

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

32-69A

Lexington

LEX.586

**Town/City:** Lexington

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

**Address:** 271 Marrett Road

**Historic Name:** Jonas & Susannah Bridge House

**Uses:** Present: single family residential

Original: single family residential

**Date of Construction:** 1793-1798

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

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

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard/wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Garage (attached)

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):

Rehabilitation & redecoration, 1928-30.

Division for two dwelling units, 2002

**Condition:** good

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 0.43

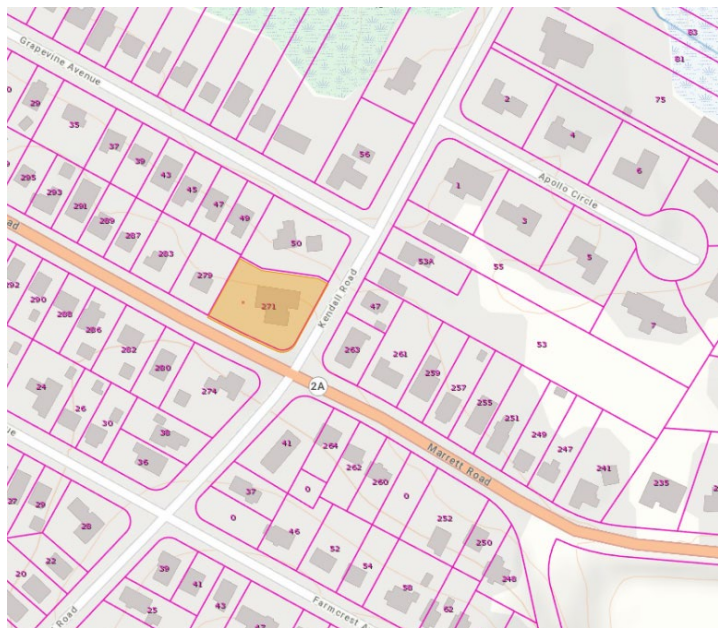
**Setting:** The property is located on a major thoroughfare built out with closely-spaced houses from a broad period of development.

## Photograph



View from south

## Locus Map (north at top)



Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer.

**Recorded by:** Walter R. Wheeler, Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson  
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 Walter R. Wheeler & Neil Larson, 2021

The main section of the Jonas & Susannah Bridge House was built in the 1790s on land owned by the Bridge family since the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. It would have been predated by an earlier dwelling. It has a two-story hall-parlor plan with a center passage; the rooms have chimneys centered on their rear (north) walls. There likely was a lean-to containing a kitchen, at least on west side of the house. It has a five-bay front façade facing south with a center entrance in a simple surround capped by a thin cornice in a Neoclassical manner. It appears that the sash within the array of windows around it, also in minimal frames, once were six-over-six in pattern, but early on were made to be three-over-three with the removal of medial muntins. There is a shallow cornice at the eave line with a frieze interrupted by the window heads in characteristic 18<sup>th</sup>-century fashion. A piazza was built across the entire façade later in the 1800s and has since been removed; the doorway may have been reconstructed at this time.

The eaves on the gable ends are tight against the walls, and each has single windows centered on all three stories. A two-story gable-roof wing with a façade about as wide as the main house is engaged to the rear corner of the west end of the house. It has a ruder and potentially older timber frame than the house and may have functioned as an outbuilding before being adapted for use as a kitchen. It has a two-room plan with a cooking hearth in the room closest to the house. Each section has two windows on both stories on the façade; a door is awkwardly squeezed in the corner where the two buildings are joined. It opens on a small lobby with doors into the house and the wing and access to a staircase. Another door was located at the other end of the façade, but it was replaced with a window. A one-story extension is attached to the west end of the kitchen wing. It contains an early garage now fronted by three conjoined windows where a vehicle door once was and a later garage with an arched opening with swing doors.

Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century a large two-story wing with a flat roof was added to the rear of the main house obliterating any annex that it may have replaced. It partially wraps around the rear of the kitchen wing and a piazza spans the entire north elevation (substantially rebuilt in 1929 with square posts and turned balusters apparently salvaged from the original). Fenestration is varied and from a mix of period alterations. At some later date, a two-story, one-room-plan wing with fireplaces was constructed against the east side of this massive addition. It seems to have been intended to function independent of the house.

Accounts repeated in many 20<sup>th</sup>-century historical sources assert that the two-story wing that extends from the west gable end of the main block of the house represents a 17<sup>th</sup> century dwelling built for Matthew Bridge. This interpretation is questionable for at least two reasons. First, the configuration of the frame of the wing is more akin to that of a kitchen wing, or perhaps an outbuilding, rather than a dwelling. Second, the high level of oxidation of most of the framing members—now exposed, but previously (perhaps by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century) covered with lath and plaster—is a strong indication of a long period during which these structural components were initially exposed before being covered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and thus unlikely to have formed part of a domestic space.

A more likely scenario is that the original house on the property had this wing added to it, and at a later date, ca. 1800, the original house was demolished and replaced with a five-bay wide house with center passage with the wing retained and possibly remodeled for domestic use at that time. Dendrochronological analysis of beams would help determine the construction date of the building.

A 1969 newspaper article about the house noted that in “pulling up the floorboards in the attic, they [the owners] discovered that two mainbeams [sic] in both bedrooms were stained and chamfered [sic]. At the top of the attic stairs a whole partition turned out to be panelling covered with wallpaper of the 1700’s.”<sup>1</sup> These beams are not presently available for inspection, but the finishes on exposed girts and posts in the east bedchamber (the summer beam is encased in a modern finish) do not support an early construction date.

<sup>1</sup> Anne R. Scigliano, “The Old House”—Memorial to the Past,” *Lexington Minute-Man*, 16 October 1969.

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The plan of the main block of the house consists of a central passage flanked by rooms with rear-wall chimneys. There are accounts of experts from the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), now known as Historic New England, inspecting the house and finding evidence of the existence of a center chimney having been at the core of the house, but that evidence could not be verified in current fieldwork. The history of the numerous additions to the north side of the house is difficult to determine, given the extensive alterations that occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There is documentation of a kitchen fireplace with attached bake oven, located in the portion of the north wing adjacent to the main block of the house, however, and so there may have been a lean-to constructed contemporaneously with the hall and parlor section, as there is no identifiable location for an early kitchen in that part of the dwelling.<sup>2</sup> Yet, if the old wing was extant, it likely would have served kitchen functions. The principal stair in the main block of the house has rectangular balusters, a feature that is commonly found in Lexington houses (and elsewhere) that were constructed or modified in the ca. 1790-1820 period. Among these are 5 Harrington Street, 70 East Street, and 1377 and 1445 Massachusetts Avenue.

**19<sup>th</sup> century alterations**

A two-story frame addition with its own exterior entrance was attached to the rear wing of the house in ca. 1820 or later. It has a small fireplace in both its first and second floor levels, and there is some suggestion of the location of a stair connecting the two floors, in the east wall. The shallow gable roof—necessitating covering either with tin or asphalt roll roofing—suggests a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century construction date. However, the design of the fireboxes, which are of the Rumford type, points to an earlier date of construction and the roof may have replaced an earlier one of steeper form. This structure was attached to the east face of the north wing, which may have served as a kitchen (the use history of the now-destroyed original plan of the north wing is presently unknown); if so, it may have served as a dormitory for hired hands. The first floor of this part of the house served as a guest bedroom in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The room had already acquired a closet with glazed door and the small fireplace in its east end wall had (by 1929) been closed up.<sup>3</sup> The second floor retains two closet doors of Italianate design flanking the fireplace.

The first generation of indoor plumbing, including at least two bathrooms (one at the north end of the second-floor hall and a second at the south end of the hall, over the entrance) was installed at about the same time, based upon descriptions of it published in 1929.<sup>4</sup>

The west wing retains a 19<sup>th</sup> century cast iron range, manufactured by John G. Copp, of Boston. It incorporates C. Carpenter's hot air range No. 3 and bears an embossed "patent applied for" date of 1855. A similar example is located in 50 Kendall Street, formerly located at 29 Allen Street and moved in 1988. The example in that house has embossed patent dates of 1858 and 4 January 1859 on its components and was manufactured by Chilson of Boston. In 1928 the first floor of the wing was described as a "summer kitchen" and the 1855 range was referenced. The room to the west was at that time partitioned off and described as a "beautiful square room entirely ceiled with narrow matched oak", and with a "tool house" beyond.<sup>5</sup> This finish probably represented later-19<sup>th</sup> century work (ca. 1885) which is further documented in other parts of the house by doors of Italianate design, including the entrance door to the wing.

The carriage barn attached to the house can be seen to have been modified from its form as depicted in the earlier extant photograph; by that date one of its bays had been fronted with a latticed treatment. This finish was set under an extension of the eave of the east half of the carriage barn. A pergola extended across much of the front elevation, returning along the west face of the main block of the house to engage with the south wall of the wing.

**Early 20<sup>th</sup> century**

A photograph from 1923 depicts the house with a large covered porch extending across its central three bays. A low balustraded wall had been constructed to the south and east of the house, enclosing a terrace. Window sash had been replaced with three-over-three double-hung sash having vertically-oriented lights. The west end of the carriage barn had been converted for vehicular use and its doors disguised with lattice work. A photograph published in *The Modern Priscilla* in April 1928 shows the house without any changes from its 1923 appearance.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Della T. Lutes, "The Old, Old Kitchen in a Brand-New Dress," *The Modern Priscilla*, February 1928.

<sup>3</sup> Della T. Lutes, "The Little Step Down Room," *The Modern Priscilla*, March 1929.

<sup>4</sup> Della Thompson Lutes, "An Old Bathroom Made New," *The Modern Priscilla*, January 1929.

<sup>5</sup> Della T. Lutes, "The Old House and its Old, Old Elms," *The Modern Priscilla*, April 1928.

<sup>6</sup> Della T. Lutes, "The Old House and its Old, Old Elms," *The Modern Priscilla*, April 1928.

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**Late 1920s**

Early 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations to the house included the installation of a large kitchen and a bathroom with modern appliances. Many of the renovations undertaken in the late 1920s were documented in the pages of *The Modern Priscilla*, a popular women's magazine of the period. "The Old House," as it was then named, was used as a "proving ground" for old house rehabilitation and interior design. A tearoom occupied the former "summer kitchen" space, and it was stripped of its acquired interior finishes to give it a rustic appearance. The kitchen in the rear of the main house and connecting to the tea house wing was remodeled by early 1928.<sup>7</sup> It was noted, in 1928, that a furnace had not many years earlier been introduced to the house, and that there was indoor plumbing including bathrooms, which were noted as in need of updating.<sup>8</sup> A bathroom on the second floor, described as having been "off the end of the upstairs hall" was renovated in 1928, removing "the old wooden, zinc-lined tub" and an "unspeakable" toilet.<sup>9</sup> Renovation of a second hall bathroom, this one located directly over the entry, necessitated the lowering of a portion of the ceiling in the lower hall and the construction of a chase in the front corner to facilitate the installation of new plumbing.<sup>10</sup>

Front and east-side porches were removed in 1928-29, and the remaining rear (north) porch was substantially reconstructed creating a screened porch with a glazed section at its west end, behind the west wing. An elm tree around which the porch was built no longer exists.<sup>11</sup>

The floorboards in the east parlor, described as in very poor condition, were removed and replaced with specially treated oak boards of random widths in 1928.<sup>12</sup> French doors had by that date replaced the door in the north wall of the parlor. What was identified as "the book room" in 1928 was located at that time just to the north of this room and was remodeled at about the same time. Photographs published in July 1928 show a ca. 1830 cast iron Franklin stove as a supplemental heating source in this room.<sup>13</sup>

Although not explicitly discussed in the pages of the magazine, door types and hardware in the second floor of the wing point to a modernization of this part of the house during this same period. Whether the partitioning was altered at that time is not presently possible to determine.

A photograph of the house published in *The Modern Priscilla* of February 1930 shows the conversion of the carriage barn into a one-bay garage (at its west end) and the insertion of three conjoined double-hung sash in the former east bay, indicating its probable conversion by that time for use as an antique shop, which had been discussed in the pages of the magazine. A similar group of windows in the north elevation of this part of the wing were probably installed at the same time.

**1966-1969**

An article published in the *Lexington Minute-Man* in 1969 referred to work undertaken at the house since the ownership had changed in 1966.<sup>14</sup> This included replacing the wainscoting and preserving the stenciled floors in the west front rooms and hall that were "uncovered when later flooring was removed. Only the stenciling of the west parlor appears to survive at present, unless that in the center hall is preserved under more recent flooring. The old flooring in the east living room was replaced in 1928 with no mention of stenciling having been discovered.<sup>15</sup> The owners at that time, stripped the paint from the woodwork in the "front rooms" replacing it with the "original Hazard Putty" color, a soft grey.

**Late-20<sup>th</sup> century alterations**

Changes made to the house at a more recent date include the replacement of the west door in the south wall of the wing with a window, introduction of several closets into the north part of the first-floor center passage, and replacement of the large restaurant kitchen with two smaller kitchens, the latter undertaken as part of the work done to create a rental unit in the wing.

<sup>7</sup> Della T. Lutes, "The Old, Old Kitchen in a Brand-New Dress," *The Modern Priscilla*, February 1928.

<sup>8</sup> Della T. Lutes, "The Old House and its Old, Old Elms," *The Modern Priscilla*, April 1928.

<sup>9</sup> Della Thompson Lutes, "An Old Bathroom Made New," *The Modern Priscilla*, January 1929.

<sup>10</sup> Della T. Lutes, "The Hall at the Old House," *The Modern Priscilla*, February 1929.

<sup>11</sup> Della T. Lutes, "Outdoor Porch, The Old House," *The Modern Priscilla*, May 1929.

<sup>12</sup> Della T. Lutes, "Living Room at the Old House," *The Modern Priscilla*, September 1928.

<sup>13</sup> Della T. Lutes, "More About the Old House Book Room," *The Modern Priscilla*, July 1928.

<sup>14</sup> Anne R. Scigliano, "The Old House"—Memorial to the Past," *Lexington Minute-Man*, 16 October 1969.

<sup>15</sup> Della T. Lutes, "Living Room at the Old House," *The Modern Priscilla*, September 1928).



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The opening of the garage bay originally had diagonally cut upper corners; the opening was later turned into an elliptical arch and fitted with a pair of swinging doors.

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Researched and written by Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson

An analysis of the construction history of the main house at 271 Marrett Road has determined it was built at the end of the 1700s, likely by Jonas Bridge (1757-1837) and his wife Susannah Reed, the third generation to occupy the land. A two-story kitchen ell is reputed to date to the 17<sup>th</sup> century; this can be verified only by dendrochronology.

Some local historians have asserted that the original part of 271 Marrett Road was built between 1661 and 1663 by Matthew Bridge (1615-1700) on land that his father, the immigrant John Bridge, had acquired between 1639 and 1645.<sup>16</sup> Most of these sources cite as evidence Matthew Bridge's request to cut wood for building and for roofing material (1661) and to repair his house "at the Farms," meaning Cambridge Farms, now Lexington (1668), and formed at least part of the grounds on which local historian Edwin B. Worthen asserted that the 271 Marrett Road house was built just before 1668, "although a positive date cannot be established."<sup>17</sup>

However, local historians Harry W. Davis and Michael J. Canavan stated that Matthew Bridge Jr. (1650-1738) built four houses for his sons Matthew, John, Joseph, and Samuel. In 1887 Davis stated that Matthew Jr. inherited about 600 acres "south-westerly of Vine Brook" and that, "upon the marriage of his four sons, he built each of them a substantial farm-house, and presented each with one hundred acres of land." Indeed, Matthew Bridge's May 1735 will stated that he had "already putt all my Sons into Possession & Title of Diverse Lands & Tenements" and so bequeathed "the whole of the remaining of Hunting Swamp so called which is yet undisposed of to them." In 1739 the brothers formally agreed to a division of the Hunting Swamp.<sup>18</sup>

Canavan had identified the brothers' houses as the Estabrook and Blodgett farm, Grasslands, Valley Field, and Patty Bridge (this last in Waltham), though he was unable to determine which son owned which property. Davis, however, stated that Matthew's house was in Waltham, John's the Estabrook and Blodgett farm, Joseph's the Nehemiah Wellington farm, which was Grasslands, and Samuel's "the house owned by Mr. Tompkins," or what is now 271 Marrett Road and known as Valley Field. The chain of title for 271 Marrett Road establishes that it belonged to Matthew's son Samuel (1705-91) and suggests that a house was built there about 1730-32.<sup>19</sup>

Like his father, Samuel Bridge served the town as a selectman (1758-60). As his father had served the town in both King Philip's War and the 1690 Quebec expedition, Samuel was a Revolutionary War soldier, serving in New Jersey, Bennington, and Cambridge in 1777. In early April 1731 he married Susanna Page (1711-35), with whom he had one child, Samuel, and three years after her death married Martha Bowman (1718-93), with whom he had twelve children. Of the eleven sons, three left Lexington to settle elsewhere and five died in childhood or early adulthood.

The 1790 census shows Samuel Bridge with three in his household; his son Jonas (1759-1837) had married Susannah Reed of Lexington in 1783, was also listed in this census, but not near his father. In October 1793, two years after Samuel Bridge died, his heirs sold his livestock, crops, and real estate judged to be worth 30 pounds to settle his estate debt of 100 pounds; son Jonas satisfied the rest of the debt, and Samuel's other heirs released their interest in the property to him. Jonas and his wife, Susannah Reed, built the existing house at 271 Marrett Road sometime after; the fate of his father's house is unknown. The

<sup>16</sup> As cited on existing 1984 MHC Building Form.

<sup>17</sup> *Tracing the Past in Lexington, Massachusetts* (NY: Vantage Press, 1998).

<sup>18</sup> Agreement, 26 Nov. 1739, MSD 40:309; Michael J. Canavan, untitled & undated manuscript, M.J. Canavan Papers, Lexington Historical Society; Harry W. Davis "Matthew Bridge," *Lexington Historical Society: Papers Relating to the History of the Town Read by Some of Its Members* 1 (1889): 56, 58.

<sup>19</sup> Matthew Bridge to S. (probably Samuel) Bridge, 10 December 1730, MSD 30: 500 & 501 and 9 September 1732, MSD 33:352, both listed in the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds index on Family Search. The 1730 deeds are not currently viewable on the website, and the 1732 deed appears to be cited incorrectly in the index. Matthew Bridge granted his son Matthew 50 acres in Lexington with a house and barn standing on it in June 1717 (MSD 28:30), to be accounted as 150 pounds toward his portion of his father's estate. He deeded property to sons John in 1731 (MSD 32:207 and 208) and Joseph in 1732 (MSD 32:544), none of which are viewable on the registry website. On the Bridge family see Charles Hudson, *History of the Town of Lexington, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, from Its First Settlement to 1868* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1913), 2:53-60.

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1798 federal direct tax schedules for Lexington show Jonas Bridge with a house and 80 acres of land. He is listed in Lexington censuses through 1830, and he died in 1837. He left no will and very little in the way of probate records, and the 271 Marrett Road house passed to his son Samuel (1796-1874).

In 1836 Samuel Bridge married Hannah Maria Wellington, daughter of Nehemiah and Nancy Stearns Wellington, whose household was listed next to Jonas Bridge's in 1820 and 1830. The 1840 census lists Samuel Bridge in a household of six people. In 1847, Bridge sold 271 Marrett Road to his brother-in-law Jonas Clarke Wellington (1815-89) and moved with his family to another property in Lexington.<sup>20</sup>

Wellington, whose family had moved from Watertown to Lexington about 1700, acquired the 120-acre farm and its buildings for \$4,000 and mortgaged it to Samuel Bridge on the same day. The 1850 census lists him with \$9,000 in real property in a household with his wife Harriet, their son Austin, and four boarders, one of them probably a domestic servant and the others probably farm workers. When he sold 271 Marrett Road and 87.5 acres to resettle in Cambridge in 1854, he described the property as "part of the Wellington Farm so called."<sup>21</sup>

In 1854 271 Marrett Road became the property of Robert Morris Copeland (1830-74), who that year had formed a partnership with Horace Cleveland in a landscape gardening and architecture firm in Boston. Copeland owned the Lexington property for only three years, but while there he began his short but influential career. In 1855 he designed Sleepy Hollow Cemetery for the neighboring town of Concord, and in 1856 he and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who had been friends since their years together at Harvard College, collaborated on *A Few Words on the Central Park*. The next year Copeland submitted his proposal to design the New York City park but lost to the team of Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux. He later designed Mount Feake Cemetery in Waltham (for \$325 and his choice of lot); Samuel Colt's Armsmear estate in Hartford, Connecticut; Frederick Billings's estate in Woodstock, Vermont (now the Billings Farm and Museum); and town plans for Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard and Ridley Park in Pennsylvania. In 1859 Copeland wrote and published *Country Life: A Handbook of Agriculture, Horticulture, and Landscape Gardening*, and in 1872 he published his plan for a connected park system in Boston in *The Most Beautiful City in America*. But Copeland died two years later before he could implement his vision.

