

PH0090221

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

APR 8 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Harnden Tavern

AND/OR COMMON

same

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

430 Salem Street

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

VICINITY OF

5th

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY

Middlesex

CODE

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

Town of Wilmington

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Middlesex Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

VICINITY OF

Massachusetts

STATE

01897

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Cambridge Street

CITY, TOWN

Cambridge

Massachusetts

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE

1974

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

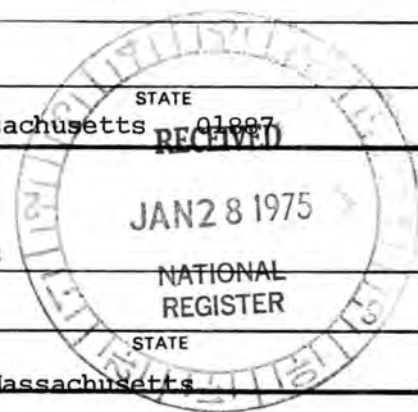
Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

40 Beacon Street

Massachusetts

STATE



# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT  
☐ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED  
☐ ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built c. 1770, the Harnden Tavern faces south on a major residential road in Wilmington. The 2 story clapboard structure has a hip roof with a large central chimney and is two rooms wide and two deep, with a central hall. The focal point of the facade is the central doorway with its Doric pilasters, full classical entablature and dentiled triangular pediment. Like the pediment, the house cornice is also dentiled.

A long 2 story clapboard ell, believed to have been built in the first half of the 19th c., extends east from the northeast corner of the house. The ell has a ridge roof and the four first floor windows are flanked by a small open porch at either end. The east elevation of the ell also has a small open porch. A tall narrow chimney projects from the ridge peak in the center of the ell.

A large 2½ story ridge roof barn is situated further to the east of the ell, with its axis north-south. Covered with clapboard, the barn has irregular window openings and a number of doors on its south and west sides.



# 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 type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION              | <input 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899            | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION             |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) | medicine |
|                                               |                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |                                                 |                                                     |          |

## SPECIFIC DATES

c.1770

## BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Ebenezer Jones

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built c.1770, the Harnden Tavern is significant as the only example of late Georgian architecture in Wilmington and as the home of a family of important physicians.

The house was built by Ebenezer Jones, a local contractor, probably for speculation. Sometime prior to 1795, the house was sold to Capt. Joshua Harnden, a Revolutionary War hero and a member of a committee which reported to the Cambridge Convention on the formation of the State Constitution in 1780. For thirty years thereafter it was known as the Harnden Tavern, a popular grog shop on the main road from Salem to Lowell. In 1818 the Inn was sold to Dr. Silas Brown. Silas' father, Jonathan (1735-1822) was the physician who went to Saratoga in October 1777 to escort the British officers to Cambridge after Burgoyne's surrender. Dismayed by the doctrines of the established churches in the years before the Civil War, the Silas Browns embraced the doctrines of the Swedenborgians, ardent abolitionists. It was at this time that the tavern is believed to have become a stop in the underground railway. The secret chamber located in the southwest bedroom next to the center chimney may have been used to harbor runaway slaves. There are no substantiating documents, however, other than family letters which make only indirect references because of the great need for secrecy at that time. Silas Brown was a practicing physician in Wilmington for over 50 years and died in 1864. Silas's son, Jonathan, also served as a local and wartime physician. After having studied with his father and at Harvard Medical School, Jonathan was appointed resident physician of the new State Almshouse in Tewksbury in 1854. He served as superintendent there for 11 years. For 6 months in 1862, he served as Chief Surgeon under Gen. McClellan in Va. but after contracting malaria, he returned home. He resigned his position at the Almshouse in 1865 and resumed private practice. He died in 1867. In 1893 the Hathaway family acquired the Tavern and owned it for 150 years.

On June 25, 1973 the Township of Wilmington voted to take the Harnden Tavern by eminent domain under the State's Historic Eminent Domain Act, to preserve it from threatened demolition. This is the only case in which the provisions of this act have been exercised.

Now used as a house museum and caretaker's quarters, the Tavern is an unusually well preserved late Georgian house. Among many other elements, it retains its original clapboards, entrance door, window panes and sash. The interior remains little changed as well.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Brown, Dr. Silas, Journal, unpublished, begun in 1777.
2. "Obituary", Lowell Daily Courier, Aug. 24, 1867.
3. Various deeds running with the property.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 2

UTM REFERENCES

A 

|      |   |   |         |   |   |    |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---|---|---------|---|---|----|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1    | 9 | 3 | 2       | 3 | 7 | 10 | 4        | 7 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| ZONE |   |   | EASTING |   |   |    | NORTHING |   |   |   |   |   |   |

B 

|      |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|--|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ZONE |  |  | EASTING |  |  |  | NORTHING |  |  |  |  |  |  |

C 

|      |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|--|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ZONE |  |  | EASTING |  |  |  | NORTHING |  |  |  |  |  |  |

D 

|      |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|--|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ZONE |  |  | EASTING |  |  |  | NORTHING |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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

Mindy Arbo, N.R. Editor for Pat Weslowski, State Survey Director

ORGANIZATION

Massachusetts Historical Commission

DATE

3/12/74

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*Elizabeth R. Arnadon, State Historic Pres. Officer*

TITLE Executive Director, Mass. Historical Commission

DATE Jan. 15, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

4/3/75

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

APR 2 1975

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED APR 3 1975

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Harnden Tavern

AND/OR COMMON

same

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

Middlesex

COUNTY

STATE

Massachusetts

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT

Colonial Studio of Photography

1973

DATE OF PHOTO

NEGATIVE FILED AT

same

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

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

looking northeast

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

The Colonial Studio of Photography  
474 Main Street  
WILMINGTON, MASS. 01887



#1081

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED APR 3 1975

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Harnden Tavern

AND/OR COMMON

same

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

Middlesex

COUNTY

STATE

Massachusetts

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE

USGS Wilmington, MA.

