

FORM C - OBJECT

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

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

Plat 35 no lot

Billerica

~~M-17~~
974

Junction School & Main Sts.

Town

Chelmsford

Place (neighborhood or village)

West Chelmsford

Address or Location

Intersection Main & School Streets; Winship Square
Name

Quessy Monument

Ownership Public Private

Type of Object (check one):

- statue
- bust
- group composition
- religious shrine
- boundary marker
- other (specify)
- monument
- milestone
- marker

Date of Construction

Unknown, after 1918

Source

Designer/Sculptor

Materials

Bronze plaque on boulder

Alterations (with dates)

none known

Condition

sunken

Moved no yes Date

Acreage

Ca 395 sq. ft

Setting

residential, at intersection of two busy roads

Recorded by

Jane B. Drury

Organization

For Chelmsford Historical Commission

Date (month/year)

~~December 2001~~
Feb. 2004

Photograph

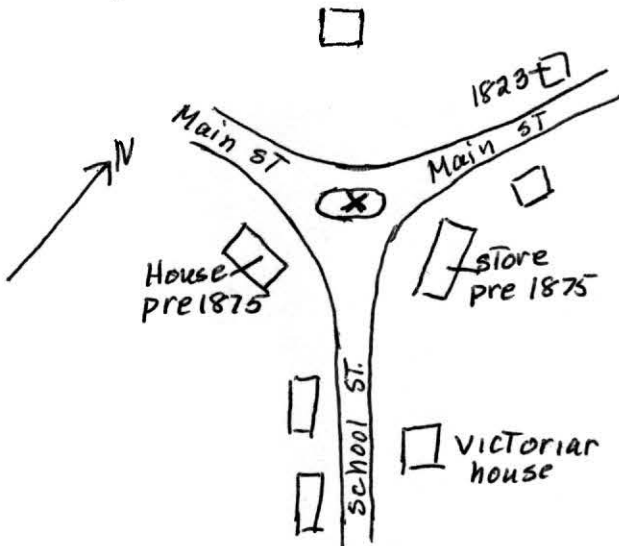
(3" x 3" or 3-1/2" x 5', black and white only)
Label photo on back with town and property address. Record film roll and negative numbers here on the form. Staple photo to left side of form. Staple photo to left side of form over this space. Attach additional photos to continuation sheets.

roll negative

[] []

Sketch Map

Draw a map showing the object's location in relation to the nearest cross streets and/or major natural features. Show all buildings between object and nearest intersection or natural feature. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Circle and number the inventoried object. Indicate north.



OBJECT FORM

DESIGN ASSESSMENT *see continuation sheet*

Describe the design features of the object, and evaluate in terms of other similar types of objects within the community.

By 2001 the boulder on which the bronze plaque is mounted had sunk several inches, so that the bottom of the plaque was below ground.. An unknown person, not the Town, had taken an interest in the monument and its surroundings and had been seeding the grass and planting flowers. In 2002 a new tree, an American Washington elm, and the monument were replaced in the redesigned intersection. The boulder is rough on its sides but its front and rear sides are smooth. About 14 inches of the boulder is still above ground. The visible portion of the plaque is 10 inches high by 15 inches wide.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *see continuation sheet*

Explain the history of the object, and how it relates to the development of the community

This monument was placed here in memory of Cpl. George Ralph Quessy, who was killed in the Battle of Argonne in France, Nov. 1, 1918. Cpl. Quessy was a member of Battery F., 102nd Field Artillery at the time of his death. He was the only resident of the West section to be killed in World War I. he was born in Chelmsford on Dec. 23, 1896. His father, a Canadian immigrant, was a blacksmith/carpenter and town constable, prominent in town affairs. The family lived nearby on Main St. but moved to Lowell shortly after Cpl. Quessy's death.

Sometime, probably during the 1920s, the West Chelmsford Grange #344 put the monument in place and dedicated the tree behind it to Cpl Quessy's memory.

