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NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Maine Public Libraries

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Maine Public Libraries: ca. 1750-1938

C. Geographical Data

State of Maine

☐ See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Signature of certifying official — Date: 11/16/88

Maine Historic Preservation Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

for Signature of the Keeper of the National Register — Date: 1-5-89

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

MAINE PUBLIC LIBRARIES: ca. 1750-1938

Maine's historic public library buildings represent a cultural resource significant not only for their architectural prominence and diversity but also as a lasting reminder of broader patterns of local, state and national history that fostered the rise of these educational institutions. Built across the state through local fund raising campaigns and/or the largesse of well-to-do patrons and ultimately sustained by public support, the libraries have historically and to this day been the source of community pride on a par with other public buildings such as schools and town halls. Unlike many of these other facilities, however, the vast majority of the state's approximately 110 historic library buildings continue to function in their original capacity, a fact that testifies to their enduring legacy.

The history of public library development in the United States has been examined by a number of authors whose titles belie the range of analysis applied to the subject./1 In addition, a handful of thematic National Register nominations have been prepared by states including Iowa, Kansas, and Washington, that specifically address the building campaigns funded by steel magnate Andrew Carnegie. An overview of national and regional trends will be useful to repeat here as a prelude to a closer review of the particular patterns that shaped the evolution of libraries in Maine.

Although private libraries are believed to have been imported to North America in the early Colonial period, the origin of the public library has its roots in the first half of the eighteenth century. These early tentative and sporadic efforts were made almost entirely by private benefaction, but the donated collections (the idea of presenting a building had not been born) suffered from the absence of supervision and management and perhaps ultimately from the lack of widespread public support./2 For the duration of at least the next century the free public library concept was supplanted by the rise of social and circulating libraries.

Social libraries, which were known in England long before they were founded in the Colonies, first appeared in the second quarter of the eighteenth century and rapidly gained popularity prior to the Revolution. By 1780 no fewer than fifty-one such institutions had been formed in New England./3 Social libraries were, in their basic definition, collections supported by member fees and organized in a formal or informal manner. Furthermore, they were generally the domain of the more learned members of the community. Their continued

[X] See continuation sheet

widespread acceptance and use during the nineteenth century can be seen in the fact that by 1850 1,064 libraries had been established in the region./4 Despite this apparent popularity the rise and fall of social libraries has been shown to follow the fluctuating curve of economic fortunes during the period of their prominence./5 The availability of surplus capital stimulated social library growth; its sudden absence placed their existence in question.

In parallel development with the social libraries were the strictly commercial ventures known as circulating libraries. Because of this foundation their promoters were interested strictly in profit and the titles in the collections reflected the popular interest. From their eighteenth century beginnings these libraries were increasingly dominated by works of fiction, a trend which underscored one of the fundamental differences between the social and circulating libraries; namely that the former was likely to contain works of well regarded literature and science whereas the latter was comprised of what contemporary moralists called "greasy combustible duodecimos"./6 Irregardless of their perceived moraless value, these institutions appealed to a segment of the population whose future support for the free public library would be essential even though the resulting make-up of the collection would prove to be a matter of considerable and on-going debate.

The public library movement that is the direct antecedent of the existing system emerged in the mid-nineteenth century. Fostered in part by the wealth generated from the advancing urban industrial society and the accompanying social/humanitarian reaction to it, libraries were increasingly perceived as having a key role in shaping the educational and moral attitudes of their community. As Maine's own State librarian remarked on the subject in his 1895-96 Report:

> Another great object and end attained by the establishment of a free library is, that through its influence the reading of the community can, in a great measure, be directed to a higher class of literature.... Even the novel-reading habits of a community may be, in some degree, eradicated or changed by the cultivation of taste for a higher class of literature, and a healthier class of fiction may be substituted for the five and ten cent novels of the circulating library and news stand.

Libraries were also seen as a means by which adult education could be fostered and "...habits of study inculcated or revived in the minds of those who have long since left schools"./7 In these many respects the free public library was clearly a product of Victorian America.

Considerable attention has been directed to the enactment in 1849 of a law in Massachusetts that permitted taxation for the specific use of establishing and maintaining free public libraries. Its effect was quickly felt not only in Massachusetts (where at least ten public libraries were formed by 1854) but throughout the region as neighboring state legislatures enacted similar statutes (Maine's was passed in 1854).

The political climate in which these laws were drafted presupposes the existence of a broader social attitude in which the educational role of the library was reaffirmed but the restrictive and often unstable vehicle of the social and circulating library was rejected. Support of the free library as a public institution has been linked to a rising sense of nationalism, a renewed climate of democracy, the rapid advancement of science and technology, and a spirit of self-culture./8 As the century progressed, reformers seized upon the library as an institution in which a host of industrial America's mounting problems could be addressed, although not always with the determined support of the working class./9 Nurtured at the height of an agrarian based society, the vast majority of free public libraries came into being only after a generation of social and cultural adjustments to a new industrial order.

The rapid development of the library as a permanent public institution is underscored by the formation in 1876 of the American Library Association. Founded by public and university librarians, the ALA became the voice of this emerging cadre of trained professionals through its monthly publication, the Library Journal. Its pages convey the myriad questions that confronted the profession: the library's role in society and the make-up of its collections, more technical aspects such as book conservation, and one of the longest running and most heated debates; the design of buildings.

The issue of library design and construction occupied a significant place at the ALA's yearly conferences, and commentary frequently appeared in the monthly journals. With few exceptions, the ALA consistently denounced the architectural profession's inability to comprehend the special needs of the librarian. It countered existing or proposed solutions with its own model plans accompanied by lengthy discussions about the problems of collection expansion, preservation, accessibility, and supervision. In 1888 a bitter exchange ensued between the two professions when the American Architect and Building News responded to the negative impression of architects shown at the ALA's annual meeting by observing that the conference "...amused itself, as usual, by falling afoul of the architects, over whose prostrate forms every scientific hobby is made

to prance."/10 The discussion at the conference berated the late H. H. Richardson's library designs (to which the American Architect and Building News took great exception) and ended by claiming that "the architect is the natural enemy of the librarian."

One of the issues raised by the architectural profession in this debate was the absence of a model building plan agreed to by the librarians. By 1891, however,this had apparently changed and the Library Journal published an essay entitled "Points of Agreement Among Librarians as to Library Architecture"./11 Three years later it noted the sense of increased cooperation that now existed between the two professions and its positive effect./12 The intervening years had undoubtedly seen increased participation by librarians in the decisions about design made by trustees and building committees at the local level. Furthermore, the architects themselves had more experience with the library as a building type.

Philanthropy, frequently in the form of gifts for building construction, played a major role in the wide geographic distribution of public libraries established during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The person most often associated with this method of donation was Pittsburgh steel maker Andrew Carnegie. Much has been written about Carnegie's immigrant background and his bequests to nearly 1,700 communities in the United States and it is beyond the scope of this study to detail his life here./13 The essence of his approach, however, was to grant sufficient building funds to an applicant provided that the town set aside yearly an equivalent of ten-percent of the award for maintenance. The books themselves were to be provided by the community. Carnegie's largesse was clearly a major factor in stimulating municipal authorities to establish a tax funded library, and his interest in providing buildings gave the collections themselves a prominent physical location./14 Carnegie was not alone in choosing the library as a worthy beneficiary of accumulated wealth. His example was repeated throughout the nation by local residents or former residents who had achieved a measure of financial success and wished to bestow some of it on their native towns, most often in the form of memorials to family members.

Despite their outward appearance of magnanimous public bequests, the grants and memorials which provided for the libraries were at times met with opposition and scorn. Carnegie's gifts could be especially problematic because of the vocal opposition from labor unions that stemmed from his unwillingness to improve basic working and living conditions for his employees./15 From other voices came the charge that a donated library was merely another means by which

the industrialists tightened their hold on the working class./16 These two examples plainly illustrate the turbulent social context in which the public library movement developed during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a fact that must not be lost sight of in the consideration of its history.

Public Libraries in Maine

The history and development of libraries in Maine generally follows the national pattern as described above. Beginning with a handful of social libraries founded in the second half of the eighteenth century there appeared a small group of specialty and circulating collections by the 1820s, a few mechanics libraries some decades thereafter, and finally the free public institutions at the turn of the century.

The relatively late settlement of Maine (by comparison to other New England states) and the turmoil of frontier life culminating with the abandonment of most settlements during the French and Indian War, did not produce a particularly conducive environment for the early organization of libraries. In fact, during the forty years between 1741 and 1780 only three social libraries were established in Maine./17 Tabulations for subsequent five year intervals show a steady increase of from two to eight per period with an especially dramatic jump in 1816-20 when seventeen were founded./18 These figures clearly demonstrate the importance of a favorable economic, cultural and social environment to the development of these libraries.

