

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	CON.333
<b>Historic Name:</b>	First Church of Christ Scientist
<b>Common Name:</b>	Merriam, Ephraim House - Colonial Inn Annex
<b>Address:</b>	7 Lowell Rd
<b>City/Town:</b>	Concord
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	Concord Center
<b>Local No:</b>	H9-1690
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	1832
<b>Architect(s):</b>	Bickford, John H. Company; Derby and Robinson; Derby, Richard; Miner, Charles N.
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	Colonial Revival; Federal
<b>Use(s):</b>	Church; Hotel or Inn; Single Family Dwelling House
<b>Significance:</b>	Architecture; Commerce; Religion
<b>Area(s):</b>	CON.A: Concord Monument Sq-Lexington Road Historic Dist. CON.DV: North Bridge - Monument Square Historic District
<b>Designation(s):</b>	Local Historic District (03/05/1973); Nat'l Register District (09/13/1977)
<b>Building Materials(s):</b>	Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Stucco; Wood; Wood Flushboard Foundation: Concrete Unspecified



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

The MACRIS database and scanned files are highly dynamic; new information is added daily and both database records and related scanned files may be updated as new information is incorporated into MHC files. Users should note that there may be a considerable lag time between the receipt of new or updated records by MHC and the appearance of related information in MACRIS. Users should also note that not all source materials for the MACRIS database are made available as scanned images. Users may consult the records, files and maps available in MHC's public research area at its offices at the State Archives Building, 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, open M-F, 9-5.

Users of this digital material acknowledge that they have read and understood the MACRIS Information and Disclaimer (<http://mhc-macris.net/macrisdisclaimer.htm>)

Data available via the MACRIS web interface, and associated scanned files are for information purposes only. THE ACT OF CHECKING THIS DATABASE AND ASSOCIATED SCANNED FILES DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LOCAL, STATE OR FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. IF YOU ARE REPRESENTING A DEVELOPER AND/OR A PROPOSED PROJECT THAT WILL REQUIRE A PERMIT, LICENSE OR FUNDING FROM ANY STATE OR FEDERAL AGENCY YOU MUST SUBMIT A PROJECT NOTIFICATION FORM TO MHC FOR MHC'S REVIEW AND COMMENT. You can obtain a copy of a PNF through the MHC web site ([www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)) under the subject heading "MHC Forms."

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

This file was accessed on: Friday, October 30, 2020 at 10:35 AM

Massachusetts Historical Commission

H9-1690

Concord

A

333

Massachusetts Archives Building

220 Morrissey Boulevard

Boston, Massachusetts 02125

NR: DIS; LHD

3/5173

Town Concord

Place (neighborhood or village) \_\_\_\_\_

Concord centerAddress 7 Lowell RoadHistoric Name First Church of Christ, ScientistEphraim Merriam HouseUses: Present churchOriginal dwellingDate of Construction ca. 1832-33; 1914Source Keyes/TolmanStyle/Form Colonial/Classical RevivalArchitect/Builder Derby & Robinson (Richard Derby): 1914 church

Exterior Material:

Foundation parged concreteWall/Trim stucco, with wood trimRoof asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures \_\_\_\_\_

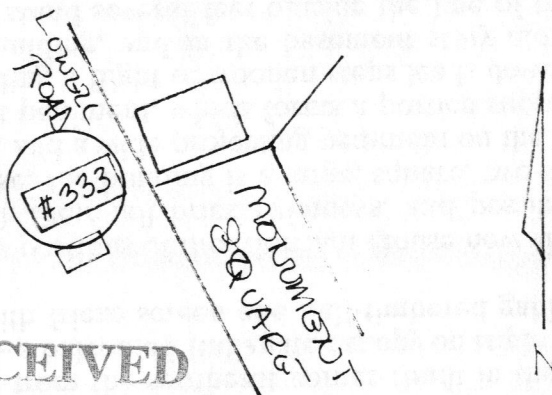
none

Major Alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

conversion and enlargement of house tochurch--1914. Rear addition ca. 1920.Condition goodMoved [X]no [ ] yes Date N/AAcreage 1 5/8 acreSetting On deep lot extending back to MillBrook; parking lot at rear. Faces northeastat outer end of Monument Square.

## Sketch Map

Draw a 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. Attach a separate sheet if space is not sufficient here. Indicate north.



RECEIVED

FEB 03 1997

MASS. HIST. COMM.

Recorded by Anne Forbes, consultant

research by Pam Swing and Anne Forbes

Organization Concord Hist. CommissionDate 11/96



BUILDING FORM

CON-333

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION [ X ] *see continuation sheet*

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

This vigorously classical church still has within it a portion of the 1832-33 Merriam House. Historic photographs show the house to have been a brick-ended, late Federal building much like the slightly earlier all-brick Hunt/Bartlett House to its north--five- by two bays, with a hipped roof and a single tall chimney rising from each end wall. Later additions included a three-bay clapboarded wing extending to the rear from the southeast corner (built in the third quarter of the nineteenth century), and two entry porches--a balconied Italianate canopy on triple square posts at the main entry, and a square Queen Anne porch with frieze screen and half-timbered gable at the south side entry on the wing.

