

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received

AUG 7 1985

date entered

SEP 5 1985

1. Name

historic Oliver Hutchins House

and or common same

2. Location

street & number 79 Elm Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Chelmsford

N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts

code 025

county Middlesex

code 017

3. Classification**Category**☐ district
☒ building(s)
☐ structure
☐ site
☐ object**Ownership**☐ public
☒ private
☐ both**Public Acquisition**☐ in process
☒ being considered**Status**☐ occupied
☒ unoccupied
☒ work in progress**Accessible**☒ yes: restricted
☐ yes: unrestricted
☐ no**Present Use**☒ agriculture
☐ commercial
☐ educational
☐ entertainment
☐ government
☐ industrial
☐ military☐ museum
☐ park
☐ private residence
☐ religious
☐ scientific
☐ transportation
☐ other:**4. Owner of Property**

name Alan Taylor Kent

street & number 72 High Street

city, town Chelmsford

N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Middlesex North District

street & number Gorham Street

city, town Lowell

state Massachusetts

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic Assets of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

title has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1983 Inv. #108

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town 80 Boylston Street
Boston

state Massachusetts

7. Description

Oliver Hutchins House, Chelmsford, Mass

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

The Oliver Hutchins House, built ca. 1820, is a late, vernacular Federal farmhouse. Situated on approximately thirty acres of land, the setting of the Hutchins House retains its rural character. A granary, well-house and the foundations of a barn (no longer standing) make up the outbuildings associated with the house.

The Hutchins House, at 79 Elm Street, is located in the southeast corner of the town of Chelmsford, near the Carlisle and Westford town lines. The thirty-acre lot has a frontage of approximately 1,300 feet along Elm Street. About ten acres of land are open fields that are currently under cultivation. The remaining acreage is wooded with a variety of growth including white pine, hardwood and scrub brush. A portion of the land near the road slopes downward gradually to a natural drainage swale and then slopes gradually upward into the woods and towards the back side of the property. A number of stone walls criss-cross the property.

Elm Street runs in a north-south direction. The street is residential; most of the houses are set on large lots and were built in the mid-twentieth century. The land immediately across the street from the Hutchins House has been designated as wetlands through local zoning, and about half of that land is actually under water. At present, approximately 137 acres of this land is owned by the Lowell Cranberry Company. To the west of the Hutchins land is a residential subdivision laid out in the 1950s and expanded in the 1970s.

The Hutchins House faces northeast, and is set back approximately thirty-eight feet from Elm Street. The granary is located to the northwest of the house and is set back approximately two hundred feet from the road. Located immediately to the northwest of the granary is the well-house. The foundation of the barn is to the north of the house and set back from the road by approximately seventy feet.

The main block of the Hutchins House is a five-bay, two-and-one-half-story, end-gabled structure. A rear one-and-one-half-story ell with a gable roof is perpendicular to the main block. A one-story carriage house wing with a gable roof projects south, running perpendicular to the ell but parallel to the main block.

The house rests on a foundation of regular height, constructed of large cut granite blocks. There is a full basement under the main block and under half of the ell. The exterior walls of the main block and the rear ell are covered with red cedar shingles showing about seven inches to the weather. Historical pictures show that the sheathing ca. 1900 was clapboard; it is assumed that

Continued

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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date entered

Continuation sheet Oliver Hutchins House
Chelmsford, Mass

Item number 7

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the original sheathing was also clapboard. The carriage house is covered with rough boards applied both horizontally and vertically. The roof of the main block and the ell was newly shingled with man-made materials in 1973. Two chimneys rise from the rear of the main block's roof and one chimney rises on the north side of the ell. The chimneys were rebuilt from the roofline ca. 1970, using the historic brick.

The east, or front elevation of the main block is five bays wide. Reading from left to right at the first story, there are two windows, the main entry, and two windows. The entry contains the original six-panelled door, enframed in a classic Doric architrave. The door is framed on either side by four side-lights. On the second story, five windows are placed directly above the first-floor openings and are framed into the cornice. All windows have plain architraves and contain 6/6 sash, except the window directly above the entry, which is a three-part window composed of a 6/6 sash flanked by four-pane side-lights on either side. The cornice is simple, shallow-molded and unadorned.

The north elevation of the main block consists of a single, centered 6/6 window on the first and second floors and a 3/6 window in the gable. The west or rear elevation of the main block has a bulkhead at the ground level. There is one 6/9 window at the first-floor level and another directly above it on the second floor. The windows are located close to the junction of the ell and main block.

