



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 *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 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. 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 Temple Town Hall

other names/site number Union Hall; Miller Grange Hall

2. Location

street & number Main Street opp. the intersection of NH Rt. 45 and Gen. Miller Hwy. N/A not for publication

city or town Temple N/A vicinity

state New Hampshire code NH county Hillsborough code 011 zip code 03084

3. 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James McConaha 4/30/07
Signature of certifying official Date

NEW HAMPSHIRE
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 commenting or other official 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):

Signature of Keeper *Robert H. Beall* Date of Action 6-12-07

5. Classification

| Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) | Category of Property (Check only one box) | Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count) | |
|---|---|--|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district | <u>1</u> | buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | | sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | | structures |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | | objects |
| | | <u>1</u> | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

6. Function or Use

| Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions) | | Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions) | |
|---|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Cat: <u>RELIGION</u> | Sub: <u>religious facility</u> | Cat: <u>SOCIAL</u> | Sub: <u>meeting hall</u> |
| <u>GOVERNMENT</u> | <u>city hall</u> | | |
| <u>SOCIAL</u> | <u>meeting hall</u> | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

7. Description

| Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions) | Materials (Enter categories from instructions) |
|---|--|
| <u>MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival</u> | foundation <u>STONE/granite</u> |
| | roof <u>ASPHALT</u> |
| | walls <u>WOOD/Weatherboard</u> |
| | other <u>N/A</u> |

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Temple Town Hall
Hillsborough County, NH

Description:

The Temple Town Hall is a rectangular, wood-framed building that stands in Temple Village, facing a town common in the company of a number of other public, private, and commercial buildings. Immediately to the north of the Town Hall is the Mansfield Public Library, a brick structure that has been remodeled and enlarged on several occasions. Behind or to the northwest of the Town Hall are a number of town sheds and utilitarian buildings. South of the Town Hall is the Goodyear Chapel, a former district schoolhouse that has been converted to a Congregational vestry through remodeling and through the addition of a wing to the south of the original building. South of the chapel is the third Congregational meeting house, a Greek Revival building that was built in 1842, the same year as the Town Hall, differing from the latter mainly in having a short spire rising from the parapet above its belfry stage. South of the Congregational meeting house is a village store, a wooden structure composed of two gable-roofed, Italianate store buildings that have been connected by a high, flat-fronted wood-framed link. South of the store, completing the row of buildings on the west side of the Temple Town Common, is the Wheeler-Banks House, a hip-roofed frame dwelling dating to 1797.

The Town Hall is a gable-roofed structure with the gable end facing east, standing on a foundation of granite underpinning that was split with flat wedges. The eastern gable is surmounted by a tower and serves as the building's façade. The building originally measured about thirty-six feet in width and forty-four feet in length. A later addition, apparently dating from the 1880s, extended the length of the building some twenty feet while maintaining the full thirty-six-foot width of the structure, providing volume for a stage area for dramatic presentations and Grange rituals. This extension is marked by balloon framing, in contrast to the heavy, mortised and tenoned frame of the original structure. A second addition, added in 2005, extends to the west of the first. The newer addition is somewhat lower and narrower than the addition of the 1880s, thus expressing its architectural subordination to the earlier portions of the building.

The original building has a heavy, hewn frame that is visible in the crawl space beneath the structure and in the attic. The roof is framed with three queenpost trusses, the easternmost of which supports the rear corner posts of the tower. Heavy purlins run longitudinally through the building at the shoulders of the roof trusses. Sawn common rafters lie atop these purlins and hold horizontal roof sheathing. The principal members of the frame reveal the use of square rule framing, having recessed seats at the mortise and tenon joints. The queenposts and the tie beams appear to be attached to one another by vertical iron bolts, which pass through the tie beams from

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below, extend upward through the centers of the queenposts a short distance, and are threaded through square iron nuts that are centered in mortises that are cut through the queenposts from front to back. Ceiling joists mortised or toenailed to the lower arrises of the tie beams support a ceiling of split-board lath, which has subsequently been covered with a pressed steel ceiling.

The building is treated as a one-story structure, but a rectangular fifteen-light transom sash above the front entrance, and the upper sashes of two flanking front windows, lie above the floor level of a ten-foot-deep gallery in the front of the building and provide light for the gallery. A square, twelve-light window in the tympanum of the front gable lights the building's attic. The building stands on a foundation of split granite underpinning stones and has a shallow crawl space beneath its floor.

