

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no. Chelms. Center	Form no. 204
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Town Chelmsford

Address 3-8 Central Square

Name Wilson Block/Central House

Present use upper floors-apartments
cellar-stores(east side by Cent. Sq.)

Present owner Vlahos Realty Co., Inc.

Description

Date 1884

Source Lowell Weekly Journal
Atlases, deeds, tax records

Style French

Builder

Architect Charles E. Parkhurst

Exterior wall fabric siding

Outbuildings (describe) right rear-former
stable, now businesses

Other features _____

Altered see attached Date dec. 1916

Moved no Date _____

5. Lot size:
16,980 sq. ft.
One acre or less x Over one acre

Approximate frontage ca 180 feet

Approximate distance of building from street
varies between 0 & 40 ft.

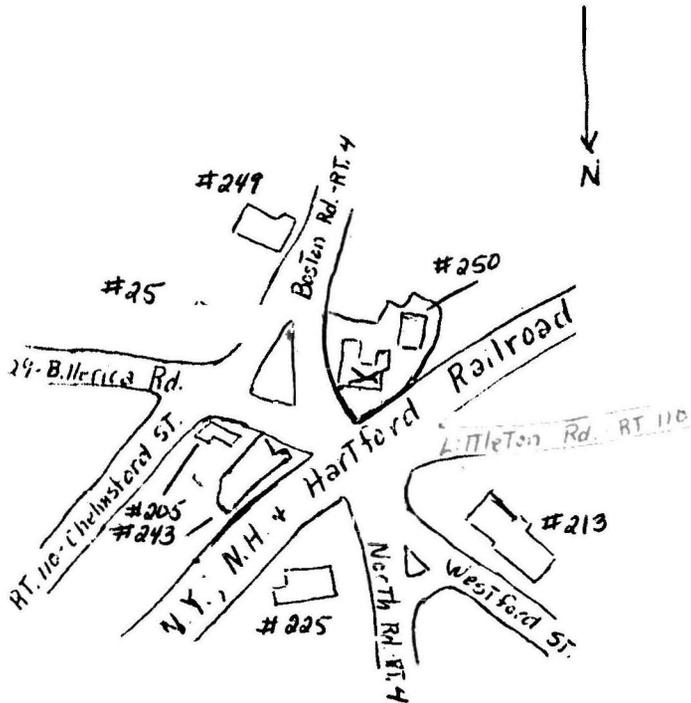
6. Recorded by Jane B. Drury

Organization Chelmsford Hist. Commission

Date December 28, 1977



4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant _____
MHC Photo no. _____

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) George H. Wilson, Sr.

Original use hotel & stores

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates _____

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	_____	Conservation	_____	Recreation	_____
Agricultural	_____	Education	_____	Religion	_____
Architectural	_____	Exploration/ settlement	_____	Science/ invention	_____
The Arts	_____	Industry	_____	Social/ humanitarian	_____
Commerce	<u>X</u>	Military	_____	Transportation	_____
Communication	_____	Political	_____		
Community development	<u>X</u>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

In the spring of 1884 the site of a store dating back to the 1700s was purchased by George Wilson, Sr. In Aug. 1884 the "building now in progress of erection in the centre of the village is about 70 ft. by 64 ft.; 3 stories high, with French roof, and for a country place is quite an imposing structure. The 3 rooms in the basement, which is of brick, are to be occupied for a shoe store, meat market & general store. The upper stories are to be suitably divided into tenements. The work is being rapidly pressed forward by Charles E. Parkhurst, contractor, & the building when completed will be a very creditable addition to the village and in striking contrast with its humble predecessor."

Later in the same month, E.S. Hosmer opened a meat & provision store in the basement; his assistant, Ervin Sweetser (residence #206), soon took it over & remained its proprietor for most of the 1st half of the 20th century. In Dec. 1884 the 1st local barber shop also was established in the basement. A large variety of businesses have been located here through the present day (1978): Chinese laundry, shoemaker, postoffice (1886-1890), 1st local drugstore, etc. In 1916 the Cookie Jar Tea Room was patronized by school children who obtained lunches there.

At first a hotel (Central House) occupied the two upper stories, Timothy Adams, Walter Simons, Ernest Nettel serving as proprietors. Around 1891 George Wilson, Sr. took over the hotel himself but eventually converted it to a boarding house & devoted his time to the trucking service & stable (#250). He retained the side of the building beside the railroad tracks for the office & his own apartment. In 1916 he retired to Malden and the property was sold. The Central House continued under other management, but the interior of the 2 upper floors has since been thoroughly remodelled & converted to the present apartment.

In 1911 a hard gale blew down 1 of the chimneys. Most of the bricks fell
(continued on attached sheet)

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds:

B.166, p.124; B.202, pg. 502; Plan B. M, Plan 77

Lowell Courier-Citizen: Mar. 1916, Dec. 1916, Mar. 1908, May 19, 1910, Jan. 30, 1911, Apr. 1915, June 1916

1875 Beers Atlas, 1889 Atlas

Chelmsford Tax Valuation records

Waters, "History of Chelmsford"

Samuel Fletcher, 4 Wildwood St.

Lowell Weekly Journal: Aug. 1884, Dec. 1884, April 1886

Mrs. Alice Dryden, 34 Proctor Rd.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

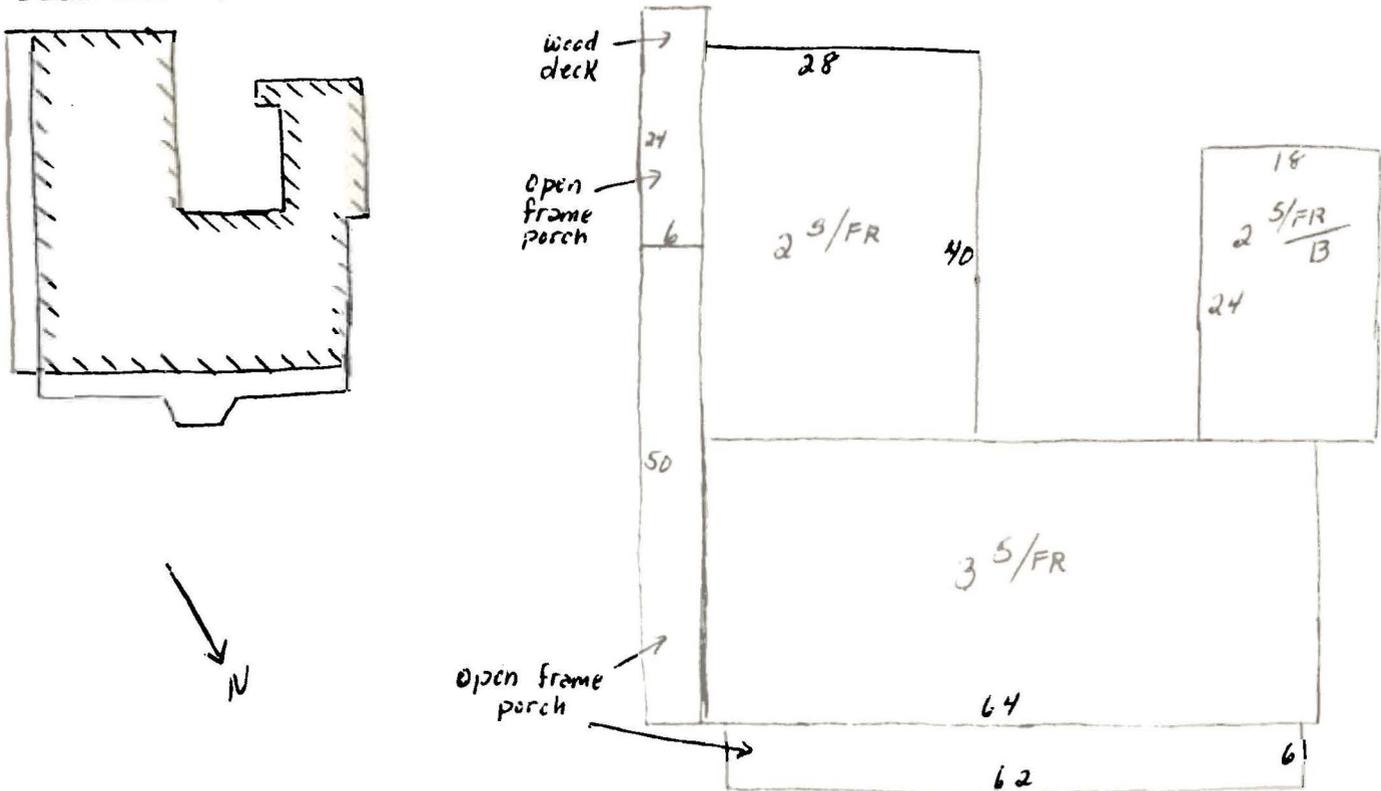
Community: Chelmsford	Form No: 204
Property Name: Wilson Block/Central House	

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

3. Altered:

1912, 1915 Plans
Scale: 1 inch = 40 ft.
Plan Bk. M, Plan 76, 97

Revaluation Records
February 1972



- 1886 - porch added along entire eastern side
- 1916 - "Through work now going on, the space occupied by Sweetser's market is to be made more commodious by taking in the hall & stairway between it and the laundry. Entrance to the 2nd story will be by an upper piazza, and a doorway taking the place of a present window will lead into the hall on that floor."
- Ca 1955 - interior remodelled considerably.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Chelmsford	Form No: 204
Property Name: Wilson Block/ Central House	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below

9. Historical Significance (continued):

into the backyard formed by the Ls of the building. However, considerable damage was done to the slate roof by the falling bricks.

Twice the building narrowly escaped destruction by fire. In 1903 the gasoline tank attached to the hot soda fountain in the drugstore spilled while being filled and caught fire, which was extinguished by Mr. Sweetser, the provision market proprietor. Early in the morning of April 8, 1915 baled shavings in the stable cellar were purposely set on fire but were discovered in time by Mr. Wilson. The Wilson Block was then "one of the largest in town, containing two stores and four tenants on the floors above."



