

FORM B - BUILDING

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

In Area no. Chelmsford Center	Form no. 249
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own Chelmsford
 address 41-44 Central Square
 name Odd Fellows' Building
 present use bank, apartments, office

present owner 1st Bank & Trust Co.

description:

date 1896

Source Lowell Daily Courier

style Queen Anne
 (Millard F. & Harry C.)

Architect Davis & Raynes of Lowell

Exterior wall fabric wood shingles

Outbuildings (describe) none

Other features _____

Altered see attached Date 1957, '73,

Moved no Date _____

5. Lot size:
 7010 sq. ft.
 One acre or less x Over one acre

Approximate frontage 80.6 ft.

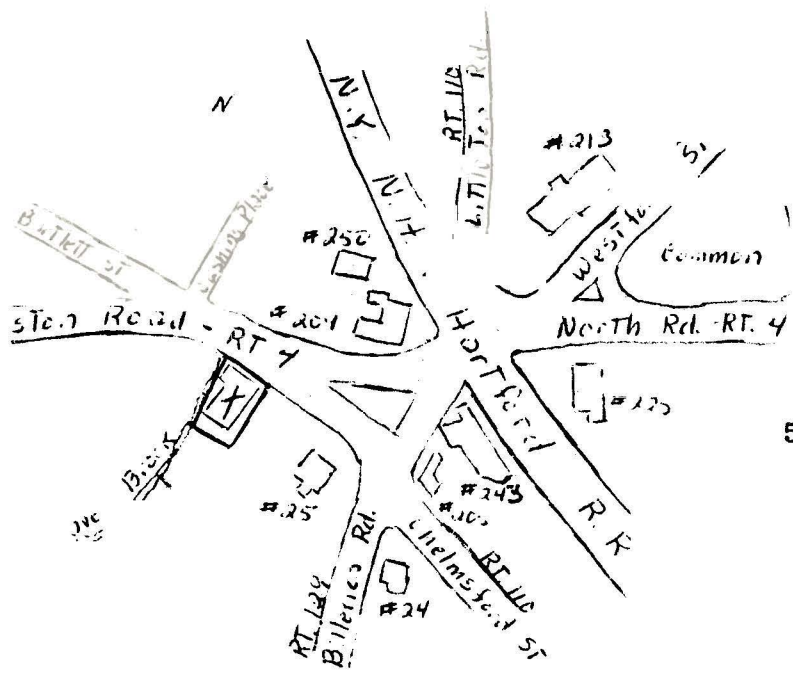
Approximate distance of building from street
ca 1 ft

6. Recorded by Jane B. Drury

Organization Chelmsford Hist. Commission

Date March 18, 1978

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) Chelmsford Odd Fellows Building Association

Original use fraternal meeting hall; general store

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates see below

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

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

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

The Odd Fellows Building Association erected this structure in 1896 after delays of almost 4 years which caused the organization to meanwhile be the "subjects of jest, burlesque & mild sarcasm." In 1894 the building was proposed to be "2 stories in height with basement, & probably about 78 feet long." Work on the foundation began July 22, 1895, and just 1 year later, on July 22, 1896, Eben T. Adams opened his grocery store on the 1st floor, although the building was not yet completed. On Oct. 15, 1896 the Odd Fellows' Hall on the 2nd floor was dedicated. This hall seated about 300 people.

In Nov. 1897 R.W.E. Milliken's bakery opened in the right front part of the 1st floor. This area later became the post office under Pat Haley. Behind it in 1898 Milliken set up an ice cream parlor, which later became the location of William Davis' shoemaker's shop, reached by a long piazza along the brook. E.T. Adams retained his grocery store on the left side until his death, after which W.T. Falls Drug Store moved in from the Wilson Block (#204) across the street.

The 2nd floor hall, with balconies on 2 sides (front & right) was 1st used as a fraternal meeting hall. However, in 1912 the Odd Fellows Building Association mortgage was foreclosed, the building became known as the Central Block, and the meeting hall became the location of the Park Theatre (movies). Also held here were Grange meetings (with kitchen & diningroom at the rear), St. Mary's Catholic Church services (1921-4), Miss Ockington's dancing classes, Tony's Barber Shop (the barber walked to & from Lowell), and, in later years, wrestling matches. In 1922 2 apartments at the rear of the building were occupied by the shoemaker & by a dressmaker. There were apartments in the building by 1906.

About 1940 the 2nd floor & attic floor were transformed into apartments and the building was known as the Colonial Apartments. About Jan. 1958 the First Bank & Trust Co. opened, and it now (1978) owns the building & occupies the entire 1st floor(not addition) & rear half of the right side of the 2nd floor. Apartments occupy the rest of the main building.

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

Lowell Weekly Journal: 9/2/1892, 6/23/1893, 6/30/1893, 5/18/1894
Lowell Daily Courier: 6/22/1895, 7/15/1896, 10/9/1896, 11/1897
Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds: Bk. 247, pg. 85 (1893)
Assessors' records; Builder inspector's records (building permit #128); Historic District Commission approval, 2/7/1977
Mrs. Margaret Mills, Ernest Day, sr., George Parkhurst, Edward Redstone
Chelmsford Newsweekly, 1955 ; Chelmsford Directory: 1915/16, 1922
1889 Atlas; 1932 picture
Tax/real estate valuation lists: 1893-1896
Lowell Courier-Citizen: 3/13/1906

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Chelmsford	Form No: 249
Property Name: Odd Fellows' Building	

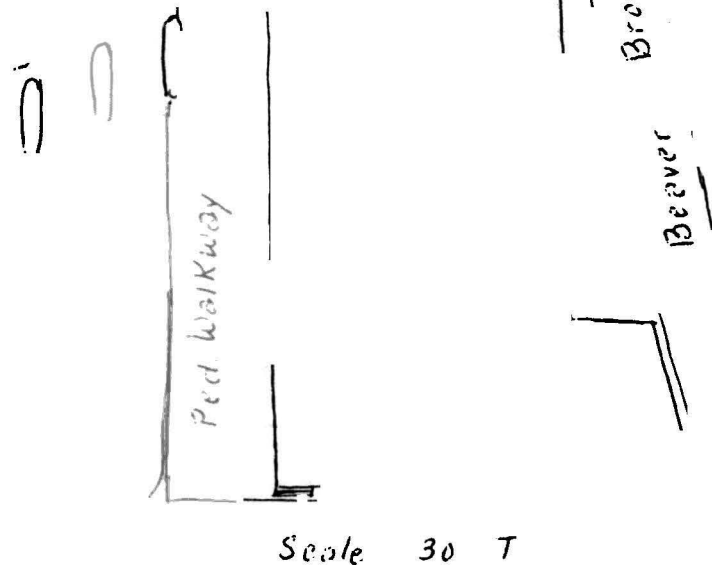
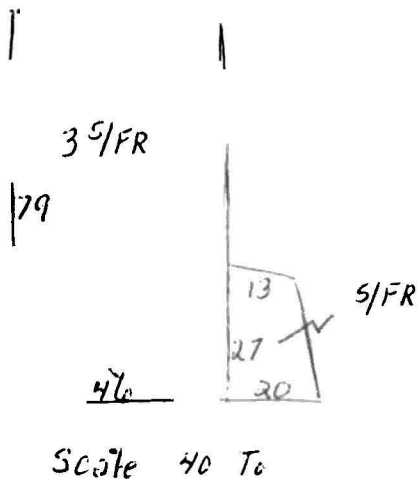
Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

