

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

GEORGETOWN

66 PARISH ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

GEO.286

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

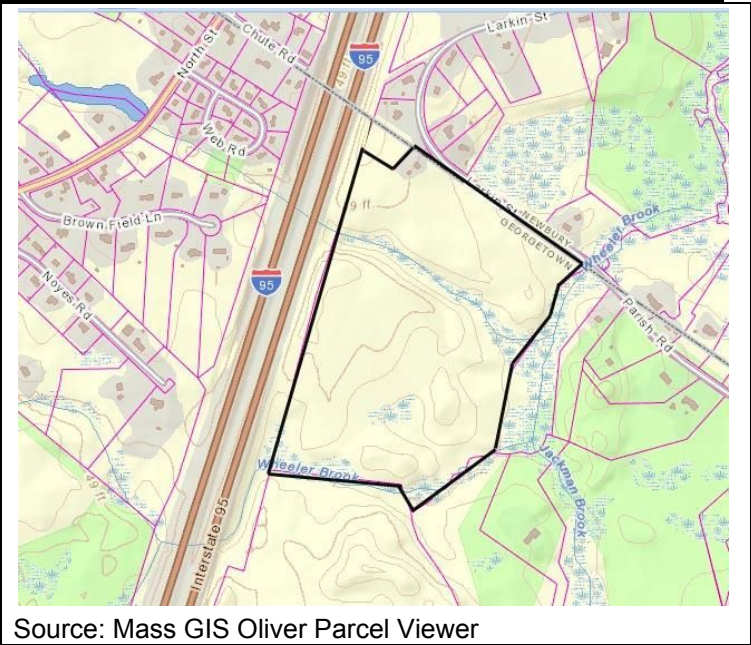
FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



View from east.



Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer

Recorded by: Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson
Organization: Georgetown Historical Commission
Date: February 2017

Locus Map (north at top)



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

20-1

Georgetown

GEO.286

Setting: This house is on the southwest side of Parish Road on a large, fallow agricultural lot near the Newbury town line and just east of Interstate Route 95.

Town/City: Georgetown

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Byfield Parish

Address: 66 Parish Road

Historic Name: Daniel & Hannah Chute House

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1760

Source: deeds, visual analysis

Style/Form: Colonial / Center Chimney

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

One-car garage

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Kitchen wing added, 19th century

Condition: poor (endangered)

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 43.19 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 Daniel and Hannah Chute House, built about 1760, is a two-story wood timber-frame dwelling located on the southerly side of Parish Street where it forms the town line between Georgetown and Newbury. A massive center chimney, with stucco applied to the brick some years ago, suggests there is a three-room, hall-parlor-kitchen plan within typical of eighteenth-century New England domestic architecture of the period. (An interior inspection needs to be made to determine the presence of original woodwork and finishes.) The front façade is bilaterally symmetrical with a center entrance aligned with the chimney and flanked by two tiers of windows. Original doors and windows were replaced sometime in the mid-nineteenth century and paint lines in the existing narrow wood clapboard siding—early if not original—indicate that a piazza had been added to the front and westerly end of the building, probably at a later nineteenth-century date. This picturesque restyling of the house included the addition of brackets under the eaves, shingles in the gables, and perhaps stucco to the chimney. A small, one-story kitchen wing on the easterly end of the house also is a nineteenth-century addition, perhaps made earlier than the piazza and roofline decoration. It appears that few changes have occurred since the turn of the 20th century, except for the gradual loss of historic fabric more recently.

The house is located in the northerly corner of a 43.19-acre farm tract, which represents the remaining land associated with the Clute family's holding in Byfield Parish, parts of which date back to the seventeenth century. Evidence of outbuildings is not visible in the tangled vegetation reclaiming the farmyard and undeveloped meadows. Only a twentieth-century wood frame one-car garage behind the house has survived. The terrain is relatively flat and drained by two legs of the Wheeler Brook. Interstate Route 95 was constructed through the property in the 1970s; land on the westerly side of the divided highway was subdivided for residential development. However, land on the easterly side of I-95, in a portion of Georgetown cut off from the rest, continues to be open. The yards surrounding the house are overgrown; a few mature trees distinguish the street front. An unpaved driveway enters the property northwest of the house.

