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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: Excelsior Grange #5  
Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 446 Harris Hill Road  
City or town: Poland State: Maine County: Androscoggin  
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A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

<u>Kurt F. Mohnney, SHPO</u>	<u>2/12/2016</u>
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 ___ meets ___ 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:)

*Oliver's Operadly*  
Signature of the Keeper

11/5/14  
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.)

SOCIAL / Meeting Hall

RECREATION and CULTURE / Auditorium

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL / Meeting Hall

RECREATION and CULTURE / Auditorium

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS / Colonial Revival

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

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

Principal exterior materials of the property: The building has wooden clapboards, standing seam metal roof, brick chimney and a concrete foundation.

**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 Excelsior Grange # 5 in Poland, Maine is a two-story meeting hall designed in the Georgian Colonial Revival style by architect Harry Wilkinson in 1914. Located on a half-acre lot in a rural portion of Androscoggin County at the cross roads of Harris Hill and Poland Corner Road, the wood frame building features a compact rectilinear massing appended with a gable front porch. Prominent eaves under the hip roof host paired modillions, and a pedimented dormer above a modified Palladian window are centered on the facade above the porch. The long side elevations contain five bays of windows on each floor. The building is sided with clapboard sheathing, sits on a concrete foundation and is topped by standing-seam metal roof. On the interior, Excelsior Grange contains a dining room and kitchen on the first floor and a meeting room, stage and anterooms on the second floor. Although twenty of twenty-nine windows were replaced in 2007 and the front porch modified, the building has integrity of materials, design, workmanship, setting, location, association and feeling.

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## Narrative Description

Excelsior Grange #5 is located in an agricultural neighborhood, on the northeast side of Harris Hill Road; for sake of simplicity it will be described as if it is oriented on an east-to-west axis and faces west towards the road. The building is set back from the road approximately 20 feet and is fronted by a dirt parking area and, closer to the building, a small grass lawn. The level, grass lot stretches to the south and east with a parking area to the south and a flat grassy area containing the septic field to the east. The boundaries of the parcel are somewhat indistinct as the lawn fades into fields on the south, east and north; immediately north along the road is a small house that was once a one-room school and later owned by the Grange. Additional farm fields are located across Harris Hill Road to the west.

Not including the small front entry porch, the building is thirty-three feet wide and seventy feet long, with three-bay front and rear elevations and five-bay side elevations. Unless otherwise noted, all of the windows are one-over-one vinyl clad replacement windows.<sup>1</sup> The lower level windows are set under a broad entablature and slightly protruding cornice. The front elevation is symmetrically composed with design emphasis placed at the center of the façade. The roughly-square porch is centered on the front doors: it has a wood deck, wooden balustrade on the sides, iron railing on the front and iron hand rails that descend the brick and concrete steps. The four, square corner posts lead to concrete blocks that form the foundation of the porch. Between the blocks are vertical wooden rails. The porch roof is peaked with a pediment filled with clapboards on the front and a wooden sign under the eaves stating "EXCELSIOR GRANGE No.5 P of H". Photographs from circa 1970 indicate that the current porch has been rebuilt. As depicted in that image the porch had a flat roof, full-width stairs, and cross-braced side railings. At this time the signboard was located above the roof.

On the first floor of the building facade the main door is centered and is composed of double half-light doors. To either side of the doors are four-light sidelights positioned over moulded wood panels. The door and window unit is enclosed within a simple wooden surround with a simple entablature that stretches to the underside of the porch roof. On either side of this unit (and beyond the sides of the porch) is a single window. Narrow corner boards and water table compliment the wood clapboard siding.

One-over-one sash are also located in the outside bays on the second floor. Above the front door is a tri-partite window with large double-hung sash at the center flanked by a very narrow, fixed light on either side. This unit – which hints at a Palladian-style window - intersects the frieze-board that runs around the entire building and mounted on this frieze directly above the window unit is a wooden, eared panel that mimics in its shape and location, an entablature. Paired modillions are set under the roof to either side of the this ornamentation, and are also located near the corners of the building. A pedimented dormer rises from the edge of the roof over the tri-partite window: this feature has a frieze, moulded

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<sup>1</sup> A photograph of the building under construction in 1914 published in the *Lewiston Daily Sun*, July 29, 1914, and another taken in 1970 indicate that the original configuration were six-over-one wood sash.

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rake trim and a louvered-fan at center. Beyond the fan the field of the tympanum is covered with clapboards.

