

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

17/84/6	Nashua South, NH		
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Town/City: Chelmsford

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

Photograph



South Façade. View looking northwest.

Address: 227 Groton Road

Historic Name: Elgin and Leslie Bill House

Uses: Present: Single-family dwelling

Original: Single-family dwelling

Date of Construction: circa 1920

Source: Census; deed, city directory

Style/Form: No style

Architect/Builder: Not known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Cut granite

Wall/Trim: Vinyl siding / Vinyl trim

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: none

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Vinyl windows and metal doors (late 20th C); Second story added; bay window added; porches enclosed.

Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.19

Setting: Located on a suburban street at edge of highway right-of-way. Small houses to the east and west date from the early 20th century to mid-20th century and are located close to the roadway.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies, Historic Preservation Consultant

Date: April 9, 2021

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

227 GROTON RD

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

The house at 227 Groton Road is located on a small level lot very close to the street. A short gravel drive leads to the east elevation of the house. The lot is grassy with scattered trees. The 2-story frame dwelling rests on a cut granite foundation with grapevine pointing. The small (941 square feet) house originally consisted of a one-story, ell-shaped building with a porch at the southeast corner and a shed-roof porch at the west elevation. The building was expanded over time with the enclosure of the porches, the addition of a small attached shed at the east elevation, and the addition of a gambrel-front second story over the main block. Two shallow poured concrete steps lead from a concrete walkway to the main entrance inside the southeast enclosed porch. A second entrance is located in the south elevation of the west porch. The second entrance contains a paneled wood door and metal storm door. A small, vertical board door is located in the east elevation of the shed.

Windows throughout the building are 1/1 vinyl-frame replacements with screw-on vinyl shutters, excepting: a 2/2 wood sash window at the rear first floor of the main block; two 2/2 wood sash windows in the west elevation of the west porch; a 4-light wood-frame hopper window in the east basement elevation; and, a 4-light wood-frame fixed window in the north elevation of the attached shed.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

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

In 1919, Elgin J. Bill (1872-1949)¹ and his wife, Leslie Farrington Bill (1885-1966),² purchased 24 acres of land, including an unspecified number or type of buildings, on Groton Road.³ Born in Vermont, Elgin Bill served in the Spanish American War as a member of the hospital corps. Leslie Farrington Bill was born in Nova Scotia and immigrated at the age of 11. At the time they purchased the property in Chelmsford, Elgin Bill was working as an assembler in a machine shop. He also worked as a carpenter⁴ and salesman.⁵ The couple wed in Lowell in 1905 and had four children. By the time of the 1930 census, Elgin was the proprietor of an automobile service and filling station.

In 1945, George and Martha Potter purchased the house at 227 Groton Road and 0.19 acre of land from Elgin and Leslie Bill.⁶ George Potter worked as a mechanic and did autobody repair at Kemp's Auto Body Shop.⁷

In 1952, Ashley W. and Mary J. Craig purchased the property.⁸ Ashley Wilmur Craig (1926-2005)⁹ served in the U.S. Navy during World War II.¹⁰ In 1953, Ashley Craig was working as a hospital aide in Bedford,¹¹ but by 1957, he had gotten a job as an

¹ Findagrave.com. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/215818896/elgin-j.-bill>. Accessed April 9, 2021.

² Findagrave.com. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/141212853/leslie-bill>. Accessed April 9, 2021.

³ Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 599, page 541. The property included what is now 225 Groton Road. It is unclear whether Elgin and Leslie Bill originally made 225 or 227 Groton Road their residence.

⁴ City Directory. 1925-1926. Ancestry.com. Accessed April 11, 2021.

⁵ U.S. Mason Membership Cards. Ancestry.com. Accessed April 9, 2021.

⁶ Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 1033, p. 370.

⁷ Chelmsford City Directory. 1949, 1951. Ancestry.com. Accessed April 9, 2021.

⁸ Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 1186, p. 397

⁹ Findagrave.com. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/18164712/ashley-wilmur-craig>. Accessed March 31, 2021.

¹⁰ U.S. World War II Navy Muster Rolls, 1938-1949. Ancestry.com. Accessed March 31, 2021.

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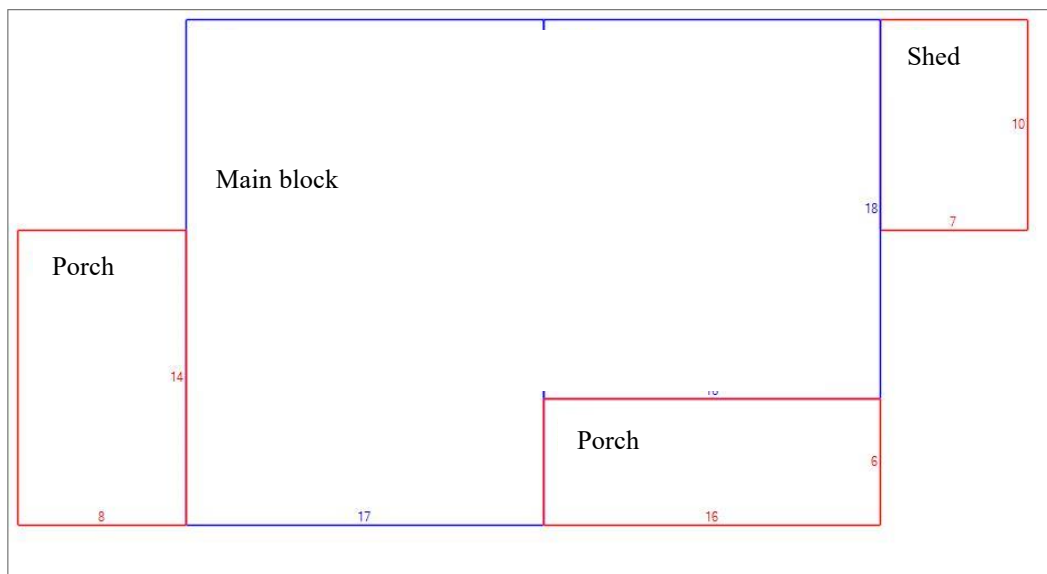
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electrician's helper at Southwell Combing Company woolen mill in Chelmsford. He worked as an electrician for the remainder of his career. Mary Craig worked as a waitress.¹² The couple lived here until their deaths in 2005 and 2006, respectively.¹³

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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



¹¹ Chelmsford City Directory. Ancestry.com. Accessed March 31, 2021.

¹² Chelmsford Registrars of Voters. *List of Men and Women*. 1975, 1978, 1980. Chelmsford Public Library.

¹³ Findagrave.com. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/18164713/mary-jane-craig>. Accessed April 11, 2021.

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Enclosed porch at southeast corner, shed at right. View looking northwest.



View looking west. Attached shed in foreground.

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Rear elevation. View looking southeast.



Secondary entrance in west enclosed porch. View looking north.

