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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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.



## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Holden Town Hall  
Other names/site number: Holden Grange #544, Holden Town House  
Name of related multiple property listing:  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 723 Main Road State: Maine County: Penobscot  
City or town: Holden Vicinity: n/a  
Not For Publication: n/a

## 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

	SHPO	5/19/14
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
<b>MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION</b>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

\_\_\_\_\_

*Louis Allen*

*7/7/14*

**Signature of the Keeper**

**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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

\_\_\_\_\_

buildings

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

sites

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

structures

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

objects

1

0

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register None

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT / City Hall

SOCIAL / Meeting Hall

RECREATION AND CULTURE/ Auditorium

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY / Gothic Revival

LATE VICTORIAN / Stick

LATE VICTORIAN / Italianate

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: The building has a concrete foundation, weatherboard siding, asphalt roof, brick chimneys and wood and glass windows and doors.

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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**Summary Paragraph**

The Holden Town Hall is an eclectic building that exhibits elements of the Late Victorian Gothic mixed with Italianate and Stick Style characteristics. The over-sized one- and one-half-story frame building was constructed in 1872 and dedicated in January 1873 and is situated on Main Road, Route 1A, in the Penobscot County town of Holden. The building is located just northwest of the cross roads of Bagaduce Road and the Main Road, close to the geographic center of the town. When it was constructed this town-built building was adjacent to the road, but in order to continue its function and avoid impacts from improvements to the highway, it was relocated 200 feet to the west in 2009. In its new location it maintains its original orientation towards the road but is now fronted by a spacious yard. This substantial building with all its original windows, doors, trim and interior features continues to provide space for municipal and community functions, and retains all aspects of integrity except for its original location.

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**Narrative Description**

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The Holden Town Hall was erected to serve multiple functions including that of an assembly space and as a community hall, with facilities for local gatherings and eventually more than 70 years of use by a fraternal organization. Holden is a relatively small town, (population in 2010 of 3,076), and is located about 8 miles southwest of the Penobscot County seat of Bangor and its sister city of Brewer. Route 1A is the main artery through the town and connects Bangor to the coast 20 miles further southwest. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Holden was an agricultural town, with population clusters and civic and commercial buildings located at cross roads in Center Holden and East Holden. Other than housing subdivisions on the side roads most of the recent commercial and residential development has occurred along Route 1A. In the vicinity of the Town Hall are a handful of nineteenth and twentieth century homes on large, wooded lots, as well as open fields and areas of woods. Immediately to the southwest of the Hall, at the intersection, is a large, modern convenience store and gas station.

The building faces north-northeast, but for simplicity it will be described as facing north. The .6 acre lot on which the Hall is located is separated from the road by a .3 acre parcel, now the location of the septic field for the adjacent convenience store. The building measures 36 ½ x 50 ½ feet, and is surrounded on the north, east and west by a grassy platform landscaped with shrubs, flowers and bushes. The platform is edged with the granite foundation stones that formed the foundation of the building before it was moved. Beyond the platform the building is surrounded by a gravel drive and parking area, although the north part of the lot also features grass and a wood post and rail fence marking the property line. Several mature hardwood trees are located along the east and west property lines.

With the exception of a new concrete foundation and an asphalt roof, the Town Hall has all its original weatherboard siding, narrow corner boards and water table, windows and trim, as well as its original front door. The steeply pitched roof has two chimneys, one on either side of the ridge, positioned approximately 13 feet south from the front of the building. As originally built the roof was clad in slate tile and contained two original glass skylights, set below the chimneys and slightly to the south. Wood gutters are built into the side wall eaves.

The façade is three bays wide on the first floor and contains a two-leaf entry with eight panel wood doors. A set of concrete steps with iron railings is positioned in front of the entry, but it is not directly connected to the building. Above the door is a triangular shaped window with vertical muntins, topped with a projecting pointed crown. On either side of the entry are tall six-over-six double hung sash windows, also topped by pointed crowns. Triangular wooden panels fill the space between the top of the windows and the hood, and the sides of the windows are flanked with decorative, scroll cut trim. The thick window sills sit on squat modillions. On the second level is a single window bay containing two narrow four-over-four sash, with beveled upper panes that form a pointed arch. A diamond-shaped wooden panel fills the space between the top of the sash and another prominent crown. Between this window unit and the entry below is a wooden sign proclaiming in black paint "Holden Town Hall – Home of Holden Grange No. 544".

On this elevation the raking eaves of the building extend far beyond the plane of the wall and its frieze board, and are supported by thick, blocky, modillions. Descending from the gable peak is a king-post truss ornamented with delicate scroll-cut "gingerbread" trim. When viewed

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from head on the modillions give the appearance of widely spaced dentils, or decorative verge, and continue the visual line of the "gingerbread" through to the lower edges of the roof before terminating with a set of scroll-cut curlicues affixed to the lowest ends of the eaves.

