

CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES * OLMSTED PROJECT COVER SHEET

Please submit completed form to: Architectural Survey Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 5, Hartford, CT 06103

I D E N T I F I C A T I O N	PROPERTY NAME (Current/Historic)		
	Private residence / Harold A. Hatch Residence		
	COUNTY	TOWN/CITY	VILLAGE
	Litchfield	Sharon	
	JOB NUMBER		
	Primary: 09045 Related Job Numbers:		
	Landscape Type		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Park, Parkway, Recreation Area. Scenic Reservation <input type="checkbox"/> City/Regional Plan, Improvement Project <input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision, Suburban Community <input type="checkbox"/> College/School Campus <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Residential Institution <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Public Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Estate / Homestead <input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery / Burial Lot / Memorial / Monument <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Commercial / Industrial Building <input type="checkbox"/> Country Club / Resort, Hotel, Club <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Church <input type="checkbox"/> Arboretum, Garden <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibition, Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous		
	DATE OF ORIGINAL PROJECT: 1929		
	SUBSEQUENT PROJECTS: 1950		

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DESIGNER(S) (primary)

- Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.
- John Charles Olmsted
- Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.
- Other firm member(s): Percival Gallagher; E.C. Whiting
- Other notes:

Other Designers (prior to or following Olmsted project):

Repositories consulted with source materials

- Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Olmsted Archives (online albums)
- Library of Congress
- Olmsted Online (OlmstedOnline.org)
- National Archives and Record Administration
- Connecticut State Library
- Hartford History Center
- Other: Archives of American Gardens, Smithsonian Institution

Observations regarding features characteristic of Olmsted firm design

The Harold Hatch Property, also known as Cobble Pond Farm, extends over 250 acres in Sharon. The property contains meadows, wetlands, a 22-acre pond lined with granite cobbles from an abandoned castle, a sunken garden, a formal Italianate secret garden, herbaceous perennial borders, an allée of sugar maples and dogwoods, a cutting and vegetable garden, and agricultural fields and pasture for farm animals such as Aberdeen angus cows, horses, donkeys, and llamas.

Harold Hatch engaged the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects in 1929 to assist with site plans for improvements to his farm in Sharon. The project began with a survey. Direction for the survey suggests that already present on the property were a cottage, barns, tennis courts, driveway, rear courtyard, fruit garden, and flower garden. Features indicated for design by the firm included a new lake, a breakfast court, circular rose garden, arbor, wall around the orchard, and a garden at the northeast end of the paved terrace in front of the house. Additional features of the plan were open expanses of lawn around the house, stone footpaths, and low stone walls defining garden rooms. Later, the firm worked on changes to the property based on a realignment of adjacent Michelltown Road, such as modifications to

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the driveway and associated plantings. The firm also later prepared plans for subdivision of a portion of the property that appears not to have been implemented.

The current owners, who acquired the property from the Hatches in 1981, have worked to restore aspects of the design that had become lost or overgrown. Some of the formal garden rooms have been planted in a more contemporary style with perennials and shrubs as replacement for the bedding annuals indicated in the original plans. Several flagstone walkways have been replaced with bluestone.

Features present today that reflect the work of the Olmsted firm include the entrance drive, arrival court in front of the house, front walk, rear terrace, expanses of lawn, and stone wall separating the dwelling precinct lawn from the working agricultural landscape, and a series of outdoor garden rooms behind the house, such as an Italianate Garden, divided into four quadrants and centered on a fountain, contained by hedges of clipped yew. A grove of apple trees is among the features of the gardens behind the house, as is a pergola planted with wisteria and climbing hydrangeas. A sunken garden features a one-hundred-year-old copper beech as well as two topiary lilacs, clematis, hydrangeas, and climbing roses. The property retains a high degree of integrity for the design prepared by Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects today.

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I D E N T I F I C A T I O N	PROPERTY NAME (Current/Historic) Private residence / Harold A. Hatch Residence (Job #09045)													
	COUNTY Litchfield	TOWN/CITY Sharon	VILLAGE											
	STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location) 21 Mitchelltown Road													
	OWNER(S) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE <input type="checkbox"/> MUNICIPAL <input type="checkbox"/> STATE <input type="checkbox"/> FEDERAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRIBAL <input type="checkbox"/> EASEMENT													
	LAT/LONG COORDINATES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Center Point <input type="checkbox"/> Polygon 41.860252, -73.477493													
	PARCEL INFORMATION Acres: 250 PID(s): MBLU(s): 12-76													
	USE (Present) Private residence		(Historic) Private residence											
	SURVEY TYPE <input type="checkbox"/> Reconnaissance-Level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intensive-Level													
	D E S C R I P T I O N	LANDSCAPE TYPE (Check all that apply) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designed <input type="checkbox"/> Vernacular <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural/Ethnographic <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Linear <input type="checkbox"/> System/Multi-Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional <input type="checkbox"/> Maritime <input type="checkbox"/> Green <input type="checkbox"/> Park- Active Recreation <input type="checkbox"/> Park-Passive Recreation or Commemorative <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify:												
		DATE OR PERIOD (Include source of date) 1929; 1950 (Olmsted Research Guide Online)												
DESIGNERS (Entities that created, designed, constructed, or shaped the landscape) Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects														
DESIGN SCOPE (For designed landscapes, explain what work was commissioned) Site plans for a new driveway, gardens, terraces, a lake, and realignment of the highway along the property														
LOCATION OF DRAWINGS/IMAGES/SOURCE MATERIAL Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site; Library of Congress;														
VISUAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY (Check boxes for the qualities that are key features of this landscape. If attaching descriptive narrative, consider these categories.) <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Layout & Spatial Relationships (siting of gardens, road)</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Features (pond, later pool)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circulation (access road, turnaround, service road, walks)</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Drainage</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Topography (grading for lawn, garden areas)</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buildings/Structures/Objects (various)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plantings/Vegetation (gardens and trees)</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Space</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Views & Vistas</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Boundaries</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Design Style:</td> </tr> </table>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Layout & Spatial Relationships (siting of gardens, road)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Features (pond, later pool)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circulation (access road, turnaround, service road, walks)	<input type="checkbox"/> Drainage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Topography (grading for lawn, garden areas)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buildings/Structures/Objects (various)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plantings/Vegetation (gardens and trees)	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Space	<input type="checkbox"/> Views & Vistas	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Boundaries	<input type="checkbox"/> Design Style:
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C O N D I T I O N	EXISTING CONDITION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recognizable <input type="checkbox"/> Not Extant/Not Recognizable Changes: Some garden elements have been added, and plant species replaced over time		
	POTENTIAL THREATS <input type="checkbox"/> None Known <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Onsite Development <input type="checkbox"/> Adjacent Development <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism <input type="checkbox"/> Overuse <input type="checkbox"/> Deferred Maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> Invasive Vegetation <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental – specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify: _____		
E N V I R O N M E N T	SETTING (One sentence description) The property is located within a rural residential area		
	VEGETATION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintained Open Land <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural Open Land <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woodland/Forest <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wetland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specimen Plants <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify: _____		
	SLOPE <input type="checkbox"/> Level/Nearly Level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Steep Slope Elevation (ASML): 752'		
	CONNECTICUT PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE (Eco-Region) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Northwest Highlands <input type="checkbox"/> Western Uplands <input type="checkbox"/> Western Coastal Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Coastal Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Uplands		
	Soil Description: Site dominated by well-drained Stockbridge loam and Georgia and Amenia silt loam		
H I S T O R Y	SUMMARY (Provide a brief overview in this space. More detailed narrative can be attached.) Harold Hatch engaged the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects in 1929 to assist with site plans for improvements to his farm in Sharon. The firm prepared designs for several garden and landscape features, including a new lake, a breakfast court, circular rose garden, arbor, orchard wall, and a garden adjacent to the paved terrace in front of the house. Features include broad lawns, stone footpaths and low stone walls defining garden rooms, with later changes designed by the firm when the adjacent road was realigned.		
	NATIONAL REGISTER RECOMMENDATION Entered by: <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Eligible (Criterion <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D) <input type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Not Evaluated Explanation: Sharon Historic District; landscape significant work of the Olmsted firm NR Listed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District-Contributing <input type="checkbox"/> District-Non-Contributing <input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient Documentation		
R E P O R T E D B Y	NAME Liz Sargent and Lucy Lawliss	ORGANIZATION Red Bridge Group	DATE December 2021
	ADDRESS 2100 Green Street, San Francisco, California 94123		
	PHOTOGRAPHER Liz Sargent	DATE November 13, 2021	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Permission to use photographs (public domain)
	SURVEY METHOD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site Visit/In-Person Walkover <input type="checkbox"/> Drive-through/Windshield <input type="checkbox"/> Digital Review Only		