In addition to the social libraries early nineteenth century Maine also had a number of specialty collections, as well as circulating libraries. Included among the former were county law libraries such as the York County Bar Library (established 1815) at Alfred, the Bangor Theological Seminary Library (established 1820), and a variety of town, school and college collections. Information regarding the number and distribution of circulating libraries is more elusive, in part due to the tenuous nature of their commercial existence. Three are known to have been operating in the 1820s including one each in Belfast, Hallowell and Waterville, but there were certainly others./19

The swell of legislative support for tax based libraries that began with the 1849 act in Massachusetts manifested itself in Maine in 1854 with the passage of an act that established maximum tax rates for public library maintenance. The immediate impact of this action is not as yet positively known. However, of the twenty-five public or quasi-public libraries founded after 1854 and still in operation

in 1887, fewer than one-half did not charge a fee for use./20 Further legislative action was taken in 1864 when towns were authorized to receive gifts and bequests for the purposes of establishing libraries, and this law was widened in 1887 to empower towns to accept land and buildings. The first substantial committment made toward assisting with the establishment of public libraries came in 1893 when the legislature made a provision to subsidize libraries at a level equal to ten percent of the yearly town appropriation. This act also included the donation of books valued at $100 for each library founded in towns of not more than 1,500 inhabitants.

The state's role in fostering the establishment and use of libraries was not limited solely to legislative action, but was institutionalized in the form of the Maine State Library. Founded in 1832, the State Library was initially charged with maintaining a law library. It gradually increased the scope of its collections and responsibilities, and by the 1890s had recognized the need to expand its services. One of the most successful programs introduced at the turn of the century was the "traveling library", a diverse collection of books that was loaned to interested towns. In 1904 there were 120 of these libraries available. By the early 1920s the State Library had further defined its goals to include supplying reference books to the general public whose local libraries might not contain them, continuing the aid to towns in support of libraries and the development of an extension service. In addition, from 1911 until 1938 it published the Bulletin of the Maine State Library which contained a variety of information including local library news, biographical sketches, book reviews and articles on historical subjects. The interaction between the state and local libraries continues today in an even more diverse manner.

In 1920 there were 113 public libraries in existence in Maine./21 An analysis of their separate dates of establishment shows that 15 were founded in the 1880s, 31 in the 1890s and 38 in the first decade of the twentieth century. Many of these replaced social libraries. Such was the case in Camden where the Ladies Library founded in 1854 gave way to the town library voted into existence in 1896. A similar scenario took place in Augusta in 1882 when the Augusta Library and Literary Association (established in 1872) merged with the Lithgow Library and Reading Room whose establishment was made possible by a sizable bequest to the city by Lewellyn W. Lithgow./22

It is clearly evident that a high percentage of the state's public libraries founded in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were endowed in one fashion or another by wealthy patrons.

These gifts may not necessarily have marked the actual beginning of a library, but they were important factors to ensuring their development. Lithgow's gift, for example, appears to have spurred the City of Augusta to create a free public facility, whereas the monies given to the Town of Wilton in the 1910s by members of the Goodspeed family were expressly set aside for the construction of a building to house the library founded in 1901. By the turn of the century, in fact, most gifts were made for the purposes of providing a facility for the collection, reading rooms and frequently a community meeting space.

The tremendous interest in public libraries at the turn of the century in Maine parallels the national trend. As discussed above, a variety of factors contributed to this pattern including the rise of social reform movements and the example set by Andrew Carnegie. The central role that bequests or gifts played in the process at the local level underscores the additional importance of the accumulation of surplus wealth during the period. From before it gained statehood in 1820 Maine's economy had followed an upward curve of prosperity based upon the exploitation of its bountiful natural resources and a Yankee penchant for hard work, inventiveness and frugality. A portion of the wealth generated by these enterprises ultimately appeared as a factor in the public library movement through provisions in wills or by gifts from family members. On other occasions these gifts were made as memorials to parents by the children who had shared in the economic success of their forebears or had been able to secure their own fortunes locally or out of state. Illustrative of the first case is the Walker Memorial Library in Westbrook, the gift of Joseph Walker, who gained prominence in the lumber industry. In the latter category is the Zadoc Long Free Public Library in Buckfield, named in honor of Zadoc and Julia (Davis) Long and built by their son John D. Long, a former Secretary of the Navy.

The frequency in which library buildings were built by or given to communities throughout Maine underscores the widely accepted idea that a facility of this kind would be of most benefit to the whole town (and in the case of donated buildings, suitable family memorials). They were generally perceived as the focus of educational growth outside of the schools, a notion that illuminates the belief held until the turn of the century that libraries were primarily for the use of the adult population. In addition to housing circulating books, libraries on occasion became cultural centers, repositories for special book, local history or art collections, war memorials, or simply community meeting places. This role was encouraged by the State Librarian in his 1903-04 Report to the Legislature in which he stated:

> There is great and valuable work for these institutions to perform, in gathering within their walls local history, portraits of leading citizens, biographical sketches, and everything relating to the towns and peoples where they are severally located./23

Many buildings were originally designed to accomodate these multiple functions. One wing of Dexter's Abbott Memorial Library, for example, was to be devoted to an art gallery with frescoed ceilings./24 The reading room in the Lithgow Library in Augusta was adorned with wall niches for statuary, a detail that accompanied the French Renaissance style plasterwork and the round exterior panels on the cornice that bear the names of eminent historical figures in all disciplines. Other libraries were adapted to such uses when patrons donated their treasured collections of art or books. Soon after it opened in 1904, the Cutler Memorial Library in Farmington was given a portrait of the donor followed by other furnishings and later a collection of paintings./25 In 1905 it received the original copy of the town plan as drawn in 1780. Finally, many buildings also served as war memorials and community centers. Both functions were incorporated in the Jay-Niles Memorial Library in North Jay erected in 1916. Its second floor contains a hall and stage given in memory of the town's Civil War veterans. At other times, as in the 1906 Revere Memorial Building on Isle au Haut, the town offices were incorporated into the design.

From the earliest period of construction, library buildings themselves were imbued with an architectural prominence that placed them on par with other public buildings such as schools and town halls. These buildings expressed not only a sense of community pride but also their functional specialty. For these reasons Maine's library buildings were most often designed by professional architects, a fact that adds to their significance by virtue of their representation of a particular individual's work. In many cases they were Maine architects, among whom were the most prominent names in the state, as well as a handful of lesser known firms. In addition, a large number of libraries were designed by out-of-state architects primarily based in Boston, but with representation from New York, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, and Sioux City, Iowa. Of this group Portland's John Calvin Stevens (and later in partnership with his son John Howard Stevens) was responsible for no less than eleven libraries. Harry S. Coombs of Lewiston designed four buildings but the firms in which he was a partner received commissions for three others. Lewiston architect William R. Miller drew the plans for four libraries, three of which were virtually identical in form and are equally flamboyant; aspects that characterize Miller's turn-of-the-century designs. Among the out-of-state architects, Boston's George

A. Clough is represented in three libraries, while the firm of Beuttler and Arnold of Sioux City, Iowa is indirectly credited with the design for the Milo Public Library, a virtual copy of the firm's Hartington, Nebraska design.

The more than half century of building embraced by this discussion witnessed remarkable changes in the nature of architectural design, both from the perspective of a rapidly growing group of professionally trained architects to the diversity of styles in which they worked. These changes are clearly evident in the existing libraries. Between the Victorian Gothic Hubbard Library of 1880 and the Colonial Revival Norway Public Library of 1938, are a host of buildings that illustrate the variety of architectural expressions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as interpreted by a wide range of professionals. These buildings, viewed both individually and as a whole, are lasting reminders of this period of architectural history.

The overwhelming majority of the state's public libraries had been established by 1938, the point at which this historic context concludes and the date when all significant buildings had been constructed. During the next forty years only a handful of public libraries were built in Maine and rarely as replacements for earlier buildings. The continued use of the historic facilities has generally favored their preservation and maintenance of integrity. This situation is rapidly changing, however, as more communities begin to face the problem of collection expansion and public programming for their growing populations. Numerous libraries have already built anew or made additions - some of which dwarf the original building - while an equal number are at this moment in the planning process.

ENDNOTES

/1. Among the earliest of these works is Arthur E. Bostwick's The American Public Library (1910) and The Public Library Movement in the United States: 1853-1893 (1913) by Samuel Swett Green. Later studies broadened their perspectives by examining the cultural and social contexts in which the public library movement developed. Two of the more widely cited of these are Arsenals of a Democratic Culture (1947) by Sidney Ditzion and Foundations of the Public Library (1949) by Jesse H. Shera.

/2. Jesse H. Shera, Foundations of the Public Library: The Origins of the Public Library Movement in New England: 1629-1855 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), p. 30, hereinafter cited as Shera, Foundations.

/3. Shera, Foundations, p. 55.

/4. Not all of these libraries were active by 1850, however. This figure is assumed to include the special mechanics' libraries organized for apprentices and other tradesmen. Shera, Foundations, p. 69.

/5. Shera, Foundations, p. 85.

/6. Shera, Foundations, p. 127.

/7. Twenty-Seventh Report of Librarian of Maine State Library For the Years 1895-96 (Augusta: Kennebec Journal Print, 1897), p. 10. Twenty years earlier the U. S. Lighthouse Board recognized the usefulness of libraries, especially at remote locations, in making lighthouse keepers "... happier and more contented with their lot, and less desirous of absenting themselves from their posts." Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Year 1875 (Washington: U. S. G. P. O., 1875), p. 10.

/8. Sidney Ditzion, Arsenals of a Democratic Culture: A Social History of the American Public Library Movement in New England and the Middle States From 1850 to 1900 (Chicago: American Library Association, 1947), p. 32, hereinafter cited as Ditzion, Arsenals.

