

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

GEORGETOWN

124 North Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

GEO.268

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

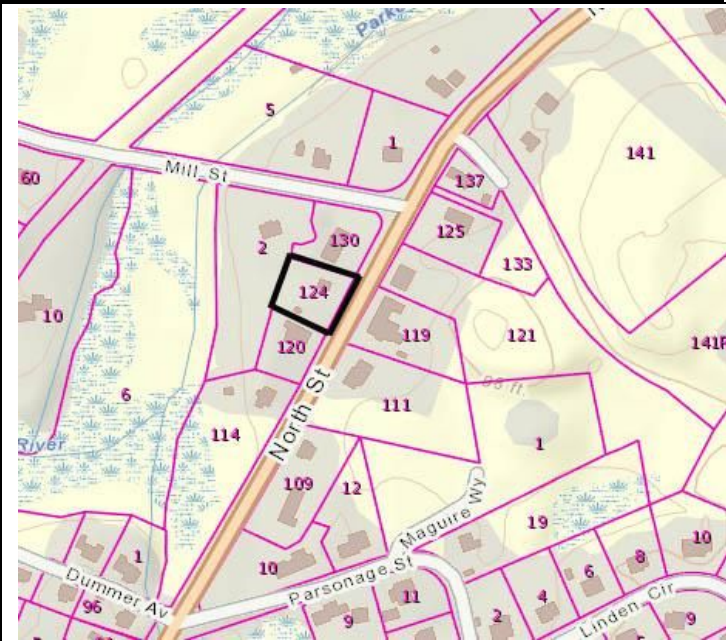
FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



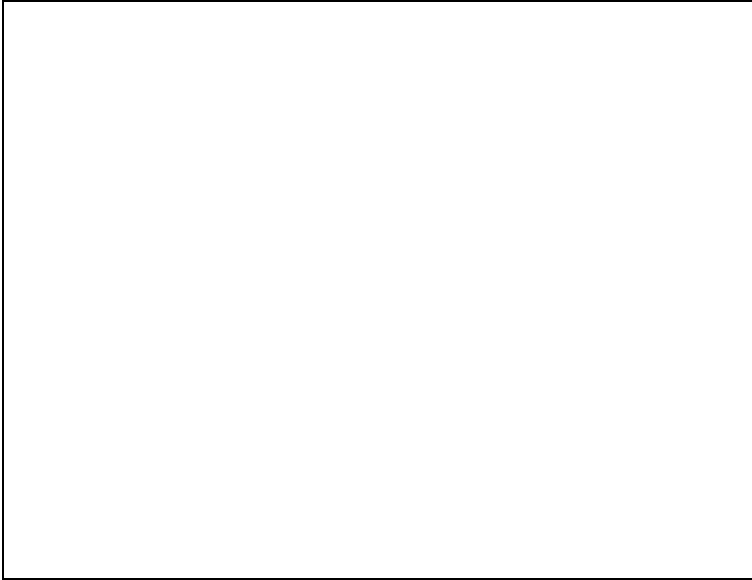
View from NE.



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

11B-55

Georgetown

GEO.268

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

**Town/City:** Georgetown

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

**Address:** 124 North Street

**Historic Name:** Dole-Cheney House

**Uses:** Present: single family residential  
Original: single family residential

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1783

**Source:** family history & visual assessment

**Style/Form:** Federal

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards

Roof: asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
None

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):  
Dormer and additions on rear, late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Condition:** good

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 0.25 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 Dole-Cheney House is a two-story wood frame single dwelling with a gable roof built in ca. 1783. Its side passage, center-chimney plan was common in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; the chimney provided hearths in a large room adjacent to the entry and one behind the stairs; a one-story kitchen wing probably is an addition made in the nineteenth century. The three-bay front façade contains an off-center entrance offset by two small windows; three windows occupy the second story aligned with the openings below. The entrance has neither sidelights nor transom but is surmounted by a hood mounted on ornate brackets added in the late nineteenth century. The two-over-two sash also date from this period. Single windows are centered in each story on the end walls, which have no overhangs; a modest cornice distinguishes the front façade.

The house is situated on the north side of a small lot set back behind a small yard. A driveway enters the south side of the frontage and leads to a twentieth-century one-car garage.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

In September 1746 Richard Dole (1678-1768), the grandson of immigrant Richard Dole (1622-1705), transferred to his son Edmund (1710-92) 14 tracts totaling 80 acres in that part of Rowley that became Georgetown, including "the Dwelling House and Barn standing on said tract now in possession of said Edmund Dole."<sup>1</sup> According to local historian Henry Mighill Nelson, this house, once on the site of 130 North Street, "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."<sup>2</sup> Edmund Dole's son, Silas Dole (1753-1828) may have built the house now numbered 124 North Street on an adjoining parcel around the time he married Rebecca Balch in 1783, although historic maps fail to show it until 1872.

In his 1787 will, Edmund Dole left almost all of his estate to his son Silas, who in his 1824 will left his widow Rebecca Balch Dole a third of his estate and his three married daughters Rebecca (wife of Amos Pillsbury), Mehitable (wife of Mighill Spofford), and Eliza (wife of Joseph P. Low) \$150 each, to be paid by their brothers Edmund (1784-1861) and Paul (1792-1860). To his two sons Silas Dole left equal shares of the rest of his real estate, beds and bedding, and all his livestock. By 1840 Paul Dole had acquired the sawmill and grist mill earlier operated near Pentucket Pond by John Wood. Evidently referring to the 124 Nelson Street house, Nelson recounted that it was "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."

