

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

J-12-9

Boston
North

Town/City: Medford

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): East Medford

Photograph



Address: 64 Court Street

Historic Name: Larkin House

Uses: Present: single-family residential

Original: single-family residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1881

Source: deeds, maps

Style/Form: altered/ end house

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: vinyl/ vinyl

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: none

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Side and entry porch enclosures; siding, sash and door replacement, recent decades.

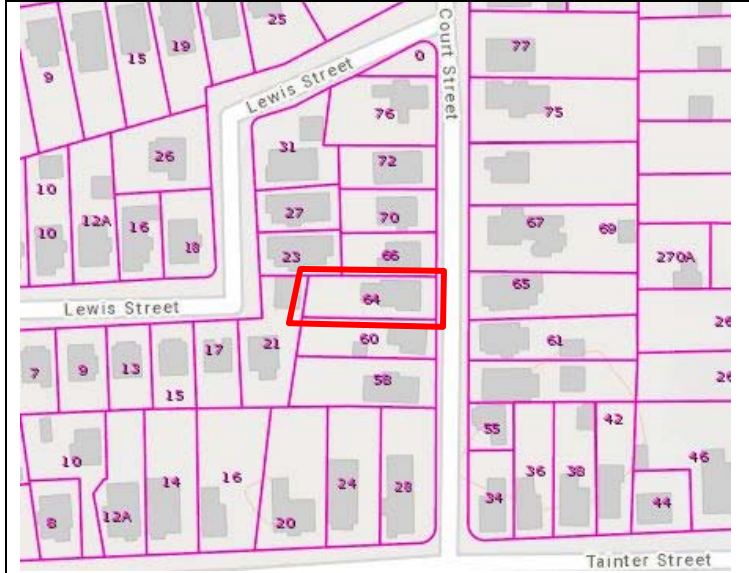
Condition: fair

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.11 acre

Setting: Dense mix of late-19th through early 20th century residential use.

Locus Map (*north is up*)



Recorded by: John D. Clemson

Organization: Medford Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): January 2022

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MEDFORD

64 COURT STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Area(s) Form No.

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The Larkin House, likely built shortly after the property's acquisition by its namesake in 1881, is a diminutive example of the gabled end-house type with additional massing. The gable-front house is a story and a half in height with knee-wall massing in the upper level, whereby the rafters rest on a plate a half story above the second floor. Dimensions of the main body are 20 feet wide by 35 feet deep. The house is expanded by a full-height gable bay in the rear pile of the left (south) side elevation and a lower 15-foot-wide rear ell in line with the left side that extends 18 feet to the rear. Period Sanborn maps suggest this ell may have been reconfigured during recent decades. The second story is further expanded by gabled wall dormers centered on each side. A shed porch filling the left-side re-entrant angle was evidently enclosed during recent decades as well as a small shed-roofed entrance porch at the right end of the façade. Sanborn maps dating to 1910 and 1930 depict an open porch that wrapped the front and left re-entrant angle. The façade is arranged in two symmetrical bays in the upper story but the parlor window has been replaced by a recent canted oriel.

The plan is suggested by the fenestration and entry sequence. A blank wall with a small window tucked against the eave beyond the main entry on the right side indicates a side-hall plan with a parlor front and two other spaces in the expanded rear pile with a kitchen in the ell. Recent vinyl siding, sash and door replacements with open soffits make a stylistic analysis challenging. The house is sited at a modest setback that matches the surrounding streetscape on a deep, narrow minimal lot landscaped with open lawn and an asphalt drive on the left side. The front garden is retained by a concrete curb and surrounded by a low chain-link fence.

Despite alterations the Larkin House is a component of the initial phase of Court Street's development during the 1870s and 1880s. It reflects period building practices in a well-preserved streetscape of similar houses of its era mixed with later examples from the late-19th through early 20th centuries.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The Larkin House was constructed within a planned subdivision dated 1847 of the land of Alfred Wallace that fills the west side of Court Street between Tainter Street on the south and the later approximate location of Brogan Road on the north. The plan is reproduced below. According to the 1855 Walling Medford map and the 1850 Federal Census Alfred Wallace (born ca. 1809) resided at 24 Tainter Street at the time with the occupation of broker owning property valued at \$4,000. His household included wife Harriet, two children and three other minors. Here his verifiable paper trail ends but later deeds indicate he resided in Washington, D.C. In October of 1881 he sold lot 5, the subject property prior to a later subdivision, to James J. Larkin. Consideration was \$338 "with any buildings thereon." A house labeled "J. Larkin" was depicted by 1889.¹

Grantee James J. Larkin (1854-1925) was a native of Dublin, Ireland who immigrated in 1870 and later became a naturalized citizen. According to his obituary he was gardener of the Lawrence Estate and later worked at the Middlesex Fells Reservation. He ended his career as a janitor at the station there, retiring ca. 1923. According to the 1900 census he was a park laborer. At that time his household included his wife, Catherine (Dyer, born Nov. 1854), also a native of Ireland immigrating ca. 1872, and five daughters born in Massachusetts between 1878 and 1886, the four adult eldest working a pentagraph at a print works, as a waitress, a sewing machine operator, and in housework. His heirs, including John J. and Irene Crowley, who inherited from Catherine Larkin, owned the property until 1961, selling to the current owners of record, members of the Tintoni family.²

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

¹ MCSRD Plan 3:37 (1847) reproduced below; Ancestry.com: 1850 Federal Census; 1855 Walling Medford map.

² MCSRD 1580:256 (1881); Ancestry.com: vital records, marriage; 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920 Federal Census; *Boston Daily Globe*, May 2, 1925, p. A3.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MEDFORD

64 COURT STREET

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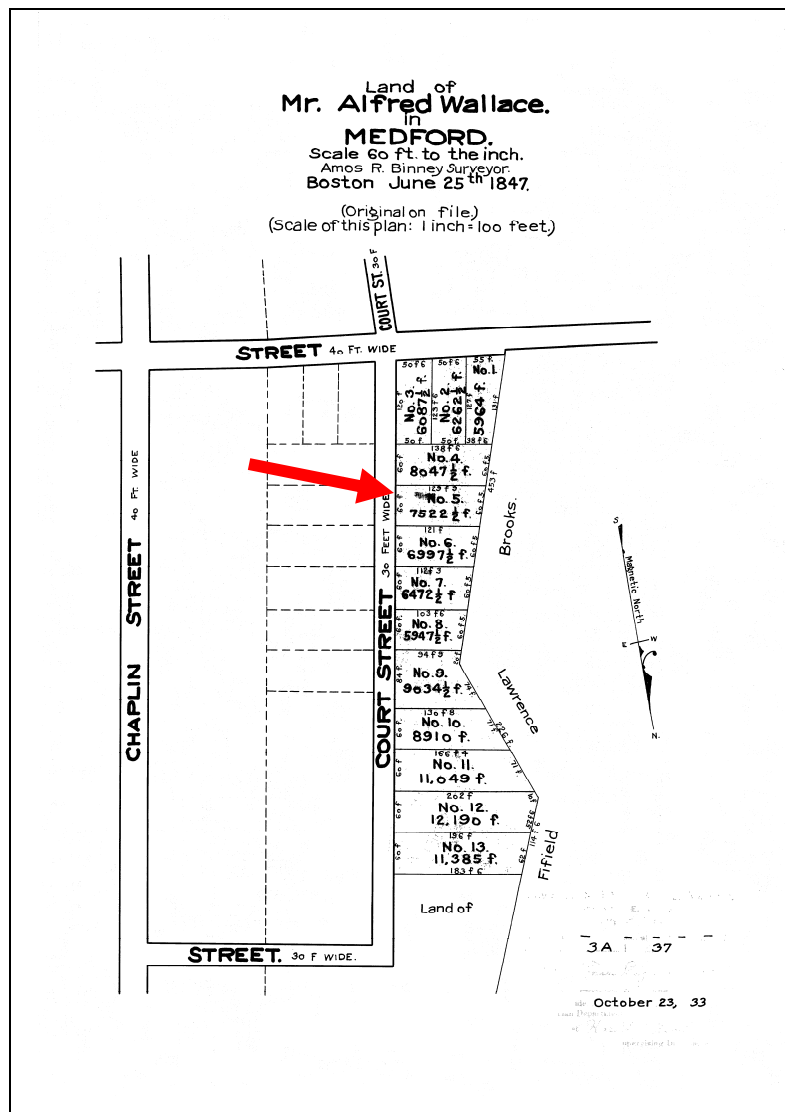
Maps and atlases:

