

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB 05 1993

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

OCT 16 1992

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 Pillsbury Memorial Hall

other names/site number Sutton Town Hall

2. Location

street & number 93 Main Street not for publication N/A

city or town Sutton vicinity N/A

state New Hampshire code NH county Merrimack code 013 zip code 03260

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.)

Nancy C. Miller January 28, 1993
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

NEW HAMPSHIRE
State of 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 the 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

[Signature]

Entered in the
National Register

Date of Action

3/4/93

Pillsbury Memorial Hall
Name of Property

Merrimack County, N.H.
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	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: city hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: city hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite

walls Brick

Weatherboard

roof Slate

other Wood

Narrative Description

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

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Pillsbury Memorial Hall

Merrimack County, N.H.

Description

Pillsbury Memorial Hall, the town hall of the Town of Sutton, New Hampshire, stands in its original location on its own small lot on the south side of Main Street in the village of Sutton. The brick building is best described as Richardsonian Romanesque in style. The rectangular, hip roofed main block is set perpendicular to the street. Most of the main block is one story high above a basement, as it is occupied by the tall, large town hall auditorium. But, at the north (street) end, the main block is divided into two stories. Projecting from the northwest corner of the main block is a circular, two story tower with a conical roof. Covering the entire north (street) facade of the main block to the east of the tower and extending along its east side facade a short distance is an open porch. The brick porch, with its large semicircular arched openings, is covered by a gable roof, whose northerly slope is continuous with the main block's hip roof, and which features a cross gable roof above the entry steps on the north side. The main block, tower, and porch, all original parts of the building, share a high granite block foundation, brick walls, and slate roofs. On the rear (south) end of the main block is the wooden framed, one story, shed roofed rear addition. On the main block's west facade is a small, short, gable roofed basement entry, whose concrete walls are covered by a brick veneer. Save for the addition of the rear addition and the basement entry, the exterior of the building has been little changed. Although the basement has been extensively altered, the other original changes have seen only minor changes. Pillsbury Memorial Hall therefore retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The main block, tower, and porch are all set on a high foundation of two courses of large, rock faced granite blocks, with the upper blocks topped by a smooth water-table. The brick walls of the three original parts of the building are all laid in common bond, flemish variation. Save on the north facade, where the north slope of the hip roof continues into the porch roof, the main block has wide wooden eaves, ornamented by mouldings, a frieze, and beaded boarding on the sloping soffit. The main block's slate covered hip roof is trimmed with copper ridge mouldings.

The western third of the north street facade of the main block is occupied by the circular tower. The rest of the north facade is sheltered by the porch, which covers the main block foundation. Directly to the east of the tower is the building's main entry, wide double doors, each leaf having six horizontal panels. The doors share their simply moulded trim with a large, two pane transom window. They are flanked by large, two pane, three-quarter sidelights, each set above a simply moulded square wooden panel. The entry and sidelights share a simply moulded outer

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Merrimack County, N.H.

Description (cont.)

frame, a smooth granite sill, and a rock faced granite lintel. To the east of the entry, two inscribed polished granite blocks are set flush into the brick wall. The larger upper block is inscribed "Erected by John Sargent Pillsbury / A.D. 1891 / And Presented to the Town of Sutton / His Birthplace / In Memory of His Parents / John and Susan Wadleigh Pillsbury." The lower block is inscribed "Built By / Freeman A. Fisher / A Native of Sutton." To the east of the granite blocks is a 4/4 sash window with simply moulded wooden frame, rock faced granite sill and lintel, and modern vinyl storm window. Between the window and the east corner of the wall is found the town's World War I memorial. The rectangular bronze plaque is labeled "Honor Roll / 1917-1919" at the top. The main inscription "Erected by the / Town of Sutton / In Honor of Men / Who Served in / World War" and the list of the World War I soldiers and sailors is enclosed in a Tudor arch. The plaque is also ornamented by American shields, crossed flags, stars, and foliage.

A small northerly part of the main block's east facade is covered by the porch. This section contains another 4/4 sash window, like the window on the north facade, with granite sill and lintel, and a vinyl storm window. To the south of the porch, the granite block foundation is fully exposed. The foundation contains three basement windows with plain wooden frames and vinyl storm windows. The north and central windows have two panes, the south window three panes. The central basement window is shorter than its two companions. Just south of the porch in the main level is the building's side entry, a wooden door with a large builtin window and three simply moulded horizontal panels. The door has a simple wooden frame, smooth granite sill, and rock faced granite lintel. It is served by four steps built of rock faced granite blocks. To the south of the side entry are seven tall windows, each with 4/4 sash, a two pane transom window, and the same simply moulded frame, rockfaced granite sill and lintel seen on the already described windows. The windows are not evenly spaced.

Another seven tall windows of the same design as the eastern facade windows are found in the main level of the west facade. Again, the seven windows are irregularly spaced. Between the second and third windows from the south, a plain exterior brick chimney rises through the eaves. The chimney has a simple concrete cap and a small cricket with slate covered slopes and metal ridge flashing. The west wall has four basement openings in its foundation, all with simply moulded wooden frames. In the north opening is a wooden louver covered by wire mesh. The next opening to the south is a two pane window, also covered by wire mesh. A three pane window with vinyl storm window occupies the third opening from the north, which is shorter than the other three openings. The southerly opening contains a metal louver, flanked by

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Pillsbury Memorial Hall

Merrimack County, N.H.

Description (cont.)

wooden panels and covered by wire mesh. (The short basement entry is found between the two central basement windows. The brick veneer walls of the small entry are laid in stretcher bond. The entry's low pitched, asphalt shingled gable roof is trimmed by a plain wooden box cornice with friezes on the lateral sides and at the lower corners of the gable. The entry's only opening is a plain wooden door with simply moulded wooden frame and concrete sill in the west gable end.) The rear (south) wall of the main block has no openings, being largely covered by the rear addition.

The most prominent feature of the building is the two story circular tower at the northwest corner of the main block. The tower's high granite foundation is visible on over half the circumference of the tower, but is not continued to the east of the granite sidewall for the entry steps. (The sidewall projects from the northerly side of the tower.) The tower's brick walls are ornamented by four rock faced granite string courses that also serve as the sills and lintels of the tower windows. Only the uppermost string course is continued around the rear (south) side of the tower to the east of the exterior chimney projecting from the southwest side of the tower. The steep, slate covered, conical roof is ornamented by a wooden cornice with dentils and mouldings and is topped by a copper pinnacle, which is octagonal in shape, with a bulbous top and a narrow waist.

On the north front of the tower's first story is a large smooth granite block in the shape of a shield, which is inscribed "Pillsbury / Memorial / Hall". The first story has two 4/4 sash windows, with simply moulded frames and vinyl storm windows. One first story window is found on the northeast side and is sheltered by the porch, while the other window is found on the northwest side. The second story has three 1/1 sash windows with simply moulded frames and vinyl storm windows, located on the northeast, north, and northwest sides of the tower. Projecting from the southwest side of the tower is a broad exterior brick chimney. Its rectangular base is composed, like the tower foundation, of two courses of rock faced granite blocks with smooth watertable. The tall brick chimney is ornamented by a simple concrete cap, and by rectangular panels inset into its sides just below the cap, two panels each on the broad southwest and northeast sides, one panel each on the narrow northwest and southeast ends.

The porch is L-shaped in plan, as it extends east from the tower along the north facade of the main block, wraps around the northeast corner of the main block, and extends a short distance down the east side of the main block. The south wall of the southerly extension is a solid brick wall. But, the brick walls of the two other

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Pillsbury Memorial Hall

Merrimack County, N.H.

Description (cont.)

exterior sides are interrupted by large semicircular brick arches, three on the north (street) front and one on the east gable end. The arches are each formed of three courses of bricks. The western arch on the north front is asymmetrical, as its west end springs from a point on the tower wall higher than the springing of its east end on the abutment it shares with the central arch. The western and central arches are the entry arches, as they are open down to the porch floor. The two entry arches have smooth granite sills and share three smooth granite steps, which are flanked by smooth granite sidewalls. A metal pipe railing in the center of the steps wraps around both sides of the abutment shared by the two entry arches. Mounted on the wall between the two entry arches is a large modern electric light fixture. The eastern arch of the north front and the arch of the east gable end are shorter, as they stop over two feet above the porch floor. Both have rock faced granite sills. The porch has a concrete floor and a beaded board ceiling with simple ceiling moulding and a simple ceiling light fixture in front of the main entry. The main porch roof is sheathed with slate and trimmed by a copper ridge moulding. As already noted, its north slope is continuous with the north slope of the main block roof. Above the two entry arches is a gable, whose roof is now covered with asphalt shingles. The porch has a wide horizontal wooden cornice, with mouldings, beaded board soffit, and simple modillions. The upper mouldings of the horizontal cornice are continued on the raking eaves of the two gables. The gables are both sheathed with slate laid in courses of regular rectangular slates and slates with their lower corners cutoff. At the apex of the north gable is a small electric light that lights the flag flown on the town hall's front lawn.

The wooden rear addition is set on a foundation of a single course of rough cut granite blocks. Its clapboarded walls are trimmed by cornerboards and a plain cornice with frieze and sloping soffit. The shed roof is sheathed with corrugated metal. Plain frames surround the windows, all in the south wall. The window in the foundation has two panes. The four windows of the main level include two small single pane central windows and two large end windows with 2/2 sash.

Most of the main block is devoted to the town hall auditorium. North of the auditorium on the main level is found the entry hall between the main entry and the auditorium. To the west of the entry hall is the circular selectmen's room (in the tower) and its adjoining vault. To the east of the entry hall is the former library room (now containing the main basement stairs) and the stairway to the balcony, which is directly above the side entry hall. To the south of the auditorium is the stage, which is flanked by two anterooms in both southerly corners of the main block. South of the stage proper is the backstage area, in the rear addition. The

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Pillsbury Memorial Hall

Merrimack County, N.H.

Description (cont.)

second story at the north end includes a circular room in the tower, a narrow storage room at the north end of the main block, and the balcony at the north end of the auditorium.

The hardwood floor of the entry hall is interrupted by three small gridded heating vents. The east, south and west walls are plastered above narrow vertical beaded board wainscoating with moulded baseboard and rail. A simple light fixture appears in the center of the plaster ceiling. Save for a narrow strip of plaster at the top, the north wall is filled by the main entry. The entry's double doors with six panel leaves, two pane transom window, and two pane sidelights above square panels, all share simply moulded trim. The east wall features two doors, an original door to the former library to the north and a later door to the balcony stairs at the south end. The library door has the six horizontal panels and the moulded frame with plain cornerblocks that is typical of the building's original doorways. The balcony stair door, with five panels and a plain frame, is reached by a single plain step projecting slightly into the entry hall. Above the balcony door, the wall is vertical beaded boarding, that is wider than the narrow beaded boarding of the wainscoating. The south wall contains the double doors to the auditorium, with the typical six horizontal panels, moulded frame and simple cornerblocks. Above the double doors is a low relief plastic oval plaque with an eagle and the dates "1784" and "1984", installed as a memento of Sutton's celebration of the bicentennial of its incorporation in 1784. Save for a small bulletin board, the west wall is interrupted only by the niche for the door to the selectmen's office. Because of the difference in shape between the rectangular entry hall and the circular selectmen's office, the niche is triangular in plan. The south wall of the niche is plastered above the wainscoating it shares with the entry hall. As the niche is shorter than the entry hall, it has its own plaster ceiling. The northwest wall of the niche is occupied by the selectmen's office door with the typical six panels and moulded frame with cornerblocks.

The selectmen's office in the first floor of the tower is unusual for its circular plan. The room has a carpeted floor, a plaster wall with simple baseboard and chair rail, and a plaster ceiling with a modern central light fixture. The room is lit by two 4/4 sash windows, one in the northwest quadrant of the room and one in the northeast quadrant. The windows both have original moulded frames with plain upper cornerblocks and moulded sills. Both are equipped with folding interior louvred shutters. A small brick fireplace projects from the southwest quadrant of the wall. The fireplace opening is now bricked up, although its flat brick arch is still visible. The fireplace is topped by a mantelshelf and a short mantel, both with moulded edges. In the southeast quadrant is found the door to the entry hall

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Merrimack County, N.H.

Description (cont.)

and the vault door. The entry hall door has the typical original moulded frame with simple upper and lower cornerblocks. The painted metal vault door, prominently labeled as the work of "Hall's Safe and Lock Co." of "Cincinnati", is decorated with painted floral and geometric ornament and two painted views, a seascape and a view of the Hall's Safe and Lock Co. factory. The flat painted metal door frame is labeled "SUTTON" at the top. The vault entry also has double inner metal doors.

The vault has an unusual plan, as it occupies the space between the circular selectmen's office to its north and the rectangular entry hall and auditorium to its east and south. The plan is best described as a rectangle with a curved area cut out of its northwest corner. The vault was built to be fireproof, with a concrete floor, painted brick walls, and a shallow arched brick ceiling. Three high metal tie rods stretch between the north and south walls just below the ceiling. The only opening is the metal framed vault door. The room is now largely filled with wooden shelves for the town's records.

The former library room in the northeast corner of the main block has a carpeted floor, plaster walls with moulded baseboard, and a plaster ceiling with simple central light fixture. The north (street) and east walls each contain a 4/4 sash window with interior folding louvred shutters, a moulded sill, and a moulded frame with plain upper cornerblocks. The six panel door to the entry hall in the west wall retains its original moulded frame with plain cornerblocks. A high modern light fixture on the south wall lights the stairway to the basement. The stairway, which descends along the south wall to the west, is protected by a short wall of vertical beaded boarding trimmed by a moulded rail on the top and the end. The stairway has carpeted steps, north and south walls of beaded boarding, and two simple wooden handrails.

The tall auditorium, the town hall's principal room, has a hardwood floor and plaster walls with the same narrow vertical beaded board wainscoating with moulded baseboard and rail as the entry hall. Hanging from the plaster ceiling are six reproduction Victorian style electric chandeliers, each with eight lights on ornate brackets.

At the north end of the auditorium is the balcony which projects over the lower north wall of the room. The back (north) wall of the balcony is five feet to the north of the lower wall beneath the balcony, as the balcony extends north over parts of the northern main level rooms. The lower north wall beneath the balcony features the double doors to the entry hall near the center and the six panel door

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Pillsbury Memorial Hall

Merrimack County, New Hampshire

Description (cont.)

to the side entry hall at the east end. All of the doors in the auditorium and balcony have original moulded frames with plain cornerblocks. Set between the two doorways is a large case built to house Sutton's bicentennial quilt. The case, with its simple wooden frame, plexiglass front, and wallboard backing, is mounted on the wall and also supported by three wooden legs. West of the quilt case, a simple sloping wooden shelf for the scrapbook describing the quilt is mounted on the wall. Two metal brackets for the town tax maps are attached to the wall west of the double doors.

The balcony projection has a plastered underside with simple light fixtures above the doorways. The projection is fronted by narrow vertical beaded boarding with moulded baseboard and rail. The balcony is reached by the stairs from the entry hall. Most of the stairway is open to the balcony above. But, a short section at the lower west end of the stairs has a plaster ceiling with light fixture and plastered north and south walls with beaded board wainscoating with moulded rail. At the west end of the stairway is the plain framed five panel door to the entry hall. Vertical beaded boarding sheathes the west wall of the stairway above the door. The stairway, which rises from west to east, has board steps with moulded nosings, and a wooden hand rail. Most of the stairway is flanked by vertical beaded boarding that continues up into the balcony proper as a short wall that protects the stairway opening on three sides. The protective wall is trimmed by a moulded rail at the top and the ends. The balcony's plain wooden floor has four levels, stepping up from the front (south) to the back (north). The stairway ends on the second level. A board step on the north side of the stairway provides access to the fourth level, which extends north of the stairway. The three walls of the balcony level are plastered with baseboards. A chair rail is mounted on most of the balcony's north wall. A slight curved bulge at the west end of the north wall marks the intrusion of the tower into the room. This upper north wall has two horizontal three pane windows and, at its east end, a four panel door, all opening into the small second story storage room at the north end of the main block. Like the other auditorium windows, these two windows have moulded sills and moulded frames with plain upper cornerblocks.

The auditorium's east and west walls each feature six tall 4/4 sash windows, with two pane transom windows and interior folding louvred shutters. The balcony projection interrupts the northerly window in each side wall. The windows are not placed symmetrically, as each side wall has a slightly different window spacing. The east and west walls do each feature two slight projections, covered by the same wainscoating and plaster as the rest of the wall. (These projections are piers

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Description (cont.)

which support the roof trusses above the auditorium.)

The auditorium's south wall is dominated by the large central opening for the stage. The stage floor is raised three feet above the auditorium floor. The stage front is curved so that it projects slightly into the auditorium. The stage front is sheathed with the same vertical beaded boarding and baseboard as the wainscoating, but has a narrow moulding at its top. The stage opening has a plain wooden frame, which it shares with the latticework backed by cloth which fills the space between the opening and the ceiling. In the center of the latticework is a diamond shaped panel with a painted landscape scene. The stage opening is equipped with a painted stage curtain, depicting a seascape with flanking painted drapes above a row of advertisements. At each end of the south wall is a six panel door to the anterooms flanking the stage. Above the western door, a simple shelf supports the emergency lights. On each side of the stage opening, a bronze rectangular plaque is mounted on the wall. The eastern plaque honors the Sutton veterans of the Korean War, while the western plaque lists the veterans of the Vietnam War.

The small side entry hall, located north of the auditorium and south of the former library room, has a board floor and plaster walls. Most of its plaster ceiling is sloped because of the balcony stairway, which is located above it. A moulded frame with plain cornerblocks surrounds the six panel door to auditorium in the south wall. The exterior door at the east end of the small room has three panels beneath a large builtin window, and a plain frame.

The second story storage room to the north of the balcony has a board floor and plaster walls with plain baseboards and chairrails. The plaster ceiling has two modern light fixtures and the opening to the attic, a plain framed board door. The only natural light in the room is provided by the two plain framed three pane windows in the south wall that look out onto the auditorium balcony. The south wall also has the plain framed four panel door to the balcony and a large builtin bookshelf with simply moulded frame. Large wooden racks for the storage of town records line the north wall. At the west end of the room, two plain wooden steps lead up to the door of the upper tower room. The four panel door with curved top has plain door jambs. Because of the height of the tower door, a shallow plaster vault rises from the flat plaster ceiling of the storage room to the arched top of the doorway.

The circular second story tower room has a board floor, a plaster wall with plain baseboard, and a plaster ceiling with central fluorescent light fixture.

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Description (cont.)

Plain frames surround the arched door to storage room on the east and the three 1/1 sash windows. The windows, found to the northeast, north, and northwest, all have interior folding louvred shutters. A thimble in the southwest quadrant of the wall marks the location of the tower chimney.

The attic is an unused space whose floor is the unfinished ceiling of the rooms below, with exposed joists and plaster laths, now partly covered by fiberglass insulation. The curved brick wall of the tower can be seen in the northwest corner, but the other sides of the room are simply the pitched undersides of the main hip roof, with exposed rafters and roof boards. The roof is supported by three large trusses. Each truss includes two rafters, a tie beam and a collarbeam. The tie beam and the collarbeam in each truss are connected by diagonal wooden braces and two vertical metal rods.

The two anterooms flanking the stage in the southeast and southwest corners of the main block are virtually mirror images of each other. Each has a hardwood floor, a plaster ceiling, and plaster walls with beaded boarding topped by a simple rail. From the main level at the auditorium door in a north corner of the room (the northeast corner of the east anteroom and the northwest corner of the west anteroom), one step rises to a landing in the outer corner (the southeast corner of the east room and the southwest corner of the west room). From this landing, three steps ascend along the south wall to a landing in the rear inner corner of the room (the southwest corner of the east room and the southeast corner of the west room). The L-shaped upper landing is edged by a short wall of vertical beaded boarding with a simple moulded rail. Each room is lit by a tall 4/4 sash window, with a two pane transom window, interior louvred shutters, and the same frame as the similar auditorium windows, in its exterior wall (the east wall of the east room and the west wall of the west room). Moulded frames with plain upper and lower cornerblocks surround the two original six panel doors in each room, the northern door to the auditorium and the door to the stage (in the west wall of the east room and the east wall of the west room). The later four panel door to the backstage area in the south wall of each room has a plain frame in a deep niche with beaded board sides and top. Formerly, each anteroom also had a basement stairway. The northwest corner of the east room still retains its stairway with its board steps, and beaded boarding on its north and south walls and on the sloping ceiling of its lower west end. But, a similar stairway in the northeast corner of the west room has been closed off and a board floor built at the level of the auditorium floor. This area of the west anteroom is now enclosed by a wire mesh storage cage, with a plain wooden frame and a wooden framed wire mesh door at its west end. Above the surviving

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Description (cont.)

stairway in the east anteroom is a simple board shelf that anchors the pulley for the stage curtain. (The pulley is dated "1930".)

The stage has a carpeted floor and a plaster ceiling. The north side of the stage is largely occupied by the plain framed stage opening. Above the stage opening can be seen the the board frame on which the stage lights are mounted and the cloth backing of the latticework above the stage opening. The east and west side walls are each plastered with moulded baseboard and chairrail, and a plain board high on the wall. Each side wall contains a six panel door to an anteroom, in its original moulded frame with plain cornerblocks. A large opening to the backstage area almost fills the south wall of the stage, leaving only a band of painted wood on its sides and top. The lower part of this opening is covered by a hanging cloth curtain on a metal rod.