ATTACHMENTS (Include the following items in the PDF)

- Location Map Site Map Photographs with captions Historic Images (if applicable)
- Narrative Description of Property Historical Narrative of Property References

DESCRIPTION (Visual Assessment Summary)

Layout & Spatial Relationships: The Harold A. Hatch Residence sits atop an elevated knoll overlooking adjacent Mitchelltown Road located to the north. The property, a large estate, is located in a relatively rural area. The house is approached via a curving entrance drive that leads to a spur associated with a garage and a formal circular arrival court in front of the main entrance. Mature trees are located at the driveway entrance and occur periodically along the road. The house is edged to the north, west, south, and east by expanses of turf lawn. A tennis court sits within the lawn northwest of the house. A stone wall separates the lawn from agricultural fields. Behind the house to the south are stone patios or terraces and paths leading to a series of formal garden spaces or rooms. A swimming pool occupies one of the garden rooms. Other areas are formal gardens edged by plantings and walls.

Circulation: The entrance drive arising from Mitchelltown Road is asphalt paved. A side road leads southeast to a second dwelling on the property. The circular arrival court in front of the house is gravel. The entrance drive also continues northwest to W Woods Road 1. A paved walk leads to the front door of the house from the arrival court. In addition to the stone and brick paved patios or terraces behind the house, there are paved stone walks and stepping stones leading outbuildings as well as the garden rooms. The swimming pool is edged by a paved patio. There are also mown grass paths.

Topography: The dwelling is set atop a high point on the property overlooking Mitchelltown Road.

Plantings/Vegetation: Many mature shade and specimen trees dot the expanses of lawn, edge the driveway, and are part of the garden rooms. Foundation plantings edge the house. These include hedges, shrubs, and ground covers. Several gardens contain clipped yew hedges. There is a grove of apple trees.

Water Features: A swimming pool and a small stone surrounded pool are in the gardens.

Buildings/Structures/Objects: In addition to the house, the property features a garage, a studio outbuilding, a wood gazebo, and a pool house. Several stone walls are present on the property. These include the wall that separates the lawn around the house from the agricultural fields and others around the gardens. Metal and stone urns, garden sculpture, and a stone surrounded pool are focal points and objects of visual interest within the gardens.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Harold Hatch (1876-1978), executive vice president of Deering, Milliken, Inc. textile company, and his wife, Margaret Leighton Milliken Hatch (1880-1970) of New York acquired 250 acres in Sharon, Connecticut in 1921 for a country home.

