

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA	FORM NO.
	NH 216

Town Newton, Mass. MRA
NEWTON (Newton Highlands)
Address 7 Norman Road
Historic Name Peabody/Williams House

Use: Present residence
Original residence

DESCRIPTION

Date 1891
Source Water Dept. Records
Style Shingle Style
Architect J. Williams Beal
Exterior Wall Fabric wood shingles
Outbuildings garage

Major Alterations (with dates) none

Condition Good

Moved no Date ---

Acreage 12,670 sq. ft. (less than 1 acre)

Setting Victorian neighborhood, close proximity to center of Newton Highlands and public transportation

Recorded by Deborah Shea, Peter Stott
Organization Newton Historical Comm.
Date May 1981, April 1986

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s).
Indicate north

(SEE ATTACHED MAP)

UTM REFERENCE 19.318320.4688060
USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON, MA
SCALE 1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

As an elaborate and well-preserved example of the Shingle Style by a well-known Boston architect, J. W. Beal, and for its close associations with the wood-carver Andrew Lees, the Peabody/Williams House meets criteria B and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

This well-preserved Shingle Style residence ranks among Newton Highlands' finest Victorian-era homes. The structure features a mass and roofline complex with angular projections -- turrets and dormers. The shingle facing is accented by a belt course of molded trim and cut shingles. The entrance is prominently featured with its massive elliptical hood with incised, beaded concave section and ridged bracket supports.

The Peabody/Williams House was designed by the well-known Boston architect, J. Williams Beal (1855-1919) less than ten years after Beal had established his own office on Kilby Street. Born in Norwell, Beal graduated from M.I.T. in 1877. For a few years he worked in the New York offices of Richard Morris Hunt and McKim, Mead & White. From a European tour in 1882, he returned to Boston to set up an office of his own in

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

An important figure in the early development of Newton Highlands was Moses Crane (1833-1898). In the late 1860s, he settled on a dozen acres of land he had purchased on the south side of Crystal Lake. With several associates, Crane divided the land into houselots and laid out Lake Avenue in 1872. Griffin Avenue (now Lakewood Road) and Norman Road soon followed. For several decades, however, this land remained open. In 1891, the property at the corner of Norman and Lakewood roads was purchased by a Boston lawyer and Newton Centre resident, William Edes Peabody, though title seems to have remained in the name of his wife, Lucy Johnson, and her mother[?], Susan M. Johnson. J. Williams Beal was engaged as architect, and the house was sufficiently completed to allow the water to be connected in May 1891. The expense of building, however, appears to have been greater than Peabody anticipated, and about 1895 the house was sold. Peabody and his wife moved to Hyde Park, while Susan Peabody relocated to Toledo, Ohio.

The new owner was Henry Williams of Worcester, who until that time had been commuting to Boston from Worcester. He moved into the house with his 25-year old son, Harry Williams. Harry married Mabel Winifred Lees, one of

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Telephone conversation with John Howard (May 1986).
Biographical material on J. Williams Beal and Andrew Lees courtesy of John and Irene Howard.
"Historical Exhibit features carvings of Andrew Lees," Wellesley Townsman 17 February 1983, p. 24.
Water Dept. Records.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Newton, Mass. MRA

Form No:

NH 216

Property Name: Peabody/Williams Hse.

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

Boston. Though best known for county and other civic buildings throughout the state, Beal also designed many residences. The Peabody/Williams House is typical of his early residential designs, showing a Richardsonian influence. The present owners retain the architect's original specifications for the house.

The interior of the house remains largely as built and features wood carving and other decorative details executed by the Scottish wood-carver and Wellesley resident, Andrew Lees (1844-1937) who had come to Boston from New Brunswick as a young man. In 1876, he moved to Wellesley Hills and for the next fifty years produced all types of ornamental wood carving. Oak was his principal wood for carving, and some of his best work, carved for Irving & Casson, can be seen in the Reference Room of the Robbins Library in Arlington. In the Peabody/Williams House, eight mantels are the work of Lees, as well as bas relief details in the "Lake Room," and a carved scallop over the front door. In addition, scattered throughout the house are many examples of Lees's work as a furniture designer, from sofas, chairs, and tables, to bookends, candlestick holders, and veneered boxes. His work as a landscape artist is represented by both oils and water colors.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

two daughters of the wood-carver, Andrew Lees, then living in Wellesley Hills. Harry's father-in-law undoubtedly executed the carving at this time.