The north and south elevations are identical in terms of fenestration pattern. Both sides have five windows on both floors: the western two windows are positioned somewhat closer to each other than those in the remaining bays. The windows are positioned directly over each other and between each pair of windows is a wooden field containing two horizontally-oriented moulded panels. In the easternmost second floor bays the windows are shorter in size than the others and the intervening ornamentation contains four panels rather than two. Three narrow basement windows set into the concrete foundation are also present on each side elevation.

The eastern elevation has two of the shorter windows on the second floor. On the first floor is a regular sized-window in the north, a wood and glass door under an attached A-frame hood at center, and two small (and smaller) windows to the south. A wooden ramp, built in 2007 leads from grade at north to the back door.

### Interior

The interior plan of the Excelsior Grange revolves around the large halls on each floor. On the first floor is an entrance hall which provides access to the main staircase, two small corner rooms and the large dining room. In the northeast corner of the building, beyond the dining room is the kitchen, and to the south of that spaces is a back room containing a back staircase, bathroom, wood storage and the back door. On the second floor the plan is similar. The stair hall provides access to an anteroom in the northwest, and the meeting hall to the east. At the east end of the hall is the stage, backstage spaces and back staircase. Although executed with some level of variation, this plan was commonly used among Granges in Maine.

Most of the interior finishes are original to the period of construction. All the original doors have five horizontal panels, and window and door trim is varnished pine. Floors are birch throughout. The entry hall, stair case and upstairs hall are all finished with varnished pine bead board wainscot with chair rail and baseboard. In these rooms, as well as in the northwest corner room and the upper ante-room, narrow wooden boards are set into the plaster walls to provide places to hang coat hooks. The ceilings in these spaces are also plaster.

According to a newspaper account describing the building under construction, the first floor corner room was the "smoking room" and ante-room above was the "Ladies room". While the walls and floors of the "smoking room" match those in the hall, the ceiling is of patterned tin. Currently this room houses the building's modern furnace (mounted on a cement pad), and also provides storage. The upstairs "ladies room" or anteroom is also used for storage.

Across the hall from the "smoking room" is a Dutch door outfitted with a narrow shelf. This door was used to sell tickets to events in the hall. Beyond the door is a narrow storage space under the stairs, and a one-hole latrine in the corner.

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The dining room measures approximately thirty-three feet wide by forty-eight feet long. Four cased posts provide interior support, connecting to beams concealed in the beaverboard and batten ceiling. Cased posts are also engaged into the sheet-rock side walls and the north wall of the room. Pine wainscot, chair rail and baseboard are used on the walls. Ductwork from the furnace is exposed in the ceiling. At the east end of the room is a large barrel wood furnace, "No. 36 Atlantic" made by the Portland Stove Foundry, which is vented to the second floor and attached by way of long pipes to the chimney in the northwest corner. The dining room is furnished with long tables and a combination of folding and wooden chairs.

Two doorways, minus doors, in the west wall lead into the kitchen. This room has modern appliances and finishes (linoleum floor and counter tops, stainless steel sink, and Vulcan ten burner gas stove) as well as wall of bead board cupboard and deep pine drawers. In the back hallway, to the south, is a wood storage area, a small, modern bathroom, and back stairs.

Although the second floor hall, or "lodge room" also has the same wood floors and trim and plaster walls as the other rooms in the building, the ornate coffered tin ceiling and the large stage sets this room apart. The ceiling is divided into nine sections, each defined by transverse and longitudinal beams supporting the ceiling structure (and connecting to the structural beams in the side and end walls). Each beam is encased in patterned and moulded tin and between the beams are fields of floral tin tiles set in a complex three-part border. The effect is quite elegant. The stage has a protruding, round, apron clad on its face with bead board. There is no proscenium arch per se: the sides of the stage are defined by large vertical cased beams and height of the opening rises to the ceiling. A door on the south side of the stage leads to the backstairs, the storage and changing rooms and to the stage itself.

A painted theatre curtain hangs at the front of the stage. Classified as a "grand drape" by curtain conservators, it was painted by F.L. Edgecomb and depicts a local, hill and river scene.<sup>2</sup> There are at least four sets of rigging in the stage ceiling, and two additional back curtains, one painted with a store and street scene and the other with a wooded path. Two side stage "walls" have been constructed and clad with wood paneling. The ceiling above the stage is the same as in the lodge hall.

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<sup>2</sup> Information provided by Curtains without Borders, <http://www.curtainswithoutborders.org/index.php/maine-ma4-49>, January 12, 2016.

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**8. Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

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

- 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.)

