

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

13/6    2231

**Town/City:** Lexington

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 15 Hibbert Street

**Historic Name:**

**Uses:** Present: residential

Original: residential

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1906-20

**Source:** historic maps, town directories, style

**Style/Form:** Victorian Eclectic

**Architect/Builder:**

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: granite

Wall/Trim: wood shingles and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
none

**Major Alterations (*with dates*):**

Side addition (M – L 20<sup>th</sup> c), replacement window sash (L 20<sup>th</sup> – E 21<sup>st</sup> c)

**Condition:** fair

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** 0.17 (part of the lot is in Arlington)

**Setting:** Located on a residential side street near the main thoroughfare of Massachusetts Avenue, on the Arlington town line. Dense hillside neighborhood with buildings of varying size and scale and predominantly early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> c construction.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Wendy Frontiero

**Organization:** Lexington Historical Commission

**Date (*month / year*):** September 2015

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

15 HIBBERT 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.*

15 Hibbert Street occupies a small lot that slopes up gently from right to left across the site. The building sits above street level, with a fieldstone retaining wall surmounted by a low hedge along the sidewalk edge. Concrete steps and a concrete walkway extend from the street edge to the front entrance. The modest front and left side setbacks are maintained chiefly in lawn. The A paved driveway lined by poured concrete retaining walls extends along the right side of the house. The building consists of a 1 ½ story main block and a full-length side addition.

The rectangular main block rises above a granite foundation to a steeply pitched, front gable roof without gable returns. It has a chimney at the top of the right slope, near the ridge line. Walls are clad with wood shingles; the shingled wall of the front gable peak appears to flare slightly above the half story. Windows typically have 1/1 double hung replacement sash with narrow band molding. The front (east) elevation of the main block contains a small, angled bay window with a hip roof and an offset entrance on the first floor, and narrow paired windows centered above. Fenestration on the bay window includes a large square picture window on the front face and a narrow double hung window on each of the angled sides. The entrance is sheltered by a wide front porch whose tapered Tuscan posts support a low hip roof.

The north (right side) elevation contains a cross-gabled ell towards the back with a single 1/1 window centered in the half story. A broad one-story addition extends across the entire south (left side) of the main block, under a low shed roof. The addition has two small 1/1 windows on its east (front) façade and two widely spaced 1/1 windows on its south (left side) elevation.

15 Hibbert Street is a very simple, very modest example of early 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban housing in Lexington. The house is notable for its flared wall surface in the front gable, side cross gable, front porch, and fieldstone retaining wall.

## 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.*

The small grid of streets bordered by Massachusetts Avenue, Hibbert Street, Taft Avenue, and Bowker Street represents an early area of suburban infill in East Lexington, near the Arlington town line. Immediately south of Taft Avenue is Liberty Heights (LEX.Q), a hilltop subdivision laid out by Brookline developer Jacob W. Wilbur in 1909 and developed in the teens and twenties. The growth of both these neighborhoods followed the arrival of the electric street railway on Massachusetts Avenue in 1899 and was directed at working class residents.

In the area adjacent to Massachusetts Avenue known as Dexter Hillside, Hibbert and Sylvia streets, which straddle the Lexington/Arlington line, were laid out, platted, and partially developed by 1898. The only other evidence of development here at that time is the L-shaped beginning of Charles and Cherry streets, where ten house lots were laid out but vacant. By 1927, both Charles and Bowker streets extended from Massachusetts Avenue to Taft Avenue, and the western ends of Cherry Street, Stevens (then Cary) Road, and Camden (then Smythe) Street pushed a few lots eastward from Charles. Development was gradual through the 1920s and 30s and was virtually complete, with the present network of streets, by 1950.

The Dexter Hillside development was conceived by Nathan Dexter Canterbury (1837-1912), who in 1895 began development of a large farm previously owned by Micajah Locke. A resident of Weymouth, Canterbury was a shoe and boot manufacturer, founded the East Weymouth Savings Bank and two Weymouth newspapers, and served as a state representative. Streets were given the middle names of Canterbury and his family. As reported by a local newspaper,

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“Dexter Hillside’ attracted many Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe who moved from densely populated areas of Boston to what was then a suburban outpost. In 1916, an Orthodox synagogue, Temple B’nai Jacob, was built on the Lexington section of Sylvia Street. It served members for three decades and closed after younger generations of early residents moved from the neighborhood, ending its unique Jewish identity.” (*Arlington Advocate*, May 2, 2011)

The house at 15 Hibbert Street appears on the historic maps between 1906 and 1927, and appears originally to have been numbered 19. The first known residents, in 1920, were Sebastian Hellman, a glassblower in a factory (born in France), his wife Anna (born in Germany), and their daughter Clotilde, who worked as a cashier in a lunch room. By 1935, the house had its present street number and was occupied by Anna Hellman along with James Irwin, a carpenter, and his wife Mary T. From at least 1945 through 1955, the house was occupied by Anthony E. Smith, an engineer (first identified as a station engineer) and his wife Sally. William E. Silvio, who worked in the post office, and his wife Charlotte lived here in 1965.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Arlington Directories: 1920, 1923.

Duffy, Richard. “Sylvia and Rublee echo with family connection”. *Arlington Advocate*, May 2, 2011.

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Lexington Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey, Period and Area Summaries.

<http://historicsurvey.lexingtonma.gov/index.htm> Accessed Jul 23, 2015.

Lexington Directories: 1899, 1908-09, 1922, 1934, 1936.

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_. Form A – Liberty Heights, LEX.Q. Prepared by Anne Grady and Nancy Seasholes, 1984 and 2001.

U. S. Census: 1920.