

PH0179205

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 8 1975

DATE ENTERED AUG 19 1975

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Parker Tavern

AND/OR COMMON Parker Tavern

**2 LOCATION**STREET & NUMBER  
103 Washington Street
 NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CITY, TOWN  
Reading

VICINITY OF

7th

STATE  
MassachusettsCODE  
025COUNTY  
MiddlesexCODE  
017**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

 DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
 BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
 IN PROCESS  
 BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

 OCCUPIED  
 UNOCCUPIED  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 NO

## PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE  
 COMMERCIAL  
 EDUCATIONAL  
 ENTERTAINMENT  
 GOVERNMENT  
 INDUSTRIAL  
 MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 RELIGIOUS  
 SCIENTIFIC  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 OTHER:
**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**NAME  
Reading Antiquarian SocietySTREET & NUMBER  
103 Washington StreetCITY, TOWN  
Reading

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Massachusetts 01867**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Middlesex County Registry of DeedsSTREET & NUMBER  
208 Cambridge StreetCITY, TOWN  
CambridgeSTATE  
Massachusetts**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**TITLE  
Inventory of the Historic Assets of the CommonwealthDATE  
1974
 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
Massachusetts Historical CommissionCITY, TOWN  
BostonSTATE  
Massachusetts 02108

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Parker Tavern is located on Washington Street in a residential area near the center of Reading. The house is of typical 17th-century saltbox design and has two stories and an attic.

The main portion of the Parker Tavern is built on a fieldstone foundation, which stands eight inches above ground. There is a window in the west cellar foundation for ventilation. Direct entrance to the cellar is only from the inside.

The main house displays the Parker Tavern's 17th century character with its integral lean-to sloping to the east. The structure is sheathed in wooden shingles with corner boards and water table. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. There is a central chimney of brick on the main house and smaller brick chimney on the 1964-65 custodian's ell.

The front facade of the house is characterized by a four-bay arrangement, with two windows to the right of the entrance and one to the left. The north elevation has five windows irregularly spaced, with three on the first floor, two on the second, and one in the attic story. The east elevation has a central doorway with one window to the right (north) and two on the left (south). The south side of the main house has three windows, one on each floor. The double-hung windows have predominately 12/8 sash with plain surrounds.

In 1923 the Parker Tavern was acquired by the Reading Antiquarian Society which restored the building between 1923 and 1930. During the restoration several appendages were removed, the chimney replaced, and the barn moved. In 1964-65 a custodian's ell was added to the south side of the house. It measures twenty-five by nineteen feet and is made of materials which match those of the main house.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1694

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Parker Tavern is the oldest documented house in Reading and is an outstanding local example of 17th century architectural building methods. It has also served as the home of a number of significant figures in Reading history.

The house was built in 1694 by Abraham Bryant, Jr., a blacksmith. Bryant had received the land in 1693 as a gift from his father who had acquired it in 1687 as part of his share in town lands purchased from the Indians. Since Abraham's taxes doubled the second year he owned the property, it is assumed that the house was built in that period.

Bryant lived in the house until his death in 1714, and in 1724 his son-in-law Nathaniel Stow purchased the house from the son of Abraham Bryant III. Stow was also a blacksmith, and so the trade was continued at the homestead until he died in the 1730's.

The next occupants of the house (from 1738 to 1757) were Ebenezer Nichols, a tanner, and his son who was a farmer. The homestead at that time comprised 30 acres of land with an additional 40 acres in the meadow lots. Colonel Nichols (the elder) was the most distinguished owner of the house and was an influential and highly honored citizen. He served as town moderator, selectman, and a representative during the critical difficulties with England over the Stamp Act. In 1768 he was listed as the fifth highest tax payer in South Reading.

From 1757 to 1804 Ephraim Parker, a cordwainer, lived on the property. Parker fought during the French and Indian War and is credited with service during the alarm of April 19, 1775. Records show that from 1770 until 1785 Ephraim Parker's house was a licensed inn, thus the derivation of the "Parker Tavern."

During the American Revolution the Parker Tavern served as prison quarters for Colonel Archibald Campbell, seven officers and twenty-two servants. Campbell and the 71st Scotch Regiment had been captured in Boston Harbor on June 16, 1776, and had been placed on parole in a number of the interior towns. In 1778 Campbell was freed when he was exchanged for Colonel Ethan Allen.

(Continued)

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Howard, Loea Parker. The Parker Tavern. Reading: Reading Antiquarian Society, 1930.  
The New England Historical Genealogical Register, January 1959.  
The 71st Highlanders in Massachusetts, 1776-1780, Colin Campbell.  
Walcott, Charles. Sir Archibald Campbell. 1898.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .6 acre (24,700 square feet)

UTM OK (9-8-75)  
WM

UTM REFERENCES

A | 19 | 326920 | 4709460 |  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C | | | | |

B | | | | |  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Judy Dobbs, National Register Editor, and Miriam A. Barclay, Reading Antiquarian

ORGANIZATION

Massachusetts Historical Commission

DATE

Society

July 2, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

40 Beacon Street

TELEPHONE

617-727-8470

CITY OR TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts 02108

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Elizabeth Reed Amadon*

TITLE

Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission

DATE

July 2, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8/19/75

DATE

AUG 18 1975

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Significance (Continued)

In 1806 the Parker Tavern passed into the hands of the Sweetser family who owned it for over a century. In 1923 the house and field adjoining it were purchased by the Town of Reading who then sold the house to the Reading Antiquarian Society. The Society now preserves the house as a museum.

Property

*Parker Tavern*

*Middlesex*

State *Mass.*

Working Number *7. 8. 75. 1277*

**TECHNICAL**

Photos *4*  
Maps *2*

**CONTROL**

*OK* <sup>*cm*</sup> *7.11.75*

*Good statement of significance.*

**HISTORIAN**

*Accept*  
*E. Smith*  
*7-22-75*

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

*ACCEPT*  
*H.W. [unclear]*  
*7/21/75*

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_  
Review \_\_\_\_\_

*Heavy Restoration!*

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

*Accept*  
*W.P. Luce*  
*7/30/75*

**BRANCH CHIEF**

*accept*  
*[Signature]*  
*8-13-75*

**KEEPER**

*[Signature]*  
**AUG 18 1975**

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_


Send-back \_\_\_\_\_

Entered **AUG 19 1975**

Federal Register Entry *10-7-75*

Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

INT:2106-74

A black and white photograph of a historic wooden building, likely a tower or lighthouse, with a gambrel roof and a sign that reads "PARKER TOWER 1694". The building is covered in shingles and has several windows. A large, bare tree branch is visible in the foreground on the right side. The ground is covered in snow or ice.

PARKER TOWER  
1694

Reading Mass.  
103 Washington St.  
Parker Tavern  
Reading Antiquarian Society

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Form No. 10-301a  
(Rev. 10-7-7)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 8 1975

DATE ENTERED AUG 19 1975

Mass

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Parker Tavern

AND/OR COMMON  
same

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Reading VICINITY OF COUNTY Middlesex STATE MA

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT Frank Gazarian

DATE OF PHOTO March 4, 1974

NEGATIVE FILED AT Raphael Studio, 244 Main Street, Reading, MA

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

North facade

PHOTO NO. 1 of 4



Reading Mass.  
103 Washington St.  
Parker Tavern  
Reading Antiquarian Society

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Form No. 10-301a  
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

JUL 8 1975

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED AUG 19 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Parker Tavern

AND/OR COMMON  
same

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Reading

\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY Middlesex

STATE MA

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT Frank Gazarian

DATE OF PHOTO March 4, 1974

NEGATIVE FILED AT Raphael Studio, 244 Main Street, Reading, MA

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET  
West facade (main facade)

PHOTO NO.

2 of 4



Reading Mass.  
103 Washington St.

