

FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



Façade (north) and west elevations

Locus Map



↑
north

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

170-10-00

Boston
South

BKL.632

Town/City: Brookline

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Lower Harvard St –
Vernon/Harris Neighborhood

Address: 32 Auburn Street

Historic Name: Charles and Georgia Richardson House

Uses: Present: residential – two-family

Original: residential – single-family

Date of Construction: 1903

Source: building permit (cited on draft form)

Style/Form: Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder: Alonzo D. Wright

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: vinyl siding and wood trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
changed to 2-family use and side porch enclosed (1959)
– vinyl siding (L 20th c)

Condition: fair

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 5,950 s.f.

Setting: Heterogeneous residential neighborhood, developed principally in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Mostly large, single-family wood frame houses, generally flat lots, and densely developed streetscapes.

Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero and Kathleen K. Broomer

Organization: Brookline Planning Department

Date (*month / year*): September 2021

RECEIVED

SEP 30 2021

MASS. HIST. COMM.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BROOKLINE

32 AUBURN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

BKL.632

☐ 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:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Charles and Georgia Richardson House is a square volume enlivened by a full-length front porch, angled bay windows on the first and second stories of the façade, a two-story angled bay window at the rear of the east elevation, and a two-story bow window at the front of the west elevation. Rising 2½ stories to a high hip roof, the roof edge features hipped dormers with paired windows on the front and west slopes and a pedimented, gabled dormer with a single window on the east slope. One chimney rises from the east dormer. Walls are trimmed with what appears to be a sill board with beveled cap at the base. Embellishing the deeply overhanging eaves are a narrow entablature, dentil course, and closely spaced, sawn modillion brackets. The second-floor walls flare out slightly at the base, above a molded band course. Windows are regularly spaced and typically feature 1/1 double hung sash with flat casings. The façade is dominated by a three-bay porch having a flat roof, Tuscan columns, and a high entablature with moldings, dentil course, and sawn modillion brackets. The center entrance features a single leaf door with an oval glass pane and narrow, half-height sidelights. A shed-roofed extension with a concrete block foundation spans the east elevation of the building; it is lit by modern gliding windows.

Well maintained, the Ryan House is a good example of early 20th century Colonial Revival suburban architecture in Brookline. Notable features include the ornamental eaves at both the main roofline and entrance porch, the use of bay and bow windows, and the simple but handsome entrance porch and doorway. Modern vinyl siding, loss of historic trim, and the incongruous side extension detract from the building's historic character.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Lewis M. Crane, a Boston-based oils dealer and resident of 71 Harvard Avenue in Brookline, apparently had this house built on speculation in 1903. He acquired the property from the heirs of Cyrus W. Washburn of Wellesley Hills. Before his death in 1899, Washburn had assembled a portfolio of real estate investment properties concentrated largely in Boston, Weymouth, and Wellesley. He acquired a tract of land on Auburn Street in Brookline during a period of intense development pressure in the area following the 1889 opening of the West End Street Railway down Beacon Street. Other houses on the tract, developed by Washburn, his heirs, or other investors, include 24 Auburn Street (see form) and all houses on Washburn Place, among them 1 Washburn Place (see form) and 2 Washburn Place (see form).

Crane sold the house in 1904 to Georgia A. Richardson, wife of Charles Leland Richardson of Brookline. The house remained in the Richardson family into the 1920s. At the time of purchase, the Richardsons were in their seventies, and resided here with an adult son and daughter-in-law, as well as a housekeeper. Born in Weston, Vermont, Charles Richardson came to Boston as a young man, joining a wholesale grocery business before establishing his own Boston-based grocery in 1861. He was well known in the area's grocery trade for fifty years, and retired in 1913, two years before his death. Members of the family who lived here in 1920 included S. Irving Richardson (no occupation listed in census), a son of Charles and Georgia; A. Pierce Green, Irving's uncle and a retired manufacturer of wholesale leather goods; and Irving's cousins, Gertrude and Helen Green.

The house remained in single-family use until its conversion to a two-family dwelling in 1959. Mary A. McCarthy and her husband, produce dealer Patrick A. McCarthy, resided here with their children and a housekeeper from at least 1927 to 1956. Patrick McCarthy had emigrated from Ireland to the United States about 1875. H. Marshall Edwards and his wife, Celia, undertook the renovations to a two-family dwelling, then resided in one of the new units beginning in 1960. Previously they lived nearby in the apartments at 10 Auburn Place. Marshall Edwards (age 75) was retired, and Celia (age 65) was employed in

Continuation sheet 1

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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sales. Their first tenant in 1960 was Dorothy E. Watchmaker (age 43, "at home"). After a brief period when their neighbors, Donald and Alys LaBarge of 1 Washburn Place (see form) held the mortgage, the Edwardses sold the property in 1965 to Chu Tung Jew, a chef, and his wife, Betty Gee Jew, who remained here until at least the late 1970s. Chu Tung Jew arrived in Boston in 1940 as a student at the age of 16, having traveled from Hong Kong by way of British Columbia and Nova Scotia.

Architect Alonzo D. Wright (1862-1933) designed a number of Colonial Revival and Craftsman-style dwellings in Brookline from 1895 to 1919, in the Fisher Hill, North Brookline, Aberdeen, and Coolidge Corner neighborhoods. Of twenty-two houses attributed to Wright in MHC's MACRIS database, all are located in Brookline, though the Brookline Preservation Commission has since identified over forty houses designed by Wright in North Brookline alone, as part of a residential development by Henry S. Coolidge. His work in Brookline includes single-family dwellings, two-family houses, and three-deckers. Born in Jefferson, Maine, Alonzo Wright moved to the Boston area by 1900, settling in Waltham before relocating by 1920 to Brookline, where he resided with his family on Mason Terrace. He maintained a Boston-based architecture practice, initially located at 40 State Street, moving by the 1920s to 53 Devonshire Street.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- 32 Auburn Street (BKL.632), prepared by Kathleen Polk and Leslie Larkin, Brookline Historical Commission, 1978.
Draft inventory form, 32 Auburn Street (undated). Brookline Preservation Commission files.
Brookline building permits (including original permit cited on draft form).
Brookline maps and atlases: 1874, 1888, 1897, 1907, 1913, 1919, 1927, 1956, 1965, 1976.
Plan of Land in Brookline, Mass. Belonging to Cyrus Washburn. May 1, 1894. Alexis H. French, C. E. Norfolk County deeds, 713:253 (recorded with deeds).
Brookline, Boston, and Wellesley directories.
Brookline street lists of residents/poll tax payers (title varies): 1930, 1960, 1965, 1970.
Brookline Preservation Commission. Demolition Application Report, 24-26 Fuller Street. September 2016.
Crane, Lewis M. deed transfer to Georgia A. Richardson. Announcement in *The Chronicle*, Brookline (January 16, 1904), 8:3
"Cyrus Washburn's Will." *Boston Daily Globe* (1872-1922); March 17, 1899. ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Boston Globe, p. 5.
Jew, Chu Tung. *Massachusetts, U. S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1820-1963*, and *Vancouver, British Columbia, Manifests of Chinese Arrivals, 1906-1912, 1929-1941*. Database and images. www.ancestry.com.
"New Executives with C. L. Richardson & Co." *Daily Boston Globe* (1928-1960); August 16, 1936; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Boston Globe, p. 52.
Norfolk County Registry of Deeds: 965:3-4 (1904), 4110:360 (1963), 4228:488 (1965).
Richardson, Charles Leland. Obituary. *The Chronicle*, Brookline (September 4, 1915), 11:1.
----- & Company. Advertisement. *The Chronicle*, Brookline (June 2, 1883), 6:3-4.
U. S. census records: 1850-1940 (excludes 1890). Database and images. www.ancestry.com.
Wright, Alonzo Delano. Find a Grave memorial ID 176882563. Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge. www.findagrave.com.
MHC MACRIS database.

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Detail of main entrance porch.

RD- LOWER HARVARD

632

In Area no.

Form no.

35

170-10

MISSION
Boston



on
in relation to nearest cross streets and
other buildings. Indicate north.

1. Town Brookline

BKL.632

Address 32 Auburn Street

Name _____

Present use Residential

Present owner C. T. & B.G. Jew

3. Description:

Date 1904

Source Tax List

Style "Suburban" w/Col. Revival &
Queen Anne elements

Architect Information not available

Exterior wall fabric Bevel siding & shing-
les

Outbuildings (describe) none

Other features Hip roof w/hipped dormer
projecting eaves w/ exposed rafters
& dentils, polygonal bays & rounded
2 story bay, broad front porch,
imbricated shingle pattern 2nd fl.

Altered to 2 family Date 1959

Moved _____ Date _____

5. Lot size: 5950' sq. ft.

One acre or less x Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage 85'

Approximate distance of building from street

20'

6. Recorded by Kathleen Polk, L. Larkin

Organization Brookline Historical Comm.

Date Summer, 1978

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) Charles L. & Georgia A. Richardson

Original use Single family residence

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates 2 family - since 1959

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science/ invention	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social/ humanitarian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	Military	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Community development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

This house is an amalgam of styles - while the symmetrical massing and steep hip roof indicate Colonial Revival, (as well as the regular placement of windows), the use of polygonal bays, rounded bay on the side rather than front of the house, and use of siding with imbricated shingles are more reminiscent of the Queen Anne style. The type of porch seen here is not usual for either of these styles; its rather classical simplicity is more often associated with the Greek Revival. However, its scale & mass are in keeping with #24 across Washburn Place, and it too looks prosperous and has retained most of the original details.

C. L. Richardson, like his neighbor Mr. Ryan at # 24, was a merchant who commuted to Boston every day - he was a wholesale grocer with premises at 166 Lincoln, Boston.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

Brookline Atlases, 1900, 1907
 Brookline Tax Lists, 1904
 Brookline Directory 1905
 Boston Directory 1905