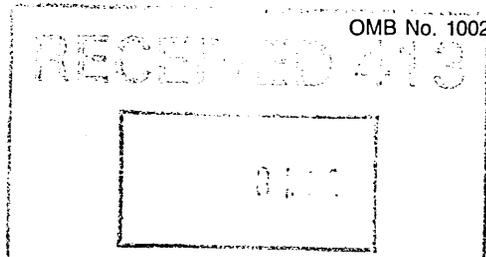


1447

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



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 HARTFORD LIBRARY

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 217 Main Street N/A not for publication

city or town Hartford N/A vicinity

state Vermont code VT county Windsor code 027 zip code 05047

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.)

Emi Seltzer 11/2/94
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
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): _____

Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

Entered in the National Register Date of Action 12.9.94

Name of Property

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		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/library

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/library

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite

walls weatherboard

brick

roof asphalt

other terra cotta

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheets for narrative description.

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.)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
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.
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:

- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
removed from its original location.
a birthplace or grave.
a cemetery.
a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
a commemorative property.
less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

Period of Significance

1893-1943

Significant Dates

1893

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Whipple, Lyman

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:

Hartford Library

HARTFORD LIBRARY
Name of Property

WINDSOR CO., VT
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 18 | 714240 | 4837490 |
Zone Easting Northing
2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing
4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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 Marlene Elizabeth Heck

organization Hardy•Heck•Moore & Assoc. date December 1993

street & number 8 Blueberry Meadow Road telephone 603/443-9791

city or town Lebanon state NH zip code 03766

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.)

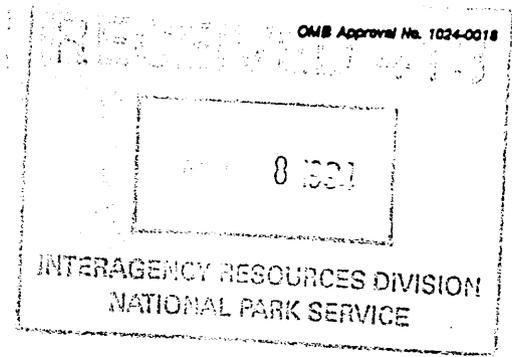
name Hartford Library, Inc.

street & number Box 512 telephone _____

city or town Hartford state Vermont zip code 05047

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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HARTFORD, WINDSOR COUNTY, VERMONT

The Hartford Public Library, a domestically scaled and detailed building, stands symbolically between the houses of its two benefactors on the main street of the village of Hartford. Late 19th-century architectural tastes and the cultural ambitions of Hartford's leading citizens during the village's most prosperous period are disclosed by the library's fashionable style and handsome detail. Constructed in 1893 in a style that combined elements of the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival, the two-story structure retains most of its original exterior and interior architectural fabric and details. The library survives as perhaps Hartford's only unaltered late 19th-century building, which strengthens the integrity of setting and association. Only the library structure and its associated lawn are included in the nominated acreage of approximately 0.1 acre.

EXTERIOR

Sited between the homeplaces of two of Hartford's most distinguished citizens, the Hartford Library faces the White River on the village's Main Street. The public structure's domestic appearance conforms to its residential setting. Constructed in 1893 primarily in the Queen Anne style, and detailed with a few elements drawn from the soon-to-be-fashionable Colonial Revival, the library was a less elaborate version of its patrons' more expansive dwellings. The Hartford Library lacks the Queen Anne's irregular massing, and the ornate trim seen on some of the state's more exuberant examples, such as Grey Gables in Richford, or observable on the many mass-produced versions found in the late 19th-century middle-class

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HARTFORD LIBRARY
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neighborhoods of Rutland and Burlington. However, the building's corner tower, multiple building materials and decorative details conform to the Queen Anne style.

The building's level of exterior finish corresponds to the visibility and importance of the surface. A red-brick veneer, laid in common bond, sheaths the first story of the south (front), east and west (sides) elevations. As it lies completely out of visual range, the north elevation (rear) is covered by clapboards. And because the building's second story is subordinate to the first, it too is covered by clapboards. A decorative band of patterned imbricated shingles, whose lower rounded edges flare outward, emphasizes the division between the first and second stories on the south, east and west elevations.

