

FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA. 02108

Form numbers in this area	Area letter
490-496, 498-499, 501-514	0

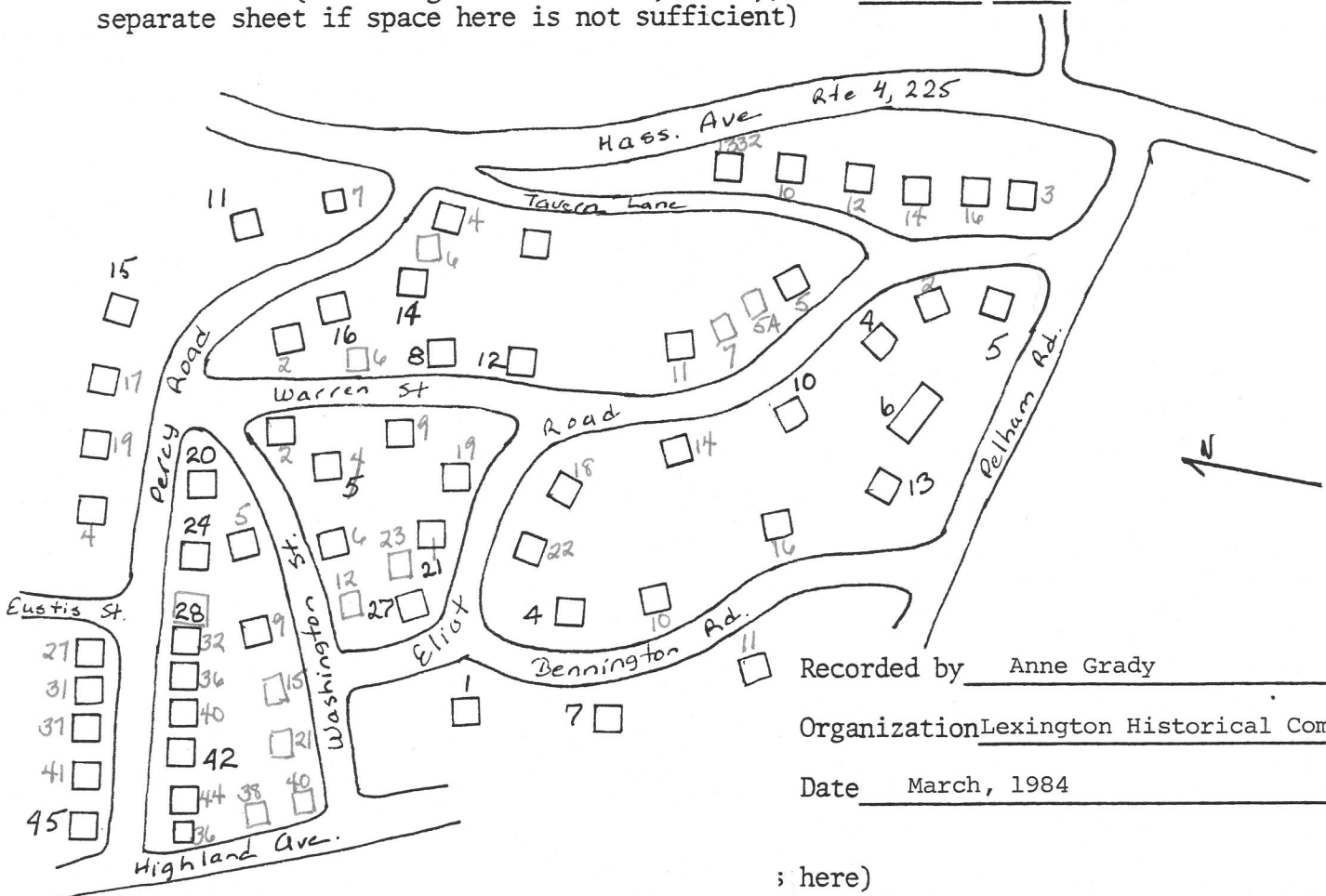


Lexington

f area (if any) Munroe Hill

l date or period 1890-1910

Sketch map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient)



Recorded by Anne Grady
Organization Lexington Historical Commission
Date March, 1984

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ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Describe physical setting, general character, and architecturally significant structures).

Munroe Hill is an elevated area west of Massachusetts Avenue. The hill rises steeply behind the pre-Revolutionary Munroe Tavern. The two dozen or so substantial late nineteenth century or early twentieth century houses define the architectural character of the area even though a number of mid-twentieth century houses are intermingled. One recently constructed house at 2 Washington Street is a striking example of contemporary design which fits well in its late nineteenth century context.

Houses on Munroe Hill reflect ^{not only} the stipulation in the deeds that buildings cost \$3,500 above the foundation but ^{also} the relative wealth of their late nineteenth/early twentieth century owners. None was built speculatively; all were very likely designed by architects. Among architects who have been identified are Samuel D. Kelley, Lois Lilly Howe, and Chapman and Frazer.

With the exception of several rather formal Colonial Revival structures, built near the end of the first wave of development of Munroe Hill, all of the

(see Continuation Sheet)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Explain development of area, what caused it, and how it affected community; be specific).

The Lexington Land Company was responsible for the development of Munroe Hill. Formed in December 1891, the company "had among its trustees William H. Mason, a real estate broker with offices in Boston, and James S. Munroe," first owner of a hardware store in Boston, then owner of a wallpaper manufactory in South Lawrence. "The land company began selling shares in 1892 at \$100 per. Among the largest shareholders were Warren Sherburne, Hiram Janvrin, John L. Norris and James S. Munroe, men who already owned land along Bloomfield Street, Mt. Vernon Street, and Main Street" (Reinhardt dissertation, pp. 91-92). Lots of 9,000 and 18,000 square feet, a slightly smaller average than Bloomfield Street, were laid out along Warren, Washington, and Bennington streets/ ^{and Percy Road.} Deed restrictions specified only one house per lot, its set back, and required a construction cost per house of over \$3,500 or more. Professions of owners included insurance adjuster, real estate promoter, banker, broker, commission merchant, lawyer, and middle management.

Many of these men who worked in Boston and their families had first been introduced to Lexington as summer guests at Lexington hotels, including the Russell House and the Massachusetts House. Lexington was known for its healthful atmosphere as the following inclusion in Hurd's History of Middlesex County of 1890 attests:

People in feeble health, or exhausted by over-work, find the atmosphere pure and bracing, and a residence of a few weeks often proves wonderfully invigorating.

(see Continuation Sheet)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Lexington Golf Club, 1895-1980. Published by the Lexington Golf Club, 1980.

Lexington Minute Man, May 3, 1892, July 22, 1892, March 24, 1893.

Reinhardt, Elizabeth Wright. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston University.

1889 atlas

1906 atlas

(see Continuation Sheet)

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Lexington	Form No: 0
Property Name: Munroe Hill	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

houses are late nineteenth century picturesque designs which incorporate such features as bay windows, turrets, varied window treatment, and porches, and are embellished with Shingle Style, Queen Anne or Colonial Revival decorative trim. There are slightly more Shingle Style houses on Munroe Hill than in the other areas of town developed at the same period (Meriam Hill, Winthrop Road) and this adds to the distinctive character of the area.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

To sickly children especially the Lexington air and life is stimulating and healthful.

Several references in the Lexington Minute Man to the new Munroe Hill development specifically mention the healthiness of the area. Very likely the notion was first promoted by the Lexington Land Company.

The Lexington Land Company places on the market lots which embrace a section of our town peculiarly favorable in all that relates to good air and pleasant scenery. (Lexington Minute Man, May 3, 1892)

The section of Lexington known as Mt. Vernon offers unusual attractions in addition to those which have long made Lexington famous as a health resort. (Lexington Minute Man, July 22, 1892)

The renaming of Mt. Vernon Street to Percy Road in the mid-1890s was the subject of much dispute. Percy, after all, was the British general who commandeered the Munroe Tavern for a hospital on April 19, 1775.

The ideals of wholesome family life amid pleasant country surroundings which prompted the newcomers to settle on Munroe Hill are thoroughly described by Elizabeth Reinhardt in her doctoral dissertation on Lexington's transformation from rural town to suburb.

