

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	CON.310
Historic Name:	Adams, Capt. John House
Common Name:	
Address:	57 Lexington Rd
City/Town:	Concord
Village/Neighborhood:	Concord Center
Local No:	63, H9-17-1
Year Constructed:	c 1817
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	Federal
Use(s):	Multiple Family Dwelling House; Single Family Dwelling House
Significance:	Architecture
Area(s):	CON.A: Concord Monument Sq-Lexington Road Historic Dist. CON.DS: American Mile Historic District
Designation(s):	Local Historic District (03/06/1961); Nat'l Register District (09/13/1977)
Building Materials(s):	Roof: Slate Wall: Brick; Wood; Wood Clapboard Foundation: Granite; Stone, Cut



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

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Massachusetts Historical Commission

H9-17-1

Concord

A

310

80 Boylston Street

Boston, Massachusetts 02116

RECEIVED

NR: DIS; LHD



Concord

Neighborhood or village)

Concord center

57 Lexington Road

Name Capt. John Adams House

Present dwelling

Original dwelling

Construction ca. 1817

Deed research by Ruth Wheeler

Farm Federal

Architect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation granite

Wall/Trim wood clapboard and brick

Roof slate

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

garage, two sheds

Major Alterations (with dates)

1-story screened porch on Tuscan columns--

E. side, early 20th C.

Condition excellent

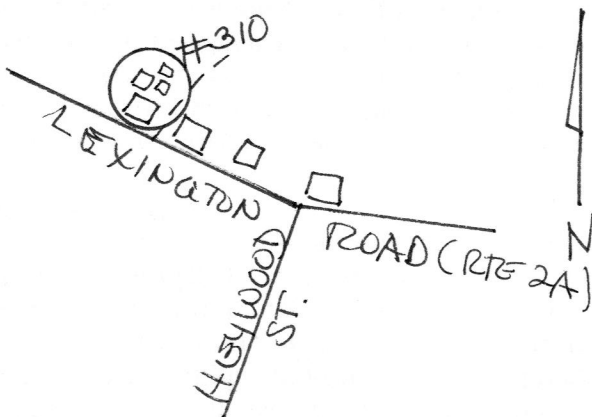
Moved [X] no [] yes Date N/A

Acreage less than one acre

Setting Shallow front yard w granite retaining wall topped with picket fence & square, urn-topped posts. Brick walk; granite steps.

Sketch Map

Draw a map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets, including route numbers, if any. Attach a separate sheet if space is not sufficient here. Indicate north.



Recorded by Anne Forbes, consultant, and

Karen Silver

Organization Concord Hist. Commission

Date 10/31/94

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION [] *see continuation sheet*

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Adams House, along with the Tolman Shops further west (see Form #304), brought the Federal style to the architectural mix on lower Lexington Road. It was built in 1817, in the decade that saw several magnificent examples of the Federal "brick-ender" being built at Concord center. It is a compact five-bay, 2 1/2-story house, two-rooms deep, with a gabled roof. It is clapboarded front and back, with a pair of high integral parapet chimneys in each brick end-wall. A two-story clapboarded wing extends to the rear. The windows in the main block are 6-over-6-sash; those on the five-bay facade have the molded, projecting frames of the period. The windows of the four-bay end walls have splayed stone lintels; a single window under the parapet at each gable-end has an arched, solid fanlight. Several 6-over-9-sash windows appear in the rear wing. All the windows appear to have their original shutters.

The main center entry is one of the most stylish and well-preserved of any Federal doorway in Concord. The door is six-panel, surrounded by leaded sidelights and fanlight, and flanked by narrow paneled pilaster boards. The entablature has a molded, projecting lintel, supported on fluted pilasters. In the northwest end wall a second six-panel door is recessed under a narrow arch, with paneled jambs and a leaded fanlight. Other architectural detail includes cornerboards, water table, and a molded, boxed cornice with returns, and a bed molding below.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE [X] *see continuation sheet*

Explain history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

This house was built as the home of store-keeper **Capt. John Adams** (ca. 1776-1836), who had come to Concord from Acton in 1815 to open a store on the south side of the street in the old "Yellow Block" on the northeast corner of the church green. Capt. Adams and his family, which included his wife and three spirited daughters, first lived in rented quarters in that building, before this house was finished about two years later. Capt. Adams is said to have been "large and handsome", and spent much of his time playing checkers. He was a member of the Social Circle from 1819 to 1831, when he sold his business and moved to Lowell.

