

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard

Map: 27 Parcel: 37

Reading

114

Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Town: North Reading, MA



Place (neighborhood or village) N/A

Address 178 North Street

Historic Name Benjamin Holt Farmstead

Use: Present Club house

Original Private residence

Date of Construction c. 1780 to 1800

Source Visual analysis of old photo in Le Page history

Style/Form Late Georgian

Architect/Builder Undetermined

Exterior Material

Foundation Granite block

Wall Vinyl

Roof Asbestos shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures N/A

Major Alterations (with dates) Vinyl siding added in 2001. At that time the main entrance's original Georgian door surround was replaced by "Colonial" enframments. Extensive side (east) and north wings added after c. late 1920s when residence is converted to a club.

Condition Good

Moved  yes  no

Acreage 0.92 acres

Setting Situated close to street with golf green to rear and wooded area with water tank across the street.

Recorded by Edward W. Gordon

Organization North Reading Historical Commission

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

## BUILDING FORM

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION *see continuation sheet*

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

Built around 1795, 178 North Street ranks among the most stylish and substantial Late Georgian farmsteads in North Reading. A vintage photograph of this residence in LePage's history of the town shows this building before the drastic changes of the mid- to late-twentieth century. Although sheathed in vinyl siding, 178 North Street retains the original, distinctive form of its main block. Mid twentieth century country club function room wings projecting from the rear wall and northeast corner may have replaced an original ell. The main block is a boxy, two-story, five-bay-by-five-bay residence which rests on a granite block foundation and is enclosed by a low, asphalt-shingle sheathed hip roof. The main facade's original center entrance surrounds were replaced by "Colonial" enframements in 2001. A second, formally enframed entrance is in evidence at the center of the west wall. Here, the door is flanked by fluted Doric pilasters and is surmounted by a multi-pane transom and a cornice-headed entablature.

The vintage photograph in Le Page's history shows shutters at the windows of the main and west elevations as well as 2/2 wood sash. This sash configuration evidently replaced the original 6/6 wood sash, which, in turn, has been replicated by the country club. The windows are presently devoid of shutters. Tall brick chimneys rise from the east and west roof slopes of the main block. The north roof slope's dormer represents a later addition of an undetermined date.

### 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) owners/occupants played within the community.*

Dating to the late eighteenth century and extant by 1795, 178 North Street was built for Benjamin Holt, a gentleman farmer who made a comfortable living "raising hops and catching wild pigeons." Holt invested his money in real estate and owned "a thousand acres of land, more or less, in the north section of town." Holt's land included "broad acres for farming just below" [his Georgian house]. Benjamin Holt was descended from "a prominent family in England, the most notable of whom was Lord Chief Justice Holt." The story of the Holt family in Massachusetts began with Nicholas Holt who, along with his wife and child, arrived in Boston in June, 1635, after a voyage of fifty-eight days. From Boston, Nicholas Holt went first to Newbury, Massachusetts and by 1644 had settled in Andover, MA. The sixth among the original settlers of North Reading's neighbor to the north, Nicholas Holt died in 1685 at the age of eighty three. Nicholas Holt had served Andover well, holding positions on important committees related to the public welfare and the laying out of roads.

