

28-9

Cotuit

MM N-1

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
 Massachusetts Archives Building  
 220 Morrissey Boulevard  
 Boston, Massachusetts 02125



Place (neighborhood or village) BARNSTABLE  
 Newtown (Marstons Mills)

Address: 749 <sup>Santuit-</sup>Newtown Rd.

Historic Name: Charles L. Hamblin House

Uses: Present: Residence

Original: Same

Date of Construction: 1925-6

Source: Barnstable Deed 419/177

Style/Form: Vernacular

Architect/Builder: Charles L. Hamblin

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete

Wall/Trim: Red cedar shingle

Roof: Composition

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Four: office NE; garage SE; two sheds SE.

Major Alterations (with dates): Full basement and dormers added, porch enclosed 1947; bath added to NW corner 1950s; garage built 1981; dormers extended westward, with bay window between 1985; office rebuilt from old garage 1987; box bay added west side and partitions of west bedrooms removed 1998.

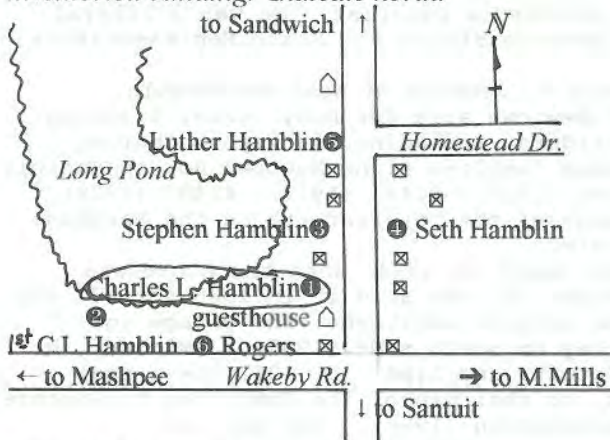
Condition Altered

Moved  no  yes Date:

Acreeage: .72

Setting: On bluff above sandy beach on southeast end of Long Pond, NW of junction of Newtown and Wakeby Roads.

relation to the nearest cross streets and/or major natural features. Show all buildings between inventoried building and nearest intersection or natural feature. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Circle and number the inventoried building. Indicate north.



Recorded by: James W. Gould

Organization: Marstons Mills  
 Historical Society

Date: 24 March 2000



## BUILDING FORM

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION *see continuation sheet*

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

The Hamblin House is an ideosyncratic vernacular creation of a builder of bungalows. It is a one and a half story house in U plan, consisting of a pair of one story hopper roofed wings connected by a taller gable roof on the west side toward the water. The south wing of three rooms was built first, with a small kitchen and two bedrooms and bath over a full basement, which has had a box bay window placed on the south wall, and the two bedrooms combined into a sunroom. Soon the north wing with living room and rounded stone fireplace and master bedroom were connected by a narrow pantry, and an open screened porch toward the water (presently enclosed), with stairs from the pantry to an open attic bunkroom above. Later this upper room was given shed dormers both north and south, which were later extended westwards and given a bay window.

The full concrete basement has a tunnel leading from its northwest corner underground for about 25 feet to an exterior door, and concrete steps leading down to the water, for access by nude bathers.

The exterior is red cedar shingle, with white trim. The original brick chimneys on the peak of the two hopper roofs have been sealed with white caulking. There is an open deck off the enclosed porch on the west side.

There are four outbuildings: 1) To the northeast, small shingled gable roofed office which replaced the original garage, 2) To the southeast, four car saltbox roofed garage, with vertical board siding, 3) Farther southeast a small storage shed, 4) Still farther southeast a "chapung", as the Azoreans called a men's hideout shed.

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *see continuation sheet*

*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.* The building is significant as the first home of the founder of the nearby nudist colony, for its architectural creation by the most important builder of the area, and as the home of radical Socialist movement.

The house is the second built for his own family by Charles Luther Hamblin (1889-1974), who was born just north of here to a family that had been in the area from the earliest days (his father Ezekiel<sup>7</sup>, Luther<sup>6</sup>, Lewis<sup>5</sup>, Benjamin<sup>4-3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, James<sup>1</sup>). In 1916 he married his neighbor Mary Mercedes Rogers (1896-1991), daughter of builder/wheelwright John Roderiques Rogers, who had immigrated from St. Michael in the Portuguese Azores. The Hamblins had two sons, carpenter Roger (1920-1996) and postal employee Paul (1924-1995), who grew up in this house.

Hamblin's was the first house to have electricity in an area that did not get public service until 1945. In the basement of the south wing he built a power unit consisting of a gasoline generator, and two racks of 24 batteries for storage. A wealthy woman guest from Boston brought down her maid, who plugged in a new iron, and used up all the electricity, plunging the house into darkness.

Hamblin began the Sandy Terrace Association, a nudist colony, nearby to the west. For access to the pond he built the tunnel and stairs to the water. He built two guest houses to the southeast, both considerably modified. Mary Rogers did not participate in the nude bathing and persuaded her husband to move the colony across the pond to #570 Wakeby Rd., where it continued to operate under the direction of Tony Capelli, who died in March 2000.

Hamblin served as a Sergeant in World War I, but returned a pacifist. He was a liberal freethinker in politics. In the interwar period he ran unsuccessfully for State Representative on the Socialist ticket.

He learned the trade before the first World War with Z. Jenkins of West Barnstable. Hamblin became the most important builder in the Santuit-Newtown area for many years, training many of the next generation of skilled carpenters and builders, including his nephew Charles Edward Hamblin. Most of the bungalows built for Portuguese families along Newtown Rd. in Santuit were his: #1721 (1928), #1765 (1928), #1676 (1926), #1666 (1927), #1481 (1931), #1493 (1928), #1503 (1929). The style is so similar that other buildings of the interwar era in the Marstons Mills-Cotuit-Mashpee area can probably be attributed to him.

Mary Hamblin continued to live here after Charles's death in 1974, when the house was assessed for \$50,000. She gave it to her son Paul of Golden CO, who sold it in 1985 for \$77,000 to newly wed Linda Edson and Michael Medeiros. They made several additions: the garage and extension of dormers (1985), the office (1987), and box bay on south side (1998). Michael (b. 1954) is proprietor of Mike's Autobody at 505 Main St. Cotuit, and Linda (b. 1962) is a real estate broker who has been active in local civic affairs, as chairman of the Committee to Restore the Burgess House (1998) and the Marstons Mills Civic Association (1998). She has run unsuccessfully for office of town councillor and state representative, and is member of the town Charter Review Commission (1999f). They were divorced in 1997, and their daughter Rebecca (b. 1990) continues to live in the house with her mother.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES *see continuation sheet*

Barnstable deeds 419/177, 2220/303, 3323/174, 7969/331.  
Barnstable probates 50,403 (Charles L. Hamblin), 11,653 (Caroline C. Hamblin to son Ezekiel).  
Interviews with owners Mike Medeiros 17 March 2000, Linda Edson 24 March 2000; nephew of the builder, Charles E. Hamblin who worked on additions, 18 March 2000.  
Oral history of Mary Rogers Hamblin, 1985 in Marstons Mills Historical Society.

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria*