

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

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

received MAY 7 1985

date entered JUN 6 1985

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

1. Name

historic Lake Village Free Baptist Church, Park Street Baptist Church

and/or common UNITED BAPTIST CHURCH OF LAKEPORT (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 23 Park Street n/a not for publication

city, town Laconia n/a vicinity of

state New Hampshire code 33 county Belknap code 001

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name United Baptist Church of Lakeport

street & number 65 Washington Street

city, town Laconia, n/a vicinity of state New Hampshire 03246

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Belknap County Courthouse
Belknap County Registry of Deeds

street & number 64 Court Street

city, town Laconia, state New Hampshire 03246

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Inventory of Laconia has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records City of Laconia, Planning Department, City Hall

city, town Laconia, state New Hampshire 03246

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moveddate N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The United Baptist Church of Lakeport is a wooden frame Victorian church, which stands on its own lot in that section of the city of Laconia known as Lakeport. The roughly rectangular lot stretches from Park Street to Railroad Avenue. The church is set to face northwest towards Park Street, the more important of the two streets. Save for the two towers, the church is two and a half stories high, with a tall clapboarded and shingled main level above a brick sheathed lower story. Because of the slope of the lot, the lower level is fully exposed on the rear (Railroad Avenue) facade, the northeast side facade, and part of the southwest side facade, but is visually reduced to a high basement on the main (Park Street) facade and the front portion of the southwest facade. The main block, covered by intersecting gable roofs, is cruciform in plan, with wide transepts on each side facade. Its Park Street facade is enlivened by a shallow but wide central projection covered by an extension of the main gable roof. (Short shed roofs cover the narrow sections of the main facade to each side of this front gable end.) The main facade is also framed by towers, a two-story stair tower to the left at the north corner of the building and a five stage belfry-entry tower to the right at the west corner of the building. On the lower level on the northeast side facade is found a porch (now enclosed as a vestibule) between the stair tower and the northeast transept.

The lower level of the main block is sheathed with brick, laid in stretcher bond. Its windows, all one over one sash windows, have granite sills and lintels, which are rockfaced with dressed margins. The junction between the two stories is marked by a wide, sloping, wooden watertable, projecting over the brick sheathing of the lower story. The four wide gable end facades of the main level are treated differently from the narrower side facades. All of the main level facades are trimmed with cornerboards, and sheathed with clapboards beneath decoratively cut wooden shingles. On the side facades, the shingling is a relatively narrow band of fishscale shingles above a simple moulded board. On the gable ends, the entire gable, above a moulded board at the impost level of the main windows, is covered by elaborate shingling, including courses of fishscale, triangular and staggered shingles. The facades also differ in their cornices. The side facades have box cornices with mouldings, sawn brackets, and friezes of beaded boarding, ornamented with mouldings. The gables have box cornices of a different design, with mouldings, larger ornate sawn brackets, and a moulded frieze. At the lower corners of the gables are found decorative gablets, each supported by a large bracket and ornamented by sawn brackets and mouldings. The small pediments of the gablets face the sides, so that the gablets are perpendicular to the gables. The cornerboards on the gable ends are topped by small triangular recessed panels beneath the gablets.

The fenestration of the main level also follows a consistent pattern. The smaller windows are semicircular arched stained glass windows, with one over one sash and semicircular transom windows. These windows have bracketed sills and plain side trim distinguished by flaring at the base. Their arches are rusticated, that is to say, divided into blocks with beveled edges, in imitation of stone blocks, and are ornamented by "impost blocks", decorated with mouldings and small wooden triangles. Large memorial windows are found in each of the three main gable ends, the front (Park

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Street) gable end and the two transept gable ends. The memorial windows are set in large semicircular arches, which also have bracketed sills, plain side trim with flared bases, and rusticated arches with moulded "impost blocks" ornamented by triangles. The arches also have decorative "keystones". Each arch contains a bank of four large rectangular stained glass windows beneath a large stained glass rose window, the corners between the rose window and the rectangular windows being filled by "triangular" stained glass windows. The plain framed rectangular windows have one over one sash in the transepts, while the front windows have fixed sash. The moulded tracery of the rose windows feature a central round window from which radiate eight pointed "petals", between which are found eight spherical triangles on the outer rim of the window. High in each gable is a semicircular window (or louver), with a bracketed sill and a rusticated arch with decorative "keystone". (Further emphasis is given these high gable windows by moulded boards which cross the gables at their sill levels.)

The steeply pitched gable roofs of the main block are sheathed with slate, save for wide raised bands above each gable, which are metal clad. Two tall brick chimneys break the northeast slopes of the roofs. The front chimney, near the stair tower, is relatively plain with a tapered cap. The rear chimney, to the rear of the northeast transept, has paneled sides and corners, and a concrete cap.

The main (Park Street) facade of the church is composed of five elements, a large central gable end which projects forward from two narrow sections of wall to each side of it, the stair tower to the northeast, and the entry-belfry tower to the southwest. The central gable end has a short brick basement with four one over one sash windows of the usual design, although shorter than their counterparts on the other facades. In the center of the gable end is the usual large semicircular arched memorial window, and above it, in the gable, is the typical frosted glass semicircular window. To each side of the main gable end are narrow sections of the wall, beneath slate clad shed roofs, which are treated like the other side facades, with clapboarded lower sections, upper sections with fishscale and staggered shingles, and the typical box cornices with brackets and beaded board friezes.