In contrast to the highly decorated front of the building the side and rear elevations are more simply detailed. Each side elevation contains three pairs of narrow, six-over-four double-hung wooden sash. Each pair of windows share an architrave with shaped side trim and thick sills with supporting modillions. Instead of the triangular crown the flat wooden cornice board has a stepped, then peaked upper molding. The widely overhanging eaves are unornamented. The rear elevation is also modest: there are two window bays on the upper level: one contains a six-over-six sash and the other has been outfitted with a short door. (The metal staircase that provided access to this door has been removed.) Both openings have architraves and sills that match the windows on the side elevations. A frieze board lines the eaves but there is no decorative trim. On the first floor is a newer doorway, near the west corner of the building, containing a three panel-and- glass door. This door is accessed by a wood staircase that connects to a long wooden ramp that spans the width of the building and descends towards the east.

### Interior

The Holden Town Hall contains two full stories and an unfinished raised concrete crawl space. On the first floor an entry hall is located behind the front doors; this space provides access to the stairs, a small room and the main hall. A three-turn set of wide stairs rise along the north and then west exterior walls before turning east towards the second floor hall; the upper portion of this staircase is lit by the top sash of the window located in the room below. Adjacent to the stairs is a small room which contains a closet (now the location of the stairs to the basement), a chimney stack and a door into the main hall. Large, two leaf, two-panel doors at the south end of the entry lead into the main hall. This room, which measures approximately 36'10" by 34'11" is a large space lit by two and one-half sets of windows on the east and west walls. (The northernmost set of windows on each wall is bisected by the north wall of the hall, with one set of sash remaining in the main hall and the other illuminating the smaller front rooms.) Four turned posts support the 15 foot plaster ceiling. A newer door is positioned in the west end of the south wall. The northeast corner of the first floor contains another office or anteroom, also with a chimney stack, but this room is accessible only from the hall; it does not have a door to the entry area.

Finishes are consistent on the first floor. Each room has pine bead board wainscot topped by a moulded chair rail, over which the walls are plastered and covered with now-peeling milk paint. The weighted sash windows and door frames are trimmed with complex mouldings, and the floor is laid in 3 ½ inch fir. The two panel doors into the main hall, the back side of the front doors and the doors into the front rooms are all grain painted, as are the door jambs. Furniture in the main hall includes long, Windsor-style wooden benches, and two box stoves, which connect to the chimneys via tall, right-angle stove pipes. School-house style pendant lights descend from the ceiling. In the northeast room is a large safe on wheels ("Wm McFarland & Cos Improved Fire Proof Safe, NY"), and a shallow wooden closet mounted on the north wall. This room is also plumbed with a rudimentary water line (controlled by a petcock) that

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descends through the ceiling from the kitchen above. The walls of both of the front rooms are lined with two rows of coat hooks.

The second floor contains a hall at the top of the stairs off of which is a large closet in the northwest corner, a kitchen in the northeast corner, and the upper meeting hall to the south. On this floor the rooms have painted plaster walls, heavy painted window and door trim and moulded baseboards; there is no wainscot on the second floor. The flooring is also 3 ½ inch fir. The kitchen contains a large wood cook stove ("Provider", manufactured by Wherle in Newark Ohio), an electric range, cast iron dry sink and a long counter. A small, wood-lined closet opens off the kitchen, under the eaves. As with the first floor rooms the kitchen walls (and the closet) feature rows of coat hooks, although in this room it is more likely that they were used to hang utensils rather than clothing. A door in the south wall of the kitchen leads into the upper hall – this door contains a small "peephole" to allow monitoring of activities in the hall from the kitchen.

The upper hall measures 36'2" by 26' 10" and has a barrel vaulted ceiling. This ceiling reaches a maximum height of 12'4" and ends at the 8" high side walls. The plaster walls and ceiling of the hall are painted, and two unusual light wells in the ceiling at the north end of the room lead to the now covered, but original, skylights. This room is also heated by a box stove, connected to the west chimney. At the south end of the room one of the two windows had been converted into an exit door, but it is now blocked from the interior and the exterior fire escape has been removed. A door in each side wall leads to storage areas under the eaves. Within these spaces is visible the complex roof system which consists of three King-Post trusses off of which are supported a system of geometrically complicated rafters and supporting beams.

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**Statement of Significance**

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**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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years



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**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions.)

POLITICS / GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1873-1964

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1922

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person** (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.) (Refer to photographs)

The Holden Town Hall is an architecturally notable one-and-one-half story wood frame structure located on Main Road in the Penobscot County town of Holden. Erected by the town in 1873 to the designs of an as of yet unknown architect, and later used by the local chapter of the Patrons of Husbandry, the handsome building with Gothic Revival, Italianate and Stick Style details served as the site of the municipality's governmental functions until the mid-1960s, and as the meeting hall for the local Grange until 1995. In addition, over the years this building was used for receptions and funerals, dinners and socials, plays and presentations, and hosted an annual fall fair. The Holden Town Hall is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A, for its long term significance with the social, recreational, and governmental history of the town, and under Criterion C. for its local architectural importance. The period of significance starts with its dedication in 1873 and ends fifty years before the present (1964) in recognition of its on-going importance to the local community through 1995.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Criterion C: Architecture**

The Holden Town Hall is a building that is locally significant as a good example of a post-Civil War public hall and as an architecturally notable example of eclectic, romantic-revival era architecture. This building exhibits the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

The Holden Town Hall is among the best surviving examples of a type public structure erected to serve the social and civic needs of the town. Almost completely original in terms of materials, workmanship, and design, the building is substantial and attractive: it represents and anticipates the town's (and region's) continued growth. It was built just after the town reached its peak population, and less than twenty years after Holden was incorporated. As opposed to the earlier nineteenth century town houses, which often contained only one large room, a town hall was designed to accommodate multiple, simultaneous uses. Included within the walls of the Holden Town Hall are two large meeting rooms, several ante-rooms or offices, closets and storage spaces, a kitchen and multiple wood stoves for heat. Although there was no permanent stage, the spaces could be adapted to suit large performances, intimate gatherings, or small meetings. It is interesting to note that as originally designed (and built), the roof featured two skylights that fed into ceiling light wells in order to illuminate the upper-story hall.

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Town Halls were built by local builders or architects and range from extremely simple vernacular buildings to ornate or exuberant examples of contemporary architectural trends. In terms of style, the Holden Town Hall presents a blend of mid-nineteenth century styles. The verticality of the building, expressed through its steep roof, triangular window and door crowns and pointed window sash are all characteristics of the Gothic Revival style, as is the decorative eave treatment on the façade. However, the use of modillion brackets under the eaves and the shaped window architraves are borrowed from the concurrent Italianate style, and the king-post truss in the gable peak represents the emergence of Stick-Style architecture.

There is documentation that the building was designed by an architect, however the identity of the architect has been lost. The town has in its possession a set of nine construction plans and framing diagrams for the "Holden Town Hall." These plans clearly reflect the current building, but unfortunately were not dated or signed. In addition, there is a reference in Highlights of the History of Holden, Maine to the inclusion of "a receipt [that] shows that \$60 was paid for 'Architectural Services' " among the records of the building's construction. This receipt has not been located recently, and thus it remains unknown whether the name of the architect was included on the note.<sup>1</sup>

In the decades following the Civil War the nearby city of Bangor was flourishing commercially and growing rapidly. In the 1880s and 1890s the principal architect in Bangor was Wifred E. Mansur; in the later part of the century Harry E. Pace and Ellsworth C. Hodgins and his brother Victor Hodgins also practiced locally. But in the 1870s the only architect in the Bangor Directories was George W. Orff (1835-1908). While this alone does not make a strong argument that Orff designed the building, the Holden Town Hall does bare hallmarks of Orff's later work at the Orono Town Hall.

George W. Orff was born in Bangor and studied architecture in Boston beginning in 1861. He returned to Bangor in 1870 to establish an architectural practice. During his eight year career in the city, he designed both commercial and residential structures.

For his commercial structures he worked mainly in brick or stone and favored the Italianate style. He designed residential buildings in the Italianate and Second Empire styles, but interestingly used the Stick Style for a double house he built for his brother and himself in 1874. Before relocating to Minnesota in 1878 Orff designed a couple of public buildings in the Bangor area, including the City Maintenance Building, Court Street in Bangor (1873), the European and North American Railroad Station (1874, Bangor), and the Town Hall Orono (1873-74). While all three of these buildings have since been destroyed, Orff's sketch for the Orono Town Hall was published in the dedication program for that building and illustrates a building with a similar design vocabulary, including a king post decorative truss and decorative rake trim. The Orono example is much grander, three full stories, with three bays of substantial paired windows over three separate entrance bays on the façade. However, this building also has decorative window hoods and modillions under the window sills. While the similarities are not strong enough to support a full attribution, they do strengthen the suggestion that the successful Bangor architect may have been involved in the design of the Holden building.

<sup>1</sup> Highlights of the History of Holden, Maine. ([Holden, Maine]: Holden Bicentennial Heritage Committee, 1976), p 29.

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**Criterion A: Politics/ Government**

As was the law in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Commonwealth of Massachusetts, any townships in the District of Maine that wished to formally incorporate were required to meet certain requirements, including building a meeting house, they set aside at least three lots for public use and settling a [Protestant] minister. These meeting houses were utilized both for religious services and for town business.<sup>2</sup> This requirement may not have been strictly enforced in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in Maine (the establishment of any official church met with some significant resistance in many parts of the District of Maine) and it was not included in the Constitution of the state, adopted in 1820.<sup>3</sup> While there only needed to be one meeting house in a town, there could and eventually usually were additional churches. As towns grew and various religious societies were established in scattered neighborhoods and settlements the dual function of the "meeting house" evolved into "churches" separate from secular "town houses". The latter was a civic and governmental building, owned by the town and used to conduct the business of the town. The next generations of these buildings were often built as town halls.