SCALE

1:24,000

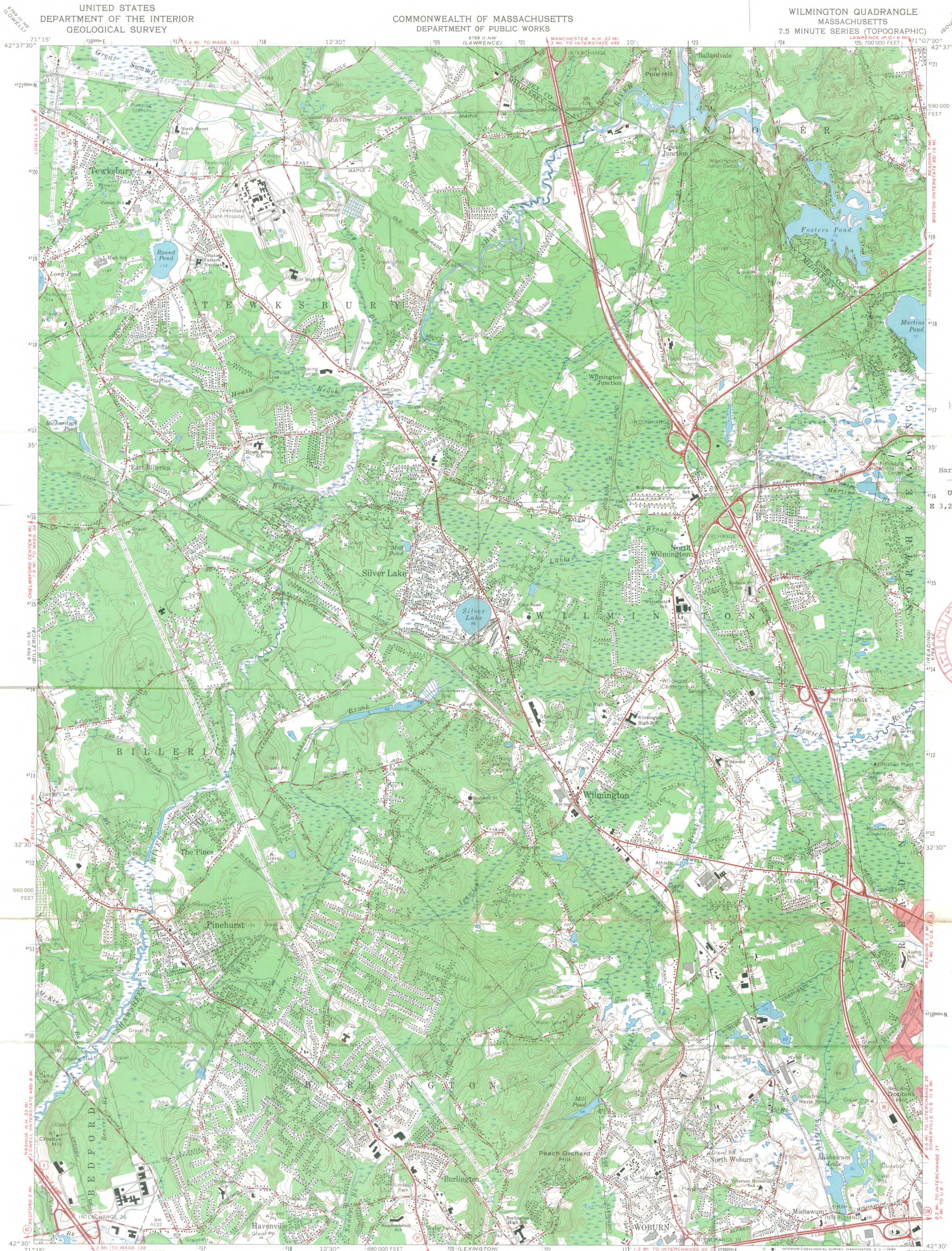
DATE  
1965

**4 REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

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



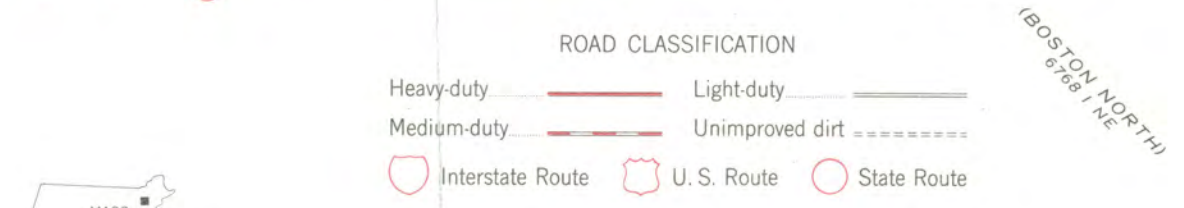
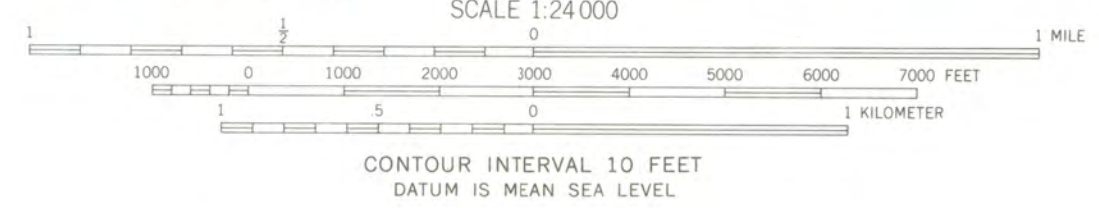
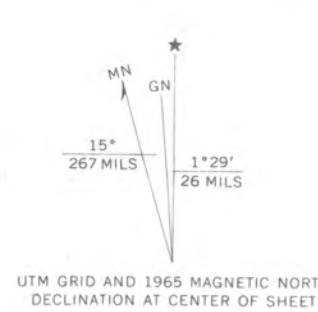


