

FORM B – BUILDING

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

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number
 101-419-1 Billerica 72

Town Chelmsford
 Place (neighborhood or village) South Chelmsford
 Address 40 Byam Road

Photograph
 (3" x 3" or 3-1/2" x 5" black and white only) Label photo on back with town and property address. Record film roll and negative numbers here on the form. Staple photo to left side of form over this space. Attach additional photos to continuation sheets.

Historic Name Barrett/Byam House
 Uses: Present Historical Society Museum

Original residence

Date of Construction before Sept. 1767, possibly ca 1740

Roll Negative(s)

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Source Middlesex No. Reg. Deeds: Bk. 5, pg. 457
 Rev. Wilson Waters History of Chelmsford

Style/Form

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation fieldstone, unmortared in old section

Wall/Trim aluminum siding (sometime after 1973)

Roof ridge, gables on end; 2 stories; wood shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures
 attached barn

Major Alterations (with dates)
 see attachments

Condition excellent

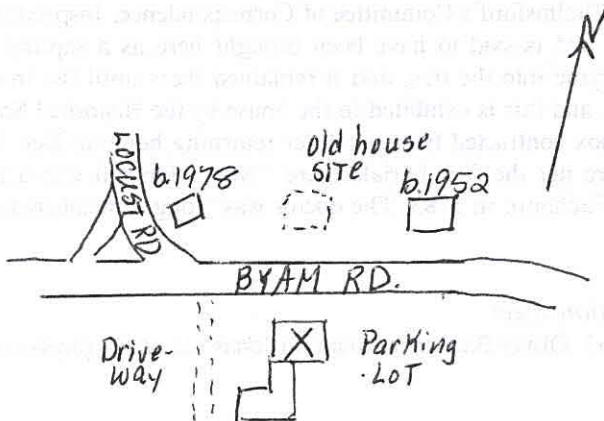
Moved no yes Date

Acres 3 acres

Setting rural residential; rolling topography

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 2005

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION see continuation sheet

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

The main portion of this house at 40 Byam Rd. is a two storied central chimney building almost square in shape, measuring 38 ft. wide by 31 ft. deep. However the façade has 3 bays, and the right side of the main portion has 4 bays. A 1 story modern ell (b. 1961) extends from its left side, while an older 1½ story ell with an unfinished basement is at the rear, connecting the main house with the barn. The roof of the older ell has its ridge perpendicular to that of the main house, and a narrow but tall chimney is located on the middle of its ridge. The main house chimney is large and is located immediately in front of the roof ridge, indicating that perhaps the main house was once only 4 bays in depth. It probably was a saltbox/leanto; in the main first floor, kitchen fireplace is located on the rear side of the chimney. This is confirmed by mortar marks on the chimney. The main house central chimney has 5 fireplaces and 2 Dutch ovens. The windows are said to have had inside shutters. The stairway in the front hall of the main house turns after two steps up, to a landing made from a single board 36" wide.

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.

The exact date when the present residence at 40 Byam Road was erected is unknown. However, it may have been built by Oliver Barrett after 1754, although the Rev. Wilson Waters, in his History of Chelmsford, said he believed it was built around 1740. By Sept. 1767 it was standing on 30 acres on the south side of the road, and the older house, built in the 1600s, stood almost opposite it, on the north side of the road. The older dwelling was taken down probably in the early 1900s, and its foundation, about 12 ft. square and approximately 4-5 feet deep, was filled in about 1970. The 18th Century date of the present house was confirmed by architectural experts brought in when the Historical Society wanted the house put on the National Register, based on the 1663 date.

Joseph Barrett was a housewright and probably erected the residence if the Rev. Wilson Waters is correct with the ca 1740 date. Joseph was the son of Joseph and Martha and had probably grown up in the old house across the street. He and his wife, Mary Taylor, had married in Concord in 1714 and raised 3 daughters and 3 sons in Chelmsford. However, he was living in Hardwick by 1754, when he sold his rights to the property, which included "lands, meadows, buildings" which were then "in the possession of the Widow Mary Barrett's called her thirds" to Oliver Barrett, who was residing in Concord at that time.

Oliver was a cooper. He and his wife, Anna, had four children born in Chelmsford between 1755 and 1767. When the property was sold in Sept. 1767 it contained the old house and cooper's shop on the north side of the road, and the new house and barn on the south of the road.

Dr. Jonas Marshall commenced his medical practice in Chelmsford in 1765. He owned and lived in the present dwelling purchased in 1767 from Oliver Barrett. In 1776 Dr. Marshall was chosen to be a member of Chelmsford's Committee of Correspondence, Inspection and Safety. Until relatively recent years an elm tree stood beside the main house and is said to have been brought here as a sapling from Worcester. When Dr. Marshall was about to leave for the war, he thrust his scythe into the tree, and it remained there until the tree was taken down. The doctor took a basket filled with medicines with him to the war, and this is exhibited in the house by the Historical Society. Mrs. Marshall and two of their children died in the house as a result of smallpox contracted from a soldier returning home in Dec. 1776. Their gravestones are the oldest in Heart Pond Cemetery, although theirs were not the first burials there. "Mrs. Marshall was a lovely woman, and the doctor was broken hearted." He sold the house and moved to Fitchburg in 1783. The doctor was "long remembered as an active man and successful practitioner."

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES see continuation sheet

Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds, North: Bk. 5, pg. 457 Sept. 29, 1767 Oliver Barrett, yeoman, to Jonas Marshall, physician
Rev. Wilson Waters, History of Chelmsford, pub. 1917

Chelmsford Assessors Records

Hazel Stevens paper April 1973

Eleanor Parkhurst

Lowell Sun 1967

Gus Falgren, 31 Byam Road

First Congregational Society (Unitarian) Church of Chelmsford records

Lowell Courier Citizen: June 1912, Aug. 31, 1915

Robert Jr & Doug MacKissock; Rachel Meredith 2004: Byam descendants

Richard Lahue, Sept. 18, 2004

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
CHELMSFORD

Property Address
40 BYAM ROAD

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BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

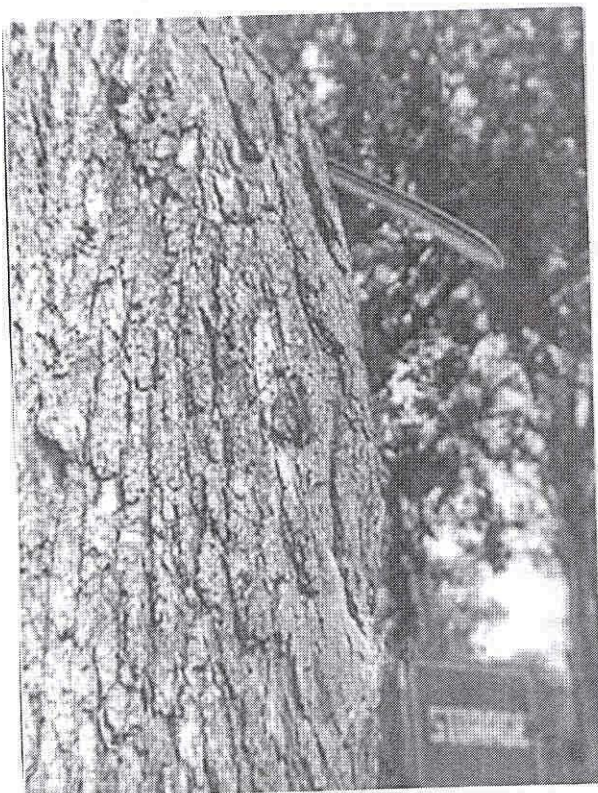
Area(s) Form No.

072

History:



Harry C. Greene & Gertrude W. Byam Greene



1975

The "sapling" Dr. Marshall
is said to have planted here.
The tree grew around his scythe.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

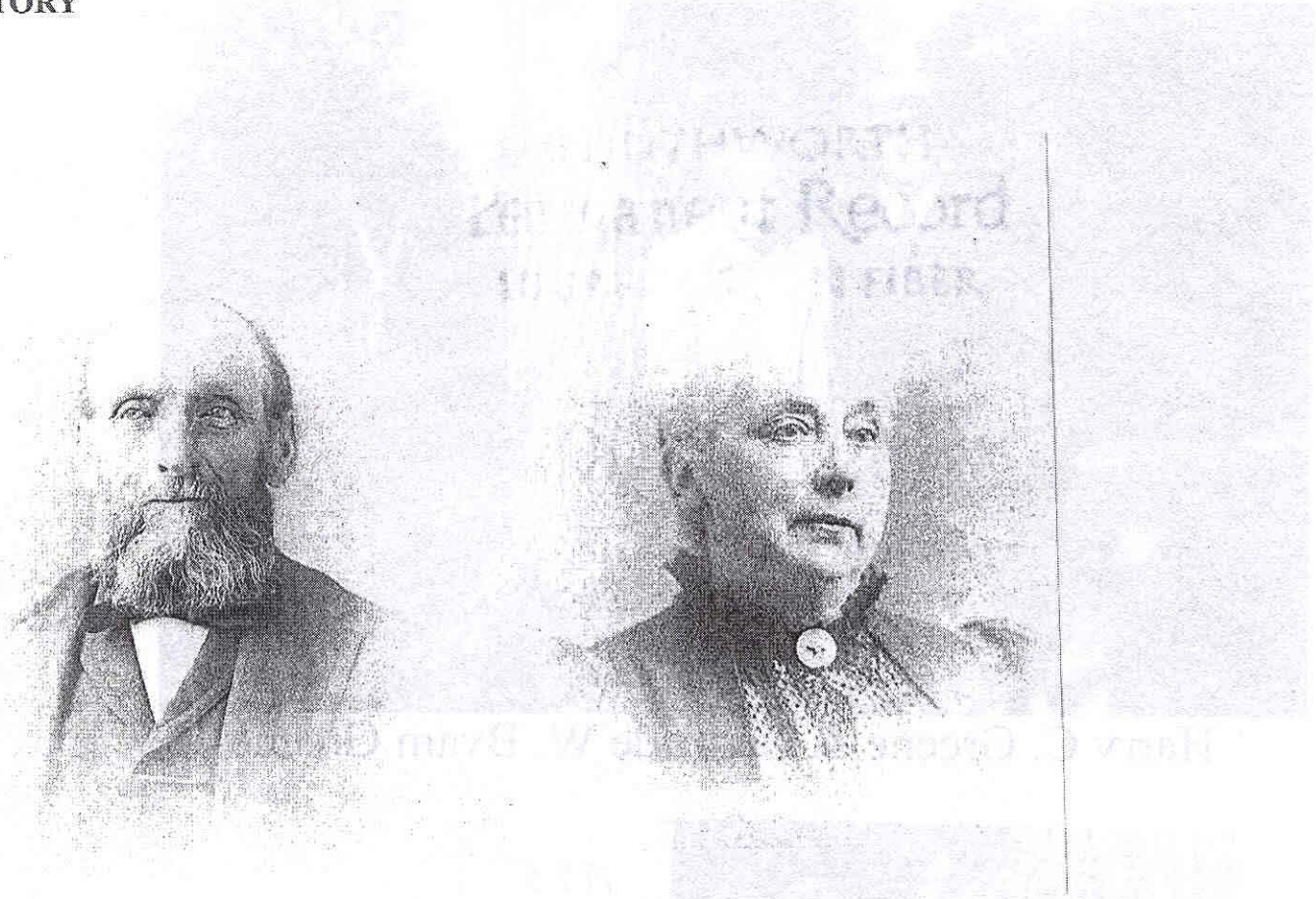
Town
CHELMSFORD

Property Address
40 BYAM RD.

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Area(s) Form No.

HISTORY



Mr. & Mrs. Charles W. Byam

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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CHELMSFORD

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Area(s) Form No.

	72
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Alterations:

probably saltbox or leanto style originally; roof line altered
unknown date: before 1973

ell between main house and barn added

Greene 1921 - 1944

The main, front door had a portico in front of it at this time. When it was put on the house or taken off is not known.

Alcorn 1944-1947

half of barn removed; perpendicular to main body of the barn

Murray 1957 - 1968

connecting ell:

had open porch on left side; changed to present form by Murray
1958

soft pine boards reversed because of wear

keeping room paneling refinished & extended; whitewash removed

new modern windows built into rear wall

back stairs reversed to give more useable space in the old kitchen

shelves added in dining room, probably at this time; glass doors put on by Historical Society

keeping room fireplace: mantel added

1961

enclosed breezeway & greenhouse added to left side. Breezeway soon became a potting shed

Historical Society: 1973 - 1990

second floor:

left front room - window on left side blocked in.

left rear room - drawers put in closet on rear wall

1981- interior alterations of some sort

cow barn at rear of main barn: converted to Stevens/Watt meeting room

greenhouse removed and taken to school in Haverhill, still there 2004; potting shed changed to document room/entrance

windows removed from document room in former potting shed

connecting ell

caretakers/renter: first floor

basement:

from Stevens/Watt room, walkway goes up a bit; goes to lavatory in cellar of main house

new garage door at rear of Stevens/Watt room, in memory of Muriel Parlee

keeping room:

fireplace & beehive oven repointed

board above fireplace mantel is original

after 1972:

new stairs leading from door on east side of "caretakers' apartment (Byam separator room)

former potting shed (now document room): windows removed

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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072

Alterations:



**Probably taken by the
Greenes, owners from
1909-1944.**

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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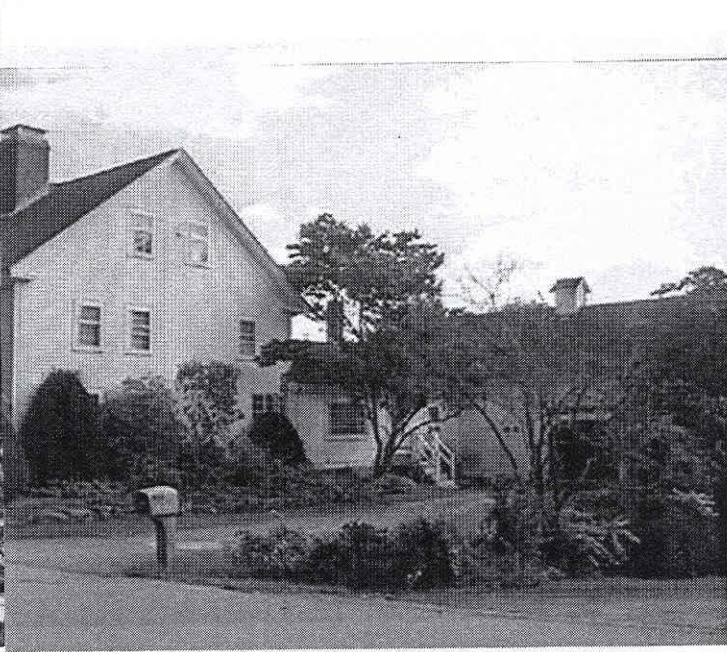
	072
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Alterations:

