

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

GEORGETOWN 135 Central Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

GEO.225

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



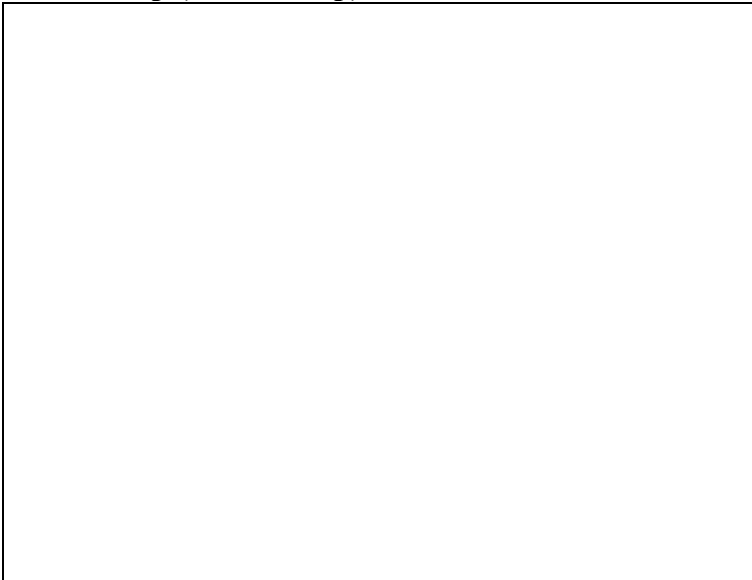
View from NE.



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

10A-2

Georgetown

GEO.225

Setting: Major route into town center with concentration of historic and non-historic residential buildings.

Town/City: Georgetown

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

Address: 135 Central Street

Historic Name: Perkins-Conant House

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

Date of Construction: 1830

Source: deeds, historic maps & visual assessment

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Rear ell enlarged and altered, late 20th century
2-sty wing added to rear, 21st century

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.35 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 Perkins-Conant House is a two-story wood frame single dwelling with a gable roof built in 1830. Its form and center passage plan a room-and-a-half deep with end chimneys represents a house type common in Georgetown in the mid-nineteenth century. The five-bay front façade contains a center entrance contained in a shallow vestibule characteristic of other Georgetown examples; pairs of windows flank the entrance. The gabled vestibule, as well as the whole of the façade, are framed by corner pilasters and eave-line friezes of modest proportions, and the end gables are enclosed in full pediments. The end walls contain two windows on each story including the attic. A cross-gable kitchen ell is attached to the south side of the rear wall and in line with the gable end of the house. It appears to have been raised from the typical story-and-a-half height to two full stories. The fenestration has been altered and the doorway moved from the ell to the gable end of the house. A two-story wing with a flat or pitched roof has been added to the remaining section of the rear wall. Once part of a farm, the house has been isolated by subdivisions on a one-third-acre parcel. It is situated at the front of a polygonal lot set back behind a small yard. A parking area occupies the south side and most of the rest is wooded.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Eliphalet Chaplin (1777-1825) was a fourth-generation descendant of Jeremiah Chaplin (1680-1765), who had bought land in what is now Georgetown in 1731, and a sixth-generation descendant of the immigrant Hugh Chaplin (1603-53). The 1800 map of Georgetown shows Eliphalet Chaplin with a large tract of land on both sides of Central Street, probably inherited from his father Jonathan Chaplin Jr., who had died that year. After Eliphalet himself died in 1825, the inventory of his estate listed real property collectively valued at \$5873—the 60-acre “old place” with its buildings that he had inherited from his father; 44 acres adjacent to the 60-acre tract with its buildings; 36 acres called “the Merrill and Pingree lands”; and “the equity of redemption” (mortgages) on another 65 acres in Rowley in three tracts, including 16 acres known as the “Adams land” valued at \$200.¹ When Chaplin’s real estate was sold at auction on 27 April 1826, John Brocklebank, whose lands bordered Chaplin’s on the north, bought a little more than six acres of this Adams land for \$230.98. The title search for 135 Central Street leads back to this deed. Deeds do not mention buildings standing on the property until 1841, but it is clear from maps that a building was on the tract by 1830 the year John Brocklebank sold the property to Samuel Perkins. Eliphalet Chaplin’s widow is shown on the 1830 map of Georgetown in a house further south on Central Street.²

John Brocklebank sold the Adams land to shoemaker Samuel Perkins for the same small price he had acquired it for in 1826, suggesting that it was Perkins that built the house at 135 Central in 1830. The deed states that it was on the west side of the road from Little’s Corner (Georgetown Center) to Salem. Born in 1802 in Deerfield, New Hampshire, Samuel Perkins was soon to be married—his wedding to Mahala Kimball Marden took place at Epsom, New Hampshire, in 1831—and had probably decided to move closer to the center of the burgeoning New England boot and shoe industry. He did not remain in Georgetown long, however. In 1841 he sold his Central Street property—now nine acres with “dwelling house, barn, and other buildings”—to Daniel Conant.³ Conant died nine years later and left his property to his son John Perley Conant and his two daughters, Mary C. Mason and Almira C. Perley. The 1850 census shows Conant’s widow Lucy Perley Conant in a household with her daughter

¹ Also listed in Chaplin’s real estate inventory was a third of a 60-acre tract in Warner, New Hampshire, an equity of redemption in three lots in Boxford with a saw mill and mill privilege, three acres of salt marsh, an acre of peat meadow, and half a pew in the “second parish meeting house.”

² The existing Massachusetts Historical Commission Form B identifies 169 Central Street (GEO.55) as the Eliphalet Chaplin House, but it includes no title history and is ascribed a construction date of 1860. Eliphalet Chaplin died in 1825, and his name is repeated only as a middle name in generations after him. The 1830 map shows his widow Martha Chaplin in an earlier house that roughly occupied the site of 169 Central Street. Amos J. Tenney, administrator estate Eliphalet Chaplin to John Brocklebank, 29 April 1826, SECD 256:302; John Brocklebank and Samuel Brocklebank to Samuel Perkins, 23 December 1830, SECD 256:303.

³ Samuel Perkins to Daniel Conant, 9 September 1841, SECD 327:121.

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Mary and Mary's husband Charles Mason and Lucy's brother John Perley; in the next-enumerated household was son John P. Conant, his wife Louisa Nelson Conant (they married in 1844), and their infant son John W. Conant as well as the family of shoemaker Jonathan H. Harriman. By 1855 Lucy Conant and her brother had moved into the household of her daughter Almira and son-in-law, boot treer Luther D. Perley, and John P. Conant was living with his family at 135 Central Street.

The 1860 census shows John P. Conant as a shoemaker with \$2000 in real estate living with his wife Louisa, their son John, and a boarding shoe cutter. By 1880 Conant was farming, and his 30-year-old son John, still in his parents' household, played cornet in a band. The Conants remained at 135 Central Street until 1911. In 1909 John P. Conant died at the age of 94, in 1909 son John married Lawrence-born shoe stitcher Gertrude D. Falvey, and in 1910 both John W. and Gertrude Conant died, she of tuberculosis and he, five months later, of "chronic alcoholism." In July 1911 the administrators of Conant's estate sold 135 Central Street and other parcel to Max Ritter. The parcel changed hands once more before March 1915, when Eli Sachs (or Saxe) acquired it.⁴ His family owned and for a time occupied the property until 1942.

Eli Sachs was born in 1895 in Lowell and by 1900 was living, with his brothers Nathan and Samuel, at the Helping Hand Temporary Home for Destitute Jewish Children in Boston. Their mother, Anna Cohen Sachs, was widowed and living in Boston by 1898. She may have been living in Arlington when son Nathan died in 1911 while still in high school and son Samuel died of anemia at the age of 21. By 1916, the Georgetown directory shows son Eli and his mother at 135 Central Street. He is shown there and in his 1917 draft registration record as a farmer. The 1920 census shows Annie Sachs as fifty-three years old and the owner of 135 Central Street. Son Eli is shown without occupation. Also in the household were her sister Minnie and Minnie's son George, both born in Russia, and the sisters' mother Bessie Cohen, then seventy-one years old. By 1925 Eli and Anna Sachs returned to Boston, but Eli owned the property until 1942, when he defaulted on a mortgage he had taken out on the property in 1917. In 1945 Georgetown Savings Bank sold 135 Central Street to Harry B. and Eva Jones Martin, who owned it for 25 years. Harry Martin was born in Newark, New Jersey in 1894 and was living in Boxford and working in North Andover by 1942. He died in Georgetown in 1958, and after his wife's death in 1970 the Georgetown property was sold to George E. and Sheila Schofield of West Newbury, who sold it the same year to William J. and Linda-Lou Lindeman. The parcel was then 1.98 acres, and it was subdivided in 1996, a year after the Lindemans sold it. Current owners Robert W. Bancroft Jr. and Rachel L. Bancroft bought 135 Central Street in 2016.⁵

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DIRECTORIES

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⁴ Harry G. Cole and Charles Neal Barney, administrators estate John W. Conant, Georgetown, to Max Ritter, 14 July 1911, SECD 2097:327; Walter C. Cohen, Boston, to Eli Saxe, 26 March 1915, SECD 2291:412.

⁵ Georgetown Savings Bank, holder of mortgage from Eli Sachs, to Georgetown Savings Bank, 21 February 1942, SECD 3288:219; Georgetown Savings Bank to Harry B. and Eva M. Martin, 16 October 1945, SECD 3427:113; Thomas S. Allison Jr., executor will Eva M. Martin, to George E. and Sheila S. Schofield, West Newbury, 7 May 1970, SECD 5685:161; George E. and Sheila S. Schofield to William J. and Linda-Lou Lindeman, 135 Central, 30 June 1970, SECD 5693:755; Thomas A. and Agnes A. Howard to Robert W. Bancroft Jr. and Rachel L. Bancroft, 135 Central St, 8 June 2016, SECD 34987:199. See also "Plan of Land Located in Georgetown, Massachusetts, Owner & Applicant Frank Gatchell/Kelley Meisner, 135 Central Street," 12 November 1996, SECP 330:99.

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MAPS

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PHOTOGRAPHS (all photos by Neil Larson, 2017)



View from SE.

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Aerial view from east with subject house shown top center; other houses on parcels subdivided. Source bing.com/maps.