

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

65 29			TEW 25
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Town: Tewksbury

Place: (*neighborhood or village*)

Photograph



Address: 108 Catamount Street

Historic Name: Gen. Adelbert Ames Castle

Uses: Present: Multi Family Residential

Original: Single Family Residential

Date of Construction: 1906

Source: Family History

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete

Wall/Trim: Stone/ Stucco

Roof: Membrane

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Garage

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Converted to nursing home (C1964)

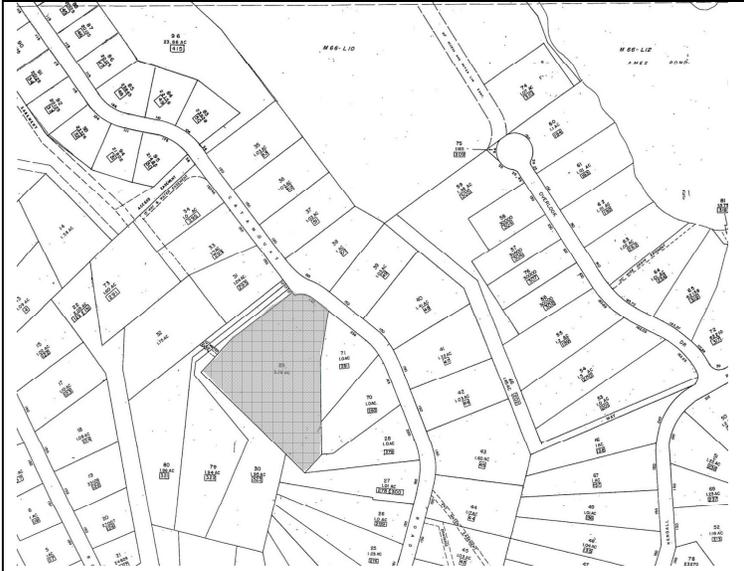
Condition: Fair

Moved: no | yes | **Date** _____

Acreage: 2.76 Acres

Setting: Located in a formerly rural area developed in the second half of the 20th century as a suburban residential area.

Topographic or Assessor's Map



Recorded by: Julie Ann Larry

Organization: ttl-architects

Date (*month / year*): March 2010

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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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.

The large residential property at **108 Catamount Road** is a building of unusual style. Located near the crest of Prospect Hill, the building was originally set on 700 acres and is known locally as "The Castle". Originally housing seventeen rooms, the castle is three-stories in height with an irregular plan. The flat roof is covered by a membrane roof. The stone walls stepped back at each level. Each level is marked by a band of concrete. The third level is significantly smaller than the lower levels and is recessed from the south and north edges of the lower stories.

The main entrance is located in the northeast tower. The wide swinging door has vertical panels set within a raised flattened Gothic arch. The door is flanked by leaded glass sidelights and under a raised three-part lintel. Symmetrically located above the door is a large two-story window comprised of three rows of four flattened Gothic arch fixed pane windows. Additional fenestration includes single, paired and bands of multiple flattened Gothic arch sash windows. Several windows and doors have been altered by the conversion to a multi-residential building and the addition of metal fire escapes. The towers are generally three stories in height while the northwest tower is only two stories in height. The south east tower features a two story bay. There are three exterior end chimneys of stone; the two on either end of the main building are stepped at each floor level like the adjacent walls. The third chimney is located on the exterior end of the southeast block. A fourth chimney pierces the flat roof near the center of the main building.

To the southeast is a small shed roof building built onto the steep slope of Prospect Hill. One story on the west elevation, the steep slope of the hill allows for two full stories on the rear (east) side. The concrete building has stone pilasters supporting a wide frieze band on the west elevation. The west façade is divided into three bays. The middle bay features a flattened Gothic arch. The middle bay has a central door flanked by a 1/1 sash window on each side. The northern bay has three 1/1 sash windows. The south bay has one asymmetrically located door. A narrow stone chimney is located on the exterior end of the south elevation.

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.

Adelbert Ames (1835-1933) was born in Rockland Maine and graduated from the United State Military Academy at West Point in 1861. He served with the Union Army during the Civil War from 1861-1865 and received a Congressional Medal of Honor for gallantry at the Battle of Bull Run where he was badly wounded in the right thigh in 1861. In 1864 Ames was colonel in the regular army and his division served under Maj. Gen Benjamin Franklin Butler, who would become his father-in-law. After the war he was appointed military Governor of Mississippi in 1868 and upon readmission of Mississippi to the United States, he was elected a United States Senator, serving from 1870 to 1874 when he again became Governor of Mississippi.

In 1870 he married Blanche Butler (1845-1939), General Benj F Butler's daughter. He returned to Massachusetts and became involved with manufacturing businesses in the Lowell area. His father, Jesse Ames, moved from Maine to Minnesota and purchased a flour mill business in 1868. Upon his return to Lowell, he settled in Tewksbury and served as the east coast representative of their mill. Ames purchased 700 acres of land on Prospect hill and built his seventeen-room castle in 1906. Adelbert Ames was an investor in the Boston-Lowell Interurban Railway, an electric line from Boston to Lowell that passed through Tewksbury.¹

¹ The Railway Age. Vol. 41. Bristol, Conn.: 1906. p232.

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Blanch and Adelbert had six children: Butler, Edith, Sarah, Blanche, Adelbert Jr, and Jessie. Blanche Bulter was a gardener, sculptor, and with an interest in geneology. She compiled a collection of her family's papers which were published by her family in 1957 as *Chronicles form the Nineteenth Century*.

He died in his winter home in Ormond Florida in 1933 and is interred in Hildreth Cemetery in Lowell with the family of his mother-in-law Sarah Hildreth Butler. Also buried in the family cemetery are his wife Blanche Butler Ames, their six children and the spouse of his son Butler and daughter Edith.

His son Adelbert Ames Jr (1880-1955) was a noted ophthamologist and perceptual psychologist. His daughter Blanche Ames Ames (1878-1969) was an activist for women's rights, especially suffrage and birth control reform, and her father's biographer, publishing *Adelbert Ames: Broken Oaths and Reconstruction in Mississippi 1835-1933* in 1964. Another daughter Edith Stevens (1873-1958) married C Brook Stevens and their family resided nearby at **190 Kendall Road TEW.26**.

In the 1960s the Ames' Castle became a nursing home and the rest of the 700-acre estate was subdivided. Most of the ranches, split levels, and contemporary homes on the estate's former land were built in the 1970s. The building is now listed as a four-unit apartment building.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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- Atlas of Middlesex County 1875. FW Beers.
- Atlas of Middlesex County 1889. Geo H Walker & Co.
- List of Residents by Streets, Ages 17 years and over, In the Town of Tewksbury Mass. As prepared by the Board of Registrars (various years 1965-)
- Valuations of the Real and Personal Estate of the Town of Tewksbury.
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