

In Area no.	Form no.
	279

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



1. Town Chelmsford
Address 19 Elm Street
Name Pickens House
Present use 1 family residence

Present owner Dennis & Nancy Di Giovanni

3. Description:
Date before 1782
Source deeds
Style _____

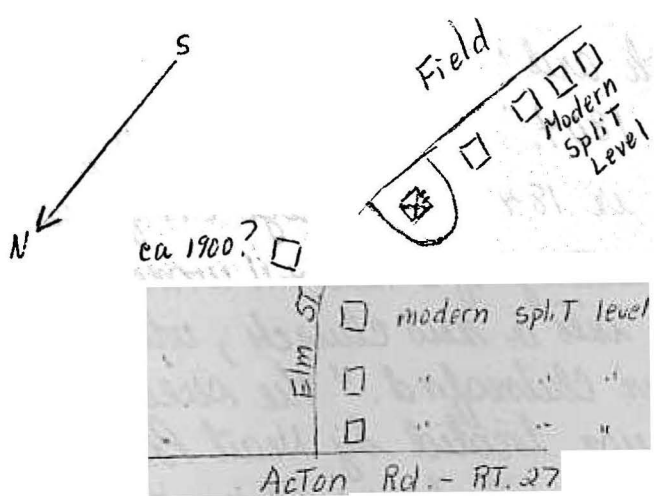
Architect _____
Exterior wall fabric siding resembling clapboard
Outbuildings (describe) large new barn at left rear of house
Other features 5 x 1 barn, facing south, windows close to the eaves

Altered several additions Date _____
Moved no Date _____

5. Lot size:
30,091 sq. ft.
One acre or less X Over one acre
Approximate frontage 150 ft
Approximate distance of building from street
ca 44 ft

6. Recorded by Jane B. Drury
Organization Chelmsford Historical Commission
Date Sept. 12, 1983

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) _____

Original use _____

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates residence

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

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

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

The earliest known mention of this house is in Oct. 1782, when Timothy Hildreth sold his farm and buildings to Isaac Patter of Westford. They were both "yeomen." Although Patter still owned it, in 1792 John Peckers came here to live and eventually purchased it. The Rev. Peckers was the 3rd minister of the South Chelmsford Church and "remained over the whole church until its division of the church in 1804." He then became a farmer and remained here until his death in 1846 of "old age" (91 years).

"On Oct. 11, 1804, a faction consisting of 5 men + 11 women, led by the Rev. Peckers, formed themselves into a new church, which they styled "The Baptist Church of Christ in Chelmsford." The seceding party retained possession of the meeting house, located by Heat Pond. The original church had no pastor during the period of separation - about 18 years, but Rev. John Spaulding, among others, officiated frequently."

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

Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds (Bk. 6, pg. 498 - 10/11/1782)
 Waters, History of Chelmsford, 1917 published
Chelmsford Vital Statistics to 1850, published 1914 Essex Institute

The Reverend Samuel Peckens House

This house was originally built in the late 1770's. The oldest deed located to date lists Reverend Peckens as the buyer in May of 1782. At that time the house and accompanying 160-acre farm was sold for 600 pounds, since the US dollar had yet to be invented. Typical of a pre 1800 house, the house faces due south, and not towards the road.

Reverend Peckens and family lived in the house for approximately 25 years. It was during this time that Reverend Peckens founded the Baptist Church of Chelmsford.

Originally the barn for this property was located in the field across Elm St. There is a story of the owner buying a disassembled barn in the mid 1800's, moving and re-assembling it on the property. Unfortunately, the floor was not properly supported, and when he led his cows into the barn for the first time, much of the floor collapsed. We understand that the cows were not pleased.

The Winning family owned the farm from 1875 to 1929, and made many changes to the house. It was during the early part of the Winning's ownership that the bay windows, front porch, dining room and kitchen were added.

In addition, the main stairway was changed from an early colonial switchback stair to the stairway you see today. The Winnings also removed the main central fireplace and chimney, replacing it with the two smaller chimneys that are designed for wood stoves.

We believe that the window in the kitchen, as well as the two in the dining room are three of the four windows that were originally in the family room and living room. When the bay windows were built, these were removed, but windows in 1880 were even more expensive than today, so the only logical thing to do is recycle them as part of the construction project.

The last 60 acres of farmland was sold in 1961, and the Robins Hill development was built around the house.











8/28/2004 F. Merriam