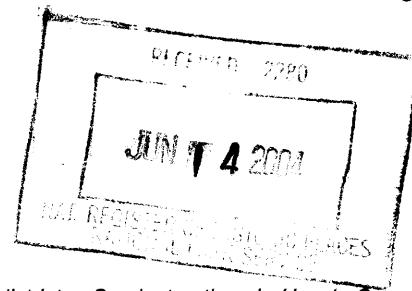


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 Joseph and Hannah Maxcy Homestead

other names/site number _____

2. Location

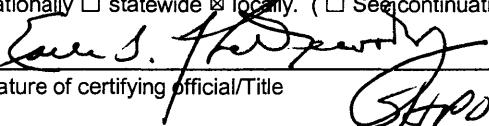
street & number 630 South Union Road N/A not for publication

city or town Union N/A vicinity

state Maine code ME county Knox code 013 zip code 04862

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.)


Signature of certifying official>Title

6/11/04
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 for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official>Title

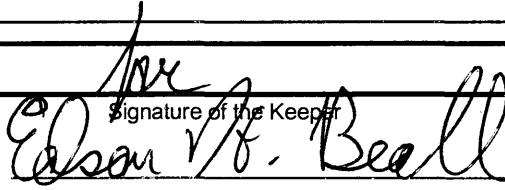
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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

7/28/04

MAXCY, JOSEPH, AND HANNAH, HOMESTEAD
Name of Property

KNOX COUNTY, 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

1 1 buildings

 sites

 structures

 objects

1 1 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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC / Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC / Single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC / Federal

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite

walls Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other Brick

Narrative Description

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

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MAXCY, JOSEPH, AND HANNAH, HOMESTEAD
Section number 7 Page 2

KNOX COUNTY, MAINE

DESCRIPTION

The c. 1802 Maxcy Homestead in South Union, Maine is a large, two story, gable-roofed frame home situated on a slight rise at a bend on the east side of South Union Road. Due to its location with in this bend, travelers from the north have a clear view the north facade, travelers from the south approach the southern facade and travelers at the intersection of South Union Road and Middle Road are met with the west facade of the building. Each of these clapboarded elevations features a distinguished centered entryway, and between the formal nature of the home's exterior and the structure's elevated position above the road, the Maxcy Homestead, with its connected ells and barn, is a striking feature on this rural town landscape.

As noted above, three of the four sides of the twin chimney, double-pile building contain formal entrances, however, it is the southern elevation that provides the primary facade for the homestead. This entrance faces a door yard bounded by the road on the west and southwest, a woods road on the south and attached ells and barn on the northeast and east. A curving driveway and mature hardwood trees complete the landscape. This facade is five bays wide, and features six-over-six windows spaced at regular intervals on each floor. The front door is flanked by Doric pilasters and is surmounted by an elaborate broken pediment, lined with dentils and modillions, which is similar to one shown in Plate 40 of Pain's Practical House Carpenter, 1794 (see figure 1). This feature surrounds a delicate semi-circular fanlight. A very similar door surround is found on the western elevation, albeit in this example a keystone marks the apex of the fanlight. This elevation is also five bays wide, however, the windows (with shutters) are more crowded on this narrower facade. As with the west and east sides the northern elevation is defined by five bays, here however, the door surround is much plainer, and consists of a simple entablature with a plain frieze and boxed cornice positioned over the door. The entire structure, which sits on a granite foundation, is capped by an asphalt gable roof oriented east to west, through which duel chimneys perforate the ridge line. The soffit of the boxed cornice is decorated with modillions and dentils, and narrow trim boards grace the corners of the building. The present roof is not original but was placed on the building in the mid 19th century. The first roof was hipped, and as such the cornice continues on all four sides of the building.

A series of connected ells extend from the east side of the main house. The first section is one-and-one-half stories tall, and on the south elevation it contains one nine-over-six window on the first floor and two six-over-six windows on the second floor. This rather unadorned structure is abutted at the eastern end of its south side by a second building, in this case a one story, four bay carriage shed which was built in two sections. The earlier and more northern section dates to the mid 19th century, while the southern bay was added as an automobile garage in the early 1930s. The final ancillary structure is an English barn which has been attached to the eastern side of the garage. Although an interesting structure, this barn was original one-half of a 100' long double English Barn located in North Union. The barn was moved to the Maxcy Homestead in the 1960s to save it from being destroyed. Unfortunately, it is not historically associated with the Homestead and thus is not considered a contributing resource in this nomination. The

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MAXCY, JOSEPH, AND HANNAH, HOMESTEAD

KNOX COUNTY, MAINE

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Maxcy barn was located to the south of the current barn's location, but was razed in the 1940s.

