

4-73

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Hon. Peter N. Kyros

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maine	
COUNTY: Lincoln	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JAN 12 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
Wiscasset Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC:
"Wiscasset Point"

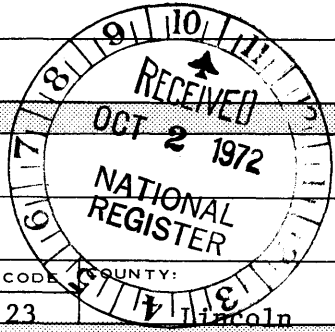
2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Wiscasset

STATE:
Maine

CODE COUNTY: **23 Lincoln** CODE **015**



3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Lincoln County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
High Street

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE
Wiscasset Maine 23

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historical American Building Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: **Maine**

COUNTY: **Lincoln**

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7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The boundaries of the Wiscasset Historic District have been drawn to encompass the historic village and its waterfront along the Sheepscot River. The point of beginning at the northwest corner of the district, (44°00'53"N; 69°40'13"W) is about 500 feet to the northwest of Route 27. From that point the boundary runs easterly in a straight line, crossing Route 27 and Federal Street, to a point in the Sheepscot River, (44°00'39"N; 69°39'26"W), the northeast corner of the district. At this point the boundary forms a right angle and continues southerly in a straight line, crossing the Maine Central Railroad tracks and Route 1, to another point in the Sheepscot River, (43°59'49"N; 69°39'51"W), the southeast corner. At this point the boundary forms a right angle and continues westerly in a straight line, crossing the Maine Central Railroad tracks again, proceeding to a point where it intersects the eastern sideline of Route 1, (44°00'03"N; 69°40'38"W), the southwest corner. At this point the boundary forms a right angle and continues in a straight line, crossing Route 1 and Bradford Street, until it reaches the point of beginning, forming a right angle with the beginning boundary line.

SELECTED BUILDINGS OF THE WISCASSET DISTRICT

Listed below are five buildings already on the National Register (red on map), ten H.A.B.S. buildings, three of which are also National Register (green on map) and a selection of outstanding or representative home of the 18th and 19th century.

A (P) preceding the list indicates an accompanying photo. The numbers listed here are marked on Map #2, homes first, public (P-1) buildings

(See Continuation Sheet)

check other sheets

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

- 1. Foye-Sortwell Farm
Gardiner Road (Rt. #27) & Willow Lane

Owned by: Daniel R. Sortwell

Built by: Original site of Foye hovel around 1735, present owner a descendent.

- P2. Judge Thomas Rice House
Rt. #1

Owned by: Mr. Wolcott Erskine Andrews

Built by: Thomas Rice, ancestor of owner.
Incorporated hovel on site built before 1766. Example of "cape cod" with pre-revolutionary structure; very good condition.

- 2a Kingsbury House
Federal & Washington Streets

Owned by: Mr. & Mrs. Wolcott Andrews

Built by: Col. John Kingsbury in 1763 on site of Nichels-Sortwell Mansion and moved by Capt. Nichels to present site. Earliest recorded house on "Wiscasset Point". Restored simple early woodwork. Very good condition.

- 3. Tucker-Nash House
Main & Pleasant Streets

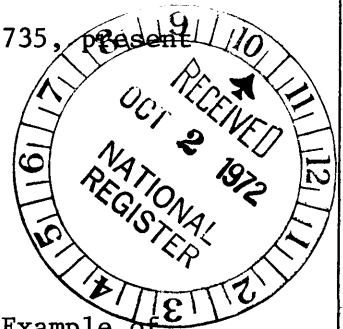
Owned by: Donald Petrie

Built by: David Silvester before 1784 and removed from Water Street by Capt. Tucker in 1792 to present site. Good condition.

- 4. Erskine-Marston House
Main Street

Owned by: Mrs. Roy Marston

Built by: Capt. Alexander Erskine in 1785.
Once home of Col. Erastus Foote, first Attorney General of the State of Maine. Good condition.



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7. DESCRIPTION

5. Hodge House
Rt. #1 & Hodge Street

Owned by: Mrs. George Davison

Built by: Henry Hodge in 1787; has interesting bay window
H.A.B.S. (Me., 1949)

6. Lilac Cottage (Antique Shop)
Washington Street

Owned by: Mrs. C. Andrews & Miss L. Perkins

Built before 1789. Primitive construction in cellar. Very good condition.