Despite its abandoned and deteriorated condition, the Daniel and Hannah Chute House is a distinctive example a mid eighteenth-century two-story, center-chimney house surviving in the town. It was part of a farm acquired by the Chute family in the seventeenth century and continued in its possession until 1940. And even though I-95 has intruded on the property, the house enjoys a rare rural setting. The historic integrity of the form and exterior features is considerable, and a cursory inspection suggests that its plan and interior features survive to an equal degree.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The long-neglected dwelling at 66 Parish Road was probably built about 1760 shortly after James Chute (1686-1769) sold all 130 acres of the property he then owned in what was then Rowley to his son Daniel (1722-1805), who occupied the dwelling until he died and whose descendants owned the property until 1940.

The father of James Chute, also James (1649-died by 1730), and James Jr.'s older brother Lionel were among those who settled "Rowlbery," later Byfield Parish, by 1702, when the town of Rowley granted these settlers permission to join with their Newbury neighbors to build a meetinghouse. The brothers James and Lionel were great grandsons of the immigrant Lionel Chute (ca. 1580-1645), who came to Ipswich from England with his wife Rose and their son James (ca. 1613-92) in 1634. James's son James, the father of these brothers, moved from Ipswich to the Byfield section between 1681 and 1686; Lionel was born in 1681 in Ipswich, while James was born in 1686 in Byfield.

In February 1715/16, the year son James married Mary Thurston (1693-1760), his father sold him ninety acres of land, including "his house barne & land & meadow lying in ye township of Rowley," which he had acquired in 1692/93 from Joseph Jewett. This

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section of town on the Newbury line was then called the ox pasture, and the tract was bordered in part by land he had already deeded to older son Lionel. James Chute Jr. had three children who survived infancy, one of them a son, Daniel (1722-1805), who in 1742 married Hannah Adams of Newbury. In August 1760, nine years before he died, James Chute Jr. transferred to Daniel all of his Rowley property, 130 acres "near the Meeting-House in Byfield, being the place on which I now dwell."¹ Daniel Chute may have built the current house on the site of his father's dwelling, which might then have been nearly seventy years old.

James Chute Sr. had been one of the first deacons of the Byfield Parish church, and his grandson Daniel was the parish clerk for thirty-three years. However, little else is known about the early family. Daniel and Hannah Adams Chute had six children that lived into adulthood. Eldest son James (1751-1825) married Mehitabel Thurston and had a son Richard (1778-1820), who married Dorothy Pearson (1784-1870) of Newbury; the Pearson family figured centrally in the later history of this house. The couple had five children before they moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where Richard Chute died in 1820. One of them, Ariel Parish Chute (1809-87), later a prominent minister in Maine and Massachusetts, may have been born in this house. However, it seems more likely that 66 Parish Road was the second of the two Chute houses local historian Henry Nelson described in his 1888 Georgetown history. "An ancient Chute house, perhaps that of James or Lionel, his son, was situated west of the church," Nelson wrote. "The venerable trees which overshadowed it have been felled, and desolation reigns. Ariel P. Chute, a teacher and clergyman, was born here about 1805. One other house of this family, on Chute Street, still exists, with marks of age and the wasting tooth of time." Chute Street is now Parish Road.

Daniel Chute's second son and third child, David (1756-1843), married Ruth Searle in 1793, and it is his name, as "D. Chute," that is attached to the house on the 1830 Georgetown map. The couple had six children who survived infancy, two of them male; the elder, also David, died at the age of twenty-four, in 1833, and the younger, Daniel (1812-49), was described as an "idiot" in his town death record. He clearly needed care, as his father's will documents. At the time he made his will in 1836, David Chute Sr. had lost his other son, and three of his four daughters had married and moved out of the house. He left to his unmarried daughter Sophia Chute (1797-1881) "all my buildings & the great field on which the buildings now stand, being all inclos'd in one field, & my little pasture so called & my young orchard, & the lot of woodland given me by my Father, and it is my will that the property as above given to sd Sophia Chute be held as surety to the comfortable support of my son Daniel Chute during his natural life." The will further stated that "for special reasons I have order'd my son Daniel Chute a maintenance for life instead of any specified sum." David Chute Sr. died in August or September of 1843. The inventory of his estate showed him with a homestead farm of forty-five acres, another ten acres of "meadow & upland," and a half-acre of woodland.

Ruth Searle Chute died in 1847, and son Daniel died in 1849 of tuberculosis. The 1850 census shows Sophia Chute with \$1500 in real estate and alone in the household. Enumerated just before her was the household of her younger sister Hannah (1801-89), who in 1827 had married shoe manufacturer James Peabody. The 1850 agricultural census shows Sophia Chute with twenty improved acres and one cow on a farm valued at \$1500 that produced small amounts of corn, oats, potatoes, barley, hay, and orchard products; her sister and brother-in-law Peabody's farm had ninety improved acres and more livestock, produced the same crops as well as modest quantities of butter and cheese, and was valued at \$4000. By 1855 it appears that James and Hannah Chute Peabody had moved into the 66 Parish Road house with Sophia Chute, and the three lived together until Sophia Chute's death in 1881.

The 1872 Georgetown map labels the 66 Parish Road house as owned by "J. C. Peabody," that being James and Hannah Peabody's eldest son James Chute Peabody, born in 1828. Peabody was a Harvard Law School graduate and practiced for a few years, but he soon turned to journalism and worked first as an overseas correspondent. He was later a translator, notably of Dante's *Inferno*, editor of the *Newburyport Watchtower* and the *Newburyport Weekly Union*, and a contributor of both verse and prose to numerous American magazines. In 1851 he married Margaret Pearson, the daughter of Byfield snuff manufacturer Benjamin Pearson (1794-1844) and his wife Lois Noyes; Margaret's aunt was Dorothy Pearson, the wife of Richard Chute (1778-1820). The 1884 map shows the house still in the hands of the Peabody family.

¹ Joseph Jewett to James Chewt, 18 January 1692/3, SECD 30:176 (not recorded until 24 February 1715); James Chewt to Daniel Chewt, 15 August 1860, SECD 109:90. Both deeds are cited in Wm. E. Chute, *A Genealogy and History of the Chute Family in America* (N.p. 1894), 3-15, 22-23, 38-39, 74, which also provides biographical background on the family. See also Thomas Gage, *The History of Rowley, Anciently Including Bradford, Buxford, and Georgetown, from the Year 1639 to the Present Time* (Boston: F. Andrews, 1840), 95-97.

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In 1900 James Chute Peabody died, and at some point between that year and 1910 his widow returned to Newbury to live with her niece Abbie M. Pearson Hale, who had married Newbury farmer John O. Hale in 1888. In 1911 she deeded the Georgetown property to her nephew Benjamin Pearson Jr.² Born in 1855, this Benjamin Pearson was the seventh of that name who descended directly from the immigrant John Pearson (died 1693), who settled in Rowley in 1643 and is believed to have founded the first fulling mill in this country. His son, the first Benjamin Pearson (1658-1731), moved to the Byfield section in 1682. According to the Newbury Historical Commission, Benjamin Pearson acquired a late seventeenth-century fulling and grist mill on the Parker River in Byfield in the first decade of the 1700s and built a house nearby. In the 1860s a later Benjamin Pearson, probably the sixth (1823-1901), converted a sawmill on the property to produce snuff, a fermented tobacco that is ground, sifted, and flavored. In 1891 Benjamin Pearson 6 and his son Benjamin 7 (1855-1933) organized the Pearson Tobacco Company in Kittery, Maine, and eight years later they bought the former Larkin Mill (which had manufactured snuff since 1804) in Newbury to supplement its operation. Byfield Snuff Company remained in business until at least 1951.³

