

FORM B - BUILDING

AREA	FORM NO.
0	507

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108



City Lexington

Address 6 Eliot Road

Historic Name Richard Engstrom House

(Fay-Engstrom House?)

Present Armenian Sisters Academy

Original residence

DESCRIPTION:

Estimated Date c. 1920 1907?

Source Minute Man, 12/8/1906

Analysis stylistic analysis

Style Colonial Revival

Architect _____

Exterior wall fabric brick

Outbuildings _____

Major alterations (with dates) _____

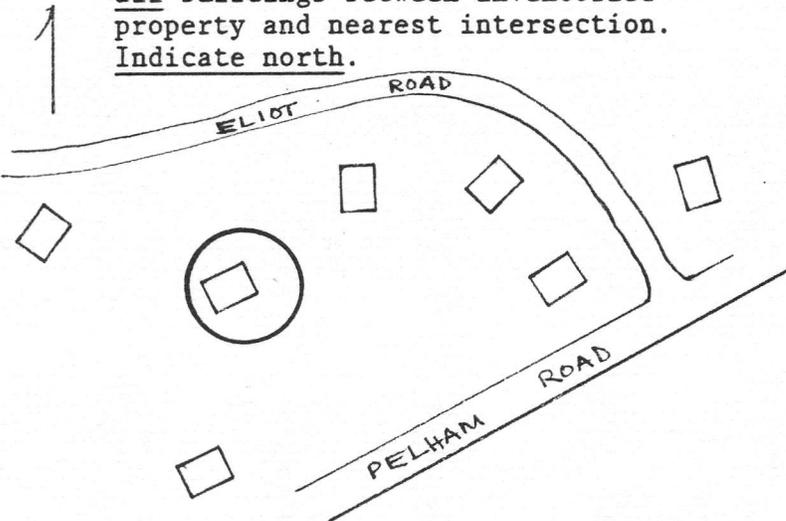
Moved _____ Date _____

Approx. acreage 130577 ft.²

Setting On spacious lot with several specimen trees; in residential neighborhood of turn of the twentieth century and mid-twentieth century houses; lot extends through to Pelham Road.

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.



Recorded by Anne Grady

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date March, 1984

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

One of the largest residences ever built in Lexington, this house is a formal Colonial Revival composition. Central pedimented pavilions on the front and rear facades are the chief focus of decorative features. The north pavilion incorporates a semicircular entrance portico with Corinthian columns; the south pavilion, a modified palladian window which is a close copy of that found on the house at 29 Chestnut Street in Salem built 1882-1885. The grounds of the estate extend from Eliot Road to Pelham Road. On the Pelham Road side is a formal sunken garden.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

The house was built between 1918 and 1922 by Richard Engstrom, a successful patent medicine manufacturer. Later purchased by the Grey Nuns for a convent, the house is now an Armenian school for girls. An early 1930s real estate guide to Lexington indulged in wishful thinking when it called this mansion "typical of the many fine homes in which Lexington takes just pride." Only one other house in Lexington (Hayes castle) compared with it in size.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

Guide to Lexington, undated, but probably 1930s. Worthen Collection, Cary Library.

1918 Directory

1922 Directory

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Lexington

Form No:

507

Property Name: 6 Eliot Road

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.



Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
LEXINGTON

Property Address
6 ELIOT ROAD

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

Area(s) Form No.

O	507
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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

This Georgian Revival mansion was not constructed for Richard Engstrom as previously believed, but rather was built as a summer residence for Harry Fay in 1907.

Several brief notes appearing in the *Lexington Minute-Man* in 1906 and 1907 document the construction of the house. On December 8, 1906 the paper reported:

The materials are on the ground for an expensive country house Mr. Harry F. Fay is to build on a large lot of land lying between Pelham and Eliot roads. Mr. Fay is president of a well known copper concern and Lexington is to be congratulated on securing such a citizen and the prospect of adding to its realty holdings. It has been stated that the house is to cost fifty thousand dollars.

On March 23, 1907, the paper noted that "Lexington Golf Club will open the season on April 19th. Mr. Fay, who is building the imposing house on "Munroe Heights," is president of the club.

An update on May 4, 1907 stated:

The brick walls now enclose the superb Georgian mansion being built for Mr. H. E. Fay, whose winter residence is at 409 Beacon street, Boston. One now gets a very good idea of the unusual size, handsome proportions and dignified architectural plans which are features of this structure, which is by far the most expensive private dwelling that has been built in Lexington since the F.B. Hayes estate was completed.

The summer home was designed by New York architect Oswald C. Hering (1874-1941). Hering graduated from MIT in 1897 and later studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. He opened an office in New York in 1900 and his early work concentrated on designing large country homes in Westchester County, on Long Island, in the Philadelphia suburbs and throughout New England and the mid Atlantic states. This is the only known building by Hering in Massachusetts. Photographs of the Fay House appeared in the national publication *Brickbuilder* in 1908.

In 1910 the Fay residence consisted of 59 year old Harry, his wife Mary, daughter Helen and three servants. The last listing for the family at this address is in the 1918 directory. The 1920 Census lists Harry and Helen as "boarders" at the Russell House, 347 Massachusetts Avenue. Richard Engstrom, a chemist, was living at 6 Eliot Road in 1922 and was still here in 1942.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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

Town
LEXINGTON

Property Address
6 ELIOT ROAD
Area(s) Form No.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Brickbuilder, Jan. 1908, vol. 17 pl. fol. p. 154. ("House at Lexington, Massachusetts").

Lexington Directories, various dates.

Lexington Minute-Man, December 8, 1906; March 23, 1907; May 4, 1907.

Massachusetts Historical Commission, MACRIS database.

U.S. Census, 1910, 1920.

Withey, Henry F. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*. Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970.

Supplement prepared by:
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March 2010