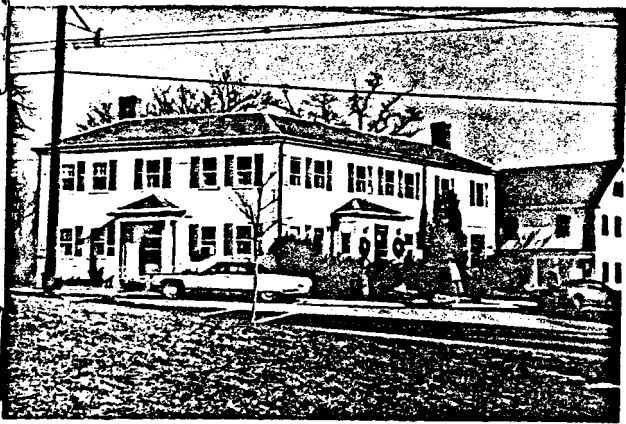


FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no.	Form no.
A	25

2.



1. Town North Reading

Address 21 Bow Street

Name Damon Tavern

Present use Weeks Memorial Library Building housing the Flint Memorial Library collection

Present owner Town

3. Description:

Date 1817

Source Reading Assessor's Record

Style Federal

Architect Ebenezer Damon, Builder

Exterior wall fabric wood clapboards

Outbuildings (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

Other features Slate roof; seven

fireplaces; Ballroom featuring Rufus Porter murals

Altered addition Date 1828

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

5. Lot size: 15,007 sq. ft.

One acre or less x Over one acre \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate frontage 170'

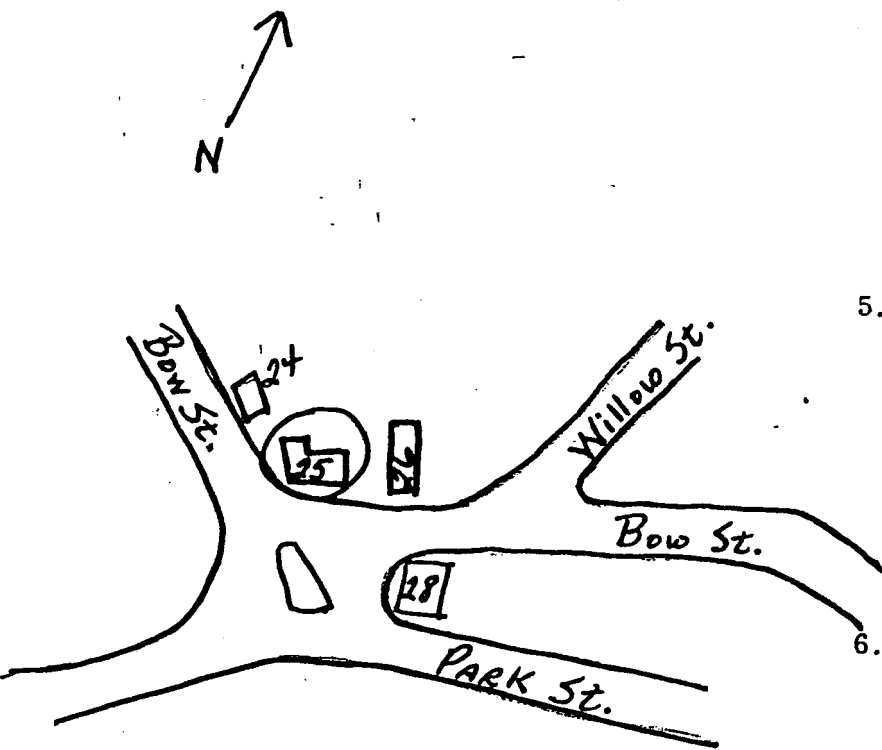
Approximate distance of building from street 10'

6. Recorded by Turner/O'Brien

Organization Historical Commission

Date March 1978

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



7. Original owner (if known) David Damon

Original use Tavern, store and post office

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates See #9

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<u>      </u>	Conservation	<u>      </u>	Recreation	<u>      </u>
Agricultural	<u>      </u>	Education	<u>      </u>	Religion	<u>      </u>
Architectural	<u>      </u>	Exploration/ settlement	<u>      </u>	Science/ invention	<u>      </u>
The Arts	<u>  x  </u>	Industry	<u>      </u>	Social/ humanitarian	<u>  x  </u>
Commerce	<u>  x  </u>	Military	<u>  x  </u>	Transportation	<u>  x  </u>
Communication	<u>  x  </u>	Political	<u>      </u>		
Community development	<u>  x  </u>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

Built by Ebenezer Damon for his older brother David, the Damon Tavern was a halfway stop on the Salem-Lowell and Boston-Haverhill routes. The tavern had 21 rooms, 51 windows, 9 fireplaces, 7 stairways and 7 doorways. One of the two barns was located where Flint Memorial Hall stands today. The second floor ballroom, which is available to community groups, features murals painted by the itinerant artist/scientist/inventor, Rufus Porter, in the 1830's. The first post office in town was located in the tavern with Capt. David Damon of the Revolutionary War as postmaster. James Damon, younger brother of both Ebenezer and David, became the next postmaster and owner of the tavern. It is said that the next four tavern and store keepers were also postmasters - Levi Whitney, Edwin Foster, Edward Smith and Jared Whitcomb. As late as 1950, this was still the location of a variety store run by Sade Whitcomb, daughter of Jared. The first telephone switchboard office in town was located in the Whitcomb residence early in the 1900's. When Dr. W. Hadley Hoyt first came to town in the late 1940's, his office was located in the oldest part of the tavern.

William W. Weeks, who died in 1944, left a sum of money to the town for a library to be named after him. In the early 1950's, the town purchased the Whitcomb residence for use as the 3rd home of the Flint Memorial Library. Interior renovations were completed in 1958.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

Mddlsx s. s. Registry of Deeds and Probate  
Reading Assessor's Records

North Reading Library, Frances M. Foster, 1969

250th Anniversary of the Ancient Town of Reading, Eaton, 1896

Genealogical History of Reading, Eaton, 1874