

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no.	Form no.
A	21



Lexington

ss 72 Waltham St.

Aaron Parker Richardson
House

nt use Golden Hand Fabrics

nt owner _____

ption: _____

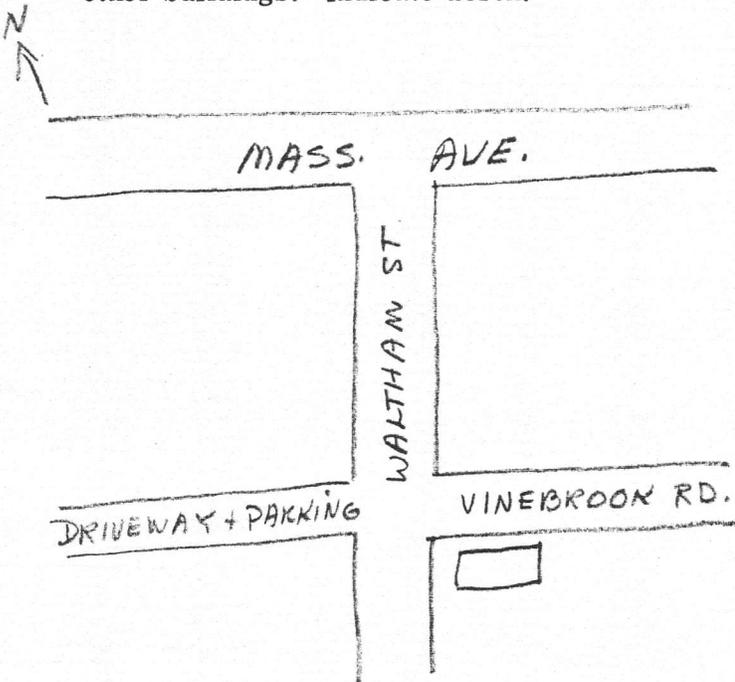
c. 1865

irce _____

Vernacular Grk Revival - late

tect _____

in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



Exterior wall fabric Clapboard

Outbuildings (describe) _____

Other features Brick foundation, gable end to street, first floor left entrance, door with round headed lights instead of upper panels.
(over)

Altered _____ Date _____

Moved _____ Date _____

5. Lot size:

One acre or less x Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage 60'

Approximate distance of building from street

6' to front steps

6. Recorded by E. W. Reinhardt

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date October, 1975

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant _____
MHC Photo no. _____

(over)

PHOTO
VINEBROOK
SOUTH A

AREA

A

FORM NO.

21

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116



Town Lexington

Address 72 Waltham Street

Historic Name Aaron Parker

Richardson House

Use: Present Residential

Original Residential

DESCRIPTION

Date c. 1853 - 1875

Source 1853 Map, 1875 Atlas

Style Vernacular/Greek Revival

Architect Unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric Clapboards

Outbuildings _____

Major Alterations (with dates) Ell

- added by 1875

Condition Good

Moved No Date _____

Acreage Ca. 1/4 acre

Setting One block from the major

intersection in Lexington's business

district in a predominantly commercial

area. A few 19th C. wood frame resi-

dential buildings are intermingled

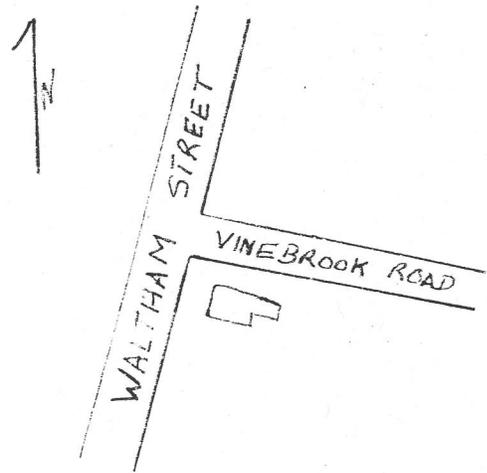
with 20th C. brick commercial buildings

Recorded by Anne Grady

Organization SPNEA

Date October 1988

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s). Indicate north



UTM REFERENCE _____

USGS QUADRANGLE _____

SCALE _____

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Aaron Parker Richardson House has integrity of location, design, materials, and feeling. Under Criterion C, the house has distinctive characteristics of form and construction reflective of mid-nineteenth century vernacular building practices in Lexington. The house is an example of the side hall, double-parlor plan - a plan type which appeared relatively belatedly in Lexington, where the two-cell, lobby-entry house predominated until the 1830s.

