

AUG 17 1989

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NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NOV 2 1989

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Moultonborough Town House
other names/site number none

2. Location

street & number N.H. Route 25 (.3 mile west of Route 109)
city, town Moultonborough
state New Hampshire code NH county Carroll code NH 003 zip code 03254

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: public-local (checked)
Category of Property: building(s) (checked)
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0, Total 1

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

4. 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 the National Register criteria.
Signature of certifying official: [Signature]
Date: OCT. 26 1989
State or Federal agency and bureau: NEW HAMPSHIRE

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

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

[Signature] 12/1/89

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government / city hall

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture / museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

No Style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stonewalls Weatherboard

roof Asphaltother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Moultonborough Town House is an early 19th century vernacular wooden town hall, that was somewhat modified in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The building is now used as the museum and meeting place of the Moultonborough Historical Society. The Town House stands in its original location, on its own lot in Moultonborough village, on the north-west side of Route 25, the main street of the village. The tall, one story, gable roofed main block is set with its main facade, the southeast gable end, facing the road. On its rear (northwest) gable end is found a small, one story, shed roofed restroom addition. The main block has a post and beam frame, the restroom addition a balloon frame. Since 1916, the building has seen a few changes, notably the addition of concrete steps, a side door, and an honor roll on the public facades, some builtin furniture in the interior, a new chimney and the small restroom on the rear. Basically however, the Town House retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The main block is set on a high fieldstone foundation, which is interrupted on the rear (northwest) side by four openings, now covered by wire mesh, which ventilate the dirt-floored crawlspace under the building. The main block's clapboarded walls are trimmed by cornerboards. The asphalt shingled gable roof is trimmed by a box cornice with mouldings, frieze, and returns on the three public (southwest, southeast, and northwest) facades. The rear (northwest) gable, however, only has close verges with simple returns. The three bay southeast (roadside) gable end contains the main entry in its central bay, tall, double six panel doors, whose frame is ornamented by an upper moulding. The entry is served by a wide concrete landing, with two wide continuous concrete steps on its three outer sides, and a central wrought metal railing. Mounted to the north of the doors is the World War II honor roll, a large bronze plaque listing the town's soldiers and sailors of World War II, mounted in a glass fronted case, with fluted side trim and a simple crowning moulding. The words "HONOR ROLL" in raised wooden letters are found on the wooden frame above the glass front. Above the entry is a long painted wooden wall sign with the inscription "MOULTONBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY". Mounted above that sign is a simple electric light on a bracket, and a shorter, but still long, painted wooden wall sign with the title "MOULTONBORO TOWN HOUSE". The windows of the main block's three public facades all have two over two sash and modern metal framed storm windows. The four windows of the southeast gable end, one each in the two side bays of the main level and

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two in the gable, each have an upper moulding on the window head, like that found above the main entry. The three windows of the four bay northwest lateral facade and the four windows of the four bay southwest lateral facade, however, all have plain frames. The third bay of the northeast facade, counting from the east front corner of the main block, contains the side entry, a tall paneled door with a large window and a plain frame. This side entry is served by a concrete landing with two continuous concrete steps on all three sides. The rear northwest gable end has four small plain framed single pane windows in the southerly third of the facade and a plain, tall concrete block exterior chimney (with a metal cleanout door in the base) near the center of the facade, as well as the restroom addition.

The small restroom addition is supported by two tall concrete block piers and the main block wall. The base of the restroom is open beneath the carrying beams. Under the restroom addition can be seen the old stone and concrete base of the earlier exterior brick chimney. The restroom is sheathed with clapboards, trimmed by cornerboards and open eaves with exposed rafters and plain fascia boards, and covered by an asphalt shingled shed roof. On the rear northwest lateral side of the restroom appear two plain framed three pane windows, placed high in the wall. The narrower northeast "gable end" has a plain modern wooden door with a plain frame, but as yet no steps.

The interior of the main block is one large tall room with a board floor. The lower portions of the walls are covered by a wainscoting of wide vertical beaded boarding topped by a moulded rail. The upper walls are sheathed with narrower horizontal beaded boarding. In each corner is a corner post boxed in by plain boards. Similarly, plain boards box in the plates that cross each gable end of the room, at the same level as the junction of the ceiling and the lateral walls. The three pitched ceiling, with its wide flat central section and pitched southwest and northeast sides, is covered by more narrow beaded boarding like that found on the upper walls. At the junctions of the pitched ceilings and the lateral walls are found two more boxed in plates, here covered by more narrow horizontal beaded boarding. Three metal tierods cross the room from one lateral plate to the other lateral plate. Mounted on the ceiling are three simple electric light fixtures and two ceiling fans. Hanging from the ceiling are two recent chandeliers made from wagon wheels. Other light fixtures include modern display lights, two on each lateral (southwest and northeast) boxed plate, one on the northwest boxed plate, and two on the southeast boxed plate. Plain frames surround all the windows and doors. In the center of the southeast (roadside) wall is the main entry, double six panel doors with emergency exit panic bars. The doors have interior double screen doors (each with two large screened panels) beneath a two panel transom screen. The

