

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

GEORGETOWN

121 North Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

GEO.267

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

FORM B – BUILDING

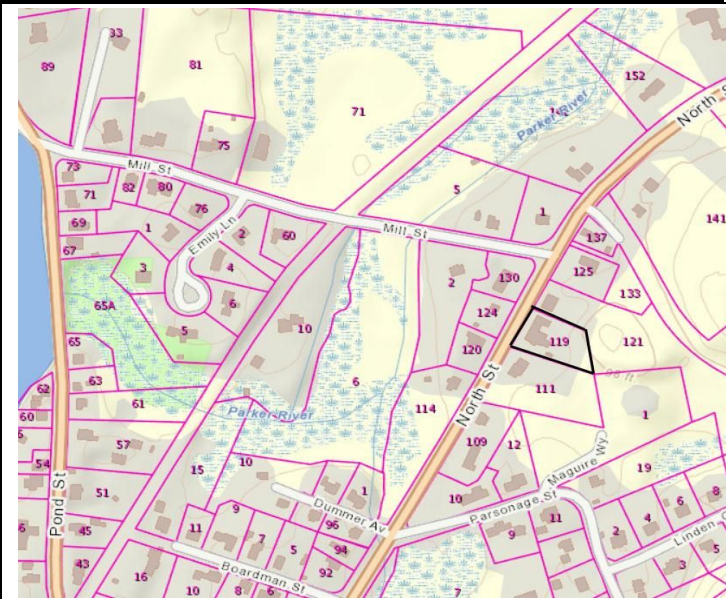
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View from west.

Locus Map (north at top)



Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer
Note #121 is indicated as #119 on map.

Recorded by: Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson
Organization: Town of Georgetown Historical Commission
Date: June 2017

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

11B-77

Georgetown

GEO.267

Setting: A rural crossroads development on the northern fringe of the town center.

Town/City: Georgetown

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

Address: 121 North Street

Historic Name: Spofford-Miller House

Uses: Present: single family residential

Original: single family residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1840

Source: deeds & visual assessment

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Barn, late 20th century

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Rear additions

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.45 acres

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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 Spofford-Miller House is a story-and-a-half wood frame, gable-roof single dwelling built about 1840. It has a single-pile center-hall plan with chimneys on the rear walls of the rooms; a one-story kitchen wing is attached to the south end of the back wall where it shares a chimney with the room in front of it. The five-bay front façade contains a center entrance in an altered architrave; windows in the half-story appear to have been added later in the nineteenth century. Single windows are centered on the end walls at both levels. A large wing with a shed roof originating on that on the house extends from the remaining section of the back wall, and the kitchen wing has been lengthened by additions. A large barn with a front-gable roof and board-and-batten siding is located just north of the house; a wide opening filled with a single overhead door dominates the front façade.

The house and barn are centered on the frontage of the half-acre lot with the house set back behind a small yard and a parking area paved in front of the barn. A yard in the rear of the parcel is bordered by woods.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

In January 1836 Georgetown house carpenter John Kimball Jr. sold a lot of 160 square rods (1.1 acre) south of "Mrs Woods house" at the southwest corner of North and Mill Streets and bordering the Baptist Society's "parsonage land on the south to Paul Dole for \$14. It was probably part of a 3-acre tract Kimball acquired two years earlier from John Savory Plummer, whose family owned a large tract of land on the east side of Pentucket Pond.¹ By 1840 Paul Dole (1792-1860), the son of Silas and Rebecca Balch Dole, had been running a saw mill and a grist mill, earlier owned by John Wood, near this pond for two decades. He lived across the street at 124 North Street (GEO.268).

In mid-November 1844 Dole sold the parcel "near Dole's Mill" to Samuel C. Hood for \$900. The deed does not mention buildings, but the mortgage Hood took out with Dole at the end of that month refers to "the house and other buildings standing on land opposite the house of John Wood."² Hood was an upper leather cutter from Wenham and did not own the property for long: in 1846 he sold 121 North Street back to Dole, and in 1856 Dole sold it to his nephew Jerome B. Spofford, a farmer who had boarded in his home in 1850. Born in 1825, Jerome Bonaparte Spofford was the son of Mighill Spofford and Mehitable Dole Spofford, Paul Dole's younger sister.³ The 1855 census seems to show Spofford in this neighborhood with his wife Laura, born in Wells, Maine, and their daughter Mary Frances, born in Georgetown in 1853. Spofford was a miller and no doubt worked for his uncle. Paul Dole died in 1860. The 1860 census shows Jerome Spofford in this area with \$700 in real property in a house with his wife, then working as a shoe binder, and daughter; in the household enumerated next were Edmund Dole (1784-1801), Paul's older brother; Jerome Spofford's mother and Edmund's sister Mehitable Dole Spofford (1795-188); and Paul Dole's daughter Hannah, a milliner.