The 1855 Lexington census describes Copeland as a gardener, and he lived at 271 Marrett Road with his wife Josephine Gannett Kent (1833-1907), their son Frederick Kent (1855-1928), and a domestic servant. The 1856 Lexington map attaches the name "R. Morris Copeland" to the house. In May 1857 Copeland sold the 271 Marrett Road house and 71 acres to Bradley M. Clark of Charlestown (1803-75), a ship painter born in Acworth, New Hampshire, who apparently rented it until April 1872, when he sold it to John Osborn (1815-89) of Arlington for \$14,000.<sup>22</sup> Osborn was a hide and leather dealer and by 1870 retired, according to that year's census. He may have aimed to become a gentleman farmer on the Marrett Road property, but he was living in Arlington in May 1881 when he announced his intention to sell the "well-known Valleyfield Farm" at auction. His auction advertisement ran in Boston newspapers through the latter half of the month:

Other business demanding immediate attention compels me to sell at public auction without reserve, one of the most convenient, pleasant and productive farms in the State, containing about 140 acres, under a high state of cultivation . . . on Waltham and Middle street, Lexington, one-half mile from Town House, depot, churches, Public Library and High school, on the most direct road leading from Boston to Concord, pleasantly situated in a very healthy location, well fenced, easily worked. One large dwelling house, containing 16 rooms, with new L and piazza, well shaded with majestic elm and hawthorn trees; the buildings are supplied with a never failing supply of pure spring water, also one other farm dwelling, a very productive orchard of 500 apple and pear trees, extensive barns 122x40, 40x36 60x40 with wings, in excellent repair with facilities for store 200 tons of hay and keeping 100 head of cattle or horses. An average daily production of 500 quarts milk finds ready sale at the farm, ice house containing 60 tons, filled.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Samuel Bridge, Lexington, to Jonas C. Wellington, 22 July 1847, MSC 514:400.

<sup>21</sup> Jonas C. Wellington, Lexington, to Robert M. Copeland, Roxbury, 1 April 1854, MSD 679:42. On the Wellington family see Hudson, *Lexington*, 2:726-35.

<sup>22</sup> Bradley M. Clarke, Charlestown, to John Osborn, Arlington, 16 April 1872, MSD 1206:6. Clark had sold Osborn a small parcel in Lexington, probably contiguous to this larger parcel, in 1871 (MSD 1206:5).

<sup>23</sup> "Peremptory Sale at Lexington," *Boston Herald*, 31 May 1881.

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Osborn clearly had hired help to work the farm, for he also stated that he would sell at the same time eighty-five head "Dutch" and Ayrshire cattle, five horses, sixty swine "of choice breeds," six pleasure and farm wagons, three one-horse carts and harnesses, two Buckeye mowers, two "patent manure spreaders," five plows, harrows, horse rakes, tedders, ice tools, and other farm implements. He also offered six carpets, a piano, and other unspecified household furniture. Finally, the advertisement stated, "about 10 acres of field crops now in, together with about 40 cords of manure, goes with the farm." Osborn asked for \$1000 down and stated that half of the purchase price could "remain on mortgage."

Osborn may not have sold the farm at auction, but in October 1881 he did sell it to Frederick G. Cass of Cambridge for \$12,000. It was then described as three contiguous parcels, together more than sixty acres and variously bounded by Middle Street (now Marrett Road), the Lincoln Road, and the new and old Waltham roads. Cass sold the three parcels two years later to Boston druggist Orlando Tompkins (1819-84) and his son Arthur for \$15,000.<sup>24</sup> In 1889 his widow and sons sold 271 Marrett Road to John Goldthwait of Boston for \$13,200, and he too owned the property for only a few years: in January 1894 he sold the three parcels to Francis Paul Kendall (1854-1912) of Watertown.<sup>25</sup> Kendall was the son of Francis Kendall (1822-1904), a partner in the woolen goods firm of Richardson, Kendall and Company, by 1865 a hosiery manufacturer in the firm Kendall and Learned, and later manager of Kendall Manufacturing Company in Providence, founded by his late brother and the maker of the "French laundry soap" Soapine. Francis P. Kendall is listed on Middle Street at the corner of Waltham Street in 1890s Lexington directories, and the 1900 census shows him as a milkman living on Middle street with his wife Frances and seven servants—two female domestics, a day laborer, a "general man," a barn man, a pig pen man, and a cow man. His wife raised prize-winning Boston terriers, most of their names prefixed with Yankee Doodle; the Boston Globe described her Yankee Doodle Rip as "the famous Boston Terrier winner, one of the best of the breed" in 1911.

The 1910 the census described Francis P. Kendall as a farmer, and by then he lived at 271 Marrett Road only with his wife and a male cook from the West Indies. On 27 December 1911 he transferred title to the farm to Emily L. Tracy of Boston, who the same day transferred it to Kendall's wife Frances. On 18 January 1912 he died from a shotgun wound, either accidentally or intentionally discharged in his bedroom at the house after he had returned from delivering milk to wholesale customers. At his death the *Boston Globe* described Kendall as "one of the wealthiest men of this town."<sup>26</sup> His widow remained in the house until December 1914, when she sold the property to Harry Seymour Kelsey (1879-1957), who had just moved to Lexington from Brookline.<sup>27</sup>

Born in Claremont, New Hampshire, Kelsey was living in Springfield when he founded what he called the Waldorf Lunch System in that city in 1903 or 1904. Named for the Waldorf Hotel in New York City, it was the first lunchroom chain in New England and aimed, according to one 1922 advertisement, to "maintain worthy dining-places where they will perform real public service, the purpose to serve tasteful food of unquestionable quality to men and woman at such small profit per person that we shall have many patrons to make those small profits profitable to our employees and shareholders." Most of the food for the famed Waldorf Lunch restaurants—sixty of them existed in 1915—was prepared and packaged in individual servings in central kitchens such as the one in Boston, which in 1918 employed one hundred people around the clock and distributed along with weekly menus to the lunchrooms. Kelsey also built and ran lunchrooms for companies, and he was heavily involved in real estate in and around Boston and Springfield. In 1914 he acquired a large tract on Spring Street near Concord Avenue in Lexington which he called Kelsey Ranch. He established the acreage as a model farm where, as one visitor recalled, the cows had tiled stalls and were entertained by a player piano.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> John Osborn, Arlington, to Frederick G. Cass, Cambridge, 24 October 1881, MSD 1581:295; Frederick G. Cass, Cambridge, to Orlando Tompkins and Arthur G. Tompkins, Boston, 27 November 1883, MSD 1651:181.

<sup>25</sup> Frances H. Tompkins, Arthur G. Tompkins, and Eugene Tompkins, Boston, to John Goldthwait, Boston, 15 June 1889, MSD 1915:339; John Goldthwait, Boston, to Francis P. Kendall, Watertown, 31 January 1894, MSD 2252:87. This deed cites a plan of the "Osborn Farm" dated 8 September 1880 but not viewable on the Middlesex South Registry website.

<sup>26</sup> Francis P. Kendall, Lexington, to Emily L. Tracy, Boston, 27 December 1911, MSD 3660:387; Frances A. W. Kendall, Lexington, to Harry S. Kelsey, Lexington, 13 December 1914, MSD 3938:28. "Farmer Kills Self," *Boston Globe*, 18 January 1912, 16. Kendall's death record stated the death was a "probable suicide," but the Globe, despite its headline, noted that the medical examiner could not be certain whether it was suicide or an accident.

<sup>27</sup> Frances A. W. Kendall, Lexington, to Harry S. Kelsey, Lexington, 13 December 1914, MSD 3938:28.

<sup>28</sup> See Arlene Taylor Richards, "Recollections and Reflections on the Trapelo Road Are from 1916" (typescript, 1974), Waltham Public Library, online at [http://inquiryunlimited.org/wc/1974\\_Taylor\\_Trapelo\\_Road.pdf](http://inquiryunlimited.org/wc/1974_Taylor_Trapelo_Road.pdf); "Harry S. Kelsey," *Boston Globe*, 1 December 1957, 22; and the Wikipedia entry for the Waldorf Lunch System.

