

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

For NPS use only

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

received **AUG 12 1985**

date entered **SEP 12 1985**

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

**1. Name**

historic Gale Memorial Library

and/or common GALE MEMORIAL LIBRARY

**2. Location**

street & number 695 Main Street n/a not for publication

city, town Laconia, 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	<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 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: Library

**4. Owner of Property**

name City of Laconia

Laconia City Hall

street & number Beacon Street East

city, town Laconia, n/a vicinity of state New Hampshire 03246

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Belknap County Courthouse  
Belknap County Registry of Deeds (Book 94, Page 185)

street & number 64 Court Street

city, town Laconia, state New Hampshire 03246

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Historical Inventory of Laconia has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records City of Laconia, Planning Department, City Hall

city, town Laconia, state New Hampshire 03246

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Gale Memorial Library is a public library building which stands on its own lot at the north corner of the intersection of Main and Church Streets in the city of Laconia, with its main facade facing southwest towards Main Street and Veterans Square. The library is composed of two distinct sections, the original Romanesque Revival stone building, erected in 1901-3, and the modern, brick-faced, children's room-auditorium wing, erected in 1956-7.

The original library building is deliberately complex in both form and plan. The hip-roofed, two-story main block, which parallels Main Street, terminates in a semi-circular apse with a half conical roof at the southeast (Church Street) end. In front (that is to say to the southwest towards Veterans Square) of the main block is a projecting portion of the building composed of three distinct elements--a pavilion to the northwest, a tower to the southeast, and a slightly recessed, narrow central section between the pavilion and the tower. The two-story pavilion is covered by a hip roof, which is somewhat lower than the main block's roof. In front of the two-story, shed-roofed central section is the main entry, a projecting, one story, gable-roofed porch-vestibule. The three story square tower has a round three story turret at its southern corner. The tower is covered by a pyramidal roof, and the turret by a conical roof. To the rear (northeast) of the main block is the two-story, hip-roofed stack wing, which is the same height as the main block. The eastern corner between the main block and the rear wing is partially filled by a small, one story, hip-roofed office section. (In the northern corner between the rear wing and the main block is found the flat roofed, two-story modern wing, whose upper story is at the same height as the original library's main floor.)

The varied sections of the original library are unified by the same wall and roof treatments. But for the main entry, the original building is constructed of coursed, rock faced New Brunswick red granite on a high foundation of rock faced Deer Island granite with a dressed watertable. The light gray Deer Island granite was also used for quoins and (save on the tower) sillcourses on both stories and a course just beneath the cornice, all these being rockfaced. (Indeed, unless otherwise noted, the light gray granite is typically rockfaced.) All of the windows are deeply recessed above sloping sills, the sills, sides and tops of the window recesses, being smooth granite. The smooth Deer Island granite cornice on the main block, pavilion, front central section, and rear wing has simple granite brackets and an upper copper moulding. The roofs of the higher sections, the main block, pavilion, front central section, tower, turret, and rear wing, are sheathed with red slate and ornamented by copper ridge mouldings, hip knobs and finials. The roofs of the one story sections, the main entry and the office, are sheathed with copper. All of the roofs have flared eaves, save for the office's hip roof, and the front central section's shed roof.

The two visible ends of the main block are treated quite differently. (On the northeast slopes of their roofs, they do both have a tall rock faced red granite chimney, trimmed with rockfaced light granite quoins and topped by a smooth light granite cornice. The northeast slope of the northwest end of the roof also features a copper framed skylight for the museum's ceiling light.) On the semicircular southeast end, we find five tall windows set in tall semicircular arches, directly above the basement's five one over one sash windows. The main level windows each have tall one over one sash, with shouldered upper sash, topped by a smooth light granite lintel and a rectangular stained glass window, which is, in turn, topped by another smooth

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400-1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500-1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600-1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/
___ 1700-1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ humanitarian
___ 1800-1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
X 1900-	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

Specific dates 1901-03 Builder/Architect Charles Brigham, Architect

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Gale Memorial Library is significant architecturally as not only one of the best public library buildings in New Hampshire, but also as one of the state's finest examples of the Romanesque Revival style.

Napoleon Bonaparte Gale (1815-1894), a successful Laconia banker, was "not a great reader of books",<sup>1</sup> but he was convinced of the importance of a good public library. Among the bequests in his will, were three gifts to the city of Laconia, \$5000 for a public park, \$10,000 for "a town hall or building for public use", and \$10,000 for "a substantial and proper building of brick and stone for the Public Library".<sup>2</sup> The residue, actually the bulk, of his estate was left to four trustees, John T. Busiel, Edwin F. Burleigh, Charles F. Pitman, and Erastus P. Jewell (who were also the executors of the estate), with the instruction that "if, in their judgement, a larger sum than \$10,000 is required for the construction of the Library building... they may, in their discretion, use for that purpose a sum not exceeding one quarter part of what remains...of my estate".<sup>3</sup> (The annual income for the rest of the residue was to be used for the benefit of the public library and the maintenance of the park.) In February of 1895, the Laconia city council voted to accept the bequests and appointed three of the executors-trustees (Busiel, Burleigh and Pitman) as a committee to locate and build the library and to lay out the public park.

The committee soon decided on a proper location for both the park and the library. In 1891, the city of Laconia widened Depot Street, an ordinary street, into a spacious Railroad Square (now Veterans Square) to serve the impressive Romanesque Revival railroad station built by the Concord & Montreal Railroad in 1891-2. At the northeast end of the Square stood the Congregational Church at the corner of Church and Main Streets. But most of the Square's Main Street frontage was occupied by the Moulton homestead. To the committee, the Moulton property seemed the perfect site for both projects, as it was a quite prominent location, suitable for a major public building, and a capacious lot, suitable for a public park. So, in April, the committee proposed to the city council the purchase of the Moulton lot for both the park and the library building. The council agreed, adding \$10,000 to the \$5,000 bequest for the park to buy the property in May of 1895.

<sup>1</sup>Laconia News & Critic, June 10, 1903.

<sup>2</sup>"Will of Napoleon B. Gale" in Belknap County Probate Records, Docket 5341, Belknap County Registry of Probate, Laconia, N.H. The Laconia Public Library, established by a town meeting vote in March 1878, opened in 1879 in a rented room in the Folsom Block. It moved ten years later to larger rented quarters in the Laconia

<sup>3</sup>National Bank Building.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.8 acres

Quadrangle name Winnipesaukee, NH

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A 

1	9	3	0	0	3	0	0	4	8	2	2	4	0	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

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 L. Ruel

organization Lakes Region Planning Commission date January 13, 1985

street & number Main Street telephone (603) 279-8171

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

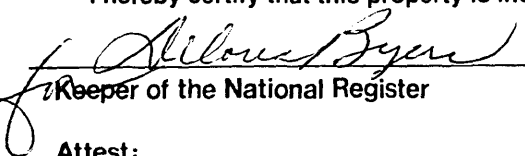
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Officer date 7/29/85

For NPS use only

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

  
Keeper of the National Register

date 9/12/85

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

1

Item number

7

Page

2

light granite lintel and a semicircular stained glass window, which fills the arch's tympanum. The windows' surrounds are of rockfaced light Deer Island granite, as are the stringcourses at the window sill and both lintel levels. The two visible facades of the hip roofed northwestern end of the main block have the same fenestration, differing only in the number of one over one sash windows in the basement, three in the northwestern facade, two in the southwestern (Square) facade. The first story of each facade has a single large triple window set in a semielliptical arch with rock faced light granite sill, surround, and arch with keystone. Each triple window has three single pane windows (the central one being wider) beneath stained glass transom windows. The second story boasts a trio of single paned windows with stained glass transom windows, the central window again being wider than its companions. (The second story windows are set on the upper sillcourse and are topped by the rock faced light granite course just beneath the cornice.) A similar set of three windows with stained glass transom windows is also found in the second story of the pavilion facing the Square. The lower levels of the pavilion's Square facade are distinguished by a rock faced light granite bow window, which has, in the basement (a continuation of the building's high foundation with watertable), three one over one sash windows, and, in the main level, three large single pane windows topped by stained glass transom windows. The bow window is crowned by a moulded cornice of smooth light granite beneath a low crenelated parapet of hammered light granite topped by a smooth moulded coping. The one bay wide northwestern facade of the pavilion has a single window at each level--a one over one sash window in the basement, and a single pane window with stained glass transom window in each upper story. The rock faced light gray granite is used for the jambs and lintel of the first story window, as well as for the two sill courses that encircle the pavilion as well as the northwest end of the main block.

To the right (southeast) of the pavilion is the projecting entry, which is half open entry porch and half vestibule. The entry is built of smooth Deer Island granite on a high foundation of hammered light granite blocks with dressed margins and a slight watertable. Granite steps with metal siderails and granite sidewalls lead up to the porch's granite and concrete floor. The porch is framed by a semicircular arch with keystone and moulded face, supported by banded pillars with bases and capitals. The porch's barrel vault is sheathed with green and black ceramic tiles above the cornice that tops the rectangular openings in the banded granite side walls. The main entry itself--arched, 3-paneled, double doors--is set on a granite sill in another semicircular arch, here with radiating voussoirs and an upper moulding, and supported by banded pilasters. In the gable above the outer arch's keystone is an unusual hemispherical depression. The gable is crowned by a low parapet wall, with a moulded coping, foliated corbels on the ends, granite globes on the gable springers, and a projecting apex stone, hiding the copper clad gable roof. Each side facade of the entry is built of banded masonry on the high foundation with watertable, and is ornamented by a moulded string-course at impost level and by a shallow moulded granite and copper cornice. The small basement window on each side is covered by an ornate iron grate. Each side also has two arches at the main level--a semielliptical arch towards the Square, with a rectangular opening, moulded lintel, and blind tympanum, and a semicircular arch towards the rear, containing a stained glass window with stained glass transom window. In the second story

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 2

Item number 7

Page 3

of the central section directly above the main entry is a large round stained glass window with a light granite surround marked by four "keystones". Rockfaced light granite courses appear below the window and just below the cornice.

The prominent feature of the Library's main facade is the square three story tower, with round three story corner turret, next to the main entry. The lower stories of the tower and the turret received the same wall treatment as the main block, save that they lack any rockfaced light granite string courses, although they do have the same light granite quoins and foundation with watertable. Their basements have three windows, a one pane window in the tower's southeast (Church Street) facade and two one over one sash windows in the turret. The first story of the tower has a single tall, thirteen over nine sash window on the Square facade, whose upper sash is arched to fit a light granite semicircular arch and which sits on a light granite sill. The second story of the tower has a single, tall, narrow stained glass window, with light granite sill and lintel, in each of the two visible facades (facing the Square and Church Street). The turret's narrow stained glass windows, which light the stairs, are staggered around the turret. The two windows of the turret's lower level are rectangular, with light granite sills and lintels, while the four taller windows of the middle level have semicircular heads, and therefore light granite arches as well as sills. The upper story of both the tower and the turret is marked by more elaborate ornament and windows, and is set off from the lower stories by a smooth moulded light granite string course. Save for the rear (northeast) facade, each facade of the tower's top story boasts a light granite semicircular arch with rock faced jambs and a smooth arch, featuring a keystone and moulded extrados. Each contains an arched stained glass window (which incorporates two large semicircular arches topped by a roundel and two small spherical triangles, all with moulded frames), above two wooden panels, divided by horizontal, vertical and diagonal mouldings. A smooth moulded string course encircles the tower at the arches' impost level. The four tall semicircular arched stained glass windows of the turret's smooth faced, light granite top level are staggered around the turret, and the stringcourse beneath them is stepped up around the turret to follow the windows. These upper windows, which also have wooden panels beneath them, similar to those of the upper tower windows, are separated by tall, narrow engaged columns with semiocagonal moulded bases and carved capitals. The columns interrupt the moulded stringcourse at the arches' impost level. The tower is topped by a smooth light granite and copper cornice featuring an egg and dart moulding, and a smooth light granite frieze, while the turret's smooth light granite and copper cornice has simpler mouldings. The tall pyramidal roof of the tower and the conical roof of the turret both have flaring eaves and quite ornate crowning copper finials.

Only the southeast (Church Street) and northeast facades of the rear stack wing are now clearly visible as the modern wing now covers much of the northwest facade. All that can be seen of the northwest facade are the six semicircular stained glass transom windows with light granite arches that are the tops of two-story tall windows,

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 3

Item number 7

Page 4

like those still visible on the southeast facade. The basement of the northeast end is more exposed than the foundations of the other facades of the original building and features a basement entry, double paneled doors with builtin windows, as well as a one over one sash window. The group of three semicircular arched windows that is the main feature of the northeast end has been obscured by the modern wing and its tall porch which overlap the facade. The two story tall windows all have stained glass windows, light granite sills, jambs, lintels and arches. (The lintels divide each window into three sections.) The central window of the trio is both wider and taller than the flanking windows. The two lower sections of the windows have been partially filled in for the modern wing, although portions of them can still be seen beneath the porch roof. Because half of the rear wing's Church Street facade is covered by the one story office section, the three semicircular arched windows to the south, above the office section, are less than a story high, while their three counterparts to the northeast are a full two stories high. All six semicircular arched windows are filled with stained glass and have light granite arched heads, sills and lintels. The southeast facade also has a one over one sash basement window. Light granite rock faced stringcourses encircle the two visible facades at both sill levels. On the hip roof of the rear wing is an octagonal ventilator, which has a flared red slate octagonal base topped by a moulded cornice. Above the cornice are found the ventilator's rectangular louvers and the small free-standing wooden columns which support the moulded box cornice and the octagonal roof with flaring eaves, red slate tiles, and copper finial. The small one story office wing has a single pane basement window and two one over one sash main level windows with light granite surrounds in each facade. The office wing is ornamented with light granite string courses at the window sill and lintel levels. The office wing is topped by a moulded smooth light granite and copper cornice and by a low pitched copper clad hip roof.

The modern wing is a lower, two story, flat roofed structure with concrete foundation, walls of light colored, almost white, brick, laid in common bond, and close metal sheathed eaves. Most of its modern windows have large panes, simple metal frames, and concrete sills. The new wing consists of two sections. The larger rectangular section fills the northern angle between the main block and the rear wing of the original library, and overlaps both older sections. On its southeast facade, directly behind the old rear wing, is found a smaller and lower two-story section that contains service rooms and the modern wing's main entry. The smaller section is L-shaped in plan, being narrower to the southwest, behind an open porch, which is covered by an extension of the smaller section's flat roof, with metal sheathed eaves and a deep "frieze" of corrugated plastic. The main feature of the smaller section is a shallow glass walled entry pavilion, which is also covered by the same flat roof and close metal eaves, and which contains double glass doors and multiple fixed panels of glass, all framed with metal. Concrete steps stretch the full width of the pavilion, which is ten panels wide, but only one panel deep. In the two bays of the smaller section's Church Street facade north of the pavilion and in the three bays of its northeast facade are found modern windows with two panes in the lower level and three panes in the upper level. Under the porch, with its plywood ceiling and paved "floor", the southeast facade of the narrower portion has a two pane window in the lower level and two narrow three pane

MAR 13 1985

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

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

<b>For NPS use only</b>
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 4

Item number 7

Page 5

windows in the upper level. The larger and taller section of the modern wing, seven bays long and three bays wide, also has two pane windows in the lower level (save on the Square facade). The northeast end has a triple window in the central bay of each level. Its upper level windows, the triple window and both flanking single windows, are tall seven pane windows. The seven bay wide northwest facade has five pane upper level windows. The central bay of the southwest (Square) facade is treated as one unit, combining the lower level entry and the double window of the upper level, which are separated by a shared metal band, not by bricks. The entry, a simple metal door, is flanked by four pane sidelights. The double window, like the single windows in the two other bays of the second story, has five panes. The lower level has a single pane window to the north of the entry and a louver of the same size to the south of the entry.

The main entry opens into the vestibule, a small barrel vaulted space in the rear half of the entry. The vestibule has a mosaic floor. Green ceramic tile covers the walls from the polished granite baseboards up to the springing of the vault. The upper course of the tiles is moulded and ornamented with beads and egg and dart moulding. The vault and the walls above the ceramic tiles are plastered, with a hanging electric light in the center of the ceiling. The vestibule's outer wall contains the main entry--double paneled doors with granite sill and moulded frame. The side walls each have a stained glass window in a semicircular arched recess. The lower rectangular stained glass window with paneled and floral designs is framed by moulded wooden trim, and topped by a lintel that is a continuation of the upper moulded course of the ceramic tiles, (the lower part of the recess being sheathed with the same ceramic tiles as the walls). The semicircular stained glass transom window features a shield and foliage in its design. The inner wall contains the entry to the building proper, large, double, semicircular arched, three panel doors that are identical in design to the main entry doors, save that they have a wooden sill.