Form No. 10-301a  
(Rev. 10-77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUL 8 1975
DATE ENTERED AUG 19 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

Reading

**1** NAME

HISTORIC Parker Tavern

AND/OR COMMON  
same

**2** LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Reading VICINITY OF COUNTY Middlesex STATE MA

**3** PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Frank Gazarian

DATE OF PHOTO March 4, 1974

NEGATIVE FILED AT Raphael Studio, 244 Main Street, Reading, MA

**4** IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET  
East facade

PHOTO NO. 3 of 4



*Reading Mass.  
103 Washington St.  
Parker Tavern  
The Artisanarian Society*

Form No. 10-301a  
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED **JUL 8 1975**  
DATE ENTERED **AUG 19 1975**

*Mass.*

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

**1 NAME**  
HISTORIC Parker Tavern

AND/OR COMMON  
same

**2 LOCATION**  
CITY, TOWN Reading \_\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY Middlesex STATE MA

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**  
PHOTO CREDIT Frank Gazarian DATE OF PHOTO March 4, 1974  
NEGATIVE FILED AT Raphael Studio, 244 Main Street, Reading, MA

**4 IDENTIFICATION**  
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET  
South facade, showing 1964-65 custodian's ell

PHOTO NO. *4 of 4*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

JUL 8 1975  
RECEIVED

AUG 19 1975  
DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Parker Tavern

AND/OR COMMON  
same

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Reading \_\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF COUNTY Middlesex STATE MA

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE USGS, Reading Quadrangle

SCALE 1:24000 DATE 1966

**4 REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 8 1975
DATE ENTERED	AUG 19 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Parker Tavern

AND/OR COMMON  
same

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Reading

\_\_\_VICINITY OF

COUNTY Middlesex STATE MA

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE Assessors Map

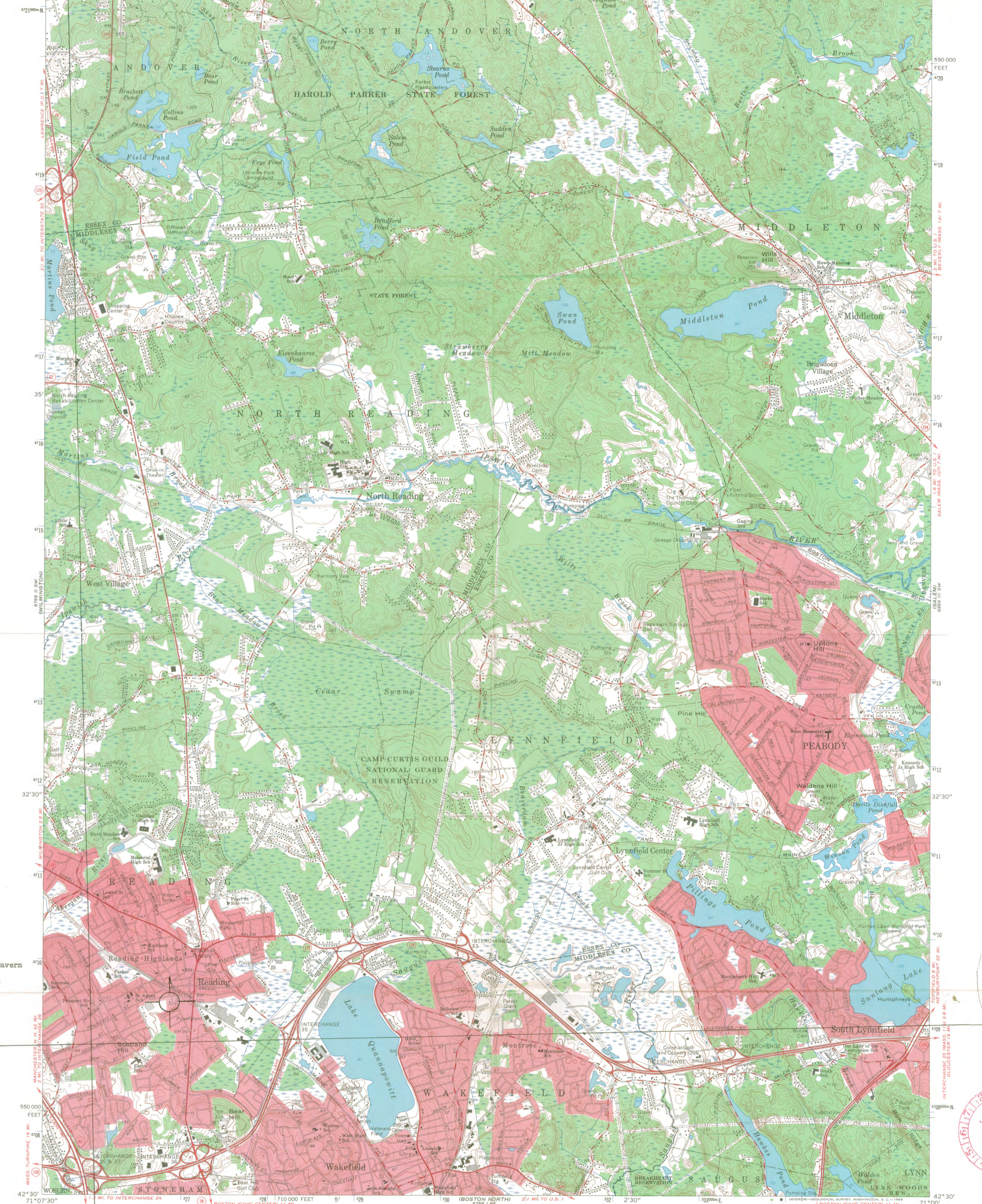
SCALE 1" = 160'

