

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

8

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Harvey, Matthew, House
other names/site number Muster Field Farm

2. Location

street & number west side of Harvey Road, 0.25 miles north of its intersection with Keyser Street N/A not for publication
city or town Sutton N/A vicinity
state New Hampshire code NH county Merrimack code 013 zip code 03260

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Murray C. Miller July 23, 1992
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
NEW HAMPSHIRE
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper **Entered in the National Register** Date of Action
Melvin Byers 9/4/92

Harvey, Matthew, House

Name of Property

Merrimack County, NH

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: hotel

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Georgian

Federal

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Granite

walls WOOD: Weatherboard

roof WOOD: Shingle

other WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Harvey, Matthew, House
Name of Property

Merrimack County, NH
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	9
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2	6	0	5	0	5
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4	8	0	6	2	5	5
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Zone

Easting

Northing

2

3

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--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone

Easting

Northing

4

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James L. Garvin, Ph.D.

organization NH Division of Historical Resources date June 1992

street & number 19 Pillsbury Street -- PO Box 2043 telephone (603) 271-3558

city or town Concord state NH zip code 03302-2043

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Robert S. Bristol

street & number Harvey Road -- P.O. Box 120 telephone (603) 927-4276

city or town North Sutton state NH zip code 03260

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1784-1859

Significant Dates

1784

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Description

The Matthew Harvey House is a rural New Hampshire dwelling that stands in an elevated location, surrounded by fields and woods. The building represents farmhouse architecture at the turn of the nineteenth century in a newly-settled but prosperous New England agricultural community, and also exemplifies in its floor plan and appointments the special attributes of a rural tavern. The dwelling is generally conservative in its architectural character, retaining vernacular approaches to floor plan, chimney placement, and detailing. As a result of a remodeling a few years after initial construction, the house also possesses certain features which reveal the introduction of the Federal style under the influence of an architectural guidebook. The house is in excellent physical condition, has had relatively little alteration since its construction, and possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The Harvey House is a two-and-a-half story gable-roofed dwelling of wood frame construction. The house has a large central chimney of brick. The building stands over a partial cellar which extends beneath the eastern rooms of both house and wing and has mortared fieldstone walls with split granite underpinning at grade level. The house faces south, and a one-story wing extends from its northern (rear) wall and connects the dwelling to a gable-roofed shed which is oriented with its axis parallel to that of the main house.

The house stands on the west side of Harvey Road, at the brow of a hill that rises gently about two hundred feet above Kezar Lake to the south. The land around the house forms a level plateau that extends east of the dwelling and provides an extensive, flat field long used for agriculture and as a muster field for militia training. To the west, open pastures slope gently away from the house. To the south, the house is framed by an irregular double row of mature sugar maples that provide a shaded alley or avenue leading to the front door. Continued use of the land for agriculture has prevented and even reversed reforestation and thus has preserved extensive views in all directions, especially toward hills lying to the south and west, and Mount Kearsarge, one of the dominating mountains of the region, to the east. Beyond the cultivated acres surrounding the house, the second-growth forest is composed of mixed northern hardwoods and conifers, with eastern white pine trees predominating in the forest along the southerly portions of Harvey Road.

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Continuation Sheet

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Description (continued)

The main house measures about 36-1/2 by 32 feet. The house and the wing have separate frames; the juncture between the two is most readily viewed in the cellar, where the sills of the main house and of the wing adjoin one another. In keeping with traditional practice in the region, the frame of the main house is composed of members of eastern white pine and oak, with the larger members hewn and the smaller members, such as braces, sawn on an upright or reciprocating water-powered saw.

The roof frame of the house is unusually massive and staunchly built for a dwelling house. The rafters on each side of the central chimney and the intermediate rafters are mostly white oak. They are supported by king posts rising from their tie beams to the ridge pole of the house, and by bracing struts which rise from each king post to a point about midway up each rafter. The king posts of the chimney rafters are further supported by prick posts which extend down through the house on either side of the chimney stack to the sill level. The king posts on each side of the chimney are connected to one another by heavy longitudinal ties which are securely mortised into the king posts and are further stiffened by diagonal braces that rise from the midpoint of the ties to a point near the top of each king post. This heavy trussing of the roof frame, unusual in New Hampshire except in meeting house frames, may represent the work of carpenter John Harvey (1769-1825), who was a cousin of the first owner of the house and who framed the nearby meeting house in 1794. The roof is further reinforced by heavy diagonal wind braces which rise from the front and rear wall plates to each end rafter, intersecting the longitudinal purlins. By means of these various bracing members, the entire roof system of the house is strongly reinforced against wind loads, being stiffened in all directions and firmly locked into the equally heavy wall frame below. The unusually heavy framing of the roof also permits a ballroom on the second floor of the house to extend through the full depth of the building without having its expansive ceiling supported by partitions.

The house has clapboarded walls and a roof covered with wood shingles. The walls retain a high percentage of original riven and hand-shaved clapboards. In keeping with local practice during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the clapboards are applied with graded exposure to the weather, with progressively greater exposure toward the upper walls, and have lapped joints at their ends. Corners of the house are finished with corner boards.

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Description (continued)

The facade or south elevation of the house is five bays in width and is symmetrically composed around a central frontispiece or doorway. First-story windows have nine-over-six sashes; second-story windows have six-over-six sashes. Sashes on the front (south) of the house and on the west have Federal-style muntins, three-quarters of an inch in width; those on the west (not visible from the road) are apparently older and have heavy muntins a full inch in width. Exterior window casings are bordered by backband mouldings, and most windows are fitted with a pair of louvered window blinds. The eaves cornice of the house is a heavily-projecting double cornice, with its ogee bed moulding mitered back against the facade and its corona and crown moulding (also an ogee) returning a short distance on each side elevation.

The front doorway is unusually monumental, with its features closely patterned on those of the Tuscan order as codified in Asher Benjamin's The Country Builder's Assistant. The doorway pilasters are delicately reeded, and support an entablature which spans an opening with a two-leaf front door hung on butt hinges. Each leaf of the front door has three flat panels framed with double ovolo mouldings; the door retains an early brass thumb latch. Flanking the door are two unusual three-over-two-light sidelight sashes, with sliding bottom sashes. The front door step of the house is a single massive slab of hammered granite.

The eastern side elevation of the house, facing Harvey Road, serves as a secondary facade. Its doorway is also in the Tuscan order, with plain pilasters instead of the reeded members seen on the front entrance; the six-panel door is modern. The fenestration on this side of the house is slightly asymmetrical, with an attic window centrally placed in the gable, two balanced windows on the second floor, a first-floor window below the front window of the second floor, and the door and an adjacent window together occupying the rear bay on the first floor. As on the front, sashes are six-over-six on the second floor and nine-over-six on the first floor. Because the eastern side faces the road, the window casings here are provided with moulded backbands to match those on the facade; window casings elsewhere on the house are plain. Windows on the east side of the house, like those on the front, are fitted with exterior blinds; windows on the west and north elevations of the house have no blinds.

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Description (continued)

The western side elevation of the house has balanced fenestration, with a single attic window and two windows each on the first and second floors. These are aligned vertically, with six-over-six sashes on the second floor and nine-over-six sashes on the first. This side of the house is clapboarded with modern clapboards laid with graded exposure to the weather, as elsewhere on the house. The rear (north) elevation of the house, intersected by the wing, has three bays on each floor, with the central bay of the first floor occupied by a back door.

The story-and-a-half wing, about seventeen feet square, holds a secondary or "summer" kitchen and connects the house to a gable-roofed shed that measures eighteen by forty-nine feet. The front (east) of the shed was converted to an automobile garage some fifty years ago; the rear of the structure has had some of its vertical sheathing removed to create a screened porch.

The floor plan of the Harvey House derives from that of the typical two-story, two-room-deep central chimney dwelling of northern New England. The brick chimney, built upon a platform of large split granite slabs supported on foundation walls of well-mortared split stone rubble, rises through the center of the house, piercing the ridge of the roof. The rooms of the house are disposed in a generally symmetrical manner around this chimney on both floors. On the first story, the house follows regional tradition by having two rooms, warmed by fireplaces on opposite sides of the chimney stack, on either side of the chimney, with a long kitchen, served by a larger fireplace and brick oven, centered at the rear of the house. The second floor of the dwelling departs from the usual plan, which in most center-chimney houses echoes the room layout of the first floor. Instead of having two front bedchambers with a group of lesser rooms aligned along the back of the house, the Harvey House has a single large ballroom, heated by a fireplace, extending through the full depth of the house along the western side. Opposite this, on the southeast quarter of the second floor, is a front bedchamber with a fireplace. North of this room, at the back of the house, are two chambers without fireplaces, one of them converted to a bathroom. Evidence suggests that these rooms were created by the erection of new partitions in the late nineteenth century.

