

100912

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	APR 11 1975
DATE ENTERED	APR 28 1975

**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

Brown Memorial Library

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Clinton

\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st Hon. David Emery

STATE

Maine

CODE

23

COUNTY

Kennebec

CODE

011

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Town of Clinton

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Clinton

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maine

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds,

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Augusta,

STATE

Maine

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_FEDERAL \_\_STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Brown Memorial Library is a stone structure with a slate roof reflecting the solidity and asymmetry of the work of H. H. Richardson. It is one story in height above a partially raised basement topped with a fairly steep hipped roof. The plan is basically rectangular in shape with a small rectangular projection on the rear and a slight bay projection on one side. The most emphatic deviation from a regular plan is the large five-bay projection on the right front. There is one principal entrance located on the front and a minor one to the rear. A tall brick chimney rises from the back of the structure opposite the front projection. The exterior walls are of stone construction, built of roughly shaped pink granite from Conway, N. H., laid in irregular coursing. The building is trimmed with red sandstone from Longmeadow, Mass., a source favored by Richardson. The gray slate for the roof is a local product and was quarried nearby on the banks of the Sebasticook River. There is a slight dentiled cornice; and a belt course of sandstone runs around the entire building, forming the sills of the principal windows.

The principal facade is asymmetrical with the arched entrance porch in the approximate center. To the left of the entrance are two rectangular windows placed close together, trimmed with sandstone which divides them into a long vertical bottom section and a smaller, more horizontal top panel. They are sash hung in the lower division with two large panes in each sash. The top section is divided into an ornamental pattern with a hexagonal motif. The form of these windows reflects that of all the other principal windows. At the right hand side of the entrance is a large five-bay projection trimmed in sandstone and capped with a semi-detached conical roof. The arched entryway is approached by a broad flight of four smooth granite steps leading to an ample platform. The platform and stairs are bounded on one side by the projection and on the other by stone walls capped with sandstone to the line of the belt course. Above the entry is a dormer, the base of which contains a panel with the inscription "Brown Memorial Library" and carved rosettes. Above this panel are two sash hung windows whose upper portions are also patterned with hexagons. They are trimmed with sandstone and have rather large lintels, above which rises a steep triangular pediment topped with a ball finial.

The double doorway, which features a glass panel in each, is topped by a colored glass transom. It is recessed into the building with the framing archway flush with exterior masonry. This small porch, thus created, is floored with a marble mosaic pattern. The semi-circular arch rests on vertical members but the treatment of the whole is continuous. The stones are cut and molded and features a band of carved foliage ornamentation. The whole is very spare yet elegant.

The rear elevation is plainer and is broken by a slight rectangular projection over which the downward pitch of the roof continues, making its  
(See Continuation Sheet)

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height somewhat smaller. It is pierced with three narrow windows grouped over a wooden entryway that appears to have been built over a sloping cellar entrance.

The right side elevation features a three bay projection and a small square window leaded with a pattern of hexagons and circles to its right. The opposite wall is entirely symmetrical, containing a triple window arrangement.

Beyond the main entrance is a vestibule which opens into an entrance hall. To the rear is the former librarian's room, now the children's reading room, off of which is located a fireproof brick vault in which the town archives are kept. To the left of the entrance hall is a stack room which contains space for 5,000 volumes. To the right is the largest room in the building, the reading room. It is well lighted by the massive bay at its front and from the smaller bay and window to one side. At the rear is a large fireplace flanked with built-in seats. The room is finished with a high wainscot and the ceiling is of pine patterned with trusses and panels. The interior plan, like the exterior, exhibits Steven's faithfulness to Richardsonian principals, being designed with a logical, functional simplicity.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Philanthropy
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1899-1900