The stair tower that marks the north corner of the church is circular in plan, with a conical roof. It has the usual brick clad lower level, here windowless. The main level is sheathed with wooden shingles that flare out over the lower brick wall. The shingles, laid in regular courses below the windows, are staggered between the windows. Above the windows, the wall is covered with courses of fishscale and staggered shingles. A moulded board encircles the tower at the impost level of the four semicircular arched stained glass windows. The windows follow the familiar formula, having bracketed sills, plain side trim flared at the bases, moulded "impost blocks" with pendant triangles, and rusticated arches. The tower is trimmed by a box cornice like that of the main block's side facades, with mouldings, sawn brackets, and a moulded frieze, with vertical beaded boarding. The steep conical roof is sheathed with slate and crowned by a carved finial.

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The five-stage entry-belfry tower is square in plan, and, save for the third stage, sheathed with horizontal beaded boarding. Like the main block, the tower has a wide sloping wooden watertable. The corners of its brick foundation project to support clasping wooden buttresses that extend about one third of the way up the first stage of the tower. Above the clasping buttresses, angle buttresses rise to the roof of the tower, where they are crowned by pinnacles. Both the clasping and the angle buttresses have vertical beaded board sides and paneled faces, the panels being filled by horizontal beaded boarding, and framed with plain side trim and an upper moulding. The sloping tops of the clasping buttresses and the steps of the angle buttresses are metal clad. The angle buttresses are stepped back at the tops of the first, second and third stages, the two lower stages having simple sloped setbacks, the third stage steps being distinguished by gablets with moulded pediments.

The tower's brick foundation has a single frosted glass window with the usual granite sill and lintel in its southwest facade. In the street facade of the first stage is found the church's main entry--tall, double, seven-panel doors, whose panels are embellished by chamfered edges and elaborate mouldings. The door is topped by a moulded lintel and a semicircular stained glass transom window. The entry is framed by a granite sill, side trim with the usual flared bases, and a rusticated semicircular arch decorated by a "keystone" and "impost blocks" with the usual mouldings and triangles. A moulded board crosses the street facade between the buttresses at the impost level of the arch. The entry is served by modern board steps with a lower concrete step, wrought metal hand rails, and two pseudo-Victorian light fixtures on round metal posts. The southwest facade of the first story contains a semicircular arched stained glass window of typical design, with bracketed sill, flared side trim, and rusticated arch with "impost blocks". The first stage is topped (between the buttresses) by a shallow cornice with a frieze of vertical beaded boarding.

The two public (northwest and southwest) facades of the second stage each contain an identical pair of tall semicircular arched stained glass windows, which rest on the first story cornices. They have the usual flared side trim, "impost blocks", and rusticated arches. Again, a moulded board stretches between the buttresses at the impost level in these two facades. A shallow moulded cornice with modillions and vertical beaded board frieze tops the second story (again, just between the buttresses). The third stage is distinguished by more ornate sheathing. Most of its facades are covered by very steeply pitched slate roofs which cover the cornice of the second story. These shallow roofs, ornamented by courses of hexagonal slates, are topped by simple cornices. These cornices, in turn, are topped by short blind arcades, with mouldings at the base and imposts, and beaded boarding "behind" the arcade. The third stage is crowned by a box cornice with mouldings, sawn brackets, and moulded friezes. The cornice is shared with the gablets at the same level, although the gablets lack the sawn brackets.

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The fourth and fifth stages are slightly smaller than the lower three stages. The fourth stage is the open belfry. The large semicircular arched openings in each facade are crowned by rusticated arches with "keystones" and moulded "impost blocks". Each opening is protected by a short balustrade with turned balusters and plain rail. Through the openings can be seen the bell and the beaded boarding of the ceiling, the inner walls and the wide soffits of the arches. The facades of the belfry stage are topped by shallow cornices with mouldings and paneled friezes. The fifth stage is the clock stage, each facade containing a large round glass clock face with black Roman numerals and clock hands. (The clock was designed to be illuminated at night.) The clock faces are set in semicircular arches with moulded "impost blocks" and rusticated arches. The facades of the fifth stage are topped by small gables, which are trimmed by box cornices with mouldings and friezes.

The shallow gables of the tower's highest stage are metal clad. Rising above the gables is a tall, slate sheathed, octagonal spire. The buttresses at the tower corners are crowned by pyramidal pinnacles, all sheathed with slate and trimmed by shallow cornices. The pinnacles are topped by knobs with slender finials, while the spire is crowned by a more elaborate knob and an ornate metal weathervane.

The northeast and southwest side facades of the church are virtually identical, save for the lower levels of their westernmost sections, between the towers at the front corners and the transepts. Because of the higher ground level on the southwest side, the lower level in the western section is a short brick basement, whose two boarded up windows have the usual granite sills and lintels. On the northeast facade's lower level, we find a formerly open porch, now enclosed as a vestibule, between the stair tower and the transept. The porch still retains its box cornice with mouldings and moulded frieze, and its low pitched, asphalt covered, shed roof. But it now has a concrete foundation and a wall of vertically grooved plywood siding. A six panel door with a half sidelight and plain trim, and a plain framed two over two sash window punctuate the new wall. The main levels of these western sections on both side facades each contain a typical semicircular arched stained glass window.

The two transepts are identical. They are both windowless on the sides, and have six one over one sash windows in the lower levels of their gable ends. In the center of the main levels of each gable end is a large semicircular arched memorial window. The memorial window is flanked on each side by a smaller semicircular arched stained glass window of the usual design, but taller than their counterparts elsewhere on the church. In the gables are found the expected semicircular windows, but the glass has been replaced in both windows by louvers. The two bay wide sections of both side facades east of the transepts are also of the same design, with one over one sash windows in the lower level and semicircular arched stained glass windows in the main level. (The lower windows on the southwest side are no longer functional, having been blocked off on the inside by the new walls of the modernized kitchen, but they have been retained unchanged on the exterior.)

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The rear gable end has four one over one sash windows on the lower level. North of the windows is the rear entry. Reached by a concrete step, the six panel door and the three paneled section on its north side are set in a semi-circular brick arch with a granite sill and a semicircular frosted glass transom window. The rear entry is sheltered by a gabled hood supported by large ornate sawn and carved brackets and trimmed by a shallow box cornice with mouldings and sloping soffit. The beaded board ceiling of the hood is arched to follow the entry's arch, while the gable itself is sheathed with flush boarding. The upper level of the rear gable end has three semicircular arched stained glass windows of the usual design, while the gable has yet another semicircular window. As the imposts of the stained glass windows on the rear facade are lower than the imposts of the memorial windows, the decorative wooden shingling starts at a lower level on the rear than on the other gable ends.

The main entry opens into the vestibule in the first story of the main tower. The vestibule has a linoleum floor with some carpeting and vertical beaded board wainscoating with a high moulded coping. The walls above the wainscoating are now covered by modern grooved wooden "paneling". But the ceiling still retains its ornate pressed metal tiles, with a border featuring a decorative pressed metal moulding. The elaborate pressed metal cove that surrounds the ceiling is interrupted on each side of the window in the side (southwest) wall by carved brackets. In the center of the ceiling, a simple moulded frame surrounds the large beaded board trapdoor to the upper stories of the tower. The double doors of the main entry are framed by moulded trim with cornerblocks, the lower cornerblocks being plain, the upper blocks ornamented by floral rosettes. Above the doors, the semicircular stained glass window with geometric designs is framed by moulded trim with a "keystone" of the same design as the upper cornerblocks. In the southwest wall appears a semicircular arched stained glass window, again with a geometric design, set in a deep recess. The window sill uses the wainscoat coping as an apron. The southern corner is occupied by a wide builtin sloping shelf. An indentation in the northeast wall contains the steps, with wooden risers, linoleum covered treads, and metal hand rails, and the carpeted landing that serve the double, five-paneled doors to the audience room. The doors have the same paneling and the same moulded trim with cornerblocks as the main entry doors.

The upper levels of the tower are reached by an ingeniously counter-balanced wooden ladder, which can be pulled down through the trapdoor in the vestibule ceiling. The second, third, and fourth stories of the tower (corresponding to the second and third stages of the exterior) have board floors and unfinished walls and ceilings with exposed framing. The second story, lit by two pairs of stained glass windows with geometric designs, contains a ladder up to the unfinished attic of the main block, which is lit by the high semicircular windows in the gable ends. A wooden stairway leads up to the third story of the tower, which is largely occupied by a small room, with beaded board walls and a simple board door, which contains the clock

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works. A ladder takes the climber up to the empty windowless fourth story, where another ladder serves the trapdoor in the metal sheathed floor of the open belfry. The large bell, cast by Blake Bell Co. of Boston in 1891, is set on a heavy timber frame. The walls and ceiling of the open belfry are sheathed with beaded boarding. A trapdoor in the ceiling above the bell opens into the clock stage. This small room, again unfinished with exposed framing in the walls and ceiling, is well lit by the four large translucent glass clock faces.

The audience room, which takes up most of the main level, is cruciform in plan. The cross is squat, with a large central square and short arms. The main part of the room is covered by a three pitched ceiling, also cruciform in plan. But, the room is extended to the northwest and southeast on the church's main axis by narrower and shorter spaces covered by high plastered barrel vaults, with the choir occupying the vaulted space to the southeast, behind the pulpit platform. The corners of the main level are occupied by subsidiary spaces. The already described vestibule is in the west corner, while the main stairhall, with its circular stairway in the stair tower, is found in the north corner. The choir is flanked by the choir room in the south corner, and by the pastor's study and the rear stairhall in the east corner.

The floor of the audience room is flat in the rear (northwest) vaulted section between the vestibule and the stairhall, but in most of the room, it slopes gently towards the semicircular area in front of the pulpit platform. The floor is covered with linoleum, with carpeting in the aisles. Vertical beaded board wainscoating with a moulded coping encircles the room, just below the window sills. Above the wainscoating, the walls are plastered, as is the ceiling. The stained glass windows have relatively simple moulded frames. The doors, with the chamfered and moulded panels that are typical of the church, have moulded trim with cornerblocks, the lower blocks being plain, the upper blocks decorated with floral rosettes.

The three pitched ceiling of the main cruciform part of the room is supported by a system of trusses. Half trusses are found applied to the walls at the ends of the arms of the cross, while full trusses of the same design are found at the intersection of the cross's arms with its large central square. Each of these eight trusses have the same basic components, a collar beam supporting the flat portion of the ceiling, two rafters on the pitched portions of the ceiling, two wall posts reaching from the lower ends of the rafters to ornately sawn and moulded wall brackets below, two vertical struts suspended from the junctions of the collar beam and the rafters, two arched braces from the wall posts to the struts, and an arched beam connecting the struts. All of these elements are boxed in. The boxing, trimmed with moulded edges, allows for smoothly curved intersections of the arched braces with the straight members of the truss. The vertical struts are ornamented by square moulded pendants, from which ornate electric chandeliers are suspended from the full trusses. The full trusses each also have four turned diagonal struts in the triangles formed by the vertical struts and the arched braces. Wide moulded wooden cornices ornament the junctions of the walls and the pitched portions of the ceiling.

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Purlins with moulded edges mark the junctions of the flat central sections of the ceiling with the pitched sections, and frame the ceiling's central square. In the center of the ceiling's central square is a round pierced metal ventilator, surrounded by a circular boxed "beam", again with moulded edges. (A modern ceiling fan now hangs from the vent.) The central square is divided by diagonal trusses, which rise from wall brackets (of the same design and height as the other trusses' wall brackets) at the inner corners of the room to the central ventilator. The diagonal trusses, which incorporate wall posts, rafters, collarbeam, and braces, are also boxed, here as single units with smoothly curved soffits. They are ornamented with moulded edges and small triangular panels at the junctions of the pitched and flat portions of the ceiling, and of the ceiling and the wall.

The barrel vaulted section at the northwest (Park Street) end of the audience room is dominated by the large memorial window. The stained glass window is largely composed of geometric patterns, save for a Bible depicted in the central circle of the rose window and floral patterns in the spherical triangles between the "petals". Each side wall of the vaulted section contains double five paneled doors, to the vestibule on the southwest and to the front stairhall on the northeast.

On the side walls of the main part of the room, to the west and east of each transept, is found a semicircular arched one over one sash window with geometric patterned stained glass. Each transept end wall features a central memorial window of similar design to the front memorial window, save that the central circles of the rose windows contain floral designs. And the lower rectangular windows of the northeast memorial window have band of floral patterns in their upper sash. The semicircular arched stained glass windows found to each side of the transept memorial windows have geometric patterns in their sash, and religious symbols in their transom windows, a crown and a Bible in the southwest windows, a star and an alpha and omega in the northeast windows. To each side of the pulpit platform, in the southeast wall of the audience room is a seven panel door, whose moulded frame is embellished not only by the usual cornerblocks, but also by blocks with carved rosettes at the junctions of the frame and the wainscoat coping. The northern door serves the rear stairhall, the south door the choir room. Permanent attachments to the audience room walls include a bronze World War II honor roll, two hymnboards, and a wooden framed glass case on brackets for the church communion service.

The focus of the audience room is the pulpit platform in the center of the southeast end of the room, with the choir in the barrel vaulted section behind it. The pulpit platform is raised four steps above the floor. The platform is roughly semicircular in plan, with a shallow rectangular projection on the front and steps with sidewalls on both sides. The sides of the platform are sheathed with vertical beaded boarding, save for the paneled front of the central projection. The same moulding tops both the beaded boarding and the projection. (Ornate metal vents punctuate the beaded boarding.) Normally, the five-sided wooden pulpit, ornamented

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with a moulded base, corner colonettes with foliated capitals flanking ogee Gothic arches with blind tracery, and a moulded cornice, stands on the platform, along with three Victorian chairs and two tables. (The altar table stands on the main floor in front of the pulpit.) But the pulpit can be removed for ceremonies. And, once a year, the platform carpet and the plywood and board floor are removed to reveal the heated baptismal tank beneath the platform. Separating the platform from the higher choir behind it is the choir rail, which is curvilinear in plan. Beginning at the corners of the vaulted space, the choir rail curves out into the audience room to small square projections on each side of the pulpit platform, then curves back inward between the two projections. The choir rail, set on the beaded board platform, is ornamented by a moulded baseboard, a blind arcade with colonettes and sloping sills in front of beaded boarding, simple turned disks on the spandrels, and a moulded cornice whose frieze contains panels of basket weave carving. The choir rail is topped by a short curtain hanging from an iron rail.

In each side wall of the linoleum floored choir is a five-panel door with the usual paneling and frames, one door leading to the choir room, the other to the rear stairs. The walls and ceiling of the vaulted choir are ornamented only with a moulded baseboard and a beveled corner at the junction of the vault with the wall of the main part of the audience room. The most impressive feature of the choir is the organ which fills most of it. The organ front is divided into three bays by four tall posts with chamfered edges, mouldings and crowning knobs. Each bay has a paneled wooden base beneath a row of tall organ pipes supported by a high moulded rail between the posts. The narrower side bays each have four panels, with chamfered and moulded edges, above a baseboard and beneath a shallow moulded cornice. The wider central bay has the same shallow moulded cornice, but its paneling is higher to emphasize the builtin organ keyboard, supported by carved brackets. The paneling above the keyboard is ornamented by a semicircular "sunburst" with two triangular panels in the corners above it and fluted trim flanking it. To each side of the keyboard are found paneled sections, each with five panels of the same design as those found in the side bays and on the doors. The moulded upper rail that supports the pipes is curved up from the end posts to the posts flanking the central bay and is given a semicircular arch above the keyboard. The central bay section of the high rail is supported by carved brackets at each end. And an illuminated cross is hung from the central arch of the rail.

The curved slip pews that occupy most of the audience room are ranged in semicircular ranks facing the pulpit and are divided into four sections by aisles along the walls, on the central axis of the church, and on diagonals radiating from the pulpit back into the corners of the transepts. The carved pew ends are decorated with moulded edges, turned disks, and applied panels. The arm rests on the pew ends and on the supports in the centers of the longer pews are also ornamented with moulded edges and are supported by pairs of small turned balusters. The pew seats are cushioned, while the fluted pew backs are topped by a moulded coping.

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In the southern corner of the main level we find the choir room, which has a carpeted floor, plaster walls with moulded baseboards, and a plaster ceiling. The room is lit by a semicircular arched stained glass window, with one over one sash, geometric patterns, and moulded frames in each of the outer (southwest and southeast) walls. Plain trim with cornerblocks (plain lower blocks and turned upper blocks) frames the two doors, the northwest door to the audience room and the northeast door to the choir. The choir door is reached by a short set of steps, whose beaded board sidewall has a moulded rail and turned newelpost. A very short beaded board door, with trim like that of the other two doors, in the northeast wall, allows access to the organ works. The organ works, in the back of the choir's vaulted space, are unobtrusively lit by a stained glass window.

The other door in the audience room's southeast wall opens onto a narrow corridor between the steps up to the choir's north door and the stairs along the northeast outer wall down to the lower level. The corridor and both steps have a linoleum floor, wooden steps, plaster walls with moulded baseboards, and a plaster ceiling. The doors are surrounded by frames with chamfered edges and upper cornerblocks ornamented by turned disks. The stairs to the lower level are lit by two windows, a high semicircular arched stained glass window with moulded frame, and a low one over one sash window with chamfered trim and turned upper cornerblocks.

Directly opposite the door to the audience room is the five paneled door to the pastor's study. The pastor's study has a carpeted floor, plaster walls with moulded baseboards, and a plaster ceiling with ceiling moulding. It is lit by a one over one sash stained glass window with moulded frame. (The semicircular transom window visible on the exterior is cut off by the ceiling.)

Returning to the north corner of the main level, we find the main stair hall, which includes the stair tower. The stair hall has plaster walls with moulded baseboards, and a modern tile ceiling with ceiling moulding. The carpeted landing at the top of the stairs is protected by a low partition of vertical beaded boarding with moulded rail, which ends at the circular stairway's large central newel. The round newel, sheathed with flush boarding, is topped by a moulded cap, which supports an ornate electric light. The stairs are lit by four semicircular arched stained glass windows, set in plastered recesses with splayed surrounds and wooden sills. The wooden steps are partially carpeted and are served by a metal hand rail.

The main stairway ends in the small lower hall, which has a carpeted floor, plaster walls with moulded baseboards, and a plaster ceiling. Chamfered trim with turned upper cornerblocks surrounds the five panel door to a classroom in the southwest wall, a similar five panel door to the vestry at the southeast end of the hall, and the one over one sash window and modern metal-framed glass door in the northwest wall. This last door once opened onto a porch which has now been enclosed as a vestibule. The former porch still has a painted concrete floor, inner brick walls (notably the round tower base to the northwest) and a sloping beaded board ceiling

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with ceiling moulding. The inner door and window serving the lower hall have granite lintels of the usual design, the window also boasting a granite sill, and the door a transom panel beneath the lintel. The new outer wall is sheathed with modern grooved wooden "paneling" with simple baseboard beneath the old porch cornice. Simple moulded trim surrounds the two over two sash window, the six panel door and its three pane sidelight in the new wall.

The vestry, the largest room in the lower level, is a rectangular space in the center of the story. To the northwest of the vestry is the lower hall, a classroom and a furnace room. To its southwest are two classrooms, while to the northeast are three new small classrooms, created by partitioning off part of the vestry. Finally to the rear (southeast) are a closet (partially under the rear stairs), the rear hall serving another furnace room, two restrooms, the rear stairs, and the back door, and, in the south corner, the kitchen.

The vestry has a linoleum floor, a modern tile ceiling with ceiling moulding, and, save for the new northeast wall, plaster walls with moulded baseboards and chair rails. The new wall is sheathed with modern grooved wooden "paneling" topped by a simple moulding and a high section of plasterboard. (The lower "paneled" sections of the classroom walls are easily removable, so that the vestry can be returned to its former size on special occasions.) The northeast wall contains three double yellow plastic "diamond paned" windows and three modern wooden doors, all with simple moulded trim, to serve the three new classrooms. The other doors in the vestry are all older, with the usual moulded and chamfered paneling, and chamfered frames with turned upper cornerblocks. In the front (Park Street) wall are three five-panel doors, serving the lower hall to the north, the classroom in the center, and the furnace room to the south. The long southwest wall features two large double, sliding, ten-panel doors, which allow the two classrooms to be combined with the vestry. The rear (southeast) wall has more five panel doors, one to the closet on the north, double doors to the rear hall next to it, and a kitchen door on the south. Between the kitchen and rear hall doors, a portion of the wall has been sheathed with modern grooved wooden "paneling" and topped by a wooden valence which hides a movie screen.

The classroom to the northwest of the vestry has a carpeted floor, plaster walls with moulded baseboards, and a plaster ceiling. The usual trim with turned cornerblocks surrounds the three five-panel doors, the vestry door on the southeast, and the two northeast doors serving the lower hall and the storage space in the stair tower beneath the circular stairs. (This storage space is unfinished, with a concrete floor and exposed framing in the walls and ceiling.) The same trim surrounds the three high one over one sash windows in the street wall, above a projecting section of the plaster wall, topped by a simple cornice and covering the foundation.

The furnace room in the west corner has a plywood and concrete floor, exposed stone and brick in the outer walls, simple inner board walls and a plaster ceiling. The adjoining area in the base of the tower, which contains the oil tanks, has a concrete floor, brick and stone foundations, unfinished upper walls and ceilings. The furnace room and the tower space are each lit by a single high window.