The Benjamin Pearsons appear to have used 66 Parish Road as a summer getaway, as censuses and directories through 1940 consistently show them as residents of Newbury or Newburyport. The 1930 census shows three generations in one Newburyport household—Benjamin Pearson 7 and his wife Adelaide Woodman Pearson (born 1865), their son Benjamin 8 (1898-1974) and his wife Helen Ruth Farrington Pearson (1900-1950), and grandchildren Benjamin 9 (1926-2015) and Anne. At the death of this ninth Benjamin Pearson, the last owner and president of Byfield Snuff Company, his obituary described him as having been brought up in Newburyport and Byfield.

Two years after Benjamin Pearson 7 died in 1933, his widow Adelaide deeded 66 Parish Road and other property probably in Georgetown to her son Benjamin, who in 1940 sold 66 Parish Road out to the family to Joseph Peter Phelan and his wife Augusta C. Danforth. Phelan was born in 1884 in New York and worked as a civil, electrical, and mechanical engineer; he, his wife, and their sons Bradshaw and Westall Carew were then living in Medford. The Phelans sold the property in 1943 to Harold J. Sparks of Lynn, who sold it the next year to H. Kinsman and Ethel Sweet of Beverly. It changed hands once more by 1962, when Del Realty Corporation of Beverly acquired it. Del Realty may have been owned by Joseph, John B., and Antonio DeLorenzo, to whom Del Realty sold 66 Parish Road in 1990; as trustees of Parish Road Realty, they are the current owners of the property.⁴

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² Margaret Peabody, Newbury MA to Benjamin Pearson Jr., Newbury MA, 3 January 1911, SECD 2405:550.

³ Newbury Historical Commission website, <http://www.newbury1635.org/commerce.html>. See also Jennifer Solis, "Age Leads to Demise of Oldest Mill on Parker River," *Newburyport News*, 13 April 2012; "Benjamin Pearson IX, 88," *The Forecaster* (Falmouth MA), 25 February 2015; "Benjamin Pearson IX," *Portland (ME) Press Herald*, 16 February 2015.

⁴ Adelaide W. Pearson, Newbury MA to Benjamin Pearson Jr, Newbury MA, 23 July 1935, SECD 3051:486; Benjamin Pearson, Newbury MA, to Joseph P. and Augusta Danforth Phelan, Medford MA, 28 October 1940, SECD 3236:528; Joseph P. and Augusta Danforth Phelan, Medford MA, to Harold J. Sparks, Lynn MA, 5 April 1943, SECD 3333:315; Harold J. Sparks to H. Kinsman and Ethel Sweet, Beverly, 3 July 1944, SECD 3373:596; H. Kinsman and Ethel Sweet to Herbert C. and Gertrude S. Heylmun, 23 December 1952, SECD 3949:418; Herbert C. and Gertrude S. Heylmun to Del Realty Corp., Beverly MA, 20 September 1962, SECD 4990:354; Del Realty Corporation, Danvers MA, to Joseph DeLorenzo, John B. DeLorenzo, and Antonio DeLorenzo, trustees Rowley Realty Trust, 19 December 1990, SECD 10688:254; Joseph DeLorenzo, John B. DeLorenzo, and Antonio DeLorenzo, trustees Rowley Realty Trust, to Joseph DeLorenzo and John B. DeLorenzo, trustee Parish Road Realty, 11 April 2005, SECD 24162:186.

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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 from north.

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View from west.

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View from south.

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Detail of ell from NE.

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View of detached garage from east.