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

John Calvin Stevens

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Built in 1899-1900, the Brown Memorial Library is an unusually late example of the Romanesque Revival architecture first made popular by Henry Hobson Richardson two decades earlier. It is one of several small Richardsonian-type libraries in the vicinity including the Lawrence Public in Fairfield (Nat. Register Dec. 31, 1974) and the Lithgow in Augusta. But unlike these contemporary structures the Brown Memorial is a purer example of the Richardsonian ideal with an exterior exhibiting warm hues and contrasting colors in stone walls and trim, as opposed to the almost monochromatic use of granite and slate in these other examples. The Clinton Library, though symmetry is implied, is basically an asymmetrical composition, truer to Richardson's buildings of the same type than either the Lithgow or Lawrence Libraries, which reflect contemporary Beaux Arts symmetry clothed in a Richardson-derived exterior. The Clinton Library is the most exemplary structure of its kind in Maine and is an unusually large and elegant library for a small, rural community.

The architect of the Brown Memorial was John Calvin Stevens of Portland (1855-1940), the most noted Maine architect of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a man of some national status, and Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. Steven's work was deeply influenced by Richardson and his innovations as well as the Shingle Style and of course the Romanesque Revival, both of which stressed open unified textural effects on the exterior and freely planned open interiors. The Clinton Library is one of several libraries Stevens designed for smaller Maine communities, including Houlton and Rumford. But it is his most faithful derivation of the Richardsonian model actually built. Its late date may be attributable to the fact that although Stevens had prepared several pure Richardson studies earlier in his career he had to wait until fame and a suitable climate of taste rendered acceptance and construction possible in Maine.

The Brown Memorial Library was a gift to the people of Clinton by William W. Brown of Portland, a native of the town. Brown purchased the building lot and provided funds for the actual construction plus \$5,000 as an endowment. Much of the library's collection of books, furnishings and pictures was also the gift of Brown including his large portrait by Vinton that hangs in the reading room. In 1902, the library was the beneficiary of a gift by Orrin Learned consisting of 100 volumes of the official records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Previous to the construction of this building, Clinton had no public library. (see continuation sheet)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Fisher, Maj. General Carleton E., History of Clinton Maine, K.J. Printing, Augusta, Maine 1970

Mc.Weely, James Dubois, The Houses that Jack Built, A Study of the Work of John Calvin Stevens, F.A.U.A. in and around Portland, Maine, Yale University

(See Continuation Sheet)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 46,0050 4914,27,00  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

*CLINTON CD*

B [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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 Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Architectural Historian  
 Frank A. Beard, Historic Preservationist

ORGANIZATION	DATE
Maine Historic Preservation Commission	April 4, 1975
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
31 Western Avenue	207-289-2133
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
Augusta	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 National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*James H. Mundy*

TITLE *State Historic Preservation Officer*

DATE *April 7, 1975*

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>[Signature]</i>	DATE <i>4/28/75</i>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <b>APR 24 1975</b>
ATTEST	
<i>[Signature]</i>	
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

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Ground for the structure was broken on August 29, 1899, by Mr. Brown and the cornerstone was laid on September 25 of the same year amid elaborate ceremonies. A copper box was sealed inside the stone containing materials of the history of Clinton and various fraternal and religious organizations, including a copy of the town's Act of Incorporation signed by Samuel Adams. Also included were current U. S. coins, copies of the Clinton Advertiser and business cards of all merchants and concerns of the town. The library was opened to the public on July 21, 1900, and dedication ceremonies took place at the town hall on August 15th. At the dedication the library and its contents were formally presented by Mr. Brown to the citizens of Clinton. In his speech he detailed his reasons for making this gift as a memorial to his family and parents and concluded with the wish that "generations may come and go, but I trust the good to be derived from this gift may go on forever."

The late 19th and early 20th centuries was a great age of philanthropy in the United States, a time when many communities, large and small, were the beneficiaries of cultural bequests, not the least of which were libraries. Clinton is no exception and its library is a reflection of the manner in which so many self-made individuals returned to their roots with the idea of creating not only memorials to themselves but, perhaps the means to endow and enlighten those to come.

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Van Rensselaer, Mariana Griswold, Henry Hobson Richardson and this Works, Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1969