

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	CON.452
Historic Name:	Cuming, Dr. John House
Common Name:	Concord Reformatory - Superintendent's House
Address:	998 Elm St Reformatory Cir
City/Town:	Concord
Village/Neighborhood:	West Concord
Local No:	77, D8-1918
Year Constructed:	c 1754
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	Colonial
Use(s):	Administration Office; Agricultural; Other Governmental or Civic; Single Family Dwelling House; Workers Housing
Significance:	Agriculture; Architecture
Area(s):	CON.I: Concord Reformatory CON.EB: Cuming, Dr. John House
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register Individual Property (11/11/1977)
Building Materials(s):	Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Wood; Wood Clapboard Foundation: Granite; Stone, Cut; Stone, Uncut



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

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INVENTORY FORM B
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

1. Is this site historically significant to:
Town Concord Commonwealth NR Nation

Site has historical connection with the following themes:

Agriculture	Commerce/Industry
Architecture	Science/Invention
Art/Sculpture	Travel/Communication
Education	Military Affairs
Government	Religion/Philosophy
Literature	Indians
Music	Development of Town/City

2. Town Concord
Street Reformatory Circle
Name Deputy Supt. Residence
Original Owner Dr. John Cuming
Original Use Dwelling 992 Elm St
Present Owner Commonwealth of Mass.
Present Use Dwelling
Date 1750 Style salt box colonial
Architect builder

3. CONDITION: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Moved Altered AREA I

IMPORTANCE of site to area: Great Moderate None Detrimental Endangered

4. DESCRIPTION

FOUNDATION: High Regular None Material

MATERIAL: Frame (cover: wood) Brick Stone

STORIES: 1 2 3 4 CHIMNEYS: 1 2 3 4 Center End Cluster Elaborate Irregular

PLAN: Symmetrical/Asymmetrical Simple/Complex Attached: Ells Stable Dependency

PORCHES: 1 2 3 4 Portico Balcony Interior: Gallery/porch

ROOF: Ridge Gambrel Flat Hip Mansard
Tower Cupola Gables 1 2 3 4 Balustrade Grillwork

FACADE: Gable End: Front/Side Symmetrical/Asymmetrical Ornate Simple/Complicated

Cornice: Simple/Ornate Narrow/Wide Deep/Shallow Dentils/Brackets

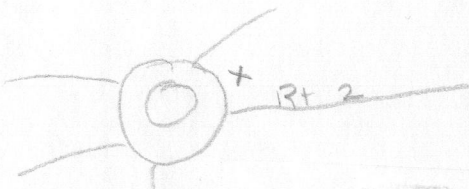
Entrance: Front/Side Centered Double Features:

Windows: Spacing: Regular/Irregular Identical/Varied

Corners: Plain Pilasters Quoins Obscured

OUTBUILDINGS LANDSCAPING

5. Indicate location of site on map below



6. Footage of structure from street 25'
Property has feet frontage on street

Recorder

For

(Name of Organization)

09.065. 1565 map 77

NOTE: Recorder should obtain written permission from Commission or sponsoring organization before using the form.

PLEASE INDICATE ANY INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (For use with important structures)

Fireplaces _____

Stairway _____

Other _____

PLEASE GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF SITE (Refer to the theme circled on front of form. What happened? Who important? When? Comment)

DESCRIPTION

FOUNDATION: High Regular loose material _____

MATERIAL: Frame (cover: _____) Bricks: None _____

STOPIES: 1 2 3 4 CHIMNEYS: 1 2 3 4 Corners: End Gables: Irregular _____

PLAN: Symmetrical/Asymmetrical Simple/Complex Attached: Elliptical Dodecagonal _____

Reference: (How was this information obtained? Guide book; records: town; state; word of mouth, etc.) _____

Bibliography _____

Deed Information: Book _____ Page _____ Registry of Deeds _____

AREA SURVEY - FORM A
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

3. Please comment on the Historical or Architectural importance of this area

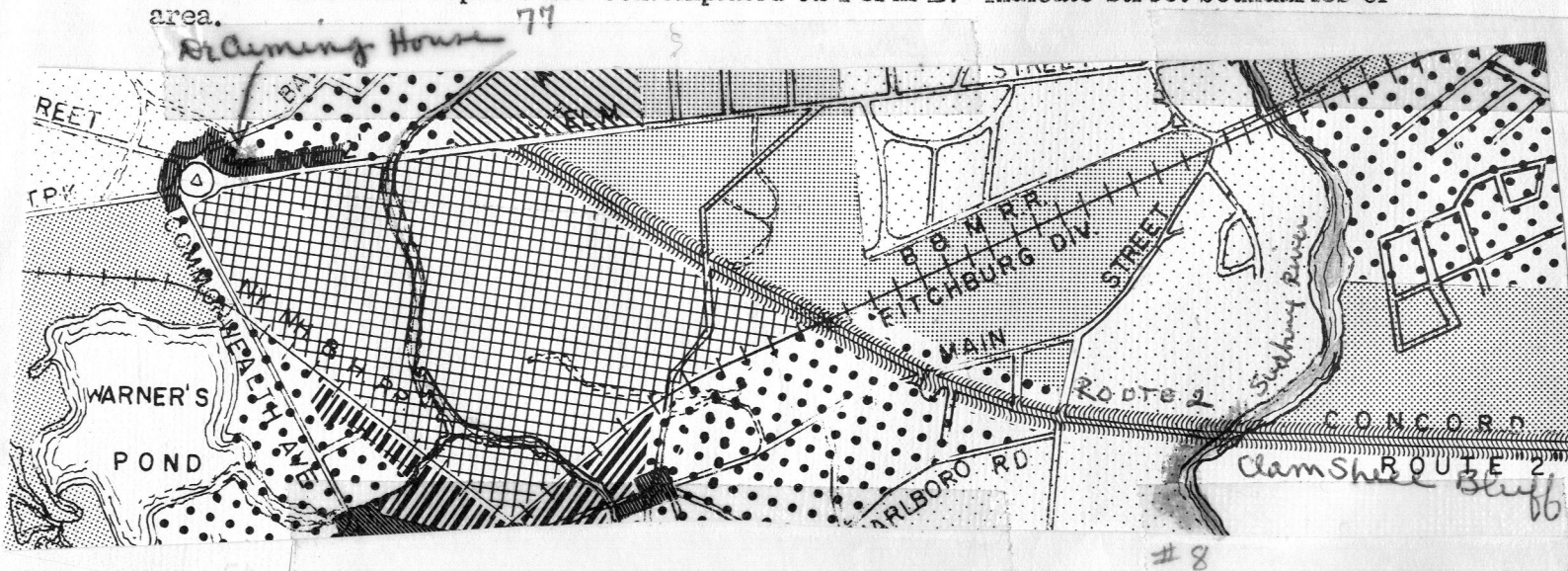
Dr. John Cuming was a country doctor and Lt. Col in the French and Indian War. He presided at 70 Town meetings before and during the Revolution.

He left a large legacy to Harvard College which was used, as he directed to start Harvard Medical School

He was Concord delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1779? 1779?

1. Town Concord 77 CON. 452
2. Name of area or section Route 2
Reformatory Circle
3. General Date or period: 1775
4. Is the area uniform? Uneven
In style _____
In condition _____
In type of ownership Comm of man
In use (Explain) residence of Deputy Supt. of Concord Reformatory
could be easily moved to nearby site
5. Is area potentially threatened? _____
By Zoning _____
By Roads: by widening of Route 2
By Developers _____
By Deterioration _____

7. Draw a general map of the area involved. Please indicate in red any known historic sites on which individual reports are contemplated on Form B. Indicate street boundaries of area.



Recorder Ruth R. Wheeler

For Concord Antiquarian Society
(Name of Organization)

2.09.065.2.177

Set # 77. also.

NOTE: Recorder should obtain written permission from Commission or sponsoring organization before using this form.

H-2



Dr. Cummings House
Reformatory Circle
(CON. 452)

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

CON-452

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

Concord

998 Elm Street
John Cuming House

Area(s)
I

Form No.
452; 1806, 1807

Additional information by Anne Forbes, December, 2000:

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL: D8-1918; 3.5 acres

SEE NATIONAL REGISTER FORM, 1977

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION, cont.

An interior inspection in October, 2000 lent support to the traditional construction date of sometime early in the third quarter of the eighteenth century for this house. It is a south-facing side-gabled, five-by-one-bay building--a configuration typical of that era--with a two-story northeast rear ell which appears to have been built several decades later. The main house would originally have had a massive center chimney; the present small off-center brick ridge chimney probably post-dates 1900. The center interior lobby entrance with three-run stair, however, is intact. The building is clapboarded, with an asphalt-shingle roof and a fieldstone and granite-block foundation.

Most of the windows in the house are 6-over-6-sash in slightly projecting, molded surrounds of an early-nineteenth-century appearance. The door in the main center entry is a variation on a transitional Greek Revival type, with six-panels with applied moldings (two sets of paired small panels appear above and below two very long panels), and is flanked by a pair of full-length divided sidelights. The overhanging roof cornice, with boxed eaves, and returns on the gable ends, may represent a nineteenth-century update of about the same time as the door. The cornerboards are narrow, and a water table adds a finish to the walls above the foundation. The pedimented canopy and posts at the main entry, and the open hip-roofed porch along the west end, are additions of the 1920s or 1930s.