1897
Wilson Block - 1st Passenger Station - Railroad House

H Carter Photographer

1899 A.W. and G.E. Howes, Photographers

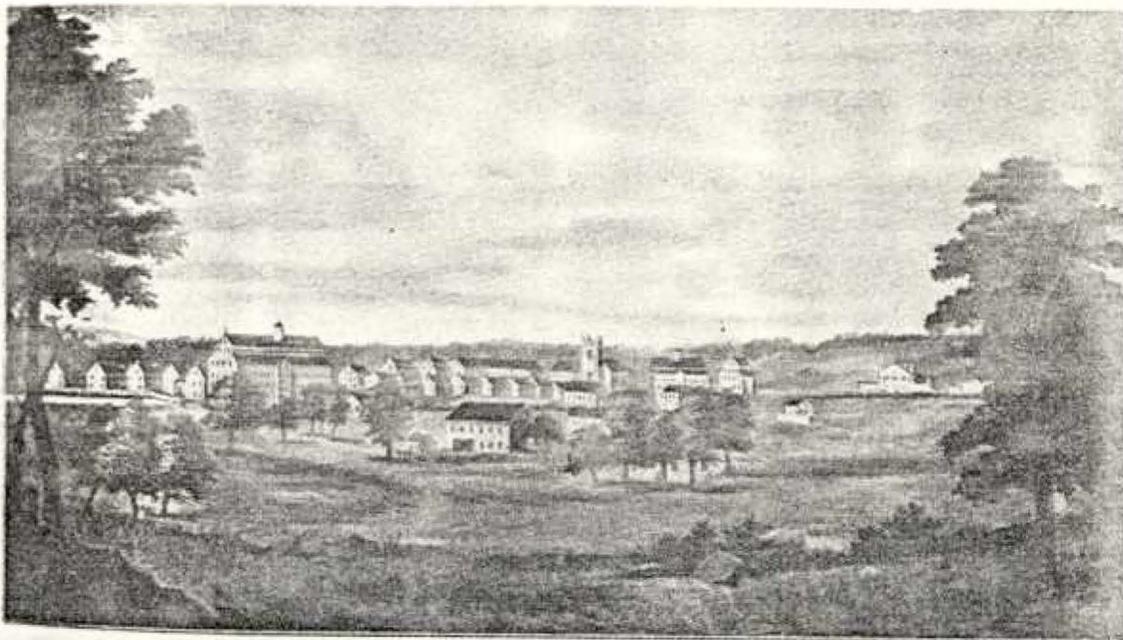


Central House





Central Square in the '90's, looking west and showing Wilson's Hotel Sweetser's Market, horse trough and the hay scales where the bubbler fountain now stands.



EAST CHELMSFORD IN 1825

Wilson Block (Central House)

Lowell Weekly Journal:

Jan. 1884 - New Boarding House

The large tenement in Wilson's new block has been hired by Ben S. Adams of this village, who, about the middle of January, will figure in the role of the jolly landlord. Mr. Adams will not only keep a boarding house but be prepared to accommodate the travelling public. A livery stable is attached to the establishment which is in close proximity to the railroad station. Mr. Adams intends to maintain a good house and hopes that the house will maintain him.

Aug. 9, 1884 - Wilson's Block

This building now in process of erection in the centre of the village is about 70 by 64 feet, 3 stories high, with French roof, and for a country place is certainly quite an imposing structure. The three rooms in the basement, which is of brick, are to be occupied as reported for a shoe store, meat market and general store. The upper stories are to be suitably divided into tenements. The work is being rapidly pushed forward by Charles E. Parkhurst, contractor, and the building when completed will be a very creditable addition to the village and in striking contrast with its humble predecessor.

Aug. 1884 - Saturday last, Mr. E.S. Hosmer opened a meat and provision store in the basement of Wilson's new block. Mr. Hosmer is a veteran knight of the cleaver, having been in the employ of Rice Brothers of Lowell some 20 odd years. His shop is equipped with all the appointments of a first-class city establishment, and with everything spick and span, new and fresh, a judicious selection of meats, fruits and vegetables and reasonable prices, there is no reason why he should not command the trade of this village and of the region roundabout.

With Ervin Sweetser as assistant he will run an order and delivery wagon, which he claims is more desirable for buyers than to purchase from the cart. A careful inspection of Mr. Hosmer's stock convinced the writer that his long continued efforts - usually unsuccessful - to obtain a tender and juicy beefsteak from the butcher's wagon are now likely to be realized.

Dec. 11, 1884 - As a desirable appendage to his new block, Geo. H. Wilson is building a neat and commodious stable, which will prove a great convenience to his tenants.

Dec. 18, 1884 - Chelmsford Centre seems to be rapidly adopting city institutions. Wednesday it attained to the dignity of a first class barber's saloon. May it be long before we are cursed with that other brand of saloon, against which Lowell at last seems to rebel. Messrs. Blaisdell and Ronchoe of Carlisle will divide their time between that town and this village, and are located in Wilson's new block, where they will be found every Wednesday evening and Sunday morning till 10 o'clock. They are workmen of considerable experience and skill, and ought to receive, as undoubtedly they will, a liberal patronage. It is reported that a part of this shop will soon be occupied as a shoe store.

