

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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

Merrill Hall ✓

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Maine and Academy Streets

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Farmington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second

STATE

Maine

— VICINITY OF
CODE

023

COUNTY

Franklin

CODE

007

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

University of Maine at Farmington

STREET & NUMBER

86 Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Farmington,

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Maine 04938

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Franklin County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Farmington,

STATE

Maine

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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

Merrill Hall in Farmington, Maine is a large and ornate example of Romanesque Revival institutional architecture. Designed by the Lewiston firm of Coombs, Gibbs, and Wilkerson and constructed in 1898, the 2½-story building is of brick construction with hipped roof and wood and granite trim.

The facade, which faces west, contains a central entrance covered by a one-story arched portico supported by Romanesque columns and a set of three semi-circular arches. Access to this portico is via a long set of granite steps, as the first-floor is above ground level, the basement level being entirely faced in granite. Above the entrance is a two-part window, the upper arched part separated from the lower by several courses of brick. In the half-story is a hipped dormer containing four 6/1 windows. The facade is dominated by corner towers, the one to the right being circular with a conical roof and 9/9 windows, the one to the left being square in plan with a wooden belfry. The latter tower is the most prominent element in the building, and is decorated with diamond-pattern ornamental brick above the second story. There is a Palladian window (a minor Colonial Revival element) below the belfry on the two exposed sides of the tower.

The sides of the building are four bays long with fenestration similar to that of the central facade bay. A semi-circular bay projects from the north-east corner of the building. This contains tall, arched windows at the second-story level.

Attached to the rear of the building and facing north is a two-and-one-half story gable roofed brick structure seven bays wide and three deep. There is a central entrance with steps and an arched portico. Above the entrance in the half story is a gable with a single 4/4 window. Fenestration is 6/6 throughout the rest of the building. This structure was originally erected in 1888 as an ell to old Normal School building of 1864, demolished in 1897.

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 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 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

1888, 1898

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

George M. Coombs

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Western State Normal School first opened its doors to students in 1864 in a new building completed the same year and attached to a smaller wood frame structure which had been Farmington Academy. After surviving a financial crisis in 1883, the Farmington State Normal School as it was now called developed a serious space problem owing to rapidly increasing enrollment. In 1888 the old wooden Academy building was removed and in its place was erected a 2½ story brick ell larger than the 1864 main building.

Overcrowding continued as a recurrent difficulty and in 1898 the state legislature appropriated \$20,000.00 to repair and enlarge the older part of the Normal School building. However, it was soon discovered that this 1864 structure was in such bad condition as to warrant no further expenditures upon it. Consequently in 1897 it was torn down and the following year the present Merrill Hall was completed on its site with the 1888 ell attached to its rear.

Chief architect for this striking and highly decorative Romanesque Revival building was George M. Coombs of Coombs, Gibbs, and Wilkerson, a Lewiston architectural firm. Coombs was an architect of distinction in Maine whose later commissions included the Lewiston Public Library of 1902-03 (N.R. 1/31/78) and the 1908 Kora Temple (N.R. 9/11/75) also in Lewiston.

Merrill Hall now serves as the administration building for the University of Maine at Farmington which superseded Farmington State Normal School in 1971.

Architecturally Merrill Hall ranks among the very finest of late 19th century academic buildings in Maine.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mallett, Richard P., University of Maine at Farmington: A Study in Educational Change, 1864-1974. Freeport, 1974.

Purington, George C. History of the State Normal School, Farmington, Maine. Farmington, 1889.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Farmington

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 408890 4946615
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Map 17, Lot 12

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

Frank A. Beard, Historian/Robert L. Bradley, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

DATE

October, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

242 State Street

TELEPHONE

207/289-2133

CITY OR TOWN

Augusta,

STATE

Maine 04333

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. Shellfworth

TITLE

S.H.P.O.

DATE

9/11/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Sally G. Oldham

DATE

1/23/80

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Anna M. Day

DATE

1/15/80

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION