

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Calais Free Library

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number North side of Union Street, .05 miles northwest of Junction with Route 1 N/A not for publication

city or town Calais vicinity

state Maine code ME county Washington code 029 zip code 04619

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Eileen S. Frederick 2/16/01
Signature of certifying official/Title SHPP Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall 4-12-01

Calais Free Library
Name of Property

Washington, Maine
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Maine Public Libraries

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/Library

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/Granite
walls Brick

roof Asphalt
other Octagonal Ventilator on Roof

Narrative Description

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALAIS FREE LIBRARY

WASHINGTON, MAINE

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The Calais Free Library is a Richardsonian Romanesque brick building with quarry faced brownstone trim and a granite foundation. Its basic rectangular footprint is modified on the facade by a semi-circular bay adjoining the round arched entryway, and on the rear elevation by a five-sided bay. An octagonal, louvered cupola surmounts the midpoint of the roof ridge. An addition was made to the north side in 1984-85. The building is located at one end of the downtown commercial district in Calais.

Facing southwest (for ease of description, the facade will be assumed to face south), the front elevation contains a steeply pitched gable at its southeast corner that frames the entryway and the adjoining semi-circular bay. The gable features brownstone coping, a pair of long narrow windows below a brownstone stringcourse in the gable peak, and a battered southeast corner that is trimmed with brownstone quoins of unequal size. A capstone with carved acanthus and swirls surmounts the quoins. The round arched entry has brownstone voussoirs, as well as a molded granite extrados and impost. Its broad base is capped by a granite water table, which extends around the building. Positioned above the arch is a rectangular hooded plaque with the words PUBLIC LIBRARY and the date 1892 carved into it. The bay contains four rectangular windows with brownstone lintels and sills, the latter of which forms a stringcourse that extends to and incorporates the sills on the stack room wall. An egg and dart bed molding over a dentil string decorates the cornice on the bay and stack room walls. The continuous molded archivolt on the five round arched stack room windows is similar in material to the extrados on the main entry. The cupola has a short base featuring a denticulated cornice, columns separating the eight louvered sides, and a bell cast eight sided roof surmounted by a tall finial.

The library's east side elevation contains a slightly projecting gabled bay that features a large round arched window comprised of a trio of one-over-one double hung sash with tracery above. Brownstone is employed in the voussoirs of the arch, and in the coping stones and stringcourse in the gable. The decorative cornice employed on the facade extends along a short wall segment to the bay. In contrast to the east wall, the west elevation is relatively unornamented with only the cornice detailing and a pair of tilt-out windows centered on the wall below the cornice. The rear elevation features a large five-sided bay along the northeastern third of the wall that contains one-over-one double hung sash windows.

In plan, the entry opens into the reading/circulation room which extends the length of the east end, whereas the stack room is located to the west. A small office accessed from the stacks is located in the semi-circular front bay. The reading room is distinguished by its groin vault, one side of which terminates in a round arch entrance to the north polygonal bay. This arch is supported by short Corinthian columns and pilasters, and its intrados is decorated with an elaborate foliate relief. On the west wall of the reading room is a large fireplace featuring a molded brick mantelpiece above which is a plaque naming the donors. Portraits of the donors hang on the wall above a wooden entablature. Interior finishes in the original block include dark varnished window and door surrounds, cornice moldings,

Due to the topography of the site, the 1984-85 addition is nearly a full story lower than the original building. Its brick exterior walls and hipped roof with a polygonal bay at the east end evoke the design of the 1892 building without replicating it. The two blocks are joined by a narrow connector that extends from the basement level of the original library.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Education

Period of Significance

1893-1951

Significant Dates

1892-1893

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Vinal, Arthur H., Architect

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALAIS FREE LIBRARY

WASHINGTON, MAINE

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Constructed in 1892-93 from designs by the Boston architect Arthur H. Vinal, the Calais Free Library is a Richardsonian Romanesque brick and stone building that stands at one end of the commercial district. It is eligible for nomination to the National Register under criterion A and C, as more fully described in the Multiple Property Documentation form titled "Maine Public Libraries."