P7. Governor Smith House
High Street

Owned by: Mrs. Lloyd Lowndes, descendent

Built by: Judge Silas Lee in 1792. Considered one of the best architectural houses in Maine. H.A.B.S. (Me. 1949). Excellent condition.

8. The Elmes
Pleasant & Bradbury Street

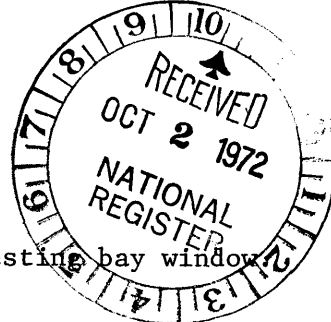
Owned by: Mr. & Mrs. Richard Collins

Built by: Gen. Abiel Wood in 1793. Gen. Wood's last wife was first Maine female novelist, Mrs. Sally Sayward Wood. Moved to present site by Wm. Elmes. Very good condition.

P9. Bradford House
Bradford Street

Owned by: Mr. John Grant Rafter

Built by: Alden Bradford in 1794, descendent of Gov. Bradford and second Congregational minister of Wiscasset. Later became Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and wrote "History of Mass." A gentleman's house. Good condition



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7. DESCRIPTION

10. Frances Cook House
Main & Pleasant Streets

Owned by: Mrs. Parker E. Marean

Built in 1795 for Francis Cook, first collector of customs and a personal friend of George Washington. Very good condition.

11. Manasseh Smith House
Main Street

Owned by: David B. Soule & Roy E. Farmer

Built by: Manasseh Smith in 1797 and considered first brick house in town. Good condition.

P12. Moses Carleton House
High Street

Owned by: Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Morris

Architect said to have been Nicholas Codd. Built in 1804-05 for Joseph Tinkham Wood. Exchanged with Capt. Moses Carlton for a hundred puncheons of rum. Good condition.

P13. "Pink House" or Damon House
Federal Street

Owned by: Harvard University, administered by Boston Athenaeum.

Built by: Wm. Stacey in 1805. One of five Federal Houses built by him, all nearby and standing. Fair condition.

14. Pumpkin House
Fore & Fort Hill Streets

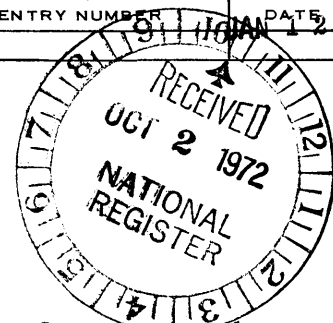
Owned by: Harwood Ellis

Built by: Hartley Wood in 1807. Very good condition.

15. Nichels-Sortwell Mansion
Main and Federal Street

Owned by: S.P.N.E.A.

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7. DESCRIPTION

Built by: Wm. Nichels in 1807. H.A.B.S. (Me.-102). On the National Register. Open to the public in summer. Excellent condition.

P16. Castle Tucker
High & Lee Streets

Owned by: Miss Jane S. Tucker

Built by: Silas Lee in 1807. Unusual elliptical stairs. Double piazza and Victorian trim added by Capt. Richard Tucker in 1859. Good condition.

P17. Wood-Foote House
High Street

Owned by: Mrs. Rufus Stetson, Jr., Mrs. Roger Scaife & Mr. Richmond White

Built by: Maj. Abiel Wood in 1811-24 and owned by descendents. A three-story mansion with graceful palladian doorway and window. Good condition.

18. Blagdon-Emerson House
Federal Street near Danforth

Owned by Mr. & Mrs. David Havens

Built before 1819. Typical two-story "mart and manse" where Charles Emerson published "Littiputian" (1881-91) and then the "Sheepscot Echo". Fair condition.

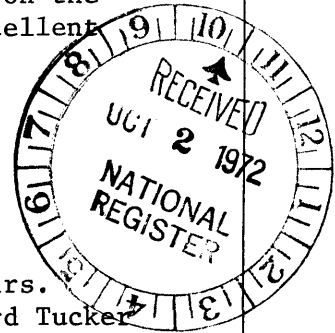
19. Samuel Page House
Lee Street

Owned by: Miss Eleanor Brace

Built in 1837. Handcarved porch by Edbury Hatch, of Newcastle. A ship's figure-head carver added in the early 20th century. H.A.B.S. (Me.-91). Excellent condition.

20. Clark-Wood House "Musical Wonder House"
High Street

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7. DESCRIPTION

Owned by: Danilo Konvalinka

Built as double house in 1852. H.A.B.S. (Me.-87). Now a museum open to paying public during summer. Excellent condition.

