

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

RECEIVED MAY 14 1990

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Elm Street Congregational Church & Parish House other names/site number

2. Location

street & number SE Corner of Elm & Franklin Streets not for publication city, town Bucksport vicinity state Maine code ME county Hancock code 009 zip code 04416

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public ownership and building/site/structure/object categories. Resource counts: Contributing 2, Noncontributing 0, Total 2.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: [Signature] Date: 5/17/90 State or Federal agency and bureau: Maine Historic Preservation Commission

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official Date State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

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

Entered in the National Register

[Signature] 6/14/90

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious Structure

**7. Description**Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Second Empire

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/Granite

walls Wood/Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other Portico and Tower on Church;

Tower fronting Parish House

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Located at the southeast corner of Elm and Franklin Streets, this pair of wooden frame buildings consists of the 1838 church building and the 1876 parish house. They are now linked by a narrow, deeply recessed passageway. In addition, a modern wing has been added to the rear of the vestry. The church features a narrow portico and a ridge mounted tower whose spire has been removed for repairs, whereas the T-shaped parish house has a projecting tower on the facade. Both buildings are sheathed in weatherboards and rest on granite foundations.

Facing west, the church's flush sheathed facade is divided into two distinct elements: the projecting pedimented portico whose four fluted columns define the three-bay composition, and the broad recessed endwall whose pediment frames the portico. Two flights of granite steps rise to the paneled two-leaf entrances between which are coupled six-over-six windows covered by shutters. A trio of similar grouped windows occupies the upper level of the portico. All of these openings have wide symmetrically molded surrounds and plain corner blocks. Paneled pilasters are located at the corners where they rise to the broad entablature. The three stage tower, which was added in 1850, consists of a short base, a squat intermediate stage composed of rectangular panels and shallow pediments, and a belfry stage each side of which features a full entablature, projecting pilasters and round-arched louvered openings with a balustrade. A temporary cap covers the belfry while the spire awaits the repair of the tower prior to its reinstallation.

The four-bay nave sidewalls are punctuated by long groups of paired nine-over-nine-over-nine triple-hung windows. In 1855-56 the eastern-most bay was added to accommodate additional pews. The full entablature carries across the elevations terminating at the corners with pilasters similar to those on the facade. Situated between the third and fourth bay of the south side is the gabled connector which, by virtue of its low profile and position, has little impact on the church. It was built in 1978. At the rear are two corner entrances added in 1962, one of which provides handicapped access. A small window is located in the tympanum of the pediment.

 See continuation sheet

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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Inside, vestibules are located on either side of the organ enclosure although they are linked by a narrow passage. The nave contains two groups of pews between a center and side aisle. A projecting round-arched opening frames the chancel and this is opposed by a segmentally arched opening that houses the Hook organ which was installed in 1863. The organ itself is located within a wooden enclosure exhibiting a Palladian composition. Shallow molded ribs form a geometric pattern on the flat ceiling.

The vestry facade is dominated by the tower which rises through three levels and the pedimented gable end to a mansard roof. Paired four-over-four windows below shallow pedimented hoods are located in the first two levels and a large bulls-eye window framed by an intricate surround is set in the third. Windows similar to those on the tower are located on the recessed flanking walls of the gable. Two-leaf doors open into vestibules on each of the deeply recessed wings that form the "T". Additional windows are located on the sides of the vestibules and leg of the "T", whereas much larger twelve-over-twelve units are located in the side gable ends. All of the window and door openings are capped by pediments. On the rear elevation of the vestry is a one-story hip roofed addition behind which is the much larger modern gabled wing housing a kitchen and offices.

The interior of the vestry features a front room below the tower that has an elaborate plaster ceiling medallion, and a much larger space behind used for community and church gatherings. This has been altered somewhat by the relocation of the low raised platform from one end to the rear wall.

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1838, 1876

Significant Dates

1838

1855-56

1876

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Deane, Benjamin S., Architect of Church

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

Bucksport's Elm Street Congregational Church and Parish House, which were built in 1838 and 1876, respectively, are significant and highly visible aspects of this community's important historic architecture. Although the designer of the parish house has not as yet been identified, the church was created by Benjamin S. Deane (1790-1867), a noted Bangor architect who received a number of church commissions from congregations in eastern Maine. This particular example is an important example of Deane's early work in the Greek Revival style and is, therefore, eligible for nomination to the National Register under criterion C and criteria consideration A.

