

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 24 1987

date entered JUN 2 1987

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

1. Name

historic Memorial Hall

and or common Memorial Hall

2. Location

street & number South Main Street, corner of Elm Street NA not for publication

city, town WINDSOR LOCKS NA vicinity of

state CT code 09 county Hartford code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: veterans hall

4. Owner of Property

name Windsor Locks War Veterans Memorial, Inc.

c/o Mr. Francis J. Draghi

street & number 28 Center Street

city, town Windsor Locks NA vicinity of state CT 06096

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Windsor Locks Land Records, Town Office Building

street & number 50 Church Street

city, town Windsor Locks state CT

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1987 federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission

59 South Prospect Street

city, town Hartford state CT

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Overview

Memorial Hall in Windsor Locks is a 44 x 77' grey granite ashlar 3-story structure in the Romanesque Revival style. It was built in 1890 to the design of F. S. Newman of Springfield, Massachusetts, as a Civil War memorial and G.A.R. hall. The building faces east near the center of town on the southwest corner of South Main and Elm streets. Across South Main Street to the east are the railroad, the Windsor Locks canal, and a paper mill. Office buildings and a parking lot are neighbors on the other three sides. A wrought-iron picket fence runs across the front of the parcel.

Monuments have been erected in Memorial Hall's front yard honoring those who served in World Wars I and II (1953) and the Korean and Vietnam conflicts (1976). (Photograph 1) The Korean and Vietnam monoliths flank the World Wars I and II monument. The property has one contributing building, Memorial Hall, one contributing structure, the fence, and two non-contributing objects, the monuments related to later wars, which are non-contributing because they are less than 50 years old.

Exterior

The building is approached through gates in the fence. (Photograph 2) A stone walk leads up to the recessed entrance. The voussoirs of the 17'-wide entrance arch are incised with the words MEMORIAL HALL. The double door, glazed and paneled, is set between side lights of small prisms over panels, under a glazed transom. Flanking the doorway are quarter-round wall sections. The effect is gradually to diminish the width of the entrance from the first steps, which are wider than the arch, to the doors, which are narrower than the arch. (Photograph 3)

To the left of the entrance is a polished granite plaque with incised lettering giving basic data about the building. (Photograph 4) To the right of the entrance is a round corner tower with four 1/1 windows of curved glass at first and second floors. The conical roof of the tower has a molded cornice over interrupted bead molding, is covered with slate, and rises to a sturdy finial. (Photograph 5)

On the south elevation at the first and second floors toward the front the windows are staggered in size and position to light the interior stairway. Behind them are two tiers of six 1/1 windows. (Photograph 6) The north elevation is similar, but without the staggered stairway windows. There is a chimney near the tower. (Photograph 7) On the rear elevation there are two pairs of 1/1 windows at the first and second floors and two single windows in the attic. The rear gable end, in diaperwork, rises to a chimney that serves as a finial. (Photograph 8)

The granite was quarried in Monson, Massachusetts. The contractor was Watson H. Bliss of Hartford and the mason Alexander Dallas of Hartford.

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Interior

The first-floor plan provides a central hall with stairway on the left, and two meeting rooms to the rear. The hall, like most of the interior, is now painted a cream color. Originally, the hall was painted with frescoes by Frank D. Cordes & Co. of Holyoke, Massachusetts.¹ The work included crossed flags painted on the ceiling and foliate borders on the walls. A bronze plaque lists the names of men from Windsor Locks who died in the Civil War. A photograph of the building's donor, Charles E. Chaffee, hangs in the hall.

To the right, the tower room (Photograph 9) originally a library, has curved bookcases and a fireplace. The mantel has surround and hearth of glazed ceramic tiles and a mirror above the shelf that is flanked by free-standing columns. (Photograph 10) Behind the tower is an anteroom (now a modern kitchen) and then a meeting hall, originally used by the Sons of Veterans, an organization affiliated with the Grand Army of the Republic. In this room there is a large paneled door under transom, in natural-finish ash, typical of doors throughout the building. (Photograph 11) Also present in this room are two "stations" used in G.A.R. meeting rituals. These square pedestals, with a hinged door on one side, were associated with the functions of officials in the proceedings, such as adjutant, sergeant-at-arms, and doorkeeper. (Photograph 12.)

A similar anteroom and hall in the south half of the building were used by the Women's Relief Corps, the distaff affiliate of the G.A.R. This room is now used by the American Legion. (Photograph 13)

At the left of the hall an elliptical stairway rises around an open well. (Photograph 14) It has a heavy molded handrail and newels that are made of square and turned components. The balusters, however, are square with incised vertical lines. At the second floor there is another hall that leads to the tower room, in the same arrangement as on the first floor. The second-floor tower room also has a fireplace with elaborate mantel.

The main G.A.R. meeting hall, 45 x 50', occupies the rest of the second floor. While its space is intact, and it retains its 14'-high ceiling, the finishes have been changed. Originally the walls were tinted and had painted borders of G.A.R. badges. (Photograph 15)

In the attic the roof framing is clearly visible. It consists of rafters, two purlins on each slope, collar beams, and diagonal braces. (Photograph 16) The front and rear walls are lined with soft-fired brick. Vertical steel rods from the collar beams help support the floor. Also visible is the interior of the conical roof of the tower, which is constructed of vertical flush boarding supported on a tapered framework of rafters and horizontal braces. (Photograph 17)

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1. Dedication of Memorial Hall, Windsor Locks, Connecticut, Wednesday,
June 10, 1891, p. 6.

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formed in 1866 and disbanded in 1956. The G.A.R. Department of Connecticut dates from 1867. The J.H. Converse² Post No. 67 G.A.R. was organized in 1884. In 1889 Jabez H. Hayden sold to the post property for a building at a favorable price (\$3500) with unusual restrictions that explain the building's continued existence at this time.³ The deed provided that the building to be constructed was to be used as a Soldiers Memorial forever, or become the property of the Orthodox Congregational Church, located several doors north on South Main Street, of which Hayden was a deacon. In return for the conveyance of this interest in the property the church by a separate deed⁴ was charged with maintaining the building forever as a Soldiers Memorial. This early example of a preservation restriction proved to be effective.

The donor of the building, Charles E. Chaffee, born in Monson, Massachusetts, in 1818 was 73 years old at the time of the dedication. A local mill owner,⁵ he was not a member of the G.A.R. His motivation for the generous gift is unknown. On the assumption that he simply wished to make a philanthropic gesture to the community, it is not surprising that his gift took the form of a Civil War memorial. Civil War memorials were popular in the years following the war. Usually the memorial took the form of a monument, but a building as the memorial was not unique. Perhaps the best known building to serve the purpose of a Civil War memorial is Memorial Hall, Cambridge.⁶ A Connecticut example is the Madison Town Hall.⁷

The town-wide celebration on the day the memorial was dedicated in 1891 was in line with the norm. The dedication of a Civil War monument usually was a major civic event with a day-long program of parade, speeches, and hospitality on a scale not likely to be matched for decades. The line of march in Windsor Locks consisted of 24 units including the First Company Governor's Footguard of 61 men and Colt's Band of 26 pieces from Hartford. The day was a successful mixture of civic pride, patriotism, tribute to the dead, and a good time celebration with broad participation, an event perhaps unique in the community's history.

In the 20th century, before World War II, the last two members of the G.A.R. post turned the hall over to the Congregational Church, in accordance with the plan made by Jabez H. Hayden. The building was used only occasionally for civic events and as a hall for rent. During World War II the rationing board leased the building.⁸ Then came a proposal that Memorial Hall be converted into the Town Hall.⁸ Architectural drawings for the revised floor plans were prepared. But interested veterans instituted legal action as a result of which the property in 1947 was deeded to a new organization, the Windsor Locks War Veterans Memorial, Inc.⁹ Use of the building was opened up to all veterans' organizations, and the monuments to those who served in later wars were erected in the front yard. Memorial Hall became the focus in the community for patriotic activity relating to all wars and conflicts from the Civil War onward.

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1.

The supervising architect of The Linden, Isaac A. Allen, Jr. (1859-1953), remained in Hartford and became probably the city's most prolific architect. One of his commissions was the 1896 cast-iron front for the Stackpole, Moore & Tryon store, where the characteristic Newman rounded corner is to be seen in cast iron.