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The two classrooms southwest of the vestry are quite similar, both having plaster walls with moulded baseboards, and modern tile ceilings with ceiling mouldings. The western classroom, now a nursery, is carpeted, but the eastern classroom has a linoleum floor. Both are lit by three one over one sash windows, and served by the double doors into the vestry, all with the trim that is commonly found in the lower level. The classrooms also share similar, double, sliding, ten panel doors, which allow the two rooms to be combined. A five panel section of this sliding door is hinged to act as a normal door. And another five panel door of the usual design connects the eastern classroom with the kitchen.

The three new classrooms on the northeast side retain some features of the vestry they were carved out of—the linoleum floors, the outer plaster walls with moulded baseboards and chair rails, and the usual window trim on their one over one sash windows. They do have modern tile ceilings with ceiling mouldings. And the new walls that divide them from each other and the vestry are of modern grooved wooden "paneling" beneath simple mouldings and high sections of plasterboard. Simple mouldings surround the double plastic window and the door found in the inner (southwest) wall of each classroom. Four exterior windows serve the central classroom, but the east and west classrooms have only one outer window apiece.

The closet southeast of the vestry is a narrow space lit by a one over one sash window, which, like the closet door, has the usual chamfered trim and turned upper cornerblocks. The closet ends in a five panel door, serving an inner closet beneath the rear stairs. Both closets have linoleum floors, plaster walls with moulded baseboards, and plaster ceilings.

The rear hall is L-shaped in plan, with one corridor leading northwest directly from the rear door (and the lower end of the rear stairs) to the vestry, the other corridor leading southwest along the rear wall from the entry to the kitchen. The hall has a board floor and the usual plaster ceiling and walls with moulded baseboards. The typical lower level trim surrounds the doors and windows, save that plain frames surround the frosted glass transom window over the rear entry and the modern metal door to the furnace room. The hall is lit by two one over one sash windows in the kitchen corridor. Off the vestry corridor is the furnace room with its concrete floor, plasterboard walls, and exposed ceiling. Off the kitchen corridor are the two restrooms, whose paneled doors have frosted glass windows. Each restroom has a linoleum floor, the usual fixtures, a high wainscoting of grooved wooden "paneling" with moulded baseboard and simple coping beneath plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling. The rear stairs open directly into the hall, but a five panel door at the southwest end of the corridor regulates access to the kitchen.

The kitchen has been completely modernized. It now has a linoleum floor and a suspended tile ceiling with builtin light panels. The plasterboard wall with simple baseboard is mostly hidden by kitchen equipment and modern builtin cabinets and counters with paneled doors, formica tops and backs. A similar rectangular island counter occupies the center of the room. Above the cabinets are short wall papered

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sections of wall. Plain trim surrounds the doors to the vestry, a classroom, and the rear hall, as well as the two one over one sash windows in the southeast wall. (The two windows in the southwest wall have been blocked off by the renovations.)

The lot slopes naturally from the west to the east. Accordingly, stone retaining walls were required to accommodate the church on the lot. One retaining wall from the stair tower to Park Street marks off the lawn directly in front of the building. Another double level retaining wall with an L-shaped plan allows light to reach the lower level of the southwest transept and the rear section of the southwest facade. A stone boundary wall marks the southwest boundary. A paved driveway leads from Park Street along the northwest side of the church to a small paved parking lot in the rear, which is also served by an unpaved driveway to Railroad Avenue. A paved walk from the curbed sidewalk on Park Street serves the main entry. A narrow strip of asphalt paving surrounds the front facade and the tower. Otherwise, the lot is grassed with some trees, notably on the southwest boundary, and with a few shrubs on the front facade. On the front lawn is a freestanding wooden church sign and the doorstep of Laconia's first church, now marked by a bronze plaque.

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 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/ humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | | |

Specific dates 1891–1892 **Builder/Architect** George H. Guernsey

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The United Baptist Church of Lakeport is significant in the area of architecture as a fine Victorian eclectic church, which ranks among the best of its style in Belknap County.

The United Baptist Church is actually the second church on its site. The earlier church was built in 1852-53 for the Lake Village Free Will Baptist Church. By 1890, the congregation had outgrown the building. So, an addition was planned and begun to enlarge the church. But on December 15, 1890, a fire starting in the addition, then under construction, destroyed the entire building. The next day, the Proprietors of the Free Will Baptist Meeting House (the pew owners) voted to rebuild the church and established committees to raise funds and to obtain plans and specifications for a new building. The soliciting of funds began "before the ruins were done smoking".¹ At a subsequent meeting on January 5, the Proprietors voted to give the \$5000 insurance money towards a new church, and essentially voted themselves out of existence by agreeing that² the new building would be owned by the Free Will Baptist Society of Lake Village.²

Items in the three Laconia newspapers of the day enable us to closely follow the construction of the church. Plans for the new church were drawn by architect-builder, George H. Guernsey of Montpelier, Vermont, in the spring of 1891. In mid-April, ground was broken for the church foundation. In early July, while work was still in progress on the foundation, the contract for the building was awarded to the architect. Before the end of the month, Guernsey's carpenters were at work on the frame. The frame was completed and "mostly boarded in"³ by late August. By early October, the slaters had covered the main roof and commenced on the spire. And the brick sheathing of the

¹Laconia Democrat, December 19, 1890.

²The Free Will Baptist Society of Lake Village was renamed the Park Street Free Baptist Society of Lakeport in 1898. In 1919, the congregations of the Park Street Church and the Gilford and Gilmanton Baptist Church (which, despite its name, was another Laconia church) agreed to merge. So, in 1920, the two churches became the United Baptist Church of Lakeport. However; the Park Street Free Baptist Society remained a separate entity for years, not deeding its property, including the church, to the United Baptist Society until 1939. In 1953, the United Baptist Society transferred the church building to the United Baptist Church.

³Belknap Republican (Lakeport), August 21, 1891.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .47 acre

Quadrangle name Winnepesaukee, NH

Quadrangle scale 1:625 00

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

(see continuation sheet)

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

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Rue11

organization Lakes Region Planning Commission date October 24, 1984

street & number Main Street telephone (603) 279-8171

city or town Meredith, state New Hampshire 03253

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *John T. Lynch*

title New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Officer date APR 26 1985

For NPS use only

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

for Melissa Byers date 6/6/85
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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lower level was "more than half done".⁴ November saw interior plastering and finish work underway. The bell and the clock, then the only illuminated clock north of Concord, were installed in December.⁵ In February, the windows were "being placed in position".⁶ And the frescoers were at work in the audience room. March saw the installation of the organ, and April the installation of the pews and the laying of carpet. Finally, on May 27, 1892, the new church was dedicated free of debt. It had cost, including furnishings, \$19,427.68, of which the architect-builder received \$12,358.00.

The United Baptist Church is remarkably well preserved. The polychrome paint scheme of the exterior and the frescoes in the audience room did not appeal to the tastes of later generations. And both have been painted over with monochrome white. But, the church has seen few other changes of note. The only significant exterior changes were made in the 1970's, when the front steps were replaced and the lower level porch was enclosed. The modern "paneling" in the vestibule is virtually the only interior change of consequence on the main level. The lower level has been modernized to a greater extent, with three new classrooms carved out of the vestry in the early 1970's, and the kitchen completely remodeled in the early 1980's. But, the lower level does retain most of its original plan and, with the exception of the kitchen, virtually all of its original details. Essentially, the United Baptist Church still appears today as it did when it was dedicated in May of 1892.

The architectural description used by the town historian for a similar Baptist Church in Ludlow, Vermont, designed by George H. Guernsey in 1892, could equally well apply to his Lakeport church—"The architecture is of no special order, but is a combination of various designs."⁷ The style of the United Baptist Church can only be described as Victorian eclectic. There are elements in its design that were inspired by traditional styles. The Gothic Revival is the obvious source for the large stained glass rose windows and the form of the belfry tower, with its buttresses and its crown of pinnacles and octagonal spire. The window and door frames, with their rusticated semicircular arches, ornate impost blocks, and flared side trim, are Italianate in inspiration. But other exterior elements can only be classified as late 19th century American. The different bands of sheathing, brick, clapboard and decoratively cut shingles on the main block, brick and shingles on the stair tower, beading boarding and slate on the belfry tower, the pronounced watertables, the varied and elaborate cornices have few precedents in earlier recognized styles. The interior is even more

⁴Belknap Republican, October 9, 1891.

⁵The village clock had been destroyed in the church fire. The new clock was financed through public subscription and a town appropriation.

⁶Laconia News & Critic, February 10, 1892.

⁷Joseph N. Harris - HISTORY OF LUDLOW, VERMONT (Charlestown, N.H., 1949), p. 38.

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Victorian. The audience room, with its cruciform plan, sloping floor, semicircular ranks of pews, beaded board wainscoating, ornate door trim, beaded board platform, curved choir rail, ornate organ in its own vaulted space, and elaborate trusses, is clearly a late 19th century American construction. The result is a superbly Victorian church, a dignified but lively building. This attractive church is a fine example of the Victorian eclectic style and a tribute to its designer's skill.

It is difficult to compare the United Baptist Church with the other Victorian churches in the state, as there are no systematic studies of such buildings in New Hampshire. Although we may suspect that the United Baptist Church ranks high among its contemporaries statewide, we must limit our comparison to a smaller area, Belknap County. Most of the late 19th century churches in Belknap County are comparatively plain vernacular structures, or more traditional high style buildings, such as Tilton's Gothic Revival Trinity Episcopal Church or Laconia's Romanesque Revival Sacred Heart Church. The only significant Victorian eclectic churches in the county are Laconia's three Baptist churches, the United Baptist Church of Lakeport, the South Baptist Church (built 1878-79) and the Evangelical Baptist Church (remodeled (1871-72)). Both of the earlier Laconia churches have the traditional form of New England churches, as both are rectangular, gable-roofed buildings, with square central entry-belfry towers projecting slightly from their main gable end facades. In a real sense, they are traditional churches, embellished with Victorian ornament. Their designers were not yet entirely free of the architectural concepts of the early 19th century. The United Baptist Church represents Victorian Eclecticism in its full development, in plan and form, as well as in ornament. Guernsey created a building that is distinctly complex, although still dominated by a basic symmetry. Even that symmetry is challenged on the main facade with its flanking towers of different designs and heights. This freedom of design places the United Baptist Church in a class by itself. The earlier churches are fine buildings, but the United Baptist Church is arguably Belknap County's purest and best example of Victorian eclectic church architecture.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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George H. Guernsey "Specifications for a Free Baptist Church, Lake Village, N.H." (manuscript, United Baptist Church of Lakeport, Lakeport, N.H.).

Joseph N. Harris - HISTORY OF LUDLOW, VERMONT (Charlestown, N.H., 1949).

