

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
BOYLSTON STREET
STON, MA 02116

Photos

1:18A facade

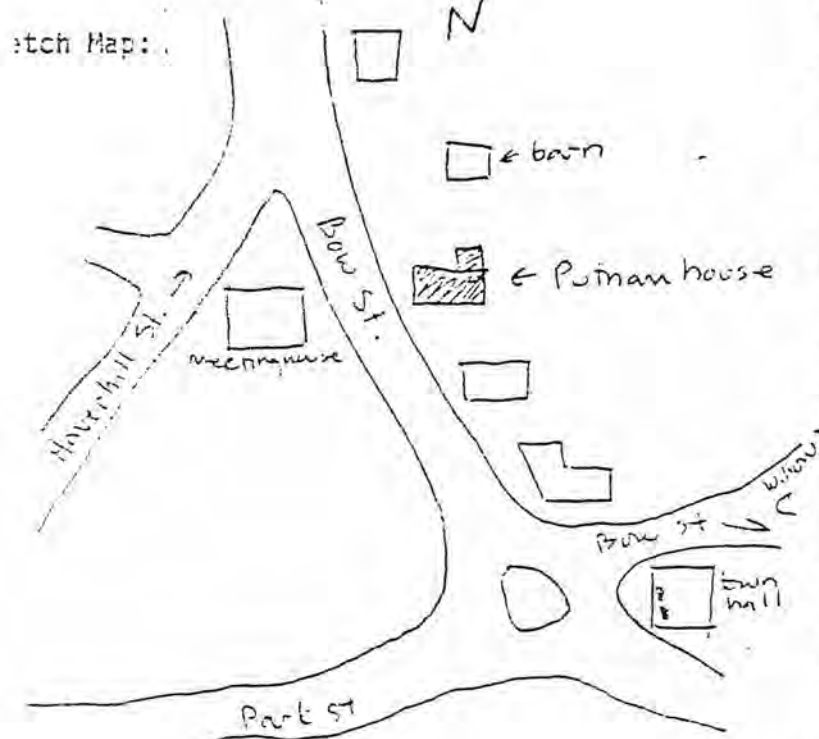
1:4A 2nd floor, east chamber, north wall

1:12A basement, vertical planking extending through sills and reused rafters

1:24 2nd floor, east end wall, summer beam detail

1:21 1st floor, west room, fireplace wall

Sketch Map:



Town North Reading 017

Address ²⁷ Bow Street

Historic Name Reverend Daniel

Purman House

Use: Present museum (N.R. Hist. Soc.)

Original residence

DESCRIPTION

Date 1720

Source Parish Records

Style First Period/transitional

Architect none

Exterior Wall Fabric clapboard

Outbuildings 1910 barn, 1844 schoolhouse

moved from orig. Main St. site

Major Alterations (with dates) enlarged to present size late 18th early 19th c., rear shed ca. 1820, chimney restored 1972

Condition excellent

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage 2.3 acres

Setting Across from common

and meeting house at old town center. Sits side to street in area of 18th and early 19th c. houses

Recorded by Anne M. Propoy

Organization Boston University

Date February, 1986

REFERENCE 2 E N 19 / 329-470 / 4715-410

QUADRANGLE Reading

SCALE 1:25,000

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:	Form No:
NORTH READING	92
Property Name: Rev. Daniel Putnam House	

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

SIGNIFICANCE

The Reverend Daniel Putnam house retains integrity of location, design, materials and workmanship in its surviving late First Period plank frame and interior finish, making it eligible under Criterion C. Its plank wall construction represents an unusual Massachusetts Bay framing alternative possibly connected to the availability of sawn lumber in the area. (North Reading had a sawmill operating by 1701.) The survival of an entire room intact, including plaster and paint, furnishes a rare opportunity to study a complete First Period interior. The existence of the original specifications and subsequent modifications for the house provide a rare insight into the ways in which actual building related to a construction proposal, and give us information as to what was considered a suitable dwelling for a rural town's minister in the early 18th century. The fact that most of the frame is presently covered with later 18th-century finish suggests that future investigation may be likely to yield important information on late First Period construction under Criterion D.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Reverend Daniel Putnam House is a five-bay, 2 1/2 story, central chimney structure, two cells deep with a simple Federal/Greek Revival doorway and a 1 1/2 story 1820's shed with a second tall, thin chimney projecting from the right rear. Recent reclapboarding revealed evidence of an original 3-bay facade, with only one window to each side of the front door. The original core was either a one or two cell 2 1/2 story house of plank frame construction, which was enlarged to its present size in the late 18th or early 19th century. The present rear wall is of stud construction.

MAJOR FIRST PERIOD FEATURES

The transitional nature of this house is evident in its retention of original First and Second Period interior finish. Built by the town for its new minister c. 1720, its lower rooms exhibit Second Period paneling and boxed beams which may be original to 1720, while the southeast chamber is finished with late First Period decoration.

Determining the evolution of the house is complicated by the existence of the minister's settlement agreement in the 1718 parish records, which specifies a building whose dimensions do not match the present structure. The town was to build Mr. Putnam a "house 28 feet long: 19 feet wide: 15 feet stud with a lenter on the back side 10 feet stud, with 3 chimnis from ye ground, and one chamber chimney, with a conveant saller and well, in lue of the 100 pounds, if [Mr. Putnam] find nails and glass" for the house." [1] For this the parish voted to raise L. 100 by taxes. Although the present house is approximately 40 feet wide and 28 feet deep, the southeast cell with chimney bay measures 24 by 17 feet, relatively close to the original specifications. As visible First Period finish is found in the southeast chamber, this may indicate an original one cell 2 1/2

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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Community: NORTH READING	Form No: 92
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story plan. Nevertheless, such a plan would not provide the number of rooms and hearths specified in the settlement, which seems to indicate a two-room plan. The parish seems to have realized this, for it voted on Aug. 26, 1719 to allow the minister's housebuilding committee to "alter the fashion of the house, chimneys, and cellar as the committee and Mr. Putnam agree," provided that they not exceed the original cost. As the present southwest end has identical plank framing visible in the cellar, it is likely that either the house was actually constructed as a two-cell plan, or the original one-cell house was enlarged shortly after, as is indicated by the presence of early Second Period paneling in these rooms. (The house ultimately did not cost L. 100 to build, as the parish in 1723 was determining what to do with the surplus building funds.)

The second floor southeast chamber exhibits complete First Period finish, including the original whitewash and plaster, recently uncovered during restoration. The transverse summer beam has a beveled chamfer with lamb's-tongue stops, the butt-cog joists have narrow flat, (beveled,) chamfers with no stops, and summer, joists, and attic floorboards are whitewashed. The plates, posts, and end tie beams have beveled chamfers; the chimney girt is quirk-beaded. The fireplace wall retains vertical half-lap sheathing with two small square raised field panels (partially restored) over the fireplace. The original north wall with its surviving plaster is exposed; the laths are nailed directly onto the plank wall, with a whitewashed rising brace in the northeast corner.

The rear first floor kitchen has one quirk-beaded post; it is impossible to tell if this is part of an original lean-to or a reused member. Twentieth-century fire damage makes it impossible to tell if the rest of the framing members were chamfered. The kitchen has wide horizontal sheathing with deep feathers. The chimney stack was removed in 1880 and restored in 1972 following the original outline. Evidence was found of a coved fireplace front in the kitchen; this has been restored in brick.

The rear second floor contains slightly jowled posts and one transverse beam which has been either hacked away or given a very crude beveled chamfer and taper stop. All other visible framing members are unfinished.

The original, partially rotted feet of the north plank wall (now the north inner wall of the southwest room) protrude down through the ceiling of the 1799 basement below. The cellar section under the rear of the house is roofed using reused rafters with purlin trenches, probably used here when the second floor was raised in the 1820's. Stringer marks in the whitewash on the front of the chimney foundation indicate that the cellar stairs were originally located under the front lobby stairway; they are now in the northwest corner of the house.

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LATER SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

Due to the transitional date of the house and its undetermined evolution, it is difficult to tell whether the Second Period finish in most of the rooms is original or later additions covering original finish. The simple, deep and widely feathered raised field panels and vertical sheathing on the fireplace walls in the southwest room and chamber could conceivably have been produced by a rural town for one of its most prominent citizens in 1720. The beams in these rooms are plainly boxed. The finish in the southeast room, which is much more elaborate, probably was put in after 1750 and may cover the original transitional finish. The fireplace wall in this room is covered with many field panels and has a simple molded fireplace surround. A molded cornice runs along the tops of the beam boxes on all four walls and the summer beam. The three outer walls are covered to the dado with field paneling. The deep windows have folding shutters and field panels on sides, sill, and soffit.

No interior finish seems to postdate ca. 1820, which seems to be when the house reached its present form.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The house was built by Reading's North Parish as a condition of Rev. Daniel Putnam's settlement as the first settled minister in the North Parish. Putnam was minister in old Reading (now Reading, North Reading, and Wakefield) for 39 years (1720-1759), longer than any other minister except his successor, Rev. Eliab Stone. The house was occupied by Putnam's descendants until 1962. Prominent owners include Deacon Daniel Putnam, physician and selectman, and Deacon Henry Putnam, selectman, state representative, and Revolutionary war veteran. The widow of state representative and War of 1812 veteran Capt. Joshua Putnam, Nancy (Graves) Putnam, used part of the house for teaching boarding students and day pupils after her husband's death.

