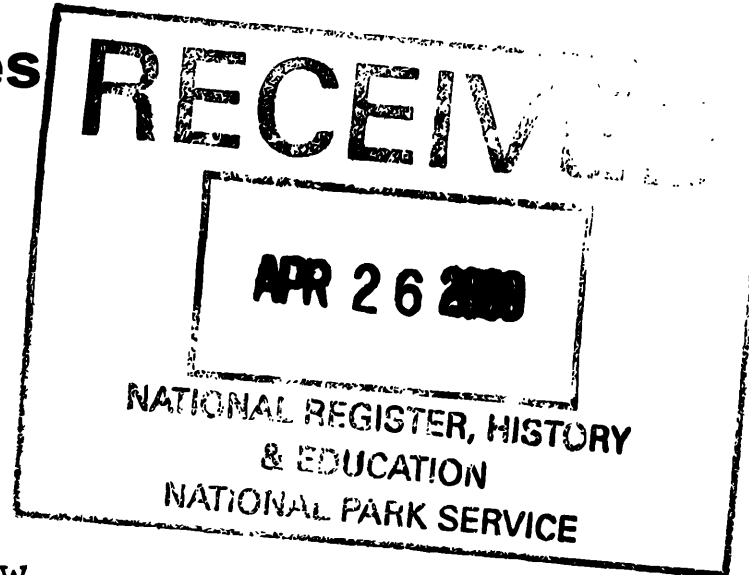


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

552

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



1. Name of Property

historic name: Tootell House

other name/site number: The King's Rose, Hedgerow

2. Location

street & number: 1747 Mooresfield Road

not for publication: N/A

city/town: South Kingstown vicinity: N/A

state: RI county: Washington code: 009 zip code: 02879

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
<u>1</u>	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>2</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

Property name Tootell House, Washington County, South Kingstown, RI

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

___ See continuation sheet.

Frank W. Hanson 19 April 2000
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

___ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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): _____

Ethan H. Beall

5-26-00

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling

Current: DOMESTIC Sub: hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Colonial Revival

Property name Tootell House, Washington County, South Kingstown, RI

Other Description:

Materials: foundation CONCRETE roof ASPHALT
walls WOOD, shingle other BRICK

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

X See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: statewide

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture
Landscape Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1932-33

Significant Dates: 1932-33

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: A Gunther, John J.G.
LA Gunther, Elizabeth Clark

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet.

Property name Tootell House, Washington County, South Kingstown, RI

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: Perry Viles and Barbara Larsen-Viles, 1747
Mooresfield Rd, S. Kingstown, RI 02879

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 2.18

UTM References: Zone			Easting	Northing	Zone			Easting	Northing
A	<u>19</u>	<u>289840</u>	<u>4595000</u>	B	_____	_____	_____	_____	
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____	_____	_____	

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Perry Viles

Organization: owner Date: 10/99

Street & Number: 1747 Mooresfield Road (R.I. Route 138) Telephone: 401-783-5222

City or Town: South Kingstown State: RI ZIP: 02879-2091

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Description

The Tootell House (1932-33) is a well preserved flank-gable 2-1/2-story, wood-frame, Neo-Colonial house, with two large interior brick chimneys; a central pedimented portico in a 5-bay façade; and large ells at the south and north ends. The property includes its original landscape (also 1932-33).

Converted to an inn by former owners, and now known as The King's Rose, the Tootell House is located on an east-west road, serving Washington County, one-half mile east of Kingston Village. The building is set 75 feet north of Mooresfield Road (R.I. Route 138) and is screened by hemlocks and deciduous shrubs. The immediate surroundings are country lots with stone walls and light, mature forest, including a horse farm across the road.

The house was built in 1932-33 as a residence for Anne Parsons Tootell (1904-) and her first husband, Frederic Delmont Tootell (1902-1964). The architect was John F.G. Gunther (1893-1946) of Gunther and Bemis Associates of Boston. Elizabeth Clark Gunther of Cambridge (1901-), the architect's wife, was the landscape architect.