• DEC • 1972

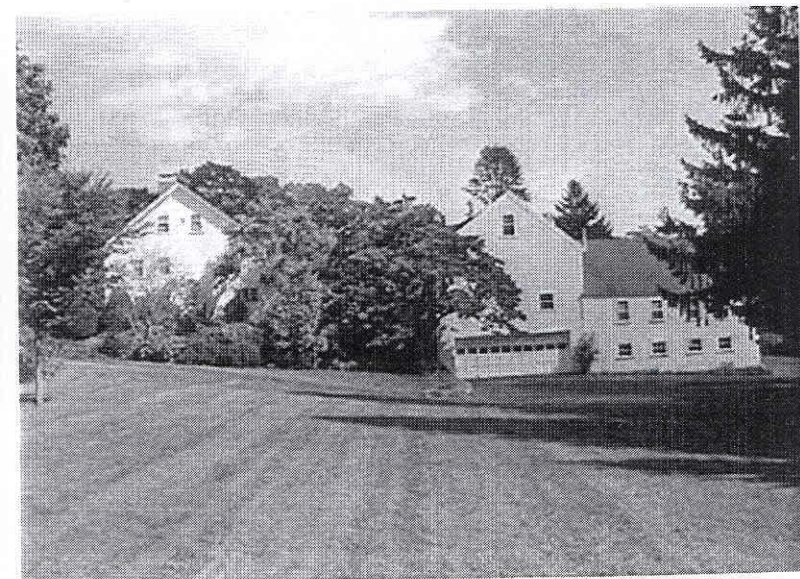


Dec. 1972



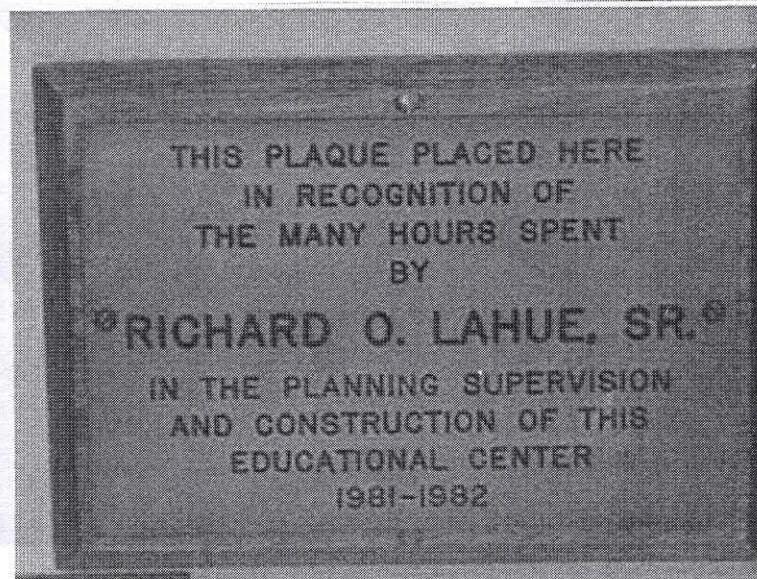
West Side

Sept. 2004



West Side

↑
*Education/
meeting center*



INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
CHELMSFORD

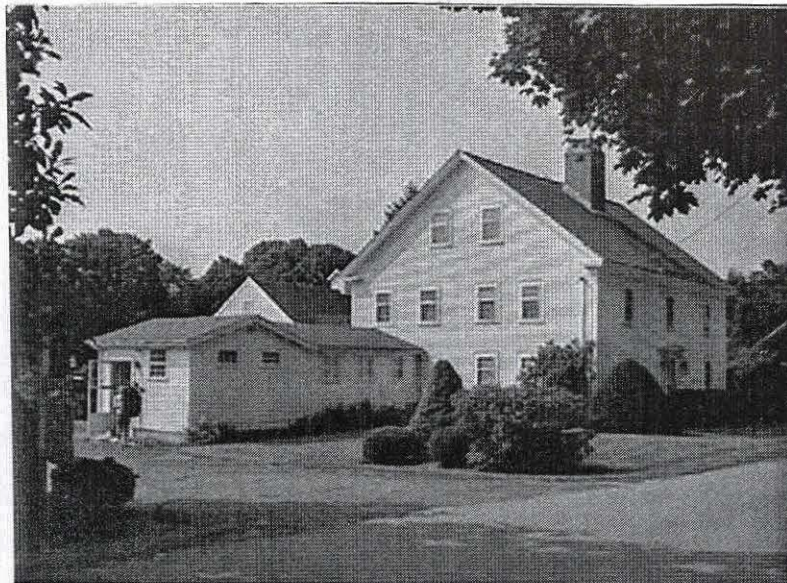
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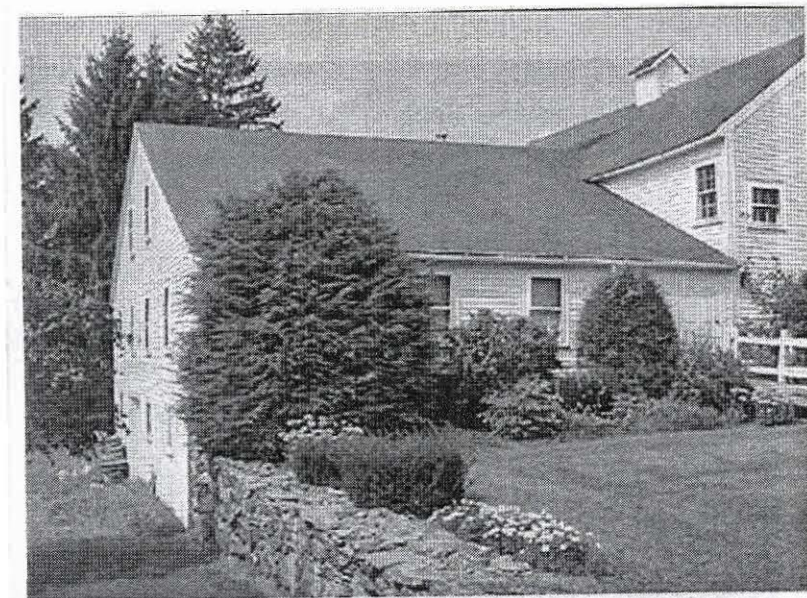
Area(s) Form No.

Alterations:

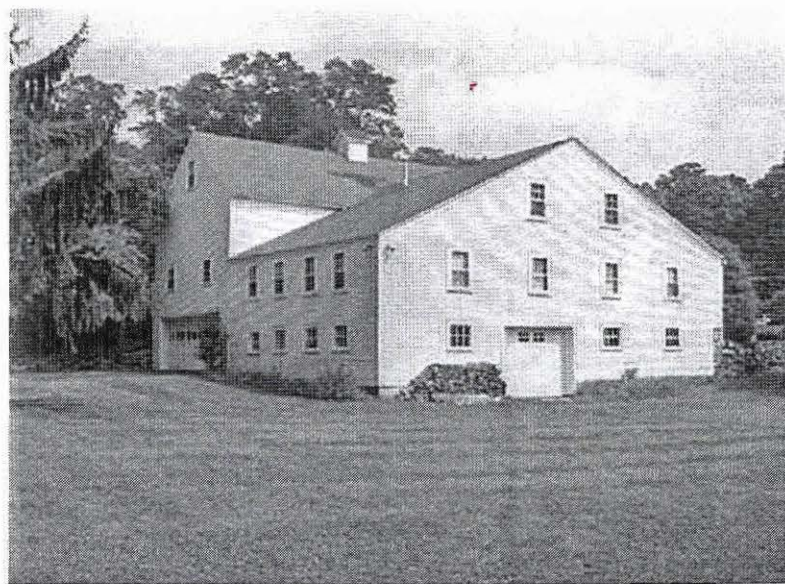
Fall 2004



East Side



East Side



South Side

Dick Lahue, Sept. 18, 2004

Murrays

- added greenhouse & potting shed

 - greenhouse was taken to a school in Havenhill & is still there in 2004

- put in shelves in dining room; Lahue put on glass doors so they could be used for the Chelmsford glass collection

Historical Society

- Stevens/Watt room: was formerly a cow barn

 - new garage door at rear of Stevens/Watt: money left for it by Ralph Parlee in memory of Muriel Parlee

- between barn & main house:

 - caretakers: first floor

 - basement:

 - up a bit from Stevens?Watt: walkway with tool display; goes to lavatory in cellar of main house

- windows removed from document room (potting shed)

- keeping room:

 - fireplace & beehive oven: repointed

 - mantel – he knows nothing of its history

 - board above mantel & where the gun is: original

 - molding at top: added by Murrays

40 Byam Road
Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds
Compiled by Jane B. Drury & Theresa Lemire

Bk. 1906, pg. 684	1969?	Albert C. & Sophie Murray to The Chelmsford Historical Society gift land & buildings: southerly side Byam Rd. same: 1957 Jeffords deed, Bk. 1372, pg. 411
Bk. 1372, pg. 411	June 6, 1957	H. Morton & Irene M. Jeffords to Albert C. & Sophie Murray
Bk. 1294, pg. 229	May 20, 1955	H. Morton & Irene Jeffords to William E. Morrissey Jr. & Ann L. Morrissey
Bk. 1112, pg. 520	Mar. 22, 1949	Edward E. Alcorn to H. Morton & Irene M. Jeffords 40 ft. strip
Bk. 1081, pg. 370	Nov. 20, 1947	Edward E. Alcorn to H. Morton & Irene M. Jeffords 2 lots: southerly side Byam Rd.
Bk. 1073, pg. 81	July 24, 1947	Edward E. Alcorn to Donald W. Montgomery 15,000 sq. ft.: southerly side Byam Rd.
Bk. 459, pg. 1004	Apr. 8, 1944	Joseph J. & Catherine V. Sweeney, Lowell, to Edward E. Alcorn 26 A., 26 rods, 88 ft. & buildings: Locust Rd. land & buildings: opposite side of Locust Rd.
Bk. 1003, pg. 366	Feb. 29, 1944	Harry C. Greene to Joseph J. & Catherine V. Sweeney same: Bk. 555, pg. 180
Probate # 243431	1942 Will	Estate of Gertrude B. Greene to Harry B. Greene
Bk. 652, pg. 436	Feb. 1, 1921	Ida E. Byam to Gertrude B. Greene ½ of that conveyed Bk. 555, pg. 180
Bk. 555, pg. 180	Aug. 11, 1909	Charles W. Byam to Gertrude B. Greene 1) 26 A., 26 rods, 88 ft.: south side Locust Rd, m east side Barton Hill Rd, north side Acton Rd. 2) 14½ A.: north side Locust Rd. 3) 9 A., 32 rods, ? ft. plan: A.G. Greene, Surveyor

Probate #28675	April 1, 1862 Will	Estate of Henry Byam (d. Mar. 9, 1862) to Charles W. Byam, son Mary Savilles: right to occupy a chamber, well, cellar
North: Bk. 11, pg. 452 South: Bk. 253, pg. 384	Apr. 13, 1824	Joel Adams, esquire, to Henry Byam, carpenter \$2825 1) 40 A. farm, dwelling house & other buildings 2) 20 A. Locust pasture north of house lot on Robbins Hill 3) 3 A. small lot: west side of road & opposite house lot 4) 14 A. wood lot
North: Bk. 11, pg. 450 South: Bk.	Apr. 12, 1824	William Laws 2 nd , Sharon, to Joel Adams 83 A. messuage: house, barns & all buildings lot in Carlisle same: 1. same father William Laws died seized of 2. 2 lots: Wm Laws Jr. owned before death of father not including: lot of father near Mr. Joshua Hunt's, Chelmsford
North: Bk. 11, pg. 352	Feb. 24, 1783	Jonas Marshall, physician, to William Laws, Billerica, yeoman 600£ 57 A. on Robins Hill & near by said hill 1) 13 A. 13 A., house, cooper's shop: north side of road 2) 30 A., house & barn: south side of road 3) 7 A. pasture land 4) 14 A. woodland
North: Bk. 5, pg. 388 South: Bk. 75, pg. 139	Dec. 5, 1772 Dec. 5, 1772	William & Martha Blanchard, Pepperell, to Jonas Marshall 13£, 3 shillings, 8 pence Rights of Dower of Mary Barrett : estate of Joseph Barrett
North: Bk. 5, pg. 387	Aug. 12, 1772	Job & Lydia Spaulding to Jonas Marshall, physician 13:6:08 rights to estate of Mr. Joseph Barret, especially part set of to his widow Mrs. Mary Barret for her thirds
North: Bk. 5, pg. 457	Sept. 29, 1767	Oliver Barrett, yeoman, to Jonas Marshall, physician 293:6:08 57 A. on Robbins Hill & near by said hill 1) 13 A., house, cooper's shop: north side of road 2) 30 A. house & barn: south side of road 3) 7 A. pasture land 4) ½ portion of 15A.: north side of road other ½ belongs to Robert Foster
North: Bk. 4, pg. 169	Apr. 29, 1754	Joseph Barrett, Hardwick, housewright, to Oliver Barrett, Concord, cooper all right to land & meadow: south side Robins Hill – widow Mary Barrett's thirds

North: Bk. 1, pg. 347

Mar. 10, 1712

Moses Barrett, Sr, husbandman, to
his son, Thomas Barrett
love and affection
all his lands & meadows, personal estate
reserve: improvement of $\frac{1}{2}$ of above during his natural
life, & wife have right to $\frac{1}{4}$ as long as she remains his
widow

North: Bk. 1, pg. 2
South: Bk. 3, pg. 111

April 10, 1663

James Parker, husbandman, to
Thomas Barret, Senior, & Thomas Barret, Junior, both of
Braintree, to
52 A.: house & lands, house lot with meadow, adjoining
upland
4 A. Tadmuck Great meadow

Lowell Courier-Citizen

June 14, 1911 - The death of Mary Jane Byam, wife of Charles W. Byam, occurred this morning at her home in South Chelmsford, after a long illness. Mrs. Byam was born at South Chelmsford in (torn)---7, the daughter of Daniel and Betsy (Parker) Proctor and had always made that town her home. Besides her husband, she is survived by two daughters, Miss Ida W. Byam, and Mrs. H.C. Greene both of (torn) Chelmsford.

June, 1912 - AN OCTOGENARIAN. Many of our readers of 25 or 30 years ago, were accustomed to turn with interest to the Chelmsford happenings to see if happily there should be a contribution signed "C.W.B."

His rare sketches of bird and animal life, and his observations of nature were so fresh and original that they gave one the feeling of a walk through the fields and wildwoods, with a fine westerly wind blowing, and the little creatures of the wilds actually skipping and flying all around.

In particular, the writer recalls a vivid description of a thunder storm written as "C.W.B." was sitting in the summit house on the top of Robin's hill.....

It will be of interest, no doubt, to many to know that this former correspondent, "Charles W. Byam," is still living in the old homestead at the foot of this hill (Robin's), where he was born 80 years ago today, June 19, 1832.

Last year, on his 79th birthday, he took a walk of 25 miles through ~~surrounding-towns~~ Westford, Littleton, Concord and home again none the worse in body for the experience, and much refreshed in mind and spirit.

This year, as a birthday celebration, he is to walk 35 miles through surrounding towns calling upon old time friends and enjoying woods and fields and quiet places with the keen appreciation of a born nature-lover.

For many years he was a valued and superior teacher of the "long winter terms" of the old district schools of that day.

He was also a member of the famous "Ols Chelmsford Band" under the inspiring leadership of grand old Dr. Levi Howard of beloved memory.

In early life he married Miss Mary Jane Proctor, daughter of Daniel Proctor, a sturdy old-time citizen of the town, and together they started out in life in the old farmhouse, which still stands nestled under the shade of giant elms which have scarce changed since his birth 80 years ago.

Just across the road there is the loveliest locust grove mingled with evergreens climbing up the hillside, and just now banks of primroses smiling at the wayfarer passing by.

In this lovely spot for more than 50 years did this couple improve and beautify their home together, until last June, when the home was saddened by the loss of the beloved wife and mother. And now, with his two daughters, our esteemed friend, hale and hearty, at the great age of 80 years, still looks out upon the fine old farm where he has spent all of his long and useful life--rare sample of a tiller of the soil.

Always especially fond of reading, and spending every leisure moment with books and maps, he has been at the same time a practical working farmer, steadily and quietly improving the fields of his beautiful farm.

As was usual in those days, the farm was cut up into small fields and lined by unsightly stone walls, and many a boulder reared its head in the way of scythe or plow. Gradually, year by year, with his own hands he has sunk those walls and boulders so far below the surface that neither plowman nor haymaker can believe they could ever have been there, and his fields stretch out broad and fair and green, unmarred by walls or rocks.

With a mind clear and alert, he is as ready to talk of the issues of the day as of reminiscences of the past, and an hour of conversation with him is a privilege indeed.

With wishes that for years to come our good old friend may gladden us with his presence and enjoy the same vigor as today, we will leave him to his 35 mile walk.

Sept. 2, 1915 - The funeral of Charles W. Byam was held at 2 o'clock this afternoon from his home in Locust street. The services which were private were conducted by Rev. L.L. Greene, pastor of the Unitarian church.....Burial was in the family lot in Forefathers' cemetery.....

Aug. 31, 1915 - Charles W. Byam, a lifelong resident of Chelmsford, died at his home today at the advanced age of 83 years. Up to September of last year Mr. Byam had enjoyed remarkable health, but since then had gradually failed, and for the past two months had been confined to his bed. He was born in the house in which he died today and his entire life had been passed on his farm located on the south side of Robin hill. A deep lover of nature and gifted with an ability as a writer, he gave enjoyment to many by frequent communications through these columns of his impressions and observations gained through long walks in the woods and fields, a pastime of which he was ever fond. The death of his wife occurred several years ago. He is survived by two daughters, Ida W. Byam and Mrs. H.C. Green, both of Chelmsford, and a sister, Mrs. Mary S. Byam of Lowell.

*One can see...
some...
trial... May 1982*

We welcome you to the Barrett-Byam Homestead and the new Watt-Stevens Educational Center of the Chelmsford Historical Society, Inc.

Perhaps you wonder why we call this house the Barrett-Byam Homestead. In 1663 Thomas Barrett of Woburn, purchased this property from James Parker, who bought the land on the south side of Chelmsford's highest hill from a peaceful Pennacook Indian named - what do you think his name was? Robin! the white man's name for him. So Robin's Hill was not named for a bird.

Thomas Barrett's family lived here for 100 years. We have in the Keeping Room a chest, marked T.B. - 1709 - look for it - made by a member of the family, and really used in that room. The chest was given to us by a direct descendent of the Barretts, Mrs. Lester Ball, who lives at the junction of Acton and Byam Roads.

Ask about the ox-shoe found on the grounds and probably used by a Barrett ox. In the 1690's, during the witchcraft scare, Martha Barrett Sparks, living here, was sent to Boston as a witch. (she most likely did not do just what was set up as the proper behavior for a woman) Because the pastor proved her otherwise, and the town did not want to pay her board in prison, she came home again.

At the time of the Revolution, Dr. Marshall who lived here, went to the war, taking with him a basket made by the Indians, for his medicines. You can see this in the Document Room. While he was gone his wife nursed a sick soldier who asked for help at her door. Later on, Mrs. Marshall and her children died of smallpox; the disease of the sick soldier. Today you can find the gravestones of this family in Hart Pond Cemetery.

In the 1800's the Byam family also lived in this house for 100 years. Thus, Barrett-Byam Homestead. Over the years this house has always been occupied by people who loved it; changed it; improved it, and even now a young couple live in the back part of the house.

This new and beautiful room is the realization of the dreams of two people; Mr. Watt, who wanted a meeting room for the Society, and Miss Stevens, who wished for moreroom for exhibit areas. Around this room you will see:

1. The Byam Bedroom - furniture of the 1800's. Pictures of Josiah and Thankful Byam.
2. Baby's Room - old crib; wicker equipment; clothes. and a metal gig.
3. Kitchen - find the washing machine (used in the brook) vacuum cleaner, cooking equipment, sewing machine, boiler for clothes, scrubbing boards, and many other things.
4. Parlor - His Master's Voice - note records, marble top table.

5. The Schoolroom - Blackboard is from the South Chelmsford School (where the old fire house was located) Desk: note sign on the side; Chair was used by R.W. Emerson, while teaching at Chelmsford Academy (where the Baptist Parsonage is now) This is how Academy Street was named. The stove (with lunch pail on it) belonged to Susan McFarlin.
6. Town Hall - ballot box, pictures, bench. The boxes on the floor were used as spit boxes for those who chewed tobacco.
7. Books from the Social Library - first library in town.
8. Chelmsford Ginger Ale Exhibit - now Canada Dry.
9. The tool exhibit is in the hallway.

