

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

28-2D	Lexington		LEX.658
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**Town/City:** Lexington

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*):  
East Lexington

**Address:** 72 Lowell Street

**Historic Name:** Reed Homestead

**Uses:** Present: single family residential

Original: single family residential

**Date of Construction:** 1785-1789

**Source:** archival sources, deeds, visual assessment

**Style/Form:** Federal/2-sty gable block

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: stone, brick

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard/wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
none

**Major Alterations (*with dates*):**  
Wing added, ca. 1880

**Condition:** good

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

**Acreage:** 0.44

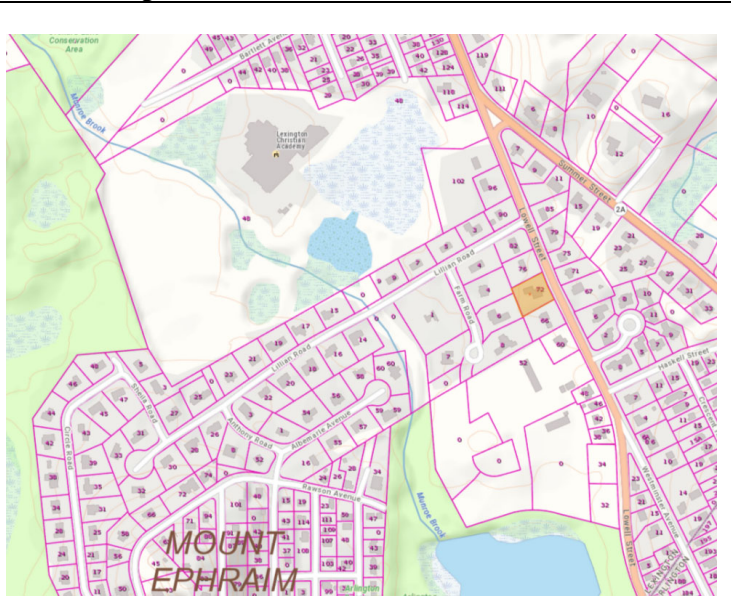
**Setting:** The property is located on a major thoroughfare built out with closely-spaced houses from a broad period of development.

## Photograph



View from SE.

## Locus Map



Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer.

**Recorded by:** Neil Larson, Walter R. Wheeler, Kathryn Grover  
Neil Larson & Associates

**Organization:** Lexington Historical Commission

**Date:** July / 2021

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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.*

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Based on fieldwork by Neil Larson &amp; Walter R. Wheeler

The Reed Homestead was built for Reuben Reed (1747-ca. 1800) after he acquired the property in 1785. It is a large two-story timber-frame house with a symmetrical fenestration and a double-pile center-hall plan with fireplaces in the partitions between front and rear rooms. This plan was introduced to Lexington in the late 1700s and was very popular there, effectively replacing the traditional center-chimney plan in the better houses in the town. On the exterior, the change is expressed by two brick chimneys positioned on the ridge inboard from the ends. A five-bay front façade faces south and is perpendicular to the street; the orientation was meant to improve solar gain and became an alternative siting in the period. It also served to provide privacy from the road. The main entrance is centered on the façade in the usual fashion; the door and sidelights are mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century additions as are the six-over-six sash contained in original window frames with moldings around the top and sides. A flat-roof porch spanning the front with Tuscan columns and a tall frieze at the eave line represents a recent restoration of a mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century feature. First-floor windows were lengthened at that time, while intact second-story windows are tight against a shallow cornice in the 18<sup>th</sup>-century manner.

Single windows are located near the corners of the first story of the gable ends, one each centered on the interior walls of the rooms, with the wide central spaces occupied by back-to-back fireplaces and flanking closets or passageways. Second-story windows are aligned with those below, although an additional one on the east end is located in a passageway between rooms. (A historic photograph shows one beneath it on the first floor.) Pairs of smaller attic windows are centered in the gables. The raking edge of the gables are distinguished by shallow cornices that make short returns at the eave line, a modest nod to Neoclassicism. The rear elevation is imbalanced due to alterations made in various periods, particularly by the intersection of a later wing on the northwest corner. The current door is off center with a window at the back of the center hall; a window centered in the second story is in a room behind the upper stair hall.

Around 1880 a large two-story, flat-roof wing was added to the house, connected to its northwest corner. This utilitarian annex was constructed for boarding workers on the Reed family's large dairy farm and retail milk business. There were common spaces on the main floor: kitchen, dining room and living room and bed chambers on the upper floor off a double-loaded hallway. The room pattern and finishes of this wing have been altered. The entrance is located on the east wall where the two sections join and once opened on a lobby with a stair. A porch was built over this entrance and across the portion of the original house where it is exposed. The basement on the north side of the wing is at grade and likely had a business function; it is now used for a garage.