Until 2001, when a new town charter was approved by the residents, the town of Holden had a Selectman-Town Meeting form of government.<sup>4</sup> As an example of a direct or participatory form of democracy, the town meeting serves as the legislative body, passing laws and approving the spending of monies. Traditionally a large portion of the town's adult voting (male) population would attend this meeting, during which local officials are elected, including the board of selectmen, who serve in a part-time capacity as the executive arm of the government, administering, enforcing, and carrying out the decisions made by the town meeting. The town house, or later town hall, was also the polling place for local, state and federal elections. In Holden the Town Hall was used by the residents as the location of most of its annual town meetings and elections from 1873 through c. 1964, and may have periodically been used for polling after this point. The town meeting in Holden is still held annually on the second Tuesday in June, but for the last five decades has been held at the much larger local school. However, the building continued to be used for town business on a periodic bases: an article in the Bangor Daily News indicates that the Town Hall was where the town assessor was available to meet with residents to talk about their assessments in April of 1980.

Numerous town-owned town houses or town halls survive in the rural communities and small town villages of Maine. During the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s there was a flurry of Town House construction throughout the older, more settled parts of the state; most of these were one-story wooden building with rectangular footprints and gable roofs, often with simple Greek Revival detailing. By the 1860s some town houses started to become embellished with Italianate details. After the Civil War it was less likely that a town would build a simple Town House in

<sup>2</sup> William D. Williamson, The History of the State of Maine. (Hallowell: Glazier, Masters & Co., 1832) p. 180.

<sup>3</sup> The Maine Constitution states "all persons demeaning themselves peaceably as good members of the State shall be equally under the protection of the laws, and no subordination nor preference of any one sect or denomination to another shall every be established by law, nor shall any religious test be required as a qualification for any office or trust, under this State." Maine Constitution 1819, Article 1 Section 3. Official disestablishment did not occur in Massachusetts until 1832.

<sup>4</sup> In 2001 the organization of the town was changed to that of elected Councilors, an appointed Town Manager (administrator) and Town Meeting. While the Town Meeting is still the instrument for approving the town budget, the Councilors have a greater authority over ordinances and proceedings.

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favor of a more elaborate, and multi-functional Town Hall, at times in an elaborate Queen Anne, Stick, Italianate or Colonial Revival style. The Holden Town House, the first civic building in the relatively young municipality, falls into this latter category.

**Criterion A: Entertainment/Recreation**

Part of the significance of the Holden Town Hall is that for decades it was the only substantial venue for entertainment in Holden. Throughout the rural communities of Maine, especially those isolated by distance or poor roads from larger urban areas, town or community halls were often the only sites for social events or performances. There are several variations with regard to the ownership or style of these buildings, but the importance of each to its respective community was similar. For example, the East Eddington Public Hall was erected in nearby East Eddington in 1879 (NR:03001503) by the local farmer's club, which financed the building through stock subscription. This structure was used for meetings, fairs, performances and large gatherings. In other neighboring communities halls were owned by towns or fraternal organizations, and also made available for public or private functions. Also in Penobscot County, the Corinth Town Hall and Corinthian Lodge # 59, I.O.O. F. was built through a joint partnership of the town and the Lodge in 1880. In larger towns, or communities with a more commercial focus, a private organization or individual might build a commercial Opera House or Music Hall, and rent it to local groups for periodic use. But in Holden, there were no commercial halls advertised in the Maine Register between 1872 and 1940; the Holden Town Hall appears to have been the only local venue for performances, club meetings, or large social events.

That this building was erected to serve multiple purposes is evident in the newspaper account of its dedication in 1873, as printed in the *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier* on January 11<sup>th</sup>.

The building, which cost about \$3,000, contains two halls, the lower designed for town meetings and the upper for lectures, entertainments, etc. Both are neatly and tastefully finished in native woods, and adjoining them are several ante-rooms, one of which is furnished with cooking apparatus for levees, suppers, etc. The dedication services Thursday afternoon were well attended, Capt. Russell Hart presided, able addresses were delivered by Rev. Dr. Tefft and Co. James Dunning of this city, and music was furnished by Andrews Orchestra. At the conclusion of the exercises an excellent oyster supper was served. (Page 3.)

Printed in the *Annual Report of the Municipal Officers of the Town of Holden* in 1921, the 18<sup>th</sup> article of the town meeting warrant asked the voters "To see if the town will vote to allow Holden Grange free use of the town hall for Grange meetings."<sup>5</sup> Initially the Union Star Grange, # 168, Patrons of Husbandry was organized in 1875, but based on entries in the *Maine Register*, apparently did not last past 1884, and it is not known whether they had their own building or met at the Hall. In 1921 a new local chapter of the Patrons of Husbandry, the

<sup>5</sup> Annal (sic) Report of the Municipal Officers of the Town of Holden For the Municipal Year 1921. (Thorndike: Newell White, 1922), 5.

