

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

COPY

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name M.H. Merriam & Company

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 7-9 Oakland Street not for publication

city or town Lexington vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Middlesex code 017 zip code 02420

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination  
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of  
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brona Simon December 29, 2008  
Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon Date  
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the  
National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register

☐ removed from the  
National Register

☐ other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action



M.H. Merriam & Co.  
Name of Property

Middlesex MA  
County and State

### 5. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

(Check only one box)

☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

#### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3		building
		sites
	1	structures
		objects
3	1	Total

#### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

#### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/multiple dwelling

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

No style (main block)  
Italianate (barn addition)

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone  
walls weatherboard  
roof asphalt  
other

#### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)



M.H. Merriam & Co.

Name of Property

### **8. Statement of Significance**

#### **Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### **Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

#### **Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

### **9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### **Previous documentation on file (NPS): HPCA #18142**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Middlesex, MA

County and State

#### **Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Planning & Development

#### **Period of Significance**

1882-1958

#### **Significant Dates**

1882

#### **Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

#### **Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

#### **Architect/Builder**

N/A

#### **Primary location of additional data:**

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_



M.H. Merriam & Co.  
Name of Property

Middlesex, MA  
County, State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

### UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 19 316760 4701800  
Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

— See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christine Beard, Tremont Preservation Services, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date December 2008

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Supportive Living, Inc.

street & number Warren House, 17 Warren Avenue telephone 617-864-5688

city or town Woburn state MA zip code 01801

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

M.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington (Middlesex), MA

Section number 7 Page 1

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The M.H. Merriam & Company site consists of four freestanding structures: a factory building with an attached garage, a small residence, a brick storage shed, and a trash enclosure. The property is located on the south side of Oakland Street in downtown Lexington, Massachusetts on a lot measuring roughly 33,000 square feet. To the south the lot borders the former Boston & Albany railroad tracks, now the Minuteman bicycle path, and a municipal parking lot used by patrons of businesses along Massachusetts Avenue, the principal commercial street in downtown Lexington. The site factory is located at the southern edge of a small residential neighborhood known as Meriam Hill (MHC Area Form H). Meriam Hill, which is bound by Glen Road, Oakland Street, and Meriam Street<sup>1</sup>, includes approximately 70 buildings, of which the factory was historically the only non-residential property. Most of the remaining buildings are substantial late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century residences. The Merriam factory is also located within the Battle Green Historic District (1956), a local historic district of 150 commercial and residential properties (and which does not include the residential neighborhood of Meriam Hill).

The Merriam lot is roughly rectangular, and most of the land is taken up by the factory building. The residence sits at the northwest corner of the site, set back slightly from Oakland Street. The storage shed is located near the center of the south lot line, while the more recent trash enclosure stands just west of the factory building. A paved asphalt driveway provides access to a small parking area at the west end of the property and continues past the main entry of the factory to the center of the building, where it exits out to Oakland Street. There are several concrete walkways over the rear of the lot, while the deeper front yard has a small grassy area landscaped with shade trees.

In 2007/2008 a certified rehabilitation was undertaken to convert the factory to a residence for victims of brain injuries. All work undertaken as part of the rehabilitation was approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and National Park Service.

Factory Building and Barn

The principal structure on the project site is the former M.H. Merriam & Company factory, which was built in four sections. The original factory structure was constructed in 1882 to hold the principal manufacturing spaces, and is a long narrow wing that comprises about three-quarters of the building. Around 1896, a two-story barn (dating from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century) was moved to the site and attached to the west end of the factory for use as an office and shipping area. Around 1915, a one-story masonry garage was constructed off the west end of the barn addition. (photo #2) There is also a small ell centered on the rear (south) elevation of the original factory section.

