

PH# 365297

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED FEB 17 1977
DATE ENTERED NOV 23 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

NAME

* HISTORIC Old Hancock County Buildings
AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Cross Street
CITY, TOWN Ellsworth VICINITY OF 2nd Hon. William Cohen
STATE Maine CODE 23 COUNTY Hancock CODE 009

CLASSIFICATION

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

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME City of Ellsworth

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Ellsworth VICINITY OF STATE Maine

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

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

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Ellsworth STATE Maine

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 type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Ellsworth Community Building and Alumni Association Building are a handsome pair of rectangular one and a half story municipal buildings of the Greek Revival style, the former built in 1834(?) and the latter constructed as a detached addition in 1838. Both buildings draw inspiration from the peristyle form and each features colonnades in the Doric order on the front and rear facades. The roofs are gabled. Both foundations are of granite blocks.

The slightly older Community Building is of wooden frame construction with wooden clapboard siding. Its main facade has eight columns supported by granite cubes across its ground floor, supporting a portico of pure Doric detail. The ground-floor wall of the building is seven bays wide, three symmetrically-placed twelve-over-twelve windows to each side of the main entrance doorway. The half-story above features a pair of gabled double dormer windows with a lunette above each double pair of windows in each dormer. The rear facade is similar but with just one central dormer, with hooded chimneys to either side, in the half-story. An additional taller chimney stands to the right of the dormer. The gable ends of the building are pierced by doors and windows in both stories, with an iron fire-escape leading to the half-story door at each end of the building. There are four windows in each story at each end, the half-story windows being nearly square and six-over-six, the first story ones being rectangular and nine-over-nine.

The Alumni Association Building is of brick construction on the first floor with wooden half story and trim. Its main facade has six columns supported by granite cubes across its ground floor, supporting a portico of pure Doric detail. The ground floor of the building is five bays wide, two symmetrically-placed nine-over-nine windows with granite lintels to each side of the arched main entrance doorway. The half story above has no dormers, but there are two chimneys. The rear facade is identical to the main facade, but has no doorway. The Gable ends are simpler than in the older building, one having five nearly square six-over-two windows in the half story and two symmetrical granite-lintelled windows in the first story. The other end of the building has three six-over-two windows upstairs and a door to the left and a twelve-over-two window to the right, both with granite lintels. There are no external fire-escapes, as on the Town House.

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 checked="" 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 1834, 1838 BUILDER/ARCHITECT John L. Moore

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The old Hancock County Buildings located on Bridge Hill look down across the Union River at the business center of the City of Ellsworth. Since the 1830's they have stood on this eminence with simple dignity and constitute a cherished community landmark.

The first people to write their names on the pages of the history of the County buildings on Bridge Hill were Mrs. Charlotte Herbert and her daughter of the same name. In 1833, before Ellsworth was the shiretown of Hancock County, the Herberts deeded the triangular piece of land to the Inhabitants of the Town of Ellsworth, in memory of George Herbert, Sr., husband and father.

Mr. Herbert was the first lawyer to settle permanently on Union River. In light of this the acre or more of land was given with the stipulation that two-thirds of the property should be used to erect county building if Ellsworth became the Shiretown. Otherwise, the lot was to revert back to the Herbert estate. The remaining western most third was to be used for a Townhouse. The Townhouse was soon built and used as such until 1837.

After much ado, Ellsworth became the county seat on February 17, 1837. On April 3, following, the town of Ellsworth held a special election to decide the question of giving the lot and townhouse to the county, and the building and lot were transferred to the county for (as the deed states) "Five dollars and divers other good and lawful considerations."

In 1838 the brick addition was built with John L. Moore doing the carpentry work. Mr. Moore was selectman for several years. He also held various other municipal offices and was a member of legislature. He died August 20, 1890 at age 87.

On October 1, 1838 the records were moved from Castine and later that month the first court session was held.

The first company that left Ellsworth for the Civil War trained on the campus of the County Buildings before their departure on May 21, 1861. The company, under Capt. Isaac Frazier, consisted of eighty men. In all 328 men left Ellsworth in the first seven months of the war. Years later the Village Monument Committee erected a monument there to their memory.

(see continuation sheet)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

City of Ellsworth Register, The, 1908 compiled by Lawton, Loring, & Jordan, pp.13,58
Ellsworth American, The., Feb. 12, 1885, June 4, 1924, June 11, 1924
History of Ellsworth, Maine, 1927, by Albert H. Davis, ppg. 87-89, 96, 159, 169,
 173-74, 189-190
 (See continuation sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	[1] [9]	[5] [4] [5] [3] [1] [0]	[4] [0] [3] [1] [7] [2] [5]	B	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] []
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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 1977

STREET & NUMBER 31 Western Avenue 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 Earle S. Feltkeworth, Jr.
 TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE February 9, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<u>Robert B. Kettig</u> DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	<u>Robert B. Kettig</u> KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: <u>Charles Alberin</u> KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE <u>11/23/77</u> DATE <u>11.17.77</u>

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As the county grew it became apparent that the buildings were no longer large enough to serve the need. On December 24, 1885 the county conveyed the property back to the Inhabitants of the City of Ellsworth for \$1750. with the stipulation that the county could still use the buildings as needed. In 1886 the court moved to new quarters on Peter's Hill and thus came the end of an era.

The building was later used for the High School and renovation costs amounted to several hundred dollars. At first only the court rooms were employed but later the adjoining building was needed. In the interim it had been used as a dwelling house. An unheated corridor was added to connect the two buildings and aptly labeled "Iceberg Alley" by all who used it in the winter.

During the years 1920-23 the Boston University College of Business Administration held successful summer school in the building and the last high school class was held in June, 1924.

The building was then condemned, but the public cried out. Numerous letters to the Editor of the Ellsworth American demonstrated the people's feelings that the building ought to be kept because it was historically valuable. As a result the condemnation was rescinded.

Various groups used the building for short periods but by the early 1960's the brick structure was in considerable disrepair. Again the city council contemplated its destruction. But, understanding the value of the rich heritage, they hesitated.

The Ellsworth High School Alumni Association was formed and was given a lease. Along with this lease the building was given a new lease on life. Repairs were slowly but steadily made. Today the building remains very much as it was when it was built 138 years ago.

The slightly older wood frame structure, the original Town House, now serves as the Ellsworth Community Building and is used for a variety of purposes.

These two dignified Greek Revival structures so intimately connected with the history of Ellsworth and Hancock County are valued symbols of permanence and progress to the community which they have long served.

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Registry of Deeds, Hancock County, Maine; Vol. 58, p.504, Vol. 63, p. 518;
Vol. 203, p.460

Old Friend on Bridge Hill, 1976, typed manuscript by Darlene Springer