At his death in 1937, Andrew Lees left his own house in Wellesley Hills to his unmarried daughter Annie Edith Lees. At her death in 1945, the furniture in the Wellesley house was moved to the attic of the house on Norman Road. Mabel Lees Williams died in the 1950s, but her husband Harry remained at 7 Norman Road until his own death in 1965. The present owners, John and Irene Howard, bought the house and its contents from the executors of the Williams estate in 1965. Very few changes have been made to the house beyond the replacement of the furnace and the installation of new wiring and plumbing.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

7/23/86

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Newton MRA
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

91. Needham Street Bridge

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byan 9/4/86

Attest

92. Newton Street Railway
CarbarnEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byan 9/4/86

Attest

93. Nichols House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byan 9/4/86

Attest

94. Old Shepard Farm

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byan 9/4/86

Attest

95. Page, H.P., House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byan 9/4/86

Attest

96. Parsons, Edward, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byan 9/4/86

Attest

97. Peabody--Williams House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byan 9/4/86

Attest

98. Potter Estate

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Delores Byan 12/23/86

Attest

99. Prescott Estate

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byan 9/4/86

Attest

100. Railroad Hotel

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byan 9/4/86

Attest

86001863

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Peabody--Williams House (Newton MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. _____
Fed. Reg. Date: JUL 23 1986 2/3/87
Date Due: 8/24/86 - 9/6/86
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 9-4-86
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ original site
		☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

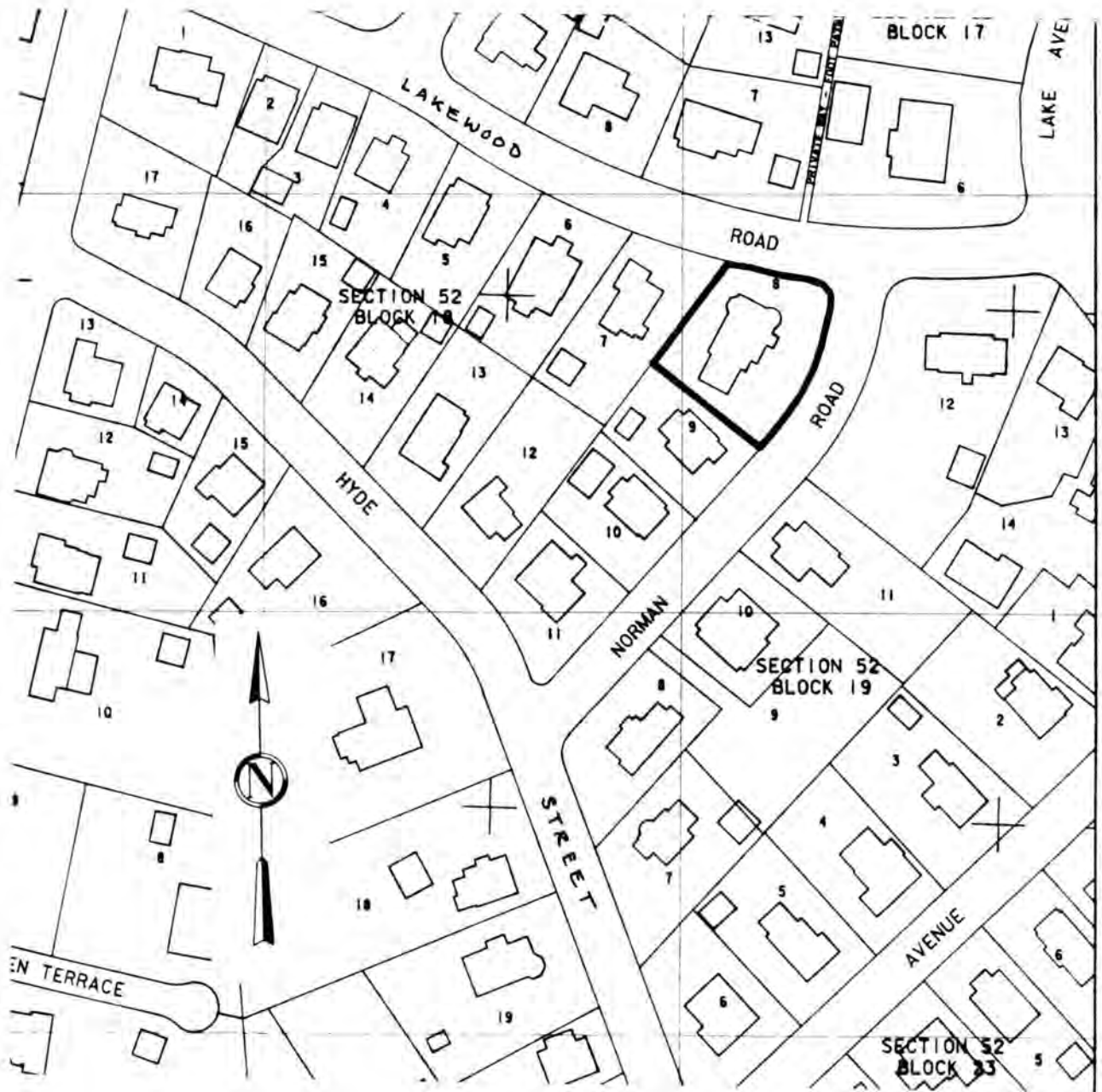
Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Newton, Mass. MRA
7 Norman Rd., N. Highlands
(Peabody/Williams House)
Inv. #NH 216

Newton, Mass. MRA





City of Newton Assessor's Maps. Sheet 104
 Metric Series. 1979
 Scale: UTM grid line interval = 100 meters (328 feet)

Newton, Mass. MRA
 7 Norman Rd., N. Highlands
 (William Edes Peabody House)
 52-18-8