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Holden Grange #544, was organized. But both before and after the second Grange was established, the town building had served as an entertainment and recreation venue for the town. Early on, the Penobscot Farmer's club met at the Holden Town House in the winter of 1887, where all those "interested in Agricultural pursuits" were invited to discuss the subject "Farmers' Needs – System and Economy".<sup>6</sup> Later that year, according to the *Bangor Whig and Courier*, a church sociable was held in the hall, although the name of the congregation was not specified in the newspaper article. In 1900 the funeral of Fred O. Perkins was held at the Town Hall, and in 1962 the Holden Town Hall was the site of the wedding reception for Pamela J. Leighton and Kenneth A. Heath, the latter a native of Holden.<sup>7</sup> Partially exposed graffiti indicate that Geo. M. Bragg's vaudeville/circus performed at the Hall at some point.<sup>8</sup> According to the memory of one resident, Mary Carter (who lived across from the hall for 81 years), a public dinner of salmon and new peas was traditionally held every Fourth of July, and the Ladies Home Circle club put on plays periodically. Interviewed in 1989 during discussions regarding the future of the building, Carter summarized how the significance of the building had changed with the times. "Years ago, you didn't just jump into a car and ride over to the theater in another town for a movie. Everyone went over to the hall because it was the only place to go. Now you've got television, and people don't call on each other like they used to."<sup>9</sup>

**Criterion A: Social History**

The Holden Town Hall was the home of the Holden Grange, No. 544, Patrons of Husbandry, from 1922 to 1995. Although they never owned the building, it was referred to locally as the "Holden Grange". The organization met in the first floor hall and used the kitchen and upper hall for dinners and other events.

Throughout the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries the Grange, or Patrons of Husbandry was an important social and fraternal organization with an emphasis on agricultural education. It's influence was widespread – ultimately 588 individual Granges were established

<sup>6</sup> "Penobscot Farmers' Club," *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, December 17, 1886, 2. (See bibliography for full citation.)

<http://interactive.ancestry.com/6644/NEWS-ME->

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[bin%2fssse.dll%3fdb%3dNEWS-ME-](http://interactive.ancestry.com/6644/NEWS-ME-BA%20DA%20WH%20AN%20CO.1886%2012%2017%200001)

[BA DA WH AN CO.1886 12 17 0001](http://interactive.ancestry.com/6644/NEWS-ME-BA%20DA%20WH%20AN%20CO.1886%2012%2017%200001) . Based on additional notices in the *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, the Penobscot Farmers' Club continued to meet at the hall at least through the winter of 1891.

<sup>7</sup>[No title], *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, December 9, 1887 (1); "Death of Fred O. Perkins", *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, February 5, 1900 (1); "Miss Pamela Leighton Plans October Wedding in Bangor" *Lewiston Evening Journal*, October 8, 1962, 2.

<sup>8</sup> Website for photograph: [http://www.historicholdentownhall.org/photogallery/griffiti/content/RES3315\\_large.html](http://www.historicholdentownhall.org/photogallery/griffiti/content/RES3315_large.html). Geo. M. Bragg was a Maine-born performer who frequently wrote his name on the walls of the venues in which he performed. The graffiti in the Holden Town Hall is partially covered by paint, but his signature and use of a date (obscured) is unmistakable. He was active in the 1920s through the 1940s, and probably earlier. His signature has been seen on venue walls throughout Maine, including at the West Paris I.O.O. F. Hall (NR: 11001058 ) and the Union Town House (NR: 01001419).

<sup>9</sup> John Weber, "The Town Hall: Losing its post as center of the community," *Bangor Daily News*, March 31, 1989, 19-20.

**HOLDEN TOWN HALL**

Name of Property

**PENOBSCOT COUNTY, MAINE**

County and State

in the state between 1873 and 1985 -but the focus of each Grange was on assisting the local communities. Not only was the Grange Hall a place for the grange members to hold their meetings, in many communities, including Holden, it became a center for community activity.

The history of the Grange has its origin in post-Civil War agricultural crises. The following two paragraphs were written by Elsbeth Brown and are the introduction to photographic exhibit titled: "Ritual and Community: The Maine Grange."

The Grange, or Patrons of Husbandry, is an agriculturally-based secret society founded in 1867. The Order, open to both men and women, was designed to meet the economic, social, and educational needs of a class of Americans -the small farmer -whose day to day lives were being irrevocably transformed in the post-Civil War period. The proliferation of the railroad, the mass production of farm machinery, and the increasing control of a new class of business men known as "speculators" or "middle-men" over the sale and distribution of farm products were a few of the many influences which led to widespread enthusiasm for the Grange in the 1870s. National membership in the Grange grew to over 1 million members in the wake of the 1873 depression, when farmers joined the organization as a means of buying and selling farm goods at wholesale prices. In the mid-1870s, membership plummeted as most Grange cooperative ventures failed to meet members' expectations.

