

FORM B – BUILDING

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

Assessor's Number **73-315-1** USGS Quad **Billerica** Area(s) Form Number **115**

Town **Chelmsford**
 Place (neighborhood or village) **Chelmsford Center**

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 over this space. Attach additional photos to continuation sheets.

Address **32-34 North Road**
 Historic Name **Wigginette**
 Uses: Present **8 apartments**
 Original **2 apartments**

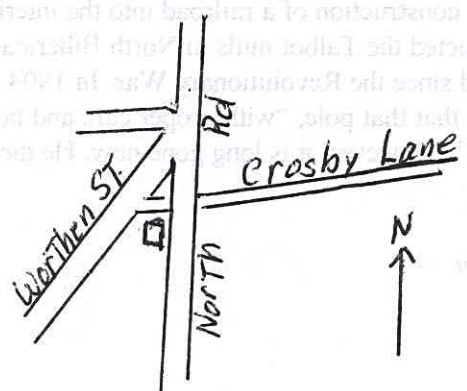
Date of Construction **1877**
 Source **Chelmsford Eagle, Dec. 12, 1877**

Roll	Negative(s)
	

Style/Form
 Architect/Builder F.H. Hodges was 1st owner
 Exterior Material:

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

Foundation front, right: concrete
 right side & rear: stone
 Wall/Trim **clapboard**
 Roof **gable, asphalt**
 Outbuildings/Secondary Structures
 garage on left side
 small shed behind garage
 Major Alterations (with dates)
 remodeled from 4 to 8 apartments as school projects:
 1935 a "3 story one room each addition"



Condition **fair**
 Moved no yes Date
 Acreage **5,181 sq. ft**
 Setting **residential, at intersection of busy roads
 businesses and churches near by**

Recorded by **Jane B. Drury**
 Organization **for Chelmsford Historical Commission**
 Date (month / year) **June 2005**

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION see continuation sheet

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

Architecturally the apartment house at 32-34 North Road is unique to other buildings in Chelmsford. The original part of the building is in the middle, with additions to the sides. It may have begun as a private residence but soon became a two and then four apartment house. Between 1918 and 1944 it was owned by Fred Wiggin, an instructor at the Lowell Trade School. Around 1920 he built a house next door, using erecting it as training for his students. It has recently been demolished, in spite of being in a historical district. Mr. Wiggin also used the house at #32-34 North Road for teaching his boys. Each year they would build another section. In 1935 they erected at least one the portions at side of the original house. At some time another ell was built on the other side of the building, increasing the number of apartments to eight.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE see continuation sheet

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.

The center section of this building at 32-34 North Road was erected in 1877 by Frank H. Hodges, who was born in Chelmsford in 1850. The "large two story house, was as yet unoccupied" by the middle of that December. Whether or not Mr. Hodges actually lived here is doubtful. The building contained two apartments. One of his sisters, Mary Jane, had married O. Cummings, and following his death in Boston in 1879, she and her family came here to live upstairs at 32-34 North Rd., where she remained until around 1920. Meanwhile Alonzo G. Greene moved into the north end of the house with his wife, Julia A. Hodges, another sister of Frank H. Hodges. A contractor and builder, Mr. Greene had made several trips to San Domingo in the West Indies superintending the building of wharves for the New York & Smyrna Fruit Co. and also the construction of a railroad into the interior. For a number of years he was a member of the Greene & Hagerman firm, which constructed the Talbot mills in North Billerica. In 1864 he had erected the first liberty pole to be raised on the Common in Chelmsford since the Revolutionary War. In 1904 the pole had become worn out and dangerous, so he erected a second one. It was his opinion that that pole, "with proper care and because of improved method of construction, [would] outlast its predecessor by many years." However, it is long gone now. He died suddenly at his home during the afternoon of Oct. 21, 1910, aged 73 years.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES see continuation sheet

Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds, Bk. 113, pg. 485
Notebook of Frances Andrews, pg. 104
Chelmsford Eagle: December 12, 1877
Margaret Mills, Oct. 1974, Nov. 28, 1978
Lowell Daily Courier, Oct. 21, 1910; Oct. 23, 1910
Chelmsford street directories
Building Inspector records; Assessors' records
Chelmsford Independent, February 8, 2001

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

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town Property Address
CHELMSFORD 32-34 NORTH RD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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HISTORY

The Rodcliffes were another family who resided here since 1900. Augusta Rodcliffe, the widow of Horatio, moved into the south side of the dwelling with her children, Frederick, Gertrude and Annie. Both worked in Lowell, Frederic as a compositor and Gertrude as a teacher. By 1925-26 the building had been increased in size and was known as the North Square Apartments. The Green and Cummings families no longer lived there, the Rodcliffe family was about to leave Chelmsford, and Frank Wiggin had moved in his wife Jessie. Jessie had grown up across the street with her parents, Almon & Susan Holt. Her father was a local building contractor. Frank Wiggin, who was known as Fred, taught at the Lowell Trade School, and he used the building at 32 North Rd. as a teaching model for his students, who built an ell on each side, dormers, and made other changes, eventually increasing its size to the present eight apartments. Over the years the building became affectionately known as the "Wiggenette." The boys from the Lowell Trade School also erected the house next door, now demolished. In 1947 Fred Wiggin died of heart problems, having retired from teaching a few years earlier. His widow, Jessie, died of cancer in 1952.

ALTERATIONS

Attached barn at left rear removed sometime after 1889

Additions & alterations by Lowell Trade School students
2 ells added, at least 1 of these said to have been added 1935
dormers added

1984
A wall left of building was removed to create a driveway, not following correct historic procedures.
Eventually an application was made and denied. Stone wall to be replaced immediately.

2001 contractor: Joseph P. Shaw
wood sash exterior windows replaced by 48 vinyl windows
single front door with long decorative oval window replaced with 3 ft. x 8 ft. solid oak six panel door.

2004
new garage doors
1" x 3" x 4" white picket fence installed on top of retaining wall located to left side of the 2 car garage

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

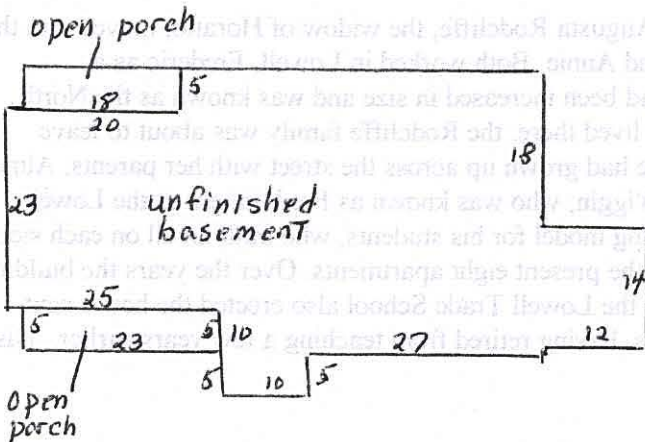
Town
CHELMSFORD

Property Address
32-34 NORTH RD

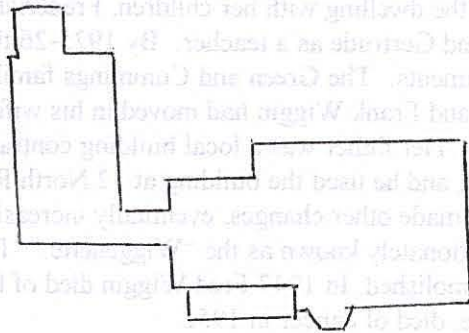
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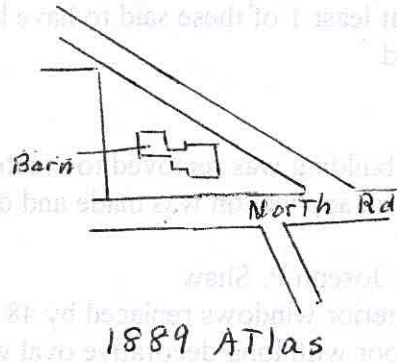
ALTERATIONS



