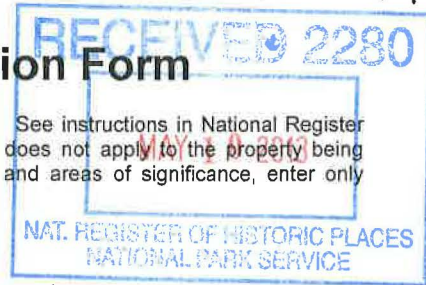


440

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: Lower Meeting House and East Bethel Cemetery

Other names/site number: East Bethel Church, Union Church

Name of related multiple property listing:

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1797 Intervale Road

City or town: Bethel

State: Maine

County: Oxford

Not For Publication: n/a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>SHPO</u>	<u>5/7/13</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:			Date
MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION			
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	

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

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:)

For Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

6-25-13
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

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	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.)

RELIGION / Religious Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION / Religious Facility

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: The Lower Meeting House is a wood frame building with a granite foundation, painted clapboard siding, a corrugated metal roof and a brick chimney.

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.)

Summary Paragraph

The Lower Meeting House in Bethel, Maine is a classically composed one-story religious edifice erected by 1831. Adjacent to the meeting house is the East Bethel Cemetery, a small burial ground of granite and marble stones with internments dating to 1817. The cemetery is located south of the meeting house and separated from the grounds of the building by a wrought iron fence. Facing east, the ridge of the timber-framed building runs parallel to Intervale Road. This is a rural route that follows the east and south alluvial flood plain of the Androscoggin River as it meanders around Farwell Mountain, Walker Mountain and two lower hills in the west and a group of five smaller mountains and hills towards the east. Between these two sets of high terrain is a broad intervale that stretches from the river to South Bethel, four and a half miles to the south. East Bethel Road follows this flat valley, and at its north end, where it intersects Intervale Road is the community of Bean's Corner¹. This small community contains a handful of homes, many from the 19th century, and a Grange and several farms. The Lower Meeting House and East Bethel Cemetery are located four-tenths of a mile west of the village, on the south side of Intervale Road.² The building and cemetery are

¹ Bean's Corner has also been historically known as East Bethel.

² The Lower Meeting House was so called due to its position downstream from the main village at Bethel Hill. Half way between East Bethel and Bethel Hill, along the Intervale Road is the 1816 Middle Intervale Meeting House.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

both in very good condition and retain a high degree of integrity of materials, workmanship, design, setting, location, association and feeling.

Narrative Description

Lower Meeting House, by 1831.

The Lower Meeting House is a symmetrically composed edifice with minimal late Federal-era stylistic detailing. The restrained building is a single story in height, with three bays on the east façade, and on the north and south elevations. The walls are covered with painted clapboards, and the building sits on granite foundation stones. A pair of brick chimneys emerges through the corrugated metal roofing at the west end of the building, one on either side of the ridge line. Surrounding the building is a broad, flat lawn edged on the east and west with tall conifers. Directly in front of the building a sign proclaiming "East Bethel Church c. 1830" hangs from a wooden frame. The building is oriented towards a road which previously passed in front of the Meeting House, leading from Intervale Road past the cemetery to access a pair of fields. Currently, a different, dirt two-track road, labeled "Hastings Road" leaves Intervale Road, curves south and east behind the church and then progresses into the cemetery.³

The front façade has two entrance doors separated by a six-over-six wood sash window. Both entries contain wood doors with two elongated panels over two almost-square panels, all with applied mouldings. The windows and doors both have medium-width board trim and are topped with a moulded entablature with a tall frieze board. The top of the window is higher than the top of the doors. The corners of the building are trimmed with medium-width corner boards, and the rake trim and boxed eaves have a beveled cornice. A frieze and bed moulding is located under the side eaves as well as on the gabled ends adjacent to the rake trim. In front of each of the doors are two rough granite steps and a bent pipe hand rail is attached to the door trim and the stones. A long white wooden ramp is positioned over the northern set of steps, and old iron boot scrapers are affixed to the wall to either side of the southern set of steps.

Both the north and south elevations feature three windows bays, equally spaced from each other but positioned somewhat off center towards the west. These six-over-six sash have plain board surrounds and wooden sills. The tops of the windows abut the lower edge of the frieze. The sash in all the windows on the Meeting House is painted black. The west elevation of the building contains another, slightly smaller, six-over-six window positioned below the ridge in the upper gable wall. The two brick chimneys are located at this end of the building. Both chimneys are slender and capped with triangular brick hoods.

In plan, the interior is divided into two front vestibules, each with small closets, and a large auditorium or sanctuary. Throughout the building the walls and flat ceiling are plaster over lath, and in the auditorium wainscot is present on the exterior walls. In the vestibule and

³ The early road is depicted on the Town of Bethel plate in Caldwell & Halfpenny, *Oxford County [Atlas]*, (Maine), 1880. The current road is labeled "Hastings Road" in Google Earth aerial imagery, image date 4/19/2012.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

closets the floors are painted pine, but in the auditorium all the floors are covered with carpet or rugs.⁴ A second set of four panel doors separate the vestibules from the auditorium. On the outer walls of each vestibule are corner closets with four panel doors.

The vestibules are separated from each other by a niche in the auditorium. This niche is lighted by the window on the building's façade, as well as unusual, fixed, four-light sash positioned high in each of the side walls between the vestibule and the niche. Two aisles lead from the vestibules to a transverse aisle which passes in front of a raised central platform upon which is located a pulpit. These aisles create five sections of pews: one section on either side of the platform, (facing in towards the center of the building), and three sections facing west. The middle of these three is further divided into two halves by a longitudinal panel that runs down the center of the pews. The platform is defined by two low walls on the sides next to which are two steps leading to the top of the platform. The pulpit is a free standing pedestal with recessed, moulded panels on the front and sides. At the back of the platform are two chimney stacks (painted) upon which have been affixed kerosene lamps with glass globes. Three matching lamps are positioned on the side walls, and an elaborate cast bronze and copper kerosene chandelier hangs from the ceiling at the center of the room. Unpainted, louvered shutters installed in 1887 flank each of the windows.

At the back of the room, the niche has a high raised platform, (higher than at the front of the church), traditionally used as the choir loft. At the edge of the platform, behind the back of the last set of center pews, is a low partition wall with moulded, recessed panels. Located on the platform are two Eastlake-style pump organs and several wooden chairs. Across the aisles, at the back of the auditorium, are partially recessed spaces positioned under a lower portion of the room's ceiling. Both of these spaces have shallow angled walls creating a recessed bay or niche and form intimate sitting spaces. Small corner cupboards with fielded panel doors are set into the bay walls. Both of these spaces originally had box stoves with long stove pipes running horizontally the length of the building to the chimneys on the west wall: the northern stove and pipe remains in place.

All of the pews and pulpit furniture, as well as wainscot that runs along the north and south walls are painted in a grey-blue color. The pews have flat seats and backs. The backs, wainscot and center divider are capped with stained rail. Along the aisle the ends of the pews feature a plain board with front and back vertical extensions that support a curved, stained arm that begins and ends in a scroll pattern. The number of each pew is stamped into these arms. Also present in the auditorium are about a dozen Windsor-style side chairs with grain-painted seats marked "J. Wardwell".

Alterations

Within the corner closets off the vestibules are cased corner posts, as well as patches in the plaster walls and ceilings. Two of these patches (one in each closet) indicate that a window had been previously removed from each side of the building. Another patch indicates that the partition between the closet/vestibule and the auditorium had been repositioned. As the

⁴ Each of the pews have their own divers rugs, but the aisles are covered with a uniformly patterned carpet.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

precise history of this church prior to 1891 has been destroyed, it is not known when or why the windows were removed, and whether they originally lighted the vestibule or the auditorium.

Cemetery

The East Bethel Cemetery is located to the south of the meeting house. The roughly rectangular plot of land is not square to the road and forms a dog-leg off the grounds of the meeting house. Historic maps indicate that the cemetery was oriented lengthwise along the southern side of the road that passed in front of the meeting house. The entire cemetery is approximately 160 feet wide and 520 feet long and it is divided into three sections. The northernmost 200-250 feet contain historic graves. Beyond this, the cemetery was expanded by acquisition of additional land in the 1960s. The southernmost 150-200 feet of this addition contain internments from the mid-twentieth century to the present. Between the historic and the new burial yards is a green space used as a columbarium. Only the northernmost portion of this cemetery is included within this nomination.

The northern line of the cemetery is marked by a decorative wrought iron, pipe and wire fence, while the boundaries of the sides and back of the site are defined by wire fencing. Beyond the west line is an open field, but to the east and south the site is bordered by a deciduous and coniferous forest. The two-track Hastings Road enters through one of two gates in the front fence and essentially bisects the length of the cemetery. There are no formal plantings, but two large cedar trees are set to either side of the road, and a few woody shrubs mark the back end of the oldest part of the cemetery and form the boundary of the nominated property.

The historic cemetery is laid out with five rows of plots, (two on the east side of the road and three on the west side of the road), each twenty-two plots long. Shallow paths separate the plots with the exception of four pairs of plots that have been combined across rows. Few of the plots are elevated, although some contain markers joined along continuous bases. The granite, slate and marble stones are common examples of nineteenth and twentieth century individual markers, and there are a few larger, more ornate family markers and obelisks. Still an active cemetery, there were over 378 individuals buried in the oldest 102 plots by 1959. The earliest burial is that of Lou Ann Gleason, 1782-1817. Some of the earliest settlers of East Bethel are buried in this cemetery, including Deacon Asa Kimball, Jr., (1767-1823), one of the founders of the Baptist Church in Bethel, who lived just northwest of the meeting house. According to an early map a portion of the cemetery was set aside for the residents of the town's poor farm which was located nearby on Kimball Hill until 1880. Many of these remains are unmarked.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

- 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

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

C. 1831

1887

1901

Significant Dates

C. 1831

1887

1901

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

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

Name of Property

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

County and State

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)

Located in the rural, settlement of East Bethel, Maine the Lower Meeting House is a classic example of a type of meeting house or church that was erected by some rural communities in Maine in four decades prior to the Civil War. Built as a 'union' church, the building was initially utilized by the town's Methodist and Baptist church organizations. The relatively plain building exhibits late Federal style massing and ornamentation, and a handsome interior with straight wooden pews, wainscoting, choir loft and pulpit. Erected by 1831, and somewhat remodeled in the decades after the Civil War, this is an example of a type of rural church found throughout Maine featuring a rectilinear footprint, gable front roof and austere classical proportions, but which lacks stylistic pretension. Adjacent to the church, and historically associated with it, is the East Bethel Cemetery which along with the church served the surrounding community. The Lower Meeting House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, as a locally significant example of a type of church architecture most commonly found in small rural communities in the mid-nineteenth century. The period of significance includes the three years during which the building was erected or altered: c. 1831, 1887, and 1901. By virtue of its past and present history as a building used by a religious body, Criterion Consideration A applies; however, this property is recognized as a significant local example of an architectural type.

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

The Lower Meeting House is a locally important and substantially intact example of a unpretentious frame building constructed to serve as a religious edifice for a small community. This building is part of a large group of architecturally related mid-nineteenth religious buildings erected in rural areas of the Maine. The buildings that comprise the general grouping can be further subdivided into three subsets: 1) churches with towers crowned by spires; 2) churches without spires; and 3) churches without towers. Common characteristics shared by all of these churches include their rectangular gable front orientations (often with a pediment), their plans (generally containing vestibules under galleries or adjacent to a raised platform), and for many, a Greek Revival style that is conveyed not only by the general massing, but also by detailing such as corner pilasters and a broad entablature. In some of the earliest members of the group, Federal style elements may even appear (St. John's Episcopal Church in Dresden, N. R. 6/14/91). The Lower Meeting House belongs to the subset of these buildings that lack towers.⁵

⁵ The context and analysis provided in this paragraph was first developed by the architectural historian Kirk Mohny and applied to his analysis of the Columbia Union Church in Washington County, Maine.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