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Harry Kelsey owned the 271 Marrett Road property for less than three years and sold it in October 1917—"for improvement," the *Boston Globe* noted—to fellow real estate developer Neil McIntosh Jr. (1878-1958); the deed reserved until 1 May 1918 Kelsey's right to use the two "smaller houses," the barns, and the sheds on the property.<sup>29</sup> Born in Paisley, Scotland, McIntosh came to the United States as an infant and was working as a stationery printer in Boston when he married Nova Scotia native Annie MacKinnon. By the mid-1910s he had begun to invest in real estate, and his purchase of the 90-acre former Kendall estate, also called "Farmhurst," included the "old homestead" and two other houses, the *Boston Herald* reported. "Being situated on the state road that runs directly to Concord and Ayer, and also on the car line, it should attract many buyers who desire country home sites. Mr. McIntosh is cutting the estate in to small farms and garden plots." A display advertisement in a May 1919 Herald encouraged potential buyers to "be independent / own a farm, raise your own vegetables" on the Farmhurst lots. "The estate comprises 90 acres of farm land, 70 acres of which are free from stones and ready to plant," the ad stated "Restrictions are imposed on the property to create and maintain an agreeable country community."<sup>30</sup>

By 1920 McIntosh, his wife, and their four children were living at what was then numbered 282 Middle Street, which may not have been the 271 Marrett Road house; at one point in 1918 he advertised a "Lexington estate" of seventeen rooms with three open fireplaces for sale in the Boston newspapers at a price of "\$5500 worth \$12,000," which may also have been this house. By 1930 McIntosh and his family had moved to Merriman Street. He bought other large estates in Lexington—including Grasslands, also once a Bridge family property, the Carey Estate with its 25-room house, and the Davis farm—all to subdivide and develop. McIntosh also engineered large developments in Newton, Waltham, and at Plymouth's Priscilla Beach, where he retired. In 1928 the Herald reported that he had developed more than five thousand acres and sold more than one thousand lots in his Massachusetts developments.<sup>31</sup>

Exactly when a tearoom was opened in "The Old House," more particularly in its kitchen wing, is not known. An article written about "The Old House" in the *Lexington Minute-Man* reported that "In the late 1920s Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Heywood opened a 'high quality' restaurant there and became famous for their delicious steaks and for offering second portions for whoever had room. The Heywoods retained the name 'The Old House,' known for its servicemen's specials for 50 cents."<sup>32</sup>

Sidney Brown Heywood (1897-1962) was born in Minneapolis, graduated the University of Minnesota in 1918, and received an M.B.A. from Harvard in 1924. He was an instructor at Harvard Business School in 1924-25 and in 1927 married Margaret Weimer in Cambridge. About the time the couple moved to Lexington Margaret W. Heywood had begun publishing and compiling international cookbooks. The 1930 census lists Sidney Heywood in a boarding house in Fall River where he was employed as business manager of Truesdale Hospital. Margaret Heywood was enumerated as the tenant in a house owned by Carl R. Arvidson, an organ builder, at 55 Kendall Road, which was either across the street from 271 Marrett Road or the very house itself. The deed by which he transferred 271 Marrett Road has not been located amid the hundreds McIntosh executed in Lexington, but at some point, it appears that the Heywoods obtained the title to the property. They were owners in 1937 when they applied to the Lexington board of appeals for a zoning variance to enlarge the existing 271 Marrett Road house.<sup>33</sup> By then Sidney Heywood was working for the Boston accounting firm Lybrand, Ross Brothers and Montgomery, while identified as proprietor of The Old House restaurant in Lexington directories.

It was during this time that a series of at least eleven articles were written based on the house by Della T. Lutes, housekeeping editor for *Modern Priscilla*, a Boston based women's magazine.<sup>34</sup> The Bridge house was in need of rehabilitation and

<sup>29</sup> Harry S. Kelsey, Lexington, to Neil McIntosh Jr., Milton, 18 October 1917, MSD 4168:168; Declaration of Trust, Neil McIntosh Jr., Milton, 18 October 1917, MSD 4168:170; "Buys in Lexington," *Boston Globe*, 22 October 1917, 6; "Harry S. Kelsey," *ibid.*, 1 December 1917, 22. In 1922 Kelsey built Kelsey City (now Lake Park) in Florida near West Palm Beach and once owned the Florida East Coast Canal between Jacksonville and Miami.

<sup>30</sup> "Big Estate on Market," *Boston Herald*, 31 March 1918, 17; advertisement in *ibid.*, 11 May 1919, 20; "High Class Scheme of Development," *ibid.*, 15 June 1919, 17.

<sup>31</sup> "Fair Oakes and Carey Estate in Lexington," *Boston Herald*, 15 April 1928, 26.

<sup>32</sup> Anne R. Scigliano, "'The Old House'—Memorial to the Past," Oct. 16, 1969.

<sup>33</sup> *Boston Globe*, 15 January 1932, 13, and "Lexington," *ibid.*, 25 March 1937, 12.

<sup>34</sup> "The Old, Old Kitchen in a Brand New Dress" (February 1928).

"The Old House and its Old, Old Elms (April 1928).

"The Old House Book Room" (June 1928).

"More About the Old House Book Room" (July 1928).

"Living Room at the Old House" (September 1928).

"The Priscilla Nursery" (October 1928).



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modernization, and it appears that Lutes and *Modern Priscilla* were invited to upgrade the house, using it as a "Priscilla Proving Plant" for living in a historic home. Margaret Heywood evidently had interests in common with Della T. Lutes and through proximity known her personally, which was how Lutes would have become attached to The Old House. Some of the articles include accounts of repairs to the old house, but they are largely about interior decoration, furnishings and modern appliances. Lutes lived in Newton but obviously had free access to the Lexington house. In one article she states, "I am writing at the Old House where I have come to spend the week-end."<sup>35</sup>

Della Thompson Lutes (1867-1942) was a well-known expert on cooking and housekeeping. Born in Michigan, she married Louis I. Lutes, with whom she had two sons. By 1910 the family had moved to Cooperstown, New York, where Lutes joined the staff of *American Motherhood*, a periodical founded by Dr. Mary Wood-Allen and published there. Between 1908 and 1919, she also was the editor of *American Motherhood*, *Today's Housewife* and *Table Talk – The National Food Magazine*, all of which were published by Arthur Crist. Lutes was the housekeeping editor of *Modern Priscilla* from 1924 until 1930 when the enterprise shut down. In one of its final issues (February 1930) *Modern Priscilla* published a photograph of the front of "The Old House" which included a sign identifying it as a tearoom. She continued to write popular essays on cooking and reminiscences of her Michigan childhood, which were collected in a book titled *The Country Kitchen* in 1936. In that year, it earned a National Book Award for Most Original Work of Nonfiction.<sup>36</sup>

Sidney B. Heywood died in Lexington in 1962, his wife Margaret in 1966. In January 1967 the executor of Margaret Heywood's will sold 271 Marrett Road to David H. and Beverly T. Smith of Wellesley.<sup>37</sup> The Smiths owned it for a decade and sold it in 1977 to Jonathan and Monika Brand, who in turn told it to Patricia L. and William J. DeBonte in December 1985. The DeBontes sold it to Jonathan A. and Naoko Goldberg in 2002, and they were the owners of record in 2021.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> "Living Room at the Old House" (September 1928).

<sup>36</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Della\\_T.\\_Lutes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Della_T._Lutes); <https://www.amazon.com/Country-Kitchen-Della-Lutes/dp/081432438X>.

