

# FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

22/35	Reading		404
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

**Town:** Reading

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*) Downtown

## Photograph



**Address:** 601-607 Main Street

**Historic Name:** Manning Block

**Uses:** Present: commercial

Original: commercial

**Date of Construction:** 1898

**Source:** Town valuation records

**Style/Form:** Queen Anne (alt.)

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

## Exterior Material:

Foundation:

Wall/Trim: vinyl siding, wood

Roof: tar & gravel

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
none

## Major Alterations (*with dates*):

date unknown? – remodeling of storefronts, vinyl siding  
1998 – new building to north (#607)

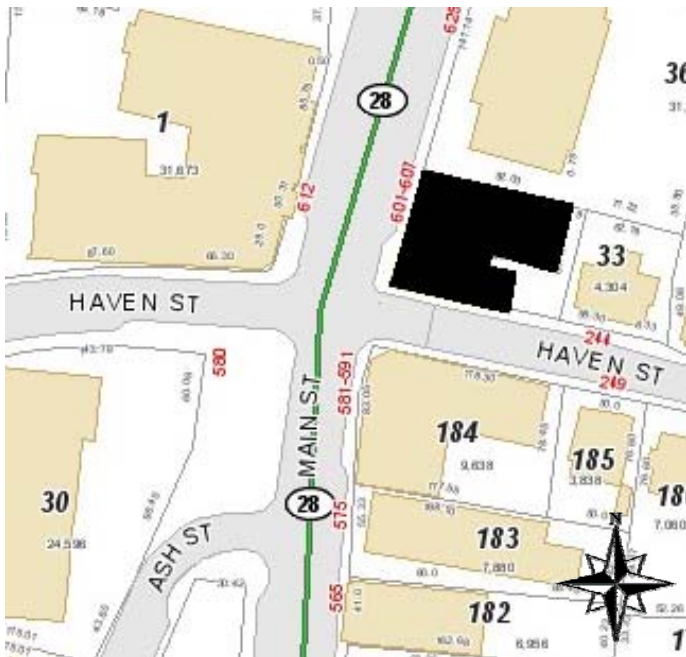
**Condition:** fair (due to siding)

**Moved:** no | x | yes | | **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acreage:** 0.17 acre

**Setting:** mixed downtown area

## Topographic or Assessor's Map



**Recorded by:** Lisa Mausolf

**Organization:** Reading Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): June 2010

**RECEIVED**  
**AUG 20 2010**  
 MASS. HIST. COMM.

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

READING

601-607 Main Street

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

Located at the northeast corner of Main and Haven Streets, the Manning Block is a two-story, late 19<sup>th</sup> century commercial block dominated by three large, three-sided bay windows projecting from the second story of the Main Street façade. The block has seen a number of alterations in recent years including the application of vinyl siding, modern 1/1 windows, vinyl shutters and a single-story addition to the north. Significant surviving historic features include the entrance to the upper story which is almost centered on the Main Street façade. The wall adjacent to the entrance displays a (wooden) rusticated or quined effect. Simple pilasters support a wooden pediment that is currently concealed by a canopy. The vestibule is decorated by full-height wall paneling with deeply recessed panels. The door leading upstairs is a modern metal and glass unit. The storefront to the north of this entry is also largely intact and retains a recessed entrance with paneled walls and paneled apron under the large display window. The single glazed wooden door is also original. The two storefronts to the south have seen more alterations. To the north of the block, the single-story storefront was constructed in 1998 and was built on the same footprint as the 1841 Parker and Stone store which it replaces.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*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.*

This commercial block (originally 183 Main Street) was constructed by Edwin Manning at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on part of what had been Sylvester Harnden's large millyard in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Manning purchased the property about 1878 and initially worked as a furniture maker. In 1884 the entire millyard was leveled by fire and Manning turned to other pursuits including that of builder. Manning subsequently built the rowhouses at 256-274 Haven Street in 1886 on part of the millyard property. In 1898 he moved the old house which had stood at the northeast corner of Main and Haven Streets to 60-62 Salem Street to make way for this business block. Town valuation records indicate that in 1898 Edwin's wife, Frances, was the owner of a store on Main Street valued at \$8,000.

By 1900 the block had been acquired by Luther G. Howard. It remained in the Howard family for many years. The property was owned by Emily Howard in 1936 and later passed to Charles P. Howard. Later owners included John and Ruth Khorkhorian. The building underwent an addition and alterations in 1958. The single-story section to the north of the Manning Block was constructed in 1998. It stands on the site of the Parker and Stone store which opened in 1841 and was the longest operated store in town.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Adams, Virginia and Roberta Sullivan. *Around the Square*. Prepared for the Reading Historical Commission, 2005.

Reading Directories, various dates.

Reading 350<sup>th</sup> Book Committee. *At Wood End – Reading, Massachusetts 1644-1994, A Pictorial History*, 1994: 163

Town of Reading. Valuation of Real and Personal Estates, various dates.

