

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received FEB 12 1987

date entered MAR 13 1987

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

1. Name

historic Levi Sargent House

and or common

2. Location

street & number Otisfield Gore Road not for publication

city, town Otisfield, X vicinity of

state Maine code 23 county Oxford code 017

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 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" 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 George Mattor

street & number R. R. #1, Box 2835

city, town Oxford, vicinity of state Maine 04270

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number

city, town South Paris, state Maine

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes ___ no

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 type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" 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

The Levi Sargent House is a one-and-a-half story three-bay cape with a long ell. Its overall similarity to the thousands of similar houses built in Maine belies the fact that the clapboards cover a hewn log structure.

Facing southwest, the house has a symmetrically composed front elevation focused on the center entrance. This entryway consists of a center six-panel door framed by sidelights within a simple Greek Revival surround of pilasters and an entablature. This is evidently a somewhat later addition. Small windows with replacement sash flank the door. Both gable ends have four symmetrically placed windows, two on each story. Those in the half story retain six pane upper sash. The front block of the house rests on a granite foundation.

From the attic space of the ell it is possible to view a portion of the log wall which forms the north elevation. The narrow interstices between the hewn logs are still partially filled with a lime mortar. Judging by the unweathered appearance of the logs and the numerous nail holes, it would appear that they were sheathed at an early date, if not originally. It is also obvious from this vantage point that some of the logs do not extend across the length of the house in one continuous hewn member. Rather, shorter logs are simply butted together. This rather curious feature combined with the use of square corner notches (visible in a documentary photograph) suggests a rather crude and structurally unsound method of construction which nevertheless has proved its suitability.

The long ell which extends to the rear of the dwelling is of frame construction with mortar and tenon components. It may, therefore, be contemporary with the Greek Revival entrance. There are three small rooms in the ell, shed additions to the west and east sides, and wood shingles covering the west and north rear facades.

The interior of the Sargent House retains a number of significant features despite remodelings. It has two large rooms on the first floor separated by a narrow entrance hall. The width of the log walls is evident by the depth of the window openings which have beveled reveals. A narrow enclosed staircase is located in the west room. It rises to the upper story which has a hall and four rooms separated by partition walls. The east partition appears to be a later addition whereas the west wall may be an original feature. It retains one section of vertically placed hand planed boards with beaded edges. Similar sheathing covers the log walls in this end of the house. The small windows which extend into the gable peaks clearly reveal, by the changing depth of their surrounds, that the log walls extend only to the height of the front and rear walls.

A relatively small flue is visible in the upper story of the house. Plainly visible in the basement, however, is a large granite base more often associated in Maine with massive center chimneys. It is entirely possible that the house was originally equipped with such a feature which was then replaced sometime thereafter.

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 ca. 1812 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Thought to have been built about 1812, the Levi Sargent House in Otisfield Gore has statewide architectural significance as a now extremely rare example of early nineteenth century domestic log construction. In fact it is only one of a handful of known extant historic log buildings in Maine.

Dwellings constructed of logs are among the rarest and least understood of Maine's historic buildings. Although the Sargent house is now an isolated example of log construction, there are references in both tradition and historic records to indicate that it was at one time a far more common building type. For example, local tradition holds that a second log house formerly stood about a mile to the west of the Sargent house.¹ An 1804 description and history of Waterford in York County contains the following accounts of the houses there:

The number of dwelling houses in town is one-hundred and seven. Six of them are two stories, eighty-six low framed, and fifteen are log houses....²

The appearance of the log structures is not clear from this list, and unfortunately it is impossible to determine whether they were temporary shelters or more permanent dwellings finished in much the same way as their frame counterparts. Their existence, however, points to a tradition of log construction in Maine at the turn of the eighteenth century. The Levi Sargent House is an extremely significant reminder of that tradition.

This important vernacular dwelling is thought to have been built by Levi Sargent (1786-1861), a farmer and Methodist minister.³ He was the son of Daniel Sargent who had removed to this neighborhood in the early 1790s. On March 20, 1811, Levi Sargent married Deliverance Sawyer (1780-1840), the daughter of Jonathan and Martha (Rich) Sawyer. The following year he acquired two tracts of land containing a total of 109 acres on part of which this house stands. It is believed that Sargent erected the dwelling soon thereafter. He later transferred the property to Isaiah Bonney, but whether Bonney occupied the house and for what period of time is not known.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Spurr, William Samuel. A History of Otisfield. Otisfield, Maine. By the Author, 1948.
Spurr, William Samuel. Vital Records of Otisfield Maine to the Year 1892 Births, Marriages and Deaths. Portland. Maine Historical Society, 1948.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1
Quadrangle name Norway, Maine Provisional Ed., 1983 Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	<u>19</u>	<u>374885</u>	<u>4889455</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is of one acre containing buildings as shown in Town of Otisfield Tax Map #R-6, Lot 8.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohny, Architectural Historian
organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date January, 1987
street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 telephone 207/289-2132
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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *E. S. Thetford*
title S.H.P.O. date 2/9/87

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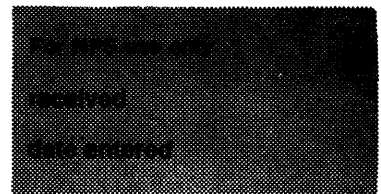
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Melrose Byers Entered in the National Register date 3-13-87
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____
Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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LEVI SARGENT HOUSE

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

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Endnotes

- ./1 This tradition is recorded in the brief sketch on the Sargent House prepared by Randall H. Bennett of the Bethel Historical Society. The other structure was known as the Abraham Lombard House, and is thought to have been built about the same time as Sargent's house was erected.
- ./2 Rev. Lincoln Ripley, "A Description and History of Waterford, in the County of York" (1804). Reprinted in Thomas Hovey Gage, Jr., Notes on the History of Waterford (Worcester, Massachusetts: 1913), p. 17.
- ./3 The biographical information on the Sargent family is taken from William S. Spurr, Vital Records of Otisfield, Maine to the Year 1892 Births, Marriages and Deaths (Maine Historical Society, 1948).