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two main level windows and the two gable windows of the southeast wall all have two over two sash. The flat central portion of the ceiling cuts off the upper part of the gable windows. The southwest wall has four two over two sash windows, the northeast wall three two over two sash windows and the side entry, the paneled door with large single pane window and an emergency exit panic bar. The southerly portion of the rear northwest wall contains four small single pane windows. Beneath these windows, a simple long display counter with board shelves and top has been built against the wall. Between the counter and the windows is mounted a long board shelf. Near the center of the rear wall is the four panel door to the restroom addition. In the north corner of the room is a small kitchen area with a simple wooden counter against the northeast wall, another counter with a sink on the northwest wall, and projecting into the room from the northwest wall, parallel to the northeast wall, a large cabinet with two board doors and a shallow moulded cornice. Sitting in the rear portion of the room is a metal woodstove, whose stove pipe rises above the tierods, then runs back to the northwest wall, where it passes through a plain framed, brick filled panel into the exterior chimney.

The restroom addition contains two small rooms connected by a doorless opening. The restroom addition has board floors and unfinished board walls with exposed studding. Only the partition separating the two rooms is sheathed with vertical beveled boarding on both sides. The unfinished pitched board ceilings have exposed rafters, with a light fixture mounted on a rafter in each room. Each room has an untrimmed three pane window in its rear northwest wall. The four panel door to the main block in the south room's southeast wall, and the modern plain wooden door to the outside in the north room's northeast wall are also untrimmed.

The historic Town House lot is basically a square, eight rods wide by eight rods deep. (A small square in the north corner of the lot, on which stands the relocated Moultonboro Neck Schoolhouse, moved here in 1987, has lost its historic character, and has therefore been excluded from the nomination.) The land is basically level, save for a drainage ditch along part of the northeast boundary. Most of the lot is grassed, although shrubs and trees do predominate in the west corner and to the rear of the Town House. Stone walls mark the historic rear and side boundaries on the northeast, northwest, and southwest. Rows of trees are found on the northwest and southwest boundaries, with some smaller trees scattered along the northeast wall. An unpaved semicircular drive runs from the highway near one end of the lot frontage, in front of the Town House, to the highway again at the other end of the lot frontage. A granite hitching post stands near the southerly entrance of the drive. In the center of the road frontage is a heavy wooden post with metal bracket, on which is mounted (seasonally) a sign announcing the historical museum and its hours. Located on the

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semicircular front lawn created by the drive and on the main axis of the Town House is a monument, a granite boulder on which the Town of Moultonborough mounted a small bronze plaque decorated by a cast eagle, in honor of the four Moultonborough men who died in World War II and the Korean War. A row of shrubs is found behind and to each side of the monument. Foundation shrubs are found around the Town House, particularly on its roadside facade. A tall plain wooden pole near the northeast boundary supports the power lines to the building. The rear west corner has a few scattered rock piles.

The Moultonborough Town House was built in 1834, following a vote of the Town to accept the report of a committee established to locate and plan a town house.¹ The committee recommended the erection of a building very much like the present building, a gable roofed structure, one story high, with the gable end facing the road and having a stone foundation and clapboarded walls. The roadside gable end was to have two doors and two windows, each lateral facade four windows, and the rear gable end one window. A wooden landing with a step was to stretch the full width of the roadside facade. The interior was to be "sealed on the walls up to the windows", with the upper walls plastered.² If actual construction of the Town House followed the committee report, the building's exterior at least must have appeared much as it did in later years, save for the roadside gable end. Unfortunately, no early views of the Town House survive to show us exactly how the building appeared in its early years.