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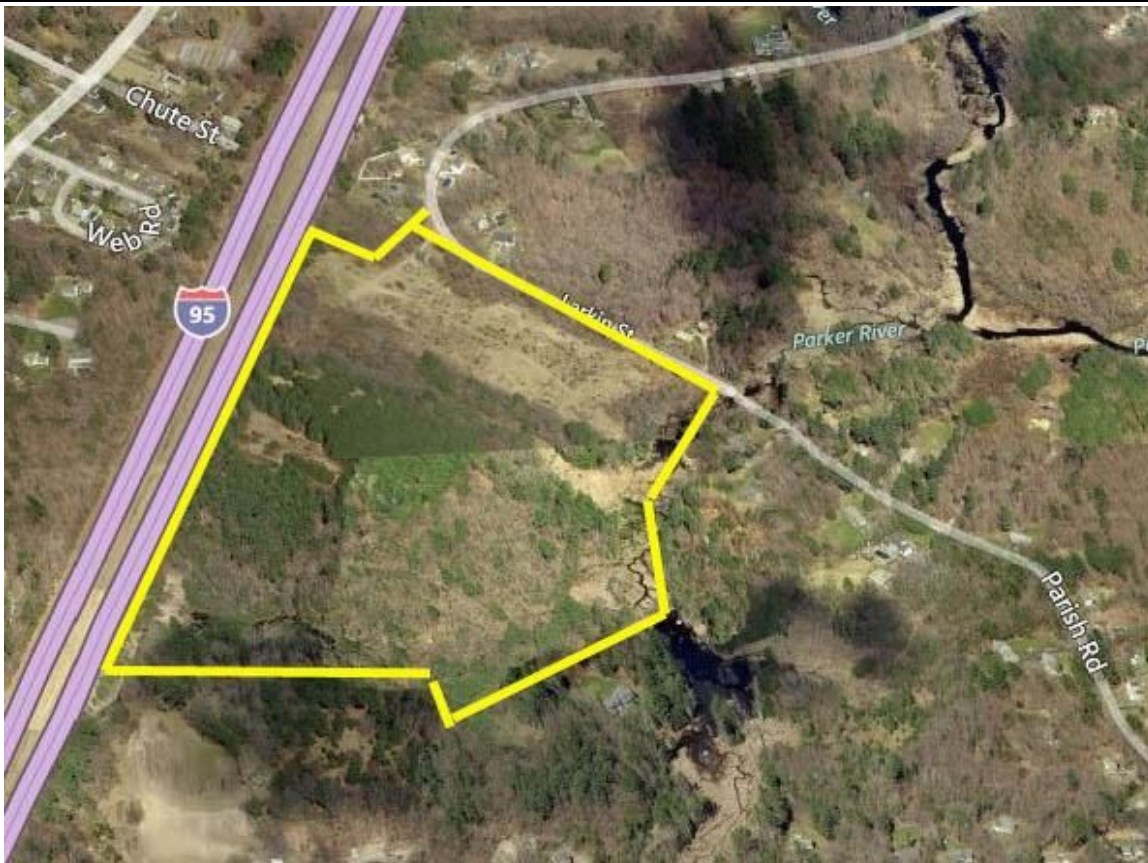
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Aerial view of property with house in upper corner at curve in road (north at top). Bing maps.

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**

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Statement of Significance by Neil Larson

The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The Daniel and Hannah Chute House appears to be eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C at a local level of significance. Despite its abandoned and deteriorated condition, it is a rare and distinctive example a mid eighteenth-century two-story, center-chimney house surviving in the town. It was part of a farm acquired by the Chute family in the seventeenth century and continued in their possession until 1940. Even though I-95 has intruded on the property, the house enjoys a rare rural setting. The historic integrity of the form and exterior features is considerable, and a cursory inspection suggests that its plan and interior features survive to an equal degree. As such, the house is architecturally and historically significant and sufficiently intact for listing on the National Register.