

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

73-329-8	Billerica		114
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**Town** Chelmsford  
**Place** (neighborhood or village)

**Address** 41 Billerica Road

**Historic Name** William Fowle House

**Uses: Present** residence, single family

**Original** residence, single family

**Date of Construction** 1893

**Source** Lowell Weekly Journal , 1893  
 tax records

**Style/Form**

**Architect/Builder** A. W. Holt

**Exterior Material:**

**Foundation** granite blocks with cement

**Wall/Trim** vinyl siding, before 1981

**Roof** gable; asphalt

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures**

**Garage**

**Major Alterations (with dates)**  
 see attached

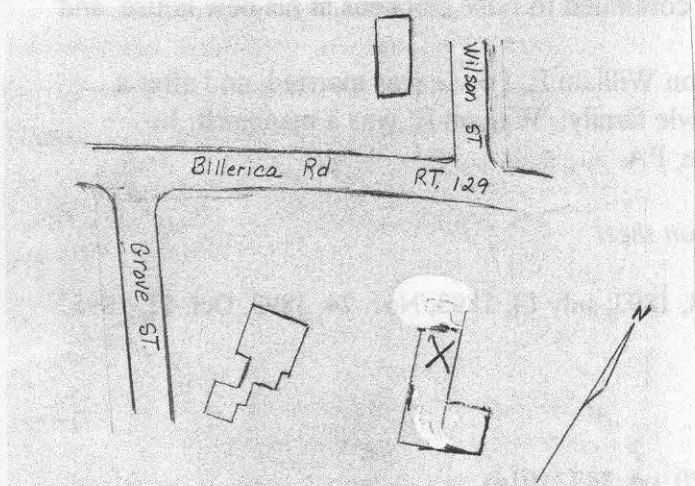
**Condition**

**Moved**  no  yes **Date**

**Acreage** 19,170 sq. ft.

**Setting**  
 residential primarily but on a busy intersection of streets; it is across the street from Wilson St.  
 Nearby are the present town office building (a former school), apartments, a bank and a church.

**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)** April 2005

**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 residence at 41 Billerica Road is typical of many houses built during 1890s in Chelmsford. It is a six room single family house two stories high with a gable roof.

**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.

On April 14, 1893 the Lowell Weekly Journal reported that "W.R. Fowle will build this season for his own occupancy on his lot on Billerica street near the premises of Mrs. E.R. Parkhurst." On April 28<sup>th</sup> "W.R. Fowle has broken ground for his new house on Billerica street." By July 14<sup>th</sup> "W.R. Fowle's new house on Billerica street is under way. A.W. Holt contractor." November 24, 1893 "William R. Fowle & family expect to occupy their new home on Billerica street in a short time." Mr. Fowle's sister came and stayed every day, watching it being built.

At the time of his marriage to Louise Perham in 1909, William was a carpenter. However, when the house was built, he was raising poultry and later was listed as a "merchant." He continued to raise chickens at his new house, and foundations for his hen houses remain.

Two years after the house was built, on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1895, their son William E. Fowle was married, and after a short wedding trip, he and his bride Alice moved in with the elder Fowle family. William E. was a machinist. In 1898/99 he moved to Salisbury; in 1914 he was a resident of Danville, PA.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

see continuation sheet

Lowell Weekly Journal: Oct. 1, 1886, Mar. 4, 1892, Apr. 14, 1893. Apr. 28, 1893, July 14, 1893, Nov. 24, 1893, Oct. 11, 1895, Mar. 30, 1913

Records of Town Clerk, Assessors

Mrs. Margaret Cunningham, Dec. 17, 1990

Chelmsford Street Directories

Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds, Bk. 193, pg. 21 (1887); Bk. 520, pg. 347 (1914)

Dick & Mary Lahue, Sept. 18, 2004

Mrs. Charlotte DeWolf

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  
41 BILLERICA RD

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

Area(s) Form No.

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## History

The elder William R. Fowle died on Oct. 22, 1909, due to a cerebral hemorrhage, but his widow, Louisa, remained in the house. During the winter of 1912/13 she stayed with her sister, but reopened the house at 41 Billerica Rd. in March. However, in 1914 the residence was sold and she moved to Bridge St. The new owner was the Rev. L. Leroy Greene, minister of the Unitarian Church. Mr. Greene was very popular and well liked among his parishioners. In 1928 he moved with his wife, Jane, to a "new" pastorate in Waverley. Lucien Burns, principal of the high school, which was then located across the street, resided here for a short time after that, although he was not an owner.

