

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Edward Chipman Public Library

other names/site number Momence Public Library

Name of Multiple Property Listing _____

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

2. Location

street & number 126 N. Locust Street not for publication

city or town Momence vicinity

state Illinois county Kankakee zip code 60954

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: ___ national ___ statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A ___ B ___ C ___ D

 12/16/14
Signature of certifying official Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
 (Check only one box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: Library

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Classical Revival

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: brick, limestone, concrete

walls: brick

roof: rubber

other: _____

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Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Edward Chipman Public Library is located at the southeast corner of Locust and Second Streets, on the northeastern edge of Momence's central business district.¹ Momence (population 3,312 in 2010) lies along the Kankakee River in eastern Kankakee County, eight miles west of the Illinois-Indiana border and approximately fifty miles south of Chicago. The library occupies a modest-size lot that is located within a block characterized by mixed institutional, commercial, and residential development. Areas lying north and east of the library primarily are residential, while those to the south and west mostly have commercial and institutional buildings. A small parking lot is located on the rear (or east) end of the library lot, but no outbuildings are present on the property. The Edward Chipman Public Library is a one-story, flat-roofed, brick, Classical-Revival-style building with a raised basement and measures approximately 47 feet (north/south) by 55 feet (east/west). The building was constructed in two episodes, with the western half representing the original 1912 library. Edward Chipman, a prominent local farmer and