

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

GEORGETOWN

216 North Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

GEO.270

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

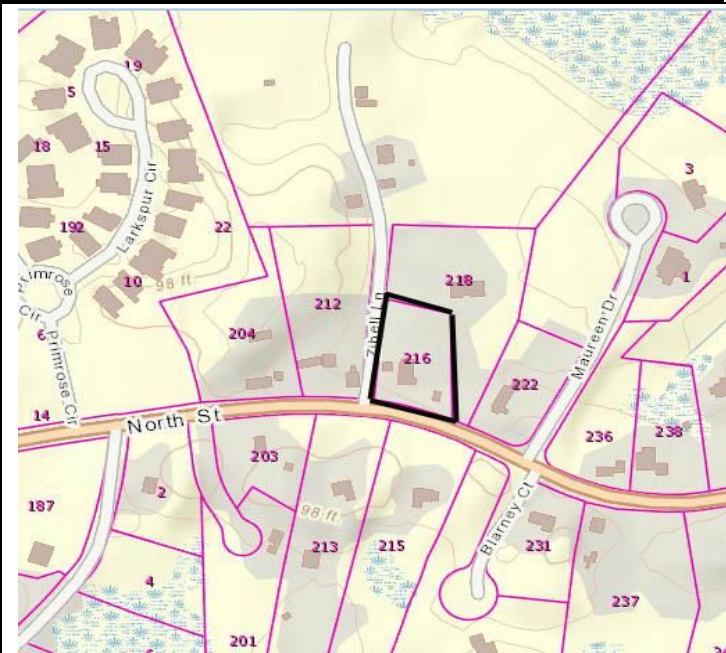
FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



View from south.



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

12-57

Georgetown

GEO.270

**Setting:** Rural highway leading out from town center with farmhouses interspersed with suburban development on once-associated farmland.

**Town/City:** Georgetown

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

**Address:** 216 North Street

**Historic Name:** Hardy-Niles House

**Uses:** Present: single family residential

Original: single family residential

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1819, ca. 1845

**Source:** deeds & visual assessment

**Style/Form:** Greek Revival

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

## Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards

Roof: asphalt shingles

## Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Garages (2)

## Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Large addition on rear, mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Doors and window sash replaced

**Condition:** fair

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 0.92 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 historic section of the Hardy-Niles House appears to have been built in two phases. Initially a story-and-a-half side-passage center-chimney-plan dwelling built about 1819, it was then enlarged with the addition of a room on the easterly side of the passage about 1845. In the latter phase, the current five-bay front façade was created and decorated with a Greek Revival entablature along the roofline, and perhaps the exterior vestibule containing the entrance were also added then. End walls contain single window centered on two levels. A large cross-gable addition has been built on the rear of the house.

The house is centered at the front of a small lot set back behind a small yard with a to-car garage on the west side and a one-car garage on the east side, both with driveways. A large open yard occupies the rear of the parcel.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

In February 1818, Revolutionary War veteran Paul Stickney sold a little more than nine acres on the north side of what is now North Street to tanner Phineas Hardy (1792-1876), the son of Enos Hardy and Jane Holmes of Rowley. Hardy paid \$234 for the tract and took out a mortgage for \$124 from Stickney. By 1830, the census suggests, Hardy had left this neighborhood and had sold his property with a house to Nathaniel Andrews, who is shown as the owner of 216 North Street on the 1830 Georgetown map. In 1822 Paul Stickney sold an eighth of an acre to Andrews for \$21, and in May 1824 Andrews took out a \$100 mortgage with his neighbor to the west, Dole Pillsbury, for a house and land on the same eighth of an acre Stickney had sold him two years earlier.<sup>1</sup> None of the deeds before this one mention a dwelling on the property, though it seems likely to have been there by 1819, the year Phineas Hardy married his first wife, Submit Cowdrey (1796-1824). After his first wife's death Hardy married Elizabeth Andrews (1803-41), whose ancestry is not yet known; she might have been a sister of Nathaniel Andrews, who married Sarah Cheney in 1818.

Nathaniel Andrews seems to have refinanced his debt with a deed in 1826 to Joseph Little for \$117, and this mortgage evidently was assigned to Amos D. Pillsbury; when he sold the house and lot in 1845 to William Niles for \$700 the property carried a \$500 mortgage. It is possible that Niles enlarged the Hardy house at this time. Three years later Pillsbury sold Niles an adjacent parcel for \$200.<sup>2</sup> In January 1852, complying with a state law passed in May 1851, Niles declared that the estate he acquired from Pillsbury in 1845 was his homestead, and the 1850 census places him in this section of Georgetown.<sup>3</sup>

Born in Sandwich, New Hampshire, in 1803, William Niles's given name was William Straw, and he was living in Georgetown by 1824, when he married Hannah Cheney (1805-96), the daughter of Abner Mooers Cheney and his wife Lois Hannaford. It is at least possible that Nathaniel Andrews and Paul Stickney were brothers-in-law, as all had married Cheneyes. In 1842 or 1843 Straw changed his family's name, according to one genealogical record; the state-maintained record of name changes states that he, his wife Hannah, and their children Hannah Maria, Charles Otis Kimball, William Eustis, John Calvin, George Dighton, Cynthia Sophia, and Orestes Herbert, all then living in Georgetown, could take the surname Niles. The 1850 census shows the family as Niles. William Niles was a shoemaker with \$1500 in real property in a household with his four of his children—17-year-old John and 15-year-old George, both shoemakers, son Orestes, and daughter Cynthia. Listed in the same

<sup>1</sup> Paul Stickney to Phineas Hardy, 12 February 1818, SECD 228:192; Paul Stickney to Phineas Hardy, 12 February 1818, SECD 228:192 (mortgage deed); Paul Stickney to Nathaniel Andrews, 2 November 1822, SECD 235:184; Nathaniel Andrews to Dole Pillsbury, 15 May 1824, SECD 235:185 (mortgage deed).

<sup>2</sup> Amos D. Pillsbury to William Niles, 3 March 1845, SECD 352:20; Amos D. Pillsbury to William Niles, 3 March 1845, SECD 352:20. Earlier deeds suggest that Pillsbury acquired these tracts from William Nelson and William C. Stickney, the latter the son of Paul Stickney, but how Little's acquisition came to them is not known. See William C. Stickney to Amos D. Pillsbury, 12 December 1842, SECD 334:252 and William Nelson to Amos D. Pillsbury, 31 March 1843, SECD 342:243.

<sup>3</sup> Homestead certificate, William Niles, 12 January 1852, SECD 455:192.

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house was son William, then a 19-year-old shoemaker, and his Irish-born wife Ann Maria Downs Niles, then sixteen years old; they had married in May of that year.

The 1855 census shows Niles and his wife Hannah in the household with their children George, Cynthia, and Orestes, and the 1856 map attaches his name to this house. In 1860 the census shows Niles in the house with his wife and her mother, 78-year-old Lois Cheney. In July 1862 Niles enlisted in Company H and the 32d Massachusetts Infantry; he died in Philadelphia in November of the same year, of tuberculosis. In January 1863 his homestead property on North Street was valued at \$800, and he owned two other small tracts. Among his personal property were "contents of shoe shop," valued at \$10, and his shoemaker's seat and tools, valued at \$4. In February the probate court ordered that his farm be set off to his widow and minor children until the youngest of them turned twenty-one or Hannah Niles remarried. The 1865 census shows Hannah Niles and her mother alone in the house, and by 1880 she lived there with only a farm laborer.

Hannah Cheney Niles died in 1896, and in the same year her heirs sold the 216 North Street property to Samuel Woodbury of Derry, New Hampshire, who sold it two months later to James R. Smith for \$600.<sup>4</sup> "The William Niles place, so called" then included 4.5 acres and its buildings. Born in Georgetown in 1857, James R. Smith was the son of Charles and Caroline Hill Smith and had married Groveland native Alice J. Hall in 1883, and the 1900 census shows them in this neighborhood with their daughter Helen, born in 1895. Smith worked as a soap factory laborer, according to the census, though the 1901 directory calls him a soap manufacturer. By 1910 he sold meat from the butcher's wagon, and by 1920 he had begun trading horses. In August 1922 he sold 216 North Street and most of its lot to Lowel S. Poor, and the property went through a series of sales between that time and June 1923, when Wallace Farnell of Newton Center bought it.<sup>5</sup> Farnell, a carpenter, is shown on the rural reaches of North Street with his wife Lena (elsewhere Helena) in the 1925 directory.

Born in Newfoundland in 1872, Farnell had come to the United States through Maine in October 1922. Border crossing registers document that his wife Lena followed from Newfoundland in July 1923 and was bound for Georgetown with children Gordon, Alice, Hazel, Archibald, Evelyn, Fred, Annie, and Harold to the North Street home of her husband, Wallace. The 1932 directory shows the Farnells on North Street, and the 1940 census shows the couple in the house with son Raymond, born in 1926, and a married daughter, Winifred Cheney, and her 9-year-old son William.

Wallace Farnell died in March 1941, and his wife died in Haverhill in 1968. The 216 North Street property as sold to Herbert E. Kent two months later. Current owners George F. Connolly Jr. and his wife Veda bought 216 North Street in 1979.<sup>6</sup>

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Southern Essex County Registry of Deeds website, salemdeeds.com.

<sup>4</sup> Alice F. Dockhum, West Newbury MA; George E. Niles, Salem MA; Laura A. Niles, guardian of Hattie E and Lena R Niles, minors of Amesbury MA; and Carrie J. Burrill, Medford MA, to Samuel Woodbury, Derry NH, 23 September 1896, SECD 1495:54; Thomas J. Niles, David M. Niles, and Lucy A. Jones, all Pittsfield NH; Lizzie H. Harvey, Lebanon NH; Frank H. Niles, Taunton MA; and Sarah A. Frye, Toledo OH, to Samuel Woodbury, Derry NH, 30 September 1896, SECD 1495:53; Orlando B. Tenney; Hannah M. Walton, Salem MA; Eva B. Tyler, Mechanic Falls ME, to Samuel Woodbury, Derry NH, 23 September 1896, SECD 1495:51; Samuel Woodbury, Derry NH, to James R. Smith, 7 November 1896, SECD 1495:56.

<sup>5</sup> James R. Smith to Lowel S. Poor, 29 June 1922, SECD 2517:496; Helen J. Luttet, Stoughton MA, to Wallace Farnell, Newton Center MA, 16 June 1923, SECD 2560:306.

<sup>6</sup> Hazel Grace Sweetland to Herbert E. Kent, 374 North St, 9 October 1968, SECD 5567:84; Andrew J. Tuney III to George F. Connolly Jr. and Veda L. Connolly, 15 June 1979, SECD 6601:629; George F. Connolly Jr. and Veda L. Connolly, 216 North St, to George Farnis Connolly Jr. and Veda Louise Connolly, trustees Connolly Family Revocable Trust, 23 October 2003, SECD 22030:571. See also Lot 1 on "Plan of Land in Georgetown, Massachusetts, as Surveyed for Andrew J. Tuney III," 4 May 1979, SEC Plan 161 of 1979.

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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.

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PHOTOGRAPHS (all photos by Neil Larson, 2017)



View of house and west garage from SW.

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View of east garage from SW.