

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

10A 32

Georgetown

GEO.96

**Town/City:** Georgetown

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

## Photograph



View from SE

## Locus Map



**Address:** 95 Elm Street

**Historic Name:** Charles E. & Caroline H. Tyler House

**Uses:** Present: residence

Original: residence

**Date of Construction:** 1881

**Source:** Southern Essex County Registry of Deeds

**Style/Form:** Shingle Style

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard & wood shingle siding

Roof: asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
none

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

Large garage/dwelling addition, ca. 1960

**Condition:** good

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 3.1 acres

**Setting:** This property is set back from the west side of Elm Street on a lot with mature hardwoods and softwoods. Elm Street is primarily residential.

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

**Organization:** Georgetown Historical Commission

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

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

GEORGETOWN

95 ELM STREET

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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 Charles E. & Caroline H. Tyler House is a two-story, wood frame building constructed in 1881 with a hipped roof and wood clapboard and wood shingle siding. A large addition was constructed on the south side of the house around 1960. The house is situated near the street on an L-shaped 3.1-acre property that widens in the rear to wrap behind its northern neighbor at 93 Elm Street. Most of the property is mown, with the rear (west) side wooded. A driveway enters the property in front of the house terminating at a paved parking area in front of the addition.

The house is finished with wood clapboards with a wide belt of wood shingles between the first- and second-story windows; the shallow eaves of the tall hipped roof are finished with a simple cornice. The street (east) front of the house contains an oriel window on the first story and a wide sash window above. The entrance is centered in the south façade, although a one-story cross-gable addition that encases the rear wall extends across the south wall obscuring the section left of the entrance. Window sash in the original section of the house appear to have been replaced.

A large two-story building substantially larger than the house was constructed south of the house in c. 1960, apparently as a garage with a dwelling unit. It connects to the addition made to the rear of the house via a one-story connector.

The Charles E. & Caroline H. Tyler House is a distinctive example of a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century residence built by the then-current generation of shoemakers on Elm Street. It was a stylish novelty in the neighborhood until altered with enormous additions that overwhelm the original design. Historically, it is a contributing to the historic district on Elm 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 1638 with the Puritan cleric Ezekiel Rogers (1590-1666). With Rogers most of these families settled at Rowley, incorporated in 1639.

<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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The extent to which the Nelson lands reached southward is not clear from the 1800 village map, but by 1880 the tract on which this property is sited belonged to Sylvanus Nelson (1803-82). The first Nelson to own the land in this section of Elm Street was Joseph Nelson (1682-1744), the grandson of the immigrant Thomas Nelson. According to local historian Henry Mighill Nelson, Joseph Nelson was the "first of this name to settle in Georgetown."<sup>3</sup> The property passed to Joseph's son Aaron (1740-1804) and from Aaron to his sons Joseph (1769-1856) and Jonathan (1772-1852) and then to Joseph's son Charles (1803-74) and Jonathan's son Sylvanus (1803-82).

In October 1870 Sylvanus Nelson sold a tract to William H. Ilsley of Georgetown. The deed makes no mention of buildings on the property. Ilsley, born about 1849 in Haverhill, was working as a blacksmith in Georgetown in 1867 when he married Louisa M. Whitehouse, the granddaughter of Jonathan Spiller of 104 Elm Street. Ilsley is shown in Spiller's household in 1870 and 1880. Ilsley deeded the property to Georgetown Savings Bank in 1873, and in 1881 the bank sold the tract to Charles Edwin Tyler,<sup>4</sup> who lived there with his wife Caroline until his death about 1927.

Born in July 1839, Charles E. Tyler was the son of merchant Caleb Greenleaf Tyler and Roxbe Chaplin Tyler. Caleb G. Tyler was born in Rowley and married Chaplin there in 1833, and soon afterward the couple moved to Montgomery, Alabama. Their son Chaplin Greenleaf Tyler was born there, but Charles was born in Boston and his brother George Prescott Tyler in Rowley in 1843. By 1850 the family was living in Georgetown, probably at 146 Elm, where the family lived for many years. In 1860 Roxbe Tyler ran a boardinghouse (though apparently not at her home), and Charles then worked as a shoe cutter. Two years later he married Caroline N. Harriman, the daughter of William B. and Olive Nelson Harriman, who lived at 94 Elm Street, and then enlisted in Company K of the Fiftieth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. Tyler was a musician and was discharged in 1863. He and his wife are shown in the Harriman house in the 1870 census.