By the 1880s, however, Grange membership in Maine was on the increase, part of what has been dubbed "the second Grange movement" centered in the Northeast; by 1887, Maine had the largest Grange membership in the nation. The focus of the second movement was an emphasis on the Grange's educational and social benefits.

The local or subordinate hall was the focus for most of the activities of the Grange. Each of these structures featured large gathering rooms where the rituals and meetings were held, and many also contain a stage and / or a dining room.

After the Civil War, the industrial revolution altered the face of the entire state's economy and in order to compete with more productive lands in the western states the practice of agriculture increasingly looked towards science and experimentation to increase yields of crops and products. One of the allures of the Patron's of Husbandry was their progressive educational focus which encouraged farmers to share knowledge or work together co-operatively. As described by historian Clarence Day in his *History of Agriculture in Maine*, at the end of the nineteenth-century the Grange experienced a period of extraordinary growth:

The Grange in Maine reached full maturity while Obadiah Gardner was State Master. (sic) (1897 -1907). Flourishing Granges were found in nearly every large agricultural community and in most of the smaller ones. Often they were social centers for the communities that they served. The Lecturers' programs featured both education and recreation. They proved excellent training ground for the development of local talent and leadership. (Page 193.)

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The Maine Grange was also active in improving the status of farmers and rural communities through legislation, advocating for educational and tax reform, voting rights for women and the development of Rural Free Delivery.

**Criterion Consideration B: Moved Properties**

When constructed the Holden Town Hall was located on a small lot close to Main Road, with a setback similar to that which fronted commercial establishments. Over time the width of this road increased, which created a difficult situation for snow removal and that was dangerous for parking. The lot was too small to accommodate additional parking around the building. In 2009 the town was given the opportunity to trade the Town Hall lot for a larger lot, approximately 100' feet to the south. This allowed the building to be moved directly back, approximately 200' feet and to be centered on a parcel that could accommodate parking as well as future improvements, such as a septic system. The previous location was acquired by the neighboring convenience store and the former footprint of the hall became the new leach field for the commercial establishment.

The architectural value of the Holden Town Hall was not impacted by the structure's relocation, nor was it moved far from its historic location at one of the town's important cross roads. The current setting, with the large front lawn, accentuates the original rural nature of the building, and it still has an orientation, setting, and general environment comparable to those of the original location and compatible with the property's significance. For this reason, Criterion Consideration B applies.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information (If appropriate.)**

The Town of Holden was incorporated in 1852, having previously been part of the City of Brewer. At the time of incorporation, the rural community had 805 residents, but this number steadily decreased until 1930 when there were only 543 residents enumerated in the census. Historically an agricultural town of widely dispersed farms with just a few mills and commercial establishments, the town started to grow again, as a bedroom community for Brewer and Bangor, reaching 1,375 residents in 1960 and almost 3,000 by 1990.

The following history of the Holden Town Hall was published in Highlights of the History of Holden, Maine, and provides an interesting anecdote regarding the location of the building.

In the late 1860s and early 1870s, the question of the location of a Town House caused a feud between the sections of the community on each side of Holden Center. The citizens of East Holden and Hart's Corner area favored the present location while individuals of the Holden Center and Copeland Hill sections as strongly preferred Holden Center.

Capt. Russel Hart supposedly gave away salt pork to win followers for the Hart's Corner location; and thus that group was dubbed "Pork Eaters." Since the other



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faction gave no such bribery, they were rather inelegantly designated as "Pinch Guts."

Records show that at a meeting June 15, 1872, the "following gents were elected (by ballot) for a building committee: Russel Hart, Harvey Clark, Henry Hart, Charles Shepard and A. P. Levensaller." It was voted that "this committee be instructed to proceed forthwith with procuring title, location, and construction of said Town House and that said committee be called up and sworn in."

The dispute relative to location, won by the "Pork Eaters," was soon superseded by another bitter diversity of opinions. The question involved was whether the structure should be a two story or one and a half story building. The latter style was decided on, and again Capt. Hart resorted to trickery by managing to have the second story so high that the result was nearly equivalent to a structure of two full stories...

The town discord extended even into the matter of financing the project. During construction, the town treasurer refused to sign any town orders. As a result, Capt. Hart obtained personal loans from the banks until he had approximately \$2000 invested. That year the tax collector pressured him for payment of his property tax. This he refused to do until the town had reimbursed him for the Town House he virtually owned. (Pages 28-29.)

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## 8. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Ames Associates. Building Assessment and Current Conditions: Holden Town Hall, Bangor, Maine, 2012.

