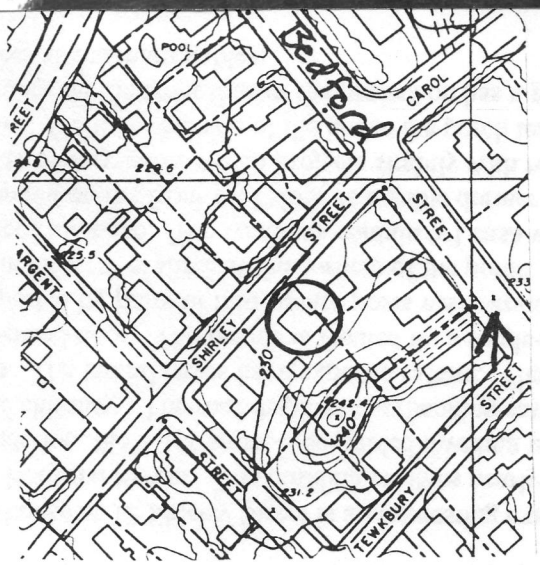
FORM B - BUILDING

Assessor's number	USGS Quad	Area(s)	Form Number
57/92	Boston N.		1119



Town Lexington

Place *(neighborhood or village)* North Lexington

Address 12 Shirley Street

Historic Name Custance-Morse House

Uses: Present Residential

Original Residential

Date of Construction 1917

Source Lexington Valuation List

Style/Form Craftsman

Architect/Builder Custance Brothers?

Exterior Material:

Foundation rubble

Wall/Trim wood shingles

Roof asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

garage

Major Alterations *(with dates)* none

Condition good

Moved ☒ no ☐ yes **Date**

Acreage 7873 SF

Setting mixed early 20th century residential neighborhood

Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date *(month/year)* June 2000

Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.

BUILDING FORM (12 Shirley Street)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of the building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The house at 12 Shirley Street is an interesting example of the Craftsman style and bears some resemblance to the house at **118 Bedford Street**. The building remains nearly totally unaltered from its original, 1917, appearance. Resting on a rubble foundation, the 2 1/2-story, side-gabled dwelling is sheathed in wood shingles with an asphalt-covered roof and a brick, off-ridge chimney. The roof displays overhanging eaves which are supported by triangular braces and flared ends on the gable ends. The lateral eaves have exposed rafters. The front facade is two-bays wide with a sidehall entrance containing a glass-and-panel door. The facade is fronted by a single-story porch which wraps around to the west elevation. The porch is supported by pairs of thin square posts with capitols and bases, and are infilled by geometric stickwork. The porch columns are in clusters of three at the corners of the porch. Between the supports stick balusters rest on a wooden deck above a latticed airspace. The windows contain 6/1 sash with molded surrounds, exterior storm windows and vertical board shutters. Centered on the front roof slope is a gable dormer with small triangular braces. Projecting from the rear of the east elevation is a two-story gable which projects slightly with two windows on the first floor of the east elevation and a single window above. On the west side of the house the porch terminates at an additional two-story projecting gable. The secondary entrance on the front face of the projection has a glass-and-panel door. Both of the side gables display the same triangular braces as the main gables.

A driveway extends along the west side of the house, terminating at a gablefront garage with an overhead door. The building displays exposed rafters on the side elevations.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Describe 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.

This house was constructed in 1917 on Lot 12 of the subdivision laid out by George Tewksbury in 1898. The Town Valuation List indicates that in 1917 Theodore Custance was assessed for the lot only. The following year the assessment included a house valued at $4000. Theodore Custance was one of the principals of Custance Brothers, contractors and builders and it is assumed that the firm built the house. By 1925, Custance, who lived across the street at what is now **9-11 Shirley Street (MHC# 1118)**, had sold the house at 12 Shirley Street. It was owned by Eugene Partridge and his wife in the 1930s and 1940s. Francis and Margaret Morse purchased the house in 1948 and continue to live here today.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Lexington Assessors Records.
Lexington Directories, various dates.
Lexington Valuation Lists, various dates.

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attached a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*