

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

Area

D

Form no.

208



Reading

51 Mill Street

Name Jerry Nichols Tavern

Original Tavern and Dwelling

Present Dwelling

Ship: ☒ Private individual
Private organization

Public

Original owner Jeremiah Nichols

NOTATION:

Other buildings
structures.

Date c. 1785

Source Rooftrees

Style Georgian Vernacular

Architect na

Exterior wall fabric Clapboards

Outbuildings none

Major alterations (with dates)

Extension east with garage;

earlier extensions were removed.

Moved no Date

Approx. acreage 10 acres (9.806 #)

Setting Faces south, with a horse

chestnut and old elm in front.

Recorded by Architectural
Preservation Associates

Organization Reading Historical
Commission

Date November 1980

REVISED

Date 6/82

UTM: 19/326900/4714940

(Staple additional sheets here)



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

This is a good example of the Georgian vernacular house form as found in Reading, Massachusetts. Five symmetrical bays long, it has its main architectural interest focused on the central, south-facing doors. The surround is composed of pilasters supporting a full entablature, but may not be original.

The high-set windows are longer than most on the first floor, being 9/6. The eaves are framed with no return, as is usual in 18th century practice.

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

The site of this farm, near the border of the Second Parish, now North Reading, was the drilling ground and powder house for Minute Men before 1776.

After returning from service in the Revolutionary War, Jeremiah Nichols took up the trade of shoemaker and farmer, bought eleven acres, and built this house around 1785. He probably added to it around 1810-13.

It is unclear when it became a tavern and stage coach stop, but it certainly was one in 1830. Jeremiah, Jr., no longer owned the property, but before his death in 1846, he was recorded as inn keeper. Enormous quantities of rum were consumed in those days and the inn did a thriving business, though the place was mortgaged and then sold in 1822. Asenath Nichols, Jeremiah's sister, was given right of homestead while single.

Peter Sanborn, deposed minister of the Old South Church, bought the "farm" and settled his son, John, there, with the farm held in trust for the grandchildren. Two of these grandchildren joined the army and died in Civil War hospitals far from home, one at 24, one at 21. The two oldest girls remained unmarried and isolated from village life, as apparently etiquette or convenience required an escort which they lacked. The property was in the Sanborn family ownership from 1824-1940's.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

1795 map J. Nichols (Jeremiah)
1830 map yes
1854 map J.N. Sanborn
1875 map J. N. Sanborn (John Norris)
Bishop, Rooftrees, Chapter 22.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Reading	Form No: D-200
Property Name: 51 Will St.	

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

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The Jerry Nichols Tavern is significant (1) in that its site was the drilling ground for the Minutemen before 1776; (2) for its role as a tavern and stage-coach stop; (3) for its connection with Revolutionary War veteran Jeremiah Nichols and the Reverend Peter Sanborn; and (4) as an example of vernacular Georgian architecture. The tavern retains integrity of location, general design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling, and meets Criteria A, B, and C of the National Register.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received 6/14/84

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1 of 9

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Reading Multiple Resource Area
State MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

1. Ace Art Company

Substantive Review for Keeper
Attest

Date/Signature

2. Common Historic District

Substantive Review for Keeper
Attest

3. Harnden-Browne House

Substantive Review for Keeper
Attest

4. Haverhill Street Milestone

Substantive Review for Keeper
Attest

5. Kemp Place

Entered in the
National Register for Keeper
Attest

6. Kemp Barn

Entered in the
National Register for Keeper
Attest

7. Nichols, Jerry, Tavern

Entered in the
National Register for Keeper
Attest

8. Reading Standpipe

Substantive Review for Keeper
Attest

9. Smith Shoe Shop

Substantive Review for Keeper
Attest10. Woburn Street Historic
DistrictSubstantive Review for Keeper
Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Nichols, Jerry, Tavern (Reading MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. JUN 4 1984
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/5/85
Date Due: 7-5-84 / 7-19-84
Action: ACCEPT 7-19-84
____ RETURN
____ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Entered in the
National Register

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

- ☐ excellent ☐ deteriorated
☐ good ☐ ruins
☐ fair ☐ 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

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: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet





Nichols, Jerry F. Von
Reading, Sept. 1961

Nichols, Jerry F. Von
Reading, May 1962

51 Mill St.

B-24

PLAT 244

STREET

4

38,580 ±
Sq. Ft.

176.58

3

15,171
Sq. Ft.

180.40

IPSW

PLAT 236

MILL

2

9.806 ± Acres

PLAT 236

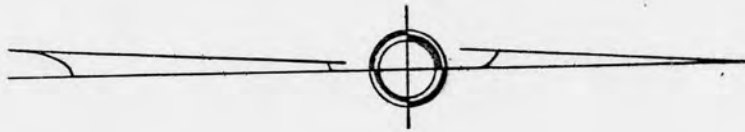
SHORT

STREET

#D-208 51 Mill St.
Map 245, Lot 02
1983 Assessors Map
1" = 100'

(page 1)

MAIN



NORTH
READING

SWICH

Town Line

RIVER

120.0	111.88	120.0
21,000	21,094	21,000
5	6	7
120.0	111.34	120.0

#D-208
(page 2)

371.46

28
47.98

STREET

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000290