Inside the Homestead:

- 1 Memorial Room: dedicated to Capt. Donald H. Fogg, a former Chelmsford High School teacher who lost his life in action in North Africa during World War II. This room remembers all Chelmsford residents who fought in all wars, from the Revolutionary War to Viet Nam. Find the long gun that went to the Battle of Bunker Hill. What is on the Civil War swords near the hilt? Capt. Fogg's uniform, the name of our P.O.W.
- 2 The Document Room: Indian artifacts; Document files, etc.
- last 2 Keeping Room: three main areas: wood, tin, fireplace.
- 3 Dining Room: Turner Glass Collection, what is different about the fireplace? (painted black in mourning for Lincoln) Look for the Civil War mini-ball and schrapnel; and the piece from the Concord Bridge.
- 4 Parlor: Victorian, contains Susan McFarlin Secretary; Byam table; horsehair sofa with embossed back; mural of Boston on wall; the Lord sisters funeral wreath of hair; dishes, how do the cups differ? use of box by fireplace? jar - made from shards after explosion of powder mill in East Chelmsford in 1901.
- 5 Children's Room: dolls; dollhouse; toys, trundle bed, etc.
- 6 Master Bedroom: commode and contents; rope springs on bed; what is in the trunk? where is the secret drawer? autograph book, a popular activity - signature of Henry Perham - what is in upper right corner? Look in closet - what do you find there?

Dr. Marshall/Byam House
40 Byam Road

Notes compiled by
J. Drury 12/10/72

1831 map
1856 map: H. Byam, owner.

Newsweekly (1955):

"Perhaps best known of all is the full 2-storied central chimney house which developed from the preceding. (Cape Cod: 1 or 1½ stories, large central chimney and three fireplaces, wide floor boards, ovens behind the fireplace up to about 1750 and beside it afterward.) Examples of these are easily found; the Josiah Richardson house on Graniteville Road, the Dr. Jonas Marshall house at 40 Byam Road, South section, and the old Hodgman house at 75 Concord Rd., Center."

Waters, pg. 207:

"Jan. 3, 1775, Capt. Oliver Barron, Dr. Jonas Marshall, and Mr. Benjamin Walker were chosen a Committee of Inspection respecting purchasing or selling any goods, wares or merchandise imported from Great Britain or Ireland."

Waters, pg. 209:

"March 4, 1776,Doctor Jonas Marshall,were chosen a Committee of Correspondence, Inspection and Safety."

Waters, pg. 280:

"The soldiers who fought in the Revolution had to foot it home if they survived the British bullets and the diseases which killed many of them. They were a miserable lot. They dragged themselves home; Dr. Marshall, who lived in the present residence of Mr. C.W.Byam, came home one day in December, 1776, and said he did not like the smell in the house, and asked if any soldiers had been there. The answer was that one had stopped there. The doctor's fears were realized. His wife and two children died of the small-pox; the soldier also died of the same disease. Mrs. Marshall was a lovely woman, and the doctor was broken-hearted."

Waters, pg. 398:

"The C.W. Byam house, south of Robin's Hill, once occupied by Dr. Jonas Marshall, is about 180 years old (ca 1737). On the opposite side of the road is the 'Billy Byam place,' of about the same age."

Waters, pg. 582:

"Feb. 24, 1776. To Benjamin Spaulding for time spent about fencing up the road to prevent people's going to Dr. Marshall's when the small pox was there.....LO:1:6:0."

Waters, pg. 802:

"Dr. Jonas Marshall commenced practice in 1765. His residence was that of the late Mr. C.W. Byam, on the south slope of Robin's Hill. A magnificent elm, standing beside this house, was brought by the doctor on horseback from his later home in Fitchburg. He was long remembered as an active man and successful practitioner.

In 1776 his wife and two daughters died of small pox, which was communicated by a soldier returning from the war, to whom they had afforded hospitality. Their bodies were first interred in the South
the
Chelmsford Cemetery. He removed to Fitchburg in 1783."

Chelmsford Cemetery. He removed to Fitchburg in 1783."

Waters, pg. 573:

"There was in Chelmsford one notable instance of accusation of witchcraft. Probably it may be safe to assume that the person referred to by Cotton Mather (see Waters, pg. 69), was Martha Sparks. How much Cotton Mather really knew of the case, it is impossible to say.

Martha was born at Braintree, Sept. 16, 1656, the daughter of Thomas Barrett, son of Thomas. Her father moved to Chelmsford, sometime prior to March, 1660. The two Thomases bought a house and fifty-two acres of land on the south side of Robin's Hill, April 10, 1663. These deaths are recorded: Thomas Barrett, Sr., Oct. 6, 1668. Margreath, wife of Thomas Barrett, July 8, 1681. Thomas Barrett, Dec. 8, 1702. Francis, wife of Thomas Barit, May 27, 1694. These were her grand-parents and parents. On July 10, 1676, Martha was married to Henry Sparks of Exeter, N.H. In February of that year he is credited to Chelmsford in the return of a Middlesex Regiment of Militia. He was granted land in Chelmsford. The births of their two children, Abiell, a daughter, in 1686, and Deliverance a son, March 8, 1690, are recorded in Chelmsford, as is the death of another son, not named in the record, July 6, 1685.

Henry Sparks died July 16, 1694, and Martha died Feb. 28, 1697. She was confined in Boston Gaol, October 28, 1691, on suspicion of witchcraft. November 1, 1692, her father petitioned the Governor and Council for her release, and on December 6 gave a recognizance for her appearance in Court, and two days afterward she was set free, no doubt owing to the influential interposition of the Rev. Mr. Clarke, then minister of Chelmsford; that is, assuming this to be the case mentioned by Mather. The case was probably never called in Court. At that time, after the dissolution of the first charter, the Court of Assistants was superseded by the Superior Court of Judicature, and there is no record of such a case being tried in either of these courts. The Records of the Middlesex County Court for the period when this case might have been called in that Court were burned some time since in a fire in Concord, where they were kept, but no papers relating to the case are to be found in the Court files of 1692 and 1693."

Also included on pages 574 and 575 are the Petition of Thomas Barrett and Thomas Barrett's Recognizance for Martha Spark's appearance at Middlesex Court.

"Item from the Account of John Arnold, the Gaol Keeper at Boston: To keeping Martha Sparks from the 28th of October 1691 to the 8th of December 1692 - 58 weeks.....at 2/6 pr w.....L7:5:1."

Waters, pg. 1,

"The first recorded movement looking to the settlement of Chelmsford was made in 1652 by some citizens of Woburn and Concord." Signatures included James Parker.

Waters, pg. 8:

"Several of the others who came here did not remain to become permanent residents of the town. James Parker went to Groton soon after 1661, where he became the important man of that town. Joseph Parker, brother of James, went to Groton about the same time, and afterwards to Dunstable. Jacob Parker, another of the five Parker brothers, was the first town clerk, but went to Malden after 1667."

Waters, pg. 28:

"At this time no church had been organized at Groton, but in 1665 the families of James Parker, Joseph Parker, James Fiske, and John Nutting were dismissed to the church at Groton.

James Parker became the leading man of that town, where he lived to a good old age. Joseph, his brother, was a large landowner and the ancestor of the most numerous branches of the Parker families in Groton and its vicinity. John Nutting was killed by Indians when Groton was attacked and destroyed, March 13, 1676, and James Parker and family were obliged to seek an asylum among his old neighbors in Chelmsford, where he remained for several years."