- 1855 H.F. Walling. "Map of Medford...."
- 1875 F. W. Beers, *County Atlas of Middlesex, Massachusetts*.
- 1880 O. H. Bailey [Bird's Eye View of] Medford.
- 1889 Geo. H. Walker & Co., *Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts*.
- 1898 Geo. W. Stadly & Co., *Atlas of the City of Medford....*
- 1900 Geo. W. Stadly & Co., *Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, Volume 1*.
- 1892, 1897, 1903, 1910, 1936, 1936-1950 Sanborn Insurance Atlases.

Ancestry.com: see footnotes

Charles Brooks and James M. Usher, *History of the Town of Medford, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, From its First Settlement in 1630 to 1855; Revised, Enlarged and Brought Down to 1885* (Rand, Avery & Co., 1886)

Middlesex County South Registry of Deeds, in notes as MCSRD book:page.



MCSRD Plan 3:37 (1847) depicting the Wallace subdivision. Note that north is down; the horizontal street at the top of the map is Tainter. The subject property, part of lot 5, is indicated by a red arrow.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

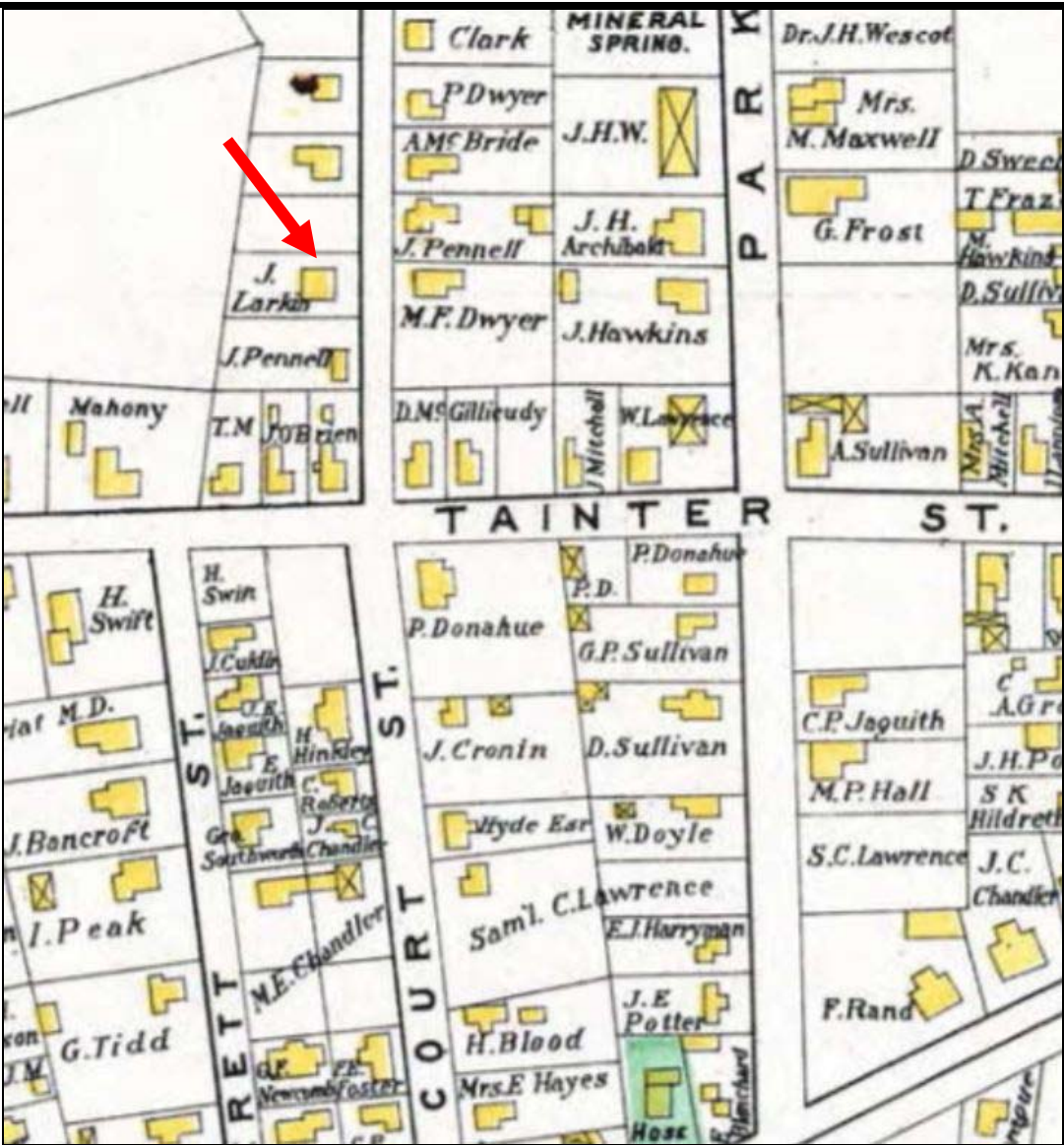
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Area(s)

Form No.



1889 Walker county atlas showing the initial depiction of the subject house indicated by a red arrow.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

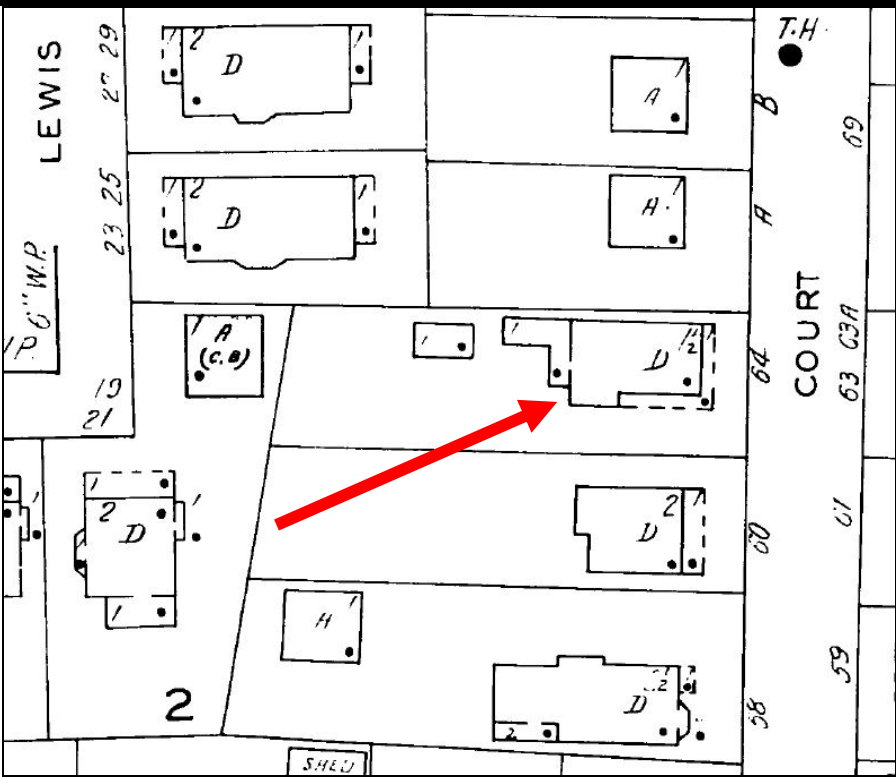
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1936 Sanborn depicting the wrap porch and an earlier configuration of the rear ell. Indicated by a red arrow.



View from NE showing right side.

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Front elevation.



Left elevation.