

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

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

received OCT 7 1985
date entered

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

1. Name

historic OSCAR FOSS MEMORIAL BUILDING
and/or common OSCAR FOSS MEMORIAL LIBRARY (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Main Street (Rte. 126), Center Barnstead n/a not for publication
city, town Barnstead 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>Library</u>

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Barnstead
street & number Main Street
Center Barnstead
city, town Barnstead, _____ vicinity of state New Hampshire 03218

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Belknap County Couthouse
Belknap County Registry of Deeds
street & number 64 Court Street
city, town Laconia, _____ state New Hampshire 03246

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title A Survey of Public Library
Buildings in the Lakes Region has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1984 Region federal state county local
depository for survey records Lakes Region Planning Commission
city, town Meredith, _____ state New Hampshire

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Oscar Foss Memorial Library is a public library building that stands on its own lot on the southwest side of Main Street (Route 126) in the village of Center Barnstead in the town of Barnstead. The three bay wide, two bay deep building is set with its long northeast facade facing the street. Basically, the one story brick building is rectangular in plan. But, it has a shallow recessed entry, distinguished by two columns in antis supporting a pediment and reached by concrete steps and landing, in the center of the main facade. On the library's rear (southwest) facade is found a shallow, brick walled projection, to which is now attached a small, one story, gable roofed, wooden rear entry. A hip roof covers the library, with a small gable roof over the pedimented entry, and a shed roofed extension of the rear slope over the shallow rear projection.

The library is set on a high foundation of random coursed, rockfaced, granite blocks with a dressed watertable. The brick walls, laid in common bond, flemish variation, are varied by occasional darker burned bricks. The wide wooden box cornice, pedimented over the entry, is decorated with mouldings, large mutules, and a frieze with mouldings. (The cornice of the rear projection is of virtually the same design, but it has a sloping soffit and lacks the large mutules.) The slate roofs of the original building have copper flashing on the eaves. A copper ridge moulding, which covers the hip roof's main ridge, is ornamented at each end by large copper knobs topped by spheres. In the center of the hip roof, on both the front and rear slopes, is found a large copper framed skylight, decorated with small, foliated, copper acroterions at each end of its ridge. A similar copper acroterion appears on the apex of the pedimented gable. (The hip roof is also broken by a large brick chimney at each end.)

In the center of the three bay wide street (northeast) facade is the main entry, which occupies one third of the facade. Modern concrete steps and a wide but shallow concrete landing, both with modern wrought metal hand rails, serve the entry. (Two concrete urns stand on the landing.) The shallow entry recess is framed by smooth granite quoins and has brick side walls. Two large wooden columns with moulded bases, visible entasis, and ornate capitals (each decorated with angled volutes, fleurons, egg and dart and beaded mouldings, and best described as a variant of the Composite capital) support a pedimented entablature spanning the entry. The entablature has a paneled soffit and a paneled frieze, which contains the title "OSCAR FOSS MEMORIAL" in raised letters. At each end of the frieze, above the quoins, is found a wide shallow bracket, with mouldings and a small panel in its face decorated with a rosette. The brackets support the pedimented cornice, which projects slightly in front of the building's regular cornice. The flush boarded tympanum contains a large triangular panel, in which appears an ornate carved cartouche, flanked by garlands of foliage. Directly behind the columns, narrow sections of the recess's rear wall are covered by moulded panels with horizontal beaded boarding. But, most of the recess's rear wall is occupied by the entry itself, a glass door with wooden frame and its surrounding windows, wide ten pane two-thirds sidelights flanking the entry, four pane transom windows above the sidelights, and an eight pane transom window above the door. (The date "1917" appears in gold letters on the lower panes of the door's transom window.) Beneath the sidelights are found panels with moulded baseboards. In the western panel is a book drop slot. A painted wooden sign giving the library hours hangs from hooks

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in front of the eastern panel. The door, windows, and panels have plain trim, but the entire group is enclosed by a simple moulded frame. On the brick wall to each side of the entry is mounted a metal plaque on a wooden back. The eastern plaque is inscribed "TOWN OFFICE", while the western plaque is inscribed "PUBLIC LIBRARY DEDICATED OCT. 27-1917". Above each plaque is a spherical electric light on an ornate metal bracket. The two side bays of the street facade are identical. Each has a four pane basement window with a simple moulded frame. In the main level is a large, wide sash window with a large single pane lower sash. The upper sash is divided by mullions and sash bars into six squares, each of which is further subdivided by diagonal mullions, giving the upper sash twenty-four triangular panes. The window has a simply moulded wooden frame, a rockfaced granite sill, and a flat arch composed of five smooth granite blocks, including a keystone and radiating end blocks.