The central entry, on the west side of the building, is flanked by leaded-glass panels and two wooden columns, and is topped by a fanlight under a dentil pediment.¹ The doorway is three steps above the paved driveway; the bottom two steps are slate. A narrow garden strip with low plantings divides the house from the driveway. At right angles to the main house at the northern end is a breezeway and attached three-car garage, the latter converted to a large day-room.

The window sash is double-hung, 8-over-8 in the first two stories and 6-over-6 on the west side of the third story where three dormers appear. The roof line over the east elevation shows the two outer bays projecting eastward beyond the central ridge line. Louvred blinds frame each opening on the first and second stories. The large chimneys are located at the intersection of the two roof levels. A one-story, narrow veranda with slate floor and square wood columns is built between the outer bays on the east side.

¹ Original blueprints and plot maps in the possession of the present owners, Dr. Perry Viles and Barbara Larsen-Viles.

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The wall cover is cypress shingling with vertical striations and angled cuts. The interior of the Tootell House has a central hall with a shallow vestibule. The interior front door is flanked by sidelights. The hall leads directly to the main stair and, on the north side of the stair, to the east (rear) door, opening directly onto the veranda. The view from the front door down the entry hall leads to the two formal terraced gardens and then eastward, through a pergola to the eastern boundary of the gardens. On the south side of the center hall is an arched entry to the living room, which spans the width of the house, and features a green marble fireplace with dentiled mantel, chair rail, and crown molding.

On the southern end of the building, through the living room, are the sunroom (southeast corner) and library (southwest corner). The sunroom has stucco walls. Interior trellises for plants were removed at least twenty years ago, but the southern window wall with plant shelves in front of 48 lights remains. The library is paneled in pine. Two built-in bookcases flank the south window. A door in the west wall of the library opens onto a short slate walk leading to the driveway. To the north of the central hall is a short hallway on the west side of the house, leading past a lavatory and painted, paneled office (formerly a coat room) to the larger kitchen. Through an arched entry on the west side of the central hall is the dining room with a rose quartz fireplace, built-in corner shelving, chair rail, and crown molding.

On the north end of the first story are the pantry and kitchen, now reversed in function from the original plan. The larger kitchen room has a built-in wall of pull-down drawers. Cabinets are mostly equipped with glass doors and have original latches.

The second story is traversed by a north-south corridor, set off-center so that the two central bedrooms with connecting bath in the narrowest part of the floor plan are on the west (front) side of the house. Two bedrooms on the north end of the building are on opposite sides of the corridor, with an adjoining bathroom in the corridor. At the south end of the corridor, spanning the south bay with windows on three sides, is the master suite with bedroom, bath, and dressing room with fireplace. Along the corridor are five closets and a walk-in cedar closet, now arranged as a reading nook. Because of the projecting end bays, all of the second-story bedrooms have windows on at least two sides.

The third floor, formerly servants' quarters, has two bedrooms, a

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kitchen and bath, all on the west and south sides. A rear stair runs on the north side all the way down to the basement. Interior doors throughout the first, second and third floors are six-paneled. All the walls (except sunroom and library) are $\frac{3}{4}$ " plaster over gypsum board. Ceilings are plaster over wire lath. The main stair has a continuous curved bannister and balustrades extending over the stairwell on the second level. Floors are hardwood, except for sunroom (original linoleum) and the two kitchens (older vinyl). There are electric sconces in the central hall, library, and dining room. Bathrooms include some original porcelain fixtures and most of the original chrome bars and racks.

The Tootell House is built on the extreme west of the property, on the highest part of the land. The views of large trees and flowering shrubs to the north and south, and the series of descending terraces and lawns to the east, are seen only from the east elevation. The grounds unfold from the east side of the house as a large private park, invisible from the highway or the west (front) entrance.

To the north from the veranda is a small shingled garden house with an attached octagonal arbor, covered by a mature grapevine. On an axis directly eastward from the garden house is a series of large shade trees--white oak, pin oak, white pine, hemlock, American hornbeam, and sourwood (identified by the Rhode Island Tree Council as the largest of the species in New England). Below the trees is a series of interconnected paths bordered by wide hedges of evergreens and flowering shrubs.

At the end of this easterly axis, in the northeast corner of the property, is a tennis court surrounded by low stone walls and trees.

