

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

James G. Blaine House

AND/OR COMMON

Blaine House; Governor's Mansion

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

State and Capitol Streets (northeast corner)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Augusta

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maine

VICINITY OF

CODE

023

COUNTY

Kennebec

CODE

011

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES RESTRICTED
- YES UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER

Governor's Mansion

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

State of Maine, Office of the Governor

STREET & NUMBER

State House

CITY, TOWN

Augusta

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maine

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Kennebec Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Kennebec County Court House

CITY, TOWN

Augusta

STATE

Maine

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

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 type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The James G. Blaine House is located on a 2.38-acre lot running along the northern side of Capitol Street between State Street on the east and Grove Street on the west in Augusta, Maine. The two-story frame and clapboard house, now containing some 28 rooms, stands at the northeast corner of the lot facing State Street. A broad lawn covers the southeast corner. To the southwest, on the opposite side of a hard-topped walkway curving from Capitol to Grove Street, are a formal flower garden and a tennis court. The lot is bordered by a hedge in front of the house and by a white picket fence on the remainder of the east, the south and west sides. To the south of the Blaine House lot are the grounds of the Maine State House, to the west and north 19th and early 20th century residences now occupied by various State offices.

The original portion of the Blaine House, constructed for a Captain James Hall, was completed in 1833. The rectangular block (5 bays by 3 bays) is topped by a hipped roof broken by twin interior chimneys near its northern and southern edges. The middle three bays of the front elevation are covered by a one-story porch supported on fluted Ionic columns and capped by a balustrade of square posts and lattice-work. The house is divided by a center hall with curving staircase and originally contained front and rear parlors (south), a sitting room, dining room, kitchen and pantry (all north) on the first floor and four bedrooms on the second. Shortly after the completion of this block, Captain Hall added a gable roofed ell at the rear (west), also two stories but lower than the main block.

James G. Blaine purchased the house in 1862 and over the next ten years made a number of changes in it. The most significant of these was the construction at the rear of the ell of an addition which essentially duplicates the main block but on a slightly smaller scale. On the south elevation of the addition is a one-story, one bay porch, again supported by fluted Ionic columns and capped by a latticed balustrade, covering the entrance to a small hall giving access to Blaine's octagonal study (east) and a billiard room (west); beyond were an expanded kitchen and pantry; further bedrooms were located on the second floor. Square, hip-roofed cupolas with round-arched windows, brackets, and dentil bands were added to the main block and the addition. A small porch was constructed on the south side of the ell and later expanded to create a veranda between the two main sections of the house. A one-story, rectangular conservatory was added along the south side of the main block. Next, Blaine removed the partitions dividing the rooms to the north of the center hall to create a large dining room; when that proved successful, the partitions dividing the parlors and conservatory were removed to create a single reception room.

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1865-1893; 1919

BUILDER/ARCHITECT renovation: John Calvin Stevens

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This substantial, two-story, frame and clapboard building in Augusta, Maine, the original portion of which was completed in 1833, was for more than 30 years the home of James G. Blaine, a dominant figure on the American political scene in the decades after the Civil War. Known to his admirers as the "Plumed Knight," Blaine was a leader of the Republican Party, United States Congressman, Senator, Secretary of State and presidential candidate. His most significant contribution to American politics was made in the field of foreign affairs, where his efforts to improve relations between the United States and the countries of Latin and South American marked the beginning of the Pan-American movement.

Blaine purchased "Blaine House" in 1862. Though in later years he spent increasing amounts of time in Washington, D.C., and summered at Bar Harbor, Maine, the Augusta house remained his official home until his death in 1893. Blaine made a number of changes in the building during his occupancy, including the construction of a rear (western) addition which nearly doubled its size. Blaine's family retained the house until 1919, when it was given to the State of Maine for use as a governor's residence. That year, under the supervision of Portland architect John Calvin Stevens, the house was renovated and a second addition constructed at the rear of the first. Renovated again in 1962, "Blaine House" remains in excellent condition and is open to the public from 2 to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

### Historical Background

James G. Blaine was born on January 30, 1830, at West Brownsville, Pennsylvania. After graduating from Washington College (now Washington and Jefferson College) at Washington, Pennsylvania in 1847, he taught for six years, first at a military academy in Kentucky and later at the Pennsylvania Institute for the Blind. In 1850 Blaine married Harriet Stanwood, a native of Augusta, Maine. Four years later, he moved to Augusta to become editor and part-owner of the Kennebec Journal and quickly assumed an active role in local politics.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

- Fish, Carl Russell. "James Gillespie Blaine," Dictionary of American Biography, vol. II (New York, 1929).
- Hunt, H. Draper. The Blaine House: Home of Maine's Governors (Somersworth, Maine, 1974).
- Muzzey, David S. James G. Blaine: A Political Idol of Other Days (New York, 1934).
- Pratt, Julius W. A History of United States Foreign Policy (New York, 1955).

