

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA	FORM NO.
	39

PHOTO: (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)
staple to left side of form

Photo number _____

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.

See attached map.

Town Sherborn

Address 172 Forest Street

Historic Name Assington

Use: Present Residence

Original Residence

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1929-1930

Source Mrs. G.S. Lewis

Style Neo-Palladian

Architect William T. Aldrich

Exterior wall fabric Stucco

Outbuildings Tea house, Caretaker's house, several service structures, all ca. 1930

Major alterations (with dates) None

Moved No Date N/A

Approx. acreage 30 acres

Setting This imposing estate is situated on a rise overlooking the Charles River.

Formal gardens and an allée lead from the house down to the water.

Medfield Quad Scale: 1 = 25,000

UTM References:

A: 19 306820 4677760 C: 19 306750 4677260
B: 19 307000 4677520 D: 19 306500 4677650

Recorded by Betsy Freidberg

Organization Mass. Historical Commission

Date May 1985

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

SEE ATTACHED SHEETS

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

SEE ATTACHED SHEETS

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Assington, the last and grandest of Sherborn's high style early 20th century estates, retains integrity of setting, design, location, materials, feeling, and workmanship, as well as associations with a nationally known architect and with the town of Sherborn's development as a haven for wealthy Bostonians in the modern period. It thus fulfills Criteria C and A of the National Register of Historic Places.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

Telephone interview with Mrs. G.S. Lewis
H. R. Baker, "West Suffolk Illustrated," 1907.
Henry F. Withey A.I.A. and Elsie Rathbone Withey, "William T. Aldrich," in Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (deceased), 1970.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Sherborn

Form No:

39

Property Name:

Assington

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Assington is the centerpiece of a large estate on the southern side of Forest Street in South Sherborn. In terms of scale, surface treatments, and landscaping it is Sherborn's most palatial home. Its northern elevation faces a circular driveway. To the west are formal gardens and tree-shaded paths. The south facade overlooks a Versailles-like allée that has been cut through dense woods and stretches from the manicured south lawn to the Charles River. Buildings on the property include a caretaker's house, tea house, and several service structures, all contemporaneous with the main structure.

The building's form and style allude to mid 18th century English country house architecture. The main house is composed of two 2½ story segments--a large rectangular main block and an east wing. An arcaded porch projects from the west wall. The house is sheathed with stucco and its facades characterized by symmetrical fenestration and restrained surface treatments. The main block's corners are defined by quoins. Both the main block and east wing are crowned by slate shingle-covered hip roofs.

Assington's north elevation is seven bays wide, with an enclosed and pedimented entrance porch. The front door is flanked by narrow sidelights and is surmounted by an elegant fanlight. The front wall of the entrance porch is rusticated and exhibits Doric pilasters.

Shutters flank the 6/6 sash windows. The hip roof of the main block is set back behind a balustrade. Three dormers with segmented hoods project from the northern slope of the roof. Four chimneys project from the roof.

The southern facade of the main block has Assington's most distinctive feature--a wide, centrally located three-story bow front, three bays wide. An entrance porch, with ionic columns supporting an entablature, cornice, and balcony, projects from the central bay. The third level of the bow breaks the flow of the balustrade. It is surrounded by a parapet which in turn is crowned by four neoclassical urns. The seven bays of the first story are 9/9; those of the second story are 6/6.

Architecturally, Assington's main block is reminiscent of James Wyatt's mid-18th century neo-Palladian English country houses. Unlike architect Joseph Everett Chandler, who favored the popular Georgian Revival style for the buildings he designed in Sherborn, or Arthur Little, who designed the picturesque Dutch Colonial Revival Vaughn house (5 Sparhawk Road, 1915, #145), William Truman Aldrich looked to the grandeur of mid 18th century English country estates for Assington's prototype.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Sherborn	Form No: 39
Property Name: Assington	

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

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Assington was designed by the Boston architect William Truman Aldrich (1880-1956) for George and Muriel Saltonstall Lewis. George Lewis was an investment counselor with Thorndike, Paine, and Lewis of Boston until his death in the early 1950s.

