

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number
Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

11C-47	Mt. Toby		AMH.
--------	----------	--	------

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

Town/City: Amherst

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Amherst

Photograph



Address: 143 Fearing Street

Historic Name: Mary M. & Patrick G. Martin House

Uses: Present: Single-Family Residence

Original: Single-Family Residence

Date of Construction: c. 1870

Source: Amherst tax records

Style/Form: Cottage/Vernacular

Architect/Builder: Patrick G. Martin

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Brick

Wall/Trim: Asbestos shingle

Roof: Asphalt composition

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Garage

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Currently undergoing major alterations on west side (2016)

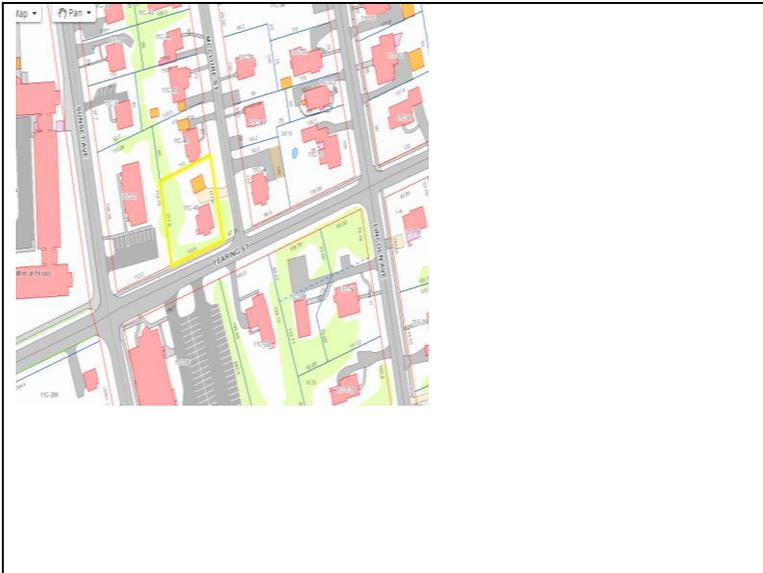
Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .3 acre

Setting: This is the single house on this block on the north side of Fearing Street. Opposite lies the old Amherst Creamery Co. building, now converted to multi-purpose, primarily offices. The Southwest dorm complex of the University of Massachusetts rises at the next corner west; several residences nearby, like this one, are rented by students as single-family homes.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Gretchen G. Fox

Organization: LHD study committee

Date (*month / year*): August 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AMHERST

143 FEARING ST

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125

--	--

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

A small, one-and-one-half-story, Vernacular cottage, an uncommon existing house type in this neighborhood and town. Its 1870 exterior is nearly entirely intact, and shows a structure of modest and careful design. Its original clapboard cladding has been replaced by asbestos shingling. Situated as it is on the southwest intersection of Fearing Street and McClure Street, parking lot bordering its west boundary, all four elevations are clearly visible. It is currently undergoing extensive remodeling on the west side, where partial removal of shingling has exposed simple clapboard cladding.

The cottage is end-gabled, 26 feet wide by 18 feet deep with narrower 18-foot-wide cross-gable to the north along the east wall of the cottage. A gabled dormer with small 4/4 window over the front entrance gives light to the half story. The dormer lies over the central entrance, with its predominate porch (6 feet by 11 feet), extending slightly eastward across the front façade. The porch is reached by one concrete step to its floor, at the end of a path of ten concrete pavers totaling 20 feet to sidewalk, 30 feet to the street. Two unturned posts and matching pilasters support the porch's shed roof, with wide (c. 10-inch) overhang; spandrels at each corner add decorative support in keeping with the rustic cottage style. Two 4/4 double hung windows unevenly flank the main entrance and match proportionately the dormer window above.

A second entrance with small, 32-square-inch porch lies 16 feet to the rear, along the 32-foot eastern side. A simple bracket supported shed roof covers the porch, which is reached by a brick path from the short driveway off McClure Street. That east elevation has regular fenestration, a single full-size window in the end gable, plus a skylight that pierces the roof light the front of the half-story. Two ground floor windows flank the porch, with a small window above the northern one to light the lower portion of the half-story or stairwell.

The northern elevation, 18 feet wide on the eastern side, includes one full-size window in gabled half-story, with two matching ones below. To the west, behind the ten-foot remainder of the western side of the main wing, a rear addition, 9 feet by 5 feet, of indeterminate date, probably not part of the original plan. Major construction work on this and the western wall and substructure obscure the original wall. However, the west elevation still shows one nonconforming, narrow window near the addition, but the regularity of the two original matching windows, at first and upper floors indicates careful proportions and measurements of the original cottage design. The brick foundation shows three feet at the rear of the cottage, due to the slope of the lot, but is evenly matched with regular bond around the perimeter, pierced by two basement windows on both east and west sides. A cellar door opens at the southern end of the western wall.

A single bay, front-gabled garage, clapboard clad, with two small southern windows, is reached by a short driveway off McClure Street. A brick path runs from the garage to the east facing rear entrance of the residence.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

On the 1899 P. B. Moore subdivision plan, this singular large lot, then totaling one acre, fronting Fearing Street and lying between McClure and Westcott Streets, is shown belonging to Mary M. Martin. The remainder of the some eight acres is subdivided into 54 lots. This land, previously part of the Henderson Farm, was sold by the partnership of Jared Westcott and Levi Stockbridge to Moore, who subdivided it the same year (HLR 526/130).

Mary M. Martin, wife of Patrick G. Martin, both born in Ireland, had purchased (\$200 shown price) the southern half-acre of this land from the partnership of Leonard Mariner Hills and Jared T. Westcott in 1870 (HLR 275/147). That year, their daughter, Annie, was born, and Patrick G. Martin built the house in which their family lived. In 1879, the Martins completed paid off a mortgage of \$550 to Salmon W. Dickinson.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AMHERST

143 FEARING ST

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125

--	--

In 1886, the Martin family now with five children is joined by a Michael Martin, saddler, who previously (1869, 1873) lived on McClellan Street. He is not further recorded living in Amherst.

In 1888, Mary Martin was deeded the second half-acre of contiguous land to the north (from partners Henry F. Hills and L. D. Hills, heirs of Leonard Mariner Hills), land bordering property belonging to W. S. Clark, retired first President of MAC. The eastern border of that land would become McClure Street the following year, as shown on the P. B. Moore subdivision plan. This land was mortgaged again to HD Fearing, discharged in 1897.

Living in this house in 1900: Patrick, age 57, day laborer at hat factory; Mary, his wife, age 55, housekeeper; Annie, daughter, age 29, trimmer, hat factory; Marcella, daughter, age 27, stitcher, hat factory; Katherine, daughter, age 25, stitcher, hat factory; Margaret, daughter, age 22, stitcher, hat factory; Emily, daughter, age 20, in school; Henry, son, age 18, in school; William, age 16, in school; and Rose, age 14, in school.

In 1910, six of the eight children remained living at home with Patrick, still listed as day laborers at the hat factory, and Mary, and Annie as a trimmer at the hat factory, Marcella had risen to forewoman at the hat factory; Katherine is still a stitcher; Emily has no listed occupation; Henry is a driver with American Express; Rose a milliner at Pavlova (Paloma?) Millinery in Amherst.

In 1920, this house and property were deeded by Marcella Miller, Administrator of Mary M.'s will, to their father, Patrick, and in turn from Patrick to Marcella.

Living here in 1925: Emily, at home; Marcella hatmaker at GBB; Rose, employed in Northampton. Three other siblings have moved nearby: Katherine, a stenographer at MAC, lives at 5 Phillips Street, along with her sister, Margaret, a teacher; William, her brother, employed at MAC, and his wife, Susan V., bookkeeper for James A. Lowell. Henry, a laborer, is living on Hallock Street.

Marcella and Emily continued to live at 143 Fearing Street until their deaths in the early 1950s. It is not clear when the property was reduced from one to one-third acre.

The house was owned and occupied for several years in the early 1960s by Doris Abramson, a prominent local poet, long time faculty member at University of Massachusetts, one of the first critical writers about African American playwrights and drama. She had grown up at 76 Fearing Street (q.v.) in the 1920s.

SOURCES

Amherst Tax Assessor's records
USCEN , 1910, 1900
Hampshire Land Records
"Doris Abramson..." obit. BG, 1/10/2008
Amherst Directories,
Amherst Street Directories