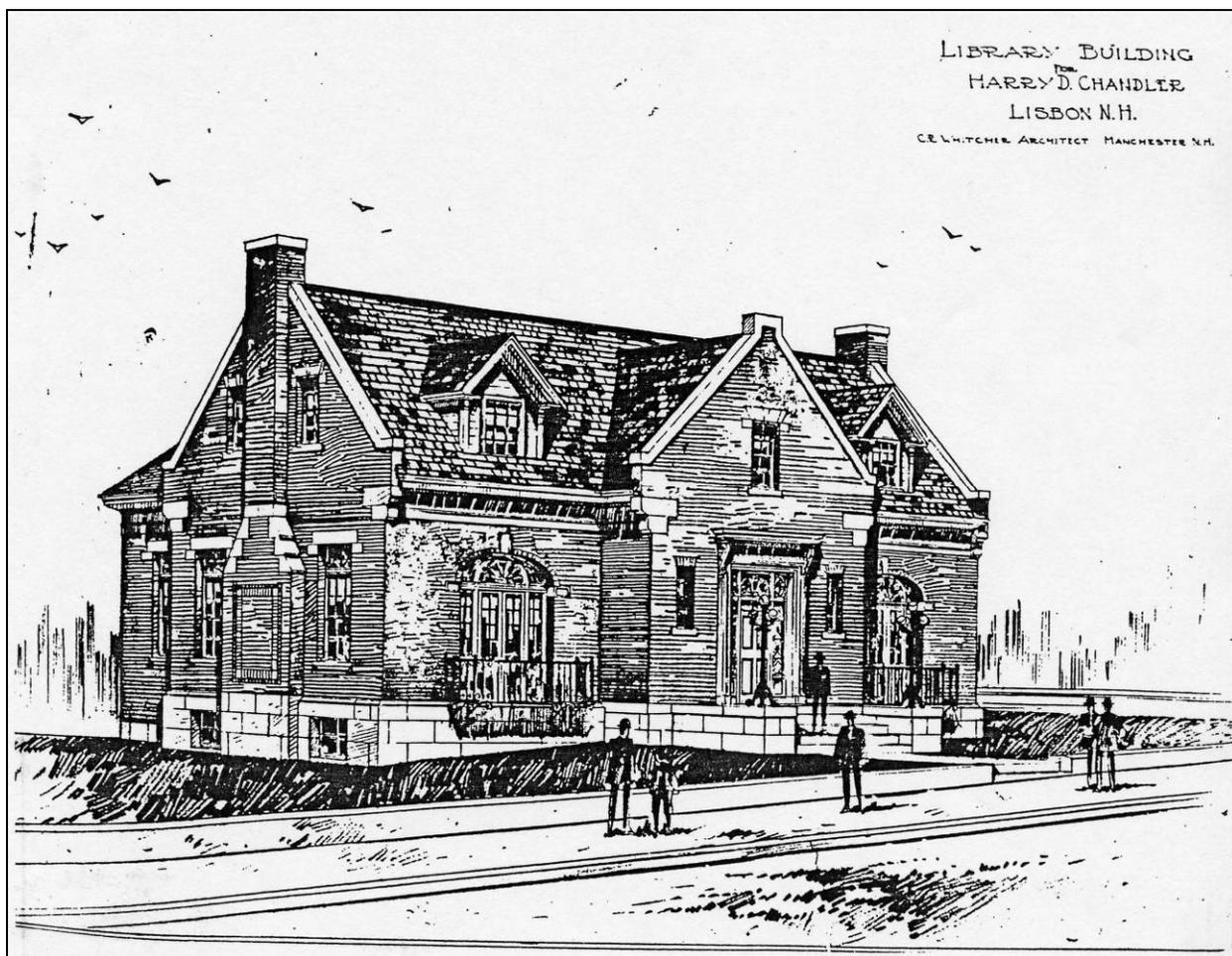


CHASE ROY WHITCHER

A Monograph



(Collection of the Lisbon Historical Society)

PRESERVATION COMPANY

Laura B. Driemeyer

2008

Architect Chase Roy Whitcher, a New Hampshire native, was active from ca. 1900 until his death in 1940. He was one of the leading and most successful architects of New Hampshire, purportedly responsible for the design of over 300 buildings, predominantly in the state (*Figure 1*).¹ Whitcher's obituary described him as "one of the most successful architects in northern New England."² The majority of his identified commissions to date include a range of institutional structures, including schools, hospitals, Masonic halls, and office buildings, fire stations, churches, country clubs, and town halls.³ His work also included "many fine homes and country places throughout the State," but few of those commissions have been identified at this time. He first established his architectural practice in his home town of Lisbon, but around 1907 Whitcher relocated to Manchester where he remained for the remainder of his life.

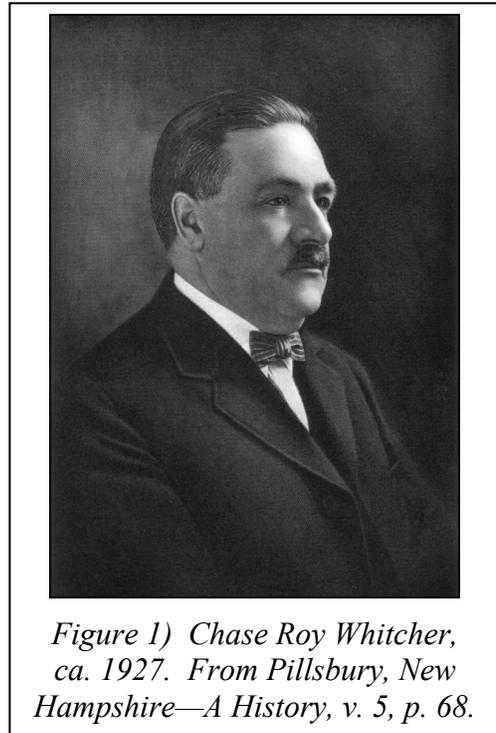


Figure 1) Chase Roy Whitcher, ca. 1927. From Pillsbury, New Hampshire—A History, v. 5, p. 68.

Whitcher's design aesthetic incorporated common architectural elements popular during the period in which he practiced. Of his known works, Colonial and Classical Revival motifs are the most common. His institutional designs commonly feature symmetrical facades with center entrances sheltered by columned porticos; brick walls with contrasting stone quoins, window sills, and lintels; cornices embellished with modillions and dentils; parapets; and primary entrances with leaded transoms and sidelights—all elements common to early twentieth century Colonial and Classical Revival buildings. For his few ecclesiastical buildings Whitcher employed the more suitable Gothic and Tudor Revival. For some hospital and school buildings, he juxtaposed

¹ Hobart Pillsbury, *New Hampshire; Resources, Attractions, and Its People—A History; Biographical* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1927), 5:68. That figure is as of the late 1920s, over ten years before Whitcher's death, meaning the final figure maybe over 350, depending upon how active his business was in the 1930s. Less than one-third of that total figure has been confirmed to date. Whitcher continued to design until the late 1930s. For instance, see his design for the Rochester High School, completed shortly before his death.

Since the 1990s a number of individuals have accumulated information on the career and commissions of Whitcher and without whose work this monograph would not have been possible. In particular, these include James L. Garvin, Linda Wilson, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, and Lisa Mausolf, in addition to Lynne Emerson Monroe and Kari Laprey of Preservation Company, all of whom were extremely generous with their time in sharing their work and answering various questions as part of the production of this monograph. Portions of this monograph draw heavily from earlier research by Preservation Company. A special thanks also to William Copeley, Librarian, New Hampshire Historical Society, for his considerable assistance in the examination of items in the historical society's collection.

This monograph was produced as mitigation for the loss of the former Portsmouth Armory, which was designed by Whitcher; a condition of the Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Portsmouth and the New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Officer.

² "Chase Whitcher, Architect, Dies," *The Manchester Union*, 26 August 1940.

³ See Appendix A for a list of Whitcher commissions identified to date. A copy of this database has been provided to the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources so they may maintain and update an electronic list as other Whitcher commissions are identified.

classical treatments with deeply-overhanging eaves supported by exposed rafter ends, imparting a Craftsman character to his designs.

Many of Whitcher's building projects demonstrate a working knowledge of evolving ideas about fire-proof building technologies and of use-specific spatial layouts for a variety of institutions including schools, hospitals, or office buildings. By the 1920s his designs incorporated steel framing, concrete flooring, and masonry interior curtain walls, all considered to be the current fire-proofing technologies, along with a sprinkling system. In his hospital designs he incorporated features articulated first in the 1890s for treatment of mental and tubercular patients. His school designs addressed current concerns about sanitary conditions by placing the bathrooms in the above grade basement and the use of easily cleaned surfaces, notably concrete. His library designs featured spatial layouts established in 1890s by librarians such as open stacks. Generally his designs are conservative, incorporating current ideas about design, style, building technologies, and plan, rather than innovative. The continued use of many of Whitcher's buildings, albeit sometimes in adapted form, is a testament to Whitcher's proficiency as an architect with an attention to functionality and sound design.

Whitcher's designs are noteworthy for their practical spatial layouts and simple but fully finished detailing throughout a building, from the most public spaces to the more private or utilitarian spaces. Furthermore, Whitcher was from a generation of designers who had practical building experience in addition to professional design training. By the end of the nineteenth century this straddling of the two professions was increasingly rare.

Biographical

Chase Roy Whitcher, the second son of Ward P. and Pheeb Perkins Whitcher, was born 8 December 1876 in Lisbon, New Hampshire. Educated in local schools, Whitcher left Lisbon as a teenager to study architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (though he did not receive a degree) and then with private instructors in Boston over a three-year period.⁴

In 1898, he returned to Lisbon and married Eda M. Aldrich of Lisbon. The couple boarded with Chase and Carlene Gates while Whitcher made a living as an architect and house carpenter. Initially Whitcher may have worked for and/or with Lawrence W. Goudie, a local builder and contractor (*Figure 2*), as a house carpenter and possibly designer, before establishing his own

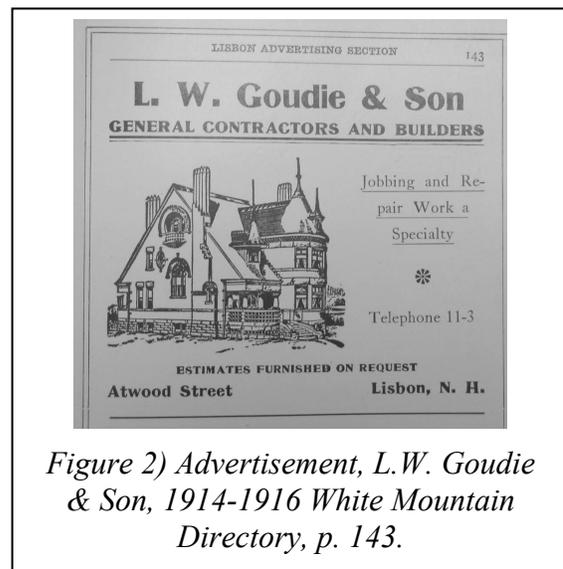


Figure 2) Advertisement, L.W. Goudie & Son, 1914-1916 White Mountain Directory, p. 143.

⁴ Whitcher's father had established a drug store in Lisbon in 1866 and also maintained an insurance business. The family resided on Whitcher Street between Main Street and the railroad tracks. The house does not survive. D.H. Hurd & Co., *Town and City Atlas of the State of New Hampshire* (Boston: D.H. Hurd and Co., 1892); William F. Whitcher, *Descendants of Chase Whitcher of Warren, New Hampshire* (Woodsville, NH: News Book and Job Print, 1907), 52-53; Pillsbury, *New Hampshire*, 5:68.

practice.⁵ In April 1903, the local newspaper reported Witcher's establishment of an architectural office in the new Boynton Block; he was the only architect in town.⁶

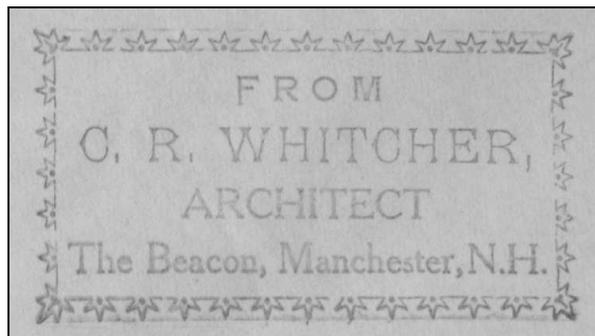


Figure 3) Stamp on Witcher drawings in Collection of New Hampshire Historical Society.

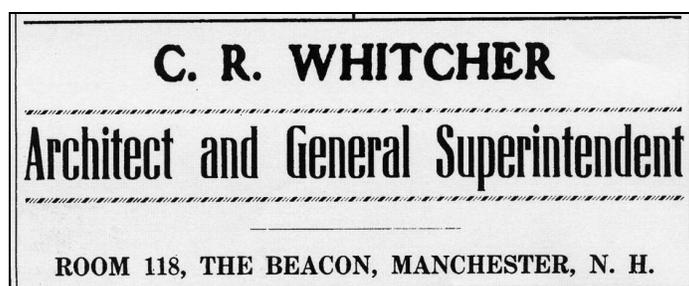


Figure 4) Advertisement, Chase R. Witcher, 1908 Manchester City Directory, p. 802.

⁵ Ancestry.com, 1900 United States Federal Census [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2004).

The collection of uncatalogued architectural drawings and building specifications owned by the New Hampshire Historical Society includes some dated and undated plans, elevations, and specifications for building designs by Witcher. Most appear to date before ca. 1915. The collection also includes designs by other New England architects including A.I. Lawrence of Berlin, N.H. and the designs of L.W. Goudie, a Lisbon builder and contractor, and his son P. Bert, both of whom worked on some of Witcher's projects. Most likely this collection represents projects worked on by the Goudies, either as the builder and/or as the designer; the Goudies may be the origin of the collection. Collection of Architectural Drawings and Building Specifications, New Hampshire Historical Society, accession 2005-013 (hereafter Architectural Drawings, NHHS).

Lawrence W. Goudie (1855-1930) immigrated to the United States in 1872 from Scotland as a young man. By 1880 he had married and settled in Lyman, New Hampshire, where his eldest son, P. Bert (born ca. 1879) was born. At that time he worked as a farm laborer. By 1900, however, Goudie had moved to Lisbon where he became a successful house carpenter and contractor. His oldest son followed in his father's footsteps and the two were in business together as L.W. Goudie and Son until Lawrence's death in 1930. Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1880 United States Federal Census [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2005); Ancestry.com, 1900 United States Federal Census; Ancestry.com, 1930 United States Federal Census [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2002); *White Mountain Directories*, Lisbon, various years.

