

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

14/68	Boston North		
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## Photograph



**Town:** Lexington

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

**Address:** 12 Fern Street

**Historic Name:**

**Uses:** Present: residential

Original: residential

**Date of Construction:** early 19<sup>th</sup> c.

**Source:** visual inspection

**Style/Form:**

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation:

Wall/Trim: clapboards

Roof: asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
none

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):  
1895 – rear addition

**Condition:** good

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

**Acreage:** 0.09 acre

**Setting:** mixed 19<sup>th</sup> century residential on narrow road off Pleasant Street

## Topographic or Assessor's Map



**Recorded by:** Lisa Mausolf

**Organization:** Lexington Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): Feb. 2010

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

LEXINGTON

12 FERN STREET.

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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.*

The modest house at 12 Fern Street may well date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Interior inspection may help narrow down its period of construction. It appears to be a well-preserved example of the one-story-plus nineteenth century cottage found most frequently in the Woburn Street area. The 2-story, 3 x 1-bay structure is oriented to face north; the gable eaves are without overhang. The center entrance contains a modern paneled door with integral glass and is set into a simple trabeated surround. Windows on the main house contain 6/6 sash and are fitted with storm windows. There is no window above the center entrance. Extending behind the main house block is a tall, single-story addition punctuated by modern 1/1 windows topped by 3 x 2-light transom panels.

**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 probably dates to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest deed found for the property indicates that it was sold by Isaac Buttrick, a carpenter, in May 1852. Buttrick may have acquired it from C. Robbins in 1838 or J. Brown in 1837. He appears to have sold 12 Fern Street at about the same time he built 40 Fern Street (see #525).

Thomas H. Earle, a tailor, purchased the property from Buttrick in May 1852. Earle enlisted in the 1<sup>st</sup> Calvary at the time of the Rebellion, September 1861, and died July 24, 1863 in Hilton Head, South Carolina. In 1864 the administrator of Earle's estate, Sylvanus Smith, sold the property to his widow, Emily Earle, for \$400. Mrs. Earle was born in Nova Scotia in 1822 and lived in the house until her death in 1900 at the age of 78. The 1870 Census lists her occupation as tailoress.

Mrs. Earle took in a niece, Annie Jones, as a young child and educated her. In 1895 Annie Jones married Herbert Teele of Arlington. The couple continued to live in the Fern Street house with Mrs. Earle and cared for her when she became an invalid. An 1895 newspaper account notes that the house had been enlarged, an apparent reference to the single-story rear section.

In 1910 Annie Jones Teele of Arlington sold the property at 12 Fern Street to Dominick and Nancy Yanushkis. He was employed as a machinist and they had formerly lived in a tenement over the post office. It was sold by the Yanushkis to Peter Caspir in 1917 who sold it in 1921 to James Alexander Wilson. Felix and Clara Blume owned the property from 1929 until 1951. He was employed as a carpenter. Later owners included L. Tyler & Lillian Barnes (1951-1960), Harry Stubbs (1960-1965), Amelia Leiss (1965-1971), Livia and John Bowditch (1971-1980) and Barbara Ausubel (1980-1998). Rebecca Edelson acquired the property in 1998.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Middlesex County Register of Deeds, Cambridge, Mass.

Town Directories

U.S. Census, various years.

1853, 1875, 1889, 1898, 1906 maps