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Plan of the William Watts Sherman House Library

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Et al.

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Interpretation Plan of the Library

William Watts Sherman House



Figure 1: Historic American Building Survey Photograph.

**Instructor: Elizabeth Delude-Dix
Practices of Historic Preservation
Cultural and Historic Preservation 202
Salve Regina University
Newport, Rhode Island
Spring 2003**

Acknowledgements

We would like to begin by thanking Professor Elizabeth Delude-Dix for her guidance and encouragement in our development of an Interpretive Plan of the William Watts Sherman Library. You challenged us to take charge, to become leaders, and to work as a team. We sincerely appreciate your efforts in leading us outside the classroom; offering us rare opportunities to consult with experts who would be essential to our understanding of this project. For this we are extremely grateful.

We would also like to thank Sister Sheila O'Brien for assisting the class with our archival research. You helped members of the class obtain information crucial to our interpretive plan. With that, we thank you.

Mrs. Eileen Slocum, thank you for sharing your memories and your home with our class. With your unique stories and recollection of your childhood you provided the class with a valuable resource for interpreting the Library, which you experienced first hand as a child. You opened your home to our class and let us see items which once filled the room, as well as other areas of the Watts Sherman House. Thank you for your generosity.

We would like to thank Mr. Samuel G. White for taking time out of his busy schedule to lead our class on a walking tour of New York City, to explore additional examples of buildings designed by McKim, Mead, and White. Thank you for continuing to share your knowledge with us even though the weather was so bad. We had a wonderful time and enjoyed learning about your family and the contributions they made to American architecture. Thank you for that experience.

Mr. John Vaughn, thank you for inviting our class to your conservation laboratory and for showing us the basics about paint analysis and conservation. You helped the class determine how the color of the Library evolved over time, which is arguably the most valuable aspect of our interpretation. This will allow our client to restore the room to its original color. Thank you for sharing your time and expertise with the class.

Finally, we would like to offer thanks to Dan Titus for his leadership, organization, and enthusiasm in producing a very complex project. You used countless hours of your own time outside of the classroom in order to pull together a great project. We would also like to thank you for your constant ability to take charge in every situation and for creating an amazing PowerPoint presentation. We thank you for all your hard work.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Table of Contents	4
Course Information	6
The Authors	6
Statement of Intent	10
Historical Importance of the William Watts Sherman House.....	12
History of Structure.....	13
Architectural Interpretations of the William Watts Sherman House.....	14
Location and History of the William Watts Sherman House	17
Chain of Title Summary for the William Watts Sherman House	24
Chain of Title Worksheet for the William Watts Sherman House	25
Subsequent Occupants.....	28
The Library	30
Importance of the Library to U.S. Architecture	31
Field Research: New York City	32
Architectural Description of the Library	35
Subsequent Uses of the Library.....	42
The William Watts Sherman Library Book Collection.....	43
Documentation	46
Measured Drawings.....	47
Decorative Finish Analysis.....	52
Summary.....	53
Observations.....	53
Door Surrounding Lintel.....	54
Decorative Lattice-Work Panel	55
Inside the Decorative Lattice-Work Panel	56
Verdigris Green.....	57
Chromochronology	58
Analytical Tools and Techniques.....	58
Oral History Synopsis.....	61
Oral Interview Questions: Mrs. Eileen Slocum	63
Transcript of Interview with Mrs. Slocum, 14 April 2003.....	64
Clients, Creators, Context.....	72
Client Background: Short Biography of William Watts Sherman	73
A Brief Biography of McKim, Mead, and White.....	77
History of the Firm - McKim, Mead, and White	78
Houses of McKim, Mead, and White in Newport, Rhode Island	80
A Brief Biography of Henry Hobson Richardson.....	81
The Relationship of William Watts Sherman with Wetmore, Richardson, and White ...	84
Stanford White's Relationship with Richardson, McKim, and Mead.....	85
Nineteenth-Century Historical Context.....	86
Future Recommendations	91

Objectives.....	91
Recommendations for General Improvement.....	91
<i>Flooring</i>	91
<i>Lighting</i>	92
<i>Window Treatments</i>	92
Suggestions for Architectural Finishes	93
Acquisitions	93
<i>Furniture Acquisition</i>	94
<i>Book Collection</i>	95
Use and Access.....	96
Awareness and Education	98
Works Cited.....	99

Course Information

CHP 202-Practices of Historic Preservation Spring 2003 (3 Credits)

In this course, students gain initial field experience in historic preservation. The emphasis is on the investigation, preliminary documentation, and interpretation of buildings, sites, and objects. Students become familiar with terminology used in preservation and develop research and writing skills through a series of projects in and around Newport.

The Authors

Stephanie Barrante, a sophomore from Torrington, CT, is double majoring in Cultural and Historical Preservation and Anthropology, with a concentration in Latin Literature.

Christopher Blanchette, a sophomore from Tiverton RI, is majoring in Cultural and Historical Preservation. He enjoys playing baseball and wandering around Newport looking at all the great architecture.

Jillian Cunningham, a sophomore from Derry, NH is a Cultural and Historical Preservation major.

Katherine Emmitt, a sophomore from Milford, MA, is a Cultural and Historical Preservation major. She has a special interest in historic interiors and interior architecture.

Gerald (Joe) Foley, a freshman from Newport, RI, is the Head of the Circulation Department at the library. A nontraditional student, he is majoring in Cultural and Historical Preservation. He is interested in Colonial Architecture in Newport. Other interests include music and sailing.

Jenna Higgins, a junior originally from Bellingham, MA, is majoring in Cultural and Historical Preservation with a minor in American History. She is currently working as an assistant conservator at Architectural Conservation Services in Bristol, RI. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a master's degree in historic preservation.

Kaithlyn Kayer, a freshman, from Worcester MA, is a double major in Cultural and Historical Preservation and American History, who is interested in pursuing a career in archaeology or teaching history.

Ann Marie Lombardo, a freshman from North Haven, CT, is a Cultural and Historical Preservation major with a minor in Studio Art. She is interested in archaeology, interior design, art (specifically painting), and athletics.

Linnea Manocci, a junior from Manchester, NH, is an American Studies major.

Lois McCormick, a senior from Dighton, MA, is majoring in Cultural and Historical Preservation and has interests in art history, New England cemeteries, and east coast archaeology of the 19th-century.

Meghan Mills, a sophomore from Greenport, NY, is a Cultural and Historical Preservation major whose interests include architectural restoration of New England barns.

Maria Morrissey, a freshman from Worcester, MA, is majoring in Cultural and Historical Preservation. She hopes to pursue a career in interior design.

Blake Nance, a freshman from Newport, RI, is a Cultural and Historical Preservation major.

Kelly Odell, a junior from Coto de Caza, CA, is a Cultural and Historical Preservation major, with a minor in English Communications. Upon graduation she hopes to write for an architectural magazine.

Diane Patrella, a sophomore from Worthington, OH, is a double major in Cultural and Historical Preservation and Art History. She enjoys architectural history.

Michelle Quinn, a sophomore from San Diego, CA, is majoring in Anthropology and Spanish, with a minor in Cultural and Historical Preservation.

Ashley Rainey, a sophomore from Seekonk, MA, is a Cultural and Historical Preservation major with a minor in Anthropology.

Paul Rogers, a junior from Lynnfield, MA, is a Cultural and Historical Preservation major whose favorite color is blue. He likes candlelight dinners, basketball, tennis, and thunderstorms.

Margaret Smith, a senior from Madison, CT, is majoring in Cultural and Historical Preservation. She hopes to use her undergraduate degree, in conjunction with a masters in Asian history, to live and work in Japan in a preservation capacity.

Daniel Titus, a senior, is a native Newporter. He is a Cultural and Historical Preservation major, and both works and teaches in the Information Technologies Department at Salve Regina. He holds a BS in Accounting and a MS in Information Systems Science. Interests include American coastal defense architecture, mills, Revolutionary and Civil War history, and most anything else.

Theresa Wagner, a freshman from San Jose, CA, is a double major in Philosophy and Cultural and Historical Preservation and aspires to become an interior designer.



Figure 2: View looking south-east of western façade, 1876.

Statement of Intent

As a unique room designed by renowned late 19th - early 20th century architect and designer Stanford White, the library of the William Watts Sherman House is considered an exemplary representation of American decorative art and architecture.

The purpose of this report is to analyze and make recommendations to Salve Regina University, the present owner of the building, in regards to the Library. This study will involve, but is not limited to, a survey of the room's history, including information about the designer, former inhabitants, and historical functions. It will draw on a large number of research venues, including historic maps, photographs, illustrations, drawings, diagrams, floor-plans, measured drawings, scientific analysis methods, wills, land evidence records, and other legal documents of previous owners.

In addition, this report will also include an intimate analysis of the room through the utilization of methodologies coming from the emergent field of Material Culture Studies, which will yield information of an evolving culture. As this report will attempt to track the various changes of the room over time, materials and methods of construction will be included.

Furthermore, works from contemporary authors will be consulted in regards to "country living", socioeconomic conditions characteristic of Newport throughout the Gilded Age, architecture, interior design, and book collecting. To gain a basic understanding of the Sherman family history, both a cursory genealogical study and oral history project was undertaken.

We intend to conclude with an interpretation of the room which will include the room's significance and relevance to our own time and place. Our interpretation will form the basis of future recommendations for this room, with goals that are consistent with the preservation and

the possible utility of the room. Ultimately, we will be left with a valuable document that can be employed as an informative tool for research.



Figure 3: View looking north-west of southern façade, circa 1882.

Historical Importance of the William Watts Sherman House

The William Watts Sherman House derives its significance not from a radical break from tradition, but rather, from the masterful distillation and amalgamation of a surprisingly wide range of preexisting design tendency's present in Europe and the United States during the early 1870's. Although American colonial buildings and English manor houses will be shown to have had a substantial influence on the Sherman House design, the final product must be seen as reaching beyond those sources to offer an integrated paradigmatic form that provided a critical source for American Shingle Style architecture.

One of the most original and subsequently influential aspects of the design is the exterior form and treatment of the very broad front gable with its bulging second floor with out English



**Figure 4: West front from the southwest.
HABS photo circa 1970.**

bargeboards. The motif of the gable going almost to the ground is a saltbox motif a powerful image of early American colonial architecture. The distinction between selected surface features and the deeper American colonial influences underlying the overall formal character of the house is a subtle one. It is here in the Williams Watts Sherman House we see the creative synergy that will become the ground breaking work of the McKim, Mead, and White firm, which could very well be the most influential architectural firm in American history.

History of Structure



Figure 5: H. H. Richardson, 17 December 1879. SPNEA Photo.

Architectural Interpretations of the William Watts Sherman House

The William Watts Sherman House, in Newport, Rhode Island, was designed by Henry Hobson Richardson for William Watts Sherman in 1874. The design of the house was based on the work of Richard Norman Shaw, a prominent Scottish architect from the 1850s to the turn of the century. Shaw was best known for his Old English and Queen Anne style designs. Stanford White, of the architectural firm McKim, Mead, and White in New York City, was later commissioned to design renovations for the house, including the Library.

The William Watts Sherman House derives its significance from the masterful distillation and amalgamation of a surprisingly wide range of pre-existing design tendencies present in Europe and the United States during the early 1870's. Richardson also drew his inspiration and details from English, Continental, and American vernacular traditions.

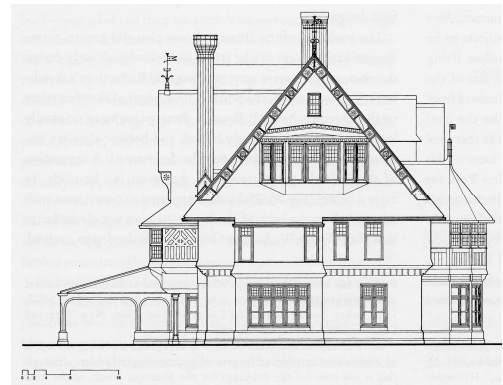


Figure 6: South elevation as built in 1876.

Although American colonial buildings and English manor houses have had a substantial influence on the design of the William Watts Sherman House, the final product can be seen as reaching beyond those sources to offer an integrated paradigmatic form that provided a significant source for American Shingle Style architecture.

In early renderings, Richardson experimented with a large hall at the back of the house. But as the design evolved, a through hall, extending from the front of the house to the back, was adopted. Various configurations for the rooms surrounding this hall were attempted until

Richardson worked out a configuration with the hall, library, parlor, and dining room arranged as in the final design.

Richardson began his elevation study with a tall, dominate pyramidal roof. Such a design allowed Richardson to achieve an initial resolution of the volumetric composition of the house, while still serving as a vehicle for further volumetric and elevation design development.

Richardson's early sketches portray a generic massing with a tall-hipped roof, vaguely medieval in character, but offer no hint that a Shavian design was intended. Later, the decision was made to draw from Shaw's work in England for most of the exterior detailing of the house. It is not known whether Richardson or Stanford White introduced the inspiration. Virtually all aspects of the Shavian detailing bear the mark of creative borrowing that has since been associated with the White.

One of the most original, and subsequently influential, aspects of the house's design is the exterior form and treatment of the very broad front gable, with its extended second floor lacking English bargeboards. This front gable is, for the most part, unlike Shaw's published work to the beginning of 1875. A close examination of the front gable shows it to be very different from the rest of the house. During construction it was decided to extend the gable to the south.



Figure 7: West façade showing horizontal banding and extended south gable.

This required substantial

alterations such as an asymmetrical move of the windows of the living hall and the bedroom above. The horizontal banding of the gable was also used to conceal the varying floor heights of

the servant's quarters that lay behind it. The deeply slanted roofline of the gable is reminiscent of a New England saltbox, serving as a powerful image of Early American colonial architecture. The gable design as finally executed reveals other influences drawn from American colonial architecture. For example, the silhouette of the gable emphasizes the second-story overhang or "garrison" projection another commonly repeated form from Early American colonial houses. In addition, the design of the front gable is curiously missing wide bargeboards, a frequent feature in Shaw's English manorial designs. The front gable also displays the stripped down, shingled roof wall connection that was a fundamental characteristic of the New England vernacular architecture.

The distinction between selected surface features and the deeper American colonial



Figure 8: Whitehall (ca. 1725) showing large gable and use of wood shingles.

influences underlying the overall formal character of the gable is a subtle one. This distinction is made more complex by the intimate linkage of American colonial architecture to English and Continental vernacular precedents, such as the use of wood, an "American" material, rather than ceramics, in the detail work of the gable as in true Shavian buildings.

Location and History of the William Watts Sherman House

The William Watts Sherman House, designed by H. H. Richardson, is located at the City of Newport's Tax Assessor's plat 36, lot 96, known as 2 Shepard Avenue, in Newport County, Newport, Rhode Island. This unique building is included in the Ochre Point/Cliffs Historic District of the Nation Register of Historic Places. The property is bounded by Shepard Avenue on the north, Victoria Avenue on the South, properties of Salve Regina University and Agnes R. Brandy on the east, and property of The Alliance for Art and Architecture (Laurence and Judy Cutler) on the west.

The bounds from the last property transaction, as recorded in Land Evidence book 305, page 343, are:

Northerly on Shepard Avenue 521.2 ft
Easterly partly by land now or formerly Louise Ann Kazanjian and partly
by land now or formerly of Thomas Brady 300 ft
Southerly on Victoria ave 528.2 ft
Westerly by other land of this grantor designated as lot number 2 on the
hereinafter mentioned plat 300 ft containing 157,410 sq ft more or
less.

In addition, the former Wetmore home, Chateau-sur-Mer, is located directly across



Figure 9: Birds-Eye-View of Newport, RI. Map. New York, NY: Galt & Hoy, 1878.

Shepard Avenue from the William Watts Sherman House.

The location of the Wetmore home is important in-so-far-as the land on which the William Watts Sherman House stands was historical Wetmore land. This tract was, along with the surrounding land, purchased by William Shepard Wetmore, a prosperous

China trade merchant, in 1853 from Mary L. Ruggles. Mr. William Wetmore constructed Chateau-sur-mer and lived there until his death in 1862. The house, land, and majority of his fortune then passed to his son, George Peabody Wetmore; excepting an allowance for his daughter Annie Derby Wetmore. Mr. George Wetmore, under the instructions of his late fathers will, transfers for the sum of \$1.00 approximately six acres of land to his sister.

On July 5, 1871, approximately six months after the transfer of land to Ms. Wetmore, she married Mr. William Watts Sherman, an M.D. and partner in the family banking business, Duncan, Sherman and Company of New York City.

After a few years of marriage, in September of 1875, William and Annie Sherman commissioned a new home on the land that was given to Annie by her father. The wife, as was common in the day, was the driving force behind the construction of the home. Construction began in 1875 and was completed a year later, 1876. The final cost for construction of the home was in excess of \$50,000. The Sherman family moved into their new summer home in May 1876. As a summer residence, it was utilized for the season only, with off seasons spent at their home in New York. When the home was first built, reporters were unable to find a name for the style of the house. It would later come to be called the Queen Anne or, much later, “shingle style”. The home has been compared



Figure 10: Elevation Study by Stanford White.

to the work of English architect Richard

Norman Shaw, especially the Surrey manor houses in England. William Jordy, an architectural historian at Brown University, has said the house is “a key monument in the history of modern

architecture and known as such throughout the world... more than any other house, it inaugurates what became a uniquely American tradition of domestic design culminating in the houses of Frank Lloyd Wright,”(Closter-Godoy 1). As designed, the house was rather small, at its largest 53 feet east-west and 81 north-south. The contractors were the Norcross Brothers of Worcester, MA, a firm well known in mansion construction of the Gilded Age period. It is believed that the house was framed in New Jersey and then transported to Newport for assembly.

In 1881, just 5 short years after the completion of the house, the first of many additions was completed. This addition, carried out by Stanford White, of the firm McKim, Mead, and

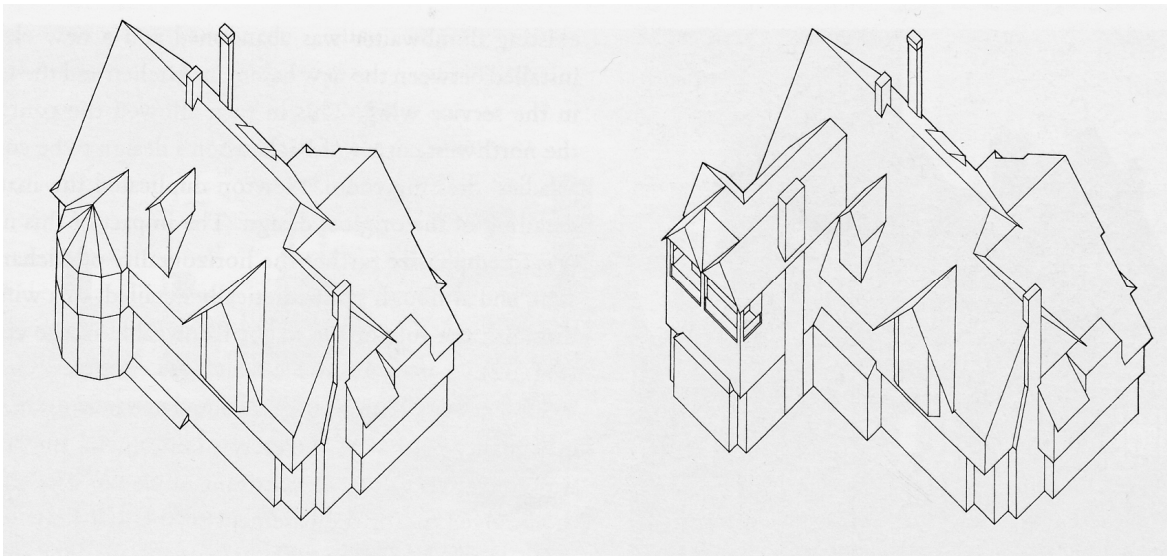


Figure 11: View of 1876 house (left) and 1881 addition by White (right).

White, change the east-facing bay-windowed library to a somewhat larger square-based projecting gable. According to the *Newport Mercury* on 14 May 1881, the cost was “some \$10,000”, in actuality, it was much closer to \$18,000. Although White was, by all accounts, one of the principal designers of the house, it is rather interesting that Richardson was not contracted to design the additions. Richardson was at the time, however, involved in a number of large projects, including Austin Hall at Harvard, Crane Library, Higginson’s House, and the Ames Gate lodge, all in the Boston area. It is with this addition by White that the library was moved

from the south-east corner of the house (at the bay-window) to the south-west corner, its present location. In essence, this addition switched the locations of the drawing room and library, increasing the size of both rooms. It also gave the Sherman's larger "chambers" on the upper stories. It is believed that this is the time period in which the room acquired its very striking Aesthetic Movement design style using the green and gold color pattern.

Three years later, in 1884, after 13 years of marriage, Annie Sherman died of pneumonia. Mr. William Watts Sherman, however, remarried a year later, in Newport, on October 7, 1885. This marriage was to Ms. Sophia Augusta Brown. Ms. Brown was, like Ms. Wetmore who preceded her, from a prominent family. Her father was John Carter Brown, a book collector, philanthropist, and one of the greatest benefactors to Brown University.

Life in Newport in the Gilded Age was changing and so too would the Sherman House. In 1890, the Newport architect Dudley Newton designed yet another addition to the south-east side of the building. This time, the addition extended the 1881 parlor designed by White into a ballroom, as well as increasing the size of the rooms above. This 1890 addition is still intact in a relatively unadulterated form, preserving an early Gilded Age ballroom addition.

It was not until 1903-1904, 12 years later, that the physical layout and design of the house would change again. In 1903, the Sherman's once again contracted Dudley Newton to substantially increase the size of the north-facing service wing, which was to that date



Figure 12: View showing addition by Dudley Newton.

unaffected by previous enlargement campaigns. The addition, although continuing the pre-existing north gable, altered the flow of the house by sheer scale. Instead of a vertical massing as originally designed, the house took on its more horizontal massing, which is what we see today as we look at the west façade. This addition moved many domestic functions to the basement, added service quarters, storage, required installation of a new elevator and dumbwaiter, and included space for a ladies' dressing room.

The home underwent no further major alterations while under ownership of the Sherman family. With the death of William Watts Sherman in January 1912, and the subsequent return of his body to his Newport burial plot in Island Cemetery, Mrs. Sherman continued to remain in residence during the "Season". With her eventual passing, in June of 1947, the William Watts Sherman House soon passed out of family hands (after 4 years in the hands of the estate lawyers).

In August 1951 it was "granted" to the Baptist Home of Rhode Island for use as a home for the aged, having been opened as such since the previous year. As can be imagined, interior changes were made to adapt the house to its new life, such as movement of some service



Figure 13: The Watts Sherman House as the Baptist Home.

functions out of the basement, division of second and third floor space into rooms for residents, and handicap accessibility issues. On the exterior, a substantial addition, or more

appropriately, wing, was completed in 1963 at a cost estimated by contemporary sources to be \$150,000; three times the original cost of the home. This one story (plus walk in basement) easterly facing wing is designed in the post-modern style and finished with brick. As designed, it was intended for assisted living, resembling a hospital ward. In addition, as one might expect with a retirement home, the Baptist Home continued the 1903 elevator in the service wing to the third floor. This necessitated piercing the original north-south roof gable with an elevator shaft, which is visible to this day.

Having outgrown the space afforded by the home, the Baptists sold the property to Salve Regina College (now University) in January 1982 for a reported \$300,000. The university has made a number of changes to both the interior and exterior. The interior has been adapted to dormitory life, with modernization of rooms, baths, and social spaces. The exterior has



Figure 14: Showing later additions by the Baptist Home and Salve Regina College.

experienced a couple of relatively unsympathetic additions in the 1980's to the east façade, turning a rather clean façade into a relatively comical collection of projection, gables, and bay windows.

Though the additions of the 1960's and 1980's tend to break with the spirit of the house, it still retains its essential form from the days of William and Sophia Sherman.



Figure 15: The Sherman House today as a dorm. Photo by N. LaPolice.

Chain of Title Summary for the William Watts Sherman House

In 1853, Ms. Mary L. Ruggles sold a large tract of property to William S. Wetmore for the consideration of \$28,545.18. This large tract ran from Bellevue Avenue to the Cliffs, and from LeRoy Avenue to Ruggles Avenue. At his death in 1869, William S. Wetmore's land was passed to his son George P. Wetmore, with the exception of a lot approximately 4 acres in size, which was given to his daughter, Annie Wetmore Sherman, in 1870 for the consideration of \$1.00. Annie Wetmore married Mr. William Watts Sherman and, a few years later, in September 1875, commissioned a house to be built on the lot. In 1878, Annie Wetmore Sherman passed, and the house was put in the care of her trustees, George P. Wetmore, William Watts Sherman, and Stephen Williams. Annie wrote a clause in her will granting her husband the home, with the exception that if he were to remarry after her death, he would not inherit the estate. Sherman did remarry; a Ms. Sophia Augusta Brown. In December of 1890, Stephen Williams, one of Annie's trustees, had passed, causing William Man to take his place. Then in December of 1890, Annie's trustees sold the house to William Watts Sherman for the consideration of \$100,000.00. In 1908, William Watts Sherman transferred the house to his wife, Sophia. In July of 1947, Sophia has passed and the estate was left to her trustees, Frank W. Matteson, Robert Hale Ives Goddard, and Eugene Kingman. Sophia's trustees later sold the house to John J. Egan and James Ryan for \$10.00 and other valuable considerations in March of 1951. During that same year, the house was sold again to Franklin Hoy and Edward Dunn for \$10.00 and other valuable considerations. In August 1951, Hoy and Dunn granted the house to The Baptist Home of Rhode Island. Finally, in January of 1982, the house was sold to Salve Regina College for \$10.00 and other valuable considerations.

Chain of Title Worksheet for the William Watts Sherman House

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
305/843	Baptist Home Of RI	Salve Regina College	\$10.00 o.v.c.

Northerly on Shepard Avenue 521.2 ft
 Easterly partly by land now or formerly Louise Ann Kazanjian and partly by land now or formerly of Thomas Brady 300 ft
 Southerly on Victoria ave 528.2 ft
 Westerly by other land of this grantor designated as lot number 2 on the hereinafter mentioned plat 300 ft containing 157,410 sq ft more or less

Instrument signed 11 January 1982, recorded 11 January 1982 by William Martin.

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
176/96	Franklin D. Hoy Edward Dunn	Baptist Home of RI	Grant

Southeasterly corner of said lot at a point in said Victoria Avenue and at the southeasterly corner of parcel number three on said plat said point being 339.3 ft, westerly from westerly line of Lawrence Avenue as measured along the northerly line of said Victoria Avenue. Thence westerly bounding southerly on said Victoria Avenue 528.2 ft to parcel number 2 on said plat, thence northerly bounding westerly on the last named lot 300 ft to Shepard Avenue. Thence easterly bounding northerly on said Shepard Avenue 520.2 ft to said parcel number 3 on said plat; thence southerly bounding easterly on the last named lot 300 ft to place of beginning.

Instrument signed 1 August 1951, recorded 3 August 1951.

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
175/97	John J. Egan James Ryan	Franklin Hoy Edward Dunn	\$10.00 o.v.c.

Bounds same as previous

Instrument signed 14 April 1951, recorded 16 April 1951 by Robert Shea.

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
174/580	Goddard, Kingman, Mattheson, Trustees	Egan and Ryan	\$10.00 o.v.c.

Same as previous

Instrument signed 3 March 1951, recorded 5 March 1951.

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
PBR119/1	Sophia Augusta Sherman's Will		

Appoints Frank W. Matteson, Robert Hale Ives Goddard, and Eugene Kingman as executors and authorizes them to sell real estate.

Signed 14 July 1947.

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
91/432	William Watts Sherman	Sophia Augusta Sherman	not given

Instrument signed 7 December 1908.

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
PBR 37/614	Annie Wetmore Sherman's Will		

Names William Watts Sherman, George Peabody Wetmore, and Stephen Williams as executors and trustees.

"Should her husband (William Watts Sherman) remarry after her death he does not inherit real estate."

Instrument signed 18 November 1878.

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
63/49	George P. Wetmore William Man as Trustees of Annie Sherman, deceased	William Watts Sherman	\$100,000.00

Executors: William Watts Sherman, George P. Wetmore, and Stephen Williams, who has since died. Then appointed William Man to replace Stephen Williams.

Instrument signed 22 December 1890.

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
42/45	George P. Wetmore	Annie Wetmore	\$1.00

Instrument signed 10 January 1870.

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
PBR 21/295	The Will of William Sheperd Wetmore	George P. Wetmore	

William S. Wetmore leaves his real estate to George P. Wetmore, his son.

Instrument signed 13 December 1860.

Book/Page	Grantor	Grantee	Consideration
31/233	Mary L. Ruggles	William S. Wetmore	\$28,545.18

Instrument signed 3 October 1853, recorded 7 October 1853.

Subsequent Occupants

Since its construction in 1875-1876 there have been several occupants of the William Watts Sherman House, beginning with William Watts Sherman and his first wife, Ms. Annie Derby Wetmore, who had the house designed and built for them. They had one daughter, Georgette Wetmore, born on July 13, 1872, who resided there. As the house was used only as a summer “cottage”, it would have been occupied in the off season by a caretaker. During the season, it would have also been occupied by members of the domestic staff, such as maids, cooks, butler, and other inside staff. Their quarters would have been on the third floor and above the service wing on the second floor.



Figure 16: Sherman family coat-of-arms, the only private family to own the house.

After the untimely death of Mrs. Annie Sherman in 1884, Mr. Sherman remarried, this time to Ms. Sophia Augusta Brown on October 7, 1885. His new bride moved into the house and they soon had two daughters in quick succession, Irene Muriel Augusta, born June 9, 1887 and Mildred Constance, born July 3, 1888.

When William Watts Sherman died in 1912, Sophia Sherman remained in the house. She was the only occupant, excepting the domestic help and guests, until her death in 1947. After her death, the home was once again in caretaker status until the estate could be settled and litigation dealt with. During this time no family members inhabited the house.

In August 1951, the property was sold to the Baptist Home of Rhode Island and used as a nursing home. At this time so many new occupants came “Home” to the William Watts Sherman House that an addition had to be added.

In 1982, after outgrowing its home, the Board of Directors of the Baptist Home sold the land to Salve Regina College (now University) to use as dormitory space. Today, the university still uses this home to house the many men and women seeking a higher education.

The Library



Figure 17: Looking at east and partial north wall, library.

Importance of the Library to U.S. Architecture

The Sherman House, and in particular our study of the Library, derives its significance not from a radical break from tradition, but rather, from the masterful distillation and amalgamation of a surprisingly wide range of pre-existing design tendencies present in Europe and the United States during the early 1870's.

The Library inherits its design from many sources such as classicism, oriental, Arts and Crafts and others. These seemingly disparate elements have been fused in the room to create a harmonious whole. Many of the design features have been altered or used in totally new ways. For example, flanking the bay is a fluted pilaster in the classical style used to create a visual separation. Unlike a traditional pilaster, which would stop upon reaching the ceiling, these two continue along the ceiling connecting to the opposite side. This transformation of conventional ideas occurs throughout the room. This room is a roadmap to what the work of Stanford White and the firm of McKim, Mead, and White will become.



Figure 18: Fluted pilaster in library bay.

Field Research: New York City

In preparation for our interpretation of the McKim, Mead, and White Library at the William Watts Sherman House, we traveled to New York City for a field trip hosted by Samuel G. White, the great-grandson of Stanford White. During our visit we were able to observe examples of White's early accomplishments such as the 7th Division Armory Tiffany Room of 1880, as well as later works such as the Metropolitan Club of 1894, The Harvard Club 1902-1915, and the Payne Whitney House Venetian Room of 1906.

All of these buildings have characteristics and similarities that became signature elements of White's work. White creates a sense of drama and intrigue in every interior and this helps to define his work. By combining many elements, he strives for a beautiful ensemble of architecture, painting, sculpture and decoration to create a fully coordinated interior. In all of these examples, some of the most common occurrences are highly decorative fireplaces, ornate ceilings, geometric forms, elements from nature and classical elements.

When comparing the William Watts Sherman Library to the interiors of our site visit to New York, there are numerous examples of earlier ideas influencing interiors that White composed later in his career. One such example of this is the highly ornate Venetian Room at the Payne Whitney House on Fifth Avenue. In this room the fireplace, designed by White, uses a shape that is



Figure 19: Venetian Room in former Payne Whitney House.

reminiscent of the recessed area above the fireplace in the William Watts Sherman Library. The

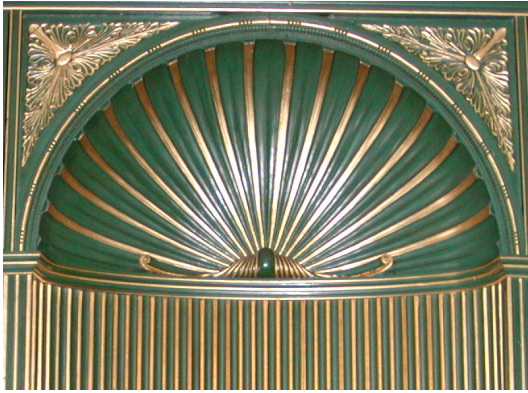


Figure 21: Scollop shell design, Sherman Library.

