

STATE: Massachusetts  
COUNTY: Middlesex  
FOR NPS USE ONLY  
ENTRY DATE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**  
(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

**1. NAME**

COMMON: Buckman Tavern  
AND/OR HISTORIC: Buckman Tavern

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: 1 Bedford Street  
CITY OR TOWN: Lexington CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Fifth  
STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025 COUNTY: Middlesex CODE: 017

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: Town of Lexington (contact Chairman, Board of Selectmen)  
STREET AND NUMBER: Town Office Building, Massachusetts Avenue  
CITY OR TOWN: Lexington 02173 STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Southern District  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
CITY OR TOWN: Cambridge 02141 STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey  
(catalogue number: Mass-547)  
DATE OF SURVEY: 1962-63  Federal  State  County  Local  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress  
STREET AND NUMBER: 10 First Street SE  
CITY OR TOWN: Washington 20540 STATE: D.C. CODE: 011

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Buckman Tavern stands near Bedford Street at the center of a 2.86 acre park-like property, formerly the Merriam estate and now owned by the Town of Lexington, Massachusetts. The Tavern faces south, the typical orientation for buildings of its period. It was begun about 1690, later enlarged and remodeled, and by 1775 essentially had assumed its present Georgian appearance. An extensive rehabilitation program was carried out at the Tavern in 1973 and the building is now in excellent condition.

The main block of the frame and clapboard Tavern is now a four-square, 2-story unit. Its hipped roof is broken by 3 shed dormers on the front slope, 2 on each side slope. Windows throughout the block are 12/12 sash with louvered blinds; those in the dormers are 9/9 sash. The main entrance is set slightly off-center in the five-bay front facade; its paneled doorway, topped by a five-light transom, is flanked by Doric pilasters carrying a full entablature and a dentilled pediment.

Attached to the northeast corner of the main block is a 1½ story ell with gabled roof. At the southeast corner is a 1 story ell, also with gabled roof and a center entrance facing Bedford Street. The two ells are connected by a 1 story shed-roofed addition along the eastern side of the main block.

The Buckman Tavern shares the former Merriam estate with four other structures. Just northwest of the Tavern, near Bedford Street, is a memorial to the Lexington Minute Men of 1775, created by sculptress Bashka Paeff and dedicated on April 19, 1949. The stone relief with stepped granite base is set on a low mound and surrounded by a simple iron fence. At the northern corner of the property are a 2-story frame and clapboard house with gabled roof, now the headquarters of the local Red Cross chapter, and a 2-story wooden carriage shed, used by public works crews for maintenance of town-owned land in the area. In 1965, a town visitor's center was constructed at the southeast corner of the property off Merriam Street; this frame and clapboard building is a long rectangle, 1½ stories in height, with a gabled roof broken by dormers.

Boundary

As shown in red on the attached plat map of the Merriam estate; beginning at the intersection of the north side of Merriam Street and the east side of Massachusetts Avenue; thence, in a curving line along the east side of Massachusetts Avenue, Bedford Street and Hancock Street to its intersection with the west sideline of the right-of-way of the Boston and Maine Railroad; thence, along said sideline to its intersection with the north sideline of Merriam Street; thence, along the north sideline of Merriam Street to the point of beginning.

\*Though included in these boundaries because of their location on land historically associated with the Buckman Tavern, the Red Cross house, the carriage shed, and the Minute Man memorial and the Minute Man Memorial do not contribute to the national significance of the landmark.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century            |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) c. 1690; 1775

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Buckman Tavern, a 2-story frame and clapboard building begun about 1690, is the oldest of a dozen hostelries that once did a thriving business in Lexington, Massachusetts. More important, it is the building most closely associated with the Battle of Lexington, the brief skirmish between local militia and British regulars on the morning of April 19, 1775, which marked the beginning of the armed struggle for American independence. The Tavern was the headquarters of the militia on that morning; its walls still bear the scars left by British musket balls.

The Buckman Tavern was acquired by the Town of Lexington in 1913 and then leased to the Lexington Historical Society which operates it as a museum. During the Bicentennial period (1975-76), the Tavern will be open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, April 15 to October 15.

Historic Background

The original section of the Buckman Tavern was constructed about 1690 by Benjamin Muzzy, who was licensed to keep a public house there in 1693. The building was subsequently enlarged and remodeled and by 1775 had assumed its present appearance--a four-square Georgian block with ells at the south-east and northeast corners.

The Tavern derives its name from John Buckman, who in 1775 was its proprietor and also a member of the Lexington company of Minute Men. His public house was a convenient gathering place for his fellow Minute Men on the days they trained on the adjacent Lexington Green, and it was natural that they should assemble there during the night that preceded the arrival of the British regulars on April 19, 1775. The walls of the building still bear the scars left by musket balls fired that morning in the brief skirmish between Captain John Parker's Minute Men and Major John Pitcairn's light infantry.

Lexington's first store was located in the Tavern and, in 1812, its south-eastern ell became the town's first post office. During World War I, the Tavern served as the headquarters of the local Red Cross chapter and an emergency hospital.

(Continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

UTM 19.316590.4701850

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2.86

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

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

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE: 12/23/74

STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 L Street NW.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: D.C.

CODE: 011

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Designated: 1/20/61

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) Certified:

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Chief, Hist. & Arch. Surveys

ATTEST:

Boundary Affirmed:

Keeper of The National Register

Director, OAMP

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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*9:18-75*  
*9/25/75*

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARKS)

(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance: (1)

Buckman Tavern

In 1913, the Town of Lexington acquired the Buckman Tavern and its land, known locally as the Merriam estate. The Lexington Historical Society made a substantial contribution toward the purchase and, under a 99-year lease, took on the responsibility of furnishing the building and opening it to the public. A visitor's center, constructed in 1965 near the southeastern corner of the Merriam property, serves the Tavern and other historic sites in Lexington.