

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Massachusetts	
COUNTY: Worcester	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:

General Rufus Putnam House (Bliss-Murray-Putnam House)

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

344 Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Rutland

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

COUNTY:

Worcester

CODE

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

Mrs. George Endicott

STREET AND NUMBER:

344 Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Rutland 01543

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Worcester

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Historic American Buildings Survey (15 sheets and 7 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

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built in the period 1760-65 by John Murray, the General Rufus Putnam House is a two-story rectangular frame house with hipped roof, two interior brick chimneys, and clapboarded walls. The house is 42 feet wide and 36 feet deep. A two-story gable-roofed frame wing, added in the first portion of the 20th century, adjoins the main house of the rear. Facing south, the main house is five-bays wide. Its center door, topped by a transom and a flat pediment, opens into a center hall that extends halfway through the house. A fine stairway is set against the left, or west, hall wall. The four rooms on each floor are divided by halls into pairs. To the right of the hall are the sitting room and a large kitchen and to the left, a parlor and dining room. Small vestibules, with the western side-door topped by a triangular pediment and the eastern side-door by a flat pediment, are located between each pair of first-floor rooms. There are four bedrooms on the second floor. Each room has original pine panelled wainscoting and every fireplace wall is fully panelled. The two front room fireplaces down stairs and the southwest bedroom fireplace upstairs are faced with blue deft tiles.

Clapboarding, interior panelling, and second-floor floors are all original. Original floors in three of the first-story rooms have been replaced with 18th century floor-boards taken from the attic. In excellent condition, the little-altered house is used as a private residence and is not open to visitors.

History of the House

The General Rufus Putnam House was built in the period 1760-65 by John Murray, whose daughter married Daniel Bliss. The Blisses came to live in this house prior to the Revolution. The farmhouse was confiscated by the State of Massachusetts when the Blisses became Tories during the War for Independence. Rufus Putnam acquired the house and 150 acres of land on May 24, 1781, for 993 pounds and resided here until 1788. From 1896 to 1950 the General Rufus Putnam House was open to visitors as a museum and maintained by the Rufus Putnam Memorial Association. When that group disbanded in 1950, the structure was sold and has since been utilized as a private residence.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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) 1781-1788

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The home, from 1781 to 1788, of Rufus Putnam, engineer and soldier of the War for Independence, and later organizer of settlement in the Northwest Territory.

Built in 1760-65, the General Rufus Putnam House is very well preserved and little-altered.

History

Rufus Putnam was born at Sutton, Massachusetts in 1738. His father died when Rufus was seven and the boy was cared for by different relatives. In 1754 he was apprenticed to a millwright and he obtained the greater part of his education unaided, studying geography, history, and especially mathematics. Enlisting during the French and Indian War in 1757, he saw service in the region of Lake George- Lake Champlain, and his practical training came into play in the construction of defensive works. In December 1760 he arrived home in North Brookfield and married in April 1761. His bride died the same year and Putnam remarried in 1765. He had 9 children by this second marriage. He worked his farm, practiced surveying, and built mills. In 1773 he served upon a committee to explore and survey lands on the Mississippi that were claimed as bounties for the veterans of the French and Indian War. Although this project failed, it aroused his interest in the possibilities of western lands for colonization and for military bounties.

Entering the Revolutionary army as a lieutenant colonel, Putnam soon took charge of the defensive works being built around Boston. During the winter of 1775-76, when the ground was frozen so deeply that the usual earthen breastworks could not be constructed, Putnam suggested and executed a plan that made possible the fortification of Dorchester Heights on March 4-5, 1776. Putnam suggested building the breastwork on the ground, instead of digging it out of the ground. His plan was to use chandeliers, heavy timber frames in which gabions, fascines, and bales of hay could be fitted, thus creating quickly a breastwork which could afterward be strengthened with earth. It was to be faced with an abatis made out of neighboring orchard trees. In front of all, there were to be placed barrels full of earth, which would add an

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XV, 284-285.
Massachusetts, A Guide to Its Places and People (American Guide Series)
 (Boston, 1937), 602.
 Rowena Buell, editor, The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam (1903)
 Christopher Ward, The War of the Revolution (2 vols., New York, 1952), I,
 126, 240, 261, 262, 268, II, 598.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	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	42° 22' 46"	71° 58' 37"		42° 22' 17"	71° 58' 03"	
NE	42° 22' 46"	71° 57' 52"				
SE	42° 22' 13"	71° 57' 52"				
SW	42° 22' 13"	71° 58' 37"				

Location of the House

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **135 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: **2/17/72**
 STREET AND NUMBER: **801 19th Street, N.W.**
 CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **D.C.**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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 _____

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 _____

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General Rufus Putnam (Continuation Sheet)
House

(Number all entries)

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8. Significance (Continued)

appearance of strength to the works but, if the British assaulted, could be rolled down the hill to break their ranks and injure them. On the night of March 4 General John Thomas, with a fatigue party of 1,200, led by a covering party of 800 under arms and followed by 360 oxcarts loaded with entrenching tools and materials, carried out Putnam's plan. Moving the 66 field-pieces that Henry Knox had brought from Ticonderoga into position on these fortified heights, Washington thereby rendered Howe's position in Boston untenable and the British withdrew from the city on March 17, 1776.