The backstage area in the rear addition has a carpeted floor, horizontal beaded board walls on the south, east and west, and a sloping beaded board ceiling. The north wall is painted brick to the east and west of the large plain framed opening to the stage. At each end of the north wall is a plain framed four panel door to an anteroom. Plain frames also surround the four windows in the south wall, two central single pane windows and a 2/2 sash window at each end.

At the foot of the basement stairs from the former library room is a small landing area that opens directly to its south to the main room that occupies most of the basement. (The main room, once a dining room, now serves a pre-school.) Along the west side of the basement are three rooms opening off the main room, the furnace room to the north, a storage room (with the basement entry) in the center, and the kitchen to the south. The kitchen continues into the southwest corner of the basement level. On the south side of the main room are the women's restroom, just east of the kitchen, and the men's restroom in the southeast corner. Both restrooms include a separate toilet room. The men's restroom also has the stairs to the east anteroom and a storage area under the stairs. (Part of the basement to the north of the northern stairs and landing is still unfinished and unused.)

The landing at the foot of the main stairs and the main room share a linoleum tile floor and modern acoustic tile ceilings with ceiling mouldings and modern light fixtures. The landing area has painted concrete block walls on its north and south. Its east and south sides are plain framed openings into the stairway and the main room, respectively. In its north wall is a short two panel door with simply moulded trim to the unused area at the north end of the basement. (This

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Pillsbury Memorial Hall

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Description (cont.)

unused space has a dirt floor, stone and brick walls on the north, east and west, concrete block and beaded board walls on the south, and an unfinished board ceiling.)

The main room has painted concrete block walls on its east and north sides, and on most of its west side. The south end of the west wall is vertical beaded boarding, while the south wall is plastered. The east wall is topped by a moulded frieze. Four round metal posts punctuate the room. At the west end of the north wall is the plain framed opening to the stair landing. High in the east wall are three deep plain framed openings for the basement windows, a three pane window to the south, two pane windows to the north and in the center. Simply moulded frames grace the two four panel doors to the restrooms in the south wall. Plain frames surround the openings in the west wall, the four panel doors to the furnace room and the storage room to the north, the plain double leaved, folding wooden doors to the kitchen at the south end, and the countertop opening, with formica covered shelf, to the kitchen just north of the kitchen doors.

The furnace room has a concrete floor, a concrete block wall on the east, stone and brick walls on the other three sides, and a plaster ceiling. Plain frames trim the four panel door to the main room in the east wall and the two high openings in the outer west wall, a two pane window to the south and a louver to the north. In the brick south wall can be seen a former opening to the storage room, now filled in with concrete blocks. The room is used for the building's furnace and for storage.

The storage room's concrete floor is set one step above the main basement floor level. The room has an unfinished board ceiling with exposed joists, and brick and stone walls. Concrete blocks fill the closed opening to the furnace room in the north wall. Plain frames surround the east door to the main room and the western board door to the basement entry.

The basement entry is basically a covering for four shallow concrete steps that rise from the storage room to the outer western door. On the outer edges of the steps are narrow ramps used for the wheeled chemical fire extinguisher once owned by the town. The entry has poured concrete walls on three sides, the old brick and granite block outer wall of the main block at its east end, and an unfinished board ceiling with exposed rafters and tie beams. The wooden doors at the east and west ends have plain frames.

The kitchen has a linoleum tile floor and a beaded board ceiling with light fixtures. The walls are plastered on the north, and painted brick and concrete on

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Pillsbury Memorial Hall

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Description (cont.)

the south and west. The east wall is vertical beaded boarding to the north of the doors to the main room, painted concrete block to the south of the doors. Two short sections of painted concrete wall project into the room from the east and west walls, to mark the junction between the original kitchen and its later south extension. Built against the north wall is a counter with a builtin sink, beaded board front, and formica top and splashboard. The countertop continues down the west wall and the east wall, and through the east wall's countertop opening into the main room. The western section of the counter has two pairs of board doors in its base. Under the countertop on the east wall are builtin wooden shelves. A board shelf is mounted on the north wall above the counter. Cabinets with plywood doors and simple trim are mounted on the east wall south of the plain framed main room doors, as well as on much of the south wall. The west wall has two high exterior openings. The north opening still contains a plain framed three pane window. The south opening now contains a louver for the kitchen fan. The south end of the west wall features a wooden counter with drawers and formica top, and shelves mounted on brackets above the counter.

The women's restroom contains two spaces, an outer room with a sink to the north, and the inner toilet room to the south. Both small spaces have linoleum tile floors and beaded board ceilings with light fixtures. They share a painted concrete block west wall and a plastered east wall. Plaster also covers the north wall of the outer room, while the south wall of the toilet room is painted concrete. The wall between the two spaces is constructed of vertical beaded boarding and is equipped with a plain framed, vertical beaded board door.

The men's restroom in the southeast corner is composed of three spaces, an L-shaped space containing the sink to the north and west of the stairs down from the anteroom, a storage space to the east and south of and under the stairs, and the small toilet room in the southwest corner, south of the westerly section of the main outer space. Again the outer space and the toilet room share linoleum tile floors and beaded board ceilings with light fixtures. The two southerly walls of the outer room are built of vertical beaded boarding, while its other walls are plastered. Plain frames surround the four panel door to the main room to the north and the vertical beaded board door to the toilet room to the south. The board door with a wire mesh covered opening to the storage room to the south under the stairs has no trim. There is no door in the opening to the stairway. The toilet room has beaded boarding on its east and north walls, plaster on its south and west walls, and a plain frame on the door to the outhouse. The storage space has a concrete floor, beaded board ceiling, a brick and concrete wall on the south, a plastered

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Description (cont.)

wall on the east, beaded board walls on the north and west. The unfinished underside of the stairs can be seen in the northwest corner of the storage space.

Under the rear addition is a crawlspace with dirt floor, brick and stone walls, and an unfinished board ceiling. The crawlspace is accessible only through the window in the addition's south foundation.

The rectangular lot is three-eighths of an acre in size. The land slopes slightly to the south, enough so that earth had to be banked around the rear of the building. The front lawn is, however, quite level. A concrete curb marks the street frontage. An asphalt paved walk leads from the street to an asphalt paved semicircle in front of the entry steps. To the west of the walkway, the front lawn features a bulletin board, a flagpole, a large spruce tree, and a maple tree. The wooden bulletin board, supported by two wooden posts, has double plexiglass doors with simple trim, and a little wooden shingled gable roof with a plain box cornice. The flagpole is a tall metal pole, hinged between two metal posts so that it can be lowered for maintenance. The eastern portion of the front lawn features a small maple tree in the center, two large maple trees on the east boundary, a shrub at the northeast corner of the porch, and a concrete circle marking the location of a former flagpole. A concrete splashpad encircles the building's foundation. On the west side of the building is found a free standing propane gas tank, connected by a pipe to the furnace, and a circular concrete well cover. A small maple tree grows in the north corner of the basement entry and the main block. Shrubs grow near the southwest corner of the lot. A thick growth of trees and a short fieldstone wall are found in the southeast corner of the lot.

Pillsbury Memorial Hall was built and essentially completed in 1891¹, although it was not formally accepted by the Town of Sutton until 1892². Despite a hundred years of use, the building has seen relatively few changes.

The exterior of Pillsbury Memorial Hall shows little change since its picture was taken for the frontispiece of the book published on its dedication³. The largest addition was made in 1895, when the annual town meeting voted "to build suitable

1. Kearsarge Independent and Times (Warner) June 5, 1891, p.1; Oct. 2, 1891, p.4
2. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901" (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.) pp. 315 and 319
3. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H. (Concord, Republican Press Association, 1893) frontispiece

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Description (cont.)

water closets for the Town Hall".⁴ (The descriptions of Pillsbury Memorial Hall as built make no mention of any restrooms or sanitary facilities.⁵) The rear addition was built to house the new restrooms.⁶ The rear addition appears today much as it did when built, save perhaps for its corrugated metal roof, which may well be a later change. The other major exterior addition, the basement entry, was probably first constructed about 1915, when the town purchased chemical fire extinguishers mounted on carts. One of the extinguishers was stored in the basement of the town hall. At that time, the present steps and ramps were apparently built on the west side of the main block basement.⁷ It is probable that this basement entry was subsequently remodeled later in the 20th century, but it has probably not changed greatly in size. In 1922, a bronze honor roll for the veterans of World War I was installed on the front wall of the main block.⁸ Some exterior changes are probably related to the installation of a kitchen and dining room in the basement as a Works Progress Administration project in 1935-36.⁹ The construction of the rooms probably required the erection of exterior brick chimney on the west side of the main block to serve the kitchen stove¹⁰, and the installation of more basement windows to light the rooms. (The dedication book photograph shows only the two northerly windows in the main block's west foundation.¹¹)

4. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901", pp. 417 and 419

5. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., pp.65-66; Kearsarge Independent and Times Oct. 2, 1891, p.4; Concord Evening Monitor July 14, 1892, p.5

6. Kearsarge Independent and Times June 7, 1895, p.4; ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON FOR THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 15, 1896 (North Sutton, Charles H. Peaslee, 1896) pp.10-11

7. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992; interview of Larry Bennett by David Ruell, Sept. 12, 1992; interview of Clifford Ayer by David Ruell, Sept. 25, 1992

8. untitled volume of town records, including town meeting minutes, 1901-1925 (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.) pp. 632 and 638; ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON FOR THE YEAR ENDING JANUARY 31, 1923 (Concord, Evans Printing Co., 1923) pp.13 and 22

9. Kearsarge Independent May 3, 1935, p.5; Robert Bristol "Historical Sketch of Pillsbury Memorial Hall", ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1972 (Claremont, Hurd's Offset Printing) p.86; ANNUAL REPORTS OF TOWN OF SUTTON FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JANUARY 31, 1936 (Henniker, Maxwell Press) pp. 25, 42-43; ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JANUARY 31, 1937 (Henniker, Maxwell Press) p.30

10. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992; interview of Clifford Ayer by David Ruell, Sept. 25, 1992

11. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., frontispiece

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Description (cont.)

