

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

10B 35

Georgetown

GEO.77

**Town/City:** Georgetown

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Elm Street Area

## Photograph



View from SE

**Address:** 9 Elm Street

**Historic Name:** Lewis S. & Carrie Adams house

**Uses:** Present: residence

Original: residence

**Date of Construction:** 1900

**Source:** town assessor's records

**Style/Form:** Classical Revival

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard siding

Roof: asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

One-car garage

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):

none

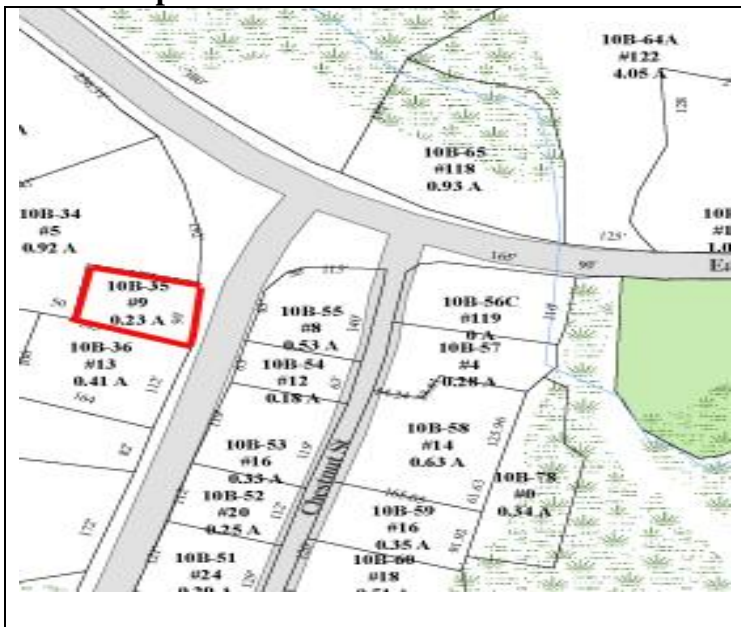
**Condition:** good

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 0.23 acre

**Setting:** The property is located near the intersection of Elm and East Main Streets (MA Route 133) on lot with mature hardwoods. Elm Street is primarily residential.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Kathryn Grover and Neil Larson

**Organization:** Georgetown Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): January 2010

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

GEORGETOWN

9 ELM STREET

## MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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 Lewis S. & Carrie Adams House is a two-story wood frame dwelling with a front gable roof constructed in ca. 1900 on a small quarter-acre lot subdivided from the neighboring Adams Hall property (5 Elm St.), which at the time was owned by Lewis's father Jophanus Adams and was the site of the family's livery stable. The house is sited close to the south property line. There is a paved driveway and free-standing garage on the north side and a small yard in the rear.

The front gable façade contains an entrance and a one-story bay window with beveled corners on the first story and three windows on the second story. A porch covers the entrance and wraps around the north side of the house, terminating at a cross-gable pavilion. The porch has been enclosed with lower kneewalls and screened panels. A two-story bay window with beveled corners and a gabled dormer is centered on the south side of the house. A pronounced entablature with tall frieze and deep soffits distinguishes the roof edge, with the lower raking sections returning a short distance at the base of the gables. A kitchen ell is appended on the rear, with a two-story façade on the south side and a single story on the north side, which contains a low shed dormer in the roof.

A single-story one-car garage is located to the rear and north of the house at the end of a long driveway. The wood frame building has a front gable roof, wood clapboard siding and an overhead vehicle door.

The Lewis S. & Carrie Adams House is an intact and distinctive example of the design of modest dwellings built in industrial towns in eastern Massachusetts during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A late addition to the streetscape, it is a contributing property to the Elm Street Historic District as an example of the new houses added by later generations of the families that long populated the street.

### 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.*

According to local histories, aside from the road (now Massachusetts Route 133) connecting Georgetown to its parent Rowley to the east and Andover on the west, Elm Street is one of the oldest streets in Georgetown, having been opened to "public travel" about 1686.<sup>1</sup> At that time between ten and twenty families lived in what was known as Rowley second (or west) parish or New Rowley. Beginning in the 1650s Rowley proprietors began to make land grants in the town's western reaches; in 1666-67, the town laid out three thousand acres in the area and granted John Spofford the job of penning cattle "the young cattle of the towne" where they had "been herded this last yeare." Pen Brook is named for these pens, which stood west of Elm Street. In 1732 families in the area successfully petitioned to form the Second Church of Rowley (ultimately Georgetown's First Congregational Church) and built a second meetinghouse at the junction of Elm and East Main Streets in 1769. In 1838 the General Court of Massachusetts incorporated Georgetown, which embraced most of the second parish.<sup>2</sup>

By 1800, according to a map showing the town center at that time, various branches of the Nelson family owned large tracts embracing both sides of Elm and Chestnut Street and both sides of Main Street in this section. All of these branches descended from Thomas Nelson (1615-about 1648), who was among the twenty families who had come to the New World in the winter of

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Benjamin F. Arrington, ed., *Municipal History of Essex County in Massachusetts* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1922), 146.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Gage, *The History of Rowley* (Boston: Ferdinand Andrews, 1840), 31-32, 320, 324, 326, 329.