The inner door opens into the entrance-stair hall, which is actually two spaces connected by a very wide arched opening, a passageway to the northwest in the first story of the front central section, and a stairhall to the southeast in the tower. Both have the carpeted floors that are now continuous throughout the first story of the building. Both the passageway and the first story of the stairhall have plaster walls above paneled wooden wainscoating with moulded baseboard and coping. The rectangular passageway is covered by a plastered groin vault, giving each of its walls the shape of a semicircular arch. (An elaborate light fixture hangs from the central intersection of the vault.) The elements in these walls reflect this shape. In the outer southwest wall are the semicircular arched double inner entry doors, with a moulded frame. Set in a semicircular arched recess with splayed jambs and arch in the northwest wall is an elaborate semicircular arched stained glass window. The window is set low in the wall, extending below the normal height of the paneled wainscoating, which is continued beneath it. The window is divided into eight sections in two levels.



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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet 5

Item number 7

Page 6

The lower level has a large rectangular central pane flanked by two rectangular side-lights, all framed by narrow pilasters and topped by a shallow cornice. Directly above the central pane, in the arch itself, is a semicircular window of the same width. Radiating from the semicircular window are four windows that fill the remainder of the arch. These upper windows have moulded frames. The designs of the large lower window and the semicircular window feature trefoil "arched" panels, while the outer windows are decorated with ornate geometric patterns. In the northeast wall is found a large semicircular arched opening, with splayed jambs and arch, into the periodical room. An even larger semicircular arch to the southeast connects the passageway with the stairhall.

The northeast side of the stairhall's first story is a simple hall with the stairway itself on the southwest side of the space. This northeast section has the usual plaster walls with wainscoating, and a flat plaster ceiling with an elaborate cornice featuring mouldings and mutules. (The exposed undersides of the stairs are simply plastered.) The northeast hall has only one opening, a two panel door with moulded frame, beneath the stairway, that serves the stairs to the basement. The stairway itself, which projects slightly into the northwest passageway, has wooden steps with moulded nosings and rectangular panels on the stringers, which themselves have moulded lower edges. The balustrade has turned balusters and ramped moulded hand rails. The lower newel post is an elaborate octagonal structure with a moulded base, paneled pilasters (decorated with diamonds and ovals) on four faces, and an octagonal cap with four more diamond ornamented panels, as well as mouldings and tiny modillions. The upper newel posts are basically wooden columns, having square bases with ornate round pendants beneath them, and square caps with diamond decorated panels and moulded tops crowned by urns above them. A moulded baseboard and a moulded "chair" rail follow the stairs up the plastered walls as they rise. The first flight of the stairs goes up the outer southwest wall (past a semicircular arched thirteen over nine sash window with rippled and stained glass featuring geometric patterns, arched upper sash, and moulded frame) to a landing at the south corner of the tower. The board floored landing continues into the round corner turret, giving the landing an unusual shape. The landing contains a builtin wooden bench which follows the curve of the turret wall, and is lit by two rectangular turret windows, both with moulded frames and stained glass featuring the same geometric patterns. The southeast window is raised above its southwest companion. A short flight leads up along the tower's outer southeast wall to another board floored landing, lit by a rectangular stained glass window, similar to the two turret windows, albeit larger with a more complex version of their geometric design. Another flight along the inner northeast wall ends at the second story landing which is protected by a continuation of the balustrade. A segmental arch in the northwest wall connects the landing to the upper hall in the second story of the front central section. Another short flight of stairs continues from the second story landing along the outer southwest wall, past a narrow rectangular stained glass window, again of a design similar to the lower landing turret windows, to a two panel door with moulded frame, which serves the upper level of the tower. The second story of the stairhall has a flat plaster ceiling with moulded cornice and a central hanging electric light.

MAR 10 1985

MAR 13 1985

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet

6

Item number 7

Page 7

Returning to the main level, we pass from the entrance hall to the periodical room, the library's most impressive space. Two stories high, the periodical room occupies about half of the main block, including the southeast apse. It has the expected carpeted floor. Above the high paneled wainscoating, with moulded baseboard and coping, the plaster walls are twice interrupted by high mouldings, that encircle most of the room, being broken only by the balcony and its doors at the northwest end. The lower moulding is relatively simple, compared to the upper moulding, which incorporates ovum, foliage and beads. The upper moulding marks the springing of the great plaster coves that surround the ceiling. The ceiling proper, of the same shape as the room with a semicircular southeast end, is bordered by a heavy moulding, too elaborate to describe here. Within the border moulding, a relatively shallow cove rises to another ornate moulding, that surrounds the flat section of the ceiling. From the flat ceiling hangs two impressive electric and gas chandeliers.

The semicircular southeast end features five tall windows with moulded frames, set in slight recesses with splayed jambs. Each window is divided into three sections by the two high mouldings. The lowest but tallest section, between the wainscoating and the lower moulding, contains a large one over one sash window, which, like the windows above, has curved glass panes. Between the two mouldings are found rectangular stained glass windows with geometric designs. Above the upper moulding are semicircular stained glass windows. These upper windows each have geometric patterns and a central wreath enclosing a picture, depicting, respectively, chemist's flasks, an owl, the head of a woman crowned by a laurel wreath (perhaps the goddess Minerva or some other mythological figure), a lyre, and engineer's equipment (a triangle, compass, and gear). The southwest wall contains only one opening, the semicircular arched opening into the entrance hall. On this side, the opening is framed by paneled pilasters supporting a moulded wooden arch with paneled soffit. The northeast wall features a large fireplace and chimney breast projecting from the wall. The fireplace itself is built of limestone above a brick hearth. The semicircular arched fireplace opening has large radiating voussoirs and an inner moulding. The fireplace interior is covered by three metal firebacks, with their own narrative, depicting, in turn, a boy and a girl fleeing from a dragon, a knight slaying the dragon, and the knight and the children after the rescue. The sides of the stone fireplace are paneled. The two piers supporting the mantel have simple moulded bases, paneled fronts decorated with carved foliage, fruit and strapwork, and brackets ornamented with carved shields. The mantel is topped by a cornice with mouldings, notably an ornate foliated moulding. The plaster chimney breast is tapered above the fireplace, but still rises to the high ceiling. North of the fireplace in the northeast wall are found two identical doors, each a tall three panel door, framed by paneled pilasters and moulded lintel, and topped by a semicircular transom window--a fanlight with rippled leaded glass and a moulded frame. The north door leads to the stack area, while the south door would serve the librarian's office, if it was not false, as it is a fixed panel lacking both hinges and doorknob.

MAR 1 5 1985

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

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

<b>For NPS use only</b>
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 7 Item number 7 Page 8

On the inner northwest wall, the wainscoating is lower, with a simpler moulded coping, but it still retains its paneling and moulded baseboard. In the center of the wall is an elaborate wooden doorway with side windows, topped by a balcony that serves the double doors of the museum in the second story. The doorway on the lower level has three bays, the wider central bay containing the arched opening into the delivery room, the side bays containing windows. The three bays are framed by four tall paneled pilasters on paneled pedestals and are topped by a simple moulded lintel. The central opening is covered by a basket arch with paneled soffit, which is supported by paneled pilasters on the inside of the arch as well as on the outer faces. The arch is ornamented by a keystone with the carved head of a woman crowned with a laurel wreath. The spandrels are each decorated with carved foliage and a carved shield bearing an open book. The side bays each have a panel beneath the windows, a long sidelight with leaded clear glass incorporating quatrefoils and diamonds in the design, and an upper square window, also with leaded clear glass, featuring a quatrefoil in the design. (Both windows have moulded frames.) Directly above the four tall pilasters are found four elaborate and massive console brackets, almost completely covered with carved foliage, that support the large balcony. (Between the brackets above the arched opening and the windows are found panels, the overwindow panels incorporating semicircular arches in their design.) The balcony itself has a paneled underside, a deep floor with moulded base and moulded cornice and an elaborate metal railing with geometric ironwork and a moulded wooden hand rail. The double doors that open onto the carpeted balcony are wooden framed glass doors, having clear leaded glass with geometric patterns and stained glass borders. Above the doors is a semicircular transom window, whose stained glass includes a central oval surrounding a caduceus. Returning to the main level, we find to each side of the central doorway a semicircular arch above the wainscoating, with pilasters supporting a moulded arch with paneled soffit. The western arch contains a bookcase with double leaded glass doors with wooden frames, topped by a moulded lintel and a quarter spherical plastered recess in the arch itself. The eastern arch is an open arch into the stack area, with paneling on the inner face of the piers as well as on the arch soffit.