Library fireplace.

Strong geometric patterns are another common theme in Whites work. His skill at arranging geometric pieces to form intricate ceilings is apparent in the William Watts Sherman Library with its white maze-like pattern and inset brass plaques.

Ceilings seem to play an integral part in the formation of White's interiors and it is clear that no surface goes undecorated, including the ceiling. An early example of this is the Tiffany Room at the Armory. Here White paints intricate



Figure 20: 7th Armory ceiling.

designs on to a beamed and coffered ceiling and it is as if every inch of space has some form of ornamentation. The area is filled with geometric formations of figure 8's, Celtic knots, zigzags, dots and dashes, all painted with silver like aluminum paint.



Figure 22: Harvard Club library ceiling.

In contrast to the busy and highly whimsical ceiling in the Armory, is the Harvard Club interior. In this space, White has given the club a serious, serene look. Geometric forms are again used, but now in

shape is quite similar although in the Venetian Room, White has eliminated the shell design and continues the curve of the niche all the way down into the fireplace mantle, curving it as well. This floor to ceiling curve is quite striking. Built during the high classical period, it echoes earlier work and is a unique version of the William Watts Sherman

a highly organized style reminiscent of Greek architecture. Octagon shapes with decorative rosettes are evenly spaced along the ceiling giving it a strong order.

Another ceiling worth noting is that of the Venetian Room. Here, White uses elements from nature as he did in the William Watts Sherman Library. However, here he uses porcelain



Figure 23: Venetian Room ceiling, former Payne Whitney

flowers for ornamentation. The ceiling is an intricate and delicate intertwining of flowers woven through a three dimensional decorative lattice work screen and is highly decorative. This room is a fine example of White's ability to assemble architecture, painting, sculpture and decoration to create a fully coordinated interior.

This trip was beneficial in showing the evolution of White's style as he transitioned throughout his career and it is interesting to see how one structure was influenced by another.

Architectural Description of the Library

West Wall

In the center of the west wall is a fireplace. The fireplace is encased in a marble frame, approximately one foot on all sides. At the top of the fireplace opening is a tubular piece of metal, possibly used to hold a retractable fire screen. There is currently a much more modern, free standing screen in its place. Immediately, surrounding the marble is a simple beveled cornice with a bead and rod theme. A green and gold cornice frames this strip. Above the fireplace is a mantle supported by four Egyptian style brackets. The over-mantle consists of a



Figure 24: West wall, Library.

recessed mirror surrounded by a gold frame. Above the mirror is a small shelf leading into a semicircular recessed space with gold scalloped lines running up to a fan shaped pattern on top. This is a Second Empire motif of Egyptian lotus. This dome is cornered by identical floral patterns that are divided into three triangular sections. On either side of this mirror and fan are three sets of identical panels. The first panel, situated on either side of the mirror, consists of a large rectangular center with four L shaped squares surrounding the corners and two smaller

rectangles on either side, both of these panels make up doors to hidden cupboards containing two shelves each. These panels are a Chinese Chippendale pattern. Moving up one panel, separated from the one below by a thin piece of cornice, is a mirror with a gold diamond and octagon shaped lattice, topped by a rococo semicircular fan motif. The mirror portion opens revealing a cupboard, these are also Chinese Chippendale. The third, and topmost panel, is a geometric pattern consisting of a center square with four L shaped corners. This panel is also separated from the second by a thin cornice. Encasing the entire fireplace and over-mantle is a set of three strips running from the floor all the way to the ceiling. Beginning with the one closest to the fireplace, is a plain green panel running up about two feet from the floor. This leads into an apparently vernacular fish scale pattern running about three feet higher and topped by a fluted Roman style pilaster. This is capped with a Corinthian leaf motif and cornice. Above this is the same leaf motif repeated to the ceiling. An innovation on the traditional column cap, this elongating the design is totally original. Moving your eye to the middle panel, which includes a concave semicircle with fluting leading upwards to a large three dimensional shell, you may notice the similarities to the famous colonial Townsend and Goddard furniture firm's signature motif. The next outward section begins from the floor and runs up about five feet with a Greek key gold pattern. From there to the ceiling is a mirrored lattice. The third and final section is an interpretation of an Asian screen of wood running from floor to ceiling backed by a mirror. This screen is broken at three intervals by a thin cornice. Surrounding the room, where the walls meet the ceiling, is a thick cornice with a dental pattern. On either side of the fireplace is a pair of windows. Directly below the ceiling molding is a mirror with a spindle lattice over it, which is also used to create a screen effect, which may pay homage to handy craft with an Asian flair. The spindle pattern resembles three rows of books, centered by a round wagon-wheel shape.

Below this is a nine-paneled frosted glass window, which may be referencing colonial-era windows with their small lights and imperfect glass. This is directly above a plain double hung window, with a contemporary storm window behind it. There is a set of three paneled shutters, which fold into side pockets as well. Covering all of this is a set of modern white drapes hung with metal rings.

North Wall

Facing the north wall, working from left to right.

Bookshelves cover the majority of this wall. A pair of identical single-width pocket-doors breaks the wall into three sections. The first being an inglenook seat with bookshelves above and around it. The second, and middle, section is covered by bookshelves, cabinets, and a glass-fronted Chinese's Chippendale pattern cabinet. The third section is also covered by bookshelves and cabinets.



Figure 25: North wall, Library.

Doors

The doors are typical side pocket doors, also painted green. They have four rectangular raised panels two over two on the bottom half of the door. At the top are three similar raised square panels. Above the doors are large semicircular panels with a fan shaped pattern. Woven into the fan pattern are four Egyptian lotuses. This is flush with the room's walls, while the door itself is set back into the wall by about a foot and a half. Beneath this fan panel are two marine volute brackets in the upper corners.

On the left side of the left door is a seat built into the wall. It is covered with light brown/tan leather. The back of the seat is fastened to the wall by a decorative nail. Surrounding the seat are series of bookshelves. Set between the two doors are the bookshelves, with a glass cabinet in between. Beneath the cabinet is a row of five, larger protruding cabinets. On each cabinet door is the Chippendale rectangle and square pattern. The center glass cabinet, containing two shelves and a teacup set, has the Chippendale diamond and square pattern with, again, gold lattice over the glass. This is topped by a row of the dental pattern cornice and the fan pattern.

East Wall

Centering this wall is a pair of double-wide pocket-doors, with the same pattern as the



north wall doors. On either side of the doors is a pair of gold sconces. Above the pediment is a green shelf lined with gold with a water pipe and floodlight running through it. Bookshelves cover the rest of the wall.

Figure 26: East wall, Library.

South Wall

From left to right

There is a window, mimicking the west wall windows; the difference being that it is two windows separated both vertically and horizontally by a riveted strip of wood. Capping all of this is the mirror and spindle pattern. Covering the window is a set of white drapes. Moving right is a set of cabinets and bookshelves, and two centered, yet separated, glass cabinets, all identical to the north wall with the exception of the glass cabinets. These differ in that, these have glass panes with square and oval shaped gold piping breaking up the glass. Topping this is



Figure 27: South wall, Library.

a cornice and a bell shaped rococo fan. On either side of the bookcase is a pair of gold sconces. To the right of the bookcase is a recessed bay, approximately six feet deep and ten feet wide. Six windows run across the back of the bay and one at each end, facing east and west

respectively. Again, these windows

are the same as the others. Although there are no shutters, the drapes are the same as the rest. At the base of the six windows there is a heater. A fluted pilaster running from floor to ceiling and across, encase the frame of the protrusion, yet another innovation the concept of taking the pattern of a column and running it across the ceiling to connect the two walls, creating a surprise for any viewer while segregating the room parts. On the west side within the bay, is a book

pulpit protruding from the wall. Within the bay there are two different types of paneling. On the east and west walls, closest to the room, is a Z patterned panel from floor to ceiling, and below the windows at the back of the protrusion is a simple strait vertical pattern. A pipe runs across the top of this nook, flush with the room's wall. On top of all this, is that same spindle, wagon wheel and mirror, as above all the other windows. Moving right is the same seat built into the wall as the north wall, surrounded by bookshelves.

Ceiling

The ceiling consists of a series of raised and recessed geometrical shapes with square colored gold medallions. There is a variation of three different patterns that go throughout the ceiling's center. Each medallion is encompassed by twelve gold dots. Given the likeness between the ceiling pattern and the cabinet designs, it is likely Chinese Chippendale in origin, with the exception of the gold colored medallions, which have more of a Craftsman feel.

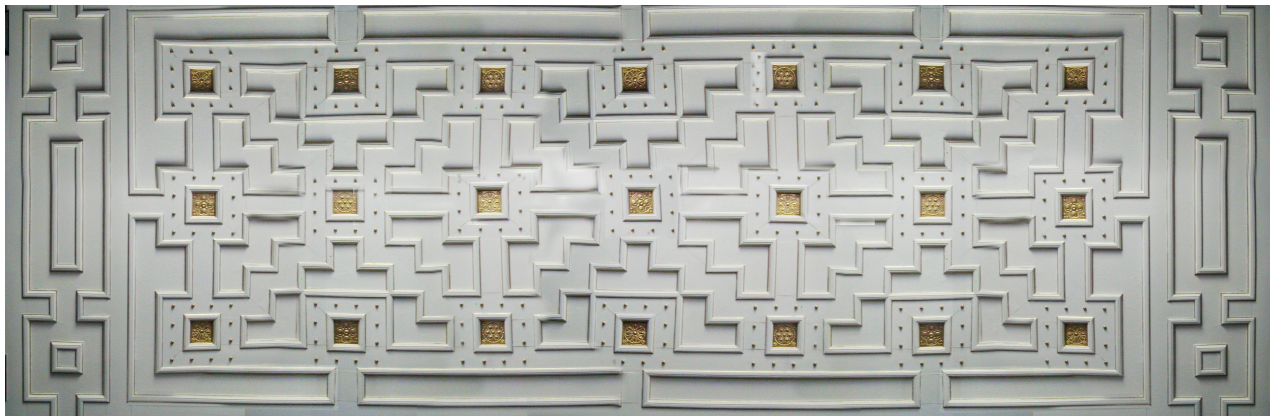
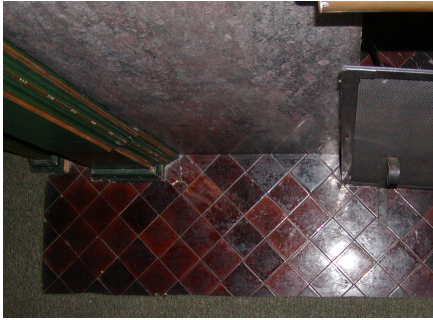


Figure 28: Ceiling design, Library.

Floor



**Figure 29: Fireplace tile floor,
Library.**

At the base of the fireplace there is a diamond shaped, rust and brown, glazed porcelain, fireproof tile. The rest of the floor is a herringbone wood floor covered by a green rug. Further investigations are necessary to properly interpret the floor.

Subsequent Uses of the Library

Throughout its history, the William Watts Sherman Library has had few, though substantial, changes. Prior to its renovation, the room was used as a parlor, not a library. The original design of the house included a polygonal bay window off the southwestern end of the house. In 1881, Sanford White began the first of several modifications to the house. White added a 3-story wing to the east side of the house extending to the south. This addition required the complete removal of the polygonal bay on the south side of the house, which accounted for

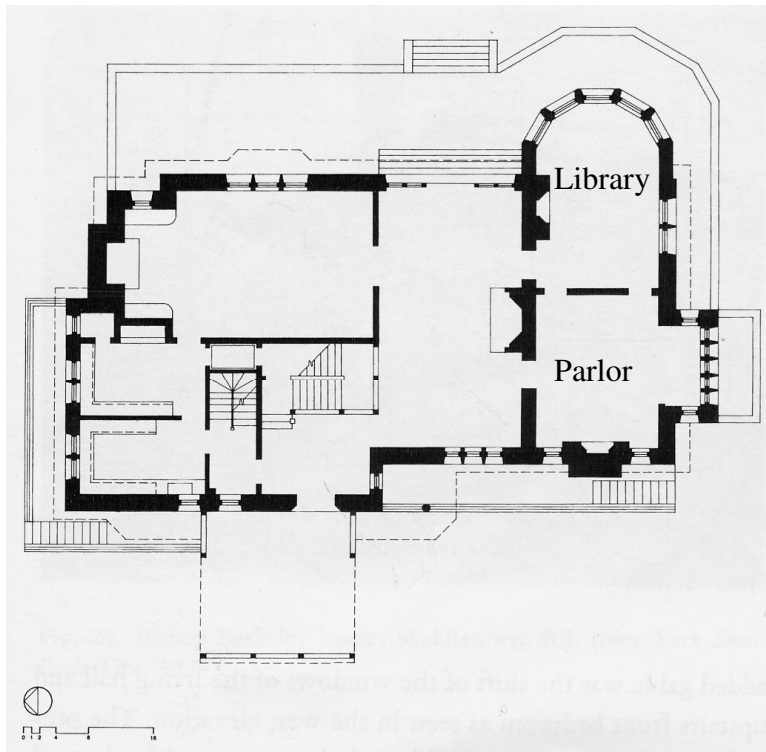


Figure 30: 1876 floor plan showing library in original location.

location, as does the somewhat smaller library.

much of the light entering the main hall. This is part of the reason the hall is currently so dark. White also reversed the location of the parlor and the library, enlarging both rooms. Once again, several years later, to accommodate the growing popularity of ballroom dancing, a ballroom was added. This extension caused the reduction of the library. Today, the parlor remains in its original

The William Watts Sherman Library Book Collection

The Sherman book collection that once graced the shelves of the 1881 library addition by Stanford White, was dispersed per order of Mrs. Sherman's will in 1947. In the will, it was divided into two collections, which are now owned by Mrs. Eileen Slocum and Mrs. Noreen Drexel, both living in Newport on Bellevue Avenue and both being descendants (grand daughters) of Augusta Sophia Brown and William Watts Sherman. In her interview with the students of this class, Mrs. Slocum shed much light on the history of the collection.

Recalling her childhood, Mrs. Slocum remembered the library being used only occasionally, but being filled with books. The collection seemed to be of rare books, books written by friends, and highly ornate books with gold binding. Mrs. Slocum referred to the library as "a proper library" that also contained many of the classics such as *Ivanhoe*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and *A Tale of Two Cities*.

Mr. and Mrs. Sherman appeared to be admirers of great literature and amassed a rather large collection. The students of the class were fortunate enough to be invited to Mrs. Slocum's home to view her portion of the William Watts Sherman collection. Having seen the collection, it can be confirmed that there are many outstanding books with beautiful bindings but, because the collection is large, we were unable to identify the classics that Mrs. Slocum referred to. We did,



Figure 31: Foreign language books from Sherman Library.

however, notice that there were many books that appeared to be in foreign languages. A possible accounting for this may be the fact that Mr. Sherman spoke seven languages and, additionally, that most people studied Latin and romance languages during this time in history. It is

therefore understandable that foreign language books are contained in this collection (Slocum interview).

According to Marjorie Akins' article in *Learning from Things*, collections can be analyzed to reveal motivating forces behind the formation of a collection (Kingery 104). Put more simply, people collect for a reason, and I believe that this is important in the overall interpretation of the library. A collection such as this reveals the personal tastes, aesthetics, societal, and cultural norms of the time period.

An important collection of rare and old books expensively bound, reveals the overall wealth of the Sherman's (Slocum interview). It shows the importance of education and

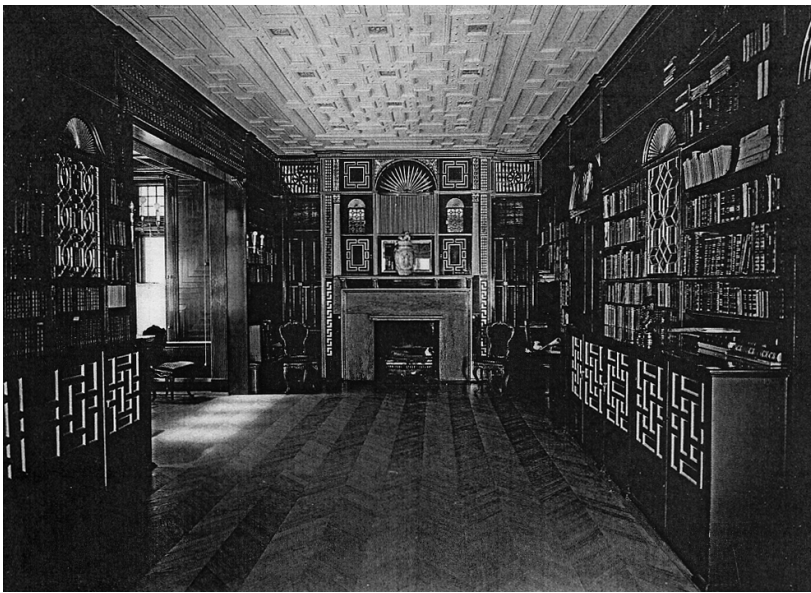


Figure 32: Sherman Library circa 1949.

worldliness with the inclusion of great writers, classic titles, books in foreign language, and books on travel (Slocum interview). Housed in an amazing setting, the museum quality collection makes an important statement aesthetically about how the Sherman's preferred to live.

Newport cottages of that time were important places to entertain and socialize and, as such, were extensions of who you were and served as a reflection of your success in life and society. A library room as magnificent as this would be expected to house an equally impressive and

beautiful collection of books. As we see, the book collection was so important to Mrs. Sherman, that she specifically assigns it to family members in her will, stating:

I give and bequeath to my daughters, Irene wife of Lawrence Lewis Gilliespie, and Mildred, wife of Ralph Francis Julian Stoner, Lord Camoys, all the household furniture and (sic) effects owned by me at my decease, wheresoever the same may be including therein all my books, pictures, plate and silver-ware, china, glass, linen and other household effects [...]. (PBR119:2)

When analyzing the collection that was housed in the William Watts Sherman Library, it



Figure 33: Part of Watts Sherman collection at Slocum home

is essential that we understand the possible motivating forces behind the formation of the collection as well as understanding the time in which it was formed. Newport's Gilded Age, with all of its splendor, became an important destination for America's wealthy families. With these families came important architects such as Stanford White who could design lavish spaces to house their important collections.

Documentation

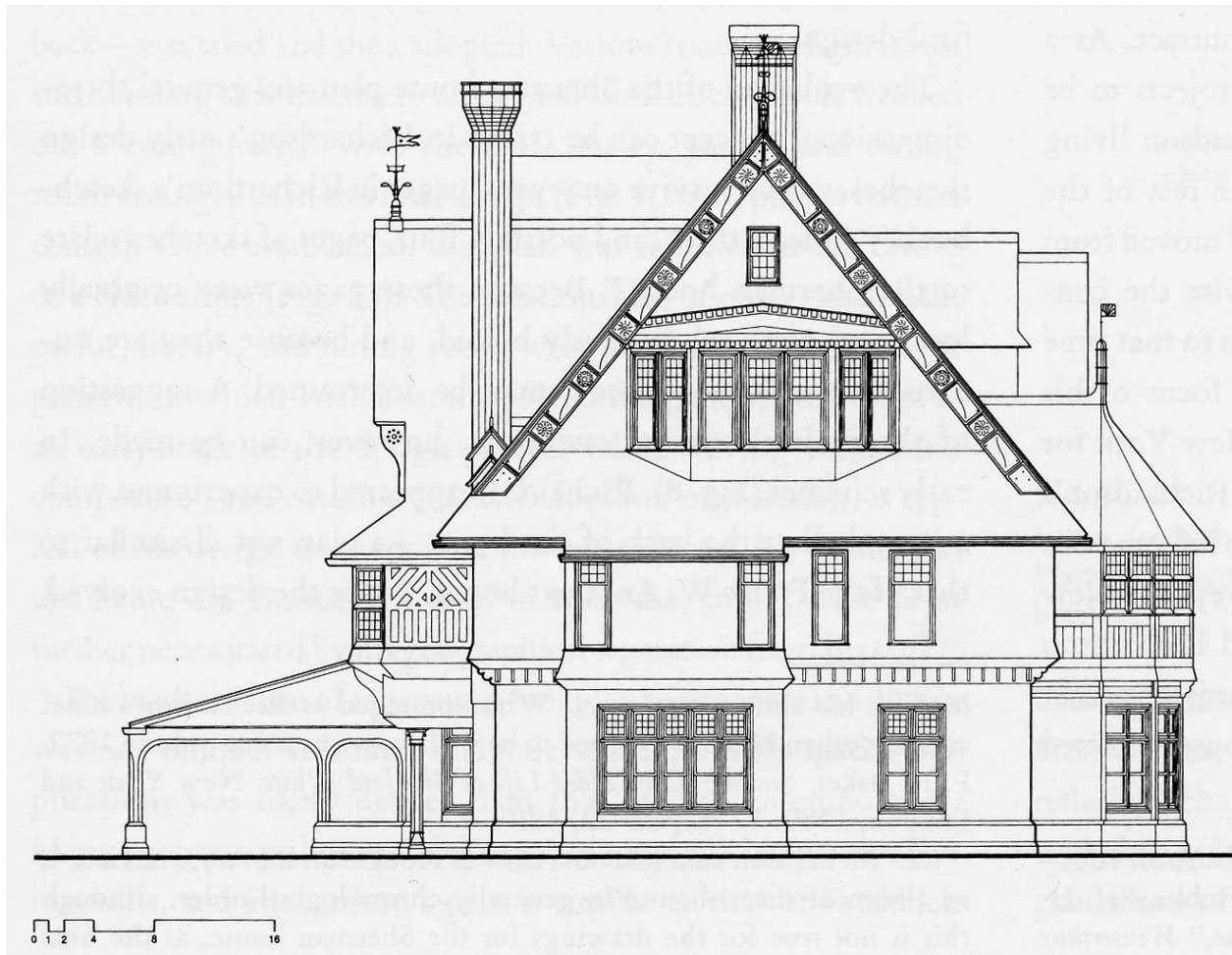


Figure 34: South elevation as built in 1876,

Measured Drawings

Measured drawings were created of the Library as part of the documentation of the room. The measurements for the plan were taken at four feet above the floor and take into consideration wall widths. The measurements were then entered into 3D Home Architect 4.0 by Broderbund. This program was used to create the floor plan and the perspectives. The perspectives were taken from above each corner of the room, looking northeast, northwest, southwest and southeast.

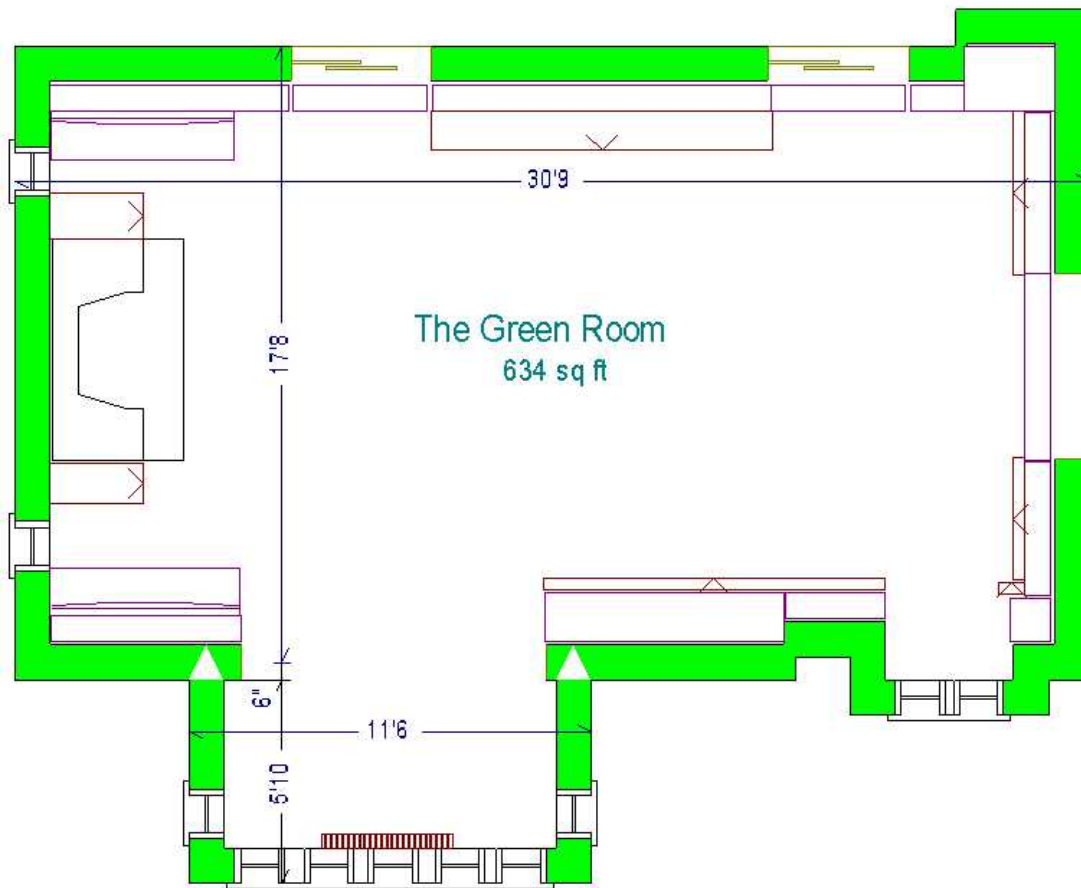


Figure 35: Measured drawing.

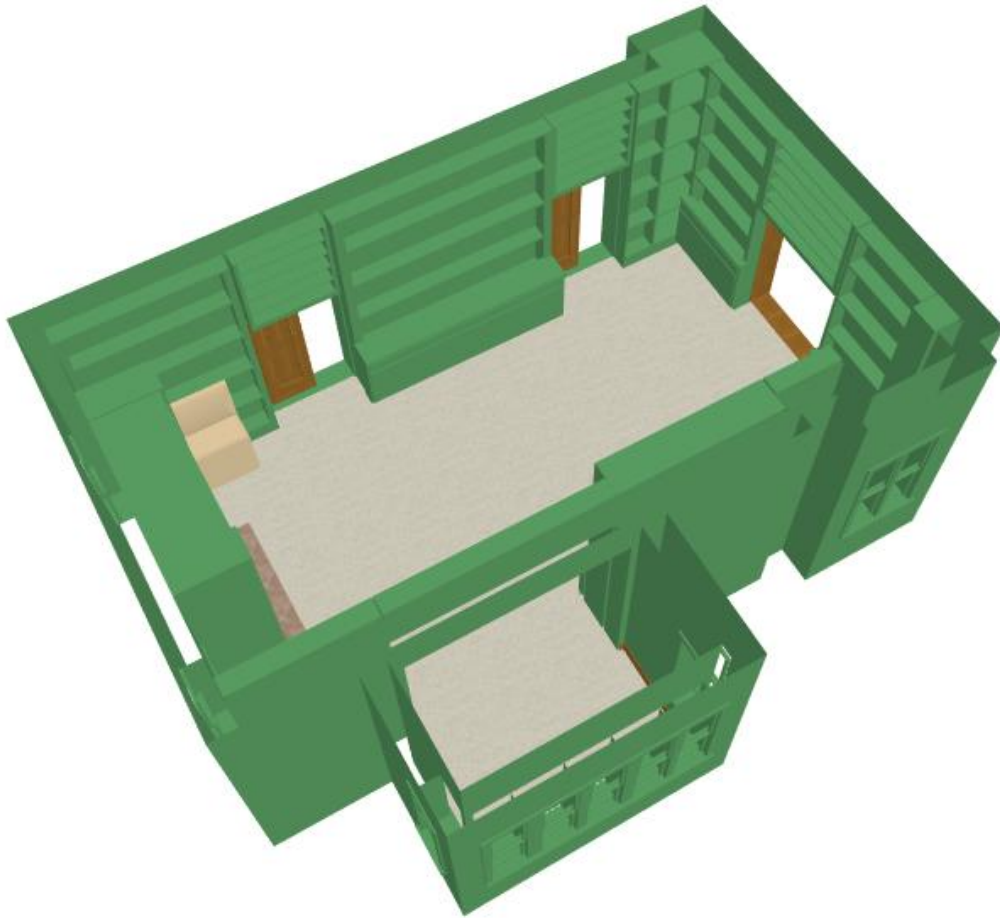


Figure 36: View looking north-east.

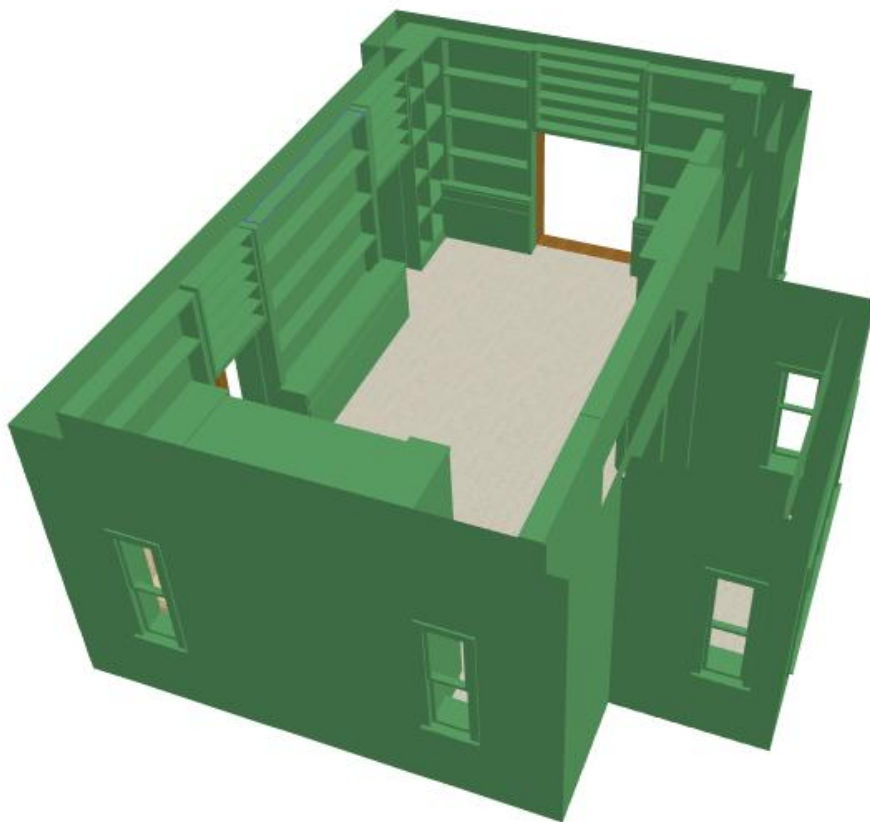


Figure 37: View looking east.

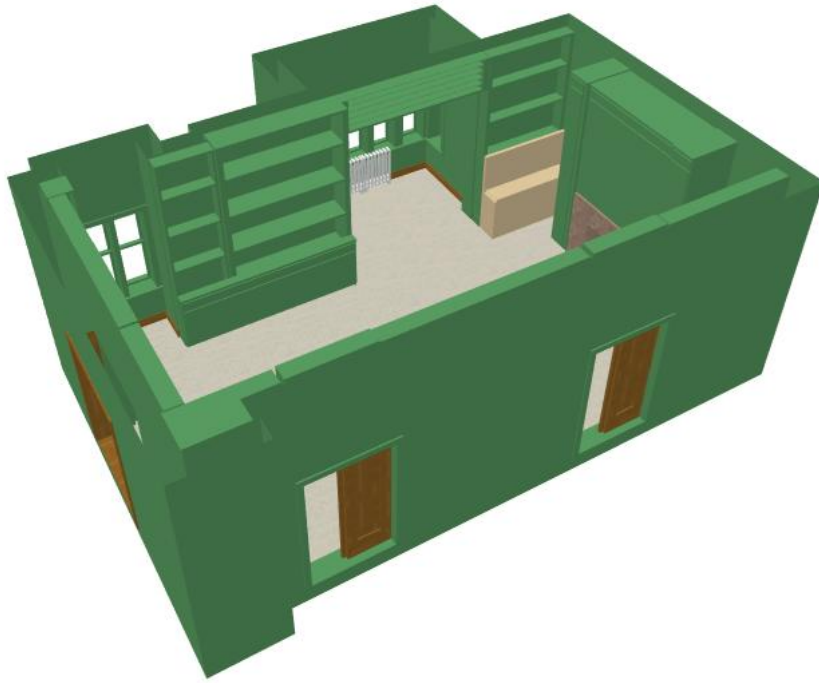


Figure 38: View looking south-west.

