

PHO120928

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED APR 11 1975  
DATE ENTERED APR 28 1975

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  
The Gates House  
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
M E  
State Highway #92  
CITY, TOWN  
Machiasport  
VICINITY OF  
2nd Hon. William Cohen  
STATE  
Maine  
CODE  
023  
COUNTY  
Washington  
CODE  
029

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
Machiasport Historical Society, Inc. c/o Mrs Wesley Carroll, Pres.  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN  
Machiasport, VICINITY OF  
STATE  
Maine

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Washington County Register of Deeds  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN  
Machias  
STATE  
Maine

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
DATE  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN  
STATE  
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

# 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built in 1807, in what was then an isolated outpost of Massachusetts, the Gates House shows earmarks of the Federal style. While the windows retain their small panes, typical of the Colonial period, the general configuration of the structure is evident of a later date. Its proportions tend towards tall and narrow, while most importantly, the roof is very low pitched in contrast with earlier practices.

The house is situated on a short, steep slope almost on the edge of the Machias River. Consequently, its two main facades are of differing heights. Toward the river (the east) it presents three stories, while toward the road (the west) there are but two. The plan is of an L-shape with a wing of two bays width projecting from the west facade, forming a broad southern elevation. The main entrance is in the west facade close to the angle of the projection. The east front features two sets of double doors on the basement located in the second and fourth bays. Above are the two stories of the residence with five windows apiece. There are two other doors, one on the basement of the southern wall and another on the north elevation of the projecting wing.

The cornice is of uniform height and simply molded as are the window frames. The main entrance is framed by rudimentary pilasters supporting a simple entablature. Above the door is a semi-circular fanlight. The sash windows, of which there are a total of 35, are all of equal height and are divided into 12 over 12 lights. There are no shutters. There are three existing chimnies, one on each of the ends of the main block and the projecting wing. Inside, however, no fireplaces remain. There is almost no attempt at ornament on the exterior, which is of clapboards and painted white.

While the exterior remains much as it was built, the interior has been altered. The first floor is comprised of two large rooms and four smaller ones, probably being close to its original layout. The single staircase rises at a right angle to the entrance foyer. The second floor has been radically altered, having once been six small apartments. Bathrooms have been contrived on both the first and second floor. The basement is unfinished.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input 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 1807

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Gates House is built into a slope close by the Machias River and commands a view of the site of the first naval engagement of the Revolution. Although rather plain in appearance, it is Federal style in character. It was the first such house in the area and, considering its construction date of 1807, is unique for the then remoteness of the site.

The house was probably built by Nathaniel Phinney, Sr. on land originally owned by Isaac Larrabee, one of the area's first settlers. It was purchased in 1813 by Nathan Gates, a trader, along with its formally adjoining wharves, barn and store. In the mid to latter part of the 19th century, its wharves served as the terminus of the small Machiasport-Whitneyville Railroad, which was used to transport lumber to the piers for loading on coastal schooners. Lumbering was the principal industry of the area throughout the 19th century and was the principal reason for the existence of many Eastern Maine communities such as Machiasport.

The house remained in the Gates Family until 1929. Subsequently its basement was used to house a clam business by its owners. At this time its upper floor was re-partitioned.

On June 12, 1775 the coastal sloop "Unity" engaged the British armed schooner "Margaretta" in what has been termed "The Lexington of the Seas." This battle, which ended in a victory for the American side, was fought off Round Island in Machiasport Harbor close by the site of the Gates House. Since its purchase in 1966, the house has been used as headquarters and museum by the Machiasport Historical Society. Among its collections are numerous artifacts relating to the battle.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Drisko, George

History of Machias, Republican Press, Machias, 1904

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 | 627250 | 49150320  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B [ ] | [ ] | [ ]  
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D [ ] | [ ] | [ ]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

*UTM OK CD*

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Architectural Historian  
Frank A. Beard, Historic Preservationist

ORGANIZATION Maine Historic Preservation Commission DATE April 4, 1975

STREET & NUMBER 31 Western Avenue TELEPHONE 207-289-2133

CITY OR TOWN Augusta, Maine STATE Maine

## 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

*James H. Mundy*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE April 7, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>[Signature]</i>	DATE <u>4/28/75</u>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>APR 24 1975</u>
ATTEST:	
<i>[Signature]</i>	
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	