The interior plan has rooms in the corners, each with a fireplace on interior walls and opening on a center passage. The front of the passage has plaster walls and ceiling and contains a staircase that quarter-turns on a landing. The best parlor, the room with the highest level of finish, is located in the southeast corner of the plan. It has plastered walls and ceiling with a wood cornice and flush-board wainscot; corner posts are expressed in the front corners. The fireplace is distinguished by a chimneybreast with crosseted corners on both the fireplace surround and paneled overmantel. The second parlor or dining room is opposite in the southwest corner of the plan. It has plastered walls and ceiling with a wood cornice less elaborate than that in the best parlor, and a chairrail (the paneled wainscot is a recent addition); corner posts are expressed in the front corners. The fireplace is distinguished by a simple trabeated mantle that was added later, as was a china closet to one side. On the other side, a short passageway bypasses the chimney space and connects with the kitchen in the northwest corner of the house. The cooking fireplace in the kitchen has been altered but original paneled cabinetry around it survives. The room in the northeast corner was converted for use as a second kitchen early in the history of the house; however, it originally would have served as a bed chamber, office or another domestic function as is the case in analogous houses of this type. The divisions between the rear rooms and the rear of the center passage have been removed. An enclosed rear staircase located in-line with the main stair in the north range, was an original component of the plan.

The second floor generally repeats the first-floor room arrangement, with the best chamber being located over the best parlor, in the southeast corner of the plan. The rear of the plan was less formal and varied with space occupied by the rear stairs. The

*Continuation sheet 1*

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medial section has been repurposed for bath and laundry rooms. In a conservative holdover, the summer beams supporting the ceilings of the north bedchambers were left exposed. Overall, walls and ceilings are plastered. The roof framing is exposed in the attic. At one point the east end was plastered. The back stairs, since removed, had terminated at this level. The roof frame is comprised of principal rafters joined to a ridge pole. The rafters are widely spaced with six purlins spanning them, one of which nearer the eaves is larger, wind-braced and tied to floor beams. The structure is intact as is the butted sheathing running across the purlins. Original floor framing is intact in the basement as are the complex brick chimney bases with arched hollows with shelving and corbeled hearth supports for both the fireplaces and ovens.

## CONSTRUCTION HISTORY

### Ca. 1800 division of the house

Reuben Reed's ca.1800 will parses out the details of the division of the house providing living space for his widow as well as for the household of his brother and nephew. (It appears that the house continued to be owned in shares and occupied by members of the extended Reed family into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.) This is made evident by the presence of a second kitchen in the northeast corner of the house with a fireplace and oven roughly contemporary with this date. The similarity of the paneling and moldings in the northeast kitchen to those in the original kitchen point to an installation date not too far removed from the original build date of the house; however, there are differences in molding profiles for all of the components of this work, suggesting another hand, or at least the passage of time. Additional work, now removed, would have been undertaken to divide the households. This may have included alteration of the back stairs to provide principal access from the northeast kitchen rather than from the original center passage or kitchen in the northwest corner. If not previously incorporated into the plan, it can further be assumed that connections between the north and south rooms on the east side of both floors of the house would have been necessary in order for it to work independently of the west side of the dwelling.

### Ca. 1840-50 Alterations

Improvements made to the house during this period included the installation of Greek Revival baseboards in the center passage at both the first and second floor levels. A new front door with a patent lock was installed. The patent for this lock set was issued in 1830 and it was produced under the name of Carpenter & Co. until 1851.

Evidence that the form of the main staircase was altered—possibly to decrease its slope—can be found in patches to the intermediary newels. The balusters of the main staircase are, at present, in the form of untapered dowels. Similar balusters can be found at 884-86 Massachusetts Avenue and appear to date to the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, or as late as ca. 1850. These alterations occurred either at this time (1840-50) or as part of renovations subsequently undertaken in ca. 1885. The central hall floor was painted in imitation of grey marble with black veining. This occurred either as part of the original construction in ca. 1789 or may date to this period. This surface was covered by narrow flooring installed ca. 1885 and only revealed when that floor was removed in 2021. It is unknown if any of the other rooms in the house had decoratively painted floors.

The mantels in the southwest parlor and in the southeast, or best chamber, on the second floor contain a mix of neoclassical and Greek Revival details, typically reflecting a date closer to the beginning of the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century than other work seen in the house. It is, however, possible that the mechanic who constructed them simply took a conservative approach to their design, and that they are contemporary with the 1840-50 work.

### Ca. 1885 Alterations

Alterations dating to ca. 1885 included the installation narrow board hardwood flooring in the south rooms and center passage on both levels (first-floor flooring removed in 2021). The refacing or replacement of the risers, treads and stringer edges of the main stair with oak and oak veneer was contemporary with this work. Other improvements in the entrance hall include installation of a lobed brass knob on the front door.

A beveled mirror with gessoed frame was fitted into the crosseted frame over the east parlor mantel at this time. Recesses flanking this fireplace were modified by the addition of flattened arches and modifications to the wainscot, possibly pointing to the removal of a door or doors which communicated with the kitchen, to the north.

A glazed doors were added to the built-in china closet in the north wall of the west parlor, adjacent to the fireplace in that room. There may have been a previous cabinet in this same location, as the profile of the associated architrave predates this period. A solid door may have been replaced. Hearths in the east and west parlors were reconstructed at this time. The current owners

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have in their possession a Delft tile that was given to them by a previous owner, with the oral history that it once formed part of the decoration of one of the fireplaces. It is a biblical tile of 18<sup>th</sup> century manufacture.

The south, or front, porch, extending across the width of the house, was probably constructed at this time; the lowering of the windows in the east and west parlors served to increase the visual connection between these rooms and the porch. Construction of a substantial wing, attached to the northwest corner of the house, was contemporary with this work. The wing is two stories in height, and rests on a banked brick masonry basement. The wing was originally heated with stoves that were vented through a small chimney located near the center of its plan. It has a flat roof.

