### **United States Department of the Interior National Park Service**

### **National Register of Historic Places Inventory**—Nomination Form

For NPS use only JUN 1 9 1984 received date entered JUL 1 9 1584

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms Type all entries—complete applicable sections

#### 1. Name

historic	Island Falls Of	pera House				
and or common	Pettengill_Bui	lding				
2. Loca						
street & number	Patten Read and	Sewall Stre	<del>et</del>		N/A not for public	ation
city, town	Island Falls,	N/A V	icinity of			
state	Maine co	ode 23	county	Aroostook	code	003
3. Clas	sification					
Category district _X building(s) structure site object	Ownership public _X_ private both Public Acquisition N/A in process being considered	Accessib yes: r _X_ yes: u	cupied in progress le	Present Use agriculture _X_ commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private re religious scientific transporta	
4. Own	er of Prope	erty	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		an an that an an	
name	Gregory and Donr	na Knapp			······································	
street & number	Route 2					
city, town	Island Falls,	<u>N/A</u> vi	cinity of	state	Maine 047	47
5. Loca	ation of Leg	gal Des	criptio	n		
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc. Aroo	ostook Count	y Registry	of Deeds		
street & number						
city, town	Houl	lton,		state	Maine	
6. Repi	resentatior	n in Exi	sting S	Surveys		
title N/A			has this prop	erty been determined e	eligible? N/A yes	no
date				federal st	ate county _	local
depository for su	rvey records					
city, town		<u>.</u>		state		

# 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
excellent X good fair	<pre> deteriorated ruins unexposed</pre>	unaltered X_ altered	X_ original site moved date

#### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Island Falls Opera House is a large L-shaped structure, three-and-onehalf stories high with a gable roof. Constructed of wood with clapboard siding, the building has a gable roof and granite foundation. The tall double-hung sash have two-over-two lights.

Exterior ornamentation is minimal, consisting chiefly of corner pilasters, cornice returns and a porch with chamfered posts and a spindle-work frieze. On the south, east and west elevations of the main section the gable end contains a tripartite window in a Palladian motif. These windows mark the location of the theater, which fills the upper two stores. On the east and south sides are store fronts with original panelling and plate glass.

On the first floor of the main section is the general store and the entrance hall to the opera house. In the former is wood counters and shelving, while the latter includes a ticket booth. The theater has a stage, rows of seating and a balcony with a projection booth containing equipment dating from the 1920s. The walls are painted with scenic panels and stencilling done in the 1920s.

In the ell behind the main section is the living quarters for the owners of the building. These rooms contain original oak woodwork around the doors and windows. There **is** also a staircase with an elaborate newell post and a decorative arch enframing the entrance to the parlor.

## 8. Significance

1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 _X 1800–1899	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture architecture art commerce communications	community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlement	Iandscape architectur Iaw Iiterature military music philosophy politics/government	science sculpture X_social/ humanitarian X_theater
Specific dates	1894	Builder/Architect Le	vett Peters and Henr	y Baldwin

#### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

This very large structure is typical of the kind of multi-purpose buildings which used to exist commonly in many of Maine's smaller communities but which have now virtually disappeared. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries travelling entertainment groups, revivalists and speakers appeared regularly in small town "opera houses" or theatres such as the one in this building (which later became a movie house). Also combined in these structures, such as this one, were stores and often a dwelling or two. The Island Falls Opera House is important as a survival which speaks of rural town life a century ago.

Mr. Columbus Lamb Pettengill, a lumberman from Vanceboro moved to Island Falls in 1893. The following year, with his son he built a general store with a hall on the second floor. Within a year or two the residential wing was added. The land was bought from W. W. Sewall, and as was the case with most of Sewall's deeds, it stated that the land would revert to the grantor if any intoxicating beverages were sold on the premises within the next one-hundred years.

The Opera House was the home of all local and travelling entertainments, balls, lectures, and revival meetings. These included the Gale and Hatch Revival Meetings, H. Price Webber's Boston Comedy Company, Gladys Klark, Chautauqua, the Ethel May Shorey Company, Tinker's Orchestra, and even the Bowdoin Glee, Guitar and Mandolin Club.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Nina G. Sawyer, Island Falls, Maine (1872-1972). Portland, 1972.

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