

# FORM B – BUILDING

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



MA, Chelmsford, Acton Road #77, 10/13/2006

Assessor's Number 1/SGIS Quad Areas) Form Number

93/357/11	Tyngsboro		303
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Town Chelmsford  
 Place (neighborhood or village) Chelmsford Center

Address 77 Acton Road

Historic Name

Uses: Present 2 family residence  
 Original 2 family residence

Date of Construction 1888

Source Lowell Weekly Journal: Nov. 7, 1878; Sept. 28, 1888

Style/Form

Architect/Builder Eugene Prescott, builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation cemented rocks

Wall/Trim vinyl siding

Roof slate: ridge front to back

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

none

Major Alterations (with dates)

before 1912 addition at rear  
 between 1912 – 1971 porch removed, front & left corner  
 see continuation sheets for more changes

Condition fair to good

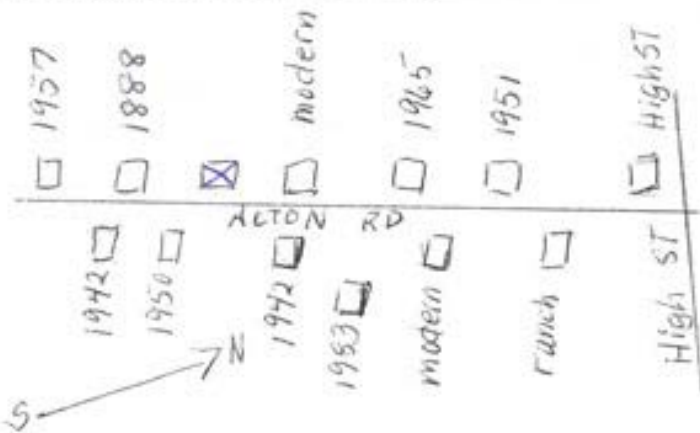
Moved  no  yes Date

Acreage 18636 sq. ft.

Setting The house is located on busy Rt. 110 in a mostly residential area. Behind 77 Acton Rd, the ground slopes down to a woods, which are behind all the house on this side of the road toward the cemetery & Chelmsford Center. A wide driveway leads from the road up beside the left side of the house. A swampy ravine lies between the driveway and #85 Acton Rd next door.

## Sketch Map

Draw a map showing the building's location in relation to the nearest cross streets and or major natural features. Show all buildings between inventoried building and nearest intersection or natural feature. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Circle and number the inventoried building. Indicate north.



Recorded by Jane B. Drury

Organization for Chelmsford Historical Commission

Date (month year) May 2006

## BUILDING FORM

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION see continuation sheet

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

This 2½ story tenement dwelling located at 77 Acton Road has many roof lines, although its primary roof ridge goes front to rear. A turret is located on the front right side of it. Sometime during the 1976 – 1995 period the attic was used for a business office. However, the present owners have converted it, the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, to a bedroom area. A paved driveway goes from the street (Acton Rd.) to the rear of the building beside the left side of the residence. A small swampy ravine is to the left of the driveway.

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE see continuation sheet

*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.*

In Nov. 1887 Mr. Louis A. Young had "just let the contract to Eugene Prescott for the erection of two neat and substantial cottages" and foundations were being put in for both this house at 77 Acton Rd. and also next door at 85 Acton Rd. However, on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>, 1888 Mr. Louis Young was "building a second dwelling house on Acton street, near the one erected by him last year." Unlike the residence next door at 85 Acton Rd built the previous year, this house has been a two family rental from its beginning until 1999.