To the south of the veranda is a wide grassy alley leading eastward down the slope, flanked on the south by evergreens screening Mooresfield Road, and on the north, by flowering trees and shrubs including rhododendron, azalea, forsythia, magnolia, and dogwood.

Directly east of the veranda is the formal garden area. The first (stone) terrace is at the level of the veranda and is bordered by small planting areas offset in paving stone, and by the veranda railings, yew hedges, and a iron railing on the east side. From the center of this terrace steps descend on each side to the perennial garden six feet below. At the foot of the two stairs is a rectangular fish pool. A rose-covered wooden pergola sixty feet away terminates the garden.

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In the middle of the pergola, and centered on the east-west axis which begins in the central hallway and crosses the veranda, is a segmental archway, leading still further eastward down a planted slope and across a reflecting pool to the open lawn with magnolia and dogwood at the far eastern border.

The north-south axis of the pergola includes stone steps at each side of the perennial terrace, and leads northward to other perennial beds and the larger deciduous trees.

The perennial garden is the focal point of both directional axes. In this garden perennials are backed by boxwood hedges four feet in height, with beds and hedges surrounding a 40-by-60 foot lawn. This formal area is in turn bordered on the north and south by eight-foot-wide grassy lanes and a tall arbor vitae hedge. The effect is that of a green box inside a green border.

All of the garden areas, both formal and informal, are related to the house, by vistas or by direct access. With the exception of a few herbaceous plantings, the present grounds faithfully reflect the original drawings of Elizabeth Clark Gunther.

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Photographs

Photographer: Perry Viles

Date: November 1999

Negatives: RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
(The above information applies to all photographs)

View: West elevation.

Photo #1 of 7

View: East elevation. Boxwood hedge on left is north border of perennial garden.

Photo #2 of 7

View: Living room, looking west-southwest.

Photo #3 of 7

View: Dining room, northwest corner.

Photo #4 of 7

View: Center hall, looking east. Stair rail at right, doorway to dining room at left.

Photo #5 of 7

View: Southern end of east elevation, from garden pergola.

Photo #6 of 7

View: View east-northeast from terrace. Boxwood hedge in center, side of perennial border to right, arbor vitae hedge at left.

Photo #7 of 7

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Significance

The Tootell House and its gardens (1932-1933) are significant for their architecture and landscape architecture. The house was designed by John J.G. Gunther; the gardens are the work of Elizabeth Clark Gunther. The architectural significance lies in the house's exemplification of early twentieth-century Georgian Revival domestic architecture as designed by an able practitioner who combined traditional architectural forms with innovative modular structural systems; such blending of tradition and innovation is characteristic of the best of pre-World War II architectural practice yet is little documented in domestic work. The significance to landscape architecture is both as a fine example of Georgian Revival domestic landscape that closely links house and gardens into a mutually reinforcing entity and as an example of the work of a member of an emerging generation of female landscape designers, trained at the Cambridge School, one of the two leading educational institutions for women in the early twentieth century.

The Tootell property is the only collaborative work of John J.G. Gunther and Elizabeth Clark Gunther and is their only Rhode Island commission.² The connection between these two architects and Anne Parsons Tootell, for whom the property was built and landscaped, was through a Boston businessman and devotee of modern architecture, Albert Farwell Bemis, and the Bemis Housing Company.

Bemis was an early advocate of modular and prefabricated housing, and operated a conglomerate of enterprises from his Boston headquarters.³ Born in 1870, he attended Colorado College and in 1893 graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with an Sc.B. in Chemical Engineering.⁴ By 1925 he was chairman of the board of Bemis Brothers Bag Company, a firm founded by his father, Judson Moss Bemis, importing cotton and burlap. In 1929, Bemis was president of Bemis Industries, which included Atlantic Gypsum Company, Penn Metal Company, and The Housing Company (Pressed Steel Division and Acoustical Division). The same year he

² Interview with Elizabeth Clark Gunther, February, 1998.

³ For information on Bemis *Who Was Who*; various Boston City Directories at the Boston Public Library; and summary notes in the Bemis Foundation archives at MIT.

⁴ At Bemis's death, in 1936, he was a life member of the MIT Corporation.

