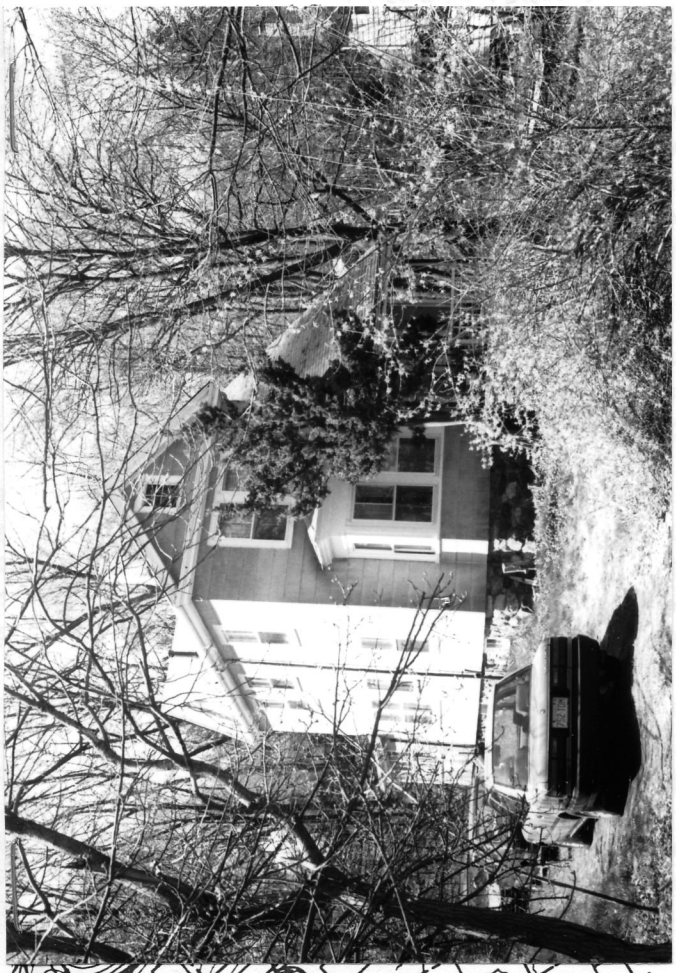
FORM B - BUILDING

Assessor's number	USGS Quad	Area(s)	Form Number
22/96	Boston N.		1136



Town Lexington

Place *(neighborhood or village)* East Lexington

Address 29 Tower Road

Historic Name W. A. Tower Estate outbuilding

Uses: Present Residential

Original Residential

Date of Construction c.1875

Source Lexington Valuation Lists

Style/Form Italianate with Queen Anne addition

Architect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation fieldstone

Wall/Trim asbestos shingle

Roof asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

garage, shed

Major Alterations *(with dates)* 1902 - moved to present site with addition to north, bay window; c.1940 - asbestos shingles

Condition fair-poor

Moved ☐ no ☒ yes **Date** 1902

Acreage 17,250 SF

Setting mixed 20th century residential neighborhood

Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date *(month/year)* May 2000

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

BUILDING FORM (29 Tower Road)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

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

Formerly part of the Tower Estate, 29 Tower Road is a 2 1/2-story dwelling which was built in two stages. The older part of the structure is the section to the south which probably dates to the 1870s or 1880s; the section to the north was apparently added after the house was moved to its present location in 1902. The house is set on a fieldstone foundation and is sheathed in asbestos shingles. The original part of the cottage is a rectangular block set with its narrow pedimented end to the street and an additional pediment on the south elevation. Projecting from the facade is a c.1902 single-story, rectangular bay window set on a stone foundation. The remaining windows consist of 2/2 sash, including both individual windows and pairs. Small 2 x 2 windows light the pediments.

The northern elevation of the c.1902 addition displays an asymmetrical gable which extends to shelter the front porch. The north elevation is punctuated by a variety of windows. The front porch is supported by turned posts with a geometric railing and latticed airspace. The main entrance, under the porch, consists of a glass-and-panel wooden door with an adjacent 2/2 window.

A single-story, 20th century wing extends behind the original house with a multi-paned sun porch on the south side. To the northwest of the house is a small, gablefront clapboarded shed. At the end of the driveway is a clapboarded garage with two overhead doors and a metal roof. The front yard is overgrown with vegetation.

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.

Together with Tower Park, an **ornamental gate at Pelham Road (MHC#512)** and the stone wall along Massachusetts Avenue and Pelham Road, this building is a last remnant of the William Augustus Tower estate which occupied much of the acreage along Mass. Ave. between Pelham Road and Middle Street (later Marrett Road).

This house was originally located on Marrett Road (according to Edwin Worther's notes it stood on the "site of Sherburne-Carter house"). It was reportedly originally built at Mr. Tower's expense for Mr. Batchelder (the estate coachman) who occupied it for 13 years before it was moved to its present location and constructed a large addition. A brief mention in the *Lexington Minute-man* in 1902 confirms that Col. William A. Tower purchased this lot of land from Frank Pierce and began excavation of a cellar. The house, then occupied by Mr. Batchelder, was moved to the site for use by the Batchelder family.

In 1906 Richard Tower sold the house and land on Tower Road to Fred Earle, a conductor on the Boston & Maine Railroad (Lexington branch). The 1906 map indicates that the surrounding acreage had already been lotted. The house was occupied for many years by Fred Earle and his wife, Caroline (Carrie). The Earles continued to own the house into the 1950s. It was known as 14 Tower until the mid 1930s.

William Augustus Tower (1824-1904) was a very successful banker and businessman who moved to Lexington in the 1850s. In addition to banking interests in Chicago and Boston, he served as president of the Concord Railroad in New Hampshire from 1870-1873 and later president of the Nashua and Lowell Railroad. He was a member of the first board of trustees of the Lexington Savings Bank and a founder of the Lexington Historical Society. He served as a member of the House of Representatives and the Governor's Council and was chief marshal at the Lexington Centennial celebration in 1875. Tower's residence south of Main Street (Mass. Ave.) was described as the finest in town in the 1868 Town History; a new house was built for Tower by a Mr. Ball in 1873. This mansion was torn down in the late 1930s or early 1940s.

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

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
Lexington

Property Address
29 Tower Road

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Area(s) Form No.

	1136

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Lexington Assessors Records.
Lexington Directories, various dates.
Lexington Minute-man, 2/22/1873; 10/11/1902; 12/15/1906.
Lexington Valuation Lists, various dates.
Worthen, Edwin. Notes on moved Lexington houses. [Courtesy of Nancy Seasholes].
1906 map.