In 1891 "George Wright, the new blacksmith, has hired a tenement of L. A. Young" on Acton St. and in Sept. 1914 Philip Donahoe "has removed to the Ellinwood house in Acton street." He was the local railroad flagman in Chelmsford Center for many years, and he and his family were still living at 77 Acton Rd. in 1922, when Loren Ellinwood sold the property. Mr. Ellinwood and his family were residents of Lowell in 1902 when he purchased this house, but the family soon moved to West Chelmsford and did not reside at 77 Acton Rd. In Sept. 1921 the tenants of the house applied to the water commissioners to have water installed. The water mains had recently been laid down the street making it possible to do so. However, in a letter to Mr. Ellinwood the water department wrote that "this, of course, means quite a little outlay. In the first place the service from the main to the cellar wall must be paid for by you. Then the piping in the house, faucets, etc. This, however, would not be the end of our trouble for the dry well that is there now is not adequate to take care of the waste water under the present conditions, and with running water they certainly would use two or three times as much as they do now, so if the water is put in it would be necessary to at once provide a much larger dry well.....for a rough estimate we would say it must cost around \$200." Whether or not Mr. Ellinwood agreed to spend the money to have running water put in at this time is not known, but 6 months he sold the property, so perhaps he didn't. He sold it to water commissioners Herbert Ellis, who had written the letter to him, and his partner Edward Robbins. The running water was surely installed at this point, if Mr. Ellinwood hadn't!

Throughout most of its history, this house has been a two family dwelling, and often the owner has been one of the residents. However, since 1999 the current owners have been the only ones living in the house.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES see continuation sheet

- Lowell Weekly Journal: Nov. 9, 1887; Sept. 28, 1888
- Lowell Courier-Citizen: Sept. 11, 1914; March 15, 1916
- Chelmsford Newsweekly, Apr. 27, May 11, 1978
- Middlesex No. Registry of Deeds: Bk. 189, pg. 512; 1912 Plan Bk. M, Plan 77
- Assessors records, Town Clerk's records; Building Inspector's records
- Chelmsford Street Directories, Voters Lists
- Account Book of Edward Robbins; 1921 letter of Herbert Ellis
- Mrs. Maureen Perry, 85 Acton Rd.: Apr. 18, 2006
- Mrs. Judith Knowles, May 3, 2006
- Letter from Herbert Ellis, Chelmsford Water Commissioner, to L.J. Ellinwood: Sept. 23, 1921 (copy owned by J. Drury 2006)

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

Town  
CHELMSFORD

Property Address  
77 ACTON ROAD

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Area(s) Form No.

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## ALTERATIONS

The house has been remuddled several times, as is obvious by its architecture inside especially.  
Old clapboards are covered with vinyl siding, which present owners hope to remove. 1978-1995  
1998 3<sup>rd</sup> floor: present owners have converted it, the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, to a bedroom area.

they had to put in 3 new windows as required by fire code, if they were to sleep up there.

1 in gable, 1 in back, 1 on driveway side. None in front.

1 window on 1<sup>st</sup> floor was walled in 1978 - 1995. Not same as window on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor above, and framing isn't the same.

Windows are all aluminum framed, which present owners hope to change

The front door was originally bigger, probably Victorian type double doors. Old framing is still there.

Porch on left front side removed between 1912 - 1971

Rear addition before 1912; probably greatly changed since then.

Modern concrete stairs lead from front of house down to the paved driveway.

It is suspected that windows on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> floors of the left front of the house have been removed (see right side)

*Rear addition before 1912*

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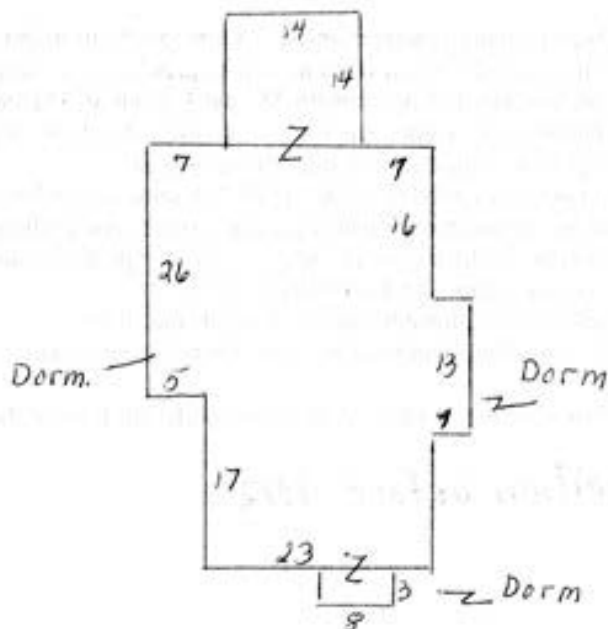
## ALTERATIONS