By 1883 Charles and Caroline Tyler were almost certainly living at 95 Elm Street. Assessor's records for that year show him owning a house on Elm Street, a henhouse, and another house on Pond Street. After William B. Harriman's death in 1884, his widow Olive moved in with her daughter and son-in-law. Tyler was then farming, though he is shown in the 1901 town directory as a shipper for George W. Chaplin and Company, a Georgetown shoe manufacturer on Central Street. In 1902 Tyler owned a house, barn, and shop on Elm Street, two houses elsewhere in the village, a horse, two cows, a buggy, and a bicycle. The house and the shop are shown on a 1960 plan, and the house then had the L-shaped addition on its south end that it features today.<sup>5</sup>

The 1920 census shows the Tylers living in the Pleasant Street household of Caroline's brother Horace Harriman, but the 1925 town directory shows them at 95 Elm Street. Charles Tyler died before mid-July 1927, when Caroline's sister Olive Pingree and brothers Fred and William, waived the shares left to them under Tyler's will in "certain real estate occupied by [Caroline] Tyler as a home." By 1941 Caroline Tyler must have died, for the property reverted to her siblings. Fred Harold Harriman was living in the house in 1942, and the property remained in the Harriman family until 1960.<sup>6</sup> In that year the property was bought by G. Ralph Young Jr. and his wife Helen and transferred to her in 1964. Young sold it to current owners Wilfred F. and Katherine Roy in 1971.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Henry M. Nelson, "Town of Georgetown History," in D. Hamilton Hurd. *History of Essex County, Massachusetts, with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis and Co., 1888), 1: 812.

<sup>4</sup> Sylvanus Nelson to William H. Ilsley, 8 October 1870, SED 887:78; Ilsley to Georgetown Savings Bank, 22 August 1873, SED 887:79; Georgetown Savings to Charles E. Tyler, 25 May 1881, SED 1059:32.

<sup>5</sup> "Plan of Land in Georgetown, Mass. as Surveyed for Rutherford Associates," February 1960, Southern Essex Plan Book 115 plan 60.

<sup>6</sup> Caroline H. Tyler to Olive Pingree et al., 9 July 1927, SED 2733:316; Olive Pingree et al., 16 July 1927, SED 2733:315; Fred H. and grace H. Harriman to Rutherford Associates, 19 February 1960, SED 4645:199.

<sup>7</sup> Rutherford Associates to G. Ralph Young Jr. (aka Ralph G. Young) and Helen M. Young, 13 July 1960, SED 4684:283; G. Ralph Young Jr. to Helen M. Young, 22 December 1964, SED 5233:757; Young to Wilfred F. and Katherine Roy, 3 September 1971, SED 5799:359.

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**MAPS**

- "Map of the Centre of Georgetown in 1800." In Perley, Sidney H., "Centre of Georgetown in the Year 1800." *The Essex Antiquarian: A Quarterly Magazine Devoted to the Biography, Genealogy, History, and Antiquities of Essex County, Massachusetts* 2, 7 (July 1898): 201.
- Map of Georgetown in 1810 and 1840. In Gage, Thomas. *The History of Rowley, Anciently Including Bradford, Boxford, and Georgetown, from the Year 1639 to the Present Time*. Boston: F. Andrews, 1840. 320.
- "Map of New Rowley Surveyed and Drawn by Philander Anderson 1830." Georgetown Historical Society.
- Map of Georgetown. 1856. In Walling, H. F. *A Topographical Map Essex County Massachusetts*. Boston: Smith and Morley, 1856.
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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 Charles E. & Caroline H. Tyler House is a distinctive example of a late19<sup>th</sup>-century residence built by the then-current generation of shoemakers on Elm Street. It was a stylish novelty in the neighborhood until altered with enormous additions that overwhelm the original design. Historically, it is a contributing to the historic district on Elm Street.



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View from E



Aerial view from SE