In January of 1929, Margaret Hatch wrote to Percival Gallagher asking for a “consultation about my garden.” This contact began a relationship with the Olmsted firm which would continue for more than two decades. The entrance driveway, stone walls surrounding the property, sunken garden, terraces, and possibly the secret garden were designed and constructed by the Olmsted firm. The Olmsted firm’s plan blends the formality of a European garden with the bucolic landscape of the surrounding areas. Within the formal areas there are broad lawns, stone footpaths and low stone walls defining the garden rooms.¹

Following Gallagher’s visit, work was underway in February of 1929 to develop a survey of the property. Gallagher’s directive to George Lewis of features to include in the survey show that much had already been constructed including tennis courts, a gardener’s cottage, flower garden, and the main house. Lewis reported the survey was complete at the end of February, noting “...we were bothered somewhat by the snow. We located everything we could find and dug into the snow for the edge of roads, paths, etc. but paths and beds in the flower gardens were so deeply covered we could not get to them.”

¹ *Dig This! Millbrook Garden Club Bulletin*, “The Metz’ Cobble Pond Farm,” Kathy Metz, June 2011.

CONTINUATION SHEET Harold A. Hatch Residence (#09045) / 21 Mitchelltown Road, Sharon

The first project appears to be a “breakfast terrace.” In May, Gallagher’s assistant, Jacob Sloet, reported shipping “by express twelve Ivy-leaved Geraniums, pink in color, to be used on the porch overlooking the new breakfast terrace....” (Sloet would be the primary representative of the Olmsted firm to work on the Hatch property.)

A year later, in May of 1930, stock had arrived from the nursery, 30 shrubs were relocated from the front of the house, and a large apple tree had been planted. In the fall, Sloet reported on a project to move a large number of trees to new locations on the property and to plant additional trees. Work included moving a silver maple to a position next to a cottage which would soon be occupied by the Hatch’s daughter (Margaret Leighton Hatch Moore) and baby. Sloet noted that the tree “would make a shady spot to park the baby during the summer months.” He also reported that Mrs. Hatch “has discovered a new hobby and is all set now to have a(n) herb garden both for medicinal herbs and culinary herbs.”

The Olmsted firm’s attention to detail was apparent in an April 1931 letter from Sloet to a vendor asking if the plant pots could be “a shade of green resembling the green of old bronze that has been exposed to the weather.”

As the Depression set in, the Hatches dismissed their gardener, and in June of 1933 invited Sloet to assess the gardens and help “get them fixed up again” along with changes to the terrace, walkways, and building a bird bath. Harold Hatch told Sloet that “conditions had sufficiently improved to warrant spending a little money on the place.”

Later that summer, Harold Hatch informed Sloet of plans to sell land near the lake for summer homes, anticipating five or six homes on lots of three to five acres, enlisting the Olmsted firm to develop the plans. After a fire had destroyed the barn in December of 1933, Sloet reported plans were in development for a new garage and farm buildings and reuse of other buildings.

In May of 1934, two versions of plans for a garden extension from the sunken terrace were submitted, described as “exceedingly simple.” The Hatch’s daughter wanted changes to create a “sheltered nook garden, where, if she got tired of the house, she could retire to read, talk or perhaps meditate in quiet retreat, without being observed by anyone from the outside...”

In November of 1944, a fire destroyed the main residence. Harold Hatch contacted Whiting in May of 1945 informing him of plans to rebuild and to ask for copies of original maps as his were lost in the fire. Although Sloet was no longer at the Olmsted firm, Hatch recruited him as well to assist with planning.

In September of 1946, Whiting made a visit to the Cobble Pond Farm property to meet with Mr. and Mrs. Hatch and the home’s architect Heathcote M. Woolsey. Whiting noted that the architect had designed a brick Colonial-style home, but bricks were not available so the home would instead have a “marbly limestone culled from waste piles in (a) local quarry....”

Whiting further reported: “The house is rather more formal and pretentious-looking that Mr. Hatch likes, and he wants to soften that effect as much as possible.” With the house completed in the spring of 1947, Whiting continued to work with the Hatches on landscaping plans for the next year. Correspondence often focused on the garden, with Whiting advising the use of annuals “because their flowering periods are generally longer than those of perennials.” Offering to send a list for approval, Whiting recommended choices such as petunias, marigolds, calendulas, zinnias, snapdragons, annual phlox, verbenas, candytuft, and ageratum.

