

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



2

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Thomas Hamilton House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 78 South Street not for publication

city, town Calais vicinity of congressional district Second

state Maine code 23 county Washington code 029

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name Richard + Katherine Berry

street & number 78 South Street

city, town Calais, vicinity of state Maine 04619

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Registry of Deeds

street & number

city, town Machias, state Maine

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved    date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Thomas Hamilton House of Calais, Maine, built c.1857, is a well-preserved and distinctive example of the vernacular Italianate style in a relatively remote geographical context.

The three-story house is of frame construction with low-pitched hipped roof, brick chimney, monitor of high profile, bracketed cornices, and clapboard siding with wooden quoins.

The three-bay facade, which faces southeast, is dominated by a first floor porch which runs the full width of the house covering a central entrance; this porch also has a bracketed cornice, as well as elaborate trim above the four posts which support it. Facade fenestration consists of paired 2/2 windows surmounted by entablatured lintels with miniature brackets. On the other three walls of the house the windows are single 2/2, as are those in the monitor. A three-sided bay window faces south-west.

Attached to the rear of the house is a small, summer porch with gabled roof, 2/2 windows, and a door facing northeast. This was added in the mid-20th century.

## 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 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 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 1856

Builder/Architect

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

This extremely pretentious (for its location) and unusually designed Italianate house may reflect in its unique qualities the character flaws of its first owner. Nevertheless, it stands as a landmark in Calais, known over the years as "Hamilton's Folly".

Thomas L. Hamilton was apparently a businessman who in his early career experienced certain modest success. Evidently his prosperity went to his head. He began to dress ostentatiously, bought expensive horses and carriages and built his fine house on South Street as a symbol of his position, as he imagined it, in the community. Registry records show that a series of mortgages were soon engaged in and in a very short span of time Mr. Hamilton had lost his house, his horses and all else. It is recorded that he died in the poorhouse.

At one time the house was owned by the Orthodox Congregational Church of St. Stephen, New Brunswick, across the river. In 1916 and 1923 it was owned by two different banks indicating, perhaps, other unlucky owners. More recently it became the residence of Clarence B. Beckett, mayor of Calais in 1935 and later a member of the Governor's Council. During this period at least two Maine Governors were overnight guests.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Ann Fernald, Sunrise County Architecture. Ellsworth, 1979.

Ray Wilson, As I Remember It. Calais, 1907.

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

# 10. Geographical Data

UMT NOT VERIFIED

Acreage of nominated property 1/2  
 Quadrangle name Calais

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

**UMT References**

A 

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

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

E 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

F 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

G 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

H 

Zone				Easting				Northing					

**Verbal boundary description and justification**

Assessor's Map 1, Block 27, Lot 199

**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 January, 1981

street & number 55 Capitol 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Charles B. Stewart*

title S.H.P.O.

date 12/18/81

For HCRS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date

2/4/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration