

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

## Photograph



View from W

## Locus Map



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

10B 64

Georgetown

GEO.106

**Town/City:** Georgetown

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

**Address:** 126 East Main Street

**Historic Name:** Edward S. & Frances Sherburne House

**Uses:** Present: residence

Original: residence

**Date of Construction:** 1870

**Source:** deeds, historic maps

**Style/Form:** Classical Revival

**Architect/Builder:** unknown  
possibly Edward S. Sherburne

### Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard

Roof: asphalt shingle

### Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Barn/workshop[  
Shop

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

Shed dormer added to east side

**Condition:** good

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 1.01 acre

**Setting:** This property is on the north side of East Main Street on a lot with mature hardwoods and softwoods. The property is partly concealed from the road by a high hedge and a board fence.

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

**Organization:** Georgetown Historical Commission

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

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GEORGETOWN

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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 Edward S. & Frances Sherburne House is a two-story wood frame single dwelling with wood clapboard siding and a front gable roof. It is situated at the base of a hill on the north side of East Main Street. The one-acre lot is mostly forested with a small yard around the house and outbuildings. A two-story barn is sited off the northwest corner of the house, with a small shop farther west of the house where there is a parking area directly off the street. A solid wood fence screens the house and yard from the road.

The house was built in 1870, possibly by Edward S. Sherburne and his sons, who later started a house building business. It presents a two-story gabled façade to the street that contains two windows and a door on the first story. The entrance is surmounted by a small hood supported by large scrolled brackets. Two windows on the second story are aligned with those below; the space above the entrance is blank. A single window is centered in the attic. The west façade is four bays wide with a porch across the first story, the front two bays of the which are open and the back two enclosed; there is an entrance in the south wall of the enclosure under the porch. The window pattern on the east wall is irregular and has been altered; a large shed dormer has been added in the roof.

Wide corner boards and plain entablatures along the roof edge are consistent with the Classical design of other houses built in this period. This is a common treatment of vernacular dwellings throughout the region. Original two-over-two sash survives in the unaltered windows throughout the house.

A two-story wood frame barn is sited very close to the northwest corner of the house and is connected by a short one-story hyphen. It appears to be roughly contemporaneous with the house and likely contained the shoe factory indicated on the 1872 town map. Later it probably functioned as a carpenter shop when the Sherburnes changed occupations. It has a wagon door centered on the south gable end, which once opened on a driveway connected to the street; there is a mow door above it and a window in the gable. The building is finished with the same simple Classical detail as the house. The current wood shingle siding is of recent date.

A small one-story wood frame shop located near the street appears to have originated as a garage. Its front façade contains an entrance and a window.

The Edward S. & Frances Sherburne House is a distinctive example of late-19<sup>th</sup>-century domestic architecture in Georgetown and is accompanied by the noteworthy feature of a barn/workshop from the period. It is a contributing feature of the Elm Street historic district.

### 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.*

East Main Street, now Massachusetts Route 133, is the earliest road in Georgetown and connects it to its parent Rowley to the east and Andover on the west. Beginning in the 1650s Rowley proprietors began to make land grants in the town's western reaches, the area that came to be known as Rowley second (or west) parish or New Rowley and ultimately Georgetown. In 1666-67, the town laid out three thousand acres in the area and granted John Spofford the job of penning "the young cattle of the towne" where they had "been herded this last yeare." Pen Brook is named for these pens, which stood east of Elm Street. In 1732 families in the area successfully petitioned to form the Second Church of Rowley (ultimately Georgetown's First

*Continuation sheet 1*

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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>1</sup>

By 1800 the site of 118 East Main Street was part of a much larger tract owned by Solomon Nelson Jr. (1741-1821), one of five members of the large Nelson family who owned land in this section of Georgetown. All of these Nelsons descended from Thomas Nelson (1615-about 1648), whose family was one of twenty who had come to the New World in the winter of 1638 with the Puritan cleric Ezekiel Rogers (1590-1660) and settled with Rogers at Rowley. Four of the five Nelsons owning land here descended from Thomas Nelson's son Sergeant Thomas Nelson (1638-1712) and the fifth from the immigrant's son Philip (1636-91). Three, including Solomon Jr., were the sons of Thomas's grandson Solomon Nelson (1703-81) and Mercy Chaplin.<sup>2</sup>

In 1870 Humphrey Nelson sold land and buildings at 126 East Main Street to the shoemaker Edward S. Sherburne, but the sale price, only \$150, suggests that no house stood on the tract at the time.<sup>3</sup> Humphrey Nelson (1810-97) was the grandson of Solomon Nelson Jr. and son of Stephen Mighill Nelson, whose homestead was 144 East Main Street just east of this property. The 1856 map shows an unnamed building in this location; in 1872 and 1884 village maps associate the lot with E. Sherburne. The 1870 census enumerates Edward Sherburne's family—his mother and siblings—with other households in the vicinity of 126 East Main Street if the order of census enumeration that year may be trusted.

