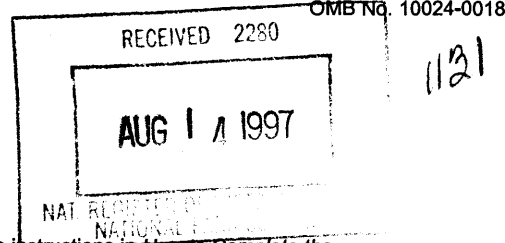


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name District #5 School House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

North Side of Billings Road, .15 Miles Northeast of Junction with

street & number Route 2 N/A not for publication

city or town Hermon N/A vicinity

state Maine code ME county Penobscot Code 019 zip code 04402

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination
 request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

9/11/97

District #5 School House
Name of Property

Penobscot, Maine
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)
 private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)
 building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)
Contributing Noncontributing

_____ 1 _____ buildings
_____ sites
_____ structures
_____ objects
_____ 1 _____ 0 _____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
_____ N/A _____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
_____ 0 _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
_____ Education/School _____

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
_____ Recreation and Culture/Museum _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
_____ Italianate _____
_____ Stick Style _____

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation _____ Stone _____
walls _____ Wood/Weatherboard _____

roof _____ Asphalt _____
other _____

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

DISTRICT #5 SCHOOL HOUSE

PENOBSCOT, MAINE

Section number 7 Page 2

The District #5 School House is a one-story, gable roofed frame building that is sheathed in clapboards. It is decorated with a combination of Italianate and Stick Style ornamentation. The building stands on a rubble stone foundation. It is located in the village of Hermon.

Facing southeast (for ease of reference it will be referred to as south), the school's symmetrically composed front elevation contains a pair of entrances featuring transoms surmounted by bracketed hoods with pediments in the center section. A wooden platform spans the area in front of these entries. The broad eaves are decorated with ornamental truss work at the gable end returns and in the gable peak. Paired brackets support the returns, and a flagpole is mounted to the face of the gable truss. A rectangular wooden sign located in the upper middle section of the facade bears the following: DISTRICT #5 SCHOOL, 1852-1950, Hermon Historical Society.

The two-bay east and west side elevations feature symmetrically placed six-over-six windows with hoods matching those on the facade, as well as a trio of paired brackets. There are two six-over-six windows on the rear elevation, as well as a small attic door and a gable roofed addition that contains the toilet. A brick flue stack rises through the roof inside the rear wall.

Inside, the school has narrow tongue and groove wainscot on each wall, wide board flooring, plaster over lath walls (except for the front partition which has been reconstructed and has sheetrock walls), metal ceiling, and blackboards on the two side walls. A four-panel door which leads into the toilet appears to be original, whereas the six-panel front doors are modern. These doors open into small vestibules, which were probably used in part for the storage of coats and boots.

After it ceased to be used as a school in 1952, the building was vacant until the early 1980s when it was converted into a facility for the town's rescue squad. At that time the front wall was modified by the insertion of a modern garage door in the southwest corner, and the interior partition was removed. The facade and interior were subsequently restored to their earlier appearance based on photographic documentation and the memory of townspeople who had attended school here.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Education

Period of Significance

c. 1880-1947

Significant Dates

c. 1880

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, designated landmark, recorded by survey, recorded by engineering.

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State agency, Federal agency, Local government, University, Other.

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetDISTRICT #5 SCHOOL HOUSEPENOBSCOT, MAINESection number 8 Page 2

The District #5 School House is a two-bay, gable roofed frame building that is noteworthy for its Italianate and Stick Style ornamentation. Although local tradition holds that the school was built in 1852, its stylistic features suggest that it dates to the late 1870s or early 1880s. It is the most intact former one-room school in the Town of Hermon. The school house is eligible for nomination to the Register under Criterion A for its association with local patterns of education, and Criterion C for its architectural significance.

Anglo settlement of Hermon is believed to have commenced about 1790 by several families, nearly all of whom came from New Hampshire (Coolidge & Mansfield, p.14). It was incorporated on June 13, 1814, at which there were some twenty families in residence. By mid century, the town's population had increased to 1,374 persons, and as reported in the *History and Description of New England* (1859): "Hermon is now nearly all cleared up, and has a productive soil The fields are well fenced, and yield luxuriant crops." The town's population rose to a recorded high of 1,489 persons in 1870 and then declined thereafter. In addition to agriculture, the community had several small scale industrial operations including a barrel factory, a paper box factory, and a cheese factory (Varney, p.278).

As early as 1852, the inhabitants of Hermon had divided the town into thirteen school districts, a figure that rose to fourteen in 1856 and then returned to its prior level in 1876. The subject building served District #5 which included Hermon village. In a deed executed on July 2, 1851, Elihu Hewes sold the lot on which the existing building stands to the town for \$25.00. It is presumed that a school house was built upon the site shortly thereafter. Confirmation of this action is probably contained in the 1852 edition of the *Maine School Report* in which it is noted that Hermon had ten school houses, two of which had been constructed in the past year at a cost of \$500.00. Unfortunately, the *Report* does not indicate the district in which the schools were built. In any event, a school was standing here by 1875 when it is shown on the *Atlas Map of Penobscot County*. Although it is likely that a school house was built on the present site after its purchase in 1851, the architectural characteristics -- including the roof pitch and the decorative detailing over the doors and windows as well as the gable peak -- of the existing building suggest that it is a replacement school that dates to the late 1870s or early 1880s rather than the mid nineteenth century. It is not implausible that the town replaced a 25-30 year old school with a new facility, particularly when one considers that the population was at its peak in this period. Furthermore, the issues of the *Maine School Report* for the years between 1855 and 1879 record the fact that eight new school buildings were erected in Hermon in this twenty-four year period, a figure that underscores the relatively rapid replacement rate of these properties. During the 1870s, four schools were built including one in 1871, two in 1872, and one in 1879. It is entirely possible that the latter example, which was constructed at a cost of \$600.00, is the District #5 School House.

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

DISTRICT #5 SCHOOL HOUSE

PENOBSCOT, MAINE

Section number 8 Page 3

The school house in District #5 was in use until 1953. It remained vacant until the early 1980s when it was adapted for use as by the local rescue squad, a change that resulted in the alteration of the front elevation. However, in 1988 restoration of the school was begun by the Hermon Historical Society which documented the original appearance with a 1914 photograph and the recollections of members of the community who had attended school there. Of the other six former school houses that existed in Hermon in 1953 when the schools were consolidated, 3 have been converted to dwellings, 1 is a storage shed, 1 is a garage, and 1 has been moved to the neighboring Town of Levant where it was converted to a garage.

The one-room school house was a familiar object in the rural landscape of nineteenth and early twentieth century Maine. This was the result of a traditional educational system in which towns subdivided themselves into school districts, each of which contained a schoolhouse to serve its particular locale. Although the district school system became a target for nineteenth century school reformers, its wide scale use resulted in the erection of a vast number and variety of buildings; a figure which at the turn-of-the-century totaled more than 4,000. Twentieth century school consolidation efforts have taken a dramatic toll on the number of these buildings which survive. In 1960, for example, it was reported that only 226 schools in Maine were being held in one-room buildings, a figure which has since dropped to a mere handful (*Report of the State Board of Education*).

Typically constructed of wood with gable roofs, Maine's one-room school buildings were usually given only modest architectural adornments with the result that the school house of 1900 may have looked very much like one that is several decades older. In this regard, the District #5 School House in Hermon is unusual with its conspicuous Italianate and Stick Style ornamentation. There appears to have been a common formula for the design of school houses which embodied widely disseminated ideas about minimum space requirements, proper ventilation and heating, site orientation, and window placement. As early as the mid nineteenth century reformers were suggesting that two entrances were desirable as a way to prevent "much confusion and rudeness" and to promote "orderly habits" (1847 *Board of Education Report*). The provision of proper lighting was also central to the issues of schoolhouse design, and by the early twentieth century a common solution to this problem was to incorporate a bank of windows along one side elevation. This modification was made to many earlier buildings, but was not carried out on the District #5 School House in Hermon.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

DISTRICT #5 SCHOOL HOUSE

PENOBSCOT, MAINE

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Coolidge, A.J., and Mansfield, J.B. *A History and Description of New England*. Vol. I.
Boston: Austin J. Coolidge. 1859.

Maine School Report. Augusta, Maine. 1852-1880.

Varney, George J. *A Gazetteer of the State of Maine*. Boston: B.B. Russell. 1881.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

DISTRICT #5 SCHOOL HOUSE

PENOBSCOT, MAINE

Section number 10 Page 2

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies the Town of Hermon Tax Map 13, Lot 22A.

Boundary Justification

The boundary embraces the entire village lot historically associated with the District #5 School House.