

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

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Nashua
South,
NH

Photograph



View looking south.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies, Historic Preservation Consultant

Date: December 2021

Town/City: Chelmsford

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

Address: 194 Tyngsboro Road

Historic Name: John and Louisa Coburn House

Uses: Present: Single-family dwelling

Original: Single-family dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1835

Source: Deed, Census

Style/Form: No style

Architect/Builder: Not known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, cut granite

Wall/Trim: Aluminum siding/Aluminum siding

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Garage (ca. 1920)

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Aluminum siding, replacement vinyl windows (Late 20th C); Entry door replaced (ca. 1950); porch enclosed; dormer added.

Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.28

Setting: Located on a moderately-travelled rural state route. A rail line and the Merrimack River are located across the street. Condominium townhouses (ca. 2003) abut the south property line. A ca. 1915 Craftsman-style single family house is located on the adjacent lot to the north.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

194 TYNGSBORO RD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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Area(s) Form No.

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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.

194 Tyngsboro Road is oriented to the east, facing the street, and has a small front yard. An asphalt-paved driveway leads from the street past the north elevation of the house to a detached garage at the rear of the lot. The lot is planted in grass.

Although many features have been lost through alterations, the building's long, low volume, center entrance, and five-bay fenestration provide clues to its likely early 19th century construction date.

The one-story frame dwelling is five bays wide with a center entrance; the side elevations contain a single, centered bay each. The building is 30 feet wide and 15 feet deep. A single-story perpendicular ell, attached to the south end of the rear (west) elevation, is 13 feet wide and 20 feet deep. The building and ell rest on an ashlar granite foundation with beaded pointing. The front steps of the main block are constructed of poured concrete with wrought-iron railings. The poured concrete extends from the steps to form a low wall that extends in both directions along the façade to form boxes. These boxes may have been used as planters. The south end of the ell is banked; granite-lined retaining walls line the basement accessway. The three-part, side-hung basement door consists of vertical-board construction.

A shed-frame roof porch is attached to the north elevation of the ell. The east end of the porch rests on cut stone foundation; the west end rests on a poured concrete foundation. The east end of the porch is enclosed with four jalousie windows; the west end contains a 6/6 wood sash window on the north elevation.

The house is capped by a side-gabled roof with shallow eaves. Shed dormers are centered on the front and rear elevations of the main block. A slender brick interior chimney pierces the north roof elevation of the ell at its intersection with the main block. The application of aluminum siding has obscured most of the wood trim; however, the rear elevation of the main block retains a shallow molded wood cornice. The wood front door dates from the mid-20th century and features two square panels below a square light. Windows throughout the building are mostly 20th-century vinyl replacements, except where indicated. 6/6 wood sash windows are located at the attic level of the main block and in the ell gable peak. The ell's rear (west) elevation contains a shallow, shed-roof box bay window. The ell's south elevation contains a pair of small 1/1 sash windows and a single larger 1/1 sash window. A fixed 6-light wood-frame window and a 3-light wood-frame window are located in the south elevation of the ell basement. A 3-light wood-frame window is also located in the basement level of the main block basement south elevation; a small rectangular replacement window is also located in the main block basement north elevation.

The frame garage rests on a concrete foundation and contains an overhead wood door (likely ca. 1970s) on the east elevation. The clapboard-clad building is covered with aluminum siding on the north and south elevations. The overhanging eaves have exposed rafter tails. A fixed, 6-light wood frame window is centered in the west (rear) elevation. The window's flat, wide surround is similar to that framing the garage door. A paneled metal door (Late 20th C) is centered in the south elevation.

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.

194 Tyngsboro Road was likely constructed circa 1835, the year in which John Coburn purchased a one-acre piece of land here.¹ Stone cutter John Coburn (1798-1863) was born in Tyngsboro and married Louisa Wright (1807-1902)² there in 1823.

¹ Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book 341, p. 24.

² <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/53614038/louisa-coburn>. Accessed Dec. 9, 2021.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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Area(s) Form No.

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John Coburn and family were living in Chelmsford by 1840, as indicated by the 1840 census. Coburn was likely employed by the granite works located a short distance away.



The granite works was located on the far side of the rail line near Cross Street, likely across the street from present-day 170 Tyngsboro Road. (*Atlas of Middlesex County*. 1875.)

Albert H. Spaulding (1835-1905) purchased the house and property from widow Louisa Coburn in 1864³ Albert H. Spaulding and his wife, Elizabeth (ca. 1836-) lived here with their six children. Albert Spaulding also worked as a stone cutter. The 1880 census indicates that all of the men in this neighborhood reported their occupation as "stone mason," "stone cutter," or "quarryman." In addition to his own house, Albert Spaulding appears to have owned two additional adjacent houses.⁴

George W. Bacon and his wife, Nellie, purchased the house and property from the Spaulding family in 1914.⁵ George W. Bacon (ca. 1874-) worked as a carpenter at a lumber mill. By 1931, he had been promoted to foreman.⁶

In 1944, Charles R. Whitney (1906-1991)⁷ and his wife, Cora (1904-before 1975), purchased the house and property.⁸ Charles R. Whitney worked as a steward at a country club in Lowell, according to city directories and voter registration lists. Mildred Whitney, Charles' second wife, sold the property out of the family in 2011.⁹

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³ Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 37, p. 477.

⁴ Walker, Map of Middlesex County, 1889.

⁵ Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 530, p. 572

⁶ 1931, Chelmsford city directory.

⁷ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/18165578/charles-r.-whitney>. Accessed Dec. 9, 2021.

⁸ Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 1005, p. 517.

⁹ Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 24705, p. 147.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



View looking west. Façade.



View looking northwest.



View looking east at rear elevation.



View looking southwest at remaining molded cornice.

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Masonry detail. South side elevation of main block.



Masonry detail. West end of south elevation of ell.



Garage. View looking south.