The Town House was used for town meetings and elections from 1835 through 1949. As the years passed, the building was occasionally repaired and renovated. Unfortunately, town records tell us when the building was repaired and/or remodeled, but seldom describe the actual changes made to the building. The 1857 annual town meeting voted \$150 for unspecified repairs to the building.³ The March 1884 town meeting appropriated \$300 for further repairs to the Town House.⁴ This appropriation was exceeded, as some \$423.75 was spent on the project.⁵ According to old receipts examined and described by a local historian, the work included plastering and new windows, door, and frames.⁶ The contemporary newspaper accounts

1. "Town of Moultonborough Records" (manuscripts, Moultonborough Town Offices, Moultonborough, N.H.), Vol. II, pp. 325-328

2. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Vol. II, pp. 326-327

3. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Book 2, No. 4, pp. 217,222

4. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Book 10, pp. 83,87

5. ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE TOWN OFFICERS OF TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 2,1885 (Sandwich,N.H.: 1885), p.8

6. Frances A. Stevens, AS I REMEMBER MOULTONBOROUGH, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Moultonborough, N.H.: 1987), pp. 91-92

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unfortunately tell us little more about the work. In April, it was reported that "the town house ... is now being torn out inside and is to be built more convenient".⁷ In September, the building was "being thoroughly repaired inside and out".⁸ And, in October, it could be reported that the work was nearing completion.⁹ (Another \$101.67 was spent in 1885 on the yard and new furniture for the Town House.¹⁰) A committee appointed to repair the Town House and its yard in 1897 spent \$48.71 on its work.¹¹ This project was described simply in a Wolfeboro newspaper as "extensive improvements ... on the town house and grounds",¹² while a Laconia newspaper noted that that it included grading around the town house.¹³ Another major remodeling took place in the early 20th century, after the March 1915 meeting "voted to accept the offer of James E. French to repair the town house at his own expense".¹⁴ James E. French (1845-1919) had served as the town moderator since 1879 and was a generous benefactor of community projects.¹⁵ Apparently, his repairs and renovations of the Town House were made primarily in 1916, as a short news item speaks of Moultonborough voters looking forward to seeing the "remodeled Town Hall" at the September 1916 primary election.¹⁶ Again, we have no detailed description of the actual changes. It does seem likely that the interior acquired its present beaded board sheathing on the walls and ceiling during the 1916 remodeling. We can only speculate on this and the other changes of the 1884, 1897, and 1916 renovations. But, it would appear that in those years the Town House acquired its present appearance with the present main entry and windows, beaded board wainscoating and sheathing. A number of minor changes have been made since 1916, but they have not significantly changed the architectural and historical character of the building.

Some changes to the Town House cannot be dated with any great certainty. These include the tierods (installed at some point to prevent the spreading of the frame), the side door, and the concrete steps, although the last two

7. Sandwich Reporter (Sandwich, N.H.), April 24, 1884, p.3

8. Sandwich Reporter September 18, 1884, p.3

9. Sandwich Reporter October 16, 1884, p.3

10. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Book 10, pp.119, 123; ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE TOWN OFFICERS OF TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 1, 1886 (Sandwich, N.H.: 1886), p.8

11. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Book 10, pp.524, 527; ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE TOWN OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING FEB. 15, 1898 (Meredith, N.H.: 1898), p.8

12. Granite State News (Wolfeboro, N.H.) November 23, 1897, p.3

13. Laconia Democrat (Laconia, N.H.) November 12, 1897, p.6

14. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Book 5, No. 11, pp.418, 421

15. Granite State News July 19, 1919, p.4

16. Laconia Democrat August 25, 1916, p.3

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features were probably installed in the 1930's or early 1940's.¹⁷ The 1946 annual town meeting appropriated \$1000 for equipment and changes to the building, so that it could be used for basketball.¹⁸ As part of this project, the low platform at the northwest end of the room and the voting booths that stood on it were removed in 1947, to make the entire floor of the room one level.¹⁹ The late 1940's also saw the mounting of the World War II honor roll near the main entry. (Originally, the names were painted on a wooden board in the honor roll, but, in the 1980's, a more permanent bronze plaque was installed in the original frame.)²⁰

In 1960, the Town, which was no longer meeting in the building, voted "to allow the Old Town House to be used as a meeting place and also for the preservation and display of historical records and items of historical interest pertaining to the town" and designated the Moultonborough Historical Society as the "custodian" of the building.²¹ The Historical Society has used the building ever since as its meeting place and as a seasonal historical museum. This new function has included some small changes. A sign identifying the historical society was installed above the main entry.²² A railing was added on the front steps, and storm windows installed.²³ The interior has seen the installation of a wood stove, a display counter on the rear wall, display lights and hanging lights, inner screen doors on the main entry, a sink and counters in one rear corner, ceiling fans, and emergency exit panic bars on the doors.²⁴ The most significant changes have been on the rear gable end, where a new concrete block chimney replaced a dilapidated brick chimney,²⁵ and, in 1986, a privy, once a separate structure, was attached.²⁶ The privy, whose original construction date is not known,

