

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

58/103

2184

Town/City:

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



Left side (Balfour Street) and front (Asbury Street façade) elevations

Address: 32 Asbury Street

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1906-25

Source: historic maps, town directories

Style/Form: Dutch Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: fieldstone

Wall/Trim: wood shingles and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Replacement sash and rear deck and pergola (L 20th – E 21st c)

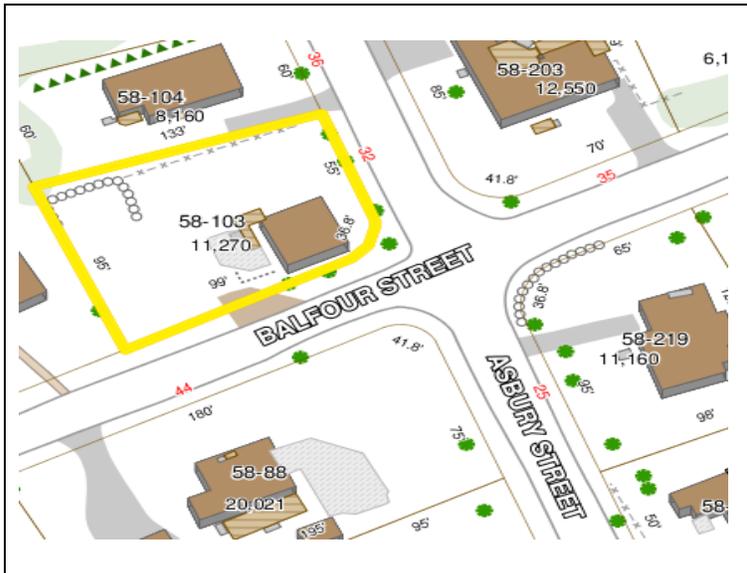
Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.26 acres

Setting: Located at corner of Asbury and Balfour streets. Densely built residential neighborhood with mainly early to mid 20th century houses of similar scale and setbacks.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

32 ASBURY STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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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.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

32 Asbury Street is positioned close to the street edges of a small corner lot. Maintained chiefly in lawn, the level lot has scattered trees and shrubs at the back and sides and dense trees and shrubbery along the Asbury Street edge. A brick paved walkway leads from Balfour Street to the front porch, and an unpaved (gravel and grass) parking area abuts Balfour Street behind the house. A low, dry-laid fieldstone wall lines the Asbury Street frontage.

The small rectangular house rises 1 ½ stories from a fieldstone foundation with deeply recessed joints to a broad, side gambrel roof with an interior chimney on the back roof slope and gambrel returns. Walls are clad with wood shingles and trim, including a pronounced cornice molding at the roof eaves. Windows typically have 1/1 double hung replacement sash with a very narrow band molding. The symmetrical façade has a full-length porch across the first floor. It is comprised of square posts, a shed roof that kicks out from the lower slope of the gambrel, a well-molded cornice, no railing, and wood stairways on both short ends. A single-leaf door is centered on the porch, with paired windows to each side. A long, shed-roofed dormer extends above across the half-story, with two sets of paired windows.

The right side elevation contains a single window towards the front and a triplet of windows towards the rear on the first floor. At the half story are two single windows. The left side (Balfour Street) elevation contains, on the first floor, a single window towards the front and a small rectangular bay window towards the back, supported on simple wood braces, and two windows centered in the half story. The asymmetrical rear elevation has an offset single-leaf door and two windows of varied size on the first floor, and a long shed-roofed dormer with two sets of paired windows in the half story. A modern wood deck off the back door has wood steps, square wood balusters, and an historically-informed pergola.

Well preserved and maintained, 32 Asbury Street is a handsome example of early 20th century suburban housing in Lexington. The house is notable for its intact Dutch Colonial Revival style, its voluminous gambrel roof, finely detailed cornices, and variety of fenestration (including single, paired, and triple windows and an unusual bay window)

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 grid of streets, including Asbury, that presently spans between Cedar Street and Massachusetts Avenue did not exist in 1906. Only two households were identified on Asbury Street by 1922: William R. Miller, a teamster, and his wife Emily M., and Charles G. Richards, a janitor, and his wife Anastasia. The first known occupants of 32 Asbury Street, are thought to be Charles E. and Elizabeth Bentley (both born in England), who appear to have moved here around 1925 and lived in the house with their five children. In 1935, Charles E. Bentley and his sons, Clarence E., Edmund F., and Winston I. were in business together as Charles E. Bentley and Sons, foreign and domestic wallpaper hangers, with a shop at 3 Meriam Street.

In 1945 and 1955, residents included Winston Bentley (who was employed in "defense" in the former year) and his wife Edwina. They were accompanied here in 1945 by Winston's father Charles E., by now retired, as well as Theodore Figgett, a laborer; Leon J. Vogt, in the Navy; and Hazel Vogt, described only as "at home". By 1965, the house was occupied by John J. Brisbois, a teacher, and Marguerite S. Brisbois, a secretary.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Historic maps and atlases: Walling 1853; Beers 1875; Walker 1889; Stadly 1898; Walker 1906; Sanborn 1908, 1918, 1927, 1935, 1935/1950.
Lexington Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey, Period and Area Summaries.
<http://historicsurvey.lexingtonma.gov/index.htm> Accessed Jul 23, 2015.
Lexington Directories: 1899, 1908-09, 1922, 1924, 1926, 1934, 1936.
Lexington *List of Persons*: 1935, 1945, 1955, 1965.
Massachusetts Historical Commission. "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Lexington." 1980.
U.S. Census: 1920, 1930, 1940.

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Rear and left side (Balfour Street) elevations



Front (Asbury Street façade) elevation: detail