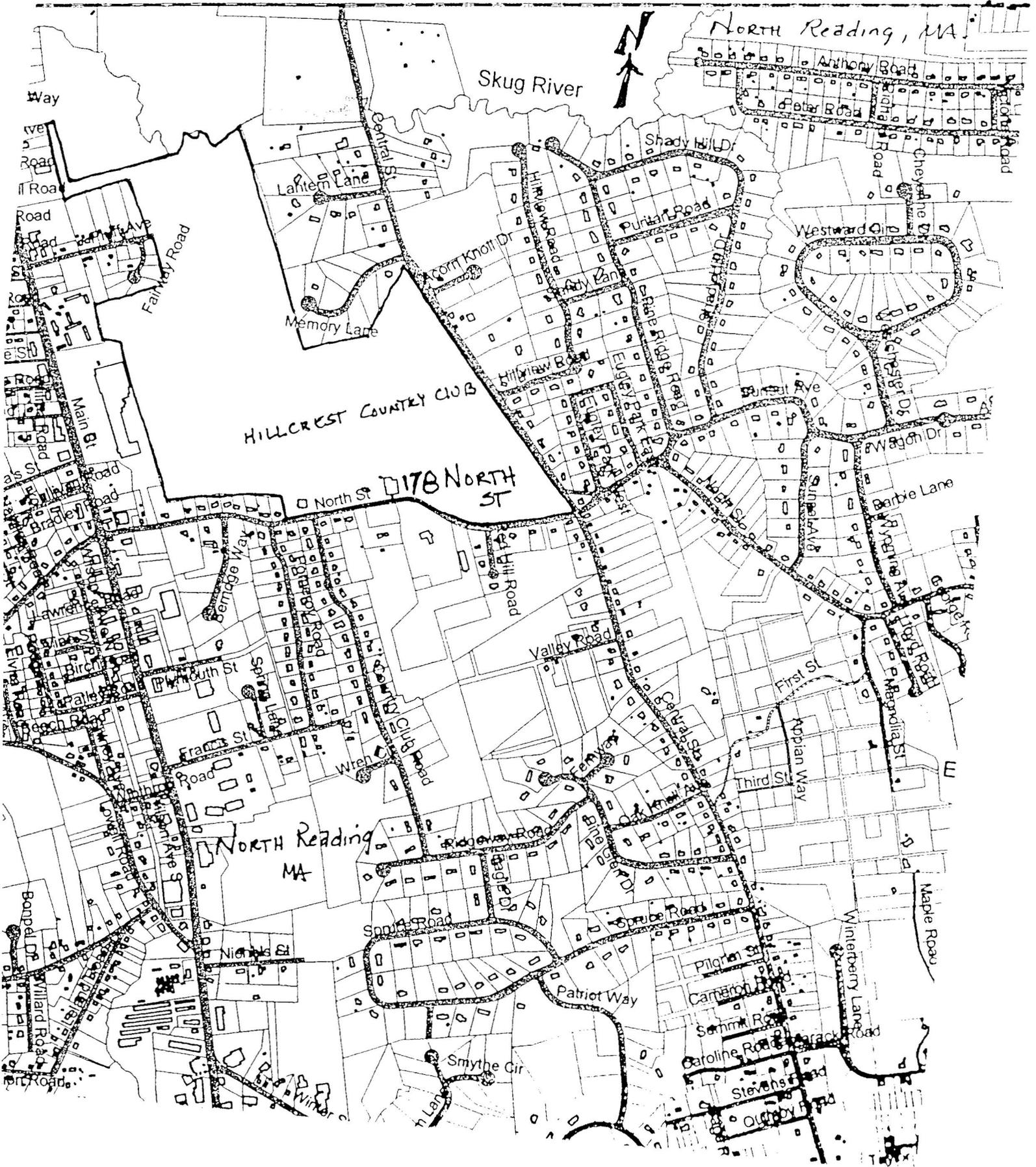
The story of North Reading's Holts begins with Joseph Holt, the grandson of Nicholas Holt of Andover. Joseph Holt's father was James Holt, the seventh child of Nicholas Holt. During the mid 1720s, Joseph Holt settled in the northern part of the then North Precinct of Reading. His eldest child, Joseph Jr. was born in 1727.

### 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  
Eaton, Chester W., & Warren Eaton, eds. Proceedings of the 250th Anniversary of the Ancient Town of N.R.  
Le Page, Samuel M. A History of North Reading, Tercentenary Edition  
Interview with Barbara Neiley, chairman, North Reading Historical Commission.

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

ANDOVER



North Reading, MA

Skug River

HILLCREST COUNTRY CLUB

178 NORTH ST

North Reading MA

Maple Road

Wintekerry Lane Road

Piloten St

Cameron Road

Sammki Road

Caroline Road

Stevens Road

Quincy Road

Third St

Appian Way

First St

Valley Road

Hill Road

North St

North St

Memory Lane

Laitem Lane

Shady Hill Dr

Puritan Road

Shady Hill Dr

North Knoll Dr

Way

ive Road

il Road

Fairway Road

Main St

Serridge Way

South St

Franch St

Wren

Way

ive Road

il Road

Fairway Road