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.38 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	19	437675	4906150	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the national historic landmark designation for the James G. Blaine House (shown in red on the accompanying sketch map) are those of lot 111 as described in the land records of Augusta and owned by the State of Maine: beginning at the intersection of the western curbline of State Street and the northern curbline of Capitol Street; thence westerly by said northern curbline, 408 feet more or less, to the eastern curbline of Grove Street; thence northerly

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME/TITLE Polly M. Rettig, Historian, Landmark Review Project; original form prepared by S. Sydney Bradford, Historian (8.19/63)

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

10/9/75

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE

202/523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

**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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*[Handwritten Signature]*

DATE

5/12/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

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The State of Maine received title to the Blaine House in 1919 and employed Portland architect John Calvin Stevens to renovate the building as the governor's residence. Though some changes were necessary to fit the house for its new function, Stevens respected the original fabric, retaining room arrangements and architectural detailing wherever possible. The study, which still contains its original furniture, Blaine's library, and other personal memorabilia, was completely restored, as were the adjacent entry hall and billiard room. Bathrooms were added on the second floor of the main block to create guest suites but otherwise it was largely unaltered. The ell was raised to the height of the other two sections and a family dining room with bay window created on its northern side. The veranda on the southern side became an enclosed sun room, walled on the south by five sets of French doors mounted between fluted Ionic columns. New kitchen and heating equipment were installed and the existing small cellar was expanded. Finally a two-story wing for service functions and servants rooms was built, angled from the northwest corner of the Blaine addition.

The last major project on the building, completed in 1962, was devoted primarily to cosmetic work (repainting, repapering, etc.) and had little effect on its architectural character. The present garden was created in 1964. Since that time the building and grounds have been well maintained and both appear to be in excellent condition.

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In 1856 Blaine attended the first national convention of the newly organized Republican party. Two years later, at the age of 28, he was elected to the Maine State Legislature where his mastery of the intricacies of parliamentary maneuvering and his political acumen enabled him to succeed, in 1860, to the speakership of the House. Blaine entered national politics in 1862, when he was elected to the United States House of Representatives. In March 1869, he was elected Speaker of the House, and in the ensuing years established a reputation which continues to rank him among the great leaders of that body.

Blaine was appointed in 1876 to fill a vacancy in the Senate and was soon elected to a full-six-year term. He had long cherished presidential ambitions, and in 1876 and 1880 made unsuccessful attempts to become the Republican party's candidate. At last, in 1884, Blaine secured the party's nomination. It appeared that he would win the election, but a number of circumstances in the final days of the campaign period worked against him and Grover Cleveland was the victor.

Though denied the presidency, Blaine made a significant contribution to the development of American foreign policy. Appointed Secretary of State by President Garfield in 1881, Blaine not only sought to expand American influence in the Pacific but also attempted to create a stronger bond between the United States and Latin America. Garfield gave strong support to Blaine's efforts, with the result that the United States invited the Latin American nations to send representatives to a meeting in Washington on November 22, 1882, to discuss common problems. Unfortunately, Garfield's assassination ended Blaine's influence in the administration and he resigned the Secretaryship; his successor quickly shelved the meeting.

Blaine again became Secretary of State in 1889 under President Harrison. The previous administration had revived Blaine's idea of an inter-American conference, issuing invitations before going out of office. When the conference convened in Washington in October 1889, Blaine was elected its president. The delegates did not end their work until April 1890. Although the conference did not accomplish all that Blaine had hoped for, it led to the creation of the Pan-American Union, established a precedent for similar meetings in the future, and did much to ease Latin American suspicion of the United States.

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Blaine resigned as Secretary of State in 1892, partly for reasons of health, but also to prevent a movement by his friends to place his name before the Republican party's nominating convention of that year. Though suffering from both pulmonary and circulatory disorders, Blaine campaigned for the Republican ticket whenever possible. By late November 1892, he was unable to leave his Washington residence and died there on January 15, 1893.

Blaine's widow, who died in 1903, bequeathed the Augusta house to her heirs in equal shares, the majority of which passed to her grandson, Walker Blaine Beale, on his 21st birthday in March 1917. Beale had been born at Blaine House and visited there frequently as a child. After his death in France in 1918, title to the house was transferred to his mother, Harriet Blaine Beale. The following year, as a memorial to her son Mrs. Beale donated the Blaine House to the State of Maine for use as a governor's residence. John Calvin Stevens, a prominent Portland architect, supervised renovation of the building and construction of a rear service wing, and Governor Carl Milliken and his family were able to move into the house in January 1920. The Blaine House was completely refurbished in 1962 and is now in excellent condition. Though still the home of Maine's Chief Executive, the house is open to the public from 2 to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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Stanwood, Edward. James Gillespie Blaine (New York, 1905).

Tyler, Alice Felt. The Foreign Policy of James G. Blaine (New York, 1927).



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by said eastern curbline, 258 feet more or less, to the southern line of a right-of-way to other property of the State of Maine on lot 121; thence easterly by said right-of-way and other state-owned property on lot 121 in section of 103 and 80 feet more or less; thence northerly by the same 8 feet more or less; thence easterly again by the southern line of lot 112, 214 feet more or less, to the western curbline of State Street; thence southerly by said western curbline, 260 feet more or less, to the point of beginning.

JAMES G. BLAINE HOUSE

Augusta, Maine

sketch map

National Historic Landmark  
Boundary \_\_\_\_\_

