

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Adams, Charles P. House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 549 Main Street N/A not for publication

city or town Grambling N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Lincoln Parish code 061 zip code 71245

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Gerri Hobdy 1/9/96
Signature of certifying official/Title Gerri Hobdy, Date
LA SHPO, Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 - determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
 - determined not eligible for the National Register.
 - removed from the National Register.
 - other, (explain): _____

Edson A. Beall 2/26/96
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Entered in National Register

Adams, Charles P. House
Name of Property

Lincoln Parish, LA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

N/A

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Ethnic Heritage/Black

Period of Significance

1936 - 1945

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Adams, Charles P.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Adams, Charles P. House
Name of Property

Lincoln Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property @ 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	115	526940	3597730
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2			

3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date October 1995

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

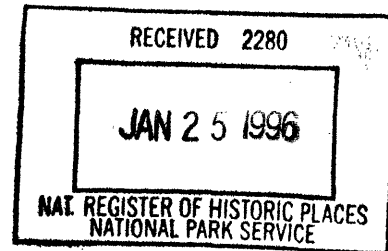
name GSU Foundation, Inc., James E. Webb, Executive Director

street & number P. O. Box 26 telephone (318) 247-8166

city or town Grambling state LA zip code 71245

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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The Charles P. Adams House (1936) is a frame dwelling which stands on a large corner lot just south of the Grambling State University campus in the Lincoln Parish town of Grambling. Although it shows very slight influences of the bungalow style, it will be classified as "no style" for the purposes of this nomination. The house has experienced some alteration since construction. However, there is no doubt that it retains its National Register eligibility.

As originally built, the house was articulated as a one-and-one-half story cottage with an extremely large pent dormer forming the upper story. Despite this articulation, the house was in effect a full two stories (see c. 1950 photograph). Some time after 1950 the side portions of the original pitched roof which flanked the large pent dormer were removed due to deterioration. This gave the house more of the appearance of a straightforward two story dwelling.

The residence now consists of a large rectangular mass beneath a low pitched roof. Its facade features a full length front gallery beneath its own pent roof. This roof is supported by four wooden posts and two brick piers slightly suggestive of the bungalow style. The piers terminate the gallery on each end; two of the posts frame the front door; and the other two stand near the piers. This configuration results in porch bays of uneven size. The facade also features four sets of paired windows. An additional single window is located above the central front door. The home's south side (at the rear) is marked by a slight projection beneath a flat or very low roof. This projection contains two bands of windows, with the first floor band containing three and the second floor band containing four windows. Both sides of the home have external chimneys.

The home's interior is very simple, with its only stylistic element being two brick fireplaces with wooden mantels. Like the porch piers, these fireplaces are reminiscent of the bungalow style. The first floor plan consists of a stair hall flanked by a large living room on the north and by a smaller dining room on the south. The dining room connects to a second small hall which opens into a sunroom on the south side and the kitchen on the east. A large pantry opens into the kitchen from beneath the stairs. On the second floor a hallway follows the outline of the stairwell, with four bedrooms and a bath opening off this hall.

In addition to the roofline change mentioned above, the home received other alterations before its donation to the Grambling State University Foundation by Charles P. Adams' family in 1979. A subsequent rehabilitation has restored much, although not all, of the building's original appearance. The following list documents changes that were not corrected (other than the roof) or that were made during the rehabilitation. These include:

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- 1) the replacement of the old concrete steps leading to the front porch with brick steps, the removal of the back porch, and the removal of a rear chimney which serviced the kitchen,
- 2) the installation of a powder room in the downstairs hallway and the construction of a closet in the downstairs sunroom, and
- 3) the removal of a portion of the wall between the two north side second story bedrooms and the installation of a casing to frame the opening created. This enlarged room is now used as the Grambling State University Hall of Fame.

Although the change to the home's roofline is regrettable, none of the above listed alterations is serious enough to impact the eligibility of the home. There is no doubt that Charles P. Adams would recognize his retirement home were he to return to the town of Grambling today, as can be readily seen by comparing a current photo with one taken shortly after construction (see enclosed photo). As the only surviving structure directly associated with the founder of Grambling State University, the Charles P. Adams House is a prime candidate for National Register listing.

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Charles P. Adams House -- As It Appeared Shortly After Construction

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Charles P. Adams House c.1950

Note: House had been asbestos sided by this time. Asbestos siding removed when house rehabilitated by Grambling University Foundation.