<sup>37</sup> Kendall L. Johnson, executor will Margaret Weimar Heywood, to David H. and Beverly T. Smith, Wellesley, 9 January 1967, MSD 11278:747.

<sup>38</sup> David H. Smith, Rochester NY, to Jonathan and Monika Brand, 271 Marrett Road, 22 April 1977, MSD 13181:347; Jonathan and Monika Brand to Patricia L. and William J. DeBonte, 24 December 1985, MSD 16680:2; Patricia L. DeBonte, 271 Marrett Road, to Jonathan A. and Naoko Goldberg, 271 Marrett Road, 23 January 2002, MSD 34636:456. The house is depicted on "Part of Land in Lexington, MA owned by William J. and Patricia L. DeBonte," 19 July 1988, plan 1359 of 1988, and may be depicted on Lot 129 of "Part of Section 2, Farmhurst, Lexington, Mass," Plan Book 271:44, and "Plan of Land in Lexington Known as the Osborn Farm," 8 September 1880 (no book and page cite offered in deeds), neither of which are currently viewable on the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds website.

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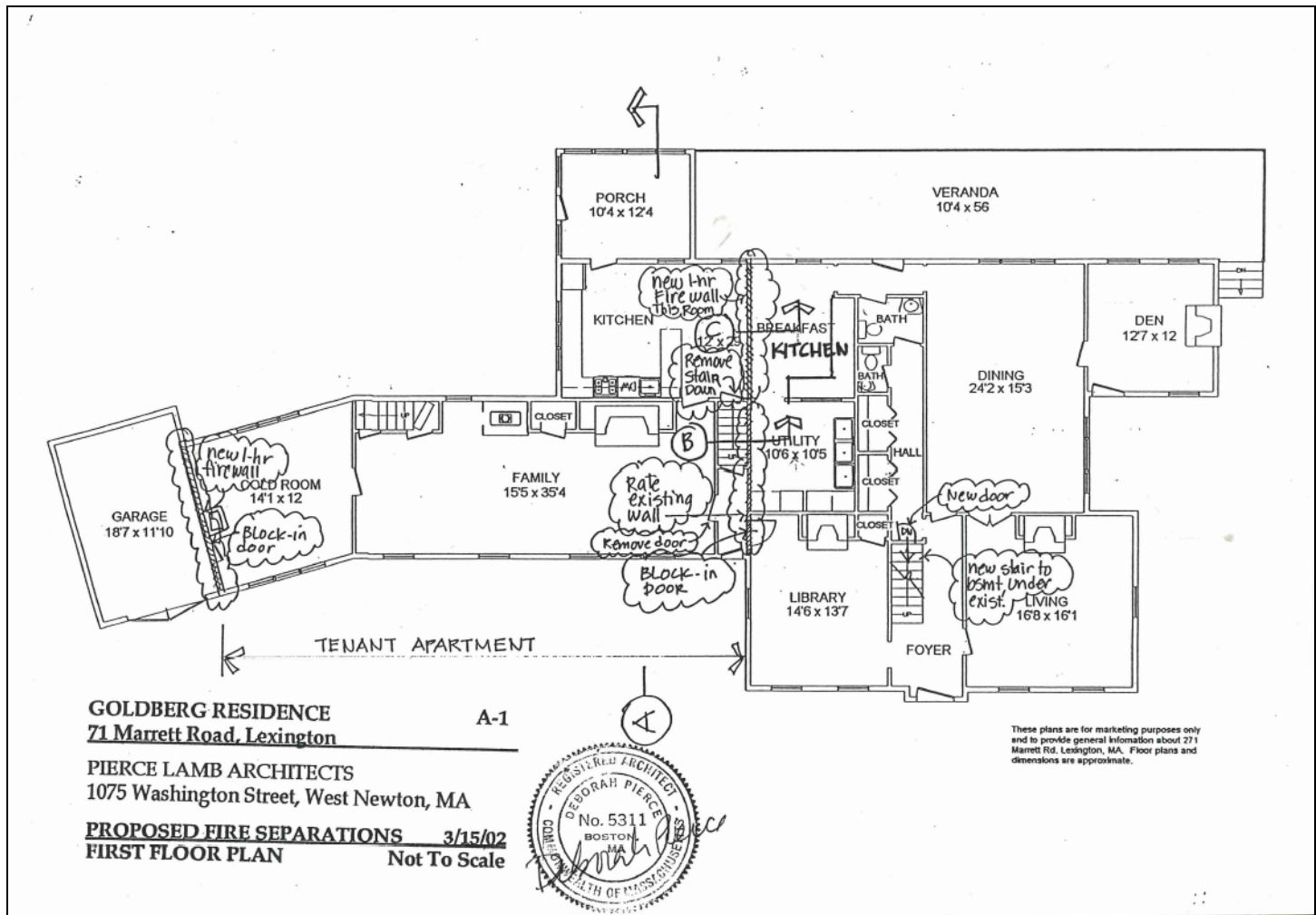
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## FIGURES



First floor plan, provided by owner.

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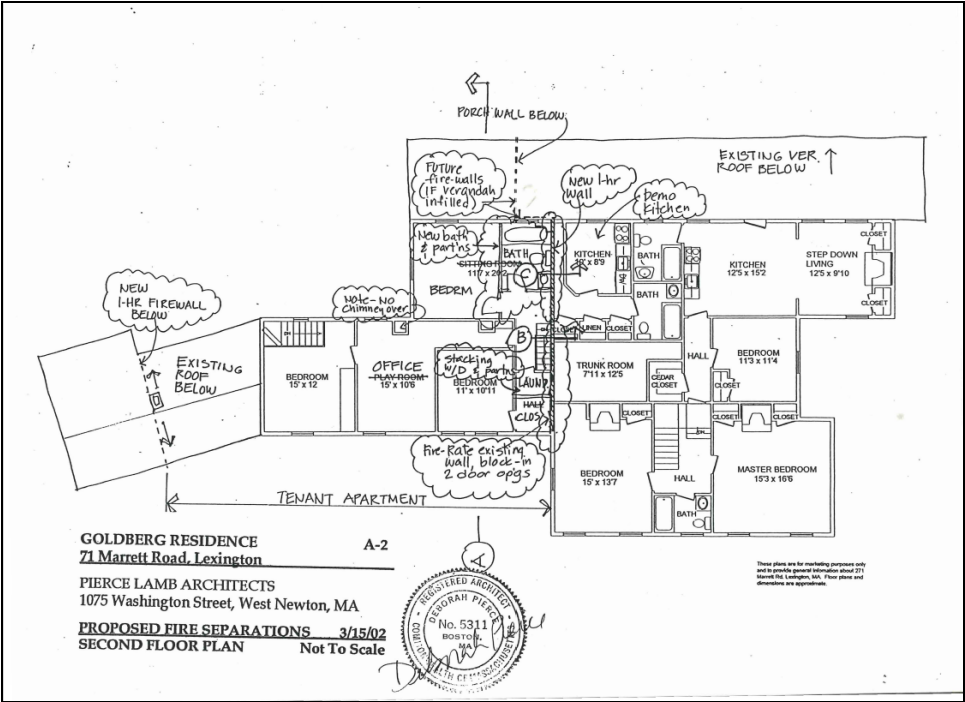
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Second floor plan, provided by owner.



Historic view of house from west, ca. 1860, showing piazza across front and wrapping on west side to wing entry; also carriage house attached to west end of wing; note agricultural barn in background. Owners' collection.