Waters, pg. 532:

"James Parker had a large grant of ~~an~~ land near the Indian line. He was one of five brothers who came from Woburn to Chelmsford. He was admitted as an inhabitant Feb. 1, 1656. He early removed to Groton, where he became the most influential inhabitant of that town."



Future Chelmsford Museum

This 300-year-old Colonial home, known as the Old Byam House, has been presented as a gift to the Chelmsford Historical Society by the owners, Mr.

and Mrs. Albert C. Murray. It will be converted into a museum, housing the society's artifacts, and will also be used for meetings.

"Witch" Once Lived in House Donated to Chelmsford Society

By Carlton L. Smith

CHELMSFORD—Can you imagine the amount of generosity a family must possess to give away their valuable home, which is over 300 years old, for the use of a town organization?

Well, Mr. and Mrs. Albert C. Murray of 40 Byam Road in Chelmsford, has given their Colonial house, built in the 1660's, to the Chelmsford Historical society, which plans to convert it into a museum. It is known locally as the Old Byam House.

The Murray's dwelling was offered last January in a letter to the society which accepted the gift during its March meeting. The letter stated that it was "to be maintained as a house for historical interest and for the incidental purposes of your association."

MR. AND MRS. MURRAY have spent over \$60,000 restoring the mansion, which is located on a three-acre site, said Hazel Stevens, president of the historical society. She commented, "The Murrays have lavished both love and money in landscaping the grounds and modernizing the old home without in any way diminishing its Colonial charm."

Mrs. Murray, playing the role of sleuth, has made digging over the entire property during the past years and found a spoon with initials E. B., half an ox shoe, and an old boot. She has placed them in one of the two Dutch ovens in the house.

Plans call for the Murrays, who are now vacationing in Florida, to move out of their home in about a year and settle in Dover, N.H. They restore old homes and have collected thousands of dollars worth of glass, including bottles and dishes. Mr. Murray recently sold his printing company in Forge Village, where he also owns another house, and will retire within three years.

THE ORIGINAL OWNER of the mansion was James Parker, who signed the petition to make Chelmsford a town in 1655. He sold it to Thomas Barrett of Needham, whose granddaughter, Martha Barrett Sparks, was accused of being a witch in 1692 and sent to Boston jail for one year. She even had to pay for her own board while incarcerated.

Jonas Marshall bought the place from Moses Barrett in 1773. While Barrett was away fighting in the Revolutionary War, a sick soldier stopped by and asked his wife for food and lodging. Mrs. Barrett and her two children died of smallpox shortly afterwards. Their graves can be seen to this day in the South Chelmsford cemetery.

From 1916 to 1944 Charles and Ida Byam resided at the beautiful home. Byam Road was named for their ancestors and is one of the oldest streets in Chelmsford. A turkey farmer, Edward E. Alcorn, then lived there for three years before School Superintendent H. Morton Jeffords moved in.

THE MANSION WAS originally a salt box, according to the shape of the boards around the chimney, and later changed over into a two-story Colonial with a large attic. There is a large central chimney and five fireplaces. It has its own artesian well, which is capable of pumping 130 gallons of water per minute, and has a barn and garage attached.

The front hall is papered with what is known as a "Chelmsford" pattern, and Miss Stevens said interior designers are looking up the history of this design. The family fireplace has the original mantel and Dutch oven, and the wall panelling, once covered with whitewash, was taken off, sanded, replaced and shellacked.

There is also a greenhouse at the side of the 10-room house, and the stone walls were all rebuilt.

MISS STEVENS, 12th president of the Historical Society, which was founded in 1930 and incorporated in 1963, stated the society will use the old home for a museum. The society recently had to vacate from the Adams Library, where the second floor was used as its museum.

The society's large collection of books, furniture, documents, paintings and glassware, which are now stored, will be placed in the Murray's home when it is vacated.

Miss Stevens said a curator has been hired to manage the museum, which will be open to schools for teaching students history. She pointed out that the barn may be converted into a meetinghouse for the society and that the house will be used for committee sessions, social affairs and exhibitions.

Indications of Age

In 1653, James Parker of Woburn was one of 29 signers of the petition for land that became Chelmsford. In 1655, when 20 or more families were living here, Chelmsford, including what became Lowell, was incorporated. The next year, 1656, land was granted to Samuel Adams for corn and saw mills. Being a very large landowner, Parker would probably have built himself a good-sized house after the sawmill was established. He became a selectman in 1658. In 1660 he was granted much more land for his work in setting boundaries when Indians and the town swapped lands. He sold 3000 acres to what is now Tyngsboro. Dunstable was named for the English town from which his wife came.

Because of church differences, he persuaded Rev. Fiske to dismiss him to the church at Groton. On April 10, 1663, he conveyed to Thomas Barritt and to his son Thomas of Braintree a house and 52 acres of land on the south side of Robin's Hill, bounded by his own and Joseph Parker's lands. Thomas Sr. had 3 and perhaps 5 children of marriageable age when he moved to Chelmsford. Thomas Jr. had 8 & 9 year old girls (and, after moving here, 4 more children). For the 9 or 11 in the two families, the Barretts needed a good-sized house.

The Murray house has 5 fireplaces and 2 Dutch ovens in a central chimney. Its rooms, if the house were a saltbox type, as indicated by mortar marks on the chimney, could have accommodated 11 Barretts. There was a burning room at one end of the south kitchen and a loft over the two front bedrooms. The downstairs room without a Dutch oven could have been a bedroom.

There is a hiding place in the chimney front hall closet which is said to have been used during Indian raids in the 1670's and 80's. Windows of 6 panes over 9, are rather small. At one time there were inside shutters. Front, back, and attic stairs are narrow and crooked. There is no cellar under the library. The house and barn appear in a sketch of Robin's Hill which shows a lone pine at the top and, below it, planting ground, which was cleared in 1673. In the same year a road was laid out which accommodated Thomas Barrett Jr. who had become sole owner after his father's death in 1688.

Martha Barrett, daughter of Thomas, Jr. was kept for over a year in Boston Goal on suspicion of witchcraft and released in December 1692. Mrs Mosee Barrett conducted a dame school in 1699.

Dr. Jonas Marshall, a surgeon in the Revolution, lived there from 1773-1783. His wife and 2 children died there of smallpox, caught from a soldier returning home in December 1776.

2111

The Byams lived there for about 100 years until 1944 when for the first time in this country a regularly organized school for the deaf was established in which only the pure oral method was taught. Mary Byam became assistant to Harriet B. Rogers. When, due to a \$50,000 gift from John Clark, the school moved to Northampton, Mary went with it. Mabel Hubbard, later Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell was one of the pupils.

After 4 short term owners, the Albert C. Murrays bought the house and its 3 acres in 1957. In November, 1969, they gave it to the Chelmsford Historical Society.

The house has been redesigned and renovated extensively since its beginning, most of the renovations being done by the Murrays. The roof line has been altered to gain more rooms on the second floor. The soft pine boards were reversed because of wear, the keeping room paneling has been refinished and extended, and the back stairs were reversed to give more usable space in the old kitchen.

Information from Hazel Stevens April 1973

Written by Janet Lombard, June 1973

Lowell Courier-Citizen

June 14, 1911 - The death of Mary Jane Byam, wife of Charles W. Byam, occurred this morning at her home in South Chelmsford, after a long illness. Mrs. Byam was born at South Chelmsford in (torn)---7, the daughter of Daniel and Betsy (Parker) Proctor and had always made that town her home. Besides her husband, she is survived by two daughters, Miss Ida W. Byam, and Mrs. H.C. Greene both of (torn) Chelmsford.

June, 1912 - AN OCTOGENARIAN. Many of our readers of 25 or 30 years ago, were accustomed to turn with interest to the Chelmsford happenings to see if happily there should be a contribution signed "C.W.B."

His rare sketches of bird and animal life, and his observations of nature were so fresh and original that they gave one the feeling of a walk through the fields and wildwoods, with a fine westerly wind blowing, and the little creatures of the wilds actually skipping and flying all around.

In particular, the writer recalls a vivid description of a thunder storm written as "C.W.B." was sitting in the summit house on the top of Robin's hill.....

It will be of interest, no doubt, to many to know that this former correspondent, "Charles W. Byam," is still living in the old homestead at the foot of this hill (Robin's), where he was born 80 years ago today, June 19, 1832.

Last year, on his 79th birthday, he took a walk of 25 miles through ~~surrounding-towns~~ Westford, Littleton, Concord and home again none the worse in body for the experience, and much refreshed in mind and spirit.

This year, as a birthday celebration, he is to walk 35 miles through surrounding towns calling upon old time friends and enjoying woods and fields and quiet places with the keen appreciation of a born nature-lover.

For many years he was a valued and superior teacher of the "long winter terms" of the old district schools of that day.

He was also a member of the famous "Ols Chelmsford Band" under the inspiring leadership of grand old Dr. Levi Howard of beloved memory.

In early life he married Miss Mary Jane Proctor, daughter of Daniel Proctor, a sturdy old-time citizen of the town, and together they started out in life in the old farmhouse, which still stands nestled under the shade of giant elms which have scarce changed since his birth 80 years ago.

Just across the road there is the loviest locust grove mingled with evergreens climbing up the hillside, and just now banks of primroses smiling at the wayfarer passing by.

In this lovely spot for more than 50 years did this couple improve and beautify their home together, until last June, when the home was saddened by the loss of the beloved wife and mother. And now, with his two daughters, our esteemed friend, hale and hearty, at the great age of 80 years, still looks out upon the fine old farm where he has spent all of his long and useful life-rare sample of a tiller of the soil.

Always especially fond of reading, and spending every leisure moment with books and maps, he has been at the same time a practical working farmer, steadily and quietly improving the fields of his beautiful farm.

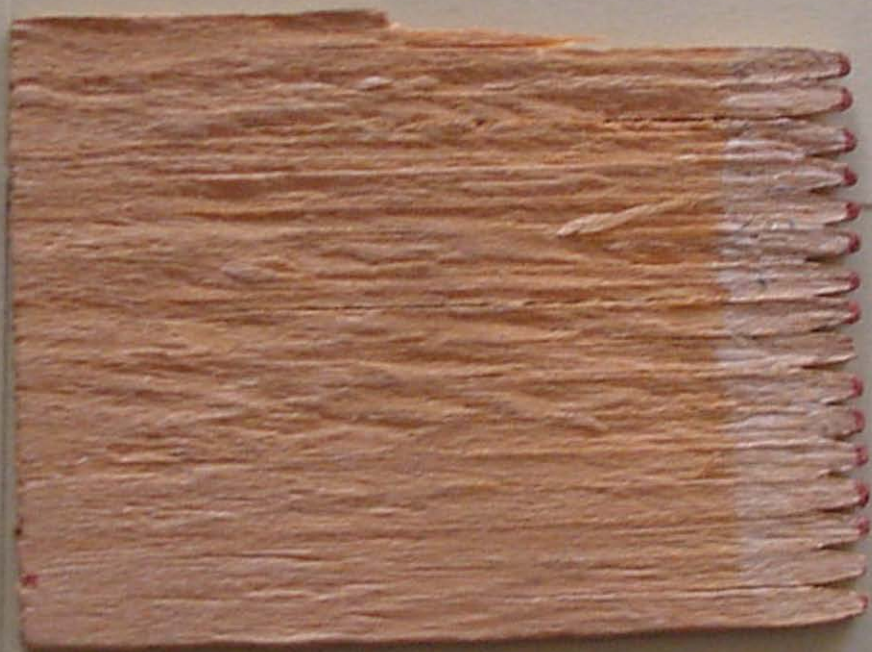
As was usual in those days, the farm was cut up into small fields and lined by unsightly stone walls, and many a boulder reared its head in the way of scythe or plow. Gradually, year by year, with his own hands he has sunk those walls and boulders so far below the surface that neither plowman nor haymaker can believe they could ever have been there, and his fields stretch out broad and fair and green, unmarred by walls or rocks.

With a mind clear and alert, he is as ready to talk of the issues of the day as of reminiscences of the past, and an hour of conversation with him is a privilege indeed.

With wishes that for years to come our good old friend may gladden us with his presence and enjoy the same vigor as today, we will leave him to his 35 mile walk.

Sept. 2, 1915 - The funeral of Charles W. Byam was held at 2 o'clock this afternoon from his home in Locust street. The services which were private were conducted by Rev. L.L. Greene, pastor of the Unitarian church.....Burial was in the family lot in Forefathers' cemetery.....

Aug. 31, 1915 - Charles W. Byam, a lifelong resident of Chelmsford, died at his home today at the advanced age of 83 years. Up to September of last year Mr. Byam had enjoyed remarkable health, but since then had gradually failed, and for the past two months had been confined to his bed. He was born in the house in which he died today and his entire life had been passed on his farm located on the south side of Robin hill. A deep lover of nature and gifted with an ability as a writer, he gave enjoyment to many by frequent communications through these columns of his impressions and observations gained through long walks in the woods and fields, a pastime of which he was ever fond. The death of his wife occurred several years ago. He is survived by two daughters, Ida W. Byam and Mrs. H.C. Green, both of Chelmsford, and a sister, Mrs. Mary S. Byam of Lowell.



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Issued July 4th 1857

Boston Match Company.



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*New
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St

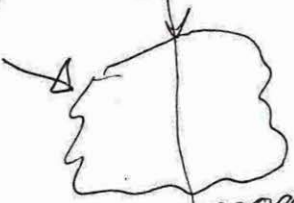
nor Parkhurst

As I remember this hole
was about 4-5' deep
old cellar hole - Now
Filled with leaves
& grass clippings

North

Just over wall
in line with
front door

This hole is filled
with stones: I dug
around a little and
found Broken pottery,
glass - As I remember
it it could have been
about 10' or so
square



31 Byam
Rd
Gus Fellgren

7 sep 97
Gus Fellgren

Byam House

stone wall used to
continue about 20'
I removed it in
about 1950

Not to Scale







RECORDS OFFICE
MARKET ST.
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9/6/2004 F. Merriam



BARRETT-BYAM
HOMESTEAD
CHELMSFORD
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



9/6/2004 F. Merriam





5/5/2002 F. Merriam