Laconia Democrat - December 19, 1890; January 22 & 30, February 27, March 13, April 17, May 1, June 5, July 10, August 14 & 21, September 4 & 25, October 2, 9 & 30, November 13 & 27, December 11 & 25, 1891; January 1 & 29, February 12, March 25, April 29, May 20 & 27, June 3, 1892.

Laconia News & Critic - December 17, 1890; March 28, April 22, July 15, August 5, September 2 & 23, October 7, 14 & 28, November 4 & 25, December 9, 16 & 23, 1891; February 10 & 17, March 2, May 25, June 1 & 8, 1892.

Charles H. Perkins - HISTORY OF THE PARK STREET FREE BAPTIST CHURCH AND THE UNITED BAPTIST CHURCH OF LAKEPORT, LACONIA, N.H., JULY 13, 1838 TO JULY 13, 1938 (Laconia, 1938).

Interview - Laurence W. Leonard, October 13, 1984.

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10. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is a roughly rectangular lot, six rods (99 feet) wide, stretching from Park Street to Railroad Avenue. It is bounded on the northwest by Park Street, on the southwest by property of Ronald and Corrine Brunette, and by property of Charles and June Avery, on the southeast by Railroad Avenue, and on the northeast by property of Judith and William Abbott, and by other property (a later acquisition) of the United Baptist Church. The nominated property includes the United Baptist Church and the lot it has stood on since its construction in 1891-92. (Laconia Tax Map 31, Street 175, Lot 5)

Boundaries of the nominated property have been highlighted in yellow on the enclosed sketch map.

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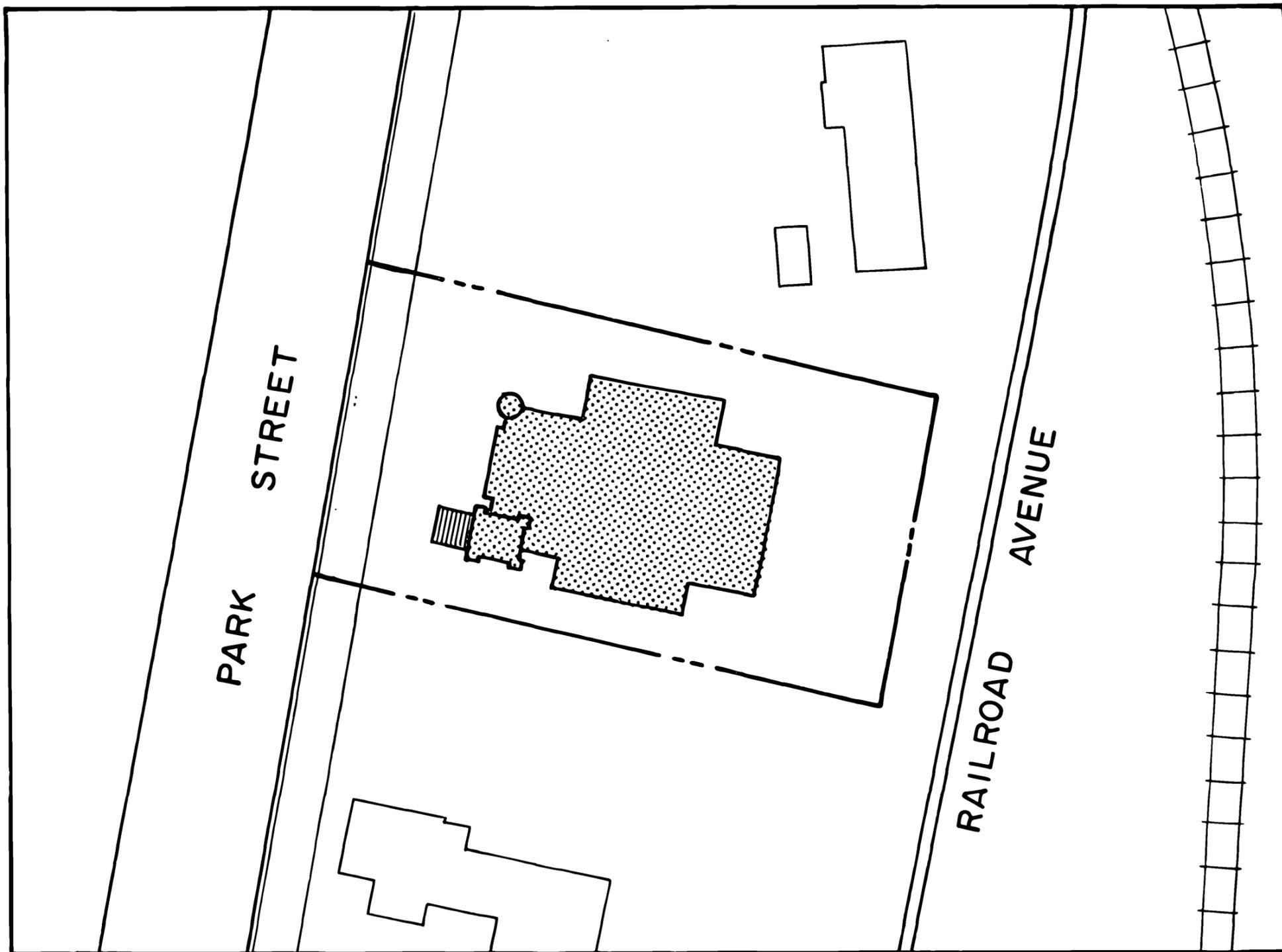
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LACONIA, NEW HAMPSHIRE