Only a small number of structures of this plan type and associated simple (Cont.)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Aaron P. Richardson House is a two and one-half story, side hall plan house with gable end toward the street. The Richardson House is a vernacular building with massing and trim influenced by the Greek Revival style. The exterior is clapboarded. Trim consists of plain corner boards, simple window and door frames and a single story porch across the facade fitted with three panelled posts. Fenestration is double hung wooden sash with narrow muntins. First-floor windows on the facade are taller than the others, reflecting the parlor function of the interior space. Second-story window frames retain an echinus-molded backband, possibly the configuration of all window frames initially. The upper story on the Waltham Street side retains early, if not original, skived clapboards. Elsewhere clapboards are more recent, having butt ends and wider weathers. (Continued)

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

The house was built between 1853 and 1875. It does not appear on the 1853 Map, but it is shown on the 1875 Map under the ownership of Aaron Parker Richardson.

Aaron Parker Richardson, born in Methuen in 1791, moved to Lexington in 1820. He married into the locally prominent Reed family in 1823. Richardson's occupation has not been identified. The 1875 Map shows him, however, to have been the owner of four houses and half a dozen sizeable parcels of land.

Richardson died in 1874, and his property, including the house at 72 Waltham Street, was inherited by his son, Chandler R. Richardson, a civil engineer and surveyor. After Chandler's death in 1897, the property passed to Bradley C. Witcher, local grain dealer.

The house at 72 Waltham Street was apparently occupied much of the 19th century by tenants, and was not the principal residence of any of its first three owners. Mrs. Charles Wetherbee, a widow, occupied the house in 1887, for example. (Continued)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Please see attached bibliography.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary of State, Boston

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

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT - Continued

...Greek Revival trim survive to illustrate indigenous building forms at mid-century in Lexington when the town was still a rural farming community. Other remaining examples include: 40 Fern Street (B Form 525), 847 Massachusetts Avenue (B Form 228), 996 Massachusetts Avenue (B Form 243), 49 Parker Street (B Form 426), and 113 Waltham Street (B Form 451).

The survival of the Richardson House in its present location adjacent to the central business district is particularly noteworthy. Once a part of a cohesive 19th century streetscape (see attached illustration), the Richardson House is one of the few 19th century vernacular wood frame structures to survive so close to Lexington's major intersection, and is the least altered.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE - Continued

Alterations apparently include the front door, Italianate in style with two arched, glazed panels, and a Victorian window with small stained glass panes on the left (north) wall of the entry. The foundation of the main body of the house is brick. There is a single, narrow central chimney. The single-story rear ell, added before 1875, has finishes and trim similar to those on the rest of the house. The ell foundation, however, is fieldstone.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE - Continued

The junction of Waltham Street, and Massachusetts Avenue, a block north of the Richardson House, had been the major crossroad in Lexington since the 17th century. As the town grew in the mid-19th century, and particularly after the introduction of the railroad in 1846, the center expanded and new streets were laid out. Waltham Street, one of the first areas to be built up, remained a locus of residential buildings until after World War II. Thereafter brick commercial buildings gradually replaced the majority of the houses.

Staple to Inventory Form at Bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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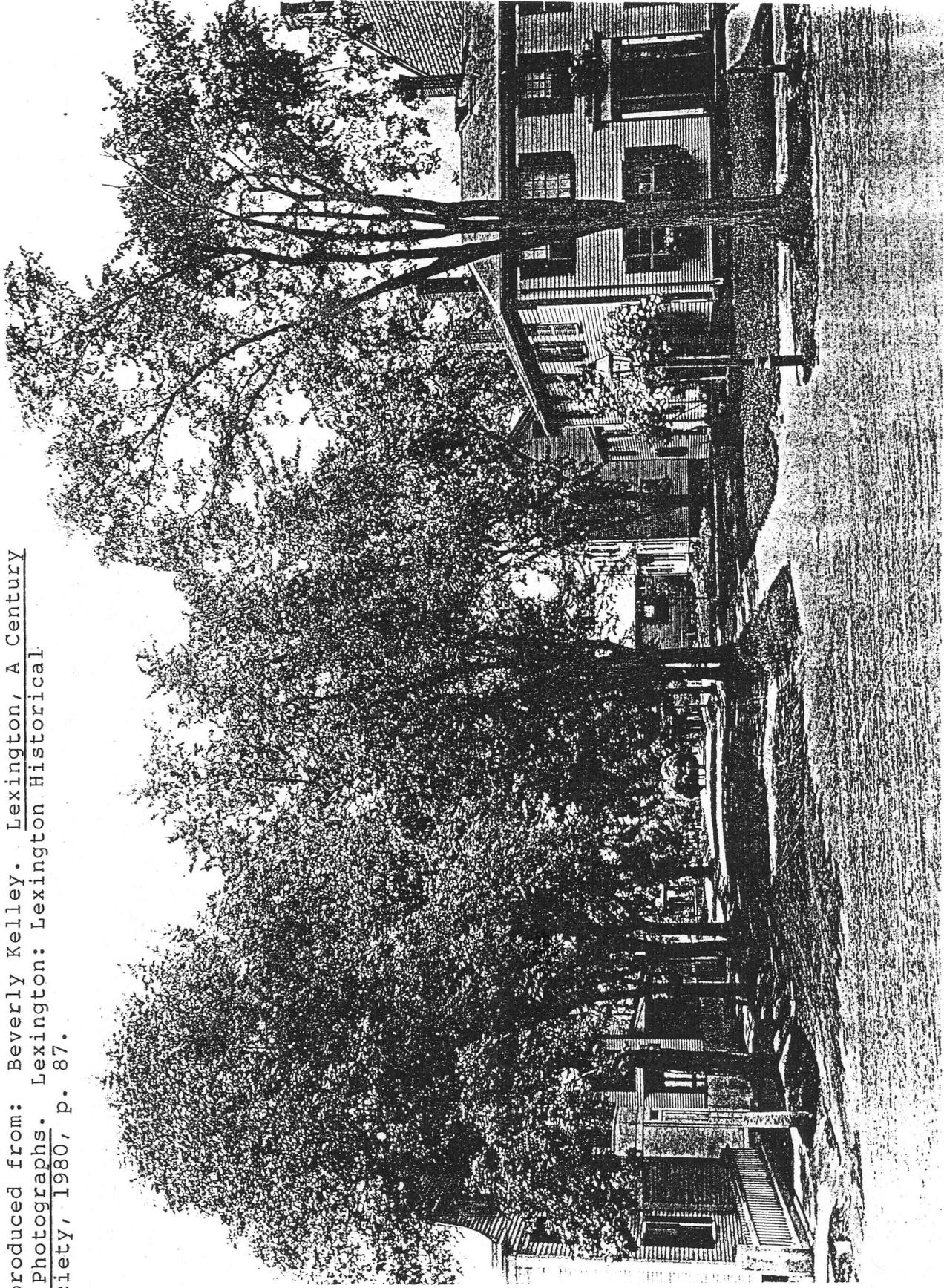
Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

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Reproduced from: Beverly Kelley. Lexington, A Century of Photographs. Lexington: Lexington Historical Society, 1980, p. 87.



VIEW DOWN WALTHAM STREET

Waltham Street about 1890 was a handsome tree-lined street when viewed from the corner of Massachusetts Avenue. Note Frank Holmes and

his hay wagon in the background. The Holmes residence is seen on page 90.

Lexington Historical Society