

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

FEB 22 1993

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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 Union School

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number East Side of Mt. Ephraim Road, .2 miles North of Junction with U.S. Route 1  not for publication

city or town Searsport  vicinity

state Maine code ME county Waldo code 027 zip code 04974

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.)

*[Signature]* 2/17/93  
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Maine Historic Preservation Commission  
 State of 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 the 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 **Entered in the National Register** Date of Action 3/25/93

Union School  
Name of Property

Waldo, 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)

Education/School  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other/Daycare  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/Granite  
walls Brick  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof Asphalt  
other Mansard roofed central entrance pavilion  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

**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 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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Education

**Period of Significance**

1866-1943

**Significant Dates**

1866

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Harding, George M., Architect

**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:

\_\_\_\_\_

Union School  
Name of Property

Waldo, Maine  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	9	5	0	5	6	7	0	4	9	2	2	8	2	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 January, 1993

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet

UNION SCHOOL WADDO CO. MS

Section number 7 Page 2

The Union School in Searsport is a striking two-story, five bay, gable roofed brick building that features a projecting central pavilion capped by a mansard roof. Its Italianate stylistic features also include paired brackets and a of trio round-arched windows. The school rests on a granite foundation. Originally, it also had an elaborate belfry and a bracketed hood above the front entry.

The building's symmetrically arranged front (south - actually southeast) elevation is composed of the central pavilion which is flanked by widely spaced six-over-six windows, four on each story. These windows have granite sills and lintels. A replacement two-leaf door that is located behind a modern wooden porch opens into the central hall plan of the interior. Between the entrance and the coupled round-arched second story windows is a granite stringcourse located above brick corbelling. It pierces the shallow pilasters that frame the edge of the pavilion. The multi-pane double-hung windows in the second story feature round-arched granite lintels. A bulls' eye window is located in the peak of the mansard. The broad overhanging eaves are supported by eight sets of brackets symmetrically located across the elevation with a ninth above the bulls-eye.

Both the east and west side elevations are three bays wide, but some variation occurs in the fenestration pattern. On the first story of the east side, single six-over-six windows flank paired six-over-six units in the center bay. The pattern is repeated on the second story except that a door (probably a window originally) is located in the center. A metal fire escape leads from this door to the ground level. A single round-arched window is located in the tympanum of the pedimented gable end. On the west elevation there are center bay doors in both the first and second stories with flanking six-over-six windows. The tympanum on this side is more highly detailed reflecting the position of this elevation as it fronted on a public road. In addition to the bracketed eaves, the embellishment includes a pair of round-arched windows enframed by an elaborate surround of wide arched head moldings, a center column, and raised geometric jambs the whole of which rests on a paneled base with wave end moldings. In contrast to the decorative west end, the north elevation is an expanse of brick masonry punctuated only by a center bay trio of paired window and door openings (second floor), one above the other. The bracketed cornice also continues across this side. Additional original features of the school include a brick interior end chimney that punctuates the roof on the southeast slope, and two wooden ridge mounted ventilators featuring denticulated cornices and pyramidal roofs.

As originally built the interior was separated into four rooms on the first floor, a room of indeterminate use on the landing between stair runs, and two large rooms on the second floor, with the central hall/stair dividing

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

UNION SCHOOL *WARD CO ME*

Section number 7 Page 3

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the spaces. Recent alterations, including the removal of a partition in the west end and the installation of paneling in this room and an enclosure of the stair, have diminished the interior integrity. Nonetheless, the original newel posts, balusters, and handrail survive as do the large open classroom spaces on the second floor.

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UNION SCHOOL WALDO CO., ME

Section number 8 Page 2

The Union School in Searsport is an Italianate style brick building erected in 1866 from designs by Portland architect George M. Harding, one of the two most important architects in mid-nineteenth century Maine. It was utilized for both elementary and high school instruction until 1953. Union School remains the most architecturally prominent historic building of the type in Searsport. The building is eligible for nomination to the National Register under criterion A for its long association with education in the community, and criterion C as a relatively well preserved example of a notable architect's work.

