

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received JUL 5 1982

date entered

1. Name

historic Manning Manse

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number 56 Chelmsford Road N/A not for publication

city, town Billerica N/A vicinity of congressional district 5

state Massachusetts code 025 county Middlesex code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☐ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☒ commercial
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☐ educational
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☒ private residence
☐ object	☐ N/A in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ entertainment
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ government
		☐ no	☐ industrial
			☐ military
			☐ museum
			☐ park
			☐ religious
			☐ scientific
			☐ transportation
			☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Manning Association, Inc.

street & number 56 Chelmsford Road

city, town Billerica N/A vicinity of state MA

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds

street & number Gorham St.

city, town Lowell state MA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth, #240 has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1978 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston state MA

7. Description

Manning Manse

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date

N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Manning Manse is sited on a 3.9 acre lot located on the south side of Chelmsford Road, in a rural area about 2¼ miles from Billerica Center. The property is completely surrounded by Manning State Forest.

The house is a fine example of the plain and substantial colonial architecture of the late 17th century. It is 2½ stories high, of framed timber construction with the main entrance on the south side, facing away from the street. The main part is 41 feet long and 19 feet 5 inches wide, but a leanto increases the width to a total of 30 feet 7 inches. The age of this integral leanto is unknown, although there are indications that it is somewhat later than the house itself. For example, boards on an interior north wall on the second floor are weathered as though they had been exposed. The chimney, with three fireplaces on the first floor, measures about 9 feet 9 inches by 8 feet 5 inches at this level. Where it passes through the roof ridge it is about 4 feet 8 inches square.

Windows on the Manning Manse have projecting frames, each constructed of four heavy timbers which are mortised together and fastened to the wall by great handmade spikes whose heads are about one inch in diameter. Nearly all of the windows are double hung, with 6/9 or 4/4 sash. Most of the windows also feature a projecting cornice molding or hood.

The main entrance of the Manse is slightly off center on the south facade. A small gabled vestibule shelters the facade doorway, which has a plain architrave and glazed transom. An entrance in the east end of the leanto (ornamented only with a shallow, peaked hood) probably served as access to the tavern for travellers using the Chelmsford Road during colonial days.

On the interior, walls are panelled floor to ceiling with wide chamfered boards, laid both vertically and horizontally on the various walls. Boxed posts, beams, and summer beams articulate the frame, while early chimneypieces ornament the fireplace openings. A three-run stairway with closed stringer connects the first and second floors.

The Manse was restored by Warren Manning, the well-known landscape architect, between 1899 and 1912. Major work involved re-clapboarding; replacement of sills; repair and replacement of window frames; replacement of the small window over the facade entrance; and repair of interior walls, floors, and ceilings. A wall in the leanto has been shifted, and closets have been added.

The entry vestibule dates from 1952, the present clapboards from ca. 1960, and the asphalt roof from 1980. During the early restoration, a small shed was removed from the west side of the house, replaced in 1930 by a larger ell containing a kitchen and toilet facilities for the Tea Room then operating in the Manse. The present dining room (28 feet by 81 feet) was added in 1960 on a north-south axis perpendicular to the house; this one story structure has a gable roof, clapboarding, and regular, multipaned fenestration.

(see continuation sheet)

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Manning Manse, Billerica

Item number 7

Page 1

The house was once accompanied by a wooden barn (possibly dating from the 18th century) with sheds, which collapsed in 1956. Today the grounds include a small lawn, parking area, and thick woods.

8. Significance

Manning Manse, Billerica

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☒ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400-1499	☒ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500-1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☒ 1600-1699	☒ architecture	☐ education	☐ military	☒ social/
☒ 1700-1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800-1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☐ 1900-	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1696 Builder/Architect Samuel Manning

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Manning Manse retains integrity of design, setting, and location. It is significant in the developmental history of Billerica and in its association with Warren H. Manning (1860-1938), a distinguished landscape architect. Additionally, it is important as an example of an early attempt to preserve and restore a 17th century family homestead. The Manning Manse meets criteria A, B, and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

Billerica was settled during the decade following a vast land grant made to Cambridge in 1641. In 1655 a petition was made for additional land west of the Concord River, a move generally regarded as the establishment of the Town of Billerica. Scattered meadow lands and some upland lots have soon divided, but no farmsteads were settled west of the river until after 1690. The Manning Manse was probably the first. Samuel Manning (1644-1711) acquired this land by 1673, and is thought to have built the Manse in 1696. The house is one of the two oldest buildings in town, and is certainly the closer of the two to its early form.

