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September 5, 2019

Martha's Vineyard Commission  
Attn: Adam Turner  
P.O. Box 1447  
33 New York Avenue  
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557  
VIA EMAIL ONLY

**RE: Stop and Shop Application for Demolition of the Caleb Prouty House**

Dear Adam,

In preparation for the LUPC hearing on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019 please further find the following information in anticipation of the hearing:

**Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey – Public Archaeology Laboratory**

A Survey was completed in March of 2013 by PAL, during the original submission of the proposed renovation of the Tisbury Stop & Shop building. A copy of that plan is attached. The structure has been unoccupied since the time of that study.

**Archeology**

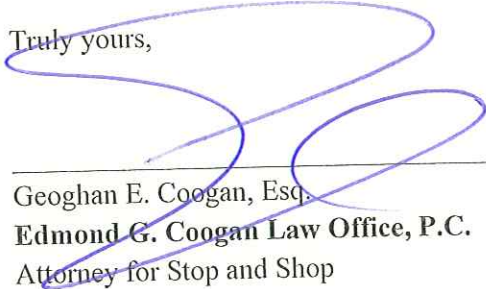
Stop and Shop is prepared to carry out an archeological survey of 15 Crowell and the back of the Golden Dragon as recommended by the Massachusetts Historic Commission. Based on the results of such survey, Stop and Shop is prepared to implement such requests as may result from such survey.

The proposal before the Martha's Vineyard Commission is to demolish the structure located at 15 Cromwell Lane. Stop & Shop is committed to a development of this site, but in order to determine what can or cannot be done with the project, this structure must be removed. Understanding the Commission has on several occasions over the past few years stated they did not want projects filed "incrementally." We do not look at this submission in that manner. For Stop & Shop to design and propose a new project,

this structure must be gone. Having reviewed several other Towns requirements for the demolition of historic structures, we are asking that the MVC follow a similar process. The Town of Cambridge, for example, has adopted a very simple policy, a copy of which is attached hereto. While we have worked with several private individuals and have heard rumors of the Town of Tisbury's interest, to relocate the building, after several years, nothing has come of those efforts. Therefore, we are asking the MVC to set a timeline. If there is an interested party, they can step forward and Stop & Shop will assist with the relocation of the building. If there simply is no interest, Stop & Shop is requesting that they be permitted to remove this structure.

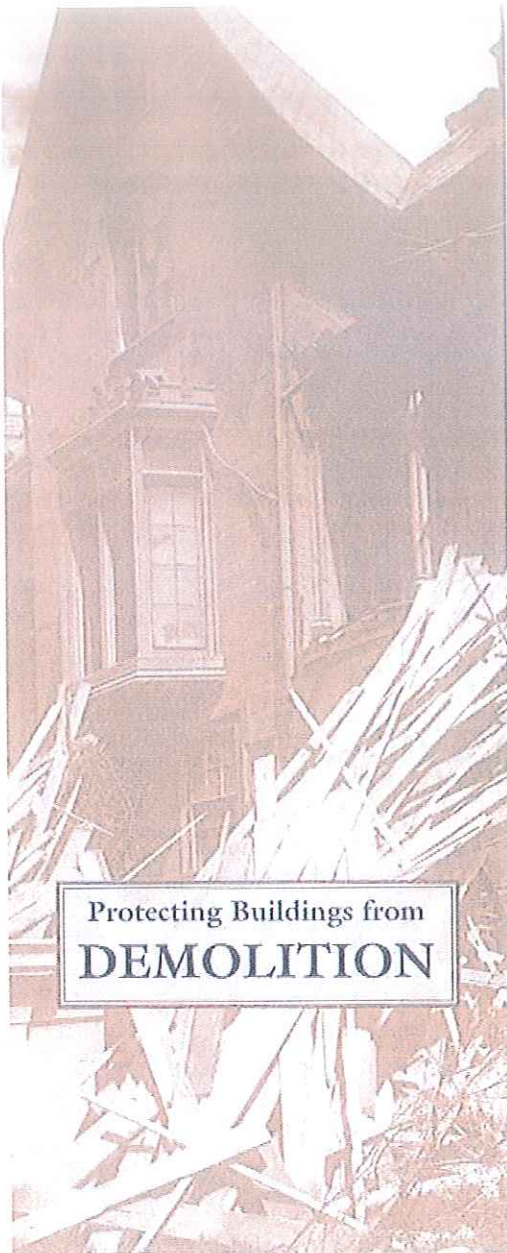
Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Truly yours,



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Geoghan E. Coogan, Esq.  
**Edmond G. Coogan Law Office, P.C.**  
Attorney for Stop and Shop



Protecting Buildings from  
**DEMOLITION**



## PROTECTING BUILDINGS FROM DEMOLITION

### Cambridge's Demolition Review Ordinance

Article II of Chapter 2.78 of the Cambridge City Code was adopted by the City Council in 1979 to protect significant buildings from destruction. When the Historical Commission determines that a building is significant and should be preserved, it can delay demolition for up to six months. During this period, the Commission, the owner, and the community can explore ways to preserve the building indefinitely or mitigate the effects of demolition.

### Historical Commission Authority

The ordinance enables the Historical Commission to advise the city's building commissioner on the issuance of demolition permits. No demolition permit can be issued for a building over fifty years old until the Commission has reviewed the application.

### Procedures for Reviewing Demolition Permit Applications

Demolition permit applications can be obtained from the Inspectional Services Department at 831 Massachusetts Avenue. The completed application will be reviewed at the Historical Commission office to determine the status of the building under Article II. If the Commission staff deter-





mines that the building is fifty or more years old and is "significant," the application is scheduled for a public hearing before the full Commission. If the building is not found to be significant, the application is released for further review by the building commissioner.

#### **Criteria for Determining Significance**

A "significant building" is one that is fifty years old or older and that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or is determined to be "importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, economic, or social history of the City or the Commonwealth" or "historically or architecturally significant . . . either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings." The initial determination of significance must be made by the Executive Director of the Commission within five days after receiving the application.

#### **Public Hearing Procedures**

The Historical Commission meets monthly. A report documenting the Director's initial determination of significance is prepared and circulated to the Commission. The hearing is advertised in a newspaper of general circulation and a placard may be placed on the building. At the hearing, the Executive Director describes the significance of the building and the owner is invited to discuss the reasons for the demolition and the nature of the replacement project, if any. The public is also invited to speak.

#### **The Commission's Decision**

The Historical Commission votes on two issues: first, whether the building is, in fact, significant, and, second, whether it is in the public interest that it should be preserved in preference to the proposed replacement. Buildings that are found

to be both significant and worthy of preservation, relative to the proposed replacement, are termed "preferably preserved significant buildings," and cannot be demolished for six months from the date of the hearing.

### **The Effect of the Demolition Delay**

The Commission holds demolition permit applications for preferably preserved significant buildings for six months from the time of the hearing. At the end of six months, however, applications will not be released until plans for the use or development of the site after demolition have been found to comply with applicable laws regarding building permits and until all necessary zoning variances and special permits for the new development have been obtained. Therefore, an application may actually be delayed for longer than six months.

All of the Historical Commission's regulatory approvals have a life of six months. This means that once the demolition permit application is released, the owner has six months to demolish the building. If the building is not taken down in that period, the Chair or the Commission may issue a six-month extension, provided the ownership and nature of the replacement project have not changed. If demolition has not occurred by the end of the extension, the owner must resubmit the demolition permit application for Historical Commission review, and the case must be heard again.

### **Questions and Answers about Article II**

*How can preferably preserved significant buildings be preserved?*

Properties subject to the demolition delay period can be preserved indefinitely through landmarking or other protective measures, such as placing a preservation easement on the property. Ten registered voters can petition the Commission, or the Commission may itself vote, to consider a property for landmark designation. If the Commission finds the property eligible and the

City Council votes to make it a landmark, then no changes to the exterior can take place without the Commission's review and approval.

A property can also be preserved if the owner is willing to rehabilitate or restore it. The development of a property may be compatible with saving its historic aspects. Development proposals can be reworked to incorporate the preservation of historic buildings. Often, another owner may be willing to maintain an existing historic property rather than redevelop it.

*What happens to a preferably preserved significant building after the six-month delay expires?*

If no action has been taken to designate the building as a landmark and no one is willing to preserve it, the building can be demolished and the proposed development can go forward. The intent of the delay is not to prevent all demolition but to provide an opportunity for developing preservation solutions for the property. In certain zoning districts, however, preferably preserved significant buildings retain this status indefinitely, and replacement projects may be penalized if such a building is demolished.

*Is a hearing required to get a demolition permit for any building?*

Not necessarily. If the building is not significant according to the criteria of Article II, the Commission's Executive Director releases the demolition permit application and demolition can go forward. Typically, buildings such as garages and sheds that lack historical or architectural importance can be approved for demolition without a hearing.

*What happens if a building that is subject to Commission review is demolished without the Commission's approval?*

Article II states that, for a period of two years, no building permit can be issued for premises on which any fifty-year-old building has been demolished in violation of the ordinance. This penalty also applies to preferably preserved significant buildings that have been lost to fire

or other causes due to the failure of the owner to properly secure the building.

*Are there any conditions whereby a demolition permit application can be released before the end of the delay period?*

Yes. The demolition permit application can be released if the Commission finds that there is no reasonable likelihood that anyone is willing to preserve the building or that the owner has made a "continuing, bona fide, reasonable and unsuccessful effort" for at least six months to locate a buyer willing to preserve the building. The Commission may also shorten the delay period if the project is modified to advance broader community preservation goals.

*Can an owner get an informal evaluation of a building's significance?*

Yes. The Commission prefers to be consulted early in the development process, and the staff will provide an opinion on the significance of a building. Although such informal opinions are not binding, they may be useful to the property owner.

## Cambridge Historical Commission

831 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139  
617 349 4683 phone  
617 349 3116 facsimile  
617 349 6112 TTY  
[www.ci.cambridge.ma.us/~Historic](http://www.ci.cambridge.ma.us/~Historic)



House at Massachusetts Avenue and Bay Street being demolished for subway construction. Photo, 1909. (Boston Elevated Railway Collection, Cambridge Historical Commission)

Demolition of house at Massachusetts Avenue and Bay Street, looking west toward Harvard Square. Photo, 1909. (Boston Elevated Railway Collection, Cambridge Historical Commission)

Partially demolished house at Massachusetts Avenue and Bay Street, with subway construction in foreground. Photo, 1909. (Boston Elevated Railway Collection, Cambridge Historical Commission)







**Report**  
**15 Cromwell Lane**  
**Tisbury, MA**

*Historic and Archaeological Assessment*  
*April 2, 2013*  
**PAL No. 2816**

Submitted to:

**Martha's Vineyard Commission**  
Martha's Vineyard Commission  
P.O. Box 1447  
Oak Bluffs MA 02557

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### **Introduction**

PAL was retained by the Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC) to complete a historic and archaeological sensitivity assessment of the 15 Cromwell Lane property in Tisbury, Massachusetts (Figures 1 and 2). The purpose is to assist the MVC and others in making informed planning decisions regarding the future of the property. The property will be affected by a supermarket development proposal by the owner that is under review by the MVC. The project was overseen by Virginia H. Adams, senior architectural historian; with Holly Herbster, senior archaeologist/principal investigator; Kathleen Miller, architectural historian; and Kirk Van Dyke, project archaeologist.

### **Project Area Description**

The project area is a 0.171-acre lot in the village of Vineyard Haven that contains one house, located in the block bounded by Cromwell Lane (west), Beach Street (south), Water Street (east), and private commercial property. The level site is overgrown and surrounded by commercial buildings, a few historic buildings, and parking lots.

### **Methodology**

The project involved research, site visit, analysis and writing to produce this Report and a Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) Building "B" Inventory form for the house, along with an evaluation of the building's eligibility for listing in the State and National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and the Massachusetts State Register (State Register). Research was conducted at the Martha's Vineyard Museum, the Tisbury Town Hall and online sources including Ancestry.com. Historic maps and views and local histories were consulted. Mr. Harold Chapedelaine, Chairman of the Tisbury Historical Commission, and Mr. James K. Norton, local historian and author, provided invaluable material on the history of the property at a meeting. The site visit and research on Martha's Vineyard were conducted on March 18 and 19, 2013.

## Results and Recommendations

### Historic Resources

The Caleb Prouty House at 15 Cromwell Lane is a Greek Revival style house likely constructed between 1844 and 1851, based on deeds. Evidence also exists in its architecture and an 1838 woodcut reproduced in Charles Bank's *History of Martha's Vineyard, Annals of Tisbury* (1966, page 9) showing a building in the approximate location of the Prouty House, suggesting it may have been constructed earlier. Additional research will be necessary to determine the date of the building's original construction. Refer to the accompanying Building "B" form for further information on the house's architecture and history.

The Caleb Prouty House at 15 Cromwell Lane in Vineyard Haven (Tisbury), MA is eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance. Under Criterion C, the house stands as an excellent local example of a moderately high-style Greek Revival style residence constructed or remodeled between 1844 and 1851 in Tisbury, retaining both a well-preserved exterior and almost pristine interior. The Caleb Prouty House possesses key character-defining features of the Greek Revival style with a front gabled roof featuring a wide cornice and flanking Doric pilasters, and an entablature door surround with full transom and side lights. The house is similar to the less elaborate residences in the William Street Historic District, and to several other houses on Main Street outside the district including the Peter Cromwell House (TIS.139), Ellis Manter House (TIS.79), 113 Main Street (TIS.113), and William Barry Owen House (TIS.111). The Caleb Prouty House is among the best preserved examples of its type and period in the village of Vineyard Haven and the Town of Tisbury. The Caleb Prouty House may possess additional architectural significance as an earlier house that was remodeled in the mid-nineteenth century. Additional research will be necessary to determine the original construction date, which may have been before 1838 based on an 1838 woodcut historical view (Banks, *Annals of Tisbury* 1966:9). Under Criterion A, the Caleb Prouty House, which was built by a mariner for his residence, is significant as one of the Vineyard Haven examples of modest and high style Greek Revival style residences that have important local historical associations with mariners and the village's maritime economy in the early to mid-nineteenth century.

A fire in 1883 destroyed most of the southern section of Main Street, leaving this house as a rare surviving standing building in the area. The post-1883 fire neighborhood along Main Street that exists between the Caleb Prouty House and the Williams Street District prevents the property from inclusion in the Williams Street Historic District. However, the Caleb Prouty House may be part of a potential small historic district with other nearby historic properties that survived the fire, within the larger setting that has been extensively modified by large-scale twentieth-century commercial development. These buildings include the adjacent Ritter House (Jirah Luce House) (TIS.56) (1796), Claghorne Tavern (no MHC form) (1759), and William J. Rotch Old Steam Mill (TIS.90) (1881). Additional research will be necessary to define a potential district.

It is recommended that the Caleb Prouty House be entered in the Town of Tisbury historic resources inventory and in the Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth maintained by the MHC. It is also recommended that the MVC and project proponents consider and implement alternatives that would preserve the house, either on site, or at a different location in Vineyard Haven. It is recommended that the MVC consider options that will 1) preserve the building in situ; 2) relocate the building on its current parcel; or 3) move the building to another suitable site in



Vineyard Haven. Demolition is not recommended. It is further recommended that the building be recorded to the State-level archival photography standards of the MHC before any relocation or construction activities occur.

### **Archaeological Resources**

PAL completed an archaeological assessment of the 15 Cromwell Lane Property as part of cultural resources services. The assessment included a review of the MHC's Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth (Inventory) and the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) maintained by the MHC to identify any recorded archaeological sites within or in the immediate vicinity of the project area, and a walkover survey to assess the existing conditions of the project area. Holly Herbster, Senior Archaeologist oversaw the assessment and Kirk Van Dyke, Project Archaeologist, completed the walkover survey.