Double-hung sash windows, and art glass and multi-light fixed sash windows on the south, east and west elevations provide natural light throughout the building. On the first-floor of the south-elevation, single-light, double-hung sash windows are symmetrically placed, one on either side of the entry bay. A decorative three-part window composed of a trio of double-hung sash windows is found above the entry bay. This tripartite opening, which marks the upper-story landing, is capped with a shallow hood supported by carved brackets and enhanced by a dentil cornice. The center window is 8/1; the flanking windows are 6/1. A small eight-light window is found to the right of the larger tripartite opening. Symmetrically-placed east elevation windows illuminate the first-floor library or "stack room" and the second-level assembly room. A single-light, double-hung sash and a single-light fixed-sash window are found on the first floor. A 6/1, double-hung sash window is found directly above each first-floor window. On the first floor of the west elevation, a single-light,

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double-hung sash window placed to the left of center is flanked by two small fixed-sash windows. Second-floor windows are placed directly above the first-floor openings and are comprised of two 6/1, double-hung sash windows and a single, small fixed-sash window. There are no windows on the north elevation. First-story windows have granite sills and jack arches formed by cream-colored Roman-brick voussoirs. Second-story windows have simple board architraves and a molded cornice. The library is capped by a hipped roof covered with asphalt shingles. Decorative cresting runs the length of the roof ridge. Shed dormers break through the roof at the south, east and west elevations. Originally, the dormer windows had colored glass panes. The east and west dormers now have louvered openings for ventilating the attic; the south elevation has clear glass panes.

A two-story square tower, which is a typical Queen-Anne element and the building's most decorative feature, marks the library's southeast corner. Much of the tower's surface, on the south and east elevations of both stories, is given over to large double-hung sash windows that light the first-floor reading room and the second-floor meeting space. The wall surface above the tower's second-story windows is further embellished with wooden circular panels, which are duplicated on the interior door and window surrounds and bookcases, and decorative wooden strapwork. The tower's pyramidal roof is covered with asphalt shingles and capped by a finial.

The exterior chimney, found on the east elevation, also follows the Queen Anne taste in its fanciful, irregular form, corbelling and the use of inset terra cotta panels that decorate its surface. The considerable attention given to the chimney is perhaps explained by the fact that

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the east elevation of the library faced Horace Pease's house. As illustrated by the brick and clapboard exterior finishes, builders typically lavish most attention on surfaces that visually are either the most public or most prominent. As the side of the library most visible to Pease, the handsome architectural details provided a fine scene for viewing from the close perspective of the Sunnycreech's veranda.

Entry into the library is made up a flight of dressed granite steps and through the pedimented and shingled arched porch that shields the centrally-placed entry bay. A small-scale dentil course describes the pediment and the front arch rests on diminutive columns. The porch flooring is comprised of wood planks. As is typical of such public buildings, architectural attention is lavished on the entry bay. The double-door entrance is capped by a transom. A jack arch of cream-colored Roman-brick voussoirs runs across the top of the entry. The upper portion of both four-paneled doors is opened by single pane of glass.

INTERIOR

The two principal floors of the library are each comprised of three rooms. A central heating system delivers warm air up through the core of the building to each of the rooms, and decorative cast iron ventilation grates are found in every room. The late 19th-century construction date and the use of the same few decorative moldings and coverings throughout the building suggests that much, if not all, of the interior trim and architectural elements were mass produced and obtained through Pease's lumber company. While no evidence of such

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elaborate decoration remains, a detailed account of the library dedication reported that "all the rooms are handsomely frescoed."

Much as one would experience in a Queen Anne house, entry into the library brings one into a hall. A door immediately to the left of the entry leads down into the unfinished basement that houses the furnace and provides storage space. Currently the hall functions as the library entry, and it is furnished with a table original to the building. As in many Victorian-era buildings, the hall is handsomely detailed. It features paneled wainscotting with a molded pedestal cap and tall baseboard and door and window architraves, all of oak, and white maple flooring. The room is encircled by a picture rail. Door and window moldings in this room, as in the two adjacent rooms, are enhanced with corner blocks with the circular motif as found on the exterior tower. The wide oak stair with turned balusters dominates the west side of the room. The same block design found on the door and window moldings decorates the newel post. A colored glass window brightens and decorates the bottom landing; a similar decorative glass window is found directly above on the second floor. A small room at the foot of the stair, lighted by a small frosted glass window, holds the lavatory. From the entry hall one moves forward through a door into the library, or through a door to the right into a small reading room. Both seven-panel doors are identical.