The original factory is one story in height and of wood-frame construction with painted clapboard siding. It is strictly utilitarian in its design, having no notable architectural detailing. This section is enclosed by a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. The roofline is defined by a simple box cornice. Window openings of this section contain 6/6 wood replacement sash, most of which are from the 1980s, and a small number from 2007. Windows are framed by simple molded wood casings. (photo #3) The Oakland Street (north) elevation is one story in height

(continued)

<sup>1</sup>The spelling "Merriam" and "Meriam" are used interchangeably for the street on historic maps and plans. The current spelling used by the town is "Meriam", also the spelling used for Meriam Hill, the residential neighborhood east of Meriam Street. The name was likely first used in honor of John Merriam, an ancestor of Matthew, who was among the earliest settlers in the area.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetM.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington (Middlesex), MASection number 7 Page 2

while the rear (south) elevation has an exposed basement, leaving two exposed levels. As part of the recent renovation, a new handicap entry was constructed near the center of the north elevation. The entry is topped by a six-pane transom, and is sheltered by a simple porch with a shed roof. (photo #1)

The east elevation is sparse, having a single central door set beneath a peaked window that appears to have been added (date unknown). The doorway has a flat wood casing and a glazed two-panel wood door (2007). The window has a shallow hood molding.

The rear elevation features two entrances. One, toward the east end of the basement was modified as part of the recent rehabilitation, and currently consists of a glazed two-panel wood replacement door (fabricated to match the historic door formerly in this location) set beneath a three-pane transom. (photo #4) The second entry, at the west end of the elevation, is a recent doorway (2007) that holds a glazed, two-panel, wood door framed by a multi-pane transom and sidelights. At the center of the rear elevation is a small ell that appears to have been built in at least two stages. Historic maps indicate that there was originally a single-story brick boiler room with a tall brick stack in this location. The boiler room remains today (as the lower level of the two-story block), as does the smokestack. Between 1897 and 1903 a second floor was added to the boiler room. (photo #5) There is an entry into the boiler room on its west face; this entry contains historic wood double doors. A second entry to the former boiler room was added in 2007 to the east elevation, beneath an original window opening. This entry holds a glazed two-panel wood door. In 2007, an eight-bay-wide addition was constructed off the rear elevation, just west of the former boiler room. The addition has clapboard siding, 6/6 wood sash, and an asphalt shingle roof. A portion of the addition was built above an old brick coal room that was added ca. 1900.

As noted above, a barn was moved to the site around 1896 for use as an office and shipping area. The barn was originally constructed around 1860 as part of the estate of General Samuel Chandler (8 Goodwin Street – NRIND, 1977). The estate was purchased by Matthew Merriam when he moved to Lexington, and it was his home from ca. 1869 until 1894. Merriam subsequently subdivided the Goodwin Street estate for residential development and moved the barn to his factory site on Oakland Street. It is likely that the north elevation of the barn was reworked at the time it was moved to create a more formal façade, which today has a central entrance containing a glazed and paneled wood door sheltered by a small entry porch with a pedimented gable. Above the entry is an arched window topped by a wood keystone. The north and side elevations of the barn have several windows that were probably added when the structure was moved. These windows have shallow projecting hoods. The side elevations also have a decorative cornice with brackets. The south elevation of the barn appears to retain more of its original features, having a large central doorway with a sliding wood door and a bale door above. In 2007 the barn and bale doors were restored. New sliding glazed doors were added on the exterior of the barn doors. There are two windows flanking the central doorway and a small fanlight at the attic level. (photo #6) As part of the recent rehabilitation a deck and handicap access ramp (with simple wood railings) were constructed adjacent to the former barn.

Between 1908 and 1918, a one-story concrete garage was added to the west end of the building. This two-bay garage has a flat roof and a stucco finish. The foundation is faced with fieldstone. Architectural detailing of the exterior walls is limited and includes a flared projecting lintel above the doors and a small number of inlaid tiles

(continued)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

M.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington (Middlesex), MA

Section number 7 Page 3

A row of tiles defines the roofline at the façade (north elevation). The historic paneled wood doors are in place at the façade. The rear elevation has two windows, while the west elevation has a tripartite window.

Prior to the recent renovation, much of the original open manufacturing space had been subdivided into smaller workrooms with modern finishes. The interior was reconfigured in 2007 to create 15 residential units. The lower level is used to house mechanical equipment and storage areas. All residential spaces are at the first floor, where original wood trusses are still visible within the units (other historic finishes had been removed when renovations were undertaken around 1980). The barn section holds a large common room and several offices. Wood framing remains visible in the common space. A kitchen was constructed within the garage area.

Residence

There is a small cottage near the northeast corner of the lot that was apparently constructed at the same time as the factory or shortly thereafter. The house is built into a hill so that it has two exposed stories at its west and south elevations and one story at its north and east elevations. This wood-framed structure is sided with clapboards and enclosed by a gable roof with asphalt shingles. There are two entrances to the house, one leading to the upper level from the north elevation and another at the lower level of the west elevation. Both doorways are framed by molded wood casings and topped by a simple projecting hood. The north entry contains the historic glazed and paneled wood door and is topped by a gabled hood on brackets. A modern wood stoop leads to this entry. The west entry has a historic four-panel wood door and is sheltered by a small porch with simple square posts. It appears that there was originally a doorway at the south elevation as well, but it was blocked up at some point. Window openings of the building contain 6/1 wood sash; many also have four-pane wood storm windows in place. A stone retaining wall abuts the rear elevation of the house. (photo #7)

The interior of the cottage remains intact, although finishes are in very poor condition. The kitchen and bathroom spaces have been modified, but the remaining rooms have seen very little change. No work was undertaken on the house as part of the 2007/2008 rehabilitation.

Storage Shed

At the rear of the site is a small brick storage shed that appears to be an original feature to the site. As early as 1887 it was used for storage of rubber cement. The shed is topped by a shallow, gabled, wood roof that appears to be fairly recent. The same is true of the set of flush double doors that provide access to the shed on its west side.

Trash Enclosure

A small freestanding wooden enclosure was constructed (2007) to obscure trash barrels at the west end of the building.

(continued)



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**M.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington (Middlesex), MA**

Section number 7 Page 4

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**Archaeological Description**

While no ancient Native American sites are known on the M. H. Merriam & Company factory property, it is possible that sites are present. Two ancient sites are known in the general area (within one mile), both within 1,000 feet of interior fresh water wetlands. The nominated property lies within the Shawsheen River watershed in the Merrimack River drainage. Environmental characteristics of the area do not represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites. The factory is located on a level to moderately sloping land surface; however, the nearest wetlands are located more than 1,000 feet away. Soil types in the area are generally excessively drained; however, urban land soil types characterized by excavated and filled land are also present. Given the above information, the size of the property (approximately 33,000 square feet), and the adverse effects to the integrity of potential resources by construction of the factory, residence, brick storage shed, and trash enclosure, a low potential exists for locating significant ancient Native American resources.

A low potential also exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the Merriam & Company property. No historic land use has been identified on the nominated property prior to its division into house lots as part of the Merriam Hill development. Agricultural land use is expected but has not been demonstrated. No potential archaeological resources have been identified associated with the M. H. Merriam & Company; however, structural evidence of outbuildings and evidence of occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) may exist.

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetM.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington (Middlesex), MASection number 8 Page 1

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The M.H. Merriam & Company factory possesses integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The factory is significant under National Register Criterion A as the principal manufacturing establishment in Lexington in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and for its associations with the development of downtown Lexington as the focus of commercial life in the town. Factory owner Matthew H. Merriam (1824-1898) was a prominent resident of Lexington, being active in many town activities, both municipal and social. The property is also eligible under Criterion C as a rare example of a utilitarian wood-frame factory building in Lexington.

Matthew Henry Merriam, the son of Matthew and Isette Kinney Merriam, was born in 1824. Little is known of his early life or his family except that his father was originally from Berwick, Maine and his parents were married in Gilsum, New Hampshire. Genealogical research indicates that Matthew H. Merriam was born in Gilsum, as were his brother and sister. By 1852 Matthew had settled in Boston, where he was employed as a civil engineer at 115 Court Street, according to the Boston city directory. In 1853 he married Jane Wilde of Fairlee, Vermont, with whom he had five children. Only two of their children, Nathaniel and Edward (the eldest and youngest respectively), survived past the age of 23. Merriam was trained as a machinist and later reported that he had:

*"made steam engines, and worked upon them as a journeyman; and I have designed and superintended the construction of steam engines. I have done it on several occasions - at Newburyport, at Boston, and at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where I have run engines. I have been engaged in that business for the past twenty years." (1864 Senate Committee Reports, p. 160)*

