### Name

**Historic**

Amos Cooke House

And/or common

### Location

**Street & Number**

Chopmist Hill Road (R.I. Route 102)

**City, Town**

Scituate

**State**

Rhode Island

**Vicinity of**

Vicinity of Congr. District 2 Hon. Edward Beard

**Congressional District**

Scituate

**Code**

44

**State Code**

Providence 007

### Classification

- **Category**
  - District
  - Building(s)
  - Structure
  - Site
  - Object

- **Ownership**
  - Public
  - Private
  - Both

- **Status**
  - Occupied
  - Unoccupied
  - Work in Progress
  - Accessible
  - Yes: Restricted
  - Yes: Unrestricted
  - No

- **Present Use**
  - Agriculture
  - Museum
  - Commercial
  - Park
  - Educational
  - Private Residence
  - Entertainment
  - Religious
  - Government
  - Scientific
  - Industrial
  - Transportation
  - Military
  - Other

### Owner of Property

**Name**

Alfred R. Carpenter

**Street & Number**

Chopmist Hill Road

**City, Town**

Scituate

**State**

Rhode Island

**Vicinity of**

Vicinity of Rhode Island

### Location of Legal Description

- **Courthouse, Registry of Deeds, etc.**
  - Scituate Town Hall

- **Street & Number**
  - Main Street

- **City, Town**
  - North Scituate

- **State**
  - Rhode Island

### Representation in Existing Surveys

**Title**

Not so represented

**Date**

Not specified
The rough granite masonry of the chimney is left exposed in the overmantel section. Except for its southern wall—which had twelve-over-twelve sash before the tripartite window was installed—this room and the parlor have retained their original appearance, most notably in the hand-hewn beams, girts, and corner posts left exposed and now painted white. Doors, window and door frames, paneling, fireplaces, floorboards, and iron hardware are also original to the house.

The section across the back has been noticeably altered on the interior. Originally two smaller rooms, the northwest room has been made into a den by the present owners, and although the mantel is original, the firebox and hearth have been recently rebuilt.

The rear hall fireplace (see sketch plan) is set at a diagonal and forms a triangle with that in the den; it retains its original mantel. The rear stairs, off the rear hall, are a later addition. The rear hall and present kitchen were probably once a single large room.

The upper floor follows the plan of the lower with slight variation. Two large bedrooms to the front above the parlor and keeping room are connected by the narrow front hall. There are four smaller rooms to the rear, one converted to a bathroom. There are only two fireplaces, one in each of the front bedrooms; a third fireplace may be concealed behind one of the bathroom walls. The triangular configuration of the first floor chimney is not carried through to the second floor. The ceilings in both the front rooms upstairs are plastered, and all corner posts are cased.

There are five outbuildings, including a barn which has been renovated; an early twentieth-century cabin; a small horse-barn, formerly a shed where sheep were raised; and a large dog house, formerly a chicken coop. In addition, there is a rustic gazebo, built from the remains of a large pine tree on the same site which was destroyed by the 1938 hurricane.

Designed after a guest house in Alaska, the cabin was affectionately named the Gnome House by its previous owners as it was built in reduced scale. The large barn may be original to the house, as the framing is much older than the building's present exterior appearance would suggest: a 1923 photograph of the house not only shows the same barn, unadorned and sheathed with vertical boards, but also another barn directly behind the main house, which has since disappeared. Its foundation is no longer evident. Also shown in the picture is a wooden well structure which sat east of the verandah in front of the house; it too is gone.
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**DESCRIPTION**

The Amos Cooke House lies west of Chopmist Hill Road (Route 102) just north of the junction with Route 14. Partially hidden by a row of dense cedar trees planted around 1920 and an old stone wall, the Cooke House is isolated from the road and set apart from neighboring twentieth-century houses. Facing east, the house sits on a knoll about thirty feet from the road; the lawn slopes gently south from the house to a garden enclosed by a stone wall, the continuation of that in front of the house.

The house is a classic two-and-a-half-story, gable-roof, five-bay Federal farmhouse with a large central chimney. The only additions to the crisp, rectangular box are a small ell at the northwest corner and a twentieth-century, flat-roof, deep-cornice verandah running the width of the first story of the southern end of the house: this porch is supported by four square posts, with a broad set of steps descending between the two center posts to the south lawn. The house, which sits on a low fieldstone foundation, is sheathed in wooden clapboard. The only ornament on the facade is the central entrance, rebuilt in a vernacular treatment of the Greek Revival style. Flanking the six-panel front door are two slender sidelights with tall, narrow panes arranged in a grid pattern. The side moldings consist of three straight bars divided into three even strips, the inner one recessed; these intersect at the top on both ends to form square frames with punched centers. The lintel over the doorway is topped with a low, plain pediment.

The original twelve-over-twelve sash were replaced—probably at the time the doorway was remodeled—with six-over-six sash. Only the windows in the attic retain the original sash; these are twelve over eight. A tripartite and a double window were both installed at the southern end of the house on the first floor when the porch was added.

The interior demonstrates an unusual variation of the five-room, center-chimney plan. The chimney is pentagonal in plan on the first floor, allowing for four fireplaces, those at the rear of the chimney set on the diagonal. At the basement level the chimney is formed of two giant piers running north-south, the western pier triangular and the eastern rectangular pier flanked by the basement stairs; an open space separates the two piers. This variation occurs seldom in Rhode Island domestic architecture, but notable exemplars include the Caleb Claggett House (ca 1725) in Newport and several late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century dwellings in Bristol.

A small, narrow entrance hall has a simple, triple-run stairway with straight balusters and closed, molded string. The parlor is a relatively simple room lacking a decorative cornice of elaborate window-moldings. The simple Federal mantel is the most elegant feature of the room, and it too is spare in detail. Several rows of stepped molding rise from its frieze section to support a simple shelf; these break out into pilaster-like elements at either end.

The keeping room is located to one side of the entrance hall instead of across the rear, a placement commonly associated with houses of the period built in western Rhode Island. The large, cut-stone cooking fireplace with baking oven to the left covers a major portion of the north wall, abutting the southwest chimney post to the left and the door to the cellar to the right. The fireplace is completely devoid of ornament or molding except for the iron brackets which support the shallow mantel shelf.

See continuation sheet 1
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Amos Cooke House, because of its change in use over the 160 years of its history, is of significance to architectural and social history. It holds interesting historical associations through its past inhabitants. Further, its landscape elements—the original stone walls, the cedar trees along the road, and its outbuildings—are significant supporting features to this well-preserved house.

A fine example of a rural Rhode Island farmhouse in the vernacular, turn-of-the-nineteenth-century style, it has an unusual variation of the center-chimney plan. As the pentagonal center-chimney arrangement is not widespread in Rhode Island eighteenth- and nineteenth-century dwellings, its use here is particularly interesting in an otherwise simple farmhouse. Further, the house retains a great deal of its original hardware (including rough-cut, black H-L hinges, window and door frames, doors, floorboards, wainscoting, mantelpieces, and fireplaces contributing to the late eighteenth-early nineteenth-century flavor of the house.

Alterations have generally enhanced the architectural quality of the house. The early twentieth-century verandah to the south and the Greek Revival doorway evince changing tastes and uses of the house.

The house has witnessed several changes in ownership throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but its notable residents have been Augustus and Carver Hopkins, Amos Cooke, and the McCrillis family.

The house was constructed in 1812 as a farmhouse by Augustus and Carver Hopkins, members of a prominent Scituate family. The Hopkins brothers were the son of Timothy Hopkins, who had served as a sergeant during the Revolution in the "Army of Observation." The Hopkins brothers were owners of large tracts of land south of the Central Turnpike, on which they built this house and maintained a working farm. A deed from 1827, which refers to this property as "the old farm," involved the purchase of forty-seven additional acres for farming purposes. By the 1830s, the brothers were involved in business in Burrillville, Augustus having founded the Hopkins Machine Works for the manufacture of spindles in 1834. They retained ownership of the property, however, until 1859, when it was purchased by Henry West.

In 1865, the farm was purchased by Amos Cooke. At the time of the transfer, the property comprised a "dwelling house, barn, and other buildings," and covered an estimated 143 acres. Cooke was involved in a lumber business with his brother in Providence before he retired to Scituate to farm.

In the early years of the twentieth century, the property was bought by Mr and Mrs Arthur M. McCrillis of Providence and altered as a summer residence, which they named "Wilbourne." Their love of the property enhanced the architecture and landscape through the addition of the verandah, minor interior alterations, the construction of the Gnome House and gazebo, and the extensive planting of trees, including

See continuation sheet 4
the row of cedars in front of the house. In renovating the property, they also contributed to its maintenance and preservation, thus sparing the Amos Cooke House the neglect and deterioration so frequently apparent in isolated rural farmhouses throughout rural Rhode Island.

The growth and changes to the Cooke House and its property, as well as the intact state of an unusual variation on the vernacular early farmhouse, amply chronicle the significance of the property to architectural and social history and merit its inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.
**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY** 3.84 acres

**UTM REFERENCES**

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Town of Scituate, Rhode Island, Tax Assessor's Plat 47, Lot 50, inclusive.

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**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

**NAME / TITLE**

Wendy A. Ketchum, William McKenzie Woodward

**ORGANIZATION**

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

**STREET & NUMBER**

150 Benefit Street

**CITY OR TOWN**

Providence

**STATE**

Rhode Island

**DATE**

October 1978

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:**

NATIONAL ___ STATE X LOCAL ___

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

**FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE**

[Signature]

**DATE**

July 10, 1980

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**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

**DATE:**

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**DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

ATTEST

**KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

**DATE:**

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KEY
1 - HOUSE
2 - BARN
3 - GNOME HOUSE
4 - SHEEP SHED, NOW HORSE BARN
5 - GAZEBO
6 - CHICKEN COOP, NOW DOG HOUSE
7 - PADDOCK
+++ - CEDARS
--- - STONE WALK

AMOS COOKE HOUSE
SCITUATE, RHODE ISLAND
SITE SKETCH PLAN NOT TO SCALE
COOKE HOUSE
CHOPMUT HILL ROAD
SCITUATE, RHODE ISLAND

SKETCH PLAN--NOT TO SCALE
Amos Cooke House
Scituate, Rhode Island

Photographer: Warren Jagger
Date: October 1978
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

View of main facade, from the southeast.

Photo #1/3
Amos Cooke House
Scituate, Rhode Island

Photographer: Warren Jagger
Date: October, 1978
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

Keeping room viewed from the southeast.

Photo #2/3
Amos Cooke House
Scituate, Rhode Island

Photographer: Warren Jagger
Date: October, 1978
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

View of the barn from the south.

Photo #3/3