The citizens of Calais enjoyed public or semi-public library services for several decades before the Free Library was built. In the 1830s, members of the Calais Young Men's Society began pledging to regularly buy books for a library, sometimes on a monthly basis. A paid public library housed either in the old City Building or Opera House was destroyed in the "great fire" of August, 1870. The remnants of the library were removed to a room in the St. Croix Hall Building, and by 1874 contained 25,000 volumes available to the public for a small fee.

The inception of the Calais Free Library can be found in the charity of one of Calais' notable citizens, James Shepherd Pike. Pike, who died in the early 1880s, left his home to the city of Calais for the express purpose of housing the "Calais Free Library and Reading Room." Pike became a successful businessman in Maine's lumber industry. After moving to Washington, D.C., and engaging in journalism for a time, Pike was appointed Minister to the Netherlands in 1861 by President Lincoln. The library currently holds Pike's forty two notebook diaries and letters from Salmon P. Chase, Horace E. Greeley, Charles A. Dana, and William Pitt Fessenden, among other figures of the Civil War period.

While the City of Calais accepted Mr. Pike's bequest of his home, it was eventually decided that his home would not be the best location for the town's library. Freeman H. Todd and Frederick A. Pike (James Shepherd Pike's brother), both suggested a brick building should be built, given the fiery fate of the previous home, and each contributed \$5,000 to that end. The Pike house was sold for \$800 and moved to a different location on Calais Avenue. At a meeting of the Calais Free Library Board of Trustees at a local law office on April 6, 1892, the contract for construction was awarded to Vinal at his proposed estimate of \$10,525. The library was opened to the public on July 4, 1893.

Since its construction in 1892 the Calais Free Library has remained an important civic institution in Calais. In 1984-85 a substantial addition -- designed by WBRC Architects/Engineers of Bangor -- was made to the rear of the building, and in September of 1992 the library's 100th anniversary was celebrated by the Board of Trustees, library staff, and the general public.

Born in Quincy, Massachusetts in 1854, Arthur Howard Vinal demonstrated "an early talent for architecture" which by age twenty helped him secure a position with the Boston architectural firm of Peabody & Stearns. After spending little more than a year at this firm, greatly contributing to its success, Vinal left to start his own firm in Boston with Henry F. Starbuck in 1875. For most of his career, however, Vinal worked alone. Vinal's major commissions in Maine include the Farmington Methodist Church (1877), the Bangor Opera House (1881), the Augusta Opera House (1900), and the giant Mount Kineo House Hotel at Moosehead Lake (1885). From 1884 to 1888 Vinal served as Boston's City Architect, and was well-known for his skill in New England by the time he was commissioned to build the Calais Free Library. Of his seven known Maine commissions, only the Calais Free Library, the Methodist Church in Farmington, and the remodeling of the E. R. Burpee House in Bangor are extant.

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Continuation Sheet

CALAIS FREE LIBRARY

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Bibliography

Goff, John V. "Arthur H. Vinal, 1854-1923," *A Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Maine*, Vol. II, No. 4.
Augusta, Maine: Maine Historic Preservation Commission, 1985.

Lamb, H. E. "Calais Free Library and Reading Room and the Mile Stones." Typescript copy on file at the Calais
Free Public Library, n.d.

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

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CALAIS FREE LIBRARY

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies the City of Calais tax map 7, block 1, lot 16.

Boundary Justification

The boundary embraces the entire city lot that is historically associated with the Calais Free Library.

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CALAIS FREE LIBRARY

WASHINGTON, MAINE

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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Roger G. Reed
September, 1988
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
View from S

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Roger G. Reed
September, 1988
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
View from NW

Note: Although the photographs were taken in 1988, the exterior appearance of the library is unchanged from what it was thirteen years ago. In fact, due to the growth in the trees and bushes since then, these earlier views show more of the building's characteristics.