



Amesbury Public Library
Amesbury, Massachusetts

was accepted on *December 9, 2025* for inclusion in the

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register is the nation's official list of buildings, districts, sites, structures, and objects that retain their historical character and are important to our local, state, or national history. The National Register was established under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and is administered in the Commonwealth by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission

Brona Simon
State Historic Preservation Officer

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
A Division of the Secretary of the Commonwealth



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

January 14, 2026

Meghan Fahey
Amesbury Public Library
149 Main Street
Amesbury, MA 01913

Dear Ms. Fahey:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is pleased to inform you that Amesbury Public Library in Amesbury was accepted by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on December 9, 2025. Enclosed is a certificate recognizing the designation of the building in the National Register of Historic Places.

For your information, an explanation of the National Register of Historic Places is enclosed. If you have any questions or wish further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

We share with you a sense of pride that this historic property has been listed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William Francis Galvin".

William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brona Simon".

Brona Simon
Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission

cc: Kassandra Gove, Mayor of Amesbury
 Pascal Rettig, Chair, Amesbury Planning Board
 Joseph Finn, Chair, Amesbury Historical Commission
 Nika Faulkner, Heritage Consulting Group

Enclosures



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

**THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES:
EFFECTS AND BENEFITS OF LISTING**

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of historic places worthy of preservation. Listing in the National Register (NR) recognizes historic properties that are significant to our communities, our state, and our nation. The NR is a federal program of the National Park Service, administered in Massachusetts by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). The NR recognizes unique and irreplaceable historic resources that give a sense of time and place to our downtowns, neighborhoods, village centers, and rural landscapes, and contribute to our communities' character, making Massachusetts a special place.

NR listing is an important preservation planning tool that encourages preservation, but it does not guarantee that listed properties will be preserved. The NR is not a design review program, but it does provide limited protection from state and federal actions, as well as eligibility for certain matching state restoration grants (when available) and certain tax benefits for certified rehabilitation projects.

STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES:

Properties listed in the NR are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places as well. The State Register is a compendium of properties with historic designations, listed by municipality, and serves as a reference guide, helping to determine whether a state funded, permitted, or licensed project will affect historic properties. The State Register review process helps ensure that listed properties will not inadvertently be harmed by activities supported by state agencies. The State Register is published annually and is available through the Statehouse Bookstore.

EFFECTS OF NR LISTING FOR PRIVATE PROPERTIES:

NR status in itself places no constraints on what owners may do with their property when using private funding, unless state or federal funds, permits, or licensing are used, or when some other regional or local bylaw, ordinance, or policy is in effect. NR listing does not impose additional restrictions to already existing local regulations or ordinances, nor does listing eliminate regulations currently in effect. Please be aware, however, that certain local ordinances, including demolition delay, may reference NR designation as a condition triggering review. NR-listed buildings may qualify for exemptions from some aspects of the State Building Code. Owners of private property listed in the NR have no obligation to open their properties to the public, to restore them, or even to maintain them. Owners can do anything they wish with their private property provided that no federal or state funding, licensing, permitting, or approval is involved. If owners use state or federal funds to alter their property or need state or federal permits, the proposed alteration will be reviewed by MHC staff. The review is triggered by the funding or permitting source, not by the historic designation. Local funding and permitting do not trigger MHC review. Owners may affix plaques to their listed properties, if they choose, but it is not required. MHC does not provide or review plaques. City or town sign ordinances should be consulted.

EFFECTS OF NR LISTING FOR PROPERTIES OWNED BY MUNICIPALITIES AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS:

All NR properties that are owned by municipalities and nonprofits are eligible to compete for grants from the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF), a state-funded competitive matching grant program that supports the preservation and maintenance of properties and sites listed in the State Register. These may include buildings, parks, landscapes, cemeteries, sites, objects, and archaeological locations. Eligible projects may include: pre-development projects, such as pre-construction documents or feasibility studies; development projects, for construction activities including stabilization, protection, rehabilitation, and restoration; and acquisition projects, specifically allocated for endangered listed properties.

Municipalities may erect markers identifying National Register historic districts, but this is not required. MHC does not provide or review markers.

EFFECTS OF NR LISTING FOR INCOME-PRODUCING PROPERTIES:

Certain federal tax provisions may apply for NR-listed income-producing properties. The federal tax code contains a variety of incentives to encourage capital investment in historic buildings and to spur revitalization of historic properties. These incentives encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of historic commercial, industrial, and rental residential buildings listed in the NR. The federal tax incentive program has encouraged private investment and rehabilitation of historic properties since 1976 and has been particularly valuable to Massachusetts. This program allows owners of applicable NR buildings to qualify for a 20% Investment Tax Credit, in effect a 20% rebate, based on rehabilitation costs. These credits help pay for the unique costs associated with rehabilitation of historic properties.

The National Park Service certifies the rehabilitation, and the MHC Technical Services staff advises and assists owners during the application and review process. The rehabilitation must be deemed substantial and must meet the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Applications should be submitted to MHC before rehabilitation work begins in order to receive the most useful advice and best results.

Under the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program, a certified rehabilitation project on an income-producing property is eligible to receive up to 20% of the cost of certified rehabilitation expenditures in state tax credits. There is an annual cap, so there are selection criteria that ensure the funds are distributed to the projects that provide the most public benefit. The MHC certifies the projects and allocates available credits. Properties on the NR, or those eligible for listing, may be eligible to receive the credits. As with the federal program, rehabilitation under the Massachusetts tax credit program must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The state rehabilitation tax credit may be used in tandem with the federal investment tax credit.

The Federal tax code also provides for federal income, estate, and gift tax deductions for charitable contributions of partial interest in historic property, principally easements. Whether these provisions are advantageous to a property owner is dependent upon the particular circumstances of the property and the owner. Individuals should consult their legal counsel or the appropriate Internal Revenue Service office for assistance in determining the tax consequences of these provisions.

FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING ALL THE PROGRAMS MENTIONED ABOVE MAY BE OBTAINED THROUGH MHC'S WEB SITE (WWW.SEC.STATE.MA.US/MHC) OR BY CONTACTING MHC AT 617-727-8470.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Amesbury Public Library
Other names/site number: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

2. Location

Street & number: 149 Main Street
City or town: Amesbury State: MA County: Essex
Not For Publication: Vicinity:

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 at the following
level(s) of significance:

national statewide local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
 A B C D

<i>Mona Simian</i>	<i>September 18, 2025</i>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	SHPO Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/library

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/library

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, STONE/Slate/Limestone/Granite,
WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Completed in late 1901 and officially opened in 1902, the Amesbury Public Library is a Romanesque Revival library building located at 149 Main Street in downtown Amesbury, Essex County, Massachusetts. The load-bearing brick building has a granite foundation and limestone ornamentation. The significant character-defining features of the exterior reflect the Romanesque Revival style in its masonry construction, particularly emphasized by its large, round arched windows and grand recessed primary entrance, and overall stone detailing. Exemplifying the Romanesque Revival style, the symmetrical façade features a central entrance framed by multiple layers of columns and a double-leaf, glazed, wood-paneled door. The Romanesque Revival style continues into the interior, with carved wood wainscoting, coved ceilings, a grand bifurcated staircase, and brick-and-terracotta fireplaces. The plan is centered around two levels of reading and research rooms, with two levels of stacks at the rear (north). The layout is largely the same as it was during the period of significance between 1901 to 1954. Between construction and the end of the period of significance, the library has seen the alteration of its one-story stacks into a two-story space with its own stair.

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The Amesbury Public Library retains excellent historic integrity from its period of significance. Relatively minimal exterior and interior alterations have taken place since the library's construction. Modifications after the period of significance include the construction of a ramp and contemporary glazed vestibule accessing a secondary entrance at the north elevation of the west wing added in 1987, and replaced in 2007, to meet ADA accessibility guidelines. New automatic doors to this secondary entrance were installed in 2008. Other exterior alterations are limited to the infill of one basement window on the west elevation, landscaping changes at the south and north side of the building, and the construction of a small, impermanent, freestanding shed, now relocated to the eastside of the site in 1989. At the interior, changes in the primary spaces are limited to some updated finishes, including the installation of carpeting over original hardwood floors, and added recessed lighting in select locations. In the basement, the plan has been altered with additional demising walls, however, these were constructed without impacting the pressed metal ceilings above. At this level, some plaster ceilings have been covered with new gypsum board.

Narrative Description

SETTING

The Amesbury Public Library is located at 149 Main Street at the southwest edge of downtown Amesbury, Massachusetts (*Map 4*). The site sits west of Plumbush Creek in an area of mixed use, with commercial establishments to the northeast along Main Street, and residential, religious, and municipal buildings in all other directions. To the south across Main Street is the former Amesbury Methodist Episcopal Church (1887; AME.95), a Queen Anne-style building. Most other buildings are late 19th- and early 20th-century single-family dwellings, some of which have been converted for commercial or community use. Directly adjacent to the west is a small park with a lawn, large trees, and a central gazebo (*Map 6*). Adjacent to the parcel to the east is an unnamed public drive (previously known as Ordway Court) which serves the adjacent properties to the north and east including the Unitarian Congregational Church, 135 Main Street (ca. 1828; AME.21), and the Horton-Webster House, 145 Main Street (1813; AME.22). A shared parking lot is located immediately north of the subject property.

SITE

The library sits on a 0.31-acre lot on Main Street north of the Naysons Court intersection (*Maps 5 & 6*). Brick sidewalks with decorative metal streetlamps line the south edge of the parcel within the public right-of-way along Main Street and connect to the non-historic circular courtyard within the parcel boundaries (*Photo 1*), on axis with the building's primary elevation. A circular stone fountain sits in the center of this brick-and-stone paved courtyard, and non-historic metal benches line the perimeter. A flight of concrete steps leads up to the centered building entrance from the north side of the courtyard. Stone wingwalls flank the steps and feature a pair of decorative metal lamps. A centered metal handrail divides the steps (*Photo 2*). Garden beds and greenery flank each side of the courtyard and steps.

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The remainder of the nominated site is simply landscaped, with green space and a mix of non-historic and historic stone retaining walls that allow for the exposure of basement windows at secondary elevations. The rear (north) and west sides of the site are similar, with parking lots and simple lawns, a portion of which are included within the parcel. A long, L-shaped ramp installed in 2007 provides access to the building through the 1987 rear vestibule. The ramp wraps around the west and north sides of the building to connect the adjacent parking lot to a rear entrance (*Photos 6 & 7*).

A small non-historic shed is tucked into the northeast corner of the site (*Photo 5*). The shed features painted wood-plank siding and an asphalt-shingle gabled roof. The shed does not sit on a permanent foundation, making it a temporary structure. Due to its small size and temporary nature, it is not counted as a separate resource.

EXTERIOR

The two-story library building has a T-shaped plan oriented to the southeast along the alignment of Main Street (*Map 6*). For clarity, the building is described using cardinal directions, with the true southeast elevation being the south elevation. The stem of the T extends north from the central block. Due to the grade of the site, the basement is exposed at all elevations. The public-facing elevations (south façade, east, and the south half of the west elevation) are clad in beige Roman brick. Common red brick clads most of the north elevation and the north half of the west elevation. All elevations feature limestone trim. The first story is set upon a granite plinth, and a decorative water table divides the ground level from the first story. Each side of the building features a mix of large, double-hung, rounded arch windows, small double-hung arched windows, and simple, rectangular windows, all wood-framed with limestone sills and lintels. Unless noted otherwise, these windows date to the original construction. A side-gabled slate-shingled roof spans the central block between parapets, and a gabled dormer extends over the main entrance. Limestone coping caps the gabled parapets. A hipped slate-shingled roof with flared eaves covers the north stem of the building with a hipped dormer on the north end. A simple wooden cornice with corbelling lines the overhanging eaves of the roof. Copper flashing decorates the top of the eaves and the ridge (*Photo 7*). The gabled ends at the center of the façade, and at the east and west faces of the wings have parapet roofs with limestone coping (*Photos 5 & 7*). At the intersection of the wings with the central block on both sides are tall brick chimneys serving two fireplaces at the interior. The roof also features two non-historic skylight covers protecting historic skylights (*Photo 7*), which are located approximately at center of the "T."

SOUTH ELEVATION/FACADE (*Photos 1 & 2*)

The symmetrical façade (south elevation) is seven bays wide, featuring a projecting central entrance bay flanked by three window bays within the main elevation. Beige Roman brick clads this elevation with limestone trim and ornamentation. A limestone water table separates the ground level from the first story. Beneath, small basement windows are obscured by greenery.

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The projecting end-gable central bay features the recessed primary entrance (*Photo 2*). A round-arched Norman-styled surround adorns the entrance bay. This surround consists of two concentric limestone arches supported by smooth engaged limestone columns with bell-shaped capitals and acanthus leaves topped with a square zigzag crown. Within the exterior arch, raised limestone letters read "FREE TO ALL" within a slightly inset band. Decorative rosettes flank the band. Carved zigzags line the top of each voussoir of the arch, and rope banding lines the bottom of each. Similar roping decorates the bottom of the inner limestone arch. The entrance is a double-leaf wood-paneled door with glazing. It is set within a paneled wood surround with a denticulated cornice over the doors featuring geometric ornamentation and carved lion head figures (*Photo 3*). Above is a semicircular wood transom panel with carved floral decoration around the perimeter. Below the glazing on each door are two carved lion heads and an intricate bronze thumb-latch door handle (*Photo 4*). The surround on each outer edge of the doors features paneling with matching lion heads. A projecting carved limestone sign that reads "Public Library" surmounts the arch. The sign has decorative stone brackets carved directly into the signage. On either side of the signage is a band of lighter colored brickwork, drawing attention to the signage (*Photo 2*). Limestone coping lines the roof of the gable end parapet. Within the gable is a centered pair of 1/1 double-hung windows divided by a limestone columned mullion. Below the windows, banding with rosettes decorate the elevation. At the gable peak there is a limestone sign reading "1900," the date construction began.

Three intersecting round-arch brick openings pierce the walls flanking the central entrance bay. Brick mullions separate the windows, with a continuous limestone sill and limestone banding at the top of each arch. Historic 3/1 wood windows fill each opening; multi-lite transoms cap each window, divided from the bottom window by a subtle denticulated wood detail. The eaves feature simple wood corbelling.

EAST ELEVATION (*Photo 5*):

The east elevation is two stories with an exposed daylight basement. The elevation features two exterior walls due to the form of the building's plan. The gabled end of the south block is five bays wide. The exposed basement level at this elevation consists of a central entrance flanked by two 3/1 wood windows. The entrance is a single-leaf modern door with glazing that is accessed by a small concrete walkway with concrete retaining walls. The rectangular windows have limestone sills, and large limestone lintels span each of the five masonry openings. Interrupted by the center of the window openings at basement level, the granite plinth continues from the façade across the east elevation. Subtle brick quoins define the outer corners of the basement level between the granite plinth and the limestone water table that separates the basement level from the first story. Like the windows on the south elevation, a set of five intersecting brick arched openings pierce the center of the first story. A continuous limestone sill connects each opening; each contains a historic 3/1 wood sash window with a multi-lite transom. A light-buff-brick course divides the first story from the gable story. A set of three windows pierces the center of the gable. A limestone sill connects the three windows, and a continuous limestone lintel spans the elevation. Tabbed limestone adorns the outer edge of the window set while engaged, triple limestone columns divide each masonry opening. The non-historic windows contain a single fixed pane with simulated center mullion to imitate a 1/1 unit; a simulated divided six-

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light transom surmounts the fixed pane. A lancet niche adorns the top of the gable wall beneath a band of limestone. The parapet roof is topped with limestone coping which terminates at the brick course.

Eight window bays organize the east elevation of the northern stem section of the building. A limestone water table also divides the basement story from the upper wall. At the basement level, the north five bays contain rectangular masonry openings with large limestone lintels; the granite plinth of the building acts as the sills. Historic two-lite awning windows fill the openings. At the first story, limestone sills and lintels define the eight rectangular masonry openings that each contain historic 1/1 double-hung wood windows. At the second story, limestone sills and round arched brick headers define the eight openings. Limestone banding caps each brick arch. The arches of the south two openings intersect. Short, three-light historic wood windows fill the upper portion of the opening above a simple stone lintel, recessed brick panel, and typical limestone sill. This maintains the composition featured at other windows on this story. The remaining bays contain historic 3/1 arched wood windows. A simple wooden cornice with corbelling and an overhanging eave defines the roofline.

NORTH ELEVATION (Photo 6):

The north elevation of the building includes the north elevations of the central block that flank the north stem. Typical corbelling lines the rooflines of each section of the elevation. The east side of the central block contains no openings; beige Roman brick and limestone clad this portion of the elevation. Red brick clads the north elevation of the stem with the beige brick of the east elevation wrapping the corner to create faux quoining. The typical limestone water table continues across the east half of this elevation; a brick water table spans the other half. A set of concrete stairs surrounded by a concrete-block wall leads up from grade to a back entrance centered in the first story. A wrought-iron railing lines the small stoop at the top of the stairs. The entrance features a single-leaf, paneled wood door with a non-historic storm door; a large limestone lintel spans the rectangular doorway. A set of granite stairs with a simple iron railing extends down from the west to access the basement entrance below the first-story entrance. The basement door is a metal, single-leaf replacement door. At the second story, a small, double-hung arched window of similar configuration to other arched windows in the building pierces the walls directly above the entrance. To the west of the window is a non-historic floodlight attached to the brick. The hipped-roof dormer, centered on the elevation, features a non-historic window with a horizontal tripartite configuration. Slate clads the walls of the dormer, matching the roof.

Common red brick clads the north elevation of the central block to the west of the stem. In 1987, a small rear vestibule addition to the original building was constructed to accommodate a ramp and ADA entrance at the north elevation of the west wing. It was designed with elements of Modernism while referencing the rounded arches of the Romanesque Revival. The ramp was replaced in 2007. The roof of the vestibule is arched, with copper sheathing matching the flashing across the building. All glass across the vestibule is transparent except for that within the arch, which is opaque. Behind the contemporary vestibule, the former exterior wall features a historic arched entrance, which historically was accessed via a small set of stairs. The entrance today contains a replacement glazed door, an original transom, and an additional original

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window within the arch. The transom is a square, horizontally configured tripartite window. The arched window above is in a simple sunburst configuration with multiple lites.

WEST ELEVATION (Photo 6)

The west elevation is similar in design to the east elevation with two stories over an exposed basement level. The elevation features two exterior walls due to the form of the building's plan. Red brick clads the north half of the elevation that corresponds to the stem of the plan. Beige brick clads the south half of the elevation corresponding with the central block. Five bays organize the gabled end of the south block. Unlike the east elevation, the exposed basement level at this elevation does not have a door or window at the center. Instead, rectangular window openings with large limestone lintels flank a center vent. The granite plinth acts as the sills for the four openings. Historic wood awning windows fill all but the southernmost masonry opening, which has been infilled with concrete. Subtle brick quoins define the outer edges of the basement level between the granite plinth and the limestone water table that separates the basement level from the first story. Similar to the windows on the east elevation, a set of five intersecting brick arched openings pierce the center of the first story. Unlike the east elevation, the center opening at the first story of the west elevation is filled with a recessed brick panel. A continuous limestone sill connects each opening that each contains a historic 3/1 double-hung wood sash window with multi-lite transom. A light-buff-brick course divides the first story from the gable story. A set of three windows pierces the center of the gable. A limestone sill connects the three windows, and a continuous limestone lintel spans the elevation. Tabbed limestone adorns the outer edge of the window set while engaged, triple limestone columns divide each masonry opening. The non-historic windows themselves contain a single fixed pane with simulated center mullion to imitate a 1/1 unit; a simulated divided six-light transom surmounts the fixed pane. A lancet niche adorns the top of the gable wall beneath a band of limestone. The parapet roof is topped with limestone coping.

The west face of the plan's stem is comparable to its east elevation; red brick clads this wall and there is a brick water table instead of the typical limestone. Eight window bays organize this elevation, with rectangular masonry openings at the ground level and first story and arched openings at the second story, all treated with the same lintels and sills as the east elevation. Historic 2/2 double-hung windows fill the basement openings. Historic 1/1 double-hung wood windows fill the first story openings and like the east elevation, the arches of the south two openings intersect. Short, three-light historic wood windows fill the upper portion of the opening above a simple stone lintel, recessed brick panel, and typical limestone sill. The remaining bays contain historic 3/1 double-hung arched wood windows. A simple wooden cornice with corbelling and an overhanging eave defines the roofline.

INTERIOR

The interior of the library consists of a mixture of public circulation space, centered around the primary reading and studying rooms, as well as private offices, stacks, and storage space. The interior is divided into the primary rooms south of the stacks at both the first and second floors,

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with the basement serving as public study, secondary staff, and storage space. Finishes within the building include painted plaster walls and ceilings, wood trim and paneled wainscoting, non-historic carpeting, and dropped ACT ceilings. While some finishes have been updated and are not historic, the large majority were installed during the period of significance, with most dating to its original construction. Four staircases provide vertical circulation within the building.

The building's vertical circulation is provided by two primary sets of stairs located at the south end of the building to either side of the main stair hall (*Photo 8*). The two stairs are identical to one another and provide access to the second floor of the building. Only one set of stairs leads to the basement level. Carpet covers the historic wooden treads and risers and a decorative wood railing with metal banisters lines the stair. The two stairs curve around from the first-floor stair hall and converge at a landing, leading to the single central stair connecting to the second floor. A narrow, utilitarian stair to the west of the entry vestibule accesses the basement. The basement stairs are unadorned and simple with painted treads and risers and a simple metal rail. At the north side of the building, just past the office corridor, is a stair at the west side of the stacks, installed in the mid-20th century. The stair provides access to both the non-historic second level of stacks, as well as the central circulation room of the second floor.

FIRST FLOOR

The programming of the first floor follows the T-shaped layout of the building. Three reading rooms fill the south, central block of the T, with offices and stacks within the stem of the T to the north (*Photo 9*). The primary south entrance leads into a small vestibule, featuring a mosaic-tile floor and marble threshold. The basement stair is accessible to the east. Moving north, the vestibule opens into the main stair hall through double doors (*Photo 8*). The two wooden stairs line the east and west sides of the stair hall. The primary public space sits to the north of the stair hall and includes the central delivery hall flanked by reading rooms (*Photos 10–14*). Above the delivery hall is a cove ceiling with a decorative frieze (*Photo 9*). The frieze is painted with an acanthus-leaf design and terminates in a gold-painted molding. The flat portion of the ceiling in the center is white with non-historic recessed lighting. Supporting the cove ceiling are wood columns, which divide the hall from the flanking rooms. A circulation desk historically divided the three reading rooms and delivery hall from the offices and stacks to the north. It has since been moved from its original location to the middle of the hall, providing public access to the stacks and books. The reading rooms feature plaster walls, arched wood surrounds, wood-paneled wainscoting, wood doors, and non-historic carpet flooring (*Photos 9, 10 & 12*).

Two equally spaced rooms sit to the west of the delivery hall, separated by a historic plate-glass and wood-paneled wall (*Photo 12*). The wall features three plate-glass windows flanked by wood pilasters on each side and topped with a matching wood cornice. The northernmost room of this wing is open and features the ADA accessible entrance leading to the non-historic glazed vestibule and exterior ramp on the north elevation (*Photo 13*). At the north end of the room is a brick fireplace with a brown Roman-brick surround, a simple wood mantel with small carvings beneath, and terra-cotta block hearth.

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One large room sits to the east of the delivery hall. Like the western room, the eastern room features a central fireplace along the northernmost wall (*Photos 10 & 11*). The fireplace features a brown Roman brick and natural carved wood surround, with a green glazed ceramic tile hearth. Brick surrounds the opening for the fireplace and is framed by decorative carved wood pilasters on either side. Above, an ornate carved mantel supports an overmantel with four additional pilasters separated by large, carved wood circles. A wood-paneled arched door to the west of the fireplace provides access to an office within the stem of the building.

To the north of the delivery hall, a small central corridor once provided access to the circulation desk but now permits access to offices and the stacks. One office flanks the east and west sides of this corridor at the south end of the stem of the T. The walls separating the offices from the corridors are wood-paneled and feature paneled wood doors with glazing (*Photos 14 & 15*). Flanking the door on either side of the central office is a single, fixed square window. The offices, converted from what was originally the head librarian's and a staff room, are simple with updated replacement finishes, including dropped ACT ceilings and carpet flooring. The historic walls, wood chair rail, and wood windowsill, however, remain.

Beyond the corridor from which the offices are accessed are the stacks at the north side of the building (*Photos 15 & 16*). In this area, paneled wood doors and molding remain; however the floor has been covered with non-historic carpet, and a second level was added above in the mid-20th century.

SECOND FLOOR

The second floor today contains the children's reading rooms. Though open to one another, the spaces are divided programmatically by age. The primary south stair provides access to the south side of the second floor (*Photo 17*). The ceilings of the stairwell are grand and double-height, following the stair as it wraps around to the second floor. Two small windows at the south wall, set within a recessed area above the stair landing, provide light to the stair and second floor (*Photo 18*). On either side of the landing are arched openings with carved wood rails.

The second floor is simpler in ornamentation than the first floor, with dark wood molding and trim, and wood floors. A central circulation space sits below a replacement multi-light skylight, likely installed during the period of significance (*Photo 19*). On either side of the central circulation room are reading rooms, accessed through a central arched entryway. Flanking each central arch are additional square openings with rounded corners. Those to the south have a wood rail and overlook the stairs. The others function as secondary entries into the rooms. The pitched ceilings in the reading rooms reflect the shape of the roof. The ceilings and walls are white plaster.

Opposite the main stairs to the north is a door leading to the circa 1960s second level of stacks, set slightly below the rest of the second floor and accessed by a small set of stairs with simple rails. This room features glued ACT ceilings and VCT flooring. At the south end of the room, remnants of the historic pressed-metal crown modeling that was originally in this space remain (*Photo 20*). The sunken stacks of the second floor date to 1954, and the related secondary stair

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and a new door connecting the space to the original second floor, date to 1963. A bathroom was also added at the east side of the second story at this time.

BASEMENT

The basement is generally utilitarian when compared with the upper floors. It can be accessed from one of three points: from the main entry vestibule on the first floor or by doors to the exterior of the building at the east and north elevations. The basement features painted pressed-metal ceilings, some circa 1960s natural wood paneling and non-historic painted shiplap walls in offices, exposed painted brickwork in secondary spaces, and non-historic carpet floors. Located on this floor are the bathrooms, several offices, an archive space, extra stacks, and storage and mechanical rooms. A central corridor runs east-west, providing access to the various office and storage space around the perimeter of the southern portion of the "T". The north portion is completely occupied by private stacks and a small storage room in the northeast corner. Storage spaces and mechanical rooms feature concrete floors. Where ceilings are not pressed metal, ACT or gypsum board have been installed over original plaster finishes during the period of significance (circa 1960s).

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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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1901–1954

Significant Dates

1902 (opened to the public)

1954 (second floor added to stacks)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Varney, Penn, Architect

Frank. G. Colburn & Company (builder)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Amesbury Public Library is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE as an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style and demonstrates a typical library plan that evolved simultaneously to the public library as a free and democratic public institution. The Amesbury Public Library, located at 149 Main Street in downtown Amesbury, is a two-story building completed in late 1901 and opened in early 1902 to serve the local population. At that time, the existing library building had outgrown its previous location on Friend Street. The new building was designed by architect Penn Varney of nearby Lynn, Massachusetts, who was known for his institutional and educational designs.¹ The Amesbury Public Library is also a rare local example of the style. Varney's design for the library coincided with the second wave of the Romanesque Revival's popularity in the late 19th century.

The library is also locally significant under Criterion A in the categories of COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT and EDUCATION. The Amesbury Public Library speaks to a national trend of making education available to the public in the 19th and 20th centuries, first through private circulation and then through public libraries supported by the town. This library reflects the substantial effort of the community and the Trustees of the Amesbury Public Library toward providing free public access to both self-guided education and educational programming in the town of Amesbury, ultimately resulting in the evolution of the library from a social library within a residential building, to a purpose-built public library that serves the town today. The resulting building is an excellent example of a turn-of-the-century library building with a T-shaped plan and stacks oriented along the interior's perimeter. The subject building is also significant for its association with the development of Amesbury, contributing to the physical development of one of the town's primary thoroughfares. The period of significance begins in 1902, the year the building opened, and ends in 1954, when a second floor was added to the rear stack room.

¹ Between 1900 and 1908, Varney designed three libraries and two schools in Massachusetts, including the Amesbury Public Library, though Amesbury Public Library is his only building designed in the Romanesque Revival style in the state.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMESBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

Amesbury, Massachusetts was settled as a part of Salisbury in the mid-17th century.² During the Colonial period (1675–1775), the village center initially remained at Amesbury Ferry, also known as Salisbury Point, approximately two miles southeast of the future site of the Amesbury Public Library along the Merrimack River. The maritime industry, made possible by the proximity of the Merrimack and Powow rivers, remained the primary industry in this area. At the same time that Amesbury Ferry was established, another settlement developed along the west bank of the smaller Powow River, north of Salisbury Point.³ It was here, north of the meeting of these two rivers, that a larger town center would inevitably develop.

The Federal period (1775–1830) in Amesbury was defined by improvements in transportation routes. Several additional bridges were constructed, including the Essex Merrimack Bridge in 1792. The bridge crossed the Merrimack River about a mile south of Salisbury Point and connected the area with Newburyport. Water travel remained a primary driver for development, feeding maritime industries, such as fishing, shipping, and shipbuilding, which remained important until the early 19th century. By the 19th century, Amesbury came to be defined not only by its maritime economy, but also by an industrial economy, fed by its access to newly constructed rail lines and the power provided by the falls of the Powow River. Construction of mills on its banks near the falls ultimately shifted the center of the town from the south on the Merrimack River, inland to the north along the Powow River's banks. Carriage making, nail manufacturing, and hat making became the primary industries that built the foundation of modern Amesbury.⁴ Leaders in these industries would help to develop much of the town, offering employment, commercial development, and exports.

During the Industrial Revolution, the population of Amesbury increased by over 50 percent. New streets were laid out with Market Square at the center just across the east side of the Powow River, and northeast of where the Amesbury Public Library would later be constructed. The citizens of Amesbury had a strong sense of civic pride. This is exemplified by the Amesbury Improvement Association, established in 1893, which is one of the oldest in Massachusetts that remains active today.⁵ The development of Amesbury's Main Street, running north from the Merrimack River and then east across the Powow River, is largely tied to the development of industry in the town. First, the west side of the river, which would go on to include the Amesbury Public Library, developed as a primarily residential area with a number of smaller

² "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report - Amesbury" (Boston, MA: MHC, 1997), <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/townreports/Essex/ame.pdf>.

³ "Amesbury Reconnaissance Report," Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory Program (Amesbury, MA: Essex National Heritage Commission, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, May 2005), <https://www.mass.gov/doc/amesbury/download.2>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

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industrial buildings. A variety of house types and styles were subsequently built in the town, beginning in the late 18th century and continuing into the 20th.⁶ Many of the historic houses present along Main Street belonged to leaders in the bustling late 18th- and early 19th-century industry.

By the late 19th century, Friend Street, west of the Powow River and north of Main Street, primarily featured mills and single-family houses, with a number of shops. Market Square to the east of the river had become the primary commercial corridor of downtown Amesbury. During the first half of the 19th century, the west side of Main Street remained primarily residential, though it accommodated some limited commercial activity as well. However, nearing the middle of the century, public buildings began being constructed to support the needs of the growing town. The Amesbury Fire Station was constructed on School Street in 1829, and the Ordway School on School Street in 1837.⁷ In 1835, the Saint James Episcopal Church began to relocate their functions from the more western Mills section of town to this portion of Main Street to the east.⁸ By 1872, a number of churches were located along the portion of Main Street and School Street west of the Powow River. Circa 1889, the Amesbury Town Hall was constructed along Friend Street, approximately 200 feet north of the future library.⁹ While the land that would ultimately house the Amesbury Public Library still accommodated a series of wood-framed dwellings, the residential neighborhood area around the future site began to develop with a public focus.¹⁰

As shown on an Atlas of Essex County from 1872 (*Figure 1*), a small public library existed on Friend Street (to be discussed further below), north of Main Street, though the building was not exclusively built for the function of a library. The structure was built in 1865 by the Salisbury Mills Corporation of Amesbury, adjacent to their factory complex. The selection of this site speaks less to the planning of Amesbury, and more to the contributions of industry to the town. Amesbury contained a mix of commercial, civic, and residential development revolving around the support of local industry at this time, but the factory complexes along the river continued to be the central focus. Though school and church buildings began to be constructed at the intersection of Main and School streets, a civic center had not yet been intentionally planned or solidified. Industry remained the primary driver of development.¹¹

In 1899, the lot that would eventually house the library contained two newly constructed buildings and was owned by the Ordway family.¹² The parcel, however, was an ideal site for a civic building, as its location along Main Street was proximal both to the important industrial and commercial areas of town, and the educational and religious buildings that were built in the early

⁶ "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report - Amesbury."

⁷ Sanborn Map Company, "Amesbury Massachusetts" (Amesbury, MA: Sanborn Map Company, 1885).

⁸ "Mission and History - Saint James Episcopal Church," July 24, 2012,

<https://www.stjamesamesbury.org/background/>.

⁹ Sanborn Map Company, "Amesbury Massachusetts" (Amesbury, MA: Sanborn Map Company, 1889), sheets 6-8.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ D.G. Beers and Co., Atlas of Essex County, "The Town of Amesbury and Salisbury Mill, Massachusetts" (Pennsylvania: D.G. Beers & Co, 1872), sheet 12.

¹² 1885 Sanborn Map of Amesbury, sheet 8.

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19th century to serve the surrounding residential community. The first buildings along this portion of Main Street to carry public functions were the Ordway School (1837) and the Amesbury Fire Station (1829). By the end of the century, these institutions remained, and new institutions, including the Amesbury Methodist Episcopal Church (1887), had been constructed. Amesbury's Town Hall was constructed to the west of the river, at the corner of Friend Street and School Street, less than a quarter-mile north of the future library site and further away from the mills and commercial corridor.¹³ A statue of Josiah Bartlett (1888; AME.908), a signer of the Declaration of Independence and Amesbury native, was also installed in 1888 at the corner of Ordway Court and Main Street.¹⁴ The statue is adjacent to where Amesbury Public Library now sits, and serves as a central landmark in town. The erection of Town Hall and the Josiah Bartlett Statue reflect the solidification of the section of School Street between Friend and Main streets as a place for Amesbury's public buildings.

When the question of a new and improved library building was posed, a site in this section of town, at the direct rear of the town hall and nearby local schools and churches, was ideal.¹⁵ The present library site remained generally undisturbed until 1900 when the Trustees of the Amesbury Public Library acted on their plans for a long-considered new Amesbury Public Library.¹⁶ The civic center of Amesbury was becoming more robust; with the consideration of a building dedicated solely to a library contributing to its evolution. Planning for the introduction of a free library in Amesbury contributed to the efforts of educational development in the town's civic center.

AMESBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY

The development of the Amesbury Public Library follows a broader pattern of educational reform and library development throughout New England and the broader United States in the decades before the subject building's construction.¹⁷ Earlier iterations of the public library, though without their own purpose-built buildings, were present in Amesbury since at least 1813.¹⁸ Included in the Amesbury Public Library's predecessors were the Salisbury Reading Society, active between the years of 1813 and 1814, offering newspapers, magazines, and maps, and the Franklin Social Library, who met and kept books at a schoolhouse at Webster's Point between 1816 and 1818. In 1819, the Franklin Social Library changed its name to the Second Social Library. The Second Social Library was located in Salisbury from 1819 to 1835. An additional library was located on Walter Street around 1818. Another report from a woman born in the early 19th century claimed that a reporter for the *Amesbury Daily News*, John H. O'Neil,

¹³ 1889 Sanborn Map of Amesbury, sheets 6–8.

¹⁴ "Statue of Josiah Bartlett," Photo Record, Haverhill Public Library, 2022, <https://haverhill.pastperfectonline.com/photo/302A1BF6-CAFF-491B-9AFA-118358792052>.

¹⁵ Sanborn Map Company, "Amesbury Massachusetts" (New York: Sanborn Map & Publishing Co, 1899), sheets 9–11.

¹⁶ 1899 Sanborn Map of Amesbury, sheet 8.

¹⁷ Michael Kevane and William A. Sundstrom, "The Development of Public Libraries in the United States, 1870–1930: A Quantitative Assessment," *Information & Culture* 49, no. 2 (2014) (University of Texas Press, Austin, TX), p. 126.

¹⁸ Roland H. Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856–1956* (Amesbury, MA, n.d.), p. 3.

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kept the books of the Citizens' Library on a shelf in the small entry of his home.¹⁹ It was these efforts that reflected the growing interest in access to books, libraries, and education at the time. The realization of the public library as we know it today relied not only on these smaller predecessors, but also on the idea that education should be accessible to all.

At this time, most people, including factory workers and farm laborers, could not afford large private in-home libraries of their own, and utilized the resources offered by the aforementioned community organizations and individuals.²⁰ Reformers also believed all children should have the benefits of education and wanted to change this. Of those leading reformers was Horace Mann of Massachusetts, who established the *Common School Journal*, which took educational issues to the public. In 1852 Massachusetts passed the first compulsory school attendance laws, becoming the first state to do so.²¹ The movement to expand library access across the country gained momentum during the educational reforms leading up to the Progressive Era, which began around the turn of the 20th century and was marked by the continued evolution of the public educational system and standards.²² The proliferation of public libraries during this period is tied to the advocacy for education reform and the institution of compulsory public school attendance.²³

Alongside educational reforms, the Carnegie Library program activated widespread construction of libraries at the end of the 19th century and into the early 20th century throughout the states, and especially in New England, where a penchant for public libraries was established by the 1850s. Many of Massachusetts's first free libraries share the origins of being a social library turned public, whether out of desire for government funding or, as in the case of Amesbury, democratizing and expanding access to educational collections.²⁴

The Boston Public Library was the first free library in a major city in the United States, opening in 1854 for all Commonwealth citizens to utilize. The term "free library" refers to libraries in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that were fully open to the public, which differentiated them from the subscription-based libraries that existed prior, which were available exclusively to paying members.²⁵ Before this, most free public libraries in the United States were found in the

¹⁹ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library*, p. 3.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Deeptha Thattai, "A history of public education in the United States." *Journal of Literacy and Education in Developing Societies* 1, no. 2 (2001): 2001-11, pp. 1-2.