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Adams, Charles P. House, Grambling, Lincoln Parish, LA

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The Charles P. Adams House is significant at the local level in the areas of education and black history because of its association with Charles Philip Adams, the founder of Grambling State University. The period of significance ranges from 1936, the year the structure was built as Adams' retirement home, through 1945, the fifty year cutoff. Adams continued to live in the house until his death in 1961. A local level of significance has been chosen for the nomination because during the historic period the influence of the school Adams founded was largely regional (i.e. Northern Louisiana) in nature.

Charles P. Adams was born in Brusly, Louisiana on July 22, 1873. Raised by his grandmother after his mother's death and his father's remarriage, Adams received only a smattering of education at the hands of his aunt during his early years. However, he acquired industrious work habits from his grandmother--habits which assisted him when, in 1892, he entered a partnership with his uncle to grow sugar cane. The two men purchased one hundred acres of land near the Mississippi River for a price of \$4,000. The terms of the sale were \$500 down, with the balance due in four years. By cultivating part of the land and renting the rest, the two men successfully paid their debt in the required time. Thus, six-foot, ten-inch tall Adams was considered a successful and prosperous man by the age of twenty-three.

Despite his prosperity, Adams wanted more from life. He wished to acquire additional education and become a lawyer. Going against the wishes of his family, he used a bounty of \$75, which had been awarded to him by the federal government for growing sugar cane, to purchase clothing and travel to Montgomery, Alabama, the home of Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute. Although he had not applied in advance and needed remedial work, Adams was allowed to enroll in Tuskegee's vocational curriculum. For the next few years he combined his studies with janitorial and bookkeeping jobs in order to avoid spending what was left of his bounty money. He completed his studies in 1901.

Adams had apparently finalized plans to enter Howard University in Washington, D.C. when he was summoned to a meeting with Booker T. Washington. Washington had received a letter from a group of North Louisiana blacks who needed help in operating a school. Charles P. Adams was Washington's candidate for the job. Although it would mean abandoning his dream of a law career, Adams eventually allowed himself to be swayed by Washington's argument that he should stay in the South and serve his people. After visiting his family in Brusly, he arrived in Lincoln Parish on August 4, 1901. There the 28 year old man met his new employers, the North Louisiana Colored Agricultural Relief Association.

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Basically a farmer's organization, the association was founded in 1896 and chose Lincoln Parish as its permanent home in 1899. Evidence is conflicting concerning how soon education became one of the organization's priorities. However, by 1899 the group had purchased land for their school (approximately one mile from the current Grambling site); begun construction of a two story building; hired two teachers; and held two, three month school terms in the nearby Allen Greene store. However, the latter experience showed the association's leaders that they lacked the skills needed to run a school. It was at this point that their request for help was forwarded to Booker T. Washington.

Between August 1 and November 1 Adams faced four priorities: 1) to finish the still incomplete two story school, 2) to obtain additional teachers, 3) to build support for the institution among the leaders of North Louisiana's black and white communities, and 4) to recruit students. He accomplished the first goal by instructing his brother to sell his interest in the family farm and pouring his \$700 profit into the building. The result was a structure containing a chapel, two classrooms, and ten dormitory rooms for boarding students. A letter to Booker T. Washington brought the needed teachers. One of these educators was domestic science instructor Martha Adams, whose father Lewis Adams had assisted Washington in founding Tuskegee and currently taught there. Martha Adams and Charles Adams would eventually marry.

Charles P. Adams achieved the goals of publicizing the school and recruiting students by embarking upon an extensive speaking tour. As a result of his efforts, approximately 125 students (twenty of whom were boarders) were in class on November 1, 1901, the institution's opening day. Although the farm organization had originally called their school the "Colored Industrial and Agricultural School," they changed its name to "Allen Greene Normal and Industrial Institute" around this time.

Dissension soon developed between Adams and the North Louisiana Colored Agricultural Relief Association's Board of Directors. Although the name first chosen for the school shows clearly that the members had originally supported the concept of an industrial school similar to that at Tuskegee, the organization's emphasis changed when a group of Baptist ministers gained control around 1903. These men wished to convert the school into a religious institution, a change which Adams and his teaching staff strongly resisted. The situation became more strained when Adams reorganized the school's board of directors. It had long been his policy to develop close ties and support within the white community, but his decision to replace most of the board's black members with Caucasians greatly angered the farm organization's leaders. Thus, the issues crystallized into two areas: 1) a religious versus a secular curriculum and 2) black vs. white control of the school. The result was a break between Adams and his employers--a break which

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Adams, Charles P. House, Grambling, Lincoln Parish, LA

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resulted in a lawsuit. The case was at first decided in favor of the ministers, but Adams appealed and his position was sustained by the higher court.

Meanwhile, Adams' Caucasian friends had advised him to start a new school. For this purpose he chose a 200 acre tract approximately five miles west of Ruston and conveniently located along the Illinois Central Railroad track. The community at this site was known as Grambling and was named after a white man who had opened a sawmill nearby. To pay the down payment for this land Adams requested and received pledges of \$25 each from six Ruston men. A later donation from Fidelia Jewett, a California philanthropist who proved to be Adams' and Grambling's long-term friend, covered the rest of the purchase price.

Adams called his new institution the North Louisiana Agricultural and Industrial School. It opened with 152 students and seven faculty members in the fall of 1905. Because no buildings were yet completed, classes were held in a nearby Methodist church. Eventually a physical plant consisting of two buildings was completed. For the next seven years the school offered courses in reading, writing, arithmetic, rhetoric, history, algebra, domestic science, and farming to students in grades one through ten. Aware of the importance of education, families began moving to the area so that their children could attend the school. At this time the institution was entirely funded by private means.

The funding situation began to change in 1912 or 1913, when the Lincoln Parish School Board agreed to pay the salary of one teacher. From this moment on the school became a semi-public institution, with Adams reporting periodically to the Lincoln Parish School Board. Over the next several years this financial commitment increased. The year 1913 was important for a second reason. In that year, Fidelia Jewett convinced the Lincoln Parish School Board to provide a private home on campus for Charles and Martha Adams and their children. Jewett herself donated funds to repair the structure which was chosen as the family's home. Until that time they had lived in the girls' dormitory.

Enrollment grew from approximately 110 to 300 between 1916 and 1918. However, a 1916 report by the General Education Board (a national endowment fund) described the North Louisiana Agricultural and Industrial School's physical plant as "crude" and its management as "not. . . effective." This report concluded by suggesting the school be developed into a parish training school. Such schools were designed to provide instruction for black children in grades one through ten or eleven, with a stress on "vocational" and "industrial" education at the secondary level. They also were to provide teacher training so that graduates could staff the rural black schools in the parish. Adams favored the concept of the training school and began negotiations with state officials, who in turn assisted in negotiations with the Lincoln Parish

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School Board. The conversion of the North Louisiana Agricultural and Industrial School into the Lincoln Parish Training School was finally accomplished between 1918 and 1919. One of the results of this development was that, for the first time since their arrival in North Louisiana, Charles and Martha Adams received salaries for their work. Although Adams had been promised a salary upon his arrival in 1901, he had never received any payment. Instead, he had used his own funds for the benefit of the school.

During the school's years as a parish training school, Adams himself taught civics, agriculture, and history in addition to continuing his administrative duties. The school's status as an official parish training school appears to have assisted him in fund raising. Over the next ten years he used donations from the General Education Board, Rosenwald Fund, and the Slater Fund to increase the school's faculty, organize a summer normal school for teachers, and construct additional buildings. By 1926 the campus could boast an eight room classroom building, a girls' and a boys' dormitory, a small dining hall, and an elementary school building in addition to several homes for faculty members built with donated funds.

Adams' school achieved another important milestone in 1928 when it became a state institution. This change would not have occurred had it not been for Adams' courage and the intervention of Governor Huey P. Long. The change was triggered by two developments: 1) the Lincoln Parish School Board's announcement that it could no longer afford to subsidize the training school, and 2) a growing movement to establish a collegiate level normal school to train black teachers. Although he had at first claimed no interest in the normal school, Adams apparently saw it as a way to underwrite his school's operation after the Lincoln Parish School Board's announcement. Thus, he approached local politician Howard Warren, who was running for a state Senate seat, and asked him to introduce a bill specifying the Lincoln Parish Training School as the site of the new normal. However, Warren was defeated for the seat by Robert B. Knott. Adams and Knott were not acquainted, but Adams won the Senator to his goal during a meeting initiated by Knott.

The two men then met with Governor Huey Long during one of the latter's visits to Shreveport. At first Long seemed cool toward their proposal and Senator Knott apparently became discouraged. At that point Adams, who had previously stood quietly by, took the initiative by pointedly telling Long that ". . . if he did not do something for the colored people in North Louisiana while he was governor there would be nothing done." Long responded by expressing admiration for the work of Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee and asked Adams if he knew Washington. Adams' reply apparently turned the tide: "I knew Dr. Washington very well; I attended school under him and he was responsible for my coming to Grambling." Long then instructed Senator Knott to introduce the bill. When it was at first defeated by friends of T. H.

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Harris, the state Superintendent of Public Schools, Governor Long himself appeared in the legislature to urge its passage. Although the measure did not include a monetary appropriation (none would be provided until 1932), it did rename the institution the Louisiana Negro Normal and Industrial Institute.

Because the bill did not specify changes in the school's curriculum, Adams apparently at first attempted to retain the institution's industrial and agricultural focuses. However, by the 1928-1929 school year, approximately 500 students were enrolled, including students in elementary, high school, and college freshman courses. The latter were designed specifically to prepare elementary teachers for small black rural schools. Adams' school at Grambling had grown from an elementary to a college level institution.

Although Adams had succeeded in achieving his goal for the school, the animosity which T. H. Harris felt for him would eventually lead to Adams' forced retirement. A number of possible reasons have been suggested to explain this opposition. Firstly, Harris had always opposed the choice of Grambling as the site of the normal college. Secondly, he felt that Adams lacked the higher education expected of a college president. Thirdly, Adams seems to have lacked either an appreciation or the skills for maintaining careful records and for the necessity of submitting reports in a timely manner. Fourthly, educational leaders wished the college to move in directions for which Adams was not prepared to lead. Finally, Adams was accused of misappropriating state funds for personal use. The latter charge was tied to the school's continued role in agricultural education and was probably more of a misunderstanding than anything else. However, it gave Harris additional ammunition in his fight to remove Adams. For all of these reasons, the latter became a target once the death of Huey Long in 1935 eliminated his most important protector.

Harris' first move against Adams was an attempt to relocate the school to another parish. When this failed, he used the February 1936 meeting of the state Board of Education to recommend that Adams' services as president of the Louisiana Negro Normal and Industrial Institute be terminated at the end of its current session. The board members agreed, forcing Charles P. Adams out of the school he had founded and served for over thirty years.

The school at Grambling continued to grow under its new leadership. It became a four year college in 1940 and experienced another name change, to Grambling College of Louisiana, in 1946. Graduate courses were offered for the first time in 1974, the year the school achieved university status.

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Buildings Associated with Charles P. Adams

Obviously, the most appropriate building for inclusion in the National Register due to its association with Adams would have been the house given to him by the Lincoln Parish School Board and repaired with funds donated by Fidelia Jewett--the one associated with his later productive years at the school. However, this residence was destroyed by fire some time between Adams' 1936 retirement and his death in 1961. Although the dormitory in which the family lived before moving to the house survives, it is not specifically associated with Adams because he was one of many persons who lived there. Instead, this building is more appropriately associated with Fidelia Jewett, who donated the funds for its construction and for whom the hall is named. A building on campus is named in honor of Adams, but it is of modern vintage. In fact, almost the entire Grambling campus is modern and does not represent Adams' accomplishments during the historic period.

This leaves Adams' retirement house as the structure most closely associated with him. Despite Superintendent Harris' role in Adams' dismissal, he was persuaded by Adams' friends to provide for the ex-president's retirement needs. Thus, the educator's final years (1936-1961) were spent in Grambling in the house built for him at 549 Main Street, which stands just south of the campus. As the building most closely associated with this significant educator, the Charles P. Adams House is a strong candidate for National Register listing.

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Adams House, Grambling, Lincoln Parish, LA

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10 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, Charles P., Sr. Excerpts from the "Autobiography of Charles P. Adams." Typescript, n.d. A. C. Lewis Memorial Library, Grambling State University. Copy in National Register file.

Adams, Charles P., III. "Preservation Report: Home Site of Charles P. Adams, Sr., Grambling, Louisiana." Typescript, August 1, 1981. Includes historic photographs of exterior and interior of home. Copy in National Register file.

Carter, Doris Dorcas. "Charles P. Adams and Grambling College." M. A. thesis, Louisiana Tech University, 1971. Copy in National Register file.

Gallot, Mildred B. F. A History of Grambling State University. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985.

"Historical Milestones," *Grambling State University of Louisiana Ninety-Second Anniversary Program*, September 26, 1993. Copy in National Register file.

Boundary Description: See sketch map.

Justification: Boundaries follow property lines of the parcel of land upon which the nominated resource is located.