

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED APR 12 1976  
DATE ENTERED OCT 8 1976

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

\*\* Sophie May House

AND/OR COMMON

Cullen Sawtelle

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Sophie May Lane

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Norridgewock

\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd Hon William Cohen

STATE

Maine

CODE

2 3

COUNTY

Somerset

CODE

025

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

\_\_DISTRICT

\_\_PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

\_\_AGRICULTURE

\_\_MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

\_\_UNOCCUPIED

\_\_COMMERCIAL

\_\_PARK

\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_BOTH

\_\_WORK IN PROGRESS

\_\_EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_RELIGIOUS

\_\_OBJECT

\_\_IN PROCESS

\_\_YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_SCIENTIFIC

\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

\_\_YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_INDUSTRIAL

\_\_TRANSPORTATION

NO

\_\_MILITARY

\_\_OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Rev. Bradford Ketchum

STREET & NUMBER

Sophie May Lane

CITY, TOWN

Norridgewock,

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maine

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Somerset County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Skowhegan,

Maine

STATE

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Sophie May House is an example of a beautifully proportioned Greek Revival temple fronted house of the type popular in Maine between the 1830's and 1860's. It is a rectangular brick structure which rests on a granite foundation. The two story portico, is fashioned after the Grecian Doric order. Two small, one story ells of different heights were included in the original plan, for the rear of the building. A low gable, running perpendicular to the facade, forms the roof. It extends beyond the facade wall to form an overhang. Four graceful Doric columns support the projecting entablature.

The entablature has clear and simple lines. The wooden molding of the cornice and architrave are sharply articulated. The pediment of matched-boarding painted white gives the effect of stone, but still retains the gracefulness of wood.

The columns on the east end create three bays in the facade behind them. On the first floor, two full length windows occupy the left bays. The main doorway takes up the right bay. The door is framed by a pair of shutters. Above, in line with the downstairs windows and door, are three double-hung windows. All the windows are flanked by louvered shutters and surmounted by stone lintels.

The north wall of the two story structure is four bays wide. Each bay contains a double-hung window on the first floor. The second floor windows are slightly smaller. Continuing on the north wall toward the back are the two ells. The first ell repeats the first floor window design in its own two windows. The final addition contains a door and a window, to the right. The door is sheltered by a small Victorian overhang supported by carved wooden brackets.

The south wall has three irregularly spaced windows on each level. The two windows to the right extend the full length of the first floor. The one on the left is a regular double-hung window as are the three on the second floor.

The house has a side-hall interior plan. The full-length windows light the front parlor, while the rear ells are occupied by the kitchen and service areas.

# 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 checked="" 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

1845

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This Greek Revival Temple house in Norridgewock beautifully displays the style of architecture which achieved great popularity in Maine during the thirty years before the Civil War. It was built in 1845 by Cullen Sawtelle, a native of the town, who, after graduating from Bowdoin in 1825, entered the legal profession and interested himself in politics. After serving in the State Senate he was elected Representative to Congress in 1844 and again in 1848. After the expiration of his second term he sold his house to Asa Clark and took up residence in New Jersey.

Rebecca Sophia Clark, the daughter of Asa Clark was born in Norridgewock in 1833 and, as a young lady, moved with her family into the Sawtelle house on the bank of the Kennebec River. Educated at the Female Academy in Norridgewock, she obtained in 1851 a teaching position in Evansville, Illinois, living at the home of a married sister. In 1858, progressive deafness forced her to give up this position and she returned to her home in Norridgewock where she spent the remaining years of her life.

Beginning with her first published story in 1861, Rebecca Clark, writing under the pen name of "Sophie May", produced over forty volumes of children's books which achieved enormous popularity. In an era when books for children were largely devoted to didactic lessons exemplified by artificially adult child characters, the children in Sophie May's books were believable people who captured her young readers' imaginations. Prudy Parlin, Dotty Dimple and Flaxie Frizzle were not pious prigs, but rollicking, mischievous young people. Her books, mostly written in six volume series were filled with homely realism and everyday humor. The town she knew was the scene of most of her stories and characters and incidents were frequently drawn from her own experience or tales told her by older residents.

In later years, after achieving a comfortable income from her writing, she travelled abroad and wintered in Baltimore, Florida and California. As a person she gave willingly of herself and was universally beloved in Norridgewock. Before her death in 1906 she donated a library building to the town.

The Sophie May House, in addition to its architectural merit, survives as the home of America's first author of what might well be described as books for and about real children.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Henrietta Danforth Wood, Early Days of Norridgewock, Skowhegan, 1941

National Cyclopedia of American Biography, V. 8.

Notable American Women, Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1971

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	9	4	3	6	5	8	0	4	9	5	1	7	0	0
ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

B 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

C 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

D 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

\_\_\_\_\_

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Architectural Historian  
Frank A. Beard, Historian

ORGANIZATION Patrica Brown, Student Assistant DATE April 2, 1976  
Maine Historic Preservation Commission

STREET & NUMBER 31 Western Avenue TELEPHONE 207-289-2133

CITY OR TOWN Augusta, 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.  
 TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE April 8, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 10/8/90

DIRECTOR OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: [Signature] DATE 9/29/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER