

FORM B – BUILDING

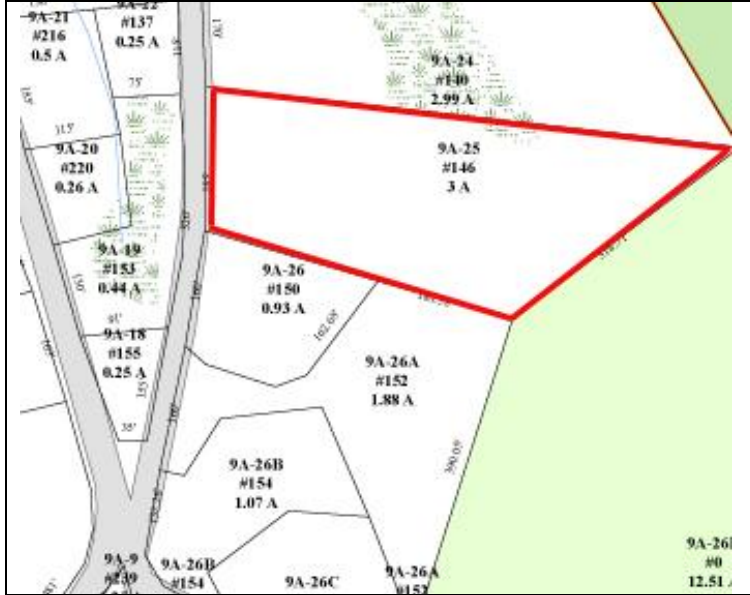
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View from W

Locus Map



Recorded by: Kathryn Grover and Neil Larson

Organization: Georgetown Historical Commission

Date (month / year): January 2010

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

9A 25

Georgetown

GEO.104

Town/City: Georgetown

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

Address: 146 Elm Street

Historic Name: Caleb G. & Rooxbe C. Tyler House

Uses: Present: residence

Original: residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1843

Source: historic maps, census records

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Barn

Garage/shop

Major Alterations (with dates):

none

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 3 acres

Setting: The house on this property is set back from the east side of Elm Street near Lovering's Corner (the intersection of Elm, Central, and Nelson Streets) on a lot with mature hardwoods. Elm Street is primarily residential.

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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 Caleb G. & Roxbe C. Tyler House is a two-story wood frame dwelling with a gable roof and wood clapboard siding built ca. 1843. It is situated on the east side of Elm Street north of Central Street on a three-acre lot; with the exception of the house yard near the road, the deep narrow parcel is wooded. A driveway on the south side of the house connects the street to a garage behind the house; a barn is located farther back on the lot and northeast of the house.

The form of the house is similar to others on the street that have one-room-deep plans with two brick chimneys on their rear walls, one each at the backs of rooms flanking a center hall. This was a popular plan for houses in towns along the North Shore of Massachusetts and in Portsmouth, New Hampshire during the period Elm Street developed. This house was built late in the period of this architectural type. Like the others, the Tyler house has a two-story kitchen ell abutting the rear wall in line with the south gable end of the main section. The rear-wall chimney on the north side of the house no longer remains, while the chimney on the south side is in place and contained within the roof of the ell.

The five-bay front façade does not contain the unusual projecting center entrance that many of the houses have; the Greek Revival-style trabeated architrave is flush with the façade. The rooflines of both the front and rear sections of the house are ornamented with a plain entablature with thin friezes abutting the tops of second-story window heads. Six-over-six window sashes appear original. The ell has a doorway on the south side, which is contained in an enclosed porch of recent construction.

A wood frame agricultural barn with a gable roof and center wagon bay is located northeast of the house. It likely dates with the house, and its distant siting suggests that it was moved at some later time. A long wood-frame garage of undetermined age is located nearer the house. It has an extension on the rear suggesting that it contains a workshop related to the property's agricultural or, later, shoemaking functions.

The Caleb G. & Roxbe C. Tyler House is a distinctive example of Greek Revival Period domestic architecture in the town and evinces the single-pile rear chimney plan form characteristic of Essex County and the North Shore region. Built ca. 1843, the house is one of the later dwellings of its type on the street. It is essentially intact and distinguished by original materials and an entrance with Greek Revival-style architrave. The property is a key contributing component of a historic district on Elm Street.

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.

According to local histories, aside from the road (now Massachusetts Route 133) connecting Georgetown to its parent Rowley to the east and Andover on the west, Elm Street is one of the oldest streets in Georgetown, having been opened to "public travel" about 1686.¹ At that time between ten and twenty families lived in what was known as Rowley second (or west) parish or New Rowley. Beginning in the 1650s Rowley proprietors began to make land grants in the town's western reaches; in 1666-67, the town laid out three thousand acres in the area and granted John Spofford the job of penning cattle "the young cattle of the towne" where they had "been herded this last yeare." Pen Brook is named for these pens, which stood west of Elm Street. In 1732 families in the area successfully petitioned to form the Second Church of Rowley (ultimately Georgetown's First

¹ See, for example, Benjamin F. Arrington, ed., *Municipal History of Essex County in Massachusetts* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1922), 146.

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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.²

By 1800, according to a map showing the town center at that time, various branches of the Nelson family owned large tracts embracing both sides of Elm and Chestnut Street and both sides of East Main Street in this section. All of these branches descended from Thomas Nelson (1615-about 1648), who was among the twenty families who had come to the New World in the winter of 1638 with the Puritan cleric Ezekiel Rogers (1590-166). With Rogers most of these families settled at Rowley, incorporated in 1639.