At the Chelmsford Town Meeting held on Feb. 13, 1922 it was voted to rename the nearby West Chelmsford School, built in 1904, the George R. Quessy School. A new building replaced the old one in 1925 and was demolished Sept. 1980.

In 1969 the large spruce tree behind the monument was extensively damaged. It was replaced and dedicated to the memory of Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Anderson, long-time residents of West Chelmsford. During the summer of 2002 the 2nd spruce tree died, the traffic island on which it stood was completely redesigned, and the monument taken up and buffed before being reset. On Dec. 4, 2002 the monument and a new tree (elm) were rededicated to Cpl Quessy's memory.

ENTIRE INSCRIPTION (if applicable):

THIS TREE PLANTED BY
WEST CHELMSFORD GRANGE 344
IN MEMORY OF
CORP. GEORGE R. QUCESSY
BORN DECEMBER 24, 1896
DIED IN THE BATTLE OF THE
ARGONNE, FRANCE
NOVEMBER 1, 1918

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES *see continuation sheet*

Chelmsford Newsweekly, Nov. 6, 1980
Annual Report of School Committee, for year ending Dec. 31, 1936, pg. 11
Regina Jackson, Chelmsford veterans Agent, July 24, 2001
Town Clerk's records
Eleanor Parkhurst

Recommended for listing in National Register of Historic Places. If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.



Published by F. E. Bickford

Post Office Square, West Chelmsford, Mass.

Postcard courtesy of Paul Pettazoni



Monument and Spruce tree in place, 1920s





STONY BROOK
APARTMENTS

THIS TREE PLANTED BY
WESTCHELMSFORD GRANCE CO. I
IN MEMORY OF
CORP. GEORGE RALPH QUESY
BORN [unclear] [unclear]
DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY
AT [unclear] [unclear]
NOVEMBER 1918



THIS TREE PLANTED BY
WEST CHELMSFORD GRANGE 344
IN MEMORY OF
CORP. GEORGE RALPH QUESSY
BORN DECEMBER 24, 1896
DIED IN THE BATTLE OF THE
ARGONNE, FRANCE
NOVEMBER 1, 1918

Veterans Day 2018

George Ralph Quessy was the third generation of his family to live on Main and School Streets in West Chelmsford near the file mill on Stony Brook, formerly the Roby Sword factory, where his grandfather worked. In April 1917 when war was declared, George and his brother Randall enlisted in the National Guard. In August the brothers were transferred into the 102nd Field Artillery Regiment and their National Guard unit became part of Yankee Division. In September 1917 they shipped out to port Saint-Nazaire and the Neufchateau training camp. With training finished in March 1918, Yankee Division provided relief to French and American divisions at several front-line locations, ending up in the Meuse River and Argonne Forest region. A major offensive started on September 26 and they were assigned to set up a diversion while the First American Army attacked along the entire Meuse-Argonne front. Fighting was brutal right up to the last minute of the war, and on October 30 in the Argonne Forest, George was injured and his brother Randall barely escaped death. George died from his injuries on **November 1, 1918**, just 10 days before the Armistice. The Quessy family moved to Lowell before the end of the war, and as a result, the brothers were documented as Lowell and not Chelmsford veterans. It was realized before the 1922 town meeting that George had been a West Chelmsford resident all his life and needed to be recognized in Chelmsford. In response, his name was added to the World War 1 Monument, the West School was renamed Quessy School, and the West Chelmsford Grange commissioned a stone and plaque at Main and School Streets.

Exactly **100 years ago** the Allies in Europe, with the help of fresh young American troops in 1917 and 18, finally put an end to this long and bloody world war. Now the process of demobilization began and while families were joyfully reuniting, six men with Chelmsford connections had become a permanent part of our history, and we remember their sacrifice, here, today.

Fred Merriam
November 11, 2018



NEW WEST SCHOOL BUILT IN REAR OF OLD CIRCA 1904-5

Old West School being dismantled in 1905, and new West School under construction behind it. The new school was named after Corporal George R. Quessy in 1922