During these years, the Olmsted firm oversaw relocation of the road, creation of new driveways and the sunken garden, designed footpaths, and built stone walls in addition to plants and trees.²

² *Dig This! Millbrook Garden Club Bulletin*, “The Metz’ Cobble Pond Farm,” Kathy Metz, June 2011.

CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES * OLMSTED PROJECT

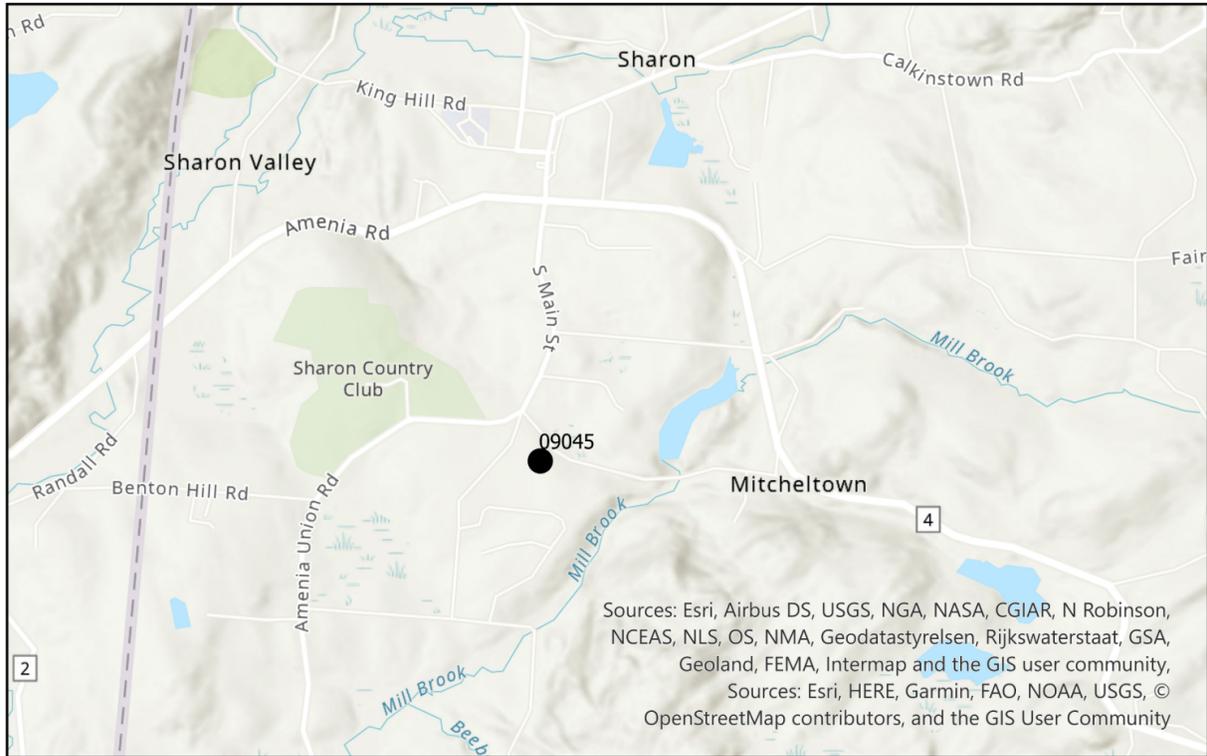
CONTINUATION SHEET Harold A. Hatch Residence (#09045) / 21 Mitchelltown Road, Sharon

Whiting returned in August of 1950 to discuss maintenance of the site, noting “On the whole, the place looks well, in spite of (a) heavy dose of Japanese beetles, but the Hatches have been away much of the last year and this, and flower areas have had very little appreciative guidance.”³

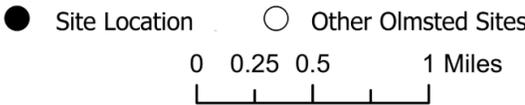
REFERENCES

Dig This! Millbrook Garden Club Bulletin, “The Metz’ Cobble Pond Farm,” Kathy Metz, June 2011.