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Continuation Sheet

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Description (continued)

The interior of the Harvey House is characterized by joiner's work of two periods, combining traditional Georgian detailing with newer Federal-style elements derived from Asher Benjamin's The Country Builder's Assistant. The house is therefore a transitional example of rural architecture, important both as a document of well-established local building traditions and as an example of the introduction of new ideas (influenced in this case by an architectural guidebook) near the turn of the nineteenth century.

The front entry of the house is a small lobby with a triple-run staircase rising against the south face of the central chimney stack. The staircase has a moulded handrail and plain, square balusters; its exposed stringer is decorated with applied brackets cut from thin boards. The entry is sheathed with both horizontal and vertical beaded pine boards. The two leaves of the front door, each with three panels, are secured by a large wooden bar held by an iron staple and hook; together, these two leaves combine to create the effect of a typical Federal-style six-panel door with flat panels. Opposite the front door, a small closet beneath the staircase is fitted with a two-panel door with raised panels but with ovolo-and-fillet stile and rail mouldings instead of the plain ovolo mouldings seen on older doors in the house. High up on the chimney wall of the stairwell, and almost inaccessible from the stairs, are a pair of small doors in the same style, opening into closets built against the side of the chimney.

The two front (south) rooms on the first floor of the house, originally a sitting room and parlor, are the most elaborately finished areas of the dwelling. The sitting room on the southeast has a fully paneled chimney wall, with plaster and wainscoting on its other three walls. The chimney wall is characterized by raised paneling of two periods. The range of panels to the left of the fireplace has plain quarter-round or ovolo mouldings planed into its stiles and rails. A closet to the right of the fireplace has a door with ovolo-and-fillet mouldings around its raised panels, representing the advent of Federal-style detailing. This wall has a crown moulding, composed of a cyma recta above a cyma reversa, above the paneled chimney wall; the other three walls have no crown moulding. The fireplace itself has a stone forehearth and a simple mantelpiece in the Federal style, above which is a rectangular wooden overmantel panel set within a moulded architrave. Except for a short section of paneling on the north wall of the room to the right of the fireplace, other walls have flat board wainscoting with a simple moulded chair rail, and plastered upper walls covered with wallpaper reproduced from a nineteenth-century document.

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Description (continued)

The southwest parlor, traditionally referred to as the "Watson Parlor," is the most elaborately-finished room in the house. Like the sitting room opposite, the parlor has a fully paneled fireplace wall with a newer, Federal-style mantelpiece. The room therefore reflects both the traditional practice of paneling the fireplace wall and the new fashion, introduced to vernacular New Hampshire dwellings in the 1790s, of emphasizing the fireplace with a formal mantelpiece.

The east wall of the parlor is dominated by the broadly-proportioned mantelpiece, which is closely patterned after Plate 20 in Benjamin's The Country Builder's Assistant. While the design and even the mouldings of the mantel follow the book closely, this example omits the composition ornament or carving suggested by Benjamin's plate, substituting flat surfaces for the enriched decoration that might have been copied in a more urban locale. The overmantel panel of this room, and the door and window architraves as well, all follow the "double" architrave design suggested by Benjamin. Typically Federal in style, these architraves contrast with the older raised paneling to the right of the fireplace, as well as with the raised panels of the doors and window shutters of the room, all of which represent the original finish of the room.

The other three walls of this room are fully plastered from the ceiling to the baseboard.

The windows of the Watson Parlor are unusual in having architraves that border all four sides of the opening, including the bottom. The windows of this room are also the only ones in the house to be fitted with sliding shutters. These are fitted into pockets in the walls and divided into upper and lower portions that slide independently across the window openings, supported by a wooden rail at the level of the meeting rail of the sashes. Like the other joiner's work of the room, the window shutters have raised panels bordered by ovolo mouldings.