Assessors' March 2005



Plan BK. M, plan 119
March 31, 1920



INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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April 6, 2005

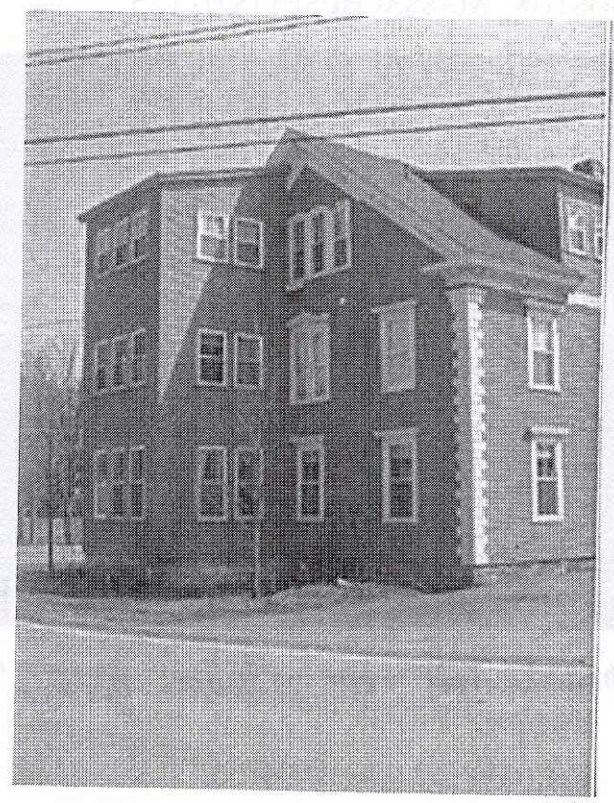
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ALTERATIONS



Front + right



Right Rear



Rear



Rear shed + garage

Front door + porch
1905 expansion noted

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shed left rear of house garage April 6, 2005



garage left + front of house



Front door + windows before changes 2001

photo courtesy of
Chelmsford Independent

Feb. 8,
2001

Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds
32-34 North Road

Bk. 139, pg. 086	Oct. 30, 2002	William L. Harvey, III, Trustee North Realty Trust, to William L. Harvey, III, 15 Wilson Rd. \$1 land & buildings: west side North Chelmsford Rd., now North Rd. same: 2001 deed, Bk. 12515, pg. 76
Bk. 12515, pg. 076	Dec. 15, 2001	William L. Harvey, III, 15 Wilson St., to William L. Harvey, III, Trustee of North Realty Trust, a/k/a North Road Realty Trust \$1 land & buildings: west side North Chelmsford Rd., now North Rd. same: deed Bk. 10555, pg. 172 also :Bk. 121189, pg. 229
Bk. 12189, pg. 229	Oct. 03, 2001	William L. Harvey, III, Trustee North Road Realty Trust, to William L. Harvey, III \$1 land & buildings: west side North Chelmsford Rd., now North Rd. same: deed Bk. 10816, pg. 122
Bk. 10816, pg. 122	May 05, 2000	William L. Harvey, III, 15 Fairmount St., Nashua, NH \$1 land & buildings: west side North Chelmsford Rd., now North Rd. same: deed Bk. 10555, pg. 172
Bk. 10555, pg. 172	Dec. 02, 1999	Robert C. Piantoni, of 34 North Road Realty Trust, to William L. Harvey, III, 15 Fairmount St., Nashua, NH 03060 \$302,000 land & buildings: west side North Chelmsford Rd., now North Rd. same: 1988 Piantoni deed, Bk. 4599, pg. 246
Bk. 4599, pg. 246	July 29, 1988	Robert C. & Sarah M. Piantoni, Andover, to Robert C. Piantoni, of 34 North Road realty Trust less than \$100 land & buildings: west side North Chelmsford Rd., now North Rd. same: Saab deed, Bk. 2073, pg. 44
Bk. 2073, pg. 034	June 29, 1973	Louis M. Saab, Lowell, to Robert C. & Sarah M. Piantoni \$54,000 land & buildings: west side North Chelmsford Rd., now North Rd.
Bk. 1806, pg. 182	July 27, 1967	F. & M. Real Estate Company, to Louis M. Saab, Lowell Parcel #17 & buildings thereon
Bk. 1046, pg. 319	June 11, 1946	Edith E. Morse to F. & M. Real Estate Company land & buildings numbered 34: west side North Chelmsford Rd., now North Rd. portion of: Wiggin deed, Bk. 1002, pg. 388
Bk. 1002, pg. 388	Jan. 22, 1944	Fred F. Wiggin to Edith E. Morse 7/8 A. & buildings: including 38 North Rd.

