

PH# 365386

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED FEB 16 1977
DATE ENTERED SEP 19 1977

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
* * * The River Meeting House
AND/OR COMMON
Sophia Bailey Memorial Chapel

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Rte 201
CITY, TOWN Vassalboro VICINITY OF 1st Hon David Emery
STATE Maine CODE 23 COUNTY Kennebec CODE 011

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" 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:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Oak Grove-Coburn School
STREET & NUMBER Rte 201
CITY, TOWN Vassalboro VICINITY OF Maine STATE

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Kennebec County Registry of Deeds
STREET & NUMBER State Street
CITY, TOWN Augusta STATE Maine

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
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		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The original meeting house of 1786 was a T-shaped wooden-framed structure with clapboard siding, gable roof, twelve-over-twelve windows and a single entrance door. The major rebuilding and renovation of 1895 completely changed the appearance of the meeting house, while retaining its basic form.

The renovated building of 1895 which stands on the site today is in the Shingle style. All doors and windows and their locations are completely different from those of the 18th century structure, and a tower, square in plan rises from the south-east interior corner of the "T".

The tower has two stories and a steeply-pitched hip roof. The second story has an arched aperture with bowed balcony on each of its four sides. This was intended to be a bell tower. Below the south balcony is a small rose window. The first story features a tall arched window on the east side and a double doorway on the south side. Over this doorway is a wooden arch which encloses a semi-circular ornamental window.

The other entrance to the building is via a portico on the south side of the west end. This portico features painted Doric columns to either side of the opening. The portico completely encloses the south-west interior corner of the original "T". A single doorway with a shallow arched window overhead provides access to the west end of the building.

The west facade has a single half-story window in the gable end and a central four-part window on the first floor. Two cellar casement windows are at ground level. The east end of the building is identical, except there are no cellar windows.

The original front of the building, the south end of the "T", features four ornate rectangular stained-glass windows on the first floor. These are symmetrically grouped, the inner two being larger than the outer two. Rising above the inner two is a large wooden closed ornamental arch with a semi-circular floral motif within. A wooden "keystone" tops this arch.

The roof and side of the building are shingled. The foundation and cellar walls are of brick.

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1786, 1895 BUILDER/ARCHITECT William H. Douglas

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sophia Bailey Memorial Chapel which now serves as a center of worship for the Oak Grove-Coburn preparatory school is of particular interest both as an unusual architectural adaptation and as a link with the Quaker heritage of the school and the community.

In the mid 18th century a large number of Quakers from Nantucket purchased wood lots along the lower Kennebec River as soon as the Kennebec Proprietors began issuing valid deeds. By the 1770's several families began to occupy the area, particularly in what later became the towns of Vassalboro and Dresden. The latter, in fact, was at one time known as "Nantucket Farm".

Many of the earlier residents of the Vassalboro area were attracted to the fold of the Society of Friends and by 1786 their numbers were large enough to construct a meeting house near the river for a group known as the River Meeting. (The enthusiasm was so great that by 1797 a second meeting house had been built in East Vassalboro for the East Pond Meeting).

The River Meeting House, the first religious building in Vassalboro, soon achieved sufficient importance that it became the site of the Quarterly Meeting for the region, dividing from the Falmouth Quarterly Meeting.

With typical dedication to intellectual stimulation, the Quaker community in Vassalboro determined in 1848 to organize a school for their children which would provide education of high quality through the upper grades. To this end the Oak Grove School opened its doors in 1850 to all children of the community. The first school building was erected adjacent to the River Meeting House.

Now a private non-denominational preparatory school, the institution has passed through a number of phases. From 1923 until very recently it served as a school for girls, but within the last five years it returned to its original coeducational status by merging with Coburn Classical Institute formerly located in Waterville. It should be noted in passing that the school includes among its alumni Rufus Jones (1863-1948), a lifelong professor of philosophy and ethics at Haverford College and leading exponent of American Quakerism during his lifetime.

By the 1890's the number of Friends in the area had greatly declined and the old Meeting House was sadly in need of repairs. In 1895 the building was deeded to the school to be used as a chapel. At the time of the transaction Mrs. Sophia D. Bailey, wife of Charles M. Bailey of Winthrop, offered to reconstruct the old building and render it suitable to the needs of the school. (See continuation sheet)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Raymond R. Manson & Elsia Holway Burleigh, First Seventy Years of Oak Grove Seminary, Wassalboro Historical Society, 1965

Oak Grove Catalogue, 1934

Alma Pierce Robbins, The History of Vassalboro, 1971

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/2 acre

UTM REFERENCES

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

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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	Robert L. Bradley, Architectural Historian Frank A. Beard, Historian		DATE	January 1977
ORGANIZATION	Maine Historic Preservation Commission		TELEPHONE	207-289-2133
STREET & NUMBER	31 Western Avenue		CITY OR TOWN	Augusta
CITY OR TOWN	Augusta		STATE	Maine

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. Hettfworth*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE January 17, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION *W. B. Sturtevant* DATE 8/19/77

ATTEST: *Charles A. ...* KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE 8-28-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

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Although the frame of the original structure was retained, the exterior fabric was radically altered and a tower and portico added. In addition, the building was raised several feet to create a cellar for a new heating plant. The interior, previously arranged in traditional Quaker fashion, was radically changed to include space for organ and choir and for a single pulpit. A combined Sunday school and lunch room was partitioned off and stained glass windows were installed. All work was carried out under the direction of William H. Douglass of Lisbon Falls who was in charge of the other school buildings and had been employed on many other important contracts by Mr. Bailey. The building was dedicated on December 8, 1895, as the Sophia Bailey Memorial Chapel, Mrs. Bailey having died during the reconstruction.

This Shingle Style adaptation of a simple 18th century Friends meeting house and its associations with Quaker dedication to educational excellence well deserves recognition as a building of unique qualities.