Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE: New Hampshire
COUNTY: Strafford
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER | DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: General John Sullivan House
AND/OR HISTORIC: (Adams-Sullivan House)

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 23 New Market Road
CITY OR TOWN: Durham
STATE: New Hampshire | CODE: | COUNTY: Strafford | CODE:

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ Building	☐ Public	Public Acquisition:	☒ Occupied	Yes:
☐ Site ☐ Structure	☒ Private	☐ In Process	☐ Unoccupied	☐ Restricted
☐ Object	☐ Both	☐ Being Considered	☐ Preservation work in progress	☐ Unrestricted
				☒ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☐ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industriol	☒ Private Residence	☐ Other *(Specify)*	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious		
☐ Entertainment	☐ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Francis Reid
STREET AND NUMBER: 23 New Market Road
CITY OR TOWN: Durham 03824 | STATE: New Hampshire | CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Town Hall
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN: Durham | STATE: New Hampshire | CODE:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey (15 Sheets and 12 Photos)
DATE OF SURVEY: 1934 ☒ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN: Washington | STATE: D. C. | CODE:

STATE: | COUNTY: | FOR NPS USE ONLY | ENTRY NUMBER | DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☐ Excellent	☒ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)		(Check One)			
	☒ Altered	☐ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on the south bank of the Oyster River and built by Dr. Samuel Adams in the period 1729-41, this house was Adams' residence until his death in 1762. John Sullivan purchased the dwelling and three acres of land on December 19, 1764 and resided here until his death in 1795.

The Adams-Sullivan House is a wood two-story L-shaped frame structure with central chimney and gable roof. The exterior walls are covered with graduated clapboarding that increases in width as the boards near the eaves. The front portion of the house is 38 feet wide and 28 feet deep. The rear ell, adjoining at the southwest corner, is 26 by 13 feet in size. The center door, protected by a restored porch, opens into a short center hall. The walls are adorned with their original panelling and the stairway with its original handsomely carved balusters is against the central chimney. To the left of the hall is the library. Originally one large and one small room, the partition has been removed. The mantel in the library is original but the dado and the panelling of the fireplace wall are 18th century replacements of the originals. To the right of the center hall is the parlor, complete with its original fireplace panelling and dado, and behind this a hall or dining room with its original panelling, and restored to its original size by the removal of later partitions. The ell behind this hall contains a service stairway and the kitchen. There are three bedrooms on the second floor and one more in the attic. The northeast and southwest bedrooms on the second floor still retain their original panelling. The floors of the house are also original. At some undetermined date a two-story sun porch was added to the rear (northwest) corner of the house.

The house has been restored and renovated by the present owners since 1966. Room colors have been restored on the basis of surviving paint samples. In excellent condition, the Adams-Sullivan House is used as a private residence and is not open to visitors.

Behind the house is a small cemetery, where General Sullivan is buried. On a small hill to the right of the private road leading to the house is a monument to General John Sullivan, erected by the State of New Hampshire in 1894.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Pre-Columbian	☐ 16th Century	☒ 18th Century	☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century	☐ 17th Century	☐ 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)*

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal	☐ Education	☐ Political	☐ Urban Planning
☐ Prehistoric	☐ Engineering	☐ Religian/Philosophy	☐ Other *(Specify)*
☐ Historic	☐ Industry		
☐ Agriculture	☐ Invention	☐ Science	
☐ Architecture	☐ Landscope Architecture	☐ Sculpture	
☐ Art		☐ Social/Humanitarian	
☐ Commerce	☐ Literature		
☐ Communications	☒ Military	☐ Theater	
☐ Conservation	☐ Music	☐ Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The home, from 1764 to 1795, of John Sullivan, a major general of the Continental Army during the War for Independence and one of Washington's ablest generals. Although the structure has undergone some alterations, the General Sullivan House is largely original.