The delivery room is a rectangular room at the functional center of the original building's plan. It has the carpeted floor and the paneled wainscoating beneath plaster walls, which we have noted in previous rooms. The room does have an elaborate cornice with mouldings, mutules, and a moulded frieze. Above the cornice, the plaster ceiling is coved and bordered by two outer mouldings with ornate carvings. Modern electric light panels are found in the center of the ceiling. The southeast wall contains the opening into the periodical room and its flanking windows. These elements and their frames, including pilasters, panels, arches, spandrels, etc., are exactly the same in design on the delivery room side as they are on the periodical room side of the wall. So we will not describe them again, save to note the shelf mounted on the wall to the west of opening, beneath the sidelight. The southwest wall contains a large

MAR 10 1985

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet	8	Item number	7	Page	9
--------------------	---	-------------	---	------	---

central opening into the Mowbray Reading Room. The opening, which is quite deep and could be considered a short passageway, has the same wainscoating beneath plaster on its side walls as does the delivery room itself. An ornate bronze plaque commemorating Napoleon Bonaparte Gale hangs on the northwest wall of the opening. Four elaborate consoles, decorated with swags, at the outer corners of the deep opening support its plaster ceiling, which is paneled with a round panel inscribed in the center. To each side of the opening in the southwest wall is found a builtin card catalog in a semicircular arch. Each catalog has wooden drawers and is framed by paneled pilasters and a moulded lintel. Above each catalog, a moulded arch with paneled soffit frames a quarter spherical plastered recess. The northwest wall echoes in many elements the opposite southeast wall, as it contains a wide central opening into the reference room, flanked by sidelights, the three bays being framed by four paneled pilasters on pedestals, like their southern counterparts. The side bays have the same design as the southeast side bays, including the panels beneath the windows, the clear leaded glass skylights whose patterns incorporate the same diamonds and quatrefoils, and the square upper clear leaded glass windows, again featuring quatrefoils. (The west sidelight has been covered by a cork bulletin board, as the window was shut off by bookcases in the reference room.) The central opening does differ, being a rectangular opening with moulded frame and a rectangular transom window, whose clear leaded glass repeats the pattern that is found in the sidelights. The northeast wall of the delivery room has a wide opening, flanked by paneled pillars on pedestals, into the stack area. This opening was once spanned by the original chargeout desk. The present chargeout desk is a modern, simply veneered, L-shaped desk in the north corner of the delivery room and extending into the stack area.

The Mowbray Reading Room in the first story of the pavilion has a rather interesting plan, based on the intersection of a circle and a rectangle. As the circle overlaps the rectangle on the northeast and the southwest, the circle's curve appears on the exterior as the bow window on the Square facade, and on the interior as the bow window to the southwest and as the two curved sections of the northeast wall to each side of the opening into the delivery room. The room has the same carpeted floor and the same paneled wainscoating beneath plaster walls seen in other rooms. A moulded wooden cornice tops the walls. The plaster ceiling is distinguished by three concentric circular mouldings. Just within the heavy outer moulding, which marks the circumference of the room's circle, the ceiling is coved. (The small corners of the ceiling outside the circle are ornamented with shallow plaster panels.) Hanging from the center of the ceiling is an electric chandelier. The northeast wall is straight in both corners, but otherwise curved to follow the circle. In each curved section north and south of the opening, the paneled wainscoating is lowered to accommodate a tall niche, which is both semicircular in plan and framed by a semicircular arch. Paneled pilasters support the moulded arch. The wooden floor of the niche projects slightly as a shelf in front. The niche's plaster walls are trimmed by a moulded baseboard and a moulding at the impost level. Above the impost moulding is the quarter spherical plaster ceiling. In the southeast wall appears the semicircular arched stained glass window that the Mowbray Reading Room shares with the entrance

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 9

Item number 7

Page 10

hall. The window is of the same design in the reading room as it is in the entrance hall, save that builtin bookcases are found beneath the window, in place of the wainscoating seen in the entrance hall. The outer southwest wall is again straight in the corners, but it is mostly occupied by the curved bow window. Each of the three windows has a large movable single pane lower sash, and a fixed stained glass transom window with geometric patterns. Each window is framed by its own paneled pilasters, supporting a moulded lintel and standing on paneled pedestals (with adjoining pilasters sharing the same paneled pedestal). A specially built curved wooden bench is set in the bow window. The outer northwest wall contains a single window of the same design as the three windows in the bow window, and also framed by paneled pilasters on paneled pedestals.

The reference room at the northwest end of the main block has a carpeted floor. The plaster walls with moulded baseboard and chair rail are largely hidden by bookcases, which are topped by simple mouldings. The plaster ceiling is framed by a cornice with mouldings and reeded soffit, and is bordered by a reeded moulding. The southeast wall has the central entry to the delivery room, with its flanking windows. The rectangular opening with its transom window and the sidelights with their tall lower and square upper windows are framed by four paneled pilasters on pedestals, supporting a cornice featuring small modillions with carved foliage. As already noted, the lower window of the west sidelight has been covered by a bookcase, but the other windows are still visible. In the same wall, to each side of the entry towards the corners, are found semicircular arches. The eastern arch, opening into the stack area, is still visible, with its pilasters supporting a moulded arch and with paneling on the arch soffit and the inner faces of the piers. But, the west arch, which contained a bookcase, like its counterpart in the periodical room, is now covered by a newer bookcase. All that is now visible is the moulded lintel and the moulded arch with paneled soffit that frame its upper quarter spherical plaster recess. The northeast wall was an outer wall, until the modern wing was built. In the center of the wall is a projecting fireplace and chimney breast. The surround has a moulded wooden frame and is flanked on each side by a fluted Composite column set in front of a similar Composite pilaster. The columns and pilasters support heavy blocks with carved shields on their outer faces. The blocks in turn support the mantelshelf, which is ornamented with fretted and beaded mouldings. Above the fireplace's moulded frame, and beneath the mantelshelf, is a rectangular panel, which contains a carved swag and is flanked by ornate carved scrolls. A former window to the north of the fireplace has been largely covered by new bookcases. Still visible is the stained glass transom window and its moulded frame. South of the fireplace is a former door into the stack area, now covered by bookcases. All that can be seen is the transom window--a semicircular fanlight with leaded rippled glass and moulded frame. The two outer (southwest and northwest) walls each contain a large, wide, semielliptical arched, triple window. Paneled pilasters support the moulded arch with its elaborate carved keystone. The window is divided into two levels by a plain lintel, the central window being wider than the flanking windows. The lower rectangular sections are large single pane sash, the central window having a movable sash, the side windows being fixed panes. The upper transom windows in the arch itself are stained

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 10

Item number 7

Page 11

glass windows, featuring geometric patterns and, in the central window, an oval medallion. The northwest medallion depicts a pen and a scroll, while the southwest medallion contains an open book and a torch. Beneath the northwest window is a radiator, while beneath the southwest window appears a builtin bookcase.

The stack area is a rectangular space, occupying all of the rear wing, with a shallow, one story, narrower, rectangular extension into the main block to the southwest towards the delivery room. The rear wing was designed to eventually contain three stack levels, but the library opened with only one stack floor. The second floor, inserted in 1971-2, does not cover the entire space, as it stops short of the southwest wall to allow room for staircases. Both stack levels have the usual carpeted floors. The plaster walls have simple baseboards and moulded chair rails at the window sill level. From the high flat plaster ceiling hangs an electric light. The shallow extension to the southwest also has a plain plaster ceiling. The extension's southwest end is practically all taken up by the wide opening into the delivery room, the narrow plaster walls to each side having low wainscoating with moulded baseboard and coping. The two narrow side (northwest and southeast) walls each contain a semicircular arched opening (into the periodical room on the southeast and the reference room on the northwest) each framed by pilasters supporting moulded arches, above sections of the same low wainscoating. East of the arches, the side walls are plastered with the usual baseboard and chair rails. To each side of the extension, in the southwest wall of the main stack area appears a door. The north door, the former door to the reference room, is now longer used and is now partially hidden by the modern staircase to the second stack level. The south door to the periodical room is a three panel door, with a moulded lintel and a fanlight of rippled leaded glass with moulded frame, in a shallow recess. The southeast wall of the stack area has three two story tall windows with diamond leaded rippled glass with stained glass borders, moulded frames, splayed jambs and sills, topped by short semicircular arched windows of the same design, to the east, and two more upper level semicircular arched windows to the west. (A third such western window is now covered on the inside by the modern booklift.) At the west end of the wall is the door to the librarian's office, a three panel door with moulded frame and lintel, and a fanlight with rippled leaded glass and moulded frame. The northwest wall still retains six tall two story windows of the same design as their southeastern counterparts, but the lower windows are rendered useless by the modern wing built against the wall. Only the semicircular arched upper level windows still provide light. (The lower portion of the westernmost window has been replaced by a doorless, plain framed opening into the modern wing.) The northeast wall still contains a group of three, two story tall, semicircular arched windows, although, again, parts of the windows have been rendered nonfunctional by the new wing. The windows are divided into three levels. The central window of the group is taller and wider and has a tall stained glass torch incorporated into its design. The three windows all have the same diamond patterned, clear, leaded glass with stained glass borders, splayed jambs and sloped sills. Against the southeast wall is found an open stairway to the basement, protected by a metal railing with geometric ironwork, square capped posts, and a moulded wooden hand rail. (The stairway has metal treads, a beaded

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet

11

Item number

7

Page

12

board inner northwest wall with a two pane window into the basement corridor and a plastered southeast wall.) The first level of the stack area is largely filled by two rows of metal bookcases with moulded cornices, divided by a central and two side aisles. Above them is the inserted floor with a ceiling of diagonal boarding and metal framing, supported in part by four metal posts on the southwest edge. In the west corner of the stack area (that is to say, at the northwest end of the space left open when the second level was added) is the stairway to the second level, with carpeted treads (but no risers), metal stringers, and balustrades with simple metal balusters, square capped metal posts, and moulded wooden hand rails. The same balustrade continues along the southwest edge of the second level, and serves the stairs of the same design from the second level, up over the open space, to the plain framed opening high in the southwest wall of the stack area. This opening to the museum in the second story of the main block is guarded by plain metal gates. The second stack level again has two rows of metal bookcases, divided by a central and two side aisles. A plain walled booklift, ornamented only by a simple baseboard, was built over the basement stairway to serve the second stack level.

The librarian's office, in the one story office section, has a carpeted floor, plaster walls with moulded baseboard, and a plaster ceiling with a shallow cove above the ceiling moulding. (Most of the walls are now covered by bookcases.) Both inner (northwest and southwest) walls contain a three panel door with moulded frame and semicircular fanlight. Both outer (northeast and southeast) walls contain a double window with one over one sash and moulded frame.

Returning up the main stairs to the second story, we enter the upper hall (the second story of the front central section), which is similar in many ways to the stair hall itself, having a board floor, plaster walls with the same moulded baseboards and chair rails, and a plaster ceiling with the same moulded cornice as the upper stair hall. An ornate chandelier hangs from the center of the ceiling. In the center of the outer southwest wall is a large round stained glass window with geometric patterns and moulded frame. Double three panel doors in a deep recess in the northwest wall serve the museum's anteroom.

The anteroom in the second story of the pavilion has a carpeted floor and, again, plaster walls with moulded baseboards and chair rails. In the center of its plaster ceiling (which is framed by a moulded cornice) hangs an electric light. Moulded frames surround the windows and doors--the double paneled doors to the upper hall in the southeast wall, the wide, double, paneled, sliding doors to the museum in the northeast wall, the single window in the outer northwest wall, and the three windows in the outer southwest wall. The windows all have single pane lower sash and stained glass transom windows with the same geometric patterns.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 12

Item number 7

Page 13

The museum, in the northwest half of the main block, once again has a carpeted floor and plaster walls with moulded baseboards and chair rails. But here the walls are topped by an ornate cornice featuring carved foliage. Above the cornice, a pronounced plaster cove rises to an elaborate moulding framing the flat rectangular ceiling. From the ornate border moulding hang twelve electric globes. The flat ceiling has a large, rectangular, moulded, recessed panel. Inscribed in the rectangle is the round moulded frame of a large stained glass skylight with geometric patterns. In the center of the southeast end of the room are the double doors with semicircular transom window and moulded frame to the balcony in the periodical room. The southwest wall contains to the south, the double sliding doors to the anteroom, whose moulded frame is topped by an entablature, and to the north, a triple window which projects slightly from the wall. Each of the three windows has a large, lower, movable, single pane sash, and a stained glass transom window with geometric pattern. Although the central window is wider than its companions, all have moulded frames and are topped by a shared entablature. The northwest wall features a triple window of the same design. Projecting from the northeast wall is a fireplace and chimney breast. The brick interior of the fireplace has a marble hearth and surround. The marble surround, in turn, has a moulded wooden frame and is flanked by two fluted Doric columns supporting a mantelpiece, which is a true Doric entablature, complete with dentils, triglyphs and guttae. South of the fireplace is the opening serving the modern stairs to the second stack level. This opening, once filled by a stained glass window, and now containing plain metal gates, has a moulded frame, which is crowned by an entablature.

Returning to the stair hall, and going up the last flight in the stair hall, we pass through the door at the top of the stairs and find a spiral staircase in the corner turret. The turret here has a board floor, plastered brick outer walls, beaded board inner walls, and a high unfinished ceiling with exposed framing. The spiral staircase has a round central post, plain board treads (but no risers) and a simple balustrade. The staircase climbs past four tall narrow semicircular arched stained glass windows with diamond patterns. Four more tall, semicircular arched stained glass windows with similar patterns appear in the turret wall above the staircase, which ends at the square room in the tower's third story. The tower room is unfinished, with board floor, bare brick walls, and an unfinished board ceiling with exposed framing. Three of the walls each contain a semicircular arched window with geometrically patterned stained glass, two semicircular arched windows, a roundel and two spherical triangles. A short opening in the windowless northeast wall leads into the attic. The attics of the main block, the pavilion and the front central section form one large unfinished space, interrupted only by the terra cotta walls of the museum skylight well. The skylight well is plastered on the interior and lights the attic through a four pane window in its southeast wall. A short opening leads into the attic of the rear stack wing. All of the attics are unfinished, with board walks across the ceiling joists, bare brick and terra cotta walls, board ceilings, and exposed joists, rafters and roof trusses.

MAR 13 1985



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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 13

Item number 7

Page 14

The basement is reached by the stairs under the main stairs, which have board steps, plaster walls with moulded baseboards, and a plaster ceiling. The basement stairs are interrupted by two landings, one in the corner turret, the other another flight down from the turret. The third and lowest flight of the stairs is protected by a balustrade with square balusters, square posts with carved knobs, and moulded hand rail, and ends in a small hall, with concrete floor, plaster ceiling, three plaster walls and a northwest wall of composition board. A four panel door with plain frame in the hall's southeast wall serves the restroom in the tower and turret basement, while a composition board door in the northwest wall serves the basement proper. The restroom has linoleum floor, plaster walls and ceiling. The restroom is lit by high windows with rippled glass, two in the turret, and one in the tower's southeast facade. Beaded board walls partition off a closet and a toilet stall at the northeast end of the room, both spaces being served by four panel doors with plain frames.

The basements under the main block, the pavilion, and the front central section form one large connected space, interrupted only by an occasional pier or chimney base, and largely filled with bookcases. The main basement has concrete floors, painted brick and stone walls, and a ceiling of shallow plastered terra cotta segmental vaults. It is lit by high windows, five in the semicircular southeast end of the main block, three beneath the bow window of the pavilion, two in the southwest wall of the main block, and three more in the northwest end of the main block. A short paneled door high in the southwest wall serves the small space under the vestibule, with its concrete floor, brick and stone walls, and shallow brick vault. A four panel door with a large three pane transom window opens into a shallow closet against the northwest wall of the pavilion. The closet, with the same interior as the basement, is lit by the basement window in the pavilion's northwest facade. A doorless opening in the main basement's northeast wall leads into the basement corridor in the rear stack wing. The stack wing basement has the same concrete floors, painted brick and stone walls, and plastered terra cotta vaults as the main basement. But the southeast wall of the corridor is the beaded board wall of the rear stairs. A beaded board door serves a closet under the stairs, while a four panel door opens onto the foot of the stairs and thereby allows access to the furnace room, whose sliding metal door is directly opposite it. (The furnace room, in the basement of the office section, has concrete floor and ceiling, and painted brick walls. It is lit by a single high window in each outer wall. In the north corner is found a short, small toilet room, with beaded board walls, a four panel door with moulded frame, and its own separate lower ceiling.) The basement corridor ends in a storage room, with concrete steps up to a concrete landing at the rear basement entry, double paneled doors with builtin windows. The storage room is lit by two basement windows. Off the landing, a sliding metal door serves a similar, albeit shorter and smaller, storage room. In the southwest wall of the main storage room, double metal doors open into the custodians'workroom, which is connected by a modern wooden door to the auditorium in the lower level of the modern wing.

MAR 19 1986

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet

14

Item number 7

Page 15

The modern wing's main entry in the southeast entry pavilion opens into a vestibule-stair hall. From the landing at the entry, stairs lead down to the lower level hall, serving the kitchen, auditorium, two restrooms and a storage area, and up to the upper level hall, serving two more restrooms, the staff room, and the children's room. The floors and stair treads are covered with linoleum. The stairs have metal balustrades with stainless steel rails and posts. The outer southeast wall of the vestibule is the metal framed glass wall, containing eighty panels of glass as well as the double glass doors. The walls of the vestibule-stair hall are sheathed with plywood, mostly a smooth, light colored wood, but with large triangles of darker and rougher wood flanking the stairs themselves. The ceilings are plastered with a simple moulding.

The lower level hall has modern wooden doors with plain frames, one to the kitchen in the southwest wall, one in the southeast wall under the stairs, serving the storage space, and two in the northeast wall for the two restrooms. Double doors with plain frame and builtin windows in the northwest wall serve the Martha A. Prescott Auditorium, identified by a bronze plaque above the doors. The kitchen has a linoleum floor, three painted concrete block walls, a plastered southwest wall, a plain framed countertop opening with overhead door in the northwest wall, a two pane southeast window, and an acoustic tile ceiling with simple moulding. The storage space is actually two spaces, a low space under the stairs, and a regular room in the east corner of the wing's smaller section. The storage space and the two restrooms all have linoleum floors, painted concrete block walls, and acoustic tile ceilings with simple mouldings, and are lit by high two pane windows, one in each restroom and three in the eastern storage room.

The auditorium is a large room occupying most of the lower level of the modern wing's main block. It has a carpeted floor and a plaster ceiling with modern strip lighting. The walls are sheathed with light plywood (trimmed by simple baseboards and coping) up to the sills of the high windows and are plastered between the windows. The room is lit by high two pane windows, six in the northwest wall, a central triple window and two flanking single windows in the northeast wall. The southeast wall contains the double entry doors, the kitchen countertop opening, and the modern wooden door to the basement of the original building, all with the plain frames found on all of the modern wing's doors. Most of the southwest wall of the auditorium is occupied by a wide stage, with plain frame and hanging curtain, set one step above the auditorium floor. (The stage itself has a linoleum floor, plywood wainscoating with baseboard and coping beneath plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling.) To the south of the stage is a louvred door serving the L-shaped closet that stretches around the stage to its southeast and southwest. (The closet has concrete floor and ceiling, new concrete block walls, and older stone walls, the outer walls and the foundation of the original building.) To the north of the stage is a modern wooden exit door to the stairhall--vestibule on the southwest (Square) side of the modern wing. The stairhall-vestibule has linoleum floor and steps, plain plaster walls and ceiling. The stairs lead up to the entry by two flights, the first past a two pane window in the northwest wall, the second past a single pane window in the southwest wall.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 15

Item number 7

Page 16

The entry door and its sidelights are metal framed, as are the high, southwest, five pane windows, a double window and a single window, in the upper level of the two story vestibule. Sliding glass windows high in the inner walls of the vestibule allow light from the upper level exterior windows into the workroom in the modern wing's upper level.

The upper level hall of the main (southeast) vestibule-stair hall has two wooden doors in the southwest wall for two restrooms, another wooden door in the northeast wall for the staff room, and double, metal framed, glass doors with metal framed transom window in the northwest wall for the children's room. The two restrooms each have a linoleum floor, plaster walls, an acoustic tile ceiling and a three pane window. The boys' room, to the southwest of the girls' room, is reached by a corridor behind the girls' room, off which is a closet with a modern wooden door, and the same interior as the restrooms. The staff room again has a linoleum floor, plaster walls, and an acoustic tile ceiling with simple moulding. Two three pane windows appear in both its southeast and northeast walls. The northwest wall has two wooden doors, to an eastern restroom, with the same interior and another three pane window, and to a western cloakroom with linoleum floor, plaster walls and ceiling.

The children's room occupies most of the upper level of the modern wing's main block, although a large workroom has been partitioned off at the southwest end. The children's room has a carpeted floor, and an acoustic tile ceiling with strip lighting and a simple ceiling moulding. Bookcases cover most of its walls. The northeast wall is entirely plastered, while the southeast and northwest walls also have plywood wainscoatings. The outer walls of the workroom are entirely sheathed with plywood. The long southeast wall is windowless, with just two openings, the double entry door and the doorless opening at the west end into the original building. The northeast wall is dominated by tall seven pane windows, a central triple window and flanking single windows. Five five-pane windows appear in the northwest wall. The workroom, set in the west corner, spans almost the entire width of the children's room, leaving only a wide corridor to its southeast. At the far (southwest) end of this corridor are double wooden doors to a large closet, with carpeted floor, plaster walls and ceiling. The walls shared by the workroom and the children's room, the five bay corridor wall and the nine bay southwest wall, have two tiers of large plain framed plate glass windows, broken only by a door with builtin window in each wall. The workroom has a carpeted floor, plastered outer walls, plywood sheathed inner walls, and an acoustic tile ceiling with ceiling moulding. (The inner northeast and southeast) walls, as already described, have two tiers of plate glass windows and a door apiece. The southwest wall has an exterior five pane window and five sliding glass windows opening into the southwest vestibule, while the northwest wall has two more exterior five pane windows.

May 13 1985

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

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

Continuation sheet

16

Item number

7

Page 17

The library is set on a slight knoll near the middle of its four sided lot. The spacious grounds are grassed with ornamental trees and shrubs, some of the trees having grown to a large size. Thick foundation plantings encircle the new wing. The lot is bounded in part on the northwest by a hedge, and on the northeast by another hedge and a dense row of tall cedars. Along the paved sidewalks on the Church and Main Street frontages is found a deep granite curb which is indented as a quarter-circle around a tall flagpole at the corner of the two streets. The flagpole is set on a wide circular granite foundation marked with the compass points. Set on a circular step and an octagonal step above the foundation is the flagpole's octagonal granite base, which has four massive scrolls, with carved foliage, at the cardinal points, and a moulded cornice. Above the granite base, a moulded copper base holds the tall wooden flagpole which is topped by a globe and a weathervane. Behind the flagpole stands the honor roll of World War I veterans, erected by the city in 1919. The three large bronze plaques listing the veterans and ornamented with foliated borders, the city seal, an eagle, and medallions of the armed services, are hung on wooden panels between round metal posts topped by simple globes. A wide, granite curbed, concrete walkway from Main Street to the main entry is twice interrupted by granite steps with granite sidewalls, as it steps up to the library lawn, and, again, as it steps up to the knoll on which the library sits. Beside the front walk is a granite block with a bronze plaque, labeled "Gale Memorial Library". A strip of asphalt paving surrounding the original building is used as a walkway around the southeast end of the building where it ends at a flight of concrete steps (with metal handrails on low concrete sidewalls) down to the paved drive serving the basement entry under the modern wing's porch. Northeast of the library is found an attractive garden which is served by two walkways that are almost parallel. The older southerly asphalt paved walk leads from granite steps with granite sidewalls at the Main Street sidewalk curb around the modern wing to the small staff parking lot northeast of the building. The northerly concrete walk leads from granite and concrete steps on the Main Street sidewalk along the northwest boundary and up a short flight of concrete steps to a circular concrete walk around a large fountain. The circular fountain is simply designed with a large shallow concrete basin with a plain concrete curb and a simple central jet. Short concrete walks connect the southerly walk with the circular fountain walk and the northerly walk. Between the two long walks, southwest of the fountain, is found the garden proper with flowerbeds, shrubs, a stone lantern, and a sundial set on a boulder. Just off the southerly walk in this garden is the city's Spanish American War monument, a bronze plaque with a list of soldiers, decorated with a foliated border, the city seal and the Spanish War Veterans badge, and mounted on a large rough granite slab. Northeast of the building are found two paved drives from Church Street, one to the modern wing's porch and the basement entry of the original building, the other to the small staff parking lot northeast of the modern wing. The two drives are connected by a short cross drive, creating a semi-circular loop off Church Street. A metal bookdrop is set beside the cross drive to serve drivers using the loop. A short walk, flanked by a metal handrail on a low

MAR 1 8 1983

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet 17

Item number 7

Page 18

concrete base, leads from the southerly drive to the modern wing's entry pavilion. Another paved walk leads from granite steps at the east corner of the lot, near the Church Street-Beacon Street intersection, across the lawn to the northerly drive, providing a more direct access to the wing.