No previously recorded archaeological sites are located within or adjacent to the project area. Several previously recorded archaeological sites are located within one-half mile of the project area, including the Vincent Site (19-DK-21), a large pre-contact (ancient Native American) archaeological site that was investigated by William Ritchie in the 1960s. Portions of the Vincent Site are still intact despite post-contact period (circa 1650 AD and later) and modern development in the downtown area of Tisbury.

The walkover survey consisted of a close visual inspection of the yard areas surrounding the 15 Cromwell Lane property. In particular, the visual assessment focused on the ground surface and any indications of previous belowground disturbance, exposed archaeological deposits or features, and other factors that influence archaeological sensitivity, such as wet or saturated soils. Several hand-excavated 2-inch wide soil auger cores were placed in the yard area to help characterize the nature of the soils below the ground surface.

The walkover survey did not identify any large areas of previously disturbed soils, particularly in the open yard area to the east and south of the house. Probable landscape soils/topsoil are present in most sections of the yard, but evidence of natural subsoils was noted as well. The extreme eastern portion of the property contains saturated soils, an indication that this area may have once been near the natural shoreline.

The 15 Cromwell Lane Property is archaeologically sensitive for both ancient Native American and post-contact/historic period archaeological resources. The natural setting of the property near the shoreline, the proximity of several other ancient Native American sites, and the lack of clearly visible disturbed subsoils all contribute to the property's archaeological sensitivity. The potential also exists for buried archaeological features associated with the historic structure to exist, including (but not limited to) outbuilding foundations, wells and/or privies, builders trenches, or landscape features such as gardens.

PAL recommends that if any ground disturbing activities are proposed for the parcel, the MVC consult with the MHC to develop an appropriate scope of work for archaeological investigations which would likely consist of an intensive (locational) archaeological survey. The goal of the survey would be to determine the presence or absence of archaeological deposits within any proposed project impacts areas, and to provide recommendations on the significance of any identified archaeological resources.



## DRI 89-M3 Stop & Shop GIS Base



Figure 1. Stop and Shop Proposal Aerial (source: Martha's Vineyard Commission).

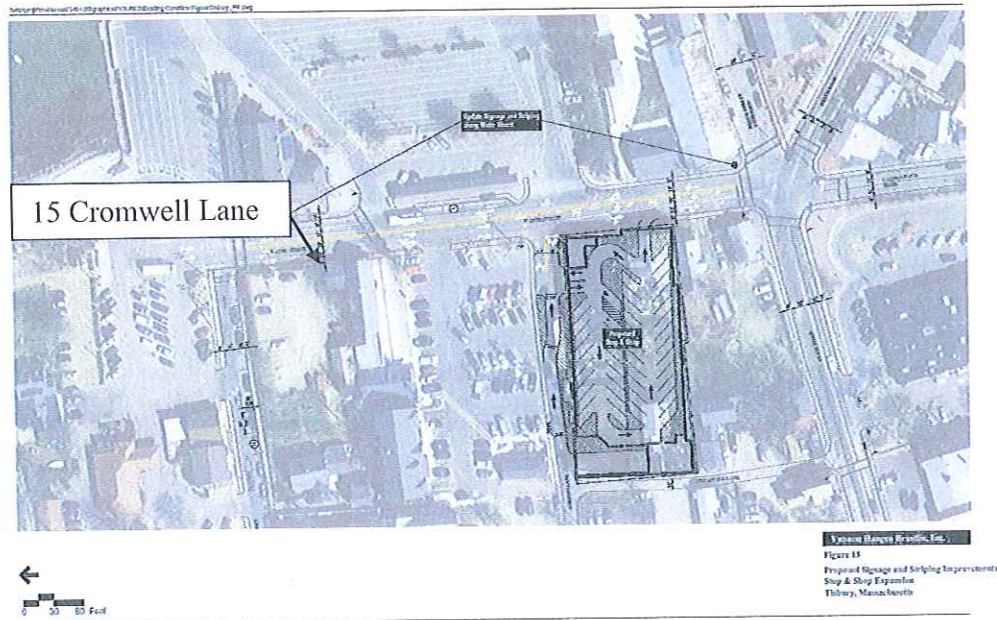


Figure 2. Stop and Shop Proposal Overlay on Aerial (source: Martha's Vineyard Commission).

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

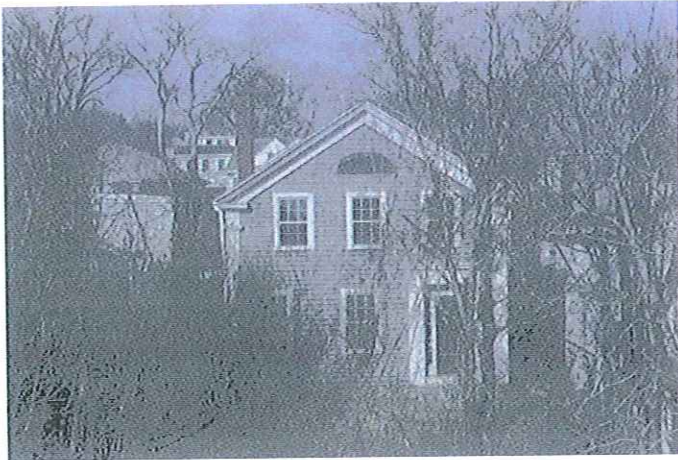
7/F-7

Vineyard  
Haven,  
MA

Town/City: Tisbury

Place: (neighborhood or village): Vineyard Haven

## Photograph



Address: 15 Cromwell Lane

Historic Name: Caleb Prouty House

Uses: Present: Vacant

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: (possibly before 1838); ca. 1844-1851

