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 Form 10-300
 (July 1969)

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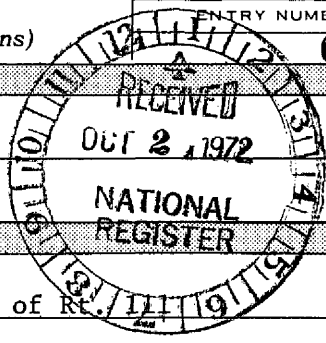
Hon. Peter N. Kyros

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maine	
COUNTY: York	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	OCT 26 1972



1. NAME

COMMON:
 First Parish Meeting House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
 Old Pool Road 2.5 miles southeast of Rt.

CITY OR TOWN:
 Biddeford

STATE Maine	CODE 23	COUNTY: York	CODE 031
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	historical	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	society meetings	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
 Biddeford Historical and Archives Society

STREET AND NUMBER:
 P.O. Box 586

CITY OR TOWN:
 Biddeford

STATE:
 Maine

CODE:
 23

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
 York County Courthouse, Registry of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
 Alfred

STATE:
 Maine

CODE:
 23

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
 not so represented

DATE OF SURVEY:
 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
 STATE:
 CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Maine

COUNTY: York

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered 1840	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

At a town meeting held Nov. 23, 1757, it was voted to build a Meeting House on the west side of the Saco River upon either side of the line that divides the land of Thomas Emery and Matthew Patton betwixt the road and the river.

At a town meeting held March 13, 1758, voted a committee Rishworth Jordan, Esq., Joseph Tarbox, Joseph Dyer, Benjamin Hooper, Heremiah Hill, to take conveyance of the land proposed to build a Meeting House upon, on the western side of the Saco River and to take care and oversight of the building of said House by providing materials and workmen for that purpose with the money that is or shall be subscribed for that use. Deed received July 28, 1758, recorded in County Library 35, folio 207. The Society has the original.

Nathaniel Perkins, Master Builder, constructed this building. Mentioned in Folsoms History of Saco & Biddeford. Some remodeling took place in 1840 when the belfry was removed, galleries along the sides taken down, the pulpit lowered and the sounding board removed. The original framework bears no evidence of alteration. Some of the beams are as much as 14 to 15 inches square, hand hewn and pinned with wooden pins. Double supports were used for the roof and the ends have supporting members joined with cove mortise and tenons. An examination of the attic space leads us to believe that the staircase and belfry were constructed in front of the building rather than throught it and that this stairway also served the gallery. An 1803 tax collector's record of the First Parish indicates there were 46 pews at that time. Currently there are 56, an indication that the five pews on either side of the pulpit may have been added in 1840.

We are continuing the architectural research for the purpose of eventually restoring the building to its original form.

It is the Societys' purpose to use the building as an example of an early New England Meeting House and to display memorabilia of early Americana in it. It will also be used as a meeting place for the Society when programs of historic and cultural interest will be presented. At such times, the public will also be invited.

The present site consists of approximately 1/3 acre. We hope to acquire additional property on two sides and the rear of the present site in the near future to protect the site against unsightly development and to beautify it by landscaping. This should add approximately an additional 1/2 acre.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1758, 1774, 1776, 1793

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The First Parish Congregational Church is the mother church of the First Parish Congregational Church in Saco and the United Church of Christ Congregation, Biddeford.

As the place where all town meetings were held during the Revolutionary Period, the building has historic significance. The town records, also in our care, and the Meeting House are associated as they contain the record of events which occurred there.

On Dec. 22, 1774, James Sullivan, a young Biddeford lawyer later to become one of the great Patriots of the period, was elected Moderator of the meeting which elected him as a delegate to the provincial Congress and to serve on the Committee of Inspection and Correspondence and a committee to provide powder and lead for the militia.

On July 30, 1774, a town meeting was held in this Meeting House for the purpose of presenting a resolution protesting the British blockade of Boston Harbor and stating their other grievances relating to unfair taxation and oppressive actions. Each inhabitant pledged his person and fortune in support, or be considered an enemy of his country. The resolution was passed.

In July of 1776, by order of the Council of Mass., the Declaration of Independence was for the first time read to the congregation in this Meeting House and recorded in the town records.

During the war years of 1780 and 1781, many actions were taken in support of the War of Independence and the Continental Army at the town meetings held in this building.

On May 2, 1793, a Heresy Trial, said to have been the only one held in Maine, was conducted in this Meeting House. A record of the trial is part of the Warwick collection at the John Carter Brown Library in Providence, R. I.

(See Continuation Sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Amory, Thomas Coffin: Life of James Sullivan, 2 Vols., Boston, 1859.

Folsom, George: History of Saco and Biddeford, Saco, 1830.

Town Records of Saco and Biddeford.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		43 ° 28' 30.5" N	70 ° 24' 55.0" W	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **less than one acre**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
John F. Xaphes, Vice President

ORGANIZATION: **Biddeford Historical and Archives Society** DATE: **9/3/71**

STREET AND NUMBER:
P.O. Box 586

CITY OR TOWN: **Biddeford** STATE: **Maine** CODE: **23**

12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name <u>James H. Mundy</u></p> <p>Title <u>State Liaison Officer</u></p> <p>Date <u>September 15, 1972</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>Robert M. Utley</u> Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date <u>10/26/72</u></p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u>William Mundy</u> Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date <u>10-19-72</u></p>
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Maine	
COUNTY	
York	
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(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE

In 1757, a second religious society was formed which included 50 defec-
tions from the First Parish Church. Thereafter, town meetings were held
alternately yearly between the two Meeting Houses then called the Upper
Meeting House and the Lower Meeting House. The latter being the old First
Parish Meeting House, the subject of this application

Other events of historic interest relating to the Embargo Act in 1809,
a resolution addressed to President Madison in 1812, actions providing for
men and provisions for the militia in 1814 are recorded in the town records.
These occurred in one or the other of these Meeting Houses, after 1797.

James Sullivan who played a leading part in the deliberations at this
Meeting House in the early days of the Revolutionary period was well known
to George Washington, John and Samuel Adams, John Hancock, Paul Revere,
Otis and Paine. He participated in the framing of the Constitution of the
Commonwealth of Mass. and as advisor to John Hancock probably contributed
his talents in the framing of the Federal Constitution. He was appointed
Judge of the Supreme Court of Mass., became it's Attorney General and
was elected for two terms as Governor. He died while in office. He had
served on more than 100 committees during the Revolution and was chair-
man of many of them. He wrote and published the first History of Maine
and authored a book entitled "Land Titles". His close friendship with
Moses Morrill, the first minister to preach in this Meeting House, and as a
member of his congregation adds significance to the historical interest of
this building.