



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1272

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Asa Bates Memorial Chapel

other names/site number Ten Lots Chapel

2. Location

street & number 2 Ten Lots Road N/A not for publication

city or town Fairfield Center vicinity

state Maine code ME county Somerset code 025 zip code 4937

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Earl S. Peterson STPS 7/12/02
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 10/31/02

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

ASA BATES MEMORIAL CHAPEL

SOMERSET CO., MAINE

Section number 7 Page 2

DESCRIPTION

The Asa Bates Memorial Chapel is a small, temple-fronted brick building set on a small corner lot in the rural community of Ten Lots in Fairfield, Maine. The west facing building is similar to a Roman temple in form, and was constructed between 1916 and 1918 for use as a chapel, library and community center. The building is one-and-a-half stories in height, and is set on a raised brick foundation and roofed with green ceramic tiles. The facade is only three bays wide, but it is dominated by a cement porch topped with four Doric columns, a wide, decorated entablature, and slightly projecting pediment. The entablature continues under the overhanging eaves on the north and south elevations of the building, and is decorated, on the front only, with triglyphs and guttae directly over each of the columns. The cornice is ornamented with modillions, and a fan window is placed in the center of the stuccoed face of the pediment. A single set of cement stairs approaches the entrance. The double doors are set in a simple marble surround, and crowned with a window decorated with a diamond pattern grill. Large pilasters of polished, gray marble block are placed against the masonry directly behind each of the columns. In each of the outer bays is another marble framed window with grill work; however, the windows occupy only the upper half of the marble frames, leaving space for an inscription on the marble below. The northern inscription reads:

TO THE RELIGIOUS
LITERARY AND SOCIAL
PURPOSES OF THIS
TEN LOTS COMMUNITY

HERE IN THE OLD CHURCH
REV. SAMUEL F. SMITH
AUTHOR OF
"MY COUNTRY, 'TIS OF THEE"
WAS PREACHER IN 1838-1842

The southern inscription is as follows:

THIS MEMORIAL
CHAPEL & LIBRARY
GIVEN IN 1916
BY
MILTON LAFOREST WILLIAMS
IN GRATEFUL MEMORY
OF HIS GRANDFATHER

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AND BENEFACTOR
ASA BATES
BORN 1794 DIED 1878

The north and south facades are mirror images of each other and contain three, large, evenly spaced nine-over-nine windows, under each of which is a three-light basement window topped with a wooden lintel. On the south side of the structure is a small, one story masonry extension which encloses the rectangular apse at the rear of the meeting hall. This extension is also roofed in ceramic tile, and carries the same cornice as the rests of the building, but it has a narrow frieze rather than the full entablature. A wooden door at the base of the extension provides access to the cellar, and a small window on the wall of the chapel ventilates the attic space.

The first floor interior of the chapel is divided into three spaces. A small room in the southwest corner of the building is the library; early 20th century novels and texts fill the glass cased bookshelves. The remainder of the front third of the building is designed to function as a lobby, gathering room, or, when the large sliding doors between it and the main meeting room are open, an extension of the principal meeting room. The custom made mahogany doors have nine panes of glass over two vertical wooden panels. The doors pivot in a track and lay flat against the exterior wall when not in use. The meeting room is roughly square in shape with the exception of the apse centered on the southern wall. A proscenium arch decorated with triglyphs and metopes surrounds the apse to the raised platform, which is reached via stairs on its north and south edges. All of the interior walls are of plaster, with a chair rail dividing the space into two blocks at the level of the window sills. The room is furnished with folding wooden auditorium seats. Four glass fixtures on long metal drops are suspended from the plaster ceiling. A gentle cove-moulded plaster cornice unites the ceiling with the walls.

The basement level of the Memorial Chapel is accessed through the staircase which is located just south of the library door. A small, mahogany panel located half way down the stairs opens to provides access (for sound or food?) from the meeting room to the chambers below. The western two-thirds of the basement is a large open space with tongue and groove paneling on the walls. A partition with windows and counters divides this dining area from the kitchen, which occupies the rear third of the building. There are no bathroom facilities.

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.)

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1918

Significant Dates

1918

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: _____

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Asa Bates Memorial Chapel is a striking Classical Revival building situated on the corner of a country road in the small settlement of Ten Lots, Maine. Surrounding the Chapel are 19th century farmhouses which rest on cropped fields, and mid-20th century low ranch houses with tidy gardens in front. Traffic passes north and south along the road that gives the community its name, but does not stop, for other than the Chapel there is neither store nor gas station, school nor office to entice the visitor. The inhabitants of Ten Lots are spilt among two municipalities, Fairfield to the north and Oakland in the south, and the boundary runs along the southern edge of the Chapel's parking lot. But regardless of town limits, the residents along Ten Lots road are a neighborhood unto themselves, and the distinctive, formal Chapel is at it's center. The Asa Bates Memorial Chapel is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, as an extraordinary example of small scale Classical Revival Architecture in a rural setting.

The Ten Lots community was settled in 1774 by Quakers from Massachusetts. The name refers to the original land division of ten lots of 200 acres each. A road was laid out from one end of the grant to the other, and eventually was called 'Ten Lots Road'. Many of the original lot lines, punctuated by early 19th century houses, are still visible on the landscape, but over time the small agricultural community has grown, and shed its Quaker affiliation, although many of the original families remain.

The civic focus of the community has always centered around the intersection of Gagnon and Ten Lots Road. As early as 1836 a Baptist Church was established on the corner where the Chapel was later built; across the street was a small school house. In 1915 the church was relocated to Rome, Maine, and the school house was used both for education and services for a few years. Eventually it too was moved and reused. The Chapel, which was built starting in 1916, was not constructed by the community, but for it, by a former resident of Ten Lots. Milton Laforest Williams had been raised in the neighborhood by his Uncle, Asa Bates. The following is excerpted from a biographical sketch of Williams, written sometime after his death in 1919.

Laforest, the name by which he was best known, lived with his grandparents from about the age of six years to about seventeen. He worked at farming and attended school at the Ten Lots Union schoolhouse and one session of the high school in what is now Oakland and may be considered one of the alumni....With his bright and happy disposition he was as a boy a general favorite wherever he was known. By his natural abilities and successful business career he came from poverty with no material assistance from anyone, honestly gained considerable wealth

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which he used generously where it was needed, and he gratefully remembering his old friends and with reverence for the memory of his grandfather, the "grand old man" as he called him, and who in his kindheartedness had been more than mother and father to him in his orphanage, he erected and furnished at the expense of about \$8,000 the beautiful Asa Bates Memorial Chapel at Ten Lots which stands on the spot where he with his grandfather attended meetings usually led by his grandfather, and endowed it with the sum of \$10,000.00 more.

He gave during his lifetime \$1,000 for the fountain and iron fence in and surrounding Lake View Cemetery in Oakland. He is buried in this cemetery with his mother and sister, and by his last will and testament the Cemetery Association has the interest of \$1,000 in perpetuity for flowers and care. (Bryant, c. 1924.)

Williams gift was intended to enhance the life of the community on many levels. As stated in the deed from Ten Lots Union Young Peoples Society of Christian Endeavor and Milton L. Williams to United Baptist Convention of Maine, "all the property both real and personal so held in trust by the said Convention shall be devoted to Christian, Moral, Literary and Social purposes which shall meet the approval of the said Convention...." From the beginning it served as home to the local chapter of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, and until the mid 1920s a minister regularly conducted services in the building. However, the building's function was not solely religious.

It was the intention of Mr. Williams that the building should serve as a community center and it is admirably adapted to that end.... There is a fine assembly room suitable for religious services or social gatherings, separated from the lobby by folding doors so arranged that both rooms can be thrown into one should the occasion require. A smaller room is reserved for library purposes and already there is the nucleus of a good circulating library. A kitchen and dining room has been installed in the basement and the whole edifice shows a kindness and thoughtfulness (sic) on the part of Mr. Williams by which he will ever be held in grateful remembrance by the people of Ten Lots. (Old Home Day and Service of Dedication of the Asa Bates Memorial Chapel at Ten Lots, Maine)

In addition, a bequest from William's estate gave \$25,000 to the Oakland, Maine School department for the construction of their new high school, which was subsequently named 'Williams High School'.