P21. Octagon House
Federal Street

Owned by: Hildreth Hawes

Built by: Capt. George Scott in 1855. Two-story brick octagonal cupula. H.A.B.S. (Me.-85) and on National Register, 1972. Fair condition.

LISTED AS PUBLIC BUILDINGS:

P1. Ancient Cemetery
Federal & Lincoln Streets

Owned by: Town of Wiscasset

Oldest stone dates from 1739

P2. Wiscasset Public Library
High Street

Built in 1805, second brick house. Originally Lincoln and Kennebec Bank, later Wiscasset Bank, Mariner's Bank, County offices located here until Courthouse was built in 1824, converted to private residence in 1862 and became a Library in 1929. Good condition.

P3. Old Academy
Hodge & Warren Streets

Owned by: Town of Wiscasset, leased by Maine Art Gallary

Built in 1807 for the Wiscasset Academical Association and used until 1923. H.A.B.S. (Me.-48). National Register October 6, 1970. Open to public. Good condition.

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7. DESCRIPTION

P4. Lincoln County Museum and Jail
Federal Street

Owned by: Lincoln County Cultural & Historical Association

Jailer's House built in 1837
Jail House built in 1809-11. H.A.B.S. (Me.-82). National Register 1970. Good condition.

P5. Old Powder House
Churchill Street

Owned by: John Jackson

Built in 1813 - brick. H.A.B.S. (Me.-70). Good condition.

P6. Old Customs House
Water, Fore & Middle Streets

Owned by: Mrs. Crosby Hodgman

Built in 1869-70. National Register August 25, 1970. Lower floor open to public as a shop. Excellent condition.

P7. Wawenock Block
Main Street

Owned by: Morris Povitch

Brick commercial block designed in 1856 by Alexander Johnston, Jr. Good condition.

This listing does not go into the architectural details as many others may apply for nomination to the National Register.



8. SIGNIFICANCE

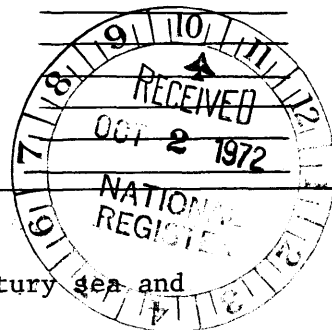
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1739-1870

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Wiscasset is an authentic late 18th and 19th century sea and river port. Its growth is visible in its buildings which remain, as a whole, intact and are a type of field museum that should be preserved. The town is known for its historic setting, made more so by its Open House Days starting in 1927 and by its inclusion in many books about New England towns of note.

Included in the proposed district are several distinct types of houses. The early, small houses some incorporating earlier hovels (2 & 3), were built about 1760-80 reflecting less prosperous surroundings. Early too are some of the simpler two-story homes (2a, 4 & 5).

Wiscasset's location overlooking a deep harbor, well protected from pirates and privateers, made her a logical mecca for shipping. The town grew from the waterfront back. The prosperous times when it is reported that with so many ships in the harbor one could walk across from shore to shore, ended with the Embargo Acts and the War of 1812. She no longer rivalled Boston.

With the affluence occurring around 1800, grander homes were built. Today one sees those about the "rim" as a series of fires "gutted" the center of town. The most noteworthy of these are the Nichels-

(See Continuation Sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Allen, Charles Edwin. History of Dresden, Maine. 1931.
 Chase, Fannie S. Wiscasset in Pownalborough, Wiscasset. 1941.
 Chamberlain, Samuel. Five New England Towns.
 Patterson, Wm. D. Old Wiscasset. 1931.
 Varney, George J. A Gazetteer of the State of Maine. Boston, 1886.
 Wiscasset, The Town That Has Made Its Past Live, Down East, August 1951, 28-31.

019/447250/4873085
 019/447200/4871525
 019/447200/4873085
 019/447200/4873085
 SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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	44° 00' 53"	69° 40' 13"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	44° 00' 39"	69° 39' 26"				
SE	43° 59' 49"	69° 39' 51"				
SW	44° 00' 03"	69° 40' 38"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

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: **Mr. Wolcott E. Andrews, President & Mrs. John G. Rafter, Director**

ORGANIZATION: **Lincoln County Cultural & Historical Association** DATE: _____

STREET AND NUMBER: **Federal Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Wiscasset** STATE: **Maine** CODE: **23**

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 James H. Mundy
 Title State Liaison Officer
 Date September 12, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Robert H. Utley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 1/12/73

ATTEST: William Mundy
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 1-8-73

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (B)

Sortwell House, the Wood-Foote House and that of Governor Smith. Equally important to the town are the lesser homes or farm houses that stretch out Federal Street, a true road of 19th century living, little changed by newer buildings.

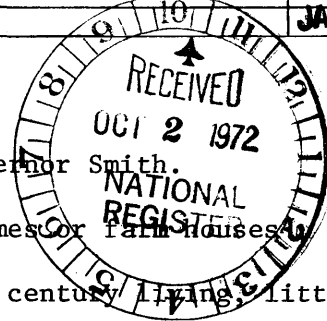
The physical condition of the buildings rate better than good in this district. The inclusion of the ten Historic American Buildings Survey of 1960 and the five buildings listed on the National Register emphasizes the abundance of classical architecture. Wiscasset is proud of its heritage and strives to preserve its cultural and esthetic environment. Many of the present owners are descendents of the builders of these homes.

The constant stream of tourists pausing before these houses reflects the importance of preserving Wiscasset's best natural resource.

Wiscasset's name comes from a Wawenock work translated as "the place where three rivers meet" and from its site stems its growth as a port. The area was long used by Indians, English and French explorers of the 17th century investigated the harbor. The initial development of Wiscasset Point was undertaken by George Davie in the 1670's under the Wiscasset and Jeremy Squam (now Westport) proprietors from a charter conveyed by the Plymouth proprietors and the Indians of the area. By the end of the 17th century English settlements were undertaken all along the Sheepscot Valley. Several times the joint efforts of the French and Indians drove off the settlers but after 1763 the area became safe and prosperity developed.

In 1740, there were thirty families at Wiscasset Point, amounting to

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (C)

one hundred and fifty people.

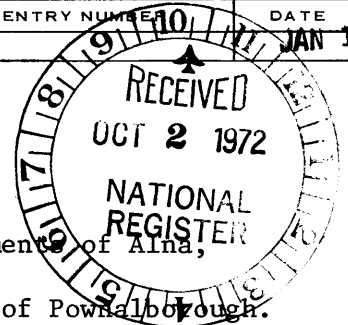
In 1760, Wiscasset Point, together with the settlements of Alna, Dresden and Perkins, were incorporated to form the Town of Pownalborough. The name was adopted in honor of Thomas Pownal, at this date, Governor of Massachusetts. Pownalborough was designated as the shire town of Lincoln County, the courthouse being located in the present Town of Dresden on the Kennebec River west of Wiscasset Point.

In 1794, the courts were moved to Wiscasset Point and in 1802 the Town of Pownalborough was broken up. As the original settlement was called by the name of Wiscasset, it was under this name that the town was then formally named.

During the Revolution, the British sloop-of-war, Rainbow, came up the river and anchoring in the harbor laid the town under contribution for supplies. The inhabitants were threatened with the halter and the town with destruction unless they complied with the requisitions; and having no defenses they were obliged to yield up their provisions.

Immediately on the conclusion of peace, an extensive business grew up between Wiscasset and foreign ports and it was also the chief mart of trade for the home region. These were palmy days for her. Most of her inhabitants were interested in navigation and her ships were found on every sea. But the embargo of 1807 on shipping was laid at an unfortunate time and dealt a destructive blow to her business and prosperity and the War of 1812 completed the mischief so that the town has never, to this day,

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (D)

retrieved its fallen fortunes.

Judges Bailey, Orchard Cook, Hons. J. D. McCrate and Chief of this town, have been representatives in Congress and Hon. Samuel E. Smith, another citizen, was for three years Governor of Maine. Judge Lee, a citizen of the Revolutionary period, and Rev. Dr. Packard, a worthy Congregational minister of the same day, are the subjects of pleasing reminiscence. Wiscasset has, since the Revolution, been the seat of a custom house for the river and contiguous portions of the sea.

In the early 1800's, the Sheepscot River Bay was a forest of ships' masts and fortunes were made and lost in the various mercantile ventures from this town. By 1880, the number of ships owned was close to one hundred and sixty-one having a tonnage of 9,894 tons. The products of the fisheries in 1879 was \$366,445.

The Knox and Lincoln Railroad passed through the town where they had a station ten miles from Bath.

The population in 1870 was 1,977; in 1880 it was 1,832; today, the population is 2,244 people.

