

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS  
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

LIGHTHOUSE INFORMATION FORM

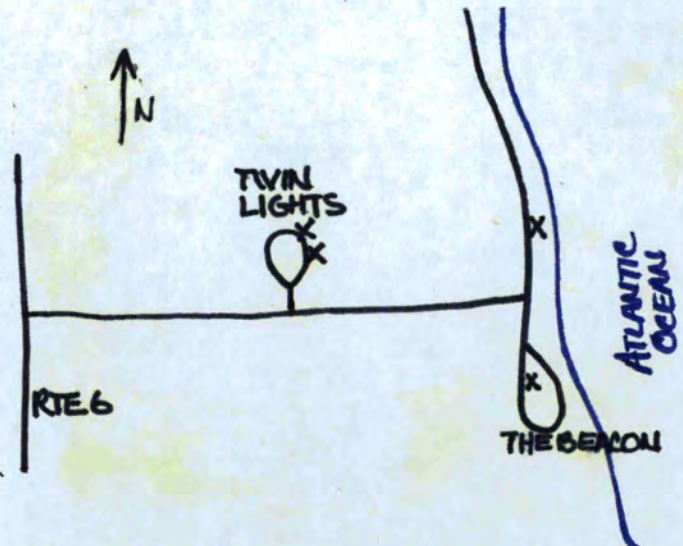
NUMBER 39

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

PHOTOGRAPH KEY  
Leslie Fox - MHC - 1981  
1) Twin towers after removal of connector  
2) Detail of entry showing lapstrake sheathing  
(Jack Clark - CCPDC - 1980)  
3) Twin towers before removal of connector

HISTORIC NAME: two of the "Three Sisters of Nauset"  
Now known as "Twin Lights"  
TOWN: Eastham  
LOCATION: c. 1 mile west of the Beacon. Along road to Nauset Beach, on private driveway halfway between Beach and High School  
COUNTY: Barnstable CODE: 001  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 10th  
LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Barnstable County Courthouse  
Book 16, page 264  
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: See attached assessor's map

SKETCH MAP



LAT./LONG.: N/A  
UTM COORDINATE: 19/420/300/4632/800  
USGS QUADRANGLE: Prov. RI., Mass., Conn.  
SCALE: 1:250,000  
ACREAGE: 5.5 acres  
OWNER(S): National Park Service/Dept. of Interior  
STATUS: Unmanned/Inactive

RECORDED BY: N. Salzman/J. Clarke  
ORGANIZATION: MHC/Cape Cod Planning  
DATE: July 22, 1981

MAY 4 1987

"Three Sisters of Nauset," Eastham

SITE DESCRIPTION

The "Twin Lights" of the "Three Sisters of Nauset" are located off Cable Road near the Coast Guard Beach, on north side of the road, set in a clearing on a wooded lot, once the home of Helen Cummings. The National Park Service has demolished the ca. 1920 cottage that connected the two lights and plans to move and restore the lights near their original site (that is, on the entrance to the Coast Guard Beach).

MAJOR ELEMENTS DESCRIPTION: Two 1892 cylindrical wood frame, shingled towers, two stories high. Built of wood frame lapstrake construction (visible). Towers contain three 6/6 windows each, set within simple frames: two at Level 1, one at Level 2. Window frames project and are topped by simple hoods. Of these windows, only the one at Level one may be original. Both towers have exposed sections where they formerly joined the cottage and where they originally possessed entry porches.

The Lens Rooms of the lighthouses are missing.

The platforms for the lens rooms now form the roofs of the lighthouses. Wooden cornices project as the bases for the lens rooms; the Italianate brackets that once supported the lens rooms (see the Beacon) are missing. The towers are set on concrete foundations.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY:

- 8/18/1837 - Benjamin H. A. and Sally Collins sell land for \$150;  
1838 - a "curious trio, badly built, three brick towers in a line 15' high, 150' apart on the Bluff at Nauset"; two keepers houses accompanied the towers; the LIGHT consisted of stationary and alternating lights; each with 10 lamps with 13" reflectors. Cost \$7050.01, \$2949.99 of appropriation returned;
- 1892 - three portable wooden towers were built further back from cliffs. The original brick towers washed away (still visible on the beach);
- 1911 - two of the three towers were sold to Helen Cummings of Attleboro, Massachusetts and moved to a temporary site near the French Cable Hut where they were used as cottages. The third light, the Beacon, continued in service with a revolving three flash light;
- 1920 - the Cummings family moved the towers to their present site, and built a cottage connecting them. "The Towers" complex, as it was known, thus incorporated the former lighthouses as corner bays;
- 12/22/1965 - National Park Service purchased the property.

#### LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Twin Sisters of Nauset possess integrity of setting, materials and workmanship as well as significant associations with the development of aids to navigation in Massachusetts. They were constructed in 1892 as part of a trio of wooden towers which replaced an earlier trio of 1838 brick towers and which were purposely designed to be portable due to the shifting nature of the Nauset bluffs. Although they are somewhat deteriorated and have lost their lens rooms, they remain significant as the only example of a triple light (along with The Beacon - #3) illustrating an early, simple technological effort to distinguish between lights which are geographically close. As technology evolved, it was possible to incorporate three signal lights within the same tower (see Nauset Beach, Eastham, #27) through use of a revolving mechanism, thus rendering three separate towers obsolete. The Twin Lights thus meet criteria A and C and exception B of the National Register on the state level as well as survey criteria 1a, 4a.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received MAY 4 1987

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 4 of 4

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Lighthouses of Massachusetts TR  
State MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

31. Chatham Light Station

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Alores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

32. Clark's Point Light

Substantive Review

Keeper

See no date on sheet

Attest

33. Tarpaulin Cove Light

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Alores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

34. Three Sisters of Nauset (Twin Lights)

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Alores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

35. West Chop Light

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Alores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

36. Wing's Neck Light

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Alores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

37. Wood End Light Lookout Station

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Alores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

38. Newburyport Harbor Rear Range Light

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Alores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

39. Ten Pound Island Light

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Alores Byers 8/1/88

Attest

40.

Keeper

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Three Sisters of Nauset--Twin Lights (Lighthouses  
of Massachusetts TR)  
Barnstable County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 4/28/87  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/2/88  
Date Due: 6/15/87  
Action:  ACCEPT 6-15-87  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: DOI USCG NPS

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_  
Discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
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4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	
	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	
	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

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**8. Significance**

Period      Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates                      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_  
Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_  
UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title                      date

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**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS  
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

JULY 1981



by Servey

" 3 sisters of Nauset "

Twin Sisters of Nauset  
Eastham #40

Photo #10P3



"3 sisters of Nauset"  
NPs owned

Twin Sisters of Nauset  
Eastham #40  
Photo #2 of 3



#7.

"The Towers" Jack Clarke  
10/50

Cable Rd.

No. Eastham, MA

Lighthouses of May 19

(The Lighthouses of Nantuxet)

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS  
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

CAPE COD PLANNING  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
1st DISTRICT COURT HOUSE  
BARNSTABLE, MASS. 02630

#'s 5, 6 & 7.

Twin Lights & The Beacon  
NAUSET LIGHTHOUSE

Bestign Assessors map,  
p. 23, Town Hall,  
January, 1978.

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS  
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

C.C.N.S. 204-31

C.C.N.S.- 203-32

129-32; 32E6262  
TOWN OF EASTHAM

1-5, 8-10  
129-32; 32E6265  
.59

FIFTH  
129-32; 32E6276  
B3-7,8  
.15

FOURTH  
B2  
2-5, 9, 10  
129-32; 32E6282  
.42

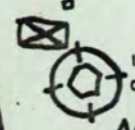
NAUSET  
B2  
7,8  
13

AVE.

AVE.

AVE.

B12  
1-7  
.66  
129-32; 32E6284



129-32; 32E6298  
0.02 AC.  
NAUSET  
LIGHT

B28  
3.75  
129-32; 32E6297

B15  
1,2  
.26  
129-32;  
32E6815  
SPRUCE

PLAN BEACH 3  
STREET  
129-32; 31E6171  
B5  
1-14  
1.03  
STREET  
129-32; 31E6175  
B2  
1-14  
1.04  
ST.



NAUSET

SECOND

FIRST  
BEACH

PLAN 1

ROAD

BEACH

PLAN 2

NAUSET  
CABLE ST.  
129-32; 31E6769  
B4  
1-6  
.44

POPLAR ST.  
B6  
1-3  
.22  
0.07A  
RD. 6  
TOWN

LINDEN ST.  
BB  
1-6  
.44

OAK ST.  
B9  
1-6  
.44

BIO  
1-8  
129-32; 32E6856

OCEAN DRIVE  
(BIRCH ST.)

AVENUE

RD 2, 4, 6  
TOWN  
0.24A  
129-32; 32E6898

OCEAN VIEW  
AVE.

C.C.N.S. 129-32  
(100' SCALE)



Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000282