The Lower Meeting House is an example of the least ornamented type of these religious buildings. Indeed, its massing and plan is also characteristic of contemporary rural schools or town halls. Examination of 1,275 photographs of religious buildings erected in Maine up to 1930 yields a general assessment of the remaining examples of these one-story rural vernacular churches with gable front orientations, and pairs of entrance doors, with or without a center window. The three simplest examples feature two-bay side elevations, and other than corner boards or eave returns, no stylistic ornamentation.⁶ Similar in quantity and design are three examples with four-bay side elevations.⁷ By far the greatest number of vernacular, tower-less churches have three-bay side elevations; the twelve examples identified in the photographs may have hoods or other basic decoration over the windows and doors, but are otherwise very plain. The Clough Meetinghouse in South Lewiston (1846) and the Plains Meeting House (1840) in Lisbon are very similar to the church in East Bethel in terms of detailing and proportion, but the Lisbon example has been significantly altered on the exterior.⁸

The East Bethel Lower Meeting House is perhaps the simplest example of religious architecture to be nominated to the National Register in Maine. And yet, this form of church was built throughout the state. In function, the Lower Meeting House is a community resource; its importance, and that of the associated cemetery, is tied less to a denomination or religious organization than to the neighborhood which it served. To some extent this function is reflected in its very stark and austere exterior, the vernacular nature of which underscores its role as a shared, common, community resource. That is not to say that it is without architectural merit, rather, it is a remarkable survival of a type of simple but pleasing church building that once was more common in the State

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

The town of Bethel was founded as Sudbury Canada in 1768 and had attracted permanent settlers by 1774. Located along both sides of the Androscoggin River at the center of Oxford County, the town first developed settlements at West Bethel, Middle Intervale, and Bean's Corner, the latter two located in what came to be referred to as East Bethel. The intervalles and meadow valleys south of the river were populated quickly, and Middle Intervale, which was located near the geographic center of the town "assumed a social and political importance," as described by historian Randall Bennett in his guide to the historic architecture of Oxford County.⁹ By the 1830s, the water power at Bethel Hill assumed a greater role in the

⁶ Examples include the Old Advent Chapel in Machiasport, the Weeks Mills Baptist Church in China and the Hall Dale Meetinghouse in Montville.

⁷ The three remaining examples are an un-named church in Phippsburg, the Bullocktite Meeting House in Hollis, and an un-named church in Gilead.

⁸ The Clough Meeting House features a reverse-plan and is eligible for listing in the National Register. The other examples in the category are the Lower Meeting House, the Old Union Church in Leeds, the South Acton Baptist Church; the Old Baptist Church in Windsor; an un-named church in Troy, the Converse Nazarene Church in Sebago, the Harrison Hill Full Gospel Church in Cumberland, the Plains Baptist church in Litchfield, an un-named brick church in West Gardiner, and an unidentified church in southern, Maine.

⁹ Randall H. Bennett, *Oxford County, Maine: A Guide to Its Historic Architecture* (Bethel, Maine: Oxford County Historic Resource Survey, 1984), 17.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

development of the town and this became the commercial, civic and educational center. In the 1882 *Gazetteer of Maine* the town was described as one of the best farming towns in the state, and the strength of this assertion reflected the fertility of the soils in the intervalles and valleys.¹⁰

East Bethel refers to the entire northeastern part of Bethel, and Bean's Corner is located five miles downstream from Middle Intervale. Bean's Corner is a cross-roads community positioned south of the Androscoggin River at the junction of the roads that parallel the river with the northern terminus of East Bethel Road, a valley road that follow Otter Brook and Beaver Brook to the south. In her 1984 "Forward" to the book *East Bethel Road*, Margaret Joy Tibbetts describes East Bethel:

We are fortunate to live in a town in which every part has beauty, but East Bethel is a particularly lovely area. The East Bethel Road at one point runs directly beside the Androscoggin River but usually is separated from the river by wide rich interval lands where...towering elms dominated the landscape. There are old houses, some of considerable architectural interest; some farm sites have been settled for over 200 years, in a number of cases continuously (sic) by the same family. It is still a farming area with rich sandy soil, some of Bethel's best gardens and fine dairy cattle. There are no filling stations, eating places or tourist services on East Bethel Road. There are however, two of Bethel's oldest and loveliest churches. It is still a neighborhood, clannishly proud of its history and traditions.¹¹