/9. In fact, the working class appears to have confined their support to non-tax supported institutions such as the old mechanics' libraries. Ditzion, Arsenals, p. 120.

/10. This response was published in the November, 1888 edition of the Library Journal (V. 13, No. 11). It was accompanied by a wonderful poem titled "Ye Architect and Ye Librarian".

/11. Library Journal, V. 16, No. 12 (New York: American Library Association, 1891), hereinafter cited as Library Journal with the appropriate volume and date.

/12. Library Journal, V. 19, No. 12, 1894.

/13. For a fuller description of Carnegie see George A. Bobinski, Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969.)

/14. Prior to 1911, there appears to have been little stated concern from Carnegie as to the form and embellishment of these buildings. In subsequent years this attitude changed, and applicants were strongly encouraged to follow the guidelines set forth in James Bertram's Notes on Library Buildings (1910).

/15. Attempts to unionize workers at the Carnegie mills in Homestead, Pennsylvania, were violently crushed in 1892 by the company leaving ten people dead and many more wounded. Working conditions and wages subsequently worsened at these and other mills. For more information see Arthur G. Burgoyne, The Homestead Strike of 1892, reprinted with an afterword by David P. Demarest, Jr. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979).

/16. Ditzion, Arsenals, p. 137.

/17. Neither the location nor the duration of these libraries is positively known. Shera, Foundations, p. 55.

/18. Shera, Foundations, p 69.

/19. Shera, Foundations, p. 147.

/20. Library Journal, V. 12, Nos. 1-2, 4, 1887.

/21. Bulletin of the Maine State Library, V. IX, No. 1, 1920.

/22. National Register nomination for the Lithgow Library, Augusta, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, 1973.

/23. Thirty-First Report of Librarian of Maine State Library for the Years 1903-04 (Augusta: Kennebec Journal Print, 1904), p. 6.

/24. Library Journal, V. 20, No. 8, 1895.

/25. National Register file for Cutler Memorial Library, Farmington, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta.

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type Public Library

II. Description

SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

III. Significance

MAINE PUBLIC LIBRARIES - ca. 1750-1938

Maine's historic public library buildings embody the spirit of local efforts to establish and maintain the library as a key element in the educational and cultural life of the community. Erected between 1880 and 1938 through tax based support or, more frequently, from the philanthropy of wealthy patrons, these buildings have further significance as important architectural resources evident in their design, scale and setting.

The concept of the public library has evolved from the widespread eighteenth century device known as the social or subscription library and variant forms of lending institutions such as Mechanic's libraries or commercial circulating libraries. Despite

IV. Registration Requirements

Maine's National Register-eligible public libraries possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association by virtue of their role in local history. Architecturally prominent, they reflect the interpretation of popular building styles by a substantial number of architects, some of whom were of regional or national significance.

The public library is a specially designed building type that reflects its unique use. For this reason the integrity of its plan is as significant as the retention of its exterior characteristics including original fenestration pattern and architectural details. This is especially evident when it is remembered that the arrangement of these spaces was the focus of heated debate between librarians and architects during the late nineteenth century. On the other hand, it is also important to consider that in the early 1900s some internal modifications may have been made to older buildings so as to accomodate the change from closed to open book stacks. Frequently,

☒ See continuation sheet

☐ See continuation sheet for additional property types

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

The multiple property submission for Maine public libraries was based upon a survey of those buildings constructed between 1880 and 1938. Because the designed library is of a highly specialized form reflecting critical decisions about the organization of interior space as well as embodying an important expression of architectural fashion, a decision was made to evaluate only this class of buildings leaving the group of structures which were adapted to this use such as houses or commercial buildings for possible future study. The methodology consisted of an analysis of the Commission's photographic collection, survey files and other documentary sources to determine which libraries belonged to the study group and which of those retained sufficient integrity to enable their consideration for nomination. One-hundred-twenty buildings were identified in this manner, although it is likely that a small percentage (such as those in remote areas) may additionally fit this category. They will be evaluated as data becomes available. Of the total, 45 libraries are currently listed in the National Register either individually or as components of historic districts.

[X] See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

The following list is by no means a comprehensive index of published material concerning libraries. However, it does include the most widely cited and useful documents pertaining to developments at the national and regional levels. Important sources for individual buildings may be found in their respective nominations.

Bobinski, George S. Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969.

Bostwick, Arthur E. The American Public Library. New York/London: D. Appleton and Company, 1910.

Bulletin of the Maine State Library. 1910-1938.

[X] See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- [X] State historic preservation office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Specify repository: _____

I. Form Prepared By

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In their diversity of form, materials and geographic distribution, Maine's historic public library buildings represent an architectural resource of prime importance. Constructed between 1880 and 1938 in places ranging from small rural communities to the state's largest urban centers, these stylish buildings, with only a handful of exceptions, assume places of physical and architectural distinction that match and often exceed the qualities of other public buildings in their respective communities. Furthermore, because they represent a specialized building type, the vast majority of them were architect designed.