32° 100.  
HARDEN TOWN  
46,16,130

Harnden Tavern,  
Wilmington  
UTM Z19 47  
E 3,23,780 N 46,16,130



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey  
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken  
1939. Topography by planimetric surveys 1942. Revised 1965  
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



WILMINGTON, MASS.  
N4230-W7107.5/7.5  
1965  
AMS 6769 II SW-SERIES V814

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE      MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered      APR 3 1975

Name

Location

Oak Grove Cemetery

Gloucester  
Essex County

L Harnden Tavern

Wilmington  
Middlesex County

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy  
Hon. Edward W. Brooke  
Hon. Michael J. Harrington  
Hon. Paul E. Tsongas

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

Regional Director, North Atlantic  
Region

# NR Data Sheet

DATE: 3/29/77  
 Reviewer: INITIALS: *SK*  
 NR: DOE April 8, 1975

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: Harnden Tavern

OTHER NAMES:

## LOCATION:

STREET & NUMBER 430 Salem Street

CITY, TOWN Wilmington  
 STATE Massachusetts

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 5th  
 COUNTY Middlesex code 01

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

ADMINISTRATOR (underline)

FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME): Public

NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) N. ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST  
 SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

## FEATURES:

|                                                            |                                                            |                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>INTERIOR</u>                                            | <u>EXTERIOR</u>                                            | <u>ENVIRONS</u>                                            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially intact-1 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially intact-2 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially intact-3 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unknown - 4            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unknown - 5            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unknown - 6            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable - 7     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable - 8     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not applicable-9       |

☒ Interior, exterior, environs not intact-0

|                                                           |                                                  |                                                   |                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| CONDITION - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RUINS        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reconstructed | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unknown       |
|                                                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unexcavated  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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 / Tavern

now- Museum

*1973 - under state's Historic Eminent Domain Act.*

## SIGNIFICANCE:

- |                                                             |                                                  |                                                            |                                                                 |                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAW/Gov't/politics     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> health         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> recreation     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE - <u>4</u> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> settlement     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> socio/cultural |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Medieval</u>             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> urban & commun |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INVENTION    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Underground Railroad</u> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> planning       |

## Claims

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

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:

Late Georgian

architect/m.builder:

landscape/garden designer:

interior decorator:

engineer:

artist/artisan:

builder/contractor:

Ebenezer Jones

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES:

(label role  
&  
appropriate date)

personal

Capt. Joshua Harden - 1st President -  
Rev. War hero

events

Dr. Silas Brown - <sup>later</sup> abolitionist -  
may have harbored fugitive slaves in house

institutional

DATES:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): 1770

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS:

early 19<sup>th</sup> C - ell built

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE:

(OF NOMINATION)

PRIVATE

STATE

LOCAL GOV'T

MUNICIPAL

COUNTY

OTHER

FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE:

(to nearest tenth of an acre)

2

COMMENTS: (include architectural information here)

Frame, clapboarded, 2 stories, modified rectangle,  
hipped roof, <sup>interior</sup> central chimney, front center  
pedimented entrance with Doric pilasters,  
boxed cornice, gabled side ell <sup>early 19<sup>th</sup> C</sup>  
with bracketed hood entrance, <sup>interior</sup> 2 1/2-story.  
Clapboarded barn. Wilmington's only remaining  
late Georgian structure; residence of and tavern of

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)

Capt. Joshua Harden, Revolutionary  
war hero; ~~later~~ purported to be underground  
Railroad stop under later ownership of  
Dr. Silas Brown, ~~and~~ local physician  
and ardent abolitionist. Museum.