Social History

Entertainment and Recreation

Architecture

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

**Period of Significance**

1914-1966

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

**Significant Dates**

1914

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

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

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

**Cultural Affiliation**

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

**Architect/Builder**

Barrows, Walter, contractor, Portland, Maine

Wilkinson, Harry, C., architect (1872-1937)

\_\_\_\_\_

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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 Excelsior Grange #4 is a building which has served the town of Poland, Maine since 1914. Erected in that year to replace an earlier grange hall that had burned, the two story building displays restrained Georgian Revival stylistic details on the exterior and the functional interior plan common to many Grange buildings. Throughout the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries the Grange, or Patrons' of Husbandry, was an important social organization with an emphasis on agricultural education and progressive community and social activities. Its influence was widespread – ultimately 588 individual Granges were established 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 Poland, it became a center for community activity. Although interest in the Grange began to wane after World War II, the Portland chapter remains active and it also has an important role as a Pomona Grange, a regional level of the organization that has oversight of subordinate granges in the area. The Excelsior Grange # 5 is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, at the local level of significance, for its current and past role in the social and entertainment history of Poland, and under Criterion C, as one of the few architect designed granges and probably the only grange designed by architect Harry S. Wilkinson. The areas of significance are Social History, Entertainment and Recreation, and Architecture.

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

**Criterion A: Social History**

The Grange, or Patrons' of Husbandry, is a fraternal-type society founded in 1867. Since then the many granges in Maine have had an immeasurable and important impact on local, state, and national social movements focusing on agriculture, social welfare and education. The Excelsior Grange # 5, formed in 1874, was the fifth grange organized in Maine and it is locally significant for its long term commitment to bettering the lives of both its members and the surrounding community.

The history of the Grange has its basis in post-Civil War agricultural crises. The following two paragraphs are from a brochure announcing the photographic exhibit by Elspeth Brown 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

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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.<sup>3</sup>

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 contained a stage and / or a dining room. As explained by Charles M. Gardner in The Grange - Friend of the Farmer, the Grange is

...a symbol of the progress rural families have made in the past eighty years as the result of "meeting together, talking together, working together, buying together, selling together, and in general acting together" for their "mutual protection and advancement, as occasion may require".

In Grange halls farm families share their social activities, discuss their mutual problems, plan programs and fearlessly face conditions which call for skillful leadership and out of which many a betterment project is evolved.

Here in these meeting halls, rural people through their Granges have formulated and carried out projects of far-reaching effect to themselves and to their city neighbors. Starting in Grange meetings, often in good-natured discussion, have been such great undertakings as delivery of mail to farm homes, rural electrification, improved highways, better schools and countless other worthy achievements, which perhaps never would have been attempted but for the nucleus of promotion created in alert Subordinate Granges.<sup>4</sup>

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

<sup>3</sup> Elspeth **Error! Main Document Only**.Brown, "About the Grange." *Ritual and Community: The Maine Grange*. (Gorham, ME: University of Southern Maine, 1992), introduction.

<sup>4</sup> Charles M. Gardner, *The Grange - Friend of the Farmer*. (Washington, D.C.: The National Grange, 1949), 366-367.

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crops and products. One of the allures of the Patrons' of Husbandry was their progressive educational focus which encouraged farmers to share knowledge or work together co-operatively. Early in the organization's history some of the granges organized cooperative stores selling food, supplies or farming equipment, while others organized co-operative insurance companies. According to the history of the Excelsior Grange, early in its history the members operated a cooperative store, a function that was expressed in the store-front like design of the group's first grange hall, built in 1875.

At the end of the nineteenth-century the Grange experienced a period of extraordinary growth, as described by historian Clarence Day in Farming in Maine 1860-1940:

The Grange in Maine reached full maturity while Obadiah Gardner was State Master (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.<sup>5</sup>

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Poland grange was said to have the second highest membership in the state.<sup>6</sup>

The Maine Grange was also active in improving the status of farmers and rural communities through legislation. Historian Stanley Howe catalogs the causes that were championed by the subordinate Granges in Maine: "more uniform textbooks in Maine's public schools, the abolition of the district school system, more generous appropriations for the State College of Agriculture (at Orono), cabinet status for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, curbs on the powers of railroads and monopolies, and a graduated federal income tax."<sup>7</sup> The Granges also focused on securing voting rights for women, supporting prohibition, and advocating for Rural Free Delivery. While many of these causes were orchestrated on a state or national level, they were accomplished through the activities and with the support of the local, subordinate chapters.

The Excelsior Grange # 5 in Poland was chartered March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1874 and was the fifth Grange organized in Maine.<sup>8</sup> Three years later Excelsior was organized as a Pomona grange. All grangers belong to at least one subordinate grange. Granges from a region – usually all those within a county - are grouped together to form the Pomona Grange. Excelsior Grange is the Pomona Grange for Androscoggin County and twice a year members from the subordinate

<sup>5</sup> Clarence A. Day, *Farming in Maine, 1860 - 1940*. University of Maine Studies, Second Series, No. 78. (Orono, Maine: University of Maine Press, 1963), 193.