This room is papered with a foliate wallpaper reproduced from a document of about 1830 found in the room itself, and with a wide flocked border with a peony motif.

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Description (continued)

The original kitchen of the house, extending across the rear of the dwelling behind the chimney, centers upon a large cooking fireplace with a brick oven to its right. Both fireplace opening and oven door are spanned by a heavy granite lintel; the forehearth in front of the fireplace and oven is a single piece of hammered granite. The fireplace wall is sheathed with vertical pine boards, and the fireplace itself is surmounted by a long raised panel. The fireplace has unusually elaborate trim for a kitchen hearth, with a moulded architrave around its opening, a mantelshelf supported on bed mouldings, and a paneled door covering the oven and ash pit to the right of the fireplace. The western end of this room is fitted with the appliances of a modern kitchen.

The story-and-a-half summer kitchen north of the main house has a single principal room, and several minor closets and storage areas, on its first floor. The principal room is equipped as a summer kitchen, having its own chimney with a second cooking fireplace and oven comparable in size, construction, and detailing to those in the main house. Like the main kitchen, this area is finished in pine sheathing and has a well-detailed mantelpiece with an overmantel panel.

The second floor ballroom, extending through the full depth of the house on its western side, is heated by a single fireplace which is set within a slight recess in the plane of the chimney wall. The fireplace has a simple Federal-style mantelpiece with an overmantel panel similar in detailing to those in the front rooms on the first floor. The wall flanking the fireplace is paneled with older raised panels in upper and lower ranges. The paneling to the right of the fireplace is interrupted by the recess which holds the mantelpiece. Immediately to the left of the fireplace is a small closet with a two-panel door having the later and more elaborate ovolo-and-fillet mouldings around its panels. The other three walls of the room are wainscoted with flat boards, and have plaster above. Fixed to the wainscoting on these walls are boxed benches with hinged seats providing access to storage below, all fashioned from plain boards. The ballroom is floored with wide pine boards.

The southeast bedroom is similar in detailing to the ballroom, with a comparable mantelpiece but with a pair of horizontal overmantel panels having plain ovolo mouldings. The remainder of the fireplace wall is also paneled, and the other three walls of the bedroom are finished with flat board wainscoting and plaster. To the right of the fireplace is a small closet having a two-panel door with ovolo-and-fillet stile and rail mouldings. Like the sitting room below, this chamber has a double cyma crown moulding applied above the paneled fireplace wall.

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Description (continued)

At the northeast corner of the second floor is a bedchamber with no fireplace. Two of its walls, on the exterior sides of the room, are sheathed with shiplapped horizontal pine sheathing. The other two walls, dating from the late nineteenth century, are plastered from floor to ceiling and are covered with a wallpaper reproduced in the 1940s; this matches a paper of about 1800 found in the house.

The central room on the north side of the second floor is now used as a bathroom.

Original appearance: The Matthew Harvey House remained in the family of its original builder until 1941. Since that date, the house has been owned by two generations of another family. Thus, the building has undergone less change than would be typical of a dwelling that had passed through the hands of many different owners. The first changes to the house, strongly influenced by Asher Benjamin's The Country Builder's Assistant (1797 and later editions), may have been carried out after 1800 following the death of the builder, Matthew Harvey (1749-1799), and the transfer of the property to his eldest son Jonathan (1780-1859). Other changes have been carried out since 1941, when the property passed into the ownership of a new family for the first time.

As far as is known, the house as originally built differed only superficially from its present exterior appearance. The principal exterior changes to the dwelling appear to have included the installation of front and side frontispieces or doorways based on Benjamin's The Country Builder's Assistant, and the substitution of Federal-style sashes, with narrower muntins than the originals, on the public south and west elevations of the house. The western side of the dwelling, not visible from the road, was covered with weathered wooden shingles until the 1940s; clapboards were substituted for these shingles at that time. The house has undergone slight changes in fenestration since 1941, and the attached shed was converted to a garage and summer house in the early 1940s.

Changes to the original interior of the house took the form of a substitution of Federal-style mantelpieces and doors for older joiner's work, as outlined above, and probably a complete remodeling of the entry and staircase at the time of the installation of the new front doorway. These changes may be ascribed to Jonathan Harvey, who quickly assumed a leading position in the community following his father's death at age forty-nine. At some point after the second-floor ballroom ceased to be needed as such, it was subdivided into two bed chambers by the installation of a partition of vertical one-inch sheathing boards, held to the floor and ceiling by wooden cleats.

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Continuation Sheet

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Description (continued)

Interior changes since 1941 have consisted in the removal of internal partitions of vertical one-inch boards, at least some of which postdated the construction of the house. Two such partitions, formerly separating an entry and a pantry from the kitchen, were removed in the 1940s and 1950s; a third, subdividing the ballroom into bedchambers, was removed in the 1940s. A few other elements have been added to the house; these include a beaufait or corner cupboard, reconstructed on the basis of physical evidence in the southwest parlor, and wooden overmantel panels within the original architraves above the two front fireplaces on the first floor and the fireplace in the ballroom on the second floor.

In fields adjacent to the house, but not included within the bounds of the nominated property, the present owner has assembled a number of early buildings used for agriculture or in conjunction with programs of the Muster Field Farm Museum, which uses the property for a variety of seasonal activities. Some of these buildings were moved to the site to save them from deterioration; others were donated by individuals with an interest in the Farm Museum.

Statement of Significance

The Matthew Harvey House is significant under National Register Criterion C as an ambitious rural dwelling of the late eighteenth century, little altered except for the installation about 1800 of a few key interior and exterior features derived from an influential architectural guidebook. The building therefore provides an important index to the characteristics of Georgian detailing in a New Hampshire country town, and also to the influence of books in introducing the forms of the new Federal style. The building is further important as an unusually well-preserved rural New England tavern, exemplifying the ambitious scale and detailing often associated with tavern buildings at a time when the tavern was a key institution in society, and retaining special attributes, such as a ballroom and double kitchens, often associated with such buildings. The house is also significant under Criterion A, having served many of the varied roles typical of the New England tavern and therefore having contributed to the social history of its town and region. The period of significance of the building extends from its construction in the 1780s to the death of the son of the original builder in 1859, at which time the house ceased to function as a social and political center and became simply a farmhouse.

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Statement of Significance (continued)

The township of Sutton was granted under the name of "Perrystown" in 1749 by the Masonian Proprietors, a group of private investors who had purchased an ancient proprietary claim to much of New Hampshire.¹ Because of the remoteness of the grant from the older settled communities on the seacoast, little progress was made in clearing land and building houses until 1770.² In 1772, Matthew Harvey (1749-1799) settled on the lot where the Harvey House now stands, but little is known of the character of his original dwelling.³ Like other settlers, Harvey was required by the terms of his land grant to clear and improve land. In 1780, Harvey began to set out an orchard just north of the present dwelling; apple cider was the universal New England drink in the eighteenth century, and an orchard was considered essential to every farm and even more so to a tavern.⁴

The Matthew Harvey House was built about 1784.⁵ The house assumed special importance when the road that ran past its door was designated as the main route leading to adjoining towns. This road became the principal highway of the town, leading especially to the adjacent town of New London to the north; the presence of sawmills in New London and the geography of Sutton combined to align the interests of the settlers of North Sutton more with New London than with the southern portions of Sutton itself. In response to the greatly increased traffic on this thoroughfare, Matthew Harvey opened his house as a tavern, perhaps the first in town.⁶ By the time he died in 1799 at the age of forty-nine, Harvey had become a civic leader and the largest landowner and wealthiest man in the community.⁷

The Harvey House is significant for its framing, finish, and plan. Built with heavy members of oak and pine, the dwelling is one of the most massively framed houses of its size in the region. Its main carcass is unusual in having prick posts both in the outer bents of the frame and in the chimney bents. Its roof frame is exceptional both for the king posts that support the rafters and for the trusses that connect these posts together to form a heavily braced system, as well as for the wind braces that lend rigidity to the roof planes themselves. The exceptional size and elaboration of the frame denote the hand of an experienced carpenter, and suggest framing practices more commonly seen in meeting house construction than in dwelling houses. These features recall the fact that Matthew Harvey's cousin John Harvey (1769-1825) was the carpenter and the chief joiner of the meeting house of 1794 in North Sutton, and settled nearby.⁸

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Section number 8 Page 11

Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Statement of Significance (continued)

The original interior joiner's work of the house is typical of eighteenth-century work in New Hampshire. It utilizes paneling and doors with raised panels and simple ovolo mouldings planed into the stiles and rails; the horizontal wall sheathing seen in some rear spaces of the house was fabricated with the same tools used for the more finished paneling. This joiner's work survives virtually intact throughout the house except where Federal-style mantelpieces were added a few years later, and renders the building an important document of stylistic preferences in a rural and relatively newly-settled New Hampshire community in the late eighteenth century.

Of equal interest are the Federal-style features that were added to the house around 1800. These include the two principal doorways or frontispieces of the building, elements of the front stairhall, and the mantelpieces throughout the dwelling. Based closely upon plates in Asher Benjamin's The Country Builder's Assistant (first edition, 1797), these features demonstrate the compelling power of the new style, and especially of the first book written by New England's chief exponent of the style. The fact that the house was remodeled within twenty years of its original construction suggests that even in a rural community both householders and joiners were keenly aware of the new fashion, and also that the older style of joiner's work was regarded by some people as outdated. One of Matthew Harvey's sons, Philip Sargent Harvey (1783-1855), was a joiner who would have been familiar with the new style and who may have been involved in the remodeling of the house.⁹

Probably added by Jonathan Harvey (1780-1859), the son of the original builder, these Federal-style details reflect the stature to which the young man aspired as well as the symbolic place of this tavern building in the community. Jonathan Harvey assumed an active role in local politics immediately after coming of legal age, quickly becoming a selectman, the town clerk, and a representative to the legislature. Within a few years, Harvey was a leader in state politics, becoming president of the state senate, a member of the executive council, and a member of Congress for three successive terms. Long active in the local militia, Harvey made his house the site of annual regimental musters and of the important social events that surrounded them.¹⁰

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Harvey, Matthew, House
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Statement of Significance (continued)

The plan and appointments of the house reflect the building's role as a tavern and social center. The building's single most unusual feature is the ballroom that extends through the full thirty-foot depth of the house on the western side of the second floor. The expansive ceiling of this large room is suspended from the heavy framing in the attic; the king post in the roof truss above the center of the room, acting as a tension member, allows the weight of the attic floor frame and of the plaster below it to be carried with no support within the room below.

Such "long rooms" had been characteristic of New Hampshire taverns since the 1760s. These halls served the needs of dancers, of diners at the great banquets that were a specialty of taverns, and of groups and clubs needing a large room for business or social gatherings.¹¹ According to a reminiscence of Jonathan Harvey's niece, written in 1873, the long room of Harvey's tavern provided space for breakfast and dinner on muster days during the 1820s; following these meals, "after the dinner tables were cleared away, the hall was made ready for the dancers."¹²

The dinners commonly served to large groups at all taverns, and the food routinely provided to individual passing travelers, both required unusually extensive cooking facilities. The Harvey House has two fully equipped kitchens, one on the rear (north) side of the central chimney of the main dwelling, and the second served by a large chimney at the north end of the one-story wing. Both kitchens have capacious cooking fireplaces and brick ovens.

Also connected with the functioning of the tavern are nearby features of the landscape. The former orchard, planted in 1780, was an important adjunct to this or any other tavern. Because of the nighttime need to impound herds of animals being driven to summer fields for fattening or to market, all country taverns required adjacent fenced fields like those around the Harvey House. Tavernkeepers who were in a position to do so were also eager to host the annual or semiannual militia musters.

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Statement of Significance (continued)

All able-bodied men were required to attend these drills, and musters were eagerly awaited as holidays by wives and children; thus, a tavernkeeper received a great deal of business on these occasions.¹³ The muster field close to the Harvey House long served the needs of the Thirtieth New Hampshire Regiment, of which Jonathan Harvey was adjutant. According to Harvey's niece Theresa,

Nature made that muster-field with special reference to military display, just as much as each man's uniform was made for the same purpose; for I do not know of another like it in Sutton, nor in any of the towns adjacent. A high table-land, embracing more than twenty acres, so level that the eye could take in the whole scene at once, is a rare thing in the broken, mountainous region I speak of.¹⁴

The tavern was a social center of eighteenth-century New England, and the tavernkeeper was usually one of the most influential men or women in any town. Matthew Harvey and his son Jonathan were both community leaders. In keeping with their stature in the community, both men were involved with several local organizations; in keeping with common practice at the period, the Harvey tavern was used as the meeting place for the governing boards of these bodies.