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took on John F.G. Gunther as an associate in architecture; the German-born Gunther was then an instructor in architecture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Bemis maintained a lifelong interest in applying mass production methods to residential housing. He carried out his program to "rationalize" the housing industry in his laboratory in Waverly, Massachusetts, and explained his principles in a volume on *The Evolving House: Rational Design* (Cambridge, The Technology Press, 1936).

In his work, Bemis gave particular emphasis to the cubical module as a basic structure, and to the use and inter-connection of structural members in concrete, steel, and wood. His work owed much to Wright and Neutra.

As Bemis's associate from 1929 to 1936, John Gunther worked with prefabricated housing and tested structural materials in Bemis's lab and contributed 22 drawings to Chapter VIII on "The Cubical Module of Architectural Design" of Bemis's volume.

In a supplement to Bemis's 1936 book, another of his associates, John Burchard 2nd, described over 60 "systems" for the redesign of houses. Works by Wright, LeCorbusier, Neutra, and Gropius were included, as well as six examples of systems sponsored by the Bemis Housing Company, which had been tried in the laboratory and then incorporated into one or more houses, mostly in New England.⁵

Gunther's drawings for the Tootell House show evidence of some of these Bemis-sponsored "systems." Foundation walls are concrete, poured in situ. The principal structural members above the foundation are six steel I-beams, resting on iron-rod-reinforced concrete piers and crossing the width of the house at 14-foot intervals. Thus, an I-beam is located at each of the junctures of the side bays to the central portion of the building. Wooden joists, a full 2x10", are bolted to the flanges of the I-beams. Atop the sills are iron right-angle rails, which with additional horizontal wooden blocks form fire-stops at each story.⁶ For the walls, Gunther's plans specify gypsum board and plaster coating, Bemis-made materials.⁷

⁵ Bemis, op. cit.

⁶ House drawings, as above (inspected by JFG Gunther).

⁷ House drawings.

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While the pairing of Gunther and Bemis is listed in the Boston city directories and in the COPAR survey for Massachusetts, it is surprising that neither is mentioned in the Avery Index or in Withey. The omission is more surprising for Bemis's gifted associate, John F.G. Gunther.

Johannes Friedrich Georg Gunther was born in Leipzig, Germany, on July 2, 1893.⁸ His father, Frederick Gunther (1853-1933) was a printer and both his parents were Mormons. Emigrating to the United States in 1905, through Boston, the family went on to Salt Lake City, where Frederick later became a printer for the *Desert News* and was a leader of his church. John Gunther completed high school in Salt Lake City in 1911. During his high-school vacations he was apprenticed to Cannon & Fetzer, architects, who employed him from 1911 to 1915. For this firm he supervised the construction of a high school in Cedar City, Utah.

John Gunther received a scholarship to study architecture at the University of Pennsylvania in 1915-18. By 1919 he headed the firm of Gunther & Cannon of Salt Lake City, acting as sole architect and supervisor of construction for a Carnegie library, several churches, a bank and an office building.

Before leaving Salt Lake City in 1921, Gunther became a naturalized citizen (1919) and was elected to the American Institute of Architects (1920).

From 1921 until 1923 Gunther was in graduate study in architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This middle period of his professional life (1921-1938) was largely guided by his affiliation with MIT.⁹ From that institution he received a one-year traveling post-graduate fellowship, in 1923-24 to Italy, Spain, France and Morocco. During that year he posed for photographs on the steps of the American Academy of Rome, the bastion of classicism. During his three months there he may have met Elizabeth Clark, his future wife, whose father directed the School of Classical Studies of the American Academy.¹⁰

⁸ For information on her father, including documentation and photographs, I am grateful to Anne Gunther Donaldson of Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

⁹ Donaldson correspondence; Boston City Directories.

¹⁰ See below for Elizabeth Clark Gunther.

(8-86)

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John Gunther served MIT as Instructor in Architecture (1925-34) and Assistant Professor (1934-37). Through MIT he met Albert Farwell Bemis. In 1936 Gunther left the Boston-Cambridge area and relocated his family to the village of Hancock, NH, where he had purchased an eighteenth-century farmhouse in 1930.¹¹

One architectural project in these years earned Gunther a Boston Gold Medal. In 1933, working with the firm of Ralph H. Doane, for whom he designed housing developments, Gunther designed the Motor Mart garage building.

During the eight years remaining before his death in 1946, Gunther practiced as sole architect in Peterborough. His designs helped rebuild the small town after it was damaged by hurricane and flood in September, 1938. In these eight years Gunther designed a printing plant, an apartment building, several residences, large garage buildings and a market. The latter, Roy's Market, a brick cube with curved corner entrance and flat roof with wooden cornice, added a touch of *Arte Moderne* to the village of Peterborough.¹²

Gunther's last years were also marked by two projects of national importance. He was always a gifted draftsman and water-colorist, and his design for the postage stamp honoring composer Edward McDowell of Peterborough was selected in 1940. Just before his death, he won a national contest to design a solar house suitable for New Hampshire winters for the Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Company.¹³

The third member of the trio which produced the Tootell property was Elizabeth Clark Gunther. She was born in 1901 in New Haven, CT, where her father was a member of the faculty at Yale University. Charles Upson Clark (1875-1960) had been a fellow in the School of Classical Studies in Rome from 1898 to 1900. He returned to Rome as Professor of Classical Studies in 1912, and in 1916 was appointed director of the Classical School.

As a teenager Elizabeth Clark grew up in an enclave of interest in

¹¹ Interview with Elizabeth Clark Gunther, February, 1998.

¹² Peterborough Historical Society, *Our Changing Town*. Peterborough, 1939-1989, Peter E. Randall, Portsmouth (NH), 1996, vol. I, 737.

¹³ Donaldson correspondence; Gunther plan.

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architecture and gardens. The American Academy had acquired the Villa Aurelia in 1909, and the Clark family lived on the mezzanine floor of Charles Follen McKim's great new palazzo, completed in 1914 on the same Roman hilltop as the Villa Aurelia. Gorham Phillips Stevens became the Academy Director in 1917, and by 1919 had embarked on redesigning the gardens.

The curriculum and fellowship awards for the fine arts section of the Academy remained conservative in Elizabeth's years there, and female scholars were not welcome. At the Classical School, however, the Clarks provided lodging for women students, sharing their family quarters with visitors.¹⁴

Elizabeth Clark entered Vassar College but found the work "boring."¹⁵ She discovered more stimulation when she entered the Cambridge School of Domestic Agriculture and Landscape Architecture in 1924, earning a certificate of completion in 1926. Hers was one of three certificates awarded that year, following the granting of 23 certificates from 1919 through 1925.¹⁶

Elizabeth Clark followed a curriculum concentrating in freehand drawing, watercolor, horticulture (using Harvard's Arnold Arboretum), design, and construction. Clark was to use her construction lessons in steps, terraces, pools, walls, contours, and drainage as she transformed the gentle eastward slope of the Tootell property into terraces, with two pools and six flights of stone steps.¹⁷

¹⁴ Figret K. Yegul, *Gentlemen of Instinct and Breeding: Architecture at the American Academy in Rome, 1894-1940*, NY, Oxford University Press, 1991, pp. 5-59. An early fund-raiser for the Academy, Chicago architect Daniel Burnham, wrote in 1908 that Italian villas are "the greatest source of information for the landscape architect," displaying "perfect order" (*ibid.*, 9). See also Lucia N. & Alan Valentine, *The American Academy in Rome, 1894-1969*. Charlottesville, VA, University Press, 1973, pp. 76 and 163.

¹⁵ Interview, Feb. 1998.

¹⁶ *Alumnae Bulletin*, Cambridge School, vol. 5, No. 1, 1932 (now in Smith College archives).

¹⁷ For the Cambridge School, its curriculum and its instructors, see Dorothy May Anderson, *Women, Design, and the Cambridge School*, PDA

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The Cambridge School began in 1924 as a series of lectures for women in the offices of Bremer Whidden Pond and Henry Atherton Frost. Both were faculty members in the Harvard Graduate School of Landscape Architecture. Pond had been an associate of Fredrick Law Olmsted. His younger partner, Frost, became the director of the school until 1942. Lectures and field instruction were supplied by various other Harvard faculty.

