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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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Francestown Town Hall and Academy and Town Common Historic District

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

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



### 2. Location

Street & number: 2 New Boston Road

City or town: Francestown State: NH County: Hillsborough

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local  
Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

<u>Elysebeth H. Murphy</u>	<u>2/8/16</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Director and SHPO, NH Division of Historical Resources</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

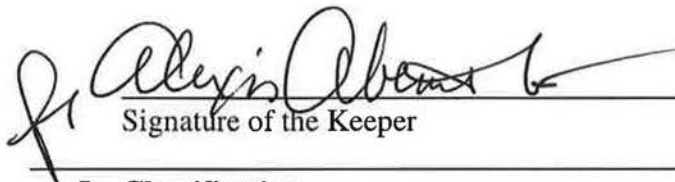
entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

  
Signature of the Keeper

  
Date of Action

#### 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

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Site

Structure

Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>Three</u>	<u>One</u>	buildings
<u>One</u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>Three</u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>Seven</u>	<u>One</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT—City Hall

EDUCATION—School

COMMERCE-TRADE

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE—Auditorium

RECREATION AND CULTURE—Museum

RECREATION AND CULTURE—Monument/Marker

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY—Greek Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD—Weatherboard; STONE—Granite

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Francestown Town Hall and Academy and Town Common Historic District includes a town common created in 1772; a town hall and former academy building (1846); an adjacent framed horse shed; a nearby framed domestic structure, the Butterfield Block or “The Beehive,” which was built as a dormitory for academy students; a granite animal watering trough; a platform or hay scale; and a boulder near the town hall/academy building bearing a bronze tablet (1933) that commemorates a prominent principal of the academy. Also within the district is a noncontributing structure, a museum building (2012) adapted from a barn. The district is located at the southern end of the compact village of Francestown, New Hampshire. It embraces the intersection of the main street of the village (which historically was a section of the Second New Hampshire Turnpike, incorporated in 1799), and New Hampshire Route 136, which enters the village from New Boston on the east and curves in front of the academy building to exit Francestown toward Greenfield to the west. These roads pass through an open town green or common. The academy building stands at the southern end of the common, facing a church (NR listed) and cemetery at the northern end, with the “Beehive” dormitory and horse shed nearby to the west. The Francestown Town Hall District retains integrity of design, location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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## Narrative Description

### Contributing Site: Francestown Town Common

Francestown Common is the symbolic center of Francestown Village, lying at and including the intersection of several roads that converge on the southern end of the village and formerly embracing the town hall, the remodeled meeting house, the earliest burying ground in town, as well as the more recent public watering trough and public hay scales. The common was originally donated in 1772 as a gift of four acres “for the use and benefit of the inhabitants” of Francestown and as a site upon which “to build a meeting House [and] for a burying yard and training field.”<sup>1</sup> Today, the common is diminished in area from the original four acres and is generally defined as the area of open land south of (but not including) the meeting house and its adjacent cemetery, and north of (and beside) the Town Hall and Academy building. The meeting house has been listed separately in the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>2</sup>

As defined here, the common includes the triangular town-owned tax parcel on which the Town Hall and Academy building and the horse sheds stand, together with a small triangular parcel extending from the northern end of the Town Hall parcel but not given a tax parcel number.<sup>3</sup> The smaller triangle includes the town hay scales and the town’s granite watering trough.

The common measures about 290 feet in breadth at the property line running just south of the Town Hall and Academy building, which defines the base of the larger triangular portion of the town-owned tract. The vertical axis of the larger triangle, running north and south, is about 240 feet in length to the paved highway intersection. The smaller, northern triangle with the hay scales and watering trough measures about 50 feet at its east-west base and about 100 feet along its north-south axis.

The smaller northern parcel is covered with grass. The eastern half of the larger southern parcel is likewise covered with grass. The western half, defined by a walkway extending north from the door of the Town Hall, is treated as a gravel-surfaced parking area that extends westerly to the horse sheds. A paved driveway extends westerly from the western side of the Town Hall past the north side of the “Beehive,” and connects to Greenfield Road or N. H. Route 136.

The common is level across its full extent except at its extreme western edge, behind the horse sheds, where the land drops away to the edge of Greenfield Road, which is at a lower elevation than the plateau that forms the common.

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<sup>1</sup> Cochrane, *History of Francestown*, pp. 31-33, 697.

<sup>2</sup> Deirdre Brotherson, National Register nomination, “Francestown Meetinghouse” (NRIS Reference Number: 99000667), 1999.

<sup>3</sup>The designation of the major parcel in 2015 is Tax Map 13, Parcel 41. There is no separate tax map parcel designation for the parcel that includes the hay scales and the watering trough.

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### **Contributing Object: Commemorative Boulder and Bronze Tablet:**

The Francestown town common includes items of public utility and features of aesthetic or symbolic value. The principal items of public utility are the town hay scales and a public watering trough, both of which are described separately. The principal feature of symbolic significance is a granite boulder bearing a bronze tablet, placed in the lawn to the northeast of the Town Hall and Academy building. The tablet reads:

HERVEY S. COWELL, A.M., PD.D. [Master of Arts, Doctor of Pedagogy]  
PRINCIPAL  
FRANCESTOWN ACADEMY  
1876 — 1883  
DEDICATED BY HIS PUPILS  
IN LOVING MEMORY OF HIS WORK  
AUGUST 30, 1933

*Context:* Hervey S. Cowell (1856-1929) was a charismatic teacher and principal whose arrival at Francestown Academy at the age of twenty-one reversed a period of declining attendance and frequent changes in administration. Cowell expanded the curriculum and the academic resources of the institution, presided over the remodeling of the Academy rooms, and supported the publication of the *Students' Journal*, which recorded a number of the changes that occurred to the building and to the institution's academic and social life during Cowell's tenure. Cowell left Francestown in 1883 to become principal of Arms Academy in Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts, and then of Cushing Academy in Ashburnham, Massachusetts. Cowell's former students warmly remembered his inspiring presence, and until 1936 held reunions in Francestown every five years (on average), many of which Cowell attended until his death.<sup>4</sup> As its wording documents, the bronze tablet was placed on the common at one of the last of these student reunions in commemoration of Cowell's contribution to the Academy and to the lives of his students.

A second feature of symbolic significance is a state historical marker at the northern end of the larger parcel of the common. This marker commemorates native son Levi Woodbury (1798-1851), whose distinguished career included service as a United States Senator, Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of the Treasury, and justice of the United States Supreme Court. This marker was erected in the year 1967 and replaced in 2000, so because of its date is not a contributing resource in this National Register district.

Near the state historical marker is a steel flagpole.

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<sup>4</sup>John R. Schott, *Frances' Town: A History of Francestown, New Hampshire* (Francestown: by the town, 1972), pp. 29, 99-103, 171-3.

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### **Contributing Building: Francestown Town Hall and Academy Building**

The Francestown Town Hall and Academy building is a two-story timber-framed structure that was built in 1847 to serve the dual purposes of a town hall or meeting room on the first story and a private academy, with several chambers of varying uses and dimensions, on the second story. As a place of assembly, the building was, and is, accompanied by a long framed shed (described separately), open on most of one side, with stalls for sheltering the horses of people who drove to functions in the building. Students who attended the Francestown Academy boarded throughout the surrounding village; an adjacent building (described separately) served as a purpose-built boarding house for some students. Long called “the Beehive,” this structure is an element in the setting and associations of the Town Hall and Academy building.

#### *Frame and exterior*

The Town Hall and Academy building measures about 43 by 69 feet. The framed structure stands on a masonry foundation that is composed of split and mortared granite on the north end, of brick on the south (rear) end, and of poured concrete topped with concrete blocks, dating from the late 1950s and early 1960s, on the east and west sides. The building has a full basement that was formerly used to store firewood for a warm-air furnace that was installed in this space in 1921. Two brick chimneys rise from the basement inside the rear (south) wall of the building and penetrate the roof.

The frame of the building is composed of major timbers that are hewn, and secondary members, such as wall studs, floor joists, and ordinary roof purlins, that were sawn on a reciprocating water-powered sawmill. The body of the building is composed of six wall posts on each side of the structure. These are connected to horizontal girts and wall plates by sawn diagonal braces. Some joints of the frame, especially in the attic, are exposed to view and reveal that the frame was laid out by the “square rule,” in which the seats of all similar joints are made uniform by chiseling below the irregular surfaces of the hewn timbers. This method of frame layout became commonplace in New Hampshire after about 1820.

The roof frame is composed of three king post trusses together with one queen post truss that supports the south (rear) frame of the belfry. As in meeting house frames, the king posts are connected to one another through the length of the building by heavy, hewn horizontal members with diagonal braces between the horizontal timbers and the vertical posts. Hewn rafters extend between the tops of the king posts and the ends of the tie beams. At about one-third of the height of the roof frame, a single heavy hewn purlin runs between adjacent rafters on each side of the roof, with diagonal rising and falling wind braces linking the purlin and the rafters. The remainder of each roof plane of the building is filled with eight common purlins, which are sawn rather than hewn. The ends of the hewn principal purlins are tenoned into the sides of the rafters, while the sawn common purlins are half-lapped across the tops of the rafters. Roof sheathing boards are applied vertically from ridge to eaves.

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The exterior of the building is characterized by proportioning and detail that exemplify the Greek Revival style. The three-bay façade (north elevation) of the building suggests a temple front, having four wooden pilasters that support a horizontal entablature below a closed triangular pediment. Each pilaster is composed of a flat board bordered by applied fillets at each edge, creating the appearance of an anta with a sunken flat panel at the center. Each pilaster has a diminutive capital composed of a flat Grecian ovolo molding supporting a narrow abacus.

The center of the facade has an entrance with double doors and side and top casings that, like the antae, are composed of flat boards flanked by applied fillets at each edge. The upper corners of the casings are marked by plain square wooden blocks. The double doors are surmounted by an eight-light transom sash. The central entrance is flanked by a six-over-six window on each side.

Above the central doorway is a three-part window with a six-over-six sash at the center and two two-over-two sashes at the sides. Like all other windows in the building, this opening has simple casings composed of flat side boards surmounted by a slightly thicker top board or lintel, creating a shadow line at the top of each opening. All sashes in the building are six-over-six units with late nineteenth-century muntin profiles, but the sashes on the first and second stories were installed at different dates and display differing profiles.

The side elevations of the building have five windows on each story. The rearmost window on the eastern side elevation of the second story has been replaced by a fire door opening onto a steel fire escape. The rear (south) elevation of the building has a privy addition, now equipped with water closets. The structure is about 10'-3" in projection from the main building and about 16'-4" in width.

The two-stage tower is supported by a queen post truss in the attic of the building beneath the south wall of the tower and by the frame of the front (north) wall of the building. The square lower stage of the tower is clapboarded. It has square-edged corner boards and is capped by a bell deck that is surrounded by a simple balustrade. Above the bell deck rises a square second stage or belfry, pierced on each face by a rectangular louvered opening. The belfry is flush-boarded and capped by a four-sided segmental dome. A replica eagle is mounted at the apex of the dome; the original eagle of 1847 is preserved inside the building.

The main cornice of the building and the cornices of the lower and upper stages of the tower have identical cornices composed of flat Grecian ovolo bed moldings, deeply projecting coronas, and crown moldings composed of flat Grecian ovolos, somewhat larger than the bed moldings, above narrow fillets.



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### *Interior*

The interior of the Francestown Town Hall and Academy building is composed of large halls or assembly rooms on each floor, filling the south end of each story, with staircases and smaller rooms at the front (north end) of each story.

The first story, which served principally as the Francestown Town Hall from the time the building was completed, has a central hallway leading directly from the double exterior front door to a similar double interior door opening into the hall proper. To the right, a broad staircase ascends to the second story in two straight runs terminating at a middle landing. Beneath this staircase is a small closet and a straight stairway leading to the basement. To the left of the entrance hallway is a doorway opening into a room that has principally served as a cloakroom in recent years, but formerly has been used for various purposes (see below, "Alterations or changes to the property").

The auditorium or town hall is marked by simple detailing. The lower walls are wainscoted with beaded sheathing or ceiling board, applied vertically and capped by a heavy wooden chair rail. Above the chair rail, the walls are plastered over original split-board lath and painted. The ceiling of the hall is similarly plastered; the room has no cornice. Door and window casings are symmetrically molded and have square wooden blocks, incised with round bosses, at the upper corners.

A deep stage fills the southern end of the room, enclosed behind a fully sheathed wall of vertical ceiling board that matches the wainscoting in the hall. Doors flank the stage on right and left, accessible by short flights of steps that rise from the hall floor. These doors, and the proscenium arch of the stage, share casings that match those of windows and other doors in the room. The oak floor is composed of narrow matched boards, blind nailed.

The rooms in front (to the north) of the hall include an antechamber or cloakroom on the east and a stairway to the second story on the west. These areas are finished with beaded ceiling board on the lower walls, with plastered upper walls and ceilings.

The second story, planned for the use of Francestown Academy, provides a large classroom or recitation hall at the rear (south end) and two smaller classrooms at the northeast and northwest corners of the building. Between these academic rooms are two smaller chambers, accessible from the central stairhall that rises from the first story. These chambers probably served as cloakrooms for students. The northeastern classroom was later converted to a simple kitchen for use with public events or Grange meetings. The northwestern classroom has served most recently as the office of the Francestown board of selectmen.

Although the trustees of Francestown Academy carried out a series of changes to their spaces, described below, the second story of the building generally retains more original detailing from

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1847 than does the first story. Some areas have original wainscoting, composed of horizontal boards, beaded on one edge. The main recitation room is wainscoted with narrow, beaded boards, applied vertically; these were installed in 1876. Probably in 1881, the ceiling of the recitation room was sheathed in ceiling boards, matching the material used as wainscoting on the first story.

