

# DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0699969

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 6 1979
DATE ENTERED	26

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

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

### 1 NAME

HISTORIC Kent's Hill School Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION ME 17

STREET & NUMBER Route 17, Kent's Hill

CITY, TOWN Kent's Hill  
Readfield VICINITY OF Kent's Hill

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st

STATE Maine CODE 23 COUNTY Kennebec CODE 011

### CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 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:

### OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Kent's Hill School Board of Trustees ✓

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Kent's Hill STATE Maine  
VICINITY OF

### LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Kennebec County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER 95 State Street

CITY, TOWN Augusta STATE Maine

### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

# 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		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Kent's Hill School Historic District is comprised of five architecturally or historically significant buildings. Dating from 1858 to 1932, these buildings have undergone little change. The Kent's Hill School is located on the top of Kent's Hill, on the south side of State Route 17 in Readfield.

### Buildings contributing to the character of the district:

1. Newton Gymnasium: 1932, Colonial Revival, 1½ stories, brick, Doric portico, cross-gabled hip roof.
2. Blethen Hall (Headmaster's House): 1883-84, Queen Anne, 2½ stories, frame, clapboarded and shingled, facade porch, cross-gabled hip roof.
3. Bearce Hall (including Deering Chapel): 1873, Italianate with Mansard roof, 3½ stories, brick, 4-story facade tower with polygonal belfry.
4. Ricker Hall: 1893-94, Colonial Revival, 3½ stories, frame, clapboarded, hip roof.
5. Sampson Hall: 1858-60, Italianate, 4 stories, brick, pedimented pavillion, flat roof.

# 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/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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Before the advent of publicly supported secondary schools in Maine, this level of education was largely carried on by private academies on one hand, or seminaries, so-called, affiliated with some Protestant denomination on the other. Academies were far more common and were scattered widely so that almost every community of any size boasted one. Seminaries, however, existed in a very small number and one of the earliest of these was what has now evolved as Kent's Hill School, a private, non-denominational, preparatory school.

Luther Sampson, the founder, was a Revolutionary soldier originally from Duxbury, Massachusetts, who, taking advantage of a veteran's land grant, moved in 1799 to Readfield where he opened up a 215 acre farm. Evidently inspired by the itinerant Methodist evangelist, Rev. Jesse Lee, who preached for a time in the region, this industrious, but largely unlettered farmer formed, in 1821, the Readfield Religious and Charitable Society which was duly incorporated. The purpose of the organization being to provide Christian education for young people, Sampson donated 140 acres of land for a school site together with a new house, barns, sheds, cattle and sheep as well as equipment, all to the value of over \$10,000.

The school, soon named Maine Wesleyan Seminary, began operation in 1824, at first admitting boys only but shortly after becoming coeducational. An unusual feature of the institution was that a large and productive farm with orchards was maintained and many disadvantaged students in the early years were able to work off their tuition through labor in the fields or barns. A fine orchard is still maintained by the school.

Of the present buildings, the most noteworthy is Bearce Hall, a singularly well proportioned and imposing 3½ story Mansard brick structure with a central pavillion and handsome bell tower, constructed in 1873. This was designed by Francis H. Fassett of Portland, Maine's leading mid-nineteenth century architect.

Fassett, who was as much responsible as anyone for the rebuilding not only of Portland, but also Bath and Augusta after disastrous fires, was the designer of such structures as Corthell Hall on the Gorham Campus, the Portland Public Library, and the Fifth Maine Regiment Building, all presently listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Wood framed Ricker Hall, an early Colonial Revival design, was also executed by Fassett in 1893 and, while not as ambitious a structure as Bearce, combines with it to leave the mark of this noted architect clearly stamped on the Kent's Hill scene.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Newton, John O. and Young, Oscar E., Kent's Hill and Its Makers. Farmington, Maine, 1947.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 8

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1,9</u>	<u>4,2,0,0,8,0</u>	<u>4,9,1,7,1,4,0</u>	B	<u>1,9</u>	<u>4,2,0,3,3,0</u>	<u>4,9,1,7,0,8,0</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	<u>1,9</u>	<u>4,2,0,3,1,0</u>	<u>4,9,1,6,9,8,0</u>	D	<u>1,9</u>	<u>4,2,0,0,6,0</u>	<u>4,9,1,6,1,0,0</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the easterly corner of the intersection between Route 17 and driveway running southerly from it and adjacent to the west end of Sampson Hall, the district boundary runs easterly along the south side of Route 17 to a point 50 feet beyond that point where an extension of the east facing wall of Newton Gymnasium would intersect with said road. From this point the line turns 90° and runs south, parallel to the east facing wall of Newton Gymnasium for 400 (see feet. Here it again turns 90° and runs west parallel to Route 17 to a point cont.shi

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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

# 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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Charles S. Heltman*

TITLE

S.H.P.O.

DATE

2/27/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles S. Heltman  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

4-26-79

ATTEST:

*Lower Mer Jones*

DATE

4/29/79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

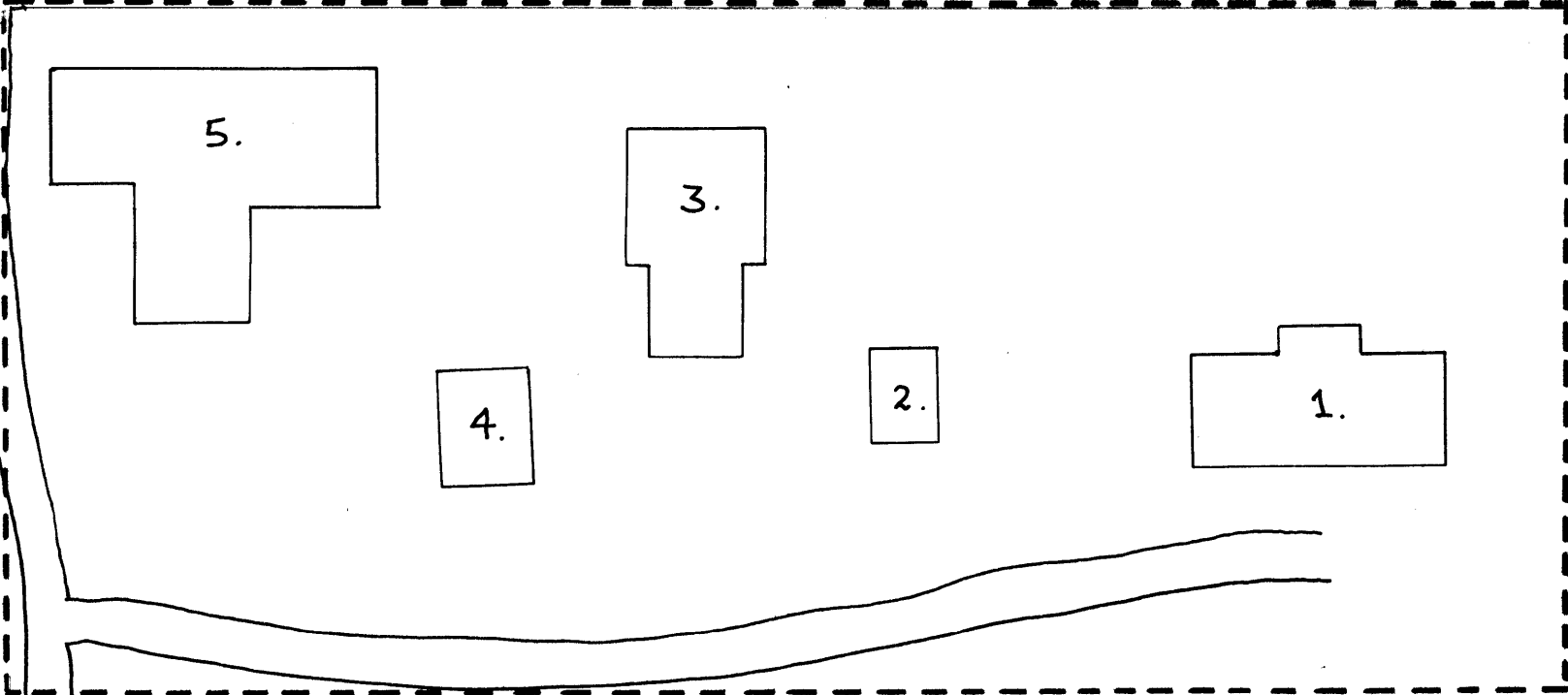
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where a further 90° turn to the north will return it to the point of beginning.



ROUTE 17



KENT'S HILL SCHOOL HISTORIC DISTRICT

DISTRICT BOUNDARY - - - - -

