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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

JUN 12 1989

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 Union Church
other names/site number Philllips Congregational Church

2. Location

street & number NE Corner of Main & Pleasant Streets
city, town Philllips
state Maine code ME county Franklin code 007 zip code 04966

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.

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] SHPD
Date: 6/7/89
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
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:
[X] 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 the Keeper: [Signature] Entered in the National Register: 7/13/89
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

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/Granite

walls Wood/Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other Ridge mounted Tower with an open Belfry

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Standing on a small lot at the northeast corner of Main and Pleasant Streets in Phillips village, the Greek Revival style Union Church is a commodious rectangular wooden frame building covered by a gable roof. Its broad pedimented facade is dominated by a tall, square two-stage tower with an open belfry. The church is sheathed in weatherboards and it rests on a granite slab foundation.

The front (west) elevation of the church is symmetrically divided into three bays on both the entry and gallery levels. On the former, two six-panel doors framed by wide surrounds and an entablature are separated by a centrally-placed nine-over-nine double-hung sash window. A trio of similar windows are located above these openings and immediately below the narrow cornice of the pediment. All of these windows, like those along the side walls are 1957 replacements of two-over-two sash which were installed by 1910. A documentary postcard which was postmarked in 1908 shows the presence of six-over-six sash and louvered shutters on this elevation; both features were probably original.

The tower rises from the west gable end just behind the pediment. Three of the four sides of its square base contain a large round flush-sheathed panel, a feature which on some churches from the period would have contained a clock face. It is not certain whether the design of the tower made provision for the future installation of such a mechanism or whether it was a purely decorative treatment meant to convey the illusion of a clock. A small window is located in the rear side of the base and a broad roof overhang caps the base and supports the octagonal belfry. This most striking aspect of the building's exterior features an arcade of posts with keystones displayed in the surrounds, a decorative balustrade of criss-crossing slats and a denticulated entablature. An eight segment domed roof with a weathervane covers the belfry. The existing belfry is a 1982 reproduction of the original which had been removed in 1939. Architect Christopher Glass designed the replacement using documentary photographs to faithfully recreate it.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Both nave walls are punctuated by four long fifteen-over-fifteen windows equally placed along the elevations. A small square hipped roof apse flanked by an entrance vestibule is attached to the east end. Above it is a small twelve-over-twelve window in the gable peak.

The interior contains a foyer with a deep semi-circular projection of the nave endwall in the middle. This feature was apparently designed to reflect heat into the nave from the stove originally located within the semi-circle. Two doors provide access into the expansive nave. Three groups of pews are separated by two aisles. A wide raised platform spans the east end and contains seating for the choir. Behind it is a balustrade that is located in front of the chancel. The balcony at the rear of the church, most of which has been enclosed, is reached through a stair accessible from the southwest corner of the nave.

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

1835

Significant Dates

1835

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

Constructed in 1835, the Union Church is the oldest of two historic religious buildings in the small Franklin County village of Phillips, and the most visually distinct by virtue of its tall tower and its location near the commercial district. The Greek Revival style church is eligible for nomination to the Register under criterion C because of its architectural significance.

The Union Church was constructed by the members of three of Phillips' religious denominations: the Universalists, the Free Will Baptists and the Congregationalists. Of the three congregations, the Baptists had the longest history in Phillips, beginning with the founding of a meeting in 1794. However, the Baptists who assumed a one-half interest in the new building are believed to have re-emerged during the 1820s after the holding of regular meetings had lapsed some years earlier. The Universalist congregation, which had come together as a formal religious body about 1829 appears to have been the smallest of the three groups, having assumed only a one-sixth interest in the 1835 building. Finally, the Congregationalists, who first met on October 9, 1822, shared the remaining interest in the church. On September 10, 1835, the members of these three denominations dedicated their new building. Shared ownership of the church continued until 1931 when the Congregationalists acquired full interest and changed its name to the Phillips Congregational Church.

The Union Church is among the most significant buildings in Phillips and certainly its most prominent landmark. The broad pedimented nave and tall tower provide a significant contrast to the church's one and two-story residential neighbors, as well as to the nearby block of commercial buildings. These architectural features clearly distinguish the Union Church from the Gothic Revival style Methodist Church which was erected in 1867 to the west of here. Of particular note is the open belfry that crowns the tower. Removed in 1939 because of its deteriorated condition, this feature remained absent until 1982 when it was restored from plans drawn by architect Christopher Glass of Camden. An analysis of photographs made prior to the restoration underscores the significance of the belfry in defining the overall character of the design.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Franklin Journal, Farmington, Maine, September 18, 1959.

Franklin Journal and Farmington Chronicle, Farmington, Maine, October 13, 1922.

Pease, Albert. Sketches of the History of Phillips, Maine. Written and first published as articles in the Farmington Chronicle in 1869 and 1879. No publisher, no date.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property Less than 1

UTM References

A 19 394080 4963970
 Zone Easting Northing

C

B
 Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property of less than one acre occupies the Town of Phillips tax map U-2, lot 26.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary embraces the entire lot historically associated with the Phillips Congregational Church.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohney, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date April, 1989

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