

PH 0501191

DATA SHEET

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 19 1977
DATE ENTERED	AUG 26 1977

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Third Fitzwilliam Meeting House

AND/OR COMMON

Fitzwilliam Town Hall

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Village Green, Fitzwilliam, N. H.

2nd NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fitzwilliam

VICINITY OF

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New Hampshire

33

Cheshire

005

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Public Meetings

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Town of Fitzwilliam

STREET & NUMBER

Town Offices

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Fitzwilliam

VICINITY OF

New Hampshire 03447

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cheshire County Registry of Deeds, Cheshire County Court House

STREET & NUMBER

12 Court Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Keene

New Hampshire 03431

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

New Hampshire Historic Preservation Plan

DATE

1970

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

NH State Historic Preservation Office, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development

CITY, TOWN

Box 856

STATE

Concord, New Hampshire 03301

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED	Interior only	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The cornerstone of the Fitzwilliam Town Hall was laid on May 28, 1817¹ and the finished structure dedicated on Nov. 26 of the same year² as the Third Fitzwilliam Meeting House, to serve both as a place of worship and as a meeting hall in which to conduct the town's business. It is a replica of the second meeting house and was erected on the same site soon after the preceding structure was destroyed by fire during a severe electric storm on Jan. 17, 1817³. This was only nine weeks after its dedication on Nov. 6, 1816.^{4,5} Following typical New England village planning, the Town Hall faces the village Common, which it shares with other early 19th century buildings: library (1804), historical museum (1837), Fitzwilliam Inn (operating since 1793 in present and preceding buildings) and fine Federal and Greek Revival residences.

The white clapboard structure is of heavy wood frame construction with mortise and tenon pegged joints. It is rectangular in plan, approximately 58 feet wide and 66 feet long, with 30 foot posts. There is an open porch on the front (west) end, extending about 6 feet beyond the main building and some 40 feet across. The granite porch floor has a double flight of steps across the front and along the sides. The roof ridge is at right angles to the facade and the main and porch gables form a double pediment on the front elevation. A four-stage tower and steeple rise from the porch and main roofs.

The main facade is framed by closely spaced pairs of Ionic pilasters at each front corner of the building and by coupled Ionic columns at the ends of the porch. These support an entablature continuous across the pediments, ending at the cornerboards. The cornice departs from the neoclassic vocabulary, having sculptured inverted pyramidal brackets with doubled triangular "tassels" extending below the applied baseline on which each pyramid rests. Similar brackets are carried up the rakes of the two pediments.

The main pediment and the tower rising through it are clapboarded. The porch pediment is flush-boarded and has an eight-section vertical ovoid window with a molded frame and further decoration in the form of applied detail encirclement beyond the frame, an urn above and crossed olive branches below.

The facade under the porch has, on the first floor, a central double-hung door flanked by two smaller side doors, all under one lintel decorated with carved rosettes and surmounted by a molded and carved cap. The door frames have simple backbanded surrounds. At the second story level there is a central Palladian window group flanked by 12/12 double-hung windows directly aligned with the doors below. Formalized vine carvings are seen above the side windows of the Palladian group. Curiously, the arched portion of the central window extends above the porch ceiling, necessitating a similar arched section in the ceiling itself. Double-hung windows, matching those under the porch, are placed on both sides of the main facade, one at each story.

The tower and steeple rise in four diminishing stages. The first is square with clock faces on the four sides and a projecting boxed cornice with curved brackets and applied decoration of the architrave. Below the front clock face is a panel displaying three swag decorations. On the four corners of the roof are small "Gothic" spires⁹. Next is the belfry, also square, which has four identical arched openings with keystones, backbanded surrounds and simple molded imposts. The arches, enclosed by railings and balusters across each opening, are framed by paired pilasters on elevated bases with

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swag decorations in the spandrels. The entablature has a diamond-patterned architrave, curved brackets and dentils, surmounted by a continuous balustrade with corner pedestals and urns.

The third stage is octagonal, having round-arched openings between creased pilasters which form the corners of the octagon. Four of the openings have fixed blinds painted green; the others have 6/6 double-hung windows with fan blinds in the arched space above. Below a simple boxed cornice are dentils and plain architrave. The fourth stage, surrounded by a balustrade with pedestals and urns, is also octagonal. It is sheathed with flush boarding on which are painted (green) vertical ovoid panels with "muntins" outlined in white. The fourth stage has pilasters like those of the third stage. The entablature is simpler, with plain architrave and curved brackets. Above the fourth stage is the final balustrade with an intersecting pattern of curved lattice pieces between pedestals surmounted by small urns. A slender shingled spire rises from the fourth stage, terminating in a ball from which a rod projects to carry a gold-leafed weathervane. Total height above the ground is about 100 feet.

A bell from the Paul Revere & Son Foundry (No. 166) was installed in the 1816 meeting house¹⁰ and there is a persisting but unconfirmed report that it was unharmed by the fire and was installed once again in the 1817 structure^{11,12}. Records of the Revere foundry show, however, that a second bell (No. 189) was shipped to Fitzwilliam in the autumn of 1817¹³. This strongly suggests that it was this second bell that went into the new building. However this may be, the bell was cracked in 1881 and recast by the Wm. Blake Co., successors to the Revere foundry, and tradition has it that 300 silver dollars were added to the metal to insure a silvery tone¹⁴. The town clock, made by E. Howard & Co., was installed in 1861. It was purchased by private subscription and the list of sixty donors is still preserved¹⁵.

The two side elevations are alike, each with two rows of eight 12/12 double-hung windows. The minimum decoration consists of a cornice and inverted pyramidal brackets, as previously described, cornerboards and a simple molded water table providing a visual baseline. The rear (east) facade is trimmed with cornerboards and water table; it has a simple rake detail with returns, rather than a pediment. There are four 12/12 windows on each level and, in addition, the original pulpit window is still in place, although closed off from the inside. A central rear door has been added on the first floor and a fire-escape door on the second level. An entry is provided into the basement.

The original interior has been described as follows:¹⁶ "The three fine entrance doors in the porch, with Latin crosses--crucifixion doors--originally opened into a broad entrance hall with a stairway at each end, leading to the gallery which extended around three sides of the church. The pulpit platform was at the east end, reached by gracefully curving stairs at right and left. Above it were three small windows. The pulpit itself, of unusual design, with a long panelled front and a row of detached pillars, is still in use at town meetings as the selectmen's desk. The pews were slip pews with

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doors and in many cases the names of the owners were painted on them, as they were the personal property of the holders. A beautiful chandelier of lustrous brass, handmade down to the minute half-inch screws, hung from a rosette in the ceiling."

Following legislative removal in 1858 of legal difficulties respecting the ownership of town meeting houses in New Hampshire, the structure was taken over entirely by the town and in 1860-61 an upper floor was installed, so making the galleries a part of a new second floor auditorium. The left and right entrance doors were closed and new stairways installed, thus reducing the size of the entrance hall. Town offices, a room for the town library (later removed to the adjacent 1804 residence) and a small assembly room were provided on the first floor. There was considerable agitation at the time to take down the upper stages of the steeple to reduce maintenance costs. Fortunately, this proposal was rejected¹⁷.

Externally, these alterations made no serious change in appearance. The only noticeable difference is seen in the right and left entrance doors that are now covered with Honor Roll panels listing the Fitzwilliam residents who served in World War II and the Korean conflict.

In 1949 a general renovation of the interior was undertaken, including new and larger offices and a well-equipped kitchen. The upper hall was decorated with a blue and gold stencil pattern under the supervision of John A. Berggren of Boston, a summer neighbor in Jaffrey. The chandelier of the 1817 meeting house, relegated to the attic in 1860 as hopelessly old-fashioned, was restored in Boston to its original beauty and once more hangs from its ceiling rosette. The restorer sent word: "That ought not to be in Fitzwilliam--that belongs in the Metropolitan Museum."¹⁸

A continuing program of foundation maintenance and regular repairing and painting of the building have largely prevented movement and sagging of the structure and other deterioration so that today an outside viewer sees the building essentially as it was in 1817, thus attesting to the skills and integrity of the original builders. Night-time illumination, provided through a generous endowment by a descendant of an early settler and by a boyhood resident¹⁹ reveals new beauty, unrealized during the day, and makes the spire visible for miles, rising against the night sky.

¹ Norton, Rev. John F. The History of Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire from 1752 to 1887. New York: Burr Printing House, 18 Jacob Street, 1888, p. 196. (Hereinafter referred to as "Norton, 1888")

² Norton, 1888, p. 197.

³ Norton, 1888, pp. 195-196

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- ⁴ These several dates, taken from the town history, are easily authenticated by referring to the Church Book of Records⁵ where they were recorded in the handwriting of Rev. Sabin, resident pastor at the time. This point is emphasized because of some confusion in published histories of New England meeting houses concerning the date of completion. Sinnott⁶, without comment, gives the completion date as 1818. Speare⁷ gives 1817 but also quotes from the diary of a resident of neighboring Rindge, who wrote: "June 16th, 1818, Fitzwilliam began to raise a New Meeting House and finished it today, Election Day." Bellows⁸ misquoted from the town history when he stated: "It was completed and dedicated one year and twenty days from the time of the catastrophe" (the fire of Jan. 17, 1817), thus putting the completion date in 1818. The statement in the town history, (p. 197) however, reads: "...one year and twenty days after the dedication of its predecessor", which agrees with the two dedication dates, Nov. 6, 1816 and Nov. 26, 1817. Clearly, the correct date for completion of the present structure was 1817.
- ⁵ The Church Book of Records, compiled by Rev. John Sabin, Pastor (1805-1845), Fitzwilliam Congregational Church, p. 179. This original document is kept in a safe in the Selectmen's office.
- ⁶ Sinnott, E. W. Meeting House and Church in Early New England. New York: Bonanza Books, 1958, p. 96 (Hereinafter referred to as "Sinnott, 1958")
- ⁷ Speare, E. A. Colonial Meeting Houses of New Hampshire. Published by author, Reginald M. Colby, Agent, Littleton, N.H., revised edition, 1955, pp. xv and 118. (Hereinafter referred to as "Speare, 1955")
- ⁸ Bellows, R. P. Country Meeting Houses along the Massachusetts-New Hampshire Line. New York: Russell F. Whitehead, 150 E. 61st St., 1925, p. 4.
- ⁹ Ibid. Suggests that these may be of a later date, presumably because they are not seen on the Templeton, Mass. church, from which the Fitzwilliam structure was copied. There are no local records, however, to confirm such later additions.
- ¹⁰ Stickney, Edward and Evelyn. The Bells of Paul Revere, His Sons and Grandsons. Published by authors, 9 McMahon Rd., Bedford, Mass., 1977. Also, Nichols, Arthur. The Bells of Paul and Joseph W. Revere, 1911.
- ¹¹ Fitzwilliam Bicentennial Committee. "The Story of the Town Hall," booklet published by the town, Fitzwilliam, N. H. 1963 (no page numbers). (Hereinafter referred to as "FBC, 1963")

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	¹² Speare, 1955, p. 120 and Sinnott, 1958, p. 96.	7	5
	¹³ Stickney, E. and E., idem.		
	¹⁴ FBC, 1963		
	¹⁵ Ibid.		
	¹⁶ Ibid.		
	¹⁷ Ibid.		
	¹⁸ Ibid.		
	¹⁹ Ibid.		