The first public library built in Maine (it actually was designed for and initially used by the members of a social library) is the Hubbard Free Library in Hallowell. Completed in 1880 from plans drawn by local architect Alexander C. Currier, this granite building is of Victorian Gothic design featuring a steeply pitched gable roof covered by variegated slate and an arched entrance. Additions to the rear in the 1890s repeated the original scheme. Its high vaulted interior and handsome trusses convey the cathedral-like qualities established on the exterior. (The building was duplicated in 1883 at the Washburn family estate, "The Norlands", in Livermore for use as a family library.)

One year after completion of the library in Hallowell, the nearby town of Gardiner opened a public facility in the downtown commercial district. Designed by Henry Richards, the brick one-and-a-half story building combines a variety of architectural characteristics including a broad, squat corner stair tower, a Flemish gable and rows of gabled wall dormers on the side elevations. The interior is separated into two levels with the book stacks arranged along the outside walls.

The interior configurations of these two buildings are typical, according to the reports published in the Library Journal (1876 and onward), of the early period of library design, and represent solutions that were consistently condemned by professional librarians. Chief among their concerns, and this is best illustrated by the Hubbard Free Library, was the design of spaces with "lofty rooms, and a large, open space surrounded with alcoves and galleries... used for the storage of books." (Library Journal, April, 1881.) Galleries of books stacked one upon the other came under similar attack in large part because of the damage that resulted to collections from temperature extremes and the difficulty of obtaining materials from upper levels.

For the duration of the 1880s and the early 1890s architects and librarians alike were grappling with the issue of the ideal library plan. Local designs clearly illustrate the problem. Libraries erected in Kittery (Rice Public, 1887) and Skowhegan (Skowhegan Free Public, 1889) are tall Queen Anne style buildings with corner towers and richly embellished facades, but both have compartmentalized plans that appear to be adapted from a variety of other building types.

A notable exception to these examples is the 1887 Buck Memorial Library in Bucksport. This small L-shaped granite building embodies several features that became standard elements in subsequent designs, among them a centrally located hall containing the circulation desk and flanking reading rooms to the right and left. Its advanced design is undoubtedly due to its architect, George A. Clough, who during his tenure as Boston city architect (1873-83) had been assigned to study this building type in preparation for a proposed new city library.

The unresolved problems of interior library design that plagued most early libraries moved toward solution and widespread use in the 1890s. Bath's Patten Free Library, designed by George E. Harding of New York and erected in 1890, has an outward appearance somewhat related to those of preceding years, especially evident in the brooding tower that dominates the facade. Stairs lead to a gallery that overlooks the hall and reading room located in the building's south side. A circulation desk separates the reading room from the book stacks that occupy the north wing. The interior space remains somewhat unresolved, especially with regard to the tower and position of the reading room, but the removal of the books to a specially created space is of principal significance.

Within a few years after the opening of the Patten library, designs increasingly show the maturation of the interior plan. Among the early examples are the Peavey Memorial Library in Eastport, built in 1892-93, and the Lithgow Library in Augusta, constructed between 1894-96. Both of these Romanesque buildings were designed with a central hall/delivery room to one side of which were the closed book stacks behind a circulation desk and on the other end the reading room. The bold vertical emphasis previously supplied by towers has now been supplanted by a strong horizontal configuration, and the arrangement of interior space shows the distinct separation of the reading room from the stacks and delivery area.

The basic tripartite division of interior space as achieved in both the Peavey and Lithgow libraries was retained for the duration of library construction with, however, some important variations. The most significant of these was the provision of a separate reading room for children, a practice that gained acceptance beginning in the late 1890s (Portland Public Library made improvements in 1897 to provide such a space). Among the earliest buildings specifically designed with this space in mind is the library in Old Town, built in 1904 from plans by Albert R. Ross. In this scheme the hall/delivery area separated the reading rooms and the stacks were placed immediately behind the circulation desk with a reference area and librarian's office flanking them at the rear corners. In many small libraries erected during the next three decades the provision for two reading rooms was frequently made by building low book shelves along the walls of each area. This arrangement also made it possible to allow open access to the collection, a problem that subsequently confronted the turn-of-the-century libraries whose stack rooms had been designed for closed or limited access.

While the floor plan of the main first floor spaces evolved through a period of experimentation and in response to new definitions of the library's management and role, the basement level remained essentially a place for storage and the physical plant. However, as the library assumed a wider function as a community meeting space, special rooms were designed for such functions. Old Town's 1904 building, for example, incorporated a meeting room in the basement along with the other more utilitarian functions. Multi-story libraries (which are rare in Maine), on the other hand, placed these halls, perhaps outfitted with a stage, on the second floor. (Today, the basement areas are often converted wholly to use for the children's department and one of the first floor reading rooms is filled with free-standing shelves for the bulging collection.)

Many of the ideas for interior plans developed over a period of decades were assembled and published in 1910 by James Bertram, Andrew Carnegie's personal secretary. Notes on Library Building was intended to be a general guide to library design and was especially targeted to applicants seeking Carnegie grants. Among the suggested plans (Type F) was a variation that was essentially a two-thirds section of the more typical tripartite scheme. In this arrangement the principal entrance, located to one side of the facade, leads to the circulation desk and reference room, while the lone reading room and book shelves were placed to the left. This plan inspired the one used in the Milo Public Library which was built in 1922.

The development of ideal interior plans placed definite constraints on the exterior appearance of libraries. Nonetheless, countless variations were designed to accomodate the wide range of local needs and architectural tastes. Obviously, most of these followed in one form or another the fashionable trends of the period. During the 1890s, for example, Romanesque forms predominated as evident in the above named Peavey and Lithgow buildings, as well as a splendid example in Calais, erected in 1893-94. A notable exception to this trend, however, is the 1894 Walker Memorial Library in Westbrook, an eclectic composition that draws heavily from the Chateau style. By the turn of the century a more decided, Neo-Classical order was emerging as seen on the 1898-99 Thompson Free Library in Dover-Foxcroft. One of the most distinctive characteristics employed here and on numerous subsequent designs was the enriched pedimented entrance pavilion that projects slightly from the facade. Such embellishment had already been carried to its fullest expression on the Abbott Memorial Library (1894) in Dexter. In this scheme richly decorated terra cotta is used throughout the pavilion as well as on the broad cornice and window surrounds. Finally, among the most unique buildings from this period is the Zadoc Long Free Public Library in Buckfield, constructed in 1900 and sheathed entirely in wood shingles. It was designed by John Calvin Stevens of Portland, a figure of national prominence for his work in the Shingle Style.

The explosion of library construction that took place in Maine during the first three decades of the twentieth century left a legacy of rich architectural diversity. These buildings range from formal Renaissance Revival compositions as used in the Lewiston Public Library of 1902-03 to the more eclectic variations such as the Auburn Public Library, also erected in 1903, or the castle-like 1926 Arthur L. Mann Library in West Paris whose exterior surface is formed entirely of fieldstones. Between these extremes lie examples that illustrate features of the Beaux Arts style (Pittsfield Public Library, 1903, Pittsfield); the Prairie style (Vinalhaven Public Library, 1906-07, Vinalhaven); and the Tudor Revival (Freeland Holmes Library, 1914, Oxford). Neo-Classical forms continued to predominate, however, and in later years Colonial Revival style renditions became the accepted standard. Significant examples of the latter group include the Paris Public Library in South Paris, 1926, and the Camden Public Library in Camden, 1928.

MATERIALS

The diversity of architectural styles found in the public library buildings is mirrored by the broad range of materials employed in their construction. Of all the available options, brick was the most frequently used, although stone was a close second in popularity. It was also the material that enjoyed the longest period of use. Beginning with the Gardiner library in 1881, brick can be found in the designs from all periods, especially those with Neo-Classical and Colonial Revival style overtones. Most of these employed red brick although shades of tan or buff, as in the Wilton Public Library (1916), can also be found.

Stone was the second most popular building material for library construction, and it was utilized in an array of configurations. The abundance of native granite and the skill of local masons is reflected in numerous buildings beginning with the Hubbard Free Library (1880) and carrying through to the Arthur L. Mann Library (1926). These two dates mark the time frame in which stone was used as a principal building material. The stone itself was laid in countless patterns with coursed or random rows of granite blocks whose surfaces featured quarry faced or smooth finishes. Alternative schemes have fieldstone (Mann Library) or rounded river or glacial stone (East Sebago Library). In addition to its frequent use as a primary material, stone is often encountered in the foundations of brick and frame buildings as well as in the trim of brick structures.

When compared to the number of brick and stone libraries, wooden frame structures represent only a minor fraction of the total. In view of their role as book depositories and major public edifices, however, it is not surprising to encounter this statistic. (This discussion does not extend to frame buildings such as houses or former commercial blocks that were converted for library use.) The dozen or so examples in this category range from architect-designed buildings such as the Zadoc Long Free Public Library to very modest vernacular structures such as the library in Bryant Pond. Sheathing materials include both weatherboards and shingles, although the latter predominate.