Oct. 7, 1885 - The store in Wilson's block recently vacated by F.C. Fletcher is soon to be reopened as a grocery and provision store with Abel C. Davis as manager.

Feb. 19, 1886 - The vacant store in Wilson's block is soon to be opened by Mr. Nettel of Lowell, who will furnish it with a stock of fancy goods, stationery and confectionery. It is reported that Mrs. Nettel will take charge of the Chelmsford store while a similar establishment which has been carried on in the city will be continued.

Lowell Weekly Journal

March 5, 1886 - F. Ronco, barber, will change his residence April 1 to Boston

April 16, 1886 - The postoffice will be removed next Saturday afternoon to its new quarters in Mrs. Nettel's store, Wilson's block, when and where the new administration will take formal possession. The appointee, Geo. H. Wilson, having purchased the entire post office outfit of his predecessor, there will be no change in the present lease of boxes unless holders shall elect to make it.

April 23, 1886 - Wilson's block is to have a piazza along its entire eastern front - a much needed improvement.

July 9, 1886 - Carl A. Sylvander, shoemaker, is about to open a shoe store in Wilson's block, where he will keep a full line of boots and shoes which will be sold at Lowell prices.

Feb. 4, 1887 - About the first of March there will be an important change in the occupancy of Wilson's block, a portion of which for the past two years has been used as a hotel and boarding house by Timothy Adams, who will be succeeded, although upon a larger scale, by Walter S. Simons, proprietor of the Summit house on Robin's hill. Mr. Simons will occupy the greater part of the block above the basement story. His many friends here and in Lowell will wish him abundant success in his new enterprise. Mr. Adams will resume his residence upon the Billerica road.

March 11, 1887 - W.S. Simons will name his hotel the "Central house." He does not aspire to the somewhat lofty title, Hotel Vendome, which the correspondent of a morning paper, satirically or otherwise, recently bestowed upon the house.

April 1, 1887 - W.S. Simons is now fairly established in his hostelry in Wilson's block, and is fully prepared to take in the stranger and abundantly feed him. At the last ball of "Our Boys" quite a party sat down at his tables to a very satisfactory spread. Walter is bound to please the public if keeping a good house will accomplish it, and he is ready to submit to a severe test of his capabilities as "mine host" of the Central house.

May 13, 1887 - During the season W.S. Simons will devote one room in his hotel in the village to supplying ice cream to those who may patronize him. He believes, and rightly, too, that this community will prefer an ice cream parlor to a liquor saloon. The room will be open day and evening.

June 24, 1887 - July 1, W.S. Simons will begin running a fine, covered barge daily from the Central house near the Old Colony station to the Summit house on Robin's hill. The barge will carry 14 and will run in connection with trains to and from Lowell.

Nov. 4, 1887 - Mrs. Lizzie B., wife of Postmaster George H. Wilson of this village, died at her city home in South Boston Sunday evening. Mrs. Wilson was a native of Boston and 44 years of age. For nearly a year she had been afflicted with a cancer, and during the last 2 or 3 months had suffered from a dropsical affliction. She leaves a husband and two sons to mourn the loss of a faithful wife and mother.

July 5, 1889 A Dreadful Accident

Premature Explosion of a Cannon in Chelmsford - One Young Man Killed - Another Maimed for Life.

To the list of casualties which invariably burden the columns of the newspapers throughout the land the day following the celebration of the national anniversary, Chelmsford is now the sorrowful contributor. Never in the history of the town, so far as known, has occurred so tragic an event as that which early on the morning of the Fourth cast a feeling of gloom over this community. About half past twelve o'clock, three young men, Walter S. Simonds, jr. - son of the well known manager of the Central house, - Fred Santom and Hanson Thurston, having obtained permission to fire a salute with an old cannon which for many years has been stored at various places in the village, proceeded to the common for that purpose and discharged the piece twice without incident. While Simonds and Santom were ramming home the third cartridge, Thurston, who had his thumb upon the vent, probably involuntarily withdrew his hand on account of a sharp burning sensation and an explosion immediately followed. Young Simonds was struck by the rammer on the left side of the lower jaw, which was badly shattered and the muscles and blood vessels on the same side of the neck were completely ~~shattered~~ severed. The force of the explosion threw him some ten feet from the cannon and death was instantaneous. Pieces of the rammer were afterwards found many rods from the accident. The body was taken in charge by Undertaker L.K. Howard and temporarily placed in a carriage room to await the arrival of Dr. B.H. Hartwell of Ayer, medical examiner, who was summoned by telephone, arriving about ten o'clock. After viewing the body and making the necessary inquiries, Dr. Hartwell decided that an inquest was unnecessary. Deceased was 22 years old, a young man of active habits, kind-hearted and of warm and generous impulses. In this sudden and grievous affliction his parents will have the deepest sympathy of the community.

Fred Santom, the other victim of the explosion, was terribly mutilated but probably will live. With assistance he was able to walk to the house of Dr. Howard, who dressed his wounds, and then accompanied him to the Lowell city hospital, where amputation of the right arm, about four inches below the elbow, was performed by Dr. Johnson, assisted by Drs. Simpson and Howard. He also loses the thumb and forefinger of the left hand and his face and eyes were severely burned, imperilling the sight of the right eye. Young Santom, who is 18 years of age, is indeed in a most unfortunate condition. He is an orphan, without means, making his home with his aged grandmother, herself in humble circumstances.

