

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

Photograph



Address: 10 McClellan Street

Historic Name: Georgianna and John Davidge House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: c. 1866-7

Source: deeds

Style/Form: Queen Anne Revival

Architect/Builder: Harvey White

Exterior Material:

Foundation: brick with stone below grade

Wall/Trim: vinyl

Roof: asphalt

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: shed frame and lean-to (was tailor shop)

Major Alterations (with dates): remodel 2009-2011

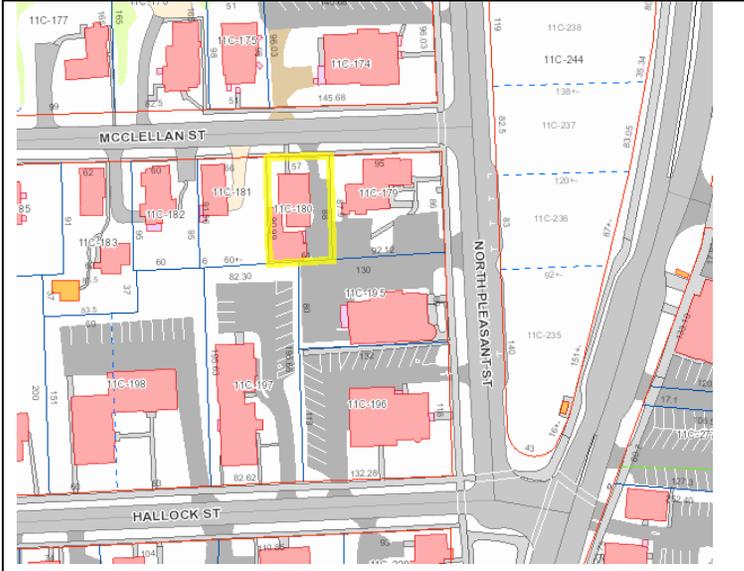
Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .12 acres

Setting: Close to the downtown business district on a side street in a rural college town

Locus Map



Recorded by: E. Guin, E. Wilfert, M. Adams

Organization: LHDSC

Date (month / year): October 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AMHERST

10 MCCLELLAN ST

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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.

Structure consists of two major massings. The portion facing McClellan, built only 6-7 feet from the sidewalk, is similar to a salt-box style house, with the gabled end facing McClellan. It is likely that, similar to colonial saltboxes, the shallower area to east was an extension, as possibly proved by the different kind of foundation (possibly concrete) under this section. This gabled end features the front door positioned to the far right under the sweeping longer right eave. Presently, a mid-twentieth century aluminum shade tops the entry door. Two paired windows narrowly fit between the door and the right edge of the house; two additional windows wrap around the corner on the eastern side. To the left, there is a second pairing of windows on the first floor. On the second floor, set within the gable, is a triple paired window, similar in style to other windows of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Two small dormers peak above the roof edge on both the western and eastern sides of the building.

Extending to the south is an attached tailor shop (was formerly "Julius the Tailor's" shop) on left side of the building with parking lot in front. There are two stories of shops behind this property and are accessed by the large parking lot on side of the building. This section of the building may be the earlier 1860's structure indicated in 1866 tax assessment volumes, or was formerly a barn/carriage house of some sort.

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.

The house was bought by Mrs. Georgianna K. [Widgeon] Davidge for \$1350 for herself and her heirs, from Harvey White (the builder) on October 29, 1867 [247/148]. The Deed lists "a certain tenement" on the property and it also notes a \$600 mortgage from the Trustees of Amherst College, documenting that the house would have been built in 1866-7.

Georgianna was born c. 1832 in Norfolk, VA, daughter of John M. and Lucy [Kring] Widgeo, and married John D. Davidge (born c. 1822 in Baltimore), who was in Amherst by October 1865. John Davidge had previously run one of Pittsfield's Largest and most fashionable" barber shops, before moving to Amherst and opening a barber shop behind the Amherst House in the old Amherst Academy building on Amity Street where he lived with his family. He owned \$1600 worth of real estate on McClellan Street in 1869 and married Georgianna that year (Smith, p. 69). Georgianna was a hair dresser, and by 1869 she had her own dressmaker shop for ladies in Palmer's Block (today's Town Hall). They had three children: Richard (age 17), Charlie (12) and Mary (11). The 1870 Census gives John's age as 48 and Georgianna's as 38 and identifies them racially as mulatto. Jerry Leonis, also a barber, lived in their McClellan St household.

Georgianna Davidge sold the property on September 8, 1869, within two years after purchasing it, to Lycurgus Van Buren Cook [264/89] and the Deed notes three mortgages on the property: to the Charity Fund of Amherst (\$600), to Jane F. Marsh (\$400) and to Mrs. M.J. Merrick (\$200). Georgianna died May 26, 1871 and John moved to Northampton and then to Pittsfield.

Cook, who lived in Belchertown, rented out this property for eight years prior to selling it on May 19, 1877 [334/352] to John B. Brown, a dry goods merchant, for \$1500. Adjacent properties also owned by Cook were maintained as rentals (these houses are now #16, 20 and 24 McClellan).

There is a shop behind the house listed as #266 North Pleasant St, and the house on the south west corner of McClellan and North Pleasant (now an office building) next door to 10 McClellan is listed as #274 North Pleasant. (#266 is actually the next

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building south of #10, set back southwesterly from #274 North Pleasant, separated by a driveway and large parking lot. Tan Brook flowed between it and #274 before 1910. The 1902 Sanborn map shows two outbuildings on the spot.)

Between Brown's acquisition of the property in 1877 and the next documented owner, Everett L. Roberts, documentary links are lacking. Somehow the property had come into possession of W. Hastings Lyon – presumably the son of William Hastings Lyon of Longmeadow, MA. The son is listed in MAC directories for 1945-7 and in the 1948 Amherst Directory as a proprietor, at Columbia University, with a home at 10 McClellan. He does not appear in the 1942 or 1950 Amherst Directories. On July 2, 1958, his widow, Sarah A. Lyon, of New York, New York, sold the property to Everett L. Roberts [1275/236]. Hastings Lyon's estate records are in Hampshire County Registry of Probate.

Everett Roberts sold the property a few months later (15 August 1958) [1278/364] to Gerald A. and Regina F. Fitzgerald who sold it to Glen t. and Gwendolyn E. Hughes in 1962 [1387/364]. Mary Muskus, wife of "Julius the Tailor" acquired it in 1968 [1534/7; 8856/243] and the out-building is referred to as a tailor shop on the property card.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Deeds

Tax Valuations

1870 census

Amherst Academy, p.147

J.A. Smith, *History of the Black Population of Amherst, Massachusetts, 1728-1870* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1999), p. 69 .

African American Historical Sites: Amherst, MA [1995]. Compiled by members of the African American Walking Tour Committee. Part of the clippings file in the Jones Library Special Collections, filed with materials concerning the AME Zion Church of Amherst.



Image from 2011 Google Maps