Bk. 0586, pg. 533 Apr. 12, 1918 Julia A. Green & Mary J. Cummings to
 Fred F. Wiggin
 7/8 A. & buildings

Bk. 0291, pg. 472 Oct. 01, 1897 Frank H. Hodges, Lowell; Anna M. Hagerman & Jessie C. Allen, heirs
 of
 Benjamin J. Hodges, deceased, intestate, to
 Julia A. Green & Mary J. Cummings
 7/8 A. & buildings
 same: 1875 Perham deed, Bk. 113, pg. 485
 excepted: buildings

Bk. 0113, pg. 485 Nov. 08, 1875 David Perham to
 Frank H. Hodges
 \$500
 7/8 A. land: west side of North Chelmsford Rd.

Compiled by Jane B. Drury, 1974; additions 2005

Mar. 22, 1889 - Mrs. Elizabeth R. Parkhurst has sold her homestead, opposite the well known Owl's Nest greenhouses, to the Adams brothers of Nashua, formerly of Lowell, who will take possession April 1. Mrs. Parkhurst has purchased of Mr. Horace Holt a building lot in the Centre village, where she will at once erect a handsome cottage.

April 12, 1889 - In consequence of the sale of the "Owl's Nest" homestead, the proprietors of the greenhouses bearing that title were forced to change their domestic headquarters and are now comfortably domiciled in the house of Mr. E.F. Parker with Miss Flora Spaulding as housekeeper.

May 31, 1889 - Work upon Mrs. E.R. Parkhurst's new cottage on Billerica street is rapidly progressing. Samuel Hagerman is the builder.

Oct. 21, 1910 - The death of Alonzo G. Greene, a well known resident of Chelmsford, occurred suddenly this afternoon at his home in Centre st. His age was 73 years.....As a contractor and builder he has had an extensive acquaintance. In this line of work he made several trips to San Domingo in the West Indies for the N.Y. & Smyrna Fruit Co., superintending the building of wharves for them, and also the construction of a railroad into the interior. He was, for a number of years, a member of the firm of Greene & Hagerman, who constructed the Palbot Mills at No. Billerica and executed many other large contracts in surrounding towns. In 1861 he was united in marriage with Julia A. Hodges.....besides his wife he is survived by a son Harry C. Greene of Chelmsford with real estate offices in Boston & Nashua.

Oct. 23, 1910 - To the late A.G. Greene fell the unusual honor of erecting all the public liberty poles that have thus far stood at the Centre village. The first he raised within the common in 1864, and when, thru age and the effects of the elements, this pole became dangerous, he was again chosen in 1904, 40 years later, to erect the one now standing in front of the town hall. It was then Mr. Greene's opinion that this pole, with proper care and because of improved method of construction, outlast its predecessor by many years.

"Chelmsford Eagle," December 12, 1877

"J.M. Fletcher, whose house was burned a little more than a year ago, has erected a thoroughly built and convenient dwelling upon the same site. Just beyond, upon the other side (of North Rd.), Frank H. Hodges has put up a large two story house, as yet unoccupied."