In the past fifty years, there have been only minor changes to the building's exterior. A metal pipe railing was installed in the center of the entry steps in 1956.¹² Louvers were installed in one western basement window about 1959,¹³ when an oil furnace was installed, and in another western basement window after the kitchen was enlarged in 1964.¹⁴ The 1970's saw the placement of a large light on gable above the porch entry.¹⁵ Sometime in the third quarter of the 20th century, the slate roof of that gable was replaced by asphalt shingles.¹⁶ Vinyl storm windows were installed in the 1970's and 1980's.¹⁷ The original two pane pivoting windows in the upper story of the tower were replaced by 1/1 sash windows in the 1980's, because it was not possible to fit storm windows over the pivoting windows.¹⁸ Basically, however, save for the addition of an exterior chimney and the two small and inconspicuous additions, the basement entry and the rear addition, the exterior appears virtually as it did when first constructed.

Although we have no early views of the interiors of the building, it is quite clear that there have been few significant changes to the main level and second story rooms, although the basement has been thoroughly remodeled. The building has seen the upgrading of utilities. Originally lit by kerosene lamps,¹⁹ the building saw the installation of electric lights in 1916.²⁰ The light fixtures have been updated over the years, most notably in 1985-86, when reproduction Victorian style

12. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1956 (Warner, Mayflower Press) p.15; interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992

13. ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1959 (Warner, Mayflower Press) pp.7-8; interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992

14. "Sutton Women's Club, Sutton, New Hampshire, Town Hall Project" (manuscript, collection of Robert Bristol, Sutton, N.H.) pp. 7 and 10, photographs(unpaged)

15. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992

16. Ibid.

17. ANNUAL REPORT OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1975 (no publication data) p.19; interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992

18. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992

19. Bristol, p.87

20. untitled volume of town records, 1901-1925, pp. 481 and 485; ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON FOR THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 15, 1917 (Warner, Kearsarge Independent Press, 1917) pp. 3 and 19

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Description (cont.)

chandeliers were installed in the auditorium.²¹ The heating system has also been periodically replaced.²²

The main level rooms saw the installation of folding interior shutters in 1895.²³ The same year saw the construction of the rear addition with its two restrooms.²⁴ This addition required the placement of two doors in the south walls of the anterooms to serve the restrooms. In 1930, a curtain, painted by a Mr. Davis of Warner, was hung on the stage.²⁵ The latticework with its central painted diamond above the stage probably dates from the same time. The 1935-36 WPA renovation included the enlargement of the stage by removing the wall between the stage and the rear addition and the remodeling of the rear addition by converting the restrooms into a backstage area.²⁶ The basement stairs in the two anterooms were presumably

21. untitled volume of town records, including town meeting minutes, 1958-1985 (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.) pp.484-485; 1985 REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON, N.H. (Newport Litho, Inc.) pp. 83 and 96; 1986 REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON, N.H. (Newport, Newport Litho, Inc.) p. 102
22. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL AFFAIRS OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON FOR THE YEAR ENDING JANUARY 31, 1918 (Warner, Kearsarge Independent Press, 1918) pp.8 and 10; ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1959, pp. 7-8; ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1969 (Claremont, Eagle Publications) p.7; 1984 REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON, N.H. (Newport Litho, Inc.) p.12
23. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901" pp. 417 and 419; ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON FOR THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 15, 1896, pp.10-11; Kearsarge Independent and Times June 7, 1895, p.4
24. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901" pp. 417 and 419; ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON FOR THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 15, 1896, pp.10-11; Kearsarge Independent and Times, June 7, 1895, p.4; interview of Grace Hersey by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992; interview of Clifford Ayer by David Ruell, Sept. 25, 1992
25. date on curtain pulley; Bristol, p.87; untitled volume of town records, including town meeting minutes, 1926-1940 (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.) pp. 81,88 and 114
26. Kearsarge Independent May 3, 1935, p.3; interview of Grace Hersey by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992

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built then to serve the new restrooms in the basement.²⁷ The only likely pre-World War II change to the main level rooms would have been the addition of the door at the foot of the balcony stairs. The stairway probably originally opened directly into the entry hall. The present door, which is different in design from the building's original doors, and the small section of beaded board infill above the door, were presumably added to keep drafts from the entry hall from rising into the balcony.

Changes to the main level and upper level rooms in the past fifty years has been limited. A new heating system in 1959 necessitated the bricking in of the selectmen's office fireplace.²⁸ Renovation of the basement led to the closure of the basement stairs in the side entry hall and the building of new basement stairs in the former library room in 1958-59,²⁹ and the closure of the basement stairs in the west anteroom in the early 1960's.³⁰ Carpets were laid in the selectmen's office in 1968 and again in 1983,³¹ in the former library room in 1972,³² and on the stage after 1970.³³ Storage needs led to the placement of the wire mesh cage in the west anteroom in the late 1970's or 1980's,³⁴ and the building of racks in

27. Interview of Grace Hersey by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992
28. "Sutton Women's Club, Sutton, New Hampshire, Town Hall Project" p.2; interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992; ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1959, pp.7-8;
29. Foster Builders, Inc. "Hall Renovations, Sutton, N.H.", plan dated 6/6/58, (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.); untitled volume of town records, including town meeting minutes, 1941-1958 (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.) pp. 466, 483, 489 and 493; ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1959, pp. 7-8 and 46 ; Bristol, p.86
30. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992; minutes of Town Hall Building Committee (manuscript, collection of Robert Bristol, Sutton, N.H.) minutes for February 29, 1960; "Sutton Women's Club, Sutton, New Hampshire, Town Hall Project" photographs
31. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1968 (no publication data) p.22; 1983 REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON, N.H. (Newport Litho) p.9;
32. ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1972, p.6
33. ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1970 (Claremont, Eagle Publications) p.51
34. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992

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Description (cont.)

the second story storage room in 1986.³⁵ Bronze plaques were mounted on the auditorium wall to honor the veterans of the Korean War and the Vietnam War in 1976.³⁶ (The Vietnam War plaque was replaced in 1989 because of the omission of one name.³⁷) The town's bicentennial celebration in 1984 led to the placing of a plaque above the doors to the auditorium in 1984³⁸ and to the display of the Bicentennial quilt in a case in the auditorium in 1985-6.³⁹

The basement has seen more extensive changes. Originally, the basement was used simply for a furnace and for storage.⁴⁰ It was probably a rather unfinished space, served by stairs in the side entry hall, and lit by two or three windows. The 1935-36 renovations by the WPA led to the creation of a dining room, a kitchen, two restrooms, and apparently, two stairways from the anterooms.⁴¹ The dining room occupied the southerly three-fifths of the present main room, while the kitchen was just the northern half of the present kitchen.⁴² The restrooms and the stairways were virtually mirror images of each other.⁴³ The rooms had beaded board ceilings and concrete floors.⁴⁴

In the past fifty years, the basement has seen two major renovations and other changes. 1958-59 saw the enlargement of the dining room to the north to become the present main room. The project included the erection of the main room's concrete block walls, the closure of the stairs to the side entry hall, and the opening

35. 1986 REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON, N.H., p.15

36. ANNUAL REPORT OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1976 (no publication data) pp.28 and 36

37. 1989 REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON, N.H. (Newport Litho, Inc.) p.18; untitled volume of town records, including town meeting minutes, 1986-1992 (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.) p.46

38. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992

39. untitled volume of town records, 1958-1985, pp. 484-485; 1986 REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON, N.H. p.102

40. Concord Evening Monitor July 14, 1892, p.5

41. Interview of Grace Hersey by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992; Bristol, p.86; Kearsarge Independent May 3, 1935 p.5

42. Foster Builders Inc. "Hall Renovations, Sutton N.H.", plan dated 6/6/58

43. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992

44. Interview of Clifford Ayer by David Ruell, Sept. 25, 1992; ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1957 (Warner, Mayflower Press) photograph between pages 64 and 65

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Description (cont.)

of wider, more convenient stairs to the former library room.⁴⁵ As already noted, the stairs down from the west anteroom were removed in the early 1960's. In 1964, the kitchen was enlarged to the south, taking over parts of the area devoted to the women's restroom and the western stairway. A new concrete block wall was built between the reduced women's restroom and the enlarged kitchen. Double folding doors replaced the single door between the kitchen and the main room. New counters and cabinets were built in the enlarged kitchen.⁴⁶ In 1965, tile floors were laid in the basement rooms.⁴⁷ Other recent changes in the basement have included the acoustic tile ceiling in the main room and the closing of the opening between the storage room and the furnace room.

In summary, the exterior, with the exception of two minor and inconspicuous additions, appears virtually as it did in 1891. The main level and upper level rooms also retain their basic late 19th century appearance. Only the basement, originally a rather unimportant subsidiary space, has seen significant change in the 20th century.

The town hall grounds are also little changed. The trees and shrubs have, of course, grown over the years. The walkway has been replaced when necessary. A concrete curb was built along the street in 1935.⁴⁸ The flagpole has been⁴⁹ moved at least twice, from its original position beside the front entry steps, to a location on the front lawn east of the walkway still marked by a concrete circle, and then to its present position west of the walk.⁵⁰ A well was drilled and covered

45. ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1959, pp.7-8; Bristol, p.86; interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992; Foster Builders, Inc. "Hall Renovations, Sutton, N.H.", plan dated 6/6/58; "Sutton Women's Club, Sutton, New Hampshire, Town Hall Project" p.2

46. "Sutton Women's Club, Sutton, New Hampshire, Town Hall Project", pp. 3,5,8-10, plan and photographs; Bristol, p.87; ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1963 (Claremont, Eagle Publications) p.8

47. untitled volume of town records, 1958-1985, pp.147 and 149; ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31,1964 (Warner, Mayflower Press) p.20; ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1965 (Warner, Mayflower Press) pp. 19 and 57

48. Kearsarge Independent August 16, 1935 p.5

49. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H. frontispiece

50. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, Sept. 22, 1992

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Pillsbury Memorial Hall

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Description (cont.)

by a concrete well cover on the west side of the building in 1961.⁵¹ About 1986, a bulletin board was erected next to the walk.⁵² A free standing propane tank was placed near the main block's west facade about 1989.⁵³ The grounds nevertheless appear today much as they did in the 1890's.

Despite minor changes, Pillsbury Memorial Hall and its grounds retain their basic integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

51. untitled volume of town records, 1958-1985, pp.83 and 85; ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1960 (Warner, Mayflower Press, 1961) p.9; ANNUAL REPORT OF TOWN OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1961 (Warner, Mayflower Press) pp.9 and 39

52. untitled volume of town records, 1958-1985, pp.484-485; 1986 REPORT OF THE TOWN OF SUTTON, N.H., p.102

53. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, September 22, 1992

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 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)

Politics / Government

Architecture

Period of Significance

1891-1942

Significant Dates

1891

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Buffington, Leroy S.

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Pillsbury Memorial Hall

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Pillsbury Memorial Hall

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Statement of Significance

Pillsbury Memorial Hall is significant under Criterion A in the area of Politics and Government as a town hall that has served the Town of Sutton for a full century and as a good, well preserved example of the town halls found in Merrimack County. Erected in 1891, Pillsbury Memorial Hall has housed all Sutton town meetings and elections from November 1892 to the present. It has housed the municipal offices, used for town administration and the storage of town records, since its first occupancy by the town. (The building also sheltered the town library until a separate library building was erected.) Pillsbury Memorial Hall continues to convey the character and associations of its historic use and building type. Pillsbury Memorial Hall is also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as one of the best Late Victorian town halls in Merrimack, as indeed the county's only Romanesque town hall. The building is also notable as the work of the nationally known architect Leroy S. Buffington of Minnesota. The well preserved building continues to convey the character of its original design. The building's period of significance under Criterion C is the year of its erection, 1891. Under Criterion A, its period of significance begins with the year of its first use for town meetings in 1892 and ends in 1942, the arbitrary 50 year cutoff date.

Politics and Government

Merrimack County was settled in the 18th century, when the townships that now comprise the county were granted to groups of proprietors. Usually, when the population in a township had grown large enough, the township was incorporated as a town and given the right of self government. Twenty-two of the present twenty-seven municipalities in the county were incorporated as towns by the end of the 18th century. Two of the smaller townships were incorporated in the early 19th century, Wilmot in 1807 and Allenstown in 1831. The 19th century also saw the incorporation of three new towns from parts of pre-existing towns, Hooksett in 1822, Franklin in 1828, and Webster in 1860.¹

The governments of all Merrimack County towns were originally based on the town meeting, the public meeting of the town's voters, held annually or as required by special needs, to make governmental policy for the town, to appropriate money, to adopt ordinances and regulations, and to elect town officers. The everyday tasks of government were given to a board of selectmen. But, the major decisions were made at the town meetings. In the 19th century, the county's two largest communities changed to a city form of government with an elected city council, Concord in 1853,²

1. D.H. Hurd, ed. HISTORY OF MERRIMACK AND BELKNAP COUNTIES, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Philadelphia, J.W. Lewis, 1885) pp.1-2

2. Hurd, p.120

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

and Franklin in 1894.³ However, the other twenty-five municipalities in Merrimack County still retain the town meeting as the principal mechanism of their local government.

Town meetings do require a place to meet. Since, in the 18th century and the early 19th century, New Hampshire town governments were also responsible for the support of a town minister and the provision of a building for religious services, most towns erected a meetinghouse, which was used for both town meetings and the religious services of the established church. The meetinghouse was typically erected on town owned land with town appropriations and/or funds raised by the sale of pew privileges. Save for the small town of Danbury, all of the Merrimack County towns in existence by 1820 had such meetinghouses,⁴ although, as we shall see, Sutton was a special case, in that it had two privately owned meetinghouses.

In 1819, the relationship of church and state in New Hampshire was radically changed when the state legislature adopted the Toleration Act, which stated that towns could no longer appropriate money for the support of ministers and of meetinghouses used for religious purposes. The Toleration Act allowed towns to continue to maintain meetinghouses that they already owned.⁵ But, in most towns, the ultimate effect of the Toleration Act was the physical, as well as the financial, separation of church and town.

Most of the old town meetinghouses in Merrimack County are no longer standing, having either been demolished or lost to fire. Eleven or twelve 18th century meetinghouses once used for town meetings still survive in Merrimack County, although all have been extensively altered. (The number is uncertain, as the fate of the 18th century South Sutton meetinghouse is unclear. Given the loss of historical records and conflicting accounts, it is not known if the building was remodeled into a church or replaced by a new building in the 1860's.⁶) Six or seven of these meetinghouses, 3. Hobart Pillsbury, NEW HAMPSHIRE: RESOURCES, ATTRACTIONS AND ITS PEOPLE: A HISTORY (New York, Lewis Historical Publishing, 1927) vol. II, p.670

4. A survey of past and present meetinghouses was made by consulting Hurd's county history and local histories, and by interviewing local historians. These sources will be cited in the appropriate footnotes and in the bibliography.

5. LAWS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, VOL. 8, SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL PERIOD, 1811-1820 (Concord, Evans Printing Co., 1920) pp.820-821

6. Augusta H. Worthen, THE HISTORY OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Concord, Republican Press Association, 1890) p.333; Arthur E. French, A HISTORIC SKETCH OF THE MEETING HOUSE BUILDING (Sutton, 1936) p.7; interview of Betty Wells by David Ruell, November 19, 1989

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in Andover, Hill, Salisbury, Hopkinton, Boscawen, North Sutton, and maybe South Sutton, were remodeled into churches.⁷ The meetinghouses in Henniker, Pittsfield and Canterbury were converted into town halls.⁸ Only two meetinghouses, in Loudon and Webster, continued to serve both governmental and religious functions, for, in the mid 19th century, each was divided into two stories, with a town hall in the first story and a church auditorium in the second story.⁹

The more typical solution was for the town government to erect its own hall for town meetings. Today, there are sixteen buildings standing in Merrimack County that were specifically built as town halls before 1942.¹⁰ These include the present

7. John R. Eastman, HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF ANDOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE, 1751-1906 (Concord, Rumford Printing Co., 1910) pp.102-104; John J. Dearborn, THE HISTORY OF SALISBURY, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Manchester, William E. Moore, 1890) pp.131-144; Charles C. Lord, LIFE AND TIMES IN HOPKINTON, N.H. (Concord, Republican Press, 1890) p.184; Mildred Morrill, Harriette Kenney, Lee-Ann Forsyth, HILL, THE OLD AND THE NEW, 1754-1976 (c.1976), p.4; Charles C. Coffin, THE HISTORY OF BOSCAWEN AND WEBSTER FROM 1773 TO 1878 (Concord, Republican Press, 1878) pp.157-158, 232-233; French, p.7; Worthen, pp. 333, 337-339. The former Andover meetinghouse, now the Congregational Church, was listed on the National Register, as part of the East Andover Village Center Historic District on March 16, 1989, while the former Hill meetinghouse, now the Hill Center Church, was listed on September 12, 1985.
8. Henniker History Committee, THE ONLY HENNIKER ON EARTH (Canaan, Phoenix Publishing, 1980) pp.38-39; E. Harold Young, HISTORY OF PITTSFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Manchester, Granite State Press, 1953) pp. 48-49; James O. Lyford, ed., HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CANTERBURY, NEW HAMPSHIRE, 1727-1912 (Canterbury, Canterbury Historical Society, 1973 reprint of 1912 ed.) pp.219 and 224. The Henniker Town Hall was listed on the National Register on February 24, 1981, while the Pittsfield Town Hall was listed as part of the Pittsfield Center Historic District on December 12, 1980
9. Coffin, pp.137-143, 242-242; Webster History Committee, WEBSTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE, 1933-1983 (Warner, R.C. Bradshaw, 1984) pp.27-28, 157-159, "Town Book No. 8, 1837-1855" (manuscript, Loudon Town Offices, Loudon, N.H.) pp.249-251. The Webster Meetinghouse was listed on the National Register on March 7, 1985, and the Loudon Town Hall was listed on September 5, 1990.
10. The town halls of the county were also surveyed by reviewing county and local histories and by interviewing local historians and officials. These sources will be cited in the appropriate places and in the bibliography. It should be noted that the towns of Allenstown and Northfield acquired former church buildings to serve as their town halls. (John Dowst "The Old Allenstown Meeting House" Granite Monthly, 1912, vol. 44, pp.5-11; Lucy R. Cross, HISTORY OF NORTHFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 1780-1905 (Concord, Rumford Press, 1905) pp.26, 37-38)

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

or past town halls in Hooksett (1828-29), Salisbury (1837), Chichester (1845), Hill (1847), Bow (1847), Epsom (1850), Danbury (1856), Bradford (1863), Hopkinton (1873), Newbury (1876), Andover (1879), Sutton (1891), Wilmot (1906), Dunbarton (1909), Warner (1910), and New London (1917-18).¹¹ The majority are modest vernacular structures, but some, such as the town hall in Sutton, have greater architectural pretensions.

The Town of Sutton has to wait for over a century before it acquired its own building for town meetings. Granted to Obadiah Perry and 59 other people in 1749, the township was first known as Perrystown.¹² Because of the French and Indian War, actual settlement of the grant was delayed until 1767.¹³ It was not until 1784 that Perrystown was incorporated as a town under the new name of Sutton.¹⁴ For the first fourteen years, town meetings were held in private homes, as there was no suitable meetinghouse in the community.¹⁵ At the first town meeting on May 20, 1784, a committee was chosen to select a site for a meetinghouse.¹⁶ But the selection of

11. Charles R. Hardy, HOOKSETT HISTORICAL SKETCHES 1822-1968 (Manchester, Lew A. Cummings, 1969) pp.57-61; Dearborn, pp.359-361; Chichester History Committee, A HISTORY OF CHICHESTER, 1727-1977 (c.1977), pp.35-36; Morrill, Kenney and Fosyth, p.4; David A. Bundy, 100 ACRES MORE OR LESS, THE HISTORY OF THE LAND AND PEOPLE OF BOW, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Canaan, Phoenix Publishing, 1975) pp.101, 308-309; James Garvin, "Report to the Epsom Town Hall Committee" (manuscript, N.H. Division of Historical Resources, Concord, N.H.); dateboard on Danbury Town Hall; Bradford History Committee, TWO HUNDRED PLUS, 1771-1976, BRADFORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE IN RETROSPECT (Canaan, Phoenix Publishing, 1976) pp.47-50; Lord, pp.172-175; NEWBURY PAST AND PRESENT (Newbury, Sunapee Lake Grange No. 112, c.1955) p.10; Ralph G. Chaffee, HISTORY OF ANDOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE, 1900-1965 (Orford, Equity Publishing, 1966) p.19; Florence Langley, GLIMPSES OF THE PAST, THE HISTORY OF WILMOT, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Canaan, Phoenix Publishing, 1986) pp.29-32; Alice M. Hadley WHERE THE WINDS BLOW FREE, DUNBARTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE (Canaan, Phoenix Publishing, 1976) pp.8 and 41; Carl Malmberg, ed. WARNER, NEW HAMPSHIRE, 1880-1974 (Warner, Warner Historical Society, 1974) pp.23-24; James D. Squires, MIRROR TO AMERICA, A HISTORY OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE 1900-1950 (Concord, Evans Printing, 1952) pp.35-36. The Bradford Town Hall was listed on the National Register on November 13, 1980.

12. Worthen, pp.1 and 4

13. Worthen, pp.14, 17 and 32

14. Worthen, pp.95-97

15. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol.1, 1784-1813" (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.)