The interior of the Macy homestead, and especially the four rooms on the first floor, were the slate on which the building's housewright and joiner, Ebenezer Alden, executed his art. Each room features a palette of period moldings from baseboard to cornice. The homestead is built on a central hallway, double-pile, four room plan. The center hall runs continuously between the south and north entrances and contains a beautiful straight run staircase with delicate dropped bannister, subtly tapered balusters, and a restrained Federal newel post. The stringer ends of the stair treads are adorned with an applied ogee and cove carving. In each of the downstairs rooms the walls are split-board lath and plaster above a 32" single board wainscot topped with a chair rail. The floors are of wide pine, and the ceilings are plastered.

The best room is the southwest parlor. In here Alden utilized his extensive collection of hand tools to create complex period moldings around the doors, windows and fireplace. The cornice consists of an ogee crown molding supported by a running band of pierced dentils, all of which is set above a frieze of metopes and triglyphs. The same combination is repeated in the entablature over the ogee-molded, raised panel, six-panel doors. The window sash are set in architraves consisting of a two-step, ogee-molded casing, which is also decorated with a smaller set of metopes and triglyphs. The pattern is also used to accent a narrow frieze in the chair rail, however here the metopes are adorned with a miniature carved pinecone, and tiny punch marks underscore each of the carved images. The fireplace is surrounded by delicately carved and molded pilasters set on plinths. The mantelpiece is decorated with pierced dentils and set over a plain frieze with secondary pilasters.

Each of the remaining three rooms on the first floor contain a full complement of period woodwork, although their scale and complexity is somewhat reduced from that found in the southwest parlor. The southeast room contained the original kitchen, and two small pantries are located on either side of the fireplace. (The western pantry also functions as a pass-through to the northeast room.) A small hall for the western entrance is located between the southwest and northwest parlors, which are the two most formal rooms on the first floor. Although this hall contains wainscoting and decorative trim around the doors, it is stylistically more casual than the central hall, which suggests that the use of the western door was secondary to the southern entrance. The first ell to the east has been recently renovated, however early wrought iron strap hinges on a clinch-nailed batten door to the carriage shed, and wide, hand-planed, ship-lapped boards forming a partition wall around the cellar stairs suggests that the ell was either original to the house or an early addition.

On the second floor, both the southwest and northwest chambers are finished similarly to their first floor counterparts. In the mid-twentieth century the northeast chamber was divided to create two bathrooms and a small bedroom, only the latter of which retains some original century finishes. The most significant and interesting feature on the second floor is a swinging paneled wall. Positioned on the west side of the southeast chamber, this hinged and hanging wall can be swung up to the ceiling and fastened in place to create a larger chamber consisting of the southern half of the hallway and the bed chamber to

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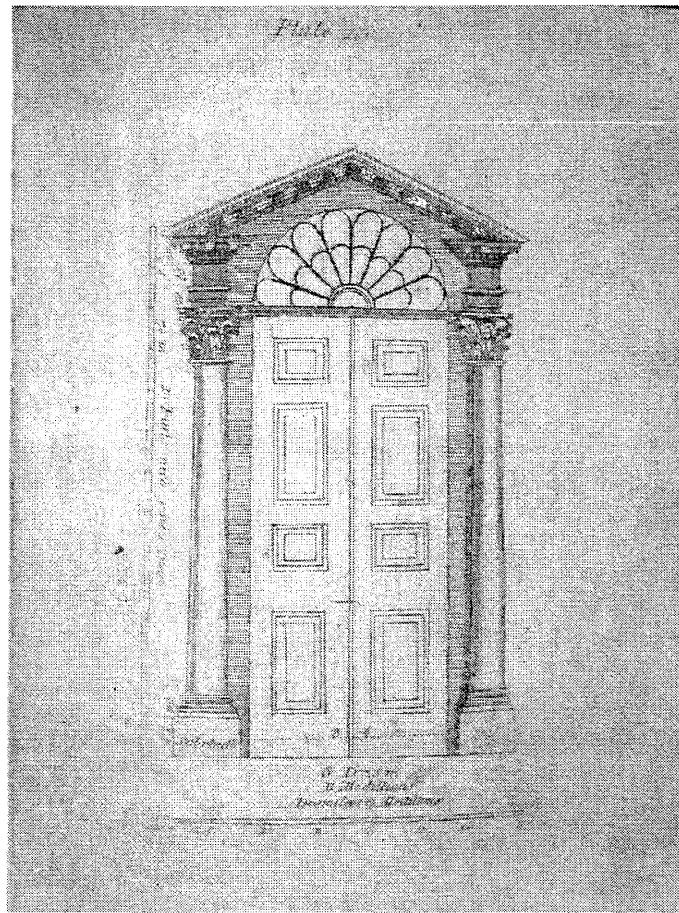
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MAXCY, JOSEPH, AND HANNAH, HOMESTEAD
Section number 7 Page 4

KNOX COUNTY, MAINE

the east. When the wall is in its vertical position, the bed chamber is accessed through a six-panel door set in the middle of the wall. Originally, there was not a fixed wall on the east end of the southwest chamber, (this was added early in the 19th century, and may have been the work of Alden considering that he lived in Union until his death in 1862) and when the swinging wall was raised the entire southern half of the second story was combined into a single large gathering space. Although the southeast chamber contains additional examples of Alden's wood craft, including wainscoting, baseboard, and door and window trim, there is no evidence for a fireplace in either of the eastern rooms.

Figure 1. William Pain, The Practical House Carpenter, 1795. Plate 40.



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 a 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.

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: _____

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KNOX COUNTY, MAINE

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Homestead of Joseph and Hannah Maxcy is one of a handful of regionally significant Federal style homes among the interior towns of Mid Coast Maine. Although the structure is not as finely rendered as high-style examples on the coast, the level of craftsmanship, eye for detail, and use and execution of the Federal vocabulary present in this structure makes it a notable example of rural architecture at the turn of the 19th century. It is also significant as a known commission by the housewright and joiner Ebenezer Alden, one of the craftsmen that worked on the original mansion of General Henry Knox, Montpelier, now destroyed. The Maxcy Homestead is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its local significance as a notable representation of rural Federal architecture at the turn of the 19th century.

In 1788 Joseph Maxcy immigrated from Attleboro, Massachusetts to Union, Maine. The first wave of settlers in the area had arrived fifteen years earlier, but the town had yet to take shape. Initially Joseph cleared land and built a house north of the current village of Union, and three years later his brother Josiah and father, Benjamin Maxcy, joined him. The next year Joseph and his brother purchased 45 ½ acres from their father. Known as the Mill Farm lot, the new parcel included all the land between Seven Tree Pond and Crawford Pond, and included both sides of the Crawford Stream which ran between the two bodies of water. The stream had a strong flow of water and offered great potential for mill sites. Within a few years the brothers developed the water power, installed a saw and grist mill, and divided the land and mill privileges between themselves.

The Maxcy brothers had chosen wisely and it is reasonable to assert that they envisioned their holdings as becoming the center of the developing town. Jeremiah Maxcy took up residence in the Mill Farm, an already established house located north of the stream, while Joseph and his wife Hannah erected their homestead on a prominent knoll just to the south of where the road to Warren crossed the water. The house was positioned so that it would be prominently visible to travelers heading north or south along the County road, or approaching from the lake to the west. As noted above, this was not the first structure the family built in the area, and the growing family had both the means and the time to construct a home that would be representative of their increasing prosperity. In circa 1802 they hired Ebenezer Alden, a local housewright of some renown to design and build the new homestead for them.

Ebenezer Alden came to Maine in 1792 from Middleboro Massachusetts. He came initially in order to work in Thomaston as a wood carver at the estate of General Henry Knox, who had been George Washington's Secretary of War and now oversaw the development of the Waldo Patent. At Montpelier, Alden was responsible for much of the fine interior trim as well as the doors, windows and mantels. After that job was completed he moved to Union, where he built himself a small shop and a large house in 1797.

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MAXCY, JOSEPH, AND HANNAH, HOMESTEAD

KNOX COUNTY, MAINE

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Known as the Ebenezer Alden House, (NR 75000100), this structure was built with bricks made by Alden on the premises. On the interior the woodwork was created with the same tools he had utilized at Montpelier.¹

When the Maxcy family commissioned Alden to build their home, they provided another outlet for him to perfect his craft. The pine cone carving in the southwest parlor chair rail is found at both properties, and it is clear that other wooden trim elements including the crown moldings, architraves, and mantelpieces, were created using the same planes and tools as he used on his own home and Montpelier. Alden relied on William Pain's Practical House Carpenter, published in London in 1794, for much of his stylistic inspiration at both houses, especially for the south and west door surrounds, which resemble the one shown in Plate 40 of Pain's book.

At the Maxcy homestead, Alden installed an hinged paneled wall on the second floor: a feature that is rare even among the highest style houses of the period. As currently configured, when the wall is lowered it creates a bedroom in the southeast corner of the house, and a hallway between that and the southwest chamber. It is evident from close examination of the western wall of the hall that this partition is a later addition, and that the hinged wall once functioned to join the entire front half of the house into one large room. The presence of this type of removable wall is rare in Maine, but a well known example is found at the Salem Towne House (1796) now located at Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts, another home heavily influenced by Pain's publication, albeit the 1792 edition.² The precise reason that the Maxcys installed the hinged wall is unknown, however it is likely to be in conjunction with needing a large space, either for social events, or to host meetings such as may have been held by a fraternal lodge. It certainly can be interpreted as a symbol of the family's social standing and success.

The prosperity that emanated from the homestead of the Maxcy family was reflected in similar homes throughout Maine, built by prosperous families in similarly nascent communities. In Maine Forms of American Architecture, William D. Shipman describes the context in which these structures emerged throughout the state.

¹The original Montpelier was destroyed in 1871. Currently, a replication of Knox's mansion is in the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing resource within the Thomaston Historic District (NR: 74000176).

²Two additional hinged walls are known in Maine. The c. 1798 Glidden House at the intersection of Glidden and Cross Road in Newcastle has a wall between two chambers that folds side to side. The wall dividing the two court rooms at the Old Gaol in York (NR: 68000016) is also hinged at the ceiling so that it can be swung up and latched. This wall was installed in 1763.

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MAXCY, JOSEPH, AND HANNAH, HOMESTEAD

KNOX COUNTY, MAINE

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"In Maine, as suggested, the Federal period coincided with the arrival of prosperity in a hitherto remote and relatively backward region. The scarcity of distinguished Colonial buildings, outside the extreme southern section, contrasts with the plethora of good Federal examples and testifies to the District's late development.... The emergence of shipping and shipbuilding as major - and highly profitable - industries after 1790 helped to create small pools of wealth along the Maine coast. While this wealth was hardly comparable to that of the Boston-Salem or New York areas, it was nevertheless sufficient to bring about a wave of building activity at, architecturally speaking, just the right time. Importation of the ideas of Bulfinch and McIntire (together with some of their English antecedents) resulted in a series of buildings whose elegance and restrained classicism make them unusually good examples of their period.

Even so, application of these ideas continued to be limited in some degree by the character of the region. Most, though not all Federal buildings in Maine were smaller, more functional, and less ambitious with respect to detail than their counterparts in the shipping centers of southern New England and the Middle Atlantic states. Outside of Portland itself, there were probably not more than a dozen fully elaborated churches and residences erected along the coast. But there were (and are) many substantial buildings which embodied the essence of Federal design. The *characteristic* Federal house in Maine is thus one which adopts the general form of the period(a rectangular block, typically two or three stories, with either hipped or gabled roof, central hall, and from two to five chimneys) but depends for its architectural appeal more on careful attention to proportion than to ornamentation or overall scale." (Shipman, p. 68)

The Maxcy Homestead contains a deeper expression of the Federal style than the minimum characteristics found in a rural house as described by Shipman. From the three formal entrances to the extraordinary woodwork in all of the rooms and the presence of the unique hinged wall, the Maxcy House illustrates the more elaborate end of rural Federal architecture as interpreted by gifted local craftsman.

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Continuation Sheet

MAXCY, JOSEPH, AND HANNAH, HOMESTEAD
Section number 10 Page 2

KNOX COUNTY, MAINE

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is fully described by the Town of Union tax map number 5, lot 19.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated 10 acre parcel represents the only portion of the original Joseph Maxcy estate that is currently associated with the Joseph and Hannah Maxcy Homestead at 630 South Union Road.

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Continuation Sheet

MAXCY, JOSEPH, AND HANNAH, HOMESTEAD

KNOX COUNTY, MAINE

Section number ____ **Page** ____

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1 of 5

Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
26 February 2004
South facade; facing north.

Photograph 2 of 5

Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
26 February 2004
West and south elevation; facing northeast.

Photograph 3 of 5

Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
26 February 2004
South elevation; facing north.
Chimneypiece detail, southwest parlor; facing north.

Photograph 4 of 5

Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
26 February 2004
South elevation; facing north.
Trim detail, southwest parlor; facing east.

Photograph 5 of 5

Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
26 February 2004
Hinged panel wall, second floor; facing southeast.