During the 18th century, the farmstead gained considerable prominence in the community. The house was established as a tavern in 1752 and continued in service until after 1800. Its eighteenth century tavern account books are preserved by the Manning Family Association in the University of Lowell Special Collections. Tradition claims that troops from Amherst, New Hampshire, bivouacked here en route to Bunker Hill. Also dating to the Revolutionary War, the crude foundation of a "salt-peter house" is still visible on the grounds.

During this time, Manse was the home of William Manning (1747-1814), author of The Key of Liberty (1798), inter alia. Samuel Gompers has noted that this is the first suggestion anywhere that laborers organize.

After the death of William Manning, the house and farm descended to his 13 children. Of these, eight occupied the Manse through their adult lives. The last was Lucinda Manning, who, at her death (1880), gave the house to trustees instructed to lease the house and devote the income to religious worship and instruction. During this period, the house gradually fell into abandonment and decay.

Concern for the "old homestead" spread among family members in the 1890's. Preservation and restoration of the Manning Manse was initiated and accomplished largely through the efforts of Warren H. Manning, of Brookline, MA -- a noted landscape architect of his time (1860 - 1938).

Manning worked in the office of Frederick Law Olmsted from 1887 through 1896, where he was involved in designs for an exhibit at the Chicago World's Fair, aboretums for private owners and institutions, and park systems for cities across the country. As

(see continuation sheet)

9. Major Bibliographical References (see continuation sheet)

The Manning Family Genealogy, published 1902 by Salem Press Co., Salem, MA
Billerica Town Records, Billerica, MA
Middlesex North District Registry of Deeds, Gorham St., Lowell, MA
Hazen, Henry A. (1883) History of Billerica, 1653-1883, Boston: A. Williams and Co.
Manning, William (1798) The Key to Liberty, reprinted with a foreword by Samuel W. Morrison, William and Mary Quarterly, Vol. 13, No. 2, 1956.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 3.9

Quadrangle name Billerica

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 19 311100 4717010
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification The Northeasterly corner of the Manse property starts on Chelmsford Road at land of Richard D. Manning, extends 417 feet South 28°45' west to land of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, then 400 feet North 61°15' West, then 377 feet North 12° West to the above said highway and then along said highway 681 feet. (see also attached sketch map)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

Wendy Frontiero, Preservation Planner, with
name/title Richard D. Manning, Director and Past President, Manning Association, Inc.

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date May 7, 1982

street & number 294 Washington St. telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state MA

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

Acting State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Valerie Ann Talmage

title Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission

date June 28, 1982

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

8/11/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Manning Manse, Billerica

Item number

8, 9

Page 1

an independent practitioner, Manning continued to work on park systems and private gardens (for such clients as John D. and William Rockefeller and Cyrus McCormick). Manning was an early advocate of regional as well as town planning; his extensive writings on this topic included work on a small magazine called "Billerica" (1912-1916), which presented a plan for development of that town.

Although Manning's efforts at forming a family association failed in 1898, the attempt was successfully renewed in 1900. During the interim, with affairs at a standstill, Warren Manning personally leased the property in May of 1899 and began a conscientious and well-documented restoration, as summarized in Section 7. This done, Manning made the property his summer home. Manning also assembled the extensive tracts of open space that today form the Manning State Forest (approximately 310 acres of land) and surround the Manse, insuring that its setting will not be developed.

With the subsequent acquisition of the house by the Manning Family Association, the last part of Warren Manning's plan was implemented: furnishing the house with family pieces and documents. The Association eventually came to lease the building, first as a tea room and later as a restaurant (which continues to operate), to provide income for taxes and maintenance on the property.

An obituary for Warren Manning ties together the various threads of this property's historic context:

"Outstanding among the strong traits of (Manning's) character was his vivid Americanism - the vital urge to accommodate a new world to the best uses of mankind. He made real in the present day the spirit of his ancestors of early Colonial days, whose lives and ways had a profound influence on his character. He was justly proud of the place which the Manning family had made for itself, and he rendered an invaluable public service in preserving the old Manning Manse at Billerica with its endless data and touching mementos of early American life."

The Manning Manse lot should be considered to contain historic archaeological remains dating as early as 1696 when the Manse is said to have been constructed. Domestic refuse may have been deposited on the property during its earliest occupation. Archaeological excavation and analysis of these artifactual remains could provide insight into 17th and 18th century eating habits and material furnishings. Scientific archaeological testing of the existing foundation believed to be a "salt-peter" house utilized during the Revolutionary War could determine the construction date and function of the structure it supported. Additional archaeological traces of a Revolutionary War troop encampment might be discovered through a systematic field survey of the property.

#9. continuation.

Landscape Architecture, April, 1938.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Dept. of Conservation
(State Forest)

1C

Town of Billerica
(Town Forest)

2

Brook

Black

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Dept. of Conservation
(State Forest)

CHELMSFORD

ROAD

MANING MANSE

BILLERICA, MASS.
Manning Manse

Source: Assessors Maps,
1960
Scale: 1" = 200'

N

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Dept. of Conservation
(State Forest)

Y-576,800

from BILLERICA ASSESSORS' MAP, Plate 14

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Manning Manse, Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS,

Working No. 7/6/82-1935
Fed. Reg. Date: 2.1.83
Date Due: 8/4/82 8-20-82
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 8/4/82
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Entered in the _____
National Register _____
Federal Agency: _____

☐ 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	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ moved
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ 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

Acres of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UMT 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: 202 272 - 3504

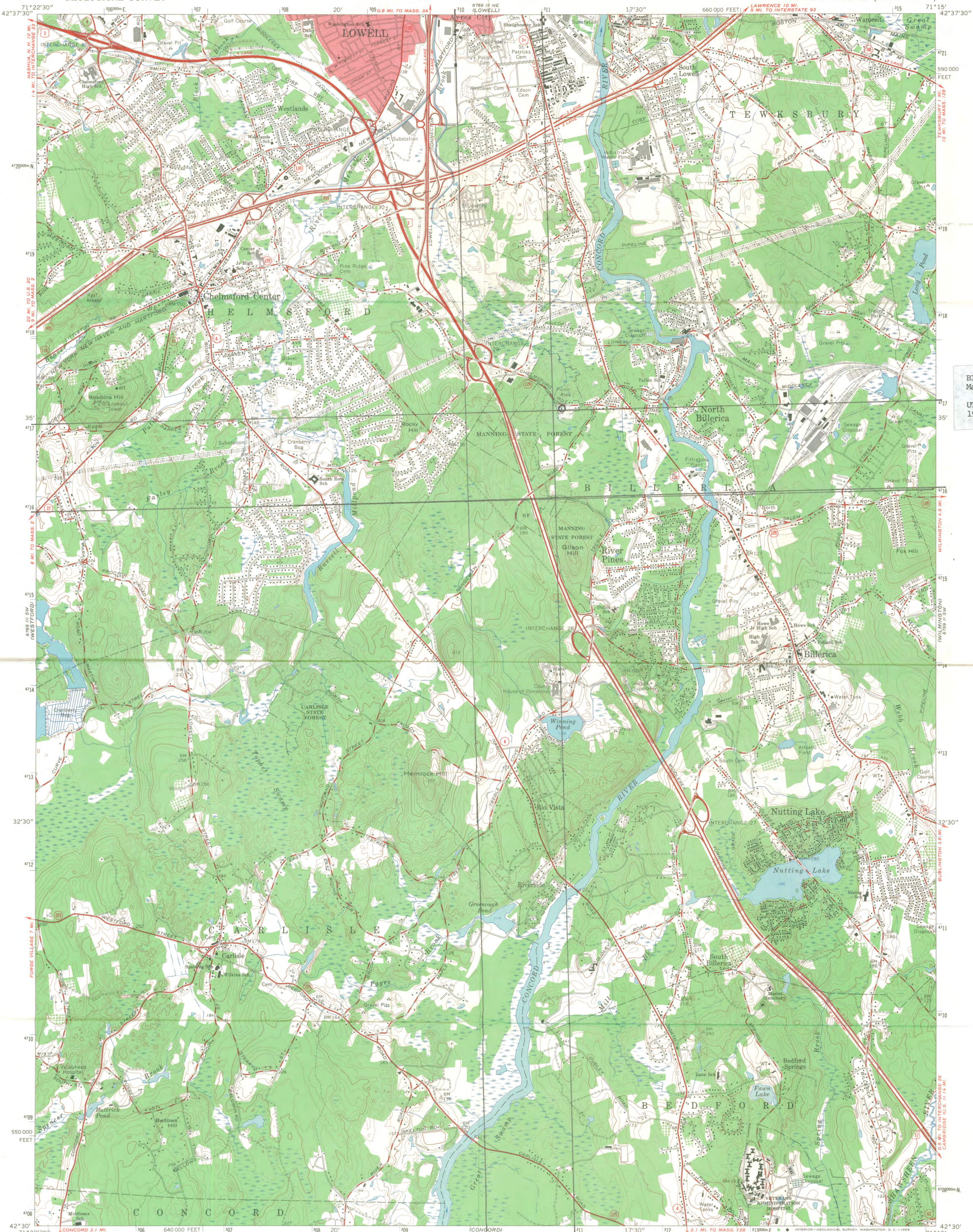
Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