16. Worthen, pp.96-97, 123

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

a site proved rather difficult, as the town's residents were divided in its early days. As a 1794 petition to the state legislature explained, the center of the town was "so mountainous and broken" that it was unwise to build a meetinghouse there and that, as the inhabitants were concentrated at the northern and southern ends of the town, it would be better to build two meetinghouses.¹⁷ Ultimately, after a decade of discussion and a number of votes and countervotes at the town meetings, the town did not build its own meetinghouse.¹⁸ Instead, private societies built two separate meetinghouses, in North Sutton and South Sutton, at about the same time, from 1794 to 1797.¹⁹ For over four decades, beginning in 1798, the two privately owned meetinghouses were used alternately for town meetings.²⁰

In the 1840's and 1850's, some town meetings were held in inns and in private halls, as well as in the meetinghouses.²¹ And the town meeting records reveal a growing interest in building a town hall. A March 1849 town meeting warrant article to build a town hall was postponed indefinitely, but a similar article was narrowly defeated on a 91 to 87 vote at the March 1854 town meeting.²² In 1855, the North Sutton Meetinghouse was remodeled. Originally, the main room of the meetinghouse was two stories high, with a high pulpit and a gallery on three sides. A new floor was now built at the gallery level. The upper level of the building became the church auditorium, while the lower level was converted into a hall.²³ The lower hall of the North Meetinghouse was the favored site for town meetings through the mid 1870's, although other sites, notably a hall owned by Joseph P. Nelson, were also used.²⁴ From 1875 on, Nelson's Hall was used almost exclusively for town meetings.²⁵ Interest in building a town hall may have been restrained in the post war years by the large debt for Civil War bounties and expenses that the town carried

17. Worthen, pp.318-319

18. Worthen, pp.123-126, 316-325

19. Worthen, pp.325-333

20. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 1, 1784-1813"; "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 2, 1814-1848" (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.)

21. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 2, 1814-1848"; "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 3, 1848-1872" (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.)

22. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 3, 1848-1872" pp.11, 20, 132, 140

23. Worthen, pp.333-338

24. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 3, 1848-1872"; "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 4, 1872 to 1885" (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.)

25. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 4, 1872 to 1885"; "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901" (manuscript, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.)

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on its books until 1883.²⁶ In the mid 1880's, there was again a movement to build a town hall. Articles asking for the erection of a town house appeared in the warrants for the annual town meetings of 1885, 1886, and 1887, but all were defeated.²⁷ The proponents of a town hall for Sutton must have grown discouraged, but they were soon to be pleasantly surprised by the generous gift of a Sutton native who had made his fortune in the West.

John Sargent Pillsbury (1828-1901)²⁸ was born in Sutton, the son of John Pillsbury (1789-1856) and Susan Wadleigh Pillsbury (1793-1877).²⁹ Educated in Sutton's common schools, he moved to Warner at the age of 16 to clerk in a general store.³⁰ He became a merchant in Warner and later in Concord.³¹ After a tour of the West, Pillsbury settled in St. Anthony, Minnesota, a community that later became the city of Minneapolis, where he engaged in the hardware business.³² He also successfully invested in lumbering, real estate, railroads, and banking.³³ But, the real source of his wealth was the flour milling firm, that he, his brother George, and George's son Charles, established in 1872.³⁴ By the late 1880's, the Pillsbury family firm could be described as the largest flour manufacturing firm in the world.³⁵

Pillsbury was also interested in Minnesota politics. He served six years on the city council, from 1858 to 1864.³⁶ Pillsbury was elected to the state senate for the first time in 1863, and served periodically in the senate until he was elected governor in 1875.³⁷ He served three terms as the governor of Minnesota, from 1876 to 1882.³⁸ Pillsbury was also deeply involved in the affairs of the University of Minnesota for nearly four decades.³⁹ Among his contributions to the University was

26. Worthen, pp.140 and 506

27. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901" pp.1,4,54,57,112,116

28. Lester B. Shippee "Pillsbury, John Sargent" DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1934) vol.7, pp.607-608

29. Worthen, pp.873 and 880

30. Worthen, p.895

31. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H. (Concord, Republican Press Association, 1893) p.8

32. Worthen, p.895; DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., pp.8-9

33. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., pp.42-43

34. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., pp.11 and 42; Shippee, p.607

35. Worthen, pp.884-885; Shippee, p.607

36. Shippee, p.607; DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., p.11

37. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., pp.11 and 14; Shippee, p.607-608

38. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., pp.14-42; Shippee, p.608

39. Shippee, p.608; DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., pp. 11-14

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the gift of a science building,⁴⁰ but Pillsbury was also noted for other acts of philanthropy. One biographer described Pillsbury and his wife as "lavish in their benefactions of private and public character."⁴¹ Pillsbury organized relief efforts for grasshopper plagued farmers and tornado victims, and made other large donations to deserving causes.⁴²

It was perhaps inevitable that Gov. Pillsbury, given his large fortune and philanthropic bent, would make some gift to his native New Hampshire town. He may have been prodded by the example of his brother George, who in 1890 made donations to all three New Hampshire communities in which he had lived before moving to Minnesota, giving a soldiers monument to Sutton, a library to Warner, and a hospital to Concord.⁴³ John Pillsbury had relatives in Sutton, who may have kept him informed of the efforts to erect a town hall. In 1892, he would state "It has long been my purpose to erect in [Sutton], in honor of my father and mother and as a memorial to their noble and devoted lives, a town house"⁴⁴ But, the public did not learn of the governor's intention until 1890.⁴⁵ There survives in the collection of the architect Leroy S. Buffington's papers at the University of Minnesota an earlier design for "Pillsbury Hall", dated 1890, suggesting that Pillsbury took his first serious steps towards the construction of the hall in that year. (This earlier design is more elaborate, and presumably more expensive, than the structure that was actually built.)⁴⁶

John and George Pillsbury visited Sutton in November of 1890 for the funeral of their brother Benjamin,⁴⁷ but they soon found a more pleasant task. The local newspaper reported on November 14 that the two men "have been in town looking for a location for a new town house, the gift of ex-Gov. John S. Pillsbury of Minnesota."⁴⁸

40. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H. pp.44-49

41. Shippee, p.608

42. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H. pp.17-21,40 and 43

43. THREE DEDICATIONS, SOLDIERS MONUMENT IN SOUTH SUTTON, PILLSBURY FREE LIBRARY AT WARNER, MARGARET PILLSBURY GENERAL HOSPITAL AT CONCORD, 1891 (Concord, Republican Press Association, 1891) pp.13, 82-83, 138 and 143

44. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., p.89

45. Worthen, p.1113

46. Leroy S. Buffington "Pillsbury Hall" elevation dated 1890 (manuscript, Leroy S. Buffington Collection, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota)

47. Kearsarge Independent and Times (Warner) Nov. 7, 1890, pp.1 and 4

48. Kearsarge Independent and Times Nov. 14, 1890, p.1

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

Pillsbury found an appropriate site in the village of Sutton. He purchased a 3/8 acre lot on the south side of the village's main street in January of 1891.⁴⁹ By early February, the first bricks for the new building were being drawn to the site.⁵⁰ In early May, it was announced that the contract for the building had been awarded to Freeman A. Fisher, another Sutton native who had emigrated to Minneapolis.⁵¹ Work commenced on the building in June.⁵² By early August, the masons had nearly finished the main block and the carpenters were putting up the roof.⁵³ By the end of that month, the brickwork was done and the roof was being slated.⁵⁴ By October 2, 1891, the newspaper could report that "Pillsbury Memorial Hall, the magnificent gift to Sutton by ex-Gov. John S. Pillsbury of Minnesota is completed."⁵⁵

Gov. Pillsbury attended the September 1, 1891 dedication of his brother's soldiers monument in Sutton, and planned to dedicate the town hall before he returned to Minnesota.⁵⁶ A special town meeting was scheduled for September 18 to formally accept the governor's gift.⁵⁷ But, Pillsbury was called back to Minnesota by the sudden death of his daughter and the dedication plans were postponed.⁵⁸ The special town meeting took no action on the gift.⁵⁹ But the annual town meeting in March of 1892, held in Nelson's Hall, did vote to accept the town hall.⁶⁰ The actual dedication was delayed until the summer of 1892 to accommodate Gov. Pillsbury's schedule.⁶¹ On July 13, 1892, Pillsbury Memorial Hall was formally presented to the town by Gov. Pillsbury and dedicated with a small parade, many speeches, a dinner, and fireworks.⁶²

49. Deed from Moses and Mary Blaisdell to John S. Pillsbury, dated January 21, 1891 (manuscript, Merrimack County Registry of Deeds, Concord, N.H.) Book 293, Page 422

50. Kearsarge Independent and Times, February 6, 1891, p.1

51. Kearsarge Independent and Times, May 8, 1891, p.4; DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., p.65

52. Kearsarge Independent and Times, June 5, 1891, p.1

53. Kearsarge Independent and Times, August 7, 1891, p.1

54. Kearsarge Independent and Times, August 28, 1891, p.5

55. Kearsarge Independent and Times, October 2, 1891, p.4

56. Kearsarge Independent and Times, September 4, 1891, pp.1 and 4; September 23, 1891, p.4; October 2, 1891, p.4

57. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901" p.310

58. Kearsarge Independent and Times, September 18, 1891, p.4, October 2, 1891, p.4

59. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901" p.311; Kearsarge Independent and Times, September 23, 1891, p.4

60. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901" pp.315 and 319

61. Kearsarge Independent and Times, September 23, 1891, p.4

62. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., pp.67-167; Kearsarge Independent and Times, July 15, 1892, p.1; Concord Evening Monitor, July 14, 1892, pp.5 and 8

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

Pillsbury Memorial Hall has not changed greatly since its dedication. During the building's period of historic significance, some changes were made to improve the usefulness and convenience of the hall as a meeting place and as a government building. The exterior saw the construction of the rear addition to provide restrooms and of the small basement entry to serve a fire extinguisher housed in the basement. Less important exterior changes in the period of significance included the World War I honor roll, the exterior chimney on the main block, and some basement windows. Exterior changes since 1942 have been minor, a railing and light at the entry steps, storm windows, louvers in two basement windows, and the replacement of the window sash in the upper story of the tower. Similarly, the main and upper level rooms, the auditorium, the stage, and the offices, saw some change in the period of significance, the installation of electric lights, interior shutters, stage curtain, and the latticework above the stage opening, the placement of a door at the foot of the balcony stairs, the construction of the rear addition with its restrooms and the subsequent enlargement of the stage into the rear addition, and the building of stairs in the anterooms to the new basement restrooms. Changes in the main and upper level rooms since 1942 have again been minor, the bricking in of a fireplace, the adding of new basement stairs and closing of old basement stairs, and the installation of carpets, storage racks, a wire mesh storage cage, bronze and plastic plaques, and the guilt case. The basement was changed during the period of significance from its original use for the furnace and storage, by the addition of a kitchen, dining room, and two restrooms. Changes since 1942 have been more significant in the basement, with the enlargement of the main room and the kitchen, the reduction of one restroom, the closing of two stairways, the opening of a new stairway, and the installation of tile ceilings and floors. Still, some sections of the basement, such as the men's restroom and stairway and parts of other rooms, appear as they did in the 1930's. The grounds have seen the movement of the flagpole, and the addition of the bulletin board and well cover. But, basically, save for parts of the basement, Pillsbury Memorial Hall and its grounds retain their historic integrity from the building's period of significance as an historic town hall.

