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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MAR 10 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bass Boarding House
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Canal Street N/A not for publication
city, town Wilton, N/A vicinity
state Maine code Me county Franklin code 007 zip code 04294

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Ernest S. Feltgen, Jr. S.H.P.O.
Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Date

3/4/88

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Albert Byrne

4-7-88

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th century

Other: Greek Revival/Gothic

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: Granite

walls Wood: Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Bass Boarding House is a two-and-a-half-story frame building with a three-bay gable front orientation. A tall two-story ell extends to the rear. Both sections are covered with weatherboards and rest on granite foundations.

Facing west the front elevation contains an entryway at the southwest corner and a pair of six-over-six double-hung sash windows to the north. The entrance is comprised of a four-panel door framed by narrow sidelights and a modest entablature. There are three six-over-six windows on the second story situated above the first story openings. Two additional windows occupy the gable peak. The facade is framed by the wide overhang of the roof.

The long north elevation has a fenestration pattern in the main block that consists of two small basement windows, five asymmetrically located double-hung sash on the first story and a similar arrangement on the second story. A pair of gabled dormers with small paired windows project from the roof. The more centrally located of the two was added prior to 1919 whereas the other one is a late 1940s alteration. The ell, whose roof is lower than that of the main block, features four double-hung windows on its north side.

Documentary photographs of the house show that the ell was formerly a more distinct building, probably a barn or carriage house, that was linked to the house via a narrow connector. This connector was substantially enlarged to the dimensions of the main block of the house in the 1940s when the dormer and the trio of paired windows below it were added.

The south elevation contains six windows and a door on the main block and five windows and a door in the ell. All windows, with the exception of a small two-over-two, make use of six-over-six sash. A gabled dormer, similar to the pre-1919 dormer on the north side, is located on the roof. Unlike the ell's roof configuration on the north, the one on this side reveals two levels: that on the original block of the barn and a taller, narrower one covering the original connector.

Inside, the house retains most of its original woodwork. This rather modest finish is typical of the period. A turned newel post and balusters on the side stairs are the most ornamental features although a number of the door and window openings are capped by shallow triangular pediments. There

 See continuation sheet

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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are a number of rooms of unequal size throughout the house, most of which are original. The interior space in the ell was presumably unfinished and open. Local residents recall that the first floor was used as a dining space during its use in the boarding house. Later, the space was utilized as a hand sewing room by the adjacent mill operation.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Period of Significance

1911-1937

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Probably constructed in the early 1860s as a single family town residence, the Bass Boarding House derives significance under National Register criterion A from the period 1911 to 1937 when it was utilized for workers' housing by the locally significant G. H. Bass Shoe Company. It is the most intact example among a handful of buildings in Wilton that were utilized in this fashion.

Deed research indicates that the property on which this house stands was acquired on November 26, 1861, by Emerson and Rawson C. Fuller./1 The value of the property lay in the title to the sawmill which stood adjacent to the Wilson Stream and there is no indication that a dwelling stood here at that time. Rawson Fuller apparently built the house sometime after he acquired the property, and he and his family occupied it until the early 1900s by which time he had removed to Highland Avenue./2 There are indications that the Fuller home had become a boarding facility by 1910, prior to the time that Bass acquired it in 1911./3

In 1911 Wilton was a thriving community whose merchants and manufactories supplied a wide variety of goods and services from automobiles to granite and steel./4 It was also home to the Wilton Woolen Company and the G. H. Bass and Company shoe and boot plant. Like many of its Maine contemporaries, Wilton had a free public library, an electric light and power company and a private academy. The town's development was greatly facilitated by its proximity to a branch of the Maine Central Railroad.

George Henry Bass began his business career as a tanner. He appears in the annual state yearbook as early as 1871, and in 1879 he added boot making to his business, apparently having purchased the Packard and Company shoe shop./5 Bass apparently prospered in his manufacturing enterprise because in 1904 he acquired the former Fuller sawmill site and erected the existing large three-story frame mill.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Adamo, Ruth. A History of the Town of Wilton. Rumford, Maine: Rumford Publishing Company, Incorporated, 1977.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than 1

UTM References

A

1	9
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4	0	2	1	4	0
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4	9	3	7	5	6	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property of less than one acre occupies the Town of Wilton, Tax Map 15, Lot 5.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary embraces the narrow strip of land on which the Bass Boarding House now stands. This comprises the entire property now owned by the Wilton Historical Society and which was historically associated with the house.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohny, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date January, 1988

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 telephone 297/289-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine zip code 04333

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Unlike his contemporary industrialist Hugh J. Chisholm in Rumford, who created Strathglass Park (N.R. 10/18/74), a planned workers' community, Bass adopted the practice of acquiring existing dwellings and either moved them or used them on their original site. In other instances he built modest frame tenement buildings for his employees. The most notable result of this policy is a widely scattered distribution of dwellings in Wilton that were formerly associated with Bass; a pattern unlike the dense concentration of houses at Strathglass Park. In this respect, therefore, the Bass Boarding House clearly illustrates the particular solution that the G. H. Bass Company found in addressing the problem of workers' housing. In addition, the integrity of the building is unique among the other existing dwellings that were similarly used.

In 1987 the Bass Boarding House was given to the Wilton Historical Society for use as a museum, meeting space and administrative office.

Endnotes

- /1. Franklin County Deeds, Book 48, p. 467.
- /2. The Wilton Town Report for 1903 indicates that Fuller was retired and living on Highland Avenue.
- /3. Franklin County Deeds, Book 180, p. 311. The town census shows that Cora Mower and Evie Wilkins were the managers of the boarding house in 1910, and tradition holds that it was located here.
- /4. Maine Register, State Year-Book and Legislative Manual (Portland: Grenville M. Dunham, 1911), p. 482.
- /5. Ruth Adamo, A History of the Town of Wilton (Rumford: Rumford Publishing Company, Incorporated, 1971), p. 23.