The extent to which Nelson family lands reached southward is not clear from the 1800 Georgetown map. Caleb G. Tyler is indicated as the owner of both 146 and 140 Elm Street on the 1856 map of Georgetown. In 1850 Caleb Tyler is enumerated as a head of household among other residents of the Elm Street neighborhood. He is 44 years of age and identified as a merchant with real estate valued at \$1,100. His wife, Rooxbe, age 36, and four children are listed with him. The previous household is headed by his father, Jacob Tyler, a 79-year-old shoemaker with real estate valued at \$1,500. Caleb's mother, Lavinia, and his sister, Selinda, were living in Jacob's household; a second household headed by Betsy Dale also lived in the house. Caleb's household was living in one house and Jacob's was in the other. At this point, who lived in which one is not known for certain, but the smaller of the two, and the one without farm buildings (140 Elm St.), was probably occupied by Caleb's aging parents. And the fact that Rooxbe Tyler continued to live at 146 Elm Street after Caleb's death in 1860 indicates their residency there.

Jacob Tyler was born in Boxford and had lived in several New Hampshire towns as well as Boxford and Haverhill before coming to Georgetown where he died in 1857. Caleb S. Tyler, born in Haverhill in 1805, married Rooxbe Chaplin in 1833 in Rowley. Rooxbe's sister, Caroline, married shoe manufacturer Hiram Newtown Noyes, and she moved her family next door at 140 Elm Street sometime after her husband's death ca. 1865. Their brothers George Washington Chaplin (born 1809) and Henry Prescott Chaplin (born 1816) were prominent shoe manufacturers in Georgetown and lived on Central Street.

Caleb G. Tyler was a merchant and soon after his marriage moved with his wife to Montgomery, Alabama; his brother Abraham had been in that city since at least 1828, and they may have been in business together. Caleb Tyler returned to New England by 1839. In that year his son Charles Edwin Tyler was born in Boston; Charles later married Caroline Harriman, the daughter of shoe manufacturer William Brown Harriman, and lived at 95 Elm Street. The family appears to have moved to Topsfield by 1840, where they are listed in that year's federal census, and were in Georgetown by 1843, when their son George Prescott Tyler was born there. It is possible that the house at 146 Elm was built about that time.

Caleb G. Tyler died in Georgetown in 1860, and in 1861 the attorney Jeremiah B. Jones, administrator of Tyler's estate, sold the real estate at auction to Rooxbe; thus he may have died intestate, though ten years later Rooxbe's son Chaplin, then living in Somerville, sold his interest in the property to his mother. Rooxbe Tyler lived at 146 Elm until 1885, when she moved into her son George's home on Andover Street. In 1892 she sold the Elm Street property to Ruth Ida Francis Cressey, whose husband John P. Cressey was a shoe stitcher at the time of their marriage in 1882. In 1900 the family was clearly living at 146 Elm, and the household included the couples son's Raymond and Morris as well as Ruth Cressey's father William C. Peabody.³

John Cressey died of consumption in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1903, at the age of forty-five. His widow and son Raymond remained in the house until 1906. The property was then sold to John W. Clark of Chelsea, who sold it in 1908 to Raymond F. Page, a car dealer born in New Jersey who married Mary E. L. Tenney in Georgetown; she was the daughter of shoe manufacturer Charles W. Tenney. The couple moved to Colorado, where their son Raymond was born in 1906, and returned to Georgetown probably in the same year. They owned 146 Elm Street until 1916, the house again changed hands, and in 1919 Charles B. Legal, a Universalist minister born in New York but then living in Nova Scotia, bought the property.⁴ The Legal family owned 146 Elm until 1958, when Charles's son Chapin sold it to current owners Charles H. and Carolee G. Miller.⁵

² Thomas Gage, *The History of Rowley* (Boston: Ferdinand Andrews, 1840), 31-32, 320, 324, 326, 329.

³ Jeremiah B. Jones, administrator, to Rooxby C. Tyler, 4 November 1861, SED 630:19; Chaplin G. and Annie E. Tyler to Rooxby C. Tyler, 7 December 1871, SED 842:167; Rooxby C. Tyler to Ruth I. F. Cressey, 1 January 1892, SED 1332:496.

⁴ Ruth I. F. Cressey to John W. Clark, 16 May 1906, SED 1822:538; Clark to Raymond F. Page, 19 October 1908, SED 1942:274; Mary Tenney Page to Eliza T. Ryerson, 8 November 1916, SED 2315: 412; Ryerson to Lyman F. Priest, 23 December 1918, SED 2403:375; Priest to Charles B. Legal, 15 October 1919, SED 2427:285.

⁵ Chapin and Alice T. Legal to Charles H. and Carolee G. Miller, 7 October 1958, SED 4503:326.

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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 Caleb G. & Roxbe C. Tyler House is a distinctive example of Greek Revival Period domestic architecture in the town and evinces the single-pile rear chimney plan form characteristic of Essex County and the North Shore region. Built ca. 1843, the house is one of the later dwellings of its type on the street. It is essentially intact and distinguished by original materials and an entrance with Greek Revival-style architrave. The property is a key contributing component of a historic district on Elm Street.

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View from SW



View from NW

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View from NW



Aerial view from W