

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

222-19-00

Newton

BKL.764

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

**Town/City:** Brookline

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*):  
Aspinwall Hill

**Address:** 213 Gardner Road

**Historic Name:** George and Ellen Burdett House

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

Original: residential

**Date of Construction:** 1887

**Source:** deed, tax lists

**Style/Form:** Queen Anne

**Architect/Builder:** H. Langford Warren, architect and builder

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards, shingles, and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

attached garage

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

Attached garage, first floor porches, and re-glazing of bay window (2008) – replacement sash (L 20<sup>th</sup> – E 21<sup>st</sup> c)

**Condition:** good

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** 17,153 SF

**Setting:** Located in a suburban residential neighborhood, near the base of Aspinwall Hill. Surrounded by heterogeneous single-family houses built from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in a variety of styles, sizes, and materials.

## Photograph



Façade (east) and north elevations.

## Locus Map (north is at top)



**Recorded by:** W. Frontiero and K. K. Broomer,  
preservation consultants

**Organization:** Town of Brookline

**Date** (*month / year*): June 2018

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JUL 06 2018

MASS. HIST. COMM.

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BROOKLINE

213 GARDNER RD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

	BKL.764
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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.*

*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.*

213 Gardner Street stands on a large, hillside parcel on the west side of Gardner Road; while the road slopes down to the south, the property slopes significantly up to the west. A rubble retaining wall lines the sidewalk edge, interrupted near its southern end by a flight of granite block steps. The house is placed well above street level, behind a deep front setback that is maintained chiefly in lawn, with a hedge along the front retaining wall. A dense band of trees lines the Rawson Path (north) edge of the property. A two-car, flat-roofed garage is attached to the front of the house at its northern end, with a paved driveway cut into the hillside. Its modern turned roof railing is repeated on porches at the south end of the house.

The L-shaped building consists of a rectangular main block and a large rear ell at its north end. The main block rises 2 ½ stories above a brick foundation to a side-gabled roof with a flush cross-gable at the north end of the façade and two modest eyebrow windows to the south. A substantial, cross-shaped chimney is positioned slightly off-center at the ridge. A polygonal, two-story tower with a peaked roof is attached to the southeast corner of the house. First floor walls are clad with clapboards and trimmed with a sill board, flat corner boards, and molded stringcourse under the flared base of the shingled second story. A continuous sill band and lintel band frame the second story windows; the first row of shingles above the lintel band has a petite sawtooth edge at the base. Windows typically contain 6/1 replacement sash with flat casings. Windows are usually grouped in twos and threes.

The three-part façade contains an angled bay window with modern, full-height glazing at the north end, at the garage roof deck, and two triplets of windows to the south. Three pairs of windows are centered above on the second floor. A pedimented cross gable crowns the northern bay. The north elevation of the building contains the pedimented gable end of the main block and the flush wall of the rear ell. The main block features a center window bay with a hip-roofed, rectangular bay window at the first floor and a set of three contiguous windows at the second floor and half-story. The rear ell has an asymmetrical gable roof with an eyebrow window on its north slope; exposed shaped rafter ends; a shed-roofed projection at the first floor of its rear (west) elevation; containing a plain, recessed entry porch; and irregular fenestration, including two small, 24/1 windows on the first floor of the north elevation. The utilitarian rear (west) elevation of the main block features exposed shaped rafter ends and two small, 16/1 windows on its first floor. Barely visible on the south side of the main block is an open porch with a shed roof and cross gable, square posts with curved brackets, and a modern turned balustrade. The original survey form suggests that the main entrance to the house is located at this porch, facing the adjacent house at 219 Gardner Road.

213 Gardner Road is a large and ambitious but awkward example of the Queen Anne style in Brookline, tentatively developing the architectural themes it introduces. It is distinguished by its conservative, boxy massing; corner tower; the articulation of the roofline with eyebrow windows, shaped chimney, and cross-gabled dormer; and a variety of wall textures and patterns. The building's architectural integrity is reduced by the addition of the large front garage and the impact of the related excavation to the hillside setting.

## 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.*

Among the older residences on Gardner Road and Aspinwall Hill generally, 213 Gardner Road (1887, H. Langford Warren, archt./bldr.) represents the first phase of the subdivision's development, characterized by custom single-family homes of substantial scale for families of some financial means. This house and the adjacent house at 219 Gardner Road (1887,

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

BROOKLINE

213 GARDNER RD

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220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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BKL.764) were built for William B. Strong, president of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, which had executive offices in Boston. Strong's wife, Abby, conveyed this property, "together with the dwelling house thereon standing," to their daughter, Ellen S. Strong, on the day of her marriage to Boston banker George A. Burdett on June 8, 1887 [Norfolk deeds 603:481]. William and Abby Strong resided next door at 219 Gardner Road only briefly before relocating to Chicago in 1889. The Burdetts moved to Newton by the late 1890s, though Ellen (Strong) Burdett held title to her parents' house at 219 Gardner until 1914. John E. Toulmin, president of the Shoe and Leather National Bank in Boston, succeeded the Burdetts at 213 Gardner.