Most of the training focused on residential work believed by Frost to be appropriate for women, who would have limited periods of professional activity "...for a woman, particularly in the earliest days of the school, to hold an ambition outside her family life was more unusual than it is today."¹⁸

Despite the thinking of the school's long-time director, women did find professional opportunities through the Cambridge School. MIT had closed its landscape architecture department in 1900, and women were not admitted to Harvard's Graduate School of Landscape Architecture until after World War II.¹⁹ The nearest comparable training school admitting women was the two-year course at Groton, Massachusetts, in the Low-Thorpe School of Landscape Architecture, Gardening and Horticulture.²⁰

The boom years of the 1920s supported landscape work on new and old residences. Alumnae notes from the school in the 1930s, by then a non-degree extension of Smith College, indicate that many women completing certificates had commissions for private residences, while several others practiced in architectural firms. Those with independent practices (dates indicating alumnae reports) included Elizabeth Clark Gunther (1935), Barbara Clarke (1930, in Providence and Bristol); Isabel Porter (Boston area, 1933, MIT commissions) and Janet Darling Dixon (1937, Federal work).²¹

During the eleven years between earning her certificate (1926) and her

Publishing Corp., West Lafayette, IN, 1980.

¹⁸ Quoted in Anderson, op. cit., p. 18.

¹⁹ Conversation with Mrs. Elizabeth S. Warren, former staff at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission.

²⁰ Affiliated with Simmons College in 1928, moved in 1945 to Providence and today the Low-Thorpe Department at the Rhode Island School of Design.

²¹ Alumnae material courtesy of Smith College Archivist.

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move to new Hampshire (1937), Elizabeth Clark married John J.G. Gunther, bore triplet daughters in 1930, completed in 1932 both the Tootell grounds and a sunken garden at Radcliffe College near Longfellow Hall, designed a two-acre woodland in Brookline (1936), lectured at Lesley College after 1932, and served as lecturer and volunteer at the Cambridge School's House and Garden Center at 127 Newbury Street in Boston. She maintained an independent practice for at least the period 1932-37.²²

The Cambridge School discontinued its courses in 1942 and ended its corporate status in 1945, despite the addition of Albert Bemis as trustee by 1932; the provision of a inexpensive teaching space by his daughter, Faith Bemis (Meem) after her completion of courses in 1928; and the distant sponsorship by Smith College in the 1930s.

After settling in Hancock, NH, Elizabeth Clark Gunther continued "to have a few gardens and lectures from time to time."²³ She also had a second career, home-schooling her own children and teaching remedial reading. Before her husband's death in 1946 she had enrolled in education classes at Harvard, and had begun boarding youngsters who needed tutoring in reading. One of her early pupils, now a Rhode Island resident, believes Elizabeth Clark Gunther found her finest calling in the second half of her life as a reading teacher. As she herself recalled in 1998, Gunther used her talents as circumstances presented opportunities.²⁴

The client for whom the remarkable team of John & Elizabeth Gunther created the Tootell house and grounds was herself a remarkable character. Anne Parsons was born in 1904 in Berkeley, CA.²⁵ Her father was Reginald Hascall Parsons (1873-1955), an easterner who had gone west to Colorado in the 1890s and who became a businessman and philanthropist.²⁶ Her mother was Maude Bemis, daughter of Judson Moss Bemis of Boston and sister of Albert Bemis. In 1904 Anne Parsons's father moved his family to Seattle, where he began his business career as manager of the Bemis Brothers Bag Company. Parsons and his future wife's brother had been students together at

²² *Alumnae Bulletin*, vol. VII #2, Feb., 1935.

²³ *Ibid.*, vol. XI, #3, April, 1939.

²⁴ Interview, Feb. 1998.

²⁵ I am grateful to Dr. Geoffrey Tootell of San Jose, CA, for information about his mother, his family, and the Tootell House.

²⁶ See *Who Was Who*.

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Colorado College. He and Maude Bemis had attended prep schools in Providence (Moses Brown and Mary C. Wheeler School). They married in 1901.

