

794

RECEIVED
MAY 18 1992

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Cotton-Smith House

other names/site number Fairfield History House

2. Location

street & number 42 High Street N/A not for publication

city or town Fairfield, N/A vicinity

state Maine code ME county Somerset code 025 zip code 04937

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Euse S. Howard 5/11/92
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Melores Byer

6/18/92

and in the
National Register

Cotton-Smith House
Name of Property

Somerset, Maine
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>2</u>		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Wood/Weatherboard

roof Slate

other Side Entrance Porch and

Decorative Sawn Ornamentation

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Cotton-Smith House
Name of Property

Somerset, Maine
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1890

Significant Dates

c. 1890

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Cotton-Smith House
Name of Property

Somerset, Maine
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Arthur Steinert, Intern/Kirk F. Mohny, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date April, 1992

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station 365 telephone 207/287-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine zip code 04333-0065

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetCotton-Smith HouseSomerset, MaineSection number 7 Page 2

The Cotton-Smith house in Fairfield is an asymmetrically massed, highly decorated, and remarkably well preserved two-and-a-half-story Queen Anne style residence. The framed house, which rests on a granite and brick foundation and is sheathed in weatherboards, is located on a small residential plot of land two blocks from the center of Fairfield. In back of the Cotton-Smith house is a similarly decorated carriage house.

The front (west) elevation of the house, which borders High Street, is divided into two main bays. Above the left bay is the slope of a slate shingled hip roof, and above the right bay is a large gable that extends in height from cornice to roof peak. Both bays feature an asymmetrical fenestration scheme highlighted on the first floor by a bay window on the right and a tri-partite arched window with colored glass on the left. The fenestration of the second floor consists of a row of four identical two-over-two windows. The two windows in the gable have a characteristic Queen Anne design utilizing a single large pane in each sash bordered on the top and bottom by small square panes. In the same gable are wooden panels with a rising sun pattern and intricate sawn ornamentation. This ornamentation is repeated in the cornice that also features dentils. The decoration of the cornice can be found on the three other sides of the house as well.

The south elevation is composed of a uniform wall plane which is broken in the center by a narrow projecting bay. Within the bay on the first floor is the main door that is part of a free-standing enclosed vestibule. On the second floor is a set of three double-hung sash windows, and in the half story of the extended gable is a tri-partite window with Queen Anne sash. The gable is also decorated with wooden panels similar to those on the facade. On the recessed plane of the south elevation are three five-over-five windows on the second floor. On the first floor is the highlight of the elevation, a roofed piazza built on a granite foundation. The piazza features decorative brackets, turned balusters and porch posts, and the rising sun motif used in several parts of the porch roof.

The north elevation is similar in arrangement to the south, except for the absence of a piazza and the use of the red brick in the foundation and added chimney. The chimney is to the right of the centrally-located projecting bay and contains a panel between the first and second stories with a lion's head. The roof has an angled shoulder at roof level, and it is capped by a series of raised bands. Like the south side, the north elevation has a roof gable atop the central bay which is decorated with tri-partite windows and wood paneling with the rising sun motif.

The east elevation of the house is relatively plain compared to the ornamentation of the other three sides. The east is decorated with the same clapboarding and moldings as the rest of the house; however, the facade is different because there are only three windows and one modest kitchen door.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cotton-Smith House

Somerset, Maine

Section number 7 Page 3

Also, on the eastern elevation the land slopes down to the point that the house appears to have three-and-a-half-stories.

Inside the Cotton-Smith house, the main hall is located on the south side. In the northeastern corner of the hall is a staircase that is separated at mid-story by a landing. The northwestern corner of the hall leads into an angular space that is decorated with turned wooden posts and joins the hall to the dining room on the north side and the sitting room on the west side. The sitting room and the parlor in the southwestern corner of the interior feature early twentieth century stencilled wall cornices. The parlor also features a ceiling painting of the sky. On the southeastern corner is a study and to the north is the kitchen with an adjoining pantry and storage area.