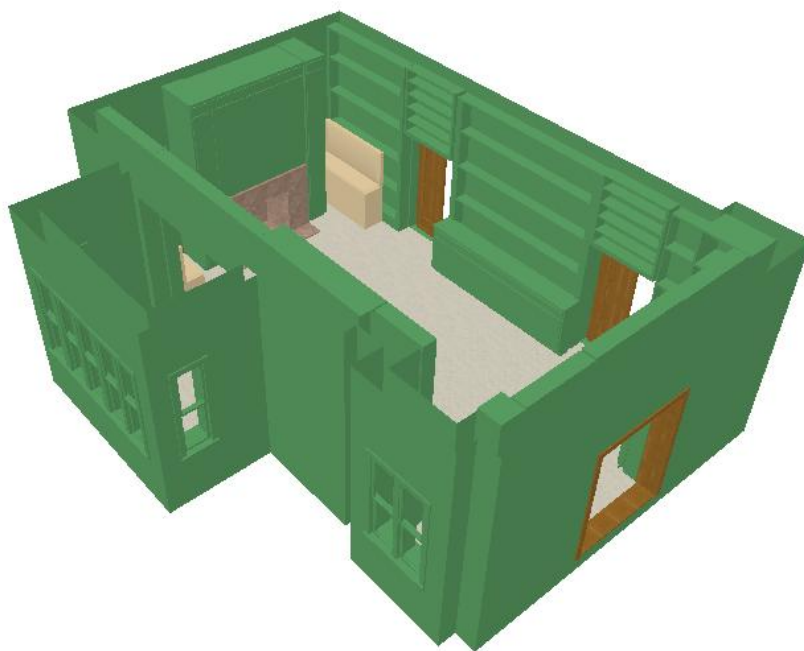


Figure 39: View looking north-west.

Decorative Finish Analysis

This report serves to record findings of the decorative finish analysis of the Library in the William Watts Sherman House based upon on-site investigation and laboratory analysis of the finishes. The purpose of the analysis was to examine the finishes of interior elements and document the stratigraphy of finish layers. More specifically, the purpose of the analysis and assessment was to determine and document, if possible;

1. the color and color placement of interior elements of the library of the Watts Sherman House for it's restoration, and,
2. the original finish campaign of the Library.

The Cultural Historic Preservation (CHP) 202 class, Practices in Historic Preservation, at Salve Regina University took samples from various elements of the Library on March 3 and April 2, 2003.

Laboratory investigation of six (6) samples were taken under the supervision of John B. Vaughan of Architectural Conservation Services (ACS) in Bristol, RI.

Six (6) samples were selected as the best representative samples and analyzed to develop the detailed chromochronology charts included below and the spreadsheet included in the appendix.

Individual samples were examined microscopically (see Analytical Tools and Techniques) to record and compare stratigraphies, determine possible campaigns of applications, and relative dates of installation. Individual paint layers contained within the stratigraphies were analyzed to match colors only when it helped to determine the possible histories of coating application and correlating colors. Color prints of architectural elements and photomicrographs

of embedded paint chip cross sections are referenced within this report to best illustrate the existing conditions and findings recorded in this report.

The stratigraphies of each sample, as listed below, are identified by a general description of each layers' color as assigned by the analyst. In addition, suspected original layers were matched to the color order utilized by the Munsell Color Notation System and/or the Munsell Neutral Value Scale.

Summary

Though irregularities exist, based on microscopic observation of samples and subsequent comparative analysis between, and alignment of stratigraphies of these samples, the following chart lists the suspected colors of targeted finish campaigns.

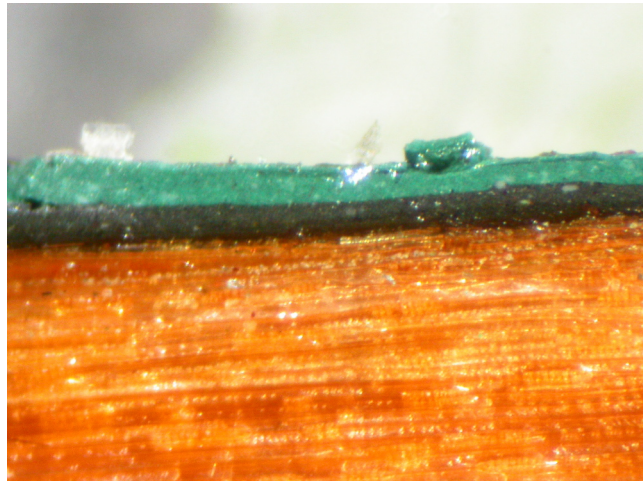


Figure 40: Paint sample from Library.

Observations

It is suspected a three-coat finishing system, at a minimum, was used for the initial finish campaign on observed wood wall samples with a total of two to four painting campaigns applied to the subject features. It is also suspected a three-coat finishing system, at a minimum, was used for the initial finish campaign on latticework panel sample with a total of two painting campaigns applied to the subject features. This number of campaigns was based upon the

stratigraphical findings. Microscopic analysis found the following color listings as the initial applied coatings of sampled elements.

Door Surrounding Lintel

A total of five (5) layers of applied coatings were observed on sample GR-3 taken from below the left window alcove on the North elevation. Based on observed stratigraphies from sample GR-3, it is suspected layers 1 to 3 of sample GR-3 comprise the initial finish campaign.

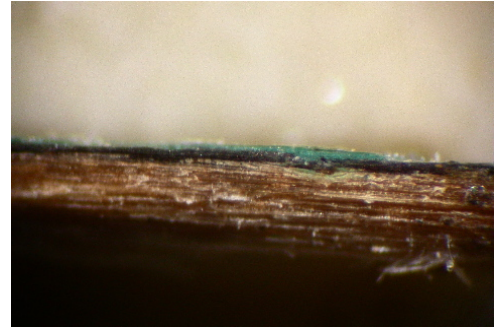


Figure 41: Paint sample GR-3.

It is surmised the “greenish black” (Munsell notation 10GY 2/0.5) of layer 3 from sample GR-3 and as listed below is the initial finish coating.

Coating Type	ISCC/NBS notation	Munsell notation
sealer	N/A	N/A
primer	dark grayish olive green	(5GY 2/1)
1 st finish coat	greenish black	(10GY 2/0.5)
2 nd finish coat	bright green	N/A
3 rd finish coat	green	N/A

It is suspected that the “greenish black” layer is the original finish coat because the sequential stratigraphy of samples GR-5 and GR-6 represents the original finish campaign.

These samples contain the original finish campaign due to the fact that it was never over painted. Sub sequential painting campaigns were never applied here due to the fact that the samples are located within a panel on the fireplace wall and were concealed from view.

The “greenish black” and “dark grayish olive green” layers had positive reactions to sodium sulfide (Na₂S) indicating the coating contains lead. These layers are most likely copper based pigments that have darkened over time. Therefore, the Munsell notation is not representative of the original color campaign.

The stratigraphy seen in sample GR-3 was also observed in samples GR-1, and GR-2. Therefore, the later samples will not be discussed in detail in this report.

Decorative Lattice-Work Panel

A total of four (4) layers of applied coatings were observed on sample GR-4 taken from the bottom left latticework decorative panel on the North elevation. Based on observed stratigraphies from sample GR-4, it is suspected layers 1 to 3 of sample GR-4 comprise the initial finish campaign.



Figure 42: Paint sample GR-4.

It is surmised the “gilding” of layer 3 from sample GR-4 and as listed below is the initial finish coating. This layer, and the “green” of layer 4 flaked off when extracting the sample, therefore an exact Munsell match could not be made.

Coating Type	ISCC/NBS notation	Munsell notation
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sealer	N/A	N/A
bole	dark grayish olive	(10 Y 2/0.5)
1 st finish coat	gilding	N/A
2 nd finish coat	green	N/A

The “dark grayish olive” (Munsell notation 10Y 2/0.5) is a suspected bole coating. This colored paint coating is a technique commonly used to create a subtle effect beneath a gilded coating. When applied, this color would slightly tint the gilded coating. The “dark grayish olive” had a positive reaction to sodium sulfide (Na₂S) indicating the coating contains lead. The bole is most likely a copper based pigment that has darkened over time. Therefore, the Munsell notation is not representative of the original color campaign.

Inside the Decorative Lattice-Work Panel

A total of three (3) layers of applied coatings were observed on sample GR-5 taken from inside of the decorative latticework panel on the North elevation. Based on observed stratigraphies from sample GR-5 it is suspected layers 1-3 of this sample comprise the initial finish campaign.



Figure 43: Paint sample GR-5

It is surmised the “greenish black” (Munsell notation 10GY 2/0.5) of layer 3 from sample GR-5 and as listed below is the initial finish coating.

coating type	ISCC/NBS notation	Munsell notation
sealer	N/A	N/A
primer	dark grayish olive green	(5GY 2/1)
1 st finish coat	greenish black	(10GY 2/0.5)

The “greenish black” and “dark grayish olive green” layers had positive reactions to sodium sulfide (Na₂S) indicating the coating contains lead. These layers are most likely copper based pigments that have darkened over time. Therefore, the Munsell notation is not representative of the original color campaign.

The stratigraphy seen in sample GR-5 was also observed in sample GR-6. Therefore, the later sample will not be discussed in detail in this report. These samples contain the original finish campaign due to the fact that it was never over painted. Subsequential painting campaigns were never applied here due to the fact that the samples are located within a panel on the fireplace wall and were concealed from view.

Verdigris Green

Each of the above-mentioned samples contained a “greenish black” color (Munsell notation 10GY 2/0.5) Initial speculation considered this color to be the original finish campaign of the Library. Later research disproved this theory.

An oral history interview with Mrs. Eileen Slocum of Newport RI proved helpful in determining the original color of the room. Mrs. Slocum visited the Watts Sherman House in her youth, when her grandmother resided in the home. Mrs. Slocum stated that the Library was a

“real apple green now” and she had remembered it being a “turquoise blue.” Obviously, turquoise blue is distinctly different from “greenish black.”

Some historical testimonies may lend false information, due to a lacking memory. Mrs. Slocum’s recollections, however, appear to be true. Chemical testing of the “greenish black” with Na₂S proved that it is a copper based pigment. It is likely that this pigment is verdigris green, a common pigment used for the interiors of homes. An article entitled *House Paint Pigments* by Richard Newman and Eugene Farrell describes the composition of verdigris green as “basic or neutral copper acetate.” (Moss 286). These pigments are known to turn black over time, especially when blocked from light. In our case, our “turquoise” pigments were blocked by light, either by a succession of layers of paint, or were enclosed within the panel fireplace. Due to this discoloration, it is beyond our limitations to determine the original color of the Library.

Chromochronology

Chromochronology refers to the chronological sequence of layers that is evidence of the history of application and removal of decorative finishes, specialized coatings and paints applied to a substrate. Specific reference is made to the color of these finishes rather than a chemical or compositional analysis of the materials.

Analytical Tools and Techniques

The samples were investigated offsite employing microscopic equipment to determine the chromochronology.

The microscope employed was an SMZ-1B zoom stereoscope microscope with 10x/21 and 20x/12 eyepieces as manufactured by Nikon Instrument Group, Inc., Garden City, New York

(516.222.0200) and a Bausch and Lomb stereomicroscope with a magnification of 100x as originally manufactured by Bausch and Lomb Optical Company, Rochester, New York.

To reduce the effects of metamerism, lighting for analysis and color matching approximated the natural daylight conditions under which the structure is to be viewed. Light with a consistent intensity and spectral composition was provided by a halogen fiber optic illuminator as manufactured by Techni-Quip Corporation, Hollywood, California (213.464.0490). This lighting source was color-corrected to approximate daylight by employing an 80A filter.

Where applicable, finish layers have been matched to the Munsell Color Notation System and/or the Munsell Neutral Value Scale as manufactured by MacBeth, a Division of Kollmorgen Corporation, 405 Little Britain Road, New Windsor, New York.

Paint samples were encapsulated in Extec polyester clear resin as manufactured by Extec Corporation, 99 Phoenix Avenue, Enfield, Connecticut (860.741.3435) and cut to expose a representative cross section of the paint layers. The cut surface was sanded with progressively finer grit (220 to 12,000) wet/dry sandpaper to achieve a polished surface. Micromesh Cushioned Abrasives with 1,500 to 12,000 grit was supplied by Conservation Support Systems, 924 West Pedregosa Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101 (805.682.9843). 220 and 600 grit wet/dry sandpaper was manufactured by 3M Do-It Yourself Division, Box 33053, St. Paul, MN 55133-3053.

Prior to photomicrography, a wetting solution of mineral oil was applied to the cross sectioned surface of the embedded samples to achieve a consistent surface to reduce glare from the effects of scattered light reflection.

Photomicrographs were produced with a Nikon Coolpix 4500 digital camera as manufactured by Nikon, fitted to the microscopes using a Martin Microscope MMCool S/N: 0485 adapter as manufactured by Martin Microscope Company, 207 South Pendleton Street, Easley, South Carolina, 29640 (864.242.3424).

The Finishes Analysis: Chromochronology Charts have been adapted from: “Techniques Employed at the North Atlantic Historic Preservation Center for the Sampling and Analysis of Historic Architectural Paints and Finishes” by Carole L. Perrault in the Association for Preservation Technology Bulletin, Vol. X, No. 2, 1978, pp. 6-46.

The chromochronology of each layer on each sample is identified in accordance with standards established in the Inter-Society Color Council / National Bureau of Standards Method of Designating Colors and a Dictionary of Color Names and A Universal Color Language, both published as Color: Universal Language and Dictionary of Names, National Bureau of Standards, Special Publication 440, December 1976.

The finish layers of the sample has been matched to the Munsell Color Notation System and/or the Munsell Neutral Value Scale as manufactured by MacBeth, a Division of Kollmorgen Corporation, 405 Little Britain Road, New Windsor, New York 12553-6148 (914.565.7600, 800.622.2384, Fax 914.565.0390).

Oral History Synopsis

On Monday, April 14th, the students and professor of CHP 202, Practices of Historic Preservation, interviewed Mrs. Slocum, a Newport resident whose grandparents had owned and summered in the William Watts Sherman House. The purpose of the interview was to obtain information from Mrs. Slocum on the use and decoration of the Library as she remembers it as a child. Below are the important facts that Mrs. Slocum added to our research.

- Mrs. Slocum believed that the room had been painted a turquoise or robins egg blue.
- She remembers the room only being used for show; people would walk in, look around, and leave. It was also used during the fall as Ms. Sherman's sitting room, before the family left for New York City.
- Mrs. Slocum remembers the room being filled only with books on all the shelves and inooks. She said the books were rare, classic, antiques with gold bindings. There were also travel books kept in the room , which were rarely moved from their spaces. Mrs. Slocum believes she has a part of the collection in her house, passed on through her own mother. Other parts of the collection were dispersed among her relatives.
- The floors, she remembered, were hardwood, her Grandmother covered them with Turkish carpets, however.
- The furniture Ms. Sherman had in the room was gold gilded, Louis XVI French furniture, which Mrs. Slocum has a portion of herself. Yet, Annie Wetmore, Mr. Sherman's first wife, had different furniture in the room. There would have been a lot of furniture in the room arranged in enclaves, two chairs and a small sofa.

- The room had John Lafarge windows, but the shades were mainly kept closed to prevent the sun from discoloring the rugs. The windows are now in a museum in Boston. She seems to remember two chandeliers that lit the room as well as many Persian lamps, porcelain with shades that were pleated silk. The curtains in the room were also made of silk.
- Mrs. Slocum believes the fireplace surround is different and that it used to be surrounded by tiles; not the marble that is currently there. Well polished bronze andirons, a fire screen, and a poker and shovel were kept next to the fireplace.

Oral Interview Questions: Mrs. Eileen Slocum

1. Do you remember how the room was used when you were a child? Was it a library or did it serve some other function(s)?
2. Was it used more as a personal study area or a sitting room?
3. Were you allowed in the room or was it an “adult” area for reserved access?
4. What types of books were in the room, and were the shelves filled?
5. What was the lighting like in the room? Was it dimly lit or filled with light sources?
6. What were the window treatments like?
7. What was the original flooring treatment? Hardwoods with carpets?
8. How was the room originally furnished?
9. Was there any other decorations in the room like family personal items and knick-knacks either on the walls or shelves?
10. Was the bookstand original or added later?

Transcript of Interview with Mrs. Slocum, 14 April 2003

Begins in the middle of Mrs. Slocum talking about her memories of entering the house each day of the summer.

Mrs. Slocum- we came here almost every single day for lunch for years and we went through and out on the terrace and we put on a gardenia from the great big bowl of gardenias that had come up from the hot house. And it really was very luxurious because on our way instead of coming in here we went in and took the door to the left, which was the coatroom and the bathroom. And usually we had been to the beach before hand and my grandmother believed in hats in the daytime and stockings. So we would put these on before we went in to greet her all with our little hats on, all with stockings, so we went through to the terrace room and sat down there before we went in to lunch. So that was the agenda for everyday.

Question (Maria Morrissey)- But you said that this room wasn't really used often? Was it closed off, were the doors usually kept shut? (Prof. Delude-Dix has to repeat the question)

Mrs. Slocum- No it wasn't, it was just rather decorative. My grandmother read a great deal but I don't remember ever seeing her picking out a book here. They were all leveled books with gold bindings, rare books and the books she was particularly interested in were books of current histories and for instance maybe were written by a friend of hers or something like that.

Question (Professor Delude-Dix)- Do you remember much about the books in the room?

Mrs. Slocum- Yes, because you see in our day we, when we were girls we read the classics we read particular authors, we read the entire line of Sir Walter Scott, Ivanhoe and all the books about the crusaders and then Thackory. We read and of course all of Dickens Nicholas Nickleby and its hard to think of the titles now, but Tale of Two Cities and everything. We read them very carefully and we used to discuss what we had read with my Grandmother but she didn't loan us books from the library because they were old and scarce and they never came out once they were in their niche, they remained there. So therefore, they were as you can call it like a collection the way people do in museums. We'd be reading a current copy of Sir Walter Scott, I don't know what you do if you wanted to get Ivanhoe today. Have any of you read Sir Walter Scott? You have what have you read? (A few students answer Ivanhoe) Ivanhoe, I guess that was the most famous because that's the one I particularly remember. And then we went on to Thackory and Anthony Trollop, we thought Anthony Trollop was very modern in those days.

Question (Diane Patrella)- Do you remember what happened to the book collection? Do you know where it went after?

Mrs. Slocum- I have a feeling that a part of it is in our drawing room, we live down the Avenue, opposite the old Wetmore place. And my living room has, my Grandfather Sherman spoke seven languages and besides Sir Walter Scott, and Thackory, and Dickens, and Anthony Trollop, they had travel books with water colors and so on. And I have my share of it they were not sold or anything they were all divided up in the family and my cousin Noreen Drexel do you know?

Of course Elizabeth knows her, she lives two houses away from me and I don't know what she's done with her mother's share but I have my mother's share of the Sherman books. There's more room though here actually for books than there are in our library because the whole top here had the little books, the little very old books. (The CHP class presents to Mrs. Slocum some small books they have found in the corner of the library.) I am so happy to think of seeing something real here. (Professor Delude-Dix tells Mrs. Slocum that the plan is to get the room back) This is in Latin and of course everybody studied Latin in my day. They felt it was the introduction to the romance languages, so you studied Latin and then it would take you on to French, Spanish, Italian, but I wrote the first Latin composition in my school. I can only remember it was about a Puer and a Puella. I'm so happy to see these. (the books) I'm so happy to see something still here, they would have gone and fit exactly in to that shelf.

Question (Maria Morrissey)- When you were here as a child, were the shelves completely filled with books?

Mrs. Slocum- Absolutely. There wasn't one single little space to put another book. I have that problem at home because my husband also was a classics major at Harvard and he had his father's collection, but he went very much further back in history than Granny and Grampa Sherman. My husband has the ones that came out that were on parchments with illuminations, gold and silver, beautiful illuminations. As big as this and someday maybe you'll come over to the house because you really see a lot of the things that have been over here. And then of course when you have an estate that sells, you do have tragedy and lose things. And I think that what happens is that someone simply detached the John LaForge windows and they're in a museum in Boston. And my cousin and I felt that there were so many things that one could go to court about, so much litigation, we didn't do anything about it. That contributed a lot to when you came in on a hot day and it gave a sort a cool shadow, a very beautiful red and green lights coming in from the John La Forge pictures. This room is so much the way it was, its simply fantastic to think what all of you have done. I think it was repainted a few years ago, but its more like a real green now, apple green, but before it was verging on turquoise blue, it had some blue in it. And it was a little paler. But I think my Grandmother would just be thrilled if she could see it now.

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)-There wasn't anything like that color? (Shows a darker painted piece of wood)

Mrs. Slocum- You mean this? Oh no. This is dark. No this was much lighter. No, nothing was dark like that. Robin's egg blue it was more.

Prof. Delude-Dix- That's interesting because you'll be interested to know that the students have been doing paint analysis under a microscope. To see what colors the room had been painted over time. And we haven't found evidence of Robin's egg blue.

Mrs. Slocum- What have you found?

Question (Jenna Higgins)- Dark, dark green.

Mrs. Slocum- That must have been some point, you remember when it was first sold, a school moved in and they must have wanted it to be less ornate. I think they must of splashed over it because nothing like that was ever here. Is it possible to get further back?

Question (Jenna Higgins)-I looked all the way to the original wood and I didn't see any blue.

Mrs. Slocum- You can't find the original. Oh, but I think this is elegant, just lovely.

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- Were there any photographs or family momentos in the room that you can remember on the shelves, we had books and then?

Mrs. Slocum- No books, just books. Granny kept her family photographs much more on the second floor. All her second floor was filled with family photographs. Really I don't think there were any down here. I don't think there were any anywhere and the ballroom was added beyond the dining room. The ballroom was added for Mummy's wedding. My mother was married June 9th 1910. And, Granny didn't think there was enough room for a wedding.

Question (Kaithlyn Kayer)- I was wondering what the furniture was like in the room?

Mrs. Slocum- French, it was French furniture, little gold guilded furniture. I have my fair share at the house.

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- Oh you do, would we be able to take any photographs on them?

Mrs. Slocum- That's the point, Noreen might know of some, have you asked her?

(Prof. Delude-Dix)- I've left a couple of messages for Mrs. Drexel earlier in the semester, with her secretary. I thought that perhaps she was very occupied and away. Would it be possible for a student to come and photograph any pieces of furniture that you can remember in this room?

Mrs. Slocum- I don't know what Noreen did with them, because she really had her family's side. They had shared half the furniture. My husband always jokes and says that my mother's younger sister's husband Lord (muffled reply) came in after my grandmother died and they made the division together, because my mother's younger sister was in fairly poor health for a great number of years. So she let her husband do the choosing. And John, my husband, said that Uncle Ray got all the valuable things, got all the gilded things and he said the things that were valuable, very old English ... in the hall upstairs, he would take one piece and Mummy would take six pieces of furniture that she thought we could use. So the answer was that in my house it simply filled the whole house, my aunt who lived in our house, not Aunt Mildred, but an older one who was a widow for sixty years she lived there, and she didn't have the gold furniture. When we moved in I replaced old furniture with so many of Granny's things that I thought were so pretty. And I'd adore to have them look at the furniture.

(The Professor and Mrs. Slocum make arrangements for students to visit Mrs. Slocum's estate the next day.)

Muffled question asked about the fireplace

Mrs. Slocum- That was a fireplace that worked, because I do remember in September the fire being lit in it.

Question (Joe Foley)- That was one of the questions I had, do you ever recall the fireplace, and do you know what they kept in these cabinets and there's little cabinets on the side of the fireplace, they open up too. Do you remember what was in those?

Mrs. Slocum- I think there were more books.

Question- Do you remember what was in the hidden cupboards?

Mrs. Slocum- I don't remember having any ornaments, anything but books. It's a library. And there were and-irons of course. They were very highly polished and-irons and things, many of which I have in the other house.

Question (Lois McCormick)- I had a question about the ceiling, has the ceiling changed color at all or was it always white?

Mrs. Slocum- It's astounding that I don't ever remember looking up.

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- For a small girl it's a long way to go. What about this floor?

Mrs. Slocum- I think she had carpets, Turkish carpets everywhere and the one in the hall was an enormous carpet. And, at the point after the fair, the owner of the John ??? nursing home called me and said he had bought the carpet in the hall at auction, but he wondered because it was so big, he wondered whether maybe I would like to buy that from him. But, then I saw something I had never noticed before when I looked at it and that was that the carpet was from the fireplace in that hall, in front the carpet was cut out and demolished. I can see that Granny had bought or had someone buying for her a very, very big carpet. She did a great deal of this though in her real youth because she was married at 18, Mummy was born when she was 19, and Aunt Mildred was born when she was 20. And she spent the first year of her married life in Paris in a house that they had rented in order to order the gold furniture that she wanted, because she had admired it in people's houses. So really, she turned what had been family old things, her style to what she thought was very contemporary. She liked newistic? things. And she ordered all the China and glass, everything in Paris in the first year. Then she came back to America after a year over there and had great fun because she divided up what she had bought, some of it in this house and most of it in the house she build in New York at 838 Fifth Avenue. That has the most of the things that she bought. She always said that she loved the New York house much more than she loved this house because this house had belonged to my grandfather and his first wife and the first wife had furnished the house. And therefore, its funny because I think it probably is a difficult situation because many of you families have had a situation where, nobody had divorces, I never heard of anyone getting a divorce. But, the people's husbands or wives died very prematurely and Grampa Sherman's first wife, who was Ms. Wentmore, Annie Peabody Wentmore, whose brother and father lived next door in the Wentmore House. And, when

Granny moved in she was saying “Oh, I don’t like all of Annie’s old stuff, I want very bright.” And she bought very bright brocades for the furniture for this house, but mostly for the New York house.

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- So your recollection is that she purchased the Louis XVI furniture that was in this room? And I know that one of you had a question about furniture and upholstery, whose question is that?

Question (Maggie Smith)- Of the furniture do you recall if there was any upholstery on the furniture, you said it was guilded but do you remember if it was patterned?

(Professor Delude-Dix) Were there any fabrics? What were they like?

Mrs. Slocum- Oh yes. They were brocade, the curtains were white satin with red velvet, cut velvet on them. They were just beautiful, but they were in the ballroom. These were very much the same. They were all of silk. Granny was very much afraid that the sun was gonna ruin the colors and they would take the colors out of the carpet. And she used to pull the shades from the bottom up and just have the light coming from the top. So of course the house was quite dull.

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- How was the furniture arranged in the room?

Mrs. Slocum- Little enclaves the way people did, a chair, a chair, a little sofa.

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- Was there quite a bit of furniture in the room, or was it

Mrs. Slocum- There was really quite a bit, there was quite a lot of furniture. I went to a breakfast at the White House the other day and I hadn’t been there for several years, in Washington. And I was amazed because, if you could have seen, they had so much old furniture in it. And I noticed how empty it seemed, and friends of mine said, “That’s because your family always liked every square inch filled with a piece, and they have had a crowd here.” And I thought it was because we saw in the newspaper that when Mrs. Clinton left she had taken 200 pieces with her in a van. And I thought “That’s where it all went!” Big huge sofas were still there. But the tables and tiny chairs were there, but they were so tiny you couldn’t put a glass or a cup on them. They are just so tiny things. And I am sure that in Mrs. Kennedy’s day there was a lot more around. It certainly wasn’t sparse the way it is now.

Question (Joe Foley)- I just want to go back to when you were talking about his first wife, your grandfather’s first wife, Annie Wentmore. I can’t find any references on how she died or they didn’t divorce right, she died?

Mrs. Slocum- Oh of course they didn’t divorce. Nobody did, the word, you couldn’t even mention it. She died of pneumonia. When her oldest daughter was, I think, was about fourteen. The women died in childbirth so often, or lost babies, or something. And there were no antibiotics, and there was childbirth fever and all those things. Now it’s, life is so easy, when you have bad germs, it can be eradicated.

Question (Maria Morrissey)- Mrs. Slocum, I have one more question for you, one that's actually really interesting to me. Do you remember what the lighting was like in here?

Mrs. Slocum- I think there were two little chandeliers, but where are they?

Question (Maria Morrissey)- Was there anything like there is now? Like candelabras?

Mrs. Slocum- They had also a lot of very beautiful lamps, Persian lamps, all through the house. Porcelain lamps with shades that were pleated silk with twinge around. I have a few of those, also, in the house.

Question (Maria Morrissey)- So maybe we could get a picture of those?

Mrs. Slocum- Yes, I never saw and standing lamps, I bought those myself when I was just married because he liked so much reading and pulling a cord or turning a button, and I have quite a few of those and my grandmother had much

(Break in tape)

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- And as a normal practice were the doors to this room left open through the course of the day? These pocket doors were they open? So you would just walk from room to room?

Mrs. Slocum- Oh just the doors, of course. But there wouldn't be much point in it, because we had turned left, put on our hats and gotten ourselves ready to go in to greet Granny. We would only come in here, for I can't think of what reason, I think in the autumn when the fire was burning. Granny might have been in here waiting for us.

Question (Maria Morrissey)- On the doors, do you remember, I saw a picture that had, it looked like drapes hanging in front of the door. Do you remember anything like that?

Mrs. Slocum- No.

Question (Maria Morrissey)- No?

Mrs. Slocum- No. No I don't actually. It's all unbelievably neat and gorgeously everything polished all the mahoganies everywhere. When they were still there, upstairs there was a big high boy; dark I think they were. I mean she didn't have French furniture in the bedroom, that was just for downstairs. It was a very, very hospitable house. Everything my Grandmother did she did with a great [unknown]. She did it in a way for people. I mean, she wasn't going to the beach, she wasn't swimming, she believed in preserving your skin, which we didn't do. And she would drive around every, quite frequently she would ask who go for a drive with her. And we'd get in the back of her car and be driven around the ocean drive and in and out of different up and down hills and home again. I don't remember my Grandmother shopping. I think people brought things to show her, like linen, shops and clothes and all those things. Of course there was no telephone when we began. I guess I must have been fifteen or fourteen when the telephones

came in. Everybody was thrilled with them. There was one in the kitchen, in my mother's old house, which was the white house. The house, which is called the Brown House, that was my Great Grandmother's house. Actually, about four or five of the houses in the area were all family houses. The one, the house I'm in is the Harold Brown House. Then there was the John Carter Brown House. That went out of the family about five years ago.

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- I think the only question I would like to ask is, Is there any event that you can remember that took place in this room? Birthday party, or, any family event that occurred in this room?

Mrs. Slocum- It was sort of a decorative room. People went in, walked around and walked out again.

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- That's a wonderful description. It's very interesting because it's much the same reaction that people have today. Generally people would wonder in, look at the room and leave again.

Mrs. Slocum- They would only do it also if they didn't know the house. They were coming in to a luncheon or something. I can't think of any little stories about the house at all, I mean about this room. Now, if you had asked about the dining room, I could have told you so much about the dining room.

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- Do you have any questions for us?

Mrs. Slocum- No. Do any of you like classical furniture, the old furniture?

Question (Prof. Delude-Dix)- Very often furniture is most closely studied when it is at a university at a decorative art program. And we have captured all of these preservation students, so they tend to look more at the architecture, even an interior space, and find the architecture design vocabulary of this room just fascinating. We took a trip to New York and looked at a whole number of interiors in New York City. Perhaps you know Sam White the architect and writer? He was up in Newport last summer. He's a great grandson of Stanford White, who designed the room. Well, he's been very generous with his time. He spent an entire Saturday in the pouring rain and he took us to a number of different places that he had researched quite carefully for a book that he wrote and this room is featured in that book. So he was quite familiar with this room. He really helped the students put this room in context of Stanford White's other work. Actually Maggie has a copy of the book.

(Maggie presents book to her)

Mrs. Slocum- (About fireplace) Of course something is totally different here, didn't this have tiles. I'm sure it didn't look like that in Granny's day. The tiles were all taken out and sold. That whole area looks awful now. I mean, Granny had lovely bronze and irons and a fire screen and tools, the shovel, the poker. Isn't that awful. That really disfigures the room.

Question (Maria Morrissey)- Do you remember what the tiles looked like? Were they like the tiles in the fireplace in the hallway?

Mrs. Slocum- I'm so glad that that tile is still there. Doesn't that look awful to you? Have the girls seen Granny's bedroom upstairs?

Prof. Delude-Dix- I think you might find upstairs somewhat changed, because it's now a dormitory upstairs.

Mrs. Slocum- What about the dark mahogany bedroom of Granny's upstairs? That you opened the doors and there were hundreds of little drawers. Have you ever been in her bedroom?

Maggie- I think it's a girl's dorm room now, I think like four girls are living there.

Prof. Delude-Dix- Four students live in that room.

Mrs. Slocum- This old Isaac Bell House. That house, at one point, when I was a girl, it belonged to a Doctor Laurence Truman Saunders. And he had quite a family, he had Elizabeth, Lucy, Hope, Nancy, Timmy, Natalie, Constance and Dan. And they were great friends of all of ours. The elder four girls, Elizabeth was older than me, Lucy was my age, and Hope was the next one down. It was so funny, their father and mother were very businesslike. They always had the girls winter coats ordered early, identical, and then we would go and look at them lying on a bed, with parapets, brown felt caps, brown coats, with mink collars. I was very jealous because Mummy could never get around to getting our winter coats until it got cold. But I never remember any of this furniture in this house at all. It must have all been removed years ago. This is a wonderful book isn't it? So many of these fireplaces I think the tiles have been defaced. This is a great book. Thank you for showing it to me.

Clients, Creators, Context



Figure 44: H.H. Richardson, Stanford White, and W. W. Sherman (L to R).

Client Background: Short Biography of William Watts Sherman

Dr. William Watts Sherman (1842-1912) was born in Albany County, Albany, New York on August 4, 1842. He was the son of Watt and Sarah (Gibson) Sherman (Friedman 1). The family originally came from Germany, at some point moved to England, and eventually relocated to an early America. Here, their lineage can be traced to colonial days, (NYTimes. 1/23/1912. 11) where the Sherman family prospered and became powerful. William Watts Sherman grew up in Albany, but shortly after his youth, both business and pleasure caused his family to move several times. Their first move was to England, then New York, and finally to Newport, Rhode Island (Friedman).

