

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Massachusetts
COUNTY:	Barnstable
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	JUL 30 1976

1. NAME

COMMON: ~~Atwood-Higgins, House~~ No. 25-55 (Cape Cod NS)

AND/OR HISTORIC: Thomas Atwood House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Boundbrook Island

CITY OR TOWN: Wellfleet

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Twelfth

STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 25 COUNTY: Barnstable CODE: 001

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Mr. Higgins</u> <u>has life</u> <u>tenancy</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. AGENCY

National Park Service

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable) North Atlantic Region

CITY OR TOWN: Boston

STREET AND NUMBER: 150 Causeway Street

STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 25

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Barnstable Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Barnstable

STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 001

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: HABS--Cape Cod National Seashore

DATE OF SURVEY: 1960-62 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

STREET AND NUMBER: Interior Building

CITY OR TOWN: Washington, D.C.

STATE: CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Massachusetts

COUNTY: Barnstable

ENTRY NUMBER: 11

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This old "typical" Cape Cod double house on Boundbrook Island, Wellfleet, was originally a "half-house" of an unknown date of construction. The present house was described in a deed of 1805 as "an old house." The Herring River flows along the south boundary of the property which actually encompasses 154 acres of pitch pine, unimproved property. Only 24 acres were reserved for mapping purposes--this amply covers the so-called "complex" of buildings.

After acquiring title to his family homestead in 1919, George K. Higgins patiently restored the house strictly in the spirit of the "original", replacing only decayed wood with new and retaining the original intent. In only two instances did he alter the house as he found it--the attic today has only one chamber; formerly, there were three; and the wall-paper, in all rooms except the large front room, had to be changed. Even here, old type paper was utilized.

The old lock to the front door, now installed in the nearby "guest house" was made in England.

The color exterior of this clapboard house with shingled ends is old-fashioned mustard yellow without trimming, sash and muntins painted white. Windows are traditional "9 over 6" panes with heavy, jutting window molds characteristic of truly old Cape houses. Roof has traditional wooden shingles.

There is a barn on the property, built largely of old timbers and boards, a "country store" likewise built partly of old planks, a "guest house", a wood shed, and a modern garage. This building "complex" is therefore made up of a fine old house with recently constructed buildings done in the spirit and design of older times.

The Atwood-Higgins House itself is perhaps the oldest on the Lower Cape.

Significance: 2nd Order

Longitude and Latitude: See Section 10

Acreage: 24 Acres (complex is easily contained in this plot). It is unnecessary to describe the entire 154 acres in the homestead, consisting as it does of unimproved pine forest.

Recommended Treatment: Preservation, exterior, which includes painting on a 4-year cycle, windows and doors kept in repair and roof free from leaks: \$450. annually. Interior: preservation, which includes painting and extermination of termites on a 4-year cycle. \$350. annually.

Photograph enclosed;

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century (unknown) 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) *A half-house, a Double House by 1800*

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | XXXXXXXXXX | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | XXXXXXXXXX | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Quoting Higgins, "This is a record of what I have done to restore the old family homestead, Boundbrook Island, Wellfleet, Mass.. as well as an effort to properly record by years the history of all additions such as buildings, fences, water supply and improvements as they occurred, and to supply a guide providing reliable information to those who follow after." Thus wrote George K. Higgins in a preface to his invaluable documentary on the restoration of his ancestral home. He says further..."the house (belonged) to my great grandmother and great grandfather, Mercy and Thomas Atwood...Captain Edward B. Atwood...gave me this old house in 1919. Neglected and almost abandoned since the death of Thomas Atwood in 1873, the old house, when I came to it, showed all this too plainly. The nearest approach by car stopped at the end of Pamet Point Road."

From this point across the meadow to the island was passable only by horse and wagon. Six inches to ten inches of water usually covered the meadow and road.

On this historic island, the original site of the Town of Wellfleet, lived and died many of those brave and hardy souls that wrote some of our early history...." Quoting Higgins further: "An old house is a constant care. Captain Atwood ran this house back to 1680 but said it was even older. Antiquarians in my time have dated it 1650 minus. It was a half-house before it was a whole (double) house. It once no doubt bore an outside chimney. The east half is much older than the west half. Reading the history and expansion of the Bay Colony causes me to believe 1635-40 would be fairly accurate. Thomas Atwood bought it in 1805 for \$396.96."

An interesting historical note states that "the first vessel built in Wellfleet of which we have any record was the schooner Freemanson, built under the hill below the Thomas Atwood place on Boundbrook Island about 1800. This craft was of 100 tons burden....."

Another historical note: If the original homestead dates as early as 1635, the original builder not only lived among Indians, but probably lived here without permission of the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth--the Fathers were very jealous of their authority to grant settling on Cape Cod. Eastham itself was not settled until 1644. However, George E. Willison in the history of the Pilgrims (Saints and Strangers), Chap. XXI, says, regarding families moving to Nauset on Cape Cod in 1644..." the leaders in the agitation (to have their land rights respected) had already staked out fields and started buildings on the Cape, and insisently asked permission to proceed, which at length was granted." (Italics ours).

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"The Story of but a few years in the long life of a very old house" by George K. Higgins. Ms. at the Cape Cod National Seashore, typed at his own expense. A thick ms. profusely illustrated with maps, deeds, and photographs. Original ms. owned by Mrs. Goerge Higgins.

A tape recording: Mr. Higgins describes his work on this old house. Copy of tape on hand at CACO.

History of Wellfleet by Everett I. Nye, 1920.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	41° 57' 18"	70° 03' 42"				
NE	41° 57' 09"	70° 03' 31"				
SE	41° 57' 09"	70° 03' 31"				
SW	41° 57' 18"	70° 03' 42"				
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 24						
LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES						
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			
Massachusetts	25	Barnstable	001			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: <i>Edison Pike Lohr Historian</i>	DATE: 7/13/73
BUSINESS ADDRESS: <i>Cape Cod National Seashore</i>	
STREET AND NUMBER:	PHONE: 617-349-3785
CITY OR TOWN: <i>South Wellfleet</i>	STATE: <i>Massachusetts</i> 02663
	CODE: 25

12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

State Liaison Officer recommendation:

- Yes
- No
- None

Elizabeth R. Amador
State Liaison Officer Signature

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Liaison Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The recommended level of significance is National State

Robert A. Wood
Federal Representative Signature
Date: _____
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Title

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Clayton R. Kopp
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: *7/30/76*

ATTEST:
W. J. Mitchell
Keeper of The National Register

Date: *7/28/76*

SEE INSTRUCTIONS