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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NOV 21 1988

NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Arthur L. Mann Memorial Library
other names/site number West Paris Public Library

2. Location

street & number Main Street N/A not for publication
city, town West Paris N/A vicinity
state Maine code ME county Oxford code 017 zip code 04270

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
1	0
Total	

Name of related multiple property listing:
Maine Public Libraries

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Carol A. Fitzgerald 11/16/88
Signature of certifying official 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.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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:)

Albion Byers 1/5/89
Entered in 1989
National Register

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education: Library

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education: Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Stone

roof Asphalt

other Steel Casement Windows

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Designed in the shape of a miniature castle and constructed entirely of fieldstone, the Arthur L. Mann Memorial Library is a one-story building with a tripartite configuration. It occupies a generous lot located between this small village's commercial and residential district.

Facing southeast, the library has a lively stepped and crenelated facade composed of three distinct blocks. At the northern-most end is the short, deeply recessed reading room whose wall is dominated by a large fifty-six pane steel casement window. The projecting, centrally located entrance bay features a four-centered arch flanked to the north by a narrow sidelight and a corner buttress. A name plaque is situated above the arch. The wooden board and batten door sheltered by this pavilion is hung on medieval style wrought iron strap hinges. The square corner tower projects farthest forward. Its solid wall is punctuated by a trio of long, narrow windows at staggered heights suggesting the location of an internal stair.

On the south elevation the tower with two narrow windows projects beyond the main book stack wall surface and its steel casement window. A similar casement window occupies the north end. The rear elevation contains the large projecting book stack room punctuated by a single narrow casement located above a basement bulkhead. In addition, the reading room wing punctuated with one window extends from a deeply recessed point at the north side.

The interior of this library contains a rather typical arrangement of space with a central circulation desk in front of an office, the reading room to the right, and the books in the large room at the left. The tower space is devoted to a small reading area, not a stair. A portion of the basement has been converted for additional book storage.

See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Education
Architecture

Period of Significance

1926-1938

Significant Dates

1926

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Gibbs & Pulsifer

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Arthur L. Mann Memorial Library is singularly unique in its medieval castle-like form executed entirely in fieldstone. Designed by the Lewiston architectural firm of Gibbs and Pulsifer, the library was dedicated on September 4, 1926, and continues to serve in its original capacity. It was the gift of Lewis M. Mann in memory of his son Arthur. The library retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and association. It meets the requirements for registration under criteria A and C for its educational and architectural significance as more fully described in the multiple property submission "Maine Public Libraries".

A meeting of local residents on April 12, 1889, inaugurated the beginning of the West Paris Library Association, which is believed to be the community's first such organization. Like most of its Maine contemporaries this was a subscription library which charged its members an annual fee for the priveleges of use. The collection appears to have been housed in a number of commercial buildings until the new building was completed in 1926. In the previous year, however, it had become a free public library after the town allocated a sum of money for its maintenance. A bequest of \$5,000 and a building lot were given to the library in the will of Lewis Mann and the monetary award was matched by his son Edwin J. Mann. Numerous additional gifts have been made since the building's construction.

9. Major Bibliographical References

"History of West Paris Public Library" (1972). Typescript copy on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than 1

UTM References

A

1	9	3	7	4	4	8	0
Zone		Easting			Northing		

C

Zone		Easting			Northing		

B

Zone		Easting			Northing		

D

Zone		Easting			Northing		

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies the Town of West Paris tax map U-6, lot 83.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property embraces the building and entire lot historically associated with the library.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohney, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date October 11, 1988

street & number 55 Capitol Street telephone (207) 289-2132

city or town Augusta state Maine zip code 04333

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

The architectural firm of Gibbs and Pulsifer was comprised of the partners Eugene J. Gibbs and Addison G. Pulsifer. Prior to 1926 Gibbs had been associated with other architectural firms whose library commissions included those in Lewiston and Dover-Foxcroft. However, one source suggests that the design for the Mann library was the inspiration of Pulsifer, and the firm's day book for 1925 clearly shows his oversight of the project. This document also reveals that the Mann family had contacted the firm as early as March, 1925 and that on September 11th they authorized the preparation of plans. Whoever was responsible for the design, it nevertheless remains a building of unusual distinction in comparison to all other properties of this type in the state.