The house occupies a 24,210-sq.-foot lot that was once part of the property associated with 47 Lexington Road, acquired by Thomas Dane in 1656. (See Form #309). In 1724 innkeeper Jonathan Ball bought the Dane property, and in 1730 he sold this piece to John Bateman, who built a tavern here. Bateman sold the tavern in 1735 to his daughter Mary and her husband Thomas Munroe, formerly of Lexington. Before the Wright Tavern was built in 1748, it was here in the Munroe Tavern that the Selectmen held their meetings, charging their refreshments to the town. Munroe ran the tavern until 1751, when he sold it to Seth Ross of Billerica, and subsequently took over the Wright Tavern himself. (Cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES [X] *see continuation sheet*

Maps and Atlases: Maps and Atlases: 1830, 1852, 1856, 1875, 1889, 1893, 1906. Sanborns. Concord Directories and Assessor's Records. Concord Free Library, Special Collections: Obituary File--Thomas Surette, 1941. Concord Vital Records. Jarvis. Houses & People in Concord. ca. 1884. (Cont.)

[X] Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places*. *If checked, a completed National Register Criteria Statement form is attached.* *NR-listed 1977.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

Concord

Capt. John Adams House

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Area(s)
A

Form No.
310

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, cont.

By the time of that sale there were at least two small shops standing on the property, and Munroe sold those to Joseph Green and Isaac Walker of Boston. Over the second half of the eighteenth century these little buildings were occupied by a succession of small artisans, who made, among other products, clocks and sleigh bells. It is not known how long Seth Ross continued to run the tavern here. He was certainly a cooper, and made barrels on the property. He died by 1769, when the property, then 55 sq. rods with a house, was sold to Isaiah Barrett. Further research will be necessary to determine whether there were other owners between Barrett and Adams. In any case, the former Green and Walker property appears to have been included in Capt. Adams' purchase, as, according to Ruth Wheeler, the little shops were torn down, along with the Bateman/Munroe house, for the building of the Adams house.

After the Adams family left Concord, this building became a double-house, and for the rest of the century, the two halves had different owners. The southeast part was apparently purchased by **Abner Ball** (b. 1797), who lived here until he, too, moved to Lowell, probably sometime in the late 1830's. His brother, **Nehemiah**, then bought the southeast half, and lived here with his family. **Nehemiah Ball** (1791-1860) worked in the tan yard of Deacon Vose on Walden Street, eventually running it himself. He was both a town constable and tax collector for several years, and became a deacon of the First Parish Church in 1835. He served several years on the school committee, was a justice of the peace, and was town clerk from 1836-1840. As a partner in the Milldam Company, he was also one of the investors who developed the Milldam in 1828. He and his family lived here until 1843, when they moved to the "almost new" house adjacent to the common that they inherited from his wife's brother, Capt. Ephraim Merriam. (See Form #333--7 Lowell Road).

The next known owner of the southeast half of the house was **Nehemiah Ball's** son-in-law, **William Frederick Hurd**. As a young man he had worked for both the New York Central and Michigan Central Railroads. Upon returning to Concord, he invested in real estate, and was the principal developer of River Street and the lower end of Elm Street. He married **Maria Augusta Ball Simonds** sometime after his first wife, **Sarah (Rice)**, died in 1850. As far as is known, they did not live at 57 Lexington Road, but resided in the Merriam House and rented out their part of this one. Among their tenants would have been **Mrs. John W. Ames**, followed by **George B. Davis**. **George Everett** also lived here for a time prior to buying the houses at 110 and 128 Walden Street in 1878. (See Form #146).

The northwest half of the house was purchased in 1849 by **Mrs. Mary Barber**. She lived here with her sister, **Mrs. Jansen**, until their deaths. **Mrs. Barber** and **Mr. Jansen**, originally from Stow, were the aunts of **Mrs. John S. Keyes**. After 1880 the northwest part was owned and occupied by one of their grand-nieces, **Mrs. Ann LaForest**, and her mother. In 1889 the northwest half is shown under the name of **H.F. Brooks**.

William Henry Brown (1849-1944) is credited with converting the house back to a single residence. His wife, **Marcella (Simonds)**, was the stepdaughter of **W.F. Hurd**, who died in 1899. She may have inherited the southeast half of the house from him, and she and her husband may have purchased the other half. **W.H. Brown** was in the dry goods business in Boston, and apparently he and his wife never lived here, either. (They had lived at 35 River Street [see Form #398] in the 1880's, spending part of the year in Boston, and made their Concord residence at 1 Lowell Road from ca. 1891 to 1906.) (Cont.)

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

Concord

Capt. John Adams House

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Area(s)
A

Form No.
310

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, cont.

From at least 1901 through 1941, 57 Lexington Road was known for its association with the Surette family. At the turn of the century, Frances Shattuck Surette, (widow of Louis Surette--see Form #298--11 Monument Square) moved here as a tenant. By 1909 at least one of her eleven children, Thomas Whitney Surette, was also living in the house.

