

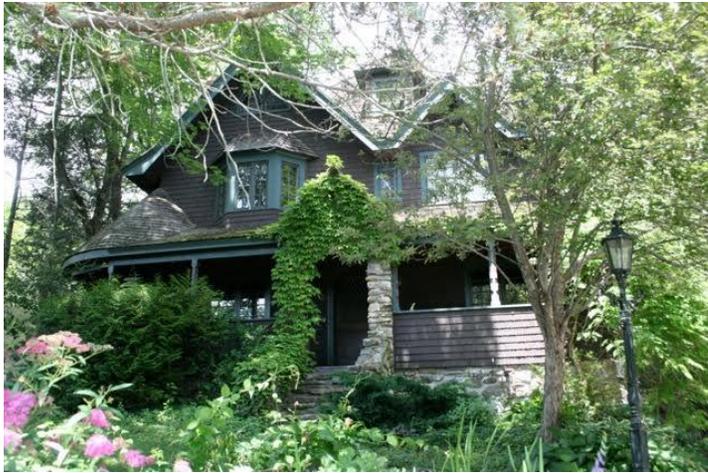
FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

48/116 [] H 2123

Photograph



Front (facade) elevation

Locus Map



Town/City: Lexington

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

Address: 30 Grant Street

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1918-27

Source: assessors' records, historic maps

Style/Form: Arts and Crafts

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: fieldstone

Wall/Trim: wood shingles and trim

Roof: wood and asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
Casement windows on 2nd floor of tower (2008)

Condition: good to excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.32

Setting: Residential neighborhood on major thoroughfare, near former railroad line (now Minuteman Bikeway) and Massachusetts Avenue, at the base of Merriam Hill. Surrounded by mainly late 19th – early 20th century residential buildings.

Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

30 GRANT STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Area(s) Form No.

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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.

30 Grant Street is located at the base of Merriam Hill, near the beginning of a main thoroughfare through East Lexington. The house is set a full story above street level with a dry-laid, fieldstone retaining wall along the street and both sides of the driveway to the right of the house. Curving stone steps lead from the driveway to the front entrance. The driveway is paved with concrete that contains an aggregate of small stones and appears to have had a grid of bluestone pavers. The building consists of a 2 ½ story main block with a trio of appendages at the back of different shapes: octagonal, rectangular with clipped corners, and circular. Only the circular tower at the back right of the building was visible from the street during site work for this survey project.

The rectangular building rises from a massive fieldstone foundation to a high hip roof with deep eaves. Walls are clad with wood shingles and trimmed with a flat fascia at the roof edge. Windows are extremely varied in size and shape, with plain flat casings. They are characteristically multi-paned and appear mostly to be casement sash. The asymmetrical façade has two cross-gables—the larger with an angled bay window at the second floor and a semi-circular stained and leaded glass lunette in the half story; the smaller with a pair of multi-light casements—and a small hip-roofed dormer between and above them. A shed-roofed porch spans the entire first floor of the façade, with a circular end and conical roof at the left side. It includes half-height shingled walls supporting decoratively carved posts, fieldstone piers at the cross-gabled entrance bay, and fieldstone steps. The main entrance, centered in the façade, is shaped with a Tudor arch and has a wood paneled door with a diamond-paned glass panel at the top.

The commanding right side elevation is dominated by the massive fieldstones of its fully-exposed basement level, a polygonal turret with conical roof at the second and half stories, a large cross gable towards the back, and a circular tower with conical roof anchoring the back corner. (Building permits show that the first floor of this tower was originally a screened porch.) Fenestration on this elevation is varied in size and arrangement. Two pairs of double leaf garage doors access garage space in the basement. Arched doorways in the stone foundation are located towards the back of the main block, in the circular tower, and in a landscape wall that spans between the tower and the side property line.

The left side elevation was largely concealed by trees during site work for the survey project. An exterior fieldstone chimney was visible, along with a hip roof dormer in the center, and a long second floor porch with decoratively sawn flat balusters and square posts.

Well maintained and well preserved, 30 Grant Street is an extraordinarily sophisticated example of the Arts & Crafts Style in Lexington. It is notable for its complex and picturesque massing, use of stone and wood shingle surfaces, integral garages, and strong landscape design.

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.

Today's Grant Street is an accumulation of several roadways. The base of the street, between Massachusetts Avenue and Sheridan Street, appears between 1875 and 1889, when it provided convenient access to the Hayes estate on Merriam Hill. The short section between Sheridan and Hayes Lane appears between 1898 and 1906. The then-discontinuous stretch from Hayes Lane to Granny's Hill was established as part of Hayes Lane by 1853. Grant Street was extended between Granny's Hill and East Street between 1875 and 1898. By the third quarter of the 19th century, however, only a few buildings clustered near

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the base of Grant Street, near the important intersection with Vine and Woburn streets; two buildings were located north of Vine Brook, near Granny's Hill, in 1875. North of Vine Brook, development along Grant Street was extremely sparse through the 19th and turn of the 20th centuries.

In the vicinity of today's 30 Grant Street, lots were subdivided along both sides of the block between Sherman and Sheridan streets by 1889; they were owned by David W. Muzzey. Muzzey and Charles G. Fletcher laid out this part of Grant Street as well as nearby Sherman, Fletcher, and Sheridan streets and built 25 houses here in the late 1880s and 90s, primarily as rental housing for middle class families.

Most of the parcels along the south (odd numbered) side of Grant Street were developed by 1898. Only one lot on the north side of the block had a house at that time, however, and it stood alone until at least 1906. 30 Grant Street appears on its site between 1918 and 1927, supporting the construction date of 1920 that the assessors' records show for the house.

The first known occupants of the house are Frank H. Gerlach, a sales manager, and his wife Hope, who moved here between 1932 and 1934, most likely with their two young daughters. By 1940, Dr. Harold Crumb, a physician, was living here with his wife Gladys, two young children, and a maid. Crumb was for many years a coach for Lexington High School, which named an athletic field after him. (Local historian Sam Doran suggests contacting Dick Michelson for further information.) Subsequent residents included Alex Bavelas, a teacher, and his wife Risma (1945), followed by Stanley Scisson, a personnel manager, and his wife Margaret (1955 and 1965), their grown son Jonathan, a student, and Caroline B. Pennell, also a student (1965)

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 Directories: 1899, 1908-09, 1922, 1932, 1934, 1935, 1936.
Lexington Historical Commission. Form A – Area for Grant/Fletcher/Sheridan/Sherman Streets, LEX.G. Prepared by Anne Grady, 1984.
Lexington *List of Persons*: 1935, 1945, 1955, 1960, 1965.
Massachusetts Historical Commission. "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Lexington." 1980.
U.S. Census: 1930, 1940.

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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Right side elevation



Right side elevation, detail



Assessors' Records: Front (façade) and right side elevations: