

17012 101 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 Bucknam House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Maine Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Columbia Falls

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Richard Holbrook Grant

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 39

CITY, TOWN

Columbia Falls

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Maine

**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

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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

Thought to have been built in 1792, the Bucknam House is a central chimneyed structure of traditional, conservative New England design. It is rectangular in shape, 2½ stories in height and features a gabled roof and a service ell to the rear. The house is of frame construction sheathed in clapboards with simple corners and little molding or cornice. It is currently painted white with dark trim. The facade is quite conventional, five bays in width with a central doorway. The doorway is extremely simple, flanked by two sets of rudimentary pilasters supporting a horizontal pediment. A narrow five light transom is located above the paneled front door. The sash of the windows on the principal stories are partially original. Six of the nine on the first floor are small pane in a twelve over twelve pattern, while the rest have larger panes in a nine over nine configuration. The two gable windows are much smaller and are six over six. The wooden shingles of the roof have been replaced by asbestos ones, while the portion of the chimney extending above the roof has been rebuilt and modified.

The plan is typical of central-chimneyed colonial structures. The front doors open into a vestibule, into which narrow twisting stairs ascend. There is a closet under the stairs. Part way up the staircase are two small doors opening into the central chimney and a storage area. The vestibule opens to the left and right into two large front rooms each lighted by three windows, two along the front and one on the side. The left front room is largely original with plastered ceiling and walls, wainscoting up to the windows, and board-covered corner posts. The fireplace wall is completely paneled in a raised pattern. The right room lacks paneling except above its mantel. The floors throughout are of painted pine and are in good condition except in the original kitchen, which shows considerable wear.

The kitchen occupies the central position at the rear of the main house. It features a wide shallow fireplace with an extensive hearth and a baking oven that is a somewhat later addition. The walls have wainscoting and the ceiling features board covered beams. The room is lighted by two windows and contains seven doors leading to a small wainscoted bedroom, pantry, milkroom, ell, back-stairs, and the two principal front rooms.

The second floor contains two principal chambers in the front with fireplaces and three smaller chambers, hall and attic stairs to the rear. The front chambers feature paneled chimney walls with a sunken overmantel topped with dentil moldings. The garrett contains a small paneled chamber with a fireplace.

The massive central chimney connects to all six working fireplaces. It rests on great brick arches in the cellar and emerges somewhat altered through the center of the roof. The house is largely original and unaltered except for the early addition of a hall on the second floor to render the smaller chambers more private. It is a most unusual house for its period in such a remote part of Maine. It stands on its original foundation facing south along the vista of the Pleasant River on U.S. Route 1.

10/24/44  
275 Chimney is recent construction

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input 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 1792

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bucknam House is an unusually large and well finished structure for its date, located in what was a remote and largely unsettled portion of the District of Maine. Built in 1792, the house stood in Township 13 as designated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. No. 13, along with adjacent Township 12, were joined together and incorporated as the town of Columbia in 1796. Columbia Falls was set off as a separate community in 1863.

The house has many associations with the early settlement and commercial history of the area. Its builder, John Bucknam (1746-92) was one of the early settlers of the township. Coming there from North Yarmouth in the late 1760's, he was accompanied by Joseph Wilson and family of Kittery. Bucknam married Mary Wilson in 1773 and settled permanently in the small Pleasant River settlement. They became the parents of nine children, seven sons and two daughters. Bucknam, with Joseph Wilson, was an early exploiter of the region's vast timber resources. He secured a mill privilege and commenced to buy up extensive tracts of land adjacent to the river on which he built lumber mills and dwellinghouses. With this beginning lumbering became the principal industry in Columbia which enjoyed a season of prosperity in the first decades of the 19th century. John Bucknam also served as one of the original trustees of Washington Academy at nearby East Machias which was incorporated in 1791.

Bucknam was a captain in the local militia and saw service in the Continental Army for a total of 12 days. Twice, in June 1777 and August 1779, he and fellow settlers of the area were summoned to the defence of the coast at Machias when British ships were sighted. He died in 1792 at the age of 46 during or soon after the construction of the house.

Mary Wilson Bucknam was named administratrix of his will and was awarded one half of the new dwellinghouse and adjacent land. Mary Bucknam also kept watch over the various family enterprises. The first ship built in the Columbia yards (1799) was named after the town and was financed by Mrs Bucknam, and her brother Gowen Wilson. Later several of Bucknam's sons carried on this and other local business concerns.

As befitting a prominent family of the era, the Bucknams employed a young servant at the house whose principal task included the fetching of wood and tending the numerous fireplaces. A worker from the shipyard often boarded in the garret's finished chamber. The house remained in the Bucknam family till about 1910. The house subsequently deteriorated somewhat but has been repaired and the top of the central chimney has been altered.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Bucknam, Samuel The Town of Columbia Falls, Bangor Historical Magazine, Vol. 1.1., pp. 136-37

Leighton, Levi, Centennial Historical Sketch of the Town of Columbia (1796-1896), Levi Leighton, Columbia, Maine, 1896

(See Continuation Sheet)

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

UTM OK CD

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 | 6010210 | 4949110  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE 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

*R.A. Worsfold*  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 4/28/75

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE APR 24 1975

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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RECEIVED	APR 11 1975
DATE ENTERED	APR 28 1975

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Information supplied by Richard H. Grant, Superintendent of Schools, SAD #37,  
from Soldiers and Sailors of Revolution and probate records of Lincoln, later  
Washington County