History

John Sullivan was born at Somersworth (now Rollinsford), New Hampshire, across the Salmon Falls River from Berwick, Maine, in 1740 and lived for a time in Berwick after 1748. At 18 he studied law at Portsmouth under Samuel Livermore. In 1760 he married, having six children by this marriage, and in 1763 settled in Durham, New Hampshire, which was to be his residence for the rest of his life. As a lawyer, man, and soldier, he was brave, hot-tempered, oversensitive, contentious, generous, fond of display, and a born political organizer. In 1772 he was appointed a major of the New Hampshire militia. He became a passionate hater of Great Britain and sent as a delegate to the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia, he took his seat September 5, 1774. By December he was back in New Hampshire,in time to receive Paul Revere's warning of a British embargo on arms and on December 14, 1774, leading 400 Portsmouth Sons of Liberty, Sullivan captured Fort William and Mary at the entrance of Portsmouth Harbor, its garrison of 6 men, and appropriated 100 barrels of gunpowder, 60 stand of small arms, and 16 cannon for the patriotic cause. This incident has been considered by many to be the first overt act of the American revolution. On May 10, 1775, Sullivan took his seat in the Second Continental Congress and on June 22 this body appointed him a brigadier general in the Continental Army.

In July Sullivan joined Washington's army outside of Boston and was stationed with his brigade at Winter Hill. On the night of August 26 he led out a fatigue party of 1,200 men and a guard of 2,400, occupied and fortified Ploughed Hill on the American left, adjacent to Bunker's Hill. With the exception of trips to organize the defenses of Portsmouth in October 1775, he served through the siege of Boston, until the evacuation, March 17, 1776.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

New Hampshire, A Guide to the Granite State (American Guide Series) (Boston, 1938), 155-156.

Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XVIII, 192-193, Randolph G. Adams.

George A. Billias, Editor, George Washington's Generals (New York, 1964), 137-162. (Charles P. Whittemore, "John Sullivan: Luckless Irishman.")

Christopher Ward, The War of the Revolution (2 vols., New York, 1952), I.

Charles P. Whittemore, A General of the Revolution, John Sullivan of New Hampshire (New York, 1961).

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	°	'	"	°	'	"	43	07	48	70	55	05
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2 acres

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: Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION: Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service.

DATE: 2/14/72

STREET AND NUMBER: 801 - 19th Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: D.C.

CODE:

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 _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

_____

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

_____

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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8. Significance: (1) General John Sullivan House, Durham, N.H.

Then ordered to the Northern army, which was retreating from Canada after General Richard Montgomery's defeat at Quebec, Sullivan reached Chambly on June 1, 1776. On June 2 Major General John Thomas, the commanding general, died of smallpox and Sullivan assumed command of the remnants of Thomas's army and the 5,500 fresh Continental troops he has brought north. In spite of information that powerful British reinforcements had reached Quebec, Sullivan decided to advance and on June 6 sent 2,000 of the best American troops under the command of Brigadier General William Thompson against Trois Riviere, about half-way between Montreal and Quebec. Launching on June 8 a surprise attack on the 800 British supposed to be holding the town, the Americans first became lost in a swamp and then discovered 8,000 crack British troops under the command of General Simon Fraser at the village. Fighting bravely, the Americans were cut up and off, forced to flee through the woods on foot, where they were pursued by Indians and Canadians, and only 1,100 badly battered troops got back to Sorel on June 11. Shaken but stubborn, Sullivan refused to retreat until June 17. One hour after the last of the American troops had embarked, the British fleet arrived at Sullivan's former camp; only contrary winds had saved his army from destruction. On July 1 Sullivan's retreating army of 8,000 men, including 3,000 ill with smallpox, reached Crown Point, where the invasion of Canada had started 10 months earlier. Superseded by Major General Horatio Gates on July 5, Sullivan went to Philadelphia and offered his resignation, but a personal conference with President John Hancock led him to withdraw it.

On August 9, 1776, Sullivan was promoted to be major general. He joined Washington's army and was stationed with his division on Long Island. In the battle of August 27 he was captured by the British and taken before Lord Howe, who wished to send him with overtures of peace to the Americans. Having obtained Washington's permission, Sullivan went to Philadelphia. During the negotiations between Congress and Howe, Sullivan was exchanged for the British general, Richard Prescott. He then rejoined the American army in Westchester County, New York, at the end of September and shared in the retreat across the Jerseys. Sullivan led the right column at the battle of Trenton, December 26, 1775, and pursued the British at Princeton, January 3, 1777. The winter of 1776-77 he spent at Morristown, New Jersey and in March 1777, Sullivan returned to New Hampshire to expedite the preparations for the ensuing campaign. On July 1 he joined Generals Nathanael Greene and Henry Knox in threatening to resign if Congress persisted in elevating the newly arrived French officer, Du Coudray, over their heads. Congress demanded an apology, and suggested that otherwise they might be asked to resign. Neither apologies nor resignations were forthcoming, and Du Coudray was accidently drowned September 15. On August 21 and 22 Sullivan led a

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raid against the British posts on Staten Island, which although conducted with spirit, failed of its objective. This failure coupled with the Du Coudray affair made him enemies in Congress who began to question his capacity.

Meantime, he hurried his division to the south to join Washington in defending Philadelphia against Howe. Washington marched his army to face Howe southwest of Philadelphia and on September 10, 1777 took up his position along the Brandywine to halt the British advance. The most likely place for the enemy to cross was at Chad's Ford and there Washington placed several brigades. To Sullivan he gave the key assignment of guarding the right flank at Brinton's Ford, just above Chad's Ford. The American lines were not unlike those at Long Island, where Sullivan had been criticized for not adequately covering a key pass against a flank march, except that this time Washington was determined not to allow Howe to march around him as he had a year before. Washington told Sullivan to reconnoiter as far north as Buffington's Ford and, erroneously, assured him he need not worry about fords beyond Buffington's because there were no likely crossing places for at least 12 miles to the north. Lulled into a false sense of security and due to a shortage of time, Sullivan failed to check out the accuracy of Washington's information on the ground. About 3:30 p.m. on the 11th, 7,000 British troops fell upon Sullivan's division, after having completed a brilliant flank march as at Long Island. After hard fighting the Americans made an orderly, if hard pressed, retreat, losing about 1,000 men that day. Members of Congress demanded Sullivan's removal for what appeared to be poor performance at both Staten Island and Brandywine. Sullivan's most outspoken critic was Thomas Burke, of North Carolina, who had been present and witnessed parts of the latter battle. Burke charged Sullivan with faulty intelligence and incompetent deployment of troops. Both charges were unfair. Congress voted to recall Sullivan until an inquiry could be made.Washington, fearful of losing one of his top officers, persuaded the politicians to delay Sullivan's recall until the military crisis in Pennsylvania had passed. In the midst of this bickering came the Battle of Germantown, October 4, 1777. In this surprise attack Washington divided his army into four widely separated columns. Sullivan, leading the right wing, executed his portion according to plan and the American discomfiture in this action was due to the progress of the fighting elsewhere on the field of battle. Congressional investigations of the Staten Island events was held and these cleared Sullivan of any negligence. Criticism of conduct at Brandywine then also abated.

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8. Significance: (3) General John Sullivan House

Sullivan's defeats apparently converted him from a rash to a cautious general and he was now about to make his greatest contributions to the patriotic cause. He spent the winter of 1777-78 at Valley Forge, and in the spring was directed by Washington to take the command in Rhode Island, with a view to driving the British from Newport, the fifth largest city in the colonies. In this first effort at Franco-American cooperation under the terms of the Alliance of February 6, 1778, everything depended on the active cooperation of the French 4,000-man army and fleet under Admiral Count d'Estaing. On August 9, Sullivan landed his 8,200-man army on the island of Rhode Island and with the French, prepared to advance on Newport, which was defended by 6,000 British soldiers. Lord Howe's British fleet appeared, and D'Estaing stood out to meet him. A storm scattered and injured both squadrons before any action was possible. D'Estaing's captains then counseled him to withdraw his fleet and army to Boston, which the Admiral did on August 20. Sullivan had begun the siege of Newport on August 15 and continued it until August 28. The departure of the French, however, disheartened his men, and between 2,000 and 3,000 of the New England militia went home on August 24 and 25. Sullivan now found himself in an awkard position on an island, with an inferior force. During the night of August 28 Sullivan withdrew his army to the north end of the island, where the British attacked him in the Battle of Rhode Island, August 29, 1778. In the drawn-and-well fought battle Sullivan repulsed the enemy. After dark on August 30, in a brilliantly executed secret retreat, Sullivan conveyed his entire army, cannon, and supplies from the island to the mainland. On the morning of the 31st a British Fleet, with Sir Henry Clinton and 4,000 soldiers, arrived at Newport. Sullivan's caution had saved his army from being trapped on the island. Sullivan and his men publicly exhibited their anger over what they regarded as D'Estaing's desertion and anti-French riots took place at Boston. It required all of Washington's tact and Lafayette's loyalty to smooth down this first failure in Franco-American cooperation.