Source: (1838 Woodcut); Visual; Deeds (21:18; 34:326-327)

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Brick

Wall/Trim: Wood

Roof: Asphalt

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: None

Major Alterations (with dates): Possibly remodeled 1844-1851

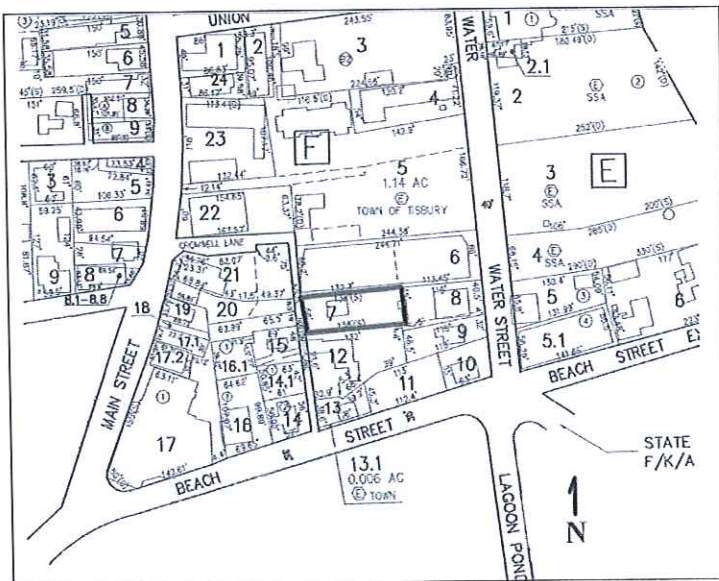
Condition: Fair

Moved: no  yes  Date:

Acres: 0.171 Acres

Setting: Approximately 550 feet from Vineyard Haven Harbor, the building is located in a dense area consisting primarily of commercial properties and parking lots.

## Locus Map



Recorded by: Kathleen M. Miller, Virginia H. Adams

Organization: PAL

Date (month / year): March 2013



**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

TISBURY

15 CROMWELL LANE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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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 Caleb Prouty House at 15 Cromwell Lane is a rectangular-shaped, Greek Revival style building, with a one-story attached late-nineteenth-century rear kitchen ell. The house may be an early building that was remodeled in the mid-nineteenth century; see discussion of construction date in the Historical Narrative below. The east-facing building sits at the top of a gradually declining slope within a long and narrow lot. Its rear faces Cromwell Lane, a two-lane gravel and partially paved road that leads to the building and runs along the property's western boundary line. The land around the property is densely developed as a village center with buildings dating to various periods in Vineyard Haven history that are situated on small and moderately sized parcels. Properties adjacent to the house consist of the rear of commercial buildings and associated parking, including a late-twentieth-century supermarket building. The building infill between the harbor and the Caleb Prouty House has blocked the property's view of Vineyard Sound to the east, and commercial development has altered the historic contextual setting. The currently-vacant building is in good condition, and the site is overgrown.

The two-story (one-and-three-quarter-story), three-bay by four-bay, gable-front, sidehall plan Caleb Prouty House has an asphalt shingle roof, wood shingle (east elevation) and clapboard (east, south, and north elevations) siding, and a brick foundation. Two tall, slender, corbelled, brick chimneys pierce the roof from the north gable slope. The front-gable roof profile of the east facade bears a deep raking cornice and a full wood classical entablature with gable returns and paneled Doric pilasters flanking the facade. An elliptical-shape, wood ornamental fan embellishes the facade gable peak. The main entrance at the southernmost bay repeats a full entablature and simple Doric pilasters that surround sidelights and a transom framing a wood paneled door and associated wood screen door. Two concrete steps lead to the entrance. The second floor windows on the facade extend above the cornice line. A wide cornice extends along the south and north elevations, each terminating in a paneled pilaster at the western corner. The west elevation has simply trimmed gable eaves and is partially covered by the kitchen ell. Fenestration is regular with rectangular-shaped, 6/6 double-hung wood sash windows with one single-pane, horizontal window set in the south elevation cornice. One non-original slightly smaller 6/6 wood double-hung window is located on the west elevation of the ell. All window openings have simple plank wood trim. A small shed structure with wood shiplap siding and a rolled asphalt roof is attached to the north elevation of the house.

The kitchen ell is a rectangular-shaped, one-bay by two-bay, gable-front addition extending from the west elevation of the main block. A tall, slender, brick chimney rises from the ridgeline of the asphalt shingle-sheathed, shallow-pitch gable roof. The north and west elevations are sheathed in wood clapboard and the south elevation is clad in wood shingles. Two secondary entrances with wood paneled doors (one with a historic wood screen door) provide access to the building at the south and north elevations of the kitchen ell. The ell rests on a mortared fieldstone foundation that is not visible on the exterior. A basement hatch entrance is located on the south side within a brick paved area.

The first floor interior plan of the Caleb Prouty House has a sidehall plan residence layout with a kitchen ell. The main entrance leads to a narrow hall with a staircase along the north side leading up to the second floor. The staircase winders curve at the second floor. It features tapered banisters and a railing that terminates on the first floor at a spiral supported on a cluster of banisters. Adjacent to the hall on the south side are two parlor (sitting/living) rooms divided by a pair of large, sliding, wood, paneled, pocket doors. These rooms are nearly identical with central brick fireplaces, molded wood mantels and delft tile ornamentation along the south exterior wall. Behind the stair hall is a small room and access to the attached rear kitchen ell to the west. All interior window trim on the first floor consists of molded frames, with bull's-eye ornament in each corner, the majority of which extend to the baseboard.



# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

TISBURY

15 CROMWELL LANE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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The building's interior finishes are plaster walls and ceilings, molded woodwork lining the walls, and wood plank flooring throughout the house. All interior doors are wood and paneled with two tall vertical panels over one horizontal panel, set in molded frames with bull's eye corner blocks.

The second floor plan has been slightly altered since its original construction, likely in the early to mid-twentieth century, to accommodate the introduction of plumbing and divide the space to create more bedrooms. The level is divided into an "L"-shaped hall leading to one master and three secondary bedrooms and terminating at a small bathroom centrally located along the south elevation. The master bedroom is similar to the parlor rooms on the first level, with a central fireplace and similar application to fenestration. The secondary bedrooms are relatively small, with simple rectangular baseboards; non-original, molded window and door trim; and non-original 6/6 wood sash windows. The bathroom has contemporary amenities, a non-original, single-pane, awning window and a tile floor.

The house has a basement with a dirt floor and stone foundation beneath the kitchen ell, accessed by a wood bulkhead and full-width stairs from the south elevation. A small, dirt crawl space is located beneath the main block accessed from the interior through an opening in the floor boards in the center of the rear parlor room and from the exterior through an opening in the foundation on the south elevation of the house.

A ca. 1880 historic photograph predating the 1883 Main Street fire shows a partial view of the Caleb Prouty House and its east and north elevations. The house looks very similar to its present state. In the photograph, the house has dark shutters over the second story windows and shutters covering the door (either lightly painted or a stripped of paint revealing light, raw wood) of the east facade. A wood fence shown lining the property boundary is no longer extant (Anonymous n.d.). The 1914 Sanborn map shows the house and ell, with the ell footprint extending further towards the west, possibly indicating there may have been an extension that has been removed (Sanborn 1914).

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Caleb Prouty House sat at the top of a hill that overlooked the present day Vineyard Haven Harbor to the northeast. Until the twentieth century, the area that occupies Vineyard Haven was called Holmes Hole (known as Homses Hole until the late eighteenth century). The economy of Holmes Hole at the middle of the nineteenth century was driven by maritime activity. In the 1850 census, about three quarters of the men in the village were identified as a mariner by occupation. Mariners, particularly Master Mariners who controlled their own ship, valued well-constructed houses in the same way they appreciated a well-built ship hull (Banks 1966; Norton 2000:15-20). The strip of houses that faced Vineyard Sound, including the Caleb Prouty House, has been the focus of several early- to mid-nineteenth-century depictions of Holmes Hole from the perspective of the sea (Baylies 1998).

Additional research will be needed to determine the original construction date of the house. The house may have been built before 1838, based on an 1838 woodcut view from the harbor, which appears to show a building in the approximate location of the Prouty House (Banks 1966:9). The arrangement of openings on the east gable end elevation of the house within the drawing does not match the characteristics of the current house. Research has also indicated that there were no structures built on this lot before the Prouty House, which also suggests that the drawn building may be the current house before remodeling. Other buildings in Vineyard Haven appear to have experience a similar remodeling around that time. The builder of this house has been identified as possibly John Howland from the bulls-eye ornament that was likely selected from a pattern book (Norton personal communication 2013). The house was built or remodeled within the time period associated with the Greek Revival style nationally, and between the years of 1833 and 1864, which saw the greatest development of Greek Revival residential and public architecture in Vineyard Haven (Norton 2000:61, personal communication 2013; Adams et al. 1982).

The property on which the Prouty House sits was acquired by Charles Smith in 1835 from Samuel Claghorn for \$200 and may have contained a building, as depicted in the 1838 woodcut (Deed 24-184; Banks 1966:9). Claghorn owned the property known as the Claghorn Tavern (extant, no MHC form) at the south corner of Beach Street and Cromwell Lane. Smith apparently made no improvements to the property that stretched to present-day Water Street, which he sold to Caleb Prouty in 1844 for \$150

*Continuation sheet 2*



## INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

TISBURY

15 CROMWELL LANE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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(Deed 34-326-327). Deed records indicate that the Caleb Prouty House, set at the rear of a lot, was likely constructed or remodeled by mariner Caleb Prouty between 1844 and 1851 as a residence for his family (Dukes County Registry of Deeds 1819-1851; United States Census Records 1850).

Caleb Prouty (born July 22, 1783) worked for the United States Revenue Service, a maritime law enforcement organization that was active between 1790 and 1915. His son, Everett, was also a mariner. His wife, Nancy, was the daughter of prominent Holmes Hole merchant, Elijah Hillman. Elijah had previously owned the adjacent property, the former landmark known as the "Hillman House" (constructed circa 1810; see Photograph 7), which had been passed down in the family for a number of years (Anonymous n.d.). The Hillman House was demolished in 1961 to make room for a department store. In 1850, Nancy Prouty died of dysentery. One year later, Caleb sold the house for \$1,000 to Abraham H. Anthony, a tailor and merchant, who lived there with his wife Fanny H. for several decades (Dukes County Registry of Deeds; Norton 2000; Walling 1858; United States Census Records 1850-1880).

Between 1833 and 1864, residential development of Holmes Hole was concentrated two blocks west of the Caleb Prouty House on the opposite side of Main Street. Here, well-constructed, predominantly Greek Revival style houses were built primarily along William Street and also on Main Street either by successful sea captains or men associated with the marine industry (Norton 2000:61; Adams et al. 1982). The William Street Historic District (MHC TIS.A; NR listed 1982) is "an early and successful effort of planned residential real estate development made possible by wealth accrued in the Island's maritime economy" and as "the most intact and consistent surviving group of Greek Revival buildings in Tisbury" (Adams et al. 1982). Out of the 56 contiguous properties in district, 36 constructed between 1833 and 1858 represent several variations of the popular Greek Revival style. Examples of mariner-constructed, Greek Revival style properties within the district include the David Porter West House (TIS.15) (1846 to 1858), the Henry Manter House (TIS.31) (1846 to 1858), and the Nathan Skiff House (TIS.5) (1849). Approximately one dozen Greek Revival style houses of the period are located along Main Street outside of the William Street Historic District.

In 1883, a fire destroyed all of the buildings in the approximately one-tenth-mile section along both sides of Main Street from Beach Street on the south to past Union Street on the north, totaling approximately 58 primary and 14 secondary buildings (Norton 2000:74). The area of the William Street Historic District was spared, and 15 Cromwell Lane is one of the few scattered buildings set back from the east side of Main Street that survived. The currently extant buildings spared nearby to the Prouty House are the Colonial period Claghorn Tavern (1759) on Beach Street, the Federal-style Ritter House (Jirah Luce House) (TIS.56) (1796 or 1803) on Beach Street, and William J. Rotch Old Steam Mill (TIS.90) (1881) on Water Street. The Colonial-period Thomas Chase house (1717) is located a few blocks to the north on Union Street. Two other buildings have been moved. The Great House was moved from the corner of Main Street and Beach Street to West Chop in 1923 (Norton 2000:39), and the Capt. Seth Daggett House (TIS.91) (1801) formerly on Beach Street has been moved to another site.

The Caleb Prouty House continued in residential use until 2012. Handwritten notations on the 1914 Sanborn map in the Martha's Vineyard Museum indicate that the residents in that year were Joe Allen and Rev. Chase (Sanborn 1914, annotated). Norman L. Chase acquired the property in 1957, and the Chase family owned the house until 2012 when it was sold to The Stop & Shop Supermarket.

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n.d. Photograph of Hillman House [ca. 1880]. Unknown Photographer. Martha's Vineyard Museum, Edgartown, MA.



# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

TISBURY

15 CROMWELL LANE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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Photograph 1. Caleb Prouty House, view southwest.



Photograph 2. Caleb Prouty House, view northeast.



**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Photograph 3. Caleb Prouty House interior, stair hall, view west.



Photograph 4. Caleb Prouty House interior, front parlor room, view north.



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Photograph 5. Caleb Prouty House interior, kitchen ell, view northwest.



Photograph 6. Caleb Prouty House interior, master bedroom, view southwest.