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet 18

Item number 8

Page 2

The trustees/building committee also decided that \$10,000 would not suffice for the city's library building. To the original bequest was added the \$10,000 bequest for "a town hall or building for public use" and the quarter of the residue of the estate. Construction of the building was delayed for a few years as the executors worked to convert Gale's securities and real estate holdings into cash.<sup>4</sup> By 1900, they were ready to act. In the fall of that year, the Moulton buildings were removed to clear the site for building operations in 1901. The building committee considered proposals from several architects, finally settling on a design by the well known Boston architect Charles Brigham (1841-1925). Brigham's design, as it came from the architect's drafting boards in the spring of 1901, was for an impressive granite Romanesque Revival library.<sup>5</sup> In May of 1901, after workmen had begun grading the lot, the building contract was awarded to E. Noyes Whitcomb & Co. of Boston. The contract called for the walls to be up by October 15 and the roofs on by November 15. The rejection of imperfect stone delivered in July delayed construction, but fine fall weather allowed the contractor to almost meet the schedule. By October 9, a local newspaper could report "The wall on the end towards the B & M railroad track, which part of the building will contain the books, is now finished up to about six feet of the top, while the first story of the walls on the other sides is laid."<sup>6</sup> By the end of November, all of the roofs, save the tower roof, were up and covered with tarpaper. Slating commenced in early December. But, in 1903-03 progress seems to have slowed, as the projected completion date for the building was moved back from the summer of 1902 to October, then into 1903, first to January, then to May. The plasterers were finishing their work in June of 1902. In early December, the carpenters had nearly completed the interior finish, with the exception of the floors. In February, 1903, the building was reported as "nearing completion" with the custom made furniture, light fixtures and carpets "now being received and placed in position."<sup>7</sup> But "the finishing touches" were delayed for "several weeks" for "lack of some small...fixtures which did not arrive from the manufacturer" as soon as planned.<sup>8</sup> Finally, on June 9, 1903, the Gale Memorial Library was dedicated with

<sup>4</sup>Part of the delay was intentional. Gale died during an economic depression. So, the executors waited for economic recovery and a rise in the value of securities, etc., before selling off much of the property.

<sup>5</sup>Two important changes were made in the design after work began on the building. In August, 1901, more expensive red slate was substituted for the planned green slate roofs. In the original design, the roofs of the tower and the corner turret were about the same height. But in January, 1902, it was decided to raise the tower roof above its companion. Both changes must be regarded as aesthetic improvements.

<sup>6</sup>Laconia News & Critic, October 9, 1901.

<sup>7</sup>Laconia Democrat, February, 6, 1903.

<sup>8</sup>Laconia Democrat, April 24, 1903.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 19

Item number 8

Page 3

MAR 18 1995

much ceremony and to the general approval of the public.<sup>9</sup> As one local newspaper delicately put it, "The progress of constructing the Gale Library may possibly have been a trifle slow, but...every Laconian will admit that it is worth waiting for."<sup>10</sup> The building, exclusive of the furnishings, lot and groundwork, cost "a little more than \$60,000"<sup>11</sup>, six times Gale's original bequest.

The library grounds continued to be improved over the years. The Congregational Church at the corner of Church and Main Streets, was regarded by many, including the majority of the Congregationalists, as an old fashioned and obsolete building. It was also a traffic hazard, as Church Street, an increasingly important thoroughfare, was narrowed considerably by the structure. In May of 1903, prompted in part by the library building committee, the city council condemned the church. The Congregationalists built a new church nearby, selling the old church to the People's Christian Church Society, which moved it across the Square to a new site. Most of the small church lot disappeared when Church Street was widened, although a narrow strip a few yards wide was added to the library lot. More importantly, the removal of the church gave the Gale Memorial Library undisputed dominance of the northeast end of the Square. The library grounds have been carefully maintained as a small park. Improvements have included the layout of the garden, with its fountain, along the northwest side of the property. Of greater symbolic importance was the erection by the Gale trustees in 1917 of the grand flagpole designed by Boston architects Adden & Parker for the street corner, and the erection by the city of the World War I honor roll in 1919 and the Spanish-American War monument in 1949.

The building itself has survived virtually intact. The one major exterior change was the addition in 1956-57 of the modern wing. Designed by architects Prescott & Erickson and built by Rolfe Camp Co., Inc., the new wing provided much needed facilities, a children's room, a workroom, and an auditorium. At the dedication on November 17, 1957, the library trustees "regretted that the addition could not conform to the architecture of the main building".<sup>12</sup> But the new wing, although differing in style and materials, from the original building, does at least have the virtue of modesty. Lower and simpler than the original library, it was placed in the rear corner of the older building. While the modern wing hides the lower portions of three original facades, the important features and the public facades of the original library were left untouched.

<sup>9</sup>It took some time for the public library to settle into its new quarters. The periodical room opened on July 22, but the first books were not loaned from the new building until August 3.

<sup>10</sup>Laconia Democrat, December 5, 1902.

<sup>11</sup>Manchester Union, June 10, 1903.

<sup>12</sup>Laconia Evening Citizen, November 18, 1957.

MAR 13 1985

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 20

Item number 8

Page 4

The interior has also seen some changes. The new wing required the cutting of a door in the stack wing and the obscuring of some windows in the stack wing and the main block. The continued growth of the library collection led to additional changes. Over the past few decades, the reference room bookshelves have been expanded to fill the entire wall space, in the process, hiding an older bookcase, a door, an exterior window, and a sidelight of the entryway. The same growth of the collection required the construction in 1971-72 of the second tier of stacks, with its stairways down to main level and up to the museum. Other changes were included in the 1971-72 renovation. The first floor and the museum were carpeted. The workroom in the modern wing was enlarged. The original chargeout desk had spanned the opening between the delivery room and the stacks. In keeping with the modern library practice of providing free access to the books, the old desk was replaced by a new chargeout desk to the side of that opening. The plan of the first floor was changed by moving the stained glass window in the entrance hall. It had originally filled the arch between the entrance hall and the periodical room. The delivery room was reached from the entrance hall through what is now the Mowbray Reading Room, which was connected to the entrance hall by an archway. The opening between the entrance hall and the Mowbray Reading Room was now closed by the relocated stained glass window, turning that small space from a busy passageway into an isolated reading room. The new opening between the entrance hall and the periodical room, and the moved stained glass window, were so carefully rebuilt that the casual visitor, ignorant of the building's history, is quite unaware that any change was made. Basically, with the exception of the chargeout desk, several elements in the reference room and the stained glass window between the museum and the stack wing<sup>13</sup>, all of the library's original interior features are still to be seen and admired.

The high praise that the Gale Memorial Library received at the time of its dedication was well deserved. The choice of the Romanesque Revival style for Laconia's largest and most prominent public building was an appropriate one. (That choice may have been prompted by Bradford Gilbert's Romanesque Revival railroad station just across the Square, which is, like the library, one of the state's best examples of the style.) The late Romanesque Revival, inspired by the work of H.H. Richardson, emphasized weight and massiveness through rock faced masonry, heavy arches, deep window reveals, broad hip and pyramidal roofs. These devices are all used successfully in the Gale Memorial Library, to give the building a true sense of dignity and strength. Generally, the exterior details are very simple, as is evidenced by the plain cornice with its heavy stone brackets on the main block, pavilion and stack wing. But, Brigham designed a building that was not only strong but picturesque. The general severity of the walls is relieved by the use of light gray granite for the arches, surrounds, sills, lintels, stringcourses, cornices, and the high basement, and by the use of smooth stone and carved ornament where it is most appropriate, at the main entry and in the top stories of the building's most prominent feature, the tower and its corner turret. The building's main level plan was organized around two

<sup>13</sup>This stained glass window, depicting a printing press, was preserved and is now in storage.



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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

21

Item number 8

Page 5

cross axes which met in the delivery room. But that basic axial arrangement is submerged by the variety of forms used for the different parts of the building, the main block with its semicircular apse, the somewhat lower pavilion with its bow window, the large stack wing with its ventilator, the one story office section, the one story, gable-roofed main entry with its arched porch, and the great square tower with its round corner turret. These distinct sections are unified by similar wall treatment and ornament, and are successfully molded into a coherent composition. As a result, the Gale Memorial Library is at once massive and strong, as well as varied and picturesque. A large building, it is nevertheless more impressive than its size would suggest, and quite simply dominates its surroundings.

The interior is harder to classify stylistically. Classical elements, such as the ornate cornices with mouldings and mutules or the pilasters flanking doors and windows and supporting semicircular arches are more common than medieval elements, such as the groin vault in the entrance hall or the stained glass windows. The building successfully accommodates both styles, the medieval limestone fireplace of the periodical room as well as the classical Doric fireplace of the museum. For the interior, the architect was less concerned with stylistic consistency than with the creation of elaborate and dignified public spaces. Certainly, the public rooms of the Gale Memorial Library are among the most interesting of any public building in central New Hampshire. The large tall periodical room, with its semicircular southeast apse, tall arched windows, elaborate doorway with sidelights and balcony in the northwest end, and ornate ceiling, is the most impressive. But, so are the entrance hall with its groin vault and stairway, the delivery room with its elaborate cornice and symmetrical design, the Mowbray Reading Room with its unusual plan and ceiling, the reference room with its great arched triple windows, and finally, the museum with its own unique triple windows and elaborate ceiling with stained glass skylight. Few municipal buildings in central New Hampshire can approach the public rooms of the Gale Memorial Library in the high quality of their design and ornament.