The two bay wide northwest and southeast ends are identical. In the center of end facade is a shallowly projecting brick chimney, which has the same granite foundation as the brick walls themselves. Actually, each chimney has two projections, a wide, shallow projection with sloped brick shoulders, which continues up to the cornice, and a shorter and narrower shallow projection superimposed on the other projection, which has stepped shoulders and a stepped top. The building's box cornice is concinued across the chimneys. Above the roof, the rectangular chimneys are each topped by two corbeled courses of brick and a concrete cap. (At the chimney corners, just below the corbeled courses, are found smooth granite corner blocks.) Each end facade has two high fixed double windows flanking the chimney. Each window of the double windows is divided into two large rectangles by a sash bar, and further subdivided by diagonal and vertical mullions, giving each rectangle six triangular panes and each double window a total of twenty-four triangular panes. The windows again have simply moulded window frames, rockfaced granite sills, and smooth granite flat arches of the same design as the street windows, with five blocks, including a keystone and radiating end blocks.

The rear (southwest) facade has the same tripartite composition as the street facade, with the shallow rear projection occupying the central third of the facade. The projection has the same granite foundation and brick walls as the rest of the building, although, as noted above, the cornice that trims its shed roof has a sloping soffit, and lacks the mutules found elsewhere on the building. The projection now has only one visible opening, a single pane basement window to the east, as the former rear door to the west is now covered by the new rear entry. The eastern third of the rear facade has two basement windows, a two pane window with simply moulded frame on the east, a boarded up window on the west. In the main level is a large, wide window of the same design as the windows in the side bays of the street facade, complete with single pane lower sash, twenty-four triangular paned upper sash, rock faced granite sill, and a five block, smooth granite, flat arch with keystone and radiating end blocks. The western third of the rear facade has two two pane basement windows, with simply moulded frames, and three tall, narrow main level windows, which have one over one sash, simply moulded wooden frames, rock faced granite sills, and flat brick heads.

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The rear entry is a small, short, one story, wooden structure on a poured concrete foundation. It is sheathed by vinyl clapboarding with corner strips. Close vinyl eaves and verges trim its asphalt shingled gable roof. In the rear (southwest) gable end is the building's rear door, a modern paneled door with a six pane builtin window and a simple moulded frame. A large granite step and a large concrete step serve the rear entry. A pseudo-Colonial electric light is mounted beside the door.

The tripartite compositions of the main and rear facades reflects the three part division of the interior. The southeast third of the building is the former Town Office, now a children's room-stack area. The northwest third is the reading room. The central third is more complex. Behind the entry recess is the wide vestibule. Behind the vestibule, in the center of the building, is the central hall, in which is found the librarian's desks and the card catalog. To the rear of the central hall are two spaces, a walkin safe (entered from the former Town Office) to the southeast and a rear hall, with a door to the rear entry, and stairs to the basement, to the northwest.

The main entry opens into the vestibule, which like the other public rooms, has a carpeted floor. Its plaster walls have moulded baseboards and moulded chair rails. Hanging on a chain from the center of the high plaster ceiling is an electric light. The main entry in the northeast wall, the glass door with wooden frame, the sidelights, the panels beneath the sidelights, and the three transom windows, all have simple moulded trim, and are enclosed by an outer frame with simple upper and lower corner-blocks and an outer moulding. In the narrow southeast wall can be seen the former doorway to the Town Office. When the Town Office became part of the library, the doorway was closed off. All traces of the doorway were removed in the Town Office itself. But, the door frame, with its simple cornerblocks and outer moulding, still survives in the vestibule, although the area formerly occupied by the door is now covered by a cork bulletin board. The inner (southwest) wall contains the entry into the central hall, another glass door with wooden frame, flanked by wide ten pane two-thirds sidelights above panels. The inner entry again has a frame with simple corner-blocks and an outer moulding.