NOTES

1. North Parish Records, December 29, 1718.

REFERENCES

Eaton, Lilley, Genealogical History of the Town of Reading Boston: 1874.
Graves, Mary H. Early Ministers of the North Precinct (1907).
LePage, Samuel M. A History of North Reading (1944).
Middlesex Registry of Deeds and Probate, research by Barbara O'Brien,
NRHC.
Parish Records.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR
State _____

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

101. Jaquith, Abraham, House **Entered in the National Register** Keeper Melrose Byers 3/14/91
Attest _____
102. Mason, John, House **Entered in the National Register** Keeper Melrose Byers 3/9/90
Attest _____
103. Meeting House of the Second Parish in Woburn **Entered in the National Register** Keeper Melrose Byers 3/9/90
Attest _____
104. Noyes--Parris House **Substantive Review** Keeper Beth J. Savage 3/9/90
Attest _____
105. Page, Christopher, House **Entered in the National Register** Keeper Melrose Byers 3/9/90
Attest _____
106. Putnam, Rev. Daniel, House **Entered in the National Register** Keeper Melrose Byers 3/9/90
Attest _____
107. Robbins, George, House **Substantive Review** Keeper Beth J. Savage 3/9/90
Attest _____
108. Spaulding, Zeb, House **Substantive Review** Keeper Beth J. Savage 3/9/90
Attest _____
109. Tenney Homestead **Entered in the National Register** Keeper Melrose Byers 3/9/90
Attest _____
110. Upham, Phineas, House **Entered in the National Register** Keeper Melrose Byers 3/9/90
Attest _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Putnam, Rev. Daniel, House
NAME:

MULTIPLE First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 1/24/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/07/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/23/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/10/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000176

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 3/9/90 DATE

Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

☐ count ☐ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

☐ historic ☐ current

DESCRIPTION

☐ architectural classification
☐ materials
☐ descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

☐ acreage ☐ verbal boundary description
☐ UTM's ☐ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

☐ sketch maps ☐ USGS maps ☐ photographs ☐ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Signed _____ Phone _____

Date _____



Rev. DANIEL Putnam House 80:18A
27 Bow St.
No. READING, MA

EXTERIOR

1st Period Buildings of E. May, TR

1985



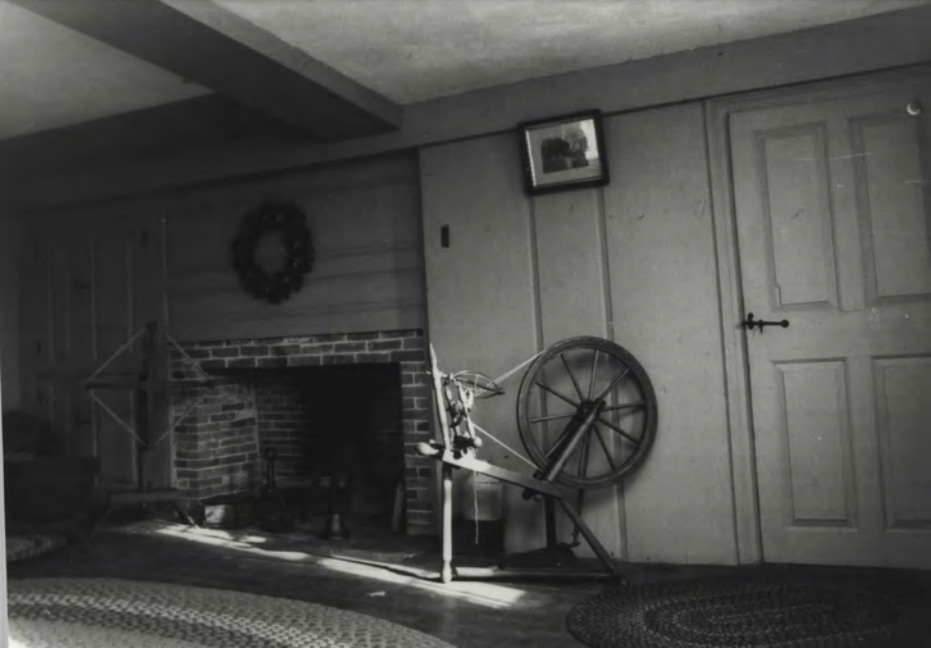
80:4A

Rev. Daniel Putnam House
27 Bow St.
No. Reading, MA

2nd floor E. chamber
N. wall

1st Period Buildings of F. Mass. TR

1985



Rev. Daniel Putnam House 79:21
27 Bow St.

No. Reading, MA

1st Period Building of E. Mass. TR

1st floor, W. Room
fireplace wall

1985



Rev. Daniel Putnam House 80:12A

27 Bow St

No. Reading, MA

1st Period Buildings of E. May, TR

Basement:

plank evidence &
re-used rafters.