The south elevation of the house includes part of both the main block and the rear ell. All structural evidence suggests that these were built at the same time. This elevation of the main block is identical to its north elevation, with 6/6 windows on the first and second stories and a 3/6 window in the gable. The south elevation of the rear ell is two bays long, with 6/9 windows on the first story of the ell and 3/6 windows directly above them on the second story.

The north elevation of the ell is five bays long. Reading from left to right, it is made up of two windows, a sheltered entry, and two windows. The windows hold 3/6 sash. The second level holds three windows with 3/6 sash--two windows above the two most easterly windows on the first floor and one window west of the entry.

The west or rear elevation of the rear ell holds two centered windows, a 6/9 window on the first floor, and a 3/6 window on the second level. The east elevation of the ell abuts the main block.

Continued

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At the end of the ell, a carriage house projects south. The east or front elevation of the carriage shed holds a set of plank doors that open outward, located close to the shed's junction with the rear ell. There is one window further to the south that is currently boarded over. The south and west (rear) elevations of the carriage house have irregular fenestration.

The interior plan of the main block of the Hutchins House consists of two rooms separated by a central hall. The hall is divided, with the staircase at the front of the house and a small room to the rear. The rear ell is divided into two rooms, with the kitchen located to the rear. The interior of the house retains most of its original Federal finishes, including six-panel doors with applied mouldings and Norfolk latches, original windows and window mouldings throughout the main block and ell, and mantels of varying Federal designs. There is some fine feathered paneling on the first floor level. There is also an unusual amount of well-fitted and finished stone work in the house, including slab hearths and a granite floor in the carriage house.

The granary shed is thought to be older than the house, although no construction date is known. It is a small, square, one-story building with a gable roof. The granary has no foundation, but stands above the ground, resting on granite pieces at each of its four corners. The walls are sheathed with horizontal boards. The building is not weather-tight, and the door and most of the windows are missing. The well house may also pre-date the house. It is a single-story shelter for the well, with a slanted roof, and is constructed of wood. It is in very poor condition.

While no subsurface testing has been conducted on the property, the potential for archaeological remains is high. A trash pit has been located to the west of the carriage house but nothing has been removed at this time. The foundation of the barn destroyed in the 1930s also remains unexcavated. The land surrounding the house is relatively undisturbed.

8. Significance

Oliver Hutchins House, Chelmsford, Mass.

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)
				Community developer

Specific dates ca. 1820 Builder Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Oliver Hutchins House possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship. Consisting of a farmhouse, a collection of outbuildings, and thirty acres of fields with their original stone walls, the property is a unique reminder of Chelmsford's nineteenth-century agricultural character. The vernacular Federal farmhouse retains almost all of its original detail. The extensive suburbanization of Chelmsford in the twentieth century makes the survival of the Hutchins House with its original boundaries and rural setting particularly significant. The property also has associations with Chelmsford's early granite industry. The Oliver Hutchins House meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places, with significance at the local level.

The town of Chelmsford was founded in 1655. Although the primary focus of settlement was at Chelmsford Center, one of several secondary loci to develop in the eighteenth century was South Chelmsford village, located in the southwest corner of town near Heart Pond. South Chelmsford was primarily an agricultural village, with settlement radiating out along what is now Garrison Road to the north, and what is now Elm Street to the south. Elm Street is thought to have been a native American trail, and was sparsely settled in the eighteenth century.

Oliver Hutchins, born in 1800, was one of the nine children of Eliakim Hutchins, a deacon of the South Chelmsford Baptist Church in 1809 and 1815. Deed research indicates that Eliakim was a farmer, living somewhere along Elm Street in 1814. Although the exact date is unknown, Oliver Hutchins built a house at 79 Elm Street, close to his father's home, during the 1820s. Hutchins was certainly living in the house by 1831, when Elm Street was formerly accepted as a public way. Property deeds list Hutchins as a yeoman.

The extent of Hutchin's activity is not known, but it is believed that he was also involved in the Chelmsford's early granite industry. In the Federal period, several granite quarries opened in the southern and western parts of Chelmsford. The unusual amount of finished granite used in the construction of the Hutchins House, including its foundation, hearths, several floors, and the stone walls and fence posts on the property suggests this connection. In addition, when Hutchins sold the property in 1855, the deed of sale allowed him the right "to take off all the split stone on the premises within one year."