Door and window casings on the second story are simple, square-edged stock, with plain square blocks at the upper corners of window openings.

### **Alterations or changes to the property**

The many functions that the Town Hall has served over the years (see 8. Statement of Significance) have demanded periodic alteration and remodeling. The building still expresses its original plan, at least through physical evidence and usually through complete preservation of original features. In addition, the structure exhibits a visible history of most of the subsequent changes that have kept it in service to its community. The building strongly reflects several milestones in its evolution, notably its original construction in 1847, its first major remodelings in 1876-9 (Academy areas) and 1881 (Town Hall), subsequent remodelings in the 1890s and early 1900s, and recent structural reinforcement of the first floor framing and roof trusses.

Over the decades since it was erected as a town hall and academy building in 1847, the structure served these two principal functions until the academy disbanded in 1921.<sup>5</sup> The town meeting room on the first story was shared for use as a vestry for the church across the common for many years, until the town asserted full ownership of the hall in 1881 and remodeled the first story of the building. The room also began to serve as a hall for the local Oak Hill Grange around 1885.<sup>6</sup> The cloakroom to the left of the front door was given its present dimensions in the remodeling of 1881. It was used by the Academy as an art studio in the early 1880s, may have served as a kitchen in the early 1900s, as the town post office between 1964 and 1968, and probably had other functions over the years.<sup>7</sup>

The exterior of the Town Hall retains a high degree of architectural integrity for its date of construction in 1847. The structure was built quickly but solidly after a fire destroyed a building on the same site that had been adapted in a somewhat makeshift manner for the use of the Academy. As seen in historical photographs as well as in the style of the exterior finish of the building, the Town Hall has seen relatively little exterior alteration over the years (see Figure 1). The principal change was the conversion in 1881 of two original exterior doorways on each side of the double central doorway into the windows that now flank the central doorway on the façade (see Figure 2). Physical evidence in the building suggests that this change coincided with the replacement of two separate winding staircases that rose through small vestibules on each side of

<sup>5</sup> Although Fracestown Academy disbanded in 1921, the academy trustees remained a corporate body that did not officially cede title to their portion of the building to the Town of Fracestown until 1945. John R. Schott, *Frances' Town: A History of Fracestown, New Hampshire* (Fracestown: by the town, 1972), pp. 194-5.

<sup>6</sup> John R. Schott, *Frances' Town: A History of Fracestown, New Hampshire*, pp. 175-6 (Grange) and 194 (vestry).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

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the building to the academy rooms on the second story. The new staircase that was substituted in 1881 is a relatively broad theater-style stairway that ascends from the central foyer to an upper landing below the three-part front window. This landing had apparently served originally as the meeting point of the two separate academy staircases.

This change moved the side partitions of the main entry inward on the first story, narrowing the entry and sealing two original, separate doors that had provided access to the first-story Town Hall. New access to the first floor hall was provided through wide double interior doors that remain in service and match the exterior doors. The remodeling converted the space that had served a presumed eastern academy stairway to a cloakroom or antechamber. Most of the floor space that had been occupied by the western academy staircase was incorporated into the broad staircase leading to the upper hall. The landing of this new staircase obscured the lower half of the new front window on the west.

The alterations of 1881 deprived the Academy of independent access to the second story through its separate doors, corridors, and stairwells, requiring the school to use the building's central doorway and entrance hall in common with the town. Interior doors leading to the town hall on the first floor and to the Academy rooms on the second story were presumably fitted with independent locks after the remodeling.

The Town Report for 1882 documents the repairs of 1881, which apparently constituted the most extensive remodeling of the Town Hall down to the present time. In addition to the changes to the front vestibule and staircase, described above, the remodeling included new window sashes (on the first story only), hung with cords and weights; a "Georgia" (southern yellow) pine floor in the first-story hall (now replaced or covered by a hardwood floor installed in 1972); and support of the floor of the Academy hall on the second story by connecting that floor with iron rods to the roof trusses in the attic. The latter change permitted the removal of an undetermined number of posts that had formerly supported the Academy floor and had encumbered the hall on the first story.

One of the most striking changes to the town hall was the addition of a stage at the southern (rear) end of the room. From *The Students' Journal*, Francestown Academy's student newspaper, we know that the town installed a stage in the Town Hall on the first story of the building in 1879.<sup>8</sup> Construction of this stage may have been among the initiatives that the town began to take in order to improve the first-floor hall until, as Cochrane's *History of Francestown* tells, "there was some dispute [among the public] as to the rights of the town in the building, and the selectmen found opposition in the way of carrying out the [earlier] vote of the town."<sup>9</sup> In 1881, after that dispute was resolved by the town's assertion of full authority over the first story, the stage was "enlarged so that it now extends the entire width of the hall."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *The Students' Journal*, November 1879, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Rev. W. R. Cochrane and George K. Wood, *History of Francestown, N. H. From its Earliest Settlement April, 1758 to January 1, 1891* (Francestown, N. H.: by the town, 1895), p. 207.

<sup>10</sup> *The Students' Journal*, October 1881, p. 6.

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Oak Hill Grange began to meet in the Town Hall around 1885.<sup>11</sup> It is possible that the Grange contributed to some of the remodeling of the first floor hall in order to accommodate its rituals. The presence of the expanded stage undoubtedly made the hall more useful for the rituals of the Grange.

Additional town expenses in 1881 included new lamps for the building and the purchase and shipment of settees for the town meeting room. New interior doors were installed at this time, and the door and window casings were replaced on the first story when new doors and window sash weights and cords were installed.

The repairs of 1881 were guided by specifications written by Harvey Augustus Hopkins. Hopkins was a Fracestown native, born in 1846, who was successful as a carpenter and builder and eventually moved to Medford, Massachusetts, where he was living when he provided the specifications for the Town Hall.<sup>12</sup> Most of the remodeling work was completed by Ephraim W. Colburn of Fracestown (born 1835), who was active in Oak Hill Grange. Colburn was described in the 1895 Fracestown history as “a carpenter and builder by trade, [who] has erected many fine buildings in many different towns,” and as a noted violinist.<sup>13</sup>

The 1890 Town Report shows that additional repairs totaling \$335.66 were completed by Harlan Page Downs, with additional small repair expenses charged by others. Harlan Page Downs was born in Fracestown in 1841. He was described in the 1895 Fracestown history as “a carpenter, ranking high in the craft, having a reputation as a builder second to few, if any.”<sup>14</sup> It is not clear how the repairs of 1890 augmented those of 1881.

Collectively, the visible changes to the town hall and the documentary record together provide a general outline of the evolution of the building during the latter 1800s and early 1900s, including the installation of a wood-burning furnace in 1921 to replace the several stoves that had previously heated the building, and the electrification of the building in 1929. This evolution brought the building largely to its present internal configuration and general appearance.

At some undetermined time, a privy was added to the rear (south) wall of the building, accessible from the town’s meeting hall through a door at the back of the stage. This construction is not noted clearly in the town reports, but could have been part of the repairs that were carried out by Harlan Page Downs in 1890. Prior to this addition, a detached privy undoubtedly served the building. The privy was reportedly altered in 1946 and converted to men’s and women’s toilet rooms with running water. This facility serves the building today.

<sup>11</sup> Schott, *Frances’ Town: A History of Fracestown, New Hampshire* (1972), pp. 175-6.

<sup>12</sup> Rev. W. R. Cochrane and George K. Wood, *History of Fracestown, N. H. From its Earliest Settlement April, 1758 to January 1, 1891*, p. 765.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 409, 592.

<sup>14</sup> Cochrane and Wood, p. 646.

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The trustees of Francestown Academy, which had always occupied the second-story hall and chambers, enjoyed autonomy in managing and remodeling these spaces and made their own alterations on the second story with no record in the town accounts (see Figure 3). *The Students' Journal*, an Academy newsletter, reported in October 1879 that "The [Academy] trustees have been constantly improving the interior of the building since Mr. Cowell came here [as Principal in August 1876]. The first year the main room was sheathed and papered, and new doors put in. The second year a new hard wood floor, and this year new seats and desks have been placed in the large room and new settees in each of the recitation rooms. The new seats were furnished by the New England School Furnishing Company, and are of the most improved pattern. The seating capacity has been increased by the addition of [the] new seats to one hundred and twenty six. These, in connection with minor changes have changed the general appearance of the place so much that many of our visitors pronounce it the pleasantest academic hall in the county."<sup>15</sup>

The most recent change to the building was the reinforcement of the roof trusses in 2013. Strengthening of the roof trusses was largely additive in nature, with supplementary timber compression members applied adjacent to the original compression members and linked to the original members by shear connectors that allow the sistered members to act together. Supplementary steel tension members were applied to the king posts and bottom chords of the trusses, the original members that acted in tension. Original timber struts placed at a low angle were replaced by new timber struts placed at an angle that allows them, in combination with the slanted upper truss chords, to act in conjunction with new vertical steel tension rods. The addition of these steel tension members permits the roof trusses to act structurally as Howe (wood and steel) trusses while retaining and preserving the principal structural members of the original kingpost trusses.

During the reinforcement of the roof trusses, the iron tension rods that extended vertically through the second-story Academy room were removed temporarily. This floor was supported by a series of temporary wooden columns placed in the Town Hall on the first story.

### **Contributing Building: Horse sheds**

The horse sheds that stand to the west of the Town Hall and Academy building are unusual survivors of a once-common New England building type, mostly associated with meeting houses, churches, and town halls.

The horse sheds are composed of a series of eighteen individual stalls, facing east toward the Town Hall and Academy building and covered by a continuous gable roof. The southernmost four stalls are secured by pairs of board and batten doors hung on forged wrought iron strap hinges; the remaining fourteen stalls are open. The building measures 175'-4" long by 17'-5" deep. It is about 8'-5" high from the top of the sills to the top of the wall plates. The walls are clapboarded and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

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<sup>15</sup>*The Students' Journal*, October 1879, p. 5.

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The frame of the horse sheds is mostly composed of sawn timbers, sawn on an upright (reciprocating) sawmill, although some stalls include hewn timbers. Like the frame of the adjacent Town Hall and Academy building, that of the sheds is laid out using square rule framing, which in New Hampshire is generally not seen before about 1820. In this framing method, the seats for intersecting timbers are hewn or chiseled below the surface of the timbers to a uniform dimension, creating a more consistent method of joining timbers than in the older type of carpentry, where intersecting members were individually scribed and fitted together at each joint. The square rule framing method of the horse shed suggests that this building is contemporary with the adjacent Town Hall and Academy building of 1847.

Each stall is framed by two front posts that define its entrance or doorway and two rear posts. Wall plate timbers extend between adjacent posts, front and rear, with their ends tenoned and pinned into the sides of the posts. Tie beams run from front to rear and define the tops of each stall; they rest upon tenons in the tops of the front and rear posts. Sawn braces rise from the posts to support the wall plates and tie beams in each stall. The braces in the front (east elevation) of the building are protected by sheathing boards, thus imparting a semi-octagonal outline to each stall opening. Below each tie beam, mortised studs extend down to the floor of each adjacent stall. The lower halves of the studs support horizontal sheathing in most stalls; above this sheathing, most stalls are open to the neighboring stalls.

Each tie beam supports a pair of rafters that are pinned into the top of the beams. Two vertical struts extend from the tops of most tie beams to support the rafters above. The rafters, in turn, support four purlins on each slope of the roof. Roof sheathing boards run from the ridge to the eaves on each side of the roof.

The horse sheds remain in nearly original condition. There is evidence of replacement of some roof sheathing boards and purlins, probably as a result of roof leakage, but most framing members and boarding retain saw or hewing marks that document their age and integrity.<sup>16</sup>

### **Contributing Building: Fracestown Academy Dormitory (Butterfield Block or “Beehive”)**

“The “Beehive” is a rectangular framed structure that was built into a steep hillside just west of the Fracestown Academy building. Because of the declivity of the building site, the structure displays a single, full story above grade on its eastern elevation, facing the former academy building. This story is entered through a central doorway, facing east. The north and south side elevations of the building, however, display two full stories above grade with central entrances, presenting secondary facades that resemble the broad, gable-fronted dwellings that were widely favored in New Hampshire from the 1830s through the 1850s. The western elevation, facing Greenfield Road, appears as a tall, two-story house with no entrances in the framed superstructure. At the center of the tall, brick basement wall, there was formerly a fourth doorway, with sidelights, providing direct access to the cellar. Because of changes in the level of

<sup>16</sup> The 1906 Fracestown Annual Town Report lists repairs to the horse sheds totaling \$214.20 and lists the owners of Sheds 1-4 and 13, 15, 18, 20 and 21 as they were then numbered.

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the earth outside the building, the bottom two feet of this basement door were below the raised grade of the highway shoulder, and the doorway has now been replaced by a window. The cellar door led directly to two basement rooms, with plastered ceilings, at the front of the building. Each front cellar room was originally lighted by two six-over-three window sashes in the brick basement wall. Other cellar areas, without plastered ceilings or large windows, lie behind the two front rooms.

Construction of a dwelling on such a steeply sloping site called for unusual skill in building the tall stone foundations that are seen in the basement and behind the eastern walls of the first story. These massive walls are constructed of split granite rubble, laid with the split sides facing toward the cellar to create a plumb face. Due to the topography of the building site, the surrounding soil envelops the northeast corner of the building up to the sill level of the second story above the cellar. Because the walls at this corner of the building must resist strong earth pressure, the cellar walls are thickened in the northeast corner by an inner layer or wythe of stone, which acts as a buttress at the base of the foundation wall. While it is not unusual to encounter early nineteenth-century dwellings built into hillsides in central New Hampshire, especially in Hillsborough County, the planning and craftsmanship seen in the foundation walls of the "Beehive" are of high quality.

Where it is visible, the frame of the "Beehive" is likewise exceptional, and appears to be comparable to the frame of the larger Town Hall and Academy building to the east. The corner and intermediate posts of the frame are not visible in most rooms, but from available vantage points it can be seen that the frame of the "Beehive" was well braced, with some braces even extending from the front and rear stairhall posts to the stairhall girts within the bearing partitions on each side of the hallway.

The principal floor framing members, apparently hewn from American chestnut, are spanned by sawn floor joists measuring approximately 2 inches by 6 inches, and placed about twenty inches apart. The first floor is supported by joists or sleepers that average about 5 inches by 5 inches.

The most imposing portion of the frame is that of the building's roof. The roof frame is composed of four sets of heavy, hewn principal rafters extending from the wall plates to a hewn ridge pole. Spanning the intervals between the rafters, at mid-height, is a wide, sawn purlin. The purlin, in turn, supports the ends of ranges of closely-spaced common rafters, which run from wall plates to purlin, and from purlin to ridgepole. Diagonal wind braces connect the rafters and the purlins at each intersection, except where chimneys rise through the attic adjacent to the two inner pairs of rafters.

When seen in New Hampshire during the early-to-mid nineteenth century, a roof of combined principal and common rafters is almost always confined to meeting houses or other exceptionally large buildings; as noted elsewhere, the contemporaneous Town Hall and Academy building next door has a similar roof frame, built on an even larger scale. Such a frame is highly unusual in a domestic building, and the use of such a frame in the "Beehive" suggests that the carpenters who

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framed the dormitory understood that the building needed to be staunchly framed in order for its broad roof planes to cover a floor area of unusual extent.

The exterior of the building is clapboarded. The structure originally had four symmetrically placed chimneys piercing the roof. The chimney in the northeast quadrant, suspended from the attic framing to heat the northeast chamber below, was removed long ago, probably because of leaks where it penetrated the roof. The southeast chimney, serving an intact cooking fireplace on the first story above the cellar, was dismantled to a point below the roof circa 2014 due to similar leakage.

Door and window casings on the exterior are simple, square-edged boards.

Because the “Beehive” retains much original material, the building offers physical evidence on the interior of the uses for which certain rooms were originally intended. While interpretation of this evidence must remain tentative pending further investigation, original uses of the rooms on each floor are described below.

The floor plans of the first story above the basement and of the second story are similar but not identical to one another. Each of these two floors has a central seven-foot-wide corridor and stairhall passing through the building from east to west. On both floors, the central corridors terminated in small chambers at the west end, lighted by windows facing Greenfield Road. The central corridors provide access to rooms or chambers arranged symmetrically on each side of the hallways. As noted above, the first floor above the basement can be entered from outside the building by two exterior doorways, one facing north and the other facing south. Both doorways originally opened upon small interior entries that provided access to large rooms placed on the left and right in each of the four corners of the building. The areas between these entries and the central east-west corridor were provided with closets that were accessible from the corner rooms. The closet partitions have been removed inside the southern doorway, but remain largely intact inside the northern doorway.

In keeping with the building’s function as a student boarding house, the “Beehive” was equipped with ample cooking facilities. The southeast corner room and the northwest corner room were both provided with brick cooking fireplaces that are supported on sturdy brick bases in the basement. Each fireplace has gudgeons or rings for a crane in its right-hand jamb, and a brick oven on one side of the fireplace. While it is not uncommon to find two cooking fireplaces in a building constructed before 1850, it is notable that these two kitchens were built on slightly different plans, with the northwest chimney being somewhat larger and having a more elaborate and substantial brick base in the cellar. The two kitchen fireplaces were provided with wooden casings in characteristic Greek Revival patterns, but the two differ in design, that on the northwest being more elaborate. Finally, the two cast iron oven doors display different designs and bear different wording. The door in the northwest kitchen has the words “Amherst, N. H.,” while the somewhat less elaborately designed oven door in the southeast kitchen bears the words “Milford, N. H.”



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The building reveals evidence of more intensive use of the southeast kitchen than of the northwest kitchen, with finish floor boards (now replaced) being nearly worn through to the sub-flooring in some places. Possibly one kitchen was reserved for the private use of a house superintendent, while the other was used to serve all the boarding students in the building.

Based on preliminary inspection, it may be theorized that the room in the northeast corner of the building in the story above the basement served as a dining room. This room is adjacent to the more heavily worn southeastern kitchen, and in fact incorporates the seven-foot-wide area that normally would have been part of the corridor adjacent to this kitchen. Thus, the supposed dining room immediately adjoined the southeastern kitchen and became the largest single finished room in the building. The room was provided with its own closet adjacent to the northern entry, perhaps used for storing dishes and other table wares. It also retains an original plastered closet in its northeast corner, possibly intended for use as a pantry or for storing items used in a dining room.

Being largely below grade, this room has windows only on the north. A comparison of the muntin profile of these windows with others in the house reveals that these are original sashes. Because even the north wall of the room is partly below grade, the windows of this room are horizontal sashes, made to slide sideways in guides or channels in order to ventilate the room.

The second floor above the basement is entered by a central doorway on the east, facing toward the Town Hall and Academy and opening directly into the seven-foot-wide corridor. Like the floor below, the second story offers clues to the uses of various rooms, yet the exact disposition of these spaces awaits further physical and documentary investigation.

Two rooms on the second floor are physically differentiated from the bedchambers on this story by unusual woodwork. The middle room on the north side, above the door and entry on the floor below, was a room with a special purpose. This room has baseboards that are set flush with the plaster, and wall cleats, also flush with the plaster, encircling the room at two different elevations above the baseboard. These elements have never been painted, and their surfaces reveal a few scattered nail holes. It may be theorized that this room served as a library or book closet, and that book cases were attached to these specialized cleats.

Adjacent to this middle room is the relatively large northeastern chamber, located above the presumed dining room on the floor below. Lighted by a window on the north and two on the east, this room is differentiated from others by having flat wainscoting around its lower walls and by a six-panel door connecting it with the central corridor, in contrast to the four-panel doors seen elsewhere in the building. Evidence in the attic above suggests that the room was originally heated by a stove vented through a chimney that rested on the attic floor framing, with its weight supported by iron rods connected with a rafter above. This room shows especially pronounced wear on its floor boards. If the middle room on the north side of this floor was indeed a library or book closet, the northeastern corner room may have functioned as a study or served some

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other academic function that resulted in heavy wear to its floors. To judge by paint accumulation on the floor, this room also had some form of bench or enclosure along its northern wall.

The other rooms on the second floor appear to have served as bedchambers. All were provided with closets in varying arrangements, and were heated by stoves attached to thimbles in the adjacent chimneys.

Two additional plastered chambers are found in the attic, on the south side of the building. Both of these rooms were apparently heated by stoves connected to the brick chimneys that pass upward, adjacent to their walls. These rooms apparently served as additional student bedrooms, or possibly as rooms for servants such as cooks or housekeepers.

The “Beehive” had (and retains) simple interior joinery that evokes the then-current Greek Revival style in a basic fashion. Much of this joinery has survived intact over the years, even in vulnerable areas where it might be expected that fragile elements like window sashes or paneled doors would have been replaced long ago.

In general, door and window openings in the “Beehive” are surrounded with plain, flat casings. In a few cases, as around the two kitchen fireplaces, the upper corners of the casings are marked by square corner blocks, but even this degree of elaboration is unusual in the building. Most window sashes throughout the building, from cellar to attic, display an attractive muntin profile that was commonly used between about 1830 and about 1850, and may represent the muntin profile that was originally used in the adjacent Town Hall and Academy building. This profile is consistent throughout most of the house, and the sashes throughout the building remain in good condition. Most of these sashes retain hand-blown cylinder or crown glass.

### **Contributing Object: Platform Scales**

The hay scales at Francestown are located at the northernmost tip of the common, in a detached triangular piece of the common that is bordered by Main Street on the west, the merged Second New Hampshire Turnpike and New Hampshire Route 136 on the north and, on the south, by a connecting road that links these two highways. This detached triangle of the common also includes a granite watering trough (described separately) that was located until 1908 where the hay scales now stand.<sup>17</sup>

The scales have two components: a rectangular wagon platform, which is oriented with its longer axis roughly north and south; and an adjacent platform that supports the wooden beam box, which houses the actual scale mechanism.

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<sup>17</sup>For a photograph of the watering trough and the site of the hay scales before their construction, see Rev. W. R. Cochrane and George K. Wood, *History of Francestown, N. H. From its Earliest Settlement April, 1758 to January 1, 1891* (Francestown, N. H.: by the town, 1895), facing p. 411.

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The wagon platform is a rectangular wood-framed structure that is covered with planks and set flush with the surface of the adjacent ground. The wooden platform measures 8'-5" by 18'-2" and is bordered by a frame composed of steel angles that are set with one leg placed vertically to act as a bordering frame for the wooden platform. Around the steel frame is a ten-inch-wide concrete curb, also set flush with the surrounding grade.

The platform of the beam box measures 4'-9" by 9'-0" and is covered with wooden boards. The beam box is 4'-11" wide and 1'-2" deep with its long axis parallel to that of the adjacent platform, and bears an enameled iron sign with the words "Fairbanks Scales." The box has a door on its eastern face, hinged at the bottom and secured at the top with a lock, which can be folded down to provide access to the beam mechanism. The existing box is a replica of the original enclosure.

The beam mechanism is a bronze Fairbanks double beam with a bronze poise on each beam. The scale is calibrated to weigh up to 3,000 pounds in 2½-pound increments with the use of the two poises alone. Weights above 3,000 pounds can be measured by adding loose cast iron weights on a hanger at the free end of the beam.<sup>18</sup> The scales are presently inoperative.

### **Contributing Object: Public Watering Trough**

The town watering trough in Fracestown is a granite trough that is now used as a summertime planter. It stands at the northernmost tip of the common, in a detached triangular piece of the common that is bordered by Main Street on the west, the merged Second New Hampshire Turnpike and New Hampshire Route 136 on the north and, on the south, by a connecting road that links these two highways. This detached triangle of the common also includes the town hay scales which were installed in 1908 at the site that was previously occupied by the trough.<sup>19</sup> The trough is now located some 25 feet south of the hay scales.

The trough is composed of two sections. The actual trough measures 5'-0" in length, 2'-2" in depth, and 1'-8" in height above a granite base. The base rises about nine inches above grade and measures 5'-6" in length and 2'-8" in depth. The base has a beveled wash at the top, bringing its level upper surface to the dimensions of the bottom of the trough.

Both base and trough are carefully hammered to provide an articulated surface. The arrises or edges of the trough are hammered to a smooth texture, emphasizing the outline of the object; the wash and upper edge of the vertical sides of the base are given the same texture. The smooth arrises of the trough define panels on each face, and these are finished in a rougher, picked surface that expresses the solidity and weight of the trough.

<sup>18</sup>For a description of the various scale beams that might be used in Fairbanks platform scales, see Fairbanks Morse & Co., *A Talk on Scales*, Publication 121B (1912), p. 16.

<sup>19</sup>For a photograph of the watering trough and the site of the hay scales before their construction, see Rev. W. R. Cochrane and George K. Wood, *History of Fracestown, N. H. From its Earliest Settlement April, 1758 to January 1, 1891* (Fracestown, N. H.: by the town, 1895), facing p. 411.

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Each end of the trough has a projecting rounded boss near the bottom, apparently provided to assist in lifting the object if necessary.

The basin of the trough has rounded corners and sloping sides that provide a graceful recess and resist the pressure of ice in the wintertime.

### **Noncontributing Building: Francestown Heritage Museum**

Standing southwest of the Town Hall and Academy building, the Francestown Heritage Museum was contributed to the Town of Francestown by members of the Francestown Volunteer Fire Department in 2012-13, on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the department. The building was adapted from the frame of a barn that was disassembled in the neighboring town of Weare, New Hampshire, and re-erected and finished at this site for the safekeeping and exhibition of materials of Francestown's history, with an emphasis on horse-drawn vehicles.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Lindsey Arceci, "Historical, Antique Vehicles Find Home," *Monadnock Ledger-Transcript*, August 1, 2013.

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## 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.

### Criteria Considerations

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

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
-

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G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- ARCHITECTURE
- TOWN PLANNING
- EDUCATION
- GOVERNMENT
- COMMERCE
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

Criterion A: Government: 1847-1965 [arbitrary fifty-year termination date]

Criterion A: Education: 1847-1921

Criterion A: Commerce: 1889-1965 [arbitrary fifty-year termination date]

Criterion C: Architecture: 1847, 1881

Criterion C: Town Planning: 1772

**Significant Dates**

1847  
1881  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Francestown Common is significant under National Register Criterion C for town planning. It represents a deliberately designated town center dating from 1772, intended to provide a site for town functions. In keeping with its civic function and its location at the intersection of important local highways, the common provided public amenities that served the function of commerce under Criterion A. These include a granite public watering trough (1889) for the refreshment and health of draft animals and a public platform or hay scales (1908) for the accurate weighing of produce, especially hay, which was sold by weight. Standing on the Common, the Francestown Town Hall and Academy building is significant at the local level under Criterion A for education and government, and under Criterion C for architecture. Built in 1847 to serve the combined needs of town government and secondary education in its community, the building was designed as a two-story structure that expresses the Greek Revival style and that is given additional symbolic importance as the seat of government and education by the addition of a domed belfry surmounted by a carved eagle. Since town halls and academies of the period both demanded large rooms for public meetings and for students, the building was provided with halls on both stories, supplemented with smaller chambers that supported government or educational functions, as described below. The period of significance for education extends from the construction of the building in 1847 to the closure of Francestown Academy in 1921. The period of significance for government extends from 1847 to the arbitrary National Register fifty-year cutoff date of 1965. The period of significance for architecture is 1847, the date of construction of the building, with a significant date of 1881, when substantial remodeling to the town hall was undertaken, as described above under "Alterations or changes to the property." The building is accompanied by a multi-stall horse shed, now a rare building type that is significant under Criterion A for transportation and Criterion C for architecture, which sheltered the horses of those who traveled to the building. The Town Hall and Academy building is accompanied by an adjacent academy boarding house that represents a rare survivor of an important architectural form that often accompanied private academies. The boarding house is significant under Criterion C for architecture.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Town Common**

#### **Criterion C, Town Planning**

The Francestown town common was created in 1772 by the gift of four acres "to build a meeting House [and] for a burying yard and training field." The four-acre parcel was presented by James

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Fisher (1750-1840), who had settled in 1770 on a large grant of land he had purchased from his father, and from which he set off the four-acre tract of land “for the use and benefit of the inhabitants” of Francestown.<sup>21</sup> In 1775, the common became the site of the first town meeting house and, in 1801, of the second, now remodeled and known as the Old Meeting House of Francestown.<sup>22</sup> To the north of the Old Meeting House is the village cemetery, as planned; at the south end stands the Francestown Town Hall and Academy.

