

Zenas Adams House  
North Pamet Road  
Truro  
Barnstable County  
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-740

HABS  
MASS,  
1-TRU,  
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

## ZENAS ADAMS HOUSE

HABS  
MASS.  
1-TRU.

As these records were incomplete when received, definitive editing has not been possible.

- Location: 1000 feet south of North Pamet Road and  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile east of U.S. Highway 6, Truro, Barnstable County, Massachusetts. Building Number 17-16 in Cape Cod National Seashore.
- Present Owner: In 1962 the owner was Dr. Wilfred Bloomberg, Russell Road, Wethersfield, Connecticut.
- Present Occupant and Use: In 1962 the house was occupied by Dr. Wilfred Bloomberg as a summer residence. It was used occasionally at other seasons of the year.
- Significance: Originally a typical Cape Cod "house and a half" in a vernacular version of the Greek Revival manner dating from around 1840, this dwelling, enlarged to a "double house" in 1940 and further enlarged in 1941 and 1961, is now a typical Cape Cod summer residence retaining most of its original features but adapted for modern use.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: Judging from the roof construction, the interior woodwork, and the general character of the house, a date in the late 1830s or early 1840s appears probable. No documentary record of an actual date has been found. A house on the site is indicated on the U.S.G.S. map of 1848, although the 1858 map of the area shows no house on the precise site.
2. Architect: The builder is unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which the structure stands. Reference is to deeds in the possession of Mrs. George Morris, Truro, Massachusetts, and to the Barnstable County Registry of Deeds in Barnstable.
 

1876 Deed, December 20, 1876, Book 129, Page 444.  
Enos Adams & wife Mary to Louisa Silva for \$400.00.

1877 Mortgage, October 31, 1877, taken by Louisa Silva & Estevin (?) Silva was satisfied October 3, 1878.  
Book 135, Pages 228-229.

- 1892 Deed, March 12, 1892, Book 201, Page 44.  
Louisa Silva of Truro to Mary A. Foster of Provincetown for \$400.00.
- 1902 Deed, August 28, 1902, Book 258, Page 166.  
Mary A. Foster of Provincetown to Mary Ellen Morris of Truro, parcel of land with dwelling house and outbuildings thereon for \$85.00.
- 1902 Deed, August 28, 1902, Book and Page not noted.  
Mary Ellen Morris conveyed the property recorded in Book 258, Page 166, plus three acres of meadow to Alexander A. Francis for \$85.00 payable in three years. Peter Morris, husband of Mary Ellen Morris, released all interest in the property, which had apparently been inherited by Mary Ellen Morris.
- 1940 George Morris, son of Peter and Mary Ellen Morris, sold the property to Dr. Wilfred Bloomberg of Wethersfield, Connecticut.

4. Alterations and Additions: Until 1940 the house was substantially unaltered. The attic was unfinished and used as a dormitory by George Morris's children. Mr. and Mrs. George Morris used the little chamber off the kitchen as their bedroom.

In 1940 the house was enlarged for Dr. Bloomberg, the new owner, by Horace Snow. It was remodeled into a double house instead of a house and a half by moving the eastern wall out  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet and building in between, thus enlarging all the rooms on the east side of the house, squaring it up and making it symmetrical.

In 1941 the north ell was added and fitted up as a modern kitchen. The western part of the house is still apparently original, except for some changes made in the northwest room. Formerly there had been a vestibule with an outside entrance immediately to the north of the west room. That has been remodeled into a study.

In 1961 further additions made by Dr. Bloomberg, included a new garage and a guest wing on the east side of the house, extending out from the northern ell--i.e. back beyond the south face of the building.

The asphalt driveway was paved in 1961, it had been sand before that.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The Zenas Adams House is a one-and-a-half story Cape Cod "double house" of wood. The rectangular house faces south with modern ell to the northeast. All exterior wall surfaces, except the north which is clapboard, are shingled. This mid-nineteenth century house was enlarged from a "house-and-a-half" to a double house by the addition of seven and a half feet to the end. The house is in excellent condition and surrounded by modern residential lawns and planting.

The over-all dimensions are 24' on the east and 31 ½' on the south. The foundations are brick with about six courses exposed. The walls are plank construction, with shingled exterior and plastered interior, except for the clapboarded north side. The frame is post and beam. There are red brick stoops at all doors. One chimney is at the center of the main house.

The front door is on the south side, in the center. It has a four light transom. There is a modern Dutch door on the west side. The ell doors are modern. The sash is nine-over-six-light double hung sash. The upper sections are fixed and the lower section operates, without weights. No shutters.

The gable roof is covered with wooden shingles. The roof planks run parallel to the ridge, and timber is sawn. There is a simple box cornice.

The cellar is entered through the pantry. This cellar is the round Cape Cod type and is lined with small stones. In its present double house the front door is in the center of the south side. There is a small entry hall, backed up by the main chimney. To the southwest and the southeast are two primary rooms. To the north or rear is the old kitchen, which is flanked on its west end by a small study and a pantry. To the north and east of the old east of the old kitchen are modern additions, containing a modern kitchen and a guest suite. On the second floor there are two bedrooms and a bath.

The one stairway runs from the eastern half of the house up and to the west to the second floor. This type of stair is not uncommon for a Cape Cod "house-and-a-half", similar to the Zenas Adams House. The flooring is random width planking from five to ten inches.

The walls and ceilings are plastered. The old kitchen and the southwest room have wainscoting and trim in the Greek Revival style. The panelling in the west room is apparently original and has wainscoting with the single boards of pine about 18 inches in width with continuous chair rail forming a part of the window stools. The door facings and window facings all correspond to the style of the Greek Revival as published in Asher Benjamin's handbook of The Practice of Architecture, 1833, with the molded facings and corner blocks at the top. These details and the simple mantel and over-mantel all suggest the simple robust character of the Greek Revival as it is found on Cape Cod."

This woodwork as well as the existing mantels have been scraped, and are now finished in natural wood. Doors have six panels, except for the two in the west wall of the old kitchen where they are four panel. The doors have iron lift latches and hinges.

The house has modern electric lamps. There is central heat and the fireplaces in the southwest room and the old kitchen are open.

The house overlooks the Pamet River. There is a small modern fence to the east. A large modern garage is to the north of the main house. A large asphalt drive and parking area have been put in to the north-east of the house.

Prepared by: Donald B. Myer  
Historian  
National Park Service  
Cape Cod Survey II  
July 27, 1962