Born in Thomaston, Maine, Benjamin S. Deane's first known commission came in 1827 when he designed and oversaw construction of the Thomaston Congregational Church (destroyed). The wooden frame edifice, with its very typical Federal style configuration utilizing a narrow projecting vestibule and a crowning three stage tower and octagonal belfry, set the pattern for his early work. His 1831 North Congregational Church in Belfast (altered) is a virtual replica of the Thomaston Church. (A pair of buildings in Warren (1828) and Searsport (1834) are remarkably similar, although these latter two have not been positively linked to Deane.)

In 1837 the most significant of Deane's religious edifices was completed in the small coastal community of Sedgwick. The First Baptist Church (N.R. 4/24/73) testifies to his total embrace of the Greek Revival style. Despite his having overseen construction in 1836 of Richard Upjohn's Gothic Revival St. John's Episcopal Church in Bangor, Deane clearly favored the elements of classical design. In Sedgwick he developed a scheme that combined a monumental Doric portico attached to a rectangular nave with a robust entablature and pilasters, and an unusual tower with a broad squat base supporting the tall belfry. Construction of this church had not yet been completed before Deane received the Commission for the Congregational Church in Bucksport.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Deane, Benjamin S., Architect file. Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine.  
Elm Street Congregational Church History. Typescript copy on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreege of property 1.5

**UTM References**

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property occupies the Town of Bucksport tax map 32 lot 134.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary embraces the buildings and entire lot historically associated with this property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Kirk F. Mohny, Architectural Historian  
organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date 3/90  
street & number 55 Capitol Street telephone (207) 289-2132  
city or town Augusta, state Maine zip code 04333

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The December 13, 1836, edition of the Bangor Whig and Courier carried a notice addressed to "House Joiners" that proposals were being solicited:

...for the building and completing from the sills, a Meeting House in this village of the following dimensions - 45 by 60 feet, 22 feet posts, according to a plan which may be seen by application to the Subscribers, or to Col. S. B. Dean [sic], at Bangor. The builders to furnish the materials and have the House completed by the 20<sup>th</sup> September next.

Deane's conception of the Elm Street Church, while it was related in spirit to the Sedgwick edifice, was also quite different. In place of the superb portico and unusual composition of the tower, Deane fell back upon a more traditional gabled nave to which he appended a shallow portico. Although this church does not exhibit the understanding of classical proportions which the architect displayed in Sedgwick, it depicts nonetheless an important step between Deane's earlier buildings and his pattern for subsequent more modest commissions. These later churches include the Congregational Church (1842-43) in Blue Hill and the Union Church (1852) in Somesville. In the former, pilasters framing the facade window and door openings rise to a pediment whose tympanum carries an elliptical fan, whereas at Somesville the pediment rested above pilasters and a pair of columns set in antis in front of the recessed entrance. Thus, the Elm Street commission is only one of two church buildings in which Deane utilized a monumental portico.

Despite the September, 1837 deadline for completing the building as advertised, the Elm Street Church was not finished until 1838. It is presumed that a tower was installed at the time, although there is no known visual or descriptive record of the original. In 1850, however, this tower was replaced by the existing one. Further changes were made to the church in 1855-56 when the east end was lengthened by 17'18" to accommodate twenty more pews; in 1863 the organ and its housing were installed; and sometime thereafter an elaborate trompe l'oeil decorative finish was applied to the interior. This latter treatment apparently survived until 1928 when Harry Cochrane, himself a noted decorator of church interiors, "restored" the interior to its earlier appearance. In 1876 the parish house was built adjacent to the church, but its designer or builder are not as yet known.

The history of the Elm Street Congregational Church has its origins with the founding in 1803 of the "Congregational Church State of Buckstown." After holding services throughout the community for many years, the congregation elected to build a meeting house. Daniel Pike, about whom little is known, designed this church which was erected between 1811 and 1814. This served the parish until the new structure was completed. It was subsequently sold to the town, moved, and converted to the town hall and Lyceum Hall. A fire destroyed it in 1910.