²² The Progressive Era of education aligned with the philosophy that education should include student driven experiences that treat childhood education holistically through many methods of education, rather than memorizing information taught to them by their teachers or textbooks. This included learning by doing, cross-disciplinary curriculums, cooperative learning and social skill development, and learning about social responsibility and democracy, etc. Throughout the early 19th century, the number of schools and students attending them grew dramatically.; Jessica Spallino, "The Progressive Movement: An Enduring Inspiration in Public Education," Method Schools, March 4, 2022, <https://www.methodschoools.org/blog-2023/the-progressive-movement-an-enduring-inspiration-in-education>.

²³ Keyane and Sundstrom, "The Development of Public Libraries in the United States," p. 118.

²⁴ Ibid. 126.

²⁵ Kevane and Sundstrom, "The Development of Public Libraries in the United States," 117.; D.J. Hoek, "There Are No Free Libraries," *American Libraries Magazine*, March 13, 2013, <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2013/03/13/there-are-no-free-libraries/>.

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New England region.²⁶ While New Hampshire was the first state to develop a full legislative plan to fund and support local public libraries in 1849, it took until about 1875 for public library systems to take hold in the broader United States.²⁷ The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in a bill signed into law then governor George S. Boutwell, authorized cities and towns to establish their own public library systems in 1851. The law additionally allowed municipalities to establish a trust fund and collect donations and bequests to fund their public library.²⁸

Alongside evolving standards for free public library systems in the United States, new libraries often built upon the donated collections of smaller, subscription-based or private libraries, as exemplified in Amesbury. The collection that would form the basis of the Amesbury Public Library was established circa 1852 by Joshua Aubin of the Salisbury Mills Company for the benefit of the company's employees.²⁹ The library was given in trust to the Amesbury and Salisbury Library Association. The trustees included Joshua Aubin and famed poet John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892), who maintained a steadfast affiliation with the library throughout his life.³⁰ In the spring of 1856, plans were made by the trustees for the opening of a library. A committee was given \$200 to buy books, which was sourced from donations.³¹

The library's first location was briefly on Friend Street within a room over a shop, opened in the summer of 1856. The same year, the Salisbury Manufacturing Company offered a room free of rent within their counting house (1828; AME.37; NRDIS 1985), and the library relocated.³² When the library was opened, there were 224 subscribers. Subscribers were allowed to borrow books for their household, increasing the appeal for many.³³ The average number of books loaned to each subscriber during the first year was 35.³⁴ The library was public in the sense that any Amesbury or Salisbury citizen was welcome to utilize its resources, but entrance was only granted after payment of a one-dollar-per-year subscription fee that subsidized the librarian's salary and the cost of electricity.³⁵ This iteration of the library is often referred to as the Public Library, though it was not a true public library by the contemporary definition of being owned and funded by the town government.³⁶

Beginning in the 1860s, the Civil War caused a decline in circulation, and as a result the library hours were reduced in 1862, as was the librarian's pay. John Greenleaf Whittier was the sole signatory of the Annual Report in 1865. In the report, he states that, "the war, with all its daily

²⁶ Kevane and Sundstrom, "The Development of Public Libraries in the United States," p. 117.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 118.

²⁸ Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *Acts and Resolves passed by the General Court of Massachusetts in the years 1849, 1850, 1851*, (Dutton and Wentworth, 1851), p. 804.

<https://archive.org/details/actsresolvespass184951mass/page/n3/mode/2up>

²⁹ "Will It Come To Pass? A Free Library from Amesbury's Reading Public," *Amesbury and Salisbury Villager*, February 21, 1889.

³⁰ "A Free Library for Amesbury's Reading Public," *Amesbury and Salisbury Villager*, February 21, 1889.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856–1956*, p. 7.

³³ Ibid., p. 8.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ "A Free Library for Amesbury's Reading Public," *Amesbury and Salisbury Villager*, February 21, 1889.

³⁶ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856–1956*, p. 8.

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excitements, is now over. The newspaper is no longer a necessity, and there will be felt an increased need for the substantial mental food which good books along can furnish.”³⁷ In the report, Whittier also stated that the foundation for a new building to be occupied by the library was being laid at a different location on Friend Street.³⁸

In 1865, the library was moved to its second Friend Street location, less than a quarter-mile southwest of the previous building, at the corner of Friend and Main streets. The ground floor of the new building (AME.32; 1865), constructed by the Salisbury Mills Company under the direction of M.D.F. Steele, the company’s agent, was reserved for a new library room and library hall.³⁹ The second floor was dedicated for use as an Odd Fellows meeting hall. The Salisbury Mills Company charged no rent to allow the Amesbury and Salisbury Library Association for their use of the space at this location. The new space was four times the size of that within the counting house, and 2,200 volumes were transferred from the previous space.⁴⁰ This building is no longer extant, having been demolished sometime between 1978 and 1986.⁴¹

The new space could hold between 8,000 and 10,000 volumes, though at the time of the building’s proposal, there were far fewer in the collection. An article in the *Amesbury and Salisbury Villager*, published around the building’s completion, issued an appeal for community members to either subscribe to the library or otherwise make donations so that more books could be purchased and added to the collection, taking advantage of the news spaces expanded potential.⁴² Additionally, the library at Friend Street held no modern books at this time, relying only on classics and publications from an earlier period, due primarily to their lack of funding. An 1889 article in *The Daily Item* reported that because of their financial situation, the library had been “struggling with fate for some time.”⁴³ Still, a robust public library remained a dream for the people of Amesbury.

Over time, the new building attracted more patronage. In 1867 it was open one day a week, from six in the morning to nine at night. Additional books were contributed by several people, and a new catalogue was printed.⁴⁴ In 1872, a gift of 646 volumes was received from Gardner Brewer of the Salisbury Manufacturing Company. Though Brewer’s gift was substantial, in the coming years, the library faced a Catch-22 with their appeal to the public being limited by their offerings. There were not enough subscribers to supply the income needed to buy the books that would attract more subscribers.⁴⁵ The financial viability of the library wavered through the next two decades, stabilizing briefly in the early 1880s, and faltering again in the latter portion of the

³⁷ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856–1956*, p. 10.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ “New Library Room and Library,” *Amesbury and Salisbury Villager*, December 14, 1865.

⁴⁰ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856–1956*, p. 11.

⁴¹ Nertonline, “Historic Aerial Viewer: 15 Friend St, Amesbury, MA,” *Historic Aerials*, 1978, 1986, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>.

⁴² “New Library Room and Library,” *Amesbury and Salisbury Villager*, December 14, 1865.

⁴³ “Neighborhood Notes,” *The Daily Item*, October 1889, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856–1956*, p. 16.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

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decade. In 1886, the librarian called for renewed effort on the part of the library's friends and the general public.⁴⁶

The Amesbury Public Library became a free library on an experimental basis in 1889.⁴⁷ The measure was petitioned for by George W. Cate, John Hume, and other members of library's board of Trustees, and voted upon by city residents. The library's affairs were to be managed jointly by the existing Trustees and the Selectmen of Amesbury, who determined what amount of funding would be allocated to the library.⁴⁸

The immediate effect of making the library free was an increase in the number of its users from 50 in 1889 to 1,600 in 1890. The added income still proved too small to buy books to meet the demand. In response, the "ladies" of the town arranged a fundraising event entitled the Grand Entertainment, held at Armory Hall on February 11, 1890. Here, for fifty cents, attendees could play games, dance, and eat. The Grand Entertainment produced enough money to buy 189 books; 27 was given by the Eighth Regiment; and 83 were purchased by the Trustees. The library was suddenly in a place to meet demand, however over 130 books were taken out a day, leaving the shelves barer than they would have liked.⁴⁹

The administrators of the Amesbury Public Library began dreaming of their own purpose-built library building as early as 1893.⁵⁰ The *Report of the Trustees of the Public Library* of that year mentions the establishment of a fundraising committee to improve their Friend Street facility, but also the hope that "wealthy and generous citizens," would someday donate to a building fund so that "Amesbury may own a substantial library building."⁵¹ The library continued to flourish, opening four days a week, and increasing circulation. Talk began to circulate about starting the fund for a new building. The success of the free public library drove the town to take steps at the annual Town Meeting in 1895, as recommended by the Trustees, to accept the library permanently and bring it under the control of the city.⁵² The 1895 Report of the Trustees further underscored their vision for the future of the library, declaring that it "ought to be located in a substantial and enduring building."⁵³

The library was officially codified as a free and public library within the guidelines provided by the Statutes of the Commonwealth at the Town Meeting in October of 18. Some examples of guidelines included that the library remain completely free, that city taxes be used to support the

⁴⁶ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856-1956*, p. 16.

⁴⁷ "Amesbury Has A New Public Library It May Well Be Proud Of." 20; *Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury*, Amesbury, Massachusetts, March 1, 1892, p. 48.

⁴⁸ "Advertisement for the Public Library Building Fund Benefit Event" (Amesbury, MA, February 1890), Amesbury Public Library.

⁴⁹ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856-1956*, p. 16.

⁵⁰ *Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury* (Amesbury, Massachusetts, March 1, 1893), p. 8-9.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856-1956*, p. 29.

⁵³ *Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury* (Amesbury Massachusetts, March 1, 1895), p. 60.

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library, and that the number of Trustees would be limited to nine.⁵⁴ The Trustees unanimously voted to donate all the library's materials to the town of Amesbury and the election of the Trustees was put to a public vote.⁵⁵ They authorized the planned building fund, beginning at a principal balance of \$132, as the first step of achieving that goal.⁵⁶ Regarding the guideline for tax financing, money was redistributed from the Amesbury "dog fund," or "dog tax."⁵⁷

There was a steady growth of the library's services over the next five years. When codified, the librarian Alice C. Follansbee expressed her opinion that a library should extend its service into the community and find people whose attention should be called to its books. "We wish to reach more of our townspeople," she wrote, "especially to bring the school and study clubs into closer connection with the library."⁵⁸ While a purpose-built building remained in a preliminary funding stage of planning, the Friend Street building was upgraded with electric lights, and magazines were acquired to attract more youth. However, despite updates, the building became increasingly dissatisfactory as the 19th century came to a close. There was an inherent lack of space and no rooms available for specialized purposes. The library building had only one large room with a delivery desk facing the entrance and a small room on either side. The shelves were crowded, and the number of books continued to increase.⁵⁹

The years 1897 and 1898 marked a turning point for the financial future of the Amesbury Public Library. In 1897, Hannah C. Hubbard, in memory of her late husband Everett Fowler, provided a \$5,000 donation to be used either for land purchase and construction of a new building or for the purchase of a larger, more suitable existing building to be used by the library.⁶⁰ In 1898, another local, Mary Barnard, bequeathed an additional \$10,000 for the purchase of books, and another \$20,000 of her estate's residuary toward the same goal of a new building.⁶¹ Isaac Barnard and his sister Mary were avid readers and wealthy members of the community. When Isaac died, he left a portion of his estate to his most utilized community resource—the library.⁶² By 1900, the library's design was published in the Amesbury Daily News (Figure 2).⁶³

⁵⁴ Massachusetts, *Acts and Resolves Passed by the General Court*, with State Library of Massachusetts (Boston : Secretary of the Commonwealth, 1663), <http://archive.org/details/actsresolvespass1890mass>. Chapter 53, Page 52, Section 5.

⁵⁵ "Special Committee to Confer with the Trustees of the Library," *Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury*, Amesbury Massachusetts, March 1, 1896, pp. 73–75.

⁵⁶ "Report of the Trustees of the Public Library," *Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury*, (Amesbury, Massachusetts, March 1, 1895)

⁵⁷ In later town reports the "dog fund" is also referred to as the "dog tax" or "dog license." This refers to the surplus of the dog tax after damage claims had been paid. *Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury*, Amesbury, Massachusetts, March 1, 1890. *Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury*, Amesbury, Massachusetts, March 1, 1890; *Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury*, March 1, 1892, p. 44.

⁵⁸ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856–1956*, pp. 20–21.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ "Public Bequests Made: Wills of Everett Fowler and Hannah C. Hubbard Contained Them," *The Boston Globe*, December 28, 1897.

⁶¹ "Amesbury Has A New Public Library It May Well Be Proud Of," p. 20.

⁶² Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856–1956*, p. 32.

⁶³ "The Contract Awarded," *Amesbury Daily News*. July 20, 1900. Clipping.

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In February of 1900, George W. Cate, local lawyer, government official, educational administrator, and Amesbury Public Library trustee, petitioned the town for a vote to raise the final funds for the construction of a new public library building. Cate was a longtime educational representative, serving as chairman of the Amesbury School Board for six years beginning in 1880.⁶⁴ The construction of a new library was supported by the Amesbury community, and with the help of Cate and those who had left money in their wills for the purposes of a library, the dream became a reality.⁶⁵

The next step was to find an architect. It was decided that the architect be chosen through a competition. Sketches were submitted, and an architect, George Swan, was employed to assist the Trustees in their selection. Swan selected four sketches, of which the Trustees of the Amesbury Public Library chose one. The trustees selected the design of Penn Varney, an architect of nearby Lynn, Massachusetts.⁶⁶ They formally accepted Varney's plans in March 1900, with an estimated cost of about \$20,000.⁶⁷ The design called for a building that matched the architectural stature of other impressive libraries in Massachusetts at this time. The general building type, including its plan and design, pulled from widespread trends in the library movements across the country at the turn of the 20th century, many of which utilized revivalist styles, symmetry, and wings. The plans called for a building of Romanesque Revival style, which had gained popularity over the last half a decade, constructed of brick and Milford granite. The same month the plans were accepted, the majority of necessary funds had been raised. Of the estimated \$20,000 needed for construction, the trustees had acquired \$17,633. To assist with the remainder and the additional costs of furnishing the rest of the building, the trustees asked the town for assistance in the amount of \$5,000. By July, all funding had been successfully acquired. After several meetings and applications, a construction contract was awarded to Frank G. Colburn & Company, a contractor from Boston, Massachusetts. The contract called for the completion of the building by May of the following year.⁶⁸

From conception to the hiring of the contractor, no major changes to the plans were made. The foundation was to be constructed of Deer Island, Maine granite, instead of the less desirable Milford granite, with all other design details remaining the same as Varney's original plan. The trim was completed with limestone and mottle-gray brick of special manufacture, the roof of slate, and the gutters and conductors of copper. The design was elegant, intended to define the building as a major public landmark in Amesbury.⁶⁹

An article from a 1900 publication of the *Amesbury Daily News* titled "The Proposed Library Building," described the plans for the library in detail, noting how "pretty" the design of the stair was, enticing readers with the facilities it would offer. Between the stack room, art room,

⁶⁴ Edward D. Redington, "CLASS OF 1861 | Dartmouth Alumni Magazine | November 1911," Dartmouth Alumni Magazine | The Complete Archive, accessed October 16, 2023, <https://archive.dartmouthalumnimagazine.com/article/1911/11/1/class-of-1861>.

⁶⁵ "New Library. Committee Decide on Plans Saturday," *Amesbury Daily News*, March 5, 1900.

⁶⁶ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856-1956*, p. 22.

⁶⁷ "New Library. Committee Decide on Plans Saturday."

⁶⁸ "The Proposed Library Building," *Amesbury Daily News*, March 12, 1900.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

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children's room, natural history rooms, and reference rooms, the community was about to gain important tools for learning and research, as well as dedicated space to read and work in.⁷⁰

Construction on the building began in August 1900 and was well underway by September of that year.⁷¹ Newspapers reported that during construction, contractors had to dig about five feet deeper than originally planned to ensure a solid foundation. They then constructed a concrete wall around the cellar and filled it up to where the design had originally intended. A concrete floor was laid on top, becoming the floor of the basement level.⁷² The building was nearly completed by December of 1901, and would open for public inspection by early January 1902.⁷³ An *Amesbury Daily News* article from 1902, published shortly before the building opened for inspection, shares the town's eager anticipation of gaining a quiet and spacious reference room where students from the public school could continue and expand their studies.⁷⁴ At this time the library's volumes had not yet been moved from the previous Friend Street facility, a job that took several months to complete.⁷⁵

In late December 1901, the *Amesbury Daily News* reported that the Boston contractors Frank G. Colburn and Co. had "given them a building erected similar to the modern public building in that city which has meant a good deal."⁷⁶ This quote reflects the intent of the building to mark Amesbury as a substantial town, one with the resources of a more urban city such as Boston. The architect, Penn Varney, was also praised by the writer of the article, who declared his design one of the best of any similar building under comparable budget considerations in the state. The building was true to the original plan, including nearly all of the original elements described in earlier newspaper articles.⁷⁷ Lengthy descriptions of the building continued to be published in the *Amesbury Daily News* throughout the construction process and upon completion. A New Years Eve article provided a nearly room-by-room description, imparting the importance of the new building in the community.⁷⁸

Though the new library brought increased physical space for new educational resources in the town of Amesbury, in the 1901 *Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury*, the library trustees lamented there being "too few books for reference," due to the limitations of space in the old library facility.⁷⁹ The construction of the new Amesbury Public Library directly addressed the shortcomings of its minimal and outdated collections by setting aside ample space in the stack room to expand the library's holdings, and a "light and pleasant" reading room in which to examine those new resources.⁸⁰

⁷⁰ "The Proposed Library Building."

⁷¹ "The Public Library Building," *Amesbury Daily News*, September 19, 1900.

⁷² "The Building Completed," *Amesbury Daily News*, December 31, 1901.

⁷³ "Amesbury Has A New Public Library It May Well Be Proud Of," *The Boston Globe*, April 20, 1902, p. 20.

⁷⁴ "Library Building," *Amesbury Daily News*, January 2, 1902.

⁷⁵ "Opened: The New Public Library Building," *Amesbury Daily News*, April 24, 1902.

