

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



OK 351

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 Boynton High School (Former)

other names/site number Eastport Town Hall

2. Location

street & number 78 High Street N/A not for publication

city or town Eastport N/A vicinity

state Maine code ME county Washington code 029 zip code 04631

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.)

James J. Thompson SHPO 2/25/02
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 W. Beall 4/11/02

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	0	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

NONE

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION / School

SOCIAL / Meeting Hall

COMMERCE / TRADE / Business

COMMERCE / TRADE / Professional

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT / Town Hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN / Italianate

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Weatherboard

roof Asphalt Shingles

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

BOYNTON HIGH SCHOOL (FORMER)

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

Section number 7 Page 2

DESCRIPTION

The former Boynton School is a two-and-one-half story wood framed, Italianate structure in the center of Eastport Maine. Built in 1846 from designs by noted Boston architect Gridley J.F. Bryant, the building has undergone incremental changes over the years but is still a commanding structure. Located on an unlandscaped urban lot at the corner of Boynton and High Streets, the long axis of the rectangular structure runs east to west along the south side of Boynton Street. Currently the main door is located on the south facade across from a small parking lot. However, as originally designed, the building featured a cupola on the east end of the building, which resembled an entrance tower and emphasized the east facade.

The former Boynton School is sided with painted clapboards, sits atop a brick foundation and is roofed with asphalt shingles. Wooden quoins are located on the first story on the northeast and southeast corners; the remaining corner boards are plain. A wooden piece of horizontal trim is used as a belt course, linking the top of the quoins between the first and second floors. Decorative brackets are located below the wide soffit and the rake, supporting both the roof and the pronounced cornice returns on each end. A chimney is positioned just to the north of the ridge on the west end of the roof. Centered under the gable peak of the east facade is a square, slightly protruding box, supported from below by additional brackets. When the cupola was attached, this ornamental box visually integrated the cupola each the window has been covered over with plywood, leaving only the bottom eight-over-eight sash. With the exception of a single two-over-two window on the east elevation, all of the remaining windows on the second floor are eight-over-eight sash. The first floor windows are twelve-over-eight sash, however those on the south side are recent replacements. The north and south facades each contain five windows evenly spaced across the length of the second floor with four windows positioned directly below. Under the fifth window on each side, the most easterly portal was originally a door; however the door was removed on the north wall and covered over. The remaining door on the southeast side has been replaced but the original trim and wooden ornaments remain. The west end of the building features two windows on the second floor (middle and south); a new emergency door is located on the first floor, and a covered-over window near the peak are located on the middle of the wall.

The interior of the building originally contained a large classroom on each floor, with a staircase running along the south wall. Starting with the first major remodeling in 1875 the interior of both the first and second floors have been continuously updated to meet the needs of the inhabitants.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

BOYNTON HIGH SCHOOL (FORMER)

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

Section number 7 Page 3

Currently the hardwood floors on the first floor are covered with carpet and the room has been divided into offices, but the original 12' ceilings remain in tact. On the second floor a high, barrel-vaulted ceiling covers the large meeting room, as well as ancillary spaces at its eastern and western ends. One oversized, two-panel vertical door with heavy Greek Revival trim opens to the men's bathroom, and another to the stair case all at the east end of the room. Adjacent to the men's room, two smaller, four-panel doors lead to a women's rest room and a storage room. Although the current position of these rooms reflects remodeling after the water lines were installed in 1886, the doors and trim were reused from elsewhere in the building and date to earlier building episodes. Additional evidence for the later construction of these interior walls is seen in the effect the walls had on a window on each of the north and south walls. On the north wall the doorway to the staircase bisected the window, and it was subsequently covered over. On the east wall, the storage room wall interrupts the eastern edge of the trim. The windows feature the same decorative trim as the over size doors; low wainscoting surrounds the plaster walls and the floor is painted hardwood. At the western end of the room a temporary office has been constructed of chipboard, and the north west window was removed, replaced with an emergency exit, which has also subsequently been boarded up. Two-over-two windows overlooking the staircase were added at the east end of each restroom to provide light.

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.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- ARCHITECTURE
- EDUCATION
- ART
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

- 1846 - 1917
- 1927 - 1937
- _____

Significant Dates

- 1846
- 1875, c. 1888
- 1921

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

BRYANT, GRIDLEY JAMES FOX, Architect

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other

Name of repository: _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

BOYNTON HIGH SCHOOL (FORMER)

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

Section number 8 Page 3

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former Boynton high School in Eastport Maine was built in 1846 to replace the Old South School House, which had burned. Boynton High School was designed by Gridley J. F. Bryant, "the great Boston mercantile architect who presided over the largest architectural office in New England at the height of his career in the middle of the nineteenth century." (*MacKay, p. 1*). This was Bryant's first commission in Maine, and the only one of three he executed in the town of Eastport that still survives. The two-and-a-half story Italianate schoolhouse is located in the heart of Eastport, several blocks to the west of the waterfront area that was almost entirely destroyed by fire in 1886. Although its cupola has been removed, windows replaced and the first floor renovated, the structure is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under criteria C as an early design by Gridley J. F. Bryant, and under criteria A for its association with George Pearce Ennis and the Grand Central Art School of New York City. In addition, the Boynton School served the community as a high school during the nineteenth-century, and as the location of commercial and town business and community activities throughout its history.

Gridley J. F. Bryant of Boston was a student of Alexander Parris and Loammi Baldwin in the 1830s, and over the next fifty years he became renowned for his expertise in designing public structures. He worked almost exclusively in the Italianate style, and made frequent use of central projecting pavilions, quoins, hooded window ornaments and towers or cupolas. Throughout his career Bryant was responsible for twenty-six commissions in Maine, at least seven of which were educational facilities. Four of these structures are extant: the Maine State Reform School (NR 85000730), Fryeburg Academy (Maine Street Historic District, Fryeburg, NR 91000324), Hawthorn Hall, Bates College (NR 70000053) and Parker Hall at Bates College. Each of these are large masonry structures in a campus setting, however the Fryeburg Academy features a three-bay rectilinear mass topped with a cupola, which is similar in intent to the Boynton High School. Of Bryant's schools in Maine that no longer exist, the Abbot Family School in Farmington was constructed of wood and was similar in scale to the Boynton High School. The *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Maine* suggests that "Bryant's expertise in scholastic design had been established through a series of Boston area school commissions in the 1840s. While it is possible that his reputation had reached the easternmost town in Maine, it is more likely that it was Bryant's friendship with Eastport resident James P. Wheeler, the chairman of the building committee that led to the selection of his design. The following passage by historian Wayne Wilcox describes Bryant's earliest activities in Maine.

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

BOYNTON HIGH SCHOOL (FORMER)

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

Section number 8 Page 3

Within the first ten years of his career a young Gridley Bryant was hired to do his first Maine commissioned work in Eastport, the Boynton high School. The school was designed in the Italianate style and was a two story wooden clapboard sided structure with a cupola. On May 28, 1847 the new Boynton High School was dedicated with much celebration. Bryant's second Maine commission was to design the new U.S. Custom House, also in Eastport, which opened in 1850. This was an Italianate style brick building that was located where the present day post office now stands. The Custom House was destroyed in the great 1886 fire which burned most of the Eastport business district.

In 1854 Bryant was hired by the congregation of the Unitarian Church (First Congregational) located on Shackford street in Eastport. The congregation wanted a complete remake of the interior and exterior of the church. The remodeling was so extensive that all that was left of the original building was the frame and the building proportions. The church was redesigned in the Italianate style and outside of the building consisted of bracketed eaves with pediment rustic corners. (*Wilcox, 2001*)

The church burned in 1946.

During the decade the school was built the population of Eastport grew rapidly, from 2876 residents in 1840 to 4125 in 1850. In response to the expanding number of students the decision was made to separate children by grade level. Thus, between 1846 and 1917 the Boynton High School served the upper level students of Eastport. It originally contained one large room on each floor, doors on the north and south exterior walls, and a squat square cupola with bracketed eaves and four rounded windows with hood ornaments. The school was remodeled first in 1875, when the staircase was repositioned and the first floor divided into three separate classrooms, and again after waterlines were laid in the town in the late 1880s. (*Eastport Sentinel, 1875*). After the new high school opened in 1917 the Boynton High School was vacant for several years, then briefly used as a playground, before it was leased from the town by the White Cloud Laundry between 1921 and 1926. At this time the classrooms on the first floor were gutted and the interior features, including doors and radiators were removed and sold.