The reading room at present is used as a children's reading room, and it is furnished with contemporary small-scale furniture and bookcases. This room is encircled by a picture rail and by oak beaded board wainscotting with a tall baseboard and molded pedestal cap that covers approximately one-third of the wall height. A fireplace found on the east wall, opposite

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the entry from the hall, reinforces the domestic imagery of the library by giving the reading room the appearance of a parlor. Decorated glazed tiles that embellish the surround and hearth floor, and a large, beveled mirror that fills the overmantle's central field further the domestic imagery of the "best room." Hearth surround tiles are gold in color, and a larger, rectangular-shaped tile decorated with two cherubs carrying a basket of fruit is found in the center of the surround. Polychromed hearth floor tiles, with yellow, brown and olive tones dominating, are arranged in a three-part composition. Moving outward from the hearth opening to the floor, a checkerboard pattern of gold and brown marbled square tiles are encircled by larger yellow, brown and olive colored square- and triangular-shaped tiles decorated with leaf and vine-like patterns. Small rectangular gold-brown tiles decorated with a flower pattern bound the entire composition. The molded overmantle shelf is supported by a single bracket at each end; these brackets each rest on a slender, partially fluted column. Both column bases feature the same decorative circular motif used elsewhere. Small disks decorated with a flower-like pattern are found at each end and the center of the mantle frieze. Slender stick-like pieces of wood with rounded ends are placed vertically between the disks to further embellish the mantle frieze.

One can also enter the library, which was known as the "stack room," from the reading room. The two rooms are separated by nine-panel double pocket doors, similar to those that mark the transition in domestic buildings from parlor to back parlor, or parlor to dining room. This large, rectangular space fills the back of the building. The same type of beaded board wainscotting found in the reading room also encircles the library space, although

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it covers approximately half the wall height. A picture rail wraps around the room. A three-leaf oak table, original to the library, is found in this room. The five original six-shelf oak bookcases, whose end boards are embellished by bands of circular designs identical to those found elsewhere, hold the library's book collection. The lower two shelves are larger than those above and project to hold oversize volumes. Undecorated wooden, five-shelf bookcases of a more recent installation flank the north and west walls.

On the second floor, one moves from the second-floor hall, which contains a storage space that has been converted to a small kitchen, into one of the two meeting rooms, which were known collectively as the "Library Hall." The hall is decorated by the same wainscotting as found below in the entry hall.

Club meetings, public social gatherings and similar events have been held in the two spaces since the library opened. The smaller room contains a table original to the building, as well as many chairs that appear original. This room also functions as something of a town archive, as two locked cabinets hold the many objects of historical interest given to the library in the last 100 years.

In size, form and detail, these rooms correspond to the two rooms below. Both second-floor meeting rooms are encircled by picture rails and by beaded board paneling with tall baseboards and molded pedestal caps. The wainscotting covers approximately one-half of the room height. Pine flooring is used throughout the second floor.

The attic level, which is little more than a crawl space, is accessible through a opening in the ceiling in the kitchen.

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HARTFORD LIBRARY
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The Hartford Library qualifies for statewide significance under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A for its significance in education, and under National Register of Historic Places Criteria C for its architectural significance. As it antedates the majority of the state's public libraries, the Hartford Library is one of Vermont's earliest examples of a building specifically dedicated for use as a permanent and free repository of circulating printed materials. The circumstances of the library's construction documents the Victorian-era's concern for education, instruction, and self-improvement, and it illustrates the patronage activities of local elites, including a former governor, that were instrumental in the founding of such cultural institutions in the late 19th century. As the principal civic building in the village of Hartford, the library served as a meeting hall for various local reading and literary organizations and women's groups, and provided assembly space for public programs. Constructed in 1893, the Hartford Library was the first of the five libraries (Wilder, 1899; White River Junction, 1907; Quechee, 1907; W. Hartford, 1922) built in the Town of Hartford. The Hartford Library possesses architectural significance as an exemplary example of an important building type and as a rare remaining architectural record of the village's once handsome domestic landscape. Standing largely as it was built, with only minor interior modifications, the Hartford Library remains in very good condition with many of its original furnishings intact. The structure's period of significance, 1893-1943, encompasses its life as one of the village's central educational and cultural institutions.

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HARTFORD LIBRARY
HARTFORD, WINDSOR COUNTY, VERMONTEducation

Victorian Americans founded literary societies, joined reading groups, purchased stereographs, spent their summers at chautauquas and crowded museums in their pursuit of personal growth, intellectual stimulation and social reform. Public libraries, along with museums, appeared in substantial numbers after the Civil War, and together these comprised the country's great cultural institutions. The social historian Thomas Schlereth describes America's 19th-century libraries as "educational and civilizing agencies," and he identifies the essential role of local elites in their establishment (Schlereth, Victorian America: 256).

Literary and library societies, like those in Poultney (1790) and Pittsford (1796), were established in Vermont as early as the late 18th century. Such associations would be instrumental in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the establishment of libraries. Until the third and fourth quarters of the 19th century, the state's libraries typically were located in buildings erected for other purposes. As example, the collection of Pittsford's library society was housed above a store until the present 1895 Romanesque-style Walker Memorial Library (NRHP) was erected (Johnson, Historic Architecture of Rutland County: 206-207). In 1872 a portion of the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum (NRHP) was given over to library use ("Educational Resources of Vermont": E6). In White River Junction the collection of the local literary society moved through the years from freight depot to schoolhouse to a room above a bakery (St. Croix, Historical Highlights of the Town of Hartford: 141). The Peabody Library (NRHP) in Post Mills, dating from 1867, may be Vermont's earliest example of a building erected specifically to function as a library. Until the 1890s only a few of the state's

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communities could boast of a permanent building dedicated to library use. The increase in the number of libraries statewide - some 67 organized in 1895 and an additional 35 founded the following year - resulted from the 1894 passage of a state law that distributed funds for the establishment of a public library to any town that demonstrated it could continue to financially maintain the institution. Further impetus to library construction in the 1890s resulted from the Old Home Week movement. Vermont natives who earned their reputations and wealth outside of the state returned to their home cities to endow memorial libraries that bore their names ("Educational Resources of Vermont": E6-E7).

In Vermont, as across the country, prominent local families and well-to-do businessmen also funded the construction of cultural institutions such as museums, opera houses and libraries. George Peabody, a financier whose banking company was bought out by J.P. Morgan, provided \$5000 in 1866 to construct and equip a library in Post Mills. Peabody would later also endow libraries in Baltimore and the three Massachusetts cities of Danvers, North Danvers and Newburyport. Peabody identified the "educational mission" of his endowed libraries as "a debt due from present to future generations." (Van Slyck: 360). Perhaps the best example in the state of such an education-affiliated philanthropy is the H. H. Richardson-designed Billings Library (NRHP) at the University of Vermont, constructed in 1885 as a gift from school alumnus and former Northern Pacific Railroad president, Frederick Billings. Other affluent Vermonters may have been inspired by Billings' largess or by the highly-publicized philanthropic efforts of Andrew Carnegie. Certainly, the centrality of education and

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improvement in Victorian middle-class culture made the funding of a public library a particularly prestigious civic gesture.

The village of Hartford, like numerous other Vermont communities, received its free library from its leading citizens. A sound and flourishing business community promoted the rise of a middle class in Hartford in the final quarter of the 19th century. New small factories and woolen mills appeared along the banks of the White River, enriching an already prosperous rail community. White River Junction, one of the five villages (Hartford, West Hartford, Quechee, Wilder) that comprise the town of Hartford, flourished as the location of five separate rail lines. From approximately 1863 until the early decades of the 20th century, the rail industry and its associated businesses substantially underpinned the economy of White River Junction and the surrounding villages. Additional businesses in neighboring villages, such as the woolen mills and lumber yards of Hartford, contributed to the area's general prosperity.

Alert to the period's concern for the arts, literature and nature, the merchant-class citizens of Hartford village formed the Hartford Library Association in 1883, and a year later organized the Ladies' Reading Club. Some forty-one years after the founding of the country's first public library - the Boston, MA Public Library - and a quarter century after the establishment of Vermont's earliest public library, private wealth provided the village of Hartford with its own cultural institution in the form of a public library.

