

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



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

**1. Name**

historic First Congregational Church of Buxton

and/or common Tory Hill Meeting House

**2. Location**

*ME 112*

street & number Route 112, Buxton Lower Corner  not for publication

city, town Buxton  vicinity of congressional district First

state Maine code 23 county York code 031

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name First Congregational Church of Buxton

street & number

city, town Buxton  vicinity of state Maine 04072

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. York County Registry of Deeds

street & number

city, town Alfred,  vicinity of state Maine

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Maine Historic Resource Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1975  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Maine Historic Preservation Commission

city, town Augusta,  vicinity of state Maine

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

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

The First Congregational Church of Buxton, built in 1822, is a well-preserved and dignified example of the Federal style in an ecclesiastical context.

The church is of frame construction with central facade tower, gabled roof, clapboard siding, and granite foundation. The facade, which faces south, is dominated by the projecting tower which is flanked by flush projections. There are two entrances in the symmetrical facade, each of which is a single panelled door with overlights and entablatured lintels. The tower is square in plan with a belfry which contains an arched, louvered aperture in each side. Above this is an octagonal base for a pyramidal spire and copper weathervane.

The sides of the church are six bays long, each bay consisting of a 20/20 window flanked by exterior black louvered shutters.

The interior of the church is also well-preserved, with simple wainscoting and bench pews.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates                      1822                      Builder/Architect

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

The First Congregational Church of Buxton, more commonly referred to as the Tory Hill Meeting House, derives particular significance from its architecture, its early history and its associations with the famous author, Kate Douglas Wiggin, whose home nearby is listed on the National Register (9/16/77).

The proprietors of Narragansett No. 1, as the Town of Buxton was originally named, granted land for a church site in 1761. A young newly graduated, but not yet ordained minister, Paul Coffin, was called in the same year and a church building begun. In March, 1763, Coffin was officially ordained and the church incorporated as the First Church of Christ although known far and wide as "The Meetinghouse". (The name "Tory Hill" was applied to the area and the church when the local, Federalist-inclined men refused to be mustered during the War of 1812.) Dr. Paul Coffin served the church until his death in 1821, a 60 year pastorate! In 1822 the first church building was torn down and replaced by the present structure.

Kate Douglas Wiggin was long a strong supporter and worker within the church and community. In 1897 she was instrumental in founding the Dorcas Society, a nondenominational organization in support of the community and the church. It was for this group that she wrote the famous play, "The Old Peabody Pew". Beginning in 1916, this work has been performed in the church each summer on a nearly annual basis, the 106th and 107th performances having been presented in 1979. This event receives considerable publicity each summer and is always heavily attended as a seasonal event. Mrs. Wiggin also drew attention to the church by frequently giving readings of her works there to benefit various groups.

Although the original box pews are gone and the high pulpit altered, the church as a whole, and particularly the exterior, retains pure Federal lines. Sited diagonally facing and set well back from a crossroads, this handsome structure with its old burying ground beside it is regarded as an important landmark over a wide area.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Marshall, Joel M., Buxton Centennial, 1772-1872. Buxton, 1872.

Cousens, Alice C., and Hannaford, Olive W., Recollections of Old Buxton, Maine. Portland, 1972.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1 **UTM NOT VERIFIED**  
 Quadrangle name Buxton **ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED** Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>9</u>	<u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>9</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

Assessor's Map 16, Lot 31

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Frank A. Beard, Historian/Robert L. Bradley, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date April, 1980

street & number 242 State Street telephone 207/289-2133

city or town Augusta state Maine

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Earle S. [Signature]

title S.H.P.O.

date 5/9/80

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature]  
Keeper of the National Register

date 6/22/80

Attest: Patrick Andrews

date 6/13/80

Chief of Registration