Interior features

The timber frame of the main house, visible in the attic and basement, is consistent with the traditional construction date in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Basement joists are approximately 4 x 3" in dimension, spaced 21 1/2 inches on center; the roof is framed with principal rafters meeting at a four-sided ridge beam, and has two sets of purlins supporting vertical roof boards. In the finished portions of the main interior, the major framing members--plates, girts, corner posts, and longitudinal first-story summer beams--are cased. Plates and girts are joined on the same plane. One curious feature in the west room of the first story is what appear to be two additional summer beams, (possibly early-twentieth-century decorative elements) parallel to the center one.

Outbuildings

Two clapboarded outbuildings stand close together on stone foundations directly behind the rear ell of the house. Their roofs are asphalt shingle, both aligned with their ridges parallel to the ridge of the main house roof. The southernmost outbuilding is a tall, narrow two-story ca. 1890s **carriagehouse** (#1806); the other is a long one-story **garage** (#1807) of early modern or mid-twentieth-century vintage. Each building has a wide wooden sectional (overhead) garage door in its east gable end. The garage has a pair of vertical-board carriage doors in the west gable end.

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

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

Concord

998 Elm Street
John Cuming House

Area(s)

I

Form No.

452; 1806, 1807

CON-452

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, cont.

The owner for whom this house is known, **Dr. John Cuming** (1728-1788), was the son of a distinguished Scotsman, Robert Cuming (See 383 Cambridge Turnpike, #158), and one of Concord's first true country squires. Dr. Cuming married Abigail Wesson in 1753, and it is believed that the house was built for their wedding. During their time it was the centerpiece of a farm of over 200 acres, with land on both sides of the Assabet River, and extending west to the Acton border. A house appears at about this location under Dr. Cuming's name on Benjamin Brown's 1754 map of the North Quarter.

A well-educated man, John Cuming attended Harvard, and completed his medical studies in Edinburgh. He later received an honorary Master of Arts from Harvard in 1771. During the French and Indian Wars he attained the rank of Lt. Colonel, and was captured, beaten, and taken to Canada for a time. During the 30+ years he lived in this house he held many important offices, including Representative to the General Court, and Moderator of ninety Town Meetings from 1763 to 1788. In spite of some initial reluctance to sign the Solemn League and Covenant against the consumption of British goods, he became a staunch patriot, and for most of the Revolution he served on the Committees of Correspondence, Inspection, and Safety. He was also one of two delegates from Concord to the constitutional convention in Boston in 1779. He was appointed a Justice of the Peace under both the Crown and the Provincial Congress, and presided over the Court of General Sessions for about twenty years. During the Revolution, he treated the wounds of both Colonial and British soldiers. He received a commission as General to lead the Massachusetts forces to Fort Ticonderoga in 1776, but resigned it at the urging of his wife, who had bitter memories of her husband's captivity during the French and Indian War.

Dr. Cuming speculated extensively in real estate. He was a proprietor of Marlow, New Hampshire, and of Brandon and Leicester, Vermont. In 1762, in partnership with several other Concord men, he bought Township Number Four in the Berkshires and sold it off to settlers. The purchase, of which he was the organizer, and for which the initial meetings were held in the Cuming house, later became the towns of Cummington and Plainfield.

Over the years Dr. Cuming accumulated considerable wealth, and when he died he left, among his other generous bequests, 300 pounds sterling to establish a professorship of physic (medicine) that, along with other donations and with the appointment of Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse and Dr. John Warren as the first professors, became the origin of Harvard Medical School. He had two former slaves, Bristo (Brister) and Jem, who each received 35 pounds sterling in his will.

After Dr. Cuming's death in 1788, the property was sold to **Maj. James Price**, who died in 1802. The house and farm are shown under the name of **K. A. Shaw** in the 1850s; the owner from at least 1875 through 1906 is shown as **George H. Pierce**. Apparently early in the twentieth century the farm was acquired by the Commonwealth as part of the Massachusetts Reformatory property, associated with the prison across the street (See Area Form I: **Concord Reformatory**). For many years it was the dwelling of the Deputy Superintendent; today, using the address of 999 Barretts Mill Road, it houses the Massachusetts Department of Correction's Victim Services Unit.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community	Property
Concord	998 Elm Street John Cuming House
Area(s)	Form No.
I	452; 1806, 1807

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES, cont.

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998 Elm St.
(CON. 452)



998 Elm Street
(CON. 452)



Left: Carriage House (CON. 1806)
Right: Garage (CON. 1807)



Lobby entrance



NW First
Story Room