17. Interview of Frank McIntire by David Ruell, April 16, 1989; Lamprey family photo album (collection, Robert Lamprey, Centre Harbor, N.H.); interview of Ernest Davis by David Ruell, March 20, 1989; interviews of Frances and Ernest Stevens by David Ruell, March 16, 1989; interview of Stewart Lamprey by David Ruell, April 23, 1989; interview of Wilmont White by David Ruell, April 22, 1989

18. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Book No. 16, pp. 75, 81

19. Interview of Robert Lamprey by David Ruell, March 25, 1989; ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBORO FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1947 (Meredith, N.H.: 1948), p.36

20. Interviews of Frances and Ernest Stevens by David Ruell; interview of Ernest Davis by David Ruell

21. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Book No. 16, pp. 376, 380

22. Interview of Ernest Davis by David Ruell

23. ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH, 1980, p.127

24. Interview of Ernest and Frances Stevens by David Ruell; interview of Ernest Davis by David Ruell

25. Interview of Ernest Davis by David Ruell; interview of Robert Lamprey by David Ruell

26. ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH, 1986 (Meredith, N.H.: 1987), p.26

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but which is probably mid 20th century in origin, was altered by the closing of a door in one end, the replacement of the door in the other end, and the making of an opening between the two once separate rooms. More significantly, the window in the center of the main block's rear facade was removed and replaced by a new door to the restroom addition.²⁷ Although numerous, these recent changes have not effected the essential character of the Town House, which still appears virtually as it did in the early 20th century.

The Town House grounds have also seen some changes. A boulder with a bronze plaque honoring the dead of World War II and the Korean War was placed on the front lawn by the Town of Moultonborough, apparently in the mid or late 1950's.²⁸ The Historical Society placed a sign post and a granite hitching post near the road.²⁹ Shrubs have been planted in front of the building and around the monument.³⁰ And, in 1987, the Moultonboro Neck Schoolhouse was moved to the property and placed in the rear north corner of Town House lot.³¹ (The relocated schoolhouse does not qualify fo the National Register, so the building and the land immediately surrounding it was excluded from this nomination.)

Although the Town House and its grounds have seen some changes in the building's century and a half of service to the community, the property does retain its basic integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

27. Interviews of Frances and Ernest Stevens by David Ruell; interview of Ernest Davis by David Ruell

28. Interview of Ernest Davis by David Ruell; interview of Robert Lamprey by David Ruell; interview of Stewart Lamprey by David Ruell

29. Interview of Ernest Davis by David Ruell; ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH, 1981 (Meredith, N.H.:1982), p.122

30. ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH, 1981, p.122

31. ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH, 1987 (Meredith, N.H.:1988), p.127

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

 nationally statewide locallyApplicable National Register Criteria A B C DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Politics / Government

Period of Significance

1834-1939

Significant Dates

1834

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Jonathan Hanson (builder)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Moultonborough Town House is significant under Criterion A in the area of Politics and Government as one of the oldest town halls in Carroll County, and as one of the county's best examples of these centers of local government. Erected in 1834, the Moultonborough Town House was the focal point of the town government for over eleven decades, housing all Moultonborough town meetings and elections from 1835 through 1949. As the setting for the town meetings that have been the basic decision making mechanisms of all town governments in Carroll County (and most municipal governments in New Hampshire), the Town House is representative of that most democratic of all American political institutions, the town meeting. The building preserves its original basic form, a one story, gable roofed structure, with its main entry in one gable end, and most of the architectural features associated with its period of use as a town hall. The period of significance begins with the building's construction and ends in 1939, the arbitrary fifty-year cutoff date.

The Moultonborough Town House is locally significant in Politics and Government, having served as the town hall and, therefore, the seat of local government from 1835 to 1949. It is the only structure ever built for that purpose in Moultonborough. Having retained its integrity, the Town House continues to convey the character and associations of its historic use and functional type.

Carroll County was settled in the late 18th century, as no settlement was possible until the end of the long conflict with the French and the Indians in 1763. The area was granted as townships to various groups of proprietors. Typically, as the new township grants acquired sufficient population, they were incorporated as towns, with the right of self government. The first Carroll County town incorporated was Conway in 1765. By the end of 1800, all but two of the present eighteen towns in the county had been granted self-government. (The other two towns were actually created in the 19th century, out of parts of pre-existing towns, Freedom from northern Effingham in 1831, Madison from western Eaton in 1852.)¹

1. For the incorporation of the towns, see Hobart Pillsbury, NEW HAMPSHIRE: RESOURCES, ATTRACTIONS See continuation sheet

AND ITS PEOPLE: A HISTORY (New York:1927) and ed. Georgia D. Merrill HISTORY OF CARROLL COUNTY (Somersworth, N.H.: 1971, reprint of 1889 ed.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE TOWN OFFICERS OF TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 2, 1885 (Sandwich: Sandwich Reporter, 1885)