Further enticement to the area was the establishment in 1894 of the Lexington Golf Club course on the portion of the Munroe land not developed and on adjacent Tower land extending to and across Marrett Road (see accompanying plan), one of the earliest courses to be laid out in the Boston area. The old barn of the Munroe Tavern was used as a clubhouse and members of the club included many of the new residents of Munroe Hill and Meriam Hill. In 1900, the club moved to land it could own outright on the former Vaille farm in North Lexington. The part of Munroe Hill bounded by Pelham and Eliot roads was then opened up for development.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

1894 Directory

1899 Directory

1906 Directory

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
LEXINGTON

Property Address
MUNROE HILL

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

Area(s) Form No.

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**DATA SHEET
AREA O
MUNROE HILL AREA**

MHC #	Address	Name	Style	Architect or Builder	Date
509	1 Bennington Road	Francis Smith Dane House	Colonial Revival		1906
510	4 Bennington Road	Thomas C. Sias House	Colonial Revival		1900
511	7 Bennington Road	Ralph Leslie Stevens House	Shingle Style		1896
	11 Bennington Road	Robert Holt House	Georgian Revival	Willard D. Brown/ Custance Bros.	1916
	23 Bennington Road		Colonial Revival		1953?
	24 Bennington Road		Colonial Revival		1950?
	3 Eliot Road				1928
508	4 Eliot Road	Francis W. Dean House	Shingle Style		1902
507	6 Eliot Road	Harry Fay/Richard Engstrom House	Georgian Revival	Oswald Hering	1907
506	10 Eliot Road	C.W. Kettell House	Colonial Revival	Lois Lilley Howe	1901
	11 Eliot Road		Colonial Revival		1935?
	14 Eliot Road		Georgian Revival		1923?
	18 Eliot Road		Georgian Revival		1928?
	19 Eliot Road		Colonial Revival		1930?
	21 Eliot Road		Colonial Revival		1930?
505	23 Eliot Road	Charles Follen Garrison House	Dutch Colonial		1900
504	27 Eliot Road	Mrs. George Stowell House	Shingle Style		1896
513	5 Pelham Road	George W. Stowell House	Colonial Revival		1896
514	13 Pelham Road	Francis Jackson Garrison House	Georgian Revival	Lois Lilley Howe	1900
	4 Percy Road		Craftsman		1916
490, 134	11 Percy Road	Warren Sherburne House	Col. Revival/Queen Anne	S.D. Kelley	1893
491	14 Percy Road	Col. Charles Thornton House	Shingle Style	Day	1893-4
492	15 Percy Road	Warren Sherburne, Jr. House	Col. Revival/Queen Anne		c.1890-3
493	16 Percy Road	Col. Charles Thornton Cottage	Shingle Style	Day	1893-4
	17 Percy Road		Queen Anne		1895?
494	20 Percy Road	Arthur Newell House	Shingle Style	Chapman & Frazer/A.C. Washburn	1896
495	24 Percy Road	William E. Page Houe	Shingle Style		1896

	27 Percy Road		Queen Anne		1887?
496	28 Percy Road	Addie Hastings House	Col. Rev./Craftsman		c.1920
497	31 Percy Road	Frank W. Coburn House	Queen Anne		1886
	32 Percy Road				1900?
	36 Percy Road		Dutch Colonial		1929?
	37 Percy Road		Queen Anne		1887?
	40 Percy Road		Dutch Colonial		1915?
498	42 Percy Road	Hiram Janvrin House	Ital./Col. Revival		1891
	44 Percy Road		Colonial Revival		1910?
499	45 Percy Road	Albin Rufus Reed House	Col. Rev./Queen Anne		1894
500	50 Percy Road	Wildacre Inn		Edward Goodwin Reed	1902
501	8 Warren Street	Grace Cook House	Col. Rev./Queen Anne		1895
	9 Warren Street		Tudor Revival		1931?
502	12 Warren Street	Mrs. William (Helen) Munroe House	Colonial Revival	Henry Ball	c.1900
503	4 Washington Street	J.M. Brooks House	Shingle Style		c.1899
	5 Washington Street		Colonial Revival		1923?
	9 Washington Street		Colonial Revival		1905?
	15 Washington Street		Dutch Colonial		1924?

Updated by Lisa Mausolf, Oct. 2009