1985



Rev Daniel Putnam House

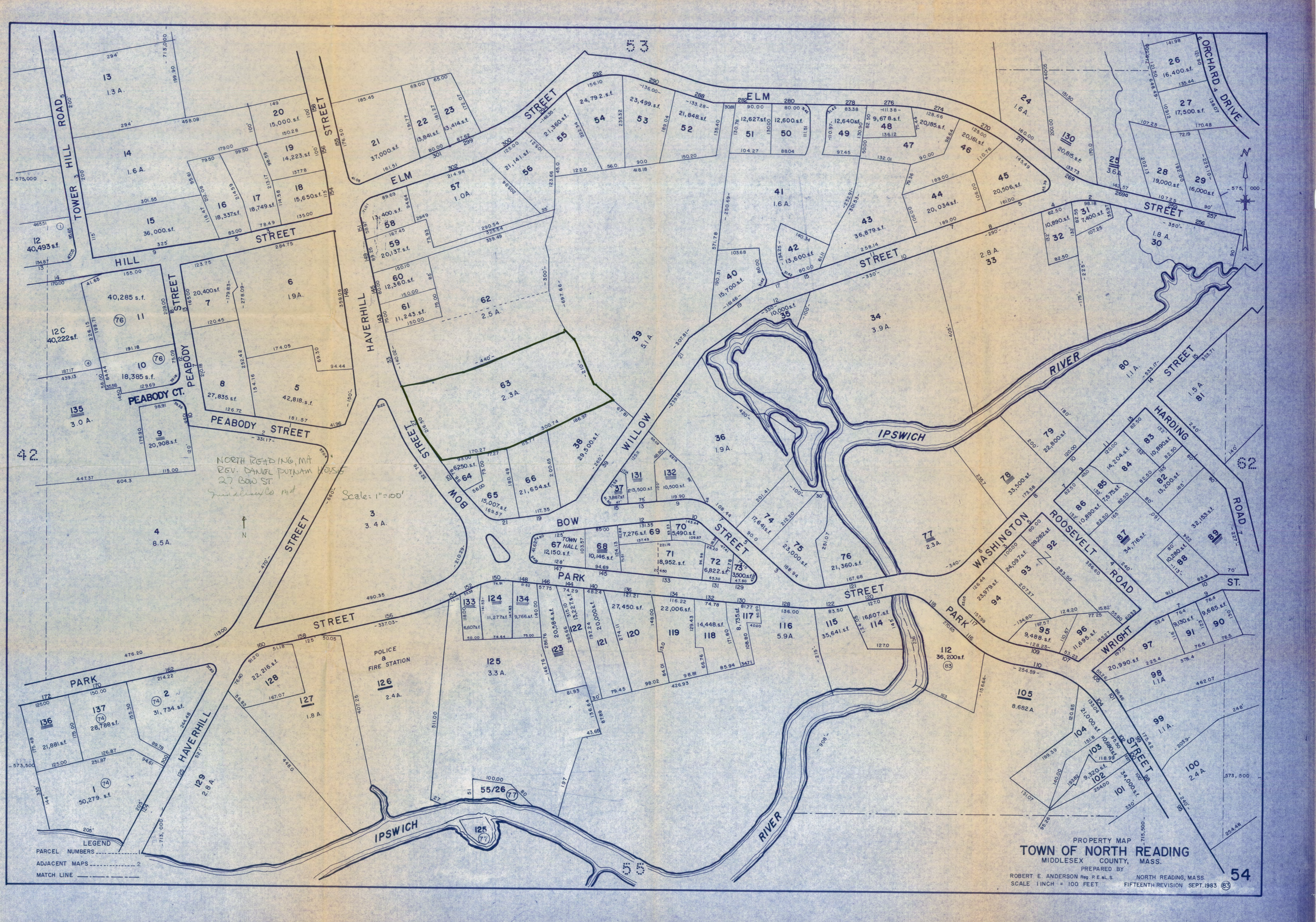
27 Bow St.

No. Reading, MA

2nd floor E. room
Summer beam

1st Period Building of E. Ma. TR

1985



NORTH READING, MA
REV. DANIEL PUTNAM HOUSE
27 BOW ST.
[unclear]

Scale: 1"=100'

LEGEND
PARCEL NUMBERS
ADJACENT MAPS
MATCH LINE

PROPERTY MAP
TOWN OF NORTH READING
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, MASS.
PREPARED BY
ROBERT E. ANDERSON Reg. P.E. & L.S.
NORTH READING, MASS.
FIFTEENTH REVISION SEPT. 1983
SCALE 1 INCH = 100 FEET

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000281