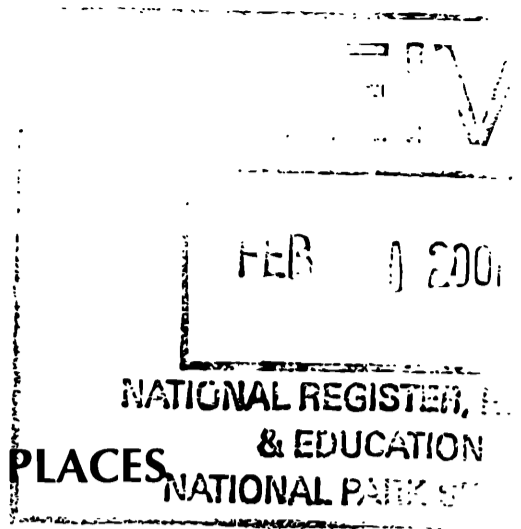


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



**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 Blow-Me-Down Grange

other names/site number P of H 234

**2. Location**

street & number 1071 Route 12-A N/A not for publication

city or town Plainfield N/A vicinity

state New Hampshire code NH county Sullivan code 019 zip code 03781

**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.)

Nancy C. Dutton January 25, 2001  
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

Edson H. Beall

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
  - district
  - site
  - structure
  - object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>1</u>     |                 | buildings  |
|              |                 | sites      |
|              |                 | structures |
|              |                 | 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)

Cat: SOCIAL Sub: Meeting Hall

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: SOCIAL Sub: Meeting Hall

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite

roof Metal

walls Brick

other Wood

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

### 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) 1899-1951

\_\_\_\_\_

C) 1839

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_

1839- date of construction

\_\_\_\_\_

1899- Grange acquires building

\_\_\_\_\_

1939-1940 Second floor built

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_

Egglestone, Charles

\_\_\_\_\_

**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  
# \_\_\_\_\_  
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**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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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property 0.41

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

|   | Zone  | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|-------|---------|----------|------|---------|----------|
| 1 | 18    | 713600  | 4823265  | 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.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

---

name/title SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

street &amp; number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Additional Documentation**

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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)

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**Property Owner**

---

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

name Blow-Me-Down Grangestreet & number PO Box 175 telephone N/Acity or town Plainfield state NH zip code 03781

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**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.

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

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Blow-Me-Down Grange  
Plainfield (Sullivan Cty) NH

Section number 7 Page 1

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### **Description:**

The Greek Revival Blow-Me-Down Grange was constructed in 1839 as the Union Congregational Church by local builder Charles Egglestone. It is a one-and-a-half-story gable-front building of brick construction located on Route 12A in the center of Plainfield village. Rectangular in plan, the building measures 40 by 54 feet, and rests on a cut granite foundation. Gable walls are sheathed in wood, the roof with standing seam metal. At the front (west) elevation, a two-stage wooden tower rises from the peak.

The front (west) elevation faces the road. Two doorways with six-panel wooden doors centered in the front provide access. Above each is a six-over-six window flanked by wooden blinds. The end bays of the front façade were originally occupied by large 30-over-30 light double hung sash, also with blinds. The upper sashes of each have been bricked in and are obscured by louvered blinds. The gable wall above is sheathed with flushed boarding and has a projecting wooden tablet in the center of the tympanum. The two-stage tower is square in plan. There are rectangular openings on the front and side elevations which are filled with louvered panels. The only adornment is ionic columns supporting the upper stage.

The side elevations are identical. Each contains three evenly spaced 30-Over-30 double-hung sash windows.

The rear elevation's wall surface is brick; the gable wall is sheathed with horizontal boards and has cornice returns. An off-center rectangular window with louvers over the top sash lights the upper story. A metalbestos chimney is located near the southeast corner. A one-story 16' by 16' addition was recently introduced on the north side of the rear elevation. It rests on a concrete foundation. Walls are clapboarded and the gable roof is sheathed with metal to match the main block's roof. The addition does not detract from the historic structure and will contribute to its revitalization by providing barrier-free access and bathroom facilities.

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**Continuation Sheet**

Blow-Me-Down Grange  
Plainfield (Sullivan Cty) NH

Section number 7 Page 2

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On the first floor, there is an entry vestibule with a staircase leading to the second floor. There is a large meeting room, with a kitchen at the rear. The side windows have fluted casings and corner blocks. There is original wide board horizontal wainscoting on all four walls; wall surfaces are otherwise plaster. The room has always had exposed ceiling joists and rafters. The floors are pine and bear the marks of the original church pews which were attached to the floor. Many of the original pews remain in the building.

The second story was added in 1939-40. Flooring is southern yellow pine. Wooden arches with keystones above the side windows were added to the window heads. The plaster replaced an earlier Celotex ceiling in 1999-2000. At that time walls and woodwork were repaired and repainted, and the floors refinished. At the rear of the second floor hall is a small stage, and a large mural painted by Cornish Colony artist Lucia Fairchild Fuller hangs on the far wall. It imaginatively depicts Puritan woman at domestic tasks in the out-of-doors; at the center, a woman stares out at the viewer.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
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# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Blow-Me-Down Grange  
Plainfield (Sullivan Cty) NH

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### **Significance**

The Blow-Me-Down Grange is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for architecture and under A for social history. Architecturally it is an excellent example of the Greek Revival style and part of an important local tradition of brick architecture; as such it retains integrity for the year 1839 – the date of construction. Under Criterion A, the building is significant as a grange hall, the focus of this important social movement in Plainfield village; it retains integrity for the period 1899, the date it became a grange hall, to the 50-year cut-off date of 1951.

### Architecture:

Initially constructed for the Union Congregational Church, the Blow-Me-Down Grange is an excellent representation of vernacular Greek Revival architecture. The symmetrical massing, gable-front orientation, low pitched roof, triangular pediment, smooth wall surfaces, flat-arched windows and doors, and the tower's trabeated design and Ionic columns are all features of the style. On the interior, fluted casings and corner blocks further characterize the Greek Revival.

Blow-Me-Down Grange is of further interest as part of a local tradition of brick architecture in the Connecticut Valley which began in 1828. In that year Ammi Burnham Young, who later became the noted architect of innumerable mid-19<sup>th</sup> century post offices and custom houses, designed Wentworth and Thornton Halls at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire. These brick buildings were oriented gable to the street and had shallow gable roofs, recessed tympanums, and simple stone doorways – features that were precedents employed in a subsequent set of brick buildings in the Valley. The first of these successor designs was the Richmond Community Church (b.1838, designed by Timothy Pickering ); its Greek Revival character comes from its orientation, triangular pediment, brick pilasters across the front, and belfry detailing. It was followed the next year by the Union Congregation Church, designed by Charles Egglestone, which in 1899 became Blow-Me-Down Grange. In 1839 a Greek Revival addition was designed by Young for his 1825 Kimball Union Academy, located in the Meriden section of Plainfield. Immediately becoming the dominant component of the Academy building, the addition's design included brick pilasters, a projecting tablet in the typanum, and a two stage tower like that of the Union Congregational Church/Blow-Me-Down

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Blow-Me-Down Grange  
Plainfield (Sullivan Cty) NH

Section number 8 Page 4

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Grange. The pilasters and tower of the earlier structures were reflected in the 1840 Baptist Church in Plainfield. The last design of this group was the Congregational Church in Cornish Center built in 1841-42. Brick pilasters, tablet in the tympanum, and two-stage tower were all included in this design, the full and final development of the type. (1)

Art:

Lucia Fairchild Fuller's mural *The Women of Plymouth*, which hangs inside the building, was painted for the 1893 Columbian exposition in Chicago. This was one of six paintings by women commissioned for the Exposition's Women's Building. Fuller, wife of painter Henry Fuller, was part of the Cornish Colony, a prominent group of artists who summered or lived in Cornish and Plainfield in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. After working in murals, she later turned to painting portrait miniatures. (2)

Social History:

The National Grange was an important movement in rural America in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The rationale behind the Grange movement was to provide help and encouragement to farmers, primarily in terms of educational and social opportunities. In addition to promoting educational and cultural goals, it was intended to foster cooperation among farmers to enhance their economic strength.

