

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

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Town Lexington

Place (neighborhood or village)

Address 168 East St.

Historic Name Isaac Blodgett/Bailey Brothers House

Uses: Present Residential

Original Residential

Date of Construction 1784–1806 (range)

Source Deeds

Style/Form Federal (altered)

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Fieldstone

Wall/Trim Wood Clapboard

Roof Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

Major Alterations (with dates)

Chimney removed, roof rebuilt (1901)

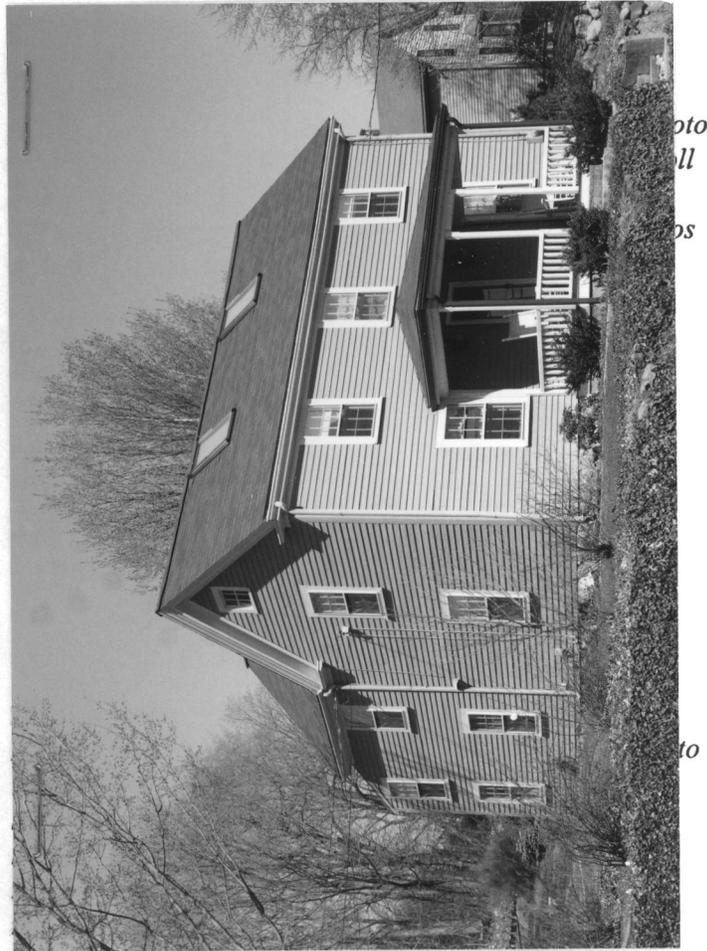
Rear additions (dates unknown)

Condition Good

Moved no yes Date

Acreage 0.7 A.

Setting Close to a busy street and near a farmstand



Recorded by Nancy S. Seasholes

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date (month / year) March 1998

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION *see continuation sheet*

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

168 East St. appears to be one of a number of side-gabled, three-bay, simple Italianate farmhouses in Lexington but is actually an early vernacular Federal that was renovated in 1900; comparable examples in Lexington of three-bay early Federals are at 176 Cedar St. (MHC #692) and 321 Concord Ave. (MHC #558). The original part of 168 East St. is rectangular, 2½ stories, three-by-one bays, and side-gabled. To it has been added a front-gabled, 2½-story, one-by-one bay rear ell with a side chimney, a two-story shed-roofed addition at the rear of the ell, and a one-story shed-roofed addition in the reentrant angle. The house is set on a fieldstone foundation, clad with wood clapboards, and roofed with asphalt shingles. The center entrance in the main block, covered by a one-bay porch, has a door with a lancet-paned light; windows are 6/6 double hung sash. An interior inspection found that the original chimney, now removed, was supported by a wood timber resting on two brick piers, construction characteristic of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *see continuation sheet*