Anne Parsons also graduated from Wheeler School and then from Mills College. Attending the 1924 Paris Olympic Games as a graduation present from her father, who was a member of the United States Olympic Committee, she met on the return voyage 22-year-old Frederic Delmont Tootell, who had just won a gold medal in the hammer throw. Tootell came to nearby Rhode Island State College in Kingston in 1925 to begin an illustrious 39-year career in coaching. He and Anne Parsons were married soon thereafter.

In 1929 Anne Parsons Tootell received an inheritance from her grandfather Bemis.²⁷ In 1932, she purchased two adjoining lots on Mooresfield Road, just east of Kingston, from Georgia A. Brown.

Three years earlier her uncle had taken on John J.G. Gunther as an associate in architecture.²⁸ Anne Parsons Tootell was content to work with her uncle's associate as her architect because he was willing to work with modular designs. She had a life-long interest in architecture and built two more large modular homes after the Kingston house.

Gunther's wife, Elizabeth, came to Mrs. Tootell's attention as her landscape architect on the strength of a watercolor rendition of the Appian Way in Cambridge, MA, a narrow street bordering the Radcliffe College campus where Gunther had designed a sunken garden in 1932.²⁹

Anne Parsons Tootell lived in her new house with her husband and two children for only two years. In 1935 she and Tootell divorced, and she returned to California. She married twice again. F. Delmont Tootell married again, in 1937, and remained in the Tootell House with his second

²⁷ The South Kingstown tax records listed "intangibles," evidently self-declared, in 1933 and 1934. Anne Parsons Tootell listed for the first time land, valued at \$800.00; buildings and improvements, valued at \$18,000; and intangible wealth of \$200,000. The latter amount made her the fifth wealthiest individual in the town, following the Forbes, Bacon and Hazard families.

²⁸ Boston City Directories, 1929-36.

²⁹ Geoffrey Tootell; Jane S. Knowles, Radcliffe College archivist, letter to Perry Viles, November 4, 1997.

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wife, Lucy Rawlings Tootell and their three children, until 1945.³⁰ Tootell lived in the Kingston community until his death in 1964 at 62.

Frederic Delmont Tootell enjoyed some of his most productive years at Rhode Island State College (now the University of Rhode Island) during his years in this house. His 25 years as head coach of track and field and his outstanding success in cross-country began in 1932. In 1936 Tootell served as coach for weight events in the Berlin Olympics, escorting two of his own graduates as competitors in the hammer. In 1937, at a testimonial dinner held by the alumni, it was announced that the senior class had voted him the faculty member who had done the most for the college.³¹

Since 1945 the Tootell House has seen a succession of owners, but the gardens and the main house retain substantial integrity.

³⁰ For information about Frederic Delmont Tootell and his years in this house, I am grateful to Lucy Rawlings Tootell of North Kingstown, RI.

³¹ Herman F. Eschenbacher, *The University of Rhode Island. A History of Land-Grant Education in Rhode Island*, NY, 1967, pp. 250, 263.

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Interviews

Dr. Perry Viles and Barbara Larsen-Viles with Elizabeth Clark Gunther, Hancock, NH, Feb. 1998 (partial tape in owners' possession).

Dr. Perry Viles and Barbara Larsen-Viles with Lucy Rawlings Tootell, South Kingstown, RI, 1998.

Correspondence:

Owners with Dr. Geoffrey Tootell (son of FDT) of San Jose, CA, 1997-99

Owners with Anne Gunther Donaldson (daughter of architects) of Portsmouth, NH, 1998

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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description (from warranty deed recorded 11/15/96 at South Kingstown Town Hall) ...two parcels forming "one tract bounding southerly on said Mooresfield Road three hundred seventy (370) feet, westerly on land now or formerly of Georgia A. Brown two hundred seventy-four (274) feet, northerly on land now or formerly of Georgia A. Brown three hundred twenty-four (324) feet, and easterly on land now or formerly of Jessie M. and Charles Wilcox..." (.37 acres taken for highway purposes by State of Rhode Island in 1930). There are markers--drill holes in stones--at the corners of the two parcels which together constitute the property.

Boundary Justification

All of the property and its structures are contained within the simple straight lines of the boundary, which has not changed since the first owner assembled the two parcels in 1932.