⁶ By that time, Witcher and his wife lived in an apartment in the newly constructed Goudie Block and in 1906 their first daughter, Pheeb, was born. Preservation Company (T. Kirker Hill, Kari Federer, and Lynne Emerson Monroe), "Boynton Block," NHDHR Inventory Form No. 105, Area L, Lisbon, New Hampshire (Concord, NH: NHDHR, 1992). At one point the Goudie Block was thought to have been designed by Witcher but a drawing in the Architectural Drawings Collection, NHHS shows the design to be by the Berlin architect A.I. Lawrence.

By 1907 Whitcher had opened a “business office” in Manchester and by the following year Whitcher had established an architectural office in the Beacon Building, 814 Elm Street (*Figure 3*). Whitcher initially occupied Room 118 at the Beacon (*Figure 4*).⁷ Over the next thirty-plus years Whitcher moved his office twice within the Beacon Building, first to room 418 by 1913, and then to room 510 by 1918, which the practice continued to occupy until Whitcher’s death in 1940. Over the years he employed at least two or three draftsmen. Some, such as Charles A. Little, worked for Whitcher for over ten years. The practice seems to have been at its busiest in the mid-1920s. By 1924, a second architect, George O. Peabody was associated with the firm and the office employed four draftsmen, including long-time employee Charles A. Little, and two stenographers.⁸ Six years later the staff was slightly smaller with three draftsmen and one stenographer assisting Whitcher and Peabody.⁹ By 1934, the office was considerably scaled down, possibly due to the confluence of the Depression and Whitcher’s advancing years. At that time only two draftsmen worked in the office, along with Whitcher’s older daughter Pheeb H. who worked as a secretary.¹⁰ By 1938 the office included Roland S. Simon, an architect, Malcolm D. Hildreth, a draftsman, Dorthy L. McCutcheon, a stenographer, and his two daughters Muriel and Pheeb, working as secretaries.¹¹ The office continued to accept commissions until the time of Whitcher’s death 25 August 1940.

State Architect

In May 1913 the state legislature, under the Administration of Governor Samuel D. Felker, established the State Board of Control “which ha[d] in general charge the various institutions maintained by the state.”¹² The legislation abolished the individual Boards of Trustees of the State Hospital in Concord, State Industrial School in Manchester, the School for Feeble Minded Children in Laconia and the State Sanatorium in Glencliff and placed responsibility with a single entity, the Board of Control, effective 1 June 1913. In August 1913 a contract for a year was made with Chase R. Whitcher of Manchester, N.H., under which he became State Architect, to draw plans and specifications, submit estimates, and generally supervise institutional construction.¹³

⁷ Whitcher, *Descendants of Chase Whitcher*, 53. This source indicates after returning to New Hampshire, Whitcher resided in Lisbon but “established himself in Manchester.” This explains how he was able to acquire so many significant commissions so soon after he moved into the Beacon Building. Whitcher is first listed in the 1908 *Manchester City Directory*. Evidence suggests that Eda and their young daughter Pheeb initially remained in Lisbon. Whitcher roomed at 452 Pine Street in 1908. By 1909, however, the family had moved to 290 Pearl Street and by 1916 to 1153 Union Street, where Whitcher resided for the remainder of his life. A second daughter, Muriel, was born in 1915, shortly before or after the family moved to Union Street. Ancestry.com. *New Hampshire City Directories* [database on-line], (Provo, UT: The Generations Network, Inc., 2005) [Manchester 1908-1938].

⁸ Ancestry.com. *New Hampshire City Directories* [Manchester, 1924]. The draftsmen were Avery L. Joy, Charles A. Little, Arthur L. Pepin, and Clarence H. Pratt. Katherine B. Talty and Annie M. O’Donnell worked as stenographers in the office.

⁹ Ancestry.com. *New Hampshire City Directories*, [Manchester, 1930]. The draftsmen were Malcolm Hildreth, Carl E. Peterson, and Clarence H. Pratt. Ruth F. McDonald was the stenographer.

¹⁰ Ancestry.com. *New Hampshire City Directories*, [Manchester, 1934]. Malcolm D. Hildreth and Clarence E. Downes were the draftsmen.

¹¹ Ancestry.com. *New Hampshire City Directories*, [Manchester, 1938].

¹² “Plans Drawn for New Building at State Home for Feeble-Minded,” *Laconia Democrat*, 22 August 1913; “An Act Providing for a Board of Control; and for a Purchasing Agent,” NH Session Laws c. 140 (1913).

¹³ *First Biennial Reports of the Board of Control of New Hampshire and of the Purchasing Agent for the Biennial Period Ending August 31, 1914* (Manchester, N.H.: John B. Clarke Co., 1915), 9. This report provides a detailed

Some of Whitcher's first designs upon accepting this new position were plans for new buildings at the State School for Feeble-Minded Children in Laconia.¹⁴ The State Board of Control was abolished just two years later and the oversight returned to the individual institutions.¹⁵

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Whitcher's designs were not published in the larger architectural journals of the period even though the work was often of major institutional structures. Perspectives of forthcoming Whitcher projects, however, often appeared in the local papers.¹⁶ For these reasons his oeuvre must be interpreted within a regional context. In some instances, for reasons not known at this time, a design was published in a newspaper but in the end another architect's design was used. This was the case with the Laconia Tavern, to be built on the corner of Church and Main streets in Laconia. Whitcher's proposed design for a four-story brick building with contrasting stone trim appeared in an April 1911 issue of the *Manchester Union* newspaper. In the end, however, the clients selected the design of a Boston firm.¹⁷

The remainder of this monograph examines a sample of commissions by Whitcher over his nearly forty-year career. The collection demonstrates Whitcher's proficiency in a wide range of building types, many in the Colonial Revival or Classical Revival style. In addition, the projects reveal his familiarity with evolving fireproof building construction and new building technologies such as the all steel frame construction, beginning in the 1910s.

Lisbon commissions, 1902-1926

Whitcher's earliest identified work to date is the 1902 designs for two adjacent commercial buildings on Main Street in Lisbon. Over the next twenty-plus years a number of Lisbon institutions and residents commissioned Whitcher for new buildings or additions to existing structures.¹⁸ A devastating fire in 1901 in downtown Lisbon generated extensive rebuilding by the following year. As was the case for much of his earliest known work, Whitcher also supervised construction of the adjoining buildings. The Classical Revival styled Boynton Block was to be "a three-story and basement brick business block, 60' x 100' . . . erected for Coggswell

description of the current building programs at each facility and identifies the contractors for the work. The identification of and examination of any drawings for the work will establish any Whitcher-designed work. In 1984-1985 Dierdre Savage compiled an inventory of architectural and engineering drawings of any state buildings in the collections of the New Hampshire Historical Society and various state agencies. Since that time, some of the drawings at the state agencies have been relocated and so that information needs to be updated. Dierdre Savage, "Inventory of Architectural and Engineering Records, State of New Hampshire and the New Hampshire Historical Society," produced under the National Park Service "Historic Preservation Fund" Matching Grant, HPF #33-84-8532-B (DRED #07659), Spring 1985. Copies can be found at the New Hampshire Historical Society and the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, among other places. Jim Garvin kindly provided us with this information. These materials were not examined for this monograph, however.

¹⁴ "Plans Drawn," *Laconia Democrat*.

¹⁵ "An Act Relating to the Management and Control of State Institutions," NH Session Laws c. 176 (1915).

¹⁶ A systematic examination of such resources will allow for the identification of additional designs. Similarly, a systematic examination of town *Annual Reports* and New Hampshire State *Biennial Reports* will likely uncover additional Whitcher designs also.

¹⁷ "Proposed Finely-Appointed Hostelry," *The Manchester Union*, 27 April 1911; "Old Prospectus of Laconia Tavern Opened in 1913," *Laconia Evening Citizen*, 11 March 1961, Vertical File, Public Library, Laconia, N.H. The existing building, since converted into apartments, was designed by Newhall and Blevins, Boston architects.

¹⁸ More research is necessary to identify potential residential commissions. Town reports should also be examined to establish any additional work he may have done for the town.

& Boynton at a cost of \$35,000” (Figure 5).¹⁹ The center three bays of the nine-bays-wide façade are inset slightly from the plane of the walls. Fenestration consists of store fronts on the ground story, rectangular sash windows with granite sills and yellow brick, keystone splayed lintels on the second story, and granite sills and yellow brick semi-circular keystone window crowns on the third-story sash windows. The ground-story windows on the side elevation and all windows on the rear elevation feature keystone, segmental-arched lintels. Other contrasting material includes brick pilasters set on granite blocks between the store front windows and yellow brick quoins. A yellow-brick cornice with a denticulated stepped frieze and a parapet with bricks set in a pattern to create the appearance of a balustrade anchored by brick panels at the ends frame the top of the building. A large brick panel with the building’s name is centered on the parapet. On the interior, the plan consists of stores on the first floor, offices on the second floor, and apartments on the third floor.²⁰ In 1908 Whitcher drafted a plan of alterations for the third floor consisting of thirteen chambers, each with a closet, men’s and women’s bathrooms, and a billiard room.²¹



Figure 5) Postcard showing the Bank Block (Whitcher, 1902-1903), Boynton Block (Whitcher, 1902-1903), and Parker Block on Main Street in Lisbon.

Whitcher designed the smaller “Bank Block,” the adjoining three-story brick building, for the Lisbon Savings Bank & Trust Co., at the same time, also in the Classical Revival style, for \$20,000 (Figure 6). The plan of the four-bay wide, 50' x 60' Bank Block was to feature store

¹⁹ *American Architect and Building News* 5 July 1902.

²⁰ Preservation Company (T. Kirker Hill, Kari Federer, and Lynne Emerson Monroe), “Boynton Block,” NHDHR Inventory Form No. 105, Area L, Lisbon, New Hampshire (Concord, NH: NHDHR, 1992).

²¹ “Alterations of Brick Block for Lisbon Building Association,” 9 December 1908, by Chase Roy Whitcher, Architectural Drawings, NHHS. It’s possible this third floor was left unfinished at the time of the building’s construction. The Lisbon Building Association owned the Boynton Block. The reason for the plan and whether this work was implemented has not been investigated.

fronts on the first floor with offices and a lodge-room on the upper two stories.²² The building uses the same stylistic detailing as the adjoining Boynton Block but a different fenestration pattern. Instead of single windows, Whitcher used paired windows on the upper two stories. On the interior the first floor accommodated two commercial spaces (one to be used by the bank). The second floor contained nine apartments and offices. The third floor contained a large meeting hall for use by the Independent Order of the Odd Fellows and the associated women's group the Rebekahs.²³



Figure 6) Elevation of proposed Bank Block, 1902, designed by Whitcher, Lisbon.

Both of these Lisbon buildings, though the work of a young architect just establishing himself, exhibit design characteristics that Whitcher would utilize throughout his career, though in a less refined fashion than seen in some of his later works. These include an emphasis on symmetry and practical and functional spatial design, classically derived ornament concentrated on the symmetrical window and door openings usually in contrasting building materials, and a parapet.

In the wake of his designs for the Boynton and Bank blocks, Whitcher drafted designs for two residences for local businessmen, each a small house design using a popular early twentieth-century form.²⁴ It seems however neither house was ever built.²⁵ Whitcher designed for William H. Merrill, a Lisbon insurance broker, a two-story Dutch Colonial with a full-width

²² Ibid; Preservation Company (T. Kirker Hill, Kari Federer, and Lynne Emerson Monroe), "Bank Block," NHDHR Inventory Form No. 106, Area L, Lisbon, New Hampshire (Concord, NH: NHDHR, 1992).

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Architectural Drawings, NHHS.

²⁵ Personal correspondence with Andrea Fitzgerald, Lisbon Historical Society, 5 May 2008.

piazza spanning the front elevation. The open plan on the first floor includes a large reception room and small den, with back-to-back corner fireplaces, and a dining room accessed by double doors in the front pile and a kitchen and pantry in the rear pile. The second story contains four chambers and a bathroom, all radiating from the center stair hall.²⁶

The second Lisbon house design, for the provisions dealer William E. Pike, was for a one-and-one-half story bungalow.²⁷ Whitcher also employed the back-to-back corner fireplace feature in the Pike House, between the living room and den. The compact house plan included a bedroom and bath on the first floor and just two bedrooms on the second floor; nearly half of the second story was left unfinished.

After moving to Manchester, Whitcher continued to receive commissions for buildings in Lisbon.²⁸ In 1914 Whitcher designed the Lisbon Congregational Church and Parish House (*Figures 7 and 8*). The brick church is a good example of the Tudor Revival style, popular for religious structures in the early twentieth century. A three-story brick corner tower anchors the one-and-one-half story, gable-roofed, symmetrically fenestrated, rectangular brick sanctuary. The building features a cornucopia of Tudor detailing including concrete ogee-arched window and door surrounds with stepped radiating voussoirs. Gabled dormers, decorated with verge boards and rectangular stained glass windows, on each roof slope provide additional light to the sanctuary's interior. The finely finished period-appropriate interior included a vaulted ceiling with exposed decorative framing and plaster walls above dark wood wainscoting. Adjacent to the church is the one-and-one-half story rectangular Parish House, opened in June 1915.²⁹

²⁶ "Dwelling House for W.H. Merrill, Lisbon, N.H.," C.R. Whitcher, Architectural Drawings, NHHS. Merrill had his offices in the Boynton Block. White Mountain Directory, 1914-15, Lisbon.

²⁷ "House for W. E. Pike, Lisbon, N.H.," C.R. Whitcher, Architectural Drawings, NHHS; Ancestry.com, 1900 *United States Federal Census*. Pike's son, George, an attorney, later had his office in the Bank Block. Preservation Company, "Bank Block."

²⁸ In 1910 Whitcher designed a two-and-one half story addition to the Lisbon Public School. Plans for this addition survive in the Architectural Drawings Collection, NHHS. The addition provided boys and girls playrooms in the basement, two classrooms on each of the next two stories, and storerooms in the dormer-lit top story. The work also involved upgrading of the heating system and refurbishing of or a new chemical lab on the third floor. Whether the project was constructed is unknown at this time. "Alteration of Lisbon Public School, Lisbon, N.H.," plans and elevation, Chase Roy Whitcher, 1910, Architectural Drawings, NHHS.

²⁹ "Lisbon Congregational Church," plans and elevations, Chase Roy Whitcher, 1914, Architectural Drawings, NHHS. Two versions of the plans reveal Whitcher reduced the depth of the choir platform at the front of the church.

In the same year Whitcher designed a one-story and basement brick addition to the Lisbon Power and Light Company Power House (now demolished). The austere and functional hip-roofed addition, intended to house an additional engine, featured 15/15 sash, segmental or "rowlock" arched lintels on the first story, granite lintels on the basement story, and granite sills. "Addition to Power House for Lisbon Light and Power Company," plan and elevations, 1914, Chase Roy Whitcher, Architectural Drawings, NHHS.

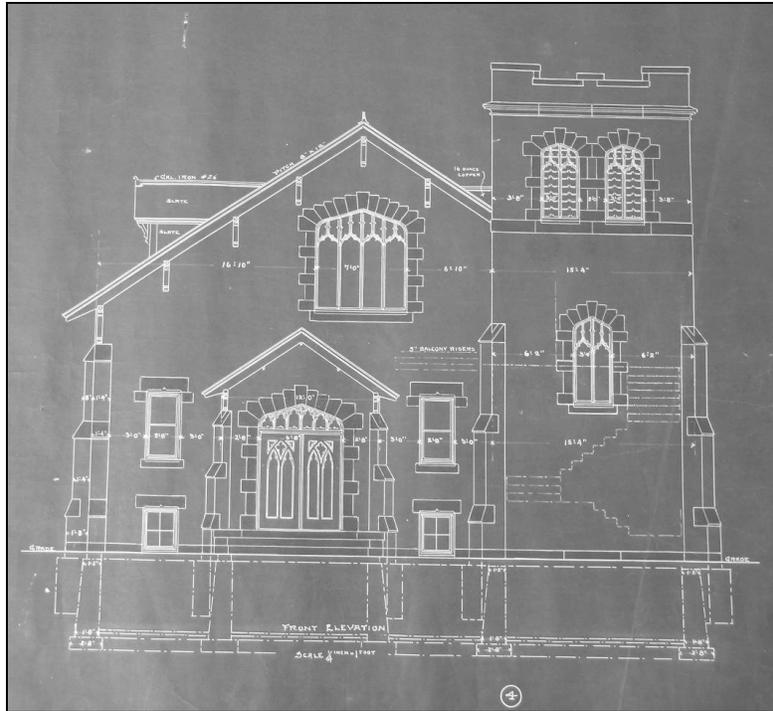


Figure 7) Front elevation, Lisbon Congregation Church, 1914. The contrasting stone is depicted in dark green on the blueprint. Collection of New Hampshire Historical Society.

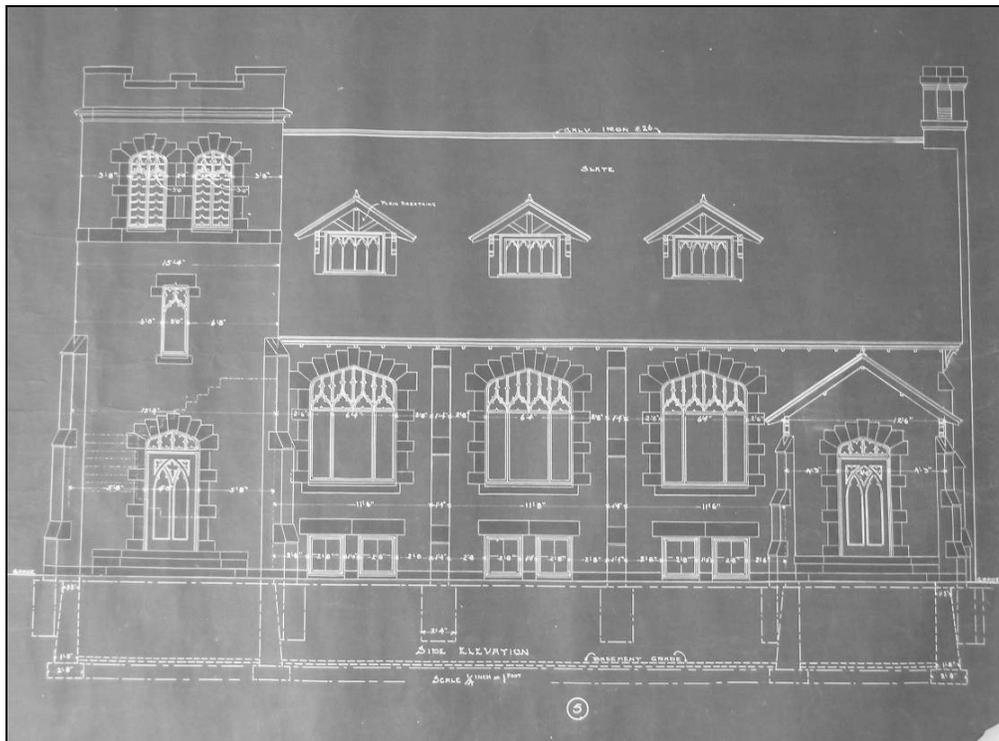


Figure 8) Southeast elevation, Lisbon Congregation Church, 1914. Collection of New Hampshire Historical Society.

Whitcher's last known commission in Lisbon is his 1925-26 design of the Lisbon Public Library (*Cover and Figure 9*).³⁰ The design is an excellent example of brick Colonial Revival style architecture in the form typical of many small early twentieth-century public libraries. The one-and-one-half story, three-bay wide, gable-roofed structure is augmented by a number of additional massing elements. A one-and-one-half story entry pavilion with a gabled parapet front is centered on the façade, framed by gable-roofed dormers. A hip-roofed ell spans much of the width of the rear elevation. Decorative motifs include contrasting materials on the window and door openings and at the eaves and varied fenestration. The functional interior space follows library design criteria of the period with two rooms and a stair hall on the first floor and a tier of rooms in the shallow rear ell. The lower level housed utilities and a larger meeting space.



Figure 9) Postcard, Lisbon Public Library, Lisbon, New Hampshire, completed 1926.

New Hampshire State Hospital, Concord, 1905-1930

While still in Lisbon, Whitcher rapidly began to expand his practice beyond Northern New Hampshire. By ca. 1905 Whitcher began his extended involvement with the New Hampshire State Hospital in Concord, receiving six commissions for new buildings or additions to existing structures between ca. 1905 and 1930. He also designed, in 1930, renovations of the North Pavilion and the Assembly Hall in the Main Building. All of the free-standing Whitcher-designed buildings generally employ the Classical Revival style in a restrained fashion with a modicum of detailing concentrated at the window and door openings. Over the several decades the building technologies employed by Whitcher evolved in response to improved fire-proofing materials and methods of construction. The earlier commissions apparently employed slow-burning or mill construction, while the later commissions attained true fireproof design through the use of hollow structural tile and brick walls and concrete floors. The plans addressed the needs of the facility and incorporated current ideas on treatment of the mentally ill in an institutional setting such as increased light and ventilation.

³⁰ "Library Building for Harry D. Chandler, Lisbon, N.H., C.R. Whitcher, Architect, Manchester N.H.," Perspective, Lisbon Historical Society.

The New Hampshire State Hospital, chartered in 1838 as the New Hampshire Asylum for the Insane, opened their newly completed Main Building situated on a 120-acre site to the west of central Concord in the fall of 1842. By 1906 the property included a Main Building with multiple additions, a large hospital building, and a couple of ancillary structures. Over the next twenty-five years the institution underwent a major building campaign, as the patient population increased, and in response to changing ideas about patient care. The patient population increase was due in large part to the State Care Act of 1903 which transferred large numbers of the indigent insane from poor farms to the state hospital.³¹



Figure 10) Thayer Building, New Hampshire Hospital. South façade. Illustrated in Sheerr & McCrystal, "Master Plan," on file at NHDHR, Concord, NH.

Whitcher's first design project for the hospital, in 1905, was the Thayer Building. This hospital building was for physically-ill mental patients (and on occasion hospital staff) and "incorporate[ed] several innovative features that kept New Hampshire on the forefront of national developments" (*Figure 10*).³² The building featured many elements of Whitcher's more mature designs but in a less sophisticated fashion. The large, brick building in the Classical Revival style had a U-shaped footprint consisting of a three-story, flat-roofed central block with a projecting pavilion and two-story hip-roofed wings with two-story hip-roofed rear ell with gabled bays. The restrained decorative detailing included brick beltcourses and corner quoins, a wooden modillion block cornice, granite sills, and splayed brick lintels. The flat-roofed entry

³¹ Sheerr & McCrystal, Inc., "Master Plan for the New Hampshire Hospital Campus" (New London, NH: October 31, 1994), C12. This invaluable report, a copy of which may be found at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, incorrectly gives Whitcher's first name as Charles in many sections. Most secondary literature on these state institutions focus on asylums and their nineteenth-century histories, due in part to the strong correlation between treatment and spatial design. By the twentieth century, with increased patient populations and changing ideas of mental health, these facilities increasingly became warehouses for the mentally ill. In addition treatment increasingly focused on clinic-based care for those with less serious mental illnesses so they could live at home. As a result these facilities increasingly housed just the most seriously ill patients. For general overviews on these facilities and changing patient populations, treatment methods, and spatial designs see Gerald N. Grob, *Mental Illness and American Society, 1875-1940* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983); David J. Rothman, *Conscience and Convenience: The Asylum and its Alternatives in Progressive America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980); and Carla Yanni, *The Architecture of Madness: Insane Asylums in the United States* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

³² Sheerr & McCrystal, "Thayer Building," 1.

porch with fluted columns screened the centered entry; an elliptical fanlight and side lights framed the doorway. Innovative plan features, most likely incorporated by Whitcher according to hospital administration criteria, included the sun verandahs or piazzas on the side elevations and semi-circular bays on the front and rear elevations of the ells to provide additional light and space to the interior. The building utilized the then current means of retarding the spread of fire in large buildings with the use of “mill” or “slow-burning” construction.³³ Whitcher generally employed this construction technology in several other commissions for the hospital, until the development of true fire-proof technology by the 1920s, comprised of steel-frames, concrete floors, and brick curtain walls. The Thayer commission introduced Whitcher to current ideas on the housing and treatment of New Hampshire residents in an institutional setting but also on general medical care. This knowledge proved integral in many of his designs for the duration of his career.

A second commission, for additions to the Peaslee and Kent Wings, housing for the most violently disturbed male and female patients, respectively, quickly followed on the heels of the Thayer project. These annexes, completed in early 1909, were noteworthy for their durable construction material, monolithic concrete faced with brick, to accommodate and segregate the violent patients from the larger hospital population. The Kent Annex, for female patients, was a three-story hip-roofed structure with an L-shaped footprint and connects to the 1868 Kent Wing. The decorative detailing and massing echoed that of the earlier structure but in a more restrained manner, with a granite foundation, corbelled cornice, polygonal bays, and hip-roofed dormers, all vaguely suggestive of the earlier Italianate-styled Kent building. The smaller Peaslee Annex, also of monolithic concrete and brick facing construction, opened in March 1909, to house and segregate the most violently disturbed male patients. The plan included individual sleeping rooms and a larger day ward. With an emphasis on security, the second-floor ward housed the criminally insane and featured special locks and window guards. One additional security feature, a high-walled airing court accessed by a vehicular underpass, permitted safe transfers of patients and prisoners. In design, the Annex echoed the 1875 north addition to the Peaslee Wing but was larger and simpler in decorative treatment: three stories, granite foundation, red brick facing, corbelled cornice, slate hipped roof with pedimented dormers and ventilator shaft. The fenestration consisted of single, segmental-arched windows with granite sills, brick lintels, and 20/20 sash.³⁴

In 1915 Whitcher designed the south wing addition to the Walker Building, completed just two years earlier with the expectation of expansion. The Walker Building, sited at the northwest corner of the campus was the first patient-care facility constructed away from the Main Building. Such free-standing structures capitalized on economy in plan and design, to accommodate long-term care for chronically ill mental patients at the state’s expense. Open day halls and dormitory style sleeping spaces reduced costs but at the expense of privacy. The south-wing addition resembled the earlier section in design and housed male patients on the first two stories and staff at the attic story. With the completion of Whitcher’s wing, the building consisted of a three-story central administrative core and two-and-one-half-story cruciform patient wings. The administrative core included a central dining room and independent kitchen. The plainly detailed structure featured a classically inspired central section with a two-story portico and Craftsman-

³³ Ibid, 1-7; Personal correspondence with James L. Garvin, 19 May 2008.

³⁴ Sheerr & McCrystal, “Peaslee Wing and Annex,” 2-3. The report incorrectly attributes the annexes to William Butterfield though the attribution is correct in the table of all building designs.

style wings with hip roofs, deep eaves, and exposed rafter tails. Two-story screened wood-framed verandahs in the rear outer angles (removed during rehabilitation of the building for office use) provided access to the outdoors. Fenestration consisted of paired windows with 12/12 sash or 8/8 sash with transoms and granite sills. When initially constructed the building was intended to provide improved light and ventilation for quiet patients and permit some employment facilities.³⁵



Figure 11) Brown Building, New Hampshire Hospital. South façade. Illustrated in Sheerr & McCrystal, "Master Plan," on file at NHDHR, Concord, NH.

The Brown Building, constructed 1923-1924, was Whitcher's next design for the New Hampshire State Hospital, and the second of the three free-standing patient care buildings constructed on the campus (*Figure 11*). Built as a dormitory for chronic, disturbed female patients, the structure helped to relieve some of the continued overcrowding in the older buildings for the female population.³⁶ Sited to the southwest of the Walker Building, the simply detailed, three-story, symmetrical structure was the first of Whitcher's designs for the hospital to incorporate true fireproof construction. The steel frame building had concrete floors and reinforced brick curtain walls.³⁷ The original form featured a dumbbell plan comprised of a central core and wings with wide square bays on the façade augmenting each wing.³⁸ The most substantial decorative detailing was concentrated on the central core with engaged fluted Doric columns supporting a full entablature and closed pediment cast-stone frontispiece and a stepped parapet. A cast-stone water table, cornice, and windows sills and lintels unify all the elevations while the stepped parapet continued as a solid parapet on the wings. The liberally fenestrated

³⁵ Sheerr & McCrystal, "Walker Building," 1-10.

³⁶ Between 1903 and 1930 the patient population nearly quadrupled from 475 to 1715. Sheerr & McCrystal, "Brown Building," 1.

³⁷ Sanborn Map Company, *Digital Sanborn maps 1867-1970* [Concord, NH: 1928 updated 1949].

³⁸ In 1948 a large addition was built around the rear of the central core.

building featured double and triple windows with a variety of multi-light sash including 9/9, 28/28, or 35/35 sash.



Figure 12) Tobey Building, New Hampshire Hospital. West façade. Illustrated in Sheerr & McCrystal, "Master Plan," on file at NHDHR, Concord, NH.

Much of the massing, stylistic detailing, and plan of the Tobey Building, the last of Whitcher's designs for the New Hampshire State Hospital campus, resembled his earlier buildings for the hospital (*Figure 12*). The Tobey Building, constructed in two phases, was the last of the three free-standing patient-care buildings to be erected but also the smallest, housing chronic, disturbed male patients. Located to the southeast of the Walker Building, the center and north wings opened in Fall 1930; the south wing, designed by another architectural firm, opened six years later. By that time the patient population had swelled to 2,081.³⁹ The phased building schedule allowed the state to spread the construction costs over two appropriation cycles. The building's proximity to the Walker Building allowed the institution to use the former's kitchen for residents in both buildings. Initially the building also housed attendants, until completion of the Spaulding Building in 1935.

³⁹ Sheerr & McCrystal, "Tobey Building," 1.

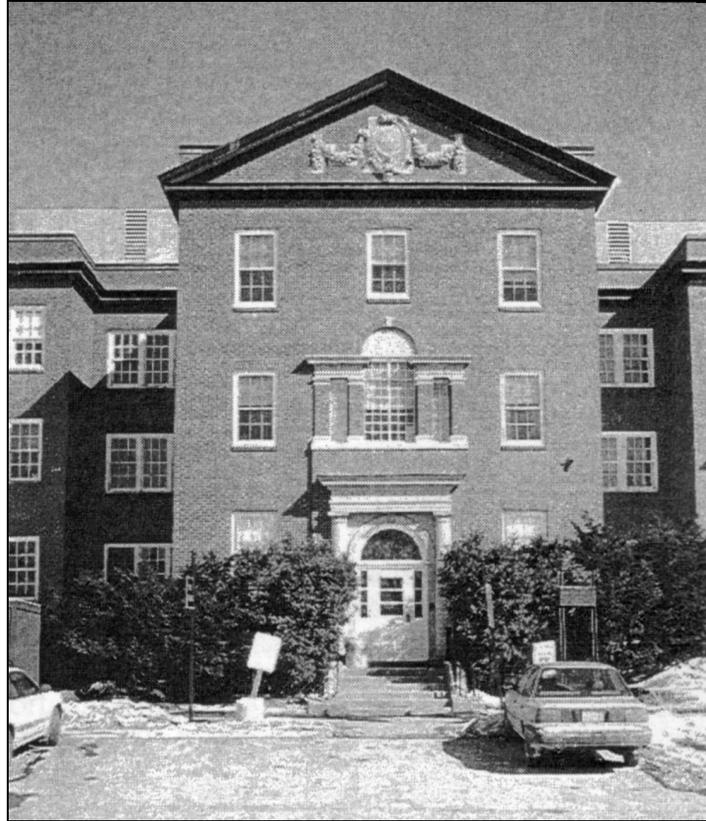


Figure 13) Tobey Building, New Hampshire Hospital. Central pavilion detail. Illustrated in Sheerr & McCrystal, "Master Plan," on file at NHDHR, Concord, NH.

The Tobey Building, like the earlier Brown Building, had a three-story central core with three-story hyphens connecting to three-story wings. Wide square bays augmented the wings on the façade to provide additional light and space to the interior.⁴⁰ Restrained, classically-derived ornament employed on all sections included a molded brick water table, solid brick parapet, and brick lintels and sills. Brick and cast-stone pilasters separated triple, multi-light windows on the wings. The central core, however, received the most elaborate detailing (*Figure 13*). A Palladian window was centered above the center entry. Engaged Tuscan columns and full entablature frontispiece framed the entry and semi-circular fanlight. Above, in the closed pediment gable was a "robust cast stone state seal framed by a cartouche and garlands."⁴¹

⁴⁰ Also like the Brown Building, the Tobey Building employed fireproof construction consisting of a steel frame, concrete floors, and brick curtain walls. Sanborn Map Company, *Digital Sanborn maps 1867-1970* [Concord, NH: 1928 updated 1949].

⁴¹ Sheerr & McCrystal, "Master Plan for the New Hampshire Hospital Campus, Tobey Building," 1-3. Quote on p. 3.



Figure 14) Littleton Hospital, 1906-1907, Littleton.

Littleton Hospital, 1906-1907

Shortly after obtaining his first commission with the New Hampshire State Hospital, Whitcher was hired to design a new hospital in Littleton.⁴² Construction began in 1906 and the official dedication of the new hospital occurred on 27 June 1907 (*Figure 14*). The new Littleton Hospital was emblematic of many of Whitcher's subsequent designs for a host of commercial, municipal, and institutional clients. The design incorporated current ideas about fire-proof building technologies, specialized spatial layout particular to the building's use, and popular stylistic elements, some of which recurred in many of his designs. The hospital exhibited many standard features of early twentieth-century hospital design. Sun rooms for recuperation in fresh air, wards segregated by sex, and the integration of smaller, private rooms rather than large open wards, were all popular concepts in hospital design by the end of the nineteenth century. Whitcher would incorporate these concepts into his subsequent hospital designs such as the New Hampshire State Sanatorium at Glencliff in Warren, New Hampshire. The building's exterior design incorporated classical architectural details on a monumental scale in a fashion common to municipal and institutional buildings of the period. The masonry construction with impermeable tile or cement interior walls and floors were features increasingly advocated by many designers of institutional buildings, be it hospitals, schools, or office buildings, for fire safety and sanitation.⁴³

The 1906 Whitcher design of the Littleton Hospital was an eleven-bay wide, double-pile deep, 80' x 30' rectangular building that rises two stories above a raised basement to a hip roof. The dominant feature of the Neo-Classical brick building was the monumental entrance portico with

⁴² Much of the following discussion of the Littleton Hospital is taken nearly verbatim from a NHDHR survey form by Preservation Company on the Littleton Hospital. Preservation Company (Lynne Monroe and Kerry Davis), "Littleton Regional Hospital," NHDHR Inventory Form No. LTL0001, Littleton, New Hampshire (Concord, NH: NHDHR, 2005).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 4.

four full-height Ionic columns supporting a full pediment centered on the façade. Two-story porches were centered on each side elevation, with the second story enclosed. Additional character-defining decorative features included cast-stone trim such as staggered quoins, water table, window sills, and splayed lintels with keystones. On the interior, the plan was symmetrically arranged along central corridors running the length and width of the building. A staircase at the intersection of the two corridors provided access to the upper and lower floors. The basement level included a cold storage room, heating plant, kitchen, laundry, and morgue. The first floor contained the superintendent's office, reception room, nurse's parlor, dining room, sleeping rooms, and four private wards. The second floor layout accommodated four additional private wards, the men's and women's wards, three bath rooms, the diet kitchen, etherizing room, operating room, and doctor's toilet room. Interior finish included six-horizontal-panel wood doors, brick fireplaces with cast-stone mantels, coved ceilings in some locations, and modest base and door trim.⁴⁴

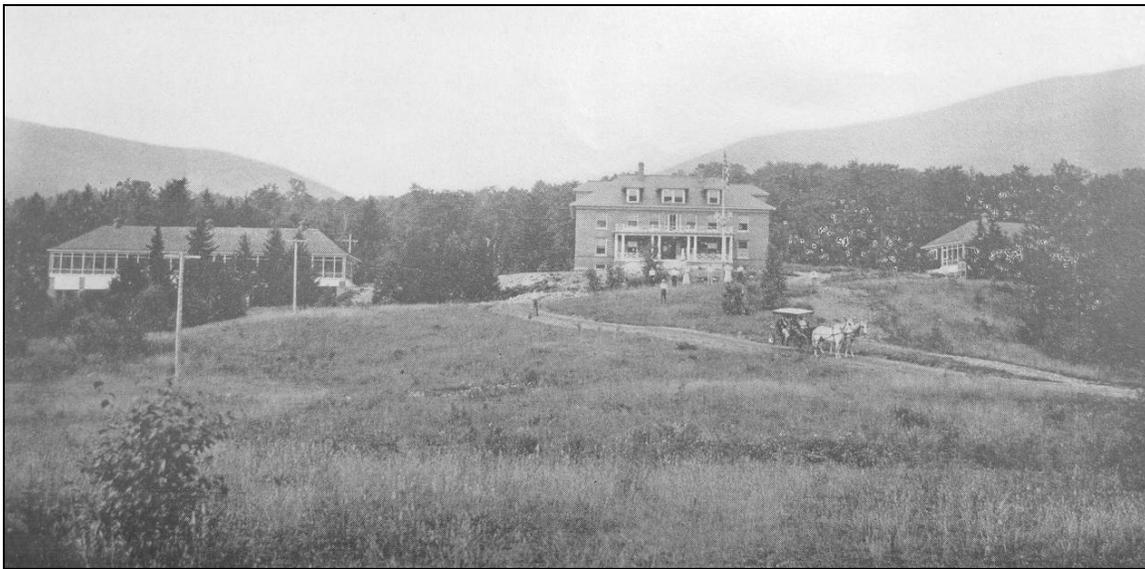


Figure 15) New Hampshire State Sanatorium, Glencliff, New Hampshire. The Administration Building is in the center with ward buildings on either side. Illustrated in First Biennial Report of the Trustees of the New Hampshire State Sanatorium for the Fiscal Period Ending Aug. 31, 1910.

New Hampshire State Sanatorium, Glencliff, 1908-1909

Witcher capitalized on his work for the New Hampshire State Hospital and the Littleton Hospital with a commission for a new state sanatorium. The New Hampshire state legislature authorized construction of a state sanatorium in Glencliff, a village in Warren, New Hampshire, in the White Mountains, but it was not until 1908 that construction of such a facility got under way. The site, 1,650' up Mount Moosilauke, provided the fresh air considered essential for the treatment of tuberculosis patients, while also isolating them from the healthy population.⁴⁵ Witcher designed the original buildings for this new facility that included an administrative

⁴⁴ Ibid, 11-12.

⁴⁵ Paige Wickner and Fordham von Reyn, M.D., "Mountain Aerie," *Dartmouth Medicine* 27, no. 4 (Summer 2003): 45.

building, male and female ward buildings, a heating plant, and a power house and electric light plant (Figure 15). Construction was completed by June 1909 and the first patients were admitted in September. The spatial layouts of the administrative and ward buildings incorporated the current thinking about treatment of tuberculosis patients.



Figure 16) Reception Room and Clerk's Office, Administration Building, New Hampshire State Sanatorium, Glencliff, New Hampshire. Illustrated in Biennial Report of the Trustees of the New Hampshire State Sanatorium for the Fiscal Period Ending Aug. 31, 1910.



Figure 17) Ward for Male Patients, New Hampshire State Sanatorium, Glencliff, New Hampshire. Illustrated in First Biennial Report of the Trustees of the New Hampshire State Sanatorium for the Fiscal Period Ending Aug. 31, 1910.

The administrative building at the New Hampshire State Sanatorium strongly resembled the slightly earlier Littleton Hospital in design, scale, and interior arrangement. The rectangular

brick administrative building was two-and-one-half stories under a hip roof with hip-roofed dormers and set on a high basement. A one-story piazza with paired columns spanned the center five bays of the seven-bay wide, double-pile deep building, screening the centered entry. Other Colonial Revival detailing included splayed lintels and a balustrade on top of the piazza. The regular fenestration pattern reflected the symmetrical interior arrangement. On the first floor a full-depth center hall intersected with a double-loaded cross corridor providing access to a reception room, and a library, and various administrative offices (*Figure 16*). The upper two floors contained chambers and baths. A kitchen and service spaces were housed in the basement. Whitcher also designed the male and female Patient Wards. These one-story, hip-roofed, T-shaped buildings incorporated lots of access to fresh air and light (*Figure 17*). A full-width piazza spanned the façade. Full-height sixteen-light sash provided considerable illumination to the full-width ward. The stem housed the bathing rooms, toilets, and dressing rooms.⁴⁶



Figure 18) Dunlap Block, Manchester, 1908. Photograph by Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, 2004.

Dunlap Block, 1908

Whitcher's earliest confirmed commission in Manchester was the extensive renovations of the Dunlap Block, on the corner of Elm and Amherst streets, in 1908 (*Figure 18*). This job demonstrated Whitcher's knowledge of building materials, fireproof construction, and current commercial building fashion. Originally a four-story brick commercial block constructed in 1879 in the Italianate style, Whitcher sensitively added a fifth story and incorporated the latest technologies and design elements including steel technology through the insertion of steel and plate glass windows on the first two stories of the façade and an elevator on the interior. The new top story duplicated the earlier finish details and fenestration pattern and was capped with a metal modillion block cornice. The interior was largely gutted and nicely finished with Colonial Revival and other period finishes. Many walls feature pressed metal decorated with torches,

⁴⁶ "Ward Building for New Hampshire State Sanatorium, Benton [sic], N.H.," Plans and elevations, C.R. Whitcher, 1908, Architectural Drawings, NHHS. The collection also includes plans and elevations for the Boiler House.

festoons, and floral motifs above beaded-board wainscoting. The renovation accommodated a large store on the first story with offices on the upper floors.⁴⁷



Figure 19) Bedford Town Hall, Bedford, 1910. Photograph by Lisa Mausolf, 1984.

Town Halls

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Whitcher's practice was quite dispersed throughout the state, and would remain so to some extent for much of his career, though in later years it appears to be more concentrated in southern part of the state. In 1909 he rapidly completed a design for a new Bedford town hall, to replace the one recently destroyed by fire.⁴⁸ Completed in 1910, the exterior of the building differed from the majority of other town halls of the period in the region and bore little resemblance to contemporary and subsequent institutional designs by Whitcher (*Figure 19*). The building, however, accommodated the town's needs and demonstrates Whitcher's versatility and ability to address the client's particular requirements. A four-columned portico in the Roman Doric order dominated the façade of the two-and-one-half story, gabled-roofed frame structure. The plan of the rectangular building resembled that of many other town halls of the period with two offices, a banquet hall, and a kitchen on the first floor and an auditorium and arcaded gallery accessed by a pair of staircases on the second floor. The building strongly referenced mid-nineteenth century New England town halls and churches with strong Greek Revival references.

⁴⁷ Elizabeth Durfee Hengen and Lisa Mausolf, "Dunlap Building," National Register of Historic Places Nomination (Concord: NHDHR, 2004).

⁴⁸ Lisa Mausolf, "Bedford Town Hall," National Register of Historic Places Nomination (Concord: NHDHR, 1984). The town reports identify Whitcher as the architect of record. He received \$325 for the plans and specifications. Ibid.

Two other town hall designs by Whitcher, in Bath and Warner, date to the same period as the Bedford Town Hall. The form of the Bath Town Hall generally reflected the Colonial Revival, a two-and-one-half story rectangular wood frame structure under a hip roof (*Figure 20*).⁴⁹

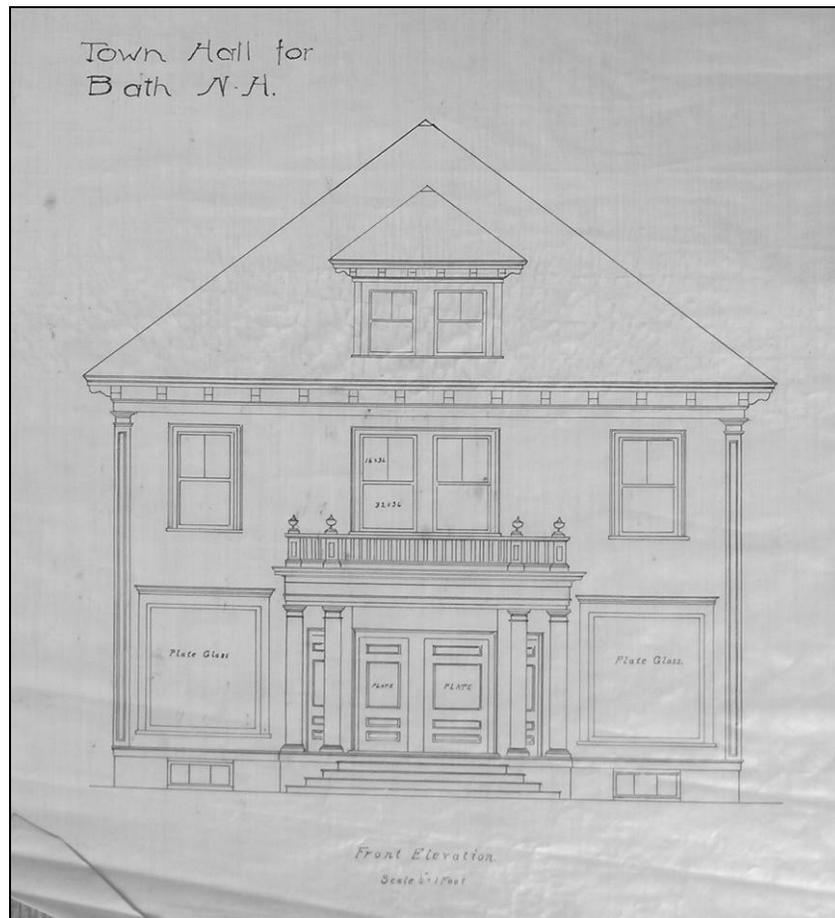


Figure 20) Elevation, Bath Town Hall, 1909-1910. Collection of New Hampshire Historical Society.

Like many of Whitcher's designs the entry was emphasized (albeit more modestly than in other designs). An entry porch with a pedimented gable supported by simple wooden posts screened the center entry. Other features common to buildings of this period included the symmetrical fenestration such as the double window above the entry porch, a hipped dormer on the façade, large plate-glass windows on the façade to either side of the entry, and double windows on the side elevations. The modicum of Classical and Craftsman detailing included paneled corner pilasters, a frieze, and a bracketed cornice. On the interior, the plan reflected the multi-purpose use of many such town halls of the early twentieth century, housing local offices and the public library on the first floor, and a large auditorium on the second floor for assemblies and theatrical events.⁵⁰ Extant plans at the New Hampshire Historical Society reveal Whitcher drafted two versions for the town (*Figures 21 and 22*). One plan featured a store, library, banquet hall,

⁴⁹ Architectural Drawings, NHHS.

⁵⁰ Preservation Company (Lynne Emerson Monroe and Kari Federer), "Bath Town Hall, NHDHR Inventory No. 17, Area D, Bath, New Hampshire," Concord, NH, 1992. [later BAT0059]

kitchen, and selectman's office with a vault on the first floor, an assembly hall on the second, and in the basement, interior brick walls, a "Tramp Room," and a vault. The other plan, as was built, removed the store option.⁵¹

⁵¹ Architectural Drawings, NHHS. Lawrence W. Goudie was the building contractor for the Bath Town Hall. Preservation Company, "Bath Town Hall." At least one other town hall design is known of with a store on the first floor, the Wakefield Town Hall (1895) designed by Alvah Thurston Ramsdell. Preservation Company (Laura B. Driemeyer), "Wakefield Town Hall and Opera House," National Register of Historic Places Nomination (Concord, NH: NHDHR, 2007).

Whitcher's third town hall design from this period, for Warner, was for a considerably more substantial structure. The brick building rises two stories to a hip roof. Three keystone arched openings set into the projecting façade pavilion screen the recessed entries. Whitcher would use the Romanesque arched arcade on a number of designs, including the Suncook School (1909).

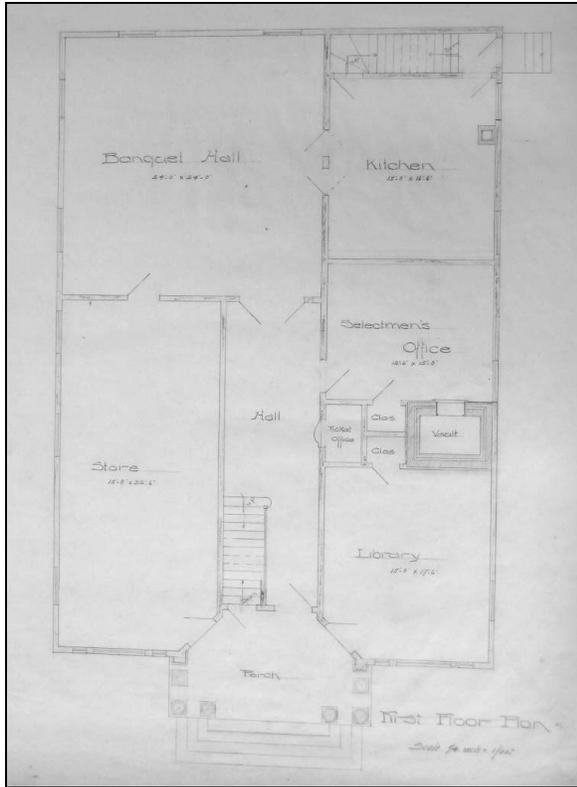


Figure 21) Proposed first-floor plan for Bath Town Hall, 1909-1910, with storefront. Collection of New Hampshire Historical Society.

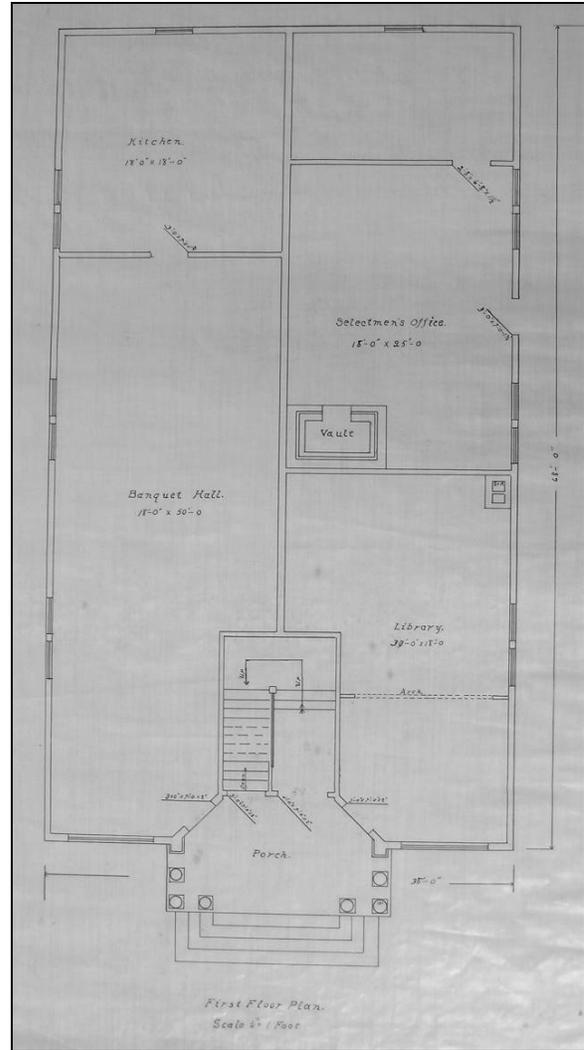


Figure 22) First-floor plan, Bath Town Hall, 1909-1910, as built. Collection of New Hampshire Historical Society.



Figure 23) Quinby Building, New Hampshire School for the Feeble-Minded, Laconia, 1909. New Hampshire Annual Reports, v. 1, 1909-1910, "Fifth Biennial Report of the Trustees of the New Hampshire School for the Feeble-Minded at Laconia."

New Hampshire School for the Feeble-Minded, Laconia, 1909

The New Hampshire School for the Feeble-Minded, in Laconia, is a second state institution for which Whitcher designed several buildings over a multi-year period. The school was established in 1901 and opened two years later. Whitcher's first commissions came in 1909, for the Quinby Building, a dining and kitchen facility, and for a laundry building, both completed the next year. The Quinby Building had a two-story brick central core flanked by one-story brick wings and a one-story brick ell (*Figure 23*). Overall the structure resembled many of Whitcher's institutional designs in massing, detailing, and plan. The restrained Classical Revival ornament was mostly concentrated on the central core. A one-story porch with Tuscan columns spanned the three-bay core, screening the center entry. Other detailing carried on all masses includes a solid brick parapet, contrasting sills, and a modillion block cornice. The functional plan consisted of a hall on the first floor and a room for the assistants employed in the kitchen and dining halls and the nearby laundry on the second floor of the main block. Each 36'-x-50' wing accommodated a dining hall, segregated by gender. The 36'-x-40' kitchen in the rear ell had small room extensions for bread making and for daily supply storage. In a nod to sanitary concerns the kitchen featured a reinforced cement floor and a monitor roof for ventilation.⁵²

In 1913, soon after his appointment as State Architect, Whitcher drafted plans for some additional buildings at the Laconia School.⁵³ The legislature had recently voted on increased

⁵² *New Hampshire Annual Reports, v. 1, 1909-1910, "Fifth Biennial Report of the Trustees of the New Hampshire School for the Feeble-Minded at Laconia," For the Biennial Period Ending August 31, 1910," v. II, part II (Concord, NH: 1911), 59-60.* Whitcher received \$1,456.43 for his design of the Quinby Building and the Laundry Building. *Ibid*, 68.

⁵³ "Plans Drawn for New Building at State Home for Feeble-Minded," *Laconia Democrat*, 22 August 1913, p. 3. The *Biennial Reports* need to be examined to determine just which buildings Whitcher designed in this later building campaign.

appropriations for the school to cover the cost of a new dormitory for epileptics, a new chapel, and an enlargement of the schoolhouse.⁵⁴



Figure 24) Colebrook Academy, 1909-1910. Illustrated in Albert H. Leake, *The Means and Methods of Agricultural Education*, p. 130.

Colebrook Academy, Colebrook, 1909-1910

Throughout his career Whitcher designed school buildings for all ages and at differing scales. In 1909-10 Whitcher designed a new building for Colebrook Academy, one of the public high schools in the rural town of Colebrook (*Figure 24*). The building was intended to accommodate the new curriculum consisting of “college-preparatory, commercial, agricultural, and domestic arts courses.”⁵⁵ The roughly H-shaped, two-story brick mass, a form common to school buildings of the period, was eleven bays wide and two rooms deep, set on a high basement and rises to a high hipped roof with deep eaves. A hip-roofed entry pavilion was centered on the façade and projecting square bays augment the rear elevation. The pavilion had entries at the outer bays, framing five windows on the first story; the second story had arched windows. The regular fenestration on the other elevations of the main block at both stories consisted of sash windows with keystone lintels and connected sills for each pair. Decorative embellishment consists of brick quoins, contrasting belt course on the pavilion, and modillion blocks, all giving the building a generally Classical Revival style.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Albert H. Leake, *The Means and Methods of Agricultural Education* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1915), 130-131. The building is still used by the town.

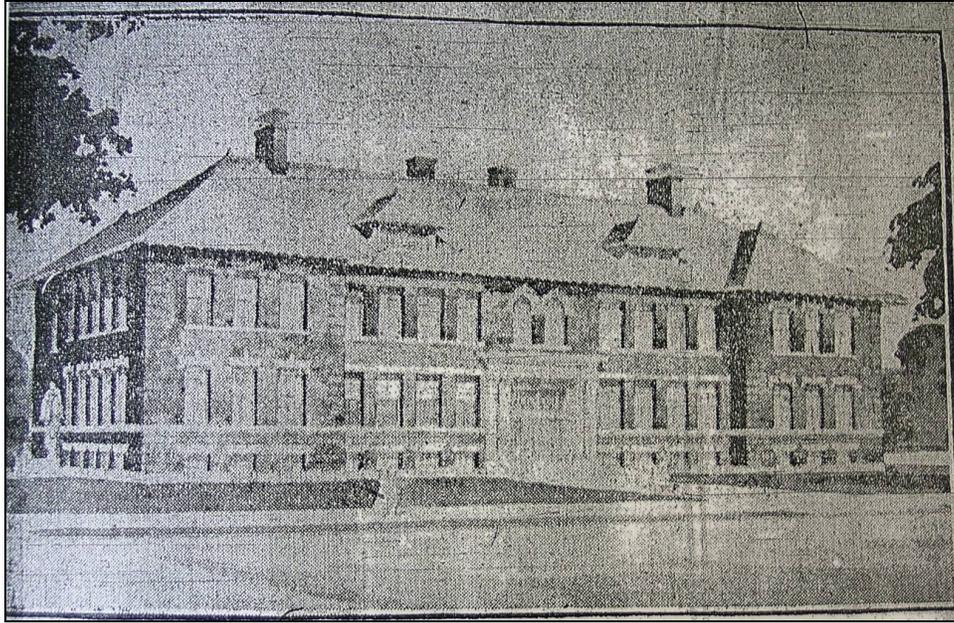


Figure 25) Perspective, Brown School, Manchester, 1911-1912. *The Union*, 19 July 1911.

Manchester Grade Schools, 1911-1912

The town of Manchester completed two new grade schools in 1912, both designed by Whitcher. In November 1912, the school board of Manchester formally accepted the newly completed Brown and Maynard school buildings, both Classical Revival-style buildings which opened on Monday, 11 November 1912 (*Figure 25*). The two schools strongly resembled each other in form and type of construction, comprised of high concrete basements and brick walls with contrasting concrete trim. Each building had an H-shaped footprint and rose two stories to a hipped roof punctuated with hip-roofed dormers. The Brown School had a single, centered entry on the façade and smaller entries on each side elevation whereas the Maynard School had two entrances on the façade into each projecting wing. The Brown School measured 133' by 45'. The Maynard School measured 120' by 63'. On the interior of each school, the floors were cement and the partition walls hollow tile, with maple trim on window and door openings. Each plan consisted of eight school rooms, teachers' rooms, book rooms, and a principal's office, and bathrooms. Fireproofing and sanitation concerns were key elements of the design.⁵⁶

Lincoln Chambers Apartment Block, Manchester, 1910-11

Whitcher designed at least one apartment block in Manchester, the 1910-11 Lincoln Chambers, an elegant apartment block on the corner of Lincoln and Hanover streets. By the early twentieth century apartment blocks became an acceptable housing form in more urban areas for middle and upper middle classes.⁵⁷ Manchester featured a number of contemporary apartment blocks on Chestnut, Maple, and Hanover streets, to the east of the business district. The Lincoln

⁵⁶ *Sixty-Seventh Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Manchester New Hampshire for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 1912* (Manchester: John B. Clarke Co., 1913), 347-348. Whitcher received \$634.09 for plans and specifications for the Brown School and \$608.76 for the Maynard School. J. H. Mendell Co. built both schools. *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Elizabeth Collins Cromley, *Alone Together: A History of New York's Early Apartments* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 4.

Chambers, designed for Leonidas P. LaBonte, a dry goods storekeeper, opened in April 1911 to much local acclaim. The three-story, hipped-roofed building had a U-shaped footprint with a grand semi-circular portico. The building contained two types of flats, twelve housekeeping flats and six sleeping flats. The large housekeeping flats contained two large chambers, two smaller chambers, a private bath, den/library, dining room, parlor or living room, and kitchenette with a gas range and ice chest, and a pantry. The six sleeping flats had two large rooms and a bath but no kitchen. Each floor also included shared baths for the tenants. The property owner intended to rent the finely finished spaces to the “highest class of tenants.”⁵⁸



Figure 26) Soldier's Memorial/James Philbrick Library, Deerfield, 1914. Photograph in NHDHR files.

Soldier's Memorial/James Philbrick Library, Deerfield, 1914

Throughout his career Whitcher designed small-scale institutional structures throughout the state of New Hampshire. The Soldiers Memorial, also known as the James Philbrick Library in Deerfield, completed in 1914, was one such commission (*Figure 26*). The small, one-story, hip-roofed brick building in the Classical Revival style sat on a high cast-stone foundation. The sloping lot from front to rear allowed for an exposed basement level on the rear. The classical ornament was more elaborate than on many of Whitcher's designs and thus demonstrates his fluency with a range of Colonial Revival features. A pedimented gable-roofed portico was centered on the three-bay wide façade. Pairs of fluted concrete Ionic columns and elaborated wide brick piers supported the pediment and framed the elaborated recessed entry. An ornate carved foliated ornament was centered on the flush board tympanum. A wooden entablature, with an egg-and-dart and denticulated cornice, deep frieze, and molded architrave wrapped

⁵⁸ “L. P. Labonte's Lincoln Chambers,” *The Manchester Union*, 27 April 1911; Ancestry.com, *1910 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2006); Ancestry.com. *New Hampshire City Directories* [Manchester 1916].

around the main block and portico, unified the two masses. The symmetrical fenestration consisted of 1/1 sash elaborated on the exterior with cast-stone splayed lintels with keystones; small three-light sash regularly set in the cast-stone foundation illuminated the basement story. On the interior, the original plan consisted of a central stair core, a meeting hall used by Women's Relief Core and Daughters' of the Army Republic, and a library room.⁵⁹

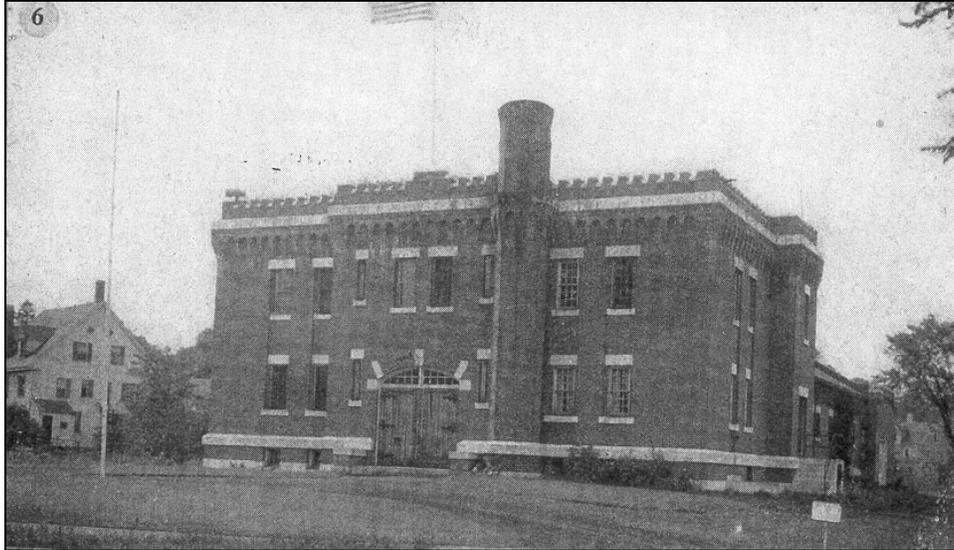


Figure 27) Portsmouth Armory, Portsmouth, 1914-1916.

Portsmouth Armory, 1914-1916

The Portsmouth Armory, demolished in 2005, is Witcher's only identified commission in Portsmouth (*Figure 27*).⁶⁰ The building, built 1914-1916, was the fourth state armory constructed in New Hampshire. The construction of the armory corresponded with many others nationally at a time of reorganization of the United State's military, including the creation of the National Guard, a state-based and state-run entity accountable to the Department of Defense. The Portsmouth Armory was typical of armory construction, consisting of a front block referred to as the Head House and a Drill Hall projecting to the rear in the "castellated" Gothic Revival or "military Gothic" style. This style was popular for armory construction in the first decade of the twentieth century but by the 1910s became less so because the use of the medieval castle theme was criticized as inappropriate for the simple military spirit of the day. The two sections of the armory created an inverted T-shaped footprint, comprised of a two-story, eight-bay wide, three-bay deep Head House and the gable-roofed, ten-bay deep Drill Hall. An octagonal brick chimney tower on the Head House adjacent to the center entry pavilion rose above the roof. Ornamental trim, mostly cast concrete was used for the lintels and sills, water table, and at the

⁵⁹ David Ruell, "Deerfield Center Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Concord: NHDHR: 2002.

⁶⁰ The following discussion draws extensively from previous research by Preservation Company. Preservation Company (Lynne Emerson Monroe and Kari A. Laprey), "Portsmouth Armory," New Hampshire Historic Property Documentation, NH State No. 562, prepared for the City of Portsmouth, 2004. No plans by Witcher for the Portsmouth Armory have been located to date. As noted above, the demolition of the armory to make way for the new Portsmouth Public Library was the genesis of this monograph on Witcher, as mitigation for the loss of that historically significant structure.

base and top of the crenellated parapet on the Head House. The Drill Hall had a corbelled brick cornice.⁶¹



Figure 28) Postcard, *The Balsams*, Whitcher addition, 1916-1918, Dixville Notch.

Hampshire House, Balsams Hotel, 1916-1918

Whitcher's design for a large addition, Hampshire House, to the Balsams Hotel in Dixville Notch illustrates his versatility and facility with a range of styles and plans and was a departure stylistically from most of his other designs. The six-and-one-half-story guest wing connected to the earlier sections of the large, sprawling hotel complex by a connector (*Figure 28*). The addition was part of a four-year expansion program by the owner of the Balsams. Hampshire House was "the first steel-frame, tile and concrete masonry structure" to be constructed in New Hampshire.⁶² This construction method provided the most advanced fire protection of the period for the hotel industry and for hotel guests. Stylistically the structure echoed the Alpine village aesthetic of the complex, drawing upon a host of eclectic elements. Eight tall square towers, each capped by a low, pyramidal tiled roof, dominated the large L-shaped structure. Similar detailing was employed on another New Hampshire grand resort hotel, the Mount Washington Hotel that drew upon Renaissance campaniles for inspiration. Other sources included the Romanesque for the round-arched openings on the towers and the German Rhine Valley for the stepped gables and window openings. Polygonal bays further articulated the long elevations and provided additional light and space to the interior spaces. The plan on each floor consisted of individual bedrooms and suites arrayed along a central corridor.⁶³

⁶¹ Ibid, 1-17.

⁶² Bryant F. Tolles, *The Grand Resort Hotels of the White Mountains, A Vanishing Legacy* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1998), 230. This description of Whitcher's design for The Balsams relies heavily on Tolles.

⁶³ Ibid, 230. As Tolles notes, the complete documentation of the Hampshire House survives in the archives of the H.P. Cummings Construction Company of Ware, Massachusetts. This construction company continues to have offices in several New England locations. The company has been responsible for the construction of numerous significant structures throughout New England. An examination of their records to identify possible other Whitcher designs is beyond the scope of this monograph but should be undertaken in the future.



Figure 29) Postcard, *The High School of Practical Arts, Manchester, N.H., Concord and Beech streets, designed 1920 by Whitcher and completed the following year.*

Practical Arts High School, Manchester, 1920-1921

In addition to Manchester grade schools commissions, Whitcher also designed one of Manchester's high schools. In 1920 the city passed a bond issue for the construction of two high schools at the cost of nearly \$800,000. Whitcher designed the Practical Arts High School on the corner of Concord and Beech streets and supervised its construction (*Figure 29*).⁶⁴ Sited across from the 1895 Manchester Classical High School and connected to it by an underground tunnel, the new building was to be a three-story brick, steel, and concrete structure with forty rooms. Budget constraints, however, led to the construction of a smaller building with fewer classrooms than initially planned.⁶⁵ The Classical-Revival styled T-shaped building featured steel joist construction, 12" brick curtain walls, and metal lath and plaster ceilings. The H-shaped main block featured shallow projecting pavilions at each end of the seven-bay wide façade and shallow stair towers on the side elevations. A two-story Classical entry portico with paired Tuscan columns spanned the center three bays screening the centered entry. Like many of Whitcher's designs, a parapet crowned the building's elevations. Ribbons of windows with 9/9 sash on all elevations provided considerable light to the interior classrooms aligned along the central interior corridor. The three-story ell housed a gymnasium on the first floor and an auditorium on the upper two stories, with a stage at one end and a balcony at the other end.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ *American Architect*, 9 June 1920; *American Architect*, 28 April 1920. The other school, across the street, was designed by Wilfred E. Provost.

⁶⁵ *American Architect*, 21 April 1920; *Seventy-Seventh Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Manchester, New Hampshire for the Year Ending December 31, 1922* (Manchester, N.H.: Lew A. Cummings Co., 1923), 141-142.

⁶⁶ Sanborn Map Company, *Digital Sanborn maps*, Manchester, NH: 1915 updated 1950.



Figure 30) Millville School in the village of Millville, Concord, 1922-1923. Photograph by Mary Lyn Ray, 1985.

Millville School, Concord, 1922-23

Whitcher also designed a small grade school in Concord in the early 1920s, in the village of Millville on the western edge of the city. In response to the particular needs of that village, Whitcher designed a building with an open plan to accommodate the loose grade structure of a small school. The Millville School on Fiske Road opened in the fall of 1923 and the design is the work of a mature architect, well-versed in current styles and plans.⁶⁷ The one-story, hip-roofed building set on a high basement was constructed of brick and hollow tile, in the Classical Revival style and exhibited many elements common to Whitcher's designs (*Figure 30*). A pedimented entry porch, supported by Tuscan columns, was centered on the projecting center pavilion. On the façade Whitcher used both semi-circular and elliptical fenestration to illuminate the interior corridor. Whitcher's design also acknowledged some modern design styles, notably Prairie and Craftsman aesthetics, indicated by the high hipped roof, deep eaves, and exposed rafter tails. The interior plan was noteworthy as it allowed for flexibility and adaptability through the presence of sliding partitions in the school rooms. The adaptable plan consisted of a teachers' room, lunch room, and janitor's room in the projecting pavilion. In the main block a single corridor running the width of the building provided access to each of three school rooms. The sliding partitions allowed the school rooms to be converted to a large assembly hall for special occasions. Stairs at each end of the corridor led to secondary entrances on the side elevations and stair access to the basement. The basement was partitioned into toilet rooms, boiler room, and two rooms for special training use such as the manual arts or domestic sciences.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Whitcher's fee on this project totaled \$1,676.63. *Seventy-First Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Concord for the Year Ending December 31, 1923* (Concord: [unknown publisher], 1924), 70.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 69. Mary Lyn Ray, "Millville School", National Register of Historic Places Nomination. Concord, NHDHR, 1985.



Figure 31) Postcard, Manchester Country Club, completed 1923.

Manchester Country Club, Bedford, 1922-23

The Manchester Country Club in Bedford is another early 1920s design by Whitcher. Completed in 1923, the long, low, asymmetrical, one-and-one-half story club house in the Colonial Revival style cost \$60,000.⁶⁹ The building consisted of three rectangular sections with ridges at forty-five degree angles, forming a rough crescent shape (*Figure 31*). A series of connected gable- and shed-roofed dormers illuminated the upper story. Doric columns supported the pedimented gable roof of the porte cochère at the primary entry. The clubhouse interior reflected the asymmetrical, long, narrow plan, comprised of an irregular series of public function rooms on the ground floor, including a large ball room, restaurant, lounge, in addition to the men's locker room. A series of guest rooms, many with private baths, lined both sides of the central corridor on the second floor; the women's locker room was also on this floor.⁷⁰ Like many of Whitcher's designs the building was functional, dressed in period ornament common to many institutional structures in the first half of the twentieth century.

⁶⁹ Bedford, New Hampshire, Bedford Historical Society, *History of Bedford, N.H., 1737-1971* (Somersworth, N.H.: New Hampshire Pub. Co., 1972), 423.

⁷⁰ Preservation Company (Lynne Emerson Monroe and Kari Ann Laprey), "Manchester Country Club," NHDHR Inventory Form No. BED0007 (Concord, N.H.: NHDHR, 1996).

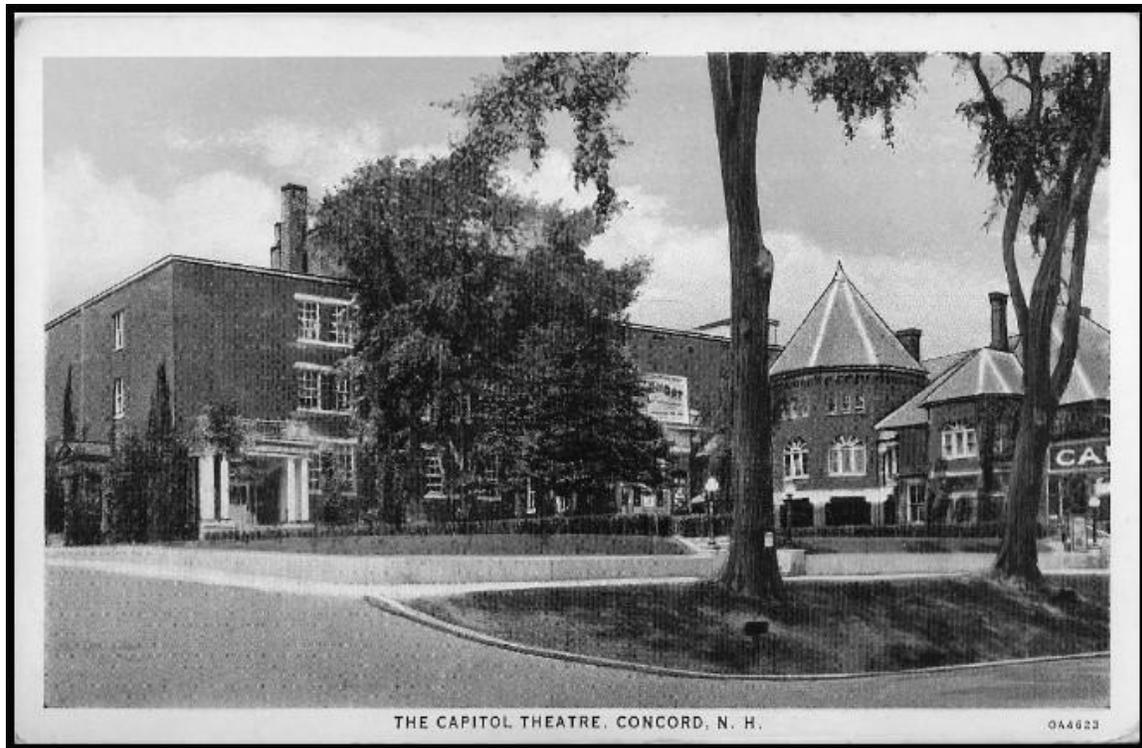


Figure 32) Postcard, Capitol Theater and Masonic Temple, Concord, completed 1927.

Capitol Theater/Masonic Building, Concord, 1925-1927

In Concord, the majority of the identified designs by Whitcher were for substantial institutional structures. One of these is the Capitol Theater/Masonic Building on South Main Street, albeit not one of his more distinguished designs. Construction began in 1925 and was completed by January 1927. The large boxy brick building was a tall, three-story rectangular structure with only minimal decorative embellishment, concentrated around window and door openings, vaguely suggestive of the Classical Revival style. The blocky structure was sited awkwardly on the lot, behind and connected to the earlier mid-1880s Benjamin Kimball House (*Figure 32*). The structure consisted of a theater, with a seating capacity for 1,500, in the north section and the Masonic Building in the south section. The theater was for live performances and movie pictures. The Masonic Building contained rental offices and two lodge rooms. The Masons also used a banquet hall in the basement of the theater building. The interior of the theater and much of its technology was modeled on the Metropolitan Theater in Boston, considered at that time to be the best theater in New England, but the finish is considerably more spartan, drawing on an Egyptian motif. The lodge rooms in the Masonic Building were classically decorated like those in another Whitcher Masonic Building commission, the Manchester Masonic Temple, but on a more modest level.⁷¹

From an aesthetic perspective, the building is not characteristic of Whitcher's designs, especially at this stage of his career, suggesting the clients had some specific requirements and a limited

⁷¹ Preservation Company (Lynne Emerson Monroe and Kari Federer), "Benjamin Kimball House and Capitol Theater/Masonic Complex," NHDHR Area Form X (Concord, NH: NHDHR, 1994), 6-7.

budget.⁷² However, what is characteristic of Witcher's work is the use of fireproof construction materials. A *Concord Monitor* article noted at the time of the theater's opening in January 1927:

The entire building is of fireproof construction. Eight fire escapes are available for exit from the main floor of the theater, which can be cleared in three minutes. All the curtains on the stage are also fireproof.⁷³



Figure 33) *Masonic Temple in Manchester, 1925. Photograph in NHDHR files.*

Masonic Temple, Manchester, 1925

Contemporary with the Theater and Masonic Temple complex in Concord was Witcher's design of the Masonic Temple in Manchester. The design was considerably more representative of Witcher's skill as a designer and the Neo-classical styled building was more characteristic of this building type stylistically and formally. Constructed in 1925, the large yellow brick and granite rectilinear building rose three stories above the raised basement and was capped by a high parapet. Three tiers of granite steps led to the centered double-leaf door entryway (*Figure 33*). On the façade a projecting pedimented portico with six Doric engaged columns on the upper two stories supported the Doric entablature and closed pediment. Alternating recessed panels and engaged piers articulated the side elevations of the upper two stories. The interior plan accommodated the social and ritual functions of Masonic halls: function hall and kitchen in the lower story; entrance hall, lounge, offices, and stair to the upper floors on the first floor, and a large meeting hall with a curved ceiling on the second floor.

⁷² *Ibid*, 5.

⁷³ Cited in *ibid*, 14.

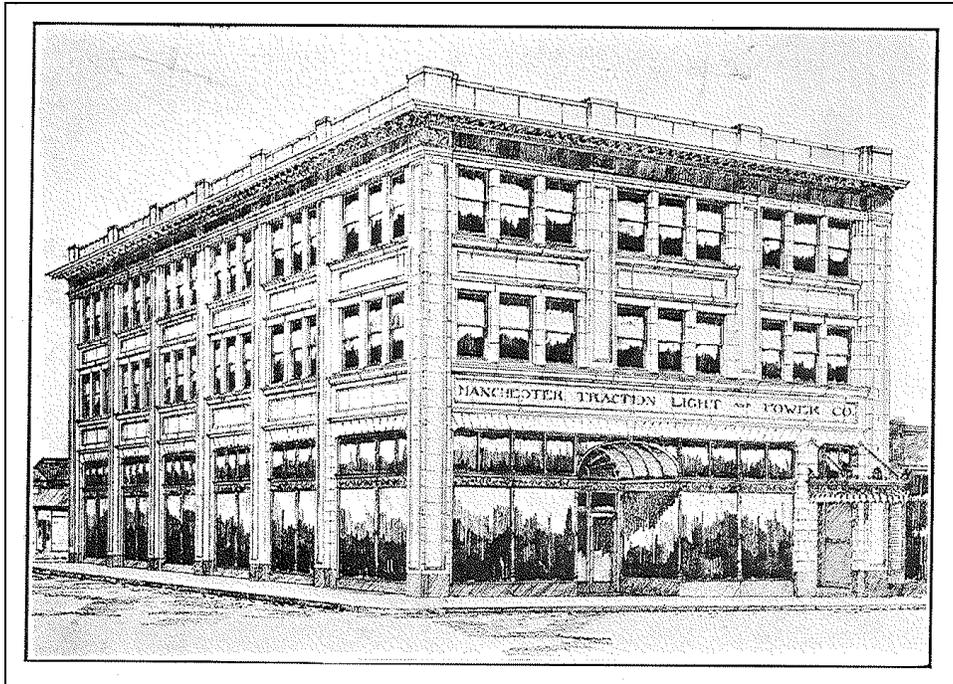


Figure 34) Perspective drawing of proposed building for Manchester Traction Light and Power Company, 1926. Collection of Public Service Company of New Hampshire.

Public Services Company of New Hampshire Headquarters, Manchester, 1926-1927

Contemporary with the Masonic temple was Whitcher's design for the proposed new headquarters building for the Manchester Traction Light and Power Company on the corner of Elm and Lowell streets.⁷⁴ Construction of the three-story Classical style building began in March 1926 (Figure 34). That fall the Public Services Company of New Hampshire (PSNH) was formed and acquired a number of power companies including Manchester Traction Light and Power Company. In the wake of this corporate transformation, two more stories were added to the building already under construction. By March 1927 construction was largely completed (Figure 35). Fire proof construction for the building included a steel frame, concrete block walls, and concrete floors and roof.⁷⁵ The alteration of the building's form after initial construction is apparent in the final design, with the upper two stories looking like an afterthought, although the fenestration pattern of triple sash windows separated by engaged piers used on the second and third stories was duplicated on the top two stories, as is the stone-clad exterior. A modillion block and denticulated cornice capped the third story. The upper two stories were more simply finished with a simple parapet. Arcaded storefront windows illuminated the first-floor showroom on the street elevations. The finely finished showroom interior included paneled wainscoting on the walls and polygonal columns with paneled plastered above (Figure 36). The upper stories accommodated offices.

⁷⁴ Elizabeth L. LaRocca and Blair Gourley, both of PSNH, recently examined the blueprints for and old photographs of this building that identify Whitcher as the architect of record. The following discussion is based on an examination of those materials and conversations with Blair Gourley and Donna Cronin, 25 April 2007 at PSNH headquarters.

⁷⁵ Sanborn Map Company, *Digital Sanborn maps*, Manchester, NH: 1915 updated 1950. PSNH has copies of some drawings and many dated photographs documenting the construction of the building.



Figure 35) Public Service Company of New Hampshire, Headquarters building, completed 1927. Collection of Public Service Company of New Hampshire.



Figure 36) Sales Room, Service Company of New Hampshire, Headquarters building. Collection of Public Service Company of New Hampshire.



Figure 37) Young Women's Christian Association, Manchester, completed 1928. Photograph at NHDHR.

YWCA, Manchester, 1928

In association with a Boston firm, Whitcher designed a Colonial Revival style, brick building that rose four stories to a flat roof for the Young Women's Christian Association on Concord Street near Chestnut Street (Figure 37).⁷⁶ Completed in 1928, the main block was U-shaped and framed a two-story section that housed the gymnasium and swimming pool. Ornamental detailing was concentrated on the façade of the rectangular structure, evoking Federal-era elements. A regular portico supported by thin columns was centered on the nine-bay wide façade, screening the entry. Fenestration treatment varied by story with roundheaded windows with a keystone brick lintel on the first story, granite lintels on the second story, and reduced height windows on the upper two stories. A cornice above the third story windows created the appearance of a fenestrated parapet at the fourth story. A brick beltcourse between the first two stories and brick quoins further articulated the façade.

Gothic Chapel, Valley Cemetery, Manchester, 1931

The Gothic Revival chapel at the Valley Cemetery in Manchester, built in 1931, represented a departure from the majority of Whitcher's designs. Valley Cemetery, a notable mid-nineteenth century rural cemetery, contains an outstanding collection of mausoleums in addition to Whitcher's picturesque chapel. Modeled on small English parish churches, the irregular rectangular building was faced in seam-faced random ashlar granite and trimmed with cast stone.

⁷⁶ Todd D. Fleming, "Young Women's Christian Association," Individual Inventory Form MAN0106 (Concord, NH: NHDHR, 2004). Original plans remain on site but were not examined for this monograph.

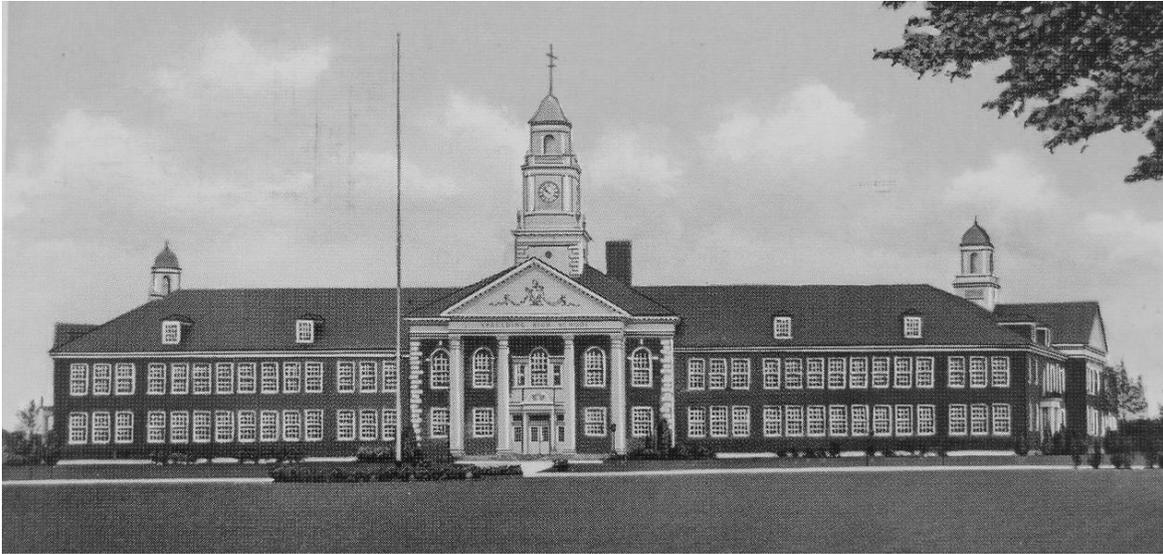


Figure 38) Postcard, Spaulding High School, Rochester. Collection of the New Hampshire Historical Society.

Spaulding High School, Rochester, 1938-1939

The Spaulding High School in Rochester, opened in 1939, was one of Whitcher's last known major commissions, completed shortly before his death (*Figure 38*).⁷⁷ This large two-story, hip-roofed, brick building epitomized secondary school design of the pre-war era, using a form and style that remained popular for the next two decades. The scale and ornament was a more elaborate and exuberant version of Whitcher's earlier school design in Townsend, Massachusetts (see below). A large projecting pedimented pavilion with a projecting two-story portico was centered on the long façade, capped by a multi-stage clock tower. Gabled bays augmented the side elevations. Ornament was concentrated on the five-bay wide entry pavilion. The centered entry had a broken scroll pediment. At the second story, pairs of compass-headed windows framed a centered Palladian window. Four columns supported the closed pediment portico. Ornament on the portico included modillion block cornices, contrasting quoins, and garlands and a seal in the tympanum.

⁷⁷ Two other commissions in Rochester, the Masonic Temple and the alterations to the City Hall/Opera House, have been attributed to Whitcher but were not verified for this monograph.



Figure 39) North (Front) Elevation, Draper High School, Hopedale, Massachusetts, 6 June 1927. Department of Public Safety, Division of Inspection, Plan Record, Massachusetts Archives.

Work outside of New Hampshire, 1920s-1930s

In the 1920s and 1930s Whitcher expanded his practice beyond New Hampshire. Several commissions have been identified for projects in Massachusetts. The General Draper High School in Hopedale, Massachusetts, constructed in 1927, is a Whitcher designed building (Figure 39). Like many of his school designs of the 1920s and 1930s, the brick and cast-stone building is in the Colonial Revival style. Set on a raised basement, the hip-roofed building was one-and-one-half stories in the front and two-stories in the rear; gabled dormers on the façade provided additional light and space to the upper story. The rectangular footprint was augmented on the façade by projecting three-bay pavilions at each end, a centered full-height semi-circular Ionic entry porch topped with a balustrade, and gabled stair porches on each side elevation. Like many of Whitcher's designs the interior plan featured a central corridor with stairs at each side elevation.⁷⁸ In other ways, however, the plan was distinctive with very specialized rooms on each floor. The ground floor contained two laboratories, a sewing room, lunch room, kitchen, domestic science room with a model dining room, and bathrooms. The first floor featured a large study hall/assembly hall, recitation rooms, commercial room, typewriter room, superintendent's and principal's offices, and teachers' rooms (Figure 40). Also on the first floor was the Draper Memorial Library, named for William F. Draper (1842-1910), son of one of the founders of Hopedale and whose house was originally located on the school property. The library was finished in the Georgian style with hand carved paneling and shell carvings above the corner shelves by Irving and Casson and Italian marble flooring.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Preservation Services, "Hopedale High School," Form B (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1989); Kathleen Kennedy Broome and Betsy Friedberg, "Hopedale Village Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination (Boston: MHC, 2002), 7:21; Sanborn Map Company, *Digital Sanborn maps*, Milford, MA: 1950.

⁷⁹ "Princess Boncompagni Turns Over Memorial Library Keys Today," *Milford Daily News*, 6 April 1929.

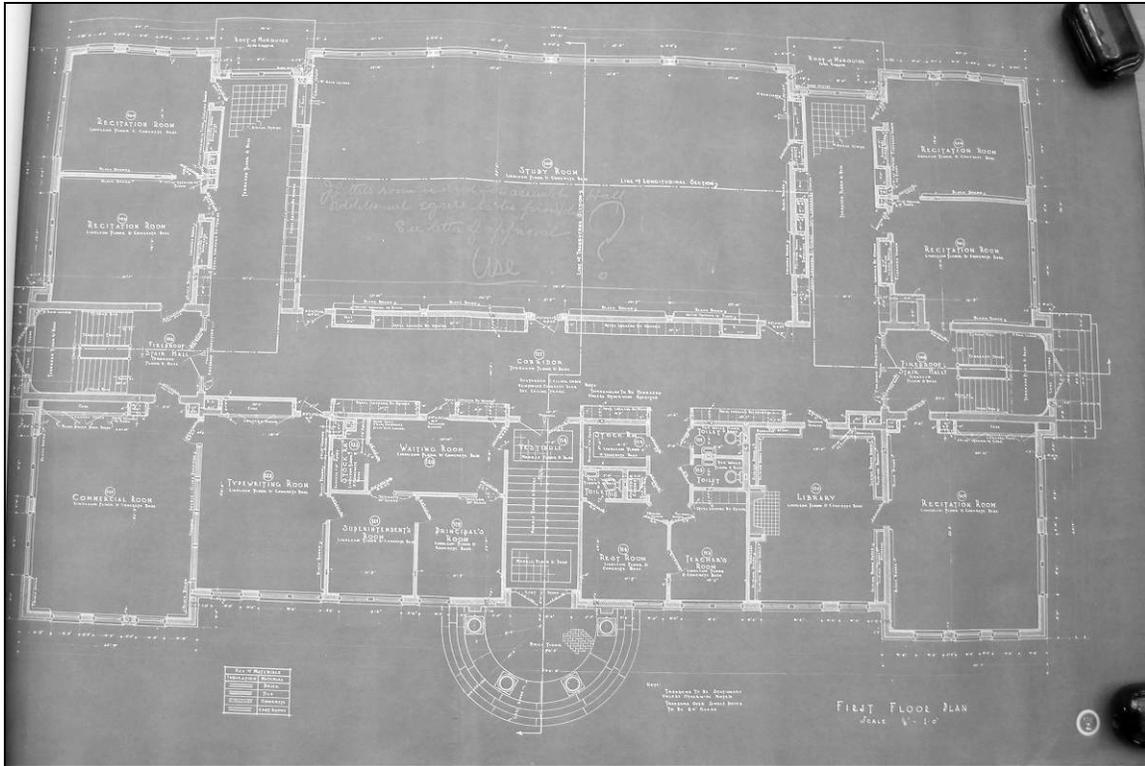


Figure 40) First floor plan, Draper High School, Hopedale, Massachusetts, 6 June 1927. Department of Public Safety, Division of Inspection, Plan Record, Massachusetts Archives.



Figure 41) Spaulding Memorial School, in Townsend, Massachusetts, completed 1932. Photograph from school website.

Another Whitcher design in Massachusetts was the 1932 Spaulding Memorial School, in Townsend, a large school in the Colonial Revival style (Figure 41).⁸⁰ The building accommodated grades one through twelve in one building. The roughly inverted T-shaped, hip-roofed building illustrates Whitcher's work at the height of his career and was distinguished by

⁸⁰ "Townsend's 200th Anniversary Celebration Opens Tomorrow; School Dedication Wednesday," *Fitchburg Sentinel* 25 June 1932.

symmetry and refined classically derived ornament applied in a restrained manner. The front block was two-and-one-half stories and the wide stem was two stories, all set on a raised basement. A five-bay wide, closed pediment, projecting entry pavilion was centered on the façade. Ornament was concentrated on the façade and included Colonial Revival details commonly employed by Whitcher including keystones above the windows and brick quoins. The entry was more elaborate than on many Whitcher designs with its broken scrolled pediment above the doorway. Somewhat distinctive round dormers, more common to the Beaux-Arts style, regularly punctuated the front roof slope. A multi-stage cupola was centered on the roof.



Figure 42) Boardinghouse in Hopedale, Massachusetts. Additions and alterations by Whitcher in 1935 to convert the building into apartments. Photograph by K. Broomer, 2000.

In 1935 Whitcher did another project in Hopedale, the renovation of a late nineteenth-century boardinghouse originally constructed to house unmarried employees of the Draper Company (*Figure 42*). The twelve-bay wide, double-pile deep building had an L-shaped footprint and rose three-and-one-half stories above a raised basement to a gable roof. Whitcher's alterations updated the building stylistically with Colonial Revival detailing and converted the building into apartments, six per floor. Each apartment typically consisted of a living room, two bedrooms, kitchenette, and bathroom. Whitcher removed the nearly full-width front porch and added pedimented entry porches with paired columns at the third and ninth bays on the façade and centered on the side elevation. These entry porches screened new doorways with elliptical fanlights and three-quarter sidelights. Other alterations included the replacement of façade gables and gabled dormers with shed-roofed and gabled dormers and replacement of 2/2 sash with 6/6 sash.⁸¹

⁸¹ Broomer and Friedberg, "Hopedale Village Historic District," 7:12.

Residential Designs

Further research is necessary to better understand this facet of Whitcher's career.⁸² The collection of architectural drawings owned by the New Hampshire Historical Society includes three undated designs by Whitcher for smaller-scaled houses, one in Laconia and two in Lisbon (see above). Evidence suggests, however, these houses were never built. All three drew upon popular forms and styles of the early twentieth century. The most traditional example was the design for the C. W. Tyler House in Laconia. The two-story, hip-roofed house was five bays wide and three rooms deep in the Classical Revival style. Classical entry porches on the façade and one side elevation were supported with Tuscan columns. On the interior, a nearly-full-width transverse hall separated the front and rear tier of rooms. The functional plan featured a parlor and sitting room on either side of the center hall in the front pile. The rear tier of spaces consisted of a kitchen, pantry behind the dog-leg stairs, and the dining room. One end of the transverse hall was separated off to be a den. The second story contained four bedrooms, a bathroom, and a sewing room. The regular fenestration included picture windows on the first-story façade and 9/1 sash above and predominantly on the side elevations at both stories.

More to be researched

There is still much to be learned about Whitcher's prolific career and many of his designs remain unidentified. This monograph is meant to be a beginning, establishing what is known about Whitcher's commissions and correcting any misidentifications to date. It is clear that Whitcher designed numerous institutional structures throughout New Hampshire. As more of New Hampshire's built environment continues to be studied and researchers examine documentary sources including town reports, state annual reports, and newspapers, more Whitcher designs will most likely come to light. One 1927 source attributed "some three hundred important buildings" throughout the state and nationwide, yet so far less than 100 have been established as the work of Whitcher.⁸³ The most challenging facet will be the identification of his residential designs. As additional Whitcher commissions are identified that information should be added to the database included with this monograph and hopefully to be maintained by New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources.

⁸² Whitcher's earliest identified residential commission in Manchester is the 1909 Joseph S. and Minna E. Flynn House at 169 Walnut Street. Mrs. Flynn was the daughter of R. G. Sullivan whose cigar factory Whitcher designed. Personal correspondence with Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, 30 April 2008. The original drawings, though not examined for this monograph, are in the possession of the current owners or their son. Ibid.

⁸³ Pillsbury, *New Hampshire*, 68.

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Correspondence

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Personal correspondence with James L. Garvin, 19 May 2008.

Personal correspondence with Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, 30 April 2008.

Date	Building	Institution	Address	City/Town	DHR or NR	Other
	Bald Peak Country Club???	Lake Winnepesaukee		Melvin Village		source: Pillsbury/not confirmed
	Block [Glover Picture House?]			Lakeport		NHHS drawing
	City Hall and Opera House, renovations???			Rochester		not confirmed
	Howe Residence			Lisbon		not confirmed
	Laundry Building	Grafton County Farm		Haverhill		not confirmed
	Masonic Lodge???			Rochester		not confirmed
	Shepard Block			Franklin		source: Pillsbury/not confirmed
????	Merchant's Bank		Elm/Manchester streets?	Manchester		source: Pillsbury/demolished 1993
1902-03	Bank Block	Lisbon Savings Bank & Trust Co.	Main Street	Lisbon	LIS0106	source: AABN/Lisbon News-Letter
1902-03	Boynton Block			Lisbon	LIS0105	source: AABN
1903? ca.	Horace H. Wood House			Lakeport		specs NHHS
1903??	Beacon Building???		814 Elm Street	Manchester		????/not confirmed
1905	Dormitory alterations	State Normal School		Plymouth		
1905-1907	Thayer Building	New Hampshire State Hospital		Concord		
1906	Dwelling	Holbrook Grocery Company		Woodsville		specs and drawing NHHS
1906-1907	Littleton Hospital		262 Cottage Street	Littleton	LTL0001	Drawings on site
1907	Suncook Schoolhouse		30 High Street	Suncook Village, Pembroke		Annual Report, Pembroke, 1908
1907-1908	Dunlap Block, renovations		967 Elm Street	Manchester	NR	
1908	Administrative Building	New Hampshire State Sanatorium		Glenciff		
1908	Benton?	New Hampshire State Sanatorium		Glenciff		
1908	Boiler House	New Hampshire State Sanatorium		Glenciff		
1908	Boynton Block --Interior alterations	Lisbon Bldg Assoc		Lisbon	LIS0105	NHHS

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1908	Ward Building	New Hampshire State Sanatorium		Glenclyff		
1908-09	Kent Annex addition	New Hampshire State Hospital		Concord		
1908-1909	Peaslee Annex	New Hampshire State Hospital		Concord		
1909	Boiler House and Coal Pocket	State Normal School		Plymouth		
1909	Flynn (Joseph & Minna) House		169 Walnut Street	Manchester		
1909?	R. G. Sullivan Cigar Factory		175 Canal Street	Manchester		unclear
1909-10	Bedford Town Hall		70 Bedford Center Road	Bedford	NR	
1909-10	Laundry	New Hampshire School for the Feeble-Minded		Laconia		
1909-10	Quinby Building	New Hampshire School for the Feeble-Minded		Laconia		Annual Report
1910	Bath Town Hall		Bath Village Green	Bath	Area D	
1910	Lisbon Public School alterations/additions??			Lisbon		NHHS specs/plans--not confirmed built
1910	Warner Town Hall			Warner		
1910-11	Colebrook Academy		Academy Street	Colebrook		
1911	Brown School		Armory Street	Manchester	MAN0137	
1911	Lincoln Chambers Apartments		513 Lincoln/376 Hanover	Manchester		
1911	Maynard School			Manchester		
1912	Fire-Alarm and Building			Manchester		Manchester Annual Report 1912.
1913	Central Heating Plant?	Keene Normal School		Keene		now Keene State College
1913-14	Soldier's Memorial Library			Deerfield		now called the James Philbrick Library
1913-1914	Dormitory for epileptics??	New Hampshire School for the Feeble-Minded		Laconia		
1914	Congregational Church and Parish House			Lisbon		NHHS Drawing
1914	Power House addition	Lisbon Power & Light Company		Lisbon	LIS0103	NHHS drawing and specs/demolished

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1914 ?	Building	New Hampshire School for the Feeble-Minded		Laconia		source: Laconia Democrat 22 Aug 1913
1914 ?	Building	State Normal School		Plymouth		source: Laconia Democrat 22 Aug 1913
1914-16	Portsmouth Armory (demolished 2005)		175 Parrott Avenue	Portsmouth	POR0012/HABS NH State No. 562	
1915-1917	Walker Building, South wing addition	New Hampshire State Hospital		Concord		
1916	Varney School Addition		84 Varney Stret	Manchester	NR?	unclear
1916-18	Hampshire House	The Balsams		Dixville Notch	DIX0001	
1920	Practical Arts High School			Manchester		source: Pillsbury
1922	Cow Barn	State Reform School		Manchester	Area Form SRS/YDC	Plans on file at YDC
1922-23	Manchester Country Club		180 South River Road	Bedford	BED0007	
1923	Millville School		2 Fiske Road	Concord		
1923-1924	Brown Building	New Hampshire State Hospital		Concord		
1925	Masonic Lodge			Manchester	MAN0074	source: Pillsbury
1925-1926	Huntress Hall	Keene Normal School		Keene		now Keene State College/source: Smart, <u>Striving</u>
1925-1927	Capitol Theater/Masonic Complex		South Main Street	Concord	Area X	
1926	Lisbon Public Library			Lisbon	LIS0101	
1926	Public Service Company of New Hampshire		1027 Elm Street	Manchester		source: PSNH drawings
1926-1927	Butterfield Hall	Keene Normal School		Keene		now Keene State College/source: Smart, <u>Striving</u>
1927	General Draper High School		25 Adin Street	Hopedale (Milford), MA	Survey	source: plans, MA archives
1927 by ??	Bell Building??			Manchester		source: Pillsbury
1927 by ??	Bomb Building??			Manchester		source: Pillsbury

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1927?? by	Masonic Temple			Laconia		source: Pillsbury
1927- 1928	Spaulding Gymnasium (now Rhodes Hall)			Keene		now Keene State College/source: Smart, <u>Striving</u>
1928	YWCA (designed with a Boston firm)		72 Concord Street	Manchester	MAN0106	drawings on site
1929- 1930	Tobey Building	New Hampshire State Hospital		Concord		
1930	North Pavillion, renovation	New Hampshire State Hospital		Concord		
1930	Pembrok Fire Station		4 Union Street	Suncook Village, Pembroke		Annual Report, Pembroke, 1930
1931	Chapel, Valley Cemetery		Pine/Auburn streets	Manchester	MAN0032	plans filed ??
1931	Superintendent's House	State Reform School		Manchester	Area Form SRS/YDC	Plans on file at YDC/rebuilding earlier structure
1932	Spaulding Memorial School		1 Whitcomb Street	Townsend, MA		source: Fitchburg Sentinel 25 June 1932
1932?	Almshouse of Coos County			West Stewartstown		
1935	Hopedale House, alterations		37 Dutcher Street	Hopedale (Milford), MA	NR	source: plans, MA archives
1939 ca.	Spaulding High School		130 Wakefield	Rochester		
not built?	George E. Pike House			Lisbon		NHHS Drawing
not built?	Tyler House			Laconia		
not built?	William Merrill House			Lisbon		NHHS Drawing

The following buildings have been incorrectly attributed to Whitcher:

Goudie Block (LIS0141), previously attributed to Whitcher, was designed by A.I. Lawrence, a Berlin architect; Youngsville School (1921), East Manchester; and the Statehouse Annex (1938), Concord.