DATE 1967

**4 REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES



Reading: Parker Tavern  
 UTM Reference:  
 19J326920/4709460



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS, JSC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey  
 Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1939. Topography by planetable surveys 1942. Revised 1966  
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone  
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 19, shown in blue  
 Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

UTM GRID AND 1966 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:24,000  
 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET  
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 KILOMETER

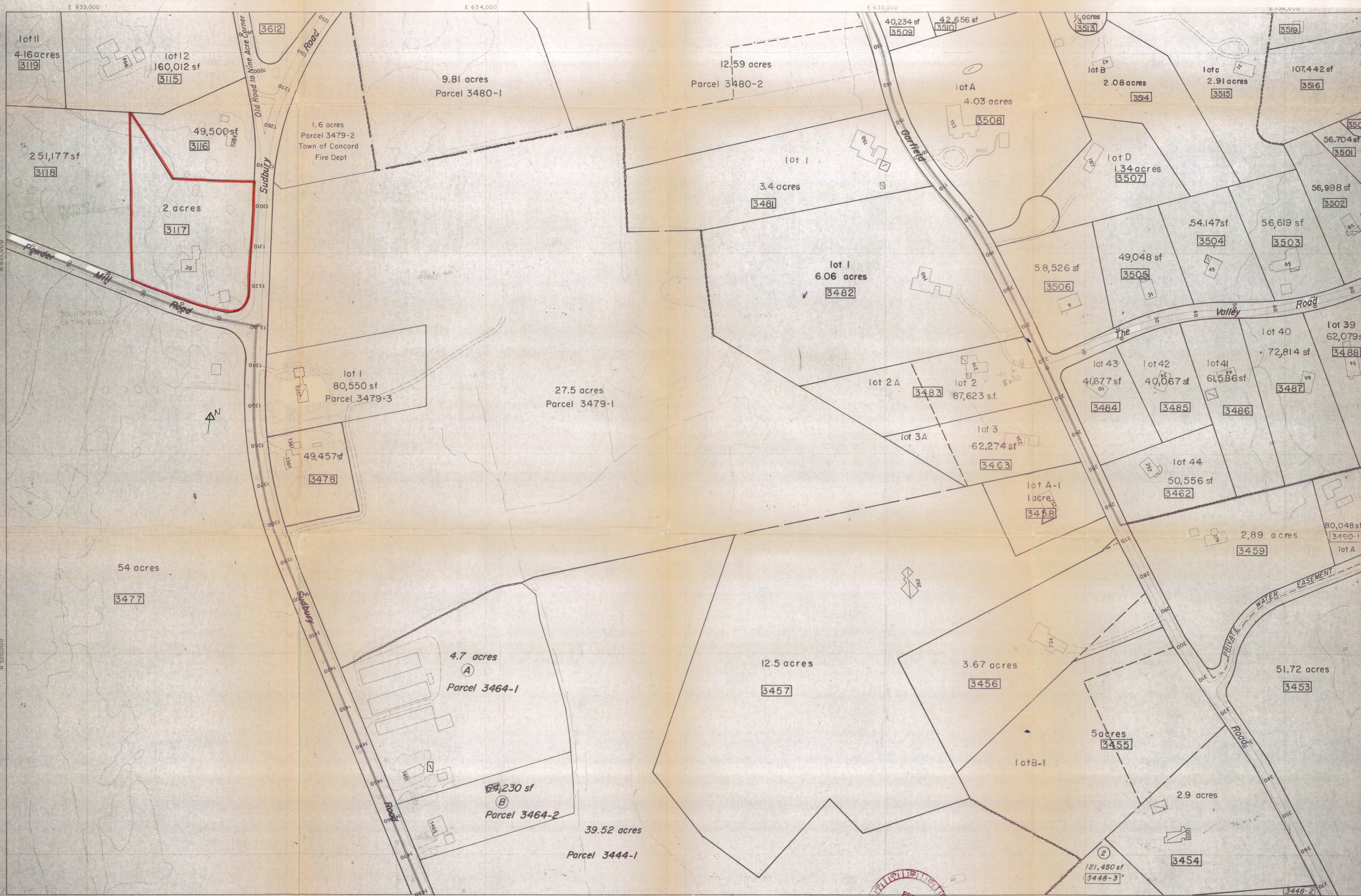
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
 DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
 Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
 Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
 Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

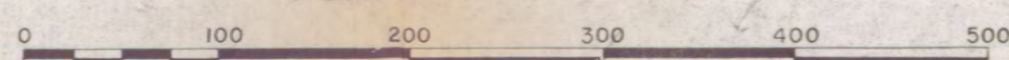
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READING, MASS.  
 N4230—W7100/7.5  
 1966  
 AMS 6769 II SE—SERIES V814

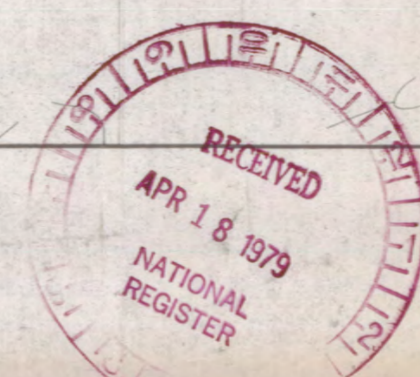
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20542  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



PREPARED BY PHOTOGRAMMETRIC METHODS  
FROM AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY OF 1960 BY  
AIR SURVEY CORPORATION  
ARLINGTON 9, VIRGINIA



DATUM IS USC & GS MEAN SEA LEVEL  
500 FOOT GRID BASED ON MASSACHUSETTS COORDINATE SYSTEM



INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

E 13	F 13	G 13
E 14	F 14	G 14
E 15	F 15	G 15

F 14

**TOWN OF CONCORD**  
Concord, Massachusetts

19 JUN 879  
608 6  
608 6

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608 6



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443A

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PLAT 53

WARREN AVE.



PLAT 41

PLAT 54



PLAT 63

PLAT 51



Plat 5

1.1967

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE BOARD OF ASSESSORS BY ENGLAND SURVEY SERVICE INC BOSTON, MASS

PLAN INFORMATION COMPILED FROM RECORD DATA, FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES ONLY

SCALE

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered AUG 19 1975

Name

Location

Parker Tavern

Reading  
Middlesex County

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy  
Hon. Edward W. Brooke  
Hon. Torbert H. Macdonald  
Regional Director, North Atlantic Region

Also Notified

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mrs. Elizabeth R. Amadon  
Executive Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
40 Beacon Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

PR MMott:cm 8/20/75

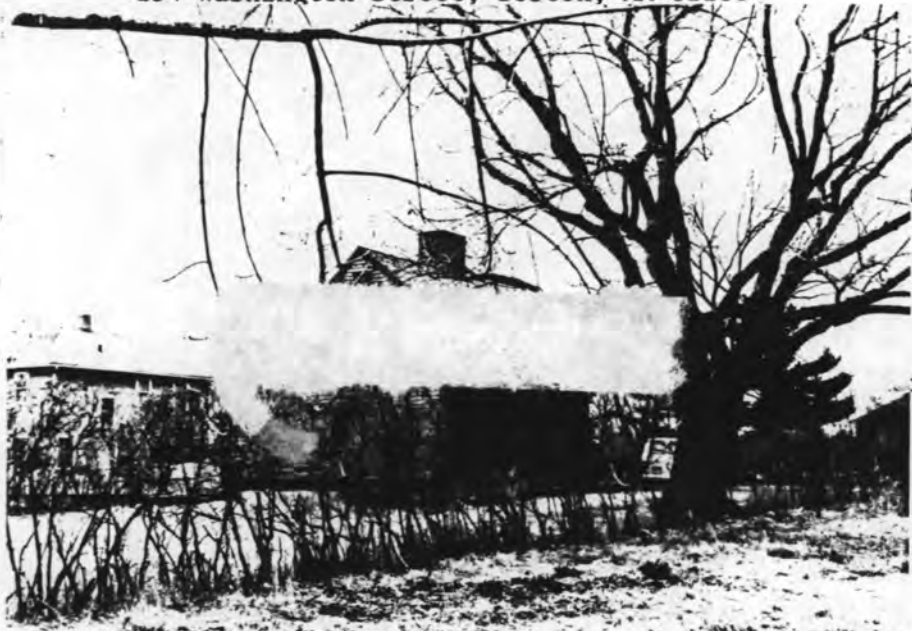
NR listed

FORM B - BUILDING

K-22

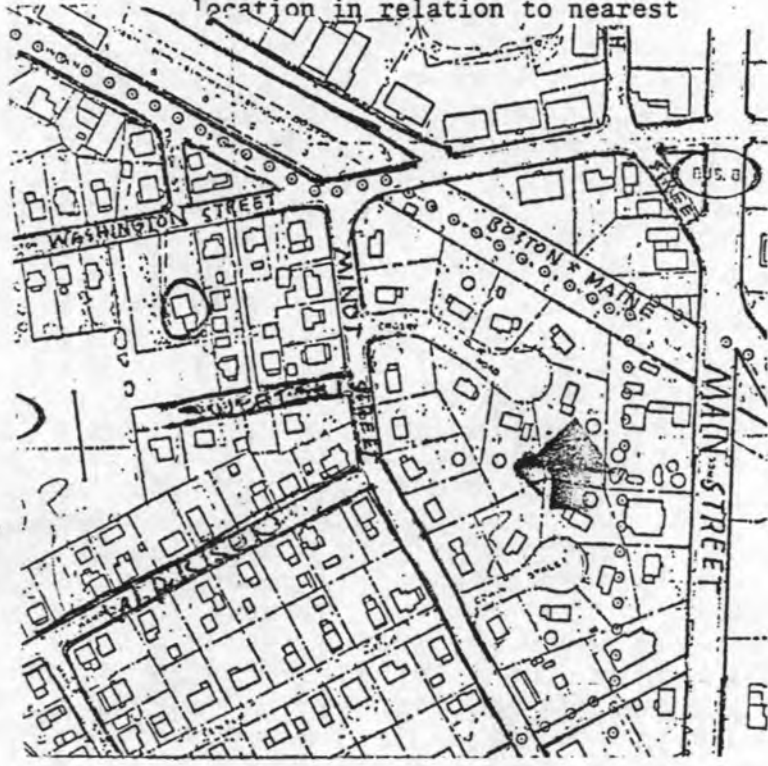
Area C	Form no. 117
-----------	-----------------