Bryant Tolles included the Gale Memorial Library in his *NEW HAMPSHIRE ARCHITECTURE* as "an excellent though late example of the Romanesque Revival style".<sup>14</sup> Both categorizations are correct. In New Hampshire, the Romanesque Revival was popular primarily in the 1880's and the 1890's. Only a few significant Romanesque Revival buildings were erected in the 20th century, mostly in the first five years of the century. The style was used basically for public buildings, churches, schools, town halls, courthouses and libraries. The Gale Memorial Memorial Library must be ranked highly among these buildings, particularly among the library buildings. A number of notable Romanesque Revival libraries were built in the 1890's, such as the Clay Library in Jaffrey (1895-6), the Conant Library in Winchester (1890), the Silsby Library in Charlestown (1893-4), and the Pillsbury Free Library in Warner (1890-1). But these, like most

<sup>14</sup>Bryant F. Tolles, Jr., *NEW HAMPSHIRE ARCHITECTURE* (Hanover, 1979), pp. 252-3.

MAR 13 1987  
NPS Form 10-900-a  
(3-82)

OMB No. 1024-0018  
Expires 10-31-87

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet 22 Item number 8 Page 6

New Hampshire public libraries, are relatively small buildings. The only Romanesque Revival library that is comparable in size to the Laconia library is Wilson Hall (1884-5), Dartmouth College's former library. Of the two, the Gale Memorial Library is the more impressive and the more sophisticated. It could be argued that the Laconia library is New Hampshire's most important Romanesque Revival library building. Certainly, it can be stated, without fear of contradiction, that the Gale Memorial Library is one of the best examples of both its style and its building type in the state.

MAR 13 1985

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet 23

Item number 9

Page 2

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Adden & Parker, Architects "Flagstaff and Base, Laconia, N.H." plans and elevations (manuscript, Gale Memorial Library, Laconia, N.H.).

Belknap County Probate Records, Docket 5341, Napoleon B. Gale (Belknap County Registry of Probate, Laconia, N.H.).

Charles Brigham, correspondence with library building committee (manuscripts, Gale Memorial Library, Laconia, N.H.).

Charles Brigham, Architect "Public Library Building, Laconia, N.H." plans, elevations and sections (manuscript, Gale Memorial Library, Laconia, N.H.).

Laconia Democrat - February 3, 1899; August 17, 1900; May 10 & 17, July 19, November 1 & 29, 1901; January 10, April 4, June 27, July 26, September 19, December 5, 1902; February 6, April 24, May 1 & 29, June 5 & 12, July 24, 1903; September 21, 1917; January 14, 1918.

Laconia Evening Citizen - June 24, 1953; August 28, September 21 & 25, October 10, 1956; November 18, 1957; June 5, 1973.

Laconia Public Library "Minutes of Board of Trustees, 1971-1979" (manuscript, Gale Memorial Library, Laconia, N.H.).

Laconia News & Critic - April 17, 1895; February 20, May 15 & 22, August 21, October 9 & 30, November 27, December 4, 1901; March 26, April 16, July 9, October 1 & 8, 1902; February 4, April 29, May 27, June 10, 1903.

Manchester Union - June 10, 1903.

Manchester Union Leader - March 5, 1957.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE STATE LIBRARY AND THE STATE LIBRARIAN - June 1, 1904 - May 31, 1906 (Manchester, 1906).

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CITY OF LACONIA for the year ending February 15, 1896 (Laconia, 1896).

Bryant F. Tolles, Jr., NEW HAMPSHIRE ARCHITECTURE (Hanover, 1979).

Charles W. Vaughan, ed., THE ILLUSTRATED LACONIAN (1899).

E. Noyes Whitcomb & Co., contract with the library building committee, May 13, 1901 (manuscript, Gale Memorial Library, Laconia, N.H.).

MAR 12 1985

NPS Form 10-900-a  
(3-82)

OMB No. 1024-0018  
Exp. 10-31-84

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet 24

Item number 9

Page 3

Interview - Gilbert Center, January 4, 1985.

Interview - Marjorie Center, January 10, 1985.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 24

Item number 10

Page 2

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The nominated property is a four sided lot, bounded on the southwest by Main Street (and Veterans Square), on the southeast by Church Street, on the northwest by a railroad right-of-way owned by the State of New Hampshire, and on the northeast by property of the Roman Catholic Diocese of New Hampshire. The nominated property includes the Gale Memorial Library and the lot on which it has stood since 1903. (Laconia Tax Map - plat 147, street 142, lot 1)

Boundaries of the nominated property have been highlighted in yellow on the attached sketch map (25-10-3).

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

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

For NPS use only

received

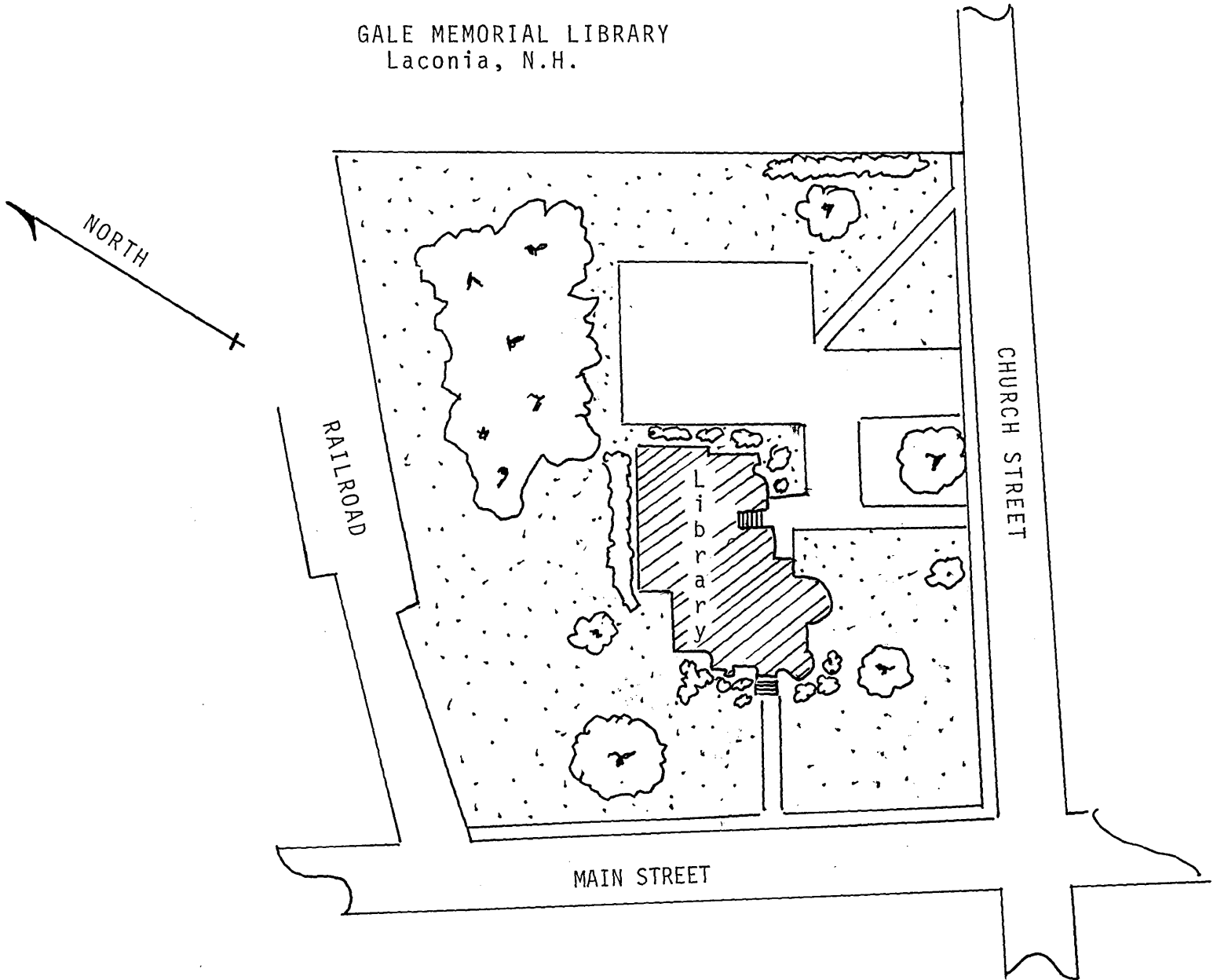
date entered

Continuation sheet 25

Item number 10

Page 3

GALE MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
Laconia, N.H.



SCALE 1" = 400'

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 26

Item number support information Page 1

---

This Certifies that the appearance of the photographs has not changed