YOUR HOME’S HISTORY

Resources at Cary Memorial Library

September 22, 2018
Types of home history questions

- When was the house was built?
- What did it looked like?
- Who lived there and when?
- What was there before?
- What was life like in Lexington when my house was built?
Two online catalogs

- Minuteman Library Network (library materials)
  - Histories
  - Vertical files (by subject)
  - Photographs
  - Maps
  - Genealogies
  - Directories
  - Town documents

- Worthen Virtual Exhibit (Worthen Collection materials)
  - Slides
  - Maps
  - Photographs
  - Documents
  - Objects
  - Newspapers
Our go-to resource: the CRS

• Our all-time favorite, go-to resource (fingers crossed)
• *If your address is listed*, the form provides a great starting point for additional research
• *If your address is not listed*, the CRS still provides opportunities for research
• It’s all about *clues*
  • Individual building forms
  • Area forms
  • Area and Period summaries
503 Concord Avenue: Cutler Farmhouse

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

wn_ Lexington
dress_ 503 Concord Avenue
storic Name_ Cutler Farmhouse

t: Present_ residential
Original_ residential

DESCRIPTION:
ite_ c. 1804

Source_ John Coles and Associates
Style_ Federal
Architect_

Exterior wall fabric_ clapboard
Outbuildings_ attached garage

Major alterations (with dates) ell
(1827); roof raised and rear addition,
est porch, bracketed door hood (1874)

Moved_ Date

Approx. acreage_ 29641 ft.²

Setting_ Screened from street with
continual traffic by a row of hemlocks;
surrounded by much newer houses built on
the farmland formerly associated with
this house.
ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

Built c. 1804, the Cutler farmhouse is one of the remaining Federal farmhouses along the old Cambridge-Concord Turnpike, now Concord Avenue. Very little of the original Federal finishes remain, however. On the exterior only the five-bay facade and the two end chimneys of the central portion date from the Federal period. On the interior, the only Federal elements are the "ribbed molded" chair rail and cornice in the west front parlor; the filled holes on the stair treads indicating the original balusters were slender, square in

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

The land on which this house is located was owned in the eighteenth century by Ebenezer White. After his death, it was sold in about 1789 to Joseph Underwood who, in turn, sold the lot to his son Joseph Jr. in 1804. The house was apparently built about this time, for the deed refers to Joseph Underwood Jr.'s "new house." Further corroboration is supplied by the Middlesex County Commissioners records for 1804 which, in describing the Cambridge-Concord Turnpike built that year (the present Concord Avenue), mention "the new house of Joseph Underwood, Jr." (Burgess 1965:84-85). This house was apparently a two-story Federal farmhouse, five bays wide, one room deep, with brick ends, two end chimneys, either a hip or a gable roof, and perhaps an attached shed at the east end of the back (John F. Cole to Mr. and Mrs. Theodore J. Nussdorfer, March 20, 1969).

The part of Ebenezer White's estate south of present Concord Avenue was sold in 1790 to Thomas Cutler who, in turn, sold it in 1802 to his son Nathaniel. The latter lived in the old White house (south of the present 502 Concord wood Jr.'s house from Underwood prosperous farmer, raising and lumber. He was also an editor, selectman, districter of the poor, surveyor of taxes. In 1837 the west ell (or shed) records mention "shades and

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)


HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

betterments on the house" (Burgess 1965:85), and in 1842 Nathaniel Cutler deeded the farm to his son Thomas in return for the right to live in the west ell. The ell has subsequently almost always been occupied by a separate household; it is now a rental apartment.

Thomas Cutler (1801–1890) was also a successful farmer, but not active in town affairs. He ran the farm with his son Thomas Everett Cutler (1830–1875); under the latter the farm began to specialize in apples and milk and its holdings were increased, especially in the area north of Shade and east of Spring streets, in what is now the Woodhaven area (1875 map). In 1874 the original house was completely remodeled; the roof was raised, the house was made two rooms deep, the brick ends covered with clapboards, and the bracketed front doorway and east porch added. Thomas E. Cutler died in 1875 and his inventory lists the rooms then existing in the main house: kitchen, dining room, sitting room (east front), front hall, parlor (west front), parlor chamber, chamber over front hall, sitting room chamber, bath room, dining room chamber, north chamber, attic, workmen's chamber, wardrobe (Burgess 1964:8-9). This inventory also mentions improvements to a barn and outbuildings; the former, at least, was located on the south side of Concord Avenue (site of present 502 Concord Avenue). Thomas Cutler died in 1890 and his inventory cites the house, barn, and three outbuildings (Burgess 1965:54).