The only portions of the Merriam House now visible from the exterior are the front corners of its hipped roof with their tall brick chimneys, and possibly the facade and northernmost side window openings. Otherwise, the building is a large, square, two-story structure with a tall glassed lantern in the center of the roof, and a wide projecting pediment on the facade and two sides. The main facade is recessed under the front pediment, which forms a portico supported on six Tuscan columns. Across the entire front of the building a flight of wooden steps leads down to the sidewalk. The present windows in the front part of the building, and in the basement story along the sides, are 6-over-6-sash. Both side walls of the building stand several feet outside the line of the Merriam House side walls. Each is surmounted by a broad center pediment with lunette vent, and is articulated by a line of five large multi-light round-topped windows. (Cont.)

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE [ X ] *see continuation sheet*

*Explain 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.*

Despite its ecclesiastical appearance, the Christian Science Church has importance both as the home of one of Concord's later religious societies and as one of the large residences that lined most of Monument Square and lower Lowell Road in the 1830's.

Ephraim Merriam House. The core of the building, not visible from the exterior, is a large house dating to 1832-33, which was built for one of the town's wealthiest entrepreneurs of the early nineteenth century, Ephraim Merriam (1796-1843). According to some accounts, to make way for the building he removed a very old house on the property, a saltbox that had belonged to Dr. Timothy Minot, Jr. in the eighteenth century. Born in the old family homestead at Merriam's Corner, like many of his generation, Mr. Merriam was a self-made man. In his early twenties he formed a partnership with his second cousins, Nathan and Cyrus Stow, and carried on a butchering business, Stows & Merriam, at 92 Walden Street, which later expanded to include a soap and candle factory (see Form #145.) In 1820 the town contracted with the three partners to run the town "poor farm" on Walden Street; in exchange, they were able to use much of the farm for their own business. (Cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES [X] *see continuation sheet*

Maps and Atlases: Merriam House: 1830, 1852, 1856, 1875, 1889, 1893, 1906; Sanborns 1897, 1903, 1909; Church: Sanborns 1918 and 1927.

"Returning to a Classic Precedent: Five Houses by Derby, Robinson, & Shepard," Architectural Record. XXXII, October, 1912.

Architecture. LXXIII, March 1936, supplement, p. 21.

Withey, Henry. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). 1956. (Cont.)

[ X ] Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places\*. If checked, a completed National Register Criteria Statement form is attached. \*within NR district boundaries.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Concord

7 Lowell Road  
First Church of Christ, Scientist

Area(s)  
A

Form No.  
333

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

The main facade entry has a double-leaf door with three panels and three glass panes across the top of each part. It is set in a tall, pilastered surround with a semi-circular fanlight and a deep cornice. A secondary entry in the southeast corner of the facade has an eight-paneled door, surmounted by a pediment.

The church is one of the few stuccoed buildings in Concord center. All architectural trim is wood, embellished with a variety of classical motifs. The side walls are punctuated with wood pilasters at the corners and between the window bays, and the entablature includes a frieze embellished with triglyphs, and a molded, boxed cornice with large mutules. The pediments are flushboarded.

The architect for the church was Richard Derby of Derby & Robinson, Boston. Richard Derby (1878-1936), grew up in Concord in the large Derby family of West Concord. He became a member of the Boston Society of Architects, AIA in 1914, the same year the church was built. The partnership, which maintained offices on Beacon Hill, was briefly Derby, Robinson, & Shepard, and later Derby, Barnes, & Champney. Mr. Derby specialized in the design of houses, and prior to the building of the church, he had designed several large Colonial and Classical Revival mansions for Concord residents, including the homes of Frederick Cheney, Murray Ballou, Francis Shepley, and Mrs. E.S. Barrett.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, cont.

Both Ephraim Merriam and Cyrus Stow were also incorporators of the 1828 Milldam Company, which developed the commercial area on the Milldam. The Stow and Merriam partnership was dissolved in 1831 upon the death of Nathan Stow. Mr. Merriam then went into the wood and lumber business in Lowell with Reuben Moore (son of Deputy Sheriff Abel Moore). For many years, partly in concert with Daniel Shattuck (see Form #298), he also invested in Lowell real estate, where he made his fortune buying and selling property in the heat of the early days of the industrial revolution. When he died of consumption in 1843 at the age of 47, his estate was the largest that had ever been inventoried in Concord. A highly-respected citizen, Mr. Merriam served on several town committees, including the committee for the building of the Battle Monument, and was elected State Representative in 1838, 1839, and 1840, and State Senator in 1841. At times he was referred to as "Captain Merriam"; the title of Captain is likely to be from one of the local military organizations that were active in the early nineteenth century, the Concord Artillery or the Light Infantry.