Brown, Elspeth. "'About the Grange". In *Ritual and Community: The Maine Grange*, a brochure announcing an exhibition of photographs by Rose Marasco. Gorham, ME: Univeristy of Southern Maine, 1992.

*Centennial Celebration and Dedication of Town Hall, Orono, Maine, March 3, 1874*. Portland, Maine: Bailey & Noyes, 1974.

Day, Clarence A. *Farming in Maine, 1860-1940*. University of Maine Studies, Second Series, No. 78. Orono, Maine: University of Maine Press, 1963.

Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. "George W. Orff. *A Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Maine*, Volume III, Number 1, by editors Earle G. Shettlworth and Roger C. Reed. Augusta: Maine Historic Preservation Commission, 1986.

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Holden, Town of. *Annual Report of the Municipal Officers*. Thorndike, Maine: Newell White, 1921, 1922.

*Maine Register, State Year-book and Legislative Manual*. Portland, Maine: Greenville M. Donham, various years, 1872-1940.

William Chase & Co. *History of Penobscot County, Maine*. Cleveland: William Chase & Co., 1882.

*Newspaper articles*

"Holden Town House." *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, (Bangor, Maine), January 11, 1873: 3.

"Penobscot Farmers' Club." *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, (Bangor, Maine), December 17, 1886: 2.

[No title]. *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, (Bangor, Maine), December 9, 1887:1.

"The Penobscot County Farmers' Club will hold a meeting... ." *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, (Bangor, Maine), January 13, 1891: 1.

"Death of Fred O. Perkins." *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, (Bangor, Maine), February 5, 1900: 3.

"Miss Pamela Leighton Plans October Wedding in Bangor." *Lewiston Evening Journal*, (Lewiston, Maine), October 8, 1962: 3.

"Assessor available for tax list review." *Bangor Daily News* (Bangor, Maine), April 6, 1980: 20.

Weber, Tom. "The Town Hall: Losing its post as center of the community." *Bangor Daily News*, (Bangor, Maine), March 31, 1989: 19-20.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

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recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** .6 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84:

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

- NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 19 | Easting: 527668 | Northing: 4954967 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |

**HOLDEN TOWN HALL**

Name of Property

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3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the nominated property are depicted on the Town of Holden Tax Map 22, lot 24.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries represent the current lot on which the relocated building now sits.

**10. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Christi A. Mitchell, Architectural Historian  
 organization: Maine Historic Preservation Commission  
 street & number: 55 Capitol Street, State House Station 65  
 city or town: Augusta state: Maine zip code: 04333-0065  
 e-mail: christi.mitchell@maine.gov  
 telephone: (207) 287-1453  
 date: 17 April 2014

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the

**HOLDEN TOWN HALL**

Name of Property

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photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Holden Town Hall  
 City or Vicinity: Holden  
 County: Penobscot State: Maine  
 Photographer: C. Mitchell  
 Date Photographed: 11 April 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 7 ME\_Penobscot County\_Holden Town Hall\_0001.tif  
Façade of Holden Town Hall, facing south.
- 2 of 7 ME\_Penobscot County\_Holden Town Hall\_0002.tif  
North façade and east elevation; facing southwest.
- 3 of 7 ME\_Penobscot County\_Holden Town Hall\_0003.tif  
South and east elevations, facing northwest.
- 4 of 7 ME\_Penobscot County\_Holden Town Hall\_0004.tif  
Detail of front entry on façade, facing east.
- 5 of 7 ME\_Penobscot County\_Holden Town Hall\_0005.tif  
Interior, first floor hall, facing southwest.
- 6 of 7 ME\_Penobscot County\_Holden Town Hall\_0006.tif  
Interior, first floor hall, facing northeast.
- 7 of 7 ME\_Penobscot County\_Holden Town Hall\_0007.tif  
Stair hall to second floor and top of window; facing south.