Thomas Cutler left the 150 acre farm to his son's widow and children. It was purchased in 1898 by Clarence H. Cutler (1869–1933), a son of Thomas E. Cutler. Like his great-grandfather, Clarence Cutler was very active in town affairs, serving as a town meeting member, on the finance committee, planning board, as a fence viewer, and a delegate to Republican conventions. He was also a member of the Lexington Grange, Minutemen, Rotary Club, and First Parish Church. 

Cutlers. After World War II the Cutler farmland was divided up and sold off for residential developments: Woodhaven in the late 1940s, Benjamin Road in the 1950s, and Five Fields, on the south side of Concord Avenue, in the early 1950s (see Five Fields area form). The Cutler barn and workmen's house were torn down in 1953 as part of the latter development.
Area Form T:
Concord Avenue

Sketch map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient.)
Clues: Concord Avenue Area form

- Cambridge-Concord Turnpike completed 1804
- Parker (187 Spring St)
- Cutler (503 Concord Ave)
- Underwood-Foster (353)
- Wellington-Smith-Packard (272)
- Wellington family (177)
- Smith’s End/Kite End
- Dairy industry/milk men
- Bibliography/References
What do we do with all these clues?

- Search Cary Library (MLN) catalog and Worthen Virtual Exhibit
- Neither catalog is organized by address; search instead using names, key words and concepts
- Some information not obvious from the catalog
  - Worthen, *Tracing the Past*...
  - Need to look beyond the catalog to the item or index
Area Form U:
Five Fields

Sketch map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient.)
MLN catalog: five fields

• Vertical file materials
  • Lexington organizations
  • Lexington properties
• Publications by/about Five Fields residents
  • Newsletters, interviews
• Research papers by LHS students
• Also…
  • Maps
  • Historical guide to open space…(Juniper Hill)
MLN catalog: *Collection of materials on farms, greenhouses and nurseries in Lexington*

- Allen-Swenson Farm.
- Breck's (Nursery)
- Busa Farm.
- **Carroll Farm.**
- Cary Homestead and Farm.
- Cataldo Farm.
- Chiesa Farm.
- Doran's Greenhouses.
- **Frost Farm.**
- Galen-Allen Farm.
- Graham Farmhouse.
- Greenfield Farm.
- Johnson Farm.
- Kelsey Ranch.
- Lawrence/Hatch Farm.
- Lexington Gardens.
- Lexington Nurseries.
- Monahan Farm.
- Howard Munroe Farm.
- **Packard Farm.**
- Parker Barn.
- Elias Phinney Farm.
- Pierce Farm.
- Porter Farm.
- Putnam Farm.
- Ricci Farm.
- Robinson Farm.
- Ryder Farm.
- John Sellars Dairy Farm.
- **Benjamin Wellington Homestead and Farm.**
- Wilson Farm.
- Winship-Reed Farm.
Welcome to the Edwin B. Worthen Collection
Cary Memorial Library Lexington, Massachusetts

The Edwin B. Worthen Collection documents life in Lexington, Massachusetts from its earliest settlement through the mid-20th century. The materials were collected by Edwin B. Worthen (1879-1956), his son Edwin B. Worthen, Jr. (1913-1976) and his daughter-in-law, Anita P. Worthen (1913-2008), and donated to Cary Memorial Library in 1976. The Worthens were avid collectors of, and enthusiastic participants in, all things Lexington. They lived during a period when the town was transformed from a relatively small community of 3,851 in 1900, to a vibrant suburb of 17,335 in 1950, peaking at over 31,000 in 1970.

The Worthens had a particular interest in the settlement, growth and development of the town of Lexington, and this interest is reflected in the materials they collected. Subjects covered by the materials include:

- American history
- the Battles of Lexington and Concord
- April 19th reenactments and other commemorative celebrations
- historic properties and monuments
- families, groups and individuals
- religious, social and civic organizations
- neighborhoods, schools and businesses
- socio-economic conditions, politics and town government
- infrastructure and transportation

Thorough researchers and prolific writers, the Worthens not only collected materials but also created them. They wrote and published monographs, articles and letters to the editor; gave talks to a variety of audiences; and participated in numerous civic and social organizations. These activities are well-documented in the Worthen Collection materials.
Collection: Edwin B. Worthen Collection
Description: Wellington Estate, Concord Avenue and Pleasant Street.

"Here is a fine old estate but I cannot say when the picture was taken. My guess is in the early 1870s. This property is at the corner of Concord Avenue and Pleasant Street. The house was built in 1802 by Benjamin Wellington for his sons Benjamin and Peter. They were a prominent family in Lexington - the race-folk serving in every town office. From this farm was carried the first milk for retail delivery in Boston - in wooden containers. You will agree that the indications are that this had been a prosperous and flourishing farm for many years. And so it was - for these two sons who married and lived here back in 1802 had children: Benjamin raised 11 and Peter 12. Sounds more like an institution than a private residence! (This property is now occupied by the Minute-Man Golf Club.)"

Object ID: Worthen.slide73
Object Name: Transparency, Lantern-slide
People: Wellington, Benjamin, Jr.
Wellington, Benjamin, Sr.
Wellington, Peter
Search: Concord Avenue
Terms: Minute-Man Golf Club
Pleasant Street
Wellington Estate
Subjects: Agricultural facilities
Farm buildings
Farmhouses
Farms
Houses
Milk cans
Milk delivery
Title: Wellington Homestead, 1870s
Wellington estate (177 Concord Ave.)
Worthen maps: Cutler

Search Results for cutler
2 matching result found

Early Settlers at The Farms, Lexington M
Keywords: map, early settlers at the farms, lexington ma. depicts settlements, with names and dates, from approximately 1643-1695. cataloger note: drawn by edwin b. worthen, be used his monograph beginnings of lexington, 1924, p. 23. worthen.1002 abbott blodgett bowman bridge comes cutler fawcett fiske grimes hancock harrieton lawrence locke mason merriam monroe muzzey russell simonds smith stone tidd trask whittemore winsip land grants ma.

Map of Southwest Lexington and Lincoln M
Keywords: map of southwest lexington and lincoln ma, no date. 974 acres set off 1754, indicates family street names, cataloger note: drawn by edwin b. worthen, featured his book, tracing past lexington, massachusetts, 1930, see pp. 72-127 east village remember it, worthen.1002 brewer bridge brown bruce cary chadbourne chandler crosby crowningshield cutler davis dudley evans fiske gallegher hardley hastings hoar hoody howland jewett kendall laughton lawrence locke marrett martin muzzey nelson parker payson peak phinney reed rhoades savills seavens simonds smith spring stimson stone towksbury tufts wellington whitcomb maps

Return to Search Page
CML and Worthen collection: *maps*

- Maps created by Mr. Worthen (depicting 1600s, 1700s, early/mid-1800s)
- Sanborn Fire Insurance (1908, 1918, 1927; 1887-1935)
- Atlases (1875, 1889, 1898)
- Property maps (1982-2001)
- Street and precinct maps (1953…2002)
- Planning, zoning, open space (1966…1990)
Worthen photos:

Kite End
Packard Farm (272 Concord Ave.)
Foster House (353 Concord Ave.)
Summary

- Study CRS for clues
  - Individual Building Forms
  - Area Forms
  - Area Summaries, Period Summaries
- Search MLN catalog
- Search Worthen Virtual Exhibit
- Identify additional resources
  - Library and Worthen collections
  - Town, Historical Society, county, etc.
Key resources in CML and Worthen collections

- General histories (Hudson)
- Special materials (Historical Society papers, LHS student papers, vertical files, Lexington Minute man newspaper)
- Maps (Worthen and CML)
- Photographs (especially Worthen collection)
- Genealogies (vital records and family histories)
- Directories (street listings/phone books)
- Town publications (List of persons, Annual reports, planning/zoning)
- Assessor’s online database
Ask a Librarian

• Stop by the Reference Desk and we’ll get you started
• Call us 781-862-6288 to ask a quick question or make an appointment
• Send an e-mail to askcary@minlib.net to ask more in-depth questions or make an appointment

We look forward to helping you learn about your home’s history
Important web sites

- Cultural Resources Survey
  - http://historicsurvey.lexingtonma.gov/

- Minuteman Library Network catalog
  - http://find.minlib.net/iii/encore/home?lang=eng

- Worthen Collection Virtual Exhibit
  - www.carylibrary.org/worthen/

- Cary Library local history & genealogy resources
  - www.carylibrary.org/e-learning-research/lexington-history
Assessor’s Database

• 187 Spring St (1843): 2 owners since 1961
• 510 Concord Ave (1955): only 2 owners!
• 503 Concord Ave (1804): 2 owners since 1976
• 353 Concord Ave (1813): 3 owners since 1996
• 272 Concord Ave (1808): 4 owners since 1979
• 177 Concord Ave (1802): 3 owners since 1991
Additional resources: histories

• Hudson, *History of Lexington* (2 vols.)
• Kollen, *Lexington: from liberty's birthplace to progressive suburb*
• Sileo, *Historical Guide to open space...*
• Worthen, *Tracing the Past in Lexington*
• Worthen, *Calendar history 1620-1946* and Hinkle *Life in Lexington 1946-1995*
• *Lexington Minute-man newspaper*, 1871-
• *Collection of materials... vertical files*
Additional resources: research/papers

- Lexington Historical Society, *Proceedings*
- Canavan papers
- Worthen, *Beginnings of Lexington*
- Grady, *The architecture of Willard D. Brown*
- Wright Reinhardt, *Suburbanization and the rural domestic ideal in Lexington, 1875-1915*
- LHS students, *Investigating Lexington’s History*
- Worthen Collection: *documents*
Additional resources: *maps*

- **Worthen Collection**
  - Maps drawn by Mr. Worthen (depicting 1600s, 1775, 1830, 1853)
  - Sanborn Fire Insurance (1908, 1918, 1927; 1887-1935 on fiche)
  - Atlases (1875, 1889, 1898)

- **Cary Library collection**
  - Property maps (1982-2001)
  - Street and precinct maps (1953…2002)
  - Sanborn Fire Insurance maps (1935)
  - Planning, zoning, recreational, open space (1966…1990)
  - Atlases (1875 and 1889)
Additional resources: photographs

- Beverly Kelley, *Lexington: a century of photographs*
- Kollen, *Images of America: Lexington*
- Worthen Collection “Virtual Exhibit”
Additional resources: genealogies

- Family histories
- Worthen Collection
- Vital Records (Lexington, other MA cities and towns)
- Ancestry.com
- Torrey, *New England marriages prior to 1700*
- DAR, *Patriot index*
- NEHGS, *Register* (1847- )
Additional resources: *Town reports*

- List of Poll taxpayers, 1912-1928
- List of Persons, 1929-present
- Directories, 1890s-present
- Town planning and zoning studies
- Annual reports (also online)
Power of CRS: 12 Lois Lane

- Individual Building Form? *No*
- Any address on Lois Lane? *No*
- Area Form? *Yes*: AO, Bedford St. Duplexes
- 4 duplexes built 1913-1914

William J. Edwards died in March 1917 and by 1918 his widow, Florence, had sold all of the duplexes except what is now 81-83 Bedford Street which she continued to own until 1941 when it was sold to William and Anna Rice. Anna Rice retained ownership of the building until 1981. Lois Lane was laid out between 73-75 Bedford Street and 77-79 Bedford Street in 1975 and these two buildings were converted to condominiums in 1976.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Lexington Directories, various years.
*Lexington Minute-man*, August 15, 1913; November 5, 1914.
Lexington, Town of. List of Persons, various years.
Assessor’s Database
12 Lois Lane

Ownership History

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Sale Price</th>
<th>Certificate</th>
<th>Book &amp; Page</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
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Building Information

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Building Attributes

- STYLE: CONDO RESIDENTIAL
- MODEL: Res Condo
- Stories: 1 STORY
- Grade: C+
- Occupancy: 1
- Interior Wall 1: DRYWALL/SHTRK
- Interior Wall 2:
- Interior Floor 1: HARDWOOD
- Interior Floor 2:
- Heat Fuel: ELECTRIC
- Heat Type: FORCED AIR DUC
- AC Type: CENTRAL
- Total Rooms: 2 Bedrooms
- Total Bathrooms: 2 Full
- Total Half Baths: 0