The exterior walls of the building are clapboarded, while the belfry stage of the tower is sheathed in wide boards that are articulated to create a strong Greek Revival stylistic character. The façade is given a strong Grecian character by a deep wooden entablature that extends across its full width and is supported at each corner by a wide pilaster. Each pilaster is composed of a flat board edged with raised, square-edged fillets, and capped by a projecting diagonal board that suggests the echinus of the Greek Doric order. The entablature is present only on the façade and does not extend along the sides of the building. The façade has a single central entrance composed of a modern, six-panel door set within an opening that is somewhat reduced in dimensions from the original, and surmounted by the fifteen-light transom sash that lights the gallery above. The enframingent for these elements is a casing that consists of a wide, flat board with applied fillets at each edge; a plain, square wooden block marks each upper corner of the casing. The casing rises nearly to the height of the bottom of the entablature.

On each side of the central entrance is a tall window with sixteen-over-sixteen light sashes and an ovolo-and-fillet muntin profile that is characteristic of the Greek Revival style. The exterior window casings rise from heavy wooden sills and, like the casings of the doorway, are composed of a wide, flat board with applied fillets at each edge and with plain, square wooden blocks at each upper corner. As noted above, the upper sashes of the front windows light a gallery that extends across the front of the auditorium within the building.

The clapboarded sides of the building are marked by three evenly-spaced window openings on both the north and south elevations of the original buildings, with a fourth window in the center of the late-nineteenth-century extension of the building. All windows have sixteen-over-sixteen

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light sashes and casings identical to those on the building's façade. The three original windows on each side have an ovolo-and-fillet muntin profile, while the two later windows at the rear of the side walls have a narrow, sharp-edged ogee profile that was common in the late nineteenth century. All windows have modern exterior storm sashes. The side elevations of the building have a deeply projecting cornice with an ogee crown molding and an ovolo-and-cavetto bed molding.

Rising from the roof at the front of the building is a two-stage tower. The lower stage is clapboarded and has flat corner boards. The belfry stage, above, is a tall, square structure with corner pilasters and capitals like those of the main body of the building. These pilasters support a high entablature composed of a flat architrave, a fillet, a high, flat frieze, and a double cornice. Each of the four faces of the belfry stage is pierced by a tall, rectangular opening that is set within a recess bordered by flat fasciae or platbands. Below each opening is a rectangular, horizontal panel set within similar recessed fasciae. Above the cornice of the belfry stage is a vertical board parapet having tall, pyramidal spires at each corner and a diamond-shaped outline, created by applied wooden fillets, on each face.

The interior of the building combines original features with others that were added when the Universalists' Union Society sold the property to Miller Grange and, later, when the Grange sold it to the Town of Temple for use at a town hall. The most significant change to the building, the addition of the rear extension to provide a stage and antechambers for dramatic presentations, appears to have been carried out by Miller Grange before the Grange sold the property to the Town of Temple in 1889.

Today, the interior of the Town Hall is a single auditorium with chambers at the eastern end, beneath the original gallery of the church, and a stage at the western end. The rooms beneath the gallery include a kitchen in the southeast corner of the building and toilet rooms in the northeast corner. The auditorium has an oak strip floor and a pressed metal ceiling with a pebbled pattern.

The auditorium retains several features that date from construction of the building in 1842, including its 16-over-16 window sashes and fluted window casings with square corner blocks. Other details were added as the room was adapted for use as an auditorium and social space. The wainscoting is composed of vertical, beaded boards laid edge-to-edge. The proscenium of the stage has flat side and top casings. The upper corners of the stage opening are defined by heavy band-sawn brackets of the type that were used to support exterior doorway hoods in the late

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nineteenth century. The wall piers are articulated by applied moldings that appear to date from 1909 and were added to provide the appearance of panels to otherwise flat wall surfaces between each window.

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 significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory 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 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.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

A: circa 1875-1956

C: 1842

Significant Dates

1842

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

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 # _____

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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Bibliography:

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Benjamin, Asher. *The Practical House Carpenter*. Reprint of the 1830 edition. New York: DaCapo Press, 1972.

Blood, Henry Ames. *The History of Temple, New Hampshire*. Boston: George C. Rand & Avery, 1860.

Dictionary of American Biography. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928. I:557-559. [Hosea Ballou]

Haynes, Tom, ed. *Sacred and Secular: Historic Meetinghouses and Churches of the Monadnock Region*. Keene, N. H.: Historical Society of Cheshire County, 2006.

Hill, Carolyn Bailey. *The Church Among the Hills: Temple, New Hampshire, 1771-1946* [the Congregational Church]. N.p, 1946.

Historical Society of Temple. *A History of Temple, New Hampshire, 1768-1976*. Dublin, N. H.: W. L. Bauhan, 1976.

McLoughlin, William G. *New England Dissent, 1630-1833*, 2 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971. [Second Great Awakening]

Sherman, Rexford Booth. "The Grange in Maine and New Hampshire, 1870-1940." Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1973.

----- "The New Hampshire Grange, 1873-1883," *Historical New Hampshire* 25 (Spring 1971): 2-25.

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Tuttle, Frank A. *The Roads, Buildings, and House Sites of an Historic Town in New Hampshire.*
[Temple:] Temple Historical Society, 1942.