## Ca. 1900

The addition of a one-story wing in front of the southwest parlor at this time obliterated the porch on this side. This alteration, and the north porch, which has squared columns, do not appear in a late-19<sup>th</sup> century photograph of the house, which does show the large northwest wing as extant.

## Alterations and other work undertaken by the present owners, 1998-present

A back stair, located between the two kitchens, was removed, the two kitchen fireplaces were reopened, and paneling was restored or modified and replicated where needed. The firebox of the west kitchen's chimney was altered to accommodate a modern cooking surface, and portions of its firebox and paneling were removed at that time. A beaded casing was inserted into the ceiling in front of the west kitchen fireplace as part of this work. This work was undertaken in 1998-2000.

Other work undertaken by the current owners has included the introduction of a paneled wainscot in the southwest parlor; removal of the wing added to the south façade, and the restoration of the porch replicating its earlier design; and substantial alterations to the room arrangement and finishes in the first and second floors of the 19<sup>th</sup> century wing. Reused 19<sup>th</sup> century doors have been introduced where the originals were missing.

Partitioning in the spaces flanking both the east and west chimney stacks at the second-floor level has been altered by the present owners, together with the doors and architraves giving access to these spaces. Two small rooms have been carved out of the east end of the northeast chamber, facilitating the installation of a modern bathroom and a large closet. A second bathroom has been installed in the former location of the rear staircase. On the first floor, a half bath has been inserted in the area under the main staircase. This work entailed the relocation of the east hall wall about a foot to the west.

Exterior improvements have also included the construction of a pergola to the west of the main block of the house, and a deck, attached to the west end of the wing. Alterations to the basement under the wing facilitated the introduction of two vehicular bays in that location.

## Graffiti and other finds

The attic contains, on one of its floor beams, an inscription that reads "RR 163"—the last number of tentative identification. This inscription was generated by a compass and straight edge, and looks to be imitative of 17<sup>th</sup> century work, rather than being genuinely from that period. It is possible that the inscription intended to record a date that is now partially obscured, with the last digit not visible today.

When undertaking work on the west kitchen fireplace a cavity was discovered, in which was found a wood box lock, possibly dating to the initial construction of the house. It retains four cut nails that formerly secured it to a door. Its date of deposition in the cavity is unknown.

## Summary

Said to have originally been constructed in 1789, the house was subsequently divided into two households, ca. 1800. This work involved the alteration of a fireplace into one that could be used for cooking, resulting in two functional kitchens within the dwelling. Additional alterations, since reversed or superseded by later work, may have increased the internal functionality of the two halves of the house.

Alterations undertaken 1840-1850 chiefly resulted in the upgrading of finishes. Subsequent alterations in ca. 1885 further upgraded finishes and a substantial wing was constructed at the northwest corner of the house, creating additional bedrooms, possibly for farmhands.

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Alterations to secondary partitions in the house have been, more recently, affected by the present owners, who have installed modern bathrooms in addition to undertaking extensive alterations to the ca. 1885 wing.

**HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

Researched &amp; written by Kathryn Grover

In 1785 Reuben Reed (1747-about 1800) acquired 66 acres of land in East Lexington, three adjoining parcels that had been part of the William Cutler farm and included a "mansion house and barn."<sup>1</sup> Cutler (1717-81) was the son of James and Elizabeth Whitmore Cutler of Cambridge, and he had owned land in East Lexington since 1742, when he acquired 12 acres that had been owned by the late physician William Russell. Cutler bought additional parcels in the same area in 1758 and 1768, including 20 woodland acres that his father had owned at his death in 1756. His great-grandfather, the immigrant James Cutler (1606-94), is said to have built one of the first houses in Lexington and died in Lexington, but his father, also James (1687-1756), died in Menotomy, then a village in Cambridge and now the town of Arlington. Deeds always record that William Cutler lived in Cambridge, and both a Cambridge history and Cutler genealogy state that he lived with his father at Menotomy; he was an affluent butcher (as deeds usually record it), farmer, and innkeeper, and "accumulated a handsome property," a nephew later recalled. None of the Lexington parcels he acquired had buildings on them, but whether William Cutler built the "mansion house" that Reuben Reed acquired has not been determined. Historian William Richard Cutter maintained that Reuben Reed himself built "the old colonial dwelling house" in 1789.<sup>2</sup>

Reuben Reed was a son of Jacob Reed (1716-1805) of Woburn and lived at what was locally known as the "Duren place" near the Woburn-Lexington border, property his father Timothy had inherited from his father George, who had come to America with his parents in 1635. In 1773 Reuben Reed married Elizabeth Barron at Woburn, and by 1785 they settled on the Lowell Street property. In his will Reed left his wife use of half of his real estate while she lived, along with some livestock and furniture, and he bequeathed the rest of the estate to his nephew and namesake Reuben Reed (1792-1864), son of his younger brother Isaac (1756-1848). Isaac Reed had married Susanna Munroe of Lexington in 1780 or 1781, and according to one family history the couple moved then from Woburn to Lexington. But no deed transferring land from Isaac to his son Reuben was recorded. And the same family history states that the younger Reuben worked for his own father and his uncle Reuben, "with whom he lived from early youth. After his uncle's death in 1800 he continued to run the farm for the widow until her death in 1817. The farm came to him and he followed farming on the place during his active life. His farm consisted of one hundred and sixty-five acres. He had excellent orchards and manufactured cider extensively; his cider mill is still standing on the homestead in Lexington."<sup>3</sup>

The elder Reuben Reed is listed in the 1790 census, and the 1798 federal direct tax listing valued his house at \$800; he then owned more than 71 acres. At his death his estate included 66 acres in three parcels, the first being the 42-acre "Hous Lot" on the west side of Lowell Street, valued at \$840, the second being 12 acres across Lowell Street, and the third 12 acres of pasture. He also owned a 12.5-acre woodlot and a 120-acre pasture, the latter with John Stone. The "hous" on the first parcel was estimated to be worth \$800, the milk house \$200, the "new barn" \$200, the old barn \$100, and various outbuildings together \$8. Reed's widow Elizabeth's half-share included the 42-acre house lot, the east end of the house "with a privilege to smoke bacon in the chimney made for that purpose," the new barn except for the horse stable, half of the milk house and other buildings, and four acres of pasture.

In 1800 Elizabeth Reed is listed in the census in Lexington with five persons in her household. Her name does not appear as a householder in the 1810 census; the only relative listed in the town was Isaac Reed, her late husband's brother and the younger Reuben's father, with seven in his household but no females her age. Perhaps she had moved by then, and perhaps Isaac had come to live with his son on his brother's Lowell Street farm. In 1820 Isaac and his son Reuben are listed in separate but consecutive households. In 1824 Reuben Reed married Mary N. Willard of Lexington, and in 1830 his household and his father's (though it could have been the household of his half-brother Isaac, born in 1781) are again enumerated one after the other. In 1840 only Reuben Reed, with six in his household, was listed before Oliver Winship, who owned a Lowell Street farm just south of Reed's. The 1850 census lists Reuben Reed as a 58-year-old "yeoman" with \$5500 in real property, and his household included his wife, their adult sons Reuben Willard (b. 1825) and Josiah Haskell (1827-90), and three boarders—one Irish

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Brooks, Medford, administrator estate William Cutler, Cambridge, to Reuben Reed, Lexington, 1 September 1785, MSD 92:120.

<sup>2</sup> William Richard Cutter, *Historic Homes and Places and Genealogical and Personal Memoirs Relating to the Families of Middlesex County, Massachusetts* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1908), 3:116-18.

<sup>3</sup> Cutter, *Historic Homes*, 3:116-18. Elizabeth Reed's death is not recorded in Lexington.

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immigrant domestic and two farm workers, one born in Ireland and the other in Nova Scotia. By 1855 both sons Reuben and Josiah had become milkmen, and there were seven others in the household—a female domestic and six male farm laborers, four of them born in Ireland.

In 1854 Reuben W. Reed married Georgianna Ferrin of Charlestown, and two years later Josiah Haskell Reed married Clara Rebecca Gates of Ashby. Oddly, their father's household in 1860 included Josiah H., his brother's wife Georgianna, and her daughters Emma and Mary but not Josiah's wife nor his brother Reuben. Also listed there were two female domestic servants and six farm workers, five of them born in Ireland and one of them fourteen years old. It is possible that the man listed as Josiah was actually his brother Reuben, for according to historian William Richard Cutter, Josiah, when he came of age, "took over the milk route that his father had established in the adjacent town of Charlestown, now in Boston. He carried on this milk business for a period of twenty-five years."

The 1860 agricultural census lists Reuben Reed with 95 improved and 30 unimproved acres and 25 dairy cows; only Nathaniel Pierce, with 30 cows, had more in Lexington. Reed produced \$1500 in milk and \$500 in market garden products the year before.

Reuben Reed died intestate in March 1864, and neither a probate record nor a deed document a transfer of the Lowell Street farm to either of his sons. In 1865 Reuben W. and his brother Josiah H. were listed in consecutive households. Josiah H. (often J. Haskell) lived with his wife Clara and their young children Frank Haskell (born 1863), Alice Gates (1865), and Mary Willard (1869) as well as a domestic and two farm workers. In 1870, however, the brothers were sharing the 72 Lowell Street house. Reuben W. is shown as farming and owning the property, valued at \$20,000, while Josiah H. had \$4500 in personal estate and was working as a milkman. According to Cutter, Josiah had sold his milk business in 1870 "and returned to the old homestead in Lexington, of which he and his brother became the owners at the death of his father in 1864." Cutter stated that J. Haskell built a house "opposite the homestead and made his home there until 1882, when he sold it to William E. Litchfield. . . . At that time Josiah bought out the interests of his brother, Reuben W. Reed, and went to live in the homestead and began market gardening, in which he was successfully occupied to the time of his death." The 1875 Lexington map shows Reuben in the 72 Lowell Street house and Josiah in his new house, 51 Lowell Street, just to the south on the east side of the street. The 1880 census shows the brothers in consecutive households; J. Haskell Reed was listed in the census as a farmer and lived in the east-side house with his family, his mother-in-law Clarissa Gates, and a domestic servant; Reuben was at 72 Lowell Street, a butter dealer, and living with his family and two female domestic servants. By 1889 the Lexington map attaches Litchfield's name to the east-side house and J. H. Reed's to 72 Lowell Street. By 1881 Reuben W. Reed and his family had moved to Brighton, and they sold their half of the homestead, in three parcels, to his brother J. Haskell for \$7,000.<sup>4</sup>

