

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

|         |              |  |         |
|---------|--------------|--|---------|
| 13/26/8 | Nashua South |  | CLM.393 |
|---------|--------------|--|---------|

**Town/City:** Chelmsford

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 9 Princeton Street

**Historic Name:** Benjamin Adams House

**Uses:** Present: automotive garage

Original: single-family dwelling

**Date of Construction:** between 1831 and 1856

**Source:** 1831 and 1856 maps of Chelmsford

**Style/Form:** Federal

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: vinyl siding/vinyl

Roof: asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** none

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

Ca. 2000 replacement siding and windows

Ca. 1970 garage bay addition

Ca. 1940 change of use

**Condition:** Fair

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

**Acreage:** .71 A

**Setting:** The building is located approximately 40' southwest of Princeton St at its intersection with Shaw St. The front and southeast parts of the lot are paved parking areas. The rear of the lot is grassy with additional parking space. The surrounding area includes 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> c. residential and commercial developments.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Jennifer Burden, Gray & Pape, Inc.

**Organization:** Chelmsford Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): June 2016

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

9 PRINCETON STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

CLM.393

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.*

This building is located on the west corner of Princeton and Shaw streets. It is an irregular-shaped, former single-family dwelling that currently houses an automotive repair shop and auto parts store. Besides the house portion, the building also contains a rear ell of the house, a former barn, a two-story connector that links the ell to the barn, and a one-bay garage addition between the barn and house.

The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and the exterior walls are covered with vinyl siding with vinyl trim. Although vinyl siding covers the foundation, the building likely rests atop a stone foundation. Built of wood frame construction the building stands two stories in height. Fenestration throughout the building consists of a mixture of six-over-six replacement sash windows, plate glass windows, and multi-light industrial windows. Much the building is covered with a hipped roof, while the barn portion, which houses the auto parts store, features a gabled roof. The northernmost portion of the building possibly constitutes the oldest or original segment of the building that served as the residence. This portion of the building includes the primary (northeast) façade, which faces Princeton Street. The second story of the primary facade features a series of five replacement windows, while the first story includes a pair of garage doors, a pedestrian entrance, and a series of three, plate glass windows. The two oversized garage bays were added to the building ca. 1970 according to available aerial maps. This front portion of the building is connected to the auto parts store at the rear or southern end the connector. The connector and barn appear on the 1907 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map as a garage or carriage house.

This building is a heavily altered example of a mid-nineteenth century residence that has been converted into commercial use. The building retains historic integrity of location and setting.

## 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.*

The building does not appear on the 1831 map of Chelmsford, but is present on the 1856 map of North Chelmsford; therefore, the building was constructed between these dates. Benjamin Adams (1801-1876) is shown as the owner of the property on the 1856 and 1875 maps. Benjamin and his brother Thomas Jefferson Adams (1805-1881) owned several properties in North Chelmsford during the nineteenth century, including the triangular land that is now the common area between Princeton and Middlesex streets. This property appears to have been Benjamin Adams's main residence according to the 1875 map of North Chelmsford. Adams was a Major General in the Massachusetts militia in the 1840s and 1850s. The 1865 Massachusetts State Census lists Adams living in Chelmsford with wife Lucilla (born ca. 1819), son Benjamin Franklin (born ca. 1839), daughter Isabel (born ca. 1845), and a boarded or servant Mary Rogers (born ca. 1840 in Ireland). At this date Adams was listed as a farmer. The 1860 agricultural census lists Adams with 150 acres of improved land and 50 acres of unimproved land valued at \$10,000, which was among the highest in the area. The 1870 census lists Adams as a retired merchant with his real estate valued at \$15,000 and personal estate valued at \$33,500; again these values were among the highest in this area. After Adams's death in 1876, the property passed to Elisha H. Shaw.

Elisha Shaw (1847-1898) was born in Springfield, MA and while there was the Town Officer and served in both branches of the legislature before being chosen as a member of the Governor's Council. The 1880 census lists Shaw (1847-1898) living in Chelmsford with his second wife Harriott (1847-1912), and young children Sarah, Elisha, Jr., and Florence. At this date Shaw was a grocer. The 1896 city directory lists Shaw as the proprietor of E. Shaw & Son general store. The store was located in the basement of the Second Congregational Church on Middlesex Street, which burned in 1893. Shaw donated land to the southeast of this property for the church to erect a new building (CLM.394) in 1894. An advertisement for the E. Shaw & Son

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

CHELMSFORD

9 PRINCETON STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

CLM.393

general store in North Chelmsford specifies that they sold "dry goods, boots, shoes and rubbers, hardware and farm tools, flour, hay, grain and coal, paint, oils, varnishes and painters' supplies, hats, caps and furnishing goods, patent medicines." Shaw also sold insurance as an agent for the Holyoke, Traders and Mechanics and Dorchester, Home Guarantee Mutual companies. The *Springfield Republican* notes in his obituary that a special train was sent from Boston for his funeral service in North Chelmsford; he is buried in Riverside Cemetery.

