

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

|       |         |  |     |
|-------|---------|--|-----|
| 40/45 | Reading |  | 424 |
|-------|---------|--|-----|

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

**Town:** Reading

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 309 Pearl Street

**Historic Name:** William P. Webb House

**Uses:** Present: residential

Original: residential

**Date of Construction:** 1929-30

**Source:** Elaine Webb, town water records

**Style/Form:** Dutch Colonial

**Architect/Builder:** William & Harvey Webb, carpenters

### Exterior Material:

Foundation: rubble

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard

Roof: asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
none

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

1995 – rear addition

2008 – new windows

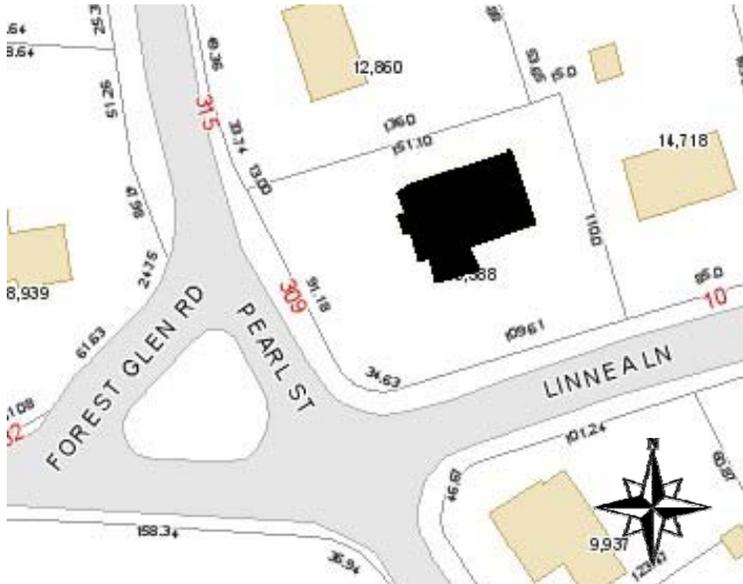
**Condition:** good

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

**Acreage:** 0.35 acre

**Setting:** mixed residential area along historic road

## Topographic or Assessor's Map



**Recorded by:** Lisa Mausolf

**Organization:** Reading Historical Commission

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

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

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

READING

309 Pearl Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

424

\_\_\_ 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 309 Pearl Street is a good example of the Dutch Colonial style, a Colonial Revival variation which found widespread popularity in the 1920s and 1930s. The style is easily identified by its gambrel roof which is oriented with the roof ridge set parallel to the street with long shed dormers on the front and rear slopes. In this case, the exterior is sheathed in wide wood clapboards and the house is set on a rubble foundation. Centered on the façade is a broken pediment with curved underside supported by Doric columns. The paneled door is flanked by partial sidelights. On either side of the porch is a set of three 6/1 windows with molded surrounds. Punctuating the front shed dormer are three pairs of windows, that in the center being slightly smaller. Lunette attic windows are located on the gambrel ends and two brick chimneys rise from the rear roof slope. Projecting from the south end of the house is a single-story sunroom, also set on a rubble foundation. Extending behind the original house is a 1995 addition with lower level garage. All of the windows on the house were replaced in 2008 but echo the original sash arrangement.

## 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 house (originally 241 Pearl Street) was constructed in 1929-30 by William Percy Webb with the assistance of his brother, Harvey Webb, a carpenter. The water was turned on June 7, 1930. Webb was born in Reading in Dec. 1893, the son of Edward and Myra Webb, both of whom were born in England. Edward Webb (1857-1925) had settled in Somerville upon immigrating to the U.S. from England in 1886. He moved his family to Reading before 1896 and occupied the house at 159 Wakefield Street (since demolished). The land on which this house stands was subdivided from 325 Pearl Street which the Webb family acquired about 1907-8. William Webb (1893-1985) built the house just prior to his marriage. At the time of the 1930 Census, Webb was 36 years old, working as a mechanic for a motion picture company and was living with his mother and siblings at 325 Pearl Street. By the time the 1931 town directory was published, he was living at 309 Pearl with his wife Helen.

William and Helen Webb lived at 309 Pearl Street with their children Edward, Virginia and Barbara. William served in the Army in World War I and worked as a machinist at the Watertown Arsenal. A charter member and past master of the Reading Grange and a 65 year old member of the Good Samaritan Lodge, AF & AM, he died in 1985 at the age of 91. The house is still owned by members of the Webb family today.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Adams, Virginia. Interview with Elaine Webb, July 2010.

Middlesex County South Registry of Deeds, Cambridge, Mass.

*Reading Chronicle*, April 29, 1985 [obituary of William P. Webb].

Reading Directories, various years.

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

Town of Reading, Water Department Records, 1891-present.

U.S. Census, 1930.