

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
Jeremiah Lee Mansion
AND/OR COMMON
Jeremiah Lee Mansion

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
161 Washington Street
CITY, TOWN
Marblehead
STATE
Massachusetts

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
6th

--- VICINITY OF

CODE
25

COUNTY
Essex

CODE
009

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Marblehead Historical Society Lichtman-Orne Printing Shop
STREET & NUMBER
161 Washington Street
CITY, TOWN
Marblehead
STATE
Massachusetts

--- VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Essex County Registry of Deeds
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN
Salem
STATE
Massachusetts

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Historic American Buildings Survey (3 photos)
DATE
1930's
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Library of Congress/Annex Division of Prints and Photographs
CITY, TOWN
Washington
STATE
D.C.

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

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		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Lee Mansion is a three story frame structure, scored and sanded to resemble ashlar masonry. Wooden angle quoins and keystone lintels over the large first and second story windows continue the masonry effect. The third story windows are foreshortened. The seven windows across the front facade are divided into three bays by a projecting central pavilion that is topped by a classic pediment with a semi-circular lunette window. A small pedimented entrance portico with two fluted Ionic columns mirrored by engaged columns at the wall, gives emphasis to the door forming a needed focal point for the facade. The hipped-roof is dominated by an octagonal cupola and two interior chimneys of immense girth. A lightly scaled modillioned cornice surrounds the building. The north rear elevation is unbroken by any distinctive architectural detail with the exception of the large semicircular headed window which lights the interior stairhall.

The large scale of the house is shown in the wide hallway which runs the full depth of the house and is wainscoted in rich mahogany. The magnificent sweeping staircase, located toward the rear of the hall is seven feet in width, also constructed of solid Santo Domingo mahogany. This high staircase is richly ornamented with elaborately turned newels and balusters its paneled and pilastered wainscoting matching that of the hall itself. The open string end of each step is paneled and carved, the large panels enclosing the closet under the stairs. Another striking feature of the hall is the English wallpaper especially made for this house. Each scene, painted in tempera on 21 by 27 inch sheets is set into a separate panel, and enframed in a rococo border. Along the second floor hall the spaces between the panels are filled with small oval medallions. The egg and dart border matches that of the woodwork around the doors.

To the left of the entrance door, on the first floor, is the state dining room or banquet hall, which measures 21 by 25 feet. The focal point is an ornate fireplace carved in the Wren-Baroque tradition with high-relief garlands and swags favored by Grinling Gibbons of England. Originally a mustard yellow, the paneling was grained in 1854 to look like oak while it was occupied by a bank. The white marble fireplace surround is framed by a carved molding upheld by scroll-type consoles. Above the lintel, carved brackets support the mantel shelf, and between them is a carved swag in high relief. The eared overmantel panel is supported by another pair of consoles and topped by a baroque cresting. The entire composition is flanked by carved festoons. A well proportioned modillioned cornice completes the room paneling. Behind the banquet room is a large library and a small office.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input 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 1768

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Erected in 1768, the Jeremiah Lee Mansion is one of the finest and most elaborate Late Georgian houses in the United States. It is the one New England Georgian house built prior to the Revolution whose interiors are equal to the finest large Georgian houses of the same period in New York City and Philadelphia. The interior woodwork is intricately carved and of the finest quality. Some of the original wallpaper remains and careful restoration has preserved the magnificent decoration which characterized the house of the wealthy merchant and civic leader of 18th century New England.

History

Colonel Jeremiah Lee, a title stemming from a commission in the Massachusetts militia of the 1750's, was a wealthy merchant-shipowner of Marblehead who joined actively in the patriot activities prior to the Revolution. As a member of the Watchdog Committee of Inspection in 1770 he enforced compliance with the economic boycott against English goods and in 1775 was nominated to represent the town of Marblehead at the Continental Congress, an honor he declined. He then served on the Committee of Safety, helping to smuggle munitions and supplies into the colony to arm the militia. He attended the famous meeting at Concord on April 1775. Spending the night at Weatherby's Black Horse Tavern in what is now a part of Arlington, they fled the inn just before the British officers entered to search it. As a result of exposure, Lee contracted an illness of which he died within a month.

His house was erected in 1768 at a cost of 10,000 pounds, a very large sum for that period. After his death his wife Martha continued to live in the mansion. In the final settlement of the Lee estate, the mansion came into the possession of Chief Justice Samuel Sewall. When he sold the house in 1804 it became a bank, a purpose it served for over one hundred years. In 1909 the Lee Mansion passed to the Marblehead Historical Society.

During the restoration at this time fireplaces were opened up, rooms repainted in original colors and the imported wallpaper cleaned and repaired. It is now operated as a house museum.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Morrison, Hugh, Early American Architecture, New York, 1952.
 Northend, Mary H., Historic Houses of New England, Boston, 1914.
 Pierson, William H. Jr., American Buildings and Their Architects: The Colonial and Neo-Classical Styles, Garden City, New York, 1970.
 Chamberlain, Marcissa G., "The Neighbors of Jeremiah Lee and the Boundaries of His Property," Essex Institute Historical Collections, Vol. CV, April 1969.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,9	3,4,7,8,6,0	4,7,0,7,1,2,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The original boundaries of the Lee property were essentially as they are today except that a brick kitchen-coach house, now the Litchman-Orne printing shop was also included. Land to the west of this was part of the cobbled courtyard, and possibly a little to the west of Lee's garden extending toward the present Rockaway Street.

The boundary has been drawn to include all of the present property belonging to the house as well as the brick kitchen-coach house, as shown in red on the sketch map. The

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 Patricia Heintzelman, Architectural Historian, Landmark Review Project
 original form prepared by Charles Snell, 1967

ORGANIZATION	DATE
Historic Sites Survey	10/9/75
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
1100 L Street NW.	
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
Washington	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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST:

DATE 3/9/77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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On the opposite side of the main hall is the family dining room with painted, wood-paneled walls that are given architectural character by fluted Corinthian pilasters flanking the fireplace. Held in the fireplace's bolection molding are scenic tiles, signed by their English maker, John Sadler. On the other walls the panelling is confined to the dado. Behind this is the family kitchen.

The second floor contains a large parlor, drawing room, and two bedrooms-- all with elaborate woodwork and mantelpieces. The great drawing room, located to the right of the hall, is also still adorned with original wallpaper imported from England. Obtained from Jackson of London, the subjects are taken from Piranesi's views of Roman ruins and are framed by wide borders of rococo scrolls. The fireplace surround is white marble and the woodwork of the mantel is a simplified version of the banquet room without the garlands, carved swags, and consoles. The pilasters are Ionic, and the fireplace tiles, also made by Sadler are extremely rare example of the use of color. Additional bedrooms are located on the third floor with remnants of original Chinese wallpaper.

The Lee furnishings were scattered at the time of the sale but the Society has furnished the mansion with authentic period pieces and has successfully recreated the general appearance of the interiors.

When the house was repainted in the late 1960's it was necessary to replace some of the rusticated siding. No other major alterations have taken place.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Kimball, Fiske, Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and of the
Early Republic, New York, 1922.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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boundary is defined on the north by the rear or southern property lines of houses facing on Summer Street, on the east by the far or eastern boundary of the Litchman-Orne printing shop, on the south by the north curb of Washington Street and on the west by a line drawn perpendicular from the intersection of Rockaway and Washington Street until it intersects the rear of northern boundary line.

Sketch Map
Jeremiah Lee Mansion
Marblehead, Massachusetts

