

FORM B – BUILDING

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

57-19	Boston North		BLM.824
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: Belmont

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

Photograph



(web photo)

Address: 80 Somerset Street

Historic Name: John Sharman House

Uses: Present: single family dwelling

Original: single family dwelling/studio

Date of Construction: 1924

Source: building permit

Style/Form: English/European Revival

Architect/Builder: Derby & Robinson, architects;
David Donaldson, builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete

Wall/Trim: stucco, wood

Roof: slate

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 47,963 SF

Setting: wooded, landscaped lot

Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Belmont Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): June 2014

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

80 SOMERSET STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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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:

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

Built into a hillside and setback from the road, 80 Somerset Street is a two-story dwelling, oriented with its ell and lower level garage facing the road to the north and its façade oriented to the west. A long concrete path leads from the driveway to the front door. Reminiscent of a rustic farmhouse, the smooth, stucco clad wall surfaces have no real detail. The main core of the house is a two-story structure with a four-bay façade, a slate roof and stuccoed end chimneys. The simple off-center entrance is fronted by an arched arbor trellis. The first floor windows have 15/15 double-hung sash with shutters; those on the upper floor are 8/8 with tops that extend to the eaves. A single-story wing extends to the south and the two-story ell extends to the east, giving the house an L-shaped plan. The large multi-light casement windows on the north wall of the ell were designed to capture northern light for a studio. Constructed in 1924 and virtually unchanged since that time, the Sharman House is a unique example of eclectic early 20th century design.

The large lot includes mature trees, an apple orchard and stone walls along the street and driveway.

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 constructed for artist John Sharman. John and Mary Margaret Sharman of Winchester purchased the land from Sarah Reed in 1922 (Book 4554, Page 139). Two years later, in April 1924 John Sharman applied for a building permit. The house was designed by Derby & Robinson, architects and constructed by David Donaldson, builder. The stated value of the house on the permit was \$17,600.

John Sharman (1879-1971) was a painter. He trained at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts under Frank Benson and Edmund Tarbell. A member of the Guild of Boston Artists, he exhibited frequently in Boston in the early 20th century and numerous favorable reviews were published in the Boston papers of the period. His work included landscapes, flowers and fruit paintings. He was one of a number of artists working on Belmont Hill in the early 20th century. Sharman owned the house for almost fifty years, selling it to Stephen and Suzanne Washburn in 1970 (Book 11886, Page 289). The house was sold by the Washburn Trust to Alfred Greenwood and Nancy Kougeas in 2014 (Book 64512, Page 25).

The dwelling was designed by architects Derby & Robinson of Boston. Richard Derby (1878-1936) grew up in Concord and graduated from MIT as did his partner, Thomas P. Robinson (1878-1954). Robinson was born in Maine and also dabbled as a playwright. He and his wife, Ethel Fay Robinson, wrote two books – *Houses in America* (1936) and *Your Own House* (1941). The firm was later known as Derby, Robinson & Shepard and later became Derby, Barnes & Champney. Derby & Robinson specialized in Colonial architecture and built houses throughout the Boston suburbs especially in Newton and Concord. The MACRIS database includes 17 examples of their work. Only one, 51 Essex Street in Newton (NWT.4614, 1927) is stuccoed and European in feeling. It was also constructed by David Donaldson. Within Belmont, Derby & Robinson also designed a First Period style house at 41 Tyler Road in 1927.

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Belmont: The Architecture and Development of the Town of Homes. Prepared for the Belmont Historic District Commission, 1984.

Betts, Richard B. *The Streets of Belmont and How they Were Named (2nd edition)*. Belmont: Belmont Historical Society, 2012.

Indianapolis Museum of Art. Information on John Sharman. <http://collection.imamuseum.org/artwork/24596/>

Massachusetts Historical Commission, MACRIS database.

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds, Cambridge, MA

Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1915, 1922, 1931, 1949.

Town of Belmont, Building Department files

U.S. Census, various dates.



Source: <http://www.estate.com/listings/info/80-somerset-st--1>