The Hutchins House is typical of vernacular houses built in Chelmsford in the Federal period. The most widespread house plan in Chelmsford at that time was the two-story rear-wall chimney type. Somewhat less common were two-story

Continued

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation Sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 30

Quadrangle name Westford

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	1 9	3 0 4	4 9 0	4 7 1	4 2 8 0
	Zone	Easting		Northing	
C	1 9	3 0 4	1 7 0	4 7 1	3 6 8 0
E					
G					

B	1 9	3 0 4	4 7 0	4 7 1	3 8 0 0
	Zone	Easting		Northing	
D	1 9	3 0 4	1 2 0	4 7 1	4 0 8 0
F					
H					

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property nominated includes all land that is historically associated with the Oliver Hutchins House; the boundaries appear to be the original property boundaries. Please see attached assessors 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

name/title Mary Kate Sampson with Monica Kent and Jane Drury, Chelmsford Historical Commission

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date June 1985

street & number 80 Boylston Street telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state Massachusetts

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Valerie A. Talmage

title Executive Director & Shop, MHC

date July 19, 1985

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register date 9/5/85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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date entered

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Chelmsford, Mass

Item number 8

Page 1

houses with double interior chimneys. The Hutchins House has a pair of interior chimneys on the rear slope of the main block, but the house has a typical double-chimney house plan, with a single room on either side of a central hallway. The hallway is divided, with a stairway at the front and a small room to the rear. The Hutchins House is one of only three houses of this plan in Chelmsford, the others being at 171 Mill Road (MHC #7) and 55 Spaulding Road (MHC #35). The Hutchins House retains much more of its original detail and has been less altered than either of these other houses.

The Hutchins House is also significant for the survival of its rural setting. The property includes thirty acres of fields with their stone walls, and several outbuildings. The thirty-acre parcel is believed to have the same boundaries as Hutchins' original purchase of land. During extensive deed research, no sales or purchases of land associated with the property were discovered. The intensive development of suburban housing tracts, starting in the early twentieth century and continuing up to the present, has made the survival of such a large, undeveloped parcel unusual in Chelmsford. The survival of the Hutchins House's granary, wellhouse and the ruins of the barn is also important in the context of Chelmsford's twentieth-century development. The combined resources of the parcel, including the historic archaeological resources of the property, can provide evidence for the interpretation of nineteenth-century agricultural life in Chelmsford.

The Oliver Hutchins House was sold to John Melvin in 1855. The property remained in the Melvin family for the next sixty-two years, continuing in operation as a farm. Between 1917 and 1975 the Hutchins House was owned and occupied by the Wright family. The Rev. George C. Wright was the minister of the Lowell Unitarian Church and simultaneously of the Ministry-at-Large Free Church, which was founded in 1846 to "safeguard family life of the small wage earner of Lowell." Caroline Wright, Rev. Wright's daughter, lived at 79 Elm Street up to the property's sale to the current owners in 1975. Ms. Wright was a 1907 graduate of Radcliffe College and pursued post-graduate work in Social Work at a time when few women studied at that level. She traversed northeastern Massachusetts both as a social worker, making home visits to the rural poor, and as a lecturer in the field of Social Service for professional and lay people. She aided her income by a home business, selling Linden Hill Honey from her apiary. Ms. Wright also wrote fiction under the alias of Quincy Germaine, including a 1912 novel about labor conditions in a cotton mill similar to those in Lowell and Lawrence.

The Oliver Hutchins House is currently unoccupied, but the owner plans to undertake a renovation of the property in the near future. Approximately ten acres of the land are still under cultivation.

Continued

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While no subsurface testing has been conducted on the property, the potential for significant archaeological remains is high. No prehistoric sites are currently known, however, several sites have been reported within a one mile radius, especially around Heart Pond. Potential is greatest on the well-drained land adjacent to the brook and overlooking the wetlands on the east of the property. Given that the prehistory of the Chelmsford area is poorly documented, and that extensive destruction of sensitive areas has occurred due to recent development, any surviving prehistoric sites on the Hutchins property would be significant.

Historic archaeological potential for this property is also high. The large size of the parcel and the lack of disturbance on the property means that nearly all archaeological features relating to the development of the property--wells, privies, trash pits and foundations for buildings no longer extant--appear to have survived. The historic archaeological significance of the Oliver Hutchins House would relate to the operations of a nineteenth-century farmstead.

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National Park Service**

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 Chelmsford, Mass

Item number 9

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Town of Carlisle; Vital Records, Carlisle Town Hall, Carlisle, Massachusetts.

Town of Chelmsford; Assessors Records, Tax Lists, Vital Records, Chelmsford Town Hall, Chelmsford, Massachusetts.

Investigation by Frederic Detwiller, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Cambridge Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

Frederic French, A Plan of Chelmsford, map surveyed in 1794.

John G. Hales, Plan of the Town of Chelmsford, map surveyed in 1831.

Research at the Middlesex North Registry of Deeds, Gorham Street, Lowell, Massachusetts.