The Francestown common is significant under National Register Criterion C as a feature of community planning and development. The common was created as a civic facility for which the town plan of Francestown, as laid out and granted to town proprietors, had made no provision. Unlike the nucleated town plans that had been commonplace in Massachusetts and Connecticut in the seventeenth centuries, the layout of most eighteenth-century inland New Hampshire towns did not provide for a planned center with a common or town green and a meeting house, surrounded by a cluster of small house lots that defined a compact village.

In contrast to this older model, inland New Hampshire towns were laid out as grids of large lots, each lot being adequate for a farmstead if the soil was good. In such town plans, the goal was to distribute the available land quickly and to encourage settlers to clear and plant their holdings rapidly, not to create a compact village from which inhabitants might travel from their homes to outlying fields as in the older Massachusetts and Connecticut settlements. If a village was to be created in such townships, its creation was an act of planning that occurred after the lands had been granted and often after the clearing and planting of agricultural lands had begun.

Francestown was granted by the Masonian Proprietors, a group of wealthy merchants who joined together in 1746 to purchase the proprietary claim to New Hampshire lands that had descended to the heirs of Captain John Mason of England, the original grantee of New Hampshire in the early seventeenth century. Mason’s heirs claimed ownership of all lands in New Hampshire within a great arc having a radius of sixty miles from the sea. This huge tract included all the townships hitherto granted by the New Hampshire government. The new proprietors were shrewd enough to grant quitclaim deeds to all the settled lands within the limits of their purchase, thereby allaying public anxiety and instilling hope among prospective settlers that vast new lands, not yet inhabited, would soon become available for settlement.<sup>23</sup>

The Masonian Proprietors began to make land grants in December 1748. The method by which the proprietors distributed lands in their new grants established a standard model, called the “range township,” for town planning in eighteenth-century New Hampshire. The range township established the land area of town grants, when feasible, at approximately thirty-six square miles. The Masonian Proprietors typically granted all the territory within the township grant at once, with no common land being retained for later distribution. Lots of regular sizes were laid out in

<sup>21</sup> Cochrane, *History of Francestown*, pp. 31-33, 697.

<sup>22</sup> Deirdre Brotherson, National Register nomination, “Francestown Meetinghouse” (NRIS Reference Number: 99000667), 1999.

<sup>23</sup> William Henry Fry, *New Hampshire as a Royal Province*. Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law 29, no. 2 (New York, 1908), pp. 301-20.



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ranges, or parallel rows, separated by range roads that provided access to each lot in each range. No small village or “home” lots were laid out, and no lot was reserved for a common or a meeting house site, although a general desire among settlers for a central place in which to conduct public functions and trade often resulted in the eventual appearance of one or more villages in Masonian townships, as eventually occurred in Francestown.<sup>24</sup>

In June 1772, Governor John Wentworth and the council and assembly acceded to a prior petition by the inhabitants of New Boston Addition (a Masonian grant of land west of the original Masonian grant of New Boston), and issued a charter for a new town “by the name of Francestown.” Francestown was to be composed of the territory of New Boston Addition and a portion of the “Society Lands,” a tract that the Masonian Proprietors had reserved for themselves and had not initially granted to others.<sup>25</sup>

On August 31, 1772, the inhabitants of the new town of Francestown held a town meeting in the barn of James Fisher. The voters agreed to award the contract for framing and erecting a meeting house to James Quigley. At a subsequent meeting on October 19, 1772, the voters agreed that “the town Shall Buy foar acers of Land Where the Committee hath fixt [the location] for the Priviledge of a Burying place and meeting House.”<sup>26</sup> Town historian W. R. Cochrane notes that

the spot fixed upon by the committee was that now covered by the south part of the village, the old church, the cemetery, horse-sheds, Academy, &c., originally containing four acres, but encroached upon and cut down [in area] from time to time, so that the part meant for a cemetery and for a “training field,” or common, is left very small. The Committee chosen to buy the land received the deed as intended, but the owner, James Fisher, donated [rather than sold] the tract for “the use of the town forever as before stated.”<sup>27</sup>

This gift was followed by clearing of a portion of the deeded tract for the cemetery and, in 1775, by the raising and enclosing of the frame of the first meeting house, close to the location of the present Old Meeting House, which replaced the first building in 1801.<sup>28</sup>

As Cochrane remarks, the original four-acre common was encroached upon and reduced in area. Subsequently, the widening and paving of the several highways that once passed over the common as gravel wagon roads has left the area of the common directly to the north of the Town

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<sup>24</sup> James L. Garvin, “The Range Township in Eighteenth-Century New Hampshire,” *New England Prospect: Maps, Place Names, and the Historical Landscape*, Annual Proceedings of the Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife, 1980, pp. 47-58, especially pp. 62-4. For a brief discussion of the growth and evolution of Francestown Village, see Joseph S. Wood, *The New England Village* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), pp. 102-3.

<sup>25</sup> *Laws of New Hampshire*, Volume 3, Province Period, 1745-1774 (Bristol, N. H.: Musgrove Printing House, 1915), pp. 577-8.

<sup>26</sup> Cochrane, *History of Francestown*, p. 49.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 81-2.

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Hall and Academy and east of the horse sheds as the portion of the original tract that retains the appearance and function of a town common.

In keeping with the practice in many New England towns, Francestown planned for the beautification of the town common in the early twentieth century.<sup>29</sup> The warrant for the annual town meeting of March 1913 include an article “to appropriate the sum of two hundred dollars for the improvement of the common and the roads leading therefrom.” The Francestown Improvement and Historical Society was established in 1922 to continue beautification and village improvement projects, and continues that work.

## Francestown Town Hall and Academy Building

### Criterion A, Education

The Francestown Town Hall and Academy building is significant as a structure that reflects the provision of secondary education in New England prior to the establishment of publicly supported high schools around 1850. Private academies were the principal institution by which students were prepared for college or a profession and were offered a broad education in preparation for a responsible role in society. Largely superseded by public high schools during the latter half of the nineteenth century, private academies today survive in greatly reduced numbers, mostly as elite boarding schools or as high schools that retain the name of “academy” for the sake of tradition but are supported by public taxation. The former role of the private academy as an accessible gateway to higher education is largely forgotten. The Francestown Academy was a prominent and enterprising educational enterprise, and its specially appointed building offers insight into the curriculum, pedagogy, and student life of such institutions.

Francestown Academy was established in 1800 and incorporated in 1819, one of twenty-six private academies that had been incorporated in New Hampshire by that year.<sup>30</sup> The academy movement in New England began in the 1790s, resulting from a desire to provide secondary education, often (but far from invariably) for the purpose of qualifying the student for entrance to college. Most academies also offered courses that were considered to be of a practical or applied nature, adapted to the needs of citizens who would not necessarily attend college. The New Hampshire legislature would eventually incorporate about 104 academies, not all of which necessarily came into actual operation.<sup>31</sup> The presence of an academy was considered an indicator of a community of intelligence and enterprise. Until the rise of publicly funded high

<sup>29</sup> For summaries of the movement to improve and beautify town commons in New England, see Joseph S. Wood, *The New England Village*, pp. 128-34; John D. Cushing, “Town Commons of New England, 1640-1840,” *Old-Time New England* 51; David D. Brodeur, “Evolution of the New England Town Common, 1630-1966,” *The Professional Geographer* 19.

<sup>30</sup> *Laws of New Hampshire, Vol. 8, Second Constitutional Period, 1811-1820* (Concord, N. H.: Evans Printing Company, 1920), p. 786; *Index to the Laws of New Hampshire, 1679-1883* (Manchester, N. H.: John B. Clarke, 1886), pp. 2-8.

<sup>31</sup> *Index to the Laws of New Hampshire, 1679-1883* (Manchester, N. H.: John B. Clarke, 1886), pp. 2-8.

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schools after about 1850, the private academy was the only potential source of secondary education for New Hampshire students.<sup>32</sup>

As indicated by its dates of initial operation and incorporation, Francestown Academy's institutional history predated the construction of the present Town Hall building. The Academy had previously held classes in a two-story brick structure that was later known as the "old academy." By 1847, Academy classes were being held in a two-story wooden building that had formerly served as a vestry and had been moved to the site of the present Town Hall in 1841 for use as an academy building; the old brick academy building was then relegated to use as a common schoolhouse. The wooden building caught fire during the day of Saturday, March 27, 1847. The structure was consumed, but its

books, apparatus and nearly every movable thing [was] saved. There were over one hundred pupils at the time, but they were crowded [back] into the 'Old Brick Academy' and the instruction went on without much interruption. Many were glad the old building was gone, as it was small, inconvenient and uncomely; and such prompt and vigorous measures were taken to rebuild, that the present structure was up and ready for use at the opening of the fall term [of 1847], less than five months after the day of the fire.<sup>33</sup>

The annual catalogue of Francestown Academy for 1847 announced that "The Trustees take pleasure in announcing to their friends and the public, that through the liberality of the citizens, a commodious Academy Building has been erected and furnished, to supply the place of the former one which was destroyed. And they can recommend this Academy to the community as worthy of their entire confidence."<sup>34</sup>

Francestown Academy was a highly professional institution that benefited from a number of principals and faculty members who brought distinction to the school. When enrollment was high, the Academy employed three full-time faculty and three or more additional teachers.<sup>35</sup> In turn, this faculty trained a number of successful and even eminent graduates, among whom was President Franklin Pierce (1804-1869). Following the construction of the Town Hall and Academy building for its accommodation, the Academy frequently listed one hundred students or more, who boarded in the village or lived in the adjacent rooming house or dormitory, referred to as "the Beehive."<sup>36</sup> Students made use not only of the Academy properties for their

<sup>32</sup> Harriet Webster Marr, *The Old New England Academies Founded Before 1826* (New York: Comet Press Books, 1959); Theodore Sizer, *The Age of the Academies* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1964); Nancy Beadie and Kim Tolley, eds., *Chartered Schools: Two Hundred Years of Independent Academies in the United States, 1727-1925* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

<sup>33</sup> Cochrane and Wood, pp. 304-5.

<sup>34</sup> Francestown Academy annual catalogue, 1847. This and other annual catalogues of the Francestown Academy are in the collections of the New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, N. H.

<sup>35</sup> *The Students' Journal*, January 1880 and January 1880 Supplement.

<sup>36</sup> James L. Garvin, "Report on the Francestown Academy Boarding House, the "Beehive," Greenfield Road, Francestown, New Hampshire, October 12, 2004.

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instruction, but also of the town library and other town facilities. Because the Academy attracted many boarding students, the institution expressed a character more akin to that of a college than to a modern high school, with students living in the community and becoming part of it.

By 1867, the Academy had benefited from purchases and gifts that provided for unusual breadth and sophistication of instruction.

The Academy has an excellent philosophical apparatus, a valuable telescope, and other astronomical instruments; these, together with a choice collection of minerals, afford good facilities for the study of the natural sciences. The Alumni have lately presented to the Library of the Academy more than four hundred dollars worth of books, chiefly new and valuable books of reference. A new Hallett & Comston's Piano has just been given to the Academy, through the generosity of its friends, at home and abroad.<sup>37</sup>

By 1881, the school library contained 340 volumes for reference and reading, and the Francestown town library of over 1200 volumes was opened weekly, free to all Academy students.<sup>38</sup>

The Academy curriculum was divided into three principal branches: college preparatory; ladies' classical, which provided instruction in the classics and English for young women; and an English course, intended for both sexes. The latter included more than language and literature, covering geography, arithmetic, geometry, algebra, trigonometry, surveying, navigation, botany and zoology, chemistry, physiology, philosophy, drawing, and mineralogy. The classical curriculum included Latin and Greek grammar; Latin readings, including Caesar, Sallust, Cicero, Virgil, and Homer; Greek readings, including Anabasis; and Roman and Grecian history and antiquities.<sup>39</sup> The Academy offered additional electives in drawing and painting in oils; music, using the Academy's own piano; astronomy, using the Academy's telescope; and chemistry and the natural sciences. The latter courses utilized the scientific "apparatus" that was owned by the Academy, was often described with pride in the annual catalogues, and was housed somewhere within the building. The building also housed a cabinet of mineral specimens, used in courses on mineralogy. The musical life of the Academy encouraged the formation of orchestras and choruses when enough students with musical interest were in attendance. As noted above, the Academy included a library of some 340 volumes and maps, and had a reading room that received daily and weekly newspapers from Boston, New York, and local presses.

## Francestown Town Hall and Academy Building

### Criterion A, Government

<sup>37</sup> Francestown Academy annual catalogues, 1867-8. New Hampshire Historical Society.

<sup>38</sup> Francestown Academy annual catalogues, 1881-2.