<sup>6</sup> "Excelsior Grange, Poland, Celebrating 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday" *Lewiston Daily Sun* (March 5, 1949), p. 10.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1928&dat=19490305&id=5ZcgAAAAIBAJ&sjid=RmgFAAAAIBAJ&pg=2471,5676409&hl=en>

<sup>7</sup> Stanley Howe, "To Improve the Farmer's Lot: The Grange in Maine" in *The Courier: History Journal of the Bethel Historical Society*. Vol. 34, No. 1. Bethel, Maine. Pages 1-4.

<sup>8</sup> With the exception of the very first Grange in Maine (Hampden Eastern Star, 1873) the other earlier granges were all in the immediate vicinity of Poland: Lewiston, #2, 1874; Lisbon, #3, 1874; and Auburn, #4, 1874. In 1874 alone 80 Granges were organized in Maine.

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granges meet at Excelsior Hall. According to historian Howe "Pomona Granges were not envisioned by the Seven Founders of the Order. The need for some kind of liaison between Subordinate Granges and the State Grange became necessary. These county level Granges brought regions together and allowed for bold action if the interests of the area demanded such a course."<sup>9</sup> As a Pomona Grange, the Poland club has additional leadership responsibilities and has been an important link between the state and national organization and the subordinate clubs of the county.

The Excelsior Grange sponsored a wide variety of programs aimed towards improving the social welfare or education of the community. For instance, in 1937 residents were invited to bring their pre-school aged children to the grange for free checkups provided by registered nurses and licensed doctors. In 1925 the Grange sponsored a series of debates for local residents in advance of a state referendum on issuing bonds for road building. The Grange also sponsored college scholarships for graduating seniors and had a Juvenile Grange chapter for many years.

### **Criterion A: Entertainment and Recreation**

From the time the members of the Excelsior Grange built their first meeting hall in 1875 their building has been a venue which brought the community together for social, cultural and civic activities. This function continued after the current building was erected in 1914. Aside from the scheduled meetings the members of the Grange frequently offered dramatic productions, followed by community dances, as well as fairs and public suppers. Fairs were big events with ballgames between Granges, horseshoe contests, foot races, a baby contest, dinner, and exhibitions of "stock, farm produce, needlework and antiques".<sup>10</sup> In the early years of the automobile the organization sponsored Model T races through the country side and later hosted Model T rallies. The presence of a convenient kitchen, and a dining room elevated the function of the building from simply the meeting hall of a fraternal organization to a social and civic gathering place for the wider community and for some years the Grange provided lunch for residents who traveled to attend town meeting. Over its history the Excelsior Grange has been used by the Poland schools for graduation exercises and it has been rented by the community for parties and receptions and political events prior to elections. As summarized by historian Howe, "The Grange's most important contribution appears to be the light it brought to countless rural families and isolated neighborhoods throughout Maine. Through its literary programs, sponsorship of libraries, debates, plays, suppers, dances and other social occasions, the Grange nourished and enriched otherwise bleak lives in ways that are difficult to understand in today's "global village."<sup>11</sup>

### **Criteria C: Architecture**

<sup>9</sup> Howe, p 5.

<sup>10</sup> "Excelsior Grange Fair on Thursday" *Lewiston Evening Journal*, October 7, 1925, p. 7.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1913&dat=19251007&id=lg5HAAAAIBAJ&sjid=4 MMAAAAIBAJ&pg=974,331704&hl=en>.

<sup>11</sup> Howe, p. 4.

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The Excelsior Grange is architecturally significant as one of the few known grange buildings to have been designed by an architect, and probably the only grange designed by Harry C. Wilkinson. The original grange hall, erected in 1875, was a plain structure that could have been mistaken for a wooden commercial building with a covered front porch and large first floor windows on the façade. Like many granges throughout the state that building was constructed by members of the grange, likely led by a local builder or joiner, using techniques not unlike those found in churches and one-room schools of the period. Most of these buildings were not heavily ornamented or designed in any specific style.

Harry C. Wilkinson was an architect and architectural illustrator who worked briefly with the prominent architect George M. Coombs of Lewiston before moving away from Maine. Wilkinson was born in 1872 in from Poland, and attended local schools and then worked briefly as a clerk in Lewiston. In 1891 he was hired as a draftsman by Coombs and in 1896 he joined Coombs and Eugene J. Gibbs in a partnership that lasted less than four years. In 1899 Wilkinson accepted a job as a draftsman with the Supervising Architect of the U. S. Treasury in Washington, D.C. , where he stayed until 1906, after which time he worked in New York, Montreal, Vancouver, Toledo and Baltimore, primarily as an architectural delineator or illustrator. He settled in Washington D.C. after World War I and was alternately identified as a designer and architect for the next decade. Although he no longer worked in Maine he continued to take commissions for projects in and around his home town. In 1903 he added the cornice and entrance towers to the Poland Springs Hotel and in 1907 he completed the Renaissance Revival Poland Spring Spring House and Bottling Plant. Other projects he worked on at the resort included the Laundry and Dormitory buildings and he designed a hotel for the patrons' chauffeurs (it may not have been built.) While in Washington he also designed a summer cottage for the Fred Watson Family in Harpswell.<sup>12</sup>

Wilkinson's hand in the design for Excelsior Grange #5 is most evident on the building's exterior; he included details that provided a sense of importance, permanence and classism through the use of Colonial Revival motifs. (See Figure 1.) The hipped roof with prominent overhang and paired modillions were features used by period architects (including quite frequently by Coombs) on higher-end residential commissions. The tri-partite window references in shape, but not in style, Palladian windows favored by designers of Colonial Revival architecture, and the same can be said of the pediment on the roof. Also setting the building apart from its more vernacular kindred are the window treatments – especially the decorative panels- and the use of water table. This architectural legacy imparts additional, architectural significance to this grange hall.

Interestingly, it appears that the nearby Auburn Grange # 4 (in East Auburn) was designed by Wilkinson's former partners Coombs and Gibbs in 1902. The buildings are similar: both contain a hipped roof with wide eaves, a front porch fronting a centered entrance, a three bay façade and small central dormer. The earlier building does not contain a tri-partite window, but it does include wooden panels between the upper and lower story windows on the façade. This building expresses the Georgian Revival through the use of broken scroll

<sup>12</sup> Copies of the blueprints for the Fred O. Watson Cottage in Harpswell, Maine are on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine in the H. C. Wilkinson research file.

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pediments over the upper windows and pilasters rather than corner boards. The Auburn Grange burned in 1927, and the replacement building, by carpenter Charles Waterman was much more restrained and vernacular.<sup>13</sup>

Although no formal study has been undertaken to identify the number of architect-designed grange buildings it is likely that this figure is low. Examination of a database of newspaper articles/entries from c. 1882 to c. 1935 as reported in the *Industrial Journal*, *New England Master Builder, Banker and Tradesmen*, and *American Architect and Building News* reveals that only fifteen of the state's grange halls caught the attention of these journals' reporters.<sup>14</sup> Of these only four of the grange halls were attributed to architects: one each to Coombs & Gibbs, A. W. Chamberlain, C. F. Fletcher, and Bunker and Savage. As the architect for the Excelsior Grange was not identified through this database it is reasonable to assert that other grange halls would have been architect designed. On the other hand, many grange halls are quite vernacular in style, lowering the expectation that they would have been designed with the assistance of an architect.

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

Excelsior Grange #5 was not the only Grange in Poland. Lake Grange, No. 24 formed in West Poland in 1874, and they remodeled a dwelling house into a hall in 1880.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Day, Clarence a. *Farming in Maine 1860-1940*. Orono: University of Maine Press, 1963.

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<sup>13</sup> *Auburn Grange, East Auburn Fourth Established in Maine*. Lewiston Daily Sun (March 12, 1949), p. 6.

<sup>14</sup> This database was developed and maintained by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission based on examination of microfilmed copies of the cited journals. Not all the journals spanned the period 1882-1935, nor were all issues available. Over 10,500 entries were recorded in the database.

**EXCELSIOR GRANGE #5**

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Howe, Stanley Russell. *"A Fair Field and No Favor": A Concise History of the Maine State Grange*. Augusta: The Maine State Grange, 1994.

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Nordin, D. Sven. *Rich Harvest: A History of the Grange, 1867-1900*. Jackson, MS: Univeristy Press of Mississippi, 1974.

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"Silhouettes of American Designers and Draftsmen, I: Harry C. Wilkinson" *Pencil Points*, Vol. 6, October, 1925. Pages 42-53.

**Newspaper articles**

"Androscoggin Pomona's Happy Day in Poland" *Lewiston Evening Journal*, December 2, 1909, p. 5.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1913&dat=19091202&id=nXggAAAAIBAJ&sjid=fWcFAAAAIBAJ&pg=893,6292578&hl=en>. Viewed January 12, 2016.

"Excelsior Grange Fair on Thursday" *Lewiston Evening Journal*, October 7, 1925, p. 7.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1913&dat=19251007&id=lg5HAAAAIBAJ&sjid=4MMAAAAIBAJ&pg=974,331704&hl=en>. Viewed January 12, 2016.

"Excelsior Grange New Home" *Lewiston Daily Sun*, July 29, 1914.

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"Excelsior Grange, Poland, Both Sides of Bond Issue Question Have Been Discussed At This Grange" *Lewiston Daily Sun*, February 7, 1925, p. 12.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1928&dat=19250207&id=mSMgAAAAIBAJ&sjid=fmKFAAAAIBAJ&pg=1715,2816636&hl=en>. Viewed January 12, 2016.

"Excelsior Grange, Poland, Celebrating 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday" *Lewiston Daily Sun*, March 5, 1949, p. 10.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1928&dat=19490305&id=5ZcgAAAAIBAJ&sjid=RmgFAAAAIBAJ&pg=2471,5676409&hl=en>. Viewed January 12, 2016.

"Hold Model T Race at Excelsior Grange Fair" *Lewiston Daily Sun*, October 12, 1934, p. 8.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1928&dat=19341012&id=D9EgAAAAIBAJ&sjid=w2oFAAAAIBAJ&pg=4993,1161062&hl=en>. Viewed January 12, 2016.

"Personal" [Column: references H. Wilkinson] *Lewiston Daily Sun*, October 18, 1899, p. 8.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1928&dat=18991018&id=PQkiAAAAIBAJ&sjid=X2kFAAAAIBAJ&pg=1533,4269347&hl=en> Viewed January 12, 2016.



**EXCELSIOR GRANGE #5**

Name of Property

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"Poland" *Lewiston Evening Journal*, May 10, 1976, p. 24.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1913&dat=19760310&id=Uz0pAAAIAAJ&sjid=yWUFAAAAIAAJ&pg=1250,1219612&hl=en>. Viewed January 12, 2016.

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"State Grange master is speaker at Excelsior birthday celebration" *Sun Journal* (Lewiston, Maine), March 27 1993, p. 11.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1914&dat=19930327&id=JoogAAAIAAJ&sjid=GmYFAAAAIAAJ&pg=1315,6202905&hl=en>. Viewed January 12, 2016.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 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): 354-0053**

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 1/2 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

**EXCELSIOR GRANGE #5**

Name of Property

**ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE**

County and State

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: 390697 Northing: 4881954
- 2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 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 Poland Tax map # 12, lot 55B.

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

The property owned by the Grange has been enlarged from its original boundaries (through the addition of an adjacent property), reduced somewhat in size (with later sale of that adjacent property) and the addition of other small portions to the east and south of the building. In light of the fact that the property continues to have significance into the present, the entire current bounds, which now include a dirt parking area and a septic field (1995), have been included.

**EXCELSIOR GRANGE #5**

Name of Property

**ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE**

County and State

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Christi A. Mitchell, Architectural Historian  
 organization: Maine Historic Preservation Commission  
 street & number: 55 Capitol Street  
 city or town: Augusta state: Maine zip code: 04333-0065  
 e-mail: christi.mitchell@maine.gov  
 telephone: (207) 287-453  
 date: 12 January 2016

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**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 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: Excelsior Grange #5

City or Vicinity: Poland

County: Androscoggin State: Maine

Photographer: C. Mitchell

**EXCELSIOR GRANGE #5**

Name of Property

**ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE**

County and State

Date Photographed: 1 December 2015

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

- 1 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0001.TIFF  
Exterior, west façade and south elevations; facing northeast.
- 2 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0002.TIFF  
Exterior, north elevation and west façade; facing southeast.
- 3 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0003.TIFF  
Façade: facing east.
- 4 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0004.TIFF  
East and north elevations; facing southwest.
- 5 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0005.TIFF  
Interior, first floor dining room, looking toward kitchen; facing east.
- 6 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0006.TIFF  
Interior, first floor kitchen; facing south toward back hall.
- 7 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0007.TIFF  
Interior, first floor front hall with door to dining room at center and Dutch door to right; facing east.
- 8 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0008.TIFF  
Second floor, Ladies room; facing northwest.
- 9 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0009.TIFF  
Second floor, Lodge Hall with door to stairhall at center; facing southwest.
- 10 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0010.TIFF  
Second floor, Lodge Hall; facing stage to east.
- 11 of 11 ME\_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY\_EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5\_0011.TIFF  
Second floor, Lodge Hall stage curtain; facing east.

**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.

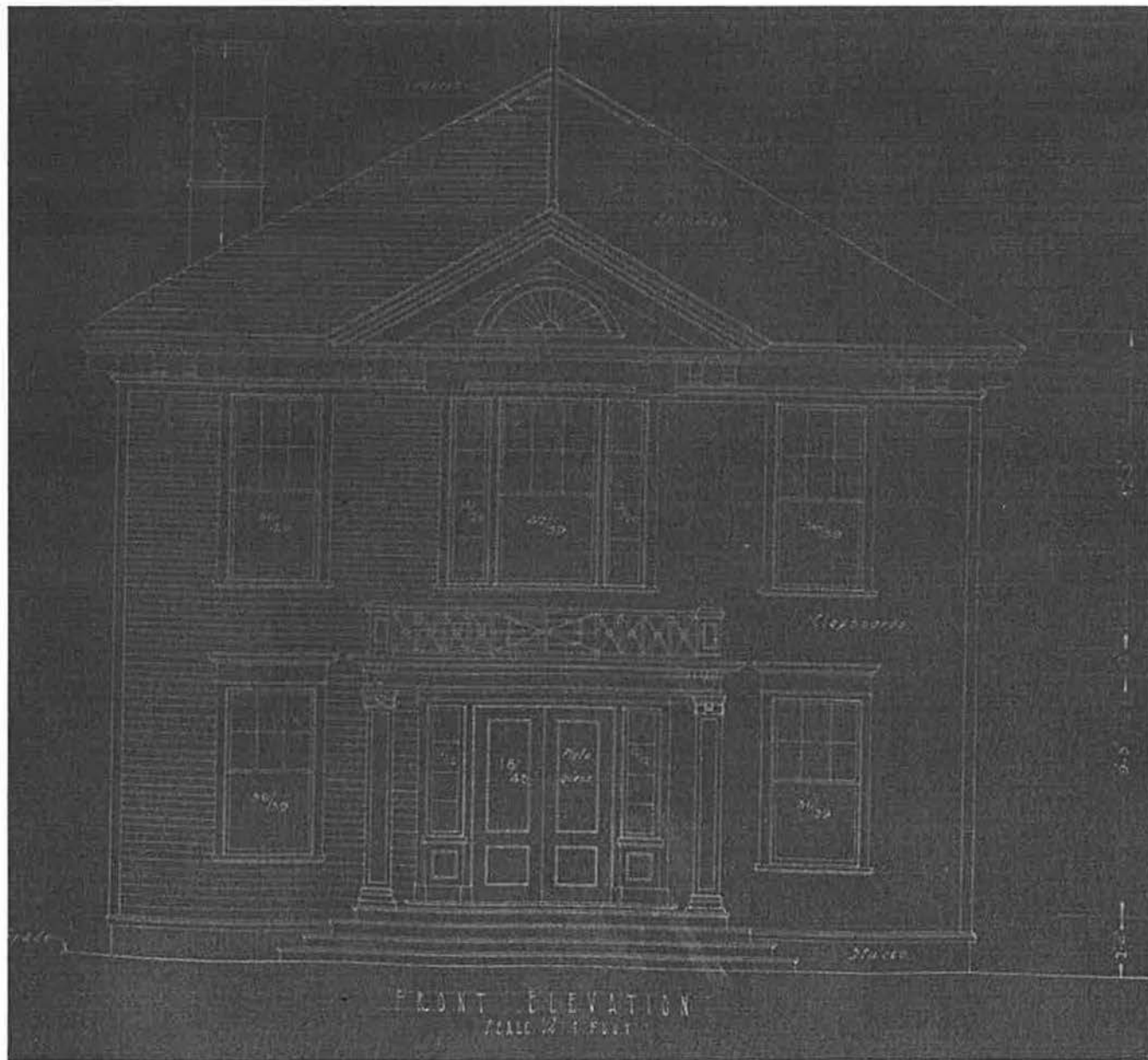
**EXCELSIOR GRANGE #5**

Name of Property

**ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE**

County and State

**FIGURE 1.** "Excelsior Grange" Harry S. Wilkinson, Lewiston, Maine, [1914].

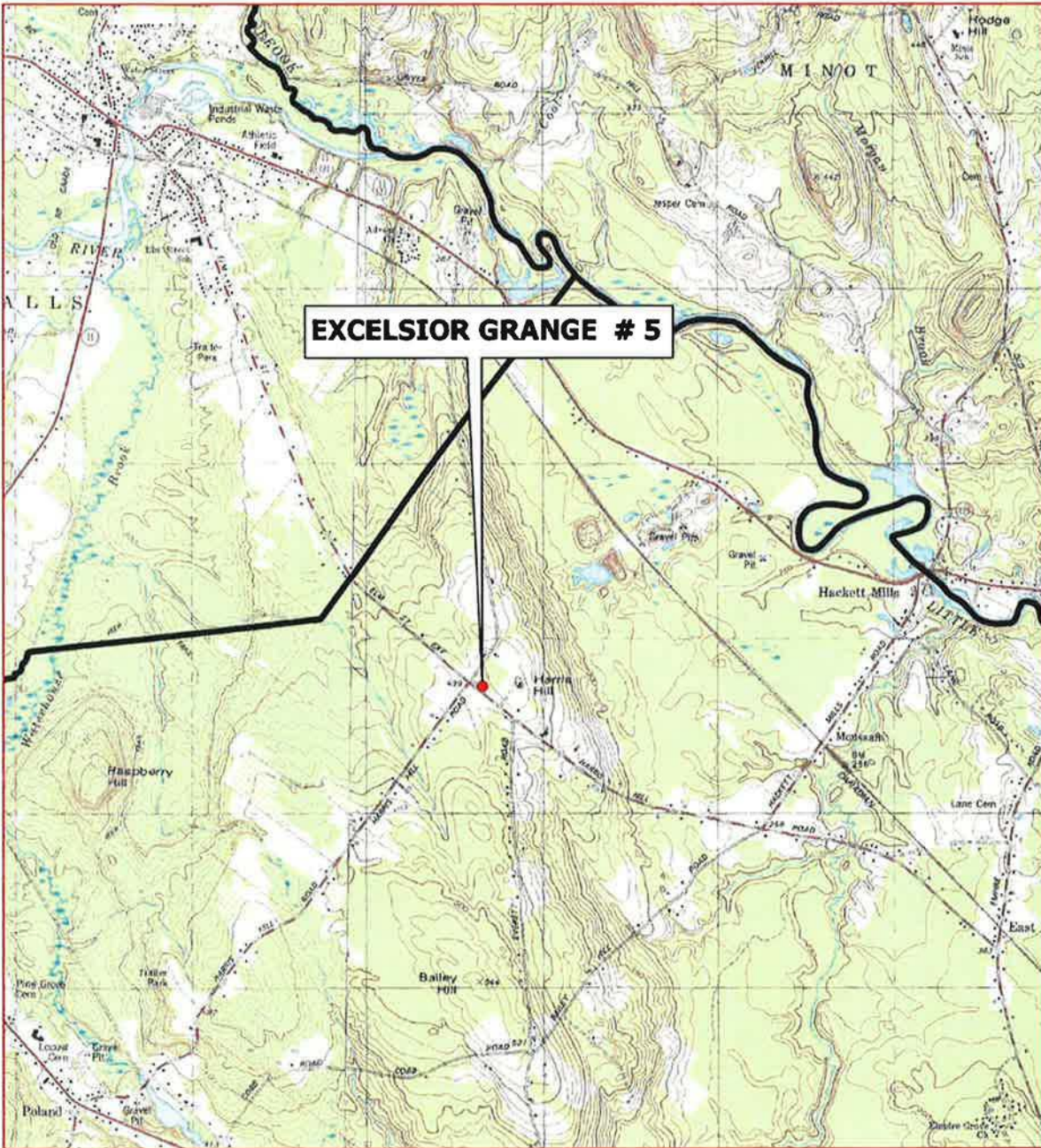


**EXCELSIOR GRANGE #5**

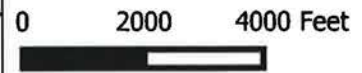
Name of Property

**ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE**

County and State



**EXCELSIOR GRANGE # 5**  
**Androscoggin County Maine**  
**1 December 2015**  
 UTM's in NAD 83  
 19/390697 / 4881954





EXCELSIOR GRANGE



EXCELSIOR GRANGES







EXCELSIOR GRANGE

No. 2  
P.O. No. 1













EXIT









UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Excelsior Grange #5  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MAINE, Androscoggin

DATE RECEIVED: 2/19/16 &pw DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: &pw DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/05/16  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000137

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 4/5/16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

&a4L

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

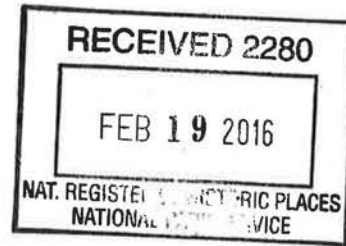
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

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



KIRK F. MOHNEY  
DIRECTOR

16 February 2016

J. Paul Loether, Deputy  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Park Service 2280  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Fl.  
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find three (3) new National Register nominations for properties in the State of Maine:

Starling Grange #156 (Former), Kennebec County  
Danville Junction Grange #65, Androscoggin County  
Excelsior Grange #5, Androscoggin 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.