

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Carr, Robert P., House  
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number Main Street  not for publication  
city, town Bowdoinham  vicinity  
state Maine code ME county Sagadahoc code 023 zip code 04008

3. Classification

|   |   |                                     |                 |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Ownership of Property                       | Category of Property                            | Number of Resources within Property |                 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing                        | Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local       | <input type="checkbox"/> district               | 1                                   | buildings       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State       | <input type="checkbox"/> site                   |                                     | sites           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal     | <input type="checkbox"/> structure              |                                     | structures      |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> object                 |                                     | objects         |
|   |   | 1                                   | 0 Total         |

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 11/5/90  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Maine Historic Preservation Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet. 12/18/90

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/Granitewalls Wood/Weatherboard

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roof Metal/Tinother Side porch and rear stable

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Robert P. Carr House is a two-story frame Italianate style building with an L-shaped plan and a two-story wing and stable. Among its distinctive features are bracketed cornices, window hoods, bay windows, and side porch. It has an equally intact and handsomely detailed interior. A granite block foundation supports the house which is sheathed in weatherboards.

Facing south, the symmetrically arranged primary elevation is composed of a pair of three-sided bay windows on the first story and two six-over-six double-hung windows above. A bullseye window with a round-arched hood occupies the gable peak, and paneled pilasters rise to the bracketed cornice. The porch, which is attached to the east side elevation, extends to the narrow projecting bay that forms the foot of the ell.

The east side is arranged with its three-bay main block, recessed behind the projecting two-bay gabled ell, and the two-story wing attached to the rear. Five chamfered posts support the porch roof which shelters two windows and the two-leaf round-arched doors featuring etched glass with the letters R. P. CARR. A second bullseye window, this one totally enframed with a wide molded surround, is located in the gable peak of the ell. The wing has a symmetrical fenestration pattern composed of a narrow door with transom and seven windows. The double-hung windows throughout the house employ a six-over-six configuration. A more modest appearance is found on the west side where the main block is divided into five bays and the recessed rear wing into three on the first story and four on the second. The attached gable roofed stable, whose roof ridge is perpendicular to the house, has four windows on its west end as well as the entrance doors and a variety of openings on the front and east side. A second set of doors punctuate the north side.

The interior is organized around a transverse hall which separates the large parlor at the south end of the building from the smaller sitting and dining rooms. A kitchen and summer kitchen occupy the wing. The central stair features a robust turned newel post and turned balusters as well as decorative sawn woodwork on the outer string. A modest cornice surrounds the hall, and the windows and door openings, like those throughout the house, are composed of a series of built-up molding profiles. The cornice is repeated in the parlor along with an additional ceiling molding. A false marble mantelpiece, an elaborate plaster ceiling medallion and lincrusta covering

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Continuation Sheet**

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of the ceiling further decorate the parlor. The sitting room features a closed-in fireplace with a marble mantel shelf, lincrusta ceiling covering, and another elaborate ceiling medallion with its chandelier. This room is connected to the dining room via an arched passageway. Like the remainder of the interior, the kitchen is virtually unaltered, in this case from its turn-of-the-century remodeling and includes cast iron sinks, hand pump, a complete pantry with built-in flour bins and a concealed bathtub. The second floor of the main house is devoted to three bedrooms and a newly installed bathroom. The hall and one bedroom have ceiling medallions. Two smaller rooms and a wide hall are located in the wing where a number of the doors exhibit a grained finish, some Federal period hardware, and Greek Revival door surrounds. It may be that the wing is either a remnant of the earlier house known to have been on this site or that certain elements such as doors and trim were salvaged and re-used in the new building. A privy is located at the very rear within the envelope of the attached stable.

The interior of the stable, erected in 1894 to replace the original barn, has narrow tongue-and-groove sheathing throughout the lower level as well as two horse stalls. There are no free-standing supporting posts, a feature made possible by the use of a massive timber truss located in the upper level.

An historic photograph of the house reveals that the original attached barn was a broad front gabled building with a tall ventilator. The property was bordered by an elaborate wooden fence composed of large square posts and decorative sawn balusters. Of additional note on this photograph is the existence of two chimneys (now there is only one), one of which was located in the front block. An inspection of the attic and study of the plan reveals that this was a false element, meant perhaps only to balance the other chimney.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Politics/Government

Period of Significance

c. 1870 - 1882

Significant Dates

c. 1870  
1894

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Carr, Robert Potter

Architect/Builder

Coombs, George M., Architect of stable

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Believed to have been constructed about 1870, the Robert P. Carr House is an Italianate style dwelling of considerable architectural distinction. Although its designer remains unidentified, the entire composition from overall massing and plan, to the interior finish strongly suggests the work of an accomplished architect. The house is also historically significant by virtue of its association with Robert Potter Carr (1818-1882), long one of Bowdoinham's most prominent residents. For these reasons the house is eligible for nomination under criteria B and C for its local historical and architectural significance.

The village of Bowdoinham is typical of the small riverine town centers found throughout much of the State with its business district located nearest the water and its residential area located behind. Standing along the somewhat random pattern of streets are a few dozen houses representing the range of late eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural styles. Among those from the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the Carr House is preeminent. In fact, the building's plan and detailing lend it a measure of sophistication more typical of urban settings rather than rural ones (for example the Sen. William P. Frye House in Lewiston or the J. H. Roak House in Auburn). This is particularly evident when compared to the nearby late Italianate style Cornish House (N.R. 1/15/80) of 1885. Although the latter is resplendent in a variety of sawn ornamentation, its basic form and plan are far more traditional than that represented by the Carr House.

Robert P. Carr was a descendent of a family which settled in the area during the seventeenth century. His father, James Carr, was a merchant in Bowdoinham as early as 1849 when he is listed in the Northeast Mercantile Union Directory under the firm name "James Carr and Son, dry goods and groceries." It is presumed that R. P. Carr was associated with this family enterprise since by the mid-1850s he alone appears in the directories as the

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Adams, Silas. History of Bowdoinham. Fairfield, Maine. 1912.

Robert P. Carr Obituary. Bath Daily Times, March 15, 1882.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than 1

**UTM References**

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property occupies the Town of Bowdoinham tax map U-1, lot 55.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

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

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Kirk F. Mohney, Architectural Historian  
 organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date 10/1990  
 street & number 55 Capitol Street telephone (207) 289-2132  
 city or town Augusta, state Maine zip code 04333

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operator of a country store in the village. Carr is also credited by local historians, along with his partner Samuel Fuller, as the first person in Bowdoinham to enter into the commercial ice industry, beginning in 1856. From 1873 to 1882 he was president of the National Bank of Bowdoinham. In addition to his business career, Carr was long active in politics having served one term each in the State House of Representatives (1858-59) and Senate (1873-74) and as a Sagadahoc County Commissioner from 1876-1881. Previously, he had been the Bowdoinham postmaster in the period 1849 to 1853. As the Bath Daily Times noted in his obituary "Mr. Carr has long been one of the leading and most respected citizens of his native town, and prominent in local affairs." In addition to his former house, Carr's stature is still evident in the scale of the tombstone which marks his grave in the nearby town cemetery.

Carr's wife, the former Abigail Theresa Whitmore (1819-1882), whom he married in 1839, survived him by only three months. The property was subsequently acquired by their daughter Mary Theresa and her husband Frank H. Purinton. Purinton had been a sea captain in Cundy's Harbor until his marriage in 1883 at which time he removed to Bowdoinham. The Purintons undertook some remodeling of the house, primarily interior cosmetic work, and erected the stable in 1894 from plans drawn by Lewiston architect George M. Coombs. They occupied the property until their deaths at which time it passed to their daughter and only child Mary Theresa Purinton (Molly). She vacated the house in 1988, and now at the age of 102 resides in Brunswick.