One such organization was a social library, a private organization made up of subscribers who pooled their contributions to create a fund for the purchase of books. Long the only type of library known in New England, social libraries eventually numbered some one hundred eighty in New Hampshire alone. "Were I to form a picture of a happy society," wrote New Hampshire historian Jeremy Belknap in 1791, it would include "a social library, annually increasing, and under good regulation."¹⁵ In 1796, a group of sixty-nine subscribers from Sutton, New London, and Newbury joined together at Matthew Harvey's house to form such a library for the region. The group chose Matthew Harvey as its librarian, probably because they felt that their books should be kept at a quasi-public house like a tavern; they incorporated themselves in 1799. Jonathan Harvey assumed librarianship of the organization after his father's death.¹⁶

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Harvey, Matthew, House
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Statement of Significance (continued)

As already mentioned, Matthew Harvey and Jonathan Harvey were both active in the militia, and the ceremonies associated with military musters required the facilities of a tavern. According to the memoirs of Theresa Harvey,

In the afternoon [before the muster] the inspector-general had arrived with his suite, and was at once shown to the best apartments in the house--a large, roomy mansion built and for some years used for a tavern, as it was then termed. . . . On the morning that I well remember, about the year 1822, before nine o'clock, Jonathan Harvey, adjutant, mounted on a splendid horse, took his station in front of his house, and called the companies in their order, and as they formed escorted them to their stations on the field. . . . After inspection the men were dismissed for dinner--a grand dinner being provided at the house for the officers [followed by a "grand review" and a sham fight]. . . . Meantime, at the house, another kind of evolution had been going on, Tony Clark with his fiddle acting as inspector-general. As soon as possible after the dinner tables were cleared away, the hall was made ready for the dancers. The muster ball was a splendid affair. Even high military functionaries did not disdain to take off their boots and don their pumps, and join with the wives and daughters of the military and social aristocracy of the land.¹⁷

Another musical use of the Harvey tavern occurred in the late 1700s and early 1800s, when Capt. Matthew Buell of Newport, a local music master, conducted a singing school one afternoon and evening each week at the house. Buell occasionally made the house the scene for meetings of several of his classes from the region, with a dinner provided at the end of the gathering. Similarly, Anthony or Tony Clark, mentioned in Theresa Harvey's memoir, taught dancing.¹⁸

The Harvey House served these and other social functions from its construction through the first half of the nineteenth century. Jonathan Harvey lived to the age of eighty, remaining active in politics, in the militia, and as justice of the peace and quorum for much of his life. Suffering from illness in his latter years, Harvey died in 1859, leaving the homestead to his descendants. Thereafter, the building returned to its basic use as a farmhouse and saw little physical change. The period of its significance has therefore been defined as ending in 1859.

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Harvey, Matthew, House
Merrimack County, NH

Statement of Significance (continued)

¹ Erastus Wadleigh and A. H. Worthen, The History of Sutton, New Hampshire, arr. by Augusta Harvey Worthen; reprint of the 1890 ed. (Sutton, N.H.: by the town, 1975), pp. 5-29; New Hampshire Provincial and State Papers, 40 vols. (Concord, N.H.: State of New Hampshire, 1867-1943), XXVIII, pp. 303-330; Jeremy Belknap, The History of the State of New-Hampshire (Dover, N.H.: S. C. Stevens and Ela & Wadleigh, 1830), pp. 296-300.

² New Hampshire Provincial and State Papers, XXVIII, pp. 317-319.

³ Wadleigh and Worthen, History of Sutton, pp. 41-42, 748-749. On July 11, 1774, Matthew Harvey purchased the entire proprietor's lot number 20 in the second division of lots in Perrystown from James Marshall (Hillsborough County Deeds, vol. 29, page 412). On January 7, 1786, Harvey purchased an additional adjoining seventeen acres, being part of lot 13 in the second division of lots, from Ebenezer Kezar (Hillsborough County Deeds, vol. 29, page 409).

⁴ Wadleigh and Worthen, History of Sutton, p. 451; W. J. Rorabaugh, The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 17.

⁵ Wadleigh and Worthen, History of Sutton, p. 586.

⁶ Ibid., p. 303.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 41-42.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 308, 325-339, 760.

⁹ Ibid., p. 120.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 42-44, 492-496, 500-505.

¹¹ Donna-Belle Garvin and James L. Garvin, On the Road North of Boston: New Hampshire Taverns and Turnpikes, 1700-1900 (Concord, N.H.: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1988), pp. 22-23, 26.

¹² Wadleigh and Worthen, History of Sutton, p. 504.

¹³ Garvin and Garvin, On the Road North of Boston, pp. 30-32, 134-137.

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Merrimack County, NH

Statement of Significance (continued)

¹⁴ Wadleigh and Worthen, History of Sutton, p. 501.

¹⁵ Jeremy Belknap, The History of New-Hampshire, reprint of vol. III (Hampton, N.H.: Peter E. Randall, 1973), p. 251.

¹⁶ Wadleigh and Worthen, History of Sutton, pp. 197-202.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 501-505.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 538-540.

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Harvey, Matthew, House
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Verbal boundary description

The boundaries of the nominated property are indicated on the attached sketch map.

Verbal boundary justification

The boundaries of the nominated property are drawn to include the Matthew Harvey Homestead and its immediate setting.

Additional documentation -- Photograph labels

Applicable to all views:

1. Matthew Harvey Homestead
2. Sutton/Merrimack County/NH
3. Malcolm D. Pearson; Sutton MA
4. June 1990
5. Robert S. Bristol, Harvey Road, Sutton NH

Photo #1:

Front (south) and side (east) elevations

Photo #2:

Side (west) elevation

Photo #3:

Side (east) elevation

This certifies that the appearance has not changed since these photographs were taken.

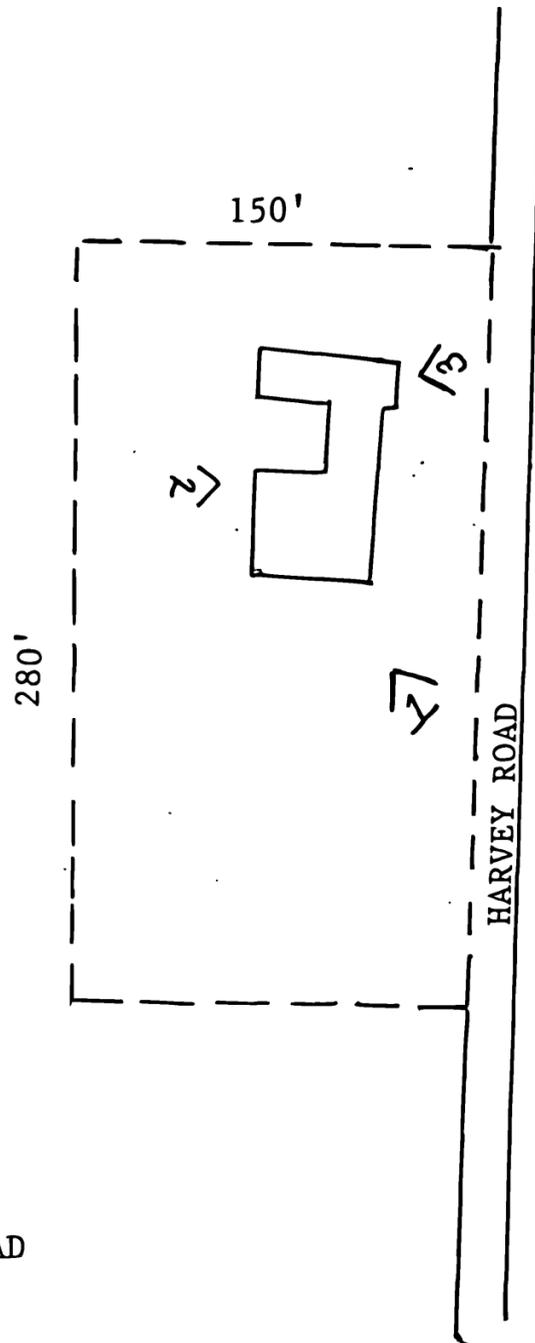
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Additional documentation

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MATTHEW HARVEY HOMESTEAD
SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

BOUNDARIES - - - - -

NORTH