Historically, Pillsbury Memorial Hall is significant for a century of use as a town hall. On November 18, 1892, the first town meeting was held in Pillsbury Memorial Hall.⁶³ Every town meeting from November of 1892 to the present has also been held in the town hall.⁶⁴ Discussions of town affairs also took place elsewhere. But, the

63. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901" pp.344,355-359

64. "Proceedings of Town Meetings, Vol. 5, 1885-1901"; five untitled books of town records, including town meeting and election minutes, for the periods 1901-1925, 1926-1940, 1941-1958, 1958-1985, 1986-1992 (manuscripts, Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.)

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actual decisions of local government have been made at the town meetings in Pillsbury Memorial Hall for the past one hundred years. Pillsbury Memorial Hall has been used as the voting place for local, county, state, and federal elections in Sutton from November, 1892 to the present.⁶⁵ The building was also designed to fulfill other governmental needs, to provide space for a selectmen's office, the storage of town records, and the town library.⁶⁶ The first story tower room has served as the selectmen's office from the town's first occupancy of the building to the present. The offices in the town hall have, in fact, been the only municipal administrative offices in Sutton for the last century. Some town officials, such as the town clerk, treasurer, and tax collector have often chosen to conduct their business in their own homes. But, the offices in the town hall have been the meeting place for the selectmen and the administrators of the town government. Other local boards, such as the school board and the planning board, have used the town hall for their meetings over the years. And the town hall auditorium has been the standard site for public hearings and meetings.⁶⁷ Town records have always been stored in the town hall.⁶⁸ The town library was moved to its own building in 1941.⁶⁹ But, for nearly fifty years, most of the building's period of significance, the library was located on the first floor of the town hall.⁷⁰ Pillsbury Memorial Hall has, in effect been the center of town government since its dedication.

Local government by town meetings and boards of selectmen has been the standard form of municipal government in New Hampshire from the Colonial period to modern times. The town halls, where town meetings and elections have been held to decide major issues and to choose officials, and where selectmen have met to discuss the daily affairs of town government, have an historical importance in the area of local government comparable to that of the state and federal capitols in the areas of state and federal government. Pillsbury Memorial Hall is a well preserved, excellent example of these important buildings and should be recognized for its central role in the governmental history of a typical New Hampshire town.

65. Ibid.

66. DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H., p.65; Concord Evening Monitor, July 14, 1892, p.5

67. Interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, October 2, 1992

68. Ibid.

69. The Narrative Committee A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF SUTTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE 1784-1984 (c.1984) p.33

70. Kearsarge Independent and Times, October 30, 1891, p.1; Concord Evening Monitor July 14, 1892, p.5; interview of Robert Bristol by David Ruell, October 2, 1992

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

Architecture

For the design of the town hall in Sutton, John S. Pillsbury turned to Minneapolis architect Leroy S. Buffington (1847-1931). Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, Buffington studied engineering in the local schools and then learned architecture in the offices of a Cincinnati architectural firm.⁷¹ In 1869, Buffington went to St. Anthony, Minnesota, now part of Minneapolis, to marry a former Cincinnati woman. They returned to Cincinnati after their marriage, but two years later moved to Saint Paul.⁷² The young architect soon opened an office in Minneapolis and "met with immediate success".⁷³ He has been described as "the city's first 'fashionable' architect".⁷⁴ And by 1877, he was "commonly referred to as the best architect in the state".⁷⁵

Leroy S. Buffington had a long association with the Pillsburys of Minneapolis, before he was asked by John Pillsbury to design Pillsbury Memorial Hall. He designed the governor's own Queen Anne Style house, built in 1877-78.⁷⁶ Buffington also designed houses for his brother, George Pillsbury, and George's two sons, Charles and Fred.⁷⁷ For the Pillsbury family flour milling firm, the architect designed the Pillsbury "A" Mill (1880-81), a massive Romanesque Revival structure that, with later additions, became the largest flouring mill in the world.⁷⁸ Buffington designed several buildings for the University of Minnesota during the period when John Pillsbury was deeply involved in the University's affairs, the most notable being the Romanesque Revival Pillsbury Hall (1887-1889), the science building that

71. Donald R. Torbert "Buffington, Leroy Sunderland" THE MACMILLAN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARCHITECTS (New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982) vol. 1, pp.320-321; THE NATIONAL CYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY (New York, James T. White & Co., 1932) vol. 22, p.364; Henry and Elsie Withey, BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN ARCHITECTS (Los Angeles, New Age Publishing Co., 1956) pp.89-90

72. Muriel B. Christison, "LeRoy S. Buffington and the Minneapolis Boom of the 1880's" Minnesota History, vol. 23, no.3 (September 1942) pp.220-221

73. Torbert, p.320

74. Donald R. Torbert, A CENTURY OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN MINNESOTA (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1968) p.50

75. Christison, p.221

76. Interview of Barbara Bezat, The Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota, by David Ruell, October 7, 1992

77. Torbert "Buffington, Leroy Sunderland", p.320; Christison, p.229

78. Christison, pp.222-223; Lucille M. Kane, THE WATERFALL THAT BUILT A CITY (Saint Paul, Minnesota Historical Society, 1966) p.104; Jean Adams Ervin, THE TWIN CITIES PERCEIVED (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1976) pp.9 and 18

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

Gov. Pillsbury donated to the school.⁷⁹ So, it is not surprising that John Pillsbury chose Buffington as the architect for a town hall in New Hampshire.

It is not easy to place Pillsbury Memorial Hall in the context of Buffington's architectural career, as there is no comprehensive study of the architect's work.⁸⁰ Most of the scholarly research on Buffington has been devoted to his controversial claim to have invented the metal framed skyscraper.⁸¹ (That claim, although interesting, is of little relevance in the consideration of this town hall, with its masonry walls and wood framed roof.) We do know that, although Buffington's work was concentrated in Minnesota, he did have a wide ranging practice, "extending from New Hampshire to Wyoming and from Kentucky to Canada".⁸² It is generally agreed that, while Buffington continued to practice until shortly before his death, his greatest success, professionally and artistically, came in the 1870's and 1880's, a period of rapid growth in the Minneapolis area.⁸³ In the 1880's, Buffington, inspired by the work of H.H. Richardson, turned to Romanesque Revival style.⁸⁴ This Richardsonian Romanesque phase of his career included some of the architect's best known and most highly regarded buildings.

Pillsbury Memorial Hall is best described as a Richardsonian Romanesque building, although it cannot be categorized as a full blown example of the style. The budget for the building presumably did not allow for the rock faced masonry and the Romanesque carving typical of the more elaborate examples of the Richardsonian Romanesque. As the town hall was built primarily of brick, rock faced granite was used only for the foundations, the sills and lintels of the windows, the sills of the porch arches, the lintels of the doors and the stringcourses of the tower. The details of the

79. Harlan E. McClure, *TWIN CITIES ARCHITECTURE* (New York, Reinhold Publishing Corp. 1955), p.11; Christison, p.231; David Gebhard and Tom Martinson, *A GUIDE TO THE ARCHITECTURE OF MINNESOTA* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1977), pp.50-51

80. Letter from Susan Roth, Minnesota Historical Society to David Ruell, Sept. 1, 1992

81. E.M. Upjohn "Buffington and the Skyscraper" *The Art Bulletin* vol. 17 (March 1935) pp.48-70; Hugh Morrison, "Buffington and the Invention of the Skyscraper" *The Art Bulletin* vol.26 (March 1944) pp.1-2; Dimitris Tselos "The Enigma of Buffington's Skyscraper" *The Art Bulletin* vol.26 (March 1944) pp.3-12; Muriel B. Christison, "How Buffington Staked His Claim" *The Art Bulletin* vol.26 (March 1944) pp. 13-24

82. Christison, "LeRoy S. Buffington and the Minneapolis Boom of the 1880's" p.219; Upjohn, p.55

83. Christison, "LeRoy S. Buffington and the Minneapolis Boon of the 1880's, pp.219-220, 232; Torbert, "Buffington, Leroy Sunderland", p.320; Morrison, p.1

84. Christison, "How Buffington Staked His Claim", p.13; Christison, "LeRoy S. Buffington and the Minneapolis Boom of the 1880's" p.227; interview of Barbara Bezat by David Ruell, October 1, 1992

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

exterior are relatively simple and employ the decorative motifs found on many late 19th century buildings, simple mouldings on the window and door frames, mouldings, modillions, and dentils on the cornices, and cut slates in the gables. But, the strong influence of the Richardsonian Romanesque is evident in the basic composition and the major elements of the building. The massiveness and simplicity of the building's forms, the broad hip roof with its lower gables on the front and side, the wide semicircular arches of the porch, the short round tower with its conical roof and plain heavy exterior chimney, and the asymmetry of the composition are all typical of the style.