Although William Watts Sherman held an M.D. from the College of Physicians and



Figure 45: Double photograph of William Watts Sherman. (Slocum Collection).

Surgeons in New York City, he apparently never practiced medicine. His father was a partner in the New York banking firm of Duncan, Sherman and Company from 1851 to 1865, this profession obviously to his non-medicinal interests (Ochsner 51). Perhaps it was the lure of money and status that swayed W.W. Sherman away from the medical field. Certainly there was money to be made. At a time when fortunes were

created in the railroad business, William Watts father's firm not only specialized in railroad financing, but was also one of the few investment firms to do so. Indeed, "they became the most prominent of all of them."(Friedman).

William Watts Sherman lived on Fifth Avenue in New York. In this neighborhood he would have had ample opportunity to make important connections. Here he could discuss railroads with the Vanderbilts, or finances with August Belmont and the Morgans. In fact, J.P. Morgan received his start in the Banking Profession by working under William Watts Sherman. These connections would serve William Watts Sherman in his personal life as well, for it was “through banking connections that he became acquainted with George Peabody Wetmore of Newport, and his sister, Annie Derby Rogers Wetmore (1848-1884). (Ochsner, 124)”

On July 5th 1871 W.W. Sherman married Annie Derby Rogers Wetmore. She was the daughter of William Shepard Wetmore, a New York merchant in the East India trade, and sister of George Peabody Wetmore, governor of Rhode Island; (1884-1886), and United States Senator (1895-1913) (Ochsner, 51). Annie and William were drawn together through more than just the fact that they came from extremely wealthy and prominent families. Annie had also spent some of her youth in England and together they shared a love of things English. “These two factors contribute to

the reason why the young couple were in search of an

architect to design a cottage in Newport for them.”(Glass Window). The newlyweds wanted something special, and being Anglophiles, we can suspect that they wanted something reflecting their taste. We do not know exactly how the Shermans came to hire the well-known architect Henry Hobson Richardson, though Ochsner and Hubka indicate that it could have been from an earlier Albany connection or possibly just from being familiar with Richardson’s construction of



Figure 46: William Watts Sherman.
(Salve Regina Archives).

the Frank W. Andrews House, in Newport in 1872. (Ochsner, 125). Just as likely, the connection may have been “through their memberships in the exclusive clubs for the New York and Newport wealthy,” (Friedman). The selection of Richardson as their architect was probably also influenced by the fact that it was well known that Richardson himself had been influenced by the famous English architect, Richard Norman Shaw.

William Watts Sherman does not appear to have fit the stereotype so typical of this age as one of the idle rich. His active participation in Newport’s social and political scene included



Figure 47: Bust of William Watts Sherman. (Slocum Collection).

being “a member and officer of the Newport Casino, the Newport Reading Room, the Redwood Library, and the Newport Historical Society; William Watts Sherman also served on the Newport Town Council and the Park Commission”(Slocum, 36). His obituary further states that he "was a member of many clubs and societies, including the Metropolitan, Knickerbocker, Century City, National Arts, Sons of the Revolution, Society of the Cincinnati, Society of Colonial Wars, Automobile Club of America, Riding, St. Nicholas Society, Colony, and Coaching. He was Treasurer of the Newport Casino, and a member of the American

Geographical Society, (NYTimes 1/23/1912, 11).”

Annie Sherman died of pneumonia in 1884. Her obituary, issued in the March 4, 1884 edition of the New York Times states that "she was one of the leaders of society in this city and Newport, and the funeral was attended by a large number of prominent ladies and

gentlemen...(she was) taken to Newport for interment in the plot of the Wetmore family," (NYTimes 3/4/1884, 8).

William Watts Sherman remarried a year later in Newport, on October 7, 1885, to Sophia Augusta Brown. Sophia was also from a prominent family. Her father Hon. John Carter Brown was one of the greatest benefactors to Brown University. A lover of books and the liberal arts, "he collected one of the best, if not the best library, of American History in this country," (Pieroth).

William Watts Sherman died Monday, January 22, 1912, after battling illness for several months (NYTimes. 23 January, 1912: 11). Funeral services were held at St. James Church in New York. (NYTimes. 25 January, 1912. 11). After the New York service, W.W. Sherman's body was brought to Newport to be buried in Island Cemetery. "The Rev. Stanley C. Hughes of Trinity Church read the burial ritual"... Funeral wreaths, sent in great number, came from the Newport Historical Society, the Newport Reading Room, the Sherman employees, and many friends". (NYTimes. 27 January, 1912: 11). His second wife Sophia outlived him by 35 years. She died June 28, 1947 in her eighty first year.

A Brief Biography of McKim, Mead, and White

The Lives of McKim, Mead, and White

Charles Follen McKim (1847-1909) was the original driving force of the architectural firm McKim, Mead, and White due to his training and his existing, large list of clientele. He studied at Harvard, as well as, the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. In addition, McKim

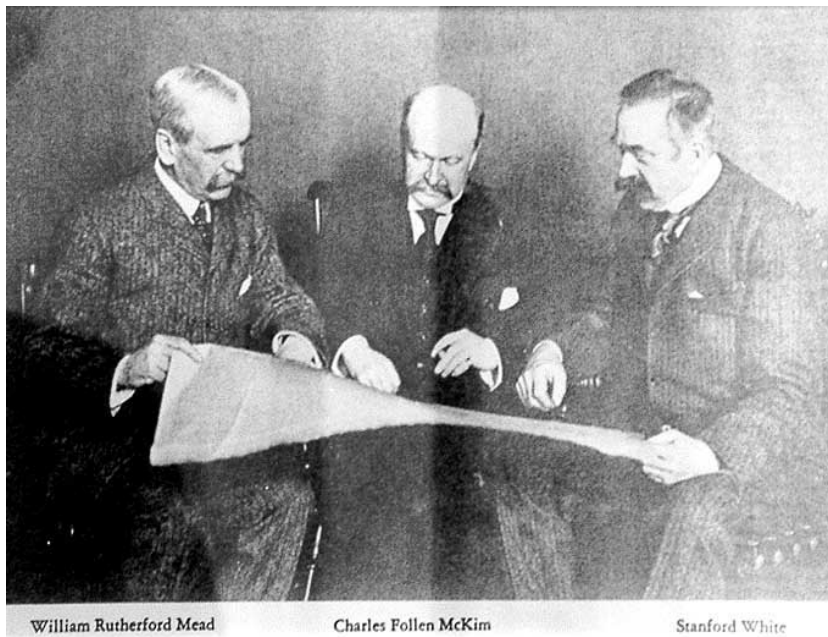


Figure 48: McKim, Mead, and White.

apprenticed under Henry Hobson Richardson in New York for two years. In 1872 he began his own practice as a designer and a domestic architect in the same building as H.H. Richardson, at 57 Broadway, New York City.

He proved he had a great understanding of early

American architecture and an

amazing ability to simplify forms. By 1879 he had completed summer houses in Long Island and Newport.

William Rutherford Mead (1846-1928) was educated at Norwich University and Amherst College, and for the next three years he apprenticed with Russell Sturgis, also at 57 Broadway in New York City. He then went to Florence for two years before joining McKim in 1873.

Stanford White (1853-1906) originally planned on becoming an artist, however he took up architecture and in 1872, at the age of 19, he began working with Gambril and Richardson as



Figure 49: White circa 1884.

Richardson's principle assistant, the job which had recently been vacated by Charles McKim. He stayed with Grambil and Richardson until 1878 when he left to tour Europe. Upon his return to New York he joined McKim and Mead's firm.

White was a brilliant artist who paid attention to elegant detail, color and texture. He also had an eye for creating unconventional juxtaposition of objects. He was a better draftsman than McKim and handled most of the firm's domestic commissions, as well as

monuments, picture frames, and book covers. White also designed furniture for some of the houses he planned. He even extended the traditional architectural services to include interior decoration, art and antique, and even event planning. On June 25, 1906, White attended a show on Madison Square Garden's rooftop theater, a piece of architecture which he had designed. While there he was shot and killed by Harry K. Thaw, a young millionaire as well as the husband of Evelyn Nesbitt one of White's mistresses.



Figure 50: Evelyn Nesbitt as a chorus girl. Pre-1905.

History of the Firm - McKim, Mead, and White

McKim and Mead first partnered with William Bigelow, a classmate of McKim's from Beaux-Arts, in 1877, this however did not last long because of Mead's marital problems with Bigelow's sister. The firm McKim, Mead, and White was created in 1879 in New York City,

and they became best known for their richly decorative houses and they practiced together for over 25 years. In the firm's first thirty years they executed about 1,000 commissions. From 1879 - 1912 it was the largest, most important architectural firm in the United States, possibly in the world, receiving over 300 residential commissions alone. One of their greatest achievements was that of receiving the Gold Medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

There are three phases, each with a distinct style, which the houses of McKim, Mead, and White can be categorized; early, transitional, and mature. Their early work was mostly done on country houses, wood-framed structures with simple forms, like that of 18th century New England. These buildings have a style of imaginative experimentation, and the collaboration of the partners is evident in this work. However, most of these houses have been lost due to aging and a period of under appreciation.

The transitional phase was between 1883 and 1891, all three phases can be seen in this work, however most noticeable is the wide range of images and models which were used in this period. Some of the different styles the firm used in this period were the Norman, Queen Anne and Neoclassical. The last, or mature, phase of their work began in 1890 with grand Georgian architecture in huge country homes. This period coincided with the Gilded Age, in which the firm created most of the residences for which they are known today.

The firm continued into the 1960s, which was long after the deaths of the original three members. Today the firm is a model for modern architects and is viewed as a definitive model of late nineteenth century American architecture.

The many styles of McKim, Mead, and White developed mostly from Renaissance architecture. Their work was seen as classical, it pulled from colonial as well as Romanesque

architecture, but mostly from the Italian Renaissance. They also experimented with innovative motifs such as the oriental style.

Houses of McKim, Mead, and White in Newport, Rhode Island

Kingscote (addition 1880-1881)

Samuel Tilton House (1880 - 1882)

William Watts Sherman House (Library Alteration 1881)

Isaac Bell House (1881-1883)

Ochre Point (1882-1884)

Berkely House (1884 - 1886)

Beacon Rock (1888- 1891)

Rosecliff (1897- 1902)

A Brief Biography of Henry Hobson Richardson

Henry Hobson Richardson was born in Louisiana on September 29, 1838. From an early age he had an interest in drawing. He attended both public and private schools in New Orleans before attending the University of Louisiana in 1854. A year later, he transferred to Harvard College where he “gave up civil engineering in favor of architecture,” (Buffalo Architecture).



Figure 51: Henry Hobson Richardson.

After graduation in 1859, Richardson traveled to Paris and enrolled at the Ecole de Beaux-Arts. He was the second American student to enroll in the prestigious art and architecture school, second to Richard Morris Hunt. After returning to the U.S. in 1865, Richardson settled in New York. He entered into a partnership with Charles Gambrill from 1867 to 1878. His early work consisted mainly of buildings constructed in the English Victorian Gothic and French Empire styles. By the early 1870's he began to develop his own approach to design. His maturity was marked by a series of projects begun in 1878. He began to simplify forms and

eliminate architectural details, by referring back to basic shapes, continuous surfaces, and the innate qualities of brick, stone, and shingles to create the unique architectural style. By 1882 he “was recognized as the leading architect in America,” (Ochsner).

His first major commission was Trinity Church in Boston, Massachusetts. He relocated from his New York Offices, at 57 Broadway, to the Boston area to be closer to this project.

“Trinity Church defined his unique style which became known as "Richardsonian Romanesque"

because of the parallels it had with Romanesque principles. It was a revival style based on French and Spanish Romanesque precedents of the 11th century¹. Richardson's style is characterized by massive stone walls, dramatic semicircular arches, and a new dynamic of interior space. Continuity and unity are keynote elements of Richardson's style. The Richardsonian Romanesque eclipsed both the Second Empire Baroque and the High Victorian Gothic styles” (Digital Archive). Richardson worked in three different styles throughout his 21 year career: Modern Gothic, Queen Anne, and Romanesque. He died in 1886 at the age of 47 of a chronic renal disorder named Bright’s Disease (Ochsner).

The William Watts Sherman House itself utilizes many elements associated with the English Queen Anne Revival, being picturesque yet simple in design. It is often regarded as the inspiration for the Shingle style. The house employs typical Shavian elements ranging from colossal chimneys to Tudor half-timbering, elaborate bay windows, stuccoed gables, and medallion ornaments. This is the closest approximation in Newport of the Shavian manor houses built around 1870 by the architect Richard Norman Shaw (1831-1912) on the outskirts of London.

William Watts Sherman (1842- 1912) was a New York banker who married Annie Wetmore, the sister of George Peabody Wetmore of Château sur Mer, in 1871. The house was built on land given to Annie by her father, the late William Shepard Wetmore. Richardson, being a principal in his firm, did the planning and conception of the house while White was responsible for the detailing (Schezen).

The William Watts Sherman House was one of the first houses erected in the Queen Anne style in America. Construction began on the house in 1875 and was completed in 1876. In

¹ Romanesque preceded Gothic in European architecture.

1881, it was expanded by the architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White. Dudley Newton altered the house in 1890 by adding a service wing and was also responsible for constructing the carriage house in 1910, which is now the home of the president of Salve Regina University.

The William Watts Sherman House is one of the first examples of the Queen Anne style in America. The style emerged in London during the 1860s as an outgrowth of the Arts and Crafts Movement. It was also called the “Olde English” or Shavian style after Shaw. “The ‘free style’ of Shaw encouraged a picturesque, textural richness and materially tectonic architecture that was rich, never academically dry, and conducive to a first decisive step out of the historicism of the mid-century,” (Buffalo Architecture).

The style was nostalgic of a simpler time in England. Shaw created a fad for houses that looked top-heavy and had steep gables, half-timbering, and massive chimneys. Architects used fancy-cut tiles or slate as the surface ornamentation in combination with medallions and heavily-carved eaves. The Americanized version dominated Newport from 1870-1890 in both large and small houses. Architects replaced fancy cut-tiles with fancy shingling but otherwise adapted the Shavian style. Variations included the Exotic Eclectic style using Oriental onion domes and other eccentric elements. At times, Colonial motifs such as Palladian windows, balusters, or Georgian pediments were incorporated into the architecture of the houses. This element was simplified for use on ordinary houses that dominated Newport during the 1880s.

The Relationship of William Watts Sherman with Wetmore, Richardson, and White

William Watts Sherman was the son of a banker and became one of the most prominent members of society in both Newport and New York. As a child, Sherman attended private schools in the United Kingdom and in Germany. Upon his return to the United States, he met Annie Wetmore, the sister of George Peabody Wetmore whom he knew through banking connections and social clubs. Annie Wetmore and William Sherman married in 1871 and after a few years of summering in Newport decided to settle there and construct their own home. They chose Henry Hobson Richardson as the architect. Sherman was most likely connected to Gambrill and Richardson through their membership at the same New York City social club, the Century Club. At this time, Richardson was in the process of designing and constructing homes for other members of the summer colony in Newport. Sherman entered into a contract with Gambrill and Richardson for the design of the house. Three years later, construction began on the house. Stanford White was contacted to design the Library, probably through his connection to Richardson. White received the design information from Richardson and brought them back to Gambrill in New York. Influences from Newport and New York had a direct effect on design elements used in the William Watts Sherman House, which was completed in 1876 (Oshner).

Stanford White's Relationship with Richardson, McKim, and Mead

The connection between Stanford White, H. H. Richardson, Charles F. McKim, and William Rutherford Mead began as an interoffice relationship. McKim and Mead conducted their apprenticeships during the same three years, McKim with Gambrill and Richardson, and Mead with Russell Sturgis. Mead left to study architecture in Florence, returning two years later to rejoin McKim in New York. Meanwhile McKim ended his apprenticeship with Gambrill and Richardson and had formed his own firm with his brother-in-law, William Bigelow.

White arrived at Gambrill & Richardson in the spring of 1872 as an untrained painter and draftsman. Three months later Richardson relocated to Brooklyn, Massachusetts, his office, however, remained in New York until 1878. White left the firm in 1878 as the chief draftsman and principal assistant to Richardson. White remained an apprentice under Gambrill and Richardson for six years before joining the architectural firm of McKim and Mead in 1879.

The environment in which McKim, Mead, and White worked was very conducive to bouncing ideas off one another. This relationship led to the creation of the firm McKim, Mead, and White in 1879. The William Watts Sherman House was completed in the middle of White's career with Richardson. The drawings of the House were created in Brooklyn by Richardson and executed in New York under the supervision of White (White 46 – 49).