The central hall also has a carpeted floor and plaster walls with moulded baseboards and moulded chair rails. But here, the four plaster walls are enlivened by large, shallow, semicircular-arched, plastered recesses. A moulded cornice encircles the room at the impost level of the arches and tops the doors and openings into the other rooms. The high plaster ceiling is reduced to a mere border by the large rectangular skylight that lights the room. Set in a deep moulded frame, the flat clear skylight is divided into nine large rectangles by simple frames. The rectangles are further subdivided by mullions to create a border of smaller panes around the skylight, giving the skylight a total of thirty panes. Filling the arch beneath the cornice in the street (northeast) wall is the inner entry, the central glass door with wooden frame and the ten pane sidelights above panels, all with simply moulded frames. The tympanum of the arch is plastered here, as it is in the other arches. Beneath the cornice in the two side (northwest and southeast) walls, the arches are open into the

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reading room and the former Town Office. These openings have very simple moulded frames. The arched recess in the rear (southwest) wall is largely plastered, with the usual baseboard, chair rail, and cornice crossing the recess. But set offcenter towards the west in the arch is the door to the rear hall, which has a single large panel, and a frame with simple upper and lower cornerblocks and an outer moulding.

The reading room in the northwest end of the library again has the carpeted floor found throughout the public rooms. The plaster walls all have a moulded baseboard, a moulded chair rail, and a high picture moulding. The walls are largely covered by wooden bookcases with top and base mouldings, and paneled ends. Three fluorescent light fixtures are mounted on the high plaster ceiling. The inner southeast wall features the opening into the central hall, which is flanked by builtin bookcases with plaster back walls. The central opening and the two builtin bookcases have simple trim. But, the side trim on the outside of the bookcases has outer mouldings. And all three, the opening and the bookcases, are topped by an entablature with a paneled frieze and a pronounced cornice. Set against the wall to each side of the builtin bookcases are more bookcases. The street (northeast) wall boasts a large sash window with a single pane lower sash and an upper sash with twenty-four triangular panes. The window is set deeply in a frame with a moulded sill, simple upper cornerblocks, and an outer moulding, and is covered by plain drapes. Beneath and beside the window, the wall is lined with bookcases. The rear (southwest) wall has three tall and narrow one over one sash windows, set deeply in frames with moulded sills, simple upper cornerblocks, and an outer moulding. West of the windows, another bookcase covers the wall. The end (northwest) wall is dominated by a fireplace and chimney breast projecting from the center of the wall. The brick fireplace has a brick interior with inner concrete hearth. The fireplace is faced with long and narrow bricks. At each end, brick corbels support the brick mantelshelf. Between the two corbels, above the fireplace opening, is a shallow brick recess. Beneath the mantelshelf is found a course of specially moulded bricks incorporating an egg and dart moulding and a bead and reel moulding. The plaster chimney breast has a simple moulded "baseboard" above the brick mantelshelf and is crossed by the high picture moulding. To each side of the fireplace is a high double window with fixed panes. Each window is divided by horizontal, vertical, and diagonal mullions into twelve triangular panes. The windows are set in deep frames with moulded sills, simple upper cornerblocks, and outer mouldings. Like the street window, the double windows are covered with drapes. Beneath each window is a bookcase covering the wall.

The former Town Office at the southeast end of the building is almost, but not quite the mirror image of the reading room. It too has a carpeted floor and plaster walls with moulded baseboards, moulded chair rails, and high picture mouldings. But, the ceiling is covered with acoustic tile and surrounded by a ceiling moulding, although it also has three fluorescent light fixtures. In the center of the inner (northwest) wall is a wide opening into the central hall, flanked by builtin bookcases.

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The central opening has a simple frame and a paneled lintel. The two bookcases both have their own distinct frames with simple cornerblocks and an outermoulding. The same moulded cornice found in the reading room tops the bookcase frames and the central opening lintel. Towards the street, a simple wooden bookcase covers the wall. To the rear on the northwest wall is the metal door to the walkin safe, which again has a frame with simple upper and lower cornerblocks and an outer moulding. The street (northeast) and rear (southwest) walls are virtually identical. Each has a large sash window of the same design with single pane lower sash, upper sash of twenty-four triangular panes, a deep frame with simple cornerblocks, and an outer moulding, and plain drapes. Beneath and beside the windows, both walls are covered with simple bookcases. The end (southeast) wall duplicates the end wall of the readingroom, having the same projecting fireplace and chimney breast in the center, and the same high double fixed windows to each side. The only difference is that the bookcases beneath the windows are simpler in design than their reading room counterparts. The front (northeast) part of the former Town Office is now fitted out as a children's area, while the rear (southwest) part of the room is occupied by two tall freestanding bookcases with base and top mouldings and paneled ends.

The walkin safe is reached through two sets of metal doors. The small windowless space has a concrete floor and ceiling, painted brick walls, and builtin wooden shelves.

The rear hall contains the stairs. From a landing at the door from the central hall, three steps lead down to a landing at the rear door into the rear entry. From the rear landing, stairs lead down to the basement. (The area beneath the stairs is a lower hall, now used primarily for storage.) Carpeting covers the steps, the landings, and the basement stairs. The upper hall on the main level has plaster walls above vertical beveled board wainscoating with moulded baseboard and simple coping. A fluorescent light hangs from the high plaster ceiling. The upper landing and the steps in the upper hall are protected by a balustrade with turned balusters, moulded hand rail, and a square post with mouldings and moulded cap. The street (northeast) wall of the upper hall contains the paneled door to the central hall, which has a plain frame. High in the southeast wall is a three panel door, with simple frame, to the attic. In the rear (southwest) wall is the rear door, a paneled door with four pane builtin window, granite sill, and plain frame.

The attic door (accessible only with a ladder) opens onto the concrete ceiling of the walkin safe, which is lower than the rest of the attic "floor". The short walls of this lower section are unfinished, with exposed studding or brick. A short ladder leads to the main attic level, with its exposed roof rafters and ceiling joists. In the center of the attic is the skylight well, which has sloping walls of beveled boarding. A small opening in the well's rear (southwest) wall lights the attic. A board door in the well's southeast wall, reached by a board walkway across the ceiling joists, allows access to clean the skylight and to tend to the well's two supplementary fluorescent light fixtures.

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The new rear entry has a concrete floor, three plasterboard walls, and a plasterboard ceiling with a simple light fixture. The original brick and granite wall to the northeast can still be seen with the former rear door, a paneled door with builtin window, granite sill, simply moulded wooden frame, and flat brick head. The new rear door in the southwest wall is a modern paneled door with a builtin six pane window and a plain frame.

Returning to the rear hall, we descend the stairs to the basement. The basement stairway and the lower hall beneath the stairs are sheathed with horizontal beveled boarding, with moulded baseboards on the stairs themselves. Simple mouldings mark the corners of the beveled boarding, which also sheathes the ceiling of the lower hall. The "railing" of the basement stairs is a solid partition of beveled boarding with a simple coping and a square newelpost with moulded cap. The lower hall has a concrete floor.

The basement is mostly one large community room, but about two-thirds of the rear portion is occupied by the stairs and the lower hall, a walkin safe to the east of the lower hall, two restrooms and a short hallway serving them to the west of the stairs. There are also three small rooms in the corners of the community room, a storage room-pump room in the north corner, a furnace room in the east corner, and the oil tank room in the rear corner next to the walkin safe. The community room is therefore rather irregular in shape. The community room has a carpeted floor, walls of modern grooved wooden "paneling", two round metal posts in the center of the room, and a suspended tile ceiling with builtin light fixtures. There are no doors to the stairs, the lower hall, or the restroom hallway. Plain trim surrounds the simple wooden doors to the furnace room, oil tank room, and pump room, as well as the metal door of the walking safe. Built against the rear wall of the narrower northwest end of the community room is a counter with plywood front, formica top, and builtin sink.

The furnace room, the oil tank room, and the pump room have similar interiors, as they preserve the basement's original concrete floor and ceiling, and outer stone and brick walls, and they all have new inner walls with exposed studding. The pump room and the furnace room are each lit by a four pane basement window. The walkin safe is similar in design to the main level safe directly above it, with two sets of metal doors, concrete floor and ceiling, painted brick walls, and builtin wooden shelves. It is lit by a single pane basement window. The restrooms and the hallway serving them all have linoleum floors, beveled board walls with simple corner mouldings, and plaster ceilings with ceiling mouldings. Five panel doors with plain frames serve the restrooms, the men's room door being found in the southwest wall of the hallway, the ladies' room door at its northwest end. Each restroom has the expected fixtures and is lit by a high two-pane basement window with simple frame in the rear (southwest) wall.