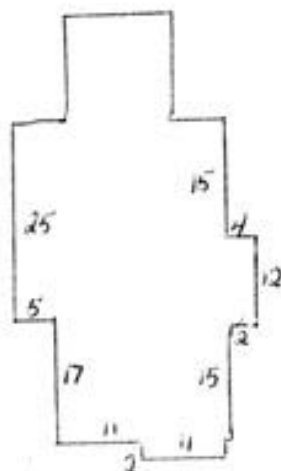
Loring J. Ellingwood

Acton Road

Plan Book M, plan 77  
1912



Assessors' Record  
5/20/1971



Assessors' Record  
3/20/2006



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*May 5, 2006*

ALTERATIONS

*Left side*



*Foundation for former porch, which must have extended past the foundation*



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ALTERATIONS



*Real Estate  
advertisement*

*Chelmsford Newsweekly  
May 11 & Apr 27, 1978*

*May 5, 2006*



*FRONT*



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*May 5, 2006*

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ALTERATIONS



*Right side*



*Front*

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ALTERATIONS



Rear side



Rear side



Right side Toward rear



77 Acton Road  
Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds

Bk. 7776, pg. 3	12/01/1995 Mortgage	Richard B. & Judith M. Knowles; John B. & Helena L. Belskis to Shawmut Mortgage Co., 433 South Main St., West Hartford, CT \$161,650 77 Acton Rd., 18,636 sq. ft. – northwesterly side Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37; same: deed of Joanne Reich & Sandra E. Steere Bell
Bk. 7776, pg. 2	11/29/1995	Joanne Reich & Sandra Steere Bell, f/k/a Sandra E. Steere to Richard B. & Judith M. Knowles, 77-79 Acton Rd. \$167,000 \$1,628.68 18636 sq. ft., 77 Acton Rd. – northwesterly side Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan bk. 8, plan 37 subject: taking Bk. 500, pg. 45 same: 1981 DeLong deed, bk. 2514, pg. 313
Bk. 2514, pg. 314	12/14/1981 mortgage	Joanne Reich & Sandra E. Steere, mortgagers, to Old Stone Bank, South Main St., Providence, R.I. 77 Acton Rd., 18,636 sq. ft. – northwesterly side Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37
Bk. 2514, pg. 313	12/01/1991	Jeffrey A. DeLong to Joanne Reich, 12 Hawthorne Village, Concord, MA & Sandra E. Steere, 53 Bell St., Nashua, 18636 sq. ft., 77 Acton Rd. – northwesterly side Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan bk. 8, plan 37 subject: taking Bk. 500, pg. 45 same: 1976 Fielding deed, Bk. 2182, pg. 119
Bk. 2182, pg. 119	01/30/1976	Richard A. & Sheila M. Fielding, Malden, to Jeffrey A. DeLong, 588 Bedford St., Carlisle \$1,628.68 18636 sq. ft., 77 Acton Rd. – northwesterly side Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan bk. 8, plan 37 subject: taking Bk. 500, pg. 45 subject: mortgage - Cambridge Savings Bank, \$30,497.97 subject: 2 <sup>nd</sup> mortgage – Robert F. DeLong (trustee), \$6,800 same: Jan. 24, 1974, Bk. 2099, pg. 229
Bk. 2099, pg. 229	01/24/1974	Robert F. DeLong, Trustee Mardo Realty Trust, to Richard A & Sheila M. Fielding, 77 Acton Rd. \$38,900 18,636 sq. ft & buildings: Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37 subject: taking, Bk. 500, pg. 45 same: Owen deed, Bk. 2002, pg. 533
Bk. 2002, pg. 533	03/21/1972	Carl W. & Dorothy Owen to Robert F. DeLong, Trustee Mardo Realty Trust \$30,500 18,636 sq. ft & buildings: Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37 same: 1969 Chambers deed, Bk. 1898, pg. 562