Edward Smith Sherburne was born in Rowley in 1849 and was the son of shoemaker and Maine native William M. Sherburne and his wife Ednah Hobson Sherburne of Rowley. In 1850 the family was living in Rowley, and the earliest record so far discovered of the family in Georgetown is of William's death in 1863. Edward Sherburne was working as a shoemaker by 1870, his older brother George was a shoe cutter, and his nineteen-year-old Hannah was a tailoress. Another brother, Herman, born about 1855, left home at some point before 1874 to travel on a flatboat from Cincinnati to New Orleans and explore the plantation South. In 1874 Herman Sherburne wrote and published an account of his trip, now considered an extremely rare book.<sup>4</sup>

In 1871 Edward married Frances L. Robinson (shown as Frank L. in some listings) of Georgetown. The 1872 village map labels a building on the site of 118 East Main Street as "E. Sherburne shoe factory," and by 1880 Sherburne is shown in the census as the manager of a shoe bottoming shop. In that year he was clearly living at 126 East Main Street with his wife and children William E. (born 1864), Amos (1866), and Howard (1868). Another son, Allen, was born in 1882, at which time Edward Sherburne is shown as a shoe contractor. That may mean that Sherburne was making complete shoes for a local manufacturer or that he worked on a putting-out system, sewing uppers or assembling the complete shoe.

By the turn of the century Edward Sherburne had become a house carpenter. In 1910 his sons William, Allen (born in 1882) and Ubert V. (born in 1887), were both house carpenters and all living in their parents' household. A year earlier another son, Arnold Playfair Sherburne, enlisted in the Marine Corps in Boston and was a sharpshooter; in 1912 he was killed in a battle against Nicaraguan rebels.<sup>5</sup> By 1910 Ubert Sherburne had become a mason and William a house painter and continued to reside with their parents in the East Main Street house. Allen continued to work in his father's trade and in 1925 was still living in his childhood home. Between 1925 and 1930 Edward S. Sherburne died, and his widow and son Ubert remained at 126 East Main Street. Georgetown directories from 1914, the first to show street numbers for many residents, showed no numbers after 119 East Main Street; the Sherburnes are shown as living "near" their 118 East Main Street business. Until 1991 126 East Main Street was a tract of more than five acres, included what is now 122 East Main, and abutted 118 East Main.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Gage, *The History of Rowley* (Boston: Ferdinand Andrews, 1840), 31-32, 320, 324, 326, 329.

<sup>2</sup> "Map of Centre of Georgetown in 1800," in Sidney Perley, "Centre of Georgetown in the Year 1800," *Essex Antiquarian* 2, 7 (July 1898), 101, based on the manuscript map "Georgetown 1800," 1996.07.01, Georgetown Historical Society. This map shows only a northern section of Elm Street and does not show how far south Nathaniel Nelson's tract extended. On the west side of Elm Street Aaron Nelson's tract abutted Solomon Nelson's on the south, but again the map does not reveal how far it extended southward. Perley, "Centre of Georgetown," 105, asserts the probability that Solomon Nelson Jr. built 8 Elm Street for his son.

<sup>3</sup> Humphrey Nelson to Edward S. Sherburne, 8 July 1870, SED 804:1538.

<sup>4</sup> Hermann Sherburne, *Adventures of Two Young Men* (Newburyport, MA, 1874). See Ten Pound Island Book Company website, <http://www.tenpound.com/173/61.html>: 3 pp.

<sup>5</sup> "Our Marines Take Fire-Swept Hill," *New York Times*, 6 October 1912; "Rebels Crushed/Our Marines Die," *New York Times*, 6 October 1912.

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In 1930, after Edward S. Sherburne's death, his widow and six of his children transferred title to the "land and buildings including homestead" to Ubert, who owned the property until 1937. In that year he sold it to George D. and Helen E. Wise, who in 1942 sold it in turn to Oscar Jaquith, who in 1930 was a greenhouse gardener in Lynn. By that year, assessor's records document, the larger tract had been divided into 122 East Main (roughly four acres) and 126 East Main (one acre); a plan documenting this subdivision was drawn and registered in 1991 by then-owners David G. and Deborah A. Harris.<sup>6</sup>

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- Resident and Business Directory of Groveland and Georgetown, Mass., for 1885-1886*. Needham, MA: Local Directory Publishing Co., 1885.

## 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.
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<sup>6</sup> Frances L. Sherburne et al. to Ubert V. Sherburne, 24 September 1930, SED 2869:244; Sherburne to George D. and Helen A. Wise, 11 June 1937, SED 3111:325; Wises to Oscar Jaquith; "Plan of Land in Georgetown Owners: David G. Harris and Deborah A. Harris," 26 July 1991, South Essex County Registry Plan Book 271 plan 42. The U.S. Public Records Index shows Jaquith at 126 East Main Street in 1985 even though he died in August 1978, according to Massachusetts death records.

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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 Edward S. & Frances Sherburne House is a distinctive example of late-19<sup>th</sup>-century domestic architecture in Georgetown and is accompanied by the noteworthy feature of a barn/workshop from the period. It is a contributing feature of the Elm Street historic district.



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View from S



View from SE



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View from W

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View from W



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View from NW



Aerial view from W