

Larrabee-Carl House
Kennebunkport
York County
Maine

HABS ME-72

HABS
ME,
16-KENP,
4-

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

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

Kennebunk River Club
west side of Ocean Avenue,
approximately 1/4 mile north
of mouth of Kennebunk River
Kennebunkport
York County
Maine

HABS No. ME-125

HABS
ME,
16-KENP,
5-

PHOTOGRAPHS

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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KENNEBUNK RIVER CLUB

HABS No. ME-125

Location: Ocean Avenue, Kennebunkport, York County, Maine.

Present Status: Owned and occupied by the Kennebunk River Club, Inc., used for social functions and boat storage.

Chain of Title: A canoe club founded by John B. McMaster, Prosper L. Senat and Henry E. Woods in the early 1880's grew to a large "Lobster Club" by 1888. In 1889 the club decided to build the boat house, changed its name to the present one, and incorporated under the laws of Maine. They have owned the boat house ever since.

Date: Fall and winter of 1889. (Formal opening August 2, 1890)

Architect: Unknown. (as also builders, notes on original plans, etc.)

Alterations: In 1895-96 a reading room was added and lockers under the building improved. In 1908 the one story addition on the south was built for canoe storage. In 1924 a bulkhead was put in, giving 3-5 feet of water along the front at low water. In 1925 the roof above the canoe storage room was floored and fitted with awnings (and presumably railings) for a tea and luncheon balcony. (The door to the roof was probably added then. No one knows when the flooring, rails and awnings were taken out). In 1926 a kitchen was added and in 1927 the stone fireplace at the north end of the building. Also in 1927, the partitions which had formed a reading room at the north end of the main floor were removed, and window seats and bookcases were built in these around the fireplace. The bookcases were removed in 1965, and a new kitchen installed. Also in 1965 the land under the building was filled out to several feet beyond the building. The Club was formerly approached by a ramp to a boardwalk over the water and level with the porch; now the walk runs over land to steps up to the porch. The approach on the water side was changed at the same time. Now steps descend straight from the building to a railed wood deck, from which a ramp opposite the steps leads further to floating docks. Formerly it was more complex; two sets of stairs, one on either side of the stairway from

the club, led back under the building to the lockers behind the bulkhead. The deck rail was continuous opposite the stairs from the building, and interrupted on the sides by ramps, one on each side leading to the floating decks.

Old photographs show that the canoe shed covered two windows toward the end of the original wall and also a door at the outer (water) corner which apparently led to a narrow railed walk along the wall. Where the present door opens from the second story out onto the canoe shed roof, there was formerly a huge window at the stair landing, the width of the present door and two windows, and in height from the top of the present door to the floor (i.e. top and bottom panels have both been filled in and the doorway added). The second door out to this roof, toward the water from the central one, is also an addition; neither it nor its roof were originally present. Railings on the river facade were painted dark rather than, as now, white, and this significantly changed the effect of the openings, emphasizing the closed curved forms of the first floor openings and giving the appearance of gaps into the dark porch of the second floor.

Old Views:

Frontispiece in Constitution, Bylaws, and Members of The Kennebunk River Club, Boston, 1901, in possession of the Club. Photo in The Wave, vol. XVI, Midsummer 1962, in library of Old Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk, Maine.

Sources:

See above. Also, A Brief History of The Kennebunk River Club, n.d. (ca. 1927) in possession of the Club, and interviews with Thomas F. Rowland, president of the Club, and G. B. Agnew, Jr., a member.

Prepared by: Martha Kingsbury
Summer 1965

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This structure is an early example of recreational architecture typical of the New England coast. Because of its shingle style, typical of late 19th century, it is of special architectural value.

2. Condition of fabric: Excellent; with minor modifications, but in poor repair.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This structure is a large one story building with loft; grey shingles with white trim. The gable roof, perpendicular to the long dimension provides space for a sail loft. The building is 63'-0 x 98'-0, with the principal elevation on the Kennebunk river.
2. Foundations: Wood piling diagonally braced.
3. Wall construction: Wood frame covered with horizontal lapped courses of wood shingles weathered to a grey.
4. Panels, stoops, steps, etc.:
 - a. Street entrance porch and steps are reached by boardwalk from street level, across sand and shell fill. The entrance porch projects from the rest of building; three shingled arched openings with wood balustrade, with railing and deck on porch roof.
 - b. A porch extends across the river elevation at first floor level, providing access to the dock area. It is defined by flat-arched openings, shingled columns and a shingled balustrade railing.
 - c. Porch at second floor river elevation is large elliptical opening, with a projecting balcony with balustrade and shingle railing.
 - d. Roof deck over canoe house, access from stair landing.
5. Chimney: Stone rubble; chimney and cap.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways: Sliding door street entrance, two sliding doors river elevation first floor. Glazed and panel doors. Two sliding doors into canoe shed.
 - b. Windows: Variety of double hung 8/8, 9/9, and fixed sash. Bay windows have three windows each, twenty-six panes in top sash, fourteen small panes in lower sash around one large pane.
7. Roof: Gable roof long dimension of building; hip roofs over bay windows; gable roofs intersect main gable at chimney and at stair hall. Built up roofing on roofdecks; composition shingle

roofing elsewhere. Boxed cornices, some with simplified brackets. Jerkinhead at gable of river elevation.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floorplan: Rectangular with projecting entrance porch. Canoe room south elevation.
 - a. First floor: Consists of large social room with fireplace area set off with balustrade. Full porch extends across river elevation. Access to kitchen and canoe room. Stairs to second floor loft. An opening in the center provides visual access to sail loft and allows hoisting between floors.
 - b. Second floor: Sail loft with storage rooms and toilets. Unfinished, with hoist systems for drying sails.
2. Stairways: Modified flying stair, storage rooms under. No importance.
3. Flooring: Wood strip flooring.
4. Walls: Carsiding and/or unfinished.
5. Ceilings: Unfinished, exposed framing. Knee braces at several first floor columns. Exposed trusses in second floor space.
6. Doorways and doors: None of importance.
7. Trim: None of interest.
8. Hardware: None of interest.
9. Lighting: Modern electric.
10. Heating: None, except for fireplace.

- D. Site: This structure is located about 75' from Ocean Avenue, on pilings facing on the Kennebunk River, about one quarter mile from the mouth.

Prepared by: F. Blair Reeves
HABS Coastal Maine 1965
July 1965