

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

61-64 Wilmington TEW.288

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

**Town/City:** Tewksbury

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Tewksbury Centre

## Photograph



**Address:** 173 East Street

**Historic Name:** Thomas and Mary Meer House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1873

**Source:** Beers 1875; MNRD 96/135

**Style/Form:** No Style, Queen Anne

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard, brick veneer/wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Ancillary building, early-to-mid-20<sup>th</sup> century

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):

Brick veneer, mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> c; replacement windows late 20<sup>th</sup> c.

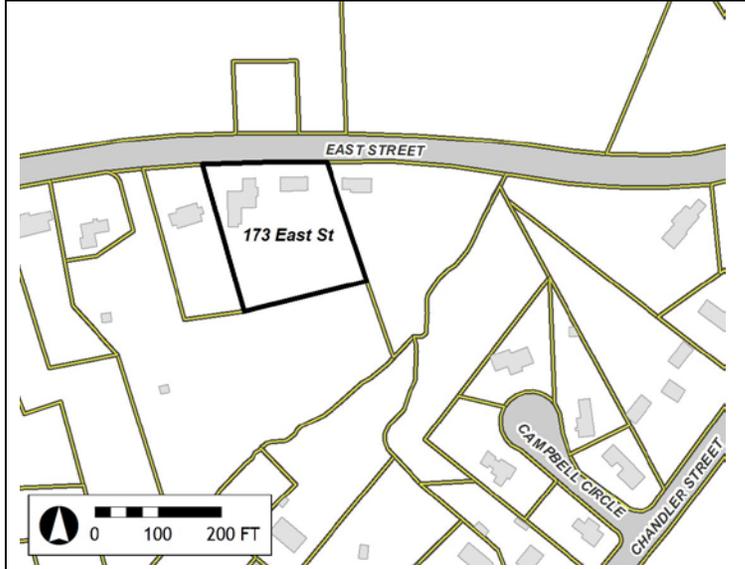
**Condition:** Good

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** .93ac

**Setting:** The house is back from the street edge on a wooded lot on the south side of East Street, across from the Tewksbury Cemetery. The house is within a residential area that dates from the mid-nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** V. Adams, G. Pineo, E. Totten, J. Chin; PAL

**Organization:** Tewksbury Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): March 2020

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

TEWKSBURY

173 EAST STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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

The Thomas and Mary Meer House (ca. 1873) is a north-facing, astylistic, one-and-one-half-story, three-bay-by-four-bay, wood-frame building with a rubblestone foundation and an end-gable roof. A one-story, two-bay-by-one-bay addition projects west from the south half of the west elevation, and a one-story addition projects south from the south elevation of the west addition. The center bay of the east elevation projects east, and has a gable roof and incised corners on the first story giving the appearance of a Queen Anne-style bay window (Photo 2). The walls of the main block are clad with wood clapboards, and the west addition is clad with brick veneer. The south addition is obscured from view by the west addition, but aerial imagery indicates that it is clad with wood clapboards. All roof surfaces are covered with asphalt shingles. The entrance is in the east bay of the north elevation of the west addition, filled with a modern door flanked by four-light sidelights. The entrance has a wide entablature supported by pilasters surrounding the entrance. A secondary entrance is in the west elevation of the south addition, sheltered by a gable entry porch supported by square posts. Fenestration consists of six-over-six, double-hung vinyl replacement sash with wide surrounds.

East of the house is a one-story ancillary building (Photo 3), likely constructed in the early-to-mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, with an asphalt shingle-clad hip-roof and wood clapboard clad walls. The foundation is not visible from the public right-of-way. The entrance is east of center in the north elevation, filled with a half-light, three-panel wood door flanked by diamond-light sidelights.

The Meer House is a typical example of a single-family residence constructed in Tewksbury Centre in the late nineteenth century. Like other contemporaneous buildings, it has undergone alterations that have removed any stylistic elements.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The Thomas and Mary Meer House (ca. 1873) on the south side of East Street, east of Lee Street, was likely constructed for Irish immigrants Thomas and Mary Meer on land purchased from tannery owner George Lee, who owned land on the east and west sides of Lee Street, and lived at 17 Lee Street (ca. 1870, TEW.15) (MNRD 96/135). Thomas Meer (1838–1915) was farmer who immigrated to the United States in 1861 and lived with his wife Mary, an Irish immigrant who arrived in the United States in 1847, and their children at 173 East Street; the Meers lived at the property until their respective deaths in 1915 and 1916, at which time the property transferred to their daughter Nellie and her husband James O'Connell (U.S. Census 1880; MNRD 554/379). In 1920, James worked as a steamfitter at the nearby state infirmary and later worked as a repairman for the railroad (U.S. Census 1920, 1930). James and Nellie lived at the property until 1951, when the O'Connells sold the property to George and Olive Manley (MNRD 1165/361). The Manleys owned the property for about 10 years before selling to Kenneth and Helen Holden (MNRD 1505/313). Kenneth Holden (1935–2017) was a stone mason and a former captain of the Tewksbury Fire Department. He also served as a trustee for the library and was on the board of trustees for the Tewksbury Cemetery (Farmer & Dee Funeral Home 2017). Helen (1937–2018) worked as an administrative assistant at the Academy of Notre Dame in nearby Tyngsboro, and volunteered at the Oblate Novitiate in Tewksbury (Farmer & Dee Funeral Home 2018). The Holden's daughter Shelley Holden is the current owner of the property.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Ancestry.com. *Massachusetts, Death Records, 1841-1915*. Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2013.

Farmer & Dee Funeral Home. "Kenneth W. 'Bunky' Holden." <https://www.currentobituary.com/member/obit/212591>, accessed March 2020.

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Middlesex North Registry of Deeds (MNRD). Book/Page (Year). 96/135 (1873); 554/379 (1916); 1165/361 (1951); 1595/1313 (1961).

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United States Bureau of the Census (U.S. Census). *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880*. (T9, 1,454 rolls). National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., ancestry.com database.

\_\_\_\_. *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920*. (T625, 2076 rolls). National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., ancestry.com database.

\_\_\_\_. *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*. (T626, 2,667 rolls). National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., ancestry.com database.

## PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 2. 173 East Street, looking southeast.

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Photo 3. Ancillary building, 173 East Street, looking southeast.