BILLERICA, MASS.
Manning Manse

South and east elevations
Photo by Jacquelyn Marvin, 1976
Negative filed with photographer,
10 University Ave., Chatham, NJ
Photo 1 of 1

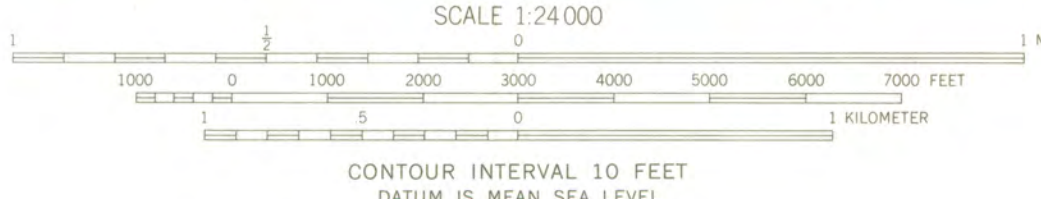
Jacquelyn Marvin



BILLERICA, MASS.
Manning Manse
UTM Reference:
19/311100/4717010

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1939. Revised 1965
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

UTM GRID AND 1965 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route



BILLERICA, MASS.
N4230—W7115/7.5

1965

AMS 6769 III SE—SERIES V814

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



**MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION**

6/28/82

Ms. Carol Shull, Acting Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Office of the Secretary of State**

294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts
02108
617-727-8470

MICHAEL JOSEPH CONNOLLY
Secretary of State

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

Becket: Becket Center Historic District (local)
✓ Billerica: Manning Manse (local)
Lowell: Allen House (local)
Lowell: South Common Historic District (local)
Lowell: Washington Square Historic District (local)
Lowell: Wamesit Canal and Whipple Mill Complex (local)
Northampton: Dimock Estate (local)
Westfield: Landlord Fowler Tavern (local - DOE: 11/79)

All have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Owners were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 - 75 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment. Comments received to date are attached to the nomination forms.

Sincerely,

Candace Jenkins

Candace Jenkins
Registration Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

CJ/sac



yes RECEIVED

MAY - 7 1982

Dear Sir,

Reading last night's paper
I noticed Manning Manse was
being considered for National
register status. We (my
wife and I) are very much
in favor of this.

We live on Chelmsford Rd.
almost across the street from
the Manse and enjoy showing
it to our guest, more so
if they are from out of
state. We hope the Board finds
the Manse eligible.

Mrs. & Mr.
Clarence J. LeBlanc

Fire Pumper
1860s
USA 20c



yes

RECEIVED

June 5, 1982

MAY - 7 1982

MASS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MASS. HIST. COMM.

294 Washington St

Boston, Mass

Re: "MANNING MANSE"

NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS

On Thursday July 3. I read in the Lowell Sun in
regards to the Manning Manse being designated a
national register property. I am in favor of this.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Burke Jr

42 Chestnut St

No. Ballineen, Mass



Billerica Historical Society, Incorporated
Billerica, Massachusetts 01821

Manning Manse
4/5

June 7, 1982

Massachusetts Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108

The Billerica Historical Society is in favor of an application to designate the Manning Manse a National Register Property by the Federal Government.

Sincerely,

Elinor T. Lahaie

Elinor T. Lahaie
Secretary



RECEIVED

JUN 10 1982

MASS. HIST. COMM.