Initially established in 1867, the National Grange made slow progress at first. Not until the depression of 1873 did the establishment of subordinate or local Granges really spread. At that time the movement was discernibly a Mid-western one, with half of the subordinate Granges located in that part of the country.



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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Blow-Me-Down Grange  
Plainfield (Sullivan Cty) NH

Section number 8 Page 5

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The depression had particularly severe consequences to Mid-western farmers because of the large surpluses they were generating. Falling prices and reduced incomes resulted in bankruptcies and foreclosures.

Farmers turned their frustration toward business interests which they felt conspired against them in the marketplace. Bankers, middlemen, and the railroads were blamed for making agricultural products unprofitable. This anger propelled farmers into the Grange and other agricultural clubs as a way of fighting back. The Grange had tremendous influence and provided a mechanism for organizing against unfair railroad tariffs and corporate monopolies. However, as the economy improved toward the end of the 1870s the need for the Grange and with it Grange membership diminished. By 1880 the Grange movement in the Mid-west had virtually come to a close.

In New England, where a tradition of farmers' clubs and associations had begun as early as the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Grange enjoyed its primary influence in the period after 1880. Rather than being a radical movement, the Grange in New England was stable and conservative. Its interests and influence were more wide-ranging and far more enduring.

The Grange sought to assist farmers to enjoy greater profitability. This objective was pursued in numerous ways. Meetings, discussions, and reports provided a forum for updating and improving information so that farmers could be more expert at the business of agriculture. Strong support was given to state agricultural colleges and experiment stations and alliances were forged with state boards/departments of agriculture and the Farm Bureau. Cooperative stores and insurance companies were organized to reduce costs. The Grange promoted fairer taxation and better transportation. Much of the Grange's work was accomplished by means of legislative initiatives.

Changes in American society during the 20<sup>th</sup> century frustrated the Grange's efforts; fewer and fewer farms remained in operation and rural areas continued to lose population into the 1940s. Those who remained, however, operated under more advantageous circumstances due to the work of the Grange. Although the organized activities of the Grange were reduced to a fraction of what they once

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Blow-Me-Down Grange  
Plainfield (Sullivan Cty) NH

Section number 8, 9 Page 6

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were. Grange halls survive as a physical reminder of an important movement in the life of rural New England.

The Blow-Me-Down Grange was founded in 1895 and purchased the building in 1899. Over the next 40 years the interior was adapted to meet the needs of the Grange membership. The interior includes the amenities typically associated with Grange activities: a meeting room with stage for dramatic presentations; a dining hall, which was adaptable for general meetings and events; and a kitchen.

- (1) Jim Garvin, National Register Nomination for Richmond Community Church, Richmond NH, listed March 24, 1983.
- (2) Rich Barlow, "Dusting Off the Many Decades", Valley News, Jan. 7, 2001.

**Bibliography**

Barlow, Rich. "Dusting Off the Many Decades", Valley News. January 7, 2001.

Garvin, James L. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Richmond (NH) Community Church. 1982.

Garvin, James L., Christine E. Fonda, and Eileen Longe. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Rod Grange #114. 1994

Sherman, Rexford Booth. The Grange in Maine and New Hampshire, 1870-1940. Boston University Graduate School, Ph.D., 1973. (Copy at New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord NH.)

Zea, Philip and Nancy Norwalk, editors. Choice White Pines and Good Land: A History of Plainfield and Meriden, New Hampshire. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher. 1991.

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**Continuation Sheet**

Blow-Me-Down Grange  
Plainfield (Sullivan Cty) NH

Section number 10,11 Page 7

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

Boundaries of the nominated property are indicated on the attached sketch map. The parcel is identified in the Plainfield NH tax records as lot #6610 and comprises 0.41 acres.

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property represents the original parcel upon which the Union Congregational Church (now the Blow-Me-Down Grange) was constructed in 1839.

