

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

83-336-15

Billerica

062

Town Chelmsford

Place (neighborhood or village) Center

Address 51 Acton Road

Historic Name G. Thomas Parkhurst House

Uses: Present residence, 1 family

Original residence, 1 family

Date of Construction 1893

Source tax records; Eleanor Parkhurst

Style/Form Victorian shingle

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation

Wall/Trim wood shingle

Roof asphalt; gable

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

unattached garage: 1989 at rear of house, on High St. sidewalk the owner and operator of the Parkhurst Press in Chelmsford for over 60 years.

Major Alterations (with dates)

enclosed porch at rear: unknown date

Condition good

Moved no yes Date

Acreage 15,300 sq. ft.

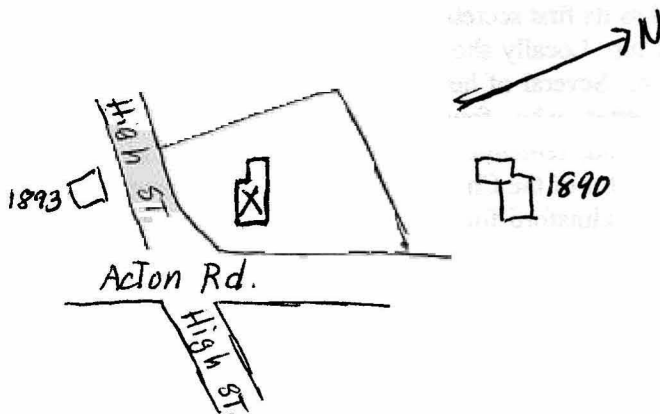
Setting In a residential area, on the corner of two busy roads

Photograph



Sketch Map

Draw a map showing the building's location in relation to the nearest cross streets and/or major natural features. Show all buildings between inventoried building and nearest intersection or natural feature. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Circle and number the inventoried building. Indicate north.



Recorded by Jane B. Drury

Organization for Chelmsford Historical Commission

Date (month / year) January 2004

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION *see continuation sheet*

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This is a fairly typical shingle style house, of which there are not many in Chelmsford. A "tower" on the right side is its most unusual characteristic.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *see continuation sheet*

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Paul and Sarah Litchfield were living in the old house at 35 High Street, when they had three residences built on a part of their land, at or near the corner of Acton Rd. and High St. #51 Acton Rd. and #26 and #29 High St. were erected in 1893. These were all sold in 1895 to William A. Boland, a developer from Lynn. Mr. Boland planned for 60 more houses on three more streets to be built on the property, but in the fall of that same year he sold #51 Acton Rd. house to Francis Scales. The proposed three new streets were never made.

Although G. Thomas Parkhurst was the 3rd owner of this dwelling located at 51 Acton Rd. Having purchased it in 1902, he and later his daughter, owned it for the next 99 years, and therefore it is historically called the "G. Thomas Parkhurst House."

Thomas Parkhurst grew up just up the street, at 78 High Street. He graduated from Chelmsford High School in 1896 and became a job printer in Lowell and later in Chelmsford. On Sept. 24, 1902 he was only 25 years old when he married Ednah Byam, also a Chelmsford native, and they bought this residence. Although Ednah was primarily a housewife, she was also active socially. A charter member of the Chelmsford Historical Society, she served as its first secretary. She was one of founders of the Chelmsford Garden Club, and was a member of the Middlesex Women's Club. Locally she became well known as a poet, and she won a prizewinning ode for Chelmsford's 1955 Anniversary Celebration. Several of her poems still exist. Women's rights were important to Mrs. Parkhurst, and she was one of the suffragettes who fought for women's right to vote.

In his youth her husband, G. Thomas, played in John Philip Sousa's band, remaining active in local musical circles, he played a trumpet in the Lowell Orchestral Society, and was for a while the director of the Chelmsford band. He also taught cornet and trumpet. He became the owner and operator of the Parkhurst Press in Chelmsford for over 60 years. He died suddenly on April 17, 1961, Ednah having predeceased him by 6 years.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES *see continuation sheet*

Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds: 1895 Bk. 262, pg. 189; Plan Bk. 11, pg. 41

Chelmsford street directories; Assessors' records

Eleanor Parkhurst

Lowell Sun: 1902 clipping; December 6, 1955; June 20, 21, 2000; 1966 obituary of T. Parkhurst

Chelmsford Independent: March 31, 1983

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town

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HISTORY

Thomas and Ednah Parkhurst had just one daughter, Eleanor, who was born in July, 1909. She joined the Chelmsford Girl Scout Troop No. 1 six months after it was formed in 1919. Nine years later she received the Golden Eaglet Award at the Lowell Auditorium, which was the highest award in Girl Scouting. Expanding on her love of music learned from her father, Eleanor sang in her college choir and studied music theory and piano. She taught economics and then became involved with social work, but eventually family responsibilities drew her back home to Chelmsford. She worked with her father in the printing business and began a long association with the Chelmsford Newsweekly, first as a cub reporter and eventually as its editor. Like her mother, Eleanor was a longtime member of the Chelmsford Garden Club. An active member of the Old Chelmsford Garrison House, she served on its board for 35 years, and worked to get the Garrison House on the National Register. In addition, she donated the historic Byam blacksmith shop to the Garrison House Association. Continuing her lively interest in local history, she was working on an up-date to Rev. Wilson Waters' History of Chelmsford, when she died in 2001. "The continuity of life is important," she said in an explanation of the waves of immigrants who lived in the community over the years. Her death concluded 99 years of Parkhurst ownership of the property at 51 Acton Road.

CHANGES

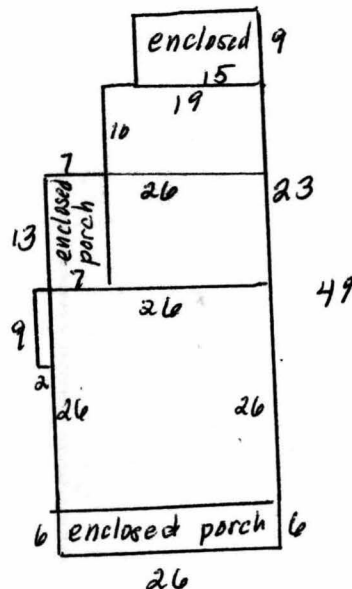
There have been few changes over the years to this house. An enclosed porch was added to the rear of the house. The interior is even less changed. In her later years Eleanor Parkhurst did move her bedroom down to the pantry off the kitchen at the rear of the main part of the house and added a toilet there. The latter has probably been removed by the present owners.

upper story finished
Garage

plan BK11
plan 41
1896



plan bK M
plan 77
1912



Assessors' record
6/24/2003

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
CHELMSFORD

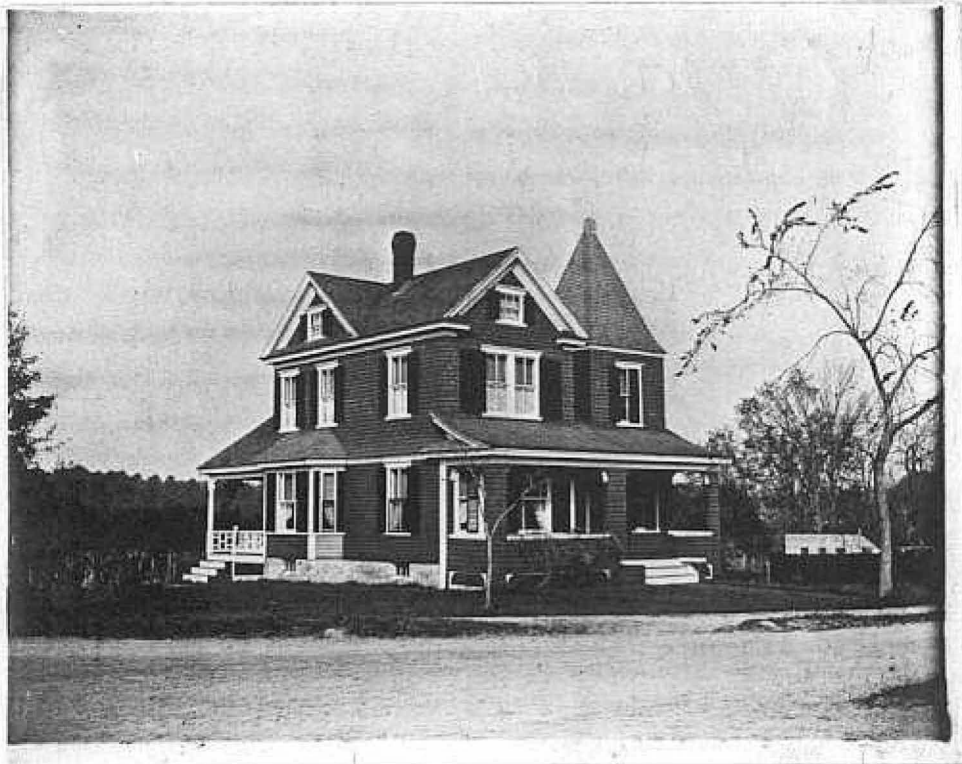
Property Address
51 ACTON RD.

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Oct. 1902



G. Thomas Parkhurst
on side porch, 51 Acton Rd.



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January 2004: note shingles on 2nd story



51 Acton Road
Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds

Bk. 11299, pg. 229	Jan. 22, 2001	Estate of Eleanor Parkhurst to Damien F. & Laura A. Katz \$222,400 51 Acton Rd. & buildings thereon: lots 1 & 2 at intersection of Acton Rd. & High St same: bk. 861, pg. 368 1935 Parkhurst deed
Probate Docket #00P3228	Jan. 8, 2001	Estate of Eleanor Parkhurst
Probate Docket #36443	1961	Estate of G. Thomas Parkhurst
Probate Docket #	1955	Estate of Ednah F. B. Parkhurst
Bk. 861, pg. 368	Apr. 29, 1935	Doris Stevens, Lowell to G. Thomas & Ednah F.B. Parkhurst
Bk. 861, pg.	1935	G. Thomas Parkhurst to Doris Stevens, Lowell
Bk. 347, pg. 124	Aug. 20, 1902	Francis H. Scales to G. Thomas Parkhurst \$1 9550 sq. ft. & buildings: Lot 2 on 1895 Boland Plan same: 1895 Boland deed
Bk. 273, pg. 42	Oct. 17, 1895	William A. Boland, Lynn, to Francis H. Scales \$1 9550 sq. ft. & buildings: Lot 2 on 1895 Boland Plan assuming: right of drainage through said lot to adjoining brook
Bk. 262, pg. 189	Mar. 25, 1895	Sarah E. & Paul F. Litchfield to William A. Boland, Lynn \$1 7 & 7/8 acres: 1. land & buildings thereon: on Acton & Robin Hill Rds. 2. land & buildings thereon: on Acton & Robin Hill Rds. reserving: right of drainage into brook running through said premises





51 Acton Road

9/6/2004 F. Merriam





51 Acton Road

9/22/2005 Jeff Corazzini