The earlier of the two churches is the Middle Intervale Meeting House (NR: 98000721), which was erected in 1816 and altered c. 1825 and 1857¹². This gable front church was first constructed as a two and a half story meeting house with a tower, but over the course of two remodeling campaigns the tower was reduced to a short hipped roof box with corner pinnacles, and the two levels of windows combined into three oversized window bays. Heavy Greek Revival entablatures and pilasters added in 1857 contrast with the delicate Federal box pews on the interior. This building was erected by "local Methodists and Baptists with financial assistance from the town", thus earning the more civic moniker of 'meeting house' rather than 'church'.¹³ The Lower Meetinghouse, which was also known as the Union Church or East Bethel Church, was constructed in order to more conveniently serve the community at Bean's Corner and the farms in the valley and interval beyond. The following passage about the East Bethel churches was penned by Millie Holt Clark, clerk of the Baptist Church in 1904 and is reproduced in Bean's *East Bethel Road*:

Some years after this church was built at Middle Intervale, because of the scattered condition of the members, some residing in Rumford, Hanover, and Newry as well as Bethel, a union church was erected at North Bethel and one at East Bethel, and for the convenience of the members, services were held at the

¹⁰ Geo. J. Varney, *Gazetteer of Maine* (Boston: R.B. Russell, 1882), 112.

¹¹ Margaret Joy Tibbetts, "Foreword" in *East Bethel Road* by Eva Bean (Bethel, Maine: Bethel Historical Society, 1984), v.

¹² Listed June 26, 1998.

¹³ Bennett, 24.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

three different churches on the Sabbaths. In 1867 the Baptists relinquished their share in the North Bethel church, and the Methodists and Baptists each desiring a church building of their own, the church at Middle Intervale was sold at auction and purchased by the Baptists who overbid the Methodists by one dollar... Since the above date (1858) the [Baptist] pastors have equally divided their time between this church and the Union Church at East Bethel, in which the Baptists still have an interest.¹⁴

The Methodists also retained 'an interest' and both groups, and possibly others, continued to hold services in the building into the 20th century. Updates to the interior, including the installation of the louvered blinds (1887), ornate kerosene chandelier and sconces (1901) and alterations to the vestibules (date unknown) testify to the ongoing use of the building. At some point in the 20th century the East Bethel Church Association became the formal owner of the building.¹⁵ Other than these facts, little is known about the building's history, as related by Stanley Howe, a local historian and the president of the East Bethel Church Association:

Few records exist for the origins of the East Bethel church since most of them were destroyed by fire when lightning (sic) struck Deacon Eli Foster's home in 1891. A deed for the lot dates from August 23, 1831, when Timothy Ayers conveyed to Ephraim Powers the land which the building has occupied since the 1830s. A pew deed for 1831 refers to the church as the Lower Meeting House (meaning that it was downriver from Bethel Hill and Middle Intervale) so it is reasonable to assume that the building dates to about that year... In 1901 the kerosene chandelier was donated to the church from the Congregational Church... Interior shutters were added in 1887 according to a newspaper item of that date. Many of the pews have woven floor coverings featuring a pattern preferred by the pew owners of their heirs. In the 19th century, the building occasionally was used for annual or special town meetings.¹⁶ For much of the late 20th century and into the 21st century, the building has been used for religious service, Sunday School, weddings and funerals.

The Church and the adjoining cemetery have served as and continue to be a focal point for an agrarian section of the Town of Bethel. The cemetery extends back to the 1820s. It also contains a number of unmarked graves of numerous residents of the Town Farm when it was located on Kimball Hill, a short distance away...

This building represents a remarkable survival of the past, with its individualized floor coverings, its kerosene chandelier, and its interior shutters. Little or nothing has been done (except painting) to the interior of the building since the

¹⁴ Bean, 89. The North Bethel union church dated to the same period and may have been similar in design. It was destroyed in the 1860s.

¹⁵ Although related functionally and physically, the church and cemetery have always been in separate ownership. Interestingly, however, they currently share the same tax map and lot on the town of Bethel's tax assessment map.

¹⁶ For example, the town meeting was held in the Meeting House in 1837.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

installation of the chandelier in 1901. Aside from the Grange Hall just below this site, there are no community buildings left in this section of town. To the people of this vicinity, the church is a very significant reminder of the area's past harkening back to the days when clannish pride and good-natured neighborliness were thoroughly in vogue. This was once a bustling farming community with only one major farm remaining today, but the Church continues to serve as a "living" reminder of former days when East Bethel was as one native claimed in his memoirs "in the center of things."¹⁷

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Bennett, Randall H. *Bethel, Maine: An Illustrated History*. Bethel, Maine : Bethel Historical Society, 1991.

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Gillette and Huntington. *The Old Maps of Oxford County, Maine in 1858*. Fryeburg, Maine: The Write Stuff, 2006 (reprint).

Haines, Agnes H. and Mildred O. Jackson, compilers. *Bethel, Maine, Cemeteries*. Bethel, Maine: The Bethel Historical Society, Incorporated, 1989.

True, Dr. Nathaniel Tuckerman. *The History of Bethel, Maine edited with an introduction by Randall H. Bennett*. Bowie Maryland: Heritage Books, 1994.

Varney, George W. *A Gazetteer of the State of Maine*. Boston: B.B.Russell, 1886.

¹⁷ Stanley Howe, excerpted from the manuscripts "East Bethel Church/Lower Meetinghouse History" and "Historical Significance," April 2012. Copies on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

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: Bethel Regional History Centery, Bethel, Maine

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property approximately 2 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84:

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

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

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- 1. Zone: 19 Easting: 363027 Northing: 4924656
- 2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

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

The boundary of the nominated property follows the north, east and west lines of the lot depicted on the Town of Bethel tax map 14, lot 26-1. The south boundary, within the cemetery portion of the property, follows a line of cedar trees from west to east. This line is meant to approximate the historic limits of the cemetery prior to the expansion of the cemetery property in the 1960s. See attached "Boundary of Lower Meeting House and East Bethel Cemetery" for reference.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary has been drawn to include all the land and resources associated with the Lower Meeting House and East Bethel Cemetery during the period of significance. Property added to the cemetery after 1901 has been excluded from the nominated property.

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: 0433-0065
e-mail: christi.mitchell@maine.gov
telephone: (207) 287-2132 x 2
date: 17 April 2013

Additional Documentation

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

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: Lower Meeting House and Cemetery

City or Vicinity: Bethel

County: Oxford State: Maine

Photographer: Andrew D. Sell and Christi A. Mitchell

Date Photographed: 8 March 2013

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

- 1 of 7 ME_OxfordCounty_Lower Meeting House_0001.TIFF
Lower Meeting House façade and north elevation, and East Bethel Cemetery at left; facing southwest.
- 2 of 7 ME_OxfordCounty_Lower Meeting House_0002.TIFF
Lower Meeting House façade; facing west.
- 3 of 7 ME_OxfordCounty_Lower Meeting House_0003.TIFF
East Bethel Cemetery; facing south.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND EAST BETHEL CEMETERY

OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

- 4 of 7 ME_OxfordCounty_Lower Meeting House_0004.TIFF
Pulpit and pews, Lower Meeting House, facing west northwest.
- 5 of 7 ME_OxfordCounty_Lower Meeting House_0005.TIFF
Back of auditorium; facing east.
- 6 of 7 ME_OxfordCounty_Lower Meeting House_0006.TIFF
Wood stove and Wardwell chairs in rear bay (north); facing north.
- 7 of 7 ME_OxfordCounty_Lower Meeting House_0007.TIFF
Organ and vestibule window in choir loft; facing southeast.

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.



**LOWER MEETING HOUSE AND CEMETERY
OXFORD COUNTY, ME**

Name: BRYANT POND
Date: 03/07/13
Scale: 1 inch = 4,000 ft.

UTM: 19/ 363027 / 4924656
NAD 27



Eopl.
Bethel
Church
c.1830













UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Lower Meeting House and East Bethel Cemetery
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MAINE, Oxford

DATE RECEIVED: 5/10/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/07/13
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/24/13 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/26/13
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13000440

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 6-25-13 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places**

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



EARLE G. SHETTLEWORTH, JR.
DIRECTOR

8 May 2013

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

To Whom It May Concern:

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

Lower Meeting House and East Bethel Cemetery, Oxford County
Clough Meeting House, Androscoggin County
St. Hyacinth School and Convent, Cumberland County

If you have any questions relating to these nominations, please do not hesitate to contact me at (207) 787-2132 x 2.

Sincerely,

Christi A. Mitchell
Architectural Historian

Enc.