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE TOWN OFFICERS OF TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 1, 1886 (Sandwich: Sandwich Reporter, 1886)

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE TOWN OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING FEB. 15, 1898 (Meredith: W.J. Randolph, 1898)

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1947 (Meredith: Meredith News, 1948)

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH, 1980 (no publication data)

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository:

Moultonborough Town Offices

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property .7 acre

UTM References

A

1	9
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3	0	6	7	6	0
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4	8	4	6	9	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is described as follows: beginning at the south corner of the Town House lot on the northwest side of Route 25, the boundary proceeds northwest 132 feet (8 rods) along the land of David Montella and Laraine Lefleur (as marked by a stone wall), then

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property was drawn to include the Moultonborough Town House and that portion of the Town House lot which retains its historical integrity. All of the property included in the nomination is part of the lot acquired by the town of Moultonborough in 1834 for

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David L. Ruell
organization Lakes Region Planning Commission date May 7, 1989
street & number Main Street telephone (603) 279-8171
city or town Meredith state New Hampshire zip code 03253

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The governments of these new Carroll County towns, like the governments of all 18th century New Hampshire towns, were based on the town meeting. The town meeting is the public meeting of all the town's voters, held annually and as required by special circumstances, to settle the major issues of the day, to appropriate funds for the local government, to adopt ordinances and regulations, and to elect town officials. Under this system of government, the daily administrative tasks are given to a board of selectmen (now sometimes joined by a town manager), but all major decisions are made by the voters gathered at a town meeting. Although some large New Hampshire municipalities have adopted other forms of government, the town meeting remains the chief mechanism of local government in all Carroll County towns to this day.

A town meeting does require a place to meet. Many communities were forced, particularly in their early years, to meet in whatever building was available, such as the local tavern, a schoolhouse, a private home, or a privately owned hall. But, in time, all but one town in Carroll County acquired a building for its town meetings. In the late 18th century, when the responsibilities of the town government included the support of a town minister, many Carroll County towns built meetinghouses, which served for both town meetings and the regular religious services of the established church. Four of these 18th century meetinghouses survive in Carroll County, but all have been greatly altered. After the separation of church and state in New Hampshire, following the Toleration Act of 1819, either the town government or the established town church (usually a Congregational church) typically relinquished its interest in the meetinghouse and erected a new building for its own use. In Effingham, Ossipee, and Wakefield, the town government eventually moved to its own town hall, leaving the Congregational Church in control of the old meetinghouse. All three buildings were extensively remodeled in the 19th century, to look more like the churches of the day, with a steeple and more stylish ornament.² The meetinghouse in Tamworth was left to the Town when the Congregational Church erected a new building in 1851. The old Tamworth meetinghouse was relocated and substantially remodeled as a two and a half story town hall at the same time.³

² Most of the towns of Carroll County proceeded in the 19th century to
2. Lawrence P. Hall, TALES OF EFFINGHAM (Freedom, N.H.:1988) pp.68-69,81; Merrill, pp. 605-609; Elizabeth B. MacRury, FOOTSTEPS OF PRIDE TO THE PAST, 1774-1974, WAKEFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Sanford, Me.: 1987), pp. 25, 34-35, 77-78, 833-836. The former Effingham meetinghouse, now the Lord's Hill Congregational Church, was listed on the National Register as a contributing building in the Lord's Hill Historic District on September 12, 1985.

³ Marjory G. Harkness, THE TAMWORTH NARRATIVE (Freeport, Me.: 1958) pp. 87-91,121,182-183

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build new town halls, rather than to reuse their old meetinghouses. By 1890, every town in the county, save the small towns of Albany and Hart's Location, had its own town hall. (Hart's Location still has no town hall; and Albany acquired a former chapel for use as its town hall in 1931.⁴) Some of these 19th century town halls have since disappeared, being destroyed by fire or demolished after newer town halls were erected. Some towns have since converted buildings erected for other purposes to serve as their town halls. These include converted schools in Bartlett, Effingham, and Eaton, a former chapel in Albany, a former theater in Ossipee, and the old Odd Fellows Hall in Madison.⁵ But some thirteen buildings erected specifically to serve as town halls still stand in Carroll County.⁶ These buildings range in date from the Tuftonboro Town House of 1818-1820 to the Sandwich Town Hall of 1915; and they do show an evolution of type and form. The earliest town halls in Tuftonboro (1818-1820), Brookfield (1822-1823), Chatham (1833), Moultonborough (1834), and Wakefield (1836-1837)⁷ were all one story, gable roofed vernacular structures, relatively simple buildings that were similar in size, each with its main entry in one gable end. In the last quarter of the 19th century and the early 20th century, new Carroll County town halls were larger and more elaborate. The former Bartlett town hall (1875)⁸ and the former Madison town hall (1884)⁹ are one and a half story buildings. But the town halls of Wolfeboro (1888-1890), Freedom (1889), Wakefield (1895), Jackson (1897), Conway (1903), and Sandwich (1915)¹⁰ are all two