GRAPHICS

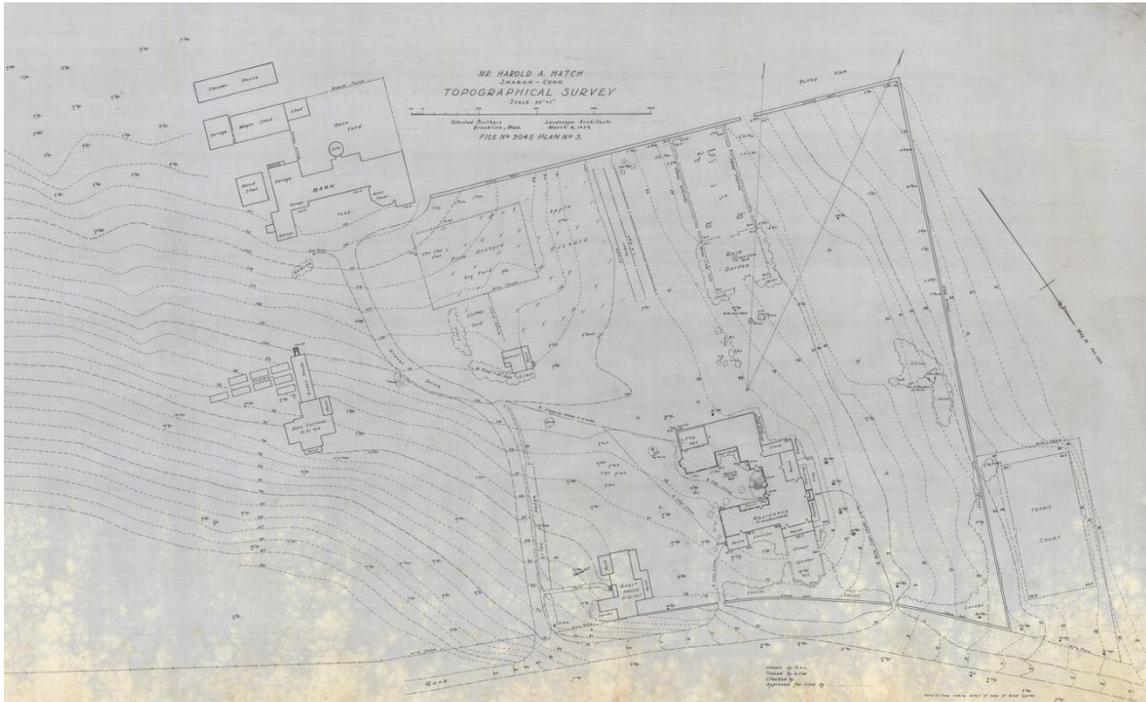


JOB: 09045 LOCATION: Sharon



³ Project Correspondence, Library of Congress.

CONTINUATION SHEET Harold A. Hatch Residence (#09045) / 21 Mitchelltown Road, Sharon



Mr. Harold A. Hatch Topographical Survey, 1929, Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects. (Source: courtesy Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.)



View southeast along the entrance drive from the parking court in front of the house. (All photographs taken by authors in 2021 unless otherwise noted)



View southwest toward the principal façade of the house.



View southwest of stone walls, sculpture and turf paths associated with the formal gardens behind the house.



View southeast toward a gazebo within the gardens behind the house.



View southeast of one of the formal plantings in the Italianate garden.



View southeast along one of the walls containing the garden areas with one of the fruit trees to the right.



View northwest across the broad lawn toward the open farmland that surrounds the house and gardens.