

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

PHOTO (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)
Staple to left side of form
Photo number _____

Roll 4 frame 3A-4A

SKETCH MAP

Draw map showing property's
location in relation to nearest
cross streets and other buildings
or geographical features.
Indicate north.



Town Uxbridge

Address Sutton Street

Historic Name Samuel Taft House

Use: Original residence & inn

Present residence

Ownership: ☒ Private individual
Private organization _____

Public _____

Original owner Samuel Taft

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1774

Source historical plaque

Style timber-frame vernacular

Architect unknown

Exterior wall fabric clapboard

Outbuildings none

Major alterations (with dates) porch and
oriel window on ell (mid-20th century)
four-panel front door with transom
(19th century?)

Moved no Date N/A

Approx. acreage 1.02 acres

Settings surrounded mostly by second
growth woods, some sparse (modern)
residential development

UTM: 19 280350 4663100

Recorded by B.R. Pfeiffer

Organization Uxbridge Historical
Commission

Date May 1981

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

The Samuel Taft House is an excellent local example of a popular house-type of the mid-eighteenth century. The building is a $1\frac{1}{2}$ storey timber-frame cottage with a main house containing a central chimney (east) and an ell added in the nineteenth century (east). The main house rests on a rock-faced granite foundation, is enclosed by a gambrel roof and has a symmetrical center-entrance facade (south). The entry contains a door of four sunken panels and two lights.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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

Known locally as the Old Taft Tavern, the Samuel Taft House possesses historical associations with the family of Samuel Taft, who occupied it during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and with George Washington who spent a night here while travelling from Boston to New York in 1789.

Samuel Taft (1736-1816) was the son of Israel and Mercy Taft of Upton and a member of the extensive Taft family which dominated the settlement of Uxbridge in the eighteenth century. In July of 1774, Taft bought the land on which the house stands together with a farm surrounding it from Samuel Read, Jr. According to one source (Taft 1928), a smaller house stood southeast of the present structure at the time of this purchase. Samuel Taft, a farmer, is believed to have built the present house in 1774 or no later than 1778; this second date is based on a painted sign for Taft's tavern bearing the date 1778 which remained in the possession of his descendants at least as late as 1928.

Standing on what was then a major route between Boston and Hartford (Sutton Street), and used both as a farmhouse and inn, the Taft House was visited by George and Martha Washington. The local memory of this visit was preserved in a letter from Washington which remained in the possession of Taft's heirs during the nineteenth century:

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES:

Maps and Atlases: 1830, 1855, 1870, 1890
 Taft, Sarah F. "The Old Taft Tavern"
 Uxbridge: Deborah Wheelock Chapter, D.A.R., 1928
 Proceedings at the Meeting of the Taft Family at
 Uxbridge, Mass., August 12, 1874, Uxbridge: Spencer
 Bros., 1874. pp. 41-42
 Hurd 1888 I: 175
 Jewett 1879 II: 428
 Sprague 1927: 28 & 94

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:	Form No:
Uxbridge	56-53
Property Name: S. Taft House	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Sash consists mostly of 12/12; originally window openings were smaller until ca.1816-1830 when original openings were enlarged by Dandridge G. Taft. Currently, all elevations are covered with clapboards and the roof is covered with wood shingles. One source reports that the house originally had clapboards on the facade only and that side walls were shingled until ca.1856-1857, when Warner Taft installed clapboards throughout.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Hartford, Nov.8, 1789

Sir: - Being informed that you have given my name to one of your sons, and called another after Mrs. Washington's family (Dandridge) and being moreover very much pleased with the modest and innocent looks of your two daughters, Patty, and Polly, I do for these reasons send each of these girls a piece of chintz; and to Patty, who bears the name of Mrs. Washington, and who waited more upon us than Polly did, I send five guineas, with which she may buy herself any little ornaments she may want, or she may dispose of them in any other manner more agreeable to herself. As I do not give these things with a view to have it talked of, or even to its being known, the less there is said about the matter, the better you will please me; but that I may be sure the chintz and money have got safe to hand, let Patty, who I dare say is equal to it, write me a line informing me thereof, directed "to the President of the United States, at New York." I wish you and your family well, and am your humble servant.

George Washington

Requests for discretion disregarded, this letter was widely known in the community, at least during the nineteenth century. On April 3, 1909, the house received its second presidential visitor when President William H. Taft visited Uxbridge and the Samuel Taft House on his way to Millbury.

After Samuel Taft's death, the house passed to one of Taft's twenty-two children, Warner Taft, who lived here until his death around 1856-1857 when the property passed to Warner's son, Dandridge G. Taft. Following the death of D.G. Taft in 1864, the house was owned and occupied by Taft's widow and after 1893 by his daughter (or granddaughter) Sarah F. Taft.

The Samuel Taft House possesses integrity of location, design, setting and workmanship as well as historical associations with Samuel Taft, a farmer, who operated a tavern in the house and with George Washington, who stayed there in 1789. The house also preserves its original vernacular design. The Taft House meets criteria A, B and C of the NRHP.

OWNER: Matthew S. Herbert
Sutton St.
Uxbridge, MA
01569

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 8/20/83

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 5 of 5

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Uxbridge Multiple Resource Area
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

41. Whipple, A., House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melona Byers 10/7/83

Attest

42. Williams, N., House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melona Byers 10/7/83

Attest

43. Taft, Aaron, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melona Byers 10/7/83

Attest

241 44. Taft, Bazaleel, Jr., House
and Law Office

Substantive Review

for Keeper

accept Patrick Andrews 10/7/83

Attest

45. Taft, Hon. Bazaleel, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melona Byers 10/7/83

Attest

46. Taft Brothers Block

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melona Byers 10/7/83

Attest

47. Taft, George, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melona Byers 10/7/83

Attest

48. Taft, Moses, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melona Byers 10/7/83

Attest

49. Taft, Samuel, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melona Byers 10/7/83

Attest

247 50. Taft, Zadock, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melona Byers 10/7/83

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Taft, Samuel, House (Uxbridge MRA)
Worcester County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. AUG 26 1983

Fed. Reg. Date: 2-5-85

Date Due: 9/22/83 - 10/10/83

Action: ☒ ACCEPT 10/7/83

Entered in the
National Register ☐ 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

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ 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: _____



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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000299