Willey, George Franklyn, ed. *State Builders: An Illustrated Historical and Biographical Record of the State of New Hampshire.* Manchester, N. H.: The New Hampshire Publishing Corporation, 1903. [Nahum J. Bachelder]

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Name of Property Temple Town Hall County and State Hillsborough, NH

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

| | Zone | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|------|---------|----------|
| 1 | <u>19</u> | <u>266839</u> | <u>4744553</u> | 3 | _____ | _____ |
| 2 | _____ | _____ | _____ | 4 | _____ | _____ |

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James L. Garvin, Architectural Historian

organization New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources date May 2006

street & number 19 Pillsbury Street telephone 603-271-6436

city or town Concord state NH zip code 03301-3570

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Temple, New Hampshire

street & number P. O. Box 191 telephone 603-878-2536

city or town Temple state NH zip code 03084

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Temple Town Hall
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Significance:

The Temple Town Hall is significant under National Register Criterion A for social history as a Grange hall, and under Criterion C for architecture, as a representative example of the Greek Revival style. Under Criterion A, the period of significance extends from circa 1875, the date of its purchase by Miller Grange with subsequent enlargement and conversion to a Grange hall, to 1956, the arbitrary fifty-year cut-off date for National Register listings. Under Criterion C, the period of significance is 1842, the date of its construction as a representative example of the Greek Revival style. The Temple Town Hall possesses integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association for both periods of significance.

Criterion A: The Temple Town Hall is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as a building that is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of New Hampshire history. The Temple Town Hall possesses significance under Criterion A in the field of social history as a Grange hall. The Temple Town Hall is one of approximately forty-two Grange halls in New Hampshire, but is the only Grange hall in Temple.

Built as a meeting house in 1842, the Temple Town Hall was purchased by the newly-founded Miller Grange in 1875 and remodeled to serve the purposes of a Grange building.¹ Almost all Grange halls in New England include a lodge room or auditorium, a raised stage, and a kitchen for the preparation of meals. In adapting the building to its needs, Miller Grange removed the original pews and the pulpit or dais, transforming the main floor of the church into an auditorium and lodge room. An extension was added to the rear (west) end of the original building, providing a stage, dressing rooms, and other facilities that were needed for Grange rituals, lectures, and dramatic presentations. Eventually, an entry area or former cloak room beneath the front gallery of the building was converted to a kitchen, allowing the preparation and serving of

¹ Remaining members of Union Society, builders of the structure, voted to sell the building in 1875. Thomas Dugan purchased the building for \$292.00. Dugan, a charter member of Miller Grange (founded on August 29, 1874), in turn sold the building to a stock company formed by Grange members. From that point, "Union Hall" was utilized for Grange meetings and was eventually rented to the town, as needed, for town meetings (Historical Society of Temple, *A History of Temple, New Hampshire, 1768-1976*, pp. 288, 729-737).

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meals in the adjacent hall. All of these changes reflect the architectural requirements of Grange practices, rituals, and social gatherings.²

The Grange, or Patrons of Husbandry, was a powerful social movement. The National Grange was founded by Oliver Hudson Kelley in 1867. One purpose of the fraternal order was to promote the economic interests of farmers, who were suffering from declining influence as manufacturing and mercantile interests grew predominant in the monetary and political life of the United States. A second purpose was to promote education, fellowship, and socialization among rural people, who often suffered from isolation and social sterility. A major farm depression in the 1870s spurred an explosive growth of subordinate, or local, Granges, especially in the Corn Belt and wheat-growing states of the northern and central plains. In these states, the Grange was seen as an active vehicle for agricultural organization in opposition to high rail tariffs and other forces that threatened the survival of farmers. In these states, the "Granger Movement" was a powerful, contentious, but short-lived phenomenon that ended with passage of some reform laws but faded quickly with the return of agricultural prosperity in the late 1870s.³

In New England, by contrast, farming had long been in decline yet remained a prevalent characteristic of rural society. Farmers maintained a relatively even, if modest, tenor of life, and were not troubled by sudden and disruptive changes in their economic existence. The principal concerns in rural New England were farm abandonment, aging of the farming population, isolation, loneliness, and decline in rural land values that made it increasingly hard for property-tax-dependent towns to maintain services. Beginning in 1873, farmers in a number of towns in New Hampshire established local or subordinate Granges. On December 22, 1873, representatives of fifteen subordinate Granges met in Manchester and established the New Hampshire State Grange.⁴

While the Grange in the West had burned itself out in short order, the Grange in New England grew slowly but steadily. In New England, the pledge of the Grange to enhance education, strengthen family life, improve agricultural practices, and provide mutual support had a deep appeal to an agricultural society that seemed to be witnessing its own disintegration after

² For a discussion of Grange meeting rooms, rituals, and lectures, see Rexford Booth Sherman, "The Grange in Maine and New Hampshire, 1870-1940" (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1973), pp. 43-44, 72, 79-80, and Sherman, "The New Hampshire Grange, 1873-1883," *Historical New Hampshire* 26 (Spring 1971): 13.