Lowell Free-Church-at-Large; Records, Lowell, Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Historical Commission, Reconnaissance Level Survey: Chelmsford, April, 1980.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

jk
Re: #
85002013

Hutchins, Oliver, House
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

AUG 7 1985

Working No. _____
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-4-86
Date Due: 9/5/85 9/24/85
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 9-5-85
_____ 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

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ excellent | ☐ deteriorated |
| ☐ good | ☐ ruins |
| ☐ fair | ☐ 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

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: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Oliver Hutchins House
79 Elm St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824

David Kent Photographer
72 High St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824
Photo # / Of 6

East Elevation: Main House, front
view



Oliver Hutchins House
79 Elm St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824

David Kent Photographer
72 High St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824
Photo # 2 of 6

North Elevation: Main house rear and
side view; ell



Oliver Hutchins House
79 Elm St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824

David Kent Photographer
72 High St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824
October 1983

Photo # 3 of 6

South Elevation: Main house, ell
and corner of carriage house



Oliver Hutchins House
79 Elm St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824

David Kent Photographer
72 High St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824
October 1983
Photo # 4 of 6

South Elevation: Carriage Shed
Ell and corner of main house roof



Oliver Hutchins House
79 Elm St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824

David Kent Photographer
72 High St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824
Photo # 5 of 6

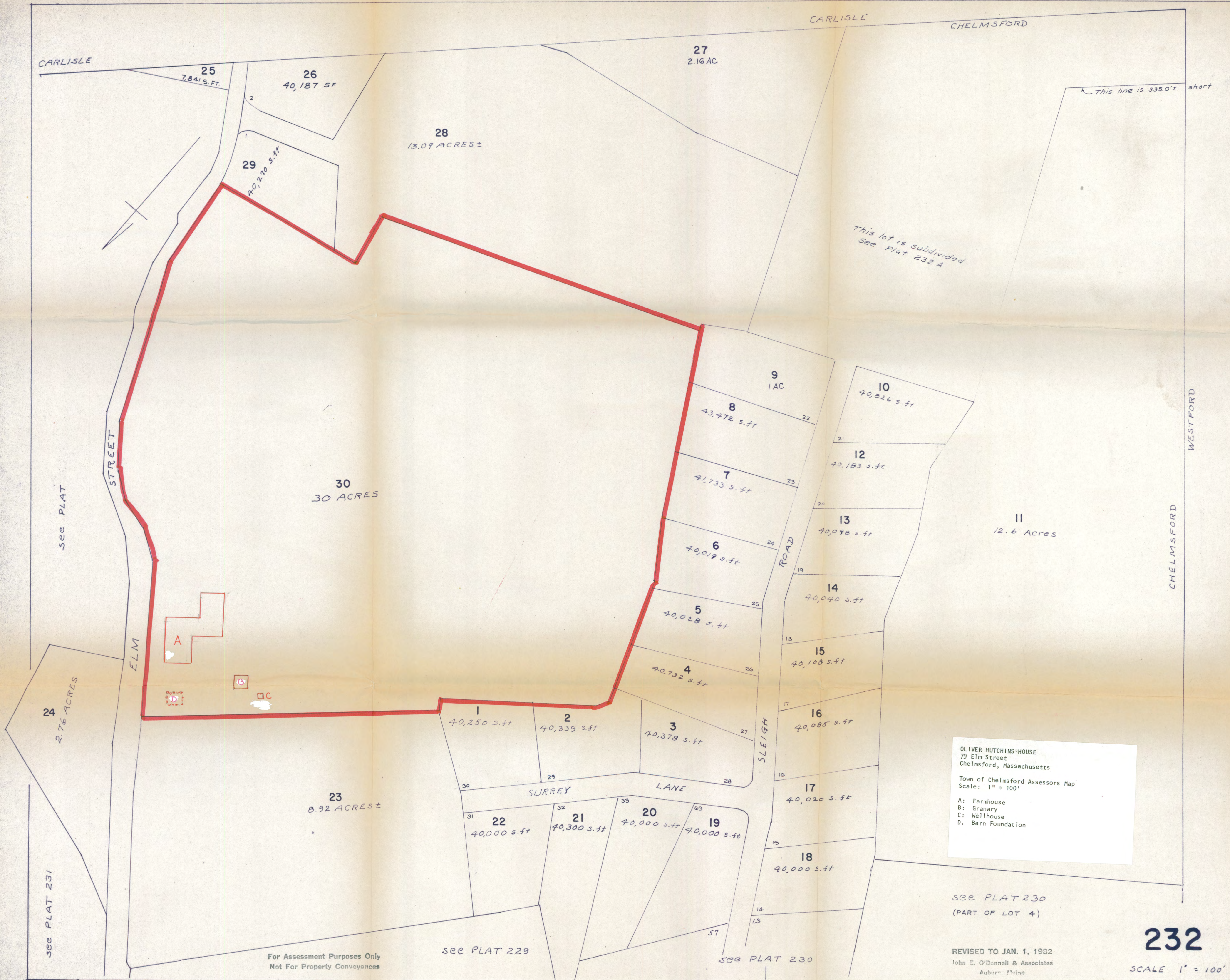
Granary



Oliver Hutchins House
79 Elm St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824