This sad event carries its own lesson. Will it be heeded?

The Lowell Sun

Sat. July 6, 1889 - A Ramrod Through His Head

Walter S. Simond's Son Instantly Killed and Fred Scranton's Arm Blown Off

Walter S. Simonds jr., was instantly killed and Fred Scranton had his right arm blown off, eyes burned, and the fingers on the left hand mutilated by the premature explosion of a cannon at Chelmsford at 12 o'clock Wednesday night. The two boys, with another, were loading the piece and by some means, it went off. A wooden ramrod an inch or two in diameter, was driven through Simond's head instantly killing him. Scranton was brought to Lowell City Hospital for treatment. The third boy was not injured. The deceased is the son of W.S. Simonds, proprietor of the hotel and Robbins Hill in Chelmsford, formerly a bill poster in this city.

Lowell Weekly Journal

July 12, 1889 - A call upon Fred Santum at the Lowell City Hospital Thursday morning found him in a very comfortable condition. His right arm is healing without suppuration and the injury to the left hand and wrist seems to be fully under control. He will also retain the sight of both eyes.

Lowell Weekly Journal

Jan. 10, 1890 - Postmaster Wilson has had a severe attack of influenza at his winter home in Boston.

Jan. 15, 1890 - Carl Sylvander has sold his interest in the boot and shoe business to his assistant, Elmer Karlson, who will continue to do first class repairing at the stand in Wilson's block. Mr. Sylvander has not made definite plans as to his business future.

Lowell Weekly Journal

Jan. 17, 1890 - Mr. E. Nettel, assistant postmaster, who also keeps a general store in Wilson's block, is now reducing his stock with the intention of closing his business as soon as practicable. He has transferred the agency for Hamilton and Frost's steam laundry to the store of S.W. Parkhurst. Mr. Nettel's plans for the future are not yet matured, but he will for the present continue his residence in this village.

Lowell Courier-Citizen

Jan. 31, 1890 - Mr. S.W. Parkhurst, who was on Monday appointed postmaster at the Centre, is a native and a life-long resident of the town. He is 54 years of age and until he was 25 years old assisted in carrying on the farm where he was born. He then engaged in the milk business, which he followed successfully for 18 years, supplying Lowell patrons, the route being considered one of the best in the city. About 8 years ago he disposed of his milk line to John T. McCoy and soon after engaged in the grocery and general merchandise trade in the building which he now occupies, and where for 17 years, until the advent of the Cleveland administration, the post office was in charge of Geo. A. Parkhurst, a brother of the new appointee. With the return of the office to its old location there will be a number of changes in the interior of the building which will greatly facilitate the transaction of postal business and contribute to the convenience of the patrons of the office. In this connection it is but simple justice to state that the change of officials is not prompted by any dissatisfaction with the management of the office. Postmaster Wilson and his assistant, Mr. E. Nettel, the latter having had the principal charge of the office, have capably and courteously served the public and the transfer is made for business reasons and with the most kindly feelings on the part of the retiring and incoming officials.

Lowell Weekly Journal

Feb. 28, 1890 - Charles E. Parkhurst is now remodelling the room in Wilson's block recently vacated by E. Nettel, and about the middle of March it will be occupied by a drug store. The proprietor will be Arthur Brown of Lowell, a registered pharmacist, who is now in charge of H.C. Brothers' drug store on Middlesex street during the latter's absence in Florida. A store in this village devoted exclusively to the sale of medicines and druggists' sundries will be a new departure, and a well conducted establishment of the kind should receive the general patronage.

March 28, 1890 - The Central house, which is to be under the management of Mr. E. Nettel, has been thoroughly renovated and refurnished, and will open for the reception of guests April 1.

May 9, 1890 - E. Nettel, the new proprietor of the Central house, reports a prosperous business, which will be increased by the addition of summer boarders in due time.

May 30, 1890 - At the Central house are Dr. and Mrs. Campbell of Lowell, and Mr. & Mrs. George H. Wilson of Boston, who will spend the summer here.

Aug. 8, 1890 - The Central house is now closed as a hotel, but the lessee, Mr. E. Nettel, will remain through the month.

Dec. 27, 1889 - W.S. Simons, whose lease of the Central house expires March 1, will ~~remove~~ then remove to his farm on the southerly side of Robin's hill and will carry on the same in connection with his management of the Summit house. Several contemplated additions to the attractions of the latter will be announced later.

Lowell Weekly Journal

June 13, 1890 - Among the improvements of the season is the enlargement of the general store occupied by S.W. Parkhurst, who is postmaster.....(Note this is at 1 Chelmsford St., not the Central house).

June 20, 1890 - Mr. & Mrs. Geo. H. Wilson are enjoying a carriage drive as far as Princeton in this state, Mr. Wilson's native town.

Aug. 15, 1890 - Wednesday afternoon Conant & Co. sold the furniture, carriages and other personal property of Ernest Nettel, lessee of the Central house. The attendance was large and good prices were realized.

