

## FORM B – BUILDING

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

### Photograph



East and façade (north) elevations.

### Locus Map



↑  
north

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

170-13-00

Boston  
South

BKL.634

**Town/City:** Brookline

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

**Address:** 24 Auburn Street

**Historic Name:** Joseph A. and Mary S. Ryan House

**Uses:** Present: residential – single-family

Original: residential – single familyu

**Date of Construction:** 1894

**Source:** building permit  
(#45, cited on 1978 survey form)

**Style/Form:** Colonial Revival

**Architect/Builder:** Walsh & Kearns, archt/  
Isaac J. Hamilton, bldr

#### Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
none

#### Major Alterations (*with dates*):

metal fire escape on east elevation (L 20<sup>th</sup> c) - wood  
egress stair at rear of building (L 20<sup>th</sup> – E 21<sup>st</sup> c)

**Condition:** fair

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 5,950 sf

**Setting:** Heterogeneous residential neighborhood,  
developed principally in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup>  
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

24 AUBURN STREET

## MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

BKL.634

☐ 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 classically-inspired Joseph and Mary Ryan House is composed of a square footprint on the main block with a short, two-story rear ell at the southeast corner. The cubical volume rises 2½ stories to a high hip roof with symmetrically placed, pedimented dormers (two each on the front and east slopes, one each on the west and rear slopes) and four tall, slender chimneys animating the roofline. Clapboard-covered walls are trimmed with a molded sill board, classical pilasters at the corners of the main block, and a decorative entablature with cornice moldings, dentil course, and shaped modillion brackets. The main volume of the house is embellished with a substantial front entrance portico, a two-story bow window at the east side of the façade, and a one-story, angled bay window at the rear of the west elevation. Windows are regularly spaced and typically feature double-hung sash occurring singly and trimmed with band molding. First floor windows on the façade are surmounted by a well-developed cornice, while a Palladian window in the middle of the east elevation has a keystone in the arched center window and a dentilated cornice over the flanking rectangular windows. The side and rear elevations of the main block each contain one diamond-paned window. Prominent on the façade, a center entrance porch features paired Tuscan columns at the outer corners supporting a high molded entablature with a dentil course and flat roof; turned balusters line the sides of the porch. The doorway is framed by slender pilasters and a simple entablature; it contains a single-leaf, wood and glass paned door flanked by half-height, leaded-glass sidelights. The rear elevation is notable for a broad exterior chimney that pierces the ornamental eave as it extends above the roofline.

Well-preserved, the Ryan House is a fine example of Colonial Revival style suburban housing in Brookline. The design is notable for its stately massing, lively roof edge, prominent entrance porch, and elegant detailing. Modern egress stairways at the sides and rear are minimal detractions; deterioration of trim at the porch, roof eave, and dormers threatens significant architectural features.

### 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.*

This house was built in connection with the 1894 subdivision of the adjacent Washburn Place, named for Cyrus W. Washburn of Wellesley Hills, a real estate developer based in Boston. Development pressure in the Harvard Street corridor was evidence of Brookline's expansion as a streetcar suburb following the 1889 opening of the West End Street Railway on Beacon Street, which enhanced commuter access from Brookline to Boston. Before his death in 1899, Washburn assembled a portfolio of real estate investment properties concentrated largely in Boston, Weymouth, and Wellesley. His heirs continued development of this Brookline subdivision into the early 20th century. Other houses associated with the Washburn land were 32 Auburn Street (see form) and all houses on Washburn Place, among them 1 Washburn Place (see form) and 2 Washburn Place (see form).

Predating the construction of Washburn Place and apparently the first house completed in the subdivision, 24 Auburn Street was built for Joseph A. Ryan and his new bride, the former Mary S. Kelly of Brookline, who acquired the undeveloped parcel from Cyrus Washburn in 1894 [Norfolk deeds, 713:251]. Joseph Ryan was employed as a Boston-based merchant importer of "tailors' trimmings." In 1903, the Ryans sold the house, described in *The Brookline Chronicle* as "a colonial style house of twelve rooms, bath and laundry," to Emily W. Withington, wife of John R. Withington, a retired Custom House employee in Boston. After John Withington's death in 1905, the house remained in the family into the 1920s. Emily Withington initially took "transient or regular boarders" into her home, but later resided elsewhere in Brookline. Genealogical research is needed to establish a family connection, if any, between John Withington and the Moses Withington family that lived at 17 Auburn Street (see form) during the same period.

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

BROOKLINE

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Area(s) Form No.

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The Boston firm of Timothy F. Walsh and Daniel D. Kearns designed the house during a very brief partnership in 1894 and 1895 as "architects and [building] superintendents," based at 165 Tremont Street, Boston. Both men were members of the Boston Architectural Club when they exhibited plans at an 1895 exhibition held jointly with the Boston Society of Architects: the "Calvary gates and lodge" – possibly referring to one of the Calvary cemeteries in Boston – and an unnamed house in Brookline. No other examples of the firm's work have been identified in MHC's MACRIS database to date. Timothy Walsh (1868-1934) was later also a member of the Boston Society of Architects and named a fellow of the American Institute of Architects. A Cambridge native, he graduated from Boston's English High School and was employed as a draftsman for Peabody and Stearns (1887-1893) before traveling Europe, studying in Paris ateliers, and working in partnership with Kearns. This was followed by a short period of practicing independently (1896-1897). He joined Charles Maginnis and Matthew Sullivan to form the architecture firm of Maginnis, Walsh and Sullivan (1898-1909), later Maginnis and Walsh (1910-1934), nationally known architects of churches, schools, convents, and institutional complexes associated with the Roman Catholic Church. Timothy Walsh lived in Cambridge at the time the Ryan House was built and later moved to Brookline, residing on Beacon Street and St. Paul Street. Daniel D. Kearns, who resided on Blue Hill Avenue in Roxbury, is listed as an architect in Boston directories from 1894 to ca. 1906 [Jennings, 260; *Boston College Stylus*; MACRIS; Boston and Brookline directories].

From the late 1920s through the 1960s, residents of 24 Auburn Street continued to be a mix of owner-occupants and tenants. In 1927, Albert Wood, a machinist, and his wife, Margaret, owned the house. They resided here with at least six boarders, mostly single women in their forties or fifties employed as nurse, writer, bookkeeper, or "at home." Ida Dane, the owner from 1949 to 1956, was the widow of Samuel Dane and lived in the area, on Harvard Street and later Park Street. During this period, there were twelve tenants in the house, including Louis Shapiro, a salesman, and his wife, Elizabeth. The Shapiros had previously owned the house, sold it to Ida Dane in 1949, and re-purchased it in 1956 [Norfolk deeds, 2880:514, 3512:399]. Genealogical research may establish a family relationship between Ida Dane and the Shapiros. John and Marguerite Badger owned the house from 1967 to 1973 [Norfolk deeds, 4908:606], though they seem to have maintained it as a rental property. Nine tenants in 1968 included a supervisor, superintendent, clerk, dealer, painter, engineer, messenger, and student, ranging in age from 24 to 68, plus one resident who was retired.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

24 Auburn Street (BKL.634), prepared by Kathleen Polk and Leslie Larkin, Brookline Historical Commission, 1978.

Brookline building permits (original permit cited on 1978 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): 1927, 1956, 1965, 1968.

Boston College. *Boston College Stylus* (May 1895), Vol. 8, No. 8, p. 33. Advertisement for T F. Walsh and D. D. Kearns, Architects and Superintendents.

*Catalogue of the Joint Exhibition of the Boston Society of Architects and the Boston Architectural Club*. Boston, MA: Bates & Guild, 1895.

"Cyrus Washburn's Will." *Boston Daily Globe* (1872-1922); March 17, 1899. ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Boston Globe, p. 5.

Jennings, Jan. *Cheap and Tasteful Dwellings. Design Competitions and the Convenient Interior, 1879-1909*. Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2005.

Norfolk County Registry of Deeds: as noted in text.

"Real Estate [Ryan sale to Withington]." *The Chronicle*, Brookline (July 18, 1903), 12:3.

Ryan, Joseph A. and Mary S. Kelly. Marriage record, Brookline (October 30, 1894). *Massachusetts, U. S., Marriage Records, 1840-1915*. Database and images. [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

U. S. census records: 1850-1940 (excludes 1890). Database and images. [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

Withington, Emily. Advertisement for accepting boarders at 24 Auburn Street. *The Chronicle*, Brookline (October 10, 1908), 14:3.

Withington, John R. Death record (June 14, 1905), Brookline. *Massachusetts, U. S., Death Records, 1841-1915*. Database and images. [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

MHC MACRIS database.





FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

PP- LOWER HARVARD 634

BKL. 634

In Area no.	Form no.
	35
	170-13

USGS-805.5



other buildings. Indicate north.

1. Town Brookline

Address 24 Auburn Street

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Present use Residential

Present owner C. & J. Wickstram

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Date 1894

Source Building permit

Style Colonial Revival

Architect Walsh & Kearns

Exterior wall fabric Bevel siding

Outbuildings (describe) none

Other features Hip roof, pedimented dormers, classical cornice, 2 story rounded bay, entrance portico w/ classical cornice, paired columns, sidelights w/leaded panes, pilasters at corners, 2 chimneys, Altered Palladian window Date side

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

5. Lot size: 5950 sq. ft.

One acre or less x Over one acre \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate frontage 80'

Approximate distance of building from street  
15'

6. Recorded by Kathleen Polk, L. Larkin

Organization Brookline Historical Comm.

Date Summer, 1978

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) Mary S. & Jos. A. Ryan

Original use Residential

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates \_\_\_\_\_

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	_____	Conservation	_____	Recreation	_____
Agricultural	_____	Education	_____	Religion	_____
Architectural	<u>X</u>	Exploration/ settlement	_____	Science/ invention	_____
The Arts	_____	Industry	_____	Social/ humanitarian	_____
Commerce	_____	Military	_____	Transportation	_____
Communication	_____	Political	_____		
Community development	<u>X</u>				

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

In good condition, this house stands out on a street consisting mostly of houses in the Queen Anne style. It is set on a good-sized lot at the corner of ~~Auburn~~ <sup>Washington</sup> Place, which was laid out a year before this house was built. Not many Colonial Revival houses are found in this part of Brookline - there are many more near the Village on Davis Avenue, and on Fisher Hill.

Ryan is listed as a merchant with offices at 71 Summer St., Boston - he was undoubtedly prosperous - his house looks it.

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

Brookline Atlases 1893, 1897  
 Brookline Tax Lists 1894-97  
 Brookline Building Dept. permit  
 Brookline Directory 1896