Merriam was also involved in creating ways to improve upon machinery, particularly machinery associated with the leather industry. In 1854 he and a partner patented an "improved tool rest for turning lathes," while the following year, he received a patent for an improved "leather splitting machine." Most importantly to his future success, Merriam jointly owned the rights to a "patent shoe binding" together with Eugene L. Norton (received ca. 1856). The two men had developed a method of efficiently producing leather trimming for shoes and had begun production in Charlestown, Massachusetts, in 1857 under the name Merriam & Norton. According to Merriam, he and Norton had a "proprietary interest" in the manufacturing of the leather shoe binding, hiring a third party to oversee the actual production (Senate Committee Reports, p. 161). In 1861 Merriam began working at the Charlestown Navy Yard as a master mechanic. At the time, he was living in Charlestown, where he served as an alderman in the early 1860s. Norton was also employed at the Navy Yard, as a Navy Agent (purchasing agent).

Eugene Lindsey Norton (1825-1880) was a native of Maine. By 1850, he was living in Charlestown and was listed in the city directory as a morocco leather dresser. The federal census of 1860 lists Norton as a morocco manufacturer, but by 1861 he was working at the Navy Yard. Norton was active in politics, serving as an alderman in Charlestown and later becoming mayor (1869). He was a state Senator (1859-61, 1879, and 1880) and a member of the state House of Representatives (1878).

(continued)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

M.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 2

It is not clear at what point Merriam and Norton began taking a more active role in the operation of the binding factory, but clearly it had become their principal occupation by about 1870 when the federal census lists Merriam as a "manufacturer" and Norton in the "shoe findings" business. By 1875 the company had moved to 31 High Street in Boston, in the city's Leather District. Merriam and Norton collaborated on at least one other invention and received a patent in 1866 for an "improved cutting machine" to facilitate the "manufacture of leather bindings, employed mostly for binding the edges of shoes." (Baldwin, p. 459)

Following Norton's death in 1880, Matthew Merriam continued to manufacture in Boston and expanded his business by constructing a new factory in Lexington, Massachusetts in 1882. Merriam had previously moved his residence to Lexington (about 1869). His first home in Lexington was the former estate of General Samuel Chandler on Hancock Street (today 8 Goodwin Street - NRIND, 1977), where he lived with his father, his wife, and his three sons (Nathaniel, Frank, and Edward). Clearly Merriam had prospered in his business for he was able to afford a fine house and a staff of three servants. He was also active in town and business affairs of Lexington, where he played a pivotal role in founding the Lexington Savings Bank (incorporated in 1871) and served as its first vice-president. He also helped establish the Cary Library and Hancock Congregational Church, and was elected the first moderator of the latter. Merriam served on numerous town boards, and was for many years President of the Lexington Field and Garden Club and member of the Lexington Historical Society.

In the 1880s Lexington was a small farming community of roughly 2,500 residents. Land that makes up Lexington was originally part of the neighboring town of Cambridge and was first settled around 1640. Prior to its incorporation as an independent community in 1713, Lexington was known as "Cambridge Farms" and its 350 residents supplied much of Boston's produce. Farming dominated the local economy for over two centuries, with residents chiefly occupied in producing hay, milk, fruit, and vegetables. The town played a significant role in United States history on April 19, 1775, when the first skirmish of the American Revolution took place in Lexington. The town's population grew very slowly in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; there were just over 750 inhabitants by 1780. It was not until the railroad line was extended from Boston in 1846 that the community began to grow at a significant rate. The population reached 1,895 by 1850. In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century Lexington became a popular summer resort and permanent residence for those commuting to work in Boston. By 1900, the population had grown to about 3,500 residents. Following World War II the town's population and residential development increased significantly as roadways and rail access were expanded. Since the 1950s Lexington residential development has continued, as older farms were sold off and subdivided into house lots. Agriculture continued to contribute to the local economy well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, although to an increasingly less significant degree. As late as 1942 there were still eight milk dealers in Lexington. Today, Lexington is largely a commuter suburb.