In 1927 the once again vacant Boynton High School caught the eye of George Pearse Ennis of New York City, and a summer resident of Eastport. Over the next ten years the structure was the summer home of the New York Summer Art School, part of the Grand Central Art School of Manhattan. The following advertisement compared Eastport Maine to Brittany as a destination for artists looking for inspiration.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

BOYNTON HIGH SCHOOL (FORMER)

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

Section number 8 Page 4

ART CLASSES IN MAINE CITY

Eastport's Natural Beauty Makes It Choice of Grand Central School. In addition to a Summer session in this city, the Grand Central School of Art will open Summer classes on July 2 at Eastport, Me., to be conducted by George Pearse Ennis, a former pupil of William M. Chase. Eastport has been selected for the Summer school because of its unspoiled landmarks, according to Edmund Graecen, President of the school, who calls the Maine resort the "Brittany of America." "Brittany has nothing to offer more interesting than the figures of the lobstermen and the boats and fishers of the sardine fleet," Mr. Graecen declared. "There is nothing in the Old World more fascinating than the town itself, with its rambling streets, its old homes, its quaint shacks and the drama of its waterfront."
(New York Times, 1928)

After Ennis died in 1937, the school was turned over to the Eastport School board. For the next eight years the building was used for school extension groups, such as nursery school and boy scouts, and as a community meeting hall. After being leased by the V.F.W. between 1946 and 1951, the former Boynton High School became home to the new high school's Industrial Arts program. In 1974 this program was relocated and the structure was remodeled for use as the city Hall, in which capacity it serves today.

At the end of his life, in 1894, Gridley J. F. Bryant mused about the disappointment he felt at knowing that many of his buildings had already been demolished. "What is fame in architecture these latter days? (T)o witness the demolition or radical remodeling of an architect's work, with less than a third of a century of real usefulness about it?" *(Bailey, p. 329)*. While the former Boynton High School has lost some of its luster in the last 164 years, it has not yet outlived its usefulness. Indeed, the sturdy structure with the large meeting room on the second floor has been reborn repeatedly as needed to serve the citizens of Eastport. Currently the structure is receiving an exterior facelift which promises to highlight the details and form that Bryant used to evoke the timeless strength inherent in classic Italian architecture.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

BOYNTON HIGH SCHOOL (FORMER)

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

Section number 9 Page 2

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Alterations in the Boynton School House." *Eastport Sentinel*. (Eastport, Maine: April 14, 1875), p. 2.

"Art Classes in Maine City." *New York Times*. (New York: July 1, 1928), Section III, p.2, c.6.

Bailey, Henry Turner. "An Architect of the Old School", *New England Magazine*, Vol., 25, No., 3, 1901.

Kilby, William Henry. *Eastport and Passamaquoddy : a collection of historical and biographical sketches*. (Eastport, Maine: E.E. Shead & Co.), 1888.

MacKay, Robert B. "Gridley J. F. Bryant" in *A Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Maine*, Vol. III, Number 9, (Augusta, Maine: Maine Historic Preservation Commission), 1986.

Tides Institute, "Grand Central School of Art."

<http://www.tidesinstitute.org/tides/art/grandcentralartschool.html>. (Eastport, Maine), 2001.

Wilcox, Wayne H. M. "Gridley J. F. Bryant Noted 19th Century Boston Architect Designed Eastport Buildings". (Eastport, Maine: manuscript on file at Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine), 2001.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .30

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 19 658630 4974175
Zone Easting Northing

3 19 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 19 _____

4 19 _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title CHRISTI A. MITCHELL, ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

organization MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION date 15 January 2002

street & number 55 CAPITOL STREET, STATION 65 telephone (207) 287-2132

city or town AUGUSTA state ME zip code 04333-0065

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

BOYNTON HIGH SCHOOL (FORMER)

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

Section number 10 Page 2

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is represented on the Town of Eastport Tax map I-7, Block B2, Lot 29.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property contains all the property historically associated with the Boynton School lot.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

BOYNTON HIGH SCHOOL (FORMER)

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

Section number **Page**

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1 of 4

Wayne H. M. Wilcox

December 2001

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

North and east exterior elevations; looking southwest.

Photograph 2 of 4

Wayne H. M. Wilcox

December 2001

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

East elevation; looking west.

Photograph 3 of 4

Wayne H. M. Wilcox

December 2001

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Second floor interior meeting hall; looking east.

Photograph 4 of 4

Wayne H. M. Wilcox

December 2001

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Second floor interior meeting hall; looking west.