

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

55/43A

2225

Town/City: Lexington

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



Front (facade) elevations, house and barn

Address: 119 Grant Street

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1890s

Source: assessors' records, historic maps, style

Style/Form: Victorian eclectic

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: granite

Wall/Trim: artificial siding and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Attached barn

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Artificial siding (L 20th c), side and rear additions (1990s), replacement windows (L 20th – E 21st c), fenestration on barn (L 20th c?)

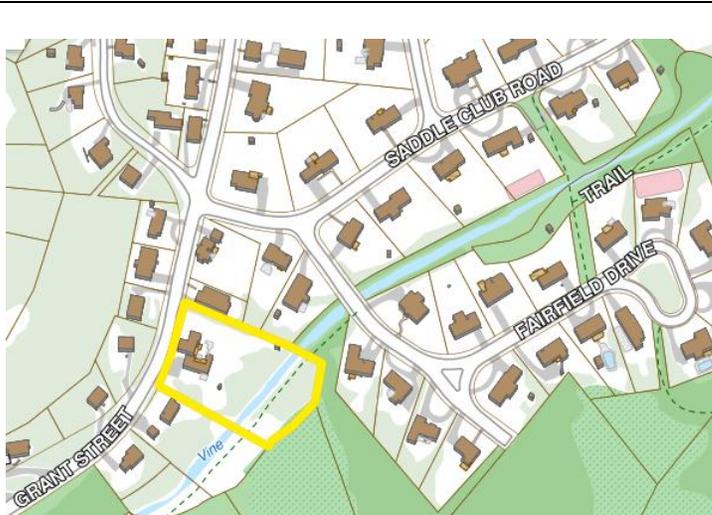
Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 1.73

Setting: Located on a major connector road between Lexington Center and North Lexington. Neighborhood of diverse residential buildings, mostly mid to late 20th c construction, regularly and frequently spaced.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

119 GRANT STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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.

119 Grant Street occupies a large lot on a main thoroughfare in East Lexington. The land slopes down sharply near the street edge and then more gradually towards the back of the property and the adjacent Vine Brook. Maintained chiefly in lawn, the lot has foundation plantings and a paved driveway and gravel parking area to the right of the house. The house is set close to the street, with a straight paved walkway to the front entrance. The building consists of a 2 ½ story main block, attached barn, and several side and rear additions.

The rectangular main block rises from a stone foundation to a front gable roof with gable returns and a small interior chimney high on the right slope. Walls are clad with artificial siding and trim. Windows typically have 2/1 double hung replacement sash with no trim. The façade contains an offset, single-leaf door with a half-height sidelight and two windows on the first floor, sheltered by a full-width porch with a hip roof and three simple turned posts. Above are two widely spaced windows on the second floor and one window centered in the attic story.

The right side elevation is asymmetrical, with one typical window and a small angled bay window on the first floor and two regularly spaced windows above. A small connector to the attaché barn is one-story high with a gabled roof and paired windows on the street façade. The left side elevation of the main block has one window off-center on the second floor. A perpendicular gabled ell extends from the first floor on a raised basement. The one-story ell has a cross-gabled projecting bay with four casement windows centered on its front façade and an exterior chimney centered on its end wall.

The large attached barn rise 1½ stories from a poured concrete foundation to a front gable roof with gable returns. The façade contains two vehicular bays with modern Colonial style trim on the ground floor and paired double hung windows with transoms centered in the half-story. Walls are clad with artificial siding and extend on both sides to low shed dormers that span most of the building's length. Fenestration is irregular, with single, paired, and triple window units and two single-leaf doorways in the outer bays of the right side elevation. A one-story addition extending from the back of the barn has a gable roof and paired windows on each side of a center door.

119 Grant Street is one of Lexington's increasingly uncommon early farmhouses, set close to a road that is now characterized by much later residential development. Although it has lost its original siding and most of its original detailing, the building is notable for its large land area, the relatively large scale and front verandah of the house, and the survival of its large barn.

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 Meriam 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 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.

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A building is marked in the vicinity of today's 119 Grant Street in both 1853 (owned by H. Reed) and 1875 (F. B. Hayes?), but are thought to be too early for the style of the present house. In 1906, this building was still owned by the Hayes Estate, which stood atop Meriam Hill, on the opposite side of Grant Street. (Three other buildings also owned by the Hayes Estate stood diagonally across Grant Street from number 119.) No barn is indicated here on the 1906 map, although one likely did exist early on, given the property's agricultural associations and commercial uses.

The property is thought to have been occupied from ca. 1910 through 1965 by members of the Forsythe and Mabey families. Thomas Forsythe, born in Canada in 1866, worked as a hostler, expressman, and furniture mover. Although these occupations officially did not include farmer, in 1920, his property is described as a farm, and earlier, in 1910, a hired man who boarded here was identified as a "garden" laborer, perhaps taking care of the land while Thomas ran his express company. Thomas Forsythe and his wife Sarah (born in Ireland) had three children, Arthur, Sarah, and Delia. Sarah married Edison R. Mabey, a shipper for a lumber company who was boarding here in 1920. Thomas Forsythe and Edison Mabey later became partners in an eponymous moving company, Forsythe & Mabey, which in 1934 advertised "Furniture and Piano Moving / Pianos Taken In and Out of Windows / Local and Long Distance Trucking of All Kinds / Ashes and Rubbish Removed" (1934 town directory). Delia is identified at this property through at least 1965; her brother-in-law Edison was here in 1945 and 1955, and her sister Sarah was here at least through 1945. Edison Mabey continued in the trucking business at least through 1955. (Local historian Sam Doran suggests contacting Guy Doran for further information on the Mabey family.)

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, 1915, 1922, 1926, 1934, 1936.

Lexington *List of Persons*: 1935, 1945, 1955, 1960, 1965.

Massachusetts Historical Commission. "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Lexington." 1980.

U.S. Census: 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940.

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Left side and front (façade) elevations



Barn: Front (facade) and right side elevations