3. Altered:

1. ca 1920 - 1925: a long piazza (since removed) ran along the right side of the building, beside Beaver Brook.
2. Balustrade: removed after 1932
3. Summer of 1957: 1 story addition at right front 22'6" by 20', wood
4. 1973: 1st story front changes
new windows replaced side doors
new "canopy" over entrance at center - replaced marque across the front
change of entrance to 2nd floor stairway - formerly recessed door led to stairs; stairs now reached from bank lobby.
5. 1977: 1 teller window & 2 customer islands on left side added 31" long by 14'7" wide

Also see pictures, next 2 pages

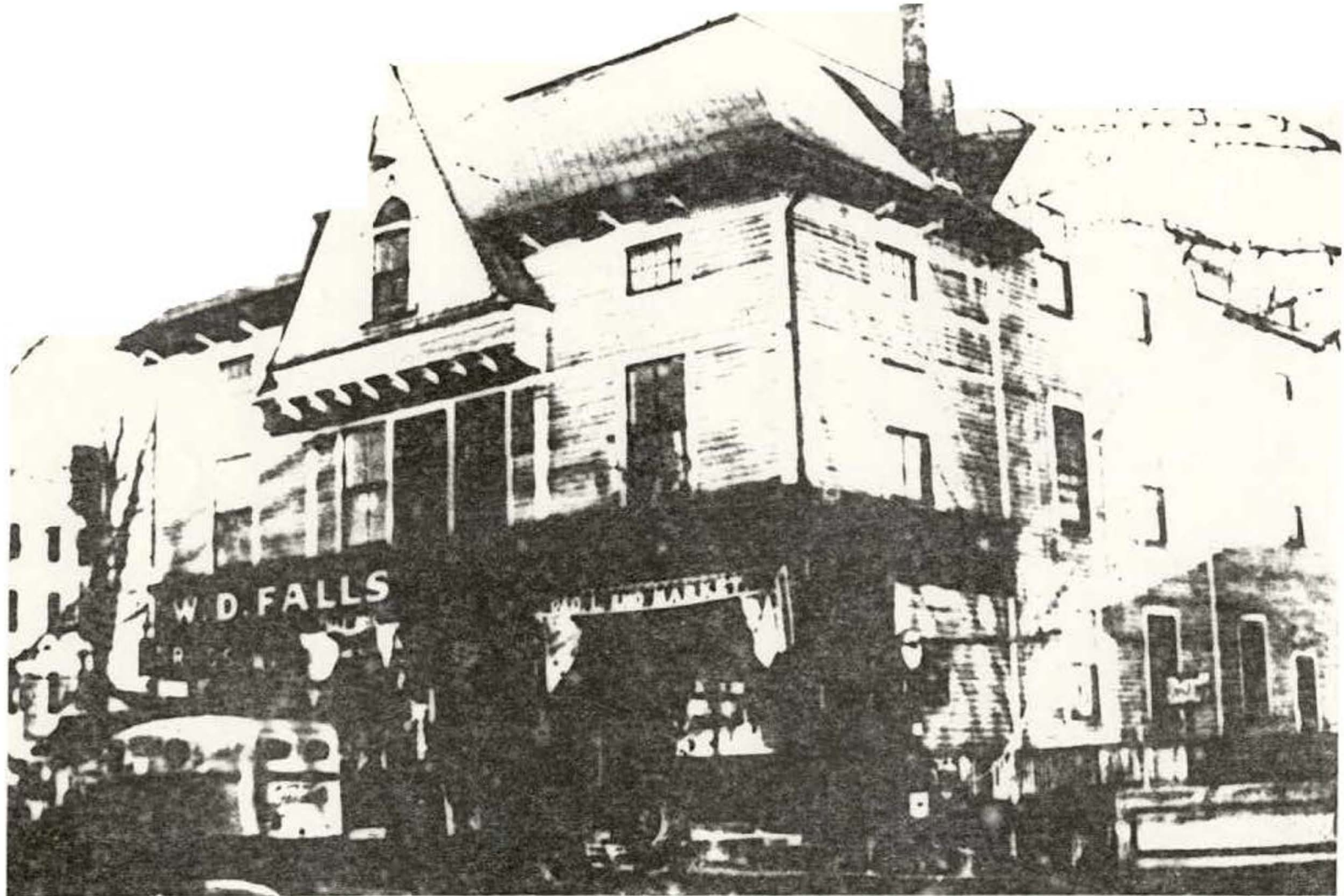
6. 1959: changes to facade - see pictures
new first floor northeast wall - reinforced for bank vault.



Assessors' Revaluation
records - 8/12/1971

Building Inspector's Plan
Dec. 16, 1976

Staple to Inventory form at bottom





41 - 44 Central Square
Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds

ook 2049, pg. 395	1/25/1973	W.C. Lahue, Inc. to First Bank and Trust Company \$175,000
Book 939, pg. 579	12/27/1939	George M. Wright, Clearwater, Florida to DeBow & Lahue, Inc., Lowell 7000 sq. ft. & Odd Fellows Building
ook 939, pg. 578	12/29/1939	Patrick H. Haley to George M. Wright, Clearwater, Florida 7000 sq. ft. & Odd Fellows Building
Book 692, pg. 72	10/31/1923	Margaret A. Wright to Patrick H. Haley her undivided half interest 7000 sq. ft. & Odd Fellows Building
Book 587, pg. 14	4/25/1918	Frank C. Byam to Patrick H. Haley and Margaret A. Wright 7000 sq. ft. & Odd Fellows Building
ook 498, pg. 57	11/21/1912	James P. Emerson to Frank C. Byam 7000 sq. ft. & Odd Fellows Building
Book 498, pg. 53	11/21/1912	Central Savings Bank to James P. Emerson \$4390 7000 sq. ft. & buildings thereon
Book 272, pg. 507	12/24/1895	Chelmsford Odd Fellows Building Associa. to Central Savings Bank \$4200 Mortgage 7000 sq. ft. & buildings thereon
Book 247, pg. 85	7/31/1893	Benjamin M. Fiske to Chelmsford Odd Fellows Building Assoc. 7000 sq. ft. land.



CHELMSFORD BAKERY

1892

May 27 - The question has not infrequently been asked in the last few years by local members of the order of Odd Fellows, "Why not have a lodge in Chelmsford?" and the recent boom in Odd Fellowship which has struck Lowell seems to have reached Chelmsford, as an Odd Fellows lodge is talked of to be organized at the Centre. The matter has not taken any definite form yet, but is being talked up and seems to meet with general favor.....

June 24 - Circular invitations have been issued signed by well-known Odd Fellows of the town for a meeting at the lower town hall, Saturday evening at 7:45 to consider the question of organizing a lodge in this village.....

July 1 - While the formation of an Odd Fellows lodge in this village has more than once been suggested within the past five years the project has never crystallized into positive action until this season, receiving no slight impetus from the enthusiasm of members of the organization who have recently become residents of the town. One week ago a circular signed by Geo. A. Parkhurst, Charles Nichols, John H. Redman and Warren B. Cotton, members of different Lowell lodges, was sent out announcing that a meeting would be held at the town hall Saturday evening, 25th instant, to consider the matter of organizing a local lodge. About 75 were present, a larger number than anticipated. Geo. A. Parkhurst of Oberlin lodge was chosen chairman and Warren B. Cotton of Veritas lodge secretary. The objects of the meeting were stated by the president, who also, in response to an inquiry from one of the audience not a member of the order, mentioned some of the prominent advantages resulting from membership. Secretary Cotton announced that there are now over 30 resident members of the order to form the nucleus of a lodge, and that it is desirable to start with a membership of at least 100, which he thought might be secured in this and some of the adjoining towns. He also gave an estimate of the probable cost of a lodge building, the construction of which he thought feasible. Mr. Nichols of Highland lodge, who is warmly in favor of the new movement, endorsed the statements of the previous speakers, and other remarks in furtherance of the scheme were made by True Morton and N.A. Glidden of Oberlin lodge, Joseph E. Adams of Lowell lodge and Roland Rowell of Highland lodge. A vote was taken upon the expediency of organizing a lodge and it was unanimous in favor.....