At least two libraries were constructed of cast concrete. One of these is the 1914 Freeland Holmes Library in Oxford and the other is the Soldier's Memorial Library in Hiram erected in 1915. Cast concrete is employed in both the foundation and walls varying from smooth to quarry faced ornamental textures.

Interior finishes range from the cathedral-like vaulted and trussed work found at Hubbard Free Library to very modest treatments in the Colonial Revival period. In many of the turn-of-the-century libraries the tripartite division of space is made through the use of posts or columns that support boxed beams. Classically inspired moldings are common and, on occasion, Colonial Revival eared window and door surrounds are employed. Finishes on this woodwork range from dark stains to medium and very light shades. A number of the more highly embellished libraries feature very elaborate decorative treatments such as ornate plasterwork (Lithgow) or paneled walls and domed rotundas (Jesup Memorial). Numerous examples also have fireplaces in one or more reading rooms, and these are often treated in ways that befit their prominence as decorative features as well as with respect to the architectural style of the exterior. Finally, shelving is generally wooden whether placed along walls or as free-standing units. In other cases the original metal stacks have also survived.

PHYSICAL SETTING

Maine's libraries exist in diverse physical environments. These include largely rural settings such as that which surrounds the Islesboro Free Library, through a range of small and medium-sized towns to large urban areas. In a majority of cases, these buildings, by virtue of their own physical and symbolic presence, have in turn created very evident impacts on the areas that they occupy. Most of them stand on prominent sites in commercial or residential areas with variations in scale that reflect upon these locations. Bangor's library, for example, is situated near the downtown commercial area and in proximity to city hall. Its own monumentality and relationship to the street maintains the sense of urban density. By comparison, the wooden frame library in the small town of Buckfield stands on an open terraced knoll that overlooks a major intersection, but in scale and materials it clearly blends with the neighboring frame residential and commercial buildings. Others have more forceful impacts, as does the Arthur L. Mann Library in West Paris. Although set back from the street and adjoining buildings, it is nevertheless visually dominant by virtue of its fieldstone construction in a neighborhood of frame houses as well as its castle-like shape.

In many towns the library and the lot on which it stands are associated with public monuments to conflicts and/or war veterans or may themselves be a memorial. The lots in Madison, Machias, and West Paris contain such monuments, whereas the library on Islesboro is both a memorial itself and is accompanied by a separate piece of sculpture. Further study will be necessary to determine whether other implied relationships exist between these two cultural features. However, it does seem that in many towns the dedication of a public library may have also carried with it an effort to establish a public open space (irregardless of its size) upon which such monuments could be placed. In fact, in at least two cases (Bangor and Brunswick) landscape architects were commissioned to design these surroundings. Other examples reveal the conscious decision to place libraries near to or subsequently develop areas around public open spaces. Camden best illustrates this case. In 1928 the library was built on a lot at one end of a residential neighborhood within close proximity to the harbor. Soon thereafter a wealthy patron donated a lot behind the library on which an outdoor ampitheatre was built and the view to the harbor was made by removing a number of buildings. Obviously, it was not considered inappropriate to create an associational link between these two public purposes.

early attempts to establish true free public libraries - as adjuncts to local schools, as a vehicle for social reform or as institutions for cultural enrichment - legislative action allowing for tax support of such facilities did not come until the mid-nineteenth century, while local interest was not widespread until the 1880s. Beginning at this time and continuing for the next half century numerous Maine communities either built or accepted the gifts of substantial architect designed library buildings to house their growing book collections. Such undertakings marked the culmination of local efforts, frequently made over a period of decades, to obtain public support for and a physical manifestation of the importance of the free public library to a community's educational and cultural development. For these reasons the public library building stands as an important reminder of one aspect in the broader patterns of history that shaped the growth of the state's many towns and cities.

this meant that the circulation desk was reoriented within the general space of the hall/delivery area. Since these alterations illustrate the continued evolution of the plan as well as more widely accepted attitudes towards collection access, they do not necessarily represent a loss of integrity.

Fortunately, most of the state's historic library buildings continue to serve in their original capacities. As collections have grown and use increased, however, much pressure has been placed upon the physical capacity of the buildings to meet these needs. A number of communities have already constructed additions to the historic buildings while others are now considering such steps. If these additions meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation by being "...compatible with the historic character of the site..." their eligibility may be retained. However, changes to the interior plan of the original building must be carefully evaluated to determine whether integrity is maintained.

For the purposes of this submission the single historic context Maine Public Libraries: ca. 1750-1938 was chosen as best illustrating the significant periods of the theme. Although no known existing buildings were constructed prior to 1880, the cultural attitudes and economic conditions that were critical to the founding of libraries were present in Maine by the mid-eighteenth century. The year 1938 marks the conclusion of the building campaign which began in earnest during the 1890s, although the zenith had already been reached more than a decade earlier.

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