⁷⁶ "The Building Completed," *Amesbury Daily News*, December 31, 1901. Clipping.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ "Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury," (Amesbury, Massachusetts: J. E. Brierly, Printer, December 31, 1901), p. 87.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

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The library officially opened to the public on April 24, 1902.⁸¹ An *Amesbury Daily News* article exalting the successes of the new free public library praised the late Miss Barnard and Mrs. Hubbard, whose bequests made the new library building possible.⁸² In an act that further assisted with the construction of a new library building, Lucy Ordway, of Ordway Court, sold the property on which the library was to be built at a discounted price.⁸³ Wealthy Amesbury residents also contributed additional funds to ensure the interior of the new library matched the exterior's intended grandeur. Library trustee E. R. Sibley and his wife paid for the installation of both gas and electric lighting fixtures, Mr. and Mrs. W. Hawkes provided rubber floor coverings for the library, and the estate of John Greenleaf Whittier furnished the hall clock. Even the children of Amesbury participated in the funding of the library, pooling their resources to provide decorative items for the children's reading room.⁸⁴

CRITERION A: COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Amesbury Public Library is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development, representing a community-wide effort to provide the town with a dedicated library building offering expanded educational opportunities. The library, made possible by contributions of some of the most significant figures in Amesbury's cultural and organizational history and supplemented by Town support, provided a central resource that was accessible to all. The library also contributed substantially to the transformation of this originally residential and industrial portion of Amesbury into a neighborhood that offered many public and civic services. Since its construction, the Amesbury Public Library has offered essential educational resources for the community.

Alongside the services provided by the new library, the building also brought a new architectural landmark to the town of Amesbury. The library's architecture was celebrated by the greater state of Massachusetts. *The Boston Globe*, for example, reported on the new construction in 1902 in an article titled "Amesbury has a new public library it may well be proud of." Though a journalist's opinion, they wrote that the library's arched entrance was "the finest for the size of the building in the state, and it is much to be admired."⁸⁵ *The Daily Item* of Lynn, Massachusetts, the hometown of Penn Varney, called the new structure an "ornament to the town of Amesbury."⁸⁶ This publication is reflective of the sentiment at the time, and the importance of a purpose-built library building in Amesbury. The establishment of this institution was a point of pride for the community, and a major contribution to the physical development of Amesbury's civic center between Friend and Main streets.

⁸¹ "Opened: The New Public Library Building," *Amesbury Daily News*.

⁸² *Amesbury Daily News*, January 2, 1902, p. 1.

⁸³ "Land for Amesbury Public Library," *Boston Evening Transcript*, August 28, 1899.

⁸⁴ "Library Building," *Amesbury Daily News*.

⁸⁵ "Amesbury Has A New Public Library It May Well Be Proud Of," *The Boston Globe*.

⁸⁶ "Amesbury's New Library," *The Daily Item*, July 21, 1900, p. 4.

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CRITERION A: EDUCATION

The Amesbury Public Library is also significant under Criterion A in the area of Education. The town's embrace of the library and its resources demonstrates the educational and community benefits that the Amesbury Public Library contributed to the town. At the time the building was constructed, there was no other public outlet for education open to all but the previous free library space at Friend Street, which was quite limited in size. This institution provided free access to a wide range of books, as well as multiple designated reading and reference rooms, which otherwise may have only been made available to those able to locate and purchase them. Additionally, the librarians of Amesbury worked closely with the town's public school to expand the variety of resources available to students and therefore augment their studies.

Further, the Amesbury Public Library, which allied itself with the public school system and accommodated a children's reading room from its outset, engaged with one of the foremost debates in library management during the period. Earlier library models often prohibited children under the age of twelve from using the library, though by 1876, some librarians, like William I. Fletcher, called out the contradictions between such a policy and the library's aim of being an educational institution.⁸⁷ It took until about 1900 for most librarians to agree that a children's department should be standard for public libraries.⁸⁸

The construction of the new public library building strengthened the existing connections between the library and the town's public school. Public libraries and public schools were seen to complement each other in creating a well-educated community. Some larger city libraries even went as far as to distribute their catalog listings to the local schools so that students would be more familiar with the resources available to them.⁸⁹ The children's room at the Amesbury Public Library served hundreds of children in the neighborhood, guided by a children's librarian.⁹⁰

The larger square footage provided by the new Amesbury Public Library made way for a considerable expansion of the library's print resources. During the first fifteen years of operation at the library's new location, their collection increased from 12,000 to 15,506 volumes, including a number of modern, more recent publications. The collection grew at a rate of approximately 233 books per year.⁹¹ With its new central location, the new library facility made its resources readily accessible to the public, who took full advantage of this new accessibility. A 1915 lending statistics report published in the *Amesbury Daily News* touts the library's success by comparing the year's circulations to the neighboring town of Newburyport's circulations. Though Amesbury possessed less than one third of the number of library volumes and operated with a much smaller trust fund—\$35,000 to Newburyport's \$125,000—the Amesbury Public Library had a much larger educational reach in its community, issuing six volumes for each of

⁸⁷ Abigail Ayres Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890–1920*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995): pp. 25–26.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁸⁹ "Library and School," *Amesbury Daily News*.

⁹⁰ "What Book Would Child Take to Moon?," *The Boston Globe*, December 22, 1964. 16.

⁹¹ "The Great Work of Our Library," *Amesbury Daily News*, December 30, 1915. Clipping.

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Amesbury's 8,500 residents. Newburyport issued just three and a half per each resident in the same year.⁹² The report concluded that the Amesbury Public Library had, "a vital part in the education, uplifting, and enlightenment... of the community."⁹³

In 1932, the circulation of books reached an all-time high of 77,719. That year, 622 books were purchased. However, as the Great Depression took hold of the country, the library's income suffered. In 1933, the town appropriation for the library was reduced, and income from invested funds declined. However, the trustees refused to reduce salaries. The number of books purchased was reduced by fifty percent, though demand suggests it should have increased. During this difficult period, library use continued. While some sought to occupy their minds and distract themselves from their poverty and hardship, others sought a richer personal life or a change at a higher trade or profession.⁹⁴

The mid-20th century brought many developments to the Amesbury Public Library's programming and offerings. In 1943, \$46,976 to be used solely for the purchase of books and \$1,800 to be added to the library's Thomas J. Clark Fund, was donated by the estate of Susan Clark Sibley, widow of E. Ripley Sibley. Sibley was a Trustee from 1893 to 1909 and was an active member of the committees in charge of the construction of the new building. Between 1944 and 1949, \$38,000 was given in memory of Charles S. Grieves's father, John G.W. Grieves, which the library was to use as it decided.⁹⁵

Thanks to the funding acquired during this period, the library emerged from the Great Depression, improving its facilities once again. In 1953, the library converted a portion of the second-floor children's room into a "high school room," offering a designated place for this older age group to study. The following year, in 1954, a second floor was added to the rear stacks room, and the stacks were divided into two single-story spaces, rather than one two-story space, to provide more shelves for additional materials.⁹⁶ An increase in book buying met the demand and filled some of the gaps resulting from the limited purchases of the early 1930s.⁹⁷ The library purchased reference and history books with the specific purpose of supporting local high school students. They then began posting lists of new acquisitions in the local newspapers to alert patrons of their availability, ensuring that the public was aware of their growing collection of educational resources. The special collections were also expanded during this time with new artworks, including paintings by Charles Harold Davis.⁹⁸

The Amesbury Public Library played a central role in advancing public access to learning, literacy, and self-improvement from the late 19th century through the mid-20th century. The library served as a critical supplement to the public school system, offering students and residents a broad range of reading materials, reference resources, and designated spaces for

⁹² "The Great Work of Our Library," *Amesbury Daily News*.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856-1956*, p. 26.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁹⁶ "Annual Report of the Town of Amesbury." Amesbury, MA, December 31, 1954, p. 134.

⁹⁷ Woodwell, *Amesbury Public Library, 1856-1956*, p. 29.

⁹⁸ Meghan Fahey, *Amesbury Public Library History*, January 23, 2024.

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study. The early inclusion of a children's reading room positioned the library within a broader national shift in library policy toward youth education and access, anticipating the now-standard model of children's departments in public libraries. Despite limited funding, the successful development of the library demonstrates the town's strong civic commitment to education from the turn of the 20th century.

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

The Amesbury Public Library is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style in the town of Amesbury and as an example of a symmetrical three bay T-plan, which became a popular typology as libraries by the turn of the century. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts holds an important place in the history and use of the Romanesque Revival style of architecture, exhibiting numerous examples from both the first wave of the style in the mid-19th century, and the second wave of the style in the latter half of the century. The Amesbury Public Library reflects its popularity in the state and serves as an excellent example, both inside and out. The building's high-style design displays the primary character-defining features of the style, and its place along Amesbury's primary downtown thoroughfare, Main Street, makes it stand out as an architectural landmark in the city.

THE ROMANESQUE REVIVAL STYLE

The Romanesque Revival style was introduced in the United States in the mid-19th century as architectural ideas from Europe were being imported to the United States through both students studying abroad in Europe, and by European immigration to America. The Gothic style had been the largely dominant style in the United States and England, especially for religious and public buildings, such as libraries. Similar to Gothic Revival architecture, with its early and late periods, the Romanesque Revival style's popularity in the United States can also be divided into two phases. Americans began experimenting with the style in the 1840s and 1850s, resembling more so their Gothic predecessors with reference to Roman forms. Typically, the United States had followed England in matters of architectural taste. Up until this point, tastes in England had continued to lean toward the Gothic. However, in France and Germany, alongside the United States, the Romanesque was becoming quite popular.⁹⁹ The buildings most frequently seen designed in this style were large-scale public buildings. It was not as popular a style for residential buildings.¹⁰⁰

Character-defining features of the Romanesque Revival included heavy rough stone or brick walls, steeply pitched hipped roofs, bold, heavy, half-round arches around doorways and windows, cavernous entryways, and towers or projecting bays. The Romanesque Revival emphasized the arch, oftentimes the Classical Roman arch or other similar stylistic variations of

⁹⁹ Kathleen Curran, *The Romanesque Revival: Religion, Politics, and Transnational Exchange*, (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), xxiv.

¹⁰⁰ Historic Preservation & Archaeology, "Romanesque Revival Style," Historic Preservation & Archaeology, January 29, 2021, <https://www.in.gov/dnr/historic-preservation/learn-about-topics/buildings-and-bridges/architectural-styles/romanesque-revival-style/>.

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the arch, as its primary characteristic.¹⁰¹ Features of this style of architecture were indeed influenced by Classical architecture, however, during the mid-19th century in the United States, the style was more directly influenced by the Romanesque era of Europe during A.D. 800–1150, particularly the Norman period in England.¹⁰² While the references to Classical Roman architectural features became common alternatives to the complexity of the Gothic style, the first architects of the Romanesque, Richard Upjohn and James Renwick, were more familiar with the Gothic. Their work in the mid-19th century made references specifically to the Norman architecture of England. Their permutation of the Romanesque style was more Picturesque, more informed by the Gothic, and more related to the Norman period in England.

The first Romanesque Revival-style building in the United States can be attributed to Richard Upjohn, with the Church of the Pilgrims in Brooklyn, New York, designed and built from 1844 to 1846. It was soon followed by the Smithsonian Institution Building in Washington, DC, designed by James Renwick and constructed by 1851. Renwick's design for the Smithsonian building was based on designs from German architecture books, which may have been linked to the influx of German immigrants seen in the United States during the 1840s. In 1848, Robert Dale Owen's *Hints on Public Architecture* was published, featuring Renwick's Smithsonian building prominently.¹⁰³ Owen argued that the Romanesque style was more flexible and economic than the Gothic or Greek Revival styles. As a result of the book and the style's growth in use, many American architects were delighted to find that the Romanesque style was free of the complexity and difficulty presented by the Gothic style. Even English architect John Nash wrote, "I hate this Gothic style; one window costs more trouble than two houses ought to."¹⁰⁴ The Romanesque Revival allowed architects to capture elements of the picturesque, which were so beloved in Gothic Revival architecture, without the extreme detail typically seen in traditional Gothic buildings.

In 1853, the Congregational Church published *A Book of Plans for Churches and Parsonages*, featuring primarily Romanesque Revival-style buildings.¹⁰⁵ This popularized the style for religious architecture. Initially, the Romanesque went by many names. As was the case with Congregational Churches, many at first called it the "Round Style," in reference to its arches.¹⁰⁶ Aside from religious buildings, civic and institutional buildings, as seen at the Smithsonian Institution building in Washington, D.C., were perfect contenders for the Romanesque Revival, reducing the cost of extreme ornamentation often found in large public buildings designed in the Gothic Revival.

¹⁰¹ Kathleen Curran, "Romanesque Revival Architecture in Transnational Perspective," *Historically Speaking* 5, no. 2, (2003): 31, <https://doi.org/10.1353/hsp.2003.0011>.

¹⁰² "Teaching the Anglo-Saxons and Normans," English Heritage, accessed October 10, 2024, <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/teaching-resources/teaching-history/teaching-saxons-normans/>.

¹⁰³ Robert Dale Owen, *Hints on Public Architecture* (New York: DeCapo Press, 1849), pp. 98–99.

¹⁰⁴ Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles*, Revised Edition (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1992), p. 63.

¹⁰⁵ Congregational Churches in the United States General Convention Central Committee and Congregational Churches in the United States General Convention Committee Albany Central, *A Book of Plans for Churches and Parsonages: Published Under the Direction of the Central Committee, General Congregational Convention, October 1852; Comprising Designs by Upjohn, Downing, Renwick*. (Daniel Burgess & Company, 1853).

¹⁰⁶ Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles*, p. 63.

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The first phase of the Romanesque Revival style in the United States gained some momentum, but the Gothic and Greek Revival styles remained popular modes. The end of the 19th century saw a resurgence of the Romanesque Revival where it became one of the leading styles in the country.

Most notable in the popularization of the Romanesque Revival style was Henry Hobson Richardson. Richardson was born in St. James, Louisiana on a sugar plantation in 1838.¹⁰⁷ At the time when Richardson was born, the Gothic and Greek Revival styles were the predominant styles of architecture in the United States. In the 1850s, with the introduction to the style by Upjohn and Renwick, the Romanesque was well thought of in intellectual circles. Many began to adapt the Romanesque style, such as Henry Austin, Eidlitz in New York, and Schulze at Harvard, touching on the Romanesque by referencing the style of von Gartner and Hubsch, who practiced architecture in South Germany.¹⁰⁸ By the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, the Romanesque, with integrated Italian and Gothic elements, had taken its place among the most popular styles of architecture in the United States.¹⁰⁹

Richardson had left for Paris, France in 1859 to study architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts, returning to the United States in 1865 just after the Civil War. Upon his return, Richardson began experimenting with a variety of regional architectural forms and developed his own take on the Romanesque Revival style. Richardson's unique use of the style was defined by his use of colorful walls and cladding, Syrian arches, sculpted shapes, and Romanesque arches. Hence, the term "Richardsonian-Romanesque" was born, a popular sub-genre of the Romanesque Revival. Richardson's work following his return to the United States catalyzes the second wave of Romanesque Revival in America and popularized the style during the second half of the 19th century into the 20th century.¹¹⁰

In 1882, Richardson was considered the leading architect in the United States. Richardson died in 1886 at the age of 47, leaving his mark on architecture and tastes in the country, which would ultimately lead Penn Varney to design the Amesbury Public Library in 1900.¹¹¹ Upon his death, his impact on the Romanesque Revival was considered one of America's first original trends in architecture.¹¹²

Examples of Richardson's notable works, of which there are many in Massachusetts, include the famous Trinity Church in Boston (1875; BOS.2623; MHL, NHL, NRIND, NRDIS), often credited with defining the architect's career and the style at large, the First Baptist Church in Boston (1872; BOS.3472; LHD, NRIND, NRDIS), Sever Hall in Cambridge (1880; CAM.179;

¹⁰⁷ Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *The Architecture of H. H. Richardson and His Times* (New York, New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1936), pp. 6–7

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ Hitchcock, *The Architecture of H. H. Richardson and His Times*, p. 3.

¹¹¹ "Henry Hobson Richardson," accessed November 10, 2023, <https://buffaloah.com/a/archs/rich/richbiog.html>.

¹¹² "Henry Hobson Richardson Paintings, Bio, Ideas," *The Art Story*, accessed November 10, 2023, <https://www.theartstory.org/artist/richardson-henry-hobson/>.

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LHD, NHL, NRIND, NRDIS), the Thomas Crane Memorial Library in Quincy (1882; QUI.245; LHD, NHL, NRIND),¹¹³ the Ames Free Library in Easton (1883; EST.3; LHD, NHL, NRDIS), the Woburn Public Library (1876; WOB.6; NHL, NRIND), Albany City Hall in New York (1883), and more.¹¹⁴ In 1885, architects voted Trinity Church as the most important building in the United States.¹¹⁵

The Amesbury Public Library was not designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque, lacking the colorful cladding and Syrian arches characteristic of Richardson's work. It was, however, constructed at the end of the 19th century, during the smaller, second wave of Romanesque Revival's popularity, which occurred in part thanks to Richardson's impact. Richardson's work, especially in the state of Massachusetts, therefore, represents a major crux that led to both the Town of Amesbury's interest in the building as a representative example of their public infrastructure, as well as Penn Varney's interest in the style. Born twenty years after Richardson, Varney would have been reaching adulthood during the style's second wave of popularity following Richardson's reinvention.

While bigger cities tended to look toward Beaux-Arts and other classical-derived styles at this time, smaller towns looked back to the Romanesque as an established, well-respected choice to be applied to new important buildings in their communities.¹¹⁶ In addition, Richardson's reinvigoration of the style reinforced it as an attractive choice for a new library in Amesbury. The design of the public library in the small town of Amesbury resulted from the confluence of the Romanesque Revival's established popularity in the United States, and a period of library development in communities across the country.

THE ROMANESQUE REVIVAL IN MASSACHUSETTS

An early example within the initial spike in the style's popularity in the mid-19th century, the brick-clad Prospect Congregational Church (CAM.286; NRIND) was constructed in Cambridge in 1851, designed by Alexander Rice Esty.¹¹⁷ Another example is the Lanesville Congregational Church (GLO.552), constructed in 1866. The building was designed by an unknown architect and constructed in wood, atypical of the stone and brick typical of the style.¹¹⁸ These earlier examples in Massachusetts set the stage for over 700 more constructed between the later 19th and early 20th centuries.¹¹⁹

¹¹³ Tom Acitelli, "Touring Henry Hobson Richardson's Boston Architecture," *Curbed Boston*, February 24, 2016, <https://boston.curbed.com/2016/2/24/11104854/henry-hobson-richardson-architecture-boston>.

¹¹⁴ Devendra Jadhav, "Henry Hobson Richardson- 15 Iconic Projects," *Rethinking The Future*, November 18, 2020, <https://www.re-thinkingthefuture.com/know-your-architects/a1272-henry-hobson-richardson-15-iconic-projects/>.

¹¹⁵ "Trinity Church: Romanesque Revival, Fashion and Decor: A Cultural History," accessed November 10, 2023, <https://mediakron.bc.edu/fashiondecor/architecture-trinity-church>.

¹¹⁶ Theodore Jones, *Carnegie Libraries Across America: A Public Legacy* (Washington, D.C. and New York: Preservation Press; John Wiley, 1997), p. 76.

¹¹⁷ Robert Rettig, "Prospect Congregational Church," MHC B Form CAM.286 (1968), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=glo.552>, accessed 11/11/23.

