

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

50/ 235/ 1/ 1

Billerica

CLM.432

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

**Town/City:** Chelmsford

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

## Photograph



View looking north from North Road.

**Address:** 140 North Rd

**Historic Name:** John and Rebecca Butterfield House

**Uses:** Present: Multiple-family dwelling

Original: Single-family dwelling

**Date of Construction:** circa 1801

**Source:** Deeds; Marriage date

**Style/Form:** Greek Revival

**Architect/Builder:** Not known

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Stone, cut

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboards; wood trim

Roof: Asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** None

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): Doors replaced; deck added to rear.

**Condition:** Very good

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

**Acreage:** 0.79

**Setting:** The house is located on a major north-south route in a residential setting. Nearby houses range in date from the 18<sup>th</sup> century through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Stacy Spies, Historic Preservation Cons.

**Organization:** for Chelmsford Historical Commission

**Date:** March 2022

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

140 NORTH RD

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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.*

Set into a steep slope, the house is oriented to the east and parallel with North Road. An asphalt-paved driveway leads from North Road to the south side of the house. The house is located very close to the road, separated from the road by shrubbery and a shallow, grassy yard. The east end of the lot near the house is planted in grass; the upland portion of the lot is wooded.

The house consists of a two-story main block constructed at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with a two-story ell that extends from the southwest corner of the main block. The main block is five bays wide and two bays deep. The main block rests on a cut stone slab foundation and is capped by a side-gabled roof with a shallow box cornice and overhang; there is no roof overhang on the side elevations. A large brick chimney is centered on the roof ridge. The entire building is sheathed with wood clapboards with cornerboards.

The main block's center entrance consists of a paneled wood(?) door partially visible behind a metal-frame storm door. The door and sidelights appear to be late 20<sup>th</sup>-century replacements. The architrave is an excellent example of Greek Revival design. The pilasters each contain two tall, vertical panels angled away from each other. Greek key motif corner blocks rest atop the pilasters. The frieze is articulated with a rectangular center plaque containing a four-faceted rectangular inset. (The architrave is very similar in design to another Butterfield house at 96 North Road (CLM.43)).

Windows throughout the building are 6/12 double-hung wood sash with narrow, flat surrounds. The second-story windows on the façade are tucked up against the roof plate and flush with a narrow frieze. Window surrounds on the first story of the façade and on the side elevations are capped with a narrow molded crown. A single window is located in each gable peak.

Square-section wood posts with recessed panels support the hipped-roof porch attached to the first floor of the south elevation. The posts are capped by a molded cornice and wide frieze. A cut stone step leads to the wood porch floor. The porch shelters two windows and a door located at the north end of the ell's east elevation.

A two-story ell is attached to the southwest corner of the main block and contains three bays on the east elevation and a single bay on the south elevation. Although narrower than the main block, the ell features the same stylistic features as those located on the main block. Windows at the first story are 6/12 sash; second-story windows are 6/6 and tucked up against the plate. A metal door is located at the east end of the south elevation. A slender brick chimney with a corbeled cap rises from the center of the roof ridge. A second-story deck and stairs constructed of pressure-treated wood is attached to the west (rear) elevation of the ell.

Interior inspections were beyond the scope of this survey, but a closer examination of surviving framing, floorplans, and interior features and finishes by an architectural historian could provide additional insights into a likely original construction date and on the physical evolution of the building over time.

While the building appears to date from the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century based on its size and volume, the building's notable features date from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The Greek Revival architrave paneled pilasters, Greek key corners, and faceted plaque are finely executed. Greek Revival features are continued in the south porch columns and frieze.

## 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.*

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The house at 140 North Street was likely constructed circa 1801, ten years after John Butterfield (ca. 1766-1840) married Rebecca Kendall in 1791. In 1801, John Butterfield purchased several parcels of land in the area of 140 North Avenue.<sup>1</sup> The Butterfield family owned most of the land on the west side of North Road near the center during the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, including 96 North Road (CLM.43). 96 North Road is reported to have been constructed by John Butterfield's grandfather, Captain John Butterfield before the Revolutionary War.

In 1823, John Butterfield's daughter, Louisa (1803-1851),<sup>2</sup> married Owen Emerson, Jr. (1796-1873).<sup>3</sup> That same year, John Butterfield sold 96 North Road and 10 acres of land to his new son-in-law.<sup>4</sup> Owen and Louisa Emerson had two sons, Henry Hebert Emerson and Charles Emerson. Owen Emerson, Jr. worked as a farmer and was active on the Board of Trustees of the Chelmsford Classical School for those "wishing to pursue the more advanced studies." His father-in-law John Butterfield was also a member of the Board of Trustees. The school was established in 1825 and funded by private donations. Among the teachers was essayist and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson.<sup>5</sup> The school had only "a brief existence."<sup>6</sup>

After John Butterfield's death in 1840, his daughter Louisa Butterfield Emerson inherited 140 North Road and she and her husband, Owen Emerson, Jr., moved to 140 North Road.<sup>7</sup> Two years after Louisa Butterfield Emerson died of consumption in 1850, Owen Emerson, Jr. married Rachel Bancroft (1810-1886).<sup>8</sup> In 1873, widow Rachel Emerson sold the property to her stepsons H. Herbert Emerson and Charles F. Emerson.<sup>9</sup>

In 1879, Susan Wright purchased the house and 5 acres on the west side of North Road and a barn and 30 acres of land on the east side of North Road.<sup>10</sup> That same year, 21-year-old Susan Wright married Francis Marshall. Francis Marshall farmed the land. The couple had one child, Rachel.

Alfred J. Allard and his wife, Jeanne, owned 140 North Road from 1924 until 1945.<sup>11</sup> Alfred and Jeanne Allard were born in Canada and married in Chelmsford in 1919. The couple had two daughters, Jeannette and Lucille, and a son, Charles. The 1930 census indicates that Alfred Allard worked as a farmer. By 1940, Allard was also operating a roadside farm stand and lunchroom here.<sup>12</sup>

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

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Hurd, Hamilton. *History of Middlesex County*. Vol. 2. Philadelphia: J. Lewis & Co. 1890.

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Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.

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Massachusetts Vital Records. Ancestry.com.

Massachusetts Marriage records. Ancestry.com.

United States Census. Ancestry.com.

<sup>1</sup> Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 9, p. 315, Book 9, p. 318, Book 9, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/18168318/louisa-emerson>. Accessed Dec. 13, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/18168326/owen-emerson>. Accessed Dec. 13, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 11, p. 484.

<sup>5</sup> Hurd: 263.

<sup>6</sup> Hurd: 263.

<sup>7</sup> MHC Form CHM.43, 1976.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/18168327/rachel-emerson>. Accessed Dec. 13, 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 96, p. 53.

<sup>10</sup> Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 136, p. 94.

<sup>11</sup> Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 704, p. 407 and Book 1031, p. 463.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Census, 1940 and City Directory, 1942.



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Walker, George H. & Co., *Atlas of Middlesex County*. Boston: George H. Walker & Co., 1889.  
Walling, Henry Francis. *Map of Middlesex County*. Boston: Smith & Bumstead, 1856.  
Waters, Rev. Wilson. *History of Chelmsford, Massachusetts*. Lowell: Courier-Citizen Company. 1917.

## SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION



View looking south at east (façade) and north elevations from North Road.



Detail, entrance.

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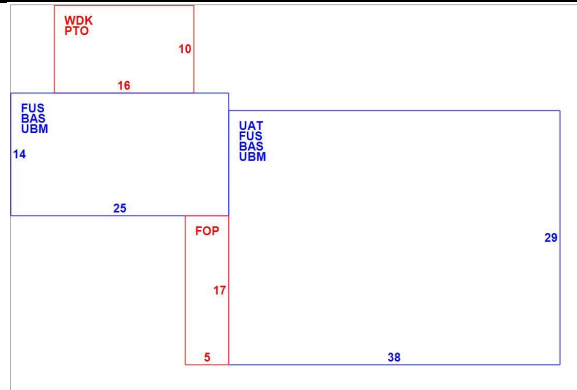
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Assessor's sketch.