Clara Gates Reed died in 1884, and her husband Josiah Haskell Reed died in March 1890 after he was injured in a fall. Son Frank H., who had begun his career as a salesman for a Boston tailoring firm, came back to Lexington after his father's death. In 1890 his sisters Alice and Mary together sold their two-thirds share in their father's homestead farm "excepting the mansion house and lot situated on both sides of Lowell Street" to their brother and held a \$7400 mortgage for him. In 1893 he married Gertrude Read Fobes of Somerville, and by 1900 Frank Reed was a dairy farmer at 72 Lowell Street and living with his wife, their children Haskell, Malcolm, and Kendall, and sisters Alice and Mary. In 1902 his sisters both sold their rest of their share in the farm to Frank.<sup>5</sup> By 1908, Cutter noted, Reed had 75 acres and 35 cows "in a model dairy." In 1910 Frank Reed was described as a dairy farmer, and the Lowell Street household included his wife, three sons, his wife's parents, a domestic servant, and two farm workers. Son Haskell, born in 1894, married Vivien Barnard Vickery of Lexington in 1914, and by 1920 the couple and their young sons Haskell Willard and Lawrence were living with Frank H. and Gertrude Reed at 72 Lowell Street.

<sup>4</sup> Reuben W. and Georgie A. Reed, Brighton, to J. Haskell Reed, Lexington, 24 September 1881, MSD 1582:27. In December 1878 Reuben had sold his half to his brother for \$10,000, and J. Haskell had transferred it for the same price on the same day to Reuben's wife; the transfer may have effectively been a mortgage. See MSD 1497:424 and 425. In 1880 Reuben W. Reed was part of the first Reed and Hobbs, which ran Waverley Butter Company in Boston. The 1885 Boston directory lists Reuben W. Reed as superintendent of Commercial Manufacturing Company, which made oleomargarine, stearine, and glycerin and had been organized in 1880 with Reed as one of the incorporators (*Boston Daily Advertiser*, 22 September 1880). In 1898 he was president of Standard Lubrication Company at the Brighton Abattoir and superintendent of Leonard and Bird Oil Company. He died in Orwell VT in July 1900, though he is listed in the 1902 Boston directory.

<sup>5</sup> Alice G. Reed and Mary W. Reed to Frank H. Reed, 1 April 1890, MSD 1973:201; Alice G. Reed, Lexington, and Mary G. Miller, Newton, to Frank H. Reed, 3 October 1902, MSD 2995:352. Alice left Lexington by 1904 for Plainfield, New Jersey, where she lived with a cousin until she died in 1924. Mary married Edward Furber Miller (1866-1933), a professor and later head of the Department of Mechanical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in 1900. The couple lived in Newton, and Mary was still living there in 1940.



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In 1930 Frank H. Reed and his wife were living on Lowell Street, either at 51 (apparently not extant) or 72, and son Haskell, his wife, and their children Haskell W., Lawrence B., Vivian, and Marjorie were in the other house. Frank Reed died in 1937, and in 1940 son Haskell is listed at 72 Lowell Street as a dairy products retailer living with his wife and the three younger children; next door was son Haskell W., a dairy product route foreman, with his wife Thelma F. Soderquist, whom he married in 1938, and their daughter Vickery. In 1942 Haskell was working for the dairy goods producer David Buttrick Company in Arlington, to whom he had sold his business seven years earlier, and he died in March 1943 at the age of 49.

In 1947 Frank H. Reed's brother Malcolm apparently transferred his interest in 72 Lowell Street homestead to the widowed Vivien B. Reed, and in October of that year Vivien subdivided the property. In 1964 she transferred title to the house and its lot to her son Haskell W. and his wife and other parcels to her children Marjorie, Lawrence, and Vivien. The siblings sold their shares of the farm in March 1981 to the realty trust of Alfred S. Busa and Daniel P. Busa, thus ending almost two centuries of Reed family ownership.<sup>6</sup>

The Busas were brothers, sons of Italian immigrants Antonio and Lillian Galletta Busa, who had grown up on their parents' farm at 46 Lowell Street. They sold the 72 Lowell Street property seven months after acquiring it to Ellen T. Curtiss, who owned it for four years. Frank A. and Janet M. Kern bought the property from Hon-Bui David Hui and Jenice S. Chou in 1997. The Kerns were the owners of record of 72 Lowell Street in 2021.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Haskell W. Reed, Lexington; Marjorie Knight, Sutton NH; Lawrence B. Reed, Antrim NH; Vivien Parish, Santa Barbara CA, to Alfred S. Busa and Daniel P. Busa, trustees A&D Realty Trust, 10 March 1981, MSD 14237:348.

<sup>7</sup> Alfred S. Busa and Daniel P. Busa, trustees A&D Realty Trust, to Ellen T. Curtiss, 72 Lowell Street, 1 October 1981, MSD 14434:333; Ellen T. Curtiss, Westford, to Hon-Bui David Hui and Jenice S. Chou, 72 Lowell Street, 23 May 1985, MSD 16181:216; Hon-Bui David Hui and Jenice S. Chou, Palo Alto CA, to Frank A. and Janet M. Kern, 72 Lowell Street, 13 October 1997, MSD 27770:222; Frank A. and Janet M. Kern, trustee 72 Lowell Street Nominee Trust, to Frank A. and Janet M. Kern, 72 Lowell Street, 19 May 2009, MSD 52837. The 72 Lowell Street house may appear on these plans, none of which are viewable on the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds website by the citations provided in deeds—on Lot D on "Plan of Land in Lexington, Mass.," 14237:348; on "Plan of Land in Lexington, Mass.," 7 July 1980; and on Lot B-2 on "Plan of Land in Lexington, Mass.," 17 October 1947, 7212:114.

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

72 LOWELL ST.

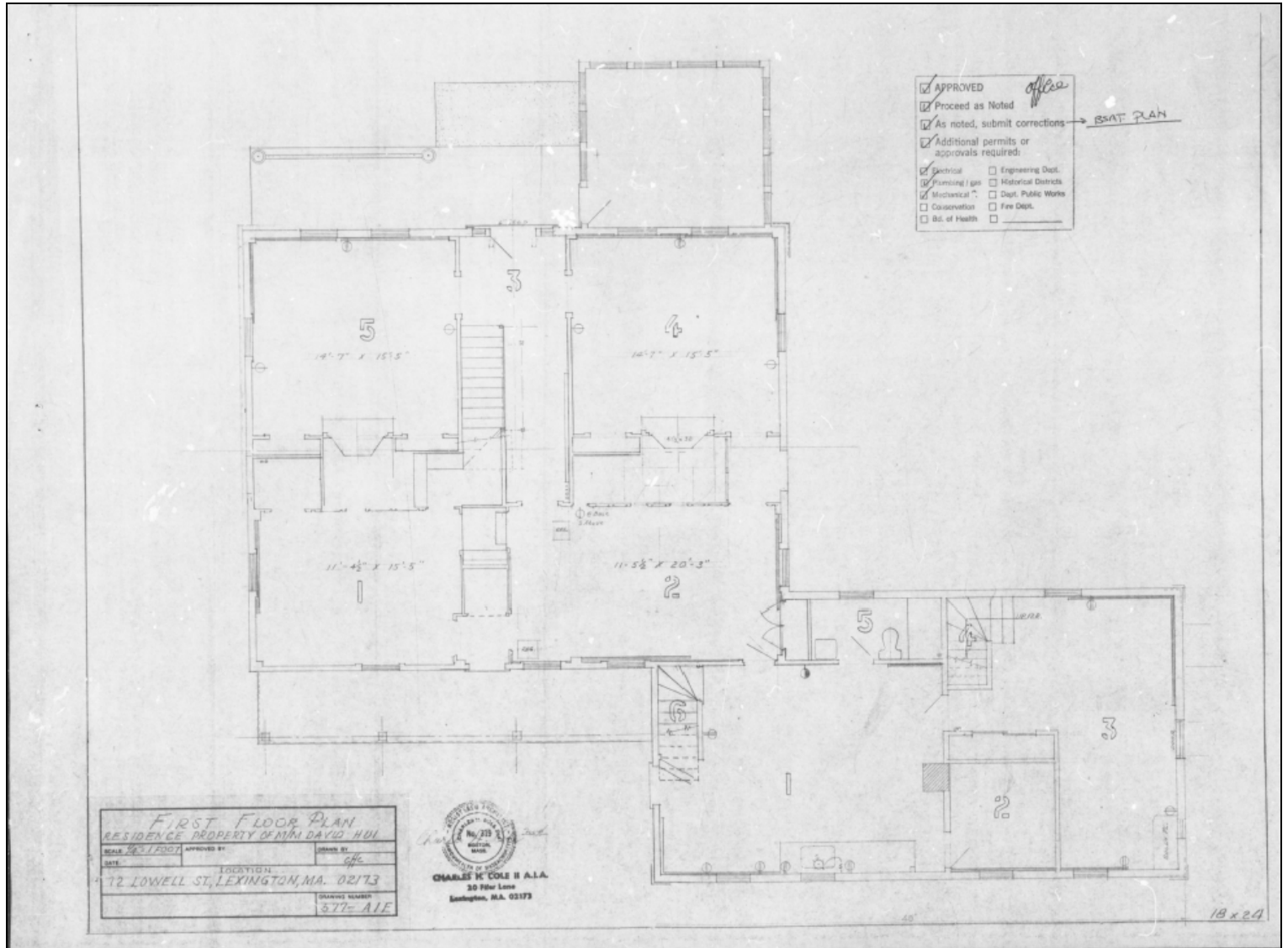
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

LEX.658

## FIGURES



First-floor plan, existing conditions ca. 1985. Best parlor upper left, dining room upper rights and two kitchens below. Note breadth of chimney masses and flanking closets and passageways. Rear stairs between kitchens extant. Shows wing added to front of dining room with exterior entrance only. Earlier wing in lower right of plan. Image courtesy of owners.



**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

LEXINGTON

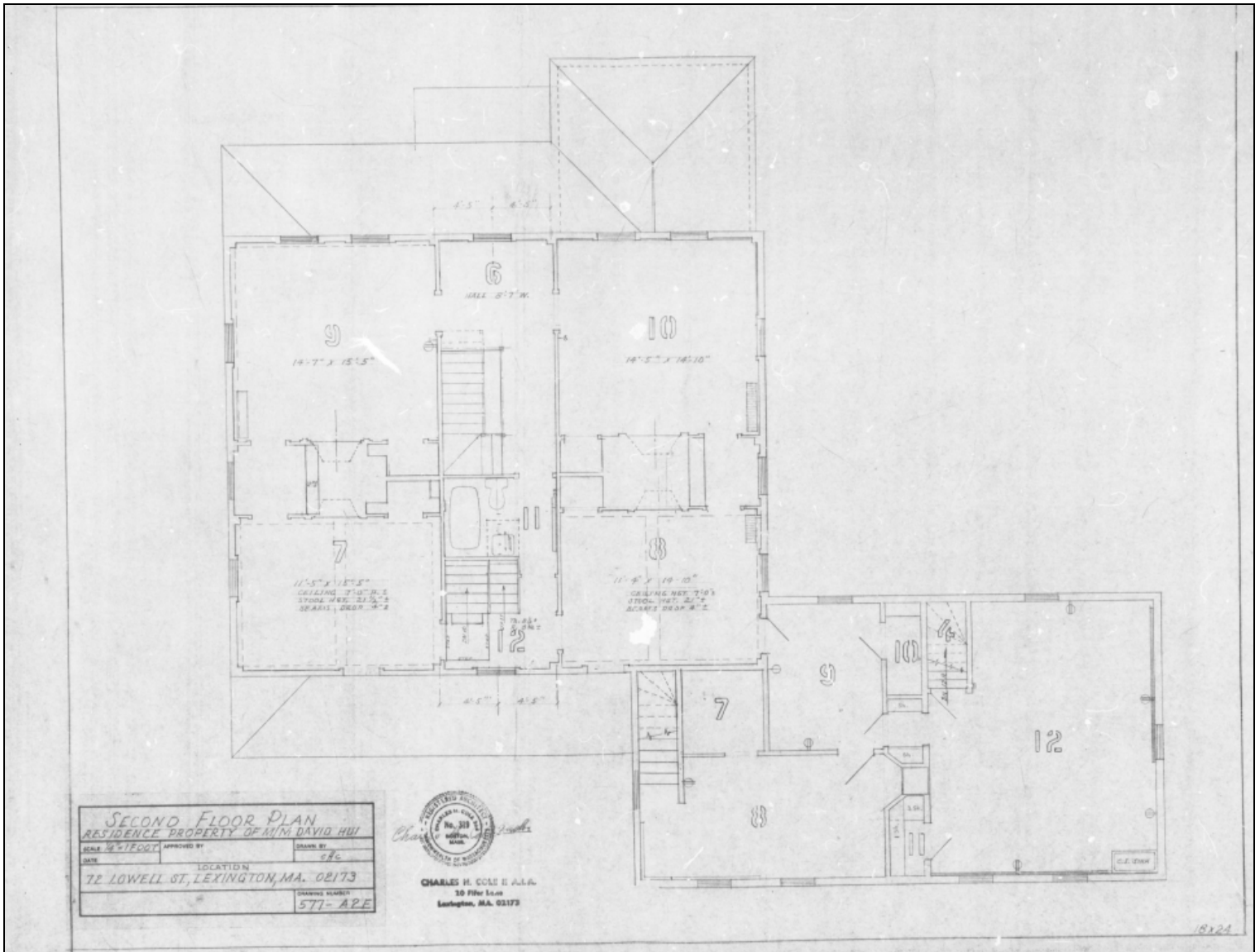
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Second-floor plan, existing conditions ca. 1985. Note closets and passageways flanking chimneys and rear stairs.

