass. 02138



**Miss Markham's School, 10 Buckingham Street (1892)**

Miss Markham's School at 10 Buckingham Street (the Markham Building on the Buckingham Browne & Nichols Lower School campus) is considered significant for its associations with the cultural and social history of the city, specifically with the original Miss Markham's School and its founder, Jeanette Markham, with the Buckingham and Buckingham Browne & Nichols schools, and with Cambridge residents Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Richard Henry and Edith Longfellow Dana III, and also for its associations with the architectural firm of Andrews, Jaques and Rantoul, as the oldest purpose-built private school building still in use in the city, and for its importance to the historical and architectural character of Buckingham Street.

Designation of the property by the City Council as a Cambridge Landmark will protect the site from inappropriate redevelopment and guide the owner on appropriate alterations while respecting the distinct architectural and historic character of the landmark. The amended guidelines incorporate suggestions from BB&N administrators regarding compliance with life safety requirements, clarify criteria for alterations and additions, eliminate review of playground equipment, and reflect recent Ordinance amendments regarding accessibility and climate resilience.

The commission declined to recommend the Thackray-Kelsey and Carey-Newell-Morrison houses at 4 and 6 Buckingham Place for designation in light of the school's plans for campus development. These buildings may now be razed to accommodate the construction plan outlined in BB&N's October 6, 2022 presentation to the Commission.

Sarah Burks and Charles Sullivan  
Cambridge Historical Commission  
November 7, 2023



## **Introduction and Context**

This landmark designation study was originally written to include three buildings that comprise the original building of the Buckingham School and as well as the structures on the north side of Buckingham Place, a residential enclave developed in the early 1890s. The Cambridge Historical Commission determined that all three buildings were significant for the purposes of the demolition permit review ordinance, Ch. 2.78, Article II of the City Code, and subsequently had the buildings under study for designation as landmarks under Ch. 2.78, Article III.

The Commission and BB&N have worked productively on several previous projects, including the restoration of the former St. Anne's convent (1870) at 15 Craigie Street, the renovation and addition to the Deane House (1858) at 80 Sparks Street, at the Middle School, and the repeated relocation and preservation of the Sloyd wood studio (1932) at the Upper School at 80 Gerry's Landing Road.

BB&N invited Historical Commission staff to meet on site in June 2021 to discuss the school's plans for renovation, new construction and demolition at the Lower School campus. Staff toured the school with school administrators and their design professionals, who described the changes to operations since the onset of COVID-19. They introduced a proposal to demolish 4 and 6 Buckingham Place and to relocate and make major alterations to the original Markham School building at 10 Buckingham Street. At a subsequent meeting the Markham Building was also identified for demolition and replacement. BB&N representatives acknowledged that they had considered applying for demolition or relocation of the Percy Bridgeman house at 10 Buckingham Place but had abandoned that plan in light of its National Historic Landmark status.

On November 10, 2021, the Commission held a public hearing on the demolition request for the three buildings. BB&N representatives described their plans to demolish the two houses, remove the additions to Markham and rebuild it on its existing site (re-using elements of it if possible), renovate Brick (the 1920 classroom and gym building), relocate the playing field to the site of 4 and 6 Buckingham Place, and construct a new Meeting House for use as a cafeteria, gym and all-school assembly space. BB&N was then in the process of purchasing the 1893 William Griswold house at 5 Buckingham Place. They indicated that the Griswold house could serve as swing space during the construction project but that no long-term plans for the property had yet been decided upon.

The Commission voted to find the three buildings (Markham, Kelsey and Morrison) preferably preserved in the context of the plans presented, and a one-year demolition delay went into effect. Commissioners encouraged the applicant to study possible alternatives to demolition of the three buildings and return after further design development. Staff suggested the school undertake a full zoning analysis of the project and meet with the Community Development Department about the application of institutional expansion provisions of the zoning code. More detail would be needed for the Markham building project. If partial demolition were to be approved, the building should be studied forensically to document the presence of the original structure.

During the one-year demolition delay CHC staff met with BB&N representatives on January 19 (with Cambridge Community Development staff) and August 17 and September 12, 2022. Staff were invited to tour the three buildings to observe their deficiencies for modern academic purposes. The BB&N team explained that their program required the demolition of the two houses and possibly Markham as well. All three meetings were held at the Lower School campus.

According to its usual practice, the Commission scheduled a hearing in the month preceding the expiration of the demolition delay to consider whether to initiate a landmark designation study for the properties. At that October 6, 2022 hearing, the Commission heard an update from the school on their campus plans. A design study for a new building on the Markham site was presented by architect Jean Carroon of Goody Clancy. The campus master plan called for a major interior renovation of Brick and construction

of a new Meetinghouse building on the field behind 15 Craigie Street. The school explained that access to the site through Buckingham Place would be the least disruptive means of carrying out the anticipated work. The sites of 4 and 6 Buckingham Place would be used for staging during construction and ultimately would become a replacement playing field.



BB&N Master Plan as of 2022, showing Markham, Kelsey and Morrison demolished and a new Markham Building (circled).  
BB&N subsequently announced that it had no current plans to construct a new Markham Building  
“BB&N Lower School Project, October 6, 2022”

During the landmark study, staff again met on campus at the School’s invitation on March 9, July 19 and September 13, 2023. As before, staff acknowledged the validity of the administrators’ concerns but urged them to recognize the significance of the three buildings and consider partial preservation alternatives, a few of which were discussed and rejected. Although the School’s October 6, 2022 presentation allowed for the possibility, the administrators stated that they had studied the impact of restoring or relocating Markham but could not find a feasible way to do that and fulfill the School’s educational mission. They now wished to completely remove it. They suggested that their board might withdraw the demolition application for Markham if the Commission agreed not to pursue landmarking but would not commit to restoring or relocating it once funds were raised for a replacement.

In a September 19 email to parents and alumni, BB&N asked for community support to oppose landmarking because, “the Buckingham Place buildings are not able to be renovated in a way that advances our school’s mission.” Goals for accessibility of all buildings, greater energy efficiency, a hot-lunch program and an increase to open space on the campus were described in this e-mail. CHC staff notified abutters on Buckingham, Craigie, Healy, Parker and Sparks streets of the public hearing advertised for October 5, 2023.

At a public hearing on October 5, 2023 the Commission received presentations from CHC staff and representatives of BB&N. The School argued that the three buildings were no longer suitable for educational purposes and could not be adapted in any useful way. (The School’s plan for the site was unchanged from

that proposed in 2021, except that it no longer included a replacement for Markham on Buckingham Street.) The Commission received 103 letters and e-mails from Cambridge residents supporting BB&N's plans for the Lower School campus and against landmark designation, one e-mail in favor of landmark designation, and one e-mail forwarding a copy of a letter addressed to the Head of School from neighbors on Buckingham, Parker and Healy streets that described concerns about traffic, parking and access. Ten residents provided in-person public comment opposing landmarking and in favor of BB&N's plans. Four residents provided in-person public comments in support of landmark designation or opposed to demolition of the buildings. Three neighbors commented on their disappointment at the lack of engagement by the school with the abutters and near neighbors..

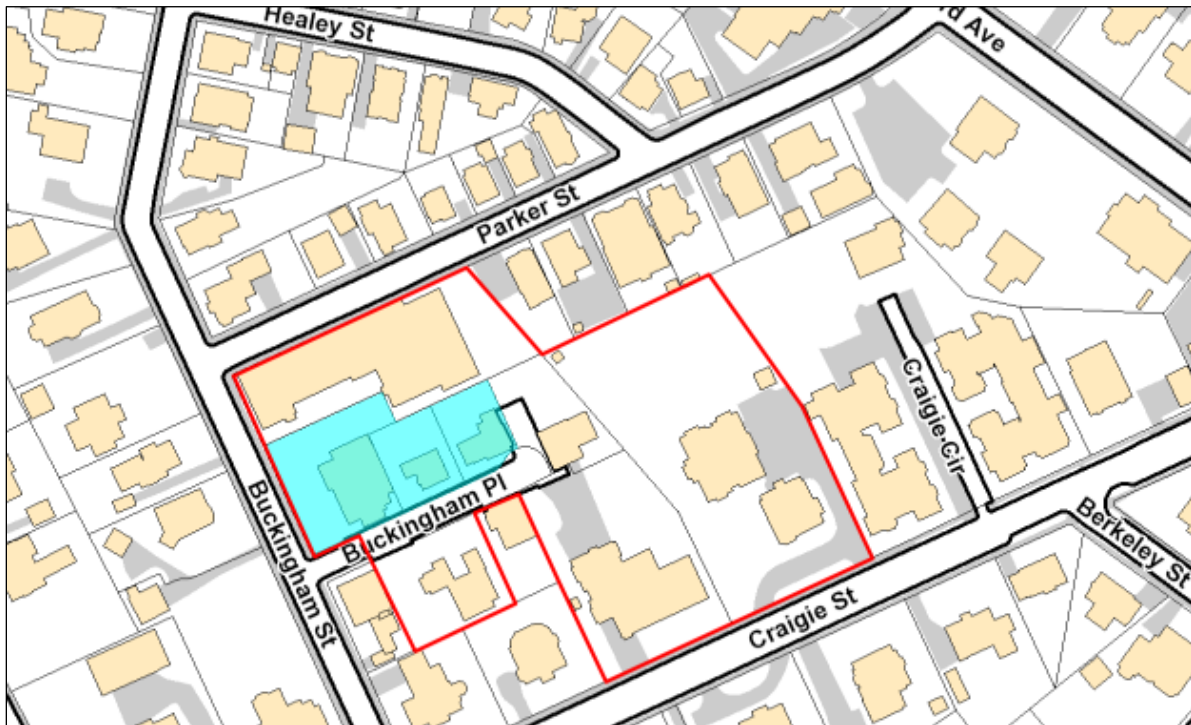
At the conclusion of the hearing the commissioners voted unanimously to recommend the designation of Miss Markham's School (the Markham Building) to the City Council. By votes of five in favor with two abstentions and six in favor with one abstention the commissioners voted to not recommend the designation of the Kelsey and Morrison buildings.

After the October 5 hearing CHC staff updated the Preliminary Report and sent a draft Final Landmark Designation Report to BB&N for comment. BB&N staff made numerous suggestions and edits, correcting factual errors and suggesting changes in emphasis. The most detailed comments were made with regard to the *Guidelines for Review of Alterations* to the Markham School. Not all requested changes could be accommodated, but the guidelines now recognize the special circumstances of Markham's educational use with regard to the safety of students and staff. The guidelines also recognize the complex history of the building and offer a framework for evaluating proposals for both new additions and removal of old ones, accept synthetic materials consistent with existing CHC practice, and facilitate achievement of climate resiliency and accessibility goals.

This Final Report dated November 7, 2023 will be forwarded to the City Manager for transmission to the City Council. It will also be posted on the Historical Commission's website and sent to members of the public who have expressed interest in the matter. The City Council may adopt the proposed Order by a simple majority vote, with immediate effect.



## Location and Zoning Considerations



Assessor's Map, Cambridge GIS, 2021 (subject parcels in blue, BB&N Lower School properties within red lines)



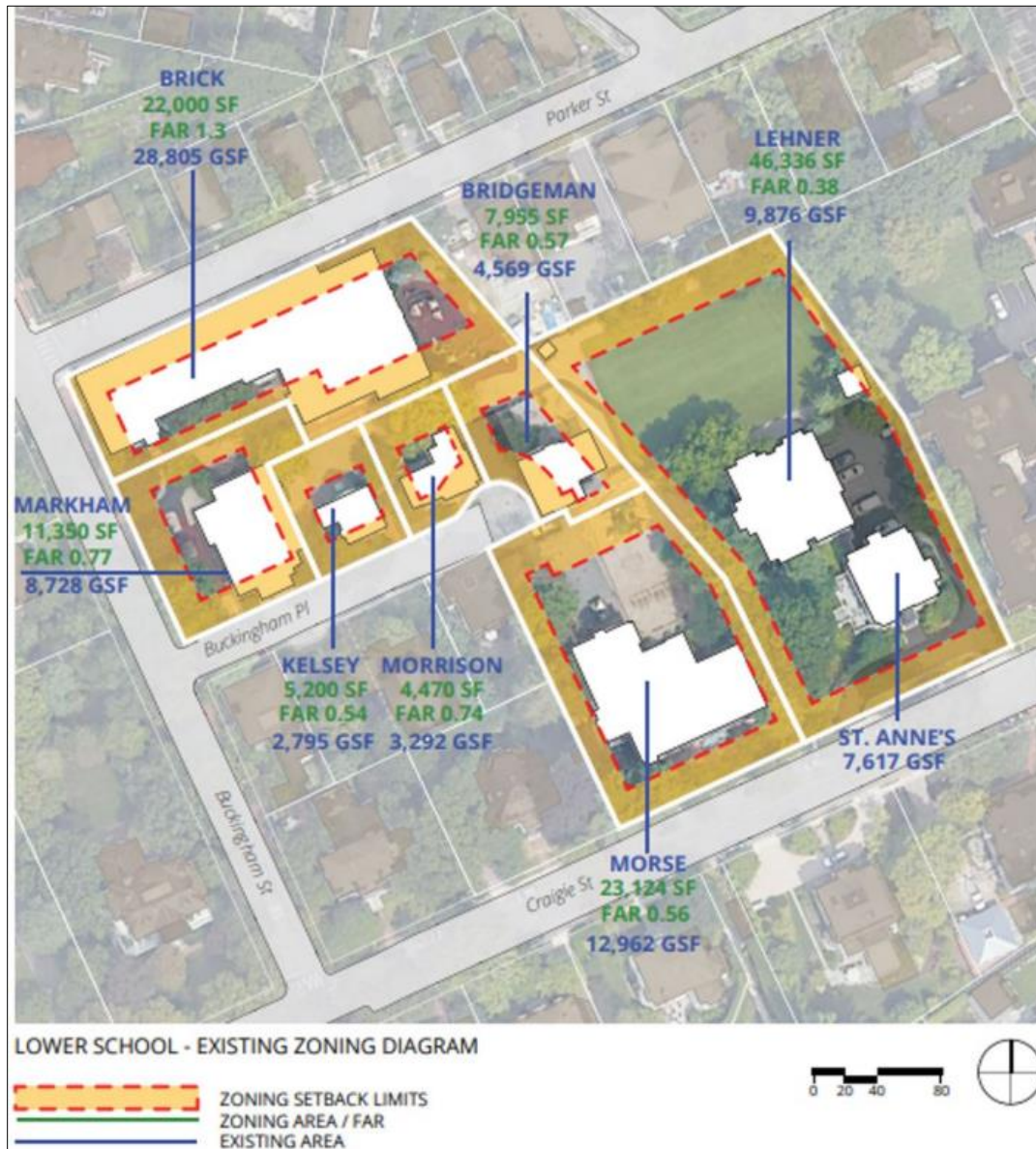
Aerial view of Buckingham Place, 27 March 2021. Nearmap.com accessed 5 Nov. 2021.

Buckingham Browne & Nichols School (BB&N) is a private pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade day school with three academic campuses in Cambridge. The lower school (PreK-6<sup>th</sup>) is situated between Craigie, Buckingham, and Parker streets. The middle school (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) is located on Sparks Street, and the upper school is at 80 Gerry's Landing Road.

The three buildings initially under study are located at 10 Buckingham Street and 4 and 6 Buckingham

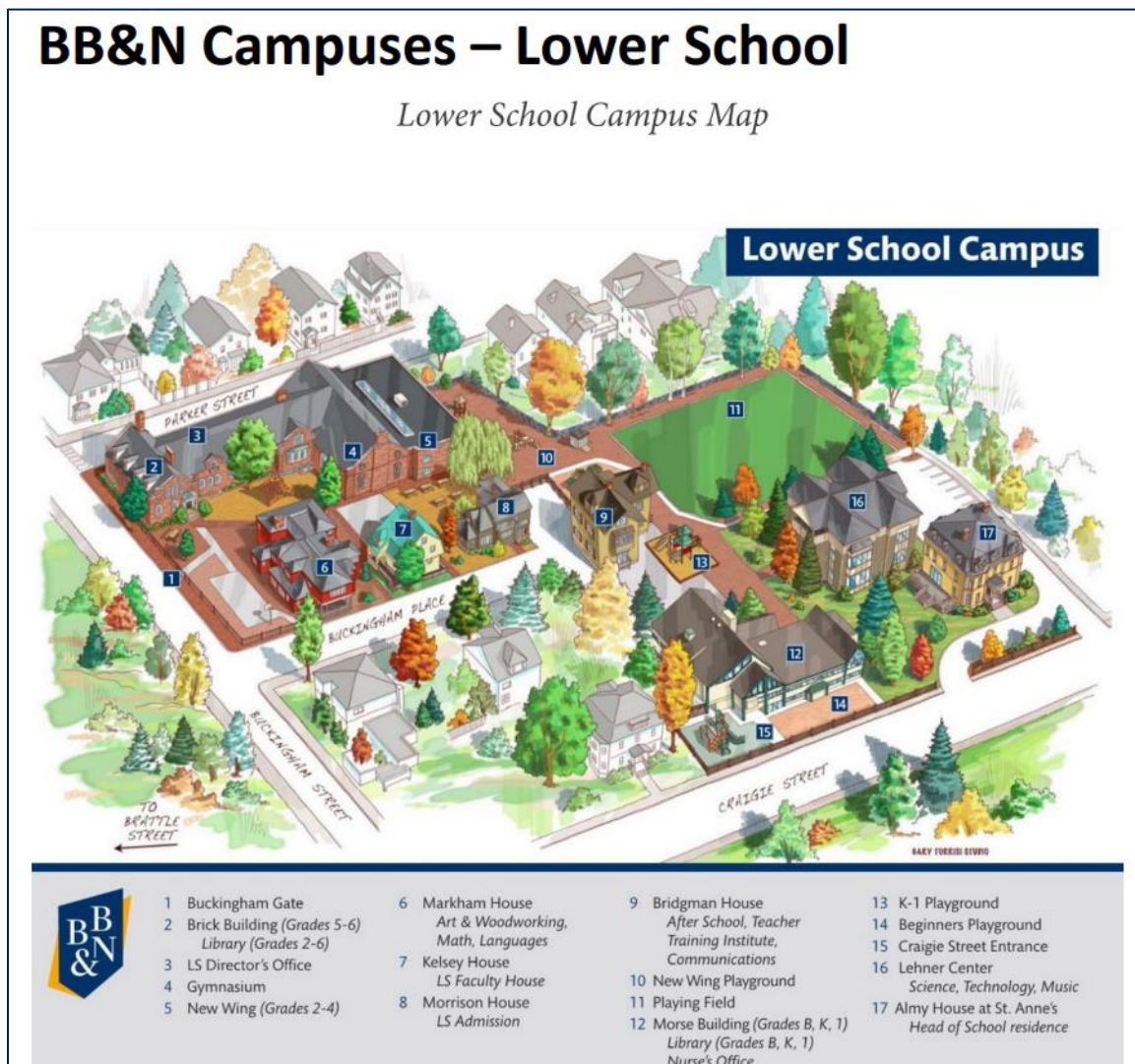
Place. Miss Markham's School (the only one recommended for landmark designation) is located on the largest of the three lots (Assessors Parcel 224-27, 11,350 sf). The property is in a Residence A-2 zoning district. The combined assessed value of the land and building, according to the online assessor's property database, is \$3,073,500, of which \$1,656,400 is attributed to the building. Buckingham Place is a short dead-end street east of Buckingham Street. There are no accessory buildings on these lots, but there is a play yard on the west side of the Markham School parcel.

