

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

11/238	Reading		441
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

**Town:** Reading

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 285 Summer Avenue (corner Howard St.)

**Historic Name:** George W. Parker House

**Uses:** Present: residential

Original: residential

**Date of Construction:** 1888

**Source:** *Reading Chronicle*, 9/8/1888

**Style/Form:** Queen Anne

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

## Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard, wood shingle

Roof: asphalt shingle

## Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

none

## Major Alterations (*with dates*):

1982 – enclosed porch

1990 – mudroom and two car garage

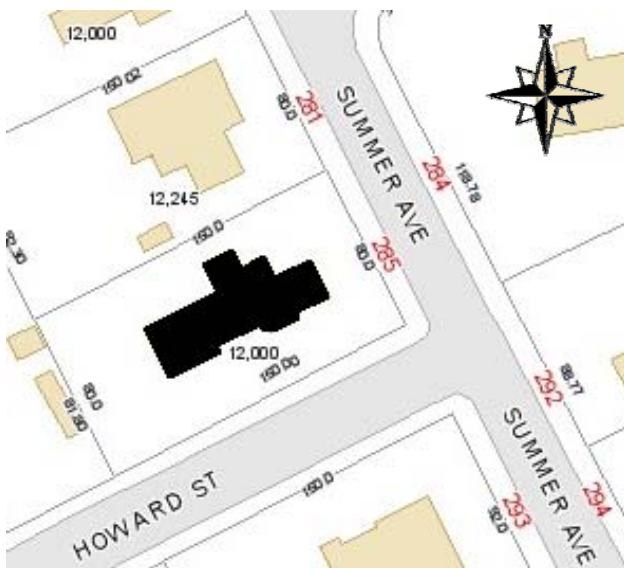
**Condition:** good

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

**Acreage:** 0.28 acre

**Setting:** mixed residential neighborhood

## Topographic or Assessor's Map



**Recorded by:** Lisa Mausolf

**Organization:** Reading Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): December 2009

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

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

READING

285 Summer Avenue

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:

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

Located at the northwest corner of Summer Avenue and Howard Street, 285 Summer Avenue is a 2½-story, gablefront dwelling in the Queen Anne style. Set on a stone foundation, it is clad primarily in wood clapboards with a band of plain wood shingles between the first and second stories and diamond-cut shingles in the front and south gables which both have a triangular panel at the peak. The façade is fronted by a single-story porch supported by turned posts with a low pediment marking the sidehall entrance. Additional projections include the pediment-topped three-sided bay window on the south elevation which is decorated by panels between the stories and brackets at the cutaway corners. Paired brackets decorate the cornice.

Extending behind the main house is a two-story wing which is fronted by a sunroom on the south side, added in 1982. At the west end of the building is a two-car garage which echoes the detailing of the main house but was constructed in 1990.

## 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.*

The original owner of this house (formerly 183 Summer Avenue) was George W. Parker. According to a brief mention in the *Reading Chronicle* on August 18, 1888, Parker had just purchased the land, which was lot 2 of the Scotland Subdivision. The paper on September 8<sup>th</sup> noted that construction had begun. Parker is shown as the owner of the house on both the 1889 and 1906 maps.

George Wanson Parker was born in Reading in 1858, the son of Clarkson and Ellen (Pratt) Parker. He worked for nearly thirty years as a varnish salesman covering New England for Berry Bros. and Standard Varnish Co. He was active in the Masons and Shriners and was an expert whist player. At the time of the 1910 Census, Parker was widowed and living here with his six sons and a housekeeper.

By 1920 the house was owned and occupied by Charles and Inez Damon. He was also a salesman. Damon (1870-1934) was born in Chicago and came to Reading when he was four years old. He was associated in the clock industry – working first with Daniel Pratt & Son and later with Nelson Brown and D.C. Percival Co. The house continued to be occupied by Inez after Charles' death, into the 1950s.

Later owners included Robert and Virginia Collins, followed by Wallace and Joyce Hayward (1969-1979). The present owners purchased the house in 1979.

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*Reading Chronicle*, Aug. 18, 1888; Sept. 8, 1888; Aug. 19, 1920; March 9, 1934.

Reading Directories, various years.

Reading 350<sup>th</sup> 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, 1900-1930.

1889, 1906 maps