¹¹⁸ D. Hilbert and E. Woodford, "Lanesville Congregational Church," MHC B Form GLO.552 (April 1, 1985), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=glo.552>, accessed 11/10/23.

¹¹⁹ *General Search of MACRIS Database - Romanesque Revival*, accessed November 11, 2023.

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The buildings included below represent examples of the Romanesque Revival style in the area surrounding Amesbury, providing a wider local context of the intersection of this building type and style. Being the only example of the Romanesque Revival in Amesbury,¹²⁰ these examples reinforce the common design elements characteristic of the style.

Walnut Square School (1889; HVR.700) – Haverhill, Massachusetts (Figure 6)

The 1898 Romanesque Revival Walnut Square School located on Main Street in Haverhill was designed by C. Willis Damon and built by the Edward Clock Company. It functioned primarily as a public school, and was built in brick, with granite and limestone details, the same as the Amesbury Public Library. The building features a recessed Roman arch entry but lacks the columns seen on many examples of Romanesque Revival style buildings. The second story features arched, multi-lite windows. The building also contains a tower, unlike most examples of Romanesque library buildings, and includes two chimneys. The façade is symmetrical, and the hipped roof terminates in an overhanging eave with a simple cornice.¹²¹ Like the Amesbury Public Library, the design of the exterior relies on arched windows and entrances.

The Peabody School (1895; HVR.251; NRIND) – Haverhill, Massachusetts (Figure 7)

The Romanesque Revival Peabody School was constructed in Haverhill circa 1895 and designed by C. Willis Damon. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986 for its architectural and educational significance. The building is primarily clad in brick, with granite accents. Unlike most examples featured here, the building has two primary entrances. The façade is, however, symmetrical, as seen in Amesbury.¹²² Though it no longer functions as a school, the building retains its original historic architectural features.

THE AMESBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE ROMANESQUE REVIVAL STYLE

By the turn of the 20th century, Massachusetts had been established as a major contributor of Romanesque Revival buildings. Notable examples exist across the state, from major cities like Boston and Worcester to smaller towns like Amesbury or Lynn. Many were designed by some of the most celebrated architects in the United State, such as Henry Hobson Richardson. Not only does the Amesbury Public Library serve as the town's only example of the Romanesque Revival style, but it also features a high degree of original characteristics that typically define it. Penn Varney's design remained true to the elements of the style, though constructed after the later period of popularity following Richardson's adaptations of Romanesque forms. The building features heavy masonry construction with brick and stone, a symmetrical façade, a recessed main

¹²⁰ Amesbury Town Hall (1888, AME.1) displays elements of the Romanesque Revival, especially in its round-arch windows, but has been classified as Panel Brick in the MHC Inventory.

¹²¹ Clemson & Dempsey, "Walnut Square School," MHC B Form HVR.700 (Dec. 1994), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=HVR.700>, accessed 11/11/23.

¹²² Mary Malaguti, "Peabody School," MHC B Form HVR.251 (Nov. 1984), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=hvr.251>, accessed 11/11/23.

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entrance flanked by columns, a hipped roof with cross-gables, a hipped dormer, arched window and door surrounds, and decorative plaques, all representing major elements of the style.

The variation of the Romanesque Revival exemplified by the Amesbury Public Library differs from that of the Richardsonian Romanesque in a number of ways, though does employ some less defining elements of the latter. While both variations feature heavy masonry construction and arches, the Richardsonian Romanesque more commonly exclusively featured rock-faced stone masonry, often utilizing a contrasting selection of stone for arches and lintels. This emphasized a color contrast with the stone walls. The explicit use of stone also created an overall sense of massiveness not always conveyed by the occasional brick used in buildings like the Amesbury Public Library. Oftentimes also, a Syrian arch would be used in the Richardsonian Romanesque. The Richardsonian version of the style is also differentiated by the use of straight-topped windows alongside arched windows. While this is seen at the secondary elevations and basement levels of the Amesbury Public Library, straight-topped windows are not employed at the façade. The library building, constructed in the later part of the Romanesque Revival period, very well may have taken this element from the popular Richardsonian Romanesque, or utilized it to minimize cost.¹²³

According to the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS), the Amesbury Public Library is the only example of the Romanesque Revival style in the town of Amesbury. In the nearby city of Haverhill, almost a dozen examples of the style exist, constructed between 1847 and 1895, with most being built toward the later end of the century. Still, among the greater area encompassing the nearby towns of Haverhill, Ipswich, Merrimac, and Newburyport, the Amesbury Public Library is one of only fifteen total examples of Romanesque Revival buildings. Further, all examples in these towns represent other religious or institutional buildings, such as firehouses, churches, banks, and even some industrial buildings, making the library the singular example of the style in Amesbury, and a rare example of a Romanesque Revival library in the greater local area.

Recognizing that public and institutional buildings largely dominate the style, many library buildings like the Amesbury Public Library were constructed in Massachusetts. There are about thirty examples of Romanesque Revival libraries across the state. Examples north of Boston include the Wayland Public Library, designed by Cabot, Everett and Mead (1900; WAY.33); the Norton Public Library (1887; NRT.74; NRDIS 1977); the Flint Public Library in Middleton (1891; MDL.1; NRIND 2002); the Lincoln Public Library (1883; LIN.40; NRDIS 1985); the William Shute Memorial Library in Everett (1898; EVR.69); and the Gleason Public Library in Carlisle (1896; CAR.2; LHD).¹²⁴ Though these examples only represent a sampling of those

¹²³ Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles*, p. 133.

¹²⁴ Gretchen G. Schuler, "Wayland Public Library," MHC B Form WAY.33 (Oct. 2012), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=WAY.33>, accessed 11/11/23.

Erin Doherty, Elizabeth D. Warburton, "Norton Public Library," MHC B Form NRT.74 (Aug. 2022), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=NRT.74%20>, accessed 11/11/23.

Mary Tragert, "Flint Public Library," MHC B Form MDL.1 (June 2000), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=MDL.1>, accessed 11/11/23.

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existing in Massachusetts at large, they reflect the prevalence of the style in the late 19th century in northern Massachusetts, especially in the design of libraries, speaking to the period at which the Amesbury Public Library was constructed.

THE AMESBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY IN THE EVOLUTION OF LIBRARY TYPOLOGY

Partially, but not entirely, informed by rapid and widespread construction of public libraries between 1886 and 1917 brought on by the Carnegie Library Program, wherein steel magnate Andrew Carnegie distributed massive portions of his fortune to communities for the purposes of constructing public libraries, a typology for town libraries emerged in the later 19th century.¹²⁵ Though the T-shaped library plan had been a popular choice since the 1880s, emerging debates between architects and public librarians reinvigorated its use.¹²⁶ Alternative library plans, such as the biaxial arrangement of Richardson's Winn Memorial Library in Woburn, Massachusetts, deemphasized public reading rooms in favor of a highly formal alcoved book hall. Such an arrangement was nearly immediately and universally rejected by public librarians as the alcoves created obstructed views where the stacks were impossible to observe from a central circulation desk. Librarians were then forced to close the stacks to public access and retrieve volumes upon patrons' requests.¹²⁷ Librarians' preferences, however, did not always or immediately inform subsequent library design, as only approximately 25 percent of public libraries at the turn of the century afforded patrons open access to the stacks.¹²⁸ Carnegie libraries did not trigger a universal trend of architectural standardization in library design, but did help to reinforce it. John Bertram, Carnegie's secretary, who held the power of ultimate approval on Carnegie library design, declared the most appropriate library plans would include one large, open room with stacks around its perimeter and subdivided when needed by half height bookshelves.¹²⁹ The Amesbury Public Library's T-plan affords a similar design, where a grand central entrance opens to a central circulation desk, reading rooms in each of the bays in the central block of the T and an open stack room at the stem.

The Amesbury Public Library blends the early preference for Romanesque Revival among libraries funded by wealthy local benefactors, with a plan type widely agreed upon by librarians to be better functioning for a fully free and public library.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: PENN VARNEY, ARCHITECT

The Amesbury Public Library was the work of local architect Penn Varney. His work was primarily rooted in his hometown of Lynn, Massachusetts, or nearby, but his designs can be

Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, "*Shute, William Memorial Library*," MHC B Form EVR.69 (Jan. 1983), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=EVR.69>, accessed 11/11/23.

Forbes/Schuler, "*Gleason Public Library*," MHC B Form CAR.2 (Sept. 2009), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=EVR.69>, accessed 11/11/23.

¹²⁵ Van Slyck, *Free to All*, 9.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

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found from New York to Maine, and across the Revival styles. From his earlier Colonial and Classical Revival schools and town halls, such as the 1898 Classical Revival Saint Joseph's Parochial School in Lynn (LYN.46), and Romanesque Revival-inspired commercial blocks, such as the 1904 Miller Building in Portland, Maine, Varney, like most other architects, was solidly committed to the revival styles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.¹³⁰

Born in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire in 1859, Varney moved to Lynn, Massachusetts in 1882 to study drafting with H. K. Wheeler, a prolific Lynn architect responsible for the design of over 400 structures in the area.¹³¹ Wheeler had studied at MIT, graduating in 1882, and would have been present in the city after the construction of Richardson's 1875 Trinity Church.¹³² Wheeler frequently designed in the Romanesque Revival. An early example is the 1862 Essex County Superior Courthouse in Salem, Massachusetts (SAL.2271; NRDIS).¹³³ During his time with Wheeler, Varney was likely influenced by his teacher's work, expanding his understanding of revival styles.¹³⁴

In 1888, Varney established his own firm. Varney completed several important civic and educational buildings in the northeast, including the Sanford Town Hall in Sanford, Maine; the Saco and Biddeford Institution of Savings in Saco, Maine; the First National Bank in Skowhegan, Maine; the 1911 Classical High School in Lynn (LYN.677; NRDIS); and many more.¹³⁵ The Amesbury Public Library was the first library building designed by Penn Varney, and his only building in Amesbury. Though it was the first library of his career, Varney designed a number of public library buildings across varying states. However, Varney designed only two other libraries in Massachusetts, the 1903 Melrose Public Library (MEL.85; NRIND) and the 1908 Westborough Public Library (WBO.204; NRDIS).¹³⁶

¹³⁰ A. Krim, "Saint Joseph's Parochial School," MHC B Form LYN.46 (Dec. 1994), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=LYN.46>, accessed 11/11/23.

¹³¹ Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, *Industries of Massachusetts: Historical and Descriptive Review of Lynn, Lowell, Lawrence, Haverhill, Salem, Beverly, Peabody, Danvers, Gloucester, Newburyport, and Amesbury, and Their Leading Manufacturers and Merchants* (New York: International Pub. Co., 1886).

¹³² Jean Carroon, "Trinity Church," MHC B Form BOS.2623 (Jan. 2006), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=BOS.2623>, accessed 11/11/23.

¹³³ Walter R. Wheeler, "Essex County Superior Courthouse," MHC B Form SAL.2271 (June 2017), <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=SAL.2271>, accessed 11/11/23.

¹³⁴ Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, *Industries of Massachusetts: Historical and Descriptive Review of Lynn, Lowell, Lawrence, Haverhill, Salem, Beverly, Peabody, Danvers, Gloucester, Newburyport, and Amesbury, and Their Leading Manufacturers and Merchants* (New York: International Pub. Co., 1886).

¹³⁵ Christine Scott Beard "Classical High School," MHC B Form LYN.677 (Oct. 1985) <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=LYN.677>, accessed 11/11/23.;

Caitlin Corkins, "Aldrich Public Library" National Register Nomination (Montpelier, Vermont. Nov. 2015) NRHP Reference No. 15000961.

¹³⁶ Orren L. Walsh, "Melrose Public Library," MHC B Form MEL.85 (June 1978) <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=MEL.85>, accessed 11/11/23.

C.E. Keller, "Westborough Public Library," MHC B Form WBO.204 (March 1984) <https://mhc-macris.net/details?mhcid=WBO.204>, accessed 11/11/23.

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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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): AME.23

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre (0.31 acres)

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 42.85537 Longitude: -70.93295

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Amesbury Public Library building is located on a 0.31-acre parcel along a primary commercial thoroughfare (Main Street) in Amesbury's downtown area. The nominated boundary is inclusive of Amesbury Tax Parcel ID #52-201 and is bound by Tax Parcel ID#52-199 to the north, Main Street at the south, a surface parking lot located on Tax Parcel ID #52-201 and 52-199, and a driveway separating the subject parcel Tax Parcel ID #52-201 at the east. (See boundary map in Figure 1 below)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated boundary is inclusive of the full legal parcel at ID #52-201. The boundary includes the full extent of the historic building.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Nika Faulkner/Abbey Davis, Heritage Consulting Group, with Ben Haley,
National Register Director
organization: Massachusetts Historical Commission
street & number: 220 Morrissey Boulevard
city or town: Boston state: MA zip code: 02125
e-mail ben.haley@sec.state.ma.us
telephone: (617) 727 8470
date: May 2025

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Amesbury Public Library

City or Vicinity: Amesbury

County: Essex

State: Massachusetts

Photographer: Michael LaFlash, Heritage Consulting Group

Date Photographed: October 12, 2023

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Façade /South Elevation, looking north.
- 2 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Façade /South Elevation, looking north.
- 3 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Façade /South Elevation, Door Surround, looking north and up.

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- 4 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Façade /South Elevation, Door Detail, looking north.
5 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, East Elevation, looking west. Non-contributing shed at right.
6 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, North Elevation, looking south and showing ramp providing access to parking lot.
7 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, West Elevation, looking southeast toward non-historic glass vestibule and ramp at west wing.
8 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, First Floor, Stair Hall and Main Entry Vestibule, looking south.
9 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, First Floor, Delivery Hall and wings to the east and west, looking north.
10 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, First Floor, East Wing, Reference Room, looking north.
11 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, First Floor, East Wing, Reference Room, looking northwest.
12 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, First Floor, West Wing, looking south at enclosed room, historically the Children's Reading Room.
13 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, First Floor, West Wing, looking west.
14 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, First Floor, West Wing, looking southeast at enclosed room, historically the Children's Reading Room, and at East Wing.
15 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, First Floor, looking east at librarian's office, looking west.
16 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, First Floor, Offices and Stacks, looking north.
17 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, Second Floor, Stairwell, looking north at upper floor rooms and skylight.
18 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, Second Floor, Stairwell, looking south at the stair landing.
19 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, Second Floor, Main Room, looking north and up at skylight.
20 of 20: Amesbury Public Library, Interior, Second Floor, Stacks, looking southwest at pressed metal cornice and stair to children's rooms (left).

Figures

- 1: From the D.G Beers and Co. Atlas of Essex County, The Town of Amesbury and Salisbury Mill, Massachusetts, 1872. Sheet #12. See original library/Oddfellows building on the Salisbury Manufacturing Company's site in blue. Site of the future/existing library noted in red.
- 2: Illustration of proposed Amesbury Public Library in 1900. "The Contract Awarded," *Amesbury Daily News*. July 20, 1900.
- 3: Postcard Showing the Amesbury Public Library "Public Library," US Town Views, Amesbury, Massachusetts. 1904.

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- 4: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Amesbury, Massachusetts. Sanborn Map Company. 1899. Sheet #9. See future site of Amesbury Public Library in red.
- 5: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Amesbury, Massachusetts. Sanborn Map Company. 1904. Sheet #7. See library site in red.
- 6: Photograph of Walnut Square School (1889, HVR.700) – Haverhill, Massachusetts.
- 7: Photograph of The Peabody School (circa 1895, HVR.251) – Haverhill, Massachusetts.

Maps

- Map 1: Exterior Photo Key (Base Map Source: Google)
- Map 2: First-Floor Photo Key (Base Map Source: Amesbury Public Library Collections)
- Map 3: Second-Floor Photo Key (Base Map Source: Amesbury Public Library Collections):
- Map 4: Amesbury, Massachusetts Tax Parcel Map (Source: Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Tax Parcel Map: MIMAP)
- Map 5: Amesbury Public Library Boundary/Site Map. (Base Map Source: Google.)

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Name of Property

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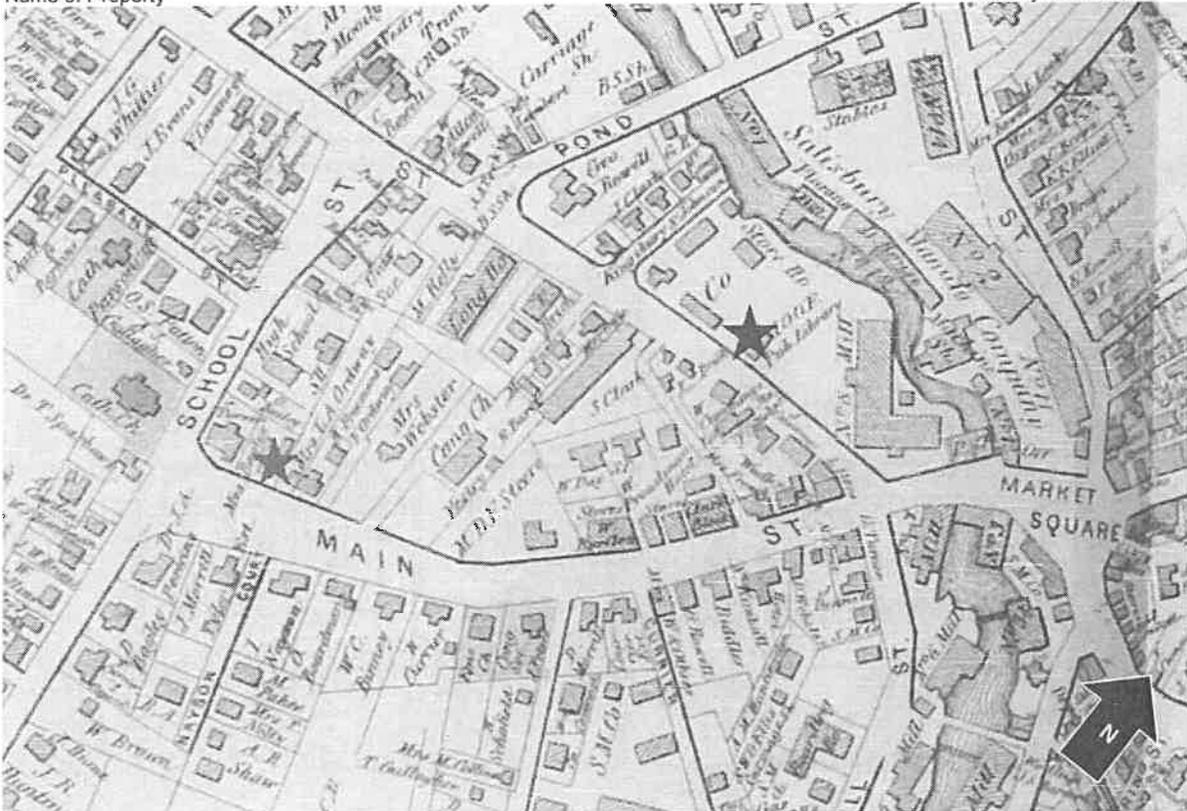


Figure 1: From the D.G Beers and Co. Atlas of Essex County, The Town of Amesbury and Salisbury Mill, Massachusetts, 1872. Sheet #12. See original library/Oddfellows building on the Salisbury Manufacturing Company's site in blue. Site of the future/existing library noted in red.

Amesbury Public Library
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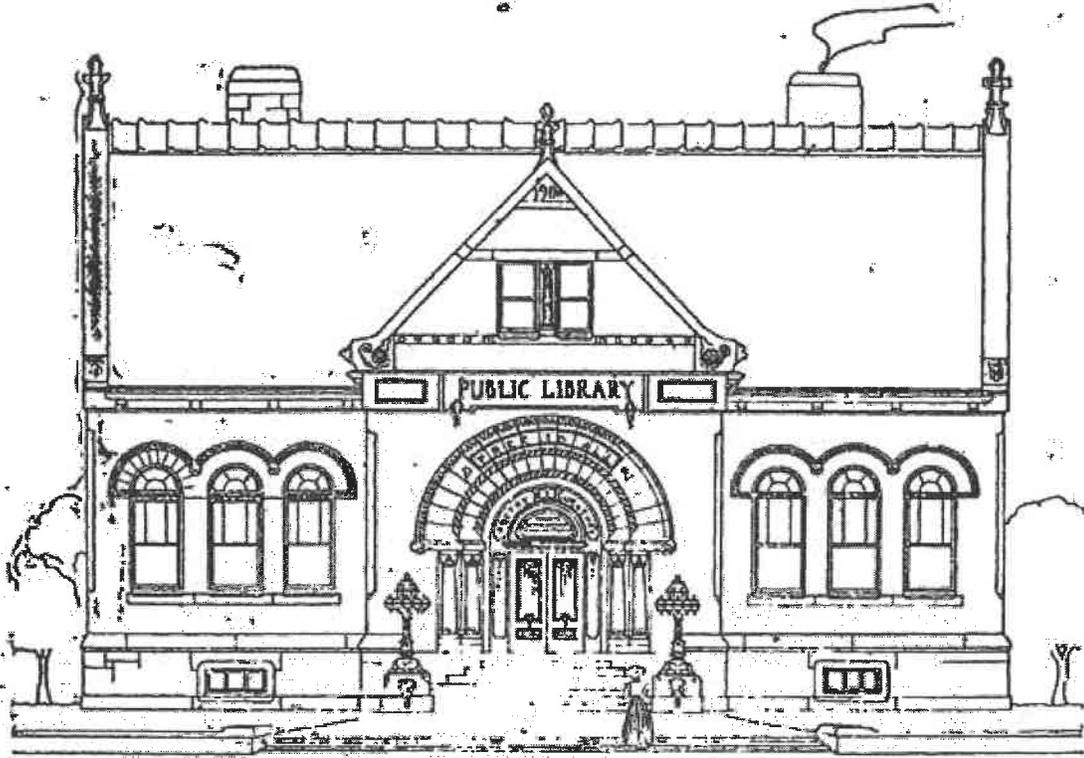


Figure 2: Illustration of proposed Amesbury Public Library in 1900. "The Contract Awarded," *Amesbury Daily News*. July 20, 1900.

Amesbury Public Library
Name of Property

Essex, MA
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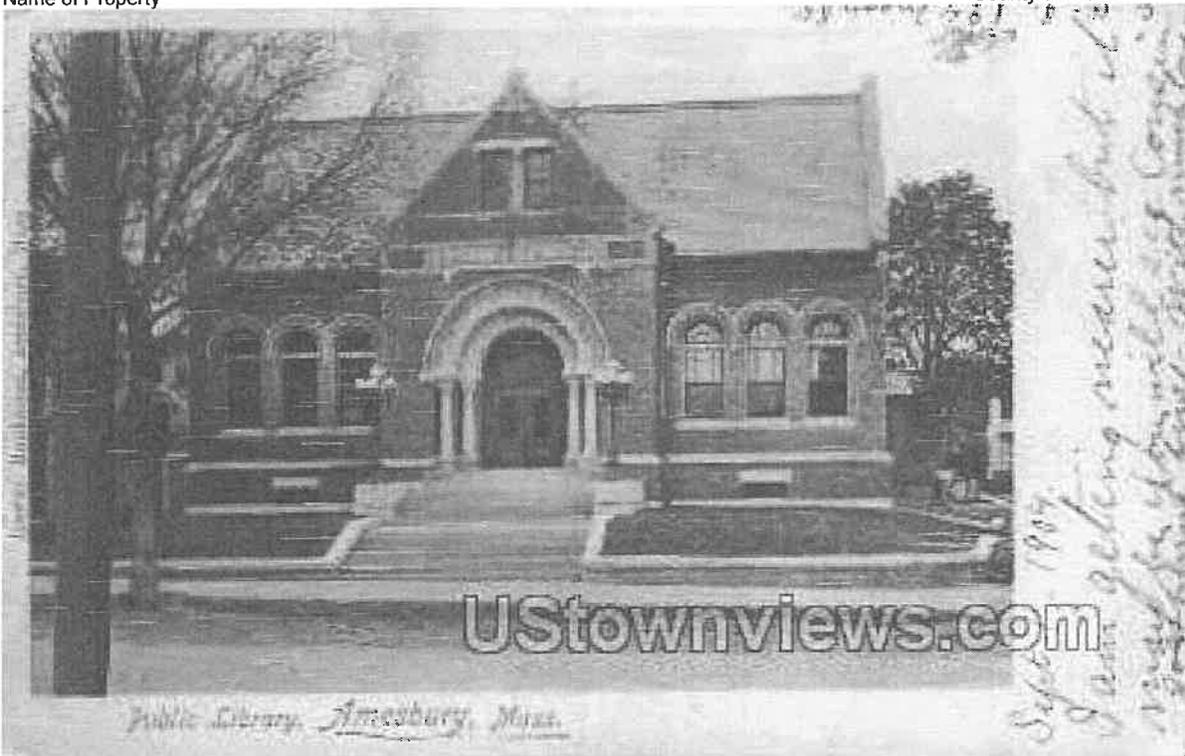


Figure 3: Postcard Showing the Amesbury Public Library “Public Library,” *US Town Views*. Amesbury, Massachusetts. 1904.

Amesbury Public Library
Name of Property

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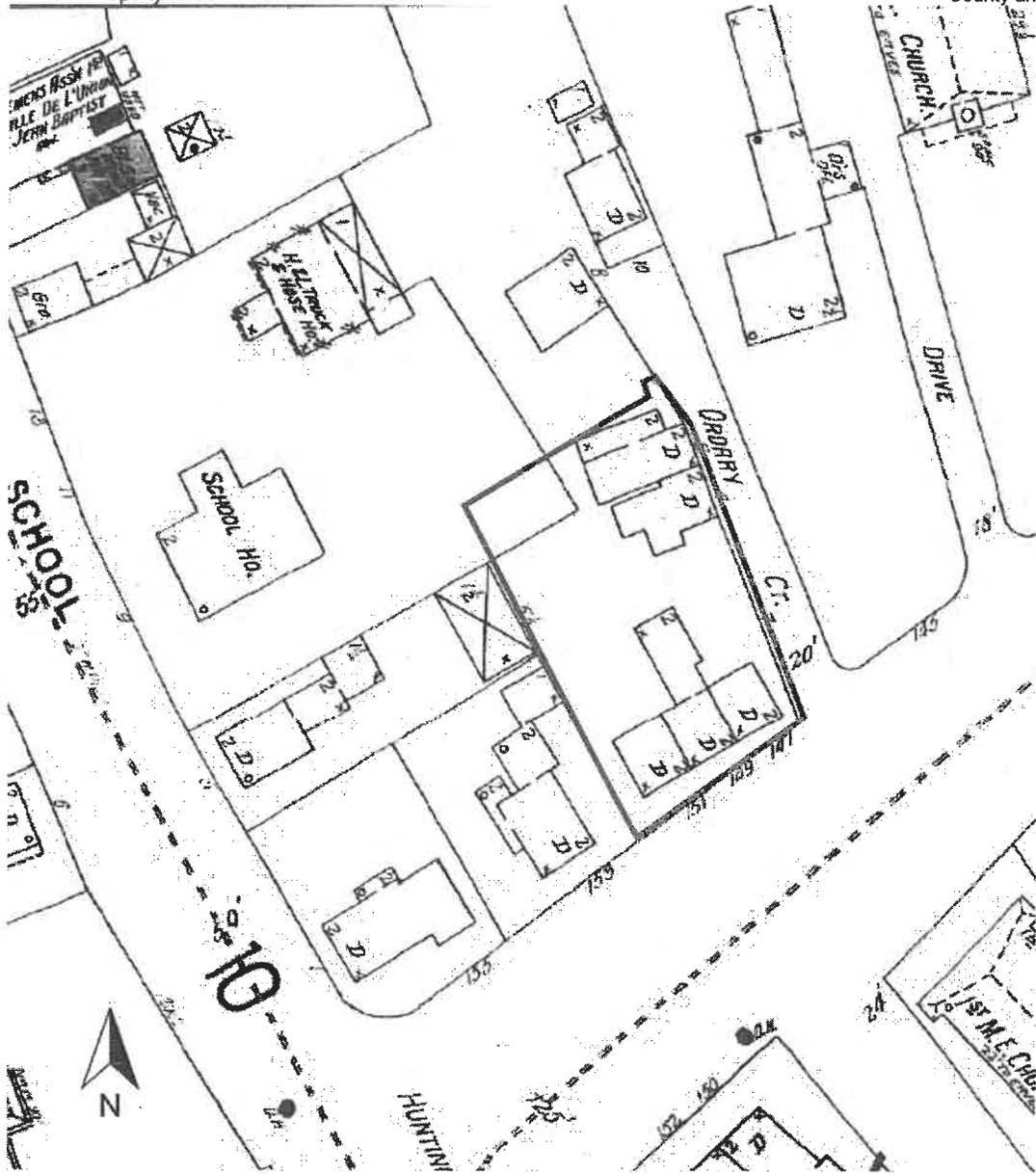


Figure 4: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Amesbury, Massachusetts. Sanborn Map Company. 1899. Sheet #9. See future site of Amesbury Public Library in red.

Amesbury Public Library
Name of Property

Essex, MA
County and State

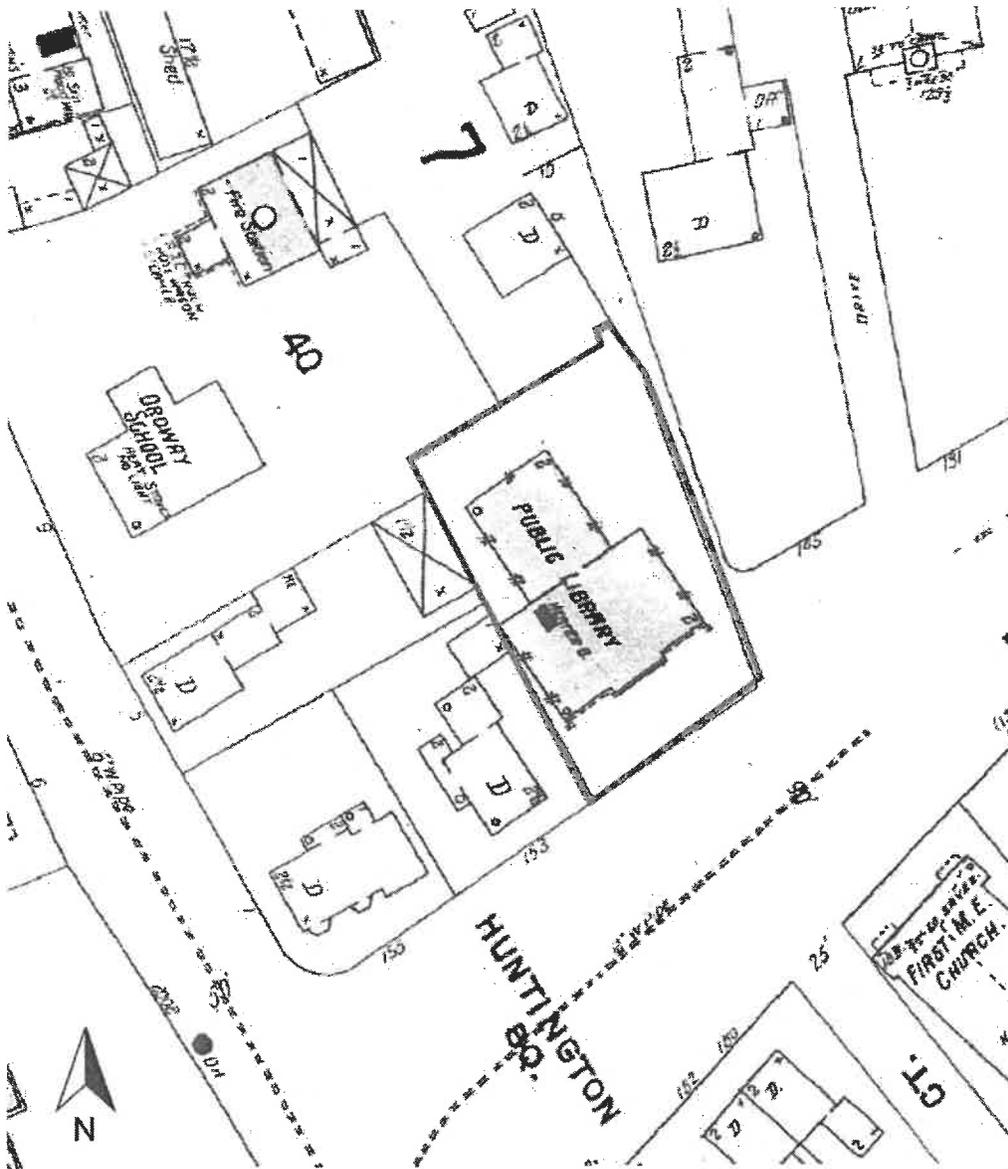


Figure 5: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Amesbury, Massachusetts. Sanborn Map Company. 1904. Sheet #7. See library site in red.

Amesbury Public Library
Name of Property

Essex, MA
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Figure 6: Photograph of Walnut Square School (1889, HVR.700) – Haverhill, Massachusetts.
(Source: MACRIS)

Amesbury Public Library
Name of Property

Essex, MA
County and State



Figure 7: Photograph of The Peabody School (circa 1895, HVR.251) – Haverhill, Massachusetts. (Source: MACRIS)

Amesbury Public Library
Name of Property

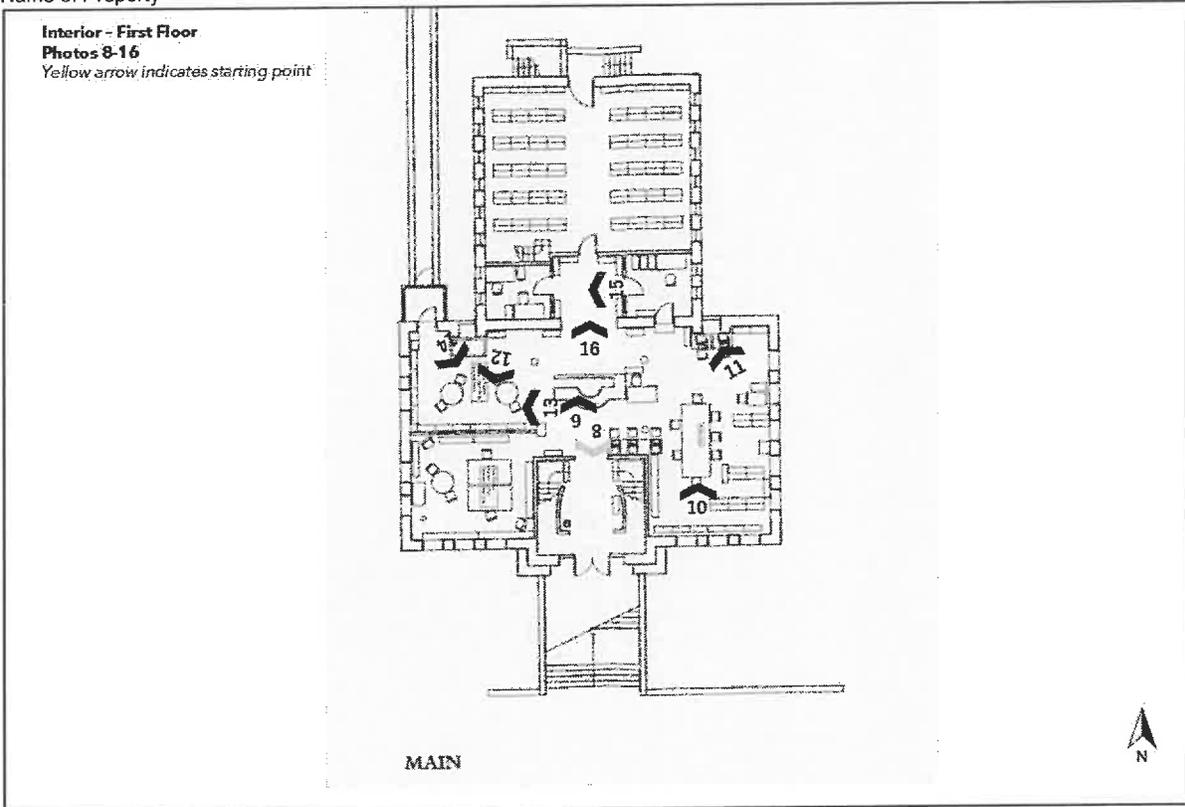
Essex, MA
County and State



Map 1: Exterior Photo Key (Base Map Source: Google)