First settled in the late eighteenth century and separately incorporated in 1845, Searsport had, by mid century developed into a thriving seaport community with an active shipbuilding industry. By 1860 the town's population stood at 2,533 persons. Among the many public buildings which had been erected by the inhabitants were fourteen school houses in eleven separate districts. The construction in 1866 of the subject architect designed, two-story brick building testifies to the importance which the town placed on educating its children.

Architect George M. Harding (1827-1910) was born in Chatham, Massachusetts. According to his obituary, he took up studies at age 17 at the Lowell Institute in Boston and later established in that city the architectural firm of Silloway & Harding. He subsequently practiced in Manchester and Concord, New Hampshire, and then relocated to Portland, Maine in 1858. Based on the extent of his documented commissions, Harding's practice flourished. More importantly, these same buildings illustrate his ability to fashion distinctive interpretations of prevailing architectural styles. He is particularly noted for his design of the Woodman Block in Portland, a sumptuous Second Empire style building erected in 1867 and two exquisite Victorian Gothic structures in Belfast, the Masonic Hall of 1877-78 and the Belfast National Bank, 1878-79. By the time he designed these latter buildings, however, Harding had already returned to Boston (he left Portland in 1872) where he remained for the balance of his career.

The design and construction of the Union School falls in the midpoint of Harding's eight documented commissions for substantial school buildings in Maine. Beginning with the design of the Portland High School (1862-63), a graded high school in Westbrook (1863), and a primary school in South Portland (date uncertain), Harding initially adopted a very traditional approach to this type of building. The pedimented facades, strict symmetry, and wide pilasters or paneled divisions are, in fact, reminiscent of Greek Revival style academy buildings erected in the 1840s and 1850s. Only the use of brackets, the occasional round-arched window, and bracketed hood moldings announce the new stylistic features. With the design of the Union School and a large three-story school in Lewiston (also 1866), Harding departed from his

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earlier projects by moving the entrances to the long side of the rectangle and articulating them with narrow projecting pavilions. In both cases he employed a broad hood above the door supported by brackets and a mansard and gabled pavilion roof respectively. Further elaboration was provided by the ornate belfry which was centered on the gable roof at the Union School and the shallow hip roof in Lewiston. Since the west end of the Union School fronted on the adjacent Mt. Ephraim Road, the architect framed its round-arched attic windows with a handsome molded and sawn surround and base. Following the Lewiston and Searsport commissions, Harding returned to the earlier gable front orientation for a high school in Gorham (1867-68) and a building to house the Greely Institute in Cumberland (1868). Like their immediate predecessors, however, these two buildings employ elaborate belfries. With his final school commission in Saco (1871-72) Harding basically re-used his design for the Union School, although significant changes were made through the use of round or segmentally arched windows throughout, a more deeply projecting pavilion, and a pronounced round-arched entryway articulated with stone rustication.

Of the above discussed schools designed by George M. Harding, two have been demolished (Gorham, South Portland), one has been incorporated into a much enlarged school complex (Portland High School), and another has been substantially altered into an apartment house (Westbrook, now Portland). Of the remaining four, the Saco school (N.R. 7/14/83) has been converted into an apartment building, a plan which is also being considered for the one in Lewiston. Neither one retains its belfry, however. In fact, only the Greely Institute building contains all of its exterior ornamentation, including porches, although wings were added at the rear in 1929 and 1955, respectively. Thus, despite the loss of several exterior architectural features and alteration of the first floor interior finish, the Union School continues to illustrate an important part of this prominent architect's work. Furthermore, its nomination to the Register has been sought by the non-profit organizational owner with the hope that such listing will encourage efforts to preserve the building.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

UNION SCHOOL WARDON CO ME

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Andrews, Catherine M. A Touch of Searsport's History.

Geogre M. Harding Architect File. Maine Historic Preservation Commission.  
Augusta.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

UNION SCHOOL WARD 00 ME

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## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property occupies the Town of Searsport tax map 15, lot 38.

## BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary embraces the entire village lot historically associated with the Union School.