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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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 an 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 Stimson Memorial Hall

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number E Side of Rt 26, .05 mi N of junc w/Rt. 202 N/A not for publication

city or town Gray N/A vicinity

state Maine code ME county Cumberland code 005 zip code 04039

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

*Sam S. Freedman* SHPO 8/27/92  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission  
State of 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 certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the 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:)

*Prof. Murray Sapsley* 10/2/92  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

entered in the National Register

Stimson Memorial Hall  
Name of Property

Cumberland, Maine  
County and State

**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	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

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

Education: Library  
Recreation and Culture: Auditorium

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

Recreation and Culture: Auditorium

**7. Description**

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

Colonial Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Wood: Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other Wooden two-story portico

**Narrative Description**

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

Stimson Memorial Hall  
Name of Property

Cumberland, Maine  
County and State

## 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 a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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.

### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Education

Entertainment/Recreation

### Period of Significance

1900-1942

### Significant Dates

1900

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Elzner and Anderson, Architects

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Stimson Memorial Hall  
Name of Property

Cumberland, Maine  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less Than 1

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	9	3	9	3	0	6	5	4	8	5	9	9	1	5
Zone			Easting					Northing						

3 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

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.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Roger G. Reed, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date July, 1992

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station 365 telephone 207/287-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine zip code 04333-0065

**Additional Documentation**

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)

**Property Owner**

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

name Town of Gray

street & number P. O. Box 258 telephone 207/657-3339

city or town Gray, state Maine zip code 04039-0258

**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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Stimson Memorial Hall is located near one of the principal intersections of the village of Gray. Buildings in the immediate vicinity consist of a mixture of modern commercial structures, residences, and, on its west side, the town office. A driveway with parking areas borders the property on three sides.

Stimson Hall is a wood frame structure with a high brick foundation. It is rectangular with a two-story pedimented portico on the front and a small one-story wing on the rear. The main section, which is two bays wide on the front, features a gable roof which incorporates the portico that is supported by four Tuscan columns. The building is sheathed with clapboard siding and has two-over-two double-hung sash. Over each set of paired windows on the first floor, and over the double doors under the portico, are fixed sash with leaded glass designs. In addition to the columns, the classical treatment of this building consists of a full entablature under the pediment and corner pilasters. Originally there was a round-arched window in the tympanum, but this has been replaced with a bulls-eye window.

The interior remains substantially unaltered except for cosmetic changes. The two double doors open into large vestibules that provide access into the assembly hall. The vestibule on the left contains the staircase to the upper levels and the basement. Inside the public hall is a stage on the north wall opposite the balcony area between the vestibules on the south wall. The second floor contains the former reading room, plus a storage room above the vestibule which does not contain the staircase. An additional storage room is in the pediment itself. Plaster work and floors and trim survive on both floors. The moldings are inexpensive stock designs, typical of the period and consist of molded trim with corner blocks. Also original are four brass light fixtures in the main hall, two bookcases on the second floor, and several benches in what was a balcony.

In 1989 the building underwent a renovation which changed the character of the first floor hall. The stage area has lost all stage equipment such as sets, curtains, lights, etc., and wall-to-wall carpet was laid over the wood floors. The balcony was enclosed with sheetrock above the wood tongue-and-groove railing. In the entry hall the lower portion of the staircase has also been enclosed with sheetrock. As the upper floor is not used, the studs and insulation behind the sheetrock in both cases is exposed from behind and can easily be removed. Also in 1987, the basement was remodeled with the installation of a kitchen and dining hall.

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Since 1900 Stimson Memorial Hall has served as the principal public auditorium for meetings and social activities in Gray. Designed in the Colonial Revival style, Stimson Hall is one of only a few architecturally prominent landmarks in the center of town. As such, it is eligible for nomination to the Register under Criterion A and C.

Stimson Memorial Hall was built for the town by the children of Theophilus (1796-1872) and Mary Stimson as a memorial to their parents. In what was not an unusual occurrence in Maine, the Stimson children had all left their native town and, after becoming established in scattered locations across the country, provided money to build this memorial. Theophilus Stimson was a blacksmith who served in the State Legislature in 1842-43 and later ran a tavern. The Stimson's sons, Charles, George, and Morton, relocated as far afield as California. Daughter Abbie married Melville Ingalls, who became a prominent Cincinnati lawyer and railroad president. In 1899 they all donated money to build this hall and supplied an endowment.

Mrs. Ingalls may have been primarily responsible for this project as the architectural firm selected to design the hall, Elzner and Anderson, were from Cincinnati. Alfred O. Elzner (1845-1935) and George M. Anderson (1869-1916) were among the leading architects in southern Ohio. Elzner had received training in the office of H. H. Richardson and at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, while Anderson was educated at Columbia University and the Ecole des Beaux Arts.

The firm worked with Wilbur Ingalls on a number of major projects in Cincinnati, including one of the first reinforced concrete skyscrapers in the country. The architects' design for Stimson Memorial Hall may owe more to Greek Revival style architecture in Ohio than to what was described in The Lewiston Journal Magazine, July 23-August 2, 1900, a local newspaper as, "the old Colonial style, after a model found in Europe." Although there are few precedents in Maine for a full two-storied temple portico on a building such as this, the design satisfied the popular conception of Colonial architecture at the turn of the century.

The site for the hall was on a lot purchased by the Universalist congregation for a church in 1897. Unable to build, the congregation deeded the land to John W. Frank, Trustee for the Stimson family, in 1899. The only condition was that the Universalists would have free use of the hall. The building was constructed in 1900 at a cost of \$6,000. Tarr and Robinson of Cumberland Mills were the builders. It included a first floor hall and a stage equipped with scenery and dressing rooms. On the second floor was a reading room which constituted the only library in town until the early 1950s.

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STIMSON MEMORIAL HALL

CUMBERLAND, MAINE

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Originally, Stimson Hall was administered jointly by the town selectmen and a Board of Trustees selected by the donors. In 1921 it was arranged for the town to take over complete responsibility. By 1989 the second floor was no longer used and it was determined to save energy by installing temporary sheetrock and insulation to seal-off the upper floors. Should new uses be found for these spaces, they remain unaltered.

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Lewiston Journal Magazine, July 23-August 2, 1900.

History and Recollections of Gray, Maine, Vol. I, by George T. Hill,  
Portland, 178.

A Biographical Dictionary of Architects, (Deceased), by Withey and Withey,  
Los Angeles, 1970.



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

STIMSON MEMORIAL HALL

CUMBERLAND, MAINE

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## **VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The nominated property occupies the Town of Gray tax map U-02, Lot 50.

## **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary embraces the entire town lot historically associated with Stimson Hall.