Charles Worthen came from a local family, but he and his wife Clara were residents of Fall River in 1928, when they purchased and moved into 41 Billerica Rd. At that time and for many years he worked in real estate but later worked as an assistant janitor before retiring. He died of cancer in 1941, aged 80 years, and his widow soon moved up the street, to 70 Billerica Road. The property had been mortgaged ten years before, and the bank sold it at public auction to Carl & Angeline Munn of Lowell. There is no record of them living in the house, and a year later the bank again took possession, selling it to G. Wesley and Stella DeBarge. Wesley worked in a mill in Lowell, but after coming to Chelmsford his occupation was that of a musician, a very good pianist. Stella was a seamstress at A.G. Pollard's store in Lowell.

Dick and Mary Lahue became the next owners, moving in with their three children early in 1952. Dick was a carpenter did make some interior changes to the residence. He enclosed a porch following a fire started by one of their sons who placed some firecrackers in the seams of the floor. The next door neighbor dashed over in her nightclothes and came to a window to tell them about the fire. They moved to Worthen St. in 1967, having sold the property to Henry DesRosiers, a salesman, and his wife, Marcelle. Soon after the DesRosiers moved in, they had to replace the double front door. There was police chase down Billerica Rd. during which a bullet went through the door. However, the DesRosiers had thought about putting in a new anyway.

The Cunningham family were living at 41 Billerica Rd. in 1981, when the DesRosiers sold them the property. John W. Cunningham was an engineer and his wife, Margaret, a housewife. They had at least three children, Mary Jane, William, and John J. In 1990 John J., by then a security guard, was still living here with his parents. In 2005 Margaret is still residing at 41 Billerica Rd.

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CHELMSFORD

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220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

114

## ALTERATIONS

1956 – 1967 Lahue ownership

interior: some changes made

front porch: removed & replaced with a large one at the left side

open porch enclosed: after fire

bay window, at right of front door: after the fire by a big window with small panes

“jut” on right side: had an overhang, into which the 1<sup>st</sup> owner backed his wagon, filled in barn (former stable)

big sliding door replaced with 16 ft. overhead door on the right side

open rear side: enclosed with stones & cement; 3 ft. door & ca 3 or 4 steps put in, due to the lay of the land

1967 – 1981 DesRosiers ownership

double front door: replaced soon after they moved in  
barn:

new stairs going up toward rear of barn, over old stairs which went down. DesRosiers stored/sold medical supplies here.

41 Billerica Road  
Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds

Bk. 2484, pg. 140      6/01/1981      Henry J. & Marcella G. DesRosiers to  
John W. & Margaret M. Cunningham, 41 Billerica Rd.  
\$96,000  
19,170 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, southeasterly side of Billerica Rd.  
Lot 2, DeBarge Plan, Bk. 81, plan 119B

Bk. 1782, pg. 117      1/11/1967      Richard O. & Mary L. Lahue to  
Henry J. & Marcelle G. DesRosiers  
19,170 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, southeasterly side of Billerica Rd.  
DeBarge Plan, Bk. 81, plan 119B  
subject: \$15796.14 mortgage

Bk. 1185, pg. 450      12/27/1951      George W. & Stella A. DeBarge to  
Richard O. & Mary L. Lahue  
19,170 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, southeasterly side of Billerica Rd.  
De Barge Plan

Bk. 978, pg. 172      6/08/1942      Merrimack River Savings Bank, Lowell, to  
George W. & Stella A. DeBarge  
28,719 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, southerly side of Billerica Rd.  
Lot 2, Patch Plan, Bk. 2, Plan 39

Bk. 963, pg. 45      7/02/1941      Carl H. & Angeline O. Munn, Lowell, to  
Merrimack River Savings Bank, Lowell  
Mortgage  
\$3700  
28,719 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, southerly side of Billerica Rd.  
Lot 2, Patch Plan, Bk. 2, Plan 39

Possession: Bk. 977, Page 266      Signed: May 9, 1942      Recorded: May 13, 1942

Bk. 963, pg. 43      7/02/1941      Merrimack River Savings Bank, Lowell, to  
Carl H. & Angeline O. Munn, Lowell  
\$3900 Public Auction Friday, 6/27/1941  
28,719 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, southerly side of Billerica Rd.  
Lot 2, Patch Plan, Bk. 2, Plan 39

Bk. 805, pg. 485      7/08/1931      Charles F. & Clara M. Worthen to  
Mortgage  
Mechanics Savings Bank, Lowell

Bk. 764, pg. 152      5/14/1928      Lovinzo L. Greene, Waverley, to  
Charles F. & Clara M. Worthen, Fall River  
28,719 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, southerly side of Billerica Rd.  
Lot 2, Patch Plan, Bk. 2, Plan 39

Bk. 520, pg. 347      4/09/1914      Louisa E. Fowle; Edward P. Fowle, N.Y., N.Y.; William E. Fowle, Danville,  
Pa., heirs of William R. Fowle, to  
Lovinzo L. & Jane M. Greene  
28,719 sq. ft. & buildings thereon, southerly side of Billerica Rd.  
Lot 2, Patch Plan, Bk. 2, Plan 39

Middlesex Probate      1909      Estate of William R. Fowle to  
Docket #83082      Louisa E. Fowle; Edward P. Fowle, William E. Fowle

Bk. 193, pg. 21

10/27/1887

David Harding, Lowell, to  
William R. Fowle

\$287.19

28,719 sq. ft., southerly side of Billerica Rd.