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1816 and 1817

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Samuel Kendall, builder
Copied from Elias Carter, architect

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architectural The Fitzwilliam meeting houses of 1816 and 1817 were patterned after the Templeton, Massachusetts church, designed by Elias Carter and built in 1811¹. Carter was a country carpenter and builder, born in Auburn, Mass. in 1781, son of an English builder from whom he is said to have inherited drawings and specifications that he used in his own work. He was a skilled carver and made up for his lack of a formal education in the arts with an innate sense of good taste and balance which he displayed regularly in his churches and other buildings. His Templeton church was evidently widely admired for it was copied in varying degrees in several neighboring towns in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.² The Fitzwilliam meeting house was the first to follow the Templeton design³ and is, perhaps, the closest copy, with the unique decorative details of the front facade, porch, and steeple quite faithfully reproduced.^{5,6}

The work was done by local craftsmen under the supervision of a master builder, Samuel Kendall, also a Fitzwilliam resident.^{7,8} Construction was certainly in the tradition of New England framed structures, with lavish use of the great oak and pine trees readily available in the surrounding primeval forests. The single-piece ridge pole (66 feet long) and king posts on which it rests, for example, are of oak, 12 inches square.⁹ The spire was built around a mast, one of the "mast trees," no doubt, once reserved for the British Navy. It was set in place by a crew of ship riggers brought from Boston.¹⁰ The four porch columns came from virgin pine trees, drawn by oxen from Fullham Hill to the building site where they were turned and shaped by hand.¹¹ To provide internal ventilation as an aid to their preservation, each column was hollowed by hand boring throughout its length.¹² The high quality of the structural design and construction was well demonstrated during the 1938 hurricane when winds in Fitzwilliam reached 115 miles per hour. The spire was seen to swing repeatedly from side to side but the building suffered little damage beyond the loss of a few roof slates.¹³

Architecturally, the Fitzwilliam Town Hall is significant for its harmony and excellent proportions and, particularly, for its successful translation from stone to wood and adaptation to the needs of small country churches of the earlier Baroque churches in England designed by Wren and Gibbs and their followers.¹⁴ It shares this distinction, of course, with many other New England meeting houses of the Federal period, which have been characterized by Sinnott as "true works of art."¹⁵ A continuing widespread admiration for the Fitzwilliam meeting house is attested to by the almost daily visits during the summer and fall seasons by painters and photographers who wish to record its beauty.

Continued on Continuation Sheet 6

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Norton, Rev. John F. The History of Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire from 1752 to 1887. New York, Burr Printing House, 8 Jacob St., 1888.
- Fitzwilliam Bicentennial Committee. "The Story of the Town Hall." Booklet published by the town, Fitzwilliam, N. H., 1963.
- Speare, Eva. A. Colonial Meeting Houses of New Hampshire. Publ. by the author, Reginald M. Colby, Agent, Littleton, N. H., revised edition, 1955.
- Sinnott, E. W. Meeting House and Church in Early New England. New York: Bonanza Books, 1958.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.0

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 733575 4740075
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

NA

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA			

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Theodore F. Hatch and Jesse F. Davis

January 1977

ORGANIZATION

Fitzwilliam Historical Society and Bicentennial Committee (603) 585-6695

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Fitzwilliam

STATE

New Hampshire 03447

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

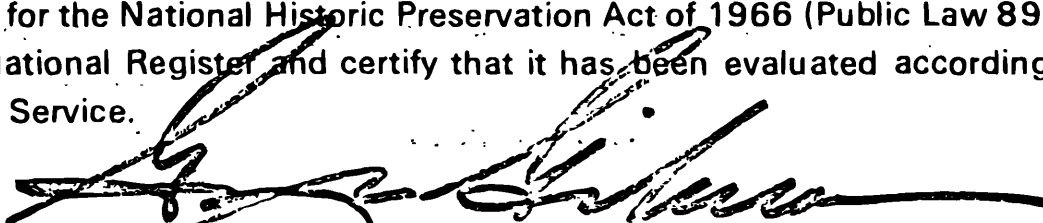
NATIONAL

STATE XXX

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.


STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE Commissioner, Department of Resources and Economic Dev
 N. H. State Historic Preservation Officer DATE MAY 11 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST 	DATE 8/26/77
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE 8.23.77

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Religion The first meeting house was built in 1770 and finished slowly over several years.¹⁶ It was a plain barn-like structure, intended as much for secular meetings as for religious worship and therefore had no great investment in the architectural and aesthetic refinements that support and strengthen the sense of worship. In this respect, it was simply a late-comer to the typical style of dual-purpose meeting house adopted widely throughout New England during the 18th century. Sinnott¹⁷ points out the growing dissatisfaction with this dual function in the last years of the 18th century and, with the religious stirring at that time, the desire to separate church from state and to confine religious services to structures having the dignity and beauty appropriate to the worship of God. In consequence, the meeting houses built in the early years of the 19th century were, for the most part, designed with this view in mind, even though the church-state connection was still functioning. This was the case in Fitzwilliam in 1816 and the choice of the Templeton design clearly anticipated the coming separation which did not take place, however, until 1832 when the Congregational Church moved into its own separate building and the town ceased to pay the minister's salary.¹⁸ This early anticipation was also evident in the relatively small appropriation by the town to help build the two structures: \$400 in 1816 and \$1,500 in 1817¹⁹ -- small fractions of the total costs -- and there is no record that the latter amount was ever used, presumably because sufficient funds came from private sources.²⁰ While not unique to Fitzwilliam, this anticipation of the coming split, after nearly 200 years under the New England Puritan tradition of total community responsibility for religious life, does give the more elegant "church" architecture, compared with the earlier severe barn-like structures, special significance. The Fitzwilliam meeting house enjoys this distinction as the first such church structure to be built in New Hampshire²¹ and its primary function as a church was well expressed by Rev. Norton in the town history of 1888²²: "Nearly all of the present generation know, and future generations ought to know, that this building was erected not for town purposes, but as a house for divine worship."

Social The Fitzwilliam Town Hall has added significance beyond its architectural quality and its meaning as a transitional style from meeting house to church. This comes from the remarkable demonstration by the people of Fitzwilliam of self-confidence and faith in the future when they rose to the challenge to replace at once the handsome structure that had been lost after only nine weeks of service. It is especially to be commended since there had been so very recently bitter division and controversy in the community over the location of the 1816 building.²³ The catastrophe brought the people together immediately and resulted in the unbelievable accomplishment of complete reconstruction in less than a year's time. The magnitude of this accomplishment is emphasized when one thinks of the great amount of labor that was required in the rebuilding, from the cutting of the trees and fashioning timbers to the redoing of the delicate carvings and other decorative details. This latter commitment to expend a great deal of extra effort to insure the beauty of the building as well as its structural quality is especially to be noted. In monetary terms, too, the accomplishment is remarkable. The cost of the 1817 building was \$6,064 and the money raised from

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pew sales (\$7,699), when added to the generous gifts from surrounding communities (\$1,000) was enough to pay the full cost and, in addition, to clear the remaining debt of \$2,000 on the 1816 structure.²⁴ Translating these amounts into 1976 dollars, one is even more impressed; the replacement cost today would certainly exceed a quarter million dollars. To this we must add that Fitzwilliam experienced unusually severe weather in 1816 and 1817, resulting in widespread crop failure, thus making these contributions doubly precious. The significance here was well expressed by Rev. Sabin in one of his historical lectures²⁵: "These things may give a little idea of the strength of a united, willing people, for the two structures were built in the two unproductive years, 1816 and 1817, cold seasons, snow or frost every month in the year, and yet the people did not suffer but got along comfortably." It is hard to imagine any small community, with similar limited resources, repeating such action today.

In this magnificent achievement, the citizens of Fitzwilliam displayed, once again, the sturdiness and strength of the New England pioneers -- characteristics that contributed so much to the growth and greatness of our country -- and the Town Hall stands today as much a national monument to our total heritage as it is a fine memorial to the early citizens of Fitzwilliam.