By 1907 the building was still used as a residence, but the larger parcel was already subdivided as the Congregational Church building and a house were added to the lot by this date. In the mid-twentieth century the house was converted into commercial space. By 1950 the house and its outbuildings were being used for automotive repair, a use that continues currently. The 1957 city directory lists Fred's Gulf Service Station at 1 Princeton Street. Fred Fantozzi (1918-2002) owned the business and resided on Beech Street in North Chelmsford.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Beers, F.W. *County Atlas of Middlesex, Massachusetts*. J.B. Beers & Co., New York. 1875.

Chelmsford Public Library. Royal Shawcross Photographs Collection. Available at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/chelmsfordpubliclibrary/sets/7215760000139715/>.

Genealogical research, including U.S. and Massachusetts census records; birth, marriage, and death records; and city directory records from ancestry.com.

Geo. H. Walker & Co. *Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts*. Geo. H. Walker & Co., Boston, MA. 1889.

Hales, John G. *Plan of the Town of Chelmsford in the County of Middlesex*. Surveyed in 1831 by John G. Hales.

Merriam, Fred. *Images of America: North and West Chelmsford*. Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, SC. 2016.

Middlesex North Registry of Deeds. [www.lowelldeeds.com](http://www.lowelldeeds.com).

Perham, Henry S. *A Sketch of the History of Chelmsford, Massachusetts*. Philadelphia, PA, J.W. Lewis. 1890.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Lowell, MA. 1907 and 1950.

*Springfield Republican*. Elisha H. Shaw Obituary. 26 November 1898.

Walling, Henry F. *Map of Middlesex County, Massachusetts*. Smith & Bumstead, Boston, MA. 1856.

Waters, Dr. Wilson. *The History of Chelmsford, Massachusetts*. Lowell, Mass., 1917.

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

CHELMSFORD

9 PRINCETON STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

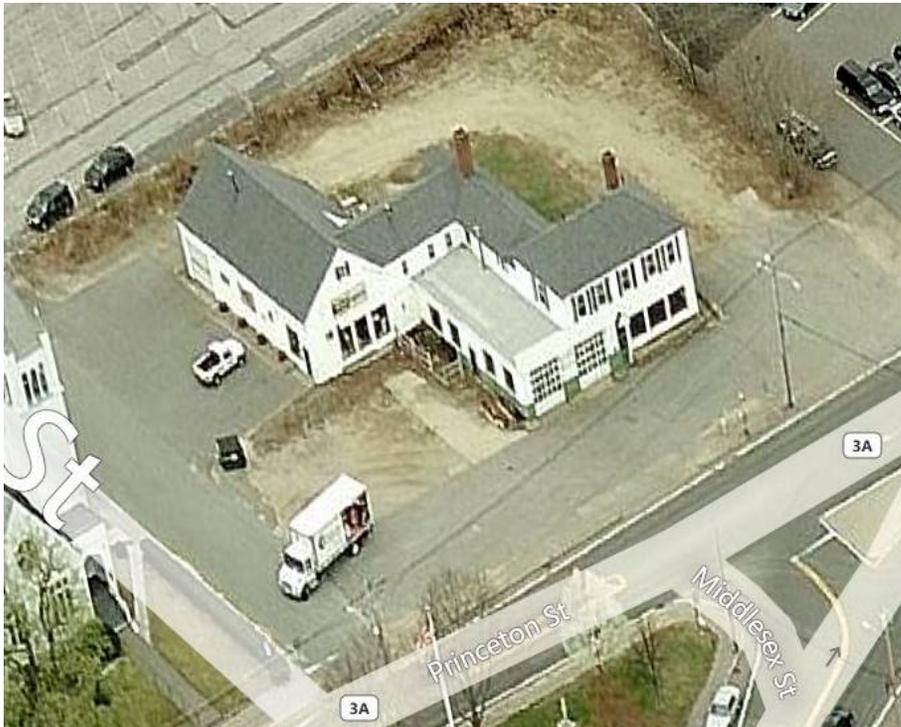
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

|  |         |
|--|---------|
|  | CLM.393 |
|--|---------|



Ca. 1895 photograph with obstructed views of the house and barn at 9 Princeton Street. (Chelmsford Public Library.)



|  |
|--|
| Aerial view of 9 Princeton Street illustrating the layout of the buildings. Bing.com |
|--|

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

CHELMSFORD

9 PRINCETON STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

|  |         |
|--|---------|
|  | CLM.393 |
|--|---------|



9 Princeton Street, facing northwest. May 2016.