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View of house from south, 1923, showing piazza different from that shown above and terrace with balustrade wrapping around front, east and west sides; also garage with lattice front added to end of former carriage house with triple window. Lexington Historical Society.



House pictured in *Modern Priscilla*, April 1928, one of at least 11 articles on the modernization of the house written by Della T. Lutes.



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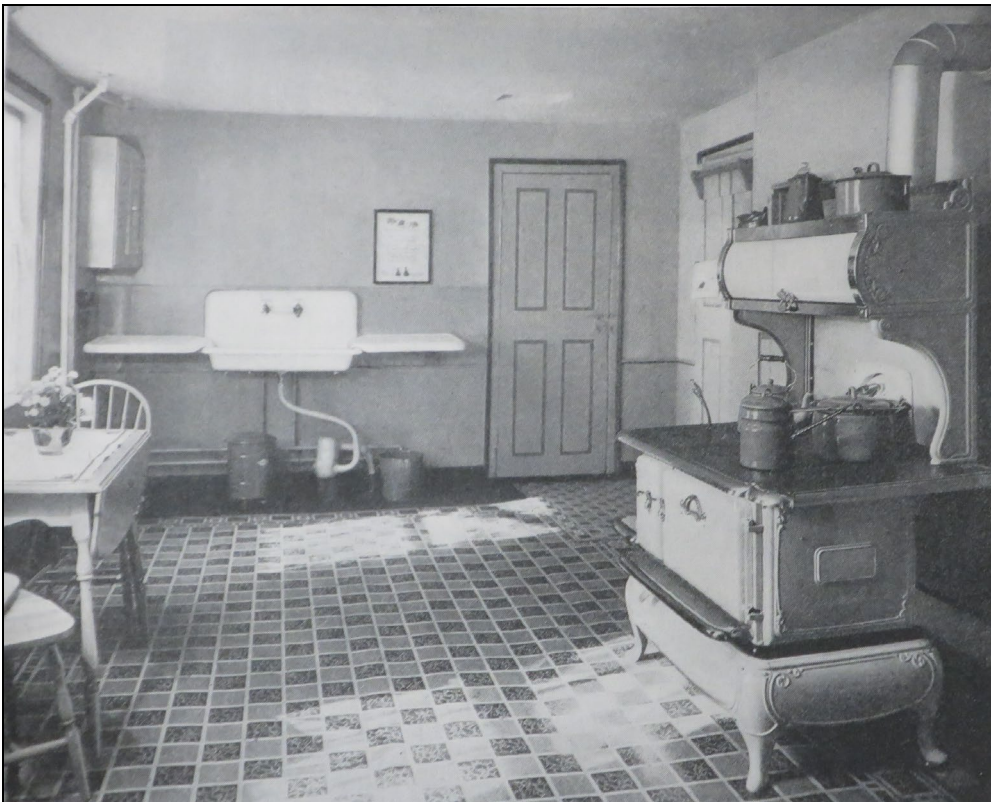
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House pictured in *Modern Priscilla*, February 1930, showing changes in appearance after two-year rehabilitation project. Piazza and balustraded terraces removed, arched doorway on garage, and enhancement of overall Colonial appearance. Note sign board for The Old House tea room mounted on tree on right.



Photograph of improved kitchen from "The Old, Old Kitchen in a Brand New Dress," February 1928. Featured Chinese red accents on trim.



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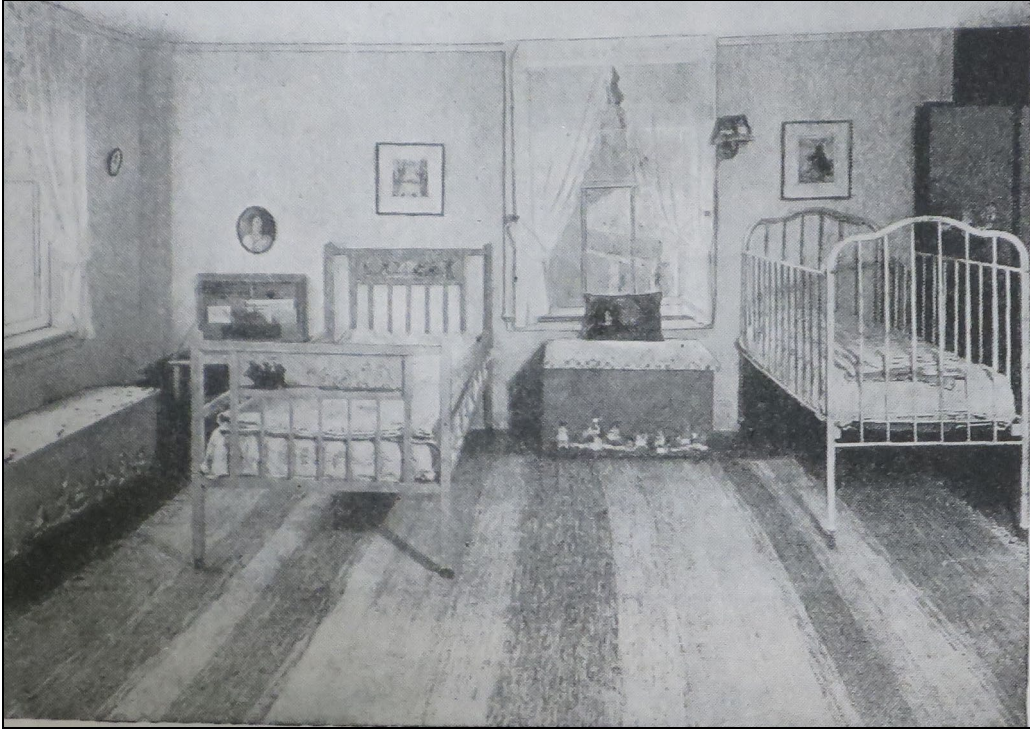
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Photograph from "The Priscilla Nursery," October 1928.



Photograph from "The Old Bathroom Made New," January 1929.

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Photograph from "The Hall at the Old House," February 1929.

**BE INDEPENDENT OWN A FARM, RAISE YOUR OWN VEGETABLES**

**Small Farms \$150**

**Large Garden Plots** and up

**15c Fare Farmhurst—Lexington 10 miles out**

**Own Your Own Farm—On easy terms—3 years to pay in full**

FARMHURST is on the Waltham street car line in Lexington, 10 miles from State House, Boston, three-fourths mile from Lexington Centre, 15c fare. It also has large frontage on the State road (Middle st). The estate comprises 90 acres of farm land, 70 acres of which are free from stones and ready to plant. Restrictions are imposed on the property to create and maintain an agreeable country community. Farm land is bound to increase in value; farm produce will be scarce and hard to buy. A small farm at Farmhurst should give you all the vegetables you will require and pay for itself in two years. Buy now and secure the best land. Don't wait until planting time. Remember, Farmhurst has town water, electric lights, is on the car line and has a mile of macadamized county and state roads. If you want to build we can help you. Liberal mortgages to first buyers. Directions: Take any car to Arlington Heights, then any outward to Lexington Centre (ask conductor for transfer to Waltham st). From Lexington Centre take Waltham st car line (using transfer), get off at State rd (Middle st), resigns. Send for circular, NEIL MCINTOSH, trustee, 929 Old South bldg, Boston.

Advertisement, *Boston Herald*, 11 May 1919, 20.



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PHOTOGRAPHS (Credit Walter R. Wheeler, 2021)



Detail of front entrance.