Bk. 1898, pg. 562	05/09/1969	Edward F. Chambers & Kaye Sullivan, husband & wife, to Carl W. & Dorothy Owen, 15 Ellsworth St., Bridgeport, CT 18,636 sq. ft. & buildings: Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37 subject: taking, Bk. 500, pg. 45 same: 1968 Johnson deed, Bk. 1868, pg. 733
Bk. 1868, pg. 733	29/11/1968	Marguerite E. Johnson to Edward F. Chambers & Kaye Sullivan, 77 Acton Rd. 18,636 sq. ft. & buildings: Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37 subject: taking, Bk. 500, pg. 45 Norman A. Johnson, deceased same: 1956 Moriarty deed, Bk. 1344, pg. 460
Bk. 1344, pg. 460	03/08/1956	George A. & Barbara M. Moriarty, to Norman A. Johnson, Sr. & Marguerite E. Johnson 18,636 sq. ft. & buildings : Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37 subject: taking, Bk. 500, pg. 45 same: 1947 Morse deed, Bk. 1071, pg. 575
Bk. 1071, pg. 575	15/07/1947	Leon A. Benkosky to George A. & Barbara M. Moriarty 18,636 sq. ft. & buildings : westerly side Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37 subject: taking, Bk. 500, pg. 45 same: 1945 Morse Deed, Bk. 1021, pg. 14
1021, pg. 14	22/03/1945	Edith E. Morse, unmarried, to Leon Benkosky, Lowell 18,636 sq. ft. & buildings : westerly side Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37 subject: taking, Bk. 500, pg. 45 same: 1943 Murphy deed, Bk. 1000, pg. 134
Bk. 1000, pg. 134	16/11/1943	Thomas J. & Grace L. Murphy to Edith E. Morse 18,636 sq. ft. & buildings : westerly side Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37 subject: taking, Bk. 500, pg. 45 same: 1942 Robbins deed, Bk. 984, pg. 50
Bk. 984, pg. 50	26/09/1942	Edward J. & Christina Robbins to Thomas J. & Grace L. Murphy 18,636 sq. ft. & buildings : westerly side Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan, Plan Bk. 8, plan 37 same: 1922 Robbins/Ellis deed, Bk. 659, pg. 219
Bk. 659, pg. 219	04/18/1922	Loren J. Ellenwood to Edward J. Robbins & Herbert E. Ellis 18,636 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, westerly side of Acton St. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan same: 1902 Greenough deed, Bk. 340, pg. 255
Bk. 340, pg. 255	02/24/1902	Samuel Greenough, Lowell, to Loren J. Ellenwood, Lowell 18,636 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, westerly side of Acton rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan – triangular lot same: Day deed to Greenough

