

Black Mansion  
Ellsworth, Maine

HABS-MAINE-25

HABS  
ME

5-ELWO

1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

District of Maine

ADDENDUM  
FOLLOWS...

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Josiah T. Puby, District Officer  
537 Congress Street, Portland, Maine

"BLACK MANSION"  
(Woodlawn)  
Ellsworth, Hancock County, Maine

Owners

Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations.

Date of Erection

1800

Builder

Colonel John Black

Present Condition

The interior of the house remains in nearly the same condition as when the builder resided in it. The one story brick wings at the ends of the main house may be a later addition. The eaves balustrade is badly in need of repair.

Description

Two story rectangular red brick house with one story wings at ends. Main house has a low hip roof, four inside chimneys set near the ends of the house. Foundation of granite. The eaves balustrade and balustrade around porch roof are both attractive features of the exterior of the house. A one story porch supported by five columns extends across the front of the house. At the rear of the house is the old garden. Beyond that are recreation grounds and an orchard. An avenue of horse chestnut trees leads to the Black family tomb. There are old stables unchanged, which would accommodate sixteen horses.

The interior of the house is furnished with beautiful and unusual antiques which were the possessions of Col. Black and his wife.

The winding stairway is the outstanding feature of the interior. The design of the skirting is unusually fine. There are also some interesting mantels and fireplaces.

Other Existing Records

Pamphlet "Ellsworth, Maine, Home of the Black Mansion" published by the Ellsworth Chamber of Commerce.

Additional Data

Colonel John Black, the builder of this house, succeeded his father-in-law, General Cobb, who was previous to Col. Black, Bingham Land Agent. Many of the priceless antiques of the Black Mansion were originally the property of General Cobb.

Legend has it that in the early days of the Republic, Massachusetts was pressed for funds and negotiated with the purchase of State lands in what is now the State of Maine to Bingham of Philadelphia. Bingham was not himself able to take up the whole of this purchase and invited British Bankers to join him in a share of it. Colonel John Black, the builder of the house was sent over as the Agent of British interests in the purchase. He promptly married the daughter of General Cobb and probably bought out the English interests in the purchase.

*Eleanor Jannell*

Approved:

*Josiah Z. Tully*

June 11, 1937

*TW 7/28/37*

Addendum to  
Colonel John Black House (Woodlawn)  
West Main Street (State Route 172),  
west side, approximately 0.2 miles  
south of U.S. Route 1  
Ellsworth  
Hancock County  
Maine

HABS No. ME-25

HABS  
ME,  
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1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

STATE Maine	COUNTY Hancock	TOWN OR VICINITY Ellsworth
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) Colonel John Black House		HABS NO. ME-25
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE Woodlawn		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) West Main Street (State Route 172), west side, approximately 0.2 miles south of U.S. Route 1		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1824-1827	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Design derived from Asher Benjamin's <u>The American Builder's Companion</u>	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) Interesting example of the Federal Style. Of exceptional quality for the area. Listed on National Register of Historic Places. Interesting extant outbuilding are a Stables and Carriage House (ME-25-A) and another separate Carriage House (ME-25-B).		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Federal		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) House: Brick with wood trim      Stables and Carriage Houses: Frame		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Rectangular main block (4-bay front) with flanking offset one-story wings and rear ell; 2-story; low hipped roof. Stables & C. House: asymmetrical; "telescope plan. C. House: 2-bay 1-story, shed roof		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE House: Balustraded roof and front porch; triple hung windows on first floor.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) Double parlors; hall approached by lateral halls; elliptical staircase.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE As of 1973, condition good.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Myers, Denys Peter. <u>The Maine Catalog, Historic American Buildings Survey</u> . 1974. Listed on National Register of Historic Places.		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION	DATE 6/10/02	

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COLONEL JOHN BLACK HOUSE  
(WOODLAWN)  
West Main Street (State Route 172)  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013