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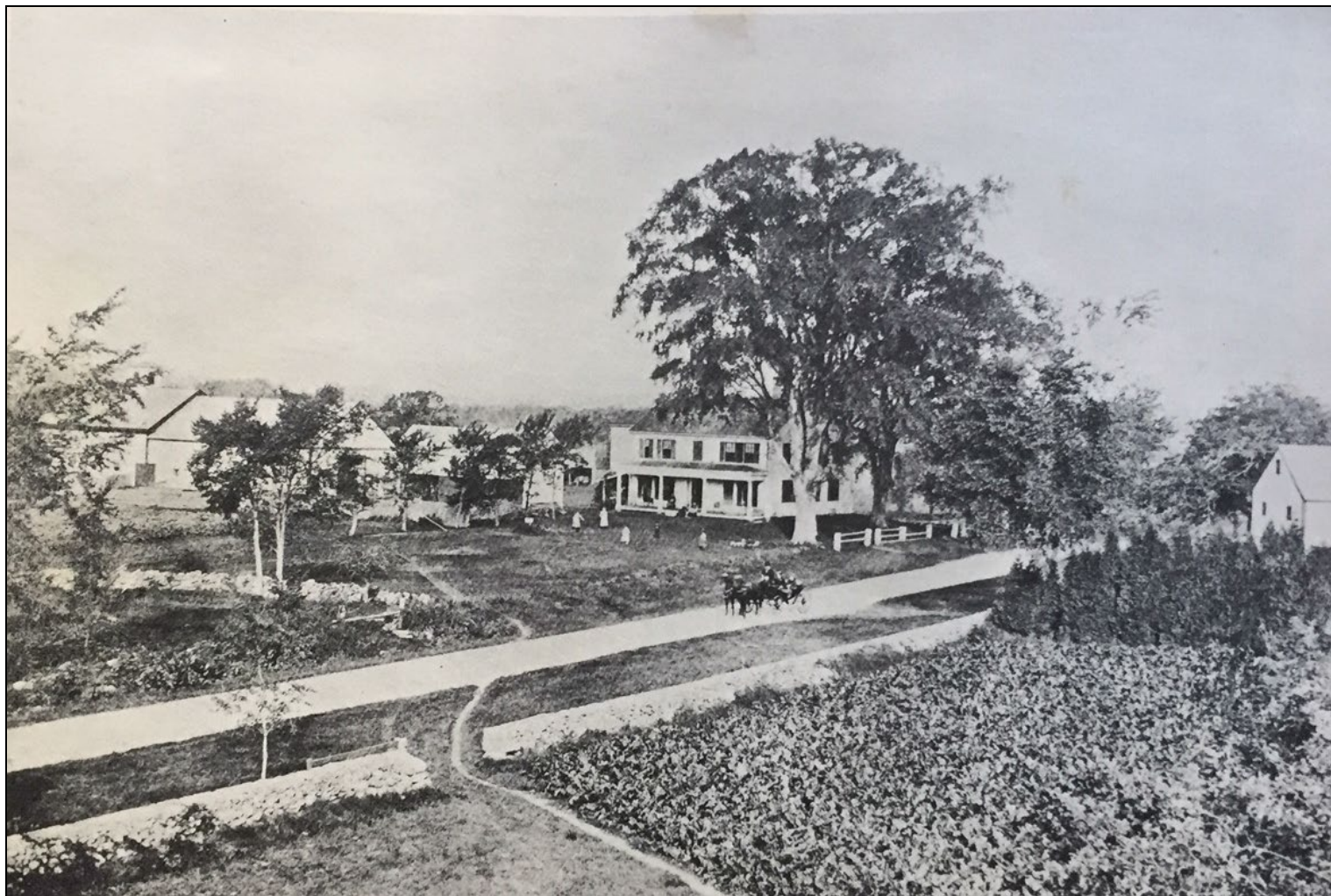


Photo of Reed Farm, ca. 1900. Beverly Allison Kelley, *Lexington, A Century of Photographs*. (Lexington MA: Lexington Historical Society, 1980), 4



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**PHOTOGRAPHS (all photos by Walter R. Wheeler)**



View from SE.



View from NE.



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View from west.



First floor center passage looking south.

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First Floor, center passage looking north.



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First floor, SE parlor, looking north.



First floor, SW dining room looking north.



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First floor, NW kitchen looking west.



First floor, NE kitchen looking east.

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Second floor, front of center stair hall looking east.



Second floor, SE front chamber looking NE.



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Second floor, detail of fireplace in NE rear chamber.



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Attic, detail of roof framing, SE side.



Attic, detail of roof framing, north side, showing large purlin and bracing.



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Attic, detail of roof framing showing ridge beam and chimney.



Basement, detail of floor framing.



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Basement, brick chimney base, east side.



Basement, chimney base west side.



[Delete this page if no Criteria Statement is prepared]

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible  Eligible only in a historic district
 Contributing to a potential historic district  Potential historic district

Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Statement of Significance by Neil Larson
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The Reed Homestead is a distinctive example of a late 18th-century farmhouse that was adapted to meet the needs and tastes of generations of a prominent Lexington family. The property appears to be individually eligible for the National Register under Criteria A for its associations with the agricultural and social history of the town and C for its architectural significance. As built in 1885-1889 by Reuben Reed (1747-ca. 1800), the two-story, double pile house was a modern innovation on the traditional New England house plan that was introduced in the mid-1700s, in which the center chimney was removed and replaced with a center passage and a pair of chimneys positioned between front and rear rooms on either side. The traditional hall-parlor format was preserved in the front, while the kitchen was moved to one side in the rear leaving space for a chamber in the remaining corner. On the second floor were two chambers in the front and smaller service spaces in the rear. In many cases, the rear portion of the plan was contained under a saltbox roof; the Reed Homestead had a full two stories in the rear, which identified it as a better house.

Reuben Reed died soon after the house was built, and soon after the house became a two-household dwelling with the center passage making the division. His widow lived in one side and his nephew, namesake and heir lived on the other. At that time a second kitchen was created in the rear chamber and a cooking fireplace added. In the 1840s Greer Revival finishes were added to the interior and a colonnaded porch and entrance on the exterior. The hall and front rooms were remodeled once more in ca. 1885 with a generational change. The farm was a very successful dairy and market garden operation; in ca. 1900 a two-story wing was added to the rear to accommodate farm workers

Historically, the house is a landmark in the rural development in Lexington. It occupies land that had been in cultivation since the early 1700s, and under the Reeds it became a successful and long-term agricultural enterprise. By the end of 1800s the Reeds operated a major retail milk business. As usually was the case, as the farm economy lagged and real estate values rose, later generations subdivided peripheral lands for residential development, which has reduced the size of the property to less than a half-acre.