The 1850 manufacturing census shows Paul Dole with a water-powered grist mill grinding 9500 bushels of corn, 1000 bushels of oats, and 500 bushels of rye and a saw mill cutting 60,000 feet each of oak and pine boards; his profit for the year previous on both operations was \$886. The 1850 population census lists him as a farmer with \$8850 in real estate living with his wife and daughter, both named Hannah, as well as Paul's older brother Edmund, a 66-year-old carpenter; his widowed sister Eliza Low and her daughter Caroline; his nephew Jerome B. Spofford; and an Irish immigrant farmer named John Griffin. Hannah Scott Dole died in 185, and by 1855 Dole, his sister Mehitable Spofford, his brother Edmund, and his daughter Hannah were in the same household. Who was living next door in the family homestead at 130 North Street has not been determined; in 1855 it possibly was rented to shoemaker James Scribner and in 1872 it was occupied by "Misses Knapp & Hardy."

<sup>1</sup> Richard Dole to Edmund Dole, 4 September 1746, SECD 119:257.

<sup>2</sup> Henry M. Nelson, "Town of Georgetown History," in D. Hamilton Hurd, History of Essex County, Massachusetts (Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis and Co., 1888), 1:832.

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Paul Dole died in 1860, and in April 1861 the administrator of his estate sold 124 North Street to Samuel Harriman of Groveland, who sold it three years later to Mary A. Cheney.<sup>3</sup> She was the wife of botanist Jonathan Cheney and the mother of Alfred Pike Cheney (1826-1908), who by 1856 had married Caroline Matilda Spofford (1828-87), the daughter of Parker and Hannah Wilkins Spofford of Andover Street.<sup>4</sup> The 1870 census shows Alfred P. Cheney, a bootmaker, with \$700 in real property in a house with his wife and their two children William P., then seventeen, and Mary Anna, then eleven. The Georgetown map in the 1872 county atlas attaches A. Cheney's name to the 124 North Street house, and the 1880 census shows him there with his wife and daughter, who was then working as a shoe stitching machine operator. In 1897 the house was deeded to Anna Maria Cheney, who in 1900 married Maine-born shoemaker Arthur J. Plummer, then living in Haverhill. Alfred Pike Cheney continued to live at 124 North Street until he died in 1908; his daughter sold the property in the same year. It changed hands twice before January 1921 when Hannah G. Bragdon acquired it.<sup>5</sup>

Born in Fryeburg, Maine, about 1859, Hannah G. Stearns Bragdon was the widow of shoemaker George C. Bragdon, a native of Wells, Maine, whom she married in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1887. He worked as a farmer and farm manager in North Andover and York, Maine, and died in 1916. The 1930 Georgetown census shows the 71-year-old widow Hannah Bragdon alone at 124 North Street. She died in March 1938, and the 124 North Street property was bought and sold seven more times before 2004, when current owner Shawn P. McGee acquired it.<sup>6</sup>

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North Essex Directory for Boxford, Georgetown, Merrimac, Newbury, Rowley, Salisbury, West Newbury. Salem, MA: Henry M. Meek Publishing Co., 1907, 1909-10, 1912, 1914-15, 1916-17, 1918, 1925.

*Ipswich, Boxford, Byfield, Georgetown, Newbury, Rowley, Salisbury, Salisbury Beach, Topsfield, West Newbury Directory*. Vol. 1, 1932-'34. Beverly, MA, and Portland, ME: Crowley & Lunt, 1932.*Haverhill, Mass. Suburban Directory for Georgetown, Groveland, Merrimac and West Newbury 1940*. North Hampton, NH: Crosby Publishing Co., 1940.*Ipswich, Boxford, Georgetown, Middleton, Newbury, Rowley, Salisbury, Topsfield, West Newbury Directory 1957*. New Haven, CT: Price & Lee Co., 1957.

<sup>3</sup> Moses Dorman, Boxford, administrator estate Paul Dole, to Samuel Harriman, Groveland, 30 April 1861, SECD 631:244; Samuel Harriman to Mary A. Cheney, 23 March 1864, SECD 664:98.

<sup>4</sup> Parker Spofford (1780-1824) and Mighill Spofford (born 1794), the husband of Mehitable Dole, were first cousins.

<sup>5</sup> Alfred P. Cheney to Annie M. Cheney, 25 April 1897, SECD 1515:501; Anna M. Plummer, Haverhill MA, to Cora A. Pleadwell, 17 October 1908, SECD 1938:424; Cora A. Pleadwell to Frederick M. Noyes, 26 June 1916, SECD 2335:24; Frederick M. Noyes, Malden MA, to Frank W. Kimball, 1 November 1919, SECD 2432:287; Frank W. Kimball, Middleton MA, to Hannah G. Bragdon, 7 January 1921, SECD 2473:563.

<sup>6</sup> Guy W. Bragdon, executor will Hannah G. Bragdon, to Cora A. Pleadwell, 14 September 1938, SECD 3157:149; James Lee and Lucretia M. Whalen to Shawn P. McGee, 10 June 2004, SECD 22982:114.

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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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PHOTOGRAPHS (all photos by Neil Larson, 2017)



View from SE



View from south

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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 Dole-Cheney House, probably built about 1783, is a distinctive surviving example late eighteenth-century domestic architecture in Georgetown. The essential form of the two-story side-passage center-chimney plan house has been preserved, although enlarged with the addition of side and rear wings. Built on a farmstead associated with the Dole family from the early 1700s, the house appears to date to the marriage of Silas Dole and Rebecca Balch in 1783. From them it passed to their sons Edmund and Paul Dole, millwrights who took over the ownership of saw and grist mills John Wood had established nearby. In 1864 the house was sold to Mary A. Cheney, wife of botanist Jonathan Cheney and the mother of bootmaker Alfred Pike Cheney. The family resided here until 1908. The property meets National Register criteria A and C as a rare surviving example of its type, period and method of construction and its association with the eighteenth-century development of the town.