July 22 - An adjourned meeting of those interested in the formation of an Odd Fellows lodge in this village was held at the town hall Saturday evening. About 60 were present.....The committee to ascertain if a suitable room or building can be secured reported that thus far there seems to be none available. One lot, with buildings, can be bought for its exact cost to the owner, who will take \$2500 in stock if a new building is erected on the premises, as would be necessary, the present building not being suitable. It was also stated that a Lowell lumber dealer, who is a resident of the village, will furnish materials for a new building upon a very liberal basis, as he is in hearty sympathy with the movement.....A committee to consider the expediency of forming a building association was chosen, consisting of A.P. Perham, A.W. Holt, Frank E. Kimball.....

Sept. 2 - A third meeting of those interested in the establishment of an Odd Fellows lodge at Chelmsford Centre was held at the town hall Saturday evening. Owing to unfavorable weather the attendance was not so large as at the previous meetings.....The report of the committee to secure a favorable room or hall for the use of the lodge was not so encouraging as could be desired. The committee had endeavored to secure quarters in the second story of the Fiske building, or to induce the proprietor to add a third story for such a purpose, but the prospect for such an arrangement was not

flattering. It was voted to accept the report and continue the committee. Words of encouragement were spoken by N.A. Glidden, W.B. Cotton and Dr. E. H. Chamberlain, who advised that the lower town hall be used for lodge meetings till more permanent quarters can be secured. The chairman stated that the committee would act upon this suggestion forthwith, and it is probable that if this arrangement can be effected the lodge will be instituted in October, if not earlier. The hope was also expressed that in the not remote future a library building, which is greatly needed, may be erected with a hall suitable for society purposes. The meeting was adjourned subject to the call of the hall committee.

Nov. 11 - Chelmsford lodge, No. 218, I.O.O.F. will be instituted in the afternoon of Tuesday, November 22, and candidates for admission to the order will be received in the evening. A banquet to the grand officers and others interested in the new lodge will be served in the lower town hall at 6:20.....Regular meetings of the lodge will be held on Friday evenings in the lower town hall. The necessary furniture for the new organization will be furnished by Adams & co., Lowell, and the regalia, &c., by C.C. Fuller, Worcester.

Dec. 30 - Chelmsford lodge, I.O.O.F. has voted to hold a fair Feb. 22, 23, the proceeds to form the nucleus of a building fund, as the members are bound to make an effort to secure a suitable hall for lodge purposes. A committee of ten has been chosen to take the general charge of the fair.

April 21 - The Chelmsford Odd Fellows Building Association has been organized with Charles Nichols, president, Edward H. Chamberlin, clerk, & treasurer.

May 19 - The Odd Fellows' Building association has nearly completed its preliminary work of organization, and will soon take active measures for the erection of a building, which will be convenient for the purposes of the lodge and provide facilities for the expansion of the business interests of the village.

June 23 - From sayements which have appeared recently in several newspapers respecting the contemplated building for the Odd Fellows' lodge, one would readily infer that the enterprise was so far matured that in a week or two the structure would take on its fair proportions and a handsome block soon be added to our present business facilities. Most of the accounts thus far published have been in some important particulars inaccurate and misleading, and certainly premature and without warrant from the building association. That a majority of the lodge hope at no very distant day to have a suitable building for lodge and general business purposes is undoubtedly true, as was stated first in this paper soon after the organization of the building association; but that preliminary measures are so far advanced that, as one paper puts it, "the work of erection will begin at once and be pushed rapidly to completion," is not true. The main facts desirable to state here to explain the exact position and progress of the building enterprise are as follows: For some time the association at its weekly meetings had discussed the matter and examined plans for the building. At its meeting one week ago Messrs. Harry C. Raynes and Millard F. Davis were chosen the architects of the building, but their plan, while favored as a whole by a large majority of the members present, has not been formally accepted, as action is to be taken at the next meeting, which the directors hope will be fully attended, so that a general expression of views may be had for the guidance of the board.