Amesbury Public Library
Name of Property

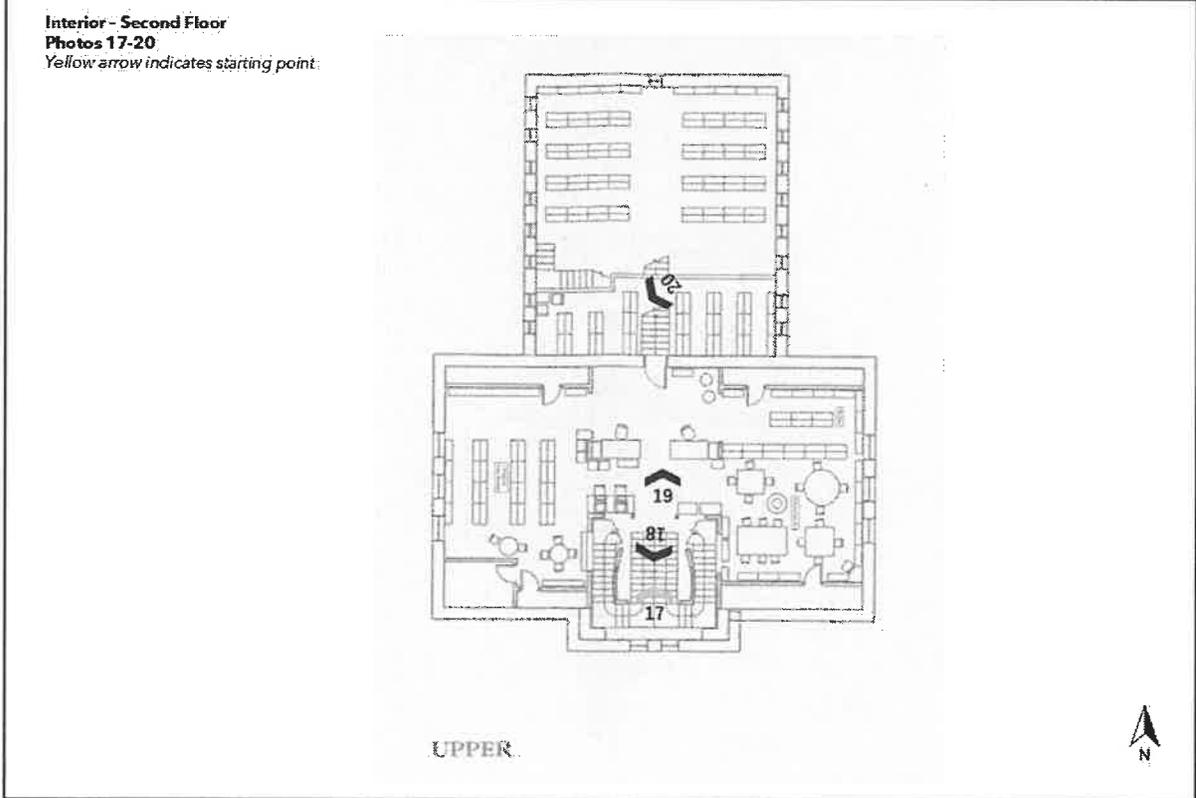
Essex, MA
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Map 2: First-Floor Photo Key (Base Map Source: Amesbury Public Library Collections)

Amesbury Public Library
Name of Property

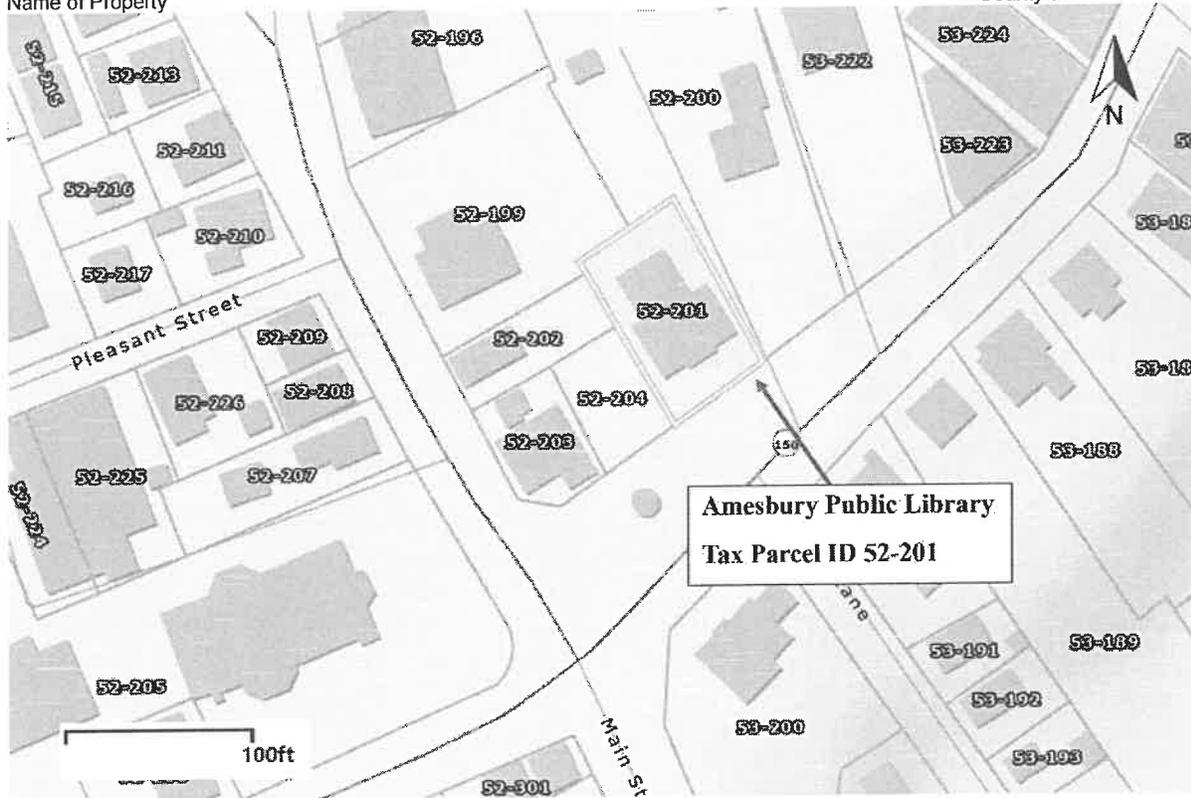
Essex, MA
County and State



Map 3: Second-Floor Photo Key (Base Map Source: Amesbury Public Library Collections)

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Map 4: Amesbury, Massachusetts Tax Parcel Map (Source: Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Tax Parcel Map: MIMAP)

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Name of Property

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Map 5: Amesbury Public Library Boundary/Site Map. (Base Map Source: Google.)

Amesbury Public Library

Essex, MA

Name of Property

County and State

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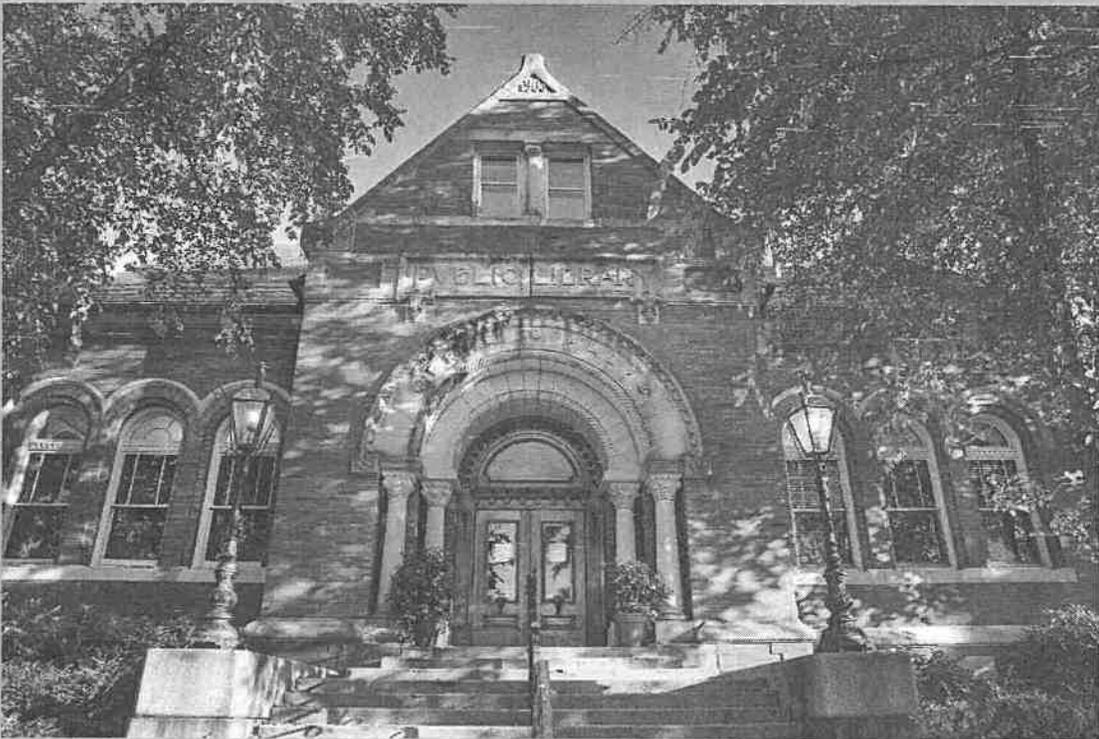
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Amesbury Public Library, Amesbury (Essex Co.), MA

