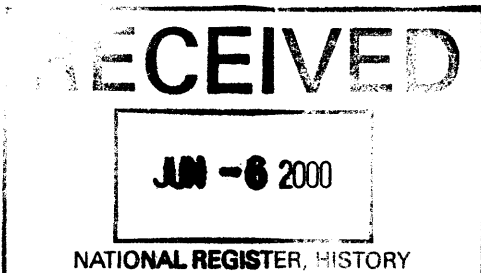


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



159

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name (Former) Union Church
other names/site number _____

2. Location

North Side of Main Street,
street & number 0.1 Miles Northeast of Junction with Addison Road N/A not for publication
city or town Columbia Falls N/A vicinity
state Maine code ME county Washington code 029 zip code 04623

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Eric S. Peterson 5/26/00
Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain): _____
Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall Date of Action 7/5/00

(Former) Union Church
Name of Property

Washington, Maine
County and State

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)
Contributing Noncontributing

_____ 1 _____ buildings
_____ sites
_____ structures
_____ objects
_____ 1 _____ 0 _____ Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
_____ 0 _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

_____ Religion/Religious Facility _____
_____ Government/City Hall _____
_____ Recreation & Culture/Auditorium Sports Facility _____

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

_____ Education/Library _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

_____ Greek Revival _____

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____ Stone/Granite _____
walls _____ Wood/Weatherboard _____
_____ Wood/Other/Flushboard _____
roof _____ Asphalt _____
other _____ Three Stage Tower with Bell and Clock _____

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

(FORMER) UNION CHURCH

WASHINGTON, MAINE

Section number 7 Page 2

The (former) Union Church is a Greek Revival style frame building that has a pedimented facade and a striking three-stage bell tower. It is sheathed in flush siding and clapboards, and it stands on a granite block foundation. The building is set back from Main Street in Columbia Falls village.

Facing southeast (for the ease of description the front elevation shall be referred to as the south elevation), the symmetrically composed, flush sheathed facade is comprised of a five-bay lower block which is capped by a pediment and surmounted by the tower. The recessed three-bay center portion contains a two-leaf paneled door framed by Doric columns set in antis. This entry is flanked by paired fifteen-over-fifteen double hung sash windows. A long flight of wooden stairs spans this center section. Paneled pilasters frame the edges of the outer bays, and a broad entablature extends across the front and side elevations. The tympanum is punctuated by a louvered, lancet arched opening. The tower is composed of a low base; a middle stage decorated with round panels that are framed by large paired console brackets at the corners; and a tall belfry stage with paired round arched openings, a clock face on three sides, and paneled corner pilasters that rise to an entablature crowned by anthemions. A low hipped roof features diagonal ribs that extend from the corners to an urn shaped mast that supports the weathervane.

The original bell still exists in the tower. It was cast in 1840 by G. H. Holbrook of East Medway, Massachusetts. In 1889 a clock was installed in the tower, resulting in the removal of the original rectangular louvered openings and the substitution of paired round arched openings and clock faces. The clockworks were manufactured by E. Howard & Co. of Boston.

Both the east and west side elevations contain large symmetrically placed windows formed by pairs of fifteen-over-fifteen double hung sash. A door is located at the northeast corner, and a gable roofed addition extends to the rear. The composition of the tower on the east and west sides is identical to that of the facade, and the rear side lacks the clock face.

The interior of the former church was converted in 1949-50 to a gymnasium for use by the nearby school. Alterations made at that time included the installation of a hardwood floor, tongue-and-groove wainscot extending about two-thirds the way up the side walls, a suspended ceiling, and a stage at the north end which projects into a gable roofed addition to the rear of the original block. The original window frames, which are ornamented with Greek frets and corner blocks with acanthus, are still in place, as is the broad crown molding behind the ceiling.

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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1840

1903-1950

Significant Dates

1840

1903

1949-1950

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

(FORMER) UNION CHURCH

WASHINGTON, MAINE

Section number 8 Page 2

The (Former) Union Church in Columbia Falls is a striking Greek Revival style frame edifice that was dedicated in January, 1841. Its evidently talented builder is as yet unidentified. In 1949-50, the building's interior was altered for use as a gymnasium and auditorium, but its exterior appearance remains largely unchanged. The former church is eligible for nomination to the National Register under criterion A for its association with local community functions and criterion C for its architectural significance. Criteria Consideration A also applies because of its original religious function.

Columbia Falls was initially settled by Euro-Americans shortly after the conclusion of the Revolution, but the town itself was not incorporated until 1863 after being set off from Columbia. In 1850, the combined population of the two towns was 1,140 persons. The first church building in the Town of Columbia was constructed in 1829 by the Baptists, but was subsequently known as the Columbia Union Church (NR 6/20/97). Both a Methodist Church and the Union Church were built at Columbia Falls in 1840.

Little is known about the early history of the Union Church in Columbia Falls, except that the young ladies of the community formed a society to purchase a clock for the belfry (installed in 1889), and that by 1903 the church group had declined to a point that the trustees of the Union Meeting House turned the building over to the town for use as a town hall. Apparently, one of the stipulations of this transfer was that while the interior could be altered to accommodate the new use, the exterior could not. The former church appears to have taken on the function of a community center, since it is reported that a basketball court had been established inside prior to the 1949-50 school year. At that time, the interior was substantially remodeled to create a gymnasium and stage for the nearby school. It continued to be used for school functions such as plays, graduation ceremonies, and physical education classes, and for annual town meetings until 1987 when a new community building was constructed.

The Union Church is part of a large group of architecturally related mid-nineteenth religious buildings erected in rural areas of the state. 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 an unmistakable Greek Revival style form that is conveyed not only by the general massing, but also by detailing such as corner pilasters and a broad entablature. These classical details are frequently combined with Gothic Revival features such as lancet arches above windows and belfry openings or in paneled pilasters, drip moldings over doors and windows, and crenelated towers. 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).

Although its interior has been dramatically altered, the well preserved exterior architectural features of the Union Church make it an important example of the Greek Revival style religious buildings erected in Maine's small towns. The composition of its facade with its paneled pilasters, broad entablature, pediment, columns in antis, and flush sheathing, as well as the unusual design of the tower constitute a particularly striking interpretation of the style.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

(FORMER) UNION CHURCH

WASHINGTON, MAINE

Section number 9 Page 2

Bibliography

Drisko, Clarence H., and Greene, Nancy H. *A History of Columbia and Columbia Falls*. Cherryfield, ME: Narraguagus Printing Co., 1976.

(Former) Union Church
Name of Property

Washington, Maine
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less Than 1

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	1	9	6	0	0	7	5	1	0	4	9	4	5	0	1	0	1	0
Zone	Easting				Northing													

3

Zone	Easting				Northing														

2

Zone	Easting				Northing														

4

Zone	Easting				Northing														

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohney, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date April, 2000

street & number 55 Capitol Street, 65 State House Station telephone 207/287-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine zip code 04333-0065

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

(FORMER) UNION CHURCH

WASHINGTON, MAINE

Section number 10 Page 2

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies the Town of Columbia Falls tax map 11, lot 27.

Boundary Justification

The boundary embraces the entire village lot that is historically associated with the (Former) Union Church.