Oct. 31, 1890 - Mr. E. Nettel and family will remove to Leominster next Monday.

April 4, 1890 - The formal opening of the Central house under the management of Mr. Ernest Nettel occurred Tuesday evening, when, in response to invitations, a large company of village people accepted the hospitalities of "mine host." As we have stated in a former communication the interior of the house has been remodelled, making it much more convenient for hotel purposes; and all the rooms have been tastefully refurnished. From 8 to 9:30 o'clock an oyster supper with cake and fruits was served to all who desired to partake, and the evening was pleasantly passed in a social and informal way. With a central location and all the appointments of the house new and neat Mr. Nettel is fully prepared to give satisfaction to all who favor him with their patronage.

Mar. 28, 1890 - Master John Wilson, who has been quite ill with dipheria, is rapidly improving.

April 3, 1891 - Burglaries

.....Across the street is Wilson's block, in basement of which are a shoe store, provision store and a druggist's establishment.....C.W. Sylvander is minus a pair of \$3 shoes, E.W. Sweetser, proprietor of the market, is out a few coppers and a small quantity of edibles, while so far as known the druggist, A.F. Brown, sustained no loss.

July 24, 1891 - George H. Wilson, jr., is at home for a short vacation from his studies at the normal school in Bridgewater.

Sept. 4, 1891 - Arthur Brown has closed his drug store and left town.

Oct. 21, 1891 - Wm. H. Hills, a registered pharmacist, has reaped the family drug store formerly carried on by Arthur F. Brown.

Dec. 11, 1891 - Chelmsford readers of the Journal should notice in another column the advertisement of the Chelmsford drug store, now under the proprietorship of Wm. H. Hills, M.D. Dr. Hill is a registered pharmacist as well as an educated physician, and is thoroughly equipped in the calling he is now pursuing. A large addition in various lines has been made to the stock of the former owner, and besides the usual supply of druggists' sundries will be found many articles suitable for Christmas gifts. Don't fail to visit Dr. Hill's attractive store in Wilson's block.

Jan. 15, 1892 - Carl Sylvander has sold his interest in the boot and shoe business to his assistant, Elmer Karlson, who will continue to do first class repairing at the stand in Wilson's block. Mr. Sylvander has not made definite plans as to his business future.

Lowell Weekly Journal

Feb. 15, 1892 - Geo. H. Wilson, jr. is at home for a week's vacation from his studies at Bridgewater.

Mar. 25, 1892 - Wilson's block seems to be the objective point of certain pilferers this week, who called at Paul Dutton's room Tuesday night between 9 and 10 o'clock during his absence at a church sociable and helped themselves to a coat and a liberal supply of neckwear.

Lowell Daily Courier

Thursday, September 13, 1900 - Wednesday's gale overturned the windmill of George H. Wilson at the Central House and broke down fruit and ornamental trees in various parts of the village.

November 19, 1903

The village had a narrow escape from a serious conflagration Wednesday afternoon. While Mr. Hornby at Falls and Burkinshaw's drug store in Wilson's Block was filling the gasoline tank attached to the hot soda fountain, a small quantity probably was dropped outside and, when lighting the heating apparatus, the portion spilled caught fire and speedily connected with the contents of the tank, the top of which had not been screwed down. The flame spread in all directions and seemed bound to have its own way, when Mr. E.W. Sweetser, proprietor of the provision market next door, took in the situation, and snatching a woolen blanket from his wagon close at hand, organized himself into an impromptu fire department and soon smothered the lively blaze. Had there been an explosion of the dangerous fluid it is doubtful if the flames could have been suppressed in season to save the building and several others.

March 22, 1908 - Frank Hugh, Chelmsford's popular Chinese laundryman, has finally completed plans for his vacation, the preliminary of which began about two weeks ago. Saturday afternoon he visited his friends about the square to bid them goodbye and in the evening started for New York from whence he intends soon or upon finding a congenial traveling companion to go to his old home in China. There he will visit his mother, who is 60 years of age and at present not in the best of health.

His plans for return are not definite except that it will be within a year. Since coming to Chelmsford eight years ago, Frank has built up a prosperous and lucrative business and has made a friend of everyone with whom he has come in contact.

Chin Tap, who has had charge of the shop for the past two weeks, will continue to conduct the business during his absence.

Jan. 18, 1909 - A huge snowslide descended from the roof of Central Block this forenoon just over the entrance of Sweetser's market. The market sleigh to which was attached old "Dick," was standing at the door and was completely filled with the deluge of snow. The only damage was the breaking of one end of the seat. Old "Dick" stood his ground without flinching, for he was in his palmier days a member of the Lowell Fire Department, and it would be entirely beneath his dignity and training to allow a trifling matter like a snowslide to disturb his calm.