Manufacturing has never been a major force in the town's economy, primarily due to a lack of waterpower. The 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries several saw and gristmills operated throughout the town, but no significant manufacturing was conducted. By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, two saw mills, a gristmill, and a spice mill shared the limited water power. The dressing of furs was undertaken with some success in the eastern part of town and a small tannery also operated in the east village. Four factories produced fur hats and related products, but none survived into the late

(continued)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetM.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 3

19<sup>th</sup> century. Small-scale clock making, first undertaken in 1751, was revived in 1829 but did not last long. Late 19<sup>th</sup> century manufacturers contemporary with the Merriam factory included the Lexington Gear Works (iron and brass gearings), Lexington Grain Mill (grains and feed), and R.I. Sherman Manufacturing Company (starch). In 1870 the Lexington Paint Company was established after a yellow ochre deposit was discovered in town, but like most of the other manufacturers in Lexington, its success was short lived. By 1942 only one manufacturer, Jefferson Union Company (joints and flanges), was operating in Lexington at the former Lexington Gear Works mill. This mill, converted to residential condominiums in 2006, is the only other late 19<sup>th</sup> century factory building remaining in Lexington. The Lexington Lumber Company (1912) mill survived through most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but was demolished in the 1980s to make way for a new structure.

After 1882, Matthew Merriam continued to operate in Boston and Lexington under his own name, expanding the line of products in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. By 1890, Merriam manufactured a variety of articles, primarily for use by shoe and clothing manufacturers. The products manufactured by the company "embrace a great variety of goods adapted for use in the manufacture of boots and shoes and articles of clothing, and are auxiliary to many other industries. They are made from fancy leather, morocco and textile fabrics of various kinds." (Hurd, p. 631) The *Boston City Directory* of 1895 lists the following products as being made by Merriam: "California welting, leather seam stay, shoe piping, leather binding, drill stay, button stays, sock linings, vamp linings, cork sole welting and binding, continuous waist band material, bias cut binding and folded tape for clothing, suspenders and underwear, butter cloth circles and squares." The Lexington factory employed between 30-35 workers at a time, most of whom were women. In Duane Hamilton Hurd's *History of Middlesex County*, it is noted that in 1890 the M.H. Merriam & Company was the "largest and best equipped of its kind in the country." The company was also the largest manufacturing facility in Lexington.

Land on which Merriam's factory was built had formerly been intended as house lots, part of a development that became known as Meriam Hill. The plan of house lots owned by J.B. Winslow and J. M. Usher dated 1873 shows a subdivision of 33 lots facing on Meriam, Stetson, and Oakland Streets (Oakland was then known as Muzzey Street). Between 1875 and 1882 Matthew Merriam purchased at least eight lots on both sides of Oakland Street. He built his factory on the south side of Oakland Street. The lot at the corner of Oakland and Meriam Streets was sold to the Episcopal Church in 1884. The parcels on the north side of Oakland Street, opposite the factory, remained vacant until, at age 60, Merriam hired architect Walter J. Paine of Boston to design a house for him in 1894 (2 Oakland Street). In 1896 Merriam subdivided his former estate on Hancock Street and sold off small house lots in a development he called "Colonial Park." In order to make room for the new house lots and to provide additional space at his factory, he moved the barn that stood on the property to the Merriam factory site on Oakland Street.

By 1890 Matthew Merriam's two sons, Edward and Nathaniel, had joined him in business, changing the name to M.H. Merriam & Company. The family lived in close proximity to the factory, in substantial houses built for them on Meriam Hill. Nathaniel's home was at 12 Oakland Street (built ca. 1888), while Edward lived around the corner at 6 Stetson Street (built ca. 1895). The three houses associated with the Merriam family (2 Oakland Street, 12

(continued)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

M.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 4

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Oakland Street, and 6 Stetson Street) all remain standing and are located within the Meriam Hill neighborhood, an intact collection of residences from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that may be eligible for National Register listing. By 1894, Nathaniel Merriam had left the company to pursue a career as a physician but Edward continued operating the business after his father's death in 1898.

In about 1900 the Merriams' Boston operation moved to 72 Lincoln Street (NRDIS, 1983), remaining in the city's Leather District. The company retained a presence in Boston well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century but by 1930 it had become their sales office. It does not appear that the line of products manufactured by the Merriams changed much in the early twentieth century. The Boston city directory of 1924 indicates that they were producing "shoe manufacturers goods" as well as bias tapes and bindings.

Edward and his wife Grace Goodwin, daughter of prominent local druggist Charles C. Goodwin, had two sons, Gordon and Robert. Gordon Merriam was not active in the family business but Robert was working with his father at M.H. Merriam & Company beginning about 1923. Little is known of Gordon except that he was living in Lexington as late as 1922, at which time he was employed as an "instructor." He is not listed in the town directories after that time. Edward Merriam left the factory property to his sons when he died in 1932. It does not appear that Robert continued manufacturing after his father's death. The 1932 Lexington town directory lists Robert as a "salesman," and the factory building on Oakland Street was vacant. By 1942 Robert was working in real estate and insurance, with an office in downtown Lexington. By then the old factory building was occupied by Adams Press, a publishing and printing business. Under the direction of Alan G. Adams, the company published the *Lexington Minuteman* newspaper. Adams had previously owned and operated the *Lexington Townsman*, a competing newspaper. Gordon and Robert Merriam sold the factory property in 1947 to Adams Press. In 1958 the parcel was transferred to The Lexington Press, Inc. who occupied the building until its recent purchase by Supportive Living Inc. (SLI). SLI is has completed a Certified Rehabilitation project to convert the former factory to housing for victims of brain injury.

#### Archaeological Significance

Both ancient Native American and historic archaeological resources have little potential significance to the nomination. However, detailed analysis of the contents of industrial trash areas, if they exist, may contribute important information related to the types of products produced, raw materials used, and technologies in use at the factory.

(end)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

M.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington (Middlesex), MA

Section number 9 Page 1

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Atlas of Lexington, Massachusetts (G.H. Walker & Company, 1889)

Baldwin, William Edward. Patent, Copyright, Trade Mark Cases Adjudged in the Supreme Court of the United States (U. S. Supreme Court – 1929)

Beers, Frederick W. Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts (1875)

Boston City Directory (various years from 1852 through 1942)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints – Family Search Ancestral Files

Hudson, Charles. History of the Town of Lexington, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, From Its First Settlement to 1868 (Boston/New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913)

Hurd, D. Hamilton. History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Pioneers and Prominent Men – Vol 1 (Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis & Co., 1890)

Lexington, A Handbook of its Points of Interest, Historical and Picturesque (Lexington Historical Society, 1891)

Lexington Minuteman (January 28, 1898 – p.1)

Lexington Town Directory (various years from 1894 through 1938)

Lexington Town Valuations (various years from 1872 through 1884)

Massachusetts Historical Commission - *Inventory of Historic Resources* (Lexington forms H, 38, 39, 101, 367, 369, 1167)

Middlesex County Probate Records (various documents)

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds (various documents)

The Reports of Committees of the Senate of the United States, for the First Session of the Thirty-Eighth Congress (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1864)

Sanborn Insurance Atlases (1887, 1892, 1897, 1903, 1908, 1918, 1927, 1935, 1950, 1961)

United States Census – (1850 through 1930)

(end)



**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**M.H. Merriam & Co.**  
**Lexington (Middlesex), MA**

Section number 10 Page 1

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property occupies Lot 92 shown on Lexington Assessors Map 48 (see attached).

**Verbal Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the entire town lot that has historically been associated with the property.

(end)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

M.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington (Middlesex), MA

Section number Photos Page 1

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The following information pertains to all photographs:

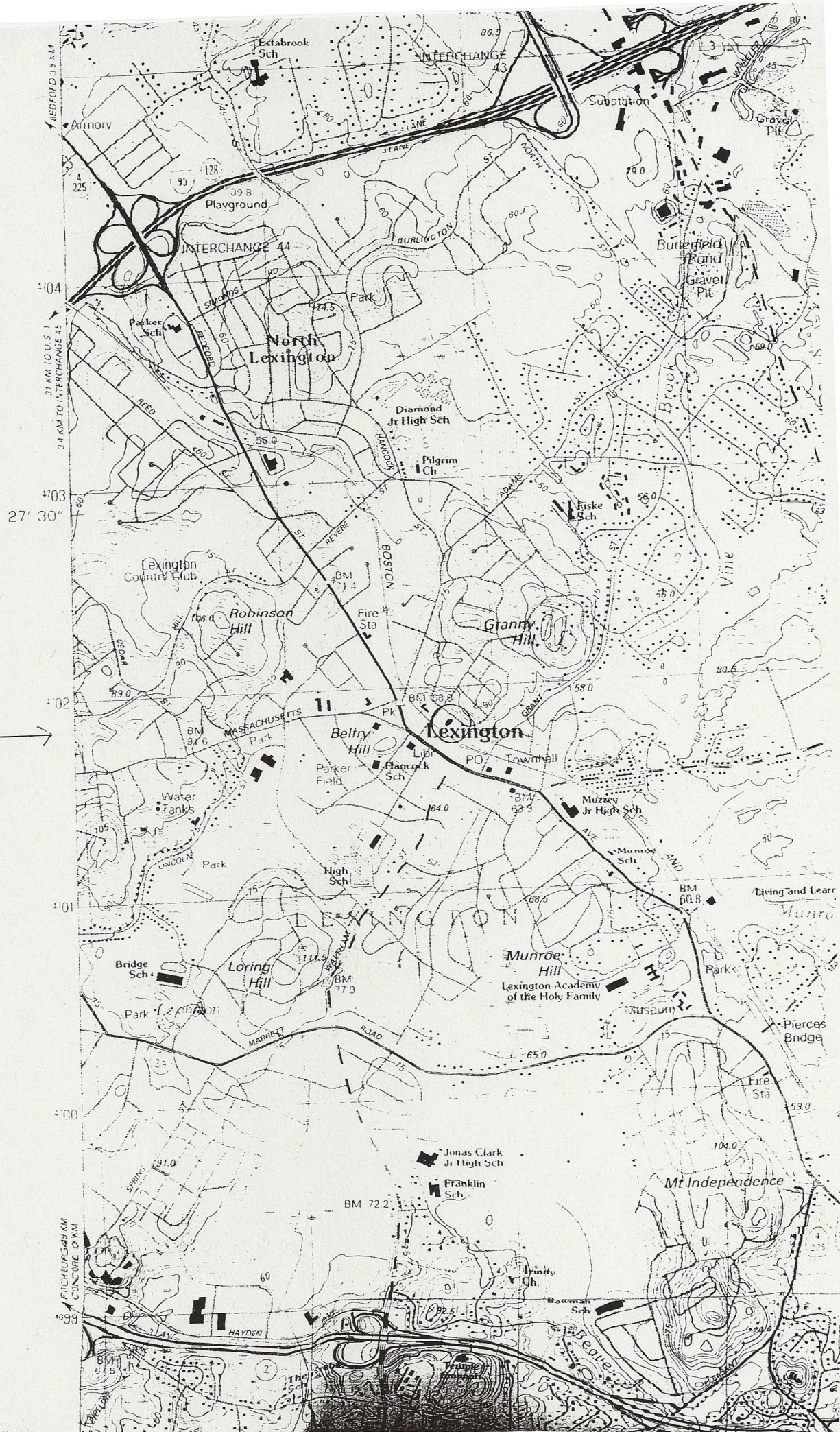
Subject: M. H. Merriam & Company  
Location: Lexington, MA  
Photographer: Christine Beard/Tremont Preservation Services  
Date of Photo: July, 2008

Photo #	Image Name	Description
1	MA_Lexington (Middlesex County)_Merriam1.tif	View southwest showing facade (north elevation)
2	MA_Lexington (Middlesex County)_Merriam2.tif	View south showing detail of facade (north elevation) of former garage
3	MA_Lexington (Middlesex County)_Merriam3.tif	View southeast showing detail of facade (north elevation) of original factory wing
4	MA_Lexington (Middlesex County)_Merriam4.tif	View northeast showing rear (south) elevation of original factory wing
5	MA_Lexington (Middlesex County)_Merriam5.tif	View north showing rear (south) elevation of former boiler room
6	MA_Lexington (Middlesex County)_Merriam6.tif	View northwest showing rear (south) elevation of former barn
7	MA_Lexington (Middlesex County)_Merriam7.tif	View northeast showing 9 Oakland St. (former Superintendent's House)









M.H. Merriam & Co.  
Lexington, MASS

North 4701800

Easting 316760