2.

Major Joseph H. Converse was killed in action at Cold Harbor on June 4, 1864. The G.A.R. post named for him succeeded a "Veterans Organization" founded in 1879.

3.

Windsor Locks Land Records, volume 8, page 219.

4.

WLLR 5/555.

5.

Chaffee worked when a young man as a wool sorter, becoming knowledgeable in the subject and advancing to the position of wool buyer. From 1838-44 he was wool buyer at the Rock and New England Mills, Rockville, then for the Enfield Stockinet Mill at Thompsonville. In 1863 he came to Windsor Locks and in 1866 journeyed to Nottingham, England, with the mill owner to buy full-fashioned knitting machinery for a new underwear mill in Windsor Locks. When the new mill failed it was reorganized with capital provided by J. Watson Beach of Hartford. Chaffee managed the mill and eventually bought it. The mill employed 200.

6.

Designed by Ware & Van Brunt, 1870.

7.

Built as Madison Memorial Hall, 1896.

8.

Memorial Hall, Madison, became the Madison Town Hall in 1939.

9.

WLLR 42/219, 44/139.

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

Specific dates 1890 **Builder/Architect** W. H. Bliss/F. S. Newman

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Summary

Memorial Hall is significant architecturally because it is a good example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style, and enjoys an excellent state of integrity. (Criterion C - Architecture) It is significant historically because it has served for a century as the focus of the community's high regard and esteem for those who served in the Civil War and later wars.

Criterion C - Architecture

Memorial Hall is a rugged masonry building of monumental proportions with sensitive details in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The over scaled entrance arch, corner tower, and quarry-faced grey Monson granite all contribute toward making the building a typical example of the style.

By the time Memorial Hall was built in 1890, the Richardsonian Romanesque no longer was new and, indeed, had started to give way in popularity to the more refined forms of the Classical Revival. Some sense of the on-coming fashion is present in Memorial Hall because it is not as rugged, the window reveals are not as deep, and the masonry is not as three dimensional as found in two nearby buildings designed by Richardson himself, the Hampden County Courthouse (1871), Springfield, and the Cheney Block (1876), Hartford.

The simplicity of the interior layout of Memorial Hall is to be noted. The building worked well, with a clearly organized plan for its function of providing meeting halls for G.A.R. groups. At the same time its interior detailing is carefully thought out and, in the ash woodwork, elliptical stairway, and tower-room fireplaces, reflects good quality workmanship of the period.

The architect of Memorial Hall, Frederick Savage Newman (1847-1906), was born in Bangor, Maine. He worked for other architects until opening his own office in Springfield in 1882. At about the time that Memorial Hall was built, Newman designed two other buildings with the same characteristic of rounded corner with tower or tourelle having conical roof. The first of these is the Chicopee National Bank in Springfield (1889), which also includes diaperwork at the top. The second is The Linden in Hartford (1891), where the low tower rises from the roof of the rounded corner and the diaperwork is found in brick on the front elevation.¹

Criterion A - History and Place in the Community

The Grand Army of the Republic was an organization of Civil War veterans

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Windsor Locks

Quadrangle scale¹ : 24000

UTM References

A

1	8	6	9	6	6	8	0	4	6	4	3	6	1	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

The nominated property is described at Windsor Locks Land Records, volume 44, page 139. The land included is the land that has always gone with the building.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code NA county NA code NA

state NA code NA county NA code NA

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David F. Ransom, Consultant, edited by John Herzan, National Register
Connecticut Coordinator

organization Historical Commission date October 20, 1986

street & number 59 South Prospect Street telephone 203 566-3005

city or town Hartford state CT

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 Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

date April 13, 1987

For NPS use only

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

Patrick Andrews

date 6/2/87

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Beth K. George

date 6-2-87

Chief of Registration

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Converse, J.H., Post No. 67 G.A.R. membership records, Connecticut State
Library Record Group 113, Box 39.

Dedication of Memorial Hall, Windsor Locks, Connecticut, Wednesday June 10,
1891.

The Leading Citizens of Hampden County, Massachusetts. Boston: Biograph-
ical Review Publishing Co., 1895.

Windsor Locks Land Records, volume 5, page 555, 8/219, 42/219, 44/139.