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The flat rectangular lot is largely grassed with foundation shrubs in front of the building and the entry landing, small shrubs in front of the chimneys, and a single shrub on the northwest boundary. Two small trees are found on the front lawn. The lot is enclosed on three sides by a metal pipe fence with three metal pipe rails and round metal posts topped by small knobs. An asphalt walk leads from the street to the front steps. On the front lawn north of the building stands Barnstead's Veterans' Memorial. The monument is a smooth granite slab set on a granite base with rockfaced sides and smooth top. The inscription honoring the Barnstead men and women who have served their country, and specifically naming the six men who gave their lives, is flanked by vertical fluting. The monument is crowned by an eagle, with outstretched wings, grasping a fasces in its claws, carved in high relief out of the granite slab. Two small flags in metal holders flank the memorial.

Note: This nomination reflects one contributing building.

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

Specific dates 1916-1917 **Builder/Architect** William M. Butterfield, architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Oscar Foss Memorial Library is significant architecturally as one of the finest small public library buildings in the Lakes Region, and as a good example of the Classical style so popular for public library buildings in the pre-World War I period.

The Town of Barnstead established its public library by a vote of the annual town meeting in 1892. But the library was not given proper quarters, being housed over the years in residences and stores. In the 1890's, the library was actually split into four branches in the town's different villages. But, the library collection was eventually consolidated in a single library in Center Barnstead, where in 1906, it occupied one large room in a private house. The need for a proper library building was apparent, but it was not met until Sarah U. Foss decided to erect a library-town office building in memory of her husband Oscar Foss (1845-1913), a prominent Barnstead businessman and lumber dealer. In the spring of 1916, Mrs. Foss announced her decision to build the Oscar Foss Memorial Building on land which had long been owned by the Foss family, appropriately located opposite the Town Hall and the Congregational Church in Center Barnstead. The building was designed by architect William M. Butterfield of Manchester and erected by contractor Leon F. Batchelder of Suncook. Construction, which began in the second week of May, 1916, actually preceded by ten months the decision of the Town, at its annual meeting of March 13, 1917 "to except, when finished, the Land and Building thereon known as the Oscar Foss Memorial Building, the same to be used for Town Office and Public Library".¹ By that time, the building must have been substantially completed, as a Laconia paper reported that "Mr. Sullivan, painter and decorator of Manchester, completed his work on the interior"² the following week. Unfortunately, the newspapers tell us as little about the progress of construction. We know that the work was "under the direction of Isaac E. Harriman",³ but we can say little more about it. The Memorial Building was dedicated with appropriate ceremony on Saturday, October 27, 1917, and was deeded to the town on the same day. Exactly one week later, the Selectmen moved into their new office. The library soon followed, opening for business in its new quarters on Saturday, November 15.

The Oscar Foss Memorial Building has changed relatively little over the years. An acoustic tile ceiling was at some point installed in the Town Office. In 1970, the basement, originally unfinished, save for the stairs, hallways and restrooms, was renovated to serve as a community room and a meeting place. Eventually, both the town officials and the library needed more space. So, in 1979, the town offices were moved across the street to an addition on the Town Hall. The old Town Office room was incorporated into the library by creating the present opening between the central hall

¹"Barnstead Town Records", Volume 7 (1906-1927), (manuscript, Oscar Foss Memorial Library, Center Barnstead, N.H.), p. 374.

²Laconia News and Critic, March 23, 1917.

³Suncook Press, November 3, 1917.

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property .16 acre

Quadrangle name Gilmanton, NH

Quadrangle scale 1:625000

UTM References

A 19 316755 4800760
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

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 March 12, 1985

street & number Main Street telephone (603) 271-8171

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

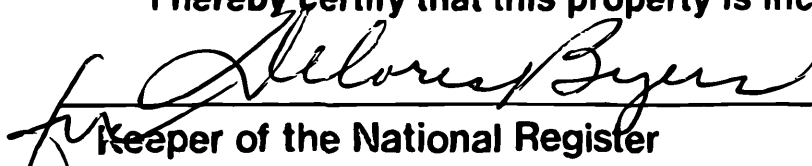
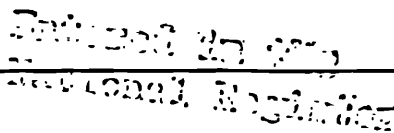
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Officer date 9/26/85

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

 Keeper of the National Register  date 11-7-85

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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and the Town Office, in what had been a solid wall. The carpenter, Douglas Tedcastle, succeeded in matching the new opening with the older opening between the central hall and the reading room. (The cornice in the central hall and the bookcases in the Town Office already existed, so only the frame of the opening and the Town Office cornice are new work.) A visitor who was unaware of the building's history would assume that the present opening had always existed. Bookcases were installed in the Town Office. The former doorway from the vestibule to the Town Office was plastered over on the Office side, and the door replaced with a bulletin board in the vestibule. 1979 also saw the installation of wall to wall carpeting in the public rooms. The exterior has been changed only at the entries. The main entry originally had three narrow and awkward concrete steps, which were crumbling by 1979. So, as part of the general renovation of the building in that year, the old steps were replaced by a wider concrete landing and steps with modern metal handrails. In 1981-82, the small and seldom seen rear entry was attached to provide a vestibule for the rear door. Basically, however, the interior and the exterior of the Oscar Foss Memorial Library remain much as they did in 1917. (The grounds, still surrounded by the original metal pipe fence, have also seen few changes. Foundation shrubs have been planted in front of the building. The walk was repaved in 1981. The most notable change was the erection in 1967 of the Veterans' Memorial on the front lawn.)

William M. Butterfield (1860-1932) was one of New Hampshire's finest and most prominent architects in the late 19th century and the early 20th century. Unfortunately, like most other New Hampshire architects of any era, he has received little scholarly attention. So, it is not possible to fit the Barnstead library into the context of his career. We should, however, note the Stone Memorial Building in Weare, also designed by Butterfield. The Weare building, erected in 1896, was also a dual purpose building, serving both for a town office and a public library. Although differing greatly in details and ornament, the Stone Memorial Building, built of brick on a granite foundation, has the same basic form as the Oscar Foss Memorial Library--a one story, hip roofed building, three bays wide and two bays deep, with a central distyle in antis portico with an ornate pediment (covered by a small gable roof) and a shallow entry recess, and a shallow, brick walled projection on the rear facade. The Weare building no doubt served as a model for the Barnstead library.

Although Butterfield did some notable work in the Queen Anne style (the Gov. Smith House in Hillsboro of 1892), the Romanesque Revival style (the Belknap County Courthouse in Laconia of 1903), and even the Egyptian Revival style (the Sphinx Senior Society building in Hanover of 1903), he is said to have favored the Classical styles. But, the choice of the Classical style for the Oscar Foss Memorial Building was not simply a matter of the architect's preference. For public buildings, particularly libraries, it was the preferred style of the period. Of the eight public library buildings erected in the Lakes Region between 1900 and the First World War, two were medieval in style, but the other six were all basically Classically inspired buildings. After the war, the Colonial Revival style would supersede the Classical style for the region's libraries. But, in 1917, the Classical style was the obvious choice for

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Barnstead's new Library building. The Oscar Foss Memorial Building cannot compare in grandeur with the Franklin Public Library (1905-06), or the Nichols Memorial Library in Centre Harbor (1909-10), but it is nevertheless a good example of the style as applied to a relatively small building. The building's dominant exterior feature is its portico, with two Composite columns in antis supporting an ornate pediment. The entry gives the building a dignity that belies its size. Outside the entry, the Classical illusions are rather limited. The basic symmetry of the building and its simple but impressive form do, however, come from the Classical tradition, as does the box cornice with its large mutules. The non-Classical exterior elements, such as the random coursed granite foundation, the projecting chimneys, and the windows, with their triangular panes and flat granite arches with keystones and radiating end blocks, are still pleasing features. The interior also has some pleasant elements, such as the simple but attractive frames of the windows, doors and openings, and the brick fireplaces with their brick mantelshelves, decorated with classical mouldings. The public rooms are dignified and attractive spaces, the most interesting room being the central hall with its large skylight and large, shallow, semicircular arched recess in each wall. These interior and exterior features and their integration in a coherent and handsome design reveal Butterfield's skill as an architect and raise the Barnstead library above most of the Region's public buildings. The Oscar Foss Memorial Library must be considered one of the best small public library buildings in the Lakes Region.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The nominated property is an almost rectangular lot, being 84 feet wide on its northeast and southwest boundaries, 88 feet deep on its northwest boundary, and 90 feet deep on its southeast boundary. The property is bounded on the northeast by Main Street, on the northwest by property of Kenneth and Elizabeth Collins, and on the southeast and southwest by property of William and Marilyn Stevens. (A metal pipe fence marks the northwest, southeast, and southwest boundaries.) The nominated property includes the Oscar Foss Memorial Library and the lot on which it has stood since 1917. (Barnstead Property Map 20, Lot 4)

The boundaries of the nominated property have been highlighted in yellow on the attached sketch map (11-10-3).

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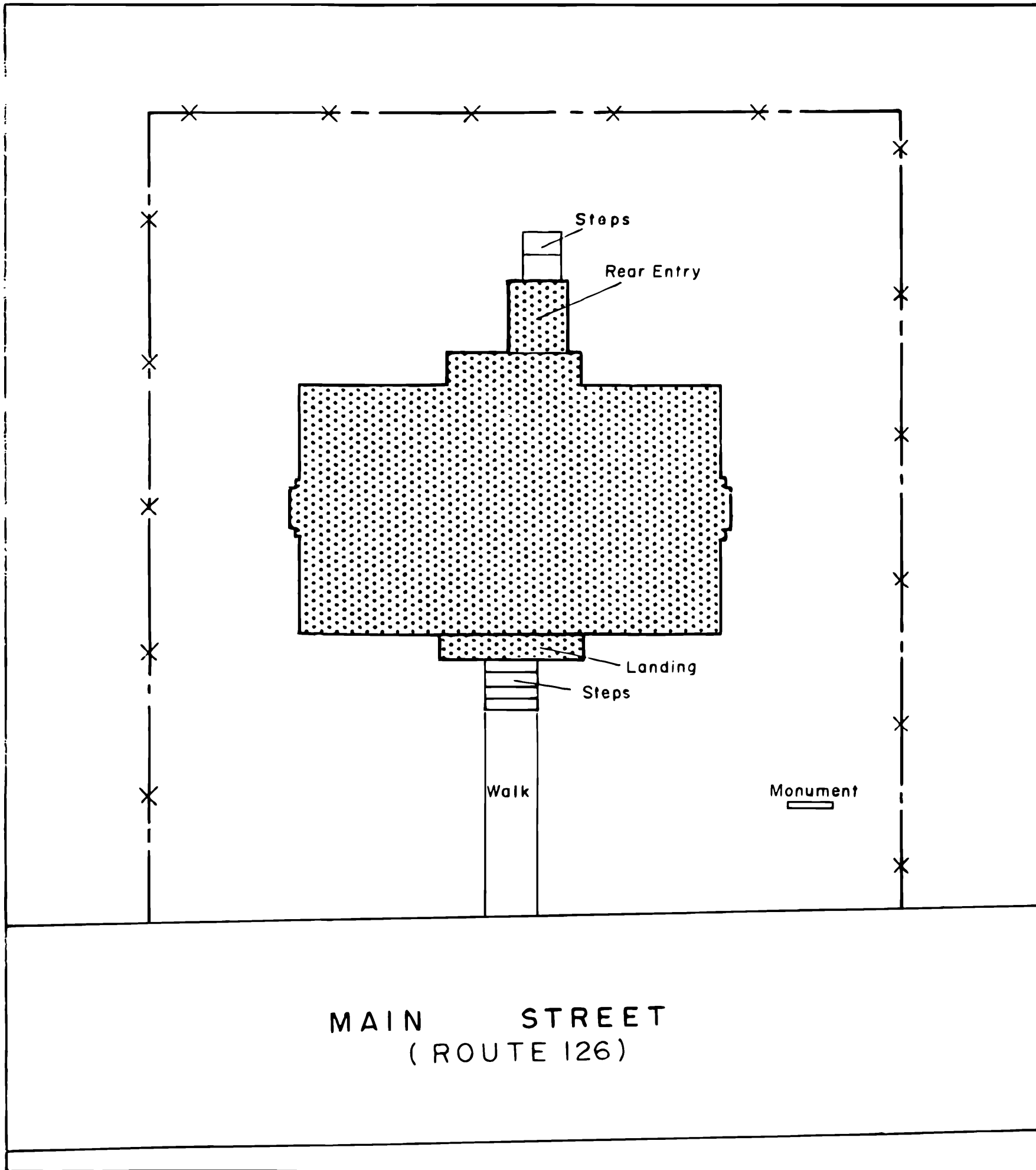
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BARNSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE



scale 1" = 14'



Oscar Foss Memorial Library

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since the photographs were taken.