UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Francis Parkman House

AND/OR COMMON

Francis Parkman House

2 LOCATION

STREET & N	UMBER				
50	Chestnut	Street			
CITY, TOWN					

CITY, TOWN		CONGRESSIONAL DIS	TRICT
Boston	VICINITY OF	Eighth	
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Massachusetts	025	Suffolk	025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGOR	Y OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRES	ENTUSE
DISTRICT	PUBLIC		AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
👷 BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK
STRUCTURE	ВОТН	WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	X_PRIVATE RESIDENCE
\$ITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITI	ON ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS
OBJECT	IN PROCESS	YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	TRANSPORTATION
		x ^{_NO}	MILITARY	OTHER
4 OWNER	OF PROPERTY			
NAME Mrs	. Charles Townsend	(Chestnut Trust)		
STREET & NUMBE	R	-		
48	Chestnut Street			
CITY, TOWN			STATE	
Bos	ton	VICINITY OF	Massachuse	tts
5 LOCATIO	ON OF LEGAL DES	CRIPTION		
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEE	EDS, ETC Suffolk Regis	try of Deeds		
STREET & NUMBE	R			
	k County Court House	e, Somerset Street		
CITY, TOWN			STATE	
Boston	1		Massachuset	ts

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

т	1	т	L	E	

The Domestic Architecture of Beacon Hill, 1800-1850

DATE 1958, reprinted 1973 _____FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY XLOCAL DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Bostonian Society

Boston

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Massachusetts

7 DESCRIPTION

X_EXCELLENTDETERIORATEDUNALTERED X_ORIGINAL SITE	co	NDITION	CHECK ONE	CHECK O	NE
	X_EXCELLENT	DETERIORATED	UNALTERED	X_ORIGINAL	SITE
GOODRUINS X_ALTEREDMOVED DATE	GOOD	RUINS	XALTERED	MOVED	DATE
FAIRUNEXPOSED	FAIR	UNEXPOSED			

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Francis Parkman House stands on the southern side of Chestnut Street (No. 50, about midway between the intersections of West Cedar and Willow Streets) in the predominantly residential Beacon Hill section of Boston. The lot, which spans the block between Chestnut and Branch Streets, contains the landmark house and a rear garden. The historic setting of the Parkman House has been effectively protected through the establishment of the Beacon Hill Historic District (also a national historic landmark district) by special act of the Massachusetts legislature.

Stylistically the Parkman House (1824) is typical of numerous small, brick row houses constructed on Beacon Hill during the 1820's. The building is three stories high above a full, granite-faced basement and has a moderately pitched attic roof broken by two interior chimneys (the shed dormer is probably a later addition). The recessed entrance is arched and banded with a line of incised granite broken by small impost blocks and a keystone. Within the paneled recess, the door is surrounded by a fan and sidelights with delicate tracery. Windows, which decrease in height from the first to third floors, are flanked by louvered blinds and topped by incised granite lintels. The interior of the building contains an open stairhall at the northeast corner, three major rooms on each floor, and a basement kitchen (the latter arrangement is typical of both large and small Beacon Hill houses). The room on the third floor front served as Francis Parkman's study.

The present owners of the Parkman House acquired the property in 1956 and the following year divided it into apartments, one on each floor and one in the basement. No change was made in the exterior appearance of the building. New heating and electrical systems and modern kitchens and bathrooms were installed for each unit but the stairhall and the major rooms are relatively unaltered. Original architectural elements include carved mantels, cornices and plasterwork medallions, and molded door and window surrounds. Both the structure and stylistic details of the building are in excellent condition.



PERIOD	AR	EAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	ECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	
PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	XLITERATURE	SCULPTURE
1600-1699	ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
_X 1800-1899	COMMERCE	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	РНІ́ГО̀ѮѺҎҤҲ	TRANSPORTATION
1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	OTHER (SPECIFY)
		INVENTION		
			<u> </u>	

SPECIFIC DATES

1865-1893

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

not known

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

the standard for a second of the second of the second and the second standard the second standard second standard second standard second standard second second standard second standard second s This three-story brick house, constructed in 1824 in Boston's Beacon Hill district, was from 1865 until 1893 the principal residence of the noted American historian .co Francis Parkman. The enduring reputation of Parkman's work is rooted in his penetrating and accurate research, his literary skill, and his responsiveness to the beauties of the physical world and the variables of human nature. Believing that historical writing is a romantic art, he used the techniques of the novelist to weave economic, social, and political facts into a dramatic fabric. Parkman's best known works are The Oregon Trail (1849) and the multivolume France and England in North America (1851-92), the major part of which was written at his Beacon Hill home.

In 1957 the present owners divided the Parkman House into four apartments. The exterior of the building is unchanged. New kitchens and bathrooms were installed but the original rooms are relatively unaltered. The house is maintained in excellent condition and is not open to the general public. and the second second

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Historical Background

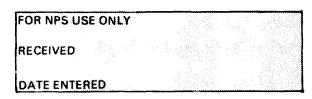
Francis Parkman, the descendant of an old New England family, was born at Boston, Massachusetts, on September 16, 1823. As a child he studied at John Angier's school in Medford (during a four year period when he lived with his maternal grandfather) and then at the private academy operated by Gideon Thayer, where he received particularly good instruction in English literature and composition. Following his admission to Harvard in 1840, Parkman undertook an extensive reading program in literature and history under the guidance of historian Jared Sparks. During college vacations, he made long excursions by canoe and on foot to wilderness areas throughout New England and Canada. Despite persistent illness, Parkman entered Harvard Law School after graduation from college, and received his degree in 1846. Though he never applied for admittance to the bar, his legal training was revealed in his careful sifting of facts and judicious appraisal of evidence as an historian.

In the spring of 1846, Parkman began an expedition across the Great Plains that took him from Independence, Missouri, westward along the Oregon Trail. Pushing beyond Fort Laramie to the basin of the Medicine Bow River, he lived for a time with the Sioux, then returned to Independence by way of Bent's Fort and the Santa Fe Trail. Though one purpose of the expedition had been to improve his health, Parkman suffered a complete breakdown on his return. During his convalescence, he dictated an account of the trip which was published serially in the Knickerbocker under the title "The Oregon Trail" (1847). The account was issued in book form in 1849.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES	
 Doughty, Howard. <u>Francis Parkman</u> (1962). Farnham, C.H. <u>A Life of Francis Parkman</u> (1900; contains extracts from Parkman's autobiography). Jacobs, Wilbur R., ed. <u>Letters of Francis Parkman</u> (2 volumes, 1960). Morison, Samuel Eliot, ed. <u>The Parkman Reader</u> (1955). Parkman, Francis. <u>The Works of Francis Parkman</u> (20 volumes, 1897-98). 	
10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY <u>less than one</u> UTM REFERENCES	
A 1 9 3 2 9 5 9 1 6 91 2 8 1 </td <td></td>	
The boundaries of the national historic landmark designation for the Francis Park House are those of the rectangular lot, numbered at 50 Chestnut Street, on which building stands. Specific lines are defined as follows: beginning at the inters of the southern curbline of Chestnut Street and the western line of the residenti property at 48 Chestnut Street; thence, southerly by said western line, 90 feet m	the ection al
or less, to the northern curbline of Branch street; thence, westerly by said nort (cont'd) LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES	bre hern
STATE CODE COUNTY CODE	

11 FORM PREPARED BY NAME/TITLE POILY M. Rettig. Historia

prepared by J. Walter Coleman, Hist ORGANIZATION	DATE
Historic Sites Survey, National H	Park Service
	TELEPHONE
LIOO L Street, NW CITY OR TOWN	STATE
Washington	
12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVA	TION OFFICER CERTIFICATION
THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICA	NCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:
NATIONAL	STATE LOCAL
hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the Na	ational Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the
criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park	
criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park	Service.
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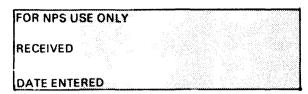
CONTINUATION SHEET Francis Parkman ITEM NUMBER #8 PAGE #2

House

Parkman's first historical work, <u>History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac</u> (1851), a descriptive narrative of the English conquest of Canada and the great Indian uprising of 1763-64, was in part the product of his ethnological observations on the Plains. This was the first in the long series of volumes, on the struggle of the French and English for possession of the North American continent, which was to be his <u>magnum</u> <u>opus</u>. While the conspiracy was being written, Parkman suffered a severe crisis in his health, a combination of partial blindness and violent head pains. His marriage in 1850 to Catherine Scollay Bigelow marked the beginning of a brief period of recovery, but after she and his only son died within a year (1858), his attacks became more virulent. Unable to continue with his historical work, Parkman took up the study of horticulture, an interest which continued throughout his life. His success in that field resulted in his election as president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and his appointment in 1871 as a professor of horticulture at Harvard.

As soon as his health was slightly improved, Parkman returned to his histories and in 1865 published <u>Pioneers of France in the New World</u>. That book at once established his popularity and his reputation as one of America's leading historians. During the next 27 years, despite frequent periods of illness, Parkman completed his extensive series by writing six additional histories: <u>The Jesuits in North America</u> (1867), <u>LaSalle and the Discovery of the Great West</u> (1869), <u>The Old Regime in Canada</u> (1874), <u>Count Frontenac and New France Under Louis XIV</u> (1877), <u>Montcalm and Wolfe</u> (1884), and <u>A Half-Century of Conflict</u> (1892). In addition, he produced an autobiographical novel, <u>Vassal Morton</u> (1856), a number of magazine articles, and a attractive book on the cultivation of roses. Parkman died on November 8, 1893.

The enduring reputation of Parkman's work is rooted in his penetrating and accurate research, his literary skill, and his responsiveness to the beauties of the physical world and the variables of human nature. Believing that historical writing is a romantic art, Parkman used the techniques of the novelist to weave economic, social, and political facts into a dramatic fabric. He had the financial means (inherited from his grandfather, Samuel Parkman, a wealthy Boston merchant) to employ copyists who combed foreign archives for documentary material and he visited the site of every significant episode in his narrative. Though subsequent researchers have supplemented his work, they have not shaken the essential validity of his conclusions.



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	Francis Parkman			
CONTINUATION SHEET	House	ITEM NUMBER #10	PAGE	#2

curbline, 25 feet more or less, to the eastern line of residential property at 52 Chestnut Street; thence, northerly by said eastern line, 90 feet more or less, to the southern curbline of Chestnut Street; thence, easterly by said southern curbline, 25 feet more or less, to the point of beginning.