Boston architect H. Langford Warren, FAIA (1857-1917) designed, and reportedly also built, both the Burdett and Strong houses [Herndon, 437]. Born in Manchester, England to a New England family that returned to the United States in 1876, Warren studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and trained five years with Brookline architect Henry Hobson Richardson. Accepting an appointment to the Harvard faculty in 1893 as an instructor in architecture, Warren remained at the college nearly 25 years, eventually heading the School of Architecture, established in 1912, and serving as dean of its faculty in 1914. Warren was one of the founders of the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts, in 1897, and led the society for nearly twenty years. Langford Warren maintained an architecture practice in Boston from 1885 onward, spending time in Troy, New York in the early 1890s on the construction of the Troy Orphan Asylum. Warren's work in Massachusetts included Colonial Revival-style town halls in Lincoln and Billerica; Gothic Revival-style churches in Clifftondale (Saugus) and Winchester; several projects for Harvard; and at least five houses in Newton [Meister, xiii, 34-36; MACRIS].

Charles E. Hodges (d. 1937), a liability insurance executive, and his wife, Mary, lived here from ca. 1902 through the 1930s. For most of his career, Hodges was associated with the American Mutual Liability Insurance Company, of Boston, eventually serving as president and then chairman of the board of directors. He was also president of the American Mutual Compensation Insurance Company, the Allied American Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, and the American Policyholders' Insurance Company. Their son, George A. Hodges, a Boston banker, stayed on in this house with his wife, Constance, into the 1940s. The house has the distinction on Aspinwall Hill of remaining in single-family use. Richard E. Schroeder, an attorney, and his wife, Mary, moved here about 1961, and were still residing here in 1970.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

- 213 Gardner Road (BKL.764) prepared by Leslie Larkin for Brookline Historical Commission, 1980.  
Aspinwall Hill area form (BKL.I), prepared by Carla Benka et al., Brookline Historical Commission, 1978-1979.  
Atlases of Brookline: 1888, 1893, 1897, 1907, 1919, 1927, 1931.  
Brookline and Boston directories.  
Brookline building permits.  
Brookline street lists of poll tax payers (title varies): 1891-1893, 1897, 1925, 1950, 1970.  
Burdett, George A. and Ellen S. Strong. Marriage record (June 8, 1887), Brookline. *Massachusetts, Marriage Records, 1840-1915*. Via [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). Retrieved April 2018.  
"Charles E. Hodges of Brookline dead. Retired insurance company executive was 76." *Daily Boston Globe (1928-1960)*; January 23, 1937; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Boston Globe, p. 3.  
Herndon, Richard, compiler. *Boston of To-Day. A Glance at its History and Characteristics*. Boston, MA: Post Publishing Company, 1892.  
Meister, Maureen. *Arts and Crafts Architecture: History and Heritage in New England*. Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2014, pp. xiii-xiv, 34-36.  
MHC MACRIS database.  
Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, as noted in text.  
Parker, William Stanley. "Herbert Langford Warren." *Harvard Graduates' Magazine, 1917-1918* (Sept. 1917), pp. 45-47, 170.  
U. S. Federal census records: 1900-1940. Database and images. Via [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

PP. ASPINWATH BKL. 764 764

FORM B - BUILDING

In Area no.	Form no.
	45/222-19

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



town Brookline

address 213 Gardner Road

name \_\_\_\_\_

present use Residential

present owner R.J. & M.L. Schroeder

description:

date 1888

source Brookline Tax Lists & Atlases

style Queen Anne/Shingle

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.

Architect Information not available

Exterior wall fabric Wood shingle

Outbuildings (describe) None

Other features 2½ stories; gable roof; 2-story turreted bay; pedimented entrance porch; eyelid dormers; slight flare above 1st floor windows and dentilled course above second floor windows; banded windows  
Altered New window cut. Date 1902

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

5. Lot size: 17,153 sq. ft.

One acre or less  Over one acre \_\_\_\_\_  
100' Gardner Road

Approximate frontage 100' Rawson Path

Approximate distance of building from street

75'

6. Recorded by Leslie Larkin

Organization BHC

Date March, 1980

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) William B. and Abby J. Strong

Original use Single family dwelling

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)

See 219 Gardner Road for the house Strong lived in.

William B. Strong built this house the same year he built his own, siting it on part of his 60, 355 sq. ft. lot. Although both houses are large and handsomely sited, sitting well back from the street in the middle of broad lawns, they are completely unlike. Strong's house is stucco, with broad eaves and a hip roof. This house has elements of both the Shingle and Queen Anne styles - irregular massing, large chimney, pedimented dormer relating to Queen Anne, as well as the turreted 2 story bay, and eyebrow dormers, and a decorative use of sawtooth shingles in a string course above the 2nd floor windows relating to the Shingle Style.

Strong was President of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe RR at the time he built this house - he sold it the same year to George A Burdett, a banker at 28 State St. in Boston. These large houses are more typical of those in their immediate neighborhood on Tappan St., rather than those on Gardner Rd., as most of their contemporaries on Gardner Rd. have been replaced by smaller, less noteworthy buildings.

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

- Atlases, 1888, 1893
- Tax lists, 1887-88
- Brookline Directory, 1889
- Boston Directory, 1889