Assington's construction was begun in 1929. It was ready for occupancy in October 1930. According to Mrs. Lewis, the house was named for Assington Hall, home of the Gurden family of West Suffolk, England. Sherborn's Assington in no way resembles its English namesake. The Gurdons' Assington was built in the 16th century to house a religious order, and is a Tudor-style building. The Lewis House's closest British prototype may be the mid 18th century work of James Wyatt (for example, the main block of Heaton Hall, Manchester, begun in 1772).

The landscaping of the extensive grounds was a collaborative effort on the part of the Lewises, William T. Aldrich, and Inno Chenti, a New York City landscape architect. It includes formal gardens and a landscaped, tree-lined allée that leads from the house's bow-front southern facade down to the Charles River. Across the river is the Dover estate of Mrs. Lewis' brother, former Massachusetts senator Leverett Saltonstall.

Assington's architect, William Truman Aldrich, was born in Washington, D.C., on February 16, 1880. At the beginning of his career he worked for the New York City architectural firm of Carrere and Hastings (1909-1911). He was a partner in the Boston architectural firm of Bellows and Aldrich from 1911 until 1923. He headed his own firm from 1923 until his death in 1956. Among his designs are buildings for the Rhode Island School of Design (1926), the Worcester Art Museum (1932), and the remodeling of Boston's Shreve, Crump and Low building in the Art Deco style (1930).

Aldrich was among several distinguished Boston architects who designed country estates in South Sherborn during the first decades of the 20th century. He provided the Lewises with a house that was grand in scale and architectural sophistication, similar to the mansions of Newport, Rhode Island.

The land along the banks of the Charles River has been deeded to the Trustees of Reservations, a non-profit conservation organization, as open conservation land.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 123

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Sherborn Multiple Resource Area
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTSCover Patrick Andrus 1/3/86

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Assington

Substantive Review for KeeperPatrick Andrus 1/3/86

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1-3-86

Determined Eligible

2. Buttonballs

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION
Substantive Review

Keeper

Eligible Patrick Andrus 1/3/86

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1-3-863. Edwards Plain-Dowse's
Corner Historic
DistrictSubstantive Review for KeeperPatrick Andrus 1/3/86

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1-3-86

4. Morse-Barber House

Substantive Review for KeeperPatrick Andrus 1/3/86

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1-3-86

5. Sewall-Ware House

Substantive Review for KeeperPatrick Andrus 1/3/86

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1-3-866. Sherborn Center Historic
DistrictSubstantive Review for KeeperPatrick Andrus 1/3/86

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1-3-86

P7. Stannox Farm

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION
Substantive Review for

Keeper

Eligible Patrick Andrus 1/3/86

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1-3-86

8. Sudbury Waste Weir A

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

9. Bullen-Stratton-
Cozzen HouseEntered in the
National Register

Keeper

Shelton Byers 1/3/86

Attest

10. Clark-Northrup House

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Shelton Byers 1/3/86

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Assington (Sherborn MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Substantive Review.

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Working No. NOV 20 1985
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87
Date Due: 12/19/85 - 1/4/86
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 1-3-86
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT

Federal Agency: _____

Substantive Review: ☒ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☒ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Sherborn's most palatial home, Assington is the last and grandest of Sherborn's high style early 20th century estates. Designed by prominent Boston architect William Abdrich for George Lewis with formally landscaped grounds Assington represents the town's development as a haven for wealthy Bostonians.