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1638 with the Puritan cleric Ezekiel Rogers (1590-166). With Rogers most of these families settled at Rowley, incorporated in 1639.

The house at 9 Elm Street was built about 1900 for Lewis (or Louis) S. Adams (born 1866), whose father Jophanus Adams (1830-1913) had lived in the next house north, 5 Elm Street, for twenty years or more. Born in Maine, where his ancestors had lived since about 1650, Jophanus Adams's family had probably come from Rowley or nearby towns: Jewett, his father's first name, and Mighill, the first name of one of his brothers, are surnames of founding Rowley families. No genealogy, however, connects his branch to the immigrant Robert Adams.<sup>3</sup>

Jophanus Adams moved from his native Wilton, Maine, to Georgetown by 1855, the year he married Laura Ann Brocklebank, a descendant of one of Georgetown's most prominent founding families. His father Jewett and brothers Lyman and Warren followed him to Georgetown by 1870, and Warren settled in Rowley. The migration of the Adamses was part of a far larger nineteenth-century movement from northern New England's rural areas into the burgeoning textile and shoe manufacturing towns and cities of southern New England. By 1835, led by Lynn and Haverhill, the towns of Essex County led Massachusetts in boot and shoe manufacture. In the latter part of that decade Rowley was fifth among all Essex towns in the value of its shoe and boot output, and Georgetown—then still part of Rowley—produced the bulk of Rowley shoes. In 1837 Rowley shops made boots and shoes valued at \$315,360; about the same time the value of these products made in Georgetown alone was \$221,900. By 1880 the town's shops and factories made shoes and boots worth \$500,000. Though much overshadowed in Essex County by Lynn, the largest shoe production center in Massachusetts, as well as by both Haverhill and Marblehead, Georgetown was best known for making boots, and its 32,600 pair were the most made in the county.<sup>4</sup>

Like his father, however, Lewis Adams was not involved, at least directly, in the local boot and shoe industry. In 1855 his father had been a shoemaker, but he had become a livery stable proprietor by 1870, and the 1880 census identifies him as a horse dealer. Adams placed an advertisement for his "sale stable" at the corner of Elm and East Main Streets in the 1885-86 Groveland and Georgetown directory noting that his stock always featured "reliable Horses" for both farm and family use and that horses could be "exchanged to suit customers." All but one of Adams's four sons worked in their father's stable from the time they entered the labor force. Lewis's older brothers, Ernest (born about 1858) and Fred Dennis Adams (born about 1863), were employed by their father by 1885, Lewis was a hostler from the time of his marriage in 1888, no doubt also working for his father.

Jophanus Adams died in July 1913, and Louis assumed control of the business. Town assessor's records show that in 1920 Louis owned sixteen horses, two cows, two pigs, and his house. Ten years later, when he was sixty-five years old, the census lists him as a stable proprietor. By that time his wife Caroline Cook Adams had died, and Lewis lived at 9 Elm with his housekeeper Nettie Abbot and her husband Harry, a shoe factory foreman. Assessor's records show Adams as owning a house and "sale stable" in 1933, and the date of his death cannot be determined from vital statistics.

In 1947 the property, then owned by Denning L. Wentworth Jr., was sold to James and Helen Boynton, who had moved there from neighboring Groveland. Boynton was born in 1912, and his father Willard worked as a chauffeur for a lumber yard in Groveland in 1930. The Boyntons sold the house in 1983 to Joseph E. and Aileen F. Miller, who sold it the next year to its current owner, John B. Singleton Jr.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Adams, *Genealogical History*, and, for the Jophanus Adams lineage, the Colby Connection website, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=SHOW&db=dmcolby&recno=7224>,

<sup>4</sup> See Gage, *History of Rowley*, 402-3, and Blanche Evans Hazard, *The Organization of the Boot and Shoe Industry in Massachusetts before 1875* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1921), 210, which notes that these statistics were gathered and published by John Warner Barber in *Historical Collections of Every Town in Massachusetts* (Worcester: Dorr, Howland and Co., 1839), 66, 201.

<sup>5</sup> Benning L. Wentworth Jr. to James H. and Helen M. Boynton, 15 July 1947, SED 3557:384; Boyntons to Joseph E. and Aileen F. Miller, 15 July 1983, SED 7163:251; Millers to John B. Singleton Jr., 6 July 1984, SED 7458:352.

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9 ELM STREET

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- MAPS
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[Delete this page if no Criteria Statement is prepared]

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Individually eligible      ☐ Eligible **only** in a historic district  
☒ Contributing to a potential historic district      ☐ Potential historic district

Criteria:    ☒ **A**    ☐ **B**    ☒ **C**    ☐ **D**

Criteria Considerations:    ☐ **A**    ☐ **B**    ☐ **C**    ☐ **D**    ☐ **E**    ☐ **F**    ☐ **G**

Statement of Significance by\_Neil Larson and Kathryn Grover\_\_\_\_\_

*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The Lewis S. & Carrie Adams House is an intact and distinctive example of the design of modest dwellings built in industrial towns in eastern Massachusetts during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A late addition to the streetscape, it is a contributing property to the Elm Street Historic District as an example of the new houses added by later generations of the families that long populated the street.



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View from NE



Aerial view from NE