Pillsbury Memorial Hall is typical of this period of Buffington's career.⁸⁵ Although we do not have a complete catalog of Buffington's work, we do have a sampling of his work at the time in a series of designs by Buffington published in the American Architect and Building News from 1888 through 1891.⁸⁶ These twelve designs are for buildings that are larger, more elaborate, and more expensive than Pillsbury Memorial Hall. But,

85. Interview of Barbara Bezat by David Ruell, October 7, 1992
86. "Pillsbury Science Hall" American Architect and Building News vol. 22, no. 630 (July 21, 1888) p. 30 and plate; "Design for the Arragon Apartment House, Chicago" American Architect and Building News vol. 24, no. 669 (Oct. 20, 1888) p. 182 and plate; "Residence for A.G. Kennedy, Minneapolis" American Architect and Building News vol. 24, no. 671 (Nov. 3, 1888) p. 206 and plate; "Office Building, Iron Construction, Minneapolis, Minn." American Architect and Building News vol. 24, no. 673 (Dec. 17, 1888) p. 230 and plate; "Storage and Warehouse Deposit Co., Minneapolis, Minn." American Architect and Building News vol. 28, no. 745 (April 5, 1890) p. 14 and plate; "Design for Presbyterian Church, East Minneapolis" American Architect and Building News vol. 28, no. 746 (April 12, 1890) p. 29 and plate; "Drill Hall, University of Minnesota" American Architect and Building News vol. 28, no. 749 (May 3, 1890) p. 72 and plate; "Dunham & Johnson Wholesale Grocery Warehouse, Minneapolis, Minn." American Architect and Building News vol. 29, no. 763 (August 9, 1890) p. 90 and plate; "House of L.S. Tainter, Menomonie, Wisconsin" American Architect and Building News vol. 29, no. 766 (August 30, 1890) p. 138 and plate; "House for N.F. Warner" American Architect and Building News vol. 31, no. 790 (Feb. 14, 1890) p. 110 and plate; "Design for Security Bank, Minneapolis" American Architect and Building News vol. 32, no. 805 (May 30, 1891) p. 139 and plate; "Mabel Tainter Memorial, Menomonie, Wisconsin" American Architect and Building News vol. 32, no. 807 (June 13, 1891) p. 170 and plate

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

they do provide some insight into Buffinton's preferences in this stage of his career. All but two of the dozen designs can be characterized as Romanesque Revival in style.⁸⁷ And, as might be expected, all but two employ large semicircular arches as prominent elements in the design, usually at the entries, but also on porches, at the top of bays, and in screen walls fronting courtyards.⁸⁸ Eight of the twelve designs use circular towers with conical roofs, most commonly at the corners.⁸⁹ The design that is most reminiscent of the town hall in Sutton is the sketch for the L.S. Tainter House in Menomonie, Wisconsin.⁹⁰ In the center of the house's hip roofed main block's main facade is a circular tower with a conical roof. Stretching to the left from the tower along the main facade and around the corner of the main block is a one story porch with large semicircular arched openings. Although the stone Tainter House is far more elaborate and larger than the Sutton town hall, with additional elements and more pretentious details, this part of the house design certainly suggests the composition of the New Hampshire town hall. While these dozen designs reveal that Pillsbury Memorial Hall was not the best or the most important design of this phase of the architect's career, they do show that the Sutton building was very representative of his work and a good example of Buffinton's architecture in the late 1880's and early 1890's.

Pillsbury Memorial Hall still retains its architectural integrity and still shows the intentions of its designer. The building's exterior has seen only minor changes, the most significant being a shallow wooden addition on its seldom seen rear south facade, a small basement entry and an exterior chimney on the west side facade of the main block. The public spaces of the interior are also virtually intact, the most important changes being the remodeling of the stage opening for a stage curtain, the construction of a basement stairway in the former library room, and the addition of a door on the balcony stairs. (The more extensive changes in the basement can be ignored here as the basement was considered a significant public space in the original scheme.) None of these changes and the other less significant changes have obscured the architect's original design.

87. The exceptions are "Residence for A.G. Kennedy, Minneapolis" and "Design for Security Bank, Minneapolis".

88. The exceptions are "Residence for A.G. Kennedy, Minneapolis" and "House for N.F. Warner".

89. "Pillsbury Science Hall"; "Design for the Arragon Apartment House, Chicago"; "Office Building, Iron Construction, Minneapolis, Minn."; "Storage and Warehouse Deposit Co., Minneapolis, Minn."; "Dunham & Johnson Wholesale Grocery Warehouse, Minneapolis, Minn."; "House of L.S. Tainter, Menomonie, Wisconsin"; "House for N.F. Warner"; "Mabel Tainter Memorial, Menomonie, Wisconsin".

90. "House of L.S. Tainter, Menomonie, Wisconsin"

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

In Merrimack County, Pillsbury Memorial Hall stands out as the only example of a Richardsonian Romanesque town hall. This should not be surprising as it was the only town hall erected in the county during the 1880's and 1890's, the heyday of the style. Half of the town halls built before 1942 in the county are modest one or one and a half story vernacular buildings, with their gable ends serving as their main facades. This group includes the town halls of Salisbury (1837), Chichester (1845), Hill (1847), Epsom (1850), Danbury (1856), Newbury (1876), Andover (1879), and Wilmot (1906), as well as the Canterbury town hall, a remodeled meetinghouse. The more pretentious town halls (and meetinghouses converted to town halls) reflect a variety of styles. The Webster meetinghouse of 1792, although internally altered to serve as a town hall and church, retains its 18th century exterior appearance. The Hooksett town hall (1828-29), originally Federal in style, has had its original design obscured by later 19th and 20th century alterations and additions. The Greek Revival style influenced the remodeling of the Loudon meetinghouse in 1847 and the construction of the Bradford town hall in 1863. The Henniker meetinghouse, remodeled in 1887, shows the influence of the Queen Anne style in some of its decoration, although it might best be described as a Victorian vernacular building. The Pittsfield meetinghouse was converted into a fine example of the Second Empire style. The Colonial Revival style was used for the Dunbarton town hall (1906), the New London town hall (1917-18) and the remodeling of the Hopkinton town hall. The Warner town hall of 1910 comes closest to the Renaissance Revival style in its composition and architectural details. Pillsbury Memorial Hall must therefore be considered the only Romanesque town hall in Merrimack County.

If we consider the somewhat larger group of Late Victorian town halls in the county we must rank the Sutton building high among them. It must be placed above the modest Victorian vernacular town halls in Newbury, Andover, and Wilmot, and the larger and somewhat more elaborate town hall in Henniker. Only the Second Empire Pittsfield town hall and the Renaissance Revival Warner town hall are, in any sense, comparable in quality. And, it would not be unfair to the Pittsfield and Warner buildings to categorize the design of Pillsbury Memorial Hall as more imaginative and daring in its asymmetrical placement of forms. (Indeed the Sutton town hall is only pre World War II town hall in the county to have a distinctly asymmetrical composition. A formal symmetry is a distinguishing feature of all the other town halls.) It is difficult to compare the quality of buildings in different styles, but it is clear that Pillsbury Memorial Hall is one of the most architecturally significant town halls of the Late Victorian era in Merrimack County.

As a representative work of Leroy S. Buffington, a prominent architect, as the only Romanesque style town hall in Merrimack County, and as one of the best Late Victorian town halls in the county, Pillsbury Memorial Hall should be recognized for its architectural importance.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is a lot six rods (99 feet) wide and 10 rods (165 feet) deep on the south side of Main Street in Sutton village. The boundary of the nominated property is shown as a heavy dashed line on the accompanying sketch map entitled "Pillsbury Memorial Hall, Sutton, N.H.". The property boundary begins on the south side of Main Street at the northeast corner of the lot (located approximately 236 feet east of the east end of the Main Street bridge over King Brook), then proceeds six rods easterly on the south curb of Main Street, then ten rods south along the property of Thomas and Carolyn Breslin, then six rods westerly along the property of John and Mary Csutor, then ten rods northerly along the property of the Csutors to the point of beginning. The nominated property appears as parcel number 428,236 on Sutton Property Map 6, and is described in the deed of John and Mahala Pillsbury to the Town of Sutton (Book 301, Pages 121 and 122, Merrimack County Registry of Deeds, Concord, N.H.).

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes Pillsbury Memorial Hall and the lot historically associated with the building since its construction in 1891.

This certifies that the appearance has not changed since the photographs were taken.

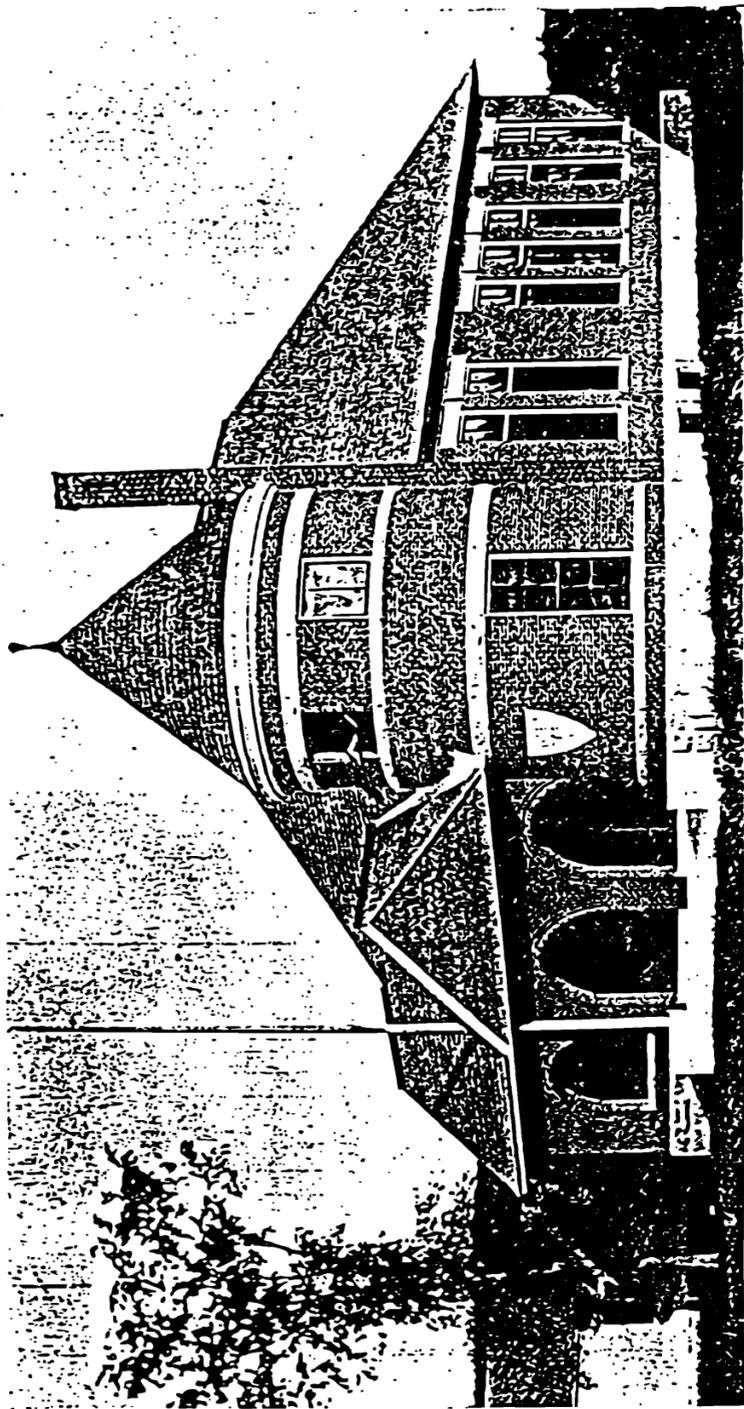
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Pillsbury Memorial Hall
Merrimack County, NH



PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL, SUTTON, N. H.

974-2B
3967

DEDIC.

OF T.

PILLSBURY
TOWN



IN

SUTTON

CONCOR
REPUBLICAN PRESS
1893.

DEDICATION OF THE PILLSBURY MEMORIAL HALL IN SUTTON, N.H.
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