**Form Prepared By**

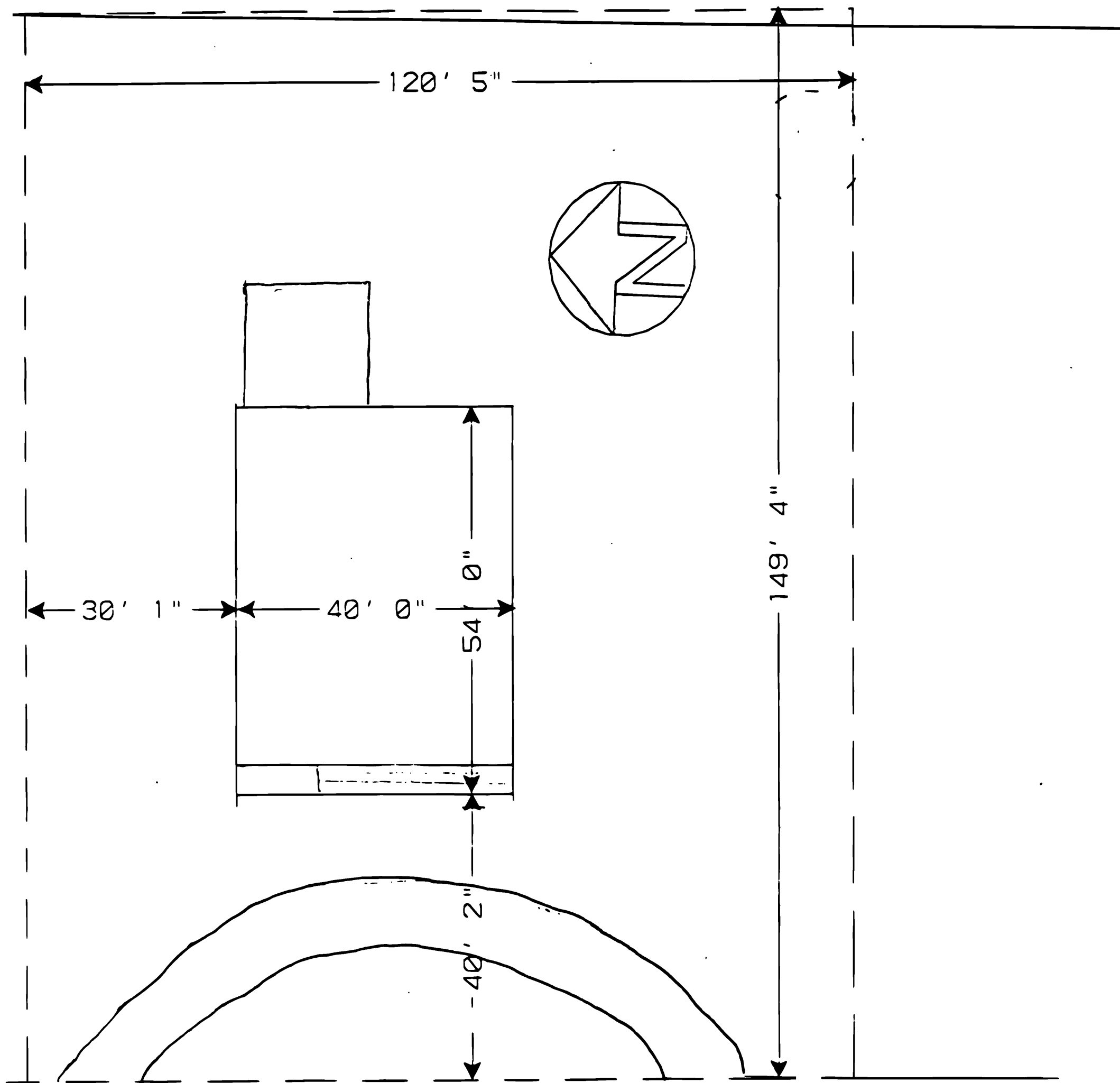
Kate Stephenson  
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Christine Fonda  
NH Div. of Historical Resource  
Box 2043  
Concord NH 03301  
603-271-6437

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Accompanying documentation  
Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 8



Route 12A

—————  
PROPERTY BOUNDS

BLOW-ME-DOWN GRANGE  
PLAINFIELD, N.H.

← 20' →