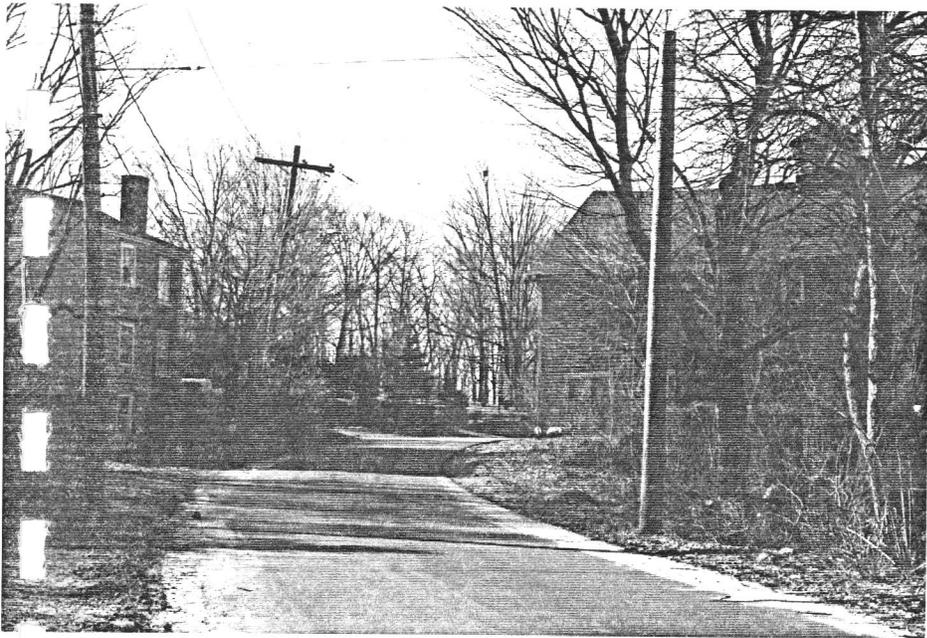


FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA. 02108

Form numbers in this area	Area letter
579, 581-582	W



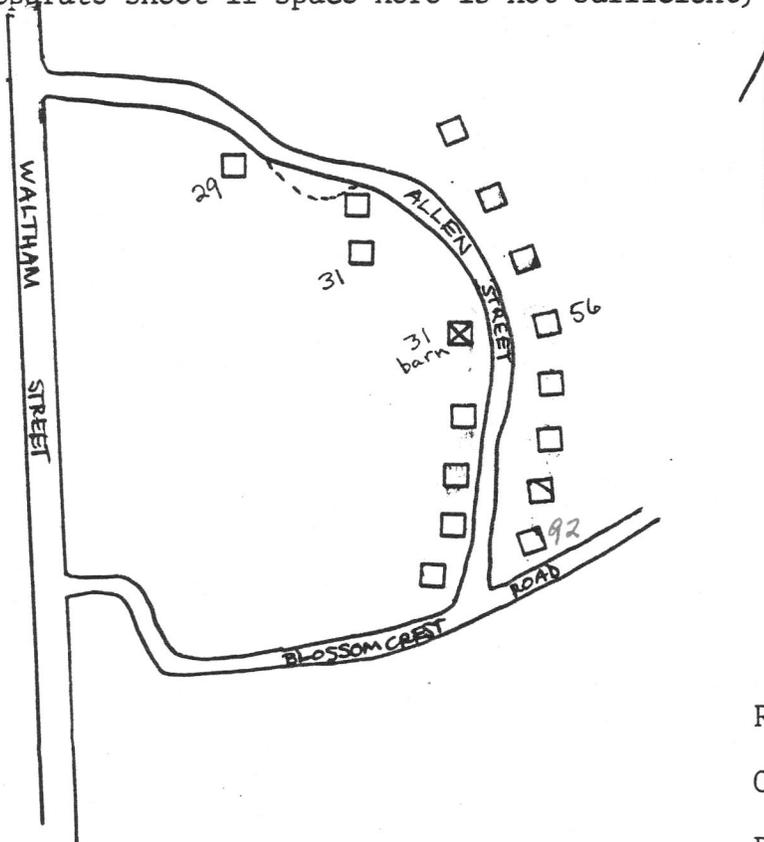
Lexington

f area (if any) Allen Street

l date or period seventeenth

ry-present

Sketch map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient)



Recorded by Nancy S. Seasholes

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date February, 1984

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Describe physical setting, general character, and architecturally significant structures).

Part of a main road during the seventeenth through early nineteenth centuries, Allen Street is now a quiet back street. Although most of it has been built up since World War II, the section near the Carroll barn and the Federal brick-ended house at 56 Allen retains a sense of the historic streetscape: a narrow, winding road bordered by stone walls and a row of maple trees with a vista of a nearby farm (in this case the Carroll farm on the west side of the street; see Carroll farm area form).

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Explain development of area, what caused it, and how it affected community; be specific).

Allen Street was part of the main route from Lexington and Bedford to Boston in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a period during which the best routes to Boston from the west went through Watertown (now Waltham) rather than Cambridge. The road from Bedford entered Lexington on what is now Grove Street, then followed present Hancock Street, Waltham Street, Marrett Road (east), Stedman Road/ Allen Street, Blossomcrest Street (west; formerly Blossom Street, which joined Waltham Street approximately where Piper Road does now), Waltham Street, Ricci's Lane (now not maintained; see Ricci's Lane area form), Bow Street (in Waltham) to Trapelo Road. Although the Allen Street part of this route was not officially laid out until 1703, there are references as early as 1648 to the "path . . . to Watertown" (Worthen 1946:20, 23).

In the nineteenth century several changes in road patterns made Allen Street less important. First, new bridges were built across the Charles directly to the Boston peninsula, making the best routes to Boston from the west those through Cambridge rather than through Watertown. As a result, the road system of which Allen Street was a part was no longer the major route to Boston. It was, however, the main route from Lexington Center to Waltham until the section of Waltham Street south of Marrett Road was built sometime between 1830 and 1852. After the latter date, most of the traffic bypassed Allen Street and it became the back road it now is.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Worthen, Edwin B. 1946. A Calendar History of Lexington, Massachusetts, 1620-1946, pp. 20, 23, 43-45. Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Savings Bank.

1830 map

1852 map

1961 map

1964 map