Only the large open field behind 15 Craigie Street has expansion potential without requiring demolition or zoning variances. The applicant proposes to construct a 6,400 sf, one-story building on this site that would serve as a cafeteria, gymnasium and assembly space. Demolition of the three buildings on Buckingham Place would provide access during construction and replacement recreational open space.



Zoning diagram of Lower School from BB&N's presentation at the Oct. 6, 2022 CHC hearing. This diagram does not reflect the school's recent purchase of the house and 9,514 sf lot at 5 Buckingham Place.





Lower School Campus Map from BB&N's presentation at the Oct. 6, 2022 CHC hearing.

The neighborhood surrounding the lower school is comprised primarily of single-family houses with the exception of two large apartment buildings at Craigie Circle and a few multiple-unit condominium and apartment houses on Parker Street.

The adjacent Percy Bridgman house at 10 Buckingham Place was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1975 for its associations with Percy Bridgman, a Nobel prize winning physicist who lived in the home between 1928-1961. BB&N proposed demolition of the ell in 1999 but reconsidered its plan following a demolition review hearing with the Historical Commission. The school acquired the house and 9,514 sf lot at 5 Buckingham Place in November 2021. The private homes at 7 Buckingham Place and 4 Buckingham Street are adjacent to the lower school but are not owned by BB&N.

Each of BB&N's academic campuses contain a mix of historic and modern buildings. The Lower School has a total of nine buildings on eight parcels. Four of the nine buildings are used for classrooms, one building is a residence, and the four remaining smaller buildings on Buckingham Place are currently used for offices, admissions, and a boxed-lunch distribution point. The largest parcel on the BB&N lower campus is 15 Craigie Street, which includes the Head of School's residence (1870), Lehner Center (2001) and a playing field. The Morse Building (1967) also faces Craigie Street. The building known as Brick (1920, 1985 addition) is located at the corner of Buckingham and Parker streets.



## Architectural Description



West and south elevations of the Markham building at 10 Buckingham St. CHC staff photo, Nov. 2021.

**Miss Markham's School at 10 Buckingham Street** started as a rectangular mass of 1½ stories measuring 50 x 42 feet in plan with a broad entry porch facing Buckingham Place. The Arts and Crafts Style building was designed with a low hipped roof, shingled walls, projecting eaves, exposed rafter tails and a large combination chimney/belfry by the Boston firm of Andrews, Jaques & Rantoul. The building grew and changed organically as the school grew and educational needs changed. The present-day building is an amalgamation of many additions around the central core of the original building. Most of the additions were built on the east and north sides of the building and included expansion of the second floor with dormers and intersecting hip roofs. The original first-floor layout included a large classroom with hardwood floors and wainscoting. Niches were built into the walls for the display of classical busts. Smaller ante-rooms for support functions were adjacent to the main room. Though partitions later divided the space, the ceiling still reveals the original scale.

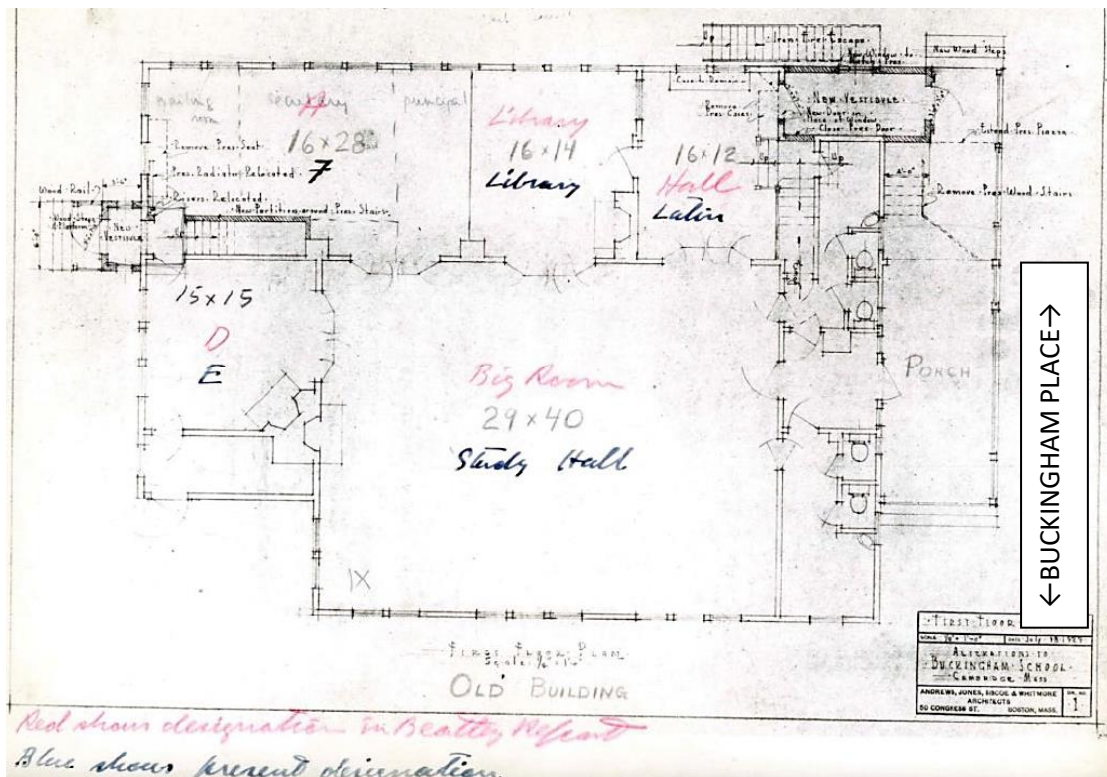


Perspective Sketch of Proposed School for Miss Markham. Andrews, Jacques & Rantoul, architects, 1888.

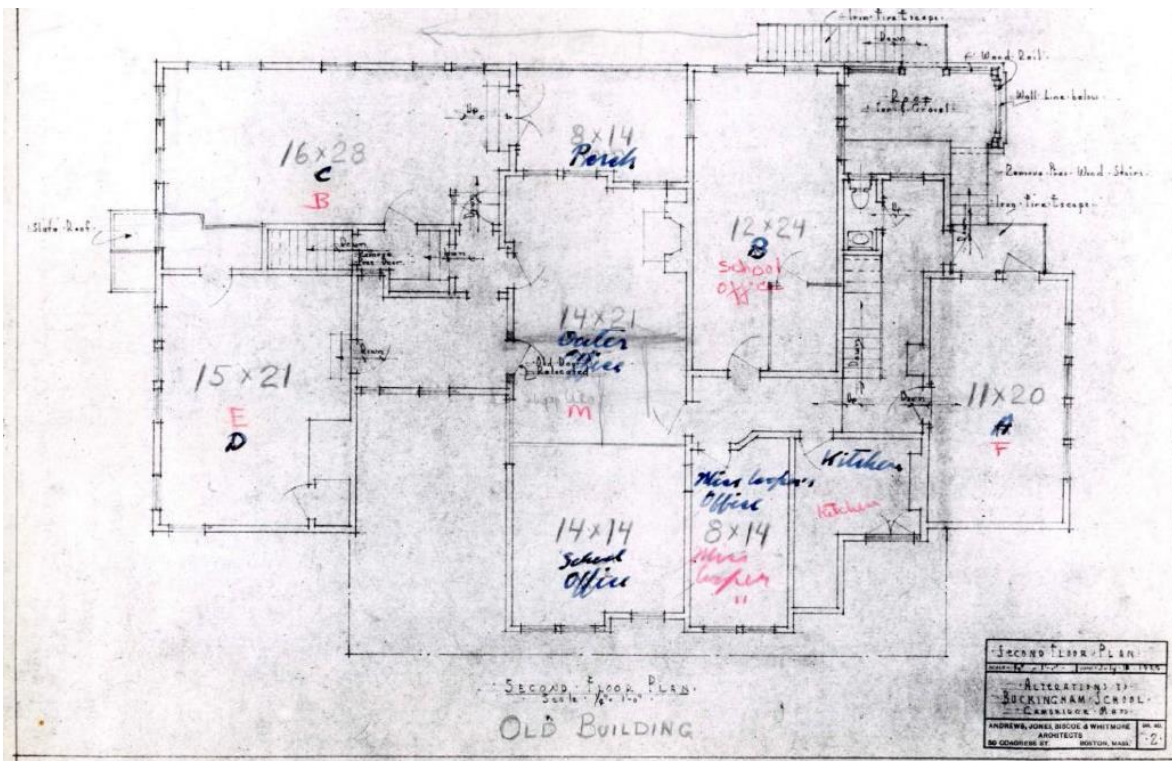




1929



Markham Building, First Floor Plan showing proposed alterations. Andrews, Jones, Biscoe & Whitmore, 1929



Second Floor Plan showing proposed alterations. Andrews, Jones, Biscoe & Whitmore, 1929  
Inspectional Services Dept. plans accompanying permit #32013