Lowell Courier-Citizen

March 30, 1909 - After an absence of nearly a year, spent in a visit to his old home in China, Frank Hugh, Chelmsford's popular Chinese laundryman, returned to town today and was kept decidedly busy for an hour or more greeting his many friends. Barring the sea voyage, his trip was thoroughly enjoyed and quite extensive apart from the long journey home. Frank does not travel often, but when he does go, he wants the best accommodations to be had, so the \$90 difference in steerage rates and first class passage did not stand in his way a minute, for, said he, "You get better to eat, better to sleep, and a man to take care of you, and I need it," for Frank was very sea sick, both coming and going, and on arriving in Chelmsford was 15 pounds short of his normal weight. This, he says, he will regain by continued vacation, but was non-committal regarding his plans for the future. Somewhere on his journey he parted with his queue, a fact which affords him considerable satisfaction.

Aug. 4, 1909 - Frank Hugh, formerly Chinese laundryman at Chelmsford but now engaged in the restaurant business at Boston, was in town today as a part of his vacation trip.

To the American mind these two lines of work seem widely separated, but if Frank can serve a dinner as well as he could do the work in a laundry, his success is assured. His new venture will have the well wishes of his many friends.

Sept. 29, 1909 - A bewildered partridge crashed into a window in the second story of the Central house yeasterday forenoon, breaking the glass, and fell to the roof of the piazza stunned. The accident was witnessed by several in the square, who watched the bird that, having recovered somewhat from the blow, walked slowly back and forth on the roof. An attempt was made to catch it, but on approach it quickly found strength to fly away.

Nov. 23, 1909 - A paved gutter that will extend from the catch basin near the post office to the top of the hill by the hotel is being put in this week by the men of the street department. A walk of granite flag stones will also be laid for about half this distance, extending from the concrete walk at the drug store to a point nearly opposite the lower watering trough.

May 19, 1910 - Falls & Burkinshaw's branch drug store in Central block was broken into some time Wednesday night, and cigars and cigarettes to the value of \$25 stolen.

May 25, 1910 - Chin Yen, the local laundryman, is at present on the sick list, an indisposition from which he had been suffering for a week reaching a climax in the heat of Tuesday.

June 12, 1910 - Because of continued ill health, Chin Len, proprietor of the local laundry, has been forced to give up his business here and today bade his Chelmsford friends goodbye. Chin Tow, a Chinaman of far more mature years, will be his successor.

Jan. 30, 1911 - No damage about town was reported from the high wind on Saturday, but the gale this afternoon blew down a chimney from the main part of the Central Block, Most of the bricks fell into the backyard formed by the Ls of the building but some of them landed on the ground in front of Sweetser's market, striking in a spot but a few minutes before occupied by the market team.

Considerable damage was done to the slate roof by the falling bricks. The windows at the town hall were said to have suffered from the force of the wind.

Lowell Courier-Citizen

Dec. 15, 1912 - Charles O. Robbins, superintendent of the Hart Pond cemetery at South Chelmsford for several years, has resigned the position and Albert Simpson of the South village has been appointed to succeed him. Mr. Robbins' resignation was accepted with regret by the cemetery commissioners for since the grounds have been in his charge, he has devoted not a little time to their improvement and to keeping them in condition, in a way that has met with the approval of both the board and the owners of the lots.

Dec. 17, 1912 - Few reach the age of 81 years, and fewer still are those arriving that age who are as vigorous and active as George H. Wilson, who today received the congratulations of his friends in celebration of that event.

April 2, 1913 - Under the direction of F.G. Pratt, Central Block is receiving a fresh coat of paint. The color remains the same, yellow with white trimmings.

April 20, 1913 - George H. Wilson, who is anticipating the arrival of a Cadillac touring car early in May, is transforming the carriage shed adjoining the Central house stables into a garage.

Oct. 14, 1913 - George H. Wilson is confined to his home by illness, the first experienced in 25 years.

Nov. 24, 1913 - Mrs. H.B. Chamberlain has removed from Central block to rooms in the Odd Fellows building. The tenement she formerly occupied has been taken by Garland Byam and family.

Jan. 14, 1914 - Telephone connection has recently been made at the home of George H. Wilson in the Central block.

May 5, 1914 - Additional garage accommodations for housing a Ford runabout are being built for George H. Wilson at the Central House stables.

April 8, 1915 - CHELMSFORD HOTEL PROPERTY IS THREATENED BY FIRE SET IN STABLE ADJOINING. When George H. Wilson went to feed his horses in his stable at Chelmsford Centre yesterday morning he found the barn filled with smoke, which was coming from the cellar.

An investigation there disclosed the fact that the baled shavings kept in a corner of the cellar had been set on fire, and were burning briskly. Giving the alarm to his neighbors, he ran into the house and secured a chemical extinguisher kept there for just an emergency, and by quick work conquered the flames.

If the fire had not been discovered at the time, it would have soon had the stable in its grasp, and as the latter is connected with what is known as the hotel property, a serious fire might have resulted. This building is one of the largest in the town, containing two stores and four tenants on the floors above.

It was evident that the fire was of incendiary origin, which adds one more to the long list of suspicious fires that have occurred within a brief time in the town. Owners of property are urging the town authorities to take some action to put a stop to them.

June 2, 1915 - Mrs. J.C. Hobbs, who has been occupying a tenement in Central Block, removed this week to Lowell.

Sept. 1, 1915 - George H. Wilson, jr., of Wayne, Pennsylvania, is visiting his father, George H. Wilson, sr., in the Central block.