Putnam next reconnoitered around New York as Washington's chief engineer and constructed defensive works, including Fort Washington, there. On August 6, 1776, Congress appointed him chief engineer with the rank of colonel and Putnam served in this capacity during the campaign around New York in the fall of 1776. Putnam wanted a distinct and properly organized engineering corps and when Congress failed to take any definite action, he resigned his commission as an engineer and accepted the command, as colonel, of 5th Massachusetts Continental Regiment. As a part of Brigadier General John Nixon's brigade, Putnam arrived at Fort Edward on the upper Hudson on July 12, 1777, joined the Northern army, and took part in the Burgoyne campaign. He defended the fortified lines of General Horatio Gates' camp during the First Battle of Saratoga, September 19 and in the Second Battle, October 7, led the 5th and 6th Massachusetts regiments in a frontal attack, with Benedict Arnold, on the Breyman Redoubt, a key defensive position to Burgoyne's camp. The capture of this redoubt resulted in the British retreat and their surrender at Saratoga on October 17, 1777. Putnam's map, entitled "An Orthographical View of the American and British Armies on the 7th & 8th of October 1777," is the only known contemporary American map of the battlefield and the American fortified camp.

On January 20, 1778, the Continental Army occupied West Point, New York, and Rufus Putnam worked from 1778 to 1781, along with various foreign engineers, in constructing an elaborate system of fortifications. From March 1778 to June 1780 the noted Polish engineer, Thaddeus Kosciuszko, was the chief engineer for this project. When completed these forts were known as "the key to the continent". On July 16, 1779, Putnam also took part in the Battle of Stony Point, New York. On January 7, 1783, Putnam was promoted to the rank of brigadier general and resigned from the army on November 3, 1783. Prior to this, on several

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8. Significance (Continued)

occasions he had acted as spokesman to present the grievances of the troops and had obtained some relief from the Massachusetts General Assembly. As chairman of the officers' organization he framed the Newburgh Petition in June 1783 for some definite provision in the Ohio country for the land bounties that had been promised to the Revolutionary veterans. As Congress failed to act upon this petition, he undertook the survey and sale of lands in Maine that belonged to Massachusetts. When Congress in 1785 appointed him a surveyor of western lands, he sent General Benjamin Tupper as a substitute. After Tupper's return with a favorable report of the western country, Putnam issued with him a joint call for a meeting at Boston on March 1, 1786, in order to consider settlement in the Ohio country. The outcome was the organization of the Ohio Company of Associates, composed largely of Revolutionary veterans, which soon contracted for a 1,800,000-acre tract of land in the Muskingum and Hocking River Valleys and along the Ohio River. Putnam, who became superintendent of the proposed new colony, left his home in Rutland, Massachusetts, and reached Marietta, Ohio, with the first party of 47 New England settlers on April 7, 1788. His practical sense was all-important to the new settlement, especially in the matter of protection from the Indians.

As the settlement increased, Putnam's influence was felt in the Western country beyond the limits of the colony he had had such a large part in founding. In March 1790 Washington appointed him a judge of the Northwest Territory and in May 1792 commissioned him also a brigadier general in the regular army. In this latter capacity his first task was to treat with the hostile Indians on the Maumee. On September 27, 1792, he finally made a treaty with the lower Wabash tribes. Resigning soon from the army, he took charge of important surveys in the neighborhood of Marietta, and on October 1, 1796, Washington appointed him surveyor general of the United States. His first important task, the survey of the military tract, was inaccurately done, chiefly because of his deficiencies in mathematics, and it was necessary to adjust these errors in the Land Act of 1800. Putnam served as surveyor general until 1803. Putnam was also a delegate to the Ohio constitutional convention of 1802, exerting a strong influence there for moderation and against the admission of slavery. Putnam died at Marietta on May 4, 1824, and was buried there.

For story of Ohio settlement and national land system, see Edward Channing, A History of the United States (6 vols., New York, 1937), III, 528-550.

Handwritten initials

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General Rufus Putnam House (Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Boundaries of the General Rufus Putnam House Historic Site, Rutland:

Approximately 135 acres of land, including the General Rufus Putnam or Bliss-Murray Putnam House, beginning at the southwest corner on the northern edge of State Route 122-A at latitude 42° 22' 14" - longitude- 71° 58' 21", then going northwest about 1300 feet to a point at latitude 42° 22' 28" - longitude 71° 58' 23", proceeding from here west about 800 feet to a point at latitude 42° 22' 28" - longitude 71° 58' 34"; hence continuing north about 1,000 feet to a point at latitude 42° 22' 38" - longitude 71° 58' 38", then going northeast about 800 feet to a point on the south bank of Mill Brook at latitude- 42° 22' 45" - longitude 71° 58' 32", hence following the south bank of Mill Brook about 2,000 feet to a point at latitude 42° 22' 42" - longitude 71° 58' 07", then continuing south about 500 feet to a point at latitude 42° 22' 37" - longitude 71° 58' 08", proceeding hence southeast about 1300 feet to a point at 42° 22' 29" - longitude 71° 57' 56", then going south about 800 feet to a point on the north edge of State Route 122-A at latitude 42° 22' 51" - longitude 71° 57' 52", hence following the north bank of State Route 122-A returning west about 1800 feet to the point of beginning, the southwest corner.

Precise boundaries, as described above, are on record on a copy of U.S. Geological Survey Map: Paxton and Washusett Mountain Quadrangle, Massachusetts, Worcester Co., 1965 and 1966, 7.5 Minute Series, on file with the Historic Sites Survey, Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service.