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 was built by Isaac Blodgett (1744–1830) perhaps as early as 1785 but definitely by 1806. In November 1784 Isaac sold the house and 18 of the 35 acres that he had acquired from his father in 1769, leaving 17 acres (described in later deeds as about 14¾ acres) that included the land on which this house is located. It is reasonable to think that Isaac had already built, or was about to build, a new house for himself on this land. The Direct Tax of 1798 does not, however, list Isaac Blodgett as the owner of a dwelling house, which may mean that this house had not yet been built or that the Direct Tax is not as reliable as has hitherto been thought, for Lexington assessor's records show that Isaac Blodgett did own real estate in 1797 and 1798 (although, since at that time these records do not distinguish between land and buildings, it is not clear whether Isaac's real estate included this house). In any event, it is clear that this house was standing in 1806 when Isaac's son Samuel (b. 1783) mortgaged the entire property, most of which was south of East St., for the deed mentions the "house of Isaac Blodgett." Samuel and Isaac were husbandmen, i.e., they raised livestock, and together mortgaged the property again in 1814; at that time the property was described as two parcels: 14 acres south of East St. and ¾ acre with the house north of East St. The Blodgett property then changed hands a number of times in the late 1820s and early 30s—it was sold at auction on October 10, 1826, "by order of the Probate Court" (because Samuel Blodgett had died?), the purchaser mortgaged it and then defaulted on the mortgage, and it was

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES *see continuation sheet*

Direct Tax of 1798. Microfilm. Cary Library, Lexington, MA.

Guy and Elaine Doran, personal communication 1998.

Hudson, Charles. *History of the Town of Lexington*. Revised and continued to 1912 by the Lexington Historical Society.

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1913. 2: 38–39, 18–19.

Lexington Minute-man, 1900.

Lexington Valuation Lists. 1797–1892, 1900–1902.

Middlesex Registry of Deeds. Deeds, Plans. Cambridge, MA. 88:57; 88: 58; 181: 402; 209: 384; 323: 144; 404: 569; 406: 86; 969: 128; 1686: 337; 12452: 121; Plan No. 850 of 1960.

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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

Town
Lexington

Property Address
168 East St.

Area(s) Form No.

	717
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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (continued)

eventually acquired in 1833 by Hammond A. Hosmer, who had moved to Lexington from Boston in 1827 and was apparently quite wealthy, for in the early 1830s he held mortgages for many Lexington properties. Hosmer already had a farm so probably rented this house out; he eventually combined the Blodgett property with some others he acquired south of East St. into a 55-acre farm, which he sold in 1841 to James Bailey (1792–1865).

James Bailey, a son-in-law of David Simonds in the house now at **42 Adams St. (MHC #704)**, had lived in Lexington in the 1820s and 30s but was living in Concord at the time he bought the East St. property. In 1842 James was assessed for a house, barn, and $6\frac{3}{4}$ acres of land (he also owned $9\frac{1}{2}$ acres of woods that abutted the house lot). After James' death in 1865, his property was auctioned and his son Edward B. bought all the land on the north (or, as deeds say, east) side of East St.—four acres with the house. During most of Edward B. Bailey's ownership, he lived in Waltham, Woburn, or Arlington, apparently renting out this house; in 1870, however, the assessed value of this house increased, suggesting that Edward had improved it, and he then apparently lived in it in 1873–1874. In 1877 a shop was added and in 1884 Edward B. sold the property to his nephews Edward C. and George H. Bailey, who were house painters and later formed the firm of Bailey Bros. In 1889 the Baileys built a new house on their property—the one now at **172 East St. (MHC #718)**—perhaps occasioned by George's marriage in 1888, for that house was apparently designed as two identical domiciles. All of the Baileys then lived in the new house and this one was used for storage. In 1900, however, after a large elm branch fell on this house, demolishing the chimney and crushing about a third of the roof, this house was repaired and renovated and then again became the Bailey brothers' home. This house remained in the Bailey family until 1973, when it was acquired by the parents of the present owner.