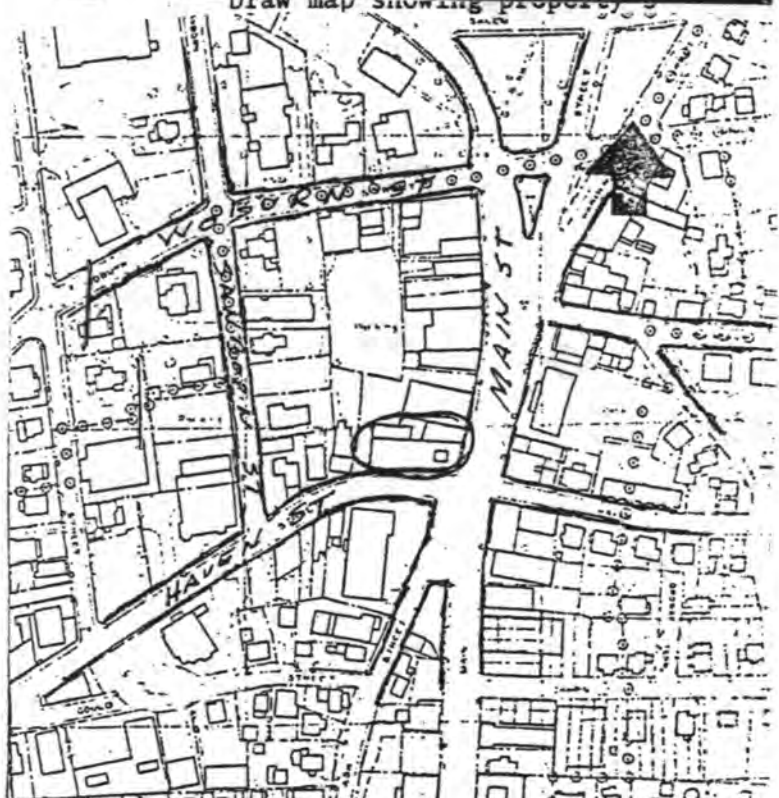


FORM B - BUILDING

Area	Form no.
C	172

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108



Reading
 Address 600-622 Main Street
 Historic Name Masonic Block
 Original commercial, organizational
 Present commercial
 Ownership: Private individual
 Private organization Millard F. Charles Building Corporation
 Public
 Original owner Reading Masonic Temple Corporation

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1894
 Source Vignettes
 Style Second Renaissance Revival
 Architect unknown
 Exterior wall fabric brick, wood, granite
 Outbuildings none
 Major alterations (with dates) first-floor entrances and fenestration; one-story extension, north (1929)
 Moved no Date _____
 Approx. acreage 31,673 sq. ft.
 Setting At corner of Haven Street, another important commercial street

Recorded by Architectural Preservation Associates
 Organization Reading Historical Com-
 Date November 1980

REVISED

Date 6/82

UTM: 19/327200/4709840

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

Although its first floor has been unmercifully "Colonialized," this sturdy, late 19th-century commercial block is still important, both for its location -- on a prominent downtown corner, on top of a hill -- and for its unusual ornamental brickwork. Its style is generally Second Renaissance Revival: it is the characteristic three-story block, with distinct horizontal divisions corresponding to the floor levels, and different treatment of windows on each floor. In this case, the long building is further articulated by brick pilasters that divide the facades into bays of two or three windows each. The floor division between the first and second floors is

(con't.)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

The Masonic Block, built in 1894, replaced the home of furniture manufacturer Henry Kingman, later of W.P. Kingman. The old house, which had been built in 1820, was broken into two pieces, one portion going to 151 Lowell Street, the other to 10 Minot Street. His shops were south and west of his home. The lane next to the property was later widened and named Haven Street, after the first minister of the Third Parish, the Rev. Thomas Haven. The street was opened as a thoroughfare to the railroad depot after 1845; it traversed the land of the second minister, the Rev. Peter Sanborn.

