

FORM B -BUILDING

Assessor' number

USGS Quad

Area(s)

Form Number

Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard

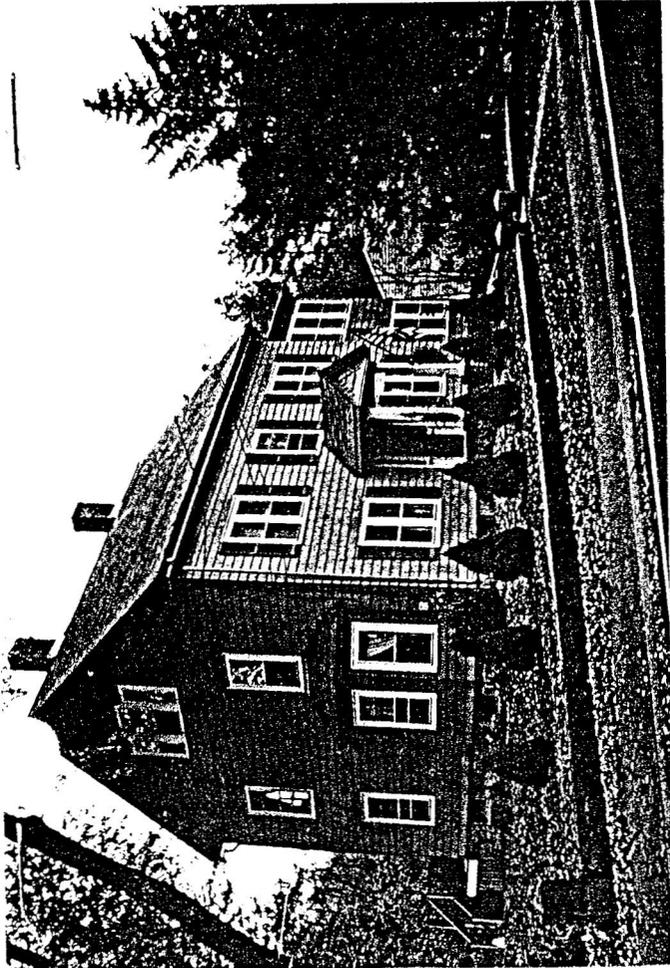
Map:45 Parcel: 12

Reading

112

oston, Massachusetts 02125

Town: North Reading, MA



Place (neighborhood or village)

Back Rowe

Address 31 North Street

Historic Name Eaton-Ober-LeFavor Farmstead

Use: Present Private residence

Original Farm house

Date of Construction c. 1890-1895

Source 1890 and 1910 N.R. real estate valuations, visual analysis

Style/Form Italianate/L-shaped

Architect/Builder Undetermined

Exterior Material

Foundation Two courses of small granite blocks

Wall Wood shingles

Roof Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures N/A

Major Alterations (with dates) Earlier side porch replaced by c. 1920s, two-story enclosed porch ell.

Condition Good

Moved yes no

Acreage 1.18 acres

Setting Situated at bend in North Street. The front yard is

enclosed by a low granite block border. Granite posts flank the front walk and appear at either end of the granite block border. Woodlands are located to the rear of this house.

Recorded by Edward W. Gordon

North Reading Historical Commission
ganization

Date(month/day/year) 17/10/2001

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION *see continuation sheet*

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Eaton-Ober-Le Favor Farmstead at 31 North Street 's construction date is difficult to determine (see below). It has the appearance of a two-story, rectangular, three-bay-by-two-bay late Italianate house. Perhaps this house's most curious feature is its foundation, which is composed of two courses of granite blocks. Prior to 1870, foundations were typically characterized by a single course of heavy, rectangular granite slabs. Local historical commissioner Patricia Romeo notes that local lore maintains that the house was moved from an unspecified location. Clad with wood shingles, the house is enclosed by a steeply pitched gable roof with return eaves. At the center of the main facade, the front door opens on to a small open porch exhibiting square posts which support a small gable roof. No longer extant are railing's turned balusters shown in an 1896 photograph included in Eaton's 250th Anniversary history. Double windows containing 1/1 wood sash flank the entrance bay. The windows are set off by louvered shutters. Projecting from the main block's west and east gables are a one-story polygonal bay and a two-story enclosed porch ell, respectively. Tripartite windows composed of standard-size center windows flanked by narrow windows illuminate the attic.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *see continuation sheet*

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

The origins of 31 North Street are not entirely clear. The 1795 Needham Map of Reading shows a house on or near this site labeled Russell Sheldon. The 1831 Hales Map indicates the presence of a building at this location. Town Assessor records list number 31's construction date as 1840. The 1857 Walling Map indicates that a house owned by an M. Eaton was located here. The foundation of the extant building, however, is composed of two courses of small granite blocks. Houses built before c. 1870 typically had a single course of granite blocks. In addition, the steeply pitched roof is more typical of post-1870 roof configurations.

The North Reading real estate valuation of 1870 lists neither an M. Eaton or a G. Ober on North Street. A G. Ober is identified as the property's owner in 1875. The dramatic increase in the value of a house on this site between 1890 and 1910 suggests that 31 North Street may have achieved its present appearance during the 1890s. The house as it now appears (with the exception of a c. 1920s enclosed two-story porch ell) is shown in Eaton's 1896 250th Anniversary History of Reading.

By 1890, Moses Eaton owned this property which included a house valued at \$300 as well as a barn (\$250), and a shop (\$10). Eaton's tract encompassed 28 acres valued at \$1250. His land was subdivided into a four-acre West Field (\$140); a three-acre North field (\$140), the twelve-acre Sheldon Pasture (\$240), a seven-acre North Pasture (\$140) and a two-acre meadow (\$30). The estimated value of 31 North Street, under the ownership of Woodbury P. Lefavor,

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES *see continuation sheet*

North Reading Maps/Atlases: 1795,1831,1857,1875,1889,1906; Town of North Reading Street List, 1966
North Reading Directories (Wakefield): 1896-97;1905;1907;1911-12; 1919-20;1931-1932;1941
Valuation of Real and Personal Estates, Town of North Reading: 1870;1890;1910;1920;1930
Massachusetts Historical Commission North Reading Reconnaissance Survey, c. 1980
Leary, Edward J., North Reading Excerpts at Random, 1971

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

