

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

13/32/3	Nashua South	G	CLM.83
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**Town/City:** Chelmsford

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): North Chelmsford

## Photograph



**Address:** 35-37 Middlesex Street

**Historic Name:** Benjamin and Mary Blood House

**Uses:** Present: single-family dwelling

Original: single-family dwelling

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1834

**Source:** deed research

**Style/Form:** Cape

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood siding/wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Detached garage

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):

Ca. 1910 dormer additions

**Condition:** Good

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

**Acreage:** .16 A

**Setting:** The house is located approximately 15' south of Middlesex St between Wright and Cottage Row. A grassy drive west of the house leads to the garage. A set of stone steps leads from the sidewalk to the main entry. The small lot is flat and grassy. The surrounding area includes 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> c. residential development.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Jennifer Burden, Gray & Pape, Inc.

**Organization:** Chelmsford Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): June 2016

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

35 MIDDLESEX STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

This building is located on the south side of Middlesex Street between Wright Street and Cottage Row. It is a one and-a-half story side-gable house with a long cross-gabled wing extending from the rear of the building. Built ca. 1834, the house features subtle elements of Greek Revival style architecture. Fenestration throughout the house consists of two-over-one double-hung windows. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and the exterior walls are covered with wood clapboard with wood trim. The house rests atop a stone foundation. The primary (north) façade, which faces Middlesex Street, is divided into five symmetrical bays on the first story and four on the second. The front entrance is located directly in the center of the façade. The entrance is surmounted by a small, flat canopy supported by a pair of turned knee braces or brackets. The most prominent feature of the primary façade consists of a pair of large, front gable roof dormers that were added ca. 1910. Located on either side of the front entrance, the dormers each include a pair of two-over-one double-hung windows and gable returns. A long, one-story addition extends from the rear of the house. It includes an enclosed porch with a shed roof along the west wall.

A detached garage is located to the southwest of the house. The two-car garage is clad in wood clapboard, has a front gable roof, and features two modern garage doors.

The building is a good example of a mid-nineteenth century, Cape type residence that retains all aspects of historic integrity.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*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.*

Previous deed research traced the ownership history of the property to 1835 when Nathaniel Blood (1809-1867) granted it to his father, Benjamin Blood (1773-1860). In 1851 Benjamin granted the property to his son Caleb Blood (1816-1856). The 1850 US Population Census lists Benjamin living in Chelmsford with wife Mary (born ca. 1779), sons Benjamin, Jr. (1805-1887) and Caleb, and three younger children, who were likely Benjamin, Sr. and Mary's grandchildren. At this date Benjamin, Sr. was a machinist, Benjamin, Jr and Caleb were laborers. According to the 1856 North Chelmsford map, Caleb remained the owner of the property. By 1875 a Mrs. Harlow was listed as the owner of the property; however, no additional information was discovered about her. By 1889 C. Flint owned the property. The 1880 census lists Charles Flint (born ca. 1829) living in Chelmsford with wife Ora (born ca. 1839), and two teenaged children, Ella and Herman. At this date Charles was listed as a machinist. In 1899 John S. Hall purchased the house along with store that was next door that served as the post office for North Chelmsford. In February 1899 Hall became the postmaster for North Chelmsford.

In ca. 1918 the house was converted for use as a doctor's office for Dr. Fred Varney and later Dr. Frank E. Phillips. Dr. Varney (1861-1944) resided across the street at 34 Middlesex (CLM.139). The 1921 Chelmsford city directory lists Dr. Varney with an office on Middlesex, north of Cottage Row (no house number is provided). Dr. Varney (born ca. 1861) was born in Maine, and attended the Bowdoin College of Medicine in Brunswick, Maine (the medical college closed in 1921). He relocated to Chelmsford in 1894 and became involved with medical issues related to North Chelmsford, including in 1906 being appointed a committee member on the selection of a source for clean water for the community. In 1926 he purchased seven acres near Crystal Lake to be used as a playground area for the children of North Chelmsford, a place of recreation still in use currently (CLM.323). In 1944 Frederick Haywood, a comber, lived at this address with his wife Annie. In 1975 Peter Picken purchased the property and remains co-owner of the property with Lewel Picken currently.

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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Geo. H. Walker & Co. *Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts*. Geo. H. Walker & Co., Boston, MA. 1889.

Hales, John G. *Plan of the Town of Chelmsford in the County of Middlesex*. Surveyed in 1831 by John G. Hales.

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Lowell, MA. 1907 and 1950.

Walling, Henry F. *Map of Middlesex County, Massachusetts*. Smith & Bumstead, Boston, MA. 1856.

Waters, Dr. Wilson. *The History of Chelmsford, Massachusetts*. Lowell, Mass., 1917.



1905 photograph of 35 Middlesex Street on the left and the former post office on the right (no longer extant). (Chelmsford Public Library.)

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## National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

Individually eligible       Eligible **only** in a historic district

Contributing to a potential historic district       Potential historic district

Criteria:     **A**     **B**     **C**     **D**

Criteria Considerations:     **A**     **B**     **C**     **D**     **E**     **F**     **G**

### Statement of Significance

The area of North Chelmsford was determined eligible for inclusion in the NRHP by MHC in 1987 for its local level of historical significance. The historic district boundary of Area G roughly includes resources along Middlesex and Princeton streets between Wright Street, Gay Street, and Edwards Avenue. The district is eligible for inclusion in the NRHP at the local level under Criterion A for its association with the industrialization of North Chelmsford in the mid- to late-nineteenth century and under Criterion C for its examples of workers' cottages, modest single-family houses, and elaborate residences owned by local industrialists. Resource CLM.83 retains sufficient historic integrity to contribute to this potential historic district.