

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

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

1. NAME

COMMON:
Lexington Green

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Lexington Green, Lexington Common, Battle Green

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Massachusetts Avenue, Harrington Road, & 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" 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:
None

DATE OF SURVEY:
 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Massachusetts
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" 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

Lexington Green, a triangular open space bounded by Massachusetts Avenue, Harrington Road, and Bedford Street, is located just northwest of the center of Lexington, Massachusetts. The 2½ acre area was acquired by the Town of Lexington during the first quarter of the 18th century in two parcels of 1½ acres and 1 acre. The Green is now a park commemorating the brief battle between local Minute Men and British regulars which occurred here on the morning of April 19, 1775. The most significant physical features of the Green are the various monuments located on it.

At the southeast corner of the Green, facing the route of the British advance, is Henry Hudson Kitson's "Lexington Minute Man"; the life-size bronze figure of a colonial farmer carrying his musket is set on a high base of rough fieldstones. Near the statue is a bronze plaque, mounted on a low boulder, marking the site of the wooden belfry which stood on the south side of the Green between 1768 and 1797.

Two monuments mark the approximate position of the line formed by the Minute Men on April 19, 1775. That on the east, near Bedford Street, is a low boulder with a carved inscription (see significance). The Revolutionary War Monument stands on a slight rise at the western end of the line. Erected in 1799, it consists of a granite obelisk now surrounded by a simple iron fence. On its face is an inscription honoring the eight men who died on the Green, seven of whom are interred in the tomb beneath the monument.

Boundary

As shown on the attached sketch map in red; beginning at the intersection of the midlines of Harrington Road and Bedford Street; thence, along the midline of Bedford Street to its intersection with the midline of Massachusetts Avenue; thence; along the midline of Massachusetts Avenue to its intersection with the midline of Harrington Road; thence, along the midline of Harrington Road to the point of beginning.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. 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) **1711 and 1722; April 19, 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

On the morning of April 19, 1775, the Lexington Green was the site of a brief but momentous skirmish between Lexington Minute Men and a British expeditionary force on route from Boston to seize colonial military supplies stored in Concord. Though the encounter, in which eight Americans were killed and ten wounded, delayed the British march for little more than half an hour, it marked the beginning of the armed struggle for American independence.

The 2½ acre Green was acquired by the Town of Lexington during the first quarter of the 18th century and served as common ground and a militia training field. Today it is maintained by the Town as a park and memorial to the events of April 19, 1775.

Historical Background

Unlike the typical New England common, the Lexington Green was not reserved for public use in the original division of town lands. Instead, in 1711, the townspeople used funds raised by public subscription to purchase 1½ acres for a common and militia training field. Eleven years later, they added another acre to it.

The Lexington Green became a nationally significant site on April 19, 1775. Sometime between midnight and 1 o'clock on that morning, Paul Revere arrived in Lexington with word that British regulars were on route from Boston to capture colonial military stores at Concord. The alarm was sounded from the belfry which then stood on the south side of the Green. By 4:30 a.m. some 75 men of the local militia, commanded by Captain John Parker, had assembled on the Green and at the adjacent Buckman Tavern.

Shortly before daylight the Minute Men formed a staggered line across the Green and waited for an advance guard of the British troops, commanded by Major John Pitcairn. After demanding that the militia disperse, Pitcairn ordered his men to move in among the Americans and disarm them. In the confusion that resulted, a musket fired, followed by several scattered shots and then a resounding volley from the British. Before Pitcairn could regain control of his men, eight Americans had been killed and ten wounded--and the Revolutionary War had begun.

(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	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **2.54 acres**

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

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., Historian, 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, 20240** 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

Name N/A

National Historic Landmark

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

[Stamp: National Historic Landmark]

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 7-2-75

ATTEST: _____
 Director, OHP

[Stamp: Secretary of the National Register]

 Date 7/2/75
 Director, OHP

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Massachusetts	
COUNTY	Middlesex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE

(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance: (1)