While the association has the refusal of a lot of land upon which to place the building, no transfer of the property has taken place, and will

not before the 10th of July, or until the line of the street has been determined by the proper authorities. Furthermore, the financial necessities of the case have not yet been provided for, and until the association has determined its methods of raising funds and ascertained that those methods are practicable, it is not likely to begin the work of erection. As contingencies may arise necessitating the postponement of construction for a time, this explanation is made to correct erroneous impressions and to show that in event of delay the association had not attempted to build its castle in or of the air.

June 30 - At a meeting of the Odd Fellows building association, Friday evening, the plans, as modified, of the architects, Davis & Raynes of Lowell, were accepted, and all further arrangements are now in the hands of the directors.

Aug. 25 - A special meeting of the Odd Fellows' building association will be held at the town hall Wednesday evening to take action with reference to the proposed building. The association has received a deed of the Fiske lot, and this step is generally approved, as real estate in this village is good property to hold; but there is a wide difference of opinion among the members of the lodge as to the advisability of building at the present time, and particularly upon the basis submitted by those having the matter directly in charge. To reconcile these differences is the object of the meeting, which every member of the association should attend.

At a meeting of the Chelmsford Odd Fellows' building association, which was held at the town hall Wednesday evening to consider the matter of proceeding with the erection of a building for lodge purposes, there was an attendance of a majority of the lodge, over 40 being present.....It was decided to indefinitely postpone the matter of erecting the building. The action of the association was influenced by the present precarious condition of financial affairs and the general business depression, as it was thought by the majority to be a matter of ordinary business prudence to postpone building until the business outlook would show a decided improvement.

1894

May 18 - At a meeting of the Chelmsford Odd Fellows' building association the directors were instructed to procure plans for a building not to exceed a cost of \$5200; to borrow of the Lowell Co-operative bank the sum of \$5000, and erect a building upon the site purchased last year. The proposed structure will be two stories in height with basement, and probably about 78 feet long. The plan is to be a modification of that adopted last season and prepared by Davis & Raynes architects, and which was designed for a three-story building.

1895

Report of 4th of July Parade

The Odd Fellows Block, that isn't built, was represented by a paper building showing the plans on the outside.

Lowell Daily Courier

Monday, July 22, 1895 - Although the Chelmsford Odd Fellows have for a year or more been the subjects of jest, burlesque and mild sarcasm for their seemingly abortive attempts to rear a suitable lodge building, they have been neither dead nor sleeping, only waiting, and as everything comes to him who waits their time has now arrived to push forward the enterprise so long in abeyance.

Work on the foundation begins this week, the contract for putting in the cellar having been awarded to Cyrus Barton of Lowell. Davis and Raynes, architects, have for some time had in charge sundry modifications of the original plans and when completed it is expected that work upon the super-structure will speedily follow.

Friday, July 26, 1895 - A car load of granite underpinning for the Odd Fellows building has arrived.

Wednesday, April 3, 1895 - Loads of stone are being dumped on the Odd Fellows' building lot, which are indications of a foundation at least.

August 7, 1895 - After several days intermission, the stone masons are again at work upon the foundation of the Odd Fellows' building and no further delays are anticipated.

Thursday, September 12, 1895 - The stone masons have resumed work upon the cellar walls of the Odd Fellows' building after two weeks intermission.

Friday, September 20, 1895 - With favorable weather the foundation of the Odd Fellows' building will be completed Saturday, at which time, but without public ceremony, a copper box, containing documents relating to the order, Boston and Lowell newspapers, coin and other articles, will be deposited in the cornerstone. The brethren in charge are Dr. E.H. Chamberlin, Albert H. Davis and Geo. A. Parkhurst.