In 1865 Jerome Spofford sold 121 North Street to Martha A. Miller, the wife of boot and shoe manufacturer George B. Miller; both were New Hampshire natives.⁴ The 1870 census lists the Millers in a household with a boarding shoemaker, and the 1872

¹ John Kimball Jr. to Paul Dole, 5 January 1836, SECD 346:9; John S. Plummer to John Kimball Jr., 25 December 1834, SECD 279:116. It is possible that the 1770 date was taken from Henry R. Nelson, "Town of Georgetown History," in D. Hamilton Hurd, History of Essex County, Massachusetts (Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis and Co., 1888), 1:832, who further stated that the house had been removed in the 1870s: "The mansion of Silas Dole, for many years the home of Major Paul Dole, the millwright, and his brother, Edmund, the inventive genius, almost a recluse, who devised a machine for making shoe pegs, which he kept secluded from mercenary eyes, must have been built, in part at least, prior to 1770. It was taken down with timber still sound by Samuel Little some ten or twelve years ago." On the Dole mills see Nelson, "Georgetown History," 843.

² Paul Dole to Samuel C. Hood, 13 November 1844, SECD 352:184; Samuel C. Hood to Paul Dole, 30 November 1844, SECD 351:106.

³ Paul Dole to Jerome B. Spofford, 5 April 1856, SECD 529:140.

⁴ Jerome B. Spofford to Martha A. Miller, 5 October 1865, SECD 691:137.

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map attaches the name "G. B. Miller" to this house. By 1900 Miller was farming and lived in the house with his wife Martha until she died in 1902. In 1903 he sold 121 North Street to Iva B. Webber with the proviso that she and her family provide for him until he married again or voluntarily left. In 1906 Miller married Jerome Spofford's daughter Mary and moved to Prospect Street in Georgetown. Iva B. Webber was the wife of shoe shop worker Harry M. Webber, who had come to Georgetown by 1900; they too were both born in New Hampshire. The 1900 census shows them on North Street with their 8-year-old son Harold, Iva's parents Samuel and Emily J. Clark, a nephew Samuel W. Clark, and three boarders.

In 1910 Webber sold the property to Jennie L. Ross, whose family owned 121 North Street until 1937.⁵ Born in 1871 in Nova Scotia of Scots immigrant parents, Jennie L. Waugh Ross was the wife of Hugh D. Ross, an ice house foreman probably for one of the ice operations then operating on Pentucket Pond. She had come to the United States when she was sixteen and needed her parents' consent to marry Ross in that year. The Rosses had eight children—Elizabeth J., Donald C., David W. (probably named for Jennie's father David Waugh), Marguerite Christine, George H., Jennie L., Clinton E., and Maud N.—between 1894 and 1907. Hugh Ross is shown as a laborer living at 121 North in the 1914 directory. In 1918, his 18-year-old son George's draft registration shows him at the same address and working as an ice man for Porter and Milton Ice Company of Georgetown; by then his older brother Donald was already serving in the military. Jennie Ross had died in 1911, and the 1920 census shows Hugh Ross in the house with son George, by then a night watchman in a stove factory, and the two youngest children, Clinton and Maud. In 1922 Ross married Susie Mereness in Laconia, New Hampshire, and the 1925 directory states that he had moved to Milton, New Hampshire. The 1932 directory indicates, though, that Hugh Ross had by then returned, was living at 121 North Street, and was working for Pentucket Ice Company.

In 1937 Hugh Ross sold 121 North Street to Patrick and Rebecca M. Hayes of Revere. Patrick Hayes, born in Ireland, worked as a pipe cutter and later as a stone polisher for a lithographer; his wife was born in Scotland. They do not appear to have occupied 121 North Street, and after their deaths the property was conveyed to Kenneth E. and Vida R. Dorn, who two years later sold a 21,840 sq. ft. parcel containing the house to Idelle M.C. Kimball. The property changed hands a number of times until 1974, when it was purchased by Oliver A. and Alice L. Landry, who then owned it for the next 30 years until Oliver A. Landry, then a widower, sold it to the current owner, Michael J. Caulfield.⁶

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⁵ George B. Miller to Iva B. Webber, 2 May 1903, SECD 1704:380; George B. Miller to Iva B. Webber, 2 May 1903, SECD 1704:380

⁶ Hugh D. Ross to Patrick J. and Rebecca M. Hayes, Revere, 10 June 1937, SECD 3118:336; Ethel M. Laverne, Saugus MA, to Kenneth E. and Vida R. Dorn, Lynn MA, 28 August 1958, SECD 4496:229; Kenneth E. and Vida R. Dorn to Idelle M.C. Kimball, 15 March 1960, SECD 4650:98; Donald J. and Rosemary E. Stewart to Oliver A. and Alice A. Landry, 15 March 1974; SECD 6051:229; Oliver A. Landry to Michael J. Caulfield, 10 September 2004, SECD 23372:66.

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MAPS

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PHOTOGRAPHS (all photos by Neil Larson, 2017)



View from NW.



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View from SW.

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Aerial view form south. Source: bing.com/maps.