¹ Sinnott, 1958, p. 95.

² Sinnott, 1958, pp. 95-99.

³ A committee was sent from what is now Troy, N. H. in 1813 to view the Templeton Church⁴ and, in consequence, the early meeting house there (Troy), built in 1815, did adopt the principal motif of extended open porch and coupled columns, but little else of Carter's original design.

⁴ Stone, M. T. "Historical Sketch of Town of Troy, New Hampshire, 1764-1897." Keene, N. H.: Sentinel Printing Co., 1897, p. 104.

⁵ Among the New Hampshire meeting houses adapted from the Templeton design, those of Acworth and Hancock have enclosed porches. Speare, 1955, p. 131, suggests that "a portico was not considered in good taste for a meeting house, recalling the puritanical severity of the Pilgrim forefathers."

⁶ The inverted pyramidal brackets under the cornice and rakes of the Templeton Church and its progeny, a characteristic feature of Carter's design, are also seen of the same design on the Unitarian Church in nearby Ashby, Massachusetts. This church was built in 1809, two years before the one in Templeton, which suggests it was in part, at least, an inspirational source for Carter's design.

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⁷ FBC, 1963.

⁸ Much has been made of the fact that one Thomas Stratton was paid \$3.33 for assisting in drafting the plan for a meeting house in Fitzwilliam (FBC, 1963) and, according to Speare, 1955, p. 117, this is the only known instance in New Hampshire where a draftsman's fee was paid for such assistance. She reports that a Thomas Stratton moved from Athol, Massachusetts to Fitzwilliam in 1812 and she therefore attributes the work to him. The Fitzwilliam Town History (Norton, 1888, p. 194) states, however, that "as early as 1796 the matter of a new meeting house was brought before the town.....and that in September 1803 Thomas Stratton was paid three dollars and thirty three cents for assisting in drafting a plan for a meeting house...." The History also records that another Thomas Stratton was living in Fitzwilliam in 1798 (p. 184) and served as a selectman in 1802 and again during 1802-12 (P. 252). It is clear, therefore, that the draftsman in question could not have prepared plans for the 1816 and 1817 meeting houses since his work in 1803 preceded the construction of the Templeton church by 8 years.

⁹ FBC, 1963.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² In striking contrast to the correct Ionic bases of wood construction on the paired pilasters at the corners of the building, the coupled columns on the porch have square granite blocks with their corners chamfered in ogee curves. We can find no supporting local records to confirm the suggestion of Speare, 1955, p. 119, that "after years of weathering the bases decayed and were replaced by granite blocks." Interestingly, Bellows (1925) also suggested that the [incorrect] elevated bases under the Templeton columns were replacements for the same reason. We prefer to believe that, in parallel with the original protection given by the hollowed-out columns, the builders of the Fitzwilliam meeting house employed the granite block bases to avoid the inevitable decay of wooden bases. Similar granite bases were placed under the columns on the open porch of the Park Hill church in nearby Westmoreland, N. H., ca. 1825.

¹³ FBC, 1963.

¹⁴ Sinnott, 1958, p. 25.

¹⁵ Sinnott, 1958, p. 75.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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¹⁶West, Mrs. H. W. Fitzwilliam Bicentennial--History of Fitzwilliam. Published by the town of Fitzwilliam, N.H., 1963.

¹⁷Sinnott, 1958, pp. 23-25.

¹⁸Norton, 1888, p. 202.

¹⁹Norton, 1888, pp. 195, 197.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 197, 356.

²¹Speare, 1955, p. 209.

²²Norton, 1888, p. 356.

²³Ibid., pp. 194-195. Such disagreement was quite common in the New England villages because everyone wanted to live near the meeting house to avoid long trips on cold winter days. Sinnott, 1958, p. 9, states that in Stonington, Connecticut, the church was built on "Agreement Hill," so named because of the unusually amicable decision respecting its location!

²⁴Norton, 1888, p. 356.

²⁵Ibid., p. 196.