

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

1. Town Chelmsford

Address 7 North Road

Name Center Firestation

Present use firestation

Present owner Town of Chelmsford

Description

Date 1952

Source cornerstone, town reports

Style

Architect

Exterior wall fabric brick-American bond

Outbuildings (describe) none

Other features 2 stories

Altered no Date

Moved no Date

5. Lot size:  
10,800 sq. ft.  
One acre or less X Over one acre

Approximate frontage 80 feet

Approximate distance of building from street  
ca 40 feet

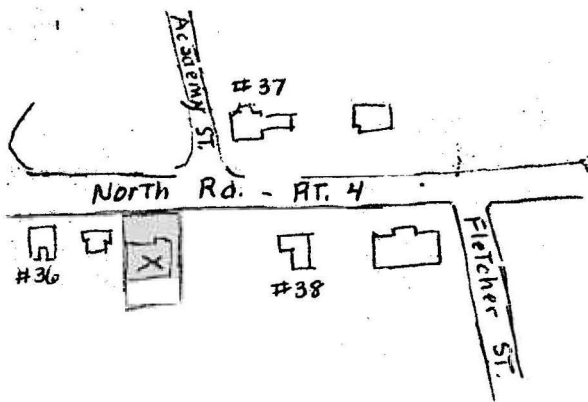
6. Recorded by Jane B. Drury

Organization Chelmsford Hist. Commission

Date March 6, 1977



other buildings. Indicate north.



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE  
USGS Quadrant \_\_\_\_\_  
MHC Photo no. \_\_\_\_\_

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) Town of Chelmsford

Original use firestation

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates \_\_\_\_\_

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

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

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

The land on which this firestation stands was purchased in June 1851 from Hildreth Dutton, owner of the house next door (#38). The so-called "yellow schoolhouse" for District #1 so long familiar as a primary & grammar school and later as a high school was built here and dedicated Nov. 12, 1851. During the early 1930s it was condemned and torn down, and the lot remained vacant for about 20 years.

In Jan. 1952 the Board of Fire Engineers reported that "our aim in 1952 is the construction of a simple fire station in the Center, to replace the antiquated, too small and poorly located shed now in use," and in July of that year money was voted for the planning, construction and equipping of the station. In the spring of 1953 the property was landscaped, and on August 1, 1953 the apparatus was moved into the new station.

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

Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds: Bk. 17, pg. 460 (1851)  
Chelmsford Assessors' records; real estate valuation records

Notebook of Miss Frances Andrews, pg. 170

Newsweekly, 1955

Annual Town Reports: 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953.

7 North Road - Lot 74

1974 owner: Town of Chelmsford  
Fire Station  
10,800 sq. ft.

Built in 1952  
First owner: Town of Chelmsford

Previous building: School, District #1  
Built 1851; demolished 1934  
Owner: Town of Chelmsford

Sources:

1. 1889 Atlas: School, District #1  
1875 Atlas: School, District #1  
1856 Map: School  
1831 Map: no
2. Chelmsford Assessor's Office 10/3/1974  
Plat 104, Block 31, Lot 74  
1974 owner: Town of Chelmsford  
1956: Centre Fire House Old School Lot 10,800 sq. ft.
3. Corner Stone, Center Fire House, Left front corner: "1952".
4. Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds  
Book 17, Pg. 460 6/4/1851 Inhabitants of School District #1 from  
Hildreth P. Dutton, Trader  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  acre land  
Book 17, Pg. 462 6/4/1851 Joseph Warren, Jr. to  
Inhabitants of School District #1  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  acre  
Discharge of mortgage given Warren by  
Hildreth.
5. Notebook of Miss Frances Andrews, pg. 170:  
"In 1851 the old school house (1802 brick) was abandoned and a new one  
erected on North Road almost opposite Academy Street on land adjoining  
that of James Emerson.  
The new one was dedicated Nov. 12, 1851.  
Was enlarged later.  
In 1934 it was condemned and torn down."
6. "Newsweekly", 1955  
"The so-called 'yellow schoolhouse' for District One at the Center, so  
long familiar as a primary and grammar school and then as a high school  
also, on the site of the present fire station, on North Road, was  
built in the 1850's and some twenty years later was enlarged to provide  
for a high school. The present high school (McFarlin) was built in  
1916, and enlarged in 1929."
7. Lowell Courier-Citizen: Aug. 12, 1912 - Carpenters have been busy the  
past week making repairs to the roof of the schoolhouse. A new piazza  
was built on the boys' side of the High School.

Lowell Weekly Journal

June 25, 1886 - The contract for the addition to the Centre school house has been awarded to A.G. Green, his bid being \$1857.....The work is to be completed by August 20.

Aug. 13, 1886 - Satisfactory progress is being made upon the addition to the Centreschool building. The plasterers began their work Tuesday morning, but it is hardly probably that the rooms will be ready for occupancy by the first of September. The addition of a bell tower is a great improvement, and here will be hung the old academy bell, so long silent, which will summon the children to school, as, more than a half century ago, it rang out a like message to their grandfathers and grandmothers when Ralph Waldo Emerson occupied the master's chair.

Lowell Daily Courier

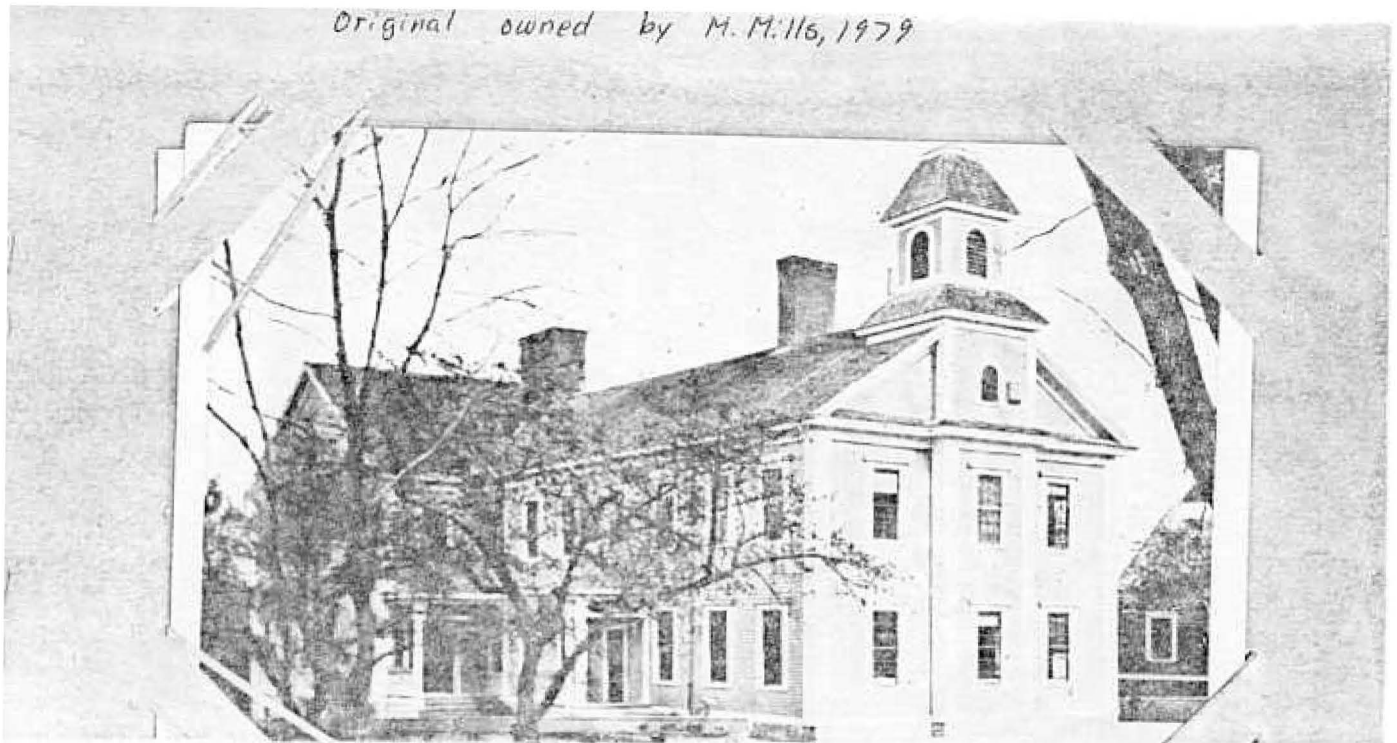
August 12, 1903 The Centre school building will wear a much brighter appearance when the fall session opens.

August 31, 1903 Public schools at the centre will open Tuesday, September 8, with the following corps of teachers:

H. H. Rice, principal  
Miss Lillian E. Copeland, Miss Lena E. Bliss,  
assistants

Miss Zelma L. Swift, grades 8 & 9  
Miss Susan S. McFarlin, grade 7  
Miss Lena E. Bliss, grade 6  
Miss Philma Parker, grades 4 & 5  
Miss Grace C. Litchfield, grades 2 & 3  
Miss Eva Godfrey, grade 1

Original owned by M. M. 116, 1979



Lowell Courier - Citizen

March 23, 1908

Chelmsford's town meeting yesterday was a hummer: Article XII: Relating to the establishment of more playgrounds for the schools in the Centre, was explained by H. E. Ellis, who said that the pupils had not adequate playgrounds except the town common. In view of the fact that the common could not be kept in proper condition as long as it was used as a playground, Mr. Ellis thought that some other place should be provided. He believed that the property owned by James P. Emerson, next to the town hall be purchased. Walter Perham moved the matter be left to the school committee. J. Adams Bartlett said it was a question of a few years before a new school is built. The motion of Mr. Perham passed.

March 22, 1909

Annual Town Meeting

Article 8: To see if the town will vote to buy a lot of land at the Centre village, supposed to belong to James P. Emerson, at a price not exceeding \$1000, for the purpose of enlarging the grounds of the Centre schoolhouse, so-called, and raise, appropriate or borrow a sufficient sum of money to pay for the same, or act in relation thereto.

There was some discussion of this article. The school children at present use the common as a play-ground. One objection was raised that there was not more than three feet of approach to the land. Its price was also questioned. The article was dismissed.

June 23, 1910

.....in grades 7 & 8 under Miss Susan S. McFarlin there are 34 pupils enrolled.

Aug. 26, 1912

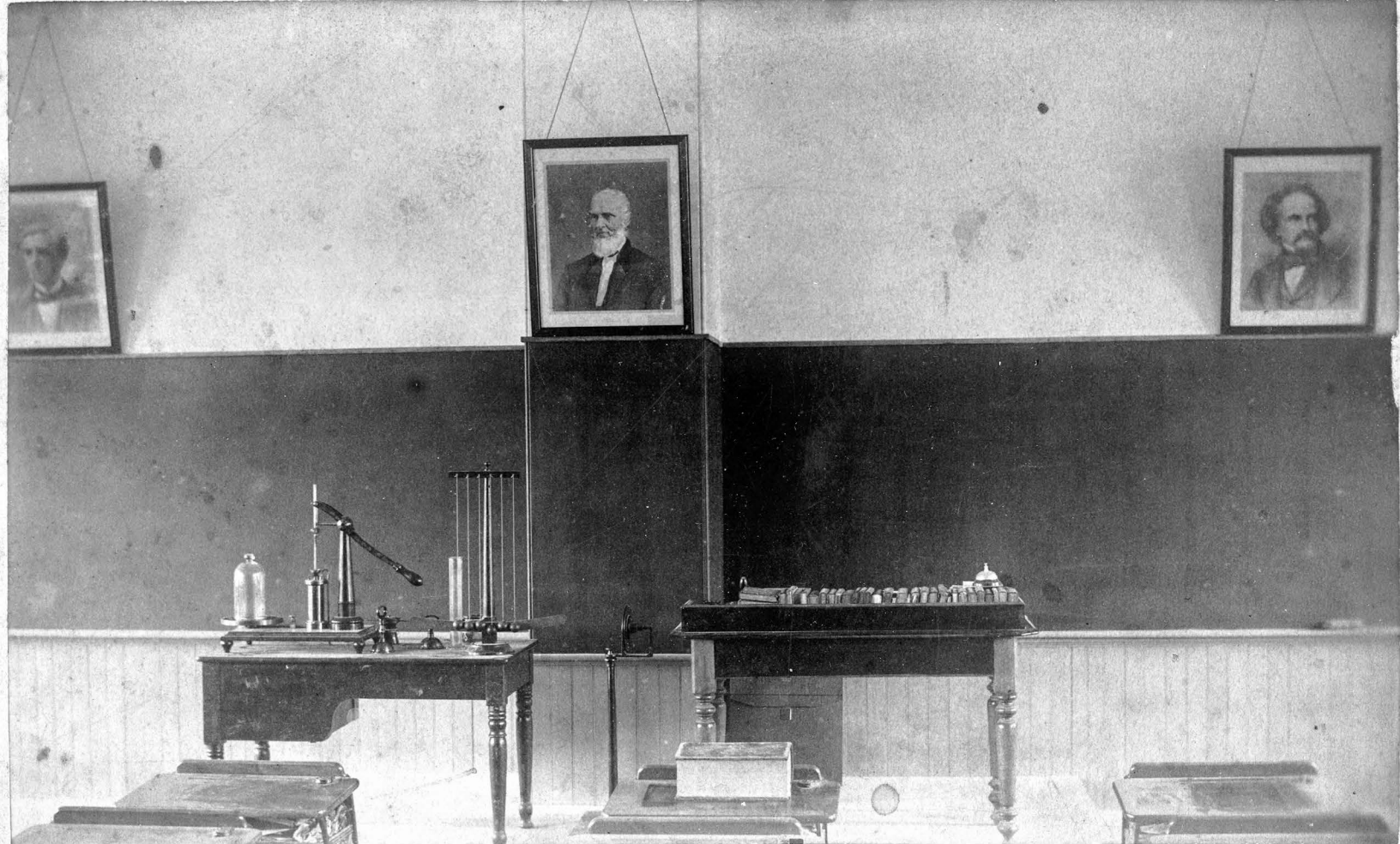
Carpenters have been busy the past week making repairs to the roof of the schoolhouse. A new piazza was built on the boys' side of the High school.

October 27, 1914

Principal Charles A. Holbrook went afishing on Tuesday, hardly away from his dry front yard in North Street, and caught a string of pickerel that would have repaid him for a tramp of several miles. The string counted out five, all good ones, and two of them were "whales" of pickerel for the place from which they came. One measured 17 inches and weighed a pound. Where did he catch them? In the brook that parallels Fletcher street. That sounds fishy all right, but not enough so for a pound and a half of pickerel, for there is no water there. Almost right; but there are always a few pools of water there in the brook course and in one of these pools, hardly more than 6 inches deep, Mr. Holbrook discovered most excellent fishing and landed the five in a very short time. Another strange thing - the fish were real pond pickerel, and not of the brook variety.