**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

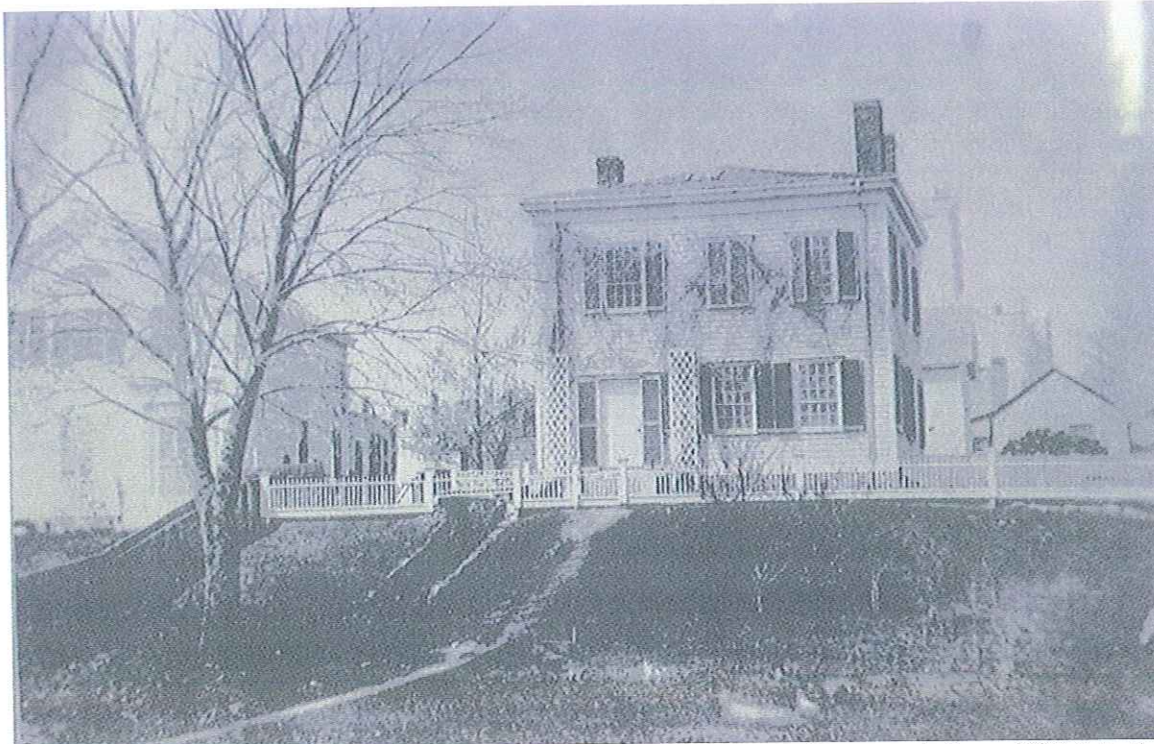
TISBURY

15 CROMWELL LANE

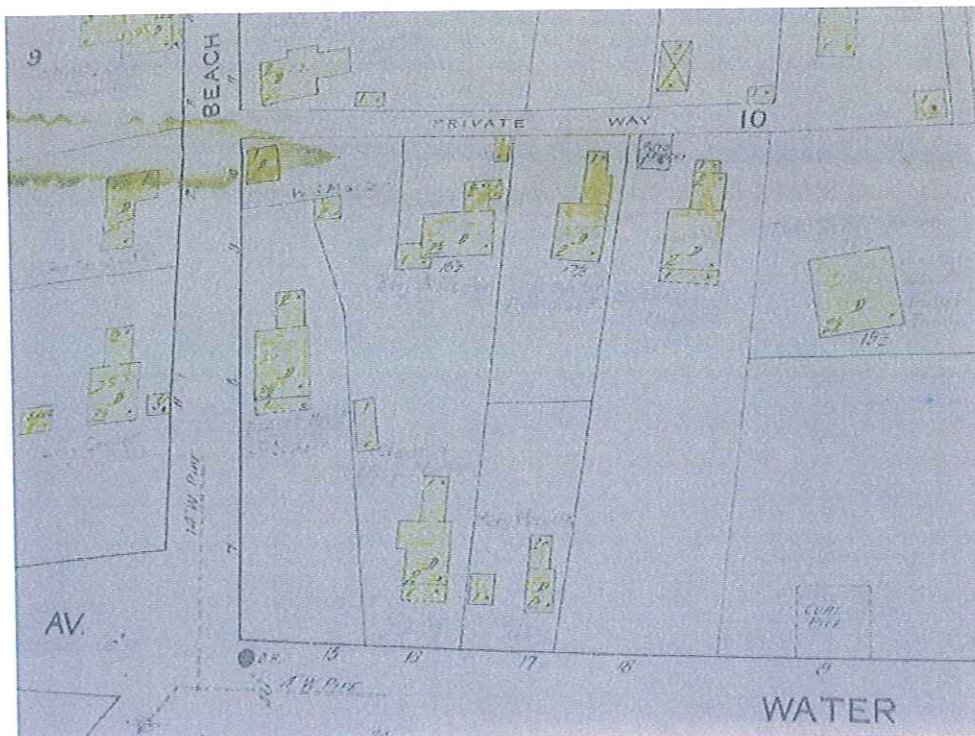
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Photograph 7. Photograph of Hillman House, view west, Caleb Prouty House on left, ca. 1880 (Martha's Vineyard Museum).



Photograph 8. Caleb Prouty House (17 1/2 Water Street) on 1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.



# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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*[Delete this page if no Criteria Statement is prepared]*

## 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

Statement of Significance by Kathleen Miller and Virginia H. Adams, PAL March 2013

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

The Caleb Prouty House at 15 Cromwell Lane in Vineyard Haven (Tisbury), MA is eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance. Under Criterion C, the house stands as an excellent local example of a moderately high-style Greek Revival style residence constructed or remodeled between 1844 and 1851 in Tisbury, retaining both a well-preserved exterior and almost pristine interior. The Caleb Prouty House possesses key character-defining features of the Greek Revival style with a front gabled roof featuring a wide cornice and flanking Doric pilasters, and an entablature door surround with full transom and side lights. The house is similar to the less elaborate residences in the William Street Historic District, and to several other houses on Main Street outside the district including the Peter Cromwell House (TIS.139), Ellis Manter House (TIS.79), 113 Main Street (TIS.113), and William Barry Owen House (TIS.111). The Caleb Prouty House is among the best preserved examples of its type and period in the village of Vineyard Haven and the Town of Tisbury. The Caleb Prouty House may possess additional architectural significance as an earlier house that was remodeled in the mid-nineteenth century. Additional research will be necessary to determine the original construction date, which may have been before 1838 based on an 1838 woodcut historical view (Banks, Annals of Tisbury 1966:9). Under Criterion A, the Caleb Prouty House, which was built by a mariner for his residence, is significant as one of the Vineyard Haven examples of modest and high style Greek Revival style residences that have important local historical associations with mariners and the village's maritime economy in the early to mid-nineteenth century. A fire in 1883 destroyed most of the southern section of Main Street, leaving this house as a rare surviving standing building in the area. The post-1883 fire neighborhood along Main Street that exists between the Caleb Prouty House and the Williams Street District prevents the property from inclusion in the Williams Street Historic District. However, the Caleb Prouty House may be part of a potential small historic district with other nearby historic properties that survived the fire, within the larger setting that has been extensively modified by large-scale twentieth-century commercial development. These buildings include the adjacent Ritter House (Jirah Luce House) (TIS.56) (1796), Claghorne Tavern (no MHC form) (1759), and William J. Rotch Old Steam Mill (TIS.90) (1881). Additional research will be necessary to define a potential district.

*Continuation sheet 9*