Buckingham Browne & Nichols Lower School  
October 6, 2022

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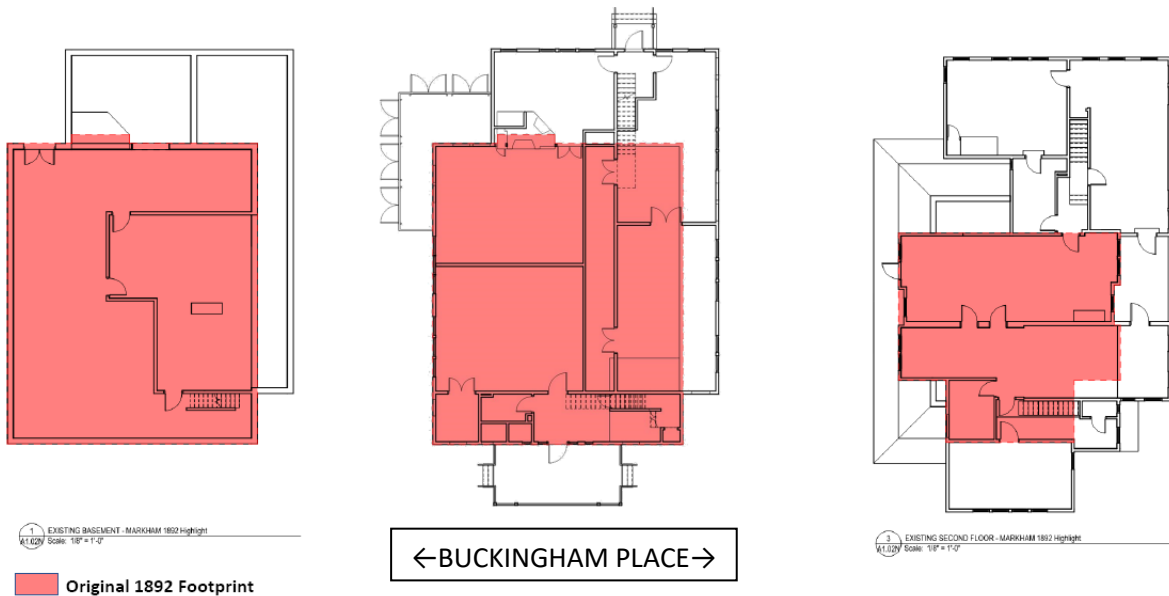


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Brick and Markham ca. 1930, after the 1929 addition (left side of Markham, second floor). "BB&N Lower School Project, October 6, 2022"

### Historic Building Footprints - Markham



Buckingham Browne & Nichols Lower School  
October 6, 2022

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Markham Building footprints, original and present: basement, first floor, second floor.  
"BB&N Lower School Project, October 6, 2022"



Markham Building from the southwest, 1983. Christopher Hale photo, CHC Collections



Markham Building from the northwest, 1983. Christopher Hale photo, CHC Collections





Aerial view of the Markham building, 27 March 2021. From Nearmap.com, accessed 5 Nov. 2021.

The architects of Miss Markham's School, the firm of Andrews, Jaques & Rantoul, were one of the most prestigious operating in Boston at the time. Robert Day Andrews (1857-1928) studied at MIT and trained in the office of Henry Hobson Richardson. In 1885 he joined Herbert Jaques (or Jacques, 1857-1916), an-



113 Brattle St. (1887, Andrews, Jaques & Rantoul, architects)

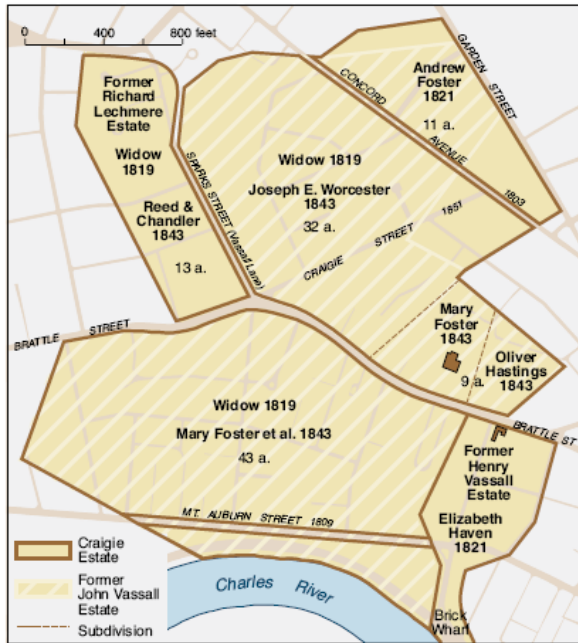
other MIT graduate, in an independent practice, and in about 1890 Harvard graduate Augustus Neal Rantoul (1864-1934) became a partner. In addition to city and suburban residences the firm was responsible for an addition to the Massachusetts State House (1895-1913); high schools in Brookline and Jamaica Plain; the Worcester County Courthouse; office buildings in Denver and Des Moines; and buildings for Colorado College. The firm was responsible for over twenty residences in Cambridge, and one of these, the house at 113 Brattle Street designed in 1887 for Richard Henry Dana and Edith Long-

fellow Dana, undoubtedly earned it the commission for Miss Markham's School in 1892. The firm went on to design Brick in 1920 and (as Andrews, Jones, Biscoe & Whitmore) what seems to be the last major addition to Markham in 1929.

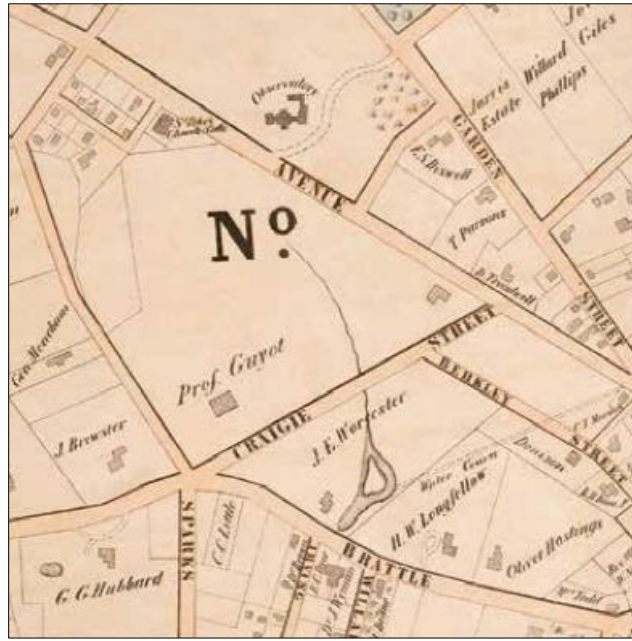


## History and Significance<sup>1</sup>

Buckingham Street and Buckingham Place occupy a small portion of the estate assembled in the 18th century by John Vassall, whose house at 105 Brattle Street is now the Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site. When the Vassall estate was subdivided after the death of Andrew Craigie's widow in 1841 the prosperous lexicographer Joseph E. Worcester bought 32 acres north of Brattle and put up a grand, broad-pilastered Regency-style house at 121 Brattle Street.



Subdivision of the Craigie estate in 1843



The Joseph Worcester estate in 1854. H.F. Walling, *Map of Cambridge, Mass.*

By 1852 Worcester had laid out Craigie Street and the west end of Berkeley and was selling lots with deed restrictions to ensure spacious settings and expensive houses. The first house, 24 Craigie Street, designed in 1854 by Henry Greenough for Professor Arnold Guyot, was probably just what he envisioned. The residence built in 1869 by Albion K.P. Welch, proprietor of the University Press, dominates the intersection of Craigie and Brattle streets and is the best-preserved academic Second Empire house in the city.

Worcester's land extended up Sparks Street to the saddle between Observatory and Reservoir hills. He and an adjoining landowner, George Meacham, straightened the curve just below Huron Avenue, which allowed Boston merchant Charles Deane to build a large Mansard in 1858 that probably had one of the finest views in Cambridge; this is now occupied by BB&N's Middle School.

<sup>1</sup> Portions of this section adapted from Susan Maycock and Charles Sullivan, *Building Old Cambridge: Architecture and Development* (The MIT Press, 2016)



Charles Deane house, 80 Sparks Street (1858) and stable (1867). The house received a brick veneer in 1932; it was acquired by the Buckingham School in 1949. Photo after 1867. CHC collection.

