

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

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**Town/City:** Amherst

**Place:** Amherst Center

## Photograph



**Address:** 25 McClellan Street

**Historic Name:** Ann and Matthew Coleman House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling house

**Date of Construction:** 1861-62

**Source:** tax valuations

**Style/Form:** Second Empire

**Architect/Builder:**

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Brick

Wall/Trim: Asbestos Shingle; Wood

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

**Major Alterations (with dates):**

Mansard roof, circa 1875-76

**Condition:** Good

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** Approximately one acre

**Setting:** Rural college town residential neighborhood

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** E. Gouin, E. Wilfert, M. Adams

**Organization:** LHDSC

**Date (month / year):** October 2016

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AMHERST

25 McCLELLAN ST

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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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.*

This small Second Empire house is closely related to three others on North Prospect and High Streets. Elements common to all are the mansard roof and modest scale. This example, the smallest of the group, has an asymmetrical façade, three shed dormers and a slight S-curve to the roofline. The house is modest vernacular interpretation of a high style.

## 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.*

This house is listed as the property of Matthew Coleman in the 1861-2 Tax Assessment records and also appears for the first time on the 1873 map as the property of Matthew Coleman. The deed of sale for a "a certain tenement" on this property from Luke Sweetser to Mrs. Ann Coleman, Matthew's wife, is dated August 24, 1872 and stipulates "said tenement being designed to be held by the grantee herein as a homestead" [296/353]. Ann G[leason] Coleman sold the property back to Luke Sweetser on August 31, 1875 for \$1200, noting a \$400 mortgage to Amherst Savings bank [320/275]. Matthew Coleman marked the Deed with an X. The 1880 Census indicates that the Colemans remained in the house, a family including Matthew, a laborer age 47; Ann his wife keeping house, age 44; daughter Margaret, a tailoress, age 24; daughters Susan and Catherine, ages 13 and 11, at school; and sons Edward and William, age 8 and 6. The 1889-90 Amherst Directory lists Matthew and John Coleman as laborers, living on McClellan. (It is likely that John is Matthew's younger brother. The 1870 Census had listed Matthew (age 39, a laborer) and wife Ann (age 27, keeping house) with 6 children, and then Margaret (age 61, presumably Matthew's mother) and John (age 23) likely Matthew's younger brother. Mother Margaret and brother John, like Matthew and wife Ann, were Irish born; the children were born in Massachusetts.

The 1897-8 lists Matthew with a house at 7 (becomes #25 in 1937-8 renumbering system) McClellan, where daughter Margaret, employed by Alfred Glynn, is listed as boarder, and his brother John, a laborer, in a house at 14 (becomes 30 when renumbered) McClellan. Matthew Coleman died June 1, 1899 at age 66. Presumably his wife Ann remained in the house with the younger children, although the house remained legally the property of Sweetser.

On April 7, 1883, J. Howard Sweetser, who lived in New York and who had inherited the property from his father Luke, sold #25 McClellan to Mary A. Coleman for \$1,000., possibly a granddaughter of the original Coleman owners. Mary A. Coleman held the property until 1947, when her executors Adelaide E. Coleman and Wendell W. Boardman under probate granted the property to Stanley K. and Elsie E. Keegan for \$5200., with a license to sell for that sum or more with the net proceeds to be held by the executors for debts and legacies of the deceased Mary A. Coleman [1018/398], but the Keegans held the property from 1947 to 1995, when it passed to Cynthia B. and Peter D. Keegan [4701/230], to Cynthia B. Keegan in 2004 [8073/310] and then to Historic Renovations and Rental in 2011[10754/88] as a non-owner occupied rental. Except for the attachment of a shed to the building in 1995, there have been no major alternations or renovations through the history of the house. It is unclear whether the mansard roof was an original feature or added later.

The 1886 Bird's Eye View of Amherst shows McClellan street tightly lined with houses about two thirds of the way from North Pleasant Street to Lincoln Avenue. At that time, most of the residents were laborers, tradespeople or widows overwhelmingly of Irish descent. The Roman Catholic Church, St. Brigid's, was located around the corner on North Pleasant Street and most McClellan Street residents were parishioners. By 1900, African-American families lived there, the Hasbrook, Bias, Goodwin, and Mittie Hall Anderson families among them, some founders of the AME Zion church.

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Tan Brook is a year-round watercourse flowing through the rear yards and gardens of this and twelve other properties and bordering five others between McClellan Street and the University of Massachusetts Amherst, including lots on North Pleasant Street, Beston Street, Fearing Street and Nutting Avenue, as well as wooded lots immediately west of North Pleasant Street. Its name derives from the tanneries which once flanked the stream during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the area of which is now part of Kendrick Park. The brook's sources lie to the north and east, and were piped underground in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, through the school grounds between Strong and Triangle Streets, beneath the East Pleasant Street commercial district, continuing under Kendrick Park and along McClellan Street. Until the arrival of piped sewerage, the brook served the north edge of the West Village for waste-water outflow. Downstream, Tan Brook waters the UMass pond and flows west through Hadley, until it empties into the Connecticut River.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Maps 1873, 1886

Amherst Street Lists and Directories

Tax valuations

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Form B (1988), online in the MACRIS database