

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

**Town/City:**    Lexington

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

## Photograph



Left side and front (facade) elevations

**Address:**    15 Shirley Street

**Historic Name:**

**Uses:** Present:    residential

Original:    residential

**Date of Construction:**    ca. 1900-15

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

**Style/Form:**    Queen Anne/Colonial Revival

**Architect/Builder:**

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation:    fieldstone

Wall/Trim:    artificial siding and trim

Roof:    asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Garage

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

Artificial siding (L 20<sup>th</sup> c), replacement windows (L 20<sup>th</sup> – E 21<sup>st</sup> c)

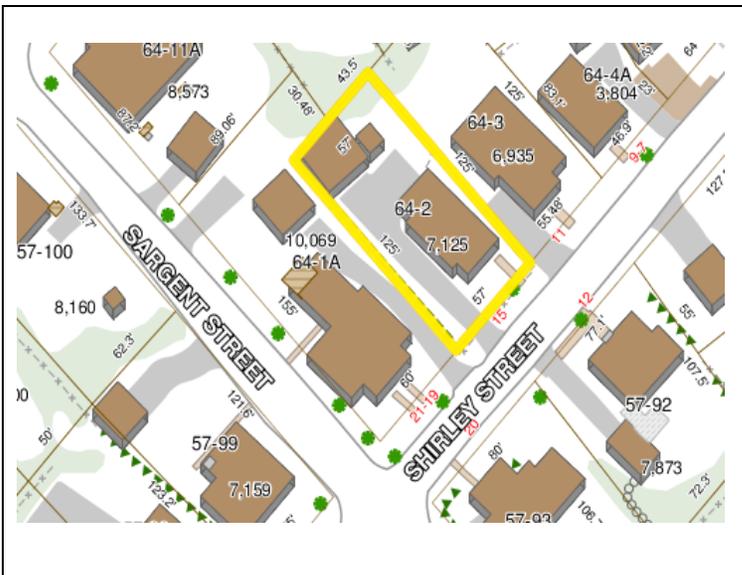
**Condition:**    good

**Moved:** no     yes     **Date:**

**Acreeage:**    0.16

**Setting:** Dead-end, residential side street off major arterial thoroughfare of Bedford Street. Cohesive streetscape with houses of generally similar period, scale, and style; buildings set close together and to the street.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:**    Wendy Frontiero

**Organization:**    Lexington Historical Commission

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

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

15 SHIRLEY STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

	2263
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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 Shirley Street occupies a small flat lot, maintained chiefly in lawn with one large street tree and foundation plantings. Building setbacks are modest. A straight paved driveway extends along the left side of the house, and a concrete walkway extends between the sidewalk and front entrance. The building consists of a 2 ½ story main block with a small rear extension and a detached garage.

The three by two bay main block rises from a fieldstone foundation to a front gabled roof with gable returns and a small chimney centered at the ridgeline. Walls are sheathed with artificial siding; the second floor flares out slightly at its base, and the half-story flares out slightly above the second story on the façade. Windows typically have 1/1 double hung sash, without trim. The façade is three bays wide with an offset doorway and a full-width, one-story porch accessed by wood steps. Turned posts and decoratively sawn brackets support the porch's low hip roof; a modern railing with square wood balusters lines the edges. A single window is centered in the half-story, abutted by a small, modern awning window.

The right side elevation has irregular fenestration, with two windows on each floor. The first floor has two widely spaced windows, including a casement or sliding unit towards the back. The second floor has a square, Queen Anne sash with gridded panes near the center. The left side elevation has a single window and an angled bay window on the first floor and two widely spaced windows aligned above. A narrow, one-story extension across the back elevation has a gabled roof and, facing the left side of the lot, an offset single-leaf door and two single windows.

Located at the left back corner of the lot, the garage is one story high with a hip roof, exposed rafter ends, and two individual vehicle bays. Its walls are constructed of small coursed ashlar blocks, and feature an exterior stone chimney on the right side elevation.

Well maintained, 15 Shirley Street is a good example of modest, late Victorian suburban housing in Lexington. It is notable for its decorative front porch, flared wall surfaces, Queen Anne window sash, and the uncommon stone construction of its original/early garage.

## 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.*

Shirley Street appears on the maps between 1898 and 1906; a handful of buildings, mostly along the south side, were standing along it in the latter year. All but one lot was developed by 1927, when the streetscape contained ten buildings (four of them side-by-side duplexes) and six garages.

The house at 15 Shirley Street represents the early period of suburbanization in Lexington, in which development along Bedford Street was sparked by the re-building of the roadway and the arrival of street railway service here at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. George F. Tewksbury, a farmer who owned the land in this area in 1898 and 1906, is credited with developing the Hill Street/Tewksbury Street/Shirley Street neighborhood.

15 Shirley Street may appear on the maps as early as 1906; it is clearly here by 1927, with the garage. The first known occupants of the house are Robert A. McAdoo, a farmer, and his wife Mary J. (1922). In 1935, two families appear to be living

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here: Herbert W. Johnson, a registered pharmacist, and his wife Elsie; and John J. Callahan, a master plumber (and president of Lexington Plumbing and Heating Co. on Bedford Street) and his wife Beatrice. Remaining in the house until at least 1965, the Callahan family also included three sons, John J., also a plumber, Martin, and Michael.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Hudson, Charles. *History of the Town of Lexington*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913.

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

Lexington Directories: 1899, 1906, 1908-09, 1922, 1934, 1936.

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

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

## SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Front (facade) and right side elevations



Garage: Front elevation