Thomas Whitney Surette (1862-1941) was a nationally-respected musical scholar and educator. His ideas on the teaching of music became known through the lectures he gave here and in England, his writings for the Atlantic Monthly, his teaching at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, his books, and the Concord Summer School of Music which he and his wife Ada ran for 23 years. His Concord series of school and choir singing books, written with Prof. Archibald Davison of Harvard College, is acknowledged to have revolutionized choral music. By the 1930's Surette's work was widely known, and his students were placed in secondary schools and colleges nationwide. He also served as a judge of the work of composers applying for Guggenheim Foundation fellowships. In 1932 he received an honorary Doctor of Music degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

The Surettes opened the Concord Summer School of Music here in the house in 1915, with 13 students. By the second summer there were 38 students, and they moved the school to the parish house of Trinity Church. In 1918 there were 150 students, and the school was held in the lecture hall of the First Parish Church. After that, until it closed in 1938, the school was held at Concord Academy.

Thomas Surette's first position as a professional musician had been as an organist at the First Parish Church from 1882 to 1892. In 1899 he married Ada Elizabeth Miles of Philadelphia. They lived here for many years before finally purchasing the house in 1924-25. For a time Mrs. Surette's father lived with them. The Surettes continued to live here until their deaths--Ada in 1937, and Thomas in 1941.

In the 1950's, the owner of the house was Graydon Smith.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, cont.

Keyes/Tolman. "Houses in Concord."

Memoirs of the Members of the Social Circle: Nehemiah Ball, William H. Brown, Shattuck.

Walcott, Charles. Concord in the Colonial Period.

Wheeler, Ruth. Concord, Climate for Freedom.

"Concord House Files" L11.

Our American Mile.

Deed research on #47 Lexington Road.

Adams, Kathleen Uhler. Thomas Whitney Surette: a Crusader for Good Music. Cambridge, MA: Windflower Press, 1983.

Beal, Jennifer. "T.W. Surette 1861-1941: A Concord Reformer", US History, March 10, 1978.

Garrelick and Bailey. Concord in the Days of Strawberries and Streetcars. 1985.

FORM B - STRUCTURE SURVEY
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

1. Is this structure historically significant to:
Town Commonwealth Nation

Structure has historical connection with the
following themes: (See also reverse side)

Agriculture	Commerce/Industry
Architecture	Science/Invention
Art/Sculpture	Travel/Communication
Education	Military Affairs
Government	Religion/Philosophy
Literature	Indians
Music	Development of Town/City

2. Town Concord CON: 310 310 ✓

Street 57 Lexington

Name Capt. John Adams

Original Use NADIS - 9/13/77 USGS - CONCORD

Present Use LHD - 3/6/61 SET B

Present Owner Graden Smith private

Date 1819 Style Federal

Source of Date p. 28 Am. Guide p. 31

Architect _____

3. CONDITION: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Moved Altered _____

IMPORTANCE of site to area: Great Little None SITE endangered by _____

4. DESCRIPTION

FOUNDATION/BASEMENT: High Regular Low Material: cut stone

WALL COVER: Wood clapboard Brick Stone Other _____

STORIES: 1 2/3 4 CHIMNEYS: 1 2 3 4 Center End Cluster Elaborate Irregular

ATTACHMENTS: Wings Ell Shed Dependency lean Simple/Complex

PORCHES: 1 2 3 4 Portico Balcony 3. side screened Recessed _____

ROOF: Ridge Gambrel Flat Hip Mansard
Tower Cupola Dormer windows Balustrade Grillwork _____

FACADE: Gable End: Front/Side Symmetrical Asymmetrical Simple/Complex Ornament

Entrance: Front/Side Centered Double Features: fan + side lights; pilasters + cornice

Windows: Spacing: Regular/Irregular Identical/Varied _____

Corners: Plain Pilasters Quoins Obscured cornerboard

OUTBUILDINGS _____ LANDSCAPING simple, well kept up

5. Indicate location of structure on map below 6. Footage of structure from street 15'

Property has c. 70' feet frontage on street

Recorder _____

For _____

Photo II-11

- 68-445

509.005.110 63

NOTE: Recorder should obtain written permission from Commission or sponsoring organization before using this form. (See Reverse Side)

building c. 35' x 25' excluding wing + ell

FOR USE WITH IMPORTANT STRUCTURES (Indicate any interior features of note)

Fireplace

Stairway

Other

GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF SITE (Refer and elaborate on theme circled on front of form)

p. 28 Amer. Mile
locally important families -

REFERENCE (Where was this information)

BIBLIOGRAPHY



Original Owner: _____

Deed Information: Book Number _____ Page _____, _____ Registry of Deeds