Nineteenth-Century Historical Context

The latter half of the 19th century, that is, the period in American History after the Civil War but before the turn of the century, is a time often referred to as the Gilded Age. The term itself, “derives from the title of a novel published by Mark Train and Charles Dudley Warner in 1873...twentieth century scholars adopted their title as a fitting descriptor for the period,” (Calhoun). It was a derisive term evoking, “materialism, pursuit of profit, corruption in business and government, ostentatious, display of possessions, vulgarity in taste, and ruthless exploitation of natural resources,” (“Gilded Age” 746). Leading reasons for this negativism centered on the Nouveau Riche in America. Their wealth had been made relatively quick and thus had not been “sanctified by hoary age,” (Hofstadter 146). In their effort to attain rank and status these robber barons, as they were dubbed, were seen as crass and pretentious by the previous generation who had acquired their wealth the old fashioned way, they inherited it. “The men of new wealth – the new plutocracy - lacked the restraints of culture, experience, the pride, or even the inherited caution of class or rank,” (DeSantis 77).

However, to dismiss this entire period as culturally sterile; politically and morally corrupt, is to miss the fact of this, “period to be one of substantial accomplishment (a time when) the United States experienced a profound transformation during these years with lasting implications for the century that followed,” (Calhoun). It was a time of consolidation in America even as it expanded with the purchase of Alaska in 1867 and the granting of statehood to North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington and Montana. The nation slowly began the process to become one again through Reconstruction. This struggle carried with it political corruption that found its way into two presidential terms under Ulysses S. Grant. James Garfield who followed

Grant is assassinated in 1881 proving just how deep the corruption was. Garfield's short one year term was followed by Chester Arthur, Grover Cleveland and finally in 1889 by Benjamin Harrison.

After the Golden Spike was driven in 1869 for the first transcontinental rail, railroads connected all parts of America. It was the beginning of the end for small town America as the combination of improved transportation and nascent rural industrialization caused the populations in these areas to migrate to the cities in order to find work within the cities own brand of urban industrialization. Urban areas swelled to the breaking point during this period as

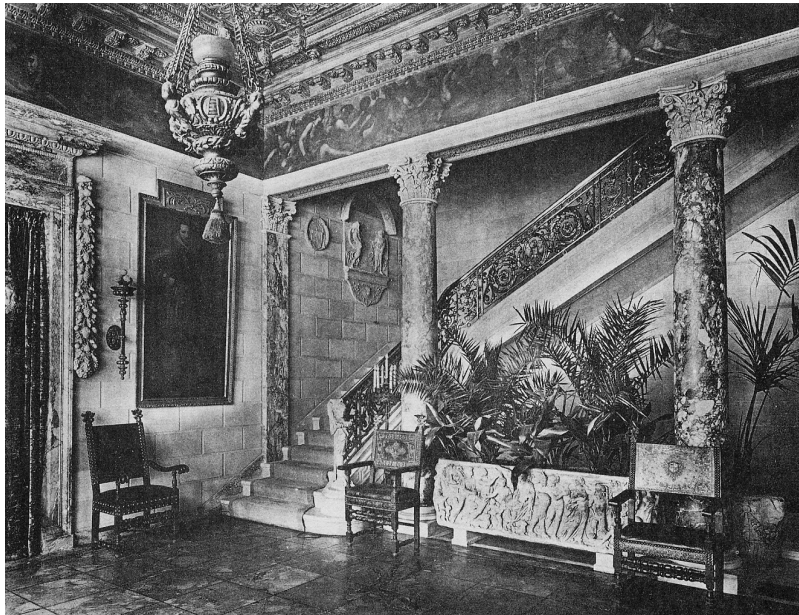


Figure 52: Second-floor hall, former Payne Whitney house.

large immigration added to the populace. This diversity alarmed some but made many rich.

Some, through real estate, made land a valuable commodity. This

last fact was the reason

architects began to think

vertically leading to the

construction of the first, 10-story

skyscraper in Chicago in 1884.

Others became rich by taking advantage of the poor and ignorant. Such greed and immorality were the causes of much corruption that the era was noted for but it also created a backlash the eventually led to reforms. During this period, "Congress adopts the 15th Amendment, Prohibition Party founded, National Women's Suffrage Association, led by Susan B. Anthony is organized.

In 1875 the “Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is formed (and) Congress passes Civil Rights Act,” (the Time Page).

No matter how they became rich, it should be noted that the rich and powerful were admired by most Americans who:

Saw these industrialists only in their role as respected members of society, pillars of the churches, rapidly connected philanthropists who occupied positions of prestige and power both here and abroad...This favorable view of industrialists was given further support by the prevailing economic and social theories of the period – laissez faire and Social Darwinism – both of which extolled the rugged individualism practiced by the captains of industry (DeSantis 78).

“The dominant economic philosophy of the times was laissez faire”(78). Such a philosophy maintained that if the government kept a hands-off approach and allowed capitalists to conduct their business as they saw fit, the long-term fruits of their enterprises would benefit all. Social Darwinism as put forward by Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), “proved especially attractive to American Businessmen...Spencer’s ideas had an enormous vogue in the United States in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. By the time of his death in 1903, Americans had bought nearly 400,000 copies of his books, an incredibly high figure for a sociological or philosophical work (79). However, during the last quarter of the 19th century, there were challenges to Spencer’s ideas such as those coming from Brown University’s sociological professor Lester Frank Ward; himself a product of those overcrowded cities mentioned earlier. These dissenters included two rebels from Wisconsin such as Edward Allsworth Ross who “argued that in the new industrial society morality required the impersonal corporation to accept full responsibility for its antisocial acts” (80) and Thorstein Veblen who “bitterly assailed what he called the ‘kept classes’ and their ‘pecuniary’ society”. (81).

The dominant Protestant Religion was also challenged during this time. Catholicism was the primary religion of the poor immigrants coming from abroad. Their numbers alarmed the status quo such that there is a direct correlation between the increasing numbers of Catholics during this period and the peaking of membership in the Ku Klux Klan during the last quarter of the 19th century.

In the arena of liberal arts, "although not one of the greatest eras in American arts and letters, it was far from barren," (Morrison 86). Besides Mark Twain, there was also Stephen Crane, Bret Harte, Henry James and William Dean Howells to name a few. Also during this period, "Magazine and book publication experienced tremendous growth (allowed by) inexpensive printing methods and by other advances in communication," (Calhoun). This was also the era of great philanthropy. It allowed "business leaders such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller to fund museums, libraries, universities, and other nurseries of culture," (Calhoun).

Although the "taste" of the era was always suspect and criticized, it also produced some of the countries leading architects: Henry Hobson Richardson, Richard Morris Hunt, Louis Sullivan, and McKim, Mead, and White. In the fine arts it yielded: Winslow Homer, George Inness, and Thomas Eakins.

In field of science, "Alexander Bell Patents the telephone,... Edison invents the light bulb (and)... patents the phonograph... (the) Linotype machine invented" (The Time Page). "George Eastman takes out a patent on a flexible roll of film for use in cameras. The first Kodak box cameras are sold in 1888," (Brief Timeline).

War changes everything. The Spanish-American war in 1898 ended an era in the U.S. that had been largely conservative, isolationist and relatively peaceful. The first use of the word

imperialism connected to the U.S. appeared as President Theodore Roosevelt used the new industrialism to flex America's muscle. He would show the world that America had arrived on the world stage. The contrast between the 19th and 20th century couldn't be greater as America soon entered the First World War. This war followed by the heady days of the 1920's became synonymous with an America that has never been the same.

Future Recommendations

Objectives

In studying the Library in the William Watts Sherman House, it is important to understand that this room holds architectural significance and integrity that is rarely found today. The analysis of the site becomes very valuable to better observe and obtain an understanding of the room and its historic purposes. Although the room has undergone several changes, it still possesses much of the original architectural elements that make this room so unique.

However, it is apparent that there is also considerable room for improvement. The main objective of this project has been to develop an interpretive plan to restore and preserve the significance and integrity of the Library. We have sought to provide suggestions to the client regarding restoration (painting, flooring, lighting and other restorative suggestions), use (to include recommendations regarding access), collection, acquisition (furniture and books), and awareness.

Recommendations for General Improvement

There are several fundamental improvements that we suggest that would contribute greatly to the renewal of the integrity of the Library.

Flooring

The industrial carpeting that exists in the room today is obviously neither original nor historically appropriate. Historic photographs

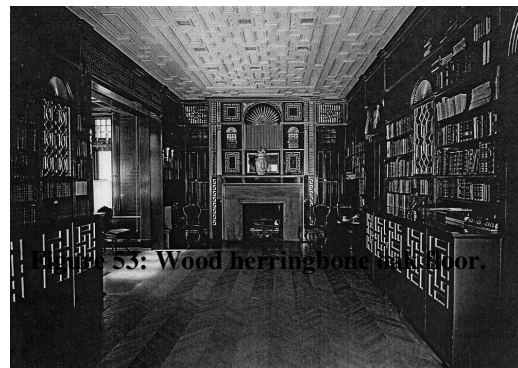


Figure 53: Wood herringbone floor.

revealed a wooden, herringbone oak patterned floor that was partially covered by large Persian area rugs. As it would be both a waste of time and money to tear up a wooden floor before installing carpeting, it is likely that the original floor lay beneath the cheaply made carpeting that is in the room today. Ideally, the original floor should be uncovered and restored. A Persian rug or a suitable replica should then be laid down in the fashion illustrated by historic photographs.

Lighting

The present lighting in the room is not effective. All five original brass wall sconces are still intact, however, they produce very little in the way of illumination. Modern floor and desk



Figure 54: Lighting issues, circa 1957.

lamps in the room now are not historically appropriate. Although there are several large windows in the room, they do not allow sufficient light to filter in even during peak daylight hours. While it may be argued that the Library's dim ambiance be historically

accurate, given its historic function as an essentially decorative room, we do suggest that the client purchase historically accurate floor and desk lamps to provide adequate light to fulfill the needs of those who may use the room today in ways recommended under the Use and Access suggestion heading. We do not suggest the installation of any built-in or overhead lighting as this would greatly compromise the integrity of the Library.

Window Treatments

Another improvement that would aid the recreation of the original integrity of the room would be to replace the existing window treatments with ones that are more appropriate to the room and interpretive date. Although it would be highly unlikely (not to mention expensive and

impractical) to track down original or period curtains, historic photographs can help us recreate appropriate window treatments in an accurate and relatively economical manner.

Suggestions for Architectural Finishes

The main objective behind our suggestions for repainting the room is the restoration of the original painting scheme. We believe that this is of immense value, therefore, it has been given its own heading.

Historically, the room has had two dominating colors: green and gold. The ceiling overhead is white. Paint sampling has yielded information regarding the room's paint history, and has confirmed that the color green currently in the room is not historically accurate. Additionally, paint sampling and historic photographs have led us to believe that more gilding was present in the room in the past, and was painted over during the most recent repainting of the room. Please refer to the previous section of our report regarding paint analysis for suggested modern color equivalents for repainting and re-gilding the room according to the Munsell notation chip that most closely matched the original colors of the room. Qualified contractors with experience painting historic interiors should be called in to do the work.

Acquisitions

Once the architectural interior of the room itself has been restored, we suggest acquiring appropriate furniture and an assortment books to restore the Library to its original function: a room that Housed a collection of literature.

Furniture Acquisition

Often times, rooms are built around the furniture one brings to it. The final selection exudes personal taste and sensitivity. Furniture has the ability to create the atmosphere of the room. As we know from our interview with Mrs. Slocum, the room gave off a decorative impression: “You walked in, walked around, and walked out again.” Evidently, the room did not



Figure 55: Louis XVI style chair original in Library. (Slocum Collection).

evoke utilitarian value; the books and the furniture were selected for exhibition.

After visiting her home, we were able to observe the actual pieces of furniture that decorated the Watts Sherman House, particularly the ones that had belonged in the Library. The furniture was of Louis XVI style (1715-1774), with its square outlines, gilt coloring, and spiraled straight and tapered legs. Its ornamental details consist of a rosette motif and floral/cherub silk upholstery.

If we are to preserve the room to its original state, it is necessary to reproduce the period furniture or find similar pieces from that era. Louis XVI furniture is a fusion between Greek and Roman styles, which feature a fragile visual quality, symmetrical design, and straight lines. Generally less ornamental than Rococo, Louis XVI style often includes inlay, restrained carving, and medallions. When painted, the colors ranged from pale gray to white and gold.

During the Neoclassical period, there was a transition from curved cabriole legs to fluted or spiraled straight and tapered legs. The arms tended to swing down, slightly forward and often ended in an acanthus leaf volute. Chair backs were rectangular, square, oval or medallion in

shape. Mahogany became the most common furniture material and the seating pieces were upholstered. The acanthus leaf, urns, lyres, flower swags and festoons were the most common ornamental details.

There are many websites that have a wide array of Louis XVI style furniture. The best



Figure 56: Original Louis XVI double chair.

site for various pieces for window treatment, flooring, chairs, tables, and lamps is at

<www.frenchfurniture.com>. Another great one for

choosing a fabric for the upholstery is <www.e-luxus-fabrics.com>. The furniture selection should

depend on the final decision of what to do with the

room. If the Library is not going to be used solely as a

decorative room, then a more common type of furniture may be chosen.

Historic photographs should be consulted to determine furniture needs and placement.

The photographs that have been provided show the space as being uncluttered and open with minimal furnishings of the above styling.

Book Collection

We know that the Library once housed an extensive collection of antique and rare books.

While attempts to acquire a listing of the books within the Library of Watts Sherman were unsuccessful, we found that the collection was divided in the Will of Sophia Augusta Brown Sherman. While visiting her in her home on Bellevue Avenue in April of 2003, Mrs. Slocum was kind enough to show us her portion of the collection. Over the years, Mr. and Mrs. Sherman accumulated a collection of beautifully bound books that included great works of literature, books in foreign languages, and rare antiques.

To amass such a collection of books today would be not only impractical, it would also



Figure 57: Part of original Sherman book collection.

be extremely expensive. Instead, we suggest that attractive books of a practical use – perhaps a collection of literature about the history of Newport – be acquired to line the shelves of the Library. We suggest that the client consult both historic photographs of the room as well as modern photographs taken in the home of Mrs.

Eileen Slocum to choose books that are aesthetically appropriate for the room. We also suggest that this room

be a repository for the works of Salve Regina scholars, such as theses papers and the dissertations of doctoral candidates.

Use and Access

Once the room is refurbished and restored to its original appearance and setting, how should the room be used? Who should have access to the room? Because so much money and effort is being put into the restoration of this magnificent room, we feel that it is necessary to share this valuable resource with others. Below are recommendations for the room that we give to the client for consideration. The most important thing to consider, however, is that the integrity of the Library is preserved. Access should be gained only with the help of Security, and only with specific permission of a CHP or other knowledgeable and responsible authority. Even after access is granted and gained, events held in the room should be presided over by Security personnel.

Firstly, we believe that Salve Regina University community should have the chance to experience an encounter with Newport's past. Professors of nearly any subject area may be able to creatively incorporate a visit to the Library into their curriculum. A history or even economics



Figure 58: Library being used for educational purposes.

class, for example, could study the Library as it relates to the broad patterns of local and national history, exhibiting the great wealth amassed by businessmen during the Gilded Age. Art students could study the Library to enhance their artistic skills. Art History and Cultural and Historic Preservation students have invested interest in the Library.

Additionally, various student groups such as clubs and university sport teams could hold meetings or ceremonies in the Library, with proper supervision.

The room would make a wonderful space for students to present senior theses or doctoral dissertations. It would also provide a quiet, composed place for University dignitaries to meet.

Another brilliant use of the room would be to rent the space to outside organizations to create revenue for the University. This plan of action would be an excellent way to offset the costs of the restoration. Again, a responsible authority (preferably a member of the CHP faculty) should be part of the process of permitting access to the Library, and a member of Security should be present at all times to ensure the safety of the integrity of the room.

Additionally, the University may consider giving a guided tour of the room by appointment. Prospective students of Salve Regina University who are interested in the CHP

major may be particularly interested in viewing this room as it will be a prime example of the goals of the CHP program.

Awareness and Education

Again, as a class, we believe that it is important to share this resource with the University community as well as the community at large. It can be safely said that the average Salve student is unaware of the significance of the Library. In order to spread knowledge about this noteworthy space, we suggest that a placard be placed outside the room to briefly explain its history and significance. A copy of this report should be available both at McKillop Library as well as within the new book collection of the Library. Small pamphlets should be made for distribution with the same purpose of the proposed placard outside the room, as well as in the Conferences Center to advertise the availability of the room for rental.

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Figure 59: Exiting the Library.