4. Interview of Marion Varney by David Ruell, May 2, 1989; A. Bernard Perry ALBANY'S RECOLLECTIONS (1976), p.21

5. Interview of Jean Garland by David Ruell, April 25, 1989; David Ruell, PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE LAKES REGION, AN ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY (Meredith: 1986), pp.28-30; interview of Keith Henney by David Ruell, April 24, 1989; Perry, *ibid.*; interview of Rev. George Davidson by David Ruell, April 24, 1989; interview of Jack Alexander by David Ruell, April 28, 1989

6. A survey of the present and former town halls in Carroll County was made through examination of Merrill's county history and many local histories, and through interviews with local historians and officials. The sources shall be cited at the appropriate places.

7. John W. Hayley, TUFTONBORO, NEW HAMPSHIRE: AN HISTORICAL SKETCH (Concord: 1923), p. 63 ; "Brookfield Town Records" (manuscript, Brookfield Town Hall, Brookfield, N.H.), Volume II, pp. 237,269; "Chatham Town Records" (manuscript, Chatham Town House, Chatham, N.H.) Book 3, pp.499-500; MacRury, pp.77-78

8. The former Bartlett town hall, now the Glen Fire Station, has been greatly altered by the addition of a wing, and the installation of vinyl siding and two large overhead doors in its main facade. Interview of Jean Garland by David Ruell; Merrill, p. 925

9. Merrill, pp. 811-812

10. David Ruell, A GUIDE TO NATIONAL REGISTER PROPERTIES IN THE LAKES REGION pp. 5-9; date signs on the Freedom and Jackson town halls, MacRury, pp. 233-257; interview of Ann Cullinan by David Ruell, April 27, 1989

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and a half stories in height. Although the former Bartlett town hall and the Freedom town hall are relatively simple, gable roofed structures, the other later buildings are more complex in form, with towers on the Wolfeboro, Wakefield, Conway and Sandwich buildings, a hip roofed front addition with inset porch on the old Madison town hall, and a two story entry pavilion on the gambrel roofed Jackson town hall. Architectural decoration is more elaborate on these later town halls, ranging from the window cornices and entry hood of the Victorian vernacular Freedom town hall to the stylistically accurate ornament of the Romanesque Revival Wolfeboro town hall and the Colonial Revival Sandwich Town Hall.¹¹ The thirteen surviving town halls in Carroll County can therefore be divided into two groups, the smaller and relatively similar vernacular town halls of the early 19th century, and the larger, more ornate and complex, and more varied town halls of the late 19th century and early 20th century.

An excellent example of the pre-Civil War town halls is the Moultonboro Town House. The township of Moultonborough was granted to a group of sixty-two proprietors in 1763.¹² The town was incorporated in November of 1777 and held its first town meeting in March of 1778.¹³ The earliest town meetings were held in a meetinghouse, built in East Moultonborough in 1773, before the town was incorporated; but, the building blew down in a severe gale in December of 1819.¹⁴ A special town meeting in January of 1820 established a committee to plan a new meetinghouse or town house.¹⁵ But, nothing seems to have come of the committee's efforts. Through the 1820's and early 1830's, town meetings were held in various places in the town, an inn, stores, private homes, a schoolhouse, and, for two years, in the meetinghouse erected by the Congregationalists on the site of the old meetinghouse.¹⁶ Apparently, none of these spaces was quite appropriate for the town meetings. Articles calling for the construction of a town house or the provision of some "suitable place" for town meetings appeared in the warrants for the annual March meetings of 1822, 1828, 1829, and 1832. But all of these articles were dismissed by the voters.¹⁷

11. The Wolfeboro town hall (Brewster Memorial Hall) was listed on the National Register on September 8, 1983, and the Sandwich Town Hall was listed on May 15, 1980.

12. Helen S. Matthews, MOULTONBOROUGH TO THE 20TH CENTURY (Moultonborough, N.H.: 1963), p.4

13. Merrill, pp.395,401

14. Merrill, p. 407; Frances A. Stevens, AS I REMEMBER MOULTONBOROUGH, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Moultonborough, N.H.: 1987), p.159

15. "Town of Moultonborough Records" (manuscripts, Moultonborough Town Offices, Moultonborough, N.H.), Vol. I, pp.167-168

16. see "Town of Moultonborough Records", Volumes I and II for these town meetings.

17. "Town of Moultonborough Records" Vol.I, pp. 186,188,244,246,260,262; Vol. II, pp. 291,296

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But, finally, a petitioned article "to build a Town House" and an accompanying article "to see what measures the Town will take to locate, plan, build, and complete said House" in the 1834 annual town meeting warrant¹⁸ received a more favorable response. The March 11, 1834 meeting established a committee of no less than twenty-one members "for the purpose of planning and locating a Town House" and directed the committee to report at an adjourned meeting in April.¹⁹ On April 8, the committee reported that it had met twice and "after examining several plots of land", decided to locate the building on a lot eight rods square in Moultonborough village owned by Moses Moulton and the widow Sophia Hoit. They recommended the construction of a building forty feet long, thirty-six feet wide, and ten foot high in the studding, with the gable end facing the road. The new town house should have "two front doors in the end facing the road"²⁰, two windows in the front gable end, four windows in each lateral facade, and one window in the rear gable end. The building should have a foundation of "common unhewed stone" and clapboarded walls. A four foot wide landing with a board step should stretch the full length of the roadside facade. The interior should be "sealed on the walls up to the windows", with "the rest of the walls lathed and plastered". A stone wall should be erected on the rear and southwesterly sides of the lot.²¹ (Presumably, a stone wall already existed on the northeast side of the lot.) The report of the committee, signed by eighteen of its members, was accepted by the adjourned meeting.²² It was then voted to give the job of building the Town House to the lowest bidder, the contractor to finish the building by March 1 of 1835.²³ The contract for the Town House was promptly bid off by Jonathan Hanson, one of the committee members, whose low bid was \$319.²⁴ The town meeting then chose a committee, consisting of three members of the original committee, "to examine and accept said Town House when finished", and approved the location recommended by the study committee.²⁵ The next annual town meeting was held at the Town House on March 10, 1835²⁶, so the building was apparently completed on schedule. If the construction followed the study committee's report, then the composition of the facades must have

18. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Vol. II, p.320

19. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Vol. II, p.325

20. This somewhat ambiguous phrasing could be interpreted to mean an entry with double doors, as is now found on the building, but it is more likely that the committee recommended two separate entries.

21. For the committee report, see "Town of Moultonborough Records", Vol. II, pp. 327-327.

22. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Vol. II, p.326

23. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Vol. II, pp.327-328

24. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Vol. II, p. 328

25. Ibid.

26. "Town of Moultonborough Records", Vol. II, p.334

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been much as it appeared in later years, save that the roadside gable end had two entries, instead of a central entry, and two windows, instead of the present four windows. Unfortunately, no early views of the Town House survive to show us how the building appeared in its early years.

The architectural history of the building after its construction and through the last major renovation in 1916 is obscure. But, it does seem that the building acquired its present appearance in the renovations of 1884, 1897, and 1916, complete with central main entry, the two over two sash windows (with moulded window heads on the main facade), and the beaded board wainscoating and sheathing of the interior. The exterior changes to the Town House since 1916 have included a new side entry, concrete landings and steps at both entries, a railing on the front steps, storm windows, the World War II honor roll and the historical society sign on the main facade, a new chimney and the restroom addition on the rear facade. Interior changes in the same period have included the removal of a low platform once found at the northwest end of the room, the replacement of a rear window by the door to the restroom addition, and the installation of lights, ceiling fans, screen doors, emergency panic bars on the doors, counters, a sink, and a stove. A monument was placed on the front lawn, and the Moultonboro Neck Schoolhouse moved to a rear corner of the lot. (Although of local historical interest as the last intact district schoolhouse in Moultonborough, the schoolhouse does not qualify for the National Register, because of its re-location. The schoolhouse building and the land immediately surrounding it have therefore been excluded from this nomination.) Basically, however, the Town House and its grounds retain their integrity for the period of significance, when the building served as the local town hall.

Historically, the Moultonborough Town House is significant for its long history as a town hall, matched by few other town halls in Carroll County. From March 1835 through March 1949, the building was the site of all town meetings and elections.²⁷ (In 1949, a centralized school building was erected in Moultonborough village.²⁸ And, beginning in 1950, the school auditorium was used for town meetings.²⁹) For those 114 years, the Town House was the center of Moultonborough's municipal government. Discussion of public affairs no doubt did take place, as it still does, in homes and stores and on the street. But, the final arguments and the actual decisions on issues were made at the town meetings in the Town House. In the Town House, local officials were elected and ballots were cast, as well, for the elected county, state, and federal officials. Local government through town meetings has been a central element of the governmental system of New Hampshire since the settlement of the colony in the 17th century. And, this most

27. see "Moultonborough Town Records" for these town meetings and elections
28. Stevens, p.144
29. "Moultonborough Town Records", Book No. 16, p.182

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democratic institution remains the standard form of local government in the state to the present day. The halls, however modest, that were built to house these town meetings therefore have an historical importance in the area of local government comparable to that of the state and federal capitols in the areas of state and federal government. The Moultonborough Town House, used for town meetings and elections for over eleven decades, must be regarded as an excellent example of these important buildings and should be recognized for its central place in the local government of a typical New Hampshire town.

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ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH, 1986 (Meredith: Meredith Media, 1987)

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MOULTONBOROUGH, 1987 (Meredith: Meredith Media, 1988)

Granite State News (Wolfeboro, N.H.) November 23, 1897; July 19, 1919

Laconia Democrat (Laconia, N.H.) November 12, 1897; August 25, 1916

Lamprey family photo album (collection, Robert Lamprey, Centre Harbor, N.H.)

Helen S. Matthews, MOULTONBOROUGH TO THE 20TH CENTURY (Moultonborough, N.H.: Moultonborough Historical Society, 1963)

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Frances A. Stevens AS I REMEMBER MOULTONBOROUGH, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Moultonborough, N.H.: Harvest Press, 1987)

Interview of Ernest Davis by David Ruell, March 20, 1989

Interview of Robert Lamprey by David Ruell, March 25, 1989

Interview of Stewart Lamprey by David Ruell, April 23, 1989

Interview of Frank McIntire by David Ruell, April 16, 1989

Interview of Ernest and Frances Stevens by David Ruell, March 16, 1989

Interview of Wilmont White by David Ruell, April 22, 1989

Other Carroll County Town Halls

"Brookfield Town Records" (manuscripts, Brookfield Town Hall, Brookfield, N.H.)

"Chatham Town Records" (manuscripts, Chatham Town House, Chatham, N.H.)

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Margaret B. Garland GILMAN'S LOCATION: A DOCUMENTARY OF JACKSON, N.H. (Conway, N.H.: Walker's Pond Press, 1975)

Lawrence P. Hall TALES OF EFFINGHAM (Freedom, N.H.: Freedom Press Associates, 1988)

Marjory G. Harkness THE TAMWORTH NARRATIVE (Freeport, Me.: Bond Wheelwright, 1958)

John W. Hayley TUFTONBORO, NEW HAMPSHIRE: AN HISTORICAL SKETCH (Concord, N.H.: Rumford Press, 1923)

Nella and Keith Henney THE EARLY DAYS OF EATON (Conway, N.H.: Reporter Press, 1967)

Elizabeth B. MacRury FOOTSTEPS OF PRIDE TO THE PAST, 1774-1974, WAKEFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Sanford, Me.: Wilson's Printers, 1987)

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Interview of Jack Alexander by David Ruell, April 28, 1989

Interview of Ann Cullinan by David Ruell, April 27, 1989

Interview of Rev. George Davidson by David Ruell, April 24, 1989

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Interview of Jean Garland by David Ruell, April 25,1989

Interview of Keith Henney by David Ruell, April 24,1989

Interview of Marion Varney by David Ruell, May 2,1989

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Verbal Boundary Description

proceeds northeast approximately 93 feet along the land of Montella and Lefleur (as marked by a stone wall), then proceeds southeast approximately 39 feet on an arbitrary line, across the Town House lot, parallel to the southwest gable end of the Moultonboro Neck Schoolhouse at a distance of two feet, then proceeds northeast approximately 39 feet on an arbitrary line parallel to the southeast facade of the Schoolhouse at a distance of two feet, then proceeds southeast approximately 93 feet along the land of Kathleen Folliard (as marked by a stone wall) to Route 25, then proceeds southwest 132 feet (8 rods) along Route 25 to the point of beginning. (The property appears as lot 24 on Moultonborough Property Map 71.) The boundary of the nominated property is shown as a dashed line on the attached sketch map entitled "Moultonborough Town House, Moultonboro, N.H."

Boundary Justification

the purpose of erecting the Town House and has been historically associated with the building since its construction. Excluded from the nominated property is the Moultonborough Neck Schoolhouse and the land immediately surrounding the Schoolhouse in the north corner of the original lot. As the Schoolhouse was relocated to the Town House lot in 1987, it was therefore not eligible for the National Register and was therefore excluded.

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Owner of Property

Town of Moultonborough
P.O. Box 139
Moultonborough, N.H. 03254

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