

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

23/24

2246

Town/City: Lexington

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



Façade (northwest) and right side (southwest) elevation

Address: 144 Marrett Road

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1880-90

Source: U.S. census, town directories

Style/Form: no style

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: granite

Wall/Trim: wood shingles and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Barn

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Side addition (L 19 – E 20th c); wood shingles, door enframement, loss of window trim, and changed fenestration (L 20th c); replacement window sash (L 20th – E 21st c)

Condition: fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 4.00

Setting: Remote site in midst of Dunback Meadow Conservation Land. Located at the end of a one-lane gravel drive (a.k.a. Bacon Street).

Locus Map



Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

144 MARRETT ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

	2246
--	------

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.

144 Marrett Road occupies a large, four-acre parcel of land that does not actually front on Marrett Road. The property is accessed by a one-lane gravel drive (known as Bacon Street) and surrounded by an extensive area of marshland and meadow. The L-shaped house consists of a main block with a large side ell; the property also contains a free-standing barn.

The rectangular main block rises 1 ½ stories to a front gable roof with gable returns and a chimney on the left slope, near the ridge line. Walls are clad with wood shingles and trimmed with bed molding at the eaves. Windows typically have 6/6 double-hung replacement sash and no trim. The façade (facing northwesterly) has an offset entrance and one window to the side on the first floor, and two windows centered above in the half story. The single-leaf door is framed with a flat casing and a high triangular “pediment” with a flat center and perimeter molding. A 1 ½ story addition on the left (northeast) side of the main block has a side gable roof and two windows on each floor; the upper windows are contained in flush-wall dormers with gable roofs (no returns).

The right side (southwest) elevation of the main block contains one double-hung window toward the front and a triple-casement unit towards the back of the first floor. Symmetrically placed on the roof, two shed-roofed dormers each have a pair of casement windows. The partially exposed basement on this elevation has utilitarian fenestration. The rear (southeast) elevation of the main block has a single-leaf door centered between two windows on the first floor, and two windows centered in the half story above. A one-story extension to the east has another single window. A modern wood deck spans the back elevation, with square vertical balusters on its railings and wood steps.

Located directly behind the house is a large barn (nearly 1000 square feet) with a broad, front-gambrel roof and three vehicle bays. One tall window is centered in its half story, flanked by two very small vertical openings. The barn is clad in wood shingles and has plain flat wood trim.

144 Marrett Road is remarkable as an isolated, relatively early set of buildings, presumably with agricultural associations. The property maintains its original landscape context, although the house has lost historic integrity through the removal of original trim and window sash (and probably siding). The buildings are notable for their vernacular character and intact simple massing, and the substantial volume of the 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.

Originally known as Middle Street, Marrett Road is an important cross-highway through Lexington that dates to the early 18th century. Scattered development occurred along the street through the 19th and turn of the 20th centuries: Only five houses were located between Mass. Ave. and Waltham Street in 1853, and ten in 1875 and through 1906. By 1922, there were 32 households along the whole of Middle Street, which extended westward to Lincoln Street. Early to late 20th century residential infill on relatively large lots (especially along the southern side of the road) contributes to the current, heterogeneous streetscape.

144 Marrett Road is significant as an unusually intact representative of Lexington’s agricultural history since at least the 1890s. Although the house’s form suggests an earlier construction date, historic maps do not show a building here until 1906. At that time, a private way (the present drive, a.k.a. Bacon Street) is shown extending from Marrett Road into the Dunback Meadow.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

144 MARRETT ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

	2246
--	------

The roadway forks at the end: the eastern branch goes to property owned by Sanderson and the western branch goes to what is now 144 Marrett Road, property identified as Haley Brothers. The Haley family—milk dealers, farmers, and market gardeners—lived and worked here until at least 1945.

The Haley family was first found in this location in 1890, when David J. Haley, a milk dealer, is identified in a house “off Middle, southerly.” By 1894, David was accompanied here by his widowed mother Eliza Haley; his sister Ellen T. (Nellie) Haley; and his brother William J., described as a farmer. From 1902 on, both David and William Haley were typically described as market gardeners or farmers. The family configuration changed over the years: sister Mary joined the family here in 1900, along with a hired farm laborer; and David’s young niece and his brother John were here in 1910, along with two Russian/Polish farm hands. By 1930, the household included David and William Haley, identified as farmer and market gardener, respectively, and an Irish-born lodger, probably a farm hand. William Haley remained at the house through at least 1945. By 1965, Arthur W. Hornig, a physicist, lived here with his wife Sarah.

Further research on the history of this farm, its place in Lexington history, and the Haley family is recommended.

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 Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey, Period and Area Summaries.

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

Lexington Directories: 1890, 1894, 1899, 1902, 1908-09, 1915, 1922, 1926, 1930, 1934, 1936.

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

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

Town of Lexington website. “Conservation Land.” www.lexingtonma.gov/conservation/conland.cfm#ConAreas. Accessed Aug 23, 2015.

U.S. Census: 1880, 1900, 1910, 1930.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

144 MARRETT ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

	2246
--	------

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Southwest elevations: House and barn



Rear (southeast) elevation



Barn: Southwest (façade) elevation