

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

13/36/8	Nashua South		CLM.293
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Town/City: Chelmsford

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

Photograph



Address: 70 Princeton Street

Historic Name: Silver and Gay Machine Shops

Uses: Present: industrial

Original: industrial

Date of Construction: 1832

Source: *History of Chelmsford 1910 – 1970*

Style/Form: altered beyond recognition

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: brick/metal

Roof: asphalt

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
Ca. 1940 north and south additions

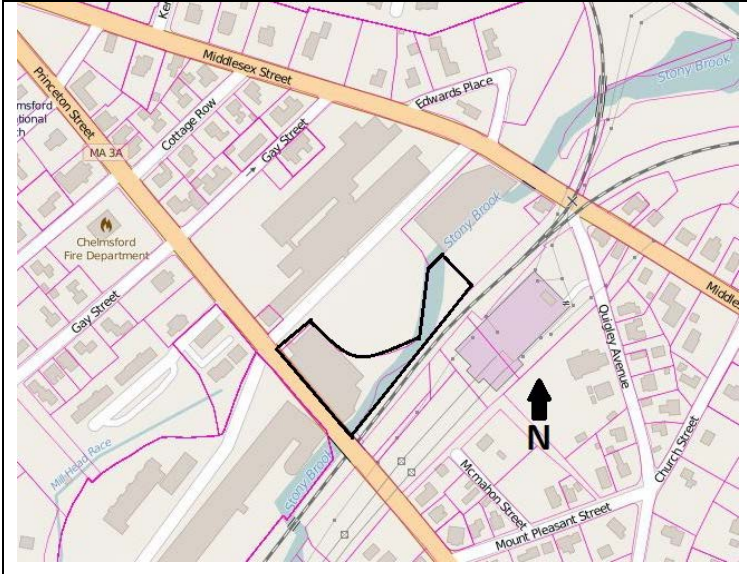
Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 1.28 A

Setting: The building is within a complex of former mill buildings on Middlesex and Princeton sts. in N. Chelmsford. It is located on the north side of Princeton St. between Foundry St and the railroad tracks. A parking area is located on the north side of the parcel.

Locus Map



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

Organization: Chelmsford Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): June 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

70 PRINCETON STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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 at the east corner of Princeton and Foundry streets. It is the former home of the Silver and Gay Machine Shop and the Chelmsford Machine and Supply Company. The roof of the overall conglomeration is covered with a rubberized membrane or asphalt. The building rests atop a stone foundation. The overall building consists of numerous additions that extend from the sides and ends of the original machine shop buildings. Sanborn maps indicate that the original section of the building, which appears to be located in the center of the overall conglomeration, consists of a long, rectangular-shaped front-gabled building. Built of brick, this section of the building has a low-pitched, almost flat, roof. Sanborn maps indicate that this section of the machine shop stood three stories in height, but it currently appears to stand just two stories in height. Window openings feature brick, segmental arches and granite sills. The windows vary in size and include 2/2, 6/6, 8/8, and 9/9 arrangements. Shed roof and low-pitched gabled roof, wood frame additions are located along the length of the north and south sides of the earlier brick portions of the machine shop. They are two stories in height, covered with clapboard, and largely utilitarian and nondescript in appearance. Many of the windows in the wood frame sections of the building appear to be recent, 1/1 replacements.

The building is an altered example of a mid-nineteenth century industrial building that retains historic integrity of location and setting.

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.

The business at this location was established in 1830 as the Ira & Ziba Gay Company, who were brothers. The company included a machine shop and blast furnace. In 1841 Ziba Gay reorganized the company as Gay, Silver and Company with Harvey Silver (Ira Gay passed away in 1837). The business was reorganized again in 1857 as the Silver & Gay Company, which is the most well-known business name. The building served as the machine shop for Silver & Gay. Operation of the company passed to Ziba's son, Ziba, Jr. (1823-1902), in 1859 when the elder Ziba sold his interest to Ziba, Jr. for \$15,000. In 1892 Gay received the other half interest in the business via a deed from Mary E. Cushing and Edward Silver. George C. Moore (1848-1923), then owner of the wool scouring mill across from the machine shop, purchased the business from Gay in 1898 and incorporated it as the North Chelmsford Machine Company.

On April 27, 1901 a fire in the building caused significant damage to the structure and portions of the building were rebuilt. In 1905 Moore reincorporated the company as the North Chelmsford Machine and Supply Company that manufactured textile machinery and supplies. This company was one of the first in the country to manufacture worsted yarn machinery. The company also made leather belting for the machinery, as well as leather comb aprons, brushes, and other mill supplies. The 1907 Sanborn map notes the various operations in the building at this date, including the machine shop on the first and second stories and the pattern shop and supply department on the third.

A year after Moore's death in 1923, the company ceased operations. The former president of the North Chelmsford Machine & Supply Company, H. Stanley Crysler, created the Crysler Company in April 1924 and continued to use this building as a general mill supply company. In 1948 the Southwell Combing Company purchased the property from Crysler. The 1950 Sanborn map indicates the building was used as the nylon plant and for wool storage for Southwell.

In 1979 the Realty Trust of the Southwell Company sold the property to Wang Laboratories of Lowell. Within 10 years of the purchase the company was deeply in debt and was selling assets and laying off employees to offset the amounts owed. In 1992

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Chelmsford Holdings, Inc. purchased this property as well as others owned by Wang Laboratories. The company retains ownership of this building. Currently several businesses operate in the building, including Nile Cargo, Inc., the Bob Pappas Golf School, Princeton Furnished Supply, Dan the Drapery Man, Northeast Software Services, Inc., Hardric Technology, Inc. and P.A.G. Industry, Inc.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Beers, F.W. *County Atlas of Middlesex, Massachusetts*. J.B. Beers & Co., New York. 1875.

Chelmsford Historical Commission. *History of Chelmsford 1910 – 1970*. Chelmsford Historical Commission, Chelmsford, MA. 2011.

Genealogical research, including U.S. and Massachusetts census records; birth, marriage, and death records; and city directory records from ancestry.com.

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

Middlesex North Registry of Deeds. www.lowelldeeds.com.

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.



70 Princeton Street, facing south. May 2016.