

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

15/54	Reading		426
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Photograph



Town: Reading

Place: (*neighborhood or village*)

Address: 20 Perkins Avenue

Historic Name: Willard & Luella Roberts House

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: 1915

Source: water department records; *Chronicle* 1/7/1916

Style/Form: Tudor Revival

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: rubble

Wall/Trim: stucco/wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

garage

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

1974 – screen porch

1999 – addition

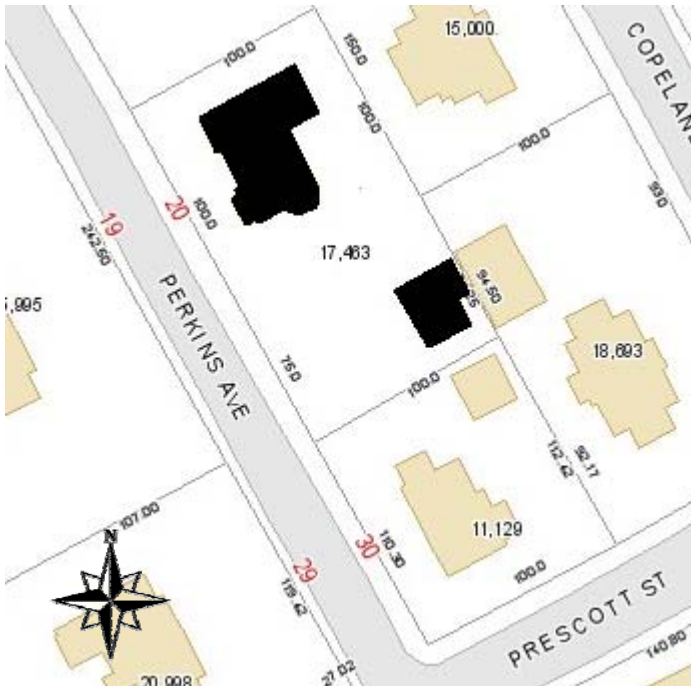
Condition: good

Moved: no | x | yes | | **Date** _____

Acreage: 0.40 acre

Setting: mixed 20th century residential neighborhood

Topographic or Assessor's Map



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Reading Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): December 2009

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INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

READING

20 Perkins Avenue

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

426

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.

The house at 20 Perkins Avenue is representative of the Tudor Revival style, one of numerous eclectic modes which found popularity in the early 20th century, based loosely on early English building traditions. The 2½-story, side-gabled residence is basically rectangular in plan and the pitch of the gables is not especially steep as is usually the case. Tudor-inspired detailing includes the use of stucco wall cladding and decorative half-timbering in a grid pattern in the gables. The overhanging eaves are supported by triangular knee braces at the base of each gable. At the base of the front gable, the small entry porch has a shed roof supported by plain posts and shelters a pair of wooden settees in front of the diamond-paned front door. Windows consist primarily of groupings of 6/1 double-hung sash but there are also multi-light casements and diamond-paned windows. At the north end of the house what had been an open porch has been enclosed with siding and modern tripartite windows. To the southeast of the house is a detached garage.

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.

Perkins Avenue was laid out on what had been the Alfred Perkins estate in 1911. This house (originally 7 Perkins Avenue) was constructed for Willard and Luella Roberts in 1915 on what was lot 9 and part of lot 8 of the subdivision. The water was turned on September 2, 1915. The couple was still living here in 1920 when Willard was 46; no occupation is listed for him. By 1930 the Roberts were living at 40 Temple Street. The Perkins Avenue house was occupied in 1930 by Joseph Knight who was employed as treasurer of a woolen company. He occupied the house with his wife Edith and a servant. Edith Knight was still living here in 1936.

The house was sold by Joseph Knight to Linwood Spencer in 1941. Cornelius Flynn was living here by 1958 and sold the house to the present owners in 1972.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Middlesex County South Registry of Deeds, Cambridge, Mass.

Reading Chronicle, January 7, 1916; March 14, 1941.

Reading Directories, various years.

Reading 350th Book Committee. *At Wood End – Reading, Massachusetts 1644-1994, A Pictorial History*, 1994.

Town of Reading. List of Persons Twenty Years of Age and Over. Compiled by the Board of Registrars, Reading, Massachusetts, 1907-1979. (No women listed until 1924).

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

Town of Reading Water Records, 1891-present.

U.S. Census, 1920-1930.

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Community Property Address
READING 20 PERKINS AVENUE

Area(s) Form No.

	426
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National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible Eligible **only** in a historic district
 Contributing to a potential historic district Potential historic district

Criteria: **A** **B** **C** **D**

Criteria Considerations: **A** **B** **C** **D** **E** **F** **G**

Statement of Significance by Lisa Mausolf

The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

Constructed in 1915, the Roberts House at 20 Perkins Avenue is a good example of the Tudor Revival style, one of numerous eclectic modes which found popularity in the early 20th century. Character-defining features include the use of stucco wall cladding and decorative half timbering, multi-light casements and diamond-paned windows. The house is set in a neighborhood of similarly scaled, significant residential properties laid out on the former Alfred Perkins estate. The property is potentially eligible for the National Register as an amendment to the 1984 Reading Multiple Resource Area under Criteria A and C, for its associations with the early 20th century development of Reading and as a good example of the Tudor Revival style.