

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	SMV.290
<b>Historic Name:</b>	Colson, Henry W. P. House
<b>Common Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	23 Pleasant Ave
<b>City/Town:</b>	Somerville
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	Prospect Hill
<b>Local No:</b>	457; 72-E-18
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	
<b>Architect(s):</b>	
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	Colonial Revival; Queen Anne
<b>Use(s):</b>	Single Family Dwelling House
<b>Significance:</b>	Architecture
<b>Area(s):</b>	SMV.AX: Pleasant Avenue Historic District SMV.C: Central Hill
<b>Designation(s):</b>	Local Historic District (10/31/1989)



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

This file was accessed on:

Wednesday, April 20, 2011 at 1:26: PM

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

L4D - 10/31/89 (10)  
Pl. Prospect  
USGS BOSTON  
sect B

AREA

FORM NO.

Prospect  
Hill

290

C, AX



wn SOMERVILLE  
dress 23 Pleasant Avenue  
storic Name Henry W.P. Colson  
e: Present residential  
Original residential  
SCRIPTION  
ce 1893  
rce deeds / maps  
le Queen Anne / Colonial Rev

Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Exterior Wall Fabric shingles/clapboard

Outbuildings \_\_\_\_\_

Major Alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

Condition good

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

Acreage 3807 sq. ft.

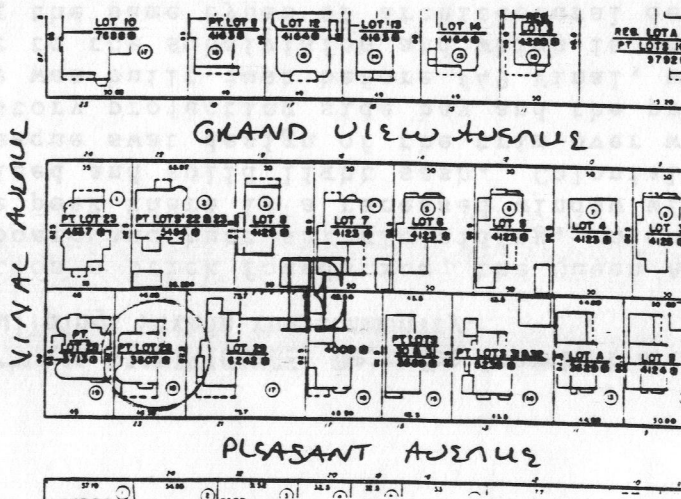
Setting North side of late 19th cen  
residential street, near Vinal Ave  
on Prospect Hill.

Recorded by Carole Zellie - 1980  
Gretchen Schuler - 1988

Organization Somerville Historic  
Preservation Commission

Date April, 1988

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location  
in relation to nearest cross streets and/or  
geographical features. Indicate all buildings  
between inventoried property and nearest  
intersection(s).  
Indicate north



UTM REFERENCE \_\_\_\_\_

USGS QUADRANGLE \_\_\_\_\_

SCALE \_\_\_\_\_



# **NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)**

## **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.**

Built on a brick foundation, the Queen Anne/Shingle Style house has clapboard and butt shingle siding, which gives a textured effect. In the gable peak there is a recessed window with shingles curving into the latticed and solid light sash. Colonial Revival motifs are found in the Adamesque swat design of the trim over windows and on the frieze of the one-story projecting side bay and the projecting full-length porch. This house was built just before #49 Vinal, which was on the same building lot prior to the subdivision and which is more elaborate and high styled but using the same types of architectural design.

## **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.**

Prospect Hill, one of the most substantial residential neighborhoods evolved throughout the late 19th century. Prior to that it was an agricultural community of farms. Large tracts of land were purchased by real estate investors and well-to-do merchants in the mid 1800s. Pleasant Avenue was part of the 1870 subdivision plan for Ira Hill and others (Plan Book 17, Plan 88). Several subdivision plans such as this were done for other parts of Prospect Hill. Ira Hill, who lived at #91 Boston Street, was a principal in most. Other Pleasant Avenue investors were Elijah Walker who also moved to Pleasant Avenue, and Horace Partridge. Each side of Pleasant Avenue was subdivided into seven lots which were then sold for development.

This house was built on a subdivided lot, formerly part of Lot #28 on the 1870 plan. Henry W. P. Colson, insurance and real estate agent on Bow Street lived here from 1893. According to deeds and maps, Fred Haley purchased the property in 1895. At the time he was a law student at Harvard Law and by the late 1890s had an insurance and real estate business on State Street of Boston. Haley's father, Abel Haley had died in the early 1890s. In all likelihood, it was this inheritance that enabled Fred Haley to purchase this property.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

1. Atlas of Middlesex County, Somerville: 1884, ("Wm. Stearns"), 1894 ("Fred Haley").
2. City Directories, 1880s-1890s
3. Registry of Deeds, Middlesex County: Book 2108, Page 269, Book 2165, Page 312.

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

PI - Prospect  
USGS. BOSTON  
SOUT B

SMV. 290

Area	Form no.
	457

Roll 13:23A

PHOTO (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)  
Staple to left side of form  
Photo number \_\_\_\_\_

Town Somerville  
Address 23 Pleasant  
Historic Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Use: Original residence  
Present residence  
Ownership: ☒ Private individual  
Private organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Public \_\_\_\_\_  
Original owner Fred Haley (1895)

SKETCH MAP

Draw map showing property's  
location in relation to nearest  
cross streets and other buildings  
or geographical features.  
Indicate north.

DESCRIPTION:

Date ca. 1894  
Source map research  
Style Queen Anne  
Architect \_\_\_\_\_  
Exterior wall fabric \_\_\_\_\_  
Outbuildings \_\_\_\_\_

Major alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Approx. acreage \_\_\_\_\_

Setting \_\_\_\_\_

Recorded by Carole Zellie  
Organization Landscape Research  
Date 11/80

(Staple additional sheets here)



ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

Apparently by the same builder as the adjacent 42 Vinal, this Queen Anne Style house has a heavily textured effect due to the use of staggered butt shingles.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

DESCRIPTION:

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Bromley, G.W. Atlas of the City of Somerville, 1895.