Mr. Merriam was a bachelor, and apparently rented out part of the house to tenants. Among them were the Rev. Hersey Goodwin, assistant minister of the First Parish Church under Dr. Ripley in the 1830's, J.P. Hayward (Heywood), proprietor of the old "Green Store" across the common on the site of the present St. Bernard's Church, and, in the early 1840's, attorney Col. Albert H. Nelson, (John Keyes' former law partner, and later chief justice of the Superior Court of Suffolk County), and his wife, Elizabeth.

Most of Mr. Merriam's estate was inherited by his sister, **Mary (Merriam) Ball**. She and her husband, **Nehemiah Ball** (1791-1860), who had been living at 57 Lexington Road (see Form #310), moved here with their children upon her brother's death in 1843. The Balls had five daughters and two sons. One of the sons died in 1850, shortly after graduating from Harvard, and the other, Nehemiah, nicknamed "Ninkie", was convicted and served time in prison for forgery and theft from the Merriam estate. It is said that ~~during that~~ while he was in prison his sisters never left the house, and that after he returned to Concord, it was he who was never seen in town in the daytime, only venturing out to walk after dark. (Cont.)



## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Concord

7 Lowell Road  
First Church of Christ, Scientist

Area(s)  
A

Form No.  
333

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, cont.

With the addition of a large rear wing between 1852 and 1875, the house had room for many occupants. All of Mary and Nehemiah's daughters lived here throughout their adult lives. At least two of them, Angelina and Elizabeth Ball, were teachers. After the Civil War they went south with Jane Hosmer to teach in a rural school in Summerville, South Carolina, under the New England Freedmen's Aid Society. Another daughter, Maria Augusta, lived here with her second husband, William Frederick Hurd, after their marriage in the 1850's. W.F. Hurd, who died in 1899, was responsible for the development of considerable real estate at Concord center, including the River and lower Elm Street area, the house at 47 Lowell Road, and, next door to this property, the refurbishment of the Masonic Hall. (See Forms #336 and 332). Between 1891 and 1906, Mrs. Hurd's daughter, Marcella (Simonds) Brown and her husband, William Henry Brown, a dry-goods dealer in Boston, also lived part of the year here. (See Form #398--35 River Street).

**Angelina Ball** outlived her siblings by many years; she died in 1907 at the age of 80. For a short time her heirs rented the house to tenants, and for a few years to the Colonial Inn as an annex. Then, in about 1911 (some sources say 1914), the property was purchased by the Christian Science church.

The Christian Science Church. Christian Scientists had been gathering in private homes in Concord since at least 1890--for a time in the home of Miss Annie Blaisdell on Thoreau Street, and later, from 1899 to 1903, at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Brown at 349 Main Street (see Form #63). In 1904, with a group of about twenty led by the Browns, a local Society, the First Society of Christian Science in Concord, was formed, and met for about a year in Masonic Hall, where Mr. Brown continued to serve as First Reader. They next held services in the former county courthouse, owned by the Middlesex Mutual Fire Insurance Company, across the square, where in 1908 they officially became a branch of the mother church and were incorporated as the First Church of Christ Scientist, Concord. (See Form #301).

A church building fund was established, and, under Charles Brown as both the society's president and chairman of the building committee, the former Merriam House, with three acres, was purchased. The architectural firm of Derby & Robinson was hired to design the radical alterations and additions to the Merriam House, and local builder Charles Miner was employed for the construction, which was completed enough by the end of 1914 to allow the first services to be held there. The building had its formal dedication in 1916.

A Christian Science Reading Room, which first opened in the Insurance Company building, has been located at 199 Sudbury Road for many years.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY, cont.

Concord Directories.

The Concord Enterprise. 5/17/1916.

"Historical Sketch Read at the Dedication of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, May 14, 1916".

Jarvis.

Keyes/Tolman. "Houses in Concord."

Shattuck.

Social Circle Memoirs: Ephraim Merriam, Cyrus Stow, Nehemiah Ball, Albert Nelson, Charles Brown. Teele, ed. The Meetinghouse on the Green.

Wheeler House File #Mo3.

CON-333

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town

Property Address

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s)

Form No.

CON	333
-----	-----

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
 DIVISION OF INSPECTION  
 PLAN RECORD

CASE *B* RACK *1* APART. *48* NO. *33837*

BUILDING *First Church of Christ Scientist* STORIES

CITY OR TOWN *Concord* STREET *Concord Square*

TO BE USED FOR *Sunday School, Auditorium, CLASS Reading Room*

OWNER *First Church of Christ Scientist*

ARCHITECT *John H. Bickford Co.*

CERTIFICATE APPROVAL—SPECIFICATION REQUIREMENTS—REFERRED

DATE *June 30, 1926*

INSPECTOR *Richard F. Beyer.*

Form 41, 2000, 1-26 No. 4051 BOSTON INDEX CARD CO M1152