Recom./Criteria Accept, A+C
Reviewer Savage
Discipline Architectural History
Date 1-3-86

see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☐ technical corrections cited below
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ moved date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

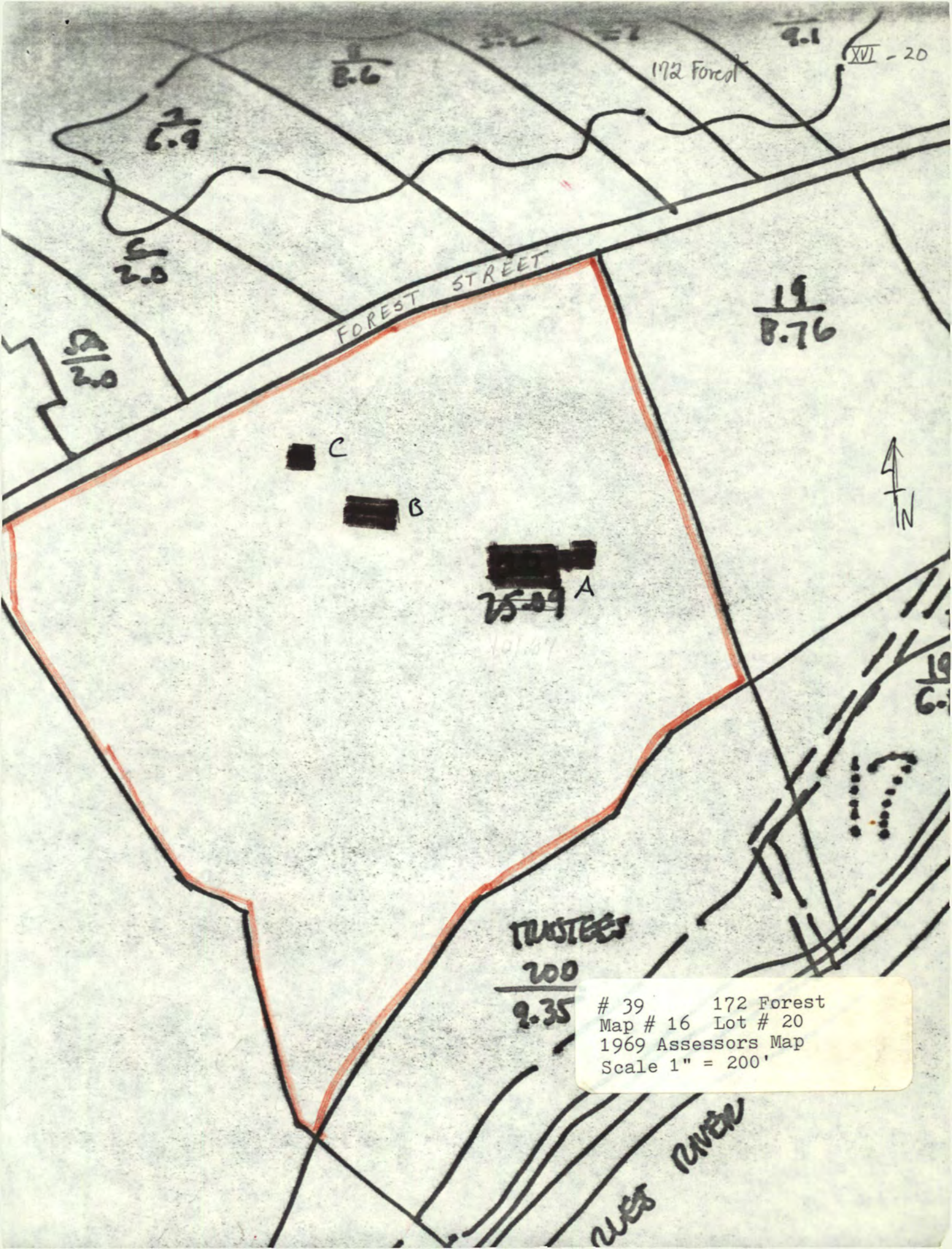
Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Assington

Stobern MRA, Ma



39 172 Forest
Map # 16 Lot # 20
1969 Assessors Map
Scale 1" = 200'

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000293