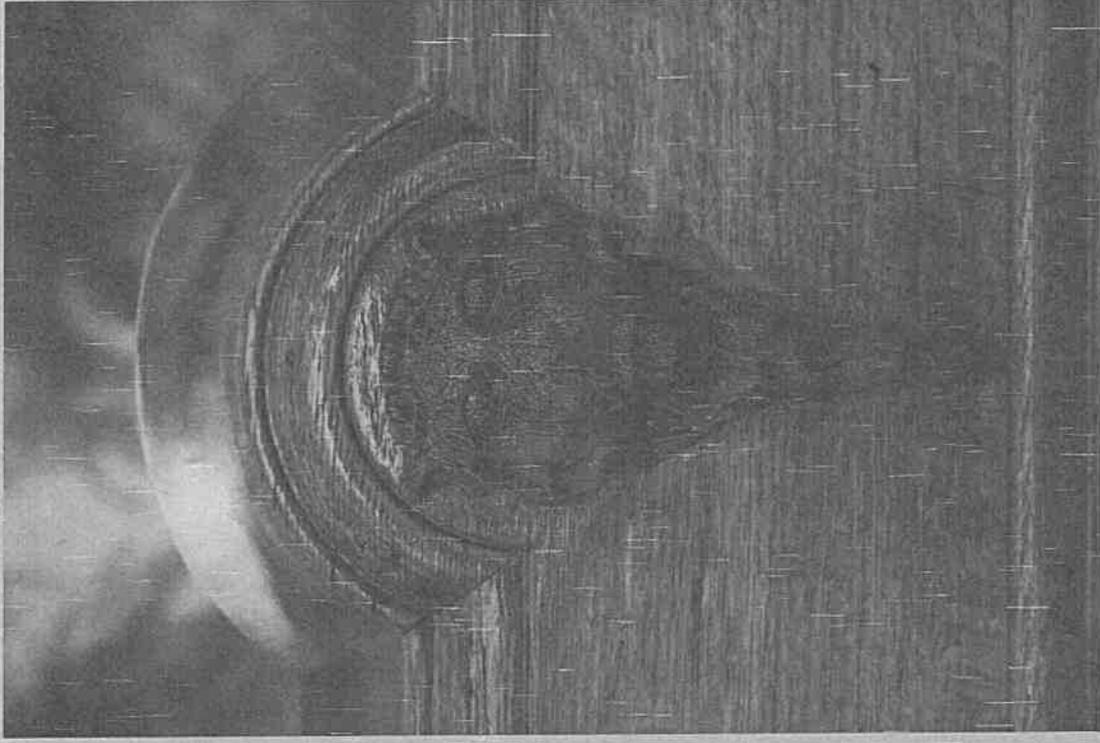


1. Façade/south elevation, looking north.

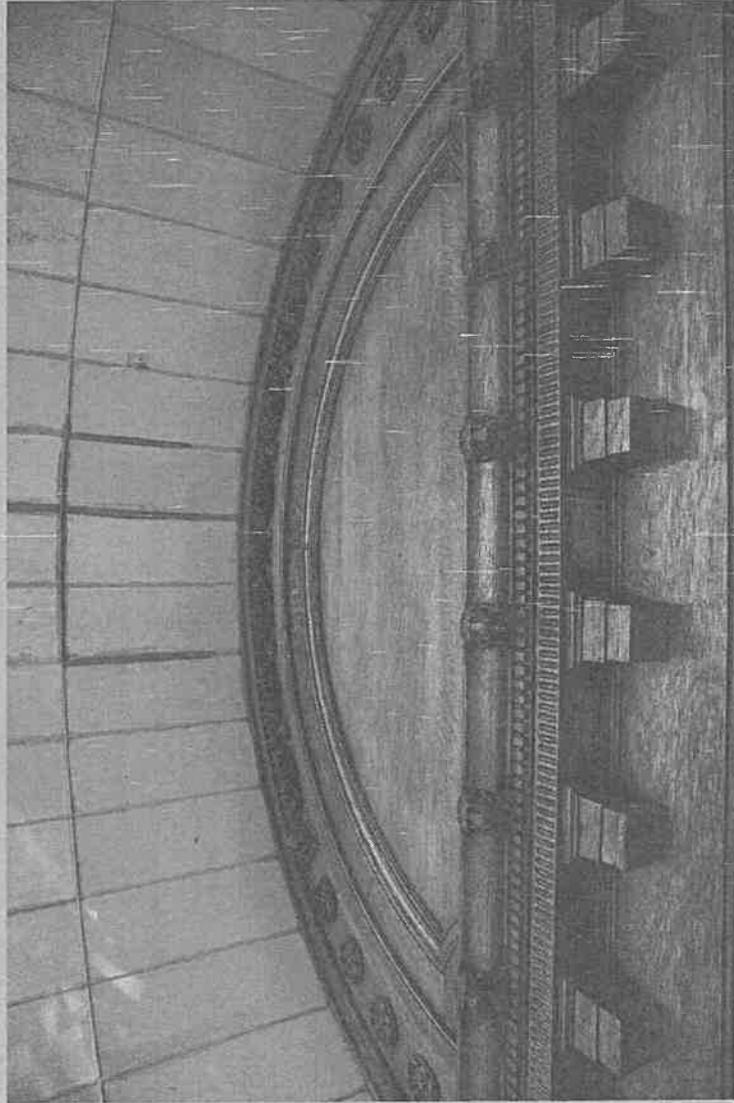


2. Façade/south elevation, looking north.

Amesbury Public Library, Amesbury (Essex Co.), MA



4. Façade/south elevation, door detail, looking north.

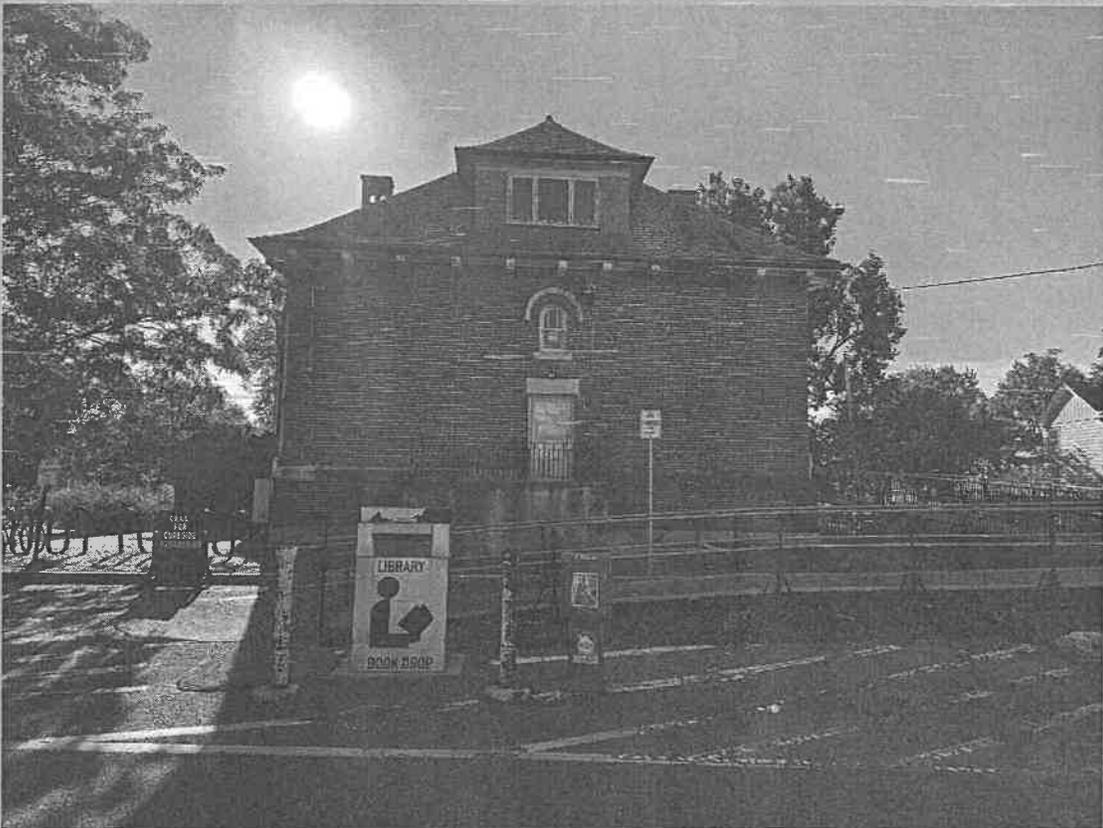


3. Façade/south elevation, door surround, looking north and up.

Amesbury Public Library, Amesbury (Essex Co.), MA

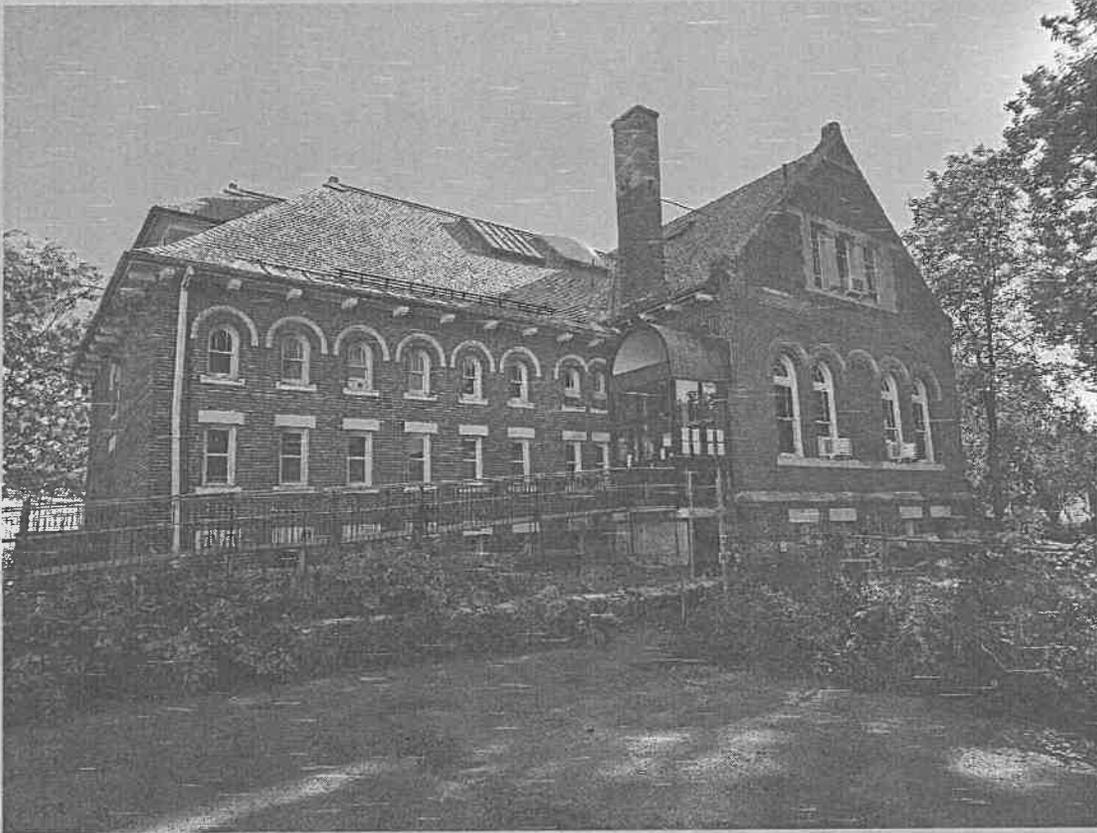


5. East elevation, looking west. Noncontributing shed at right.



6. North elevation, looking south and showing ramp providing access to parking lot.

Amesbury Public Library, Amesbury (Essex Co.), MA



7. West elevation, looking southeast towards non-historic glass vestibule and ramp at west wing.



8. First-floor interior, stair hall and main entry vestibule, looking south.

Amesbury Public Library, Amesbury (Essex Co.), MA



9. First-floor interior, delivery Hall and wings to the east and west, looking north.



10. First-floor interior, east wing, reference room, looking north.

Amesbury Public Library, Amesbury (Essex Co.), MA



11. First-floor interior, east wing, reference room, looking northwest.

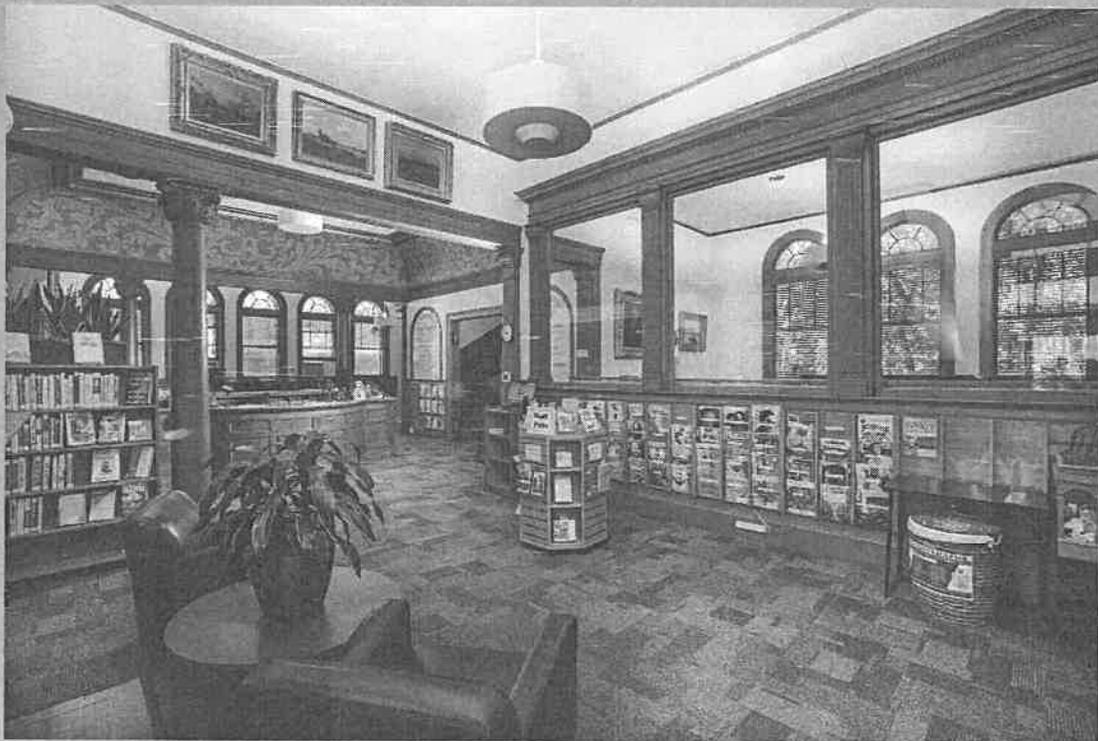


12. First-floor interior, west wing, looking south at enclosed room (historically the children's reading room).

Amesbury Public Library, Amesbury (Essex Co.), MA

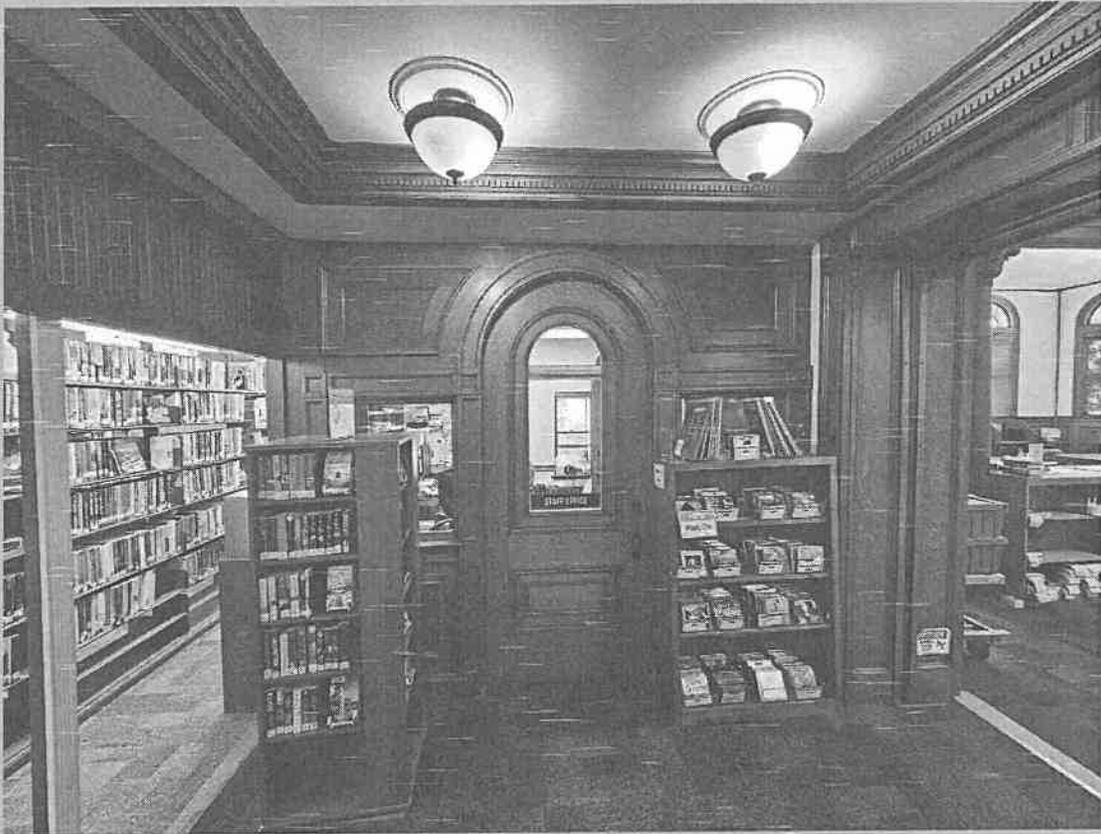


13. First-floor interior, west wing, looking west.

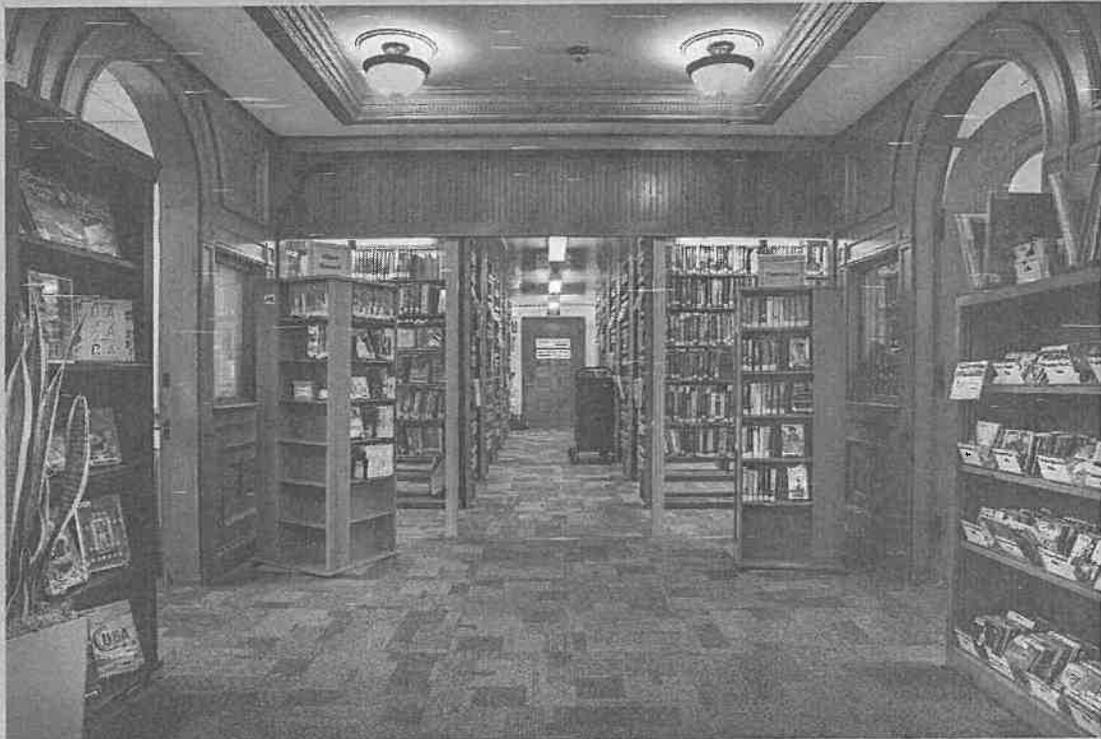


14. First-floor interior, west wing, looking southeast at enclosed room (historically the children's reading room) and at east wing.

Amesbury Public Library, Amesbury (Essex Co.), MA



15. First-floor interior, librarian's office, looking west.

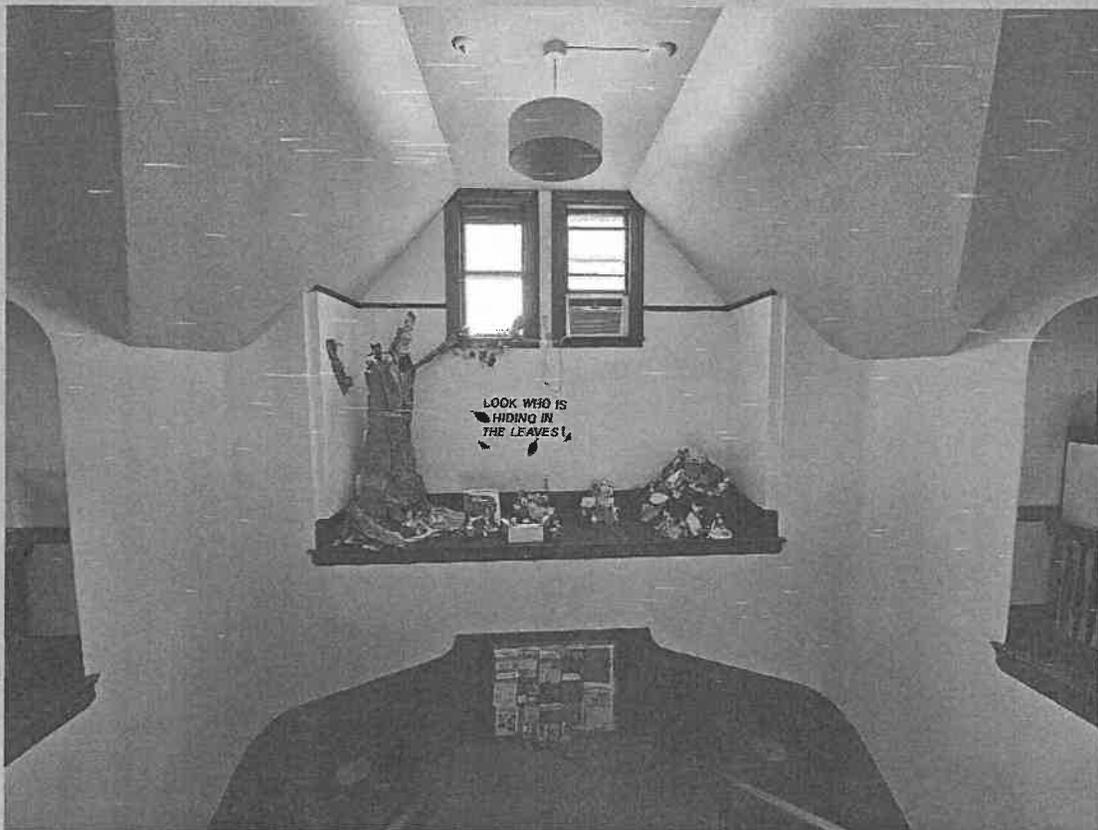


16. First-floor interior, offices and stacks, looking north.

Amesbury Public Library, Amesbury (Essex Co.), MA

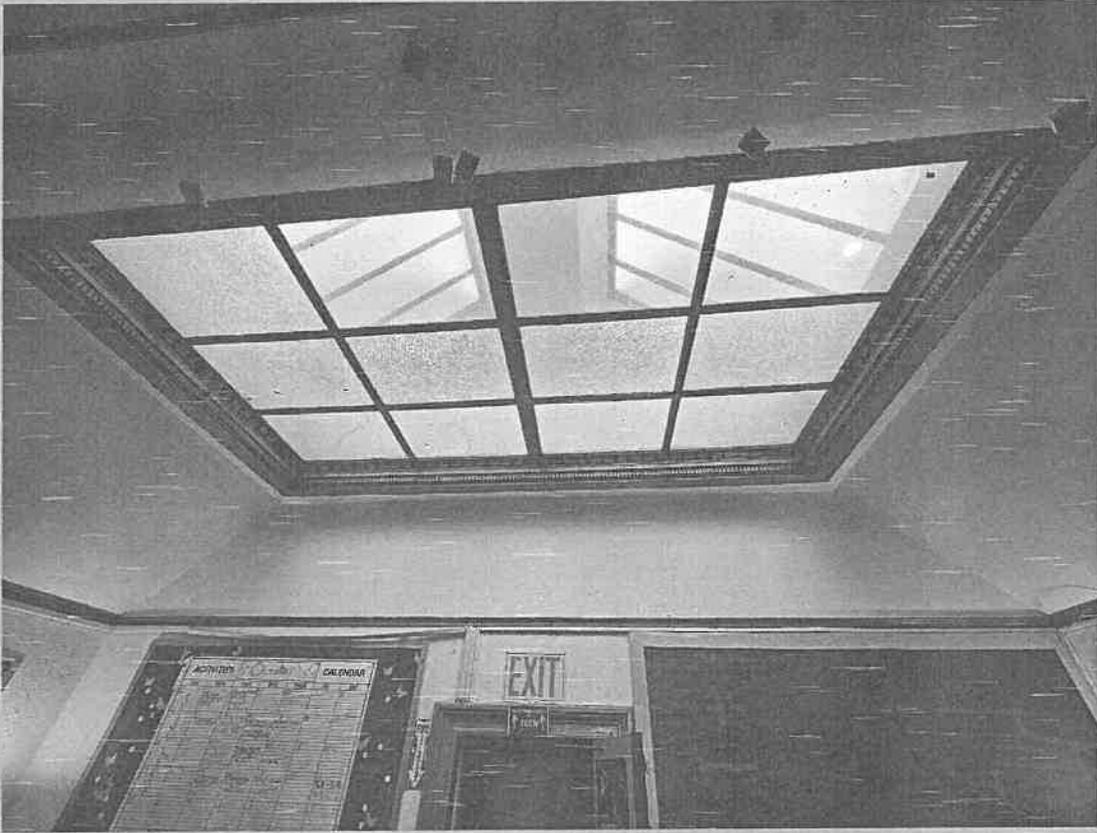


17. Second-floor interior, stairwell, looking north at upper floor rooms and skylight.

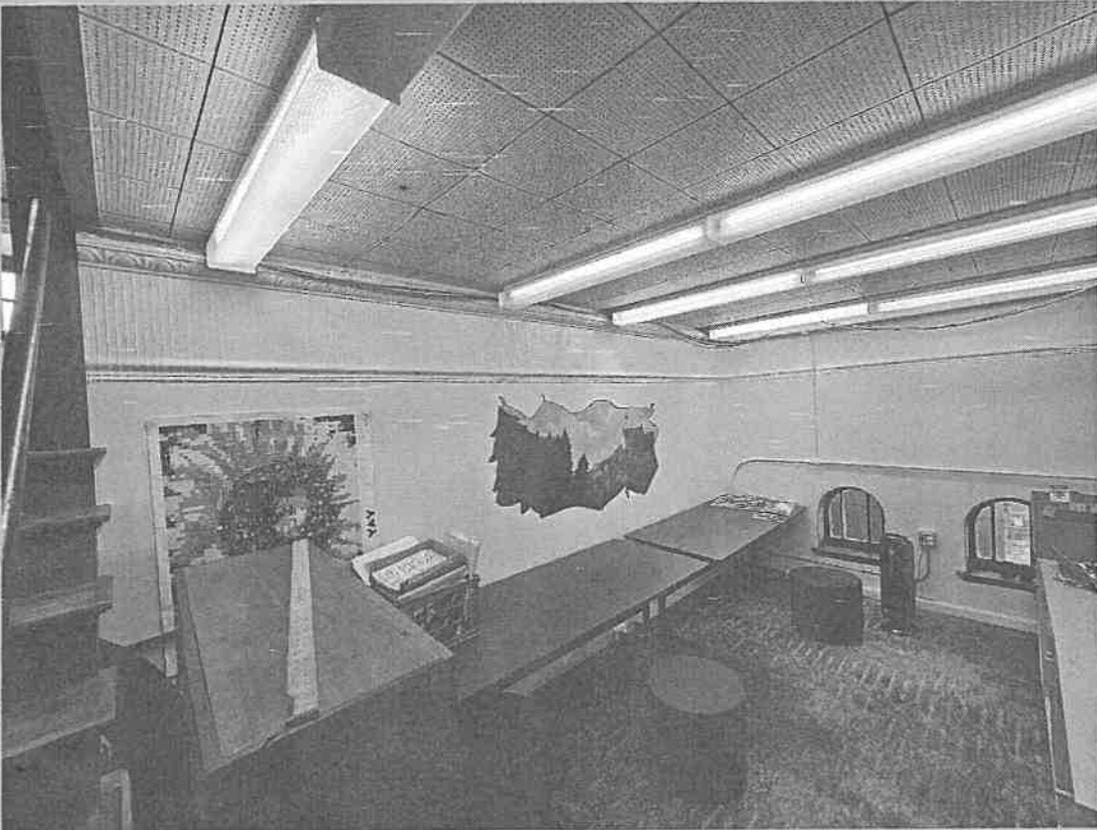


18. Second-floor interior, stairwell, looking south at the stair landing.

Amesbury Public Library, Amesbury (Essex Co.), MA



19. Second-floor interior, main room, looking north and up at skylight.



20. Second-floor interior, stacks, looking southwest at pressed metal cornice and stair to children's rooms (left).