Bk. 337, pg. 353	10/21/1901	Frances Day to Samuel Greenough, Lowell 18,636 sq. ft/ & buildings thereon, westerly side of Acton rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan - triangular lot same: 1901 Greenough deed subject: \$1500 mortgage
Bk. 335, pg. 68	10/19/1901	Samuel Greenough, Lowell, to Frances Day 18,636 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, westerly side of Acton rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan - triangular lot same: 1901 Gerrish deed subject: \$1500 mortgage
Bk. 335, pg. 269	10/10/1901	Everett B. Gerrish, Groton, to Samuel Greenough, Lowell 18,636 sq. ft/ & buildings thereon, westerly side of Acton rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan same: 1900 Tyler of Young deed, bk., 319, pg. 412 & 414
Bk. 319, pg. 412	05/07/1900	Frank F. Waters to Everett B. Gerrish, Groton \$2100 18,636 sq. ft/ & buildings thereon, westerly side of Acton rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan - triangular lot same: 1893 Tyler deed, Bk. 241, pg. 484
Bk. 317, pg. 485	03/17/1900 Possession	Franklin K. Young, Somerville, to Frank F. Waters
Bk. 243, pg. 263	05/20/1893 mortgage	Franklin K. Young, Somerville, to Frank F. Waters \$2000 18,636 sq. ft/ & buildings thereon - triangular lot Lot 2, 1893 Young plan same: 1893 Tyler, Bk. 241, pg. 484
Bk. 241, pg. 484	03/24/1893	James L. Tyler, Jr., Somerville, to Franklin K. Young, Somerville 18,636 sq. ft/ & buildings thereon, westerly side of Acton rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan same: 1893 Tyler plan, Bk. 240, pg. 323
Bk. 240, pg. 323	02/09/1893	Louis A. Young to James L. Tyler, Jr., Somerville 18,636 sq. ft/ & buildings thereon, westerly side of Acton Rd. Lot 2, 1893 Young plan - triangular lot
Bk. 189, pg. 512	06/16/1887	Thomas A. Marshall to Louis A. Young, Providence, R.I. \$7000 3 tracts & buildings thereon 1. 2 1/3 A. - on road to Robbin's Hill same: 1875 Sewall Parkhurst, Bk. 114, pg. 516 2. 253,291 sq. ft. - south side of road past Solomon Parkhurst's house Lots 1 & 2 - 1875 Baker plan same: 1875 Solomon Parkhurst deed, Bk. 113, pg. 164 3. 3 A. land - on west side of Acton Road same: 1883 Bartlett deed, bk. 160, pg. 232 subject: lease to one Prescott



Bk. 160, pg. 232	05/21/1883	Charles E. A. Bartlett to Thomas W. Marshall land
South: Bk. 427, pg. 136	01/12/1843	Eliza W. Fiske to Joel Adams

Compiled by J. B. Drury, March 2006

## Newspapers

## Lowell Weekly Journal

Nov. 4, 1887 – Mr. Louis F. Young, the recent purchaser of the T. W. Marshall estate on High street, has made improvements upon the buildings. The addition of bay windows and verandas, together with a partial remodeling of the interior, has nearly transformed the original house into a new one. Mr. Young has just let the contract to Eugene Prescott for the erection of two neat and substantial houses on the Acton road a few rods south of its intersection with the road to Robin's hill. It is intimated that this may be the beginning of Mr. Young's enterprise in this line and locality.

Workmen are busy putting in the new foundations for Mr. Young's houses on the Acton road.

Sept. 28, 1888 – Mr. Louis Young is building a second dwelling house on Acton street, near the one erected by him, last year.

Apr. 17, 1891 – George Wright, the new blacksmith, has hired a tenement of L. A. Young on the same street. (Acton street) [but which one? – JBD]

Apr. 27, 1900 – One of the "Young" houses, so-called, on Acton street was disposed of Saturday afternoon at foreclosure sale. It was knocked off to the mortgagee by Auctioneer Wooley of Groton for \$2100.

## Lowell Courier-Citizen

Sept. 11, 1914 – Phillip Donahoe, who has lived in the Railroad block in Littleton street for a number of years, has removed to the Ellinwood house in Acton Street.

March 15, 1916 – Little Josephine Donahoe is ill at the home of her father, Philip Donahoe in Acton street with an attack of tonsillitis.

**Account book of Edward J. Robbins** (Christina A. Robbins)  
[given to J. B. Drury by Margaret Mills, their daughter]

## 77 Acton Street Property

1929

Harvey Cann	\$20/mo.	Jan. – Dec.
William Wolf	"	to June 1
Edward Dryden		from Sept. 7

1931

Harvey Cann	\$20/mo.	Jan. – Sept. 7.
Mrs. R. Welcome	\$17.50/mo.	Oct. 12 – Dec. 1
Frank W. Trask	\$17.50/mo.	Nov. & Dec.

1932

Mrs. R. Welcome	\$17.50	Jan. – Dec.
	upstairs	
Frank W. Trask	\$17.50	Jan. – Dec.
	downstairs	

1933

Mrs. R. Welcome	\$17.50	Jan. – Dec.
	upstairs	
Frank W. Trask	\$17.50	Jan. – Dec.
	downstairs	