³ Rexford Booth Sherman, "The Grange in Maine and New Hampshire, 1870-1940," pp. 39-49.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-60.

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centuries of steady growth. New Hampshire Grange leaders like Nahum J. Bachelder were also prominent in movements to return population to abandoned or semi-abandoned farms and to improve rural roads, thus linking the Grange with other progressive efforts that were of deep interest to rural people.⁵ The Grange was therefore central to New Hampshire's attempt to preserve and strengthen its agricultural traditions. In 1897, 19,116 people belonged to the Grange in New Hampshire. The *New England Homestead* proclaimed that "this state represents the best organized body of farmers ever before known in the United States, and very probably in the world."⁶

The purchase of Union Hall by the Miller Grange Stock Company was symptomatic of the increasing prosperity of the Grange in New Hampshire. Miller Grange observed its one-hundredth anniversary at the Town Hall in August 1974, and continues to meet today.⁷ In 1889, the Town of Temple purchased Union Hall for \$1,000 for use as the Temple Town Hall, although Miller Grange continued to use the building.⁸ The building continued in use for town meetings until about 1990, when a new facility was constructed. It remains in use for a wide variety of social functions.

Criterion C: The Temple Town Hall is significant under architecture as a representative example of the Greek Revival style. Together with the nearby and similar Congregational Church, the Town Hall displays both the overall characteristics of the Greek Revival style and the molding profiles and other details that give even in the smaller components of the building architectural coherence with the overall style.

Among the general characteristics that express the Greek Revival style are the gabled façade of the building, with symmetrical fenestration on each side of the centerline; the closed pediment that suggests the tympanum of a Greek temple; the broad pilasters at the front corners of the building; the deep wooden entablature that spans the façade atop these pilasters and supports the pediment; the square tower at the front of the roof, with its own pilasters and deep entablature; and the flat, symmetrical door and window casings, with corner blocks, on both the exterior and

⁵ George Franklyn Willey, ed., *State Builders: An Illustrated Historical and Biographical Record of the State of New Hampshire* (Manchester, N. H.: The New Hampshire Publishing Corporation, 1903).

⁶ Quoted in Rexford Booth Sherman, "The Grange in Maine and New Hampshire, 1870-1940," p. 87.

⁷ Historical Society of Temple. *A History of Temple, New Hampshire, 1768-1976*, pp. 732-737.

⁸ Hillsborough County Deeds, Vol. 500, page 301 (April 22, 1889).

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interior of the building. Smaller details that contribute further coherence to the Grecian character of the building include the characteristic muntin profiles of the original window sashes, which survive throughout the 1842 structure, and the original interior doors, which have raised panels without surrounding moldings in keeping with the style of door illustrated in Asher Benjamin's book, *The Practical House Carpenter* (1830). The Temple Town Hall further expresses the Greek Revival style in its pervasive use of extremely flat Grecian moldings, especially on such exterior elements as the pilaster capitals and the crown moldings of the entablatures. Such Greek Revival moldings were based on the contours that were actually employed on Greek temples. Writing in the 1830s, Boston author Edward Shaw noted in his book *Civil Architecture* that such moldings were derived from Grecian molding profiles, but pointed out that their contours had been altered to achieve a somewhat different visual effect. Shaw described these new Greek Revival profiles simply as "modern mouldings."

Comparative evaluation: Temple retains two comparable buildings, both built the Greek Revival style in 1842 for religious purposes: the Temple Congregational meeting house, and the Temple Town Hall, originally built by the Universalists as Union Hall. Both Temple buildings retain integrity of design, yet each also reveals its evolution since 1842. The Temple Congregational meeting house evolved to express stronger ecclesiastical character over time, while Union Hall, now the Temple Town Hall, evolved to express greater secular character.

The Congregational meeting house underwent remodelings throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These included changes to the pews and pulpit, alterations to the gallery on the eastern wall of the auditorium, and, in 1892, the installation of the existing stained glass windows. A major restoration in 1972 altered the gallery and the rooms beneath it, and changed the lighting and interior colors of the building.⁹

The Town Hall, by contrast, has had its interior adapted to secular uses. Whatever the building had for pews and pulpit were removed after Miller Grange purchased the property in 1875. The building subsequently underwent further changes. Among these were the installation of a new floor in 1909. The same remodeling probably saw the addition of moldings to the wall piers to create the effect of panels between the windows, and installation of the existing metal ceiling.¹⁰

⁹ Historical Society of Temple. *A History of Temple, New Hampshire, 1768-1976*, pp. 306-319.

¹⁰ Temple Town Reports, various dates.

