

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

GEORGETOWN

11 Nelson Avenue

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

GEO.240
GEO.241

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

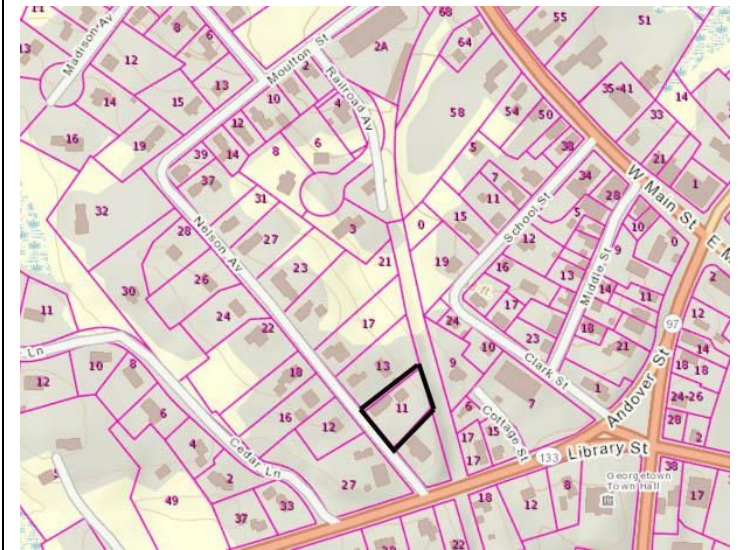
FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



View from south.



Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer

Recorded by: Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson

Organization: Town of Georgetown Historical Commission

Date: June 2017

Locus Map (north at top)

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

6C-99

Georgetown

GEO.240
GEO.241

Setting: Residential neighborhood developed in mid-19th century adjacent to commercial area of town center.

Town/City: Georgetown

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Georgetown Center

Address: 11 Nelson Avenue

Historic Name: Charles A. & Mary Kimball House & Barn

Uses: Present: single family residential

Original: single family residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1849

Source: deeds & visual assessment

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Walter and/or John Kimball, builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Barn, ca. 1870

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

none

Condition: excellent

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.45 acre

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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.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The Charles A. and Mary Kimball House, built about 1849, is a two-story, wood frame single dwelling with a front gable roof and a side-passage plan. Designed in the Greek Revival style, the three-bay front facade is distinguished by a full pediment, wide corner pilasters and an off-center trabeated doorway with a pedimented header. Entablatures with tall friezes follow the eaves along the side walls, each with pilasters at the corners. The front section of the northwest side is blank to correspond with the interior stairs running up that wall. A one-story bay window is positioned at the rear of the wall for the room behind the stairs; a single window is above it on the second story. The southeast side contains four windows on both stories, two each for the principal rooms on that side; a chimney is aligned with the interior dividing partition where hearths were located. A one-story kitchen ell with a gable roof is appended to the rear of the house, set back on the southeast where a replacement porch fills the void. A second screened porch was been added to the rear of the ell.

A large two-story, wood-frame domestic barn with a front-gable roof is sited just east of the house. The front façade has corner pilasters and raking entablatures that terminate in short returns, all of a scale less substantial than the house suggesting a later construction date. The first story of the front façade has been altered by the insertion of a wide overhead door. An arched mow door survives in the second story centered between two windows, and an oculus is positioned in the gable. The front is sided with wood clapboards while the other three walls are shingled. A square ventilator is centered on the roof ridge, and a one-story addition is on the rear. The house occupies the northwest corner of the lot with minimal set backs on the front and northwest side. A driveway enters the center of the frontage and runs past the southeast side of the house to the barn. A small paddock has been fenced off on the southeast side of the parcel.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The houses on Nelson Avenue were built on land once belonging to Nathaniel Nelson (1767-1853), the son of Solomon Nelson Jr. (1742-1821) and his wife Elizabeth Mighill Nelson (1742-77). He was descended from English immigrant Thomas Nelson, whose sons Philip (1636-91) and Thomas (1638-1712) both have descendants in Georgetown. Philip's son Joseph (1682-1744) was the first of this surname to settle in Georgetown. Nathaniel descended from Philip's brother Thomas. He had two children with Sarah Chaplin, his first wife—Sally (1800-1869), who married housewright John Kimball of Georgetown, and Mary (1803-55), who married John's older brother Joseph Kimball, also a housewright. After Sally Chaplin Nelson's death in 1828 Nathaniel Nelson married Mary A. Spofford of Boxford, and they had one child, Elisabeth Spofford Jones (1830-1902), who in 1851 married New Hampshire native and Georgetown attorney Jeremiah Pingree Jones (1819-92). By then Nathaniel Nelson appears to have moved from Elm Street to the house at 27 Andover Street (GEO.23), built in 1815 at the northwestern corner of what is now Nelson Avenue. The 1850 census enumerated Nelson in this latter neighborhood as a farmer with real estate valued at \$17,140 and a household containing his wife Mary (with \$4000 of real estate), his yet-unmarried daughter Elisabeth, and six boarders, three men of Irish descent and one man of African descent. After Nelson's death the widowed Mary Nelson lived here with her then-married daughter Elisabeth, her son-in-law Jeremiah P. Jones, the Joneses' young daughters Mary and Elisabeth, an Irish-born domestic servant, and two boarders.

In April 1849 Nathaniel Nelson sold a lot of land northeast of his Andover Street home to his grandson, housewright Walter Kimball, for \$200, with the proviso that no more than one house be built on the lot and that a house be no less than 12 feet from the front, or west, side of the lot—that is, the east side of a new road now known as Nelson Avenue.¹ Walter Kimball died

¹ Nathaniel Nelson to Walter Kimball, 2 April 1849, SECD 413:251.

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unexpectedly that year apparently leaving the property in the control of his father, Joseph Kimball. The 1856 map of Georgetown assigns the name "J. Kimball" to the house at 13 Nelson Avenue in error, since that house was built for shoemaker William S. Horner; it likely was intended to be linked to the unnamed house at 11 Nelson Avenue. Based on proximate entries to William S. Horner and Samuel Perkins, both shoemakers who lived at 13 and 17 Nelson Avenue, respectively, in the 1855 and 1865 state censuses, it would seem that Joseph Kimball was renting the house he probably built at 11 Nelson Avenue to shoemakers and their families. In 1855 shoemaker Orlando B. Tenney and shoe cutter Jacob Dickinson were listed with households at the address following Perkins and Horner, and in 1865 there were five households, all but one of them headed by Irish immigrants and all of them employed as shoe workers or laborers.

By 1870 Walter Kimball's younger brother Charles A. Kimball was the occupant of 11 Nelson Avenue. Born in 1837, Charles Alfred Kimball lived in his parents' household in 1860, and by 1866, when he married West Newbury native and widow Mary H. Burrill Tenney, he was living in Lynn and working as a carpenter.² The 1870 census shows him in the Nelson Avenue house with \$600 in personal property (the title was not transferred to him until 1881) with his wife Mary, a unrelated female, and Harry G. and Nellie Nye; the household was enumerated just after that of Jeremiah P. Jones, and the west side of Nelson Avenue was not yet developed.³

In the 1880 and 1900 censuses Charles and Mary Kimball are shown as the sole occupants of 11 Nelson Avenue, and the family owned the property until 1931. Charles Kimball died in December 1900, and his widow Mary remained in the house until her own death in 1930. In 1931 her sister Ellen Burrill Perry sold 11 Nelson Avenue (numbered 9 Nelson until about 1940) to Prudence N. Burrill Scates, her younger sister, who had married shoe cutter Joseph Henry Scates in Georgetown in 1873.⁴ They had earlier lived at 8 Elm Street, the ancestral home of Nathaniel Nelson. Joseph Scates had died in 1914, and the census for that year shows Prudence Scates in the 11 Nelson Avenue house by herself. She was living there when she died in 1943, and in the same year the administrator of her estate sold the property to George C. and Dorothy A. Colby, who owned it for less than three years. They sold it in May 1946 to Paul E. and Evelyn Pickering. Born in 1908, Paul Edmund Pickering was the son of Georgetown grocer Charles S. Pickering, and in the early 1930s he was working as a clerk at his father's 11 West Main Street store and living at home. He had married by 1938, and his wife Evelyn worked as a clerk at Salem's Shelby Shoe Company in 1939. Paul Pickering died in 1990, and in 2001 his widow sold the Nelson Avenue house to current owner Kathleen A. Flynn; Evelyn Pickering died in 2008.⁵

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DIRECTORIES

² Mary Harriett Burill had first married shoemaker Moses Edward Tenney in Newburyport in March 1864; he had already enlisted in Company K of the Fourth Massachusetts Calvary, and he died at Williamsburgh, Virginia, of typhoid fever in October of the same year.

³ Joseph H. and Mary S. Kimball to Charles A Kimball, 16 November 1881, SECD 1072:81.

⁴ Ellen L. Perry to Prudence N. Scates, 12 May 1931, SECD 2881:531.

⁵ C. Atherton Holmes, administrator estate Prudence N. Scates, to George C. and Dorothy A. Colby, 12 August 1943, SECD 3346:183; George C. and Dorothy A. Colby to Paul E. and Evelyn R. Pickering, 10 May 1946, SECD 3489:385; Evelyn R. Pickering to Kathleen A. Flynn, 11 Nelson Ave, 20 June 2001, SECD 17358:584. The 11 Nelson Avenue property is Parcel A on "Plan of Land in Georgetown, MA, Prepared for Evelyn R. Pickering," 20 June 2001, SECD 352:18.

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MAPS

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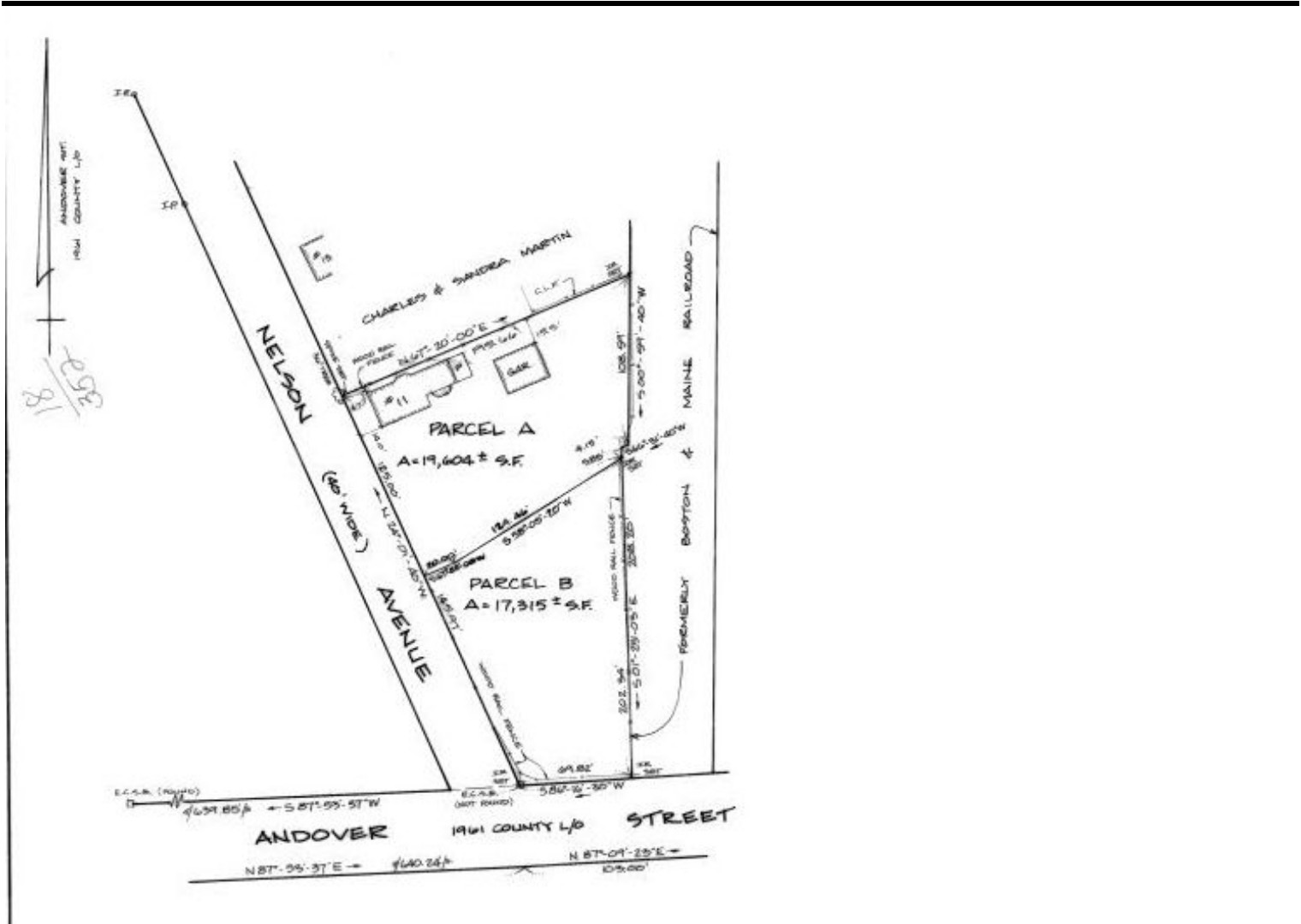
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Map showing 11 Nelson Avenue as Parcel A. SECD Plan 325:18.

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PHOTOGRAPHS (all photos by Neil Larson, 2017)



View from south.

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View from west.

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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

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

The Charles A. & Mary Kimball House, built ca. 1849, appears to be eligible for the National Register under criteria A and C. It is a distinctive example of domestic architecture designed in the Greek Revival style in Georgetown and is essentially intact from that period. It is accompanied by a substantial domestic barn erected in ca. 1870. The house and barn were built by housewright Joseph Kimball and his sons, Walter and Charles. Intended to be the home of Walter Kimball, who died during its construction, it later became the residence of his younger brother Charles A. Kimball and his family. Joseph Kimball was the son-in-law of Nathaniel Nelson, on whose farm the Nelson Avenue subdivision was created. The property also appears eligible as a contributing component of a historic district in Georgetown Center, the boundaries of which are yet to be determined.