Wednesday, July 15, 1896 - Eben T. Adams expects to open his new store in the Odd Fellows' building the last week of this month. The store fixtures are in place and the stock is being arranged. Mr. Adams will keep the variety usually found in a well equipped general store and hopes to receive his share of the public patronage.

Although the Odd Fellows' building is by no means completed it is so far advanced that the next meeting of the lodge will be held there to escape the extreme heat of the room occupied in the town hall.

Friday, July 24, 1896 - E.T. Adams began business in his new store Wednesday morning.

Friday, August 14, 1896 - All members of the Odd Fellows' lodge are urged to attend the meeting Saturday evening, when some important business will be considered.

Friday, August 28, 1896 - The Odd Fellows' hall probably will be dedicated the latter part of September.

Lowell Weekly Journal

October 9, 1896 - The committee on the dedication of the Odd Fellows' hall has nearly completed its arrangements for the event, which takes place Thursday evening, 15th.....

October 9, 1896 - The new Odd Fellows' hall will be dedicated next Thursdaythe exercises will begin at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, then supper will be served from 6 to 7:45, to be followed by the evening's entertainment.The evening program will begin at 8 o'clock.....The hall where the exercises will occur will seat about 300 and tickets have been placed at 35¢ which admits to all.

October 23, 1896 - The dedication of the Odd Fellows' hall last week was a most successful event.....

Odd Fellows Block

Newsweekly, 1955

Nov. 1897 - Chelmsford's latest industry, R.W.E. Milliken's bakery in Odd Fellows Block opened Saturday. The ~~first~~ front room is fitted up and supplied with a fine assortment of the best quality of cakes, pastry, bread and crackers. Baked beans and brown bread are delivered Saturday night and Sunday morning and there will be a daily delivery of other goods such as bread, roll, etc. Mr. Milliken proposes to fit up the rear room on the first floor for an ice cream parlor next summer.

Picture - near back of the paper

Lowell Courier-Citizen

Tuesday March 13, 1906 - George Day is at present busy explaining the presence on Sunday morning of a ladder, one end of which rested on the ground, the other on the ledge of a window of his rooms at the Odd Fellows building. A door that moved easily on its hinges, and a smoothly working spring lock is given as one reason why.

~~The Central House~~

"A Chelmsford Prose Poem" by Roland J. Parkhurst, printed in the Lowell Courier-Citizen, May 4, 1916.

Some twenty years ago or more, friend Adams undertook a business scheme in "Central Block," the building near the brook. His stock in trade was varied; coffee, sugar, tea, and rice, the highest grade of ginger, and a full supply of spice; while chief among the assets to meet the first expense, was honesty of purpose and a fund of common sense. And this important item should be added to the list, a true devoted helper to encourage and assist. With such a wise equipment he joined the public mart, the business was successful and prospered from the start. But other duties called him, while vexed with business cares, he reluctantly consented to take charge of town affairs. With patience, tact and judgement that seldom went astray, he settled all our troubles in his diplomatic way; and fairly earned his laurels when he laid the burden down, twelve years of faithful service in the interest in the town.

But now important questions come to agitate the land; party spirit reigned triumphant for election was at hand. And as the strife grew warmer; the pot began to boil, some good true man was needed to serve the sons of toil. Wise men like old Diogenes were searching up and down, to find some honest gentleman to represent the town. Now daily as I passed the store I could not fail to see a certain insect buzzing like the presidential bee. And many a politician often lingered on his way, to chat with grocer Adams on the questions of the day. Sometime before election it was evident to all, that a seat was waiting for him in our legislative hall. It came by no unfairness, no premeditated plan, 'twas a certain rare occasion, where the office seeks the man. For two long terms he started every morning from his home, to serve his fellow townsmen beneath the gilded dome, leaving Ralph behind the counter with his cheerful, pleasant looks, to please impatient traders and charm the Chelmsford cooks.

Now here we have a model of the first-class general store, and up to date delivery car stands throbbing at the door. The tempting pickle barrel confronts you as you enter and the store is filled with merchandise both sides and down the centre; the oranges and lemons, a tropic fragrance bring, and banana hang in clusters from the ceiling by a string. I miss the old time heater, where the firelight used to gleam, but "up to date" at present, means gasoline and steam. The cracker box uncovered is always sure to please, those chaps who ask for samples of the butter and the cheese. His measures never vary, his scales are always true, while he looks out for Eben, he always cares for you. It is many a worthy laborer with a lot of mouths to feed, who finds our worthy grocer, his truest friend in need. Now telephone your orders and the goods are at your door, for an honest man is Adams who keeps our general store.

J.R.P.

Chelmsford

Having reached the Utopia of their dreams, these pioneer settlers planned, built, toiled, prospered and passed on. They left to their descendants their own examples together with the means, to live in ever-growing security and comfort.

And as the country grew to be a nation, so did Chelmsford folks grow in the recognition and acceptance of their new duties and responsibilities. Second to none in loyalty and patriotism, Chelmsford citizens have fought in all our wars from the Revolution to Korea. And in pursuits of peace they have been no less active, dis-

illuminate the well-kept roads and highways of the community.

ELECTRIC HOUSELIGHTING COMES TO TOWN

Electricity for home use appeared directly after the advent of the street lamp although a number of Chelmsford homes near the Lowell line had enjoyed electric service for some years. From a handful of customers at the end of the horse and buggy era, electrically-served homes now total nearly 4,000.

Electric power also has proven a great asset to Chelmsford industrial and commercial enterprises, there being some 258 establishments of that

means 'electric living' in Chelmsford.

To the Town Officials, business men and citizens of Chelmsford, The Lowell Electric Light Corporation extends congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of the Tercentenary Celebration. Also their sincere thanks for nearly a generation and a half of neighborly cooperation and kindly business relations. That electric service may continue to help their Chelmsford friends to 'better and better living' is the hope of the friendly folks who operate The Lowell Electric Light Corporation, part of New England Electric System, New England's largest.



Picture of Fore Fathers Cemetery years ago showing the kerosene lamp which was placed in the town by the Village Improvement Association and also in the background of the cemetery may be seen the old railroad house where the Chelmsford Ginger Ale plant now stands.



The present Colonial building in Central Square as it looked over 50 years ago when Ralph Adams' father operated a store and a bakery was also located on the ground floor while the 100F hall was on the second floor.

was thought might alive the interest which had been missing the past year.

Dr. J. C. Bartlett in favor of formation for the purpose of planting shade trees and improving our street squares.

Nov. 22d. Our meeting agreeable to . . . a constitution presented and adopted. The resolution was containing the sign present and then following officers: Dr. J. C. Bartlett, E. K. Parkhurst, E. H. Warren, Geo. A. Parkhurst, Committee, N. P. Buzzell, Rev. Mrs. David Buzzell, N. P. Dadmun.

Within two weeks of the first meeting, Emerson reported provided for his E. K. Parkhurst, South Row, provided five; Mr. D. A. for Westford road, one; and Lowell road, two each; Mr. S. for road leading to the village, three; Mr. for Center road, provided and needed.

The V. I. A. made these first streets and they were cared for. The number grew considerably. A lamplighter was maintained. The number of lamps from the original which were maintained years by the Association. The total cost of annually the town maintenance as too heavy for the town.

In 1907, the introduced gas street lighting. The Centre wheel money for a celebration made it possible. Later, these were electric lights.

Street L

1892

Street lighting was assumed by Mr. I. week, but will only until the funds for the V. I. A. work. Indeed, to continue until the close of the year, Oct. the directors fund originally another purpose have been maintained substantially by the past two years.





7/30/2004 F. Merriam



Sovereign Bank

7/30/2004 F. Merriam



12/27/2004 F. Merriam