

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

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

((NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Wright Tavern

AND/OR COMMON

Wright Tavern

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2 Lexington Road, corner of Main Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Concord

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fifth

STATE

Massachusetts

__ VICINITY OF

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 MUSEUM COMMERCIAL PARK EDUCATIONAL PRIVATE RESIDENCE ENTERTAINMENT RELIGIOUS GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION MILITARY OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Society of the First Parish (contact: Trustees of Parish Donations)

STREET & NUMBER

Church Green

CITY, TOWN

Concord

STATE

Massachusetts

__ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Southern District

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Cambridge 02141

STATE

Massachusetts

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey (catalogue no. MASS-553)

DATE

1962-1963

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDSDivision of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress
10 First Street SE.

CITY, TOWN

Washington 20540

STATE

District of Columbia

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

The Wright Tavern stands at the corner of Lexington Road and Main Street, on the south side of Monument Square, at the center of Concord, Massachusetts. The greensward which is the focus of the Square is the remaining portion of the Concord common, of which the land on which the Tavern stands was once a part. The original quarter-acre Tavern lot has now been absorbed into a 3-acre parcel owned by the Society of the First Parish; the First Parish Church and its broad lawn, known as Church Green, are located immediately to the south on Lexington Road.

The main block of the Wright Tavern is a 2½ story frame and clapboard structure built in 1747. Its monitor or double-hipped roof is broken by interior brick chimneys on its northeast and southwest slopes and by pairs of gabled dormers on its southeast and northwest slopes. Windows are 9-over-9 double-hung sash; those on the southeast and northeast sides have molded caps and louvered blinds. Entrances are located in the center of the 5-bay northeast facade and on the 4-bay southeast facade. The northeast entrance consists of a paneled door topped by a 4-light transom and flanked by pilasters carrying a full entablature and a triangular pediment. The southeast entrance is less ornate, a paneled door with simple flanking pilasters carrying an entablature with a projecting cornice.

Sometime during the 19th century, a large addition was built on the northwest side of the Tavern; frame and clapboard like the main block, it is 2 stories in height with a gabled roof. Windows are 6-over-6 sash with louvered blinds. A second frame and clapboard addition, running the length of the southwest side of the Tavern, was built c. 1924 to serve as a dining room for the hotel which then operated in the building. Set on a foundation of brick and rubble, it is one story in height and has a flat roof; pairs of Ionic pilasters decorate each corner. Between the inner pilasters on each elevation is a band of windows, in the form of vertical panels of 18 lights each, enclosed by a single molded surround.

Despite the presence of these additions, the original section of the Wright Tavern retains its architectural integrity. Though allowed to deteriorate during the 19th century, the Tavern is now well maintained and appears to be structurally sound.

Boundary

The Landmark designation for the Wright Tavern includes the building itself and approximately three-tenths acre of land, described more fully in Item 10.

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 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 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

*War for Independence

SPECIFIC DATES 1747, 1774-1775

BUILDER/ARCHITECT not known

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Wright Tavern, built in 1747 in Concord, Massachusetts, is nationally significant through its association with political and military events in 1774 and 1775 which illustrated a major change in the form of American opposition to colonial ties with England--from constitutional argument to organized and overt acts of rebellion. The value of the building is enhanced by its architectural integrity, for the original portion of the low-studded hostelry, distinguished by its red clapboards and monitor or double-hipped roof, has survived for more than two centuries with fewer changes than many of its historic contemporaries.

Since 1886, the Wright Tavern has been owned by the Society of the First Parish, Congregational, whose meeting house stands immediately to the south on Church Green. The Society rents space in the building, which is open to the public during regular business hours, to a number of commercial tenants and to the Concord Chamber of Commerce.

History

The Wright Tavern was built in 1747 on land sold by the Town of Concord from the southern edge of its common and training field to Ephriam Jones for thirty pounds. Jones was town clerk, a member of the board of selectmen, and captain in the local militia company. His establishment, located between the meeting house and the training ground, quickly became an important center for political and military as well as social activity. The selectmen received no salary at that time, but they met in a tavern and the town paid for their refreshments. Jones' tavern also had the lucrative business of supplying rum to the militia on training days. Between meetings of the selectmen and militia, the landlord provided appropriate refreshment and a congenial atmosphere to his regular patrons.

Jones ran the Tavern for only four years and, in 1751, sold it to a rival inn-keeper, Thomas Munroe. When the latter died in 1766, the building was purchased by Daniel Taylor, who rented it to various tenants during the next decade. Among them was Amos Wright, the landlord in 1775, from whom the building takes its name.

The national significance of the Wright Tavern derives from its association with two events, in 1774 and 1775, which illustrated a major change in the form of American opposition to colonial ties with England--from constitutional argument to organized and overt acts of rebellion. The first of these events was the meeting of a representative assembly, the second armed resistance by colonial militia against British regulars.

(Continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Interim Report of the Boston National Historic Sites Commission Pertaining to the Lexington-Concord Battle Road", 86th Congress, 1st Session, House Document No. 57 (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1959).

Morison, Samuel Eliot. Oxford History of the American People (New York, 1965).

Works Progress Administration, American Guide Series. Massachusetts: A Guide to Its Places and People (Boston, 1937).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately three-tenths acre

UTM REFERENCES

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|----------------|-------------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 1, 9 | 3 0, 6 8, 4, 0 | 4, 7 0, 3 3, 0, 0 | B | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | | | | D | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION (as shown in red on attached engineers map)

Beginning at the intersection of the southern curblines of Lexington Road and Main Street; thence, westerly along the southern curblines of Main Street to its intersection with the western sideline (extended) of the walkway connecting Main Street and the driveway of the First Parish Church; thence, southerly along said western sideline to its intersection with the northern sideline of the driveway of the First Parish Church; thence, easterly along said northern sideline (cont'd)

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 Polly M. Rettig, Historian, Landmark Review Project; original form prepared by C. E. Shedd, Jr., Historian, 8/1/60

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| ORGANIZATION | DATE |
| Historic Sites Survey | 1/03/75 |
| STREET & NUMBER | TELEPHONE |
| 1100 L Street NW. | 202-523-5464 |
| CITY OR TOWN | STATE |
| Washington 20240 | D.C. |

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 found to meet the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE N/A National Historic Landmark

TITLE

Designated: 1/20/75
date

Boundary Certified:
DATE 9-18-75

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Chief, Hist. & Arch. Surveys
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST:

Boundary Affirmed:
DATE 9/25/75

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Director, OAHIP
date

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On October 11, 1774, 300 delegates from Massachusetts towns, with John Hancock as president and Benjamin Lincoln as secretary, were "called together to maintain the rights of the people". Naming themselves the Provincial Congress, the assembled delegates assumed the government of the Province of Massachusetts Bay. While the Congress as a whole convened in Concord's First Parish Meeting House (built in 1712; now replaced by a later meeting house on the same site), its various committees found a convenient meeting place in the Wright Tavern next-door. The measures passed at this session of the Congress, which lasted for 5 days, and at a second, which continued for 4 weeks, adjourning on April 15, 1775, gave formal status developing colonial rebellion by ending the payment of taxes to King George and making provision for an armed force ready to resist his authority.

Overt resistance to British authority became a fact on April 19, 1775, when an expeditionary force of infantry, ordered from Boston to capture colonial military supplies stored at Concord, was confronted and effectively routed by local militia companies. Warned of the British advance by Dr. Samuel Prescott, the Concord Minute Men gathered at the Wright Tavern early on that morning. Later, while their troops searched the town and guarded its two bridges in an attempt to block the arrival of additional colonial forces, the British officers, Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn, waited at the Tavern and no doubt helped themselves to the inn-keeper's liquor. According to tradition, one of them, probably Colonel Smith, stirred his toddy with his fingers and promised so to stir Yankee blood that day.

In the years after the Revolution, the Wright Tavern served as a bakery, and then was used variously by a liveryman, a bookbinder, a storekeeper, a tinsmith, a shoe dealer, and finally by the maker of Potter's Hair Balm. Though additions were made to the building and its general condition allowed to deteriorate, the architectural character of its original portion remained unaltered. The Tavern was saved from a doubtful future through the generosity of two local citizens, Judge Hoar and Ruben Rice, who purchased it in 1886 and donated it to the Society of the First Parish. Rented by the Society, it subsequently served as a hotel, a private residence, and then a restaurant. The Society's current tenants, who pay a nominal rent which provides for maintenance of the building, include a real estate firm, a gift shop, a company selling reproduction Shaker furniture, and the Concord Chamber of Commerce.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

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to its intersection with the southern curblineline of Lexington Road; thence, northerly along said southern curblineline to the point of beginning.