

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 21 1979
DATE ENTERED OCT 25 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

William Dean Howells House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Pepperrell Road Rd 1

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Kittery Point

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

__ VICINITY OF

First

STATE

Maine

CODE

023

COUNTY

York

CODE

031

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

__DISTRICT

__PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

__AGRICULTURE

__MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

__UNOCCUPIED

__COMMERCIAL

__PARK

__STRUCTURE

__BOTH

__WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

__ENTERTAINMENT

__RELIGIOUS

__OBJECT

__IN PROCESS

__YES: RESTRICTED

__GOVERNMENT

__SCIENTIFIC

__BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

__INDUSTRIAL

__TRANSPORTATION

__NO

__MILITARY

__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Harvard University, c/o Dean Richard Leahy

STREET & NUMBER

20 University Hall

CITY, TOWN

Cambridge,

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts 02138

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

York County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Alfred,

STATE

Maine

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The William Dean Howells House of Kittery is a very well-preserved residence with Mansard style roof, frame construction, clapboard siding, and field-stone foundation, all dating from c.1870.

The facade, which faces south, is 3 bays wide and features two projecting bays flanking a multi-paned picture window. The right bay contains a doorway with fanlight, while the left contains an arched window. The half-story, here as elsewhere, contains shed-roofed dormers with 2/2 fenestration. The cornice throughout is fitted with paired brackets. The west side of the house features a pair of projecting bays, each consisting of a 6/6 sash flanked by 4/4. A narrow ell, identical in height and detail to the house, projects from the north side.

A one-story enclosed walkway joins the house with a former stable to the east, which is similar to the house, though smaller and lacking cornice brackets. This building was converted into a large study by William Dean Howells.

Another one-story enclosed walkway joins the ell of the house to a gable-roofed guest house, also to the north. This guest-house contains 2 stories and is austere in appearance compared to the house and carriage-house.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

c.1870

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Originally built c.1870 by Joseph D. Brannum, a wealthy businessman from Springfield, Massachusetts, this beautifully sited residence overlooking the mouth of the Piscataqua River derives primary significance as the summer home of William Dean Howells during the last two decades of his illustrious literary career.

The son of a printer, Howells was born in Ohio and worked during his formative years in his father's shop. Although he received at most only about 18 months of formal education, he was a voracious reader and began creative writing before he was twenty. One or two of his early poems were published in the Atlantic. A campaign biography of Lincoln led to an appointment at age 24 as consul in Venice where he spend five years absorbing European literature and launching a serious writing career.

Revolting from the artificialities of Victorian fiction, Howells attracted increasing attention as a leader in the movement toward realism which gathered other adherents like Stephen Crane and Frank Norris. In 1866 James T. Fields invited him to come to Boston as assistant editor of the Atlantic, a prize which he had longed for. Becoming chief editor in 1872, Howells emerged as the lion of the literary scene, by all odds the most popular writer of his day. His output was prolific and versatile, including novels, plays, essays, poems, reviews and travel pieces. He achieved a remarkable degree of success in consistently expressing himself with ease, exactness and felicity. As editor of Atlantic, his influence was large and he encouraged and helped such budding authors as Mark Twain and Henry James whom he later numbered among his closest friends.

His realistic style had an enormous effect in his time and afterward on American writing and he is perhaps best remembered for such novels as The Rise of Silas Lapham (1885) and A Hazard of New Fortunes (1890) as well as Criticism and Fiction (1891) an essay expressing the credo of realism. Howells' work dealt with everyday people and a realistic translation of their experience. He was, however, too inhibited to indulge in sex and violence which became so much a part of later realistic writing.

In 1881 he moved to New York which by then had emerged as the new publishing center. There he wrote novels for Century Magazine and became literary advisor to Harper and Brothers.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brooks, Van Wyck, Howells, His Life and World, New York, 1959.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Kittery

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 360590 4771015

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Assessor's Map 26, Lot 27.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Frank A. Beard, Historian/Robert L. Bradley, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

DATE

July, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

242 State Street

TELEPHONE

207/289-2133

CITY OR TOWN

Augusta,

STATE

Maine 04333

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Carole S. Feltzworth

TITLE

S.H.P.O.

DATE

8/14/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. Paul Shull

DATE

10-25-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

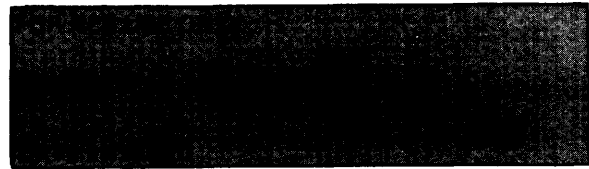
Ann M. Dwyer
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

11/29/79

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

His later years were rich with honors and filled with almost continuous travel. He was awarded honorary degrees by Harvard, Yale, Columbia and Oxford Universities and was in great demand as a teacher and lecturer. In 1908 he was chosen first president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and remained in this post until his death.

Howells' biographer Van Wyck Brooks tells us that "With all this going and coming and moving in New York, Howells had a fixed base on the coast of Maine at York Harbor and after 1902 in Kittery Point where he bought a house on the shore". Mrs. Howells called it "the Maine stay" because of the sense of permanence it gave their life.

Howells loved this refuge from New York where he could garden or wield an axe in the groves and meadows. He affectionately described the buildings as "almost as ugly as the first edition of Their Wedding Journey (which had been published with a grossly ornate Victorian binding) and mentioned working "in full view of a very emotional bell buoy and a very pessimistic foghorn". The stable, which he had converted into an ample study made an excellent place for his daily literary output. ✓

Mark Twain spent several summers nearby and among many visitors were Crane, Norris, Hamlin Garland, Booth Tarkington, Charles Eliot Norton, and many other close friends.

Howells continued his summer pilgrimages to Kittery Point until his death in 1920. The house eventually passed into the ownership of his grandson, John N. M. Howells, who, in 1978, gave the property to Harvard University.