**Old Chelmsford Academy (date unknown)**

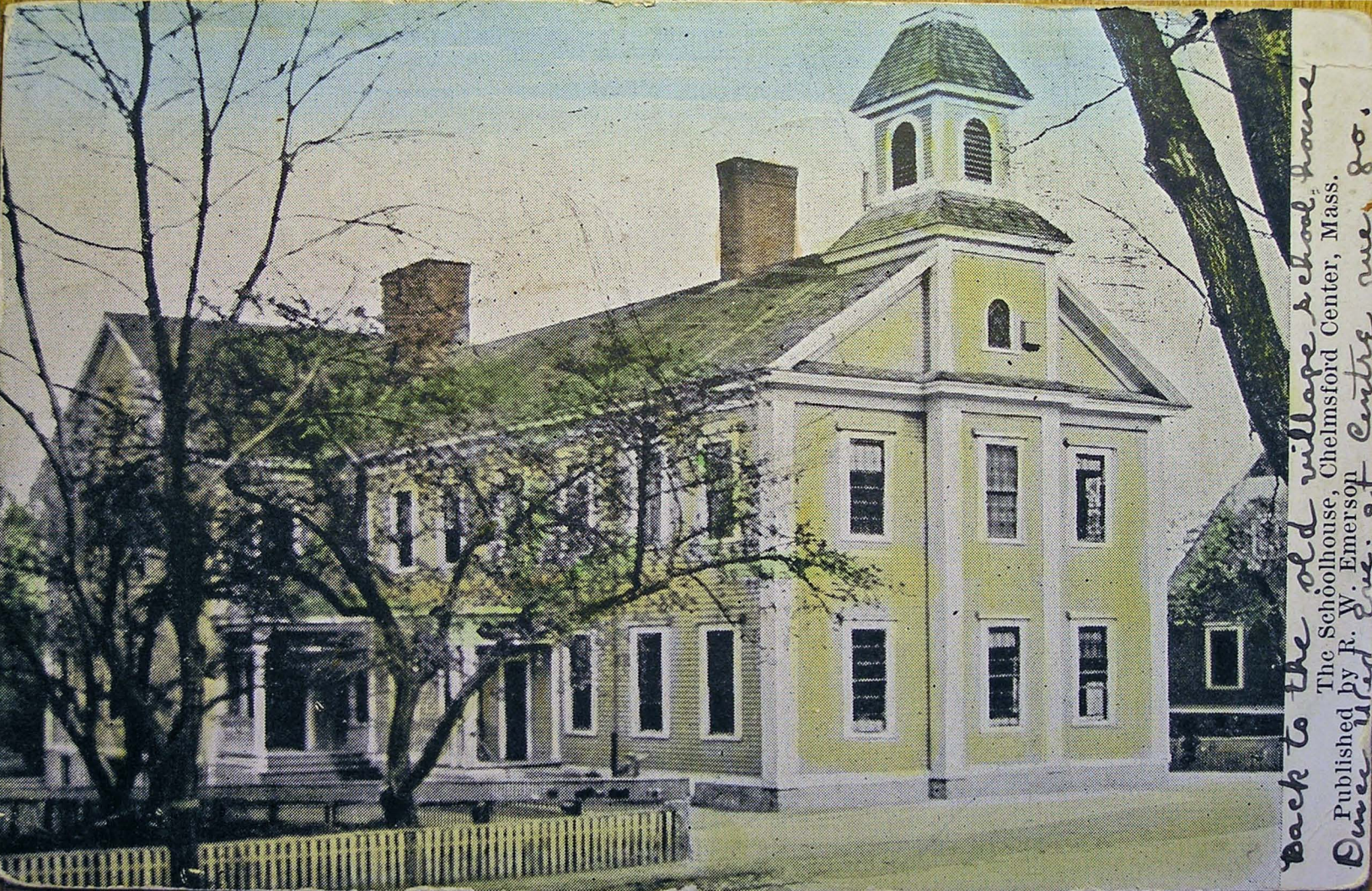


**7 North Road, Chemistry Classrom inside old Center High School, 1887**



7 North Road, Chelmsford Center School House, c. 1895





*Back to the old village school house  
The Schoolhouse, Chelmsford Center, Mass.  
Published by R. W. Emerson  
Dance Used by Emerson, do.*

**7 North Road, Center High School**

**Postcard courtesy of Paul Pettazoni**



CHELMSFORD FIRE / RESCUE

CHELMSFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT  
LADDER ONE  
ENGINE ONE

NO PARKING



7 North Road

12/27/2004 F. Merriam