Lowell Courier-Citizen

March 31, 1916 - CENTRAL HOUSE PROPERTY IN CHELMSFORD SOLD TO EDWARD J. ROBBINS AND HERBERT E. ELLIS OF THE CENTRE: One of the most important transfers of local real estate in recent years is the sale of the Central House property so-called, in Central Square by George H. Wilson to Edward J. Robbins and Herbert E. Ellis. The property consists of a three story main building with two wings, one of two stories, the other of three stories, the local drug store, market and Chinese laundry occupying the ground floor, while the upper floors are divided into three tenements. There is also a stable with accommodation for several horses and ample carriage space, with garage provisions for two automobiles. The building was erected for Mr. Wilson in 1884 by Charles E. Parkhurst. The best of material was used in its construction and it has been well cared for. For a number of years a part of the building was used for hotel purposes, Timothy Adams, Walter S. Simons and Ernest C. Nettle serving as proprietors. About 26 years ago Mr. Wilson took possession and for a time conducted the hotel, but of late years has simply made it his home and devoted his time to the management of the stables to which he has added automobile service for passengers and trucking. For many years Mr. Wilson was engaged and successfully, too, in the trucking business in Boston. In spite of being well advanced in his 85th year a fact hard to realize in seeing him, he is still more active, up-to-date, and energetic than many men younger by a score of years. For the future he plans with Mrs. Wilson to make their home in Malden, near relatives and a considerable part of their furnishings have already been forwarded to their new home. The most of happiness and future prosperity is the wish of many friends here who sincerely regret their departure.

April 3, 1916 - The auto livery and express work that has been carried on from the Central House stables is to be continued by G. Garland Byam as manager. Special attention will be given to automobile parties and prompt service may be had by telephoning 5093-J.

April 5, 1916 - Mr. & Mrs. George H. Wilson left today to make their future home near relatives in Malden.

April 21, 1916 - The interior of the Central House is undergoing a thorough renovating; Charles O. Robbins, now living in Wilson street, will occupy it about May 1.

May 3, 1916 - Charles O. Robbins and family moved into the Central House today. The house he vacated on Wilson street will be occupied by Leroy C. Bliss and family.

June 2, 1916 - Charles O. Robbins, who is now conducting the Central house stables, advertises this morning an auto livery and express service that will be found prompt and satisfactory.

June 4, 1916 - An auto livery and express service conducted by Charles O. Robbins at the Central House stables will supply your demands in a prompt and satisfactory manner.

June 28, 1916 - Prompt and satisfactory service will be given those in need of auto livery or express work, by G. Garland Byam. Tel. 3095-J.

Nov. 20, 1916 - An increasing daily patronage by the school children of the Cookie Jar tea room, shows that they appreciate the opportunity to secure a warm luncheon at the noon hour.

Lowell Courier-Citizen

Dec. 10, 1916 - Mrs. Mitchell and Mrs. Hemenway announce this morning through the suburban advertising column the opening of their Christmas sale of greeting cards, booklets and gifts at "The Cookie Jar," in the old Central House, on Tuesday afternoon, Dec. 12. Orders may be given at any time for Christmas pudding, fruit cake and ice cream. Tel. 2328-W.

Dec. 10, 1916 - Through work now going on the space occupied by Sweetser's market is to be made more commodious by taking in the hall and stairway between it and the laundry. Entrance to the second story will be by an outside stairway at the end of the building to an upper piazza and a doorway taking the place of a present window will lead into the hall on that floor.

Chelmsford-Westford-Tyngsboro
Newsweekly
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STARTING MAY 12th. a Chelmsford Police officer will be directing traffic in Central Square at the intersection of Routes 4, 110 and 129 during the peak hours of motorist traffic. The experiment hopes to determine whether a traffic officer at the single intersection can alleviate the vehicle congestion. If the experiment is successful, it is believed a single set of traffic lights will suffice rather than the three proposed in the engineering plan. The experiment will run for one month from May 12th through June 7th, six days a week, from 6:45 to 8:45 a.m. and 4-6 p.m. weekdays and 12 to 4-p.m. on Saturdays. Police Chief Germann may modify the schedule as conditions warrant.



3-8 Central Square - Central House, with Fairbanks hay scale in front

Courtesy of Chelmsford Historical Society, Index #bbh476



Hill Jocks House
Chelmsford's Historic
18th Century
Garrison House
www.garrisonhouse.org

BARBER SHOP

ESTD 1653
CHELMSFORD
SETTLED IN 1653 BY PEOPLE
FROM DORCHARD AND WINDSOR,
NAMED AFTER CHELMSFORD IN
ESSEX.
MASSACHUSETTS MAY COLONY
TERRITORIAL CONNECTION



Centre Travel

Nicola's Custom Tailor

Jim's BARBER SHOP

NO PARKING



1630 1930

CHELMSFORD

SETTLED IN 1653 BY PEOPLE FROM CONCORD AND WOBURN. NAMED AFTER CHELMSFORD IN ESSEX.

MASSACHUSETTS BAY COLONY
TERCENTENARY COMMISSION



SH DAY
W. L.H.A.M.

CENTRAL HOUSE 1884

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