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Records of the Hartford Library board of trustees disclose that Friday, August 5, 1892 was the library's founding date. Trustees gathered that evening at the home of former Vermont governor Samuel E. Pingree to organize the establishment of the Hartford Library. At this gathering Edward W. Morris (President of the Hartford Woolen Mill) was named President; Horace Cone Pease (manufacturer and merchant) was selected as Secretary and Charles M. Cone (Secretary of the Hartford Woolen Mill) was chosen as Treasurer. The three, along with Pingree and Ephraim Morris (founder of the Hartford Woolen Mill), comprised the library's board of trustees. Pease and Cone, along with Ephraim Morris, were named to form a building committee. That evening trustees also voted to accept a deed from Seraph E. Pease and Horace C. Pease for a lot on which the library would be built.

Ephraim Morris was the key figure in this enterprise. Morris, born in 1832 in Strafford, VT, moved to Hartford in 1854. For the next forty-seven years he was known as one of the village's most prosperous businessmen. He began his local career by establishing a chair factory, and later founded the Hartford Woolen Mills. Minutes from the board of trustee's meetings disclose that one month before the August 1892 meeting at Pingree's home, Morris pledged a gift of \$5000 to the library trustees for the construction of a building "suitable for a Library, Reading Room and Hall for social purposes." Any funds available after construction were to be used to purchase books and library furnishings. Following this, remaining funds and any donations would be invested for future purchases and improvements. Morris' deed of gift continued by specifying that Hartford residents were to have "free use of said Library, Reading Room, Social Hall. . . forever, with no

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other restrictions than such as may be necessary for their preservation and for the safety and careful use and enjoyment of the books and other reading matter, furniture and works of art belonging therein." One year later, on July 1, 1893, Ephraim Morris made an additional \$5000 gift to the trustees. The brief record of the second transaction in the minutes of the trustees relates only that the money was to be used "in such manner for the Library as the Trustees see fit," but the funds likely permitted the purchase of furnishings and books as the new building neared completion.

Trustees gathered on August 18, 1893 to plan for the library's dedication service, and they pressed their wives into service for this significant social event. Mrs. Charles M. Cone and Mrs. Horace C. Pease were appointed to the committee of invitation; Mrs. Ephraim Morris, Mrs. Samuel Pingree, Mrs. Edward Morris and Mrs. Horace Pease were named to form a flower committee. Mr. and Mrs. Cone, along with Horace Pease, were to compose the program.

The original dedicatory service date of September 2, 1893 was postponed to Saturday, September 16, 1893, to suit the schedule of the keynote speaker, Rev. William Jewett Tucker, President of Dartmouth College. The close fit during the late 19th century between religion and civil life is illustrated by the dedication service, which was held in the Hartford Congregational Church. With its hymns, scripture readings and multiple sermons, the public program took on the tone and structure of a Sunday morning religious service. According to an extensive account of the program prepared by W. Howard Tucker, the ceremony opened with an organ voluntary by Handel, then continued in the following order: an invocation by the rector of St. Paul's Episcopal church; organ music; the hymn, "My Native Country Thee,"

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sung by the audience; scriptural reading by the pastor of the Methodist church; prayer by the pastor of the Congregational church; organ response; hymn, "There is a Book that All May Read"; an address by former governor Samuel Pingree; address by Rev. Tucker of Dartmouth College; singing of the Doxology; and the benediction by pastor of the Quechee Congregational Church.

W. Howard Tucker's account of the principal addresses reads like a textbook description of the mentalite of America's late Victorian culture. Former governor Pingree provided a history of the efforts to secure a library for the village. He lauded the gift of the donor, who according to Pingree,

Had for a long time noticed the great needs of a permanent home for a town library, in which all the inhabitants of Hartford should have free access to the best of reading matter in standard works of the great authors of the past, and in the standard current literature of the time.

Reverend Tucker's dedicatory address was described as "a brief but eloquent extemporaneous disquisition" on the subject of "The Uses of a Public Library." The account reports that Rev. Tucker reminded his audience that,

Libraries are the sources of intellectual development and progress. Every new public library becomes a social centre which brings people into intellectual companionship, tending to the highest form of social unity. . . Education obtained by reading books which contain great thoughts of great authors, whether in the realms of poetry or of prose, is of inestimable value for what it does for the moral elevation and social refinement of the reading class of people. . .