Notebook of Miss Frances Andrews, pg. 104

"J.H. Hodges - built a two story house on North Road in 1877. 2 apartment house. This house was later remodelled into an 8 apartment house by Fred Wiggin. Was sold by him in 1944 to Mrs. Morse. In 1946 Mrs. Morse sold to Field & McKittrick.

Margaret Mills (Oct. 1974):

apartments. The Rodliff's, two maiden sisters, Gertrude & Annie, and their mother lived downstairs. The Cummings family lived upstairs.

Historical window battle leaves residents out cold

BY JULIE HANSON
STAFF WRITER

Some North Road tenants are getting the cold shoulder in a feud between their landlord and the Historic District Commission.

"While they continue the argument over the windows, I suffer the consequences by not having heat in my apartment," said tenant Sandy Donovan.

Building owner Bill Harvey III has put plastic over the rotted wooden windows he is attempting to replace. Donovan, an asthmatic with severe arthritis, says it offers little relief. She is also concerned with three infants living in the building.

"There isn't one person in this apartment whose quality of life isn't being affected by this ongoing argument," Donovan said.

The building, located at 32-34 North Road, was built in 1877 by

Frank H. Hodges and eventually converted into eight apartments known as the Wiggen's apartments. Harvey, a real estate lawyer, bought the structure just over a year ago with the intention of restoring its historic character.

"This property was deplorable, not taken care of for at least 70 years," Harvey said. "If it wasn't in the historic district I would have considered tearing it down."

The building was painstakingly restored right down to its original color. The trouble began about three months ago when Harvey decided to replace some leaky windows and doors with newer windows he has seen around the neighborhood. He said the windows look better and conserve heat.

"His problem is he has started installation prior to receiving permission," said Historic District Commission member Kathleen Howe. "Anyone within the

historic district area is required to come in before continuing with any restoration apparent from the street."

The requirement, meant to preserve historic appearance, is part of state law 40C which was adopted by Chelmsford. The law also demands "like-for-like" replacement, meaning the new windows must be wooden rather than vinyl unless the Commission makes an exception.

The wooden windows have to be specially manufactured, sized, and fitted, often tripling the cost. Some historic district landlords have received permission to use the cheaper windows.

Brad Emerson was allowed to replace 88 windows when he restored the Wilson Block in Chelmsford Center near Jack's Diner.

"Brad Emerson was able to show hardship and was given relief," Howe said. "That was all



STAFF PHOTO BY JULIE HANSON

Plastic sheets will drape the windows of this North Road building until the owner and Historic District Commission can agree on replacements.

done prior to beginning work according to our statute." ing to Howe.

A similar request submitted by Committee Chairman Brenda Lovering said the committee began Harvey was incomplete, accord-

■ SEE **WINDOWS**, PAGE 5

CHELMSFORD INDEPENDENT • Thursday, February 8, 2001 • 5

Residents out in cold over windows

■ **WINDOWS**, FROM PAGE 1

sending Harvey letters last spring asking that he come before the board before continuing his work.

"What the man should have gotten from the Historic District Commission is a letter of appreciation," said neighbor Dick Codling. "I think this is silly."

Codling said he spent 20 years staring at the building when it was an "unbelievable disgrace." He wonders why the commission

remained silent while the building deteriorated.

"We would have paid to have the thing razed it was so awful," Codling said. "Now it's so pretty."

Many neighbors have come by to compliment his work and the tenants now take pride in the building, Harvey said. He believes the continuing delays punish him and his tenants.

"It's my position that this committee does nothing to enhance

the town of Chelmsford," Harvey said. "It never has and it needs to be rectified."

Lovering said the board remains objective in reviewing this project and wants to work with Harvey.

"It's a delight to see that building brought back up," Lovering said. "We're only doing the job we were appointed to do. In order to do things you have to play by the rules."



North Road #32-34

7/10/2005 F. Merriam







North Road #32-34

7/10/2005 F. Merriam