The carriage house located on the east side of the main house contains similar design features as the larger house. The carriage house is covered with clapboards and capped by a varied gambrel roof. The carriage house also rests on a red brick foundation.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Cotton-Smith House

Somerset, Maine**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 2

Believed to have been built around 1890, the Cotton-Smith House in Fairfield is a well preserved example of the Queen Anne style. Its notable exterior appearance is accompanied on the interior by varnished woodwork and wall/ceiling stencilling in the two parlors on the first story. Although often referred to as the Smith House, the original owner of the dwelling was John Cotton, a manufacturer of wood products. The property is eligible for nomination to the Register under criterion C for its architectural significance.

John Cotton gained greatest fame in Fairfield as the owner of the Maine Manufacturing Company, which manufactured wooden ice boxes. He founded the company in 1882. On November 5, 1894, Cotton sold his property for \$1,500 and moved to Nashua, New Hampshire. The exact reasons for his decision to relocate to Nashua are unclear, but he remained in New Hampshire until his death on June 18, 1912.¹

The second owner of the house on High Street was John H. Smith. The Historical Society of Fairfield reports that the house was not completed when Mr. Smith took possession of it. However, the house had to have been near completion since Fairfield's tax records show that the tax evaluation of the property remained at \$2,000 from 1894-97. It is not until 1898, four years after the purchase of the house, that the evaluation rises to \$2,500; any necessary additions to the house could not have waited so long.

John Smith (1848-1925) is listed in the Fairfield Register of 1904 as a carpenter by trade, but it is unclear whether Smith was involved in any other professions.² Smith died on February 13, 1925. After the death of Smith's wife, Effie Smith, in 1946, the couples' only son, Aleson, inherited the property. The Cotton-Smith house was later sold to the Fairfield Historical Society in 1983 by Aleson's wife.³

The Cotton-Smith House is designed in the Queen Anne style, a common architectural style in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, characterized by the profusion of various wall and roof planes evident in most of the elevations. For example, the roof gables of the north, west, and southern faces add irregularity to the appearance of the house as does the addition of a projecting bay window on the west side and an elaborately decorated porch on the south side. The tall chimney with molded and cut brick is another typical characteristic of the Queen Anne style. Also, the variety of textures and decorative designs of the Cotton-Smith house, like the wood clapboarding, slate roofing tiles, and wood sawn ornamentation, can be traced to the Queen Anne style.⁴

Like the lively exterior organization and finish of the house, the interior is notable for the preservation of the stencilled decoration in the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Cotton-Smith House

Somerset, Maine

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

two parlors and the cloud studded sky on the ceiling. The naturalistic foliate design represents an important example of the use of such devices on domestic interior wall surfaces in late nineteenth century Maine. More study has been given in the past to earlier periods, particularly the painted landscape murals and stencil work of the 1820s and 1830s. Thus, the example preserved here will hopefully contribute to a growing understanding of the later tradition of interior ornamentation.

-
1. Information about Cotton taken from an interview with Mrs. Lester Case of the Fairfield Historical Society on January 8, 1992.
 2. David and Mitchell, Fairfield Register of 1904 (Kents Hill, Maine: H. E. Mitchell Publishing Company), p. 89.
 3. Information about Smith taken from an interview with Mrs. Lester Case of the Fairfield Historical Society on January 8, 1992.
 4. Characteristics of Queen Anne style adapted from a description in American Architecture Since 1780 by Marcus Whiffen (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press), 1969, p. 115.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

COTTON-SMITH HOUSE

Somerset, Maine

Section number 9 Page 2

Case, Mrs. Lester of the Fairfield Historical Society. Interview conducted on January 8, 1992.

Davis and Mitchell, Fairfield Register of 1904 (Kents Hill, Maine: H. E. Mitchell Publishing Company).

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press), 1969.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Cotton-Smith House

Somerset, Maine

Section number 10 Page 2

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property occupies the Town of Fairfield tax map 24, lot 38.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary embraces the entire village lot historically associated with this property.