Sullivan remained at Providence, Rhode Island, until March 1779, when he was ordered to take an expedition into western Pennsylvania and New York to lay waste the country of the Six Nations. In 1778 the Iroquois, under the leadership of their great war chief, Joseph Brant, and the Tories, led by John and Walter Butler, had defeated the militia and burned the frontier settlements of Wyoming, Pennsylvania, and German Flats and Cherry Valley in New York. Some (about 30) women and children were killed in this fighting. In revenge, the Americans burned the well-built Iroquois town of Unadilla, New York, in October 1778. Congress decided that retaliation had become a necessity and on February 25, 1779 they directed Washington to send Continental troops against the Six Nations. Sullivan was chosen for the task and Washington's orders to him stated that the purposes of the expedition were two; "the total destruction and devastation of their

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settlements and the capture of as many prisoners of every age and sex as possible" to be held as hostages--"the only kind of security to be depended on" for the good behavior of the Six Nations. The country, Washington wrote, was not to be "merely overrun but destroyed." Washington's plan called for a two-pronged invasion. Three brigades and a regiment of artillery with 8 cannon, about 2,400 men under the command of Sullivan, were to enter the Iroquois country from the south by the way of the Susquehanna River and march north. General James Clinton was to march west along the Mohawk River and to turn south to meet Sullivan. Clinton was to have 1,400 men and 2 guns. After meeting at Tioga, Pennsylvania the combined forces, under the command of Sullivan, were to march north into the heart of the Iroquois country. Sullivan reached Easton, Pennsylvania, the starting point of his expedition on May 7, and Wyoming on June 23. The country ahead was mountaineous, heavily forested, without roads, American settlements to provide supplies in case of disaster and easily defended. The cautious Sullivan left Wyoming on July 31, with 120 boats to transport his artillery and stores, 1,200 pack horses to carry the baggage of the army, and 700 beef cattle to provide meat for the troops. Devastating Indian villages enroute, he reached Tioga on August 11, Clinton left Otsego Lake in New York, where he had been waiting for 7 weeks, on August 9 and joined Sullivan at Tioga on August 22. On the 26th the combined forces moved up the Chemung River. The Indians abandoned their towns and retreated as the Americans approached. Near the Indian village of Newtown, New York, however, on August 29, the Iroquois laid out a giant ambuscade where 500 warriors and 200 Tories made a stand. Discovering the trap before it could be sprung, Sullivan advanced in line of battle. After some sharp skirmishing in which 12 Indians were killed and 3 Americans killed and 39 wounded, the Indians disappeared into the forest. On September 13 the Iroquois surprised and killed a scouting party of 23 of Daniel Morgan's riflemen. The expedition went as far as Genesee, New York, where the army destroyed 128 very large and elegant Indian log houses. By September 30 the troops reached Wyoming and they returned to Easton by October 15.

The Sullivan expedition struck a devastating blow at the Iroquois culture and civilization, more than 40 towns had been burned to the ground, 160,000 bushels of corn, with a vast quantity of vegetables destroyed, hundreds of thousands of fruit trees set in orchards were ruined. Fortunately for the honor of the Americans, they had managed to take only two Indians, an old woman and a boy, prisoners, both of whom the Americans burned to death. Sullivan was congratulated by Washington on the success of his expedition, and Congress voted its thanks to him. The foodless and shelterless Indians retreated to Fort Niagara, where many women and children, but few warriors, died of hunger and cold during the winter of 1779-80. In 1780, however, the Iroquois warriors unleased completely unlimited destruction and war on the settlements in western New York and Pennsylvania.

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8. Significance: (5) General John Sullivan House, Durham, N.H.

Sullivan's barbed remarks and complaints aimed at the Continental Board of War during his 1779 campaign had created powerful enemies. Members of the Board told Congress that the general's criticisms were unjustified. When Sullivan offered his resignation on November 30, 1779, citing poor health as his principal reason, he expected Congress to respond by giving him temporary leave. Instead, Congress accepted his resignation and Sullivan's military career came to a close.

He returned to Durham and in 1780-81 he reappeared in Congress. In 1782 he was a member of the New Hampshire constitutional convention. From 1782 to 1786 Sullivan was attorney-general of New Hampshire and in 1785 and 1788 also served in the State Assembly as speaker. He served three terms as president (governor) of New Hampshire between 1787 and 1789. He acted as chairman of the New Hampshire convention which ratified the Federal Constitution in 1788. In September 1789 he was appointed United States district judge of New Hampshire, a position that he held until his death at Durham on January 23, 1795. He was buried in the family cemetery adjacent to his house.