In his lengthy narrative of the dedicatory service W. Howard Tucker mentioned another important aspect of the building, that of patronage. He wrote that the counterpart to the building's aesthetic taste and cultured art as expressed in its beauty was the

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“...higher and more noble conception of the best uses of the fortunes acquired by such men as Mr. Morris, in trade, in commerce, in manufactures, or in other phases of industrial labor, which inspire them with a desire to do that in their lifetime which will promote and disseminate learning and intelligence among the people by means of free libraries...”

Howard's report illustrated the way in which all who attended the ceremony closely associated the library with its two principal patrons. His article opened with the paean, “Hartford, through the generosity of one of its leading citizens, Mr. Ephraim Morris, has a library building which is at once an ornament to the town and credit to the founder of the institution.” The description of the building began, “The library building is located on the north-west side of the beautiful lawn surrounding the elegant residence of Horace C. Pease.”

After the program, the audience moved up the street to inspect the newly completed structure. The library opened to the public on Wednesday, September 20, 1893. The library's first hours of operation - Wednesdays and Saturdays from 2 pm - 5 pm, and on Saturday evenings from 7 pm until 9 pm - give us a sense of the place of the library in town life. Presumably the library opened during hours most convenient for its users. For Victorian Americans, intent on education and self-improvement, a Saturday evening at the local library, perhaps attending a literary meeting or lecture, would have been an evening well spent. Library visits were public occasions as well, permitting one to see and be seen, and providing an occasion to socialize with one's neighbors.

In 1893 the Hartford Library catalog was organized into the following departments, which represent the period's intellectual typologies: fiction; history; poetry; biography; essays and literature; travels; religion; science; unclassified; and periodicals and

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continuations. There is some discrepancy regarding the number of books owned by the library in 1893. W. Howard Tucker's account of the building's dedication reports a figure of 2000 volumes, while the 1910 publication, The Old and the New, which described itself as "An Occasional Magazine devoted to the institutions and history of the town of Hartford, Vermont," mentions that the library opened with a collection of 1000 volumes. Whatever its number, the Hartford Library Association assembled the original collection in the decade preceding the library's construction. Seventeen years later the collection had grown to an impressive 4000 volumes.

Daily operations were overseen by a librarian, although one who was not professionally trained. At a June 5, 1893 meeting, trustees agreed to ask Mrs. Charles M. [Harriet] Cone to "see Miss Lizzie Howard about acting as Librarian." Perhaps Miss Howard declined the offer, as the library opened under the guidance of Miss Jennie Sprague, who was described as "a most estimable and popular young lady." It is not possible to determine how long Miss Sprague filled the position, but by 1910 The Old and the New identified the librarian as Miss Fanny L. Wright, who had held the job since 1900.

In its role as the village's central cultural institution, Hartford Library also served as an archive for some of the town's historic artifacts and relics, a role it continues to fill. In 1901 the collection included an assortment of firearms, account books, china and various artifacts associated with the village's founding families, and the records and communion plate of the Dothan Church. Town residents continue to add to this collection, which now includes

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stereograph cards showing the village's turn-of-the-century appearance, glassware, 19th-century photographs and articles of clothing.

On Sunday, September 19, 1993, the Hartford Library held a centennial celebration that was attended by a number of the descendants of those associated with the original building effort. A dedicated Board of Trustees, some of whom are long-time residents of the village of Hartford, oversees library operations. As part of the library's centennial celebration, trustees secured 100 new volumes for the collection, planned and hosted the celebratory party held on September 19, 1993, and have worked to place the building on the National Register of Historic Places. A century after its construction, the Hartford Library continues to function as a vital educational institution in the village of Hartford, VT.

Architecture

Historic photographs reveal that the Hartford Library was once part of a handsome collection of Federal- and Victorian-period dwellings and commercial buildings in this formerly-prosperous mill community. Hartford's declining fortunes also can be read in the destruction and considerable alteration of the buildings that defined its Main Street earlier this century. While the widening of Main Street and the enlargement of an adjoining parking lot have whittled away at the library's once extensive lawns, the structure still retains its residential appearance.

The Hartford Library was constructed on land carved from the adjacent residential lot belonging to Horace and Seraph Pease. As the affluent proprietor of the Pease Hotel, local

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lumber and grist mills, and a farm tool concern, Pease's personal fortune permitted him during the 1880s to erect a sprawling Queen Anne-style dwelling, Sunnyacre, on the easternmost portion of the library's lot. Sunnyacre now is owned by the Hartford Elks Lodge. To the library's west stands the elaborately synthesized Queen Anne- and Colonial Revival-style home of Ephraim W. Morris, founder of the Hartford Woolen Company, who contributed \$10,000 for the building's construction and furnishing. This building has passed through a number of owners, and in its most recent transformation it is now known as "Praise Chapel," a Christian outreach and training center. Survey documents dated 1973 indicate that a frame house, now demolished, once stood between the library and the Morris dwelling.

The specific circumstances of the library's construction are little known. A 1904 promotional publication, The Gateway of Vermont: Hartford and Its Villages, lists the various local projects designed by the regionally-renowned architect, Louis Sheldon Newton, and the library is not among them. Newton began his career in Hartford, but as he was only twenty-two in 1893, he probably had not yet opened his design office. It is likely that Horace Pease's lumber concern provided the building materials for the library's construction, and the library's patrons culled its design from one of the dozens of plan books typically available during the period at lumber companies. An account of the library's dedicatory service reports that the building contractor was Lyman Whipple of Lebanon, New Hampshire.

The choice of the Queen Anne style for the Hartford Library was a fitting one, for at the close of the 19th century it was the country's most popular style, especially for domestic and domestically-scaled buildings. In Vermont, as well, builders throughout the state utilized the

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style's picturesque form and ornamental trim for public and private structures. In addition to the Queen Anne's own distinctive constellation of characteristic features, late 19th-century builders felt free to add Eastlake-style ornament or the Colonial Revival details found on the Hartford Library, to create a lively architectural amalgam.

Because it antedates most of Vermont's public libraries, the Hartford Library is a somewhat rare example in the state of a Queen Anne-style library. By the time the majority of the state's public libraries were constructed at the turn of the 20th century, the Queen Anne style had declined in popularity. In its place, Vermont builders favored the Colonial Revival and NeoClassical Revival styles. Elements of Richardsonian Romanesque, especially the arched door and window openings and the carved stone and terra cotta ornament, also remained in the state's builders' repertoire.

Locally, the Hartford Library was architecturally distinct from the Town's other four library buildings. Both the Wilder (1899) and Quechee (1907) library buildings are brick and constructed in the Colonial Revival style. While also a Colonial Revival-style structure, the West Hartford Library (1928) was built in wood. The brick Gates Memorial Library (1907) in White River Junction is distinguished by its Gothic Revival style.

Interestingly, while the Hartford Library was built before the late 1890s debates over the proper plan for a public library, its organization conforms to the suggestions of those who argued that patrons should be allowed direct access to book shelves. At the time, many libraries restricted the movement of patrons. Library visitors gave the names of their selections to a clerk who retrieved the materials from the shelves. One writer urged that

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borrowers be allowed "the touch of the books themselves, the joy of their immediate presence (Van Slyck, "Andrew Carnegie and the Reform of the American Library": 371). It was a pleasure already known to Hartford residents.

The Hartford Library stands in very good condition almost exactly as it was built. Notably, a substantial number of its original furnishings remain intact and in use.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property, which includes the Hartford Library building and its associated lawn, is a rectangular-shaped parcel of approximately 0.1 acre. Beginning at the northernmost point of the western property line, which is 22.5 feet directly northwest of the northwest corner of the library foundation, the boundary runs east for 60.5 feet along the rear property line. Then the boundary turns south where it runs for 101.5 feet to form the eastern boundary. The boundary then turns west where it runs for 60.5 feet along the north curblineline of Main Street to form the southern boundary. Then the boundary turns north where it runs for 101.5 feet to the point of origin to form the western boundary.

Boundary Justification

The Hartford Library boundaries approximately describe the original building site. Boundaries have been drawn to include the original library building and the lawn surrounding the structure.