<sup>39</sup> Francestown Academy annual catalogues, especially those of 1854 and 1876.

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As built in 1847, the Francestown Town Hall and Academy building provided two halls and associated chambers, one on each story. As noted above, the second story was placed under the superintendence of the trustees of Francestown Academy. The first story was intended for use as a town hall, although the first-story auditorium was at first shared with the nearby Congregational Church and, after 1885, was made available to the local Oak Hill Grange. The principal use of this hall, however, was its function as the Francestown Town Hall, the site of Francestown's annual and specially-called town meetings. In New England towns that have not adopted another form of government, the annual town meeting is the definitive legislative session of the community, debating and approving or rejecting initiatives that are listed in the warrant for the meeting and establishing the budget for the ensuing year. Decisions made by vote at town meeting become the community's work plan for the future, and changes to town ordinances approved at town meeting become parts of the legal code that governs behavior in the community.

## **Francestown Town Hall and Academy Building**

### **Criterion C, Architecture**

The Francestown Town Hall was designed and built in 1847 as a dual-purpose structure, combining the attributes of a town meeting room or "Town Hall" with the attributes expected in an academy building. This dual design was prompted by an opportunity to combine town government functions with those of academic instruction, afforded by the accidental burning in March 1847 of a former academy building that had stood on the same site. At the same time, the Town of Francestown saw an opportunity to move its town meetings from a former meeting house standing just to the north of the academy site, which in 1834 had been remodeled as a modern steepled church building and thus had assumed an architectural character somewhat at variance with the then current concept of a "town hall."

The exterior of the Francestown Town Hall and Academy building displays architectural attributes that proclaimed it a modern building that embodied and expressed the Greek Revival style. The building was given a general resemblance to a Greek temple through the articulation of the façade (northern elevation) by four tall pilasters or antae that rise from the foundation to the base of a pedimented attic story. The eaves cornices of the building are carried across the front, creating a closed pediment that would have been recognizable as a hallmark of the Greek Revival style in 1847. The moldings that constitute parts of the antae capitals and the building cornices are all extremely flat and recognizable as "Grecian" moldings. Window casings are composed of square-edged boards, reflecting the deliberate simplicity of the Greek Revival style.

While the interior of the building served two purposes and was subdivided to accommodate both uses, the exterior was designed in a coherent fashion that expressed the current Greek Revival style in a stately, two-story structure surmounted by a belfry. While single-purpose town halls of the mid-1800s, described below, rarely had belfries, a number of academies utilized belfries to symbolize their identity as structures serving higher education. The Francestown Town Hall and

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Academy gained architectural distinction by combining the functions and architectural attributes of town government with those of secondary education.

*Architectural Context: Academy Buildings*

Precedents for academy architecture in New Hampshire extend back into the 1790s. Phillips Academy in Exeter, New Hampshire, was incorporated by the New Hampshire legislature in 1781. Unlike most of the later New Hampshire academies, Phillips Exeter came into being accompanied by a large financial endowment. John Phillips (1719-1795), the son of the minister of the South Parish of Andover, Massachusetts, established the Exeter academy that bore his name, endowing it with funds and property worth about \$60,000, then the largest gift ever made in the United States for such an institution.<sup>40</sup> At first housed in a small wooden building, the academy quickly outgrew its initial quarters. In 1793, the trustees of the academy decided to erect a new building, 76 feet in length by 36 feet in depth. The building was raised and finished in 1794. It was crowned with a handsome two-stage octagonal belfry and lantern. On the first floor, one half of the building was given over to the “great room,” a classroom with thirty-six double seats accommodating up to seventy-two students. The building was divided by an entry that passed through its center, with doors on the front and rear walls. On the opposite side of the building was an “English Department” room, in which a range of non-classical subjects was taught, and a separate “philosophical” lecture room, in which technical subjects were taught with the aid of a small collection of scientific instruments. On the second story, much of the space was given over to the “exhibition room,” which served as an auditorium, and to the academy’s library.

An academy in Atkinson, New Hampshire, was incorporated in 1791, although several accounts attest to the fact that the institution was operating well before its incorporation, and may in fact have been New Hampshire’s second functioning academy.<sup>41</sup> Its charter of incorporation outlined the breadth of its proposed curriculum, which was to include (or perhaps by then already included) English, Latin, Greek, writing, arithmetic, music, the art of speaking, geography, logic, and geometry “as opportunities may permit.”<sup>42</sup>

Atkinson Academy did not have the benefit of the munificent endowment of Exeter, but when its first building burned on November 15, 1802, the trustees constructed a new building that closely replicated the earlier Exeter building, although on a slightly smaller scale. While the Exeter building was subdivided into the rooms described above, the Atkinson building seems to have been left largely undivided within.

<sup>40</sup> *Sibley’s Harvard Graduates*, 9:560-70; Charles H. Bell, *History of the Town of Exeter, New Hampshire* (Exeter: n.p., 1888), pp. 293-4; *Laws of New Hampshire*, Vol. 4, Revolutionary Period, 1776-1784 (Bristol, N. H.: Musgrove Printing House, 1916), pp.

<sup>41</sup> William C. Todd, “Atkinson Academy,” *New England Historic and Genealogical Register*, April 1872, pp. 122-126.

<sup>42</sup> *Laws of New Hampshire*, Vol. 5, First Constitutional Period, 1784-1792 (Concord, N. H.: Rumford Press, 1916), pp. 729-731.

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While both the Exeter and Atkinson academies established precedents for academy curricula and architectural attributes, both were conceived in the Federal style. By the 1830s and 1840s, several stately Greek Revival academy buildings, with belfries, had appeared in New Hampshire as prototypes for the Francestown building. Among the surviving academy buildings that reflect the Grecian style are those in Boscawen (1827-8), Walpole (1831), Strafford (1833), Henniker (1836), New London (1837), and Canaan (1839).

Within, most academy buildings included a large classroom of the type that was provided at the south end of the second story in Francestown. Many had an additional “exhibition room,” which served as an auditorium and was used for public oral examinations and for public “exhibitions” of student oratory or debating.<sup>43</sup> In Francestown, the first-story Town Hall probably served this purpose on “exhibition” days. The better academies also had rooms or closets for the safekeeping of scientific or “philosophical” apparatus; at Francestown, such apparatus was kept in the building, apparently in a cabinet designated for that purpose.

Being planned and built specifically to house an academic institution on its second story, the Town Hall building was given a floor plan that reflected this use. The floor plan of the second-story academy remains largely undisturbed, and the internal layout is one of the character-defining features of the structure. The interior of the second floor was divided into one large classroom or recitation room, apparently with a dais or low stage at its northern end; two smaller classrooms or recitation rooms, which were equipped with settees rather than desks; and two small chambers, one or both of which could have served as entries to the large classroom at the southern end of the floor and could have had other functions.

The large room at the south end of the Academy’s floor was described in a poem by J. P. Rand:

The great Recitation Room where we assembled,  
For lectures, devotions, and classical lore,  
The Stage in the center where often we trembled,  
And wished, in vexation, that our school days were o’er.<sup>44</sup>

After the Town of Francestown remodeled the first story of the Town Hall building in 1881, the Academy also sometimes used the large antechamber at the northeast corner of the first story as an art classroom.

Between the middle and the end of the nineteenth century, private academies began to be supplanted by publicly-supported high schools. The relatively few academies that survived this transition were compelled to provide more modern facilities in order to offer their students educational resources that were becoming both commonplace and expected in secondary academic institutions. Some private academies replaced or supplemented their older buildings with new structures that reflected modern expectations for educational architecture; a few of

<sup>43</sup> Marr, *The Old New England Academies Founded Before 1826*, pp. 246-265.

<sup>44</sup> Quoted in Schott, *Frances’ Town: A History of Francestown, New Hampshire*, p. 172.

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these institutions retained their older buildings out of deference to their historical associations.<sup>45</sup> Those academies that replaced nineteenth-century buildings with newer structures were compelled to observe evolving standards of fire resistance, safe egress, adequate classroom illumination, ventilation, sanitary facilities, and provision of more sophisticated facilities for teaching chemistry, home economics, the manual arts, and athletics.<sup>46</sup> Eventually, almost all of the former academies relinquished their charters and property (as in Francestown), or were transformed into publicly supported high schools housed in newer academic buildings, retaining only their older names, as at Pinkerton Academy in Derry or Pembroke Academy.

### *Architectural Context: Town Halls*

Although it was within the same building as the academy, the Francestown Town Hall reflected the attributes that were seen by the 1840s in the freestanding town halls or “town houses” that were being built in other New Hampshire towns to replace the cavernous meeting houses that had formerly housed town meetings as well as religious services. The new town halls were basically one story in height, roughly equivalent in area to the first story of the Francestown building. They were relatively small in floor area, being intended to accommodate voters, who were men only, rather than a town’s full religious population of men, women, and children who had been seated in the older meeting houses. Such town halls were typically heated, in contrast to the traditionally unheated meeting house. Where meeting houses had typically provided seating in enclosed, fixed box pews that occupied the full area of the main floor, town houses were usually provided with settees that allowed seating to be arranged as needed or removed if the building was to be used for a social function such as a dance.

From these basic principles, the classic vernacular town house or town hall gradually developed. As perfected, the town house included such basic features as a gable-front orientation; a meeting hall heated with one or more stoves; an entry or lobby, similar to that of a contemporary church building, to exclude drafts and roadway noise from the meeting room; and a selectmen’s office, also heated and often located in a partial second story located above the entry.

In the absence of a fuller statewide building inventory and documentary survey, the chronological history and evolution of the New Hampshire town hall cannot yet be told in detail.

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<sup>45</sup>In New Hampshire, nineteenth-century academy buildings have been retained in association with newer buildings at Atkinson Academy; Phillips Exeter Academy; Pinkerton Academy in Derry; Colby Academy (Colby-Sawyer College) in New London; Orford Academy; and the former Haverhill Academy. A number of former New Hampshire academy buildings survive in other uses.

<sup>46</sup>Among the sources that chronicle the rapidly advancing expectations for secondary school buildings in the early twentieth century are May Ayres, Jesse F. Williams, and Thomas D. Wood, *Healthful Schools: How to Build, Equip and Maintain Them* (Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1918); John J. Donovan, *School Architecture: Principles and Practices* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1921); Horace A. Hollister, *Public School Buildings and their Equipment, with Special Reference to High Schools*, University of Illinois Bulletin, Vol. VI, No. 1 (Urbana, Ill: University of Illinois, 1909); Horace A. Hollister, *The Planning and Construction of High School Buildings*, University of Illinois Bulletin, Vol. XIV, No. 8 (Urbana, Ill: University of Illinois, 1916); and G. L. Lockhart, *Public Schools: Their Construction, Heating, Ventilation, Sanitation, Lighting and Equipment* (St. Paul, Minn.: H. W. Kingston Company, 1918).



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What is presently clear is that town houses did not appear immediately after passage in 1819 of legislation that separated town government from support of religion. Despite the requirement of this statute that towns cease to support an “orthodox” church through taxation, most towns continued in their old ways, probably terminating municipal support of an “orthodox” minister as soon as existing ministerial contracts expired, but otherwise making little physical change in the accommodation of church and town.

By the 1830s, however, the physical separation of church and town began to become evident in architectural form. A number of purpose-built town houses have been noted and in some cases studied and listed in the New Hampshire State and National Registers of Historic Places. Among these are town houses in Hooksett (1828, unusual in being a brick building), Sanbornton (1834, unusual in having a belfry), Moultonborough (1834), Wakefield (1836), Temple (1842), North Hampton (1844), Kensington (1846), Nelson (1846), Chichester (1847), Epsom (1851), Campton (1855), Orford (1859), Stoddard (1868), Newington (1872, unusual in being a two-story brick building), Strafford (1873), Freedom (1889), Orange (1895), and Columbia (1899). The form continued to be used in smaller towns after 1900, even as larger communities were sometimes building more ambitious structures, often with belltowers and large “opera house” auditoriums.

Prior to passage in 1819 of New Hampshire legislation that separated town and church, and usually for some years thereafter, most small New Hampshire towns, including Fracestown, maintained a meeting house that served both religious and secular needs. Such buildings were used on Sundays as meeting places for adherents of one or more religious societies in the community. Following a practice that originated at the time of the first settlement of New England, most communities had a single “standing order” or “orthodox” church that possessed the sole right to use the meeting house for religious meetings and enjoyed a measure of town sponsorship through taxation for support of the minister. Often, the established church was also granted town lands for a parsonage or for income that was used for ministerial support. In the majority of New Hampshire towns, the Congregational church was the “standing order;” in a few, a Presbyterian or Baptist church became the town-supported society.

As frequently noted in literature, the meeting house was usually the single publicly-built and -owned structure in newly settled towns. As the single building that was available for general public use, the meeting house typically housed town meetings as well as religious services.<sup>47</sup> The principal (or annual) town meeting was usually held in March of each year, but was often adjourned to one or more later dates in order to continue debate on various important topics. Meeting houses were not heated until the nineteenth century, so during the cold months town meetings, like religious services, were not comfortable gatherings.

Prior to construction of the meeting house, both town meetings and public worship in many towns were held at private houses, taverns, or barns, and the locations for these gatherings were

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<sup>47</sup> The literature on New England meeting houses is extensive. A recent study, which includes a good bibliography, is Peter Benes, *Meetinghouses of Early New England* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012).

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voted upon at town meetings. Town meeting and religious services were both sometimes adjourned so that attendees could warm themselves in a nearby house or tavern before resuming.

As religious denominations began to multiply in the late 1700s and early 1800s during a religious foment that is often called the “second great awakening,” their adherents often objected to paying taxes to support an “orthodox” minister with whose tenets they did not agree. Many of these societies also wished to build separate meeting houses of their own, but were prevented from doing so by the burden of being taxed to maintain the town meeting house.