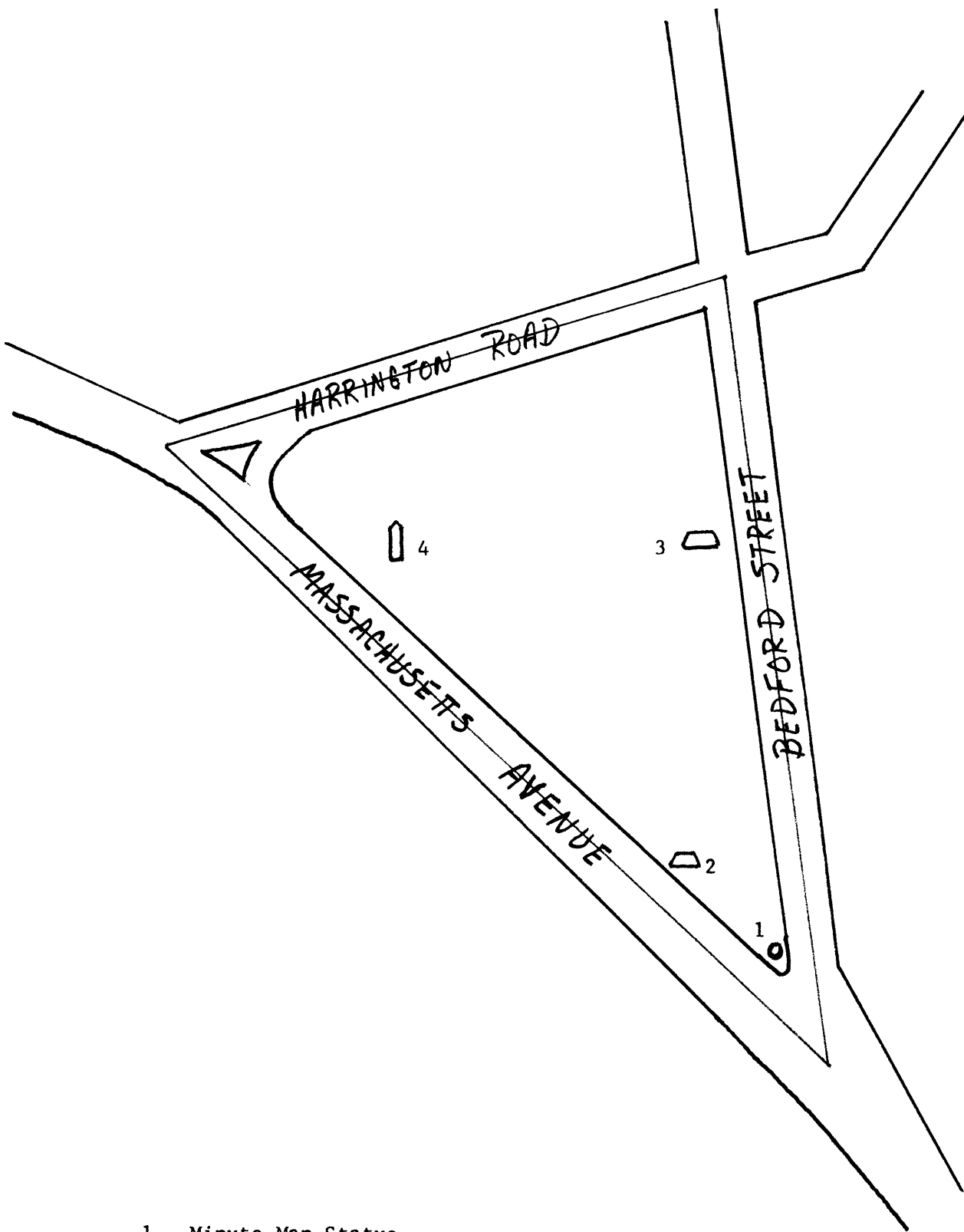
Lexington Green

Today, the Lexington Green is a public park, on which are located a number of memorials to the events of April 19. At the southeast corner of the 2½ acre triangle, facing the route of the British advance, is the commemorative statue of the "Lexington Minute Man"; the work of Boston sculptor Henry Hudson Kitson, it was dedicated on April 19, 1900. A bronze plaque, placed by the Lexington Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution in 1910, marks the site of the belfry which stood on the Green from 1768 until 1797.

Near the western corner of the Green is the oldest American monument to the Revolutionary War, erected in 1799; beneath it is the tomb of seven of the eight Minute Men killed on the Green. The monument marks the western end of the line formed by Captain Parker's company on April 19. The eastern end of that line is marked by a low boulder; carved on its smooth face are a flint-lock musket and powder horn and Captain Parker's order to his men:

STAND YOUR GROUND - DON'T FIRE UNLESS FIRED
UPON - BUT IF THEY MEAN TO HAVE A WAR LET
IT BEGIN HERE.

In 1917 landowners around the Green adopted voluntary restrictions to protect its setting. The Green and the adjacent Buckman Tavern now comprise the core of the Battle Green Historic District, established by special act of the Massachusetts General Court in 1956.



- 1. Minute Man Statue
- 2. Belfry Site
- 3. Battle Line Boulder
- 4. Revolutionary War Monument

LEXINGTON GREEN
 Lexington, Massachusetts

National Historic Landmark
 Boundary —————

sketch map - not to scale