The Masonic Block was built by the Reading Masonic Temple Corporation, a group of private investors who held shares of stock in the corporation. The first floor housed stores and shops; the firms of Atkinson's and Adams, and Willis' drugstore, were longtime occupants. On the second floor were the First National Bank of Reading and the Mechanics Savings Bank; the Reading Chronicle, which printed there from 1894 to 1932; and other professional space. The third floor was occupied by the Masonic Lodge.

Today the building is known as the M.F. Charles Building, after jeweler Millard F. Charles, who took over the business of the deceased Lewis E. Gleason in April 1891. Charles added stationery to his line in 1892. He moved into the north addition to the Masonic Block after it was built in 1929. Over the years, he bought many shares of the Masonic Temple Corporation, giving him a large interest in the building. He was town clerk for many years. His two sons continued the stationery business; one son also served as town clerk. The firm is run today by a granddaughter of M.F. Charles, and her husband. In 1972, a vote was taken at the Masonic Temple Corporation's annual stockholders' meeting to change the corporation's name to the Millard F. Charles Building Corporation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Eaton, Memorial Volume, photo (Lyceum Hall), p. 137

Pitkin, Vignettes, p. 49

Wadlin, Concerning the Past, Chapter LXXXII

1906 map

Reading Chronicle, April 11, 1891; 1893-94; and June 27, 1974

Reading Antiquarian Society, "Reflections: It Happened on Haven Street," Reading Chronicle, July 31, Aug. 7, 14, 1958; bound volume, pp. 43-55

20M-2/80

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Reading	Form No: C-172
Property Name: 600-622 Main St.	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

unknown, being hidden by the alterations. The division between the second and third floors is a course of decorative brickwork. A limestone belt course extends like a lintel across the tops of the third-floor windows, but above this is a decorated band of semi-circular blind arches infilled with more ornamental brickwork. The arches are positioned over the third-floor windows, giving the illusion of round-headed windows here. Still more decorative brickwork forms the cornice.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The Masonic Block (also known as the W. F. Charles Building) is significant (1) as an example of how business replaced residences along Main Street in the late 19th century; (2) for its long connection with a number of Reading businesses and professional men, particularly Willard F. Charles; (3) for its prominent location, on a busy downtown corner in Reading Square; and (4) as an example of the Second Renaissance Revival style. It retains integrity of location, general design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling, and meets Criteria A, B, and C of the National Register.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received 6/14/84
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 6 of 9

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Reading Multiple Resource Area
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review		Date/Signature
51. House at 206 West Street	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 7-19-84 Attest _____
52. House at 242 Summer Avenue	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 7-19-84 Attest _____
53. House at 322 Haven Street	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 7-19-84 Attest _____
54. House at 483 Summer Avenue	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 7-19-84 Attest _____
55. House at 1177 Main Street	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 7-19-84 Attest _____
56. Lewis House	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 7-19-84 Attest _____
57. Manning, Charles, House	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 7-19-84 Attest _____
58. Manning, Jacob, House	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 7-19-84 Attest _____
59. Masonic Block	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 7-19-84 Attest _____
60. Nichols, Daniel, Homestead	Entered in the National Register	for Keeper <u>Melrose Byers</u> 7-19-84 Attest _____

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Masonic Block (Reading MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. JUN 4 1984
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/5/85
Date Due: 7-5-84 / 7-19-84
Action: ACCEPT 7-19-84
 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 Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
----------	---------------------------------	----------------------	-------------

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

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- 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

Mason's Block (Reading M.R.A.)
 Middlesex County
 MASSACHUSETTS

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreege 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: _____



BayBank Middlesex

Reading Office

Shaw's
FRESH PRODUCE

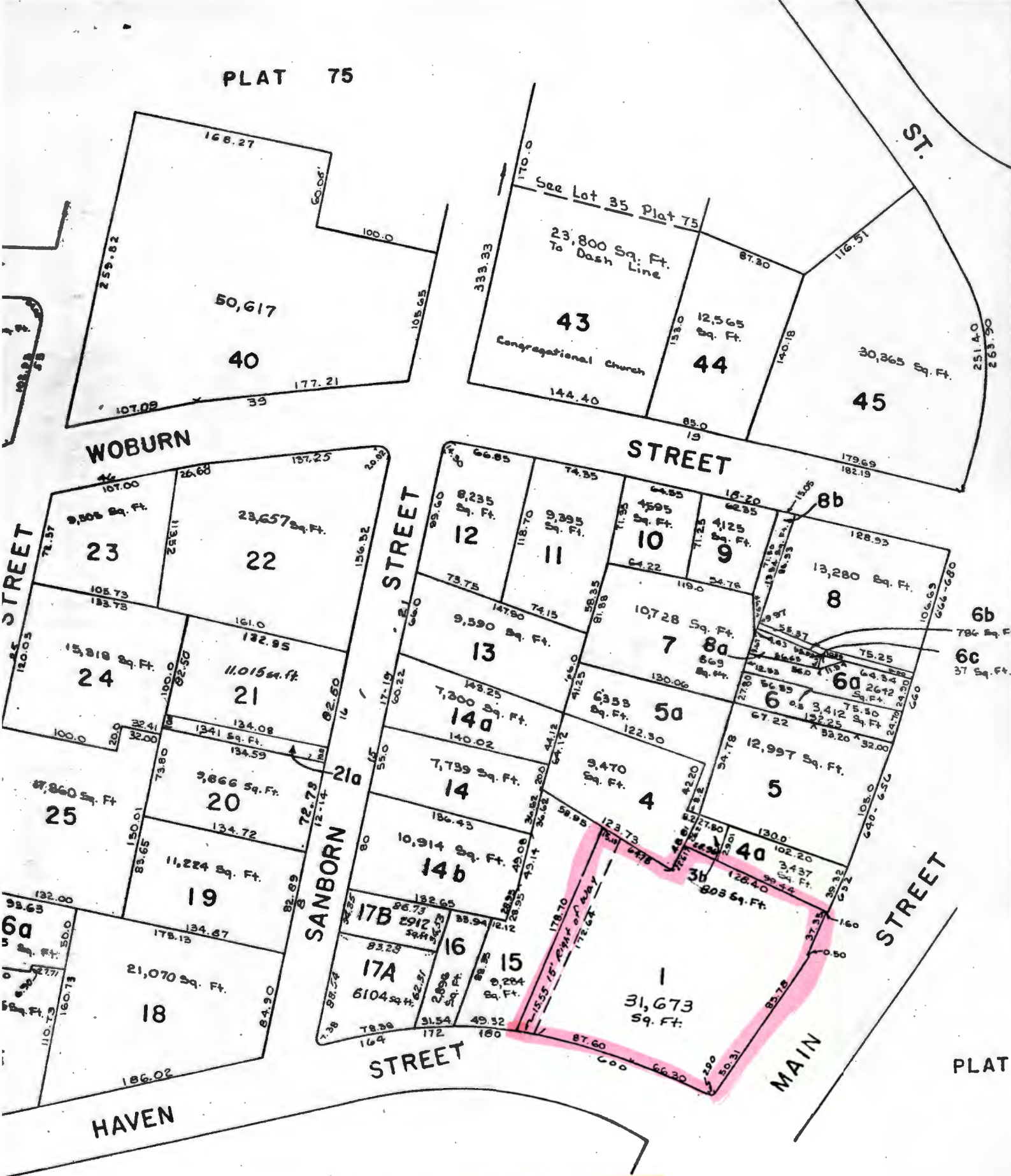
ONE WAY
PARKING

Masene Blouk
Reading ME, Ma

200 Haven St.

XXIV-1974

PLAT 75



PLAT 54 #C-172 600-622 Main St.
 Map 64, Lot 01
 1983 Assessors Map
 1" = 100'

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000290