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108



Reading (#9)  
 Address 103 Washington Street  
 Historic Name Parker Tavern  
 Original House  
 Present Museum  
 Ownership:  Private individual  
 Private organization Reading Antiquarian Society  
 Public  
 Original owner Abraham Bryant Jr.  
or Deacon Nathaniel Stow

Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest streets



DESCRIPTION:

Date c. 1693 or 1724-25  
 Source Rooftrees, Dr. Abbott L. Cummings  
 Style First Period  
 Architect none  
 Exterior wall fabric wood shingles  
 Outbuildings 20th-century tool shed  
 Major alterations (with dates) Restoration, 1923: included windows and replacement of cluster chimney. Tenants wing, 1964  
 Moved perhaps Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Approx. acreage under one acre  
 Setting on small hill at end of drive from street. House faces west

Recorded by Architectural Preservation Associates  
 Organization Reading Historical Commission  
 Date November 30, 1980

MTN: 19/326910/4709450

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE** (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

On the National Register of Historic Places, the Parker Tavern is one of Reading's oldest surviving buildings. All of the documentary sources place its construction at about 1694, but comparative structural analysis by Dr. Abbott L. Cummings suggests a date of 1724-25. It is the town's best-preserved example of the early, central-chimney, saltbox form of architecture. The simple Federal door surround -- with pilasters formed of recessed panels, capitals delineated by a narrow molding, and a shallow projecting cornice -- is found in a number of Reading's Revolutionary-War and post-war houses. Twelve-over-eight windows abut the cornice at the second story, signaling the approaching Federal period. (continued)

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE** (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

Built either by Abraham Bryant Jr. or Deacon Nathaniel Stow, the house passed from Stow's estate to Colonel Ebenezer Nichols and his son, Ebenezer, Jr., in 1738. Colonel Nichols was the most distinguished resident of the house. He served as an officer in 1722-24 against the French and Indians, and in the expedition against the French at Louisburg, Cape Breton, in 1745. He was in service at Cape Point and was wounded in the battle of Lake George. He became a colonel of a regiment under General Abercrombie at Ticonderoga in 1757, and sold his house that same year. Colonel Nichols drew the earliest map of the town, was frequently town moderator and a selectman, and represented the town for nine years in the General Court.

Ephraim Parker, who owned the house next, ran it as a tavern from about 1760 through the Revolutionary War. He boarded Colonel Archibald Campbell and some of his officers of the 71st Scots Highlanders, who had been taken prisoner in June 1776 at Boston Harbor.

Located on one of the original highways, delineated by Colonel Nichols in 1764, the house was near a crossroads leading to present-day Wakefield and Woburn.

After 1807, the house was occupied by Thomas Sweetser, whose 18-year-old wife hired herself out for spinning by the week.

In 1923, it was purchased by the Reading Antiquarian Society, which had the building restored by local architects Adden and Parker.

The society now maintains the tavern as a museum interpreting Reading's history; it has an active educational department.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

- 1765 map Ephraim Parker
  - 1795 map E. Parker
  - 1830 map yes
  - 1854 map T. Sweetser (Thomas)
  - 1875 map Thos. Sweetser
  - 1889 map no name (continuing Sweetser ownership)
  - 1906 map J. J. Williams
- Bishop, Rooftrees, Chapter 3.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Reading	Form No: C 117
Property Name: Parker Tavern	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The orientation of the house to the west -- in a town where 17th and 18th-century houses were nearly all built facing south -- indicates that the house might have been moved at some time.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Parker Tavern (Reading MRA)  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. JUN 4 1984  
Fed. Reg. Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Due: 7-5-84 / 7-19-84  
Action: ACCEPT  
          RETURN  
          REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- 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	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?    yes    no

7. Description

Condition

- |                                    |                                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good      | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair      | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- original site
- moved   date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

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

**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

(A.M. Nathan) (Reading M.A.)  
 Middlesex County  
 MASSACHUSETTS



**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

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

**11. Form Prepared By**

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

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

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



Parker Tavern

Locusty, NPA, Ala

C-117

103 Washington

K-22

The following structure -- the Parker Tavern,  
at 103 Washington Street (form no. C-117) --  
has already been listed upon the National  
Register of Historic Places, and its form is  
included here solely for reference purposes.

# NR Data Sheet

DATE: 3/23/77  
Reviewer INITIALS: JMM  
NR DOE August 19, 1975

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: Parker Tavern

OTHER NAMES:

## LOCATION:

STREET & NUMBER 103 Washington Street

CITY, TOWN Reading

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 7th

STATE Massachusetts

VICINITY OF

COUNTY Middlesex code 017.

OWNER OF PROPERTY: (Circle) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER

ADMINISTRATOR (underline)

FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME):

NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) N. ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST

SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

## FEATURES:

INTERIOR:  Substantially intact-1  
           unknown - 4  
           not applicable - 7  
EXTERIOR:  Substantially intact-2  
           unknown - 5  
           not applicable - 8  
ENVIRONS:  Substantially intact-3  
           unknown - 6  
           Not applicable-9

Interior, exterior, environs not intact-0

CONDITION -  EXCELLENT  DETERIORATED  UNALTERED  ORIGINAL SITE  
                   GOOD  RUINS  ALTERED  MOVED  
                   FAIR  UNEXPOSED  Reconstructed  Unknown  
                                   Unexcavated  Excavated

ACCESS -  Yes-restricted  Yes-unrestricted  No access  Unknown

historic district? YES  NO

WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO  
IF YES, NAME:

WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? YES NO  
IF YES, NAME:

ADAPTIVE USE:  YES  NO Saved? YES NO

FUNCTION(S): (use vocabulary words)  
then- private residence  
now- museum

## SIGNIFICANCE:

ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  CONSERVATION  LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  RELIGION  entertainment  
 ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC  ECONOMICS  LAW/Gov't/politics  SCIENCE  health  
 AGRICULTURE  EDUCATION  LITERATURE  SETTLEMENT  recreation  
 ARCHITECTURE - 4  ENGINEERING  MILITARY - 18  SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN  settlement  
 ART  EXPLORATION  MUSIC  socio/cultural  
 COMMERCE  INDUSTRY  PHILOSOPHY  TRANSPORTATION  urban & commun  
 COMMUNICATIONS  INVENTION  POLITICS/GOVERNMENT  OTHER (SPECIFY)  planning

## Claims

"first" YES NO "oldest" YES NO "only" YES NO

documented house in Reading

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: <sup>SALTBOX</sup> Colonial

architect/m.builder:

engineer:

landscape/garden designer:

artist/artisan:

interior decorator:

builder/contractor:

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES: personal

(label role & appropriate date)

events

institutional

DATES: DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): 1694

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS: 1923-30, 1964-65

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE: (OF NOMINATION) PRIVATE  STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY

OTHER FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE: (to nearest tenth of an acre) 0.6

COMMENTS: (include architectural information here) 2 1/2 STORIES, FRAME, SHINGLING, RECTANGULAR WITH

Saltbox gabled with peaked exterior

SIDE WING, GABLED ROOF, CENTER AND INTERIOR CHIMNEYS, CENTER ENTRANCE

WITH PANELED DOOR AND ARCHITRAVE, WING ENTRANCES; LEAN-TO ADDED;

SIDE WING ADDED, 1964-1965; RESTORED, 1923-1930; COLONIAL.

OLDEST DOCUMENTED HOUSE IN READING. Museum.

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)