

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only
received MAY 18 1987
date entered JUN 26 1987

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 Staples Cottage

and or common Staples Inn (preferred for listing)

2. Location

street & number 8 Portland Avenue not for publication

city, town Old Orchard Beach vicinity of

state Maine code 23 county York code 031

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"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | N/A in process | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name John and Mary Litwinetz

street & number 8 Portland Avenue

city, town Old Orchard Beach N/A vicinity of state Maine 04064

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. York County Registry of Deeds

street & number

city, town Alfred, state Maine

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" 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

Situated at the head of the main commercial street of Old Orchard Beach, the Staples Inn occupies a prominent location in the center of a continually developing resort community. The surrounding buildings date from the late nineteenth century to the present, and do not possess sufficient significance or integrity to merit inclusion in an historic district.

The Staples Inn consists of two attached two-and-one-half story wood frame buildings with clapboard siding and gable roofs. The main section, which forms the north half of the Inn, is an 18th century farmhouse which has been slightly modified with a late 19th century veranda and an early 20th century pedimented dormer. The central chimney is a smaller replacement of the original, and the six-over-six double-hung sash date from the early part of the last century.

The interior of this section is historically significant with its low ceiling, narrow staircase and mantelpiece which probably date from the 18th century. The window and door trim, and perhaps the wainscot, are of the period when the house was converted into a hotel. Similarly, the upper stories reflect mid-19th century use as a hotel.

Attached to the south side is a wing which dates from around the late 1870's (a date established by the existence of a c. 1880 photograph and a close inspection of the building's structure). This vernacular wing is an integral part of the history of the Inn, but contains no significant ornamentation on the interior or exterior. The enclosed porch and the two large pedimented dormers on the east side were probably added early in this century.

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/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates 1840 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The establishment of summer resorts along the Maine coast in the nineteenth century radically changed the development patterns of the state. Old Orchard Beach is among the earliest of these resorts, and the Staples Inn is the oldest known surviving structure in Maine to have taken in summer boarders on a regular basis. Its significance is further enhanced by the fact that it is the only surviving hostelry that is associated with the life of Ebenezer C. Staples (1808-1895), Old Orchard's pioneer resort hotel keeper.

Possibly built during the third quarter of the eighteenth century, the building that became known as Staples Inn was acquired by Elisha Staples in the 1790's.¹ His grandson Ebenezer C. Staples first opened the farmhouse in 1840 to "foreign visitors," many of whom were Canadians from the Montreal area. With the completion in 1842 of the Portsmouth and Portland Railroad and in 1852 the Grand Trunk from Montreal, tourists could easily be delivered to the Saco station within four miles of the beach. The increased tourist trade at Old Orchard Beach made it possible for Staples to enlarge the ancestral farmhouse until, by the mid 1870's, he could accommodate 300 guests at his Old Orchard House.²

On July 21, 1875, the Old Orchard House was, with the remarkable exception of the original eighteenth century building, completely destroyed by fire.³ Undaunted, Staples immediately built a new and much larger hotel, which he also named the Old Orchard House, on a site located to the southwest of the farmhouse. This building, capable of housing 600 persons, survived the disastrous fire of 1907 which destroyed much of Old Orchard, but was later pulled down.

The immediate post-fire history of the eighteenth century farmhouse is not positively known. By 1881, however, it had been remodeled and given the name Staples Cottage under the direction of Mrs. M.F. Libby.⁴ It was during this period of use that the present recessed two-story wing was built.⁵ The Staples Cottage continued to operate under this name until the early 1920's when a new proprietor changed its designation to the Staples Inn.⁶

Unlike the summer resorts for wealthier visitors such as Bar Harbor, Old Orchard was always frequented predominantly by middle class vacationers. Consequently, the area has continually undergone rapid development with most of the commercial and residential property rapidly changing hands. In this area of intensive development, few unaltered nineteenth century structures survive. That the Staples Inn remains standing with much of its original eighteenth century interior woodwork is quite extraordinary.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Locke, J. S., Old Orchard, Maine, Pen and Pencil Sketch. Portland, 1879.
Locke, J. S., Historical Sketches of Old Orchard. Portland, 1884.
Clayton, W. W., History of York County, Maine. Philadelphia, 1880.
Fairfield, Roy P., Sands, Spindles and Steeples. Portland, 1956.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property $\frac{1}{2}$

Quadrangle name Old Orchard Beach

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Assessor's Map 205, Block 1, Lot 23

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 Kirk F. Mohney/Roger G. Reed, Architectural Historians

organization Maine Historic Preservation Comm. date May, 1987

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 telephone (207) 289-2132

city or town Augusta state Maine 04333

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 *Eileen S. Feltz*

title S.H.P.O.

date 5/12/87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Carol Skuhl

date 6-26-87

Keeper of the National Register

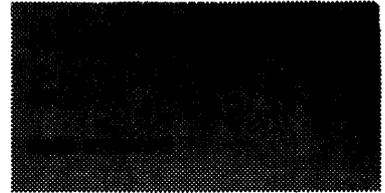
Attest: *Bob L. Swasey*

date 6-26-87

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Staples Inn

Item number 8

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END NOTES

¹J.S. Locke, Historical Sketches of Old Orchard and the Shores of Saco Bay, Biddeford Pool, Old Orchard Beach, Pine Point, Prout's Neck (Boston: C.H. Woodman and Co. 1884), p.45. Locke's description of the original Old Orchard House includes a reference to the farmhouse being "more than a century old." The history of settlement patterns in the area make it unlikely that the house dates before the 1740's or 1750's when the threat of organized Indian attack had subsided.

²W.W. Clayton, History of York County, Maine (Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1880), p.175.

³Documentary stereo views taken immediately after the fire clearly show the surviving two-story block which stands today. Stereo Card File: Old Orchard Beach, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta.

⁴A late nineteenth century bird's eye view of Old Orchard, made after the second Old Orchard House had been constructed, clearly shows that the wing as well as a large barn had been built onto the original farmhouse. Stereo Card File: Old Orchard Beach, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta.

⁵Edmund S. Hoyt, Maine Register, State Year-Book and Legislative Manual, For the Year 1881-82 (Portland: Hoyt, Fogg and Donham, 1881), p.650.

⁶Maine Register, State Year-Book and Legislative Manual (Portland: Portland Directory Company, 1922), p.1185. Comparison of the 1921 and 1922 editions of the Register clearly shows these changes.