Although a fair amount is known about Williams, nobody knows who designed the Asa Bates

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Memorial Chapel. No architect is mentioned in the newspaper articles covering the chapel's dedication, nor are there any documents in the Chapel's archives that identify him or her.

The placement of this structure on the landscape of Ten Lots contributes to its distinctiveness; no other structure in the neighborhood commands such a presence. Other Neo Classical buildings were being constructed on a larger scale, by noted architects, in the region. For example, on the northeast edge of Fairfield the Hinckley Good Will Home (Historic District, NR: 87000232) four Georgian Revival or Neo Classical masonry structures were constructed between 1905 and 1920 to house students and classrooms. Yet each of these structures combine classical motifs in non-classical forms. Classically inspired buildings were also erected at Colby College in nearby Waterville in the 1920s, but again, the scale and form of these buildings do not exhibit the crisp Roman lines of the Bates Chapel. In addition, both of these establishments were in campus settings, while this chapel was located in a rural community. A comparison of religious buildings constructed during the same era reveals some similarities between the Chapel in Ten Lots and the Christian Science Church on Neal Street in Portland. Finished in 1915, this brick, classical church features on its facade a well proportioned pediment, full entablature and high foundation. As with the Chapel, four Doric columns support the pediment, however the colonnade does not span the entire face, only the middle bay, with the outside bays comprised of brick walls. In the back of the recessed entry three fan-topped Georgian Revival doors give access to the interior. Designed by Brigham Coventry and Bisbee of Boston, the Christian Science Church shares the formalism and symmetry of the Chapel, albeit in the urban setting of Portland.

Similar in scale and location to the Chapel is the Bradford Public Library, in Bradford, Maine. Located in a small village, the refined, small brick structure sits atop a high stone foundation, and features a fan-lighted central entrance with diminutive Ionic columns, and cornice returns suggesting a pediment. Nonetheless, while this building, constructed in 1914-1915 exhibits the essence of Roman Neo Classicism, the actual expression of the style is restrained.

The origins of the Asa Bates Chapel become clearest in comparison with the structures on yet another campus setting; the Pavilions of Thomas Jefferson at the University of Virginia. Built in the early 19th century these educational and residential spaces reflect Jefferson's passion for Classic Roman architecture, combined with his intense drive towards rationality. The 20 pavilions make use of porticos with full entablature and classically proportioned pediments with fan lights.. Among the buildings the full range of Roman ornamentation and details appear. It is not known if these examples of Jeffersonian Classicism served as the direct inspiration for the structure at Ten Lots, however, no where else in Maine is this style so fully articulated as in the Asa Bates Memorial Chapel's form, proportions, and detailing. As an edifice dedicated to moral, religious, social and literary ideals, the Chapel proclaims the highest level of intentions for the community of Ten Lots to strive towards.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Tozier, Coralie, compiler. *200th Anniversary History Town of Fairfield, Maine, 1788-1988*. (Fairfield, Maine: Fairfield Historical Society), 1988.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is fully described by the Town of Fairfield tax map #5, lot 22.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundaries represent all the property historically associated with the Asa Bates Memorial Chapel.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1 of 5

Christi A. Mitchell

June 24, 2002

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

West facade; looking east.

Photograph 2 of 5

Christi A. Mitchell

June 24, 2002

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Northwest elevation; looking southeast.

Photograph 3 of 5

Christi A. Mitchell

June 24, 2002

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Northeast elevation; looking southwest.

Photograph 4 of 5

Christi A. Mitchell

June 24, 2002

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Interior, meeting room; looking southeast.

Photograph 5 of 5

Christi A. Mitchell

June 24, 2002

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Interior, meeting room; looking northwest.