

STATE: **Maine**
 COUNTY: **Cumberland**
 FOR NPS USE ONLY
 ENTRY DATE: **JUL 12 1974**

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON:
Captain Reuben Merrill House
 AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

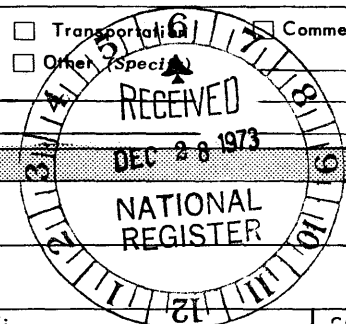
STREET AND NUMBER:
97 West Main Street
 CITY OR TOWN:
Yarmouth
 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
1st: Hon. Peter N. Kyros
 STATE: **Maine** CODE: **23** COUNTY: **Cumberland** CODE: **005**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Dr. and Mrs. Hubert Barker
 STREET AND NUMBER:
97 West Main Street
 CITY OR TOWN:
Yarmouth
 STATE: **Maine** CODE: **23**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Cumberland County Courthouse
 STREET AND NUMBER:
Federal Street
 CITY OR TOWN:
Portland
 STATE: **Maine** CODE: **23**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Yarmouth Survey
 DATE OF SURVEY: **1973** Federal State County Local
 DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
 STREET AND NUMBER:
31 Western Avenue
 CITY OR TOWN:
Augusta,
 STATE: **Maine** CODE: **23**

STATE: _____
 COUNTY: _____
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Captain Reuben Merrill House was built in 1858 in the Italian style from designs by Thomas J. Sparrow, a leading mid-nineteenth century Portland architect. The Captain Merrill House is a large, square three story wooden dwelling with a granite foundation and a hip roof. To its rear is a large, rectangular three story wooden ell, also with a granite foundation and a hip roof. The facade of the main house is composed of five bays. An entrance with double doors is found in the first story central bay. Over the doorway is a balcony supported by two large brackets. On either side of the central doorway are two windows with six-over-six-panes and heavy moldings above them. Identical window treatment is present on all five bays of the second story facade. The first two stories are clapboarded, while the third is match boarded. Each of the five bays of the third story contains a small rectangular window. Above these is an overhang ornamented by a series of brackets.

The left and right walls of the Captain Merrill House are identical. Each story has three windows. The first, second and third story windows are identical to those on the first, second, and third story facade. Like the facade, the first two stories are clapboarded, while the third is match boarded. The bracketed overhang of the front continues on the sides. On either side of the house, two tall rectangular brick chimnies project at the roofline. The hip roof is crowned at the center by a rectangular balustrade.

The ell covers most of the rear wall of the Captain Merrill House. The left side of its first story has been converted into a garage, while an enclosed sun porch has been attached to the right side. The second story of the ell is clapboarded and possesses windows similar to those on the main house. The treatment of the ell's third story is identical to that on the main house with its matched boarding and small rectangular windows. The bracketed overhang is continued from the main house.

The dignified design and large scale of the Captain Reuben House make it an impressive example of a mid-nineteenth century Maine adaptation of the Italian style in wood.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1858

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | | <u>Maritime History</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Captain Reuben Merrill House has both historical and architectural significance. Captain Merrill, for whom the house was built in 1858, was a leading mid-nineteenth century sea captain in the coastal town of Yarmouth, Maine. He was born in the nearby community of Cumberland on December 2, 1818, went to sea in his youth, and rose to become a master mariner. During his career, Captain Merrill commanded the merchant ships Cumberland, Yarmouth, Esther, and Champlain. He lost his life on June 16, 1875, during the wreck of the Champlain. That vessel had almost completed a voyage from New York to California when it entered a heavy fog and struck the Farallones Islands near San Francisco. Captain Merrill was the last man to leave the ship after being assured that the rest of the crew was safe in life boats. As he entered a boat, he was struck by the martingale and killed. Captain Reuben Merrill's long career at sea and its courageous ending symbolize the life of the nineteenth century Maine sea captain.

After Captain Merrill's marriage to Hannah Elizabeth Blanchard on October 1, 1846, the couple moved to Yarmouth. More than a decade later in 1857, Captain Merrill commissioned the prominent Portland architect Thomas J. Sparrow to draw plans for what was to become the grandest mid-nineteenth century home in Yarmouth.

Sparrow was at the peak of his career in the 1850's. Born in Portland on March 4, 1805, he first entered the organ manufacturing business with John K. Paine. He then turned to carpentry and was first listed as a joiner in the Portland Directory of 1837. The next directory, published in 1841, noted Sparrow as an architect, the first time a native of Portland had assumed that professional title.

Of the many structures which Sparrow designed in the 1840's and 50's only three are known to survive besides the Captain Merrill House. These are the Sparrow Block in Portland, an Italianate brick row house of 1849 which introduced that style to the city; a large granite obelisk of 1851 which was erected in Portland's Western Cemetery to mark the grave of the beloved school master, Henry Jackson, and Mechanics' Hall, a handsome Italian style block of 1857-59 in downtown Portland.

(See Continuation Sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"The Ship Champlain", Portland Daily Press, June 21, 1875
 Shettleworth, Earle G., Jr., The Architecture of Portland, Maine, 1830 to 1870, an unpublished thesis at the Colby College Library, Waterville, Maine.

Original manuscripts relating to the life of Captain Reuben Merrill and the construction of his house, in the possession of Mrs. Hubert Barker, Yarmouth, Maine.

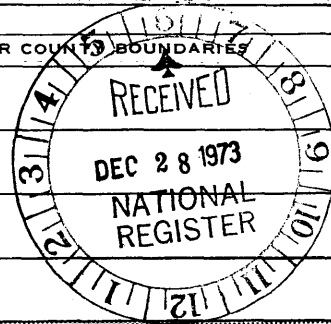
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		43 ° 48' 14 "	70 ° 12' 17 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **one acre**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: Maine Historic Preservation Commission DATE: 30, October, 73

STREET AND NUMBER:
31 Western Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Augusta, STATE: Maine CODE: 23

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name James H. Mumby
 Title State Historic Preservation Officer
 Date December 18, 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

A. R. Westman
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 7/12/74

ATTEST:
Ronald M. Greenberg
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 7-12-74

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Maine	
COUNTY	
Cumberland	
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	JUL 12 1974

(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE

Thomas J. Sparrow practiced architecture into the 1860's, but ill health prevented him from playing an active role in the rebuilding of Portland after the Great Fire of 1866. He died in Brownville, Maine, on December 22, 1870.

Sparrow provided Captain Merrill with the design for a stately three story wooden Italianate mansion. The house was erected in 1858 under the supervision of John A. Durham, a master builder from Falmouth, Maine. The dwelling was sited on a large lot on the outskirts of the village of Yarmouth. Its cost, including land, was approximately \$7,000. Captain Merrill embellished his grounds with a gazebo, more than fifty shade trees, and a handsome cast iron fence manufactured by Charles M. Plummer of Portland. The interior was equipped with a furnace as well as fireplaces. For the floors, Brussels carpets were imported from Liverpool.

From the time of its first occupancy late in 1858, Captain Reuben Merrill's mansion has been lived in by his family. Few changes have been made to it, and many of its original furnishings are intact. The present owners, Mrs. Elizabeth Merrill Barker (Captain Merrill's granddaughter) and her husband, Dr. Hubert Barker, cherish the house.

The Captain Rueben Merrill House is significant for several reasons. The house was built as the result of the successful maritime career of a distinguished Maine sea captain. It is an impressive and rare surviving work of an important Maine architect. Moreover, it has remained in one family for three generations in an excellent state of preservation.