**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.460 et seq.).

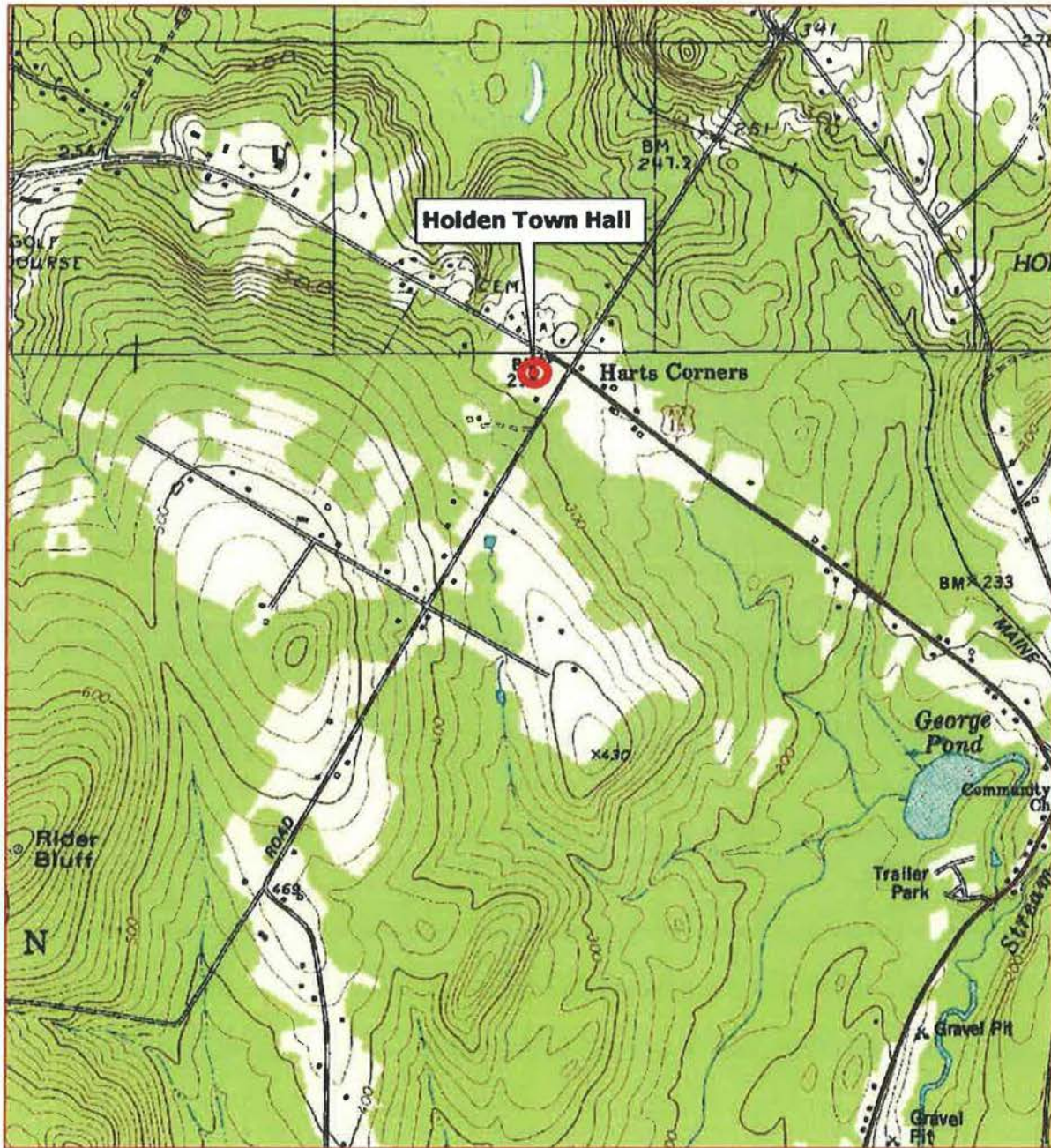
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

**HOLDEN TOWN HALL**

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<b>HOLDEN TOWN HALL</b> <b>PENOBSCOT COUNTY, MAINE</b> <b>17 APRIL 2014</b>	
UTM Coordinates, NAD 27: 19 /527668 / 4954967	
200   0   200   400   600 Feet	



## Holden Town Hall

Penobscot County, Maine



2004: Original Location

2014: New Location



HOLDEN TOWN HALL  
HOME OF  
HOLDEN GRANGE





  
Historic  
Holden Town Hall  
Built in 1875  
VISIT US  
WWW.HISTORICHOLDEN  
TOWNHALL.ORG



HOLDEN TOWN HALL  
HOME OF  
HOLDEN GRANGE  
NOV. 24









UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Holden Town Hall  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MAINE, Penobscot

DATE RECEIVED: 5/21/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/12/14  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/27/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/07/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000362

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 7/7/14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Local significance 1873 - 1964  
Area of significance: Architecture,  
social history/entertainment - politics/govt.*

RECOM./CRITERIA *H.C.*

REVIEWER *L. S. Delaney*

DISCIPLINE *H. S. J.*

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE *7/7/14*

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



PAUL R. LEPAGE  
GOVERNOR

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
55 CAPITOL STREET  
65 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333

EARLE G. SHETTLEWORTH, JR.  
DIRECTOR



20 May 2014

Keeper of the National Register  
National Park Service 2280  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW,  
Washington D.C. 20005

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find four (4) new National Register nominations for properties in the State of Maine:

Dixmont Town House, Dixmont, Penobscot County  
Holden Town Hall, Holden, Penobscot County  
Lovell Meeting House, Lovell, Oxford County  
Village School, Unity, Waldo County

If you have any questions relating to these nominations, please do not hesitate to contact me at (207) 287-2132 x 2.

Sincerely,

Christi A. Mitchell  
Architectural Historian

Enc.