The eventual result in New Hampshire was passage of the “Toleration Act” in 1819.<sup>48</sup> This legislation severed the connection between church and town, making support of a religious organization a voluntary act rather than a purpose of public taxation.<sup>49</sup> Passage of this law frequently resulted in the physical as well as the legal separation of town and church, with the town often taking steps to acquire sole ownership of the old meeting house for use as a town hall or, as happened in Francestown, with the church acquiring the meeting house and modernizing it as a more recognizable ecclesiastical structure in the fashion of the early nineteenth century.

At the same period, many sects that could afford to do so, including the “orthodox” church, often built modern church buildings to be used strictly for religious purposes, usually in the new ecclesiastical form that is recognizable as a “church.”<sup>50</sup> The architectural result, at least in prosperous communities, was a proliferation of religious buildings from the 1820s onward, and also the appearance of a new form of church structure that had its entrance on a gable end, beneath a belfry and steeple.

In Francestown, the second meeting house, built in 1801, stood north of the present Town Hall. In 1833, the town voted to sell at auction the right of the town in the meeting-house, sheds, common, and all the surroundings, "reserving the use of the house for Town-meeting and the Bell for town purposes as heretofore used, on condition that the Town shall keep the outside of

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<sup>48</sup> *Laws of New Hampshire: Vol. 8, Second Constitutional Period, 1811-1820* (Concord, N. H.: 1920), pp. 820-821; William G. McLoughlin, *New England Dissent, 1630-1833*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), II, 894-911; Charles B. Kinney, Jr., *Church and State: The Struggle for Separation in New Hampshire, 1630-1900* (New York: Columbia University Teachers College, 1955).

<sup>49</sup> Everett S. Stackpole, *History of New Hampshire*, 5 vols. (New York: American Historical Society, 1916-17), IV:230; Kinney, *Church and State*.

<sup>50</sup> The history of this separation of church and town is chronicled in Ronald and Grace Jager, *A Cloud of Witnesses: A History of Washington Congregational Church, 1780-2005* (Washington, N. H.: by the church, 2005), especially in the chapter “A New Meetinghouse (1835-1845).” A narrative of the architectural impact of the Toleration Act in New Hampshire is given in the chapter by Ronald Jager, “The Meetinghouse Becomes a Church,” in Charles E. Clark and Elizabeth C. Nordbeck, eds., *Granite and Grace: Essays Celebrating the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ* (Concord, N. H.: New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ, 2001).

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the house and the tower and bell with its tackle, in good and complete repair."<sup>51</sup> The building was sold to the "Union Congregational Society" and remodeled as a steepled church in 1834.<sup>52</sup>

When the former Francestown Academy burned in 1847, the town took advantage of the opportunity to separate itself physically from the Congregational Society. In providing itself with a hall in the same building as the Francestown Academy, the town was following a practice that had begun earlier in Massachusetts and Connecticut and was becoming more widespread in New Hampshire. While many New Hampshire towns built single-purpose "town houses" or "town halls" at this period, other communities saw the value of joining the town's hall with the facilities of a public school, courtroom, or other appropriate non-religious organization. Similarly, the private academies of the early nineteenth century often saw the benefit of sharing a structure with another entity, such as a town or a court system, which could share in the expenses of the building.

The appropriateness of such a partnership between civic and academic functions was made explicit when a new combined town house and school building was dedicated in Shirley, Massachusetts, some forty miles from Francestown, in 1848:

The form of the structure seems a fit emblem of the process by which the youth is prepared to act the part of the man. . . . As he ascends from one state of duty to the other, may his every step be characterized by that wisdom and prudence which are an earnest of his future usefulness and success, as a man, a citizen, and a republican.<sup>53</sup>

Unlike meeting houses, town halls could properly be used on occasion for social events and gatherings, or for other non-civic uses. In Francestown, the town meeting room on the first story was shared for use as a vestry for the church across the common for many years, until the town asserted full ownership of the hall in 1881 in order to have undisputed authority to spend public monies for physical improvements. The room began to serve as a hall for Oak Hill Grange around 1885.<sup>54</sup>

## Horse sheds

### Criterion A, Transportation; Criterion C, Architecture.

<sup>51</sup> Cochrane and Wood, p. 180.

<sup>52</sup> Cochrane and Wood, pp. 226-47, 249-51, especially p. 244; "Francestown Meetinghouse" National Register of Historic Places nomination, #99000667 (1999). The church building was further remodeled in 1884.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted in Kevin M. Sweeney, "Meetinghouses, Town Houses, and Churches: Changing Perceptions of Sacred and Secular Space in Southern New England, 1720-1850," *Winterthur Portfolio* 28, no. 1 (1993): 59-93. This article provides extensive background on the development of town houses in southern New England and the various means by which church and town physically separated themselves following disestablishment of the "standing order" or "orthodox" church in early nineteenth-century New England.

<sup>54</sup> John R. Schott, *Frances' Town: A History of Francestown, New Hampshire* (Francestown: by the town, 1972), pp. 175-6 (Grange) and 194 (vestry).

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The line of horse sheds standing to the west of the Francestown Town Hall and Academy is significant as a rare survivor of a once common building type. Such sheds were provided wherever people were required to drive some distance to attend lengthy events such as church services or town meetings. In a climate where shade for tethered horses was required during the heat of summer and where shelter from the wind and snow were required during the winter, the provision of such sheds became commonplace.<sup>55</sup> As noted above, the meeting house (now the “Francestown Old Meeting House”) that stood north of the Town Hall formerly had additional sheds that provided shelter for town meetings as well as for religious services.

Several other New Hampshire towns retain horse sheds, including examples at Acworth, Dublin, Hillsborough, Jaffrey Center, Lyme, Newington, Peterborough, Rindge, and North Wilmot. Such sheds continued to be built, as needed, down to the advent of the motor vehicle. A striking set of curved sheds behind a meeting house in Hancock Village were built in 1895 to replace others that were removed from the town common at about that time.

At 175 feet in length, the sheds at Francestown are the second longest surviving example in New Hampshire. The longest set of sheds is found at Lyme, New Hampshire. The Lyme Congregational Church Horse Sheds are about 245 feet in length. They include twenty-seven individual stalls, each with an arched opening, forming the longest line of contiguous sheds in New England and possibly in the United States.

The Francestown sheds are notable for their physical integrity. As noted above (7. Description), there is evidence of replacement of some roof sheathing boards and purlins, probably as a result of roof leakage, but most framing members and boarding retain saw or hewing marks that document their age and integrity.

### **Francestown Academy Dormitory (Butterfield Block or the “Beehive”)**

#### **Criterion C, Architecture**

The “Beehive,” the former boarding house of the Francestown Academy, is a rare building type—a mid-nineteenth-century boarding house or dormitory that served one of New Hampshire’s many private academies in the period before public high schools had been authorized by state legislation. The building was constructed in 1846 as a companion to the adjacent Francestown Town Hall and Academy building.

By the 1850s, surviving prospectuses for Francestown Academy described the benefit to students offered by the nearby boarding house. The catalogue of 1854 announced that “board can be

<sup>55</sup>Under certain circumstances, shelter for horses gathered near churches or town halls might be provided by other means. Nearby taverns, or even private neighbors, sometimes had large barns that could serve this purpose. In one well-known instance, the long covered bridge (1832) in Bath, New Hampshire, was used to shelter the horses of parishioners in the nearby Bath Congregational Church. A number of cribbed (gnawed) timbers in the bridge attest to this long-term practice.

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obtained in good families at reasonable rates. Every facility is afforded for young gentlemen and ladies to board themselves, which considerably reduces the expenses.” The 1881-2 catalogue stated the savings offered by “self-boarding” when it noted that “good board in private families [is] \$3.50 per week. Furnished rooms for self-boarding [are provided] at \$4.00 and \$5.00 per term. Application for board and rooms should be made early in order to secure the best.”<sup>56</sup>

While many village academies originally maintained boarding houses or dormitories, almost all such buildings have disappeared over the years or have been remodeled beyond recognition. The Francestown building, by contrast, retains a remarkable degree of integrity for the period of its construction. Although it has suffered from neglect and some alteration over the years, neither the basic structure nor its original detailing has been severely changed. Even where it has been altered, the building exhibits clear evidence of its original condition. Because the building is a rare architectural type, and because its original function was closely allied with the cultural and educational life of the village, the “Beehive” possesses significance under National Register Criterion A for education and under Criterion C for architecture.

Under Criterion A, the boarding house retains and displays the attributes of a structure that was constructed to house and feed students and to provide facilities for them to read and study outside of the classroom. As described below under Criterion C (architecture), the building was designed to provide a number of simply detailed bedchambers for students, and a kitchen and dining area to serve their needs. In addition, physical evidence points to the provision of a separate kitchen and chamber for an adult superintendent of the building. Physical evidence also shows that the building provided a library and study room on its main floor, close to the majority of bedchambers.

Under Criterion C, the building exhibits highly simplified detailing that reveals the characteristics of a structure that was designed for utilitarian use rather than as a private dwelling. At the same time, the heavy roof frame of the building shows that the structure was built substantially, possibly by the same carpenters who framed the adjacent academy building, and offers an opportunity to study an unusually heavy roof system for a building that was domestic in function.

The fact that the stone foundation walls on the eastern side of the building extend to the ceiling level of the eastern rooms, including a kitchen and dining area, offers an opportunity to study the construction of a building that was built into a hillside and had habitable rooms below grade. Such houses are not uncommon in hilly New Hampshire, especially in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, and yet have not been studied systematically either with respect to their outer stone walls or their inner framed and plastered walls. This building offers an opportunity to define the norms for framed buildings that were built with some rooms below grade level.

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<sup>56</sup> Francestown Academy catalogues at the New Hampshire Historical Society.

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The boarding house was built during the period of the Greek Revival style. Unlike the adjacent Francestown Academy building, however, the dwelling displays few attributes of that style, and those that exist are mostly seen on the interior.

Each of the two kitchen fireplaces of the building is bordered by a casing that displays the Greek Revival style through corner clocks that supported a narrow, heavy shelf above the fireplace. The mantelpiece in what appears to be the superintendent's kitchen in the northwest corner of the building is more fully detailed as a Grecian feature, and the cast iron oven door in this kitchen is likewise more fully in the Greek style, having anthemion ornaments at each of its corners.

Elsewhere, however, the building displays interior joinery that is simpler than is usually seen in private houses. The doors, window casings, and baseboards are square-edge boards that were applied over the wall lath and used as grounds for the plaster, which was troweled nearly flush with the surfaces of the trim. The doors themselves are four-panel units for the most part, and have raised panels with square-shouldered fields and no moldings around the panels. A few doors are six-panel, and these are apparently associated with rooms that had a special purpose or status. Doors display a mixture of sheet iron Norfolk thumb latches and cast iron thumb latches. Window sash details are typical of the 1840-50 period.

The boarding house had only two fireplaces, in the kitchens at the northwest and southeast corners of the lower floor of the building. Elsewhere, airtight stoves provided the heat for the rooms. This arrangement provided fuel economy, since stoves burned less wood than open fireplaces. At the same time, the presence of the two cooking fireplaces and their associated ovens demonstrates the frequently observed mid-nineteenth century preference for traditional methods of cooking over the use of the expensive and hard-to-manage kitchen ranges that were being introduced at the period.

As a structure that was built for a utilitarian but specialized purpose, the boarding house provides valuable insights into the layout and detailing of congregate housing during the era of the private academy, and displays simple detailing of a vernacular Greek Revival character that seldom survives in private dwellings.

*Context:* A few academy dormitory buildings have been studied and afford some comparison with the "Beehive." The comparable dormitory of Noyes Academy in Canaan, New Hampshire, was examined before its demolition in 2010. Unlike the "Beehive," which has all of its rooms enclosed within four walls and sheltered by an expansive gable roof, the Noyes Academy building was a dwelling house of circa 1830 with an attached two-story wing. The wing (and perhaps some of the rooms in the main house, later altered) were remodeled around 1835 to provide chambers or dormitory rooms on the second story, with a kitchen in the wing on the first story.<sup>57</sup> The Canaan building shared with the Francestown "Beehive" the use of airtight stoves rather than fireplaces for heating; like the "Beehive," the Canaan building is presumed to have

<sup>57</sup> James L. Garvin, "George Kimball House, 46 Prospect Hill Road, Canaan, New Hampshire, Field Notes, April 6, 2010."

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had a fireplace and brick oven for cooking. Otherwise, however, the Canaan dormitory departed much less from the appearance of an ordinary dwelling than does the “Beehive,” with its specialized floor plan and structural frame, its ample cooking arrangements, and its multitude of bedchambers.

A second surviving academy dormitory is Holmes House in Plymouth, New Hampshire, built in 1835 as the first of two boarding houses for Holmes Plymouth Academy and now used as an office building for Plymouth State University. Like the boarding house for Noyes Academy, the Holmes Academy boarding house took the form of a two-story dwelling of its era, with the addition of a large rear wing that evidently provided most of the dormitory chambers.<sup>58</sup> Examination reveals that the wing of this dormitory employed the frame of an earlier house, attached to the rear (north) elevation of the main dwelling. Later changes to the wing for office use have obscured the dormitory floor plan and the character of its detailing, but the general plan of this dormitory paralleled that of the Canaan dormitory, with most of the student chambers placed in a wing that was subordinate to the main dwelling.

It should be noted that the proprietors of the Noyes Academy intended to erect a larger dormitory, never built, and that the proprietors of Holmes Plymouth Academy actually built a second, larger dormitory circa 1834. The latter was described in the Plymouth town history as “the larger boarding-house, standing on the site of the normal-school building [in 1906; i.e., Rounds Hall].” It “was two stories high, and a spacious and substantial structure, affording accommodation for sixty or more inmates.”<sup>59</sup> This second and larger Plymouth dormitory, removed when the first building was built for Plymouth Normal School in 1891, may have been comparable to the “Beehive” in Francestown in its size and specialized architectural features.

