

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

56/168A		H	2144
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Town/City: Lexington

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

Address: 40 Meriam Street

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1948-50

Source: assessors' records, historic maps

Style/Form: Tudor Revival

Architect/Builder: unknown; possibly Royal Barry Wills

Exterior Material:

Foundation: brick, poured concrete

Wall/Trim: brick with wood trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Attached garage

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Condition: excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.65

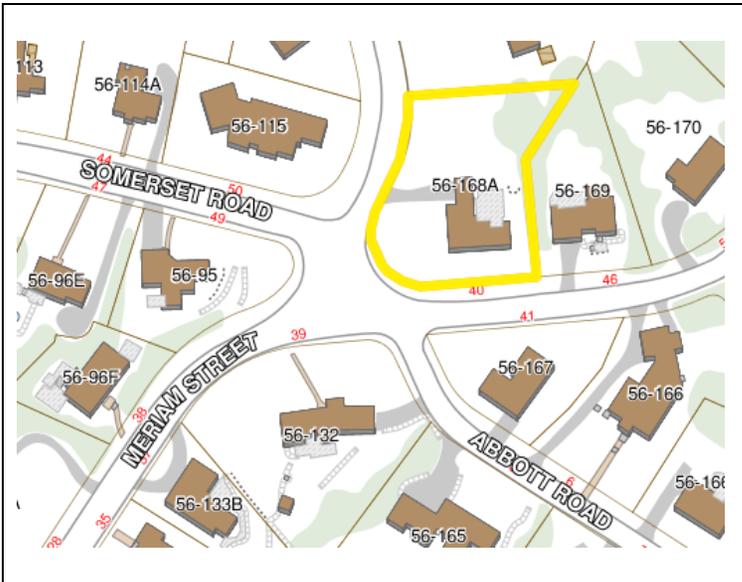
Setting: Set at complex intersection of Meriam Street and Somerset, Franklin, and Abbott Roads in residential Merriam Hill neighborhood. Surrounding properties are typically similar in scale, period, siting, and massing.

Photograph



West (facade) and south elevations

Locus Map



Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

40 MERIAM 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.

40 Meriam Street is positioned near the center of the south (Meriam Street) side of its large open lot. Maintained chiefly in lawn, the land slopes gently up to the back of the site, with generous setbacks on all sides, foundation plantings, and mature trees scattered throughout. An asphalt driveway extends between Franklin Road and the garage wing of the house, and a stone-paved walkway leads from the driveway to the front door. The building consists of a 1 ½ story main block, a smaller 1 ½ story rear wing, and a 1 ½ story garage wing.

Facing Franklin Road, the three by one bay main block rises from a brick foundation to a side gable roof with a large brick chimney on the back slope, at the intersection with the rear wing. Roofs are clad with slate shingles. Walls are brick, with a header course at the sill and wide clapboard siding in the half-story. Windows typically contain grouped, multi-light steel casement sash with header course sills and flat, painted wood or metal lintels. The façade consists of a shallow gabled pavilion on the left side, an off-center gabled portico, and a large picture window unit on the right end. The entrance portico is composed of a single-leaf wood door flanked by board and batten siding, paired wood posts, and a gable roof with half-timbering and brick infill in the tympanum. A small gabled wall dormer rises above the picture window to the right of the entrance.

The right (south) side elevation of the main block faces Meriam Street. An angled bay window with a flared hip roof is centered on the first floor, with a three-part casement window above. Set slightly back from the plane of the main block, the rear wing features three asymmetrically placed, tri-partite windows, each with a small basement window aligned below. The rear (east) elevation of the wing is sheathed with brick on the first floor and wood clapboards above; it contains two symmetrical sets of casement windows on its first floor and one centered in the gable peak.

The garage wing on the left (north) side of the main block contains two individual garage bays and a recessed pedestrian entrance. Its side gabled roof has a full-length shed dormer across the front with a variety of window sizes. The side (north) elevation of the garage wing includes a large fixed picture window centered in the first floor and a pair of small casement windows centered above.

Well preserved and well maintained, 40 Meriam Street is a handsome example of Lexington's distinctive Tudor Revival style and of upper middle class suburban development in the mid-20th century. The house is notable for its combination of brick and clapboard construction materials, its use of steel casement windows and slate roof, and its picturesque massing with wings, cross gables, and dormers.

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.

At the turn of the 20th century, this area was part of the Hayes estate, which was gradually subdivided and developed with houses in the 20th century. The area bordered by Meriam Street, Hayes Avenue, Castle Road, and Franklin Road was the location of Francis B. Hayes's Victorian mansion, "Oakmount", which was demolished in 1941. The assessors' records for this house show a construction date of 1948, which is consistent with the historical records.

40 Meriam Street appears on the Sanborn maps between 1935 and 1950, the only new construction on the block described above during that period. The first known occupants of the property were Rosario J. Barbo, a furniture manufacturer, his wife Bridie, and a young man in the Air Force who was presumably their son (1955). Rosario was born in Italy, his wife in Ireland.

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The couple was identified as living in Newton as late as 1953. Following the Barbo family, subsequent residents included Walter I. Wells, an engineer, and his wife Marjorie (1965).

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Historic maps and atlases: Walling 1853; Beers 1875; Walker 1889; Stady 1898; Walker 1906; Sanborn 1908, 1918, 1927, 1935, 1935/1950.

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

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

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

Newton Directories: 1951, 1953.

U.S. Census: 1940.

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



North (left side) and west (facade) elevations



South (right side) elevation