David Kent Photographer
72 High St., Chelmsford, MA. 01824
October 1983
Photo #6 of 6

Well House



OLIVER HUTCHINS HOUSE
79 Elm Street
Chelmsford, Massachusetts
Town of Chelmsford Assessors Map
Scale: 1" = 100'
A: Farmhouse
B: Granary
C: Wellhouse
D: Barn Foundation

SEE PLAT 230
(PART OF LOT 4)

REVISED TO JAN. 1, 1982
John E. O'Donnell & Associates
Auburn, Maine

232

SCALE 1" = 100'

Oliver Hutchins House
79 Elm Street, Chelmsford, Ma. 01824
Owner Alan Kent
72 High Street, Chelmsford, MA. 01824

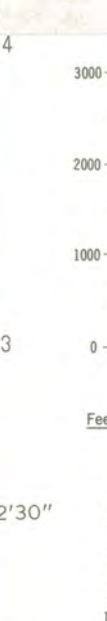
PIC
ASSESSORS
MAP



OLIVER HUTCHINS HOUSE
79 Elm Street
Chelmsford, Massachusetts

Westford Quadrangle
UTM References:

A. 19/304490/4714280
B. 19/304470/4713800
C. 19/304170/4713680
D. 19/304120/4714080

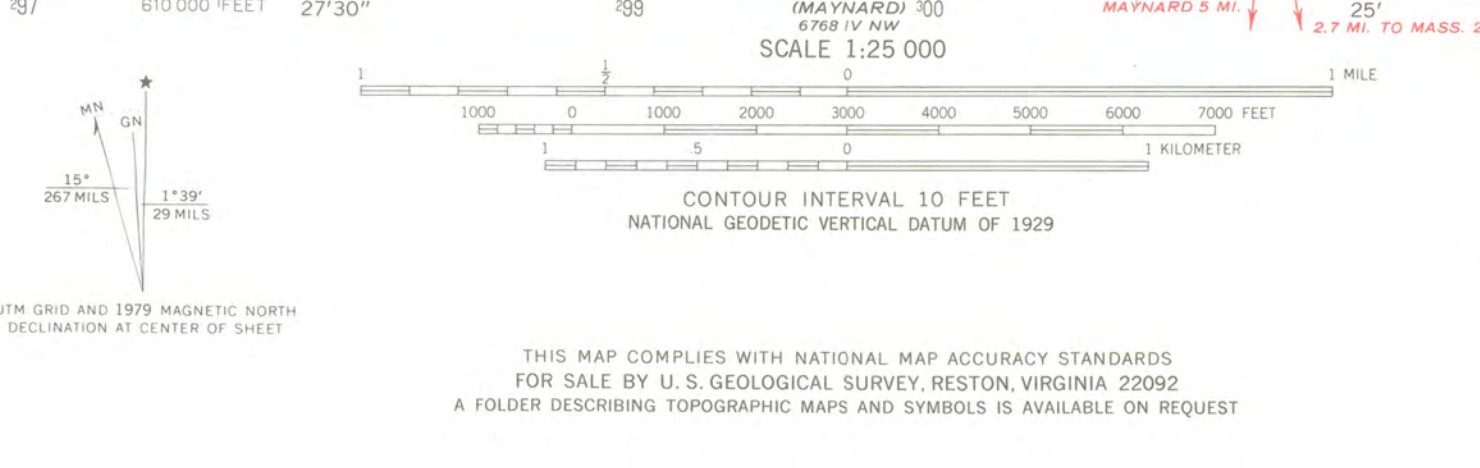


To convert feet to meters
multiply by 0.3048

To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1939. Revised from aerial
photographs taken 1965. Field checked 1966
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000 foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 19

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map
Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with State of
Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, all weather, hard surface
Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather

Interstate Route U. S. Route State Route

WESTFORD, MASS.
N4230—W7122.5/7.5

1966
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6769 III SW—SERIES V814

Oliver Hutchens House
79 Elm St.,Chelmsford, MA. 01824
Owner Alan Kent
72 High St. Chelmsford, MA. 01824

US65 MHP
P19