Other New Hampshire academies had boarding houses, but the full number of surviving examples has not been surveyed or studied. A few examples are known from illustrations, but in general these buildings were later in date than the “Beehive” and represent a further evolution of the academy dormitory. One such boarding house existed in conjunction with the Penacook Academy in Boscawen. The main building of Penacook Academy was erected from designs by New Hampshire architect Edward Dow in 1866. An accompanying dormitory, located just north of the academy building, was depicted in a wood engraving dating from circa 1878 and published in the town history of that date.<sup>60</sup> This building is shown to have been a large, two-story, gable-roofed structure with a columned veranda surrounding the first story on at least two sides. The dormitory had an ample and symmetrical arrangement of window openings with arched tops, echoing the Italianate style of the adjacent brick academy building. This building, though later and larger than the “Beehive,” may have shared with the Francestown building such features as ample kitchens, a dining room, and many small bedchambers for students. The

<sup>58</sup> James L. Garvin, “Report on Holmes House (Holmes Plymouth Academy Boarding House) and Holmes Barn, Formerly 5 Summer Street, Plymouth, New Hampshire, May 16, 2010.”

<sup>59</sup> Ezra S. Stearns, *History of Plymouth, New Hampshire* (Plymouth, N. H.: for the town, 1906), 2 vols.; I:312-13, 323.

<sup>60</sup> Charles Carleton Coffin, *The History of Boscawen and Webster, from 1733 to 1878* (Concord, N. H.: Republican Press Association, 1878).

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building had a low connected wing, probably providing wood storage, and an adjacent barn or carriage house.

By the date of incorporation of the Penacook Academy, public high schools, first authorized by a New Hampshire statute in 1848, were beginning to supplant private academies, and boarding houses or dormitories for students from afar were probably becoming less needed and less common. The “Beehive” therefore represents a building type that was uniquely associated with the era of the private academy during the early-to-mid nineteenth century.

## Hay Scales

### Criterion A, Commerce

The hay scales at Francestown Common were placed in 1908, apparently as a cooperative venture between the Town of Francestown and Abraham F. O’Hanlon, the proprietor of the nearby Francestown Hotel. The town provided an accessible public site for the scales and paid a total of \$57.80 for building a decay-resistant chestnut platform and its pit and foundation, and for building and painting the beam box beside the platform; platform scale manufacturers required that the purchaser provide these components.<sup>61</sup> The scale mechanism itself was provided by the Fairbanks Scale Company of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, and would have cost between \$350 and \$450 or more, depending on the scale’s weighing capacity.

No evidence of the purchase of the mechanism appears in the immediately succeeding town reports. Hotelkeeper O’Hanlon apparently purchased the Fairbanks mechanism at his own expense, employed the town to construct the pit, platform, and beam box, and then gradually reimbursed the town for its contribution to the project. O’Hanlon regularly paid the town varying amounts between 1909 and 1915, fully reimbursing the municipality for its \$57.80 cost of labor and materials in installing the weighing machine.<sup>62</sup> After 1915, O’Hanlon was considered to own the scales outright. The town warrant for 1919 included an article “to see if the town will vote to purchase or rent the hay scales of [from] A. F. O’Hanlon, or take any action relating thereto.”<sup>63</sup> The town apparently began to rent the scales, not listing the weighing machine in the schedule of town-owned property and equipment in the 1920 town report but showing a payment of \$11.00 to A. F. O’Hanlon in 1921.<sup>64</sup> The town finally purchased the scales in 1923 at a cost of \$538.65.<sup>65</sup>

Abraham F. O’Hanlon was born in Richmond on Staten Island in New York around 1861 of parents who were both born in Ireland.<sup>66</sup> By 1906 he was in Francestown as manager of the

<sup>61</sup> Francestown Town Report, 1909, pp. 8-9, 13-14.

<sup>62</sup> Francestown Town Reports, 1910-1915, “Hay Scale Statements.”

<sup>63</sup> Francestown Town Report, 1919, p. 3.

<sup>64</sup> Francestown Town Reports, 1920 and 1921.

<sup>65</sup> Francestown Town Report, 1924, pp. 4, 10.

<sup>66</sup> United States Census, 1880.



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Fracestown Hotel, continuing in that employment until about 1920.<sup>67</sup> O'Hanlon married Mary J. Beattie in Nashua in 1905, at about the time he became manager of the Fracestown Hotel, and died in Nashua on March 8, 1947, at age 86.<sup>68</sup>

The Fracestown Hotel stood a short distance north of the hay scales on the west side of Main Street, at a site that was later occupied by the village school (now the Fracestown Town Offices). The building was constructed in 1856 as a temperance hotel after a fire destroyed its predecessor, built circa 1795. The hotel prospered under various owners and managers until it burned on March 20, 1926.<sup>69</sup> Photographs reveal that the Fracestown Hotel had a large attached barn that accommodated the horses of travelers and of a daily stage from the railroad station in Greenfield, and probably served as a public livery stable.

Public hay scales in many New Hampshire towns were associated with local businesses, often general stores, whose proprietors were accustomed to weighing merchandise and selling by weight. As shown by the documentation cited above, the public scales in Fracestown were provided by hotelkeeper O'Hanlon, who may have acted as a hay merchant as well as manager of a local hotel and stable. The increasing specialization of farmers in central New Hampshire in dairy cattle and milk production by the late 1800s required a comparable increase in hay production and in the sale and purchase of hay as a marketable commodity that required accurate measurement.

*Context: platform scales*

Large platform scales, often referred to as "hay scales," "stock scales," or "wagon scales," were commonly found in both rural villages and cities and represented an important nineteenth-century technical development in the weighing of merchandise. This technical development, in turn, permitted large quantities of loose commodities such as hay to be sold by weight instead of imprecise volumetric measure, thereby greatly increasing the accuracy and reliability of certain types of mercantile exchange.

Accuracy and trustworthiness of weights and measures had been a concern of government in New Hampshire since the early days of European settlement. The Province of Massachusetts-Bay passed a law regulating weights and measures in 1687, and this statute was essentially replicated by the Province of New Hampshire in 1692, and re-enacted in its basic provisions in 1718. The law required that the treasurer of the province be supplied with a set of weights and

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<sup>67</sup> O'Hanlon (under the incorrect designation of "A. O. F. Hanlon") was listed as proprietor of the Fracestown Hotel in available editions of the *New Hampshire State Directory and Gazetteer* from 1906 to 1921 (last available edition). The 1902 edition of the *New Hampshire State Directory and Gazetteer* lists E. D. Moore as manager of the hotel. O'Hanlon was listed in the 1910 United States Census as "hotel keeper" in Fracestown, but as a "farmer" in Fracestown in the 1920 and 1930 Censuses, but living on Main Street rather than on a farm in 1930.

<sup>68</sup> New Hampshire Bureau of Vital Records, Concord, N. H., cited in Ancestry.com.

<sup>69</sup> Rev. W. R. Cochrane and George K. Wood. *History of Fracestown, N. H. From its Earliest Settlement April, 1758 to January 1, 1891* (Fracestown, N. H.: by the town, 1895), p. 404; John R. Schott, *Frances' Town: A History of Fracestown, New Hampshire* (Fracestown: by the town, 1972), pp. 24-7.

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measures conforming to the British Winchester standards, to be used “for the proving and Sealing [of] all waites and measures” throughout the province. The constable of every New Hampshire town was to receive measures for one bushel, a half bushel, a peck, a half peck, an ale quart, a wine pint and half pint, an ell, a yard, and weights up to four pounds (at sixteen ounces per pound), balance scales, and a steel beam or steelyard.<sup>70</sup> These town standards were to be held by town selectmen for the use of local sealers of weights and measures. The local sealer of weights and measures was to verify and seal all locally used weights and measures in April of each year, ensuring that all commerce was carried out in conformity with British Winchester measurement standards.

The law that was re-enacted in 1718 remained in effect (with penalties for violations amended in 1766) until it was repealed in 1792. In 1797, the legislature passed a new law, similar in its provisions to the 1718 statute but substituting state and county authority for provincial authority. The new statute provided for a sealer of weights and measures in each county of the state and for the election of a local sealer at each annual town meeting. Each county and town was to provide itself with a complete set of weights, measures, and a scale beam “similar to those now owned by this State.”<sup>71</sup>

The operation of the statute of 1797 was postponed several times, but became law after 1800.

The laws of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries provided standards for the accurate measurement of small volumes of dry and liquid commodities and for weights that were within the measuring range of balance scales and ordinary steelyards. For large quantities, not readily measured or weighed, available standards offered little uniformity. Stone and gravel, for example, were often sold by the “cartload.” Hay was presumably sold by the wagon load, but hay carts and wagons varied greatly in size and capacity, as did the techniques used in packing loose hay.

While most farmers probably provided their own hay, urban centers needed hay to be brought from the countryside and sold for local consumption, resulting in the provision of “hay markets.” In Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for example, a hay market, “with convenient scales for weighing,” was erected in 1755 at Haymarket Square at the intersection of today’s Middle, State, and Court Streets.<sup>72</sup>

The usual method by which hay was weighed in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, if at all, was by lifting a loaded cart or wagon by chains attached to its axles and extending upward to a very large steelyard that was mounted overhead on a tall frame. Such a device was awkward

<sup>70</sup> *Laws of New Hampshire*, Volume One, Province Period. (Manchester, N. H.: John B. Clark Co., 1904), pp. 202-4 [Massachusetts-Bay], 531-3, [New Hampshire]; *Laws of New Hampshire*, Volume Two, Province Period, 1702-1745 (Concord, N. H.: Rumford Printing Co., 1913), pp. 317-19 [New Hampshire].

<sup>71</sup> *Laws of New Hampshire*, Volume Six, Second Constitutional Period. (Concord, N. H.: Rumford Printing Co., 1917), pp. 444-6. For postponements, see *Ibid.*, pp. 493, 542, 620, 672.

<sup>72</sup> Nathaniel Adams, *Annals of Portsmouth* (Portsmouth, N. H.: by the author, 1825; reprint ed., Hampton, N. H.: Peter E. Randall, 1971), p. 195.

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to operate since the steelyard and the counterweight or poise that had to be moved along its beam were elevated far above a convenient height. Such weighing machines reportedly offered only tolerable accuracy. A related form of scales, described and illustrated by Nathaniel Bouton in his *History of Concord*, included a platform on which the cart or wagon was placed. The platform itself, with the vehicle, was lifted and weighed by an overhead steelyard.<sup>73</sup>

Thaddeus Fairbanks (1796-1886) of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, transformed the weighing of large and heavy vehicles in 1830 when he invented the platform scale, the prototype for the Francestown hay scale. The Fairbanks platform scale utilized a balance beam with counterweights, called "poises," following the same principle as the ancient steelyard. In one common configuration of such a scale, the balance beam is housed in a beam box adjacent to the weighing platform. The platform is mounted over a shallow pit and foundation that accommodate levers extending beneath the platform and supporting it. The balance beam is connected by a vertical rod to the ends of two levers that converge at the bottom of the rod from the two far corners of the platform, where they are hung from chain links that allow them to move freely under a load placed on the platform. Two shorter rods extend from hangers at the near corners of the pit and run diagonally to the midpoints of the two longer levers. The corners of the wooden scale platform rest on four knife-edged bearings on top of the four levers, near their end hangers. By mathematically calculating the ratios of the various connected levers, Fairbanks was able to calibrate the balance beam beside the platform to register an accurate reading of the load placed on the platform.<sup>74</sup> The Fairbanks Company offered a variety of different scale beams that could be supplied for mounting in the beam box according to the needs of the purchaser.<sup>75</sup>

## Watering Trough

### Criterion A: Commerce

The town-owned granite watering trough was purchased for \$113.00 in 1889 by town treasurer George E. Downs.<sup>76</sup> When it was pictured in a photograph in the town history in 1895, the trough stood on the northern point of the common.<sup>77</sup> It was moved from that location when the hay scales were installed there in 1908. At the time of this change, the town invested heavily in the digging of a new town well and the purchase of a pump, presumably in conjunction with the

<sup>73</sup> Nathaniel Bouton, *The History of Concord, From its First Grant in 1725, to the Organization of the City Government in 1853* (Concord, N. H.: Benning W. Sanborn, 1856), p. 539.

<sup>74</sup> "Plan for Fairbanks' Standard Scales," Form 103 (undated). Various models of platform scales utilized differing configurations of levers and fulcrums, but followed the same principle, which Fairbanks patented in a series of thirty-two patents. See Edward Taylor Fairbanks, *The Town of St. Johnsbury, Vt., A Review of One Hundred Twenty-Five Years to the Anniversary Pageant, 1912* (St. Johnsbury: Cowles Press, 1914), pp. 411-425.

<sup>75</sup> Fairbanks Morse & Co., *A Talk on Scales*, Publication 121B, 1912.

<sup>76</sup> Francestown Town Report for the year ending March 1, 1890 (1890), p. 6. Regrettably, the published town report does not indicate the maker or supplier of the trough.

<sup>77</sup> See Rev. W. R. Cochrane and George K. Wood, *History of Francestown, N. H. From its Earliest Settlement April, 1758 to January 1, 1891* (Francestown, N. H.: by the town, 1895), facing p. 411.

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relocation of the public trough. The new well proved difficult and expensive to dig, costing the town \$195.16; only \$75.00 had been appropriated for the job, leaving a deficit of \$120.16.<sup>78</sup>

*Context: watering troughs:* The provision of clean drinking water at the roadside was essential in an age when vehicles were drawn by animals and when rapid transportation was accomplished on horseback. A New Hampshire state statute of 1858 authorized towns to reimburse private citizens who provided and maintained watering troughs for the use of travelers' horses.<sup>79</sup> Public water supplies for horses and oxen were important in the humane treatment of working animals, especially at hilly sections of road where great exertion was required to draw the weight of vehicles uphill. Clean water was also essential to the health of horses, which are susceptible to several water-borne bacterial diseases, sometimes fatal.<sup>80</sup> In compliance with the law of 1858, annual Francestown town reports of the late 1800s and early 1900s contain numerous references to annual payments of \$3.00 to private individuals for "[keeping] public watering trough[s]" or for "P[ublic] watering trough." The provision of a substantial granite watering trough on the town common in 1889, accompanied by an expensive town well, was a municipal commitment that mirrored the private provision of public watering troughs under the statute of 1858.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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<sup>78</sup> Francestown Town Report for the year ending February 15, 1909 (1909), p. 13.

<sup>79</sup> *Laws of the State of New Hampshire Passed June Session, 1858 (Concord: John F. Brown, 1858), p. 2019, Chapter 212*; "The selectmen of every town shall allow or abate a sum not exceeding three dollars from the tax of any inhabitant who shall construct, and during the year keep in repair, a watering-trough beside the highway, well supplied with water sufficiently elevated and easily accessible for horses and carriages . . . if said selectmen shall deem the same necessary for the convenience of the traveling public."

<sup>80</sup> U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Special Report on the Diseases of the Horse* (rev ed.) Washington: United States Printing Office, 1923. See the chapter on "Infectious Diseases;" "Public watering troughs and the feed boxes of boarding stables and the tavern stables of market towns are among the most common recipients for the virus of glanders, which is most dangerous in its fresh state . . ." See also, G. Terry Sharrer, "The Great Glanders Epizootic," *Agricultural History* 69:1 (Winter 1995): 79-97. For the general benefit of watering troughs along highways, see *The Illustrated Stock-Doctor* (1880 with later eds.), p. 138: "When driving, water should be offered, especially in hot weather, at every stop . . ."

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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- 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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 1.6 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| A. Latitude: 42.987506° | Longitude: -71.812747° |
| B. Latitude: 42.987175° | Longitude: -71.812161° |
| C. Latitude: 42.986564° | Longitude: -71.811664° |
| D. Latitude: 42.986444° | Longitude: -71.812250° |
| E. Latitude: 42.986033° | Longitude: -71.812222° |

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F. Latitude: 42.986022°

Longitude: -71.812539°

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the nominated property are defined on the east by the right-of-way of the Second New Hampshire Turnpike, and on the north and west by the curving right-of-way of New Hampshire Route 136. On the south, the boundary of the nominated property is defined by lines that run approximately east and west and represent the northern lot lines of the adjacent properties at 36 Second New Hampshire Turnpike (east) and 27 Greenfield Road or New Hampshire Route 136 (west).

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The selected boundaries are the lot lines of Francestown Tax Map 13, Lot 41 and Lot 42, the land parcels of the nominated properties.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: James L. Garvin  
organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number: 470 North Pembroke Road  
city or town: Pembroke state: NH zip code: 03275  
e-mail james@jamesgarvin.net  
telephone: 603-856-4871  
date: November 28, 2015

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## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

## Photo Log

Name of Property: Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Fracestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH



Fracestown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common

Hillsborough--NH

Name of Property

County and State

Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: October 14, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #1 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0001)  
Fracestown Town Hall and Academy building, with horse sheds at right and a portion of the  
town common in the foreground. Camera facing southwest.

Name of Property: Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Fracestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: October 14, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #2 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0002)  
Fracestown Town Hall and Academy building. Exterior view of north (front) and west  
elevations. Camera facing southeast.

Name of Property: Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Fracestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: May 28, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #3 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0003)  
Fracestown Town Hall and Academy building. Town Hall (auditorium), first story. Camera  
facing southeast. Wooden support columns are temporary during strengthening of the second  
floor.

Name of Property: Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District

Francestown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common

Hillsborough--NH

Name of Property

County and State

City or Vicinity: Francestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: May 28, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #4 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0004)  
Francestown Town Hall and Academy building. Main academy classroom, second story.  
Camera facing southwest.

Name of Property: Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Francestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: May 28, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #5 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0005)  
Francestown Town Hall and Academy building. Kingpost roof trusses, with a portion of the  
queenpost truss that supports the bell tower in the immediate foreground. Camera facing  
south.

Name of Property: Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Francestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: October 14, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #6 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0006)  
Francestown Town Hall and Academy building. Horse sheds, exterior. Camera facing  
northwest.

Francestown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common  
Name of Property

Hillsborough--NH  
County and State

Name of Property: Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Francestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: October 14, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #7 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0007)  
Francestown Town Hall and Academy building. Horse sheds, interior. Camera facing south.

Name of Property: Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Francestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: October 14, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #8 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0008)  
Francestown Town Hall and Academy building. Horse sheds, detail showing the juncture of  
a wall post, tie beam, wall plates, and rafter, and illustrating the surface texture of the sawn  
timbers and the recessed joints that characterize square rule timber framing. Camera facing  
southwest.

Name of Property: Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Francestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: October 14, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #9 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0009)

Fracestown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common  
Name of Property

Hillsborough--NH  
County and State

Exterior of "Beehive" or Butterfield Block (Fracestown Academy Boarding House), north and west elevations. Camera facing southeast.

Name of Property: Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Fracestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: October 14, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #10 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0010)  
Exterior of "Beehive" or Butterfield Block (Fracestown Academy Boarding House), west and south elevations. Camera facing northeast.

Name of Property: Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Fracestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: June 5, 2015  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #11 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0011)  
Interior of "Beehive" or Butterfield Block (Fracestown Academy Boarding House).  
Northwest kitchen, showing cooking fireplace with oven at left. Camera facing southwest.

Name of Property: Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Fracestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: June 20, 2015  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Fracestown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common  
Name of Property

Hillsborough--NH  
County and State

Photo #12 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0012)  
Fairbanks platform scales, showing beam box at the right. Camera facing southwest.

Name of Property: Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Fracestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: June 20, 2015  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #13 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0013)  
Public watering trough. Camera facing northeast.

Name of Property: Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Fracestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: James L. Garvin  
Date of Photograph: June 5, 2015  
Location of Original Digital Files: 30 South Main St., Concord, NH 03301

Photo #14 (NH\_Hillsborough County\_ Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District\_0014)  
Granite boulder with bronze tablet, 1933, commemorating academy principal Henry S.  
Cowell. Camera facing south.

Fracestown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common  
Name of Property

Hillsborough--NH  
County and State



**Figure 1.** Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, circa 1870.  
From John R. Schott, *Frances' Town: A History of Fracestown, New Hampshire*  
(Fracestown: by the town, 1972).

This photograph records the original window sashes of the building and the two doors that originally flanked the wide central doorway.

Fracestown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common  
Name of Property

Hillsborough--NH  
County and State



**Figure 2.** Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, circa 1890.

From W. R. Cochrane and George K. Wood, *History of Fracestown, N. H. From its Earliest Settlement April, 1758 to January 1, 1891*. Fracestown, N. H.: by the town, 1895.

This photograph shows the conversion of the two flanking doorways into windows, the installation of new sashes in the windows of the first story, and the construction of a new stair landing, partially blocking the first story window on the west (right). The original window sashes remained on the second story, occupied by Fracestown Academy.

Fracestown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common  
Name of Property

Hillsborough--NH  
County and State



**Figure 3.** Fracestown Town Hall and Academy, circa 1910. From a post card published by E. D. Putnam, Antrim, New Hampshire.

This photograph records the replacement of the window sashes on the second (Academy) story of the building with the sashes that remain in use. By this date, the exterior of the building had attained the appearance that it retains at the date of this nomination.



Francestown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common  
Name of Property

Hillsborough--NH  
County and State

### Index of Figures:

#### Figure 1

Name of Property: Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Francestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: Unknown  
Date of Photograph: Circa 1870  
From John R. Schott, *Frances' Town: A History of Francestown, New Hampshire*  
(Francestown: by the town, 1972).

#### Figure 2

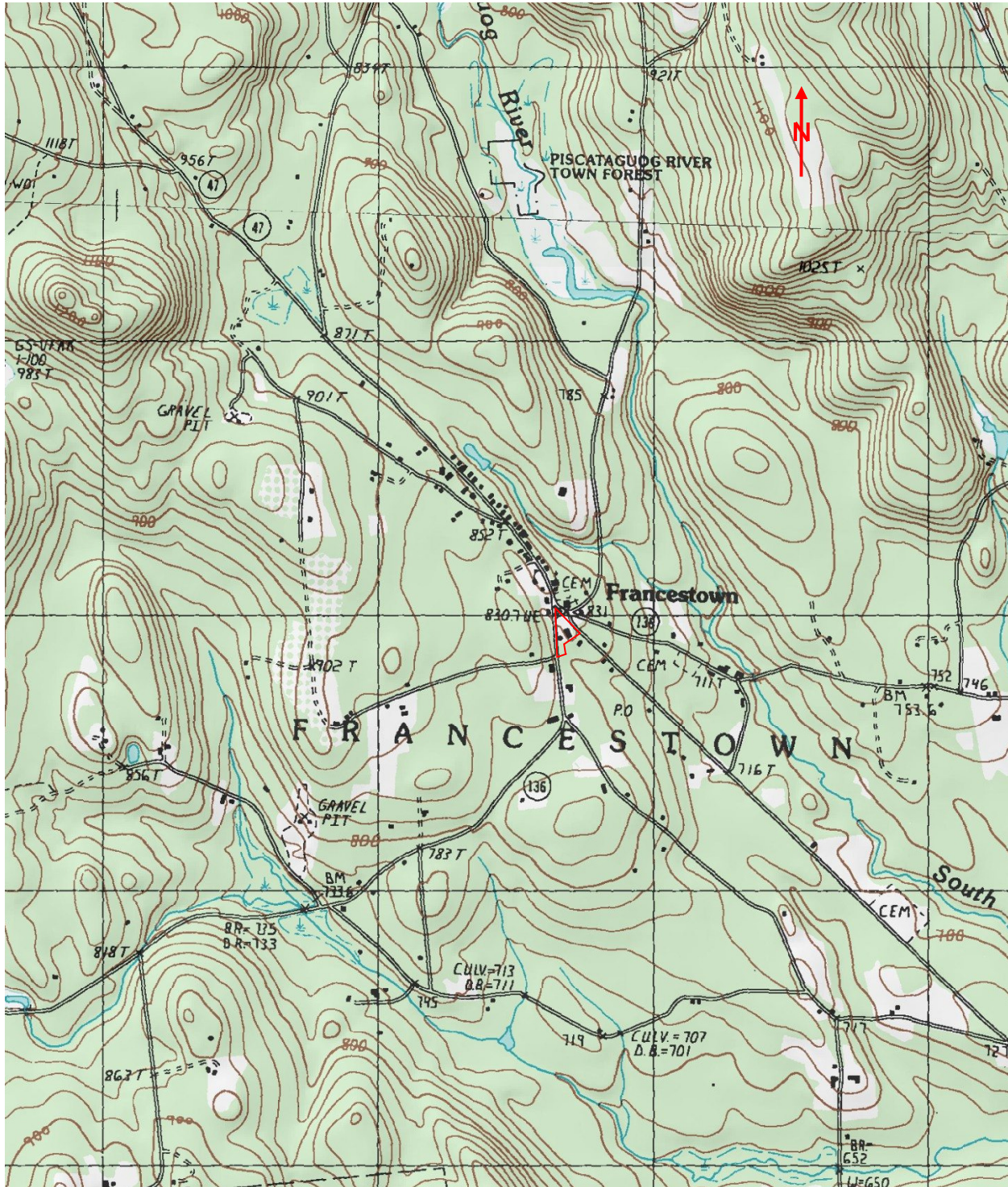
Name of Property: Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Francestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: Unknown  
Date of Photograph: Circa 1890  
From W. R. Cochrane and George K. Wood, *History of Francestown, N. H. From its Earliest  
Settlement April, 1758 to January 1, 1891*. Francestown, N. H.: by the town, 1895.

#### Figure 3

Name of Property: Francestown Town Hall and Academy, and Town  
Common Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Francestown  
County: Hillsborough County  
State: NH  
Name of Photographer: Unknown  
Date of Photograph: Circa 1910  
From a post card published by E. D. Putnam, Antrim, New Hampshire.

Francestown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common  
Name of Property

Hillsborough--NH  
County and State



Francetown Town Hall and Academy and Town  
Common  
Name of Property

Hillsborough--NH  
County and State



**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.







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Exhibit  
1234

THIMBLE FOR HEAT

EXHIBIT ROOM  
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STOP

Fairbanks Scales





HERVEY S. COWELL, A.M., PD. D.  
PRINCIPAL  
FRANCESTOWN ACADEMY  
1876 — 1883  
DEDICATED BY HIS PUPILS  
IN LOVING MEMORY OF HIS WORK  
AUGUST 30, 1933



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Francestown Town Hall and Academy and Town Common Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW HAMPSHIRE, Hillsborough

DATE RECEIVED: 2/19/16 &pw DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: &pw DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/05/16  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000143

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 4/5/16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

L

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



---

NEW HAMPSHIRE DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

**Fax:** (202) 371-6447

**From:** Peter Michaud

**Subject:** National Register Transmittal Letter

**Date:** March 3, 2016

**Page 3 of 3**

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Dear Lisa,

Town Hall and Academy and Town Common are now on the nomination for Franconstown  
National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Peter Michaud  
National Register, Preservation Tax Incentives,  
& Easements Coordinator  
19 Pillsbury Street  
Concord, NH 03301  
(603) 271 3583 fax (603) 271 3433  
Peter.michaud@dcr.nh.gov