

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NCRS use only

received FEB 25 1980

date entered APR 23 1980

## 1. Name

historic Brick School House

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number School House Hill - Route 179 \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Aurora, \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district Second

state Maine code 023 county Hancock code 009

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Town of Aurora

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city, town Aurora, \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Maine 04408

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hancock County Registry of Deeds

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city, town Ellsworth, \_\_\_\_\_ state Maine

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title \_\_\_\_\_ has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Brick Schoolhouse in Aurora, Maine, dating from 1827, is a fine example of a simple neighborhood school of the late Federal period.

The one-story building is of brick construction, with hipped roof and field-stone foundation. The school's only entrance faces south, to the right side of that wall, and contains a single board and batten door.

The building's south and west sides contain three bays, while the north contains two, and the east contains none. Fenestration is 12/8, and each window is fitted with a single external board and batten shutter. A brick chimney is built against the inside of the north wall.

The interior walls are wainscotted, typical of the period. The building is unaltered.

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates                      1827                      Builder/Architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

First settled in 1808, Aurora in the census of 1820 listed only nine heads of families yet by that year they had already erected a school. By 1825 it was attended by 35 children at a cost of \$85.00 per annum.

On April 2, 1827 a legal meeting of the inhabitants of the plantation voted to build a new school house of brick, 25 feet square, with seats on three sides. Three hundred and fifty dollars was raised to pay for it and construction was started that spring.

The Brick School House for all its remote location is the oldest standing public brick building in Hancock County and may have been the first built. When erected it was so far advanced for school house construction that no other building in Eastern Maine came close to comparing with it in size per pupil, lighting and comfort. Twenty years after the Brick School was built, the State Department of Education set forth minimum standards for school construction that were considerably below those already achieved in Aurora.

Why the town built its school house of brick is not clear in view of the fact that wood was cheap and plentiful in this primarily lumbering community. The best explanation, probably, is that Samuel Silsby, the first settler and acknowledged leader, attended a brick school as a boy in Windham County, Connecticut, where such construction was common.

Aurora, over the years, never achieved a large population so that the school building remained in use until 1918. It has served the town well, being employed also as a town hall for many years. A 1954 town meeting appropriated money to repair the building which had been used for storage of town machinery. A movement is now afoot to return the town meeting to this historic location.

The building clearly deserves recognition as a remarkably preserved example of a late Federal school house in an extremely remote section which reflects the determination of early settlers to provide an educational opportunity of quality.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Silsby, Herbert T., II, A History of Aurora, Maine. Ellsworth, 1958.

State of Maine, First Report of the Board of Education. 1847.

# 10. Geographical Data UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 1/4 **ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**  
 Quadrangle name Great Pond Quadrangle scale 1:62500

### UMT References

A	<u>19</u>	<u>553050</u>	<u>4966010</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Assessor's Map 7, Lot 5

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Frank A. Beard, Historian/Robert L. Bradley, Architectural Historian  
 organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date January, 1979  
 street & number 242 State Street telephone 207/289-2133  
 city or town Augusta, state Maine 04333

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Earle S. Hildreth*  
 title S.H.P.O. date 2/15/80

For HCERS use only  
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
 for *Bruce Lee Dodge* date 4/23/80  
 Keeper of the National Register  
 Attest: *Patrick Andrews* date 4/22/80  
 Chief of Registration