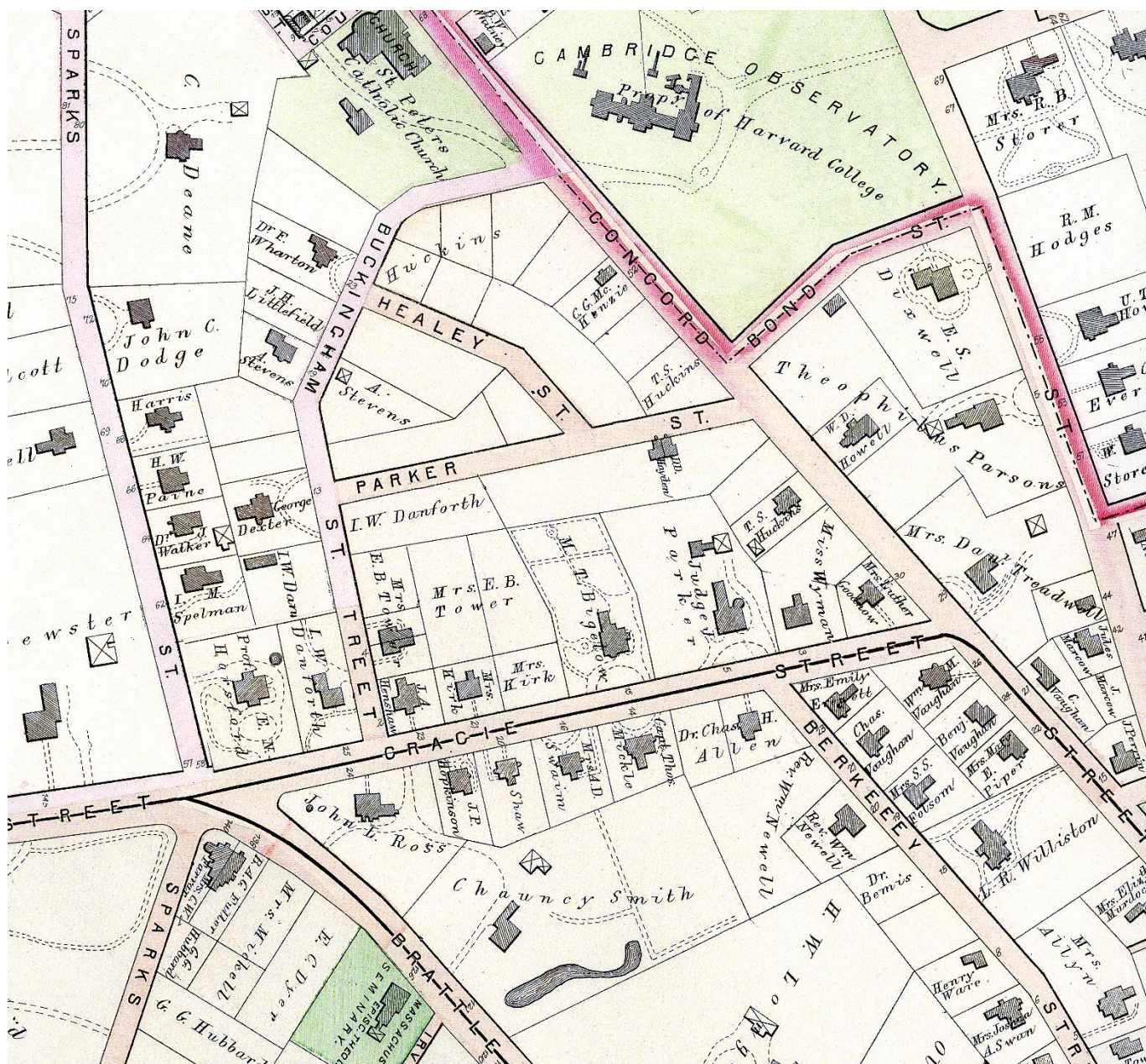
Worcester laid out a new street from Craigie Street to Concord Avenue in 1855 and sold the first two lots to housewrights Oliver Hastings and Albert Stevens. Hastings built 23 Craigie Street for his daughter Caroline on the occasion of her marriage to chemist John Andrew Henshaw. Stevens put up a house around the corner and sold it in 1857 to Ellen and Lucy Buckingham, the unmarried daughters of Joseph Buckingham, a retired newspaper publisher who had just sold his place on Quincy Street; Worcester named the new street in his honor. Notable surviving houses include 13 Buckingham, a Mansard designed for attorney Henry Muzzy by Newburyport architect Rufus Sargent, number 23, an elaborate Stick Style dwelling built in 1878 for Professor James Laughlin, and number 29, an early Queen Anne house built in 1880 for the abolitionist Thomas Wentworth Higginson. The east side of the street falls off to a lower elevation and contains smaller lots laid out in 1872; the Stick Style houses at 60 (1879) and 34 (1882) and the Queen Anne at 50 (1884) are modest in scale but fine examples of the period.

Buckingham Street was acclaimed for its literary residents. F. Stanhope Hill, the Tribune's editor, may have authored the following feature story for his own paper and then sent it out for publication in other New England papers. Here is the piece that ran on the January 21, 1893 in the Cambridge Tribune,

....For a short street, Buckingham street certainly has a **decidedly scientific**, literary, journalistic and scholastic character. Starting at its head we find the Harvard observatory with its full staff of star-gazers, under the direction of Professor Pickering; a little further down our Cambridge poet and essayist, Colonel T. W. Higginson, has his charming English cottage with its well-kept lawn sloping to the Sun; almost opposite, the editor of The Tribune is cosily domiciled; a bit further down dwells Instructor Edward Cummings of the university; on the other side of the street Horace E. Scudder, author and editor of the Atlantic Monthly, resides, when he is not at his summer home at Chocorua, N.H. Nestling shyly between Buckingham and Sparks streets, accessible from either thoroughfare, lives Dr. Justin Winsor,

librarian of the university; in the close neighborhood the Misses Smith have their excellent school in what was the former residence of Mr. George Dexter on Buckingham street; on the other side of the way is Miss Markham's school and, closely adjoining, Miss Emily A. Thackeray, who has done much literary work in various directions, has built herself a very pretty cottage. At the foot of the street on the corner of Craigie Mr. W. M. Griswold, whose descriptive lists of literature are so well and favorably known to writers, owns a large estate. This is not a bad showing for one short Cambridge street where also dwell many other very charming people who are not in the classifications to which we refer.





The former Joseph Worcester estate in 1873, showing Buckingham and Parker streets.

Parker and Healy streets also occupy Worcester land. 'The Hollow' was the source of a brook that fed Craigie's Pond; it was recalled as "a pretty open marshy place where the neighborhood children picked wildflowers as late as the eighties of the nineteenth century" (Howe, "Lost Brook," 53). In 1890, Somerville builder Suther Blaikie put up seven Queen Annes on Parker Street, some of which he sold to African American families. Many of these houses had inadequate footings for the peat that underlay the area and had to be placed on new foundations.

David Tower (1808-1868), a teacher and textbook author, acquired the Buckingham house in 1865. His widow laid out Buckingham Place with six house lots in 1892. Emily Thackeray, a journalist and teacher, built a gambrel cottage (Now BB&N's Kelsey House) at 4, and next door Jeanette Markham put up a schoolhouse with the assistance of a neighborhood mother, Edith Longfellow Dana; this became the Buckingham School in 1902. The houses at 5, 7, and 10, designed in 1892-93 by William Griswold, a journalist and amateur architect who lived at 25 Craigie Street, led the Cambridge Tribune to declare the street "an exceedingly pretty place" (Apr. 28, 1894). Number 6 (BB&N's Morrison House) was originally





## Individuals Associated with 10 Buckingham Street and Miss Markham's School



Thomas W. Higginson. Brittanica.com

**Thomas Wentworth Higginson** (1823-1911) belonged to a constellation of nationally-known literary figures associated with Cambridge in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that included Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Richard Henry Dana II, James Russell Lowell, and William Dean Howells. Wikipedia sums up his career this way:

“Thomas Wentworth Higginson ... was an American Unitarian minister, author, abolitionist, politician, and soldier. He was active in abolitionism in the United States during the 1840s and 1850s, identifying himself with disunion and militant abolitionism. He was a member of the Secret Six who supported John Brown. During the Civil War, he served as colonel of the 1st South Carolina Volunteers, the first federally authorized black regiment, from 1862 to 1864. Following the war, he wrote about his experiences with African American soldiers and devoted much of the rest of his life to fighting for the rights of freed people, women, and other disfranchised peoples. He is

also remembered as a mentor to poet Emily Dickinson.”<sup>2</sup>

Higginson was born on Kirkland Street in 1823, and after graduating from Harvard Divinity School in 1847 served several different congregations around New England. After the Civil War he settled in Cambridge and served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1879-1880. His first wife died in 1877, and in 1879 he married Mary Potter Thatcher, who bore him two children. He purchased a lot at 29 Buckingham Street in 1880 and built an innovative Queen Anne Style house the following year.

**Jeannette Sumner Markham** (1862-1932), a young school-teacher living with her parents in Atchison, Kansas, heard about the higher educational opportunities for women in Cambridge through her local newspaper. She found her way to the Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women (aka the Harvard Annex and future Radcliffe College) with the local assistance of Miss Ellen F. Mason. As a student at the Annex, Markham boarded with the family of Thomas Wentworth Higginson at 29 Buckingham Street. She began teaching Higginson's daughter Margaret and with his recommendation, other families in the neighborhood began to send their children to her as well. Miss Markham opened a school in 1889 in the Cummings home at 64 (now 74) Buckingham Street. The first building constructed for Miss Markham's School was financed by Edith Longfellow Dana on land that she purchased in 1890 at 10 Buckingham Street (2 Buckingham Place). The building was completed in 1892 and opened for classes that fall. It is now the oldest building in Cambridge built as a private school and still in use.<sup>3</sup>



Jeanette Markham. BB&N Archives

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\\_Wentworth\\_Higginson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Wentworth_Higginson).

<sup>3</sup> Some private school masters and mistresses built classroom additions that were later detached and converted to residences, as at 15 Berkeley Street and 11 Buckingham Street. Miss Harris's School at 5 Ash Street (1886) predated Miss Markham's School

The Markham building was built with financial assistance from Edith Longfellow Dana and her husband, Richard Henry Dana III, who held the title until the property was transferred to the Buckingham School in 1902. Miss Markham's living quarters were on the upper floor, while the large classroom on the first floor, known as Buckingham Hall, was rented out for theatricals, concerts, and dances. Miss Markham's School competed with Brattle Hall (now the Brattle Theater) as a center of social life in the community.

In 1901 Miss Markham left the school for married life. Public school teachers were not allowed to keep their jobs once they got married. Though this was her own school, it wasn't socially acceptable for a married woman to teach children and other arrangements had to be made for its continuation. The parents incorporated the Buckingham School in 1902 and it remained in continuous operation.

Markham's husband was Winthrop S. Scudder, an editor at Houghton Mifflin, who had been widowed with one son two years earlier. She remained active in Old Cambridge social and charitable circles. The family lived at 2 Phillips Place, 4 Willard Street and 7 Longfellow Park. After Winthrop Scudder retired in 1919, the Scudders enjoyed traveling to the American Southwest and Europe.



Edith Longfellow Dana and Richard Henry Dana, III.,  
ca. 1880. National Park Service.

**Richard Henry Dana III (1851–1931)** grew up on Berkeley Street with Longfellow's children, the budding ornithologist William Brewster, and Brewster's close friend, the future sculptor Daniel Chester French. Dana graduated from Harvard Law School in 1877 and married **Edith Longfellow (1853-1915)** a year later. He was as devoted to reform as his father and advocated for civil service and the secret ballot. Although he served on commissions that built the Charles River Dam and the Longfellow Bridge, the greatest part of his public service was performed as a trustee of organizations ranging from the Episcopal Theological School to the Cambridge Boat Club. Edith Dana ("Edith with

the golden-hair" from her father's poem "The Children's Hour") was her father's fifth child. According to the National Park Service,

Edith was a devoted mother in raising her six children: Richard Henry IV, Henry W.L. ("Harry"), Frances Appleton, Allston, Edmund Trowbridge ("Ned"), and Delia Farley. She also participated in civic activities, namely the Cambridge Historical Society, the Humane Society, and the Holy Ghost Hospital for Incurables. Inspired by her husband, she joined the Woman's Auxiliary to the Civil Service Reform Society. Like much of her family, she was fascinated by history, particularly the history of her childhood home and its connection to George Washington.<sup>4</sup>

Richard and Edith's six children were all born between 1879 and 1889, so providing for their care and education was a major concern that was accommodated by the impromptu school that Miss Markham established at Thomas Wentworth Higginson's home in 1889 (see below). Some of the Dana children attended Miss Markham's initial classes at the Higginson's and the Cummings' houses, and Mrs. Dana was sufficiently impressed that she purchased a former pear orchard from the Tower heirs and arranged for the design and construction of the school. The Danas held title to the schoolhouse at 10 Buckingham Street and undoubtedly chose the architect.

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but was remodeled as a residence in 1890. The oldest public school remaining in Cambridge is the Boardman at 105 Windsor Street (1868).

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nps.gov/long/learn/historyculture/edith-longfellow-dana.htm>



### **Private Schools in Cambridge<sup>5</sup>**

Private schools continue to play an important role in the education of the region's children and in the development of the city. In the early days, many small private schools operated in a teacher's home for only a few years. Some added classroom wings to their houses, while the most successful founded independent schools that long outlived them.

Dame schools, typically run by an older woman in her own home, were a common choice for families able to give their children an early start. Miss Jennison's school operated in Deacon Moore's old house at Garden and Mason streets in the 1840s and '50s for "the daughters and small sons of the best families," such as Thomas Wentworth Higginson and James Russell Lowell. Richard Henry Dana 2nd attended a school kept by Ralph Waldo Emerson about 1820, and Lowell, Higginson, and Dana continued their education at William Wells' boarding school at 175 Brattle Street.



Miss Jennison's School at 11 Garden Street. This daguerreotype was taken for Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, whose son Charlie is sitting on the fencepost dressed in black. Behind him on the right is Elizabeth Ellery ("Lily") Dana; among the seven boys and eleven girls are Ernest Longfellow, Benjie Peirce, the Dixwell sisters, one of Winslow Homer's brothers, and future admiral Charles Henry Davis Jr. Miss Jennison died a year or two after the photo was taken, and the house was demolished in 1863. Photo 1851–52.

Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz operated the Agassiz School for Girls from 1855 to 1863 in her home at 36 Quincy Street. Professor Agassiz himself lectured in the school, which was one of the first to offer a scientific education for women. Mrs. Agassiz was one of seven ladies who in 1879 published a circular offering women collegiate instruction by members of the Harvard faculty, and in 1883 she became the first president of the Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women, soon renamed Radcliffe College.



Berkeley Street School students in front of the school wing at 15 Berkeley Street. Photo ca. 1897.

Lyman Richards Williston, principal of the Cambridge High School, founded a private school for girls on Irving Street in 1862. Lyman built a large Italianate house at 15 Berkeley Street with a one-story classroom wing in 1863 (left). The Berkeley Street School operated until 1912, when it merged with the Cambridge School for Girls.

Kate V. Smith and her sisters opened the first private co-educational institution for college preparation in Cambridge in 1879. The Misses Smith's School was located at 16 Ash Street and 5 Phillips Place before moving in 1887 to the Smiths' home at 13 Buckingham Street. A schoolroom addition was relocated to 11 Buckingham Street where it was converted to a residence.

<sup>5</sup> This section adapted from Susan Maycock and Charles Sullivan, *Building Old Cambridge: Architecture and Development* (The MIT Press, 2016). See pp. 649–658 for illustrations.



Browne & Nichols School, 11 Appian Way. The original building, the John Warland Jr. house (1804), is at right. The gymnasium (1887) behind 11 Appian Way is in the center. A new academic building (1894, Browne & Stearns, architects) is on the left. All were sold to Radcliffe and demolished by 1929. Photo ca. 1895

Three schools founded in private homes in the 1880s – Browne & Nichols, Buckingham, and the Cambridge School for Girls – built campuses in Old Cambridge. In 1883 George Browne and Edgar Nichols, both 1878 graduates of Harvard, announced the opening of a college preparatory school for boys in a rented house at 11 Appian Way. By 1886 Browne & Nichols also occupied a house at 8 Garden Street; a few years later it built a gymnasium. In 1894, with an enrollment of seventy-five, the school erected its first new academic building.

By 1897 Browne & Nichols needed additional space and Radcliffe College wanted to expand, so the institutions exchanged properties. B&N erected a three-story Georgian Revival building at 20 Garden Street (right). Radcliffe occupied the old B&N buildings on Appian Way until Longfellow Hall replaced them in 1929. In 1912 Browne & Nichols purchased part of the Coolidge farm, a former salt marsh at Gerry's Landing recently protected from the tides by the Charles River Dam. The school leveled a drumlin to raise the grade of Nichols Field, constructed a locker building and a baseball cage, and added a woodworking shop known as the Sloyd Building in 1932. B&N announced in 1928 that it planned to relocate to Gerry's Landing to conform to the country day school model popular at the time, but it did not begin to develop the new site until 1948.



As already noted, Jeanette Markham, founder of the Buckingham School, was a Radcliffe scholarship student from Atchison, Kansas, who lived with Thomas Wentworth Higginson's family and cared for their young daughter. Miss Markham's School began in 1889 across the street in a private house at 64 (now numbered 74) Buckingham Street owned by Theron and Louisa Cummings. After a year, Mrs. Richard Henry (Edith Longfellow) Dana bought a lot on the corner of Buckingham Place and lent Miss Markham money to build what is now the oldest private school building in Cambridge. After a decade Miss



Markham resigned to marry, and in 1902 parents and neighbors incorporated the Buckingham School to continue as before.



“Brick”, Buckingham School, 16 Buckingham Street (1920, Andrews, Rantoul & Jones, architects). Photo ca. 1925

In 1920 Buckingham erected a Georgian Revival building (known as “Brick”) at the corner of Parker Street that contained an assembly hall and a two-story gymnasium with a fine trussed ceiling. A 1980 addition incorporated the exterior of the gym, including the cornice and part of the roof, into an atrium designed by Architectural Resources

Cambridge. In 1949 the school purchased the old Deane residence at 80 Sparks Street for its upper school, which had been established for girls in 1924; a previous owner had remodeled this 1858 Second Empire mansion with a brick veneer and Georgian Revival detail in 1932. In 1967 Ashley/Myer/ Smith designed a new lower school at 19 Craigie Street that incorporated charming irregularities in room shapes, floor levels, and ceiling heights to create a varied and stimulating environment. In spite of its modern design, the building’s mass, use of gables, and placement on the lot respect the residential character of the neighborhood.



Buckingham School (now BB&N Lower School), 19 Craigie Street (1967, Ashley/Myer/Smith Architects). Photo ca. 1970

Arthur Gilman (1836–1909), who had been instrumental in founding Radcliffe College in 1879 and continued as one of its regents, founded the Cambridge School for Girls in 1886. Gilman had grown up in New York, retired from business there, and arrived in Cambridge in 1870 with a growing family of daughters and a strong interest in education. The Cambridge School soon outgrew the ca. 1770 Josiah

Mason house at 20 Mason Street as well as subsequent buildings at 77 Brattle Street and 21 Chauncy Street. In 1896 he erected a classroom building at 34 Concord Avenue. In 1931 the upper school relocated to the suburbs and became the Cambridge School of Weston. The lower school remained and in 1948 became Lesley College's Ellis School for Children.

A few Harvard families founded the Cooperative Open-Air School (now the Shady Hill School) in 1915. Six boys and girls began taking lessons on a sleeping porch at 16 Quincy Street, the home of philosophy professor William Ernest Hocking and his wife, Agnes Boyle O'Reilly, whose children comprised half the student body. After a successful year the parents bought a lot on the corner of Holden and Scott streets, and in August 1916 the city issued permits for five small buildings.

The Open-Air School began with no defined educational theory, and many of its methods were experimental. The school became known for using parents in the classroom, for a teaching approach called "central subject" that organized the year's curriculum, an emphasis on learning through first-hand experience rather than textbooks, and above all for holding open-air classes. In the low, open-sided buildings in their wooded setting the children worked through the winter wearing layers of heavy woolen clothes, mittens, and padded bags that came over their shoulders. In 1925 and 1926, when enrollment reached about 135, the Open-Air trustees purchased land between Coolidge Hill and Cambridge Cemetery adjoining Nichols Field and adopted the name Shady Hill to recall its old site.



Gilman Hall, Cambridge School for Girls, 77 Brattle Street (1893, E.N. Boyden, architect). Radcliffe moved Gilman Hall to 8 Garden Street in 1907 to make way for Schlesinger Library, and then moved it again to 73 Brattle Street in 1930 for Byerly Hall. It was demolished in 1932. Photo ca. 1905



The new Shady Hill School under construction at Coolidge Hill. Photo ca. 1926.

The 1960s were a difficult period for private secondary schools in New England, and several – such as Northfield and Mount Hermon – chose to merge. Browne & Nichols and Buckingham combined to become Buckingham Browne & Nichols in 1974. The upper schools were consolidated at Gerry's Landing, the middle schools at 80 Sparks Street, and the lower schools on Buckingham Place. BB&N acquired several adjoining houses for redevelopment of the latter campus but instead entered into a community



planning process that resulted in partial restoration of 15 Craigie Street for a headmaster's residence and construction of a striking new science building designed by Ann Beha Associates. BB&N continues to grow and expand as a premier private day school.

Historically, private schools as well as Harvard, MIT, and Lesley University have often sought to expand in Cambridge at the expense of their surroundings. Each institution has dealt with the imperative for growth in different ways. Stymied by community opposition, Harvard University stopped expanding in Cambridge in the late 1990s and instead focused on its newly-acquired land in Allston. MIT, surrounded by factories, was largely buffered from community opposition as it expanded after WWII. Lesley College was founded in a private house on Everett Street in 1891. In the 1950s it developed a small campus on Oxford Street and acquired dozens of Victorian houses in the Baldwin neighborhood. Blocked by the community, it expanded into the former Sears, Roebuck store in Porter Square and then by the acquisition of the entire campus of the Episcopal Divinity School in the 2010s. While BB&N and Shady Hill have been able to expand at their Gerry's Landing campuses with little opposition, expansion into residential neighborhoods such as Buckingham and Sparks streets remains problematic.

### **Significance of the Property**

Miss Markham's School at 10 Buckingham Street is significant for its important associations with the cultural and social history of Cambridge, specifically for its relationship to schoolmistress Jeanette Markham and the founding of Buckingham School as well as for its important associations to other local educators and literary figures including Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Richard Henry and Edith Longfellow Dana. 10 Buckingham Street is also architecturally significant for its important associations with architects Andrews, Jacques & Rantoul, as the oldest extant purpose-built private school building in Cambridge, and in the context of the Buckingham Street neighborhood.

### **Relationship of Property to Landmark Designation Criteria**

The purpose of landmark designation is described in Ch. 2.78.140 of the City Code, which was enacted in 1983:

... to preserve, conserve and protect the beauty and heritage of the City and to improve the quality of its environment through identification, conservation and maintenance of neighborhoods, sites and structures which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City; to resist and restrain environmental influences adverse to this purpose; to foster appropriate use and wider public knowledge and appreciation of such neighborhoods, areas, or structures; and by furthering these purposes to promote the public welfare by making the city a more desirable place in which to live and work.

The enabling ordinance states:

The Historical Commission by majority vote may recommend for designation as a land-mark any property within the City being or containing a place, structure, feature or object which it determines to be either (1) importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, aesthetic, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth or (2) historically or architecturally significant (in terms of its period, style, method of construction or association with a famous architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of structures ... (Chapter 2.78.180.A)

Miss Markham's School meets criterion (1) for its associations with the architectural, cultural and social history of Cambridge, and criterion (2) as "architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of construction or association with a famous architect or builder)."

### **Standards and Criteria for Review of Alterations**

Under the neighborhood conservation district and landmark designation ordinance, Ch. 2.78, Art. III, the Historical Commission is charged with reviewing all construction, demolition or alterations that affect exterior architectural features (other than color) of a designated landmark. This section of the report describes exterior architectural features of the proposed landmarks. Except as the Order designating or amending the landmarks may otherwise provide, the exterior architectural features described in this report should be preserved and/or enhanced in any proposed alteration or construction that affects those features of the buildings.

The Standards described below represent current best practices in historic preservation and are generally applicable to any designated property. The following Guidelines are to be consulted during consideration of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for alterations to the landmarks described in this report. The standards and guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive or comprehensive; the Commission must use its collective judgement in determining the appropriateness of any proposed project.

In this context the verb should indicates a recommended course of action; the verbs shall or must indicate those actions which are specifically required to preserve and protect significant architectural elements.



## A. General Standards for Landmarks

Subject to review and approval of alterations to exterior architectural features under the terms of this report, the following standards shall apply:

1. The historic character of a property must be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property must be avoided.
2. Changes and additions to the landmark which have taken place over time are evidence of the history of the property and its context. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right and, if so, that significance should be recognized and respected.
3. Significant historic and architectural features of the landmark, including but not limited to those identified in this report, should be preserved if practicable in a manner consistent with these standards.
4. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement, the new feature must match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.
5. The use of synthetic replacement materials is discouraged, except when substituted for perishable features exposed to the weather or when necessary to accommodate the effects of climate change.<sup>6</sup>
6. Chemical and/or physical treatments (such as sandblasting) must not be used in a manner that damages historic materials. The surface cleaning of structures must be undertaken using the gentlest means possible and the results should preserve the patina that characterizes the age of the structure. Applications of paint or masonry preservative solutions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis; painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.
7. Architectural (building façade) lighting, streetscape lighting, and signage lighting, when allowed by a Certificate of Appropriateness, should reinforce definitive characteristics of historic and contemporary architecture as well as create high quality 24-hour streetscapes. To achieve these goals, projects should minimize brightness and light trespass, monitor light color (temperature Kelvin), and focus lighting on significant features.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project should be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures must be undertaken.
9. Alterations or additions that may be needed to assure the continued use of the historic structure or site or that expand the volume or footprint of the structure should not radically change, obscure or destroy character defining spaces, materials, features or finishes. New additions should be considered only after it has been determined that project requirements cannot be successfully met by altering non-character-defining interior spaces.
10. Additions should reflect an explicit understanding of the architectural character of the historic building and its context. Additions should be designed in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new, but should not arbitrarily impose contrasting materials, scales, or design vocabularies. The design of the work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic building. Regardless of the design approach, the result should appear as a harmonious whole.

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<sup>6</sup> See *Cambridge Historical Commission Practices in Reviewing Synthetic Trim and Gutters*, June 26, 2018

- a. Additions should respect the essential form of the historic building and be clearly recessive or subsidiary to the original structure in location, massing, materials, finishes, and textures. Additions are best located at the rear and/or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building and limited in size and scale in relationship to the historic building.
  - b. Additions should be considered in terms of their effect on the context of the site. Additions can contribute variety and interest in complex urban environments but should not dominate or distract from significant nearby structures.
  - c. Additions should not compromise the historic aspects, architectural significance, or the distinct character of the landmark, neighborhood, and environment.
  - d. Additions should be clearly differentiated from the historic building but still compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and color.
  - e. Additions should cause the least possible loss of historic materials so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.
  - f. Rooftop additions should be set well back from historic facades so that the historic structure retains its integrity of form and mass. Additional stories, when required for the new use, should be set back from the wall plane and be as inconspicuous as possible when viewed from the street. Designers should be cognizant of distant views and neighborhood context and take advantage of existing parapets to conceal rooftop structures.
  - g. Additions such as balconies and greenhouses should be placed on non-character-defining elevations and limited in size and scale in relationship to the historic building.
  - h. Additions should be designed in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future the essential form and integrity of the landmark would be unimpaired.
- 11. New construction on a designated property shall conform to the guidelines for alterations, where applicable.
  - 12. Demolition of a designated structure can be allowed only as a last resort after all practicable measures have been taken to ensure preservation, or unless required to comply with requirements certified by a duly authorized public officer to be necessary for public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition.
  - 13. Climate Resiliency and Renewable Energy Features should be installed so as to minimize their impact on the appearance of the historic structure. Solar panels should be installed on the same plane as the roof and no closer than 18" from roof ends, peak, or eaves. Conduits and electrical panels should be installed on secondary elevations. Heat pumps and associated conduits should be installed on secondary facades. Elevated foundations should complement historic fabric when appropriate to do so.
  - 14. Accessibility improvements may not be unreasonably denied. Both temporary and permanent accessibility improvements should avoid irreversible alterations to historic fabric. Temporary accessibility features (such as ramps constructed of standardized metal components that can be assembled and disassembled in the same manner) shall be approved by staff within one business day. When appropriate, alterations to the topography or grades of a site should be prioritized over construction of ramps or lifts.

#### B. Guidelines for 10 Buckingham Street

Miss Markham's School is a relatively small academic building that has been altered many times during its 130 years of use. Some alterations were designed by the original or later architects, while



others appear to have been carried out ad hoc. Not all are documented in city records. Some may be considered superfluous, redundant, not significant, or damaging to the fabric of the building, while others may have achieved significance because of their architectural character or original purpose.

A forensic analysis or historic structures report would record the existing spaces, features, and materials of the building, and, in combination with an analysis of available records, allow the Owner and the Commission to evaluate proposals for alterations and additions. Consideration of alterations at Markham must recognize the educational priorities and operational necessities associated with its use as a school. Life safety requirements for continued operation as a school must be accommodated.

#### 1. Architectural Character

The Markham schoolhouse originated as an Arts and Crafts Style building designed with a low hipped roof, projecting eaves, exposed rafter tails and a large combination chimney/belfry. Multiple additions (at least one of which can be attributed to the original architect) complicate the form and obscure the original design, but all exterior surfaces are clad with cedar shingles with woven corners. Small-paned wooden sash predominate while window trim is unadorned flat stock. The porch and entry on Buckingham Place retain their original features.

#### 2. Site Development.

The Markham schoolhouse is sited directly on Buckingham Place but has a 45' setback from Buckingham Street. In conjunction with efforts to restore the architectural character of the building the Commission will consider its relocation closer to Buckingham Street or Brick. New construction on the premises should not obscure the building from the public way.

#### 3. Future Alterations, Construction, or Demolition

All publicly-visible exterior alterations, construction or demolition will be subject to binding review through the Certificate of Appropriateness process. While alterations are generally seen as significant to the history of a building, some may be considered deleterious and may be considered for removal or alteration. Decisions about removal or reversal of additions and alterations could have the aim of returning the exterior appearance of the building to some earlier stage of development, but alternative rationales may be considered. New additions should be designed to complement the architectural character of the structure in accordance with the General Standards.

Demolition of the entire structure would be considered only as a last resort, and only after a replacement structure has received a Certificate of Appropriateness.

#### 4. Exterior surfaces

Original exterior materials on the publicly visible facades must be preserved or restored insofar as practicable.

#### 5. Foundations and chimneys

Foundation and chimney repairs on the publicly visible elevations must be made in kind, using original materials if practicable. Special care must be taken to protect and maintain brick and stone masonry. Repointing the mortar joints must maintain the strength, color and texture of the mortar and the size and profile of the joints, and samples of the proposed work must receive prior approval of CHC staff. Paint removal, if undertaken, must be carried out with minimum pressure and minimum chemical concentrations, subject to on-site staff monitoring. Application of paint on unpainted exterior masonry is discouraged, but if implemented must follow Commission requirements.

#### 6. Windows

Original sash should be evaluated for restoration while maintaining operability. Replacement windows should replicate historic patterns and details as closely as practicable while achieving energy efficiency goals. Only half-screens will be allowed on double-hung windows. Storm windows may be installed without review in conformance with current Commission policy.

#### 7. Facade Repairs and Restoration

Evidence of prior details that may have been removed or covered by subsequent alterations and additions shall be carefully preserved and used to prepare replacement details. The Owner and CHC staff may identify deteriorated materials for replacement in kind. Replacement of deteriorated materials with synthetic materials for perishable features exposed to the weather or when necessary to accommodate the effects of climate change shall be permitted in accordance with CHC practices ([https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/historicalcommission/pdf/policy\\_synthetics.pdf](https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/historicalcommission/pdf/policy_synthetics.pdf)). Lead paint may be abated by chemical or mechanical means, subject to applicable codes and approval of the staff.

#### 8. Roof

The original roofing material was wood shingles; it is now asphalt shingles. Color and pattern of replacement asphalt shingles will be subject to CHC staff approval. Publicly-visible rooftop HVAC equipment are discouraged.

#### 9. Additions

Additions to the north, west, and east elevations of Markham might be considered in conjunction with appropriate alterations. Evaluation of proposed additions should consider the architectural character of the schoolhouse and its immediate surroundings. Additions should represent the period in which they are designed but be secondary to and appropriate to the historic character of the main structure. Additions should respect the form, massing, scale and materials of the original structure.

#### 10. Site features

Alterations to publicly visible landscape structures, including walls, fences, paths, driveways, and the like, should be compatible with the original design and materials. Fences or walls at the sidewalks should be kept low so that views of the building and significant exterior features are not obstructed, taking into account provisions for the safety and privacy of students. HVAC equipment should not be placed in the north, south or west setbacks or attached to publicly-visible exterior walls. Playground equipment such as swings, slides, climbing structures and the like may be installed, relocated, or removed without review by the Commission.

#### 11. Exterior Colors

Although exterior colors of landmarks are not subject to the jurisdiction of the Historical Commission, the Owner is strongly encouraged to paint the exterior in a period-appropriate color scheme and to seek the advice and consultation of CHC staff.

#### 12. Interior features

Although interior features are not subject to the jurisdiction of the Cambridge Historical Commission, the owners are encouraged to preserve all original window and door trim, fireplace surrounds, bannisters, and the like.

#### 13. Life Safety

Any alterations required to the structure to meet life safety requirements for the operation of a school building, if imposed by any federal, state, or local government, or required in writing by



any accreditation agency or authority of which the School is a member, including but not limited to safety provisions pertaining to lighting, security systems, entry or egress doors, windows, or disability access, shall not be subject to the jurisdiction of the Cambridge Historical Commission.

### **Conclusion**

A recommendation for designation of Miss Markham's School, if accepted by the City Council, would allow the exploration of alternatives for demolition that would preserve essential features of the premises. Such alternatives could include relocation and/or restoration of Markham or construction of an accessible addition.

**Proposed Order Designating 10 Buckingham Street as a Cambridge Landmark**

ORDERED,

That Miss Markham's School (the Markham Building) at 10 Buckingham Street be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter 2.78, Article III, Section 2.78.180 of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on October 5, 2023. The premises so designated are the land defined as parcel 27 on assessor's map 224 and the structures thereon.

This designation is justified by the high level of significance exhibited by building's associations with the cultural and social history of the city, specifically with the original Miss Markham's School and its founder, Jeanette Markham, with the Buckingham and Buckingham Browne & Nichols schools, and with Cambridge residents Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Richard Henry and Edith Longfellow Dana III, and also for its associations with the architectural firm of Andrews, Jaques and Rantoul, as the oldest purpose-built private school building still in use in the city, and for its importance to the historical and architectural character of Buckingham Street.

The effect of this designation shall be that review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability shall be required before any construction activity can take place within the designated premises or any action can be taken affecting the appearance of the premises, that would in either case be visible from a public way. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the Final Landmark Designation Report, dated November 7, 2023 with respect to the designated premises, by the Standards and Criteria contained in said report, and by the applicable sections of Chapter 2.78, Article III, of the Cambridge Municipal Code.



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## CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Joseph V. Ferrara, Chandra Harrington, Elizabeth Lyster, Jo M. Solet, Yuting Zhang, *Members*

Gavin W. Kleespies, Paula A. Paris, Kyle Sheffield, *Alternates*

December 6, 2023

To: Yi-An Huang, City Manager

From: Charles Sullivan, Executive Director  
Cambridge Historical Commission

Re: Final Landmark Designation Report, Miss Markham's School, 10 Buckingham Street,

I am submitting the Final Landmark Designation Report for Miss Markham's School at 10 Buckingham Street on the Buckingham, Browne & Nichols (BB&N) Lower School campus with the request of the Cambridge Historical Commission that it be transmitted to the City Council for their consideration.

The Commission considers Markham significant for its many associations with the cultural and social history of the city. It was the first building of the original Miss Markham's School and remains the oldest purpose-built private school building still in use in the city. Preservation of the Markham Building would honor a pioneering woman educator, Jeanette Markham, and commemorate the formative educational experiences of thousands of schoolchildren who have attended classes there for the past 130 years.

On October 5 the Commission held a public hearing to consider landmark designation of BB&N's Markham, Kelsey and Morrison buildings. The Commissioners voted against designation of Kelsey and Morrison, and BB&N is now free to clear those sites to accommodate the renovation of Brick and construction of a new Meeting House, as outlined in the school's October 6, 2022 presentation to the Commission.

After the hearing CHC staff updated the Preliminary Report and circulated it for comments. BB&N staff made numerous suggestions and edits, corrected factual errors, and suggested changes in emphasis. The *Guidelines for Review of Alterations* to Markham now incorporate suggestions from school administrators exempting from review required life safety improvements and playground equipment. The guidelines recognize the complex history of the building and offer a framework for evaluating proposals for both new additions and removal of old ones, accept synthetic materials consistent with existing CHC practice, and facilitate achievement of the City's climate resiliency and accessibility goals.

The effect of the designation, which can be accomplished by a simple majority vote adopting the attached Order, will be to protect the publicly-visible exterior of Miss Markham's School from demolition or inappropriate alterations or additions while allowing the School to proceed with their stated development plans with no further review by the Historical Commission.

Attachment





# City of Cambridge

Agenda Item Number 5  
**IN CITY COUNCIL**  
December 18, 2023

## ORDERED:

That Miss Markham's School (the Markham Building) at 10 Buckingham Street be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter 2.78, Article III, Section 2.78.180 of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on October 5, 2023. The premises so designated are the land defined as parcel 27 on assessor's map 224 and the structures thereon.

This designation is justified by the high level of significance exhibited by building's associations with the cultural and social history of the city, specifically with the original Miss Markham's School and its founder, Jeanette Markham, with the Buckingham and Buckingham Browne & Nichols schools, and with Cambridge residents Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Richard Henry and Edith Longfellow Dana III, and also for its associations with the architectural firm of Andrews, Jaques and Rantoul, as the oldest purpose-built private school building still in use in the city, and for its importance to the historical and architectural character of Buckingham Street.

The effect of this designation shall be that review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability shall be required before any construction activity can take place within the designated premises or any action can be taken affecting the appearance of the premises, that would in either case be visible from a public way. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the Final Landmark Designation Report, dated November 7, 2023 with respect to the designated premises, by the Standards and Criteria contained in said report, and by the applicable sections of Chapter 2.78, Article III, of the Cambridge Municipal Code.