Lot 2, 1872 Patch Plan

Bk. 94, pg 437

6/13/1873

David Perham to

David Harding

Lowell Weekly Journal:

October 1, 1886

Another successful raiser of poultry is Mr. Wm. R. Fowle, who has recently enlarged his accommodations by building a hennery 100 feet by 12, modelled upon the coops of Mr. Hawkins of Lancaster, a recognized authority. The apartments are 12 x 12, and 30 hens are to be kept in each. With Mr. Fowle the Plymouth Rock is the favorite bird, and he has a family of about 600, kept in some ten different localities upon his premises. He finds that the business pays a fair profit, and his sales of eggs have been largely increased by judicious advertising in the Farmers' Exchange, which he will more likely patronize another season.

March 4, 1892

Willie E. Fowle is ill with typhoid fever of a mild type.

[Note by J.B.D.: Mr. Fowle had not yet purchased the property at 41 Billerica Rd.]  
*purchased Oct. 1887*

April 14, 1893

W. R. Fowle will build this season for his own occupancy a dwelling on his lot on Billerica street near the premises of Mrs. E. R. Parkhurst.

April 28, 1893

W. R. Fowle has broken ground for his new house on Billerica street.

July 14, 1893

W. R. Fowle's new house on Billerica street is under way. A. W. Holt contractor.

November 24, 1893

William R. Fowle & family expect to occupy their new house on Billerica street in a short time.

October 11, 1895

William E. Fowle and Miss Alice W. Perkins were married at Lowell, Tuesday, 9th inst., by Rev. J. M. Greene, D.D. After a short wedding trip the young couple will reside with the groom's parents on Billerica street, and will be home to friends after November 1.

March 30, 1913

Mrs. W. R. Fowle who has passed this winter with her sister, Mrs. W. S. Hall, has reopened her home on Billerica street. Mrs. H. L. Fletcher will be there with her until the completion of her new home in High street.

**Dick & Mary Lahue**, Sept. 18, 2004 Visit with Jane Drury

builder: Almon Holt. He built several in area (including 22 Worthen St.)  
Mr. Fowle's sister came and stayed every day, watching it being built

Fowle family:

Greene family:

Rev. Lorenzo Greene, minister of the Unitarian Church, lived here with his wife Jane  
Lucian Burns, principal of the high school (across the street), lived here for a short time sometime after  
that

DeBarge family:

Mrs. DeBarge – seamstress at A.G. Pollards store, Lowell  
Mr. DeBarge – very good pianist  
didn't have much money; house needed painting & needed attention when Lahues moved in

Lahue family:

moved here in 1952; left 1976 for 22 Worthen St. (which was 2 ten. then; later apartment was added at  
rear)

interior – some changes made

foundation for Mr. Fowle's hen houses were still there the last he knew (except those that slid down the  
rear back into someone else's yard after Lahue left

front porch:

taken off & replaced with large one at the side

right side:

open porch enclosed by Lahue.

reason: one of their sons placed firecrackers in seams of the floor, & started a fire. Miss Frances  
Clark lived next door & dashed over in her nightclothes to come to the window & tell them  
bay window, right of front door: replaced at the same time by a big window with small panes  
just behind porch was a jut with overhang, where Mr. Fowler backed his wagon into the jut (he was  
a butcher). Lahue filled in the jut.

barn:

had a big sliding door, which he replaced with 16 ft. overhead door on right side

rear: was open: closed in by Lahue with stones & cement

3 ft. door & steps (ca 3, 4) put in, which went down due to lay of land

DesRosiers family

double front door: replaced soon after moving in.

during a police chase down Billerica Rd., a bullet went into the double door, so it had to be replaced  
but they were already thinking about changing it anyway.

barn:

built new stairway toward back of barn, really over old stairs which went down. The new ones went  
up, where DesRosiers stored/sold medical supplies





**41 Billerica Road**

**1/27/2006 F. Merriam**



41 Billerica Road

MAYO  
41 Billerica Road  
Billerica, MA 01821  
978-666-1234