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Entrance to upper level

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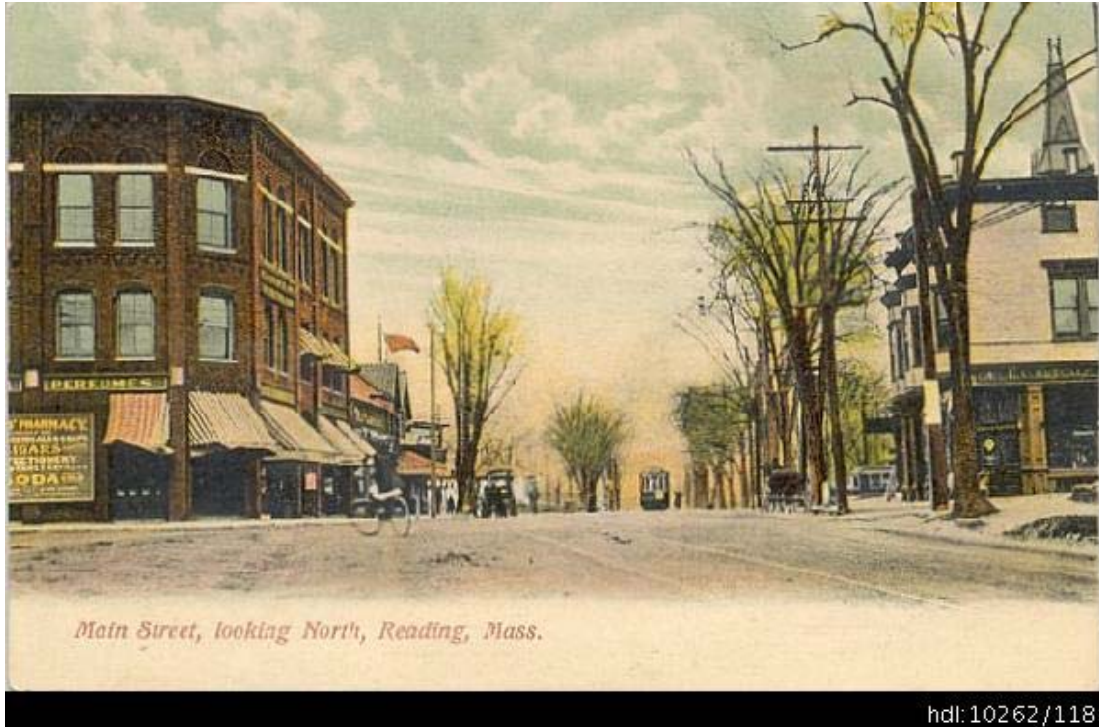
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Main Street, looking north (Manning Block at right)

Source: Reading Public Library, Murphy Postcard Collection,  
NOBLE Digital Library Archive

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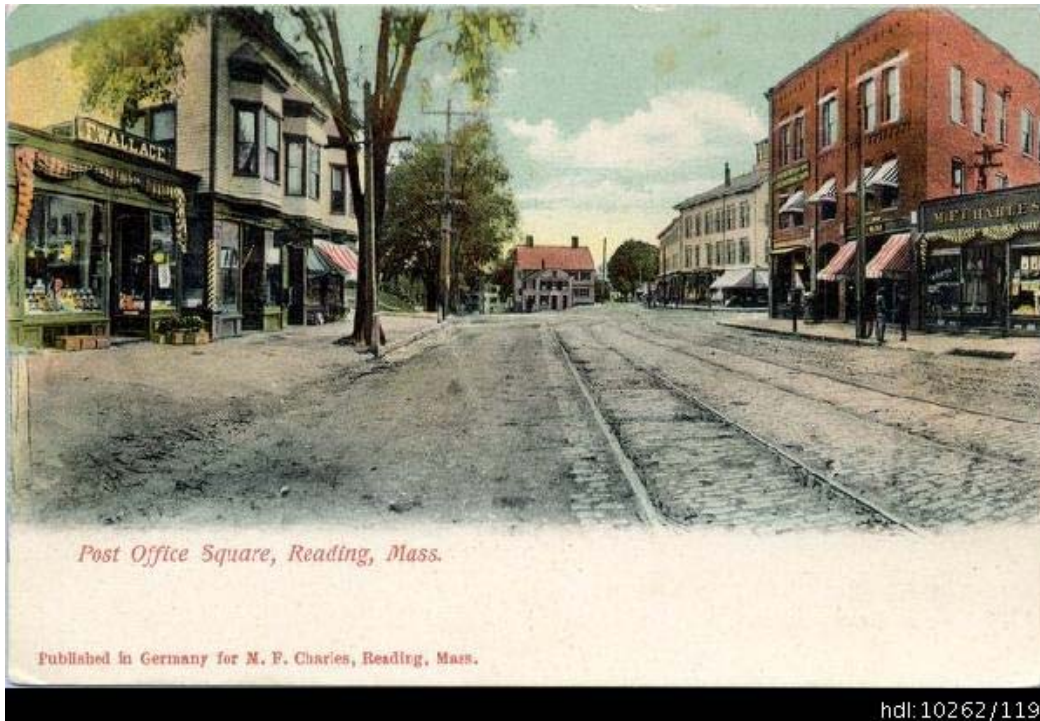
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Undated historic view looking south on Main Street (Manning Block is 2<sup>nd</sup> building from left)

Source: Reading Public Library, Murphy Postcard Collection,  
NOBLE Digital Library Archive

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E.C. Metcalf's store, 1904

Source: Reading Public Library, Murphy Postcard Collection,  
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Undated photo showing Manning Block at center (looking NE)

Source: Reading Historical Commission.