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View from west.



View from NE.



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View of rear of main house from NW.



View of rear of kitchen wing and attached outbuildings from north.



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View of attached outbuildings from NE.



First floor, SE parlor looking NE.



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First floor, SE parlor, detail of mantel.

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First floor, center hall and stair.



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First floor, SW parlor looking north.



First floor, SW parlor, detail of floor painting.

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First floor, north wing looking north.



First floor, wing on east side of north wing looking east.



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Second floor, center passage, stairs to attic, looking north.



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Second floor, SW chamber looking north.



Second floor, SE chamber showing corner posts, girts and summer beam exposed when original plaster ceiling was removed. Summer beam now cased.

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Second floor, chamber in north wing looking east into second story room in added wing.



Attic, looking east, showing roof framing.



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Attic, detail of principal rafter and common purlin joinery.



Basement, detail of brick base for west chimney.



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Basement, detail of abandoned basement stairs.



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Kitchen wing, first floor, cooking hearth on north wall.



Kitchen wing, basement, chimney base for cooking hearth.



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Kitchen wing, first floor, cast iron cook stove and oven.



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Kitchen Wing, first floor, looking west.



Kitchen wing, first floor, looking east.



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Kitchen wing, first floor, framing in ceiling showing beam with mortises for dividing wall.



Kitchen wing, second floor, passageway between chimney and east chamber.

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Kitchen wing, attic, looking west.



Kitchen wing, attic, detail of joinery.



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Kitchen wing, attic, view of rafters, ridge pole and joinery method.

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## 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 Jonas & Susannah Bridge House, built 1793-1798 is historically and architecturally significant as a distinctive surviving example of 18<sup>th</sup>-century domestic in the Town of Lexington. As such it appears to meet National Register criteria A and C. Historically, the house is a landmark to the Bridge family, one of the first to settle in Lexington, then known as Cambridge Farms. John Bridge of Cambridge acquired the land between 1639 and 1645. His son, Matthew Bridge (1615-1700), filed a request with the town in 1661 to cut wood for building and for roofing material. Matthew Bridge Jr. (1650-1738) inherited about 600 acres of land from his father, and he built four houses for his sons Matthew, John, Joseph, and Samuel. The chain of title for 271 Marrett Road establishes that it belonged to Matthew's son Samuel (1705-91) and suggests that a house was built there about 1730-32.

Like his father, Samuel Bridge served the town as a selectman (1758-60). As his father had served the town in both King Philip's War and the 1690 Quebec expedition, Samuel was a Revolutionary War soldier, serving in New Jersey, Bennington, and Cambridge in 1777. In early April 1731 he married Susanna Page (1711-35), with whom he had one child, Samuel, and three years after her death married Martha Bowman (1718-93), with whom he had twelve children. Of the eleven sons, three left Lexington to settle elsewhere and five died in childhood or early adulthood. Samuel's son Jonas Bridge obtained title to the farm after his death; he and his wife, Susannah Reed, built the existing house at 217 Marrett Road sometime after; the fate of his father's house is unknown. When Jonas died, the house and property passed to his son Samuel Bridge.

The Bridge family's association with the 271 Marrett Road property ended in 1854, but its history was elaborated with association with several significant personages. Robert Morris Copeland (1830-74) purchased the farm in 1854, the same year he had formed a partnership with Horace Cleveland in a landscape gardening and architecture firm in Boston. In May 1857 Copeland sold the house and a 71-acre farm to ship painter Bradley M. Clark of Charlestown. who sold it to John Osborn of Arlington, a retired hide and leather dealer who may have aimed to become a gentleman farmer, but in 1881 he put the "well-known Valleyfield Farm" up for auction. Sales literature described it as having a large dwelling house, containing 16 rooms with a new ell and piazza, one other farm dwelling, a very productive orchard of 500 apple and pear trees, three barns in excellent repair with facilities for store 200 tons of hay and keeping 100 head of cattle or horses.

After a few short-term owners, the property was bought in 1894 by Francis Paul Kendall (1854-1912) of Watertown. Son of a manufacturer of woolen goods, Kendall is identified as a milkman in the 1900 census with a

*Continuation sheet 35*



**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

LEXINGTON

271 MARRETT ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

LEX.586

household containing his wife Frances and seven servants. His wife raised prize-winning Boston terriers, most of their names prefixed with Yankee Doodle. In his obituary, Kendall was described as one of the wealthiest men in the town." In 1914, his widow sold the farm to Harry Seymour Kelsey (1879-1957), who founded what he called the Waldorf Lunch System in Springfield in 1903. Named for the Waldorf Hotel in New York City, it was the first lunchroom chain in New England. He continued the dairy operation, probably to supply his restaurants.

Harry Kelsey had owned the property for less than three years when he sold it in 1917 to real estate developer Neil McIntosh Jr. (1878-1958), who subdivided the farm into small farms and garden plots. The 271 Marrett Road house apparently was rented, and the kitchen wing was renovated in to teahouse in what was called "The Old House." In the late 1920s it was operated by Margaret W. Heywood, a cookbook publisher, and her husband Sidney, a business executive. They eventually bought the house, and they invited *Modern Priscilla* magazine to use the house as a test site for domestic improvement. At least eleven articles were written based on the house by Della T. Lutes, housekeeping editor for *Modern Priscilla*, a Boston based women's magazine. Della Thompson Lutes (1867-1942) was a well-known expert on cooking and housekeeping. She joined the staff of *American Motherhood*, a periodical founded by Dr. Mary Wood-Allen and published there. Between 1908 and 1919, sh also was the editor of *American Motherhood*, *Today's Housewife* and *Table Talk – The National Food Magazine*, all of which were published by Arthur Crist. Lutes was the housekeeping editor of *Modern Priscilla* from 1924 until 1930 when the enterprise shut down.

An analysis of the construction history of the main house at 271 Marrett Road has determined it was built at the end of the 1700s by Jonas Bridge (1757-1837) and his wife Susannah Reed, the third generation to occupy the land. The form and plan of the house reflects a design popular in Lexington during the last half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, an updating of the traditional center-chimney plan by the insertion of a center passage with chimneys on either side positioned between front and back rooms. The front rooms are contained in a two-story, gable roof mass with a symmetrical five-bay, center-entrance façade. The rear rooms are contained in a lean-to. This transition occurred with new construction or by renovation; many earlier houses lost their original center chimneys in the process, although no evidence of this was found in this case. The lean-to was replaced with a large two-story wing added in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which has gone through many changes. A veranda had wrapped around the entire building before being removed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These stages do not contribute to the architectural significance of the house.

Many of these houses had a kitchen in one of the rear rooms, but another innovation occurring in this period was to locate the kitchen in a wing connected to other service spaces and outbuildings, including barns. The 371 Marrett Road house has a two-story wing with three sections; a cooking fireplace is located on the back wall in what was the room closest to the house. The wing was extensively renovated in the 1920s when it began functioning as a teahouse, with partitions and earlier wall and ceiling finishes removed. It has an odd timber roof frame, which has been construed as being a remnant of the original 17<sup>th</sup>-century dwelling built for Bridge family. Alternatively, it has been suggested that it was built as a wing for a previous house and preserved when the current house was built. Closer material analysis is needed to confirm these assertions. Nevertheless, the core house retains significant features associated with its late 1700s construction date to represent the early history of the property, as well as those added in the 20<sup>th</sup>-century evincing the work of later significant owners.