

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

GEORGETOWN

253 Central Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

GEO.228
GEO.229

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

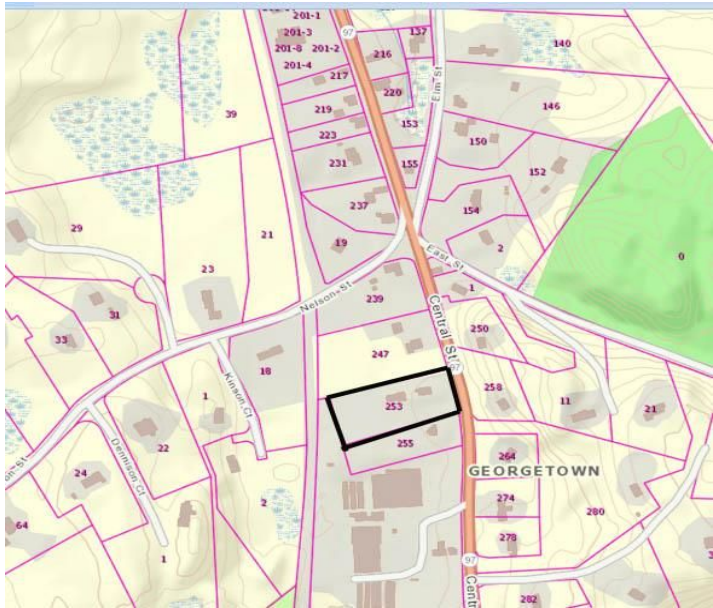
FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



View from SE.



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

9A-11

Georgetown

GEO.228
GEO.229

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: 253 Central Street

Historic Name: George W. & Sarah J. Adams House & Barn

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

Date of Construction: ca. 1851

Source: deeds & visual assessment

Style/Form: Italianate

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
Barn, ca. 1861

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
Rear addition, mid-20th century

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 1.2 acres

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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 George W. and Sarah J. Adams House is a two-story wood frame single dwelling with a gable roof built about 1851. Its form and hall-parlor and center-passage plan with chimneys on the rear wall represents a house type common in Georgetown much earlier, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The three-bay front façade contains a central entrance, offset to one side flanked by single windows. Two windows on the second story are aligned with those below. Deep, unornamented eaves associate the design with the Italianate taste popular in the mid-1800s. The end walls contain two windows on each story and a louvered vent centered in the attic. A one-story cross-gable ell added to the rear wall is as wide as the house. An entrance into this section is located on the rear wall. A story-and-a-half barn, appearing to be the same age as the house, is situated behind it. It has a gable roof with a central wagon door and a stable door (altered) on the north side of the front façade. The front façade is covered with wood novelty siding and the ends with wood shingles. A rear cross-gable wing probably is an addition.

The house is sited at the front of a deep lot set back behind a large yard that wraps around on the sides. A driveway enters the center of the frontage and runs past the south end of the house and back to the barn. The rear of the parcel contains a meadow.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

In 1850 Ruth A. Adams bought a parcel of land south of the house in which she lived (247 Central St., GEO.227) from Charles H. Johnson for \$90, which he had acquired at the auction of the estate of Abraham Adams, Ruth's deceased husband. Abraham Adams (1800-1849) and his younger brother Charles Henry Adams (1809-1880), partners in a store at the corner of Central and Nelson streets, shared the double house at #247, the north half of which became part of his widow's dower. When Abraham died unexpectedly in 1849, a committee appointed by the probate court assigned to his widow Ruth Anne Loftly Adams the house in which she then lived, half of a "hog house," and half of a shed on the property; other portions of Abraham's estate were sold to settle his debts. Charles H. Johnson, a friend of the family, purchased the adjoining parcel at auction and immediately conveyed it to Ruth A. Adams.¹ The 1850 census enumerated the widow Ruth Loftly Adams, 36 years of age, living in the house she had shared with her husband with her infant daughter Lizzie Frances and boarding five male shoemakers. Also included in her dwelling was the household of shoe manufacturer Luther D. Perley, his wife Almira and infant daughter Lucy. She built the subject house by the time the 1856 Essex County map was published, which indicated her as the occupant.

In 1863 Ruth A. Adams sold both dwellings (#247 and #253) George Washington Adams (1815/16-97), the younger brother of her late husband, and moved elsewhere in the town.² The 1872 map attaches his name to this property, and the 1880 census places him in this neighborhood with his wife Sarah J. Perley Adams, who had sciatica, and a nurse and housekeeper; he was listed as a shoemaker and farmer. George Washington Adams died in 1896, and his widow remained in the house with her son Charles Piper Adams, born about 1860 and working as a car painter for the Boston & Maine Railroad by 1900. Sarah Perley Adams died in 1909, and Charles P. Adams is shown alone in the house in 1910.

¹ Charles H. Johnson to Ruth A. Adams, 16 November 1850, 438:249 and Ruth A. Adams, adminx to Charles H. Johnson, 16 November 1850, 438:248.

² Ruth A. Adams to George W. Adams, 28 December 1863, SECD 660:284. In 1853, a year after the death of Benjamin Adams Jr., his sons Benajmin and Samuel sold their father's "mansion house" and nine acres to George W. Adams, who also owned the family's ancestral estate called Highfields in the Newbury section of Byfield Parish. See Andrew N. Adams, *A Genealogical History of Robert Adams, of Newbury, Mass., and His Descendants, 1635-1900* (Rutland, VT: by the author, 1900), 7.

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Although it has not been determined how, by 1944, this property was owned by Clarence C. and Cornelia Baker Adams, part of the other Adams family of Georgetown, the deed by which they sold it that year to Clarence H. and Adeline D. Poole cites the 1863 title transfer to George W. Adams from Ruth Adams and the estates of George W., his wife Sarah, and their son Charles Piper Adams. Born in Georgetown in 1911, Clarence Hale Poole was the son of grocer William M. Polle and Alice M. Foote Poole. In 1932 he married Adeline D. Biron, a native of Haverhill whose parents were then living in Georgetown. In 1940 the couple lived on Chestnut Street with their six-year-old daughter Jean. The Pooles owned 253 Central Street until 1986, and current owners James J. Feenan Jr. and his wife Patricia bought the property in 2011.³

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MAPS

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³ Clarence C. and Cornelia Baker Adams to Clarence H. and Adeline D. Poole, 28 October 1944, SECD 3389:58; Federal National Mortgage Association to James J. Feenan Jr. and Patricia C. Feenan, Windham MN, 28 September 2011, SECD 30830:307.

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PHOTOGRAPHS (all photos by Neil Larson, 2017)



View from NE.

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View from SE.

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Aerial view from south. Source: bing.com/maps.