

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

56/193 H 1176

Town/City: Lexington

Place: *(neighborhood or village):*

Photograph



Assessor's photograph: Front (façade) and right side elevations

Address: 21 Oakland Street

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: 1906-27

Source: historic maps

Style/Form: Craftsman/Arts & Crafts

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood shingles and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Major Alterations *(with dates):*

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.59

Setting: Located on steep, wooded slope of Merriam Hill, directly behind a large mansion at 23 Oakland Street and halfway between Grant and Oakland streets. Densely built residential neighborhood along both streets, largely constructed in the late 19th/turn of the 20th centuries.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date *(month / year):* September 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

21 OAKLAND STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

H	1176
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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.

21 Oakland Street occupies a relatively large, nearly square parcel between Oakland and Grant streets, on the steep southern slope of Merriam Hill. The lot is connected to Oakland Street by a narrow strip of land, just wide enough to accommodate an unpaved (gravel and grass) driveway. An adjacent, undeveloped parcel fronting on Grant Street is under the same ownership and contains another unpaved driveway. Visibility from public ways is extremely limited; field observations were substantially augmented by assessor's records and Bing bird's eye views for the following description.

The rectangular building consists of a 35 by 40 foot main block rising 1 ½ stories from a stone foundation to a front gable roof (facing Oakland Street) with exposed rafter ends. Due to the slope of the land, the basement level is fully exposed at the back of the house. Walls are clad with wood shingles; windows typically have double-hung sash with band molding. The main entrance is set slightly off the center line of the front (Oakland Street) façade. The right side elevation (facing 19A Oakland Street) contains a wide, three-sided bay window that rises above the main eave line and is topped by a polygonal roof, creating a tower effect. Towards the rear of this elevation, a broad exterior chimney is flanked on the first floor by paired windows at the left and two single windows on the right, and two gabled dormers, each with a single window, at the roof. The rear elevation (facing Grant Street) has a wood porch and stairway spanning most of its length.

21 Oakland Street appears to be a substantial, distinctive, and little altered example of the Craftsman/Arts & Crafts style in Lexington. Access to the property for closer examination is merited.

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.

Oakland Street was laid out and platted after 1873; most of the houses in this section were built in the 1880s. In 1906, this property was part of the Edward P. Bliss estate. Bliss's Queen Anne style house was built in 1884, with a major Craftsman style addition ca. 1906, designed by Lexington architect Willard Brown (LEX.373). The building now known as 21 Oakland Street was not illustrated on the 1906 map. A two-story building of roughly the same size, shape, and location (with an appendage at the back left [southeast] corner) appears on the 1927 Sanborn map, identified as Locke Hill Riding School. Parcel lines are unfortunately not completely drawn to indicate whether or not it was still part of the Bliss estate. In 1935, the building, now clearly on a separate parcel, is identified as a dwelling and numbered 21 Oakland Street. The narrow strip of land connecting the building and Oakland Street was in place at this time.

No information is presently known of the Locke Hill Riding School. The first known residents at this address, in 1932, were Matthew Stevenson, then a cattle inspector, and his wife Minnie L. By 1935, they were accompanied by their son William H. Stevenson, and Matthew's sister, Irene C. Stevenson. In 1940, the family had a boarder, Althea Earley, who worked as a public school teacher. From at least 1945 through 1965, the house was occupied by Ernest F. Stokes and his wife Edith E. Mr. Stokes's occupation was described variously as accountant, purchasing agent, and manager.

Further research is recommended to ascertain the construction date of this house, its affiliation with the Bliss estate, and early uses, including the history of the Locke Hill Riding School.

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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 Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey, Period and Area Summaries.

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

Lexington Directories: 1899, 1908-09, 1922, 1928, 1930, 1932, 1934, 1936.

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

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

_____. Form B building inventory forms: LEX.373, LEX.375.

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