

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Central Parish Church

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 146 Main Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Yarmouth

N/A vicinity

state Maine code ME county Cumberland code 005 zip code 04096

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Gene L. Fuller, S.H.P.O.
Signature of certifying official
Maine Historic Preservation Commission

5/16/88
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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:)

Delores Byers

Entered in the
National Register

6-23-88

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religious/Religious Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religious/Religious Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brickwalls Wood/Weatherboard

roof Asphaltother Flush Sheathing on Tower

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Conspicuous among its residential and small scale commercial neighbors that occupy both sides of Main Street, the Central Parish Church is an impressive Italianate style frame edifice. Supported by a tall brick basement the rectangular building, which is covered in weatherboards and flush sheathing, is dominated by a tall three-stage tower that projects from the facade. its decorative exterior features clearly exhibit the building's stylistic relationship.

The front (south) elevation of the church is three bays in width. Its center bay is comprised of the base of the tower in which a two-leaf door and round arched, paneled fanlight is surmounted by a pair of round arched windows framed by an Italiante hood molding. Flush boards cover the front of this tower stage whereas the sides are covered in weatherboards and rusticated wooden blocks are utilized below the water table. The six-over-six windows with four-pane round arched upper panels have ornate glazing and multi-color painted edges. Paneled corner pilasters that rest on tall plinths frame the windows and door and rise to a broad segmentally arched cornice with end returns. This cornice, which visually separates the tower base from the middle stage, is detailed with brackets and a dentil string. Broad, flat pilasters extend through the second stage of the tower to the simple cornice and pent roof located below the belfry. The latter has eight sides, four of which contain recessed round arched openings with keystones and balustrades, and four narrower paneled sides that connect the openings. The bell continues to be used. An octagonal spire crowns the tower.

Flanking the tower base on the recessed wall of the main block are long two-part windows framed by moldings similar to those found on the tower windows. The lower component is a fixed nine-pane window that is separated from its larger double-hung companion by a wide panel. These upper windows are identical to those on the tower although a few of the panes have been lost and their replacements do not sustain the original decorative design. The raking cornice which frames the gable end is similar in detail to the one previously described on the tower. A pair of segmentally arched openings punctuate the basement whose corners feature brick quoins.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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The east and west side elevations each contain a trio of large symmetrically placed double-hung windows with round arched upper sash. Bordered by typical Italianate moldings with keystones, the windows have a twelve-over-twelve configuration. The cornice carries along both sides and meets paneled pilasters at each corner. Three six-over-six windows with granite sills and lintels and a single six-panel door occupy the basement wall on the west side. There are no openings on the east side although there is a brick flue stack and a twentieth century one-story frame wing projecting from the northeast corner. The rear elevation features a five sided apse with a partially obscured round arched window in its east side, a pair of flanking basement windows, a six-over-six window in the gable peak and a flue stack rising through the fully detailed cornice.

The church's expansive interior is delineated into three spaces: a vestibule which extends across the rear and contains stairs that lead to the gallery; the nave whose gently curving pews are reached by a wide center aisle and narrower side aisles; and a full width raised sanctuary bordered by paneled framing and extending into the apse. Upon entering the tower, stairs lead forward into a landing behind the nave and another provides access to the basement. Two enclosed stairs begin on the landing, one of which leads to the gallery and the other into the tower. The plaster over lath walls in the entire vestibule are scored to imitate rectangular stone blocks. The nave is detailed with broad window and door surrounds that are typical of the period and an ornate central ceiling medallion of foliate motifs and four figured masks. The ceiling itself consists of modern square block acoustic tiles. A long narrow paneled parapet wall extends in front of the gallery. The basement has been remodeled with modern materials.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1859-60

Significant Dates
1859-60

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Holt, Thomas

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Yarmouth's Central Parish Church is a handsome Italianate style frame building erected in 1859-60. Designed by Thomas Holt, the edifice is one of four known church commissions in Maine by the architect and one of the two most intact. Its nomination to the National Register is made under criterion C and criteria consideration A as a religious property whose significance derives from its architectural merit.

The Central Parish Church was organized in 1859 as a Congregational society by disaffected members of the First Universalist Church./1 On June 5th of the following year they dedicated their new building. According to local historians the Church flourished until the late 1870s or early 1880s, but a subsequent decline was followed in 1885 by a wholesale loss of members to the mother Church. As a result of this action the two congregations agreed to consolidate choosing to utilize the building and name of the Central Parish Church. In 1920 the congregation became known as the First Universalist Church and in 1962 they merged with the Unitarians, but retained the Universalist name.

Thomas Holt (1835-1889) was born in Bethel, Maine, and educated at the local Gould Academy./2 The son of a carpenter, Holt appears to have first established a firm with contractors Moses C. Foster and Cyrus Buck. By 1857, however, he had entered into private practice and two years later was offering his architectural services through the Bethel Courier. In addition to his skills as an architect, Holt had also acquired sufficient engineering expertise that enabled him to design both wooden bridges as well as steel truss bridges for the Maine Central Railroad. In fact the latter part of his career was largely spent as an engineer for the Maine Central./3

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Garness, George W. Profiles of Yarmouth Heritage. Yarmouth, Maine: Yarmouth Historical Society, 1967.

Holt, Thomas, Architect file, Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property Less than 1

UTM References

A

1	9
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4	0	4	8	4	0
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4	8	5	0	0	3	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property of less than one acre occupies the Town of Yarmouth tax map 32, lot 115.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary embraces the entire lot historically associated with the Central Parish Church building.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohney, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date April, 1988

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 telephone 207/289-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine zip code 04333

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The first known of Holt's commissions date to 1859. After completing a residence for Benjamin Freeman in Bethel, he next designed three churches, all of which are strikingly similar in form and detail. The first of these built was the Universalist Chapel in Paris Hill, a towered Italianate building featuring tall round arched windows and a broken pediment on the projecting base of the towers that framed the arched entrance. In his two subsequent church designs as well as in an 1862 design for the Congregational Church in Skowhegan, Holt employed a virtually identical configuration to that at Paris Hill, although the tower pediment varied between a pitched form and a segmental arch. Of his four known church commissions, the one in Paris Hill was destroyed and Skowhegan's—which is most like the Central Parish Church—has been covered in aluminum siding. The Congregational Church of 1860 in North Waterford also survives, although it is the least similar to the other members of the group. In this context, therefore, the Central Parish Church assumes an important role as a visible and little altered reminder of Holt's work, examples of which are today rare in Maine.

- /1. George W. Garness, Profiles of Yarmouth Heritage (Yarmouth: Yarmouth Historical Society, 1967), pp. 30-31.
- /2. Information about Holt's personal and professional background can be found in the Thomas Holt architect file, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, hereinafter referred to as Thomas Holt architect file.
- /3. Holt's work for the Maine Central included at least one bridge, two railroad stations and its principal office building in Portland. Only the altered office survives. Thomas Holt architect file.