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The village of Temple is unusual in having two prominent Greek Revival buildings standing in proximity to one another, both sharing a religious origin, both adhering to the same general scale and design, and both built in 1842. The two buildings share a comparable degree of integrity, yet each has evolved in a different direction. The changes to the pair document their adaptation for different purposes.

As noted below under *Historical background*, New Hampshire retains approximately thirty small church buildings that reflect the general architectural form exhibited by the Temple Town Hall. Of these, virtually all but the very earliest examples reflect the Greek Revival style. Like the Temple Town Hall, most of these buildings have been adapted over time to accommodate new uses or new needs. The Temple Town Hall is a representative example of this coherent group of Greek Revival buildings.

Most details of the Temple Town Hall derive, at least generally, from Asher Benjamin's influential book, *The Practical House Carpenter* (1830). By the 1820s, the Greek Revival style had attracted enough popular interest in New England that Benjamin included new plates illustrating the Greek orders in the 1826 edition of *The American Builder's Companion*. Four years later, Benjamin published a new book, *The Practical House Carpenter* (1830), entirely in the Greek Revival style. In his introduction, Benjamin alluded to the transformation that had occurred in American architecture in the intervening years: "since my last publication, the Roman school of architecture [the federal style] has been entirely changed for the Grecian."¹¹

Historical background: The Temple Town Hall was originally built as a Union meeting house, predominantly by and for the use of local Universalists. The Greek Revival character of the building is characteristic of the style adopted by building committees of many New Hampshire sects as they were freed by law from the support of an established church and thereby won the freedom to build their own places of worship.

In New England, characteristics of Universalism included repudiation of many of the central principles of Calvinism (the basis of Congregational theology of the early 1800s), and the substitution of a belief in universal human salvation. Specifically, Universalists rejected the Calvinist beliefs in human depravity, in divine predestination for salvation or damnation, and in

¹¹ Asher Benjamin, *The Practical House Carpenter* (1830), reprint ed., New York: DaCapo Press, 1972.

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the possibility of eternal punishment.¹² Universalists asserted God's universal, impartial, and everlasting love for humankind, which precluded damnation and punishment for anyone.¹³

This theology was espoused strongly by Hosea Ballou (1771-1852), a native of Richmond, New Hampshire, who was excommunicated from the Richmond Baptist Church in 1791 on doctrinal grounds and thereafter began a career as one of the leading proponents of Universalism in New England. Ballou became associated with John Murray (1741-1815), the English-born "father of American Universalism," after 1791, and began a period of itinerant teaching as far west as New York, eventually becoming the settled minister of the Universalist Church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1809.¹⁴

The growth of American Universalism is closely associated with New Hampshire. Under the influence of Ballou and others, New England Universalism was firmly codified through a "confession of faith" that was adopted at Winchester, New Hampshire, in 1803. Ballou's writings, especially his *Notes on the Parables* (1804) and his *Treatise on the Atonement* (1805) made him the chief voice of the religion and established southwestern New Hampshire as the locus of enthusiastic acceptance of Universalism. Ballou is known to have preached in Temple and to have moved many listeners to adopt his beliefs.¹⁵

Prior to 1819, most small New Hampshire towns 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. 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 and, often, the provision of 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.

¹² William G. McLoughlin, *New England Dissent, 1630-1833*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), I, 653-9.

¹³ *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), I:557-559.

¹⁴ William G. McLoughlin, *New England Dissent, 1630-1833*, 2 vols., II, 717-22; William Bassett, *History of the Town of Richmond, Cheshire County, New Hampshire, from its First Settlement, to 1882* (Boston: C. W. Calkins & Co., 1884), pp. 277-283; *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), I:557-559.

¹⁵ Historical Society of Temple. *A History of Temple, New Hampshire, 1768-1976*. (Dublin, N. H.: W. L. Bauhan, 1976), pp. 285-6.

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As other denominations began to multiply in the late 1700s and early 1800s, however, 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 was passage of the “Toleration Act” in 1819.¹⁶ This legislation severed the connection between church and town, making support of a religious organization a voluntary act.¹⁷ 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. At the same time, all sects that could afford to do so, including the “orthodox” church, often built modern meeting houses to be used strictly for religious purposes. 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.

This evolution was largely followed in Temple. The town’s second meeting house was built in 1782-4 on what is now the common at the town center. At first occupied for town meetings and by the Congregational Church, the building was made available after 1832 for preaching on one Sunday each month by the Universalists.¹⁸

The strength of Universalist belief in the region impelled local adherents to form their Union Society in 1832 and to build their own meeting house, Union Hall, ten years later. Both the Congregationalists and the Universalists abandoned the early meeting house in 1842, relinquishing the structure to the town for civic purposes alone. Both sects simultaneously built

¹⁶ *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.

¹⁷ Everett S. Stackpole, *History of New Hampshire*, 5 vols. (New York: American Historical Society, 1916-17), IV:230.

¹⁸ Historical Society of Temple. *A History of Temple, New Hampshire, 1768-1976*. (Dublin, N. H.: W. L. Bauhan, 1976), pp. 285-7. Henry Ames Blood, *The History of Temple, New Hampshire* (Boston: George C. Rand & Avery, 1860), p. 132. Some fifty-five Universalists of Temple, perhaps with other non-Congregationalists, formed the “Union Society” in 1832.

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similar church structures facing Temple's common, where the old meeting house had been sited.¹⁹

Union Society purchased a lot of land from Mehitable Farrar for \$54.00. The society employed the Rev. Solomon Laws as minister for four years, dismissing him in 1850. It appears that from that point forward Union Society employed no settled minister, and that their meeting house was little used during the 1850s and 1860s.²⁰

The building is a representative example of a type of church building that began to evolve in the 1820s to serve the needs of a wide range of Protestant sects, many of which had been gathered during New England's "Second Great Awakening," a period of religious foment that reached its height in the late 1700s and early 1800s. These churches typically experienced newfound vigor and prosperity following the abolition of established, town-supported churches in New Hampshire in 1819, and many were able to construct their own meeting houses for the first time. As noted above, the Universalists of Temple constructed Union Hall, later Temple Town Hall, in 1842, at the same time that the Congregationalists built their own new meeting house a short distance to the south.

Union Hall followed a revised church plan that was widely adopted by many sects during this period of widespread church building and was especially compatible with the Greek Revival style of architecture. New Hampshire churches built from about 1800 until the 1820s had generally reflected some variation of Asher Benjamin's "Design for a Meeting House," first published in the original (1797) edition of his *The Country Builder's Assistant*. This design illustrated a meeting house with a front tower that rested partly on the main roof of the building, and partly on the gable roof of a shallow pavilion that projected forward from the front wall of the main body of the structure.

In the 1820s, however, William Abbot (1793-1837), a joiner and master builder from Boscawen, New Hampshire, constructed several meeting houses in various parts of the state. These buildings established the practice of supporting the tower fully on the roof of the building, leaving the façade uninterrupted and the gable free to express the triangular pediment of the classic temple. In 1823, Abbot and carpenter George T. Pillsbury (1792-1836) constructed a

¹⁹ William Nathaniel Banks, *A History of the Congregational Church of Temple, N. H., 1771-1971* (Peterborough, N. H.: Sims Press, 1971).

²⁰ Hillsborough County Deeds, Vol. 436, page 2 (December 15, 1876).

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Congregational meeting house on Corser Hill in Webster, New Hampshire, the first known example of the new design. Abbot followed this building with several others that gradually evolved in their stylistic vocabulary from the Federal style to the Greek Revival, a style to which the pedimented façade of the new design was especially well suited. In addition to the Corser Hill meeting house, other examples of Abbot's prototype group survive in Wentworth (1828) and Henniker (1834), New Hampshire.²¹ It is not known how Abbot adopted this simplified design for a church building. Perhaps he took the suggestion from a plate in the 1820 edition of Asher Benjamin's *The American Builder's Companion*, showing a temple-fronted church with a tower wholly supported on its roof.²²

As described in a recent study of meeting houses of the Monadnock Region of New Hampshire, the pedimented meeting house "followed the recently adopted practice of supporting a three-stage tower entirely on the roof of the building. Previous [meeting house] styles had supported the tower on the porch roof or partly on the roof of a projecting pavilion. With the tower fully on the roof, the facade and gable end of the building were available to incorporate other elements. The result was a wonderful variety of buildings scattered throughout the region that incorporated details of a variety of architectural styles."²³

As the Greek Revival style supplanted the Federal, the pedimented meeting house design grew ever more popular. Many such structures were built by various sects during the 1830s and later, becoming almost a standard design for small or medium-sized meeting houses across New Hampshire. The design was adapted to smaller meeting houses having only a small gallery

²¹ Charles Carleton Coffin, *The History of Boscowen and Webster, from 1733 to 1878* (Concord, N. H.: Republican Press Association, 1878), pp. 430, 464-65, 595-6; Dorothy W. Sanborn and James L. Garvin, "Webster Congregational Church," National Register nomination, August 1984.

²² Dexter Bailey Dawes II, "The 'Bulfinch' Church of Peterborough, New Hampshire: Destruction of a Town Myth," *Old-Time New England* 48 (1958): 107-110, iv.

²³ Tom Haynes, ed., *Sacred and Secular: Historic Meetinghouses and Churches of the Monadnock Region* (Keene, N. H.: Historical Society of Cheshire County, 2006), p. 15.

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above their front entries, like the Temple building, and to larger structures having galleries that also extend along both side walls of the building, with a second tier of windows at the gallery level.

Among the surviving meeting houses that share this general body design and tower location are buildings in Acworth (1844), Bennington (1839), Bradford Center (1838), Bow Bog (1835), Candia (1846), Canterbury (1852), Chesterfield (1844), Chesterfield (Spofford Village) (1853), East Concord (1841), East Croydon (1854), Croydon Flat (1854), Danbury (1828), Durham (1848), Gilmanton Lower Village (1842), Hudson Center (1841), Loudon Village (1827), Lyndeboro Center (1837), Mason (1837), Milford (1834), Stratham (1837), South Sutton (1839), Tamworth (1832), Warner (1833), Warner Lower Village (1844), Washington (1840), Webster (1839), East Wilton (1852), and Windham (1835). The nearby Temple Congregational Church (1842) also shares this body design and tower placement.

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Boundary description

The boundaries of the nominated property are defined as the parcel recorded on the Temple town assessor's records as Map #7a, Lot #06. Boundaries are indicated on the attached sketch map.

Boundary justification

This parcel has historically been associated with the Temple Town Hall and continues this association today.

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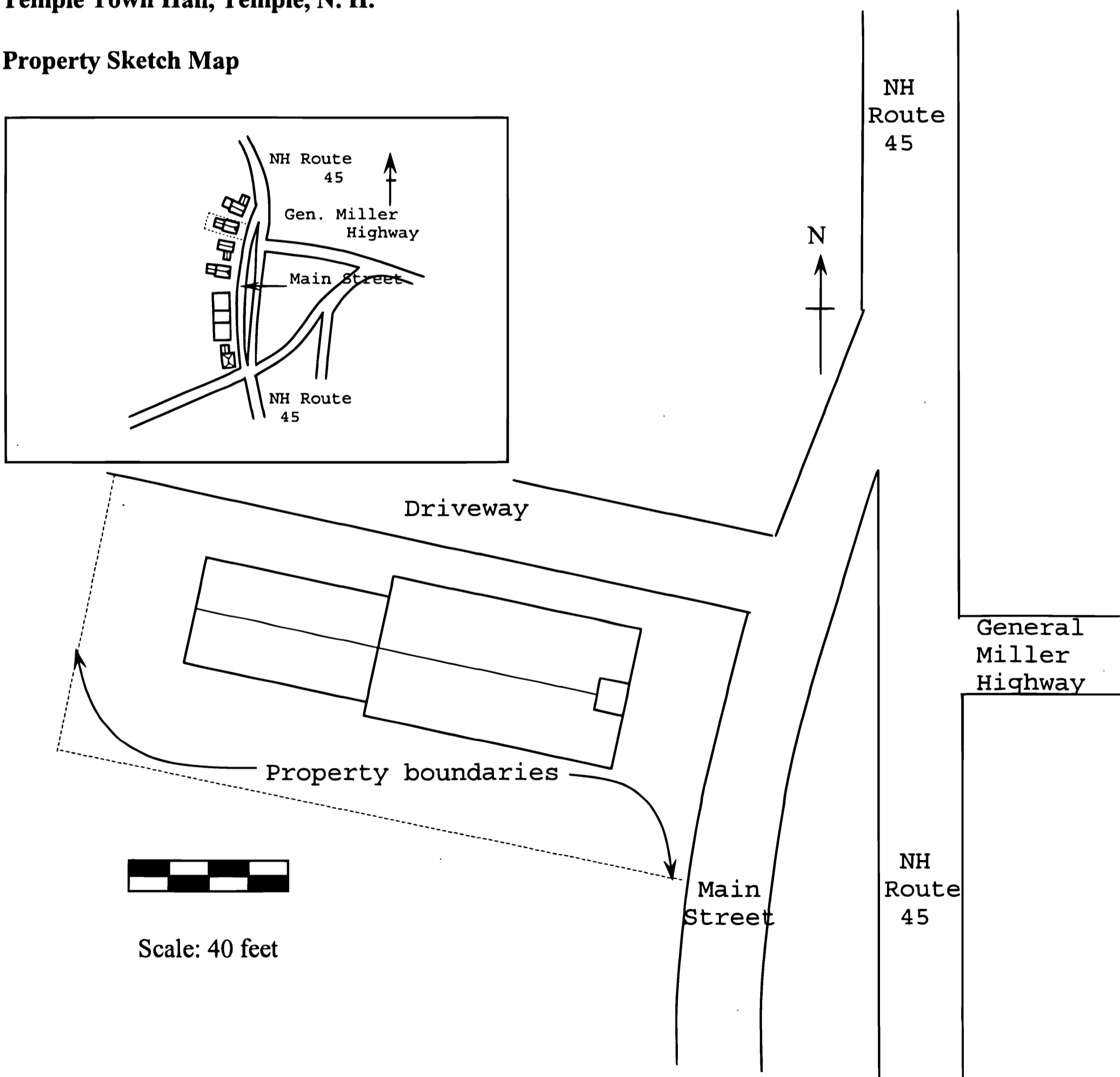
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Temple Town Hall, Temple, N. H.

Property Sketch Map



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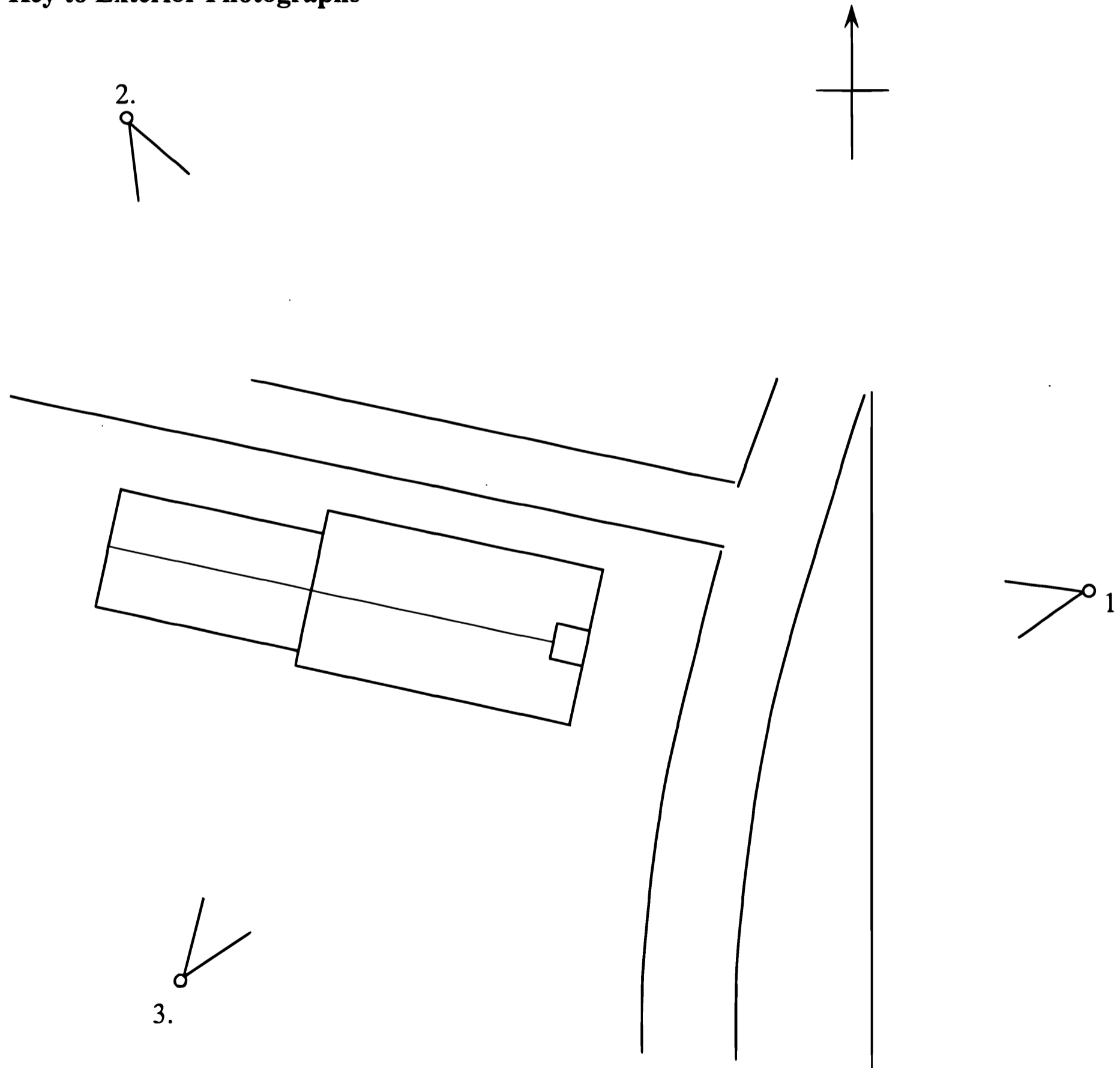
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Temple Town Hall, Temple, N. H.

Key to Exterior Photographs



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PHOTOGRAPH LABELS

The following information pertains to all views:

- 1.) Temple Town Hall
- 2.) Temple (Hillsborough County), NH
- 3.) Photographer: James L. Garvin
- 4.) Photographs taken September 2006
- 5.) Negatives at: New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Concord, NH

Photo # 1:

View: Exterior of Temple Town Hall, east (front) and north elevations, looking west.

Photo #2:

View: Exterior of Temple Town Hall, north and west (rear) elevations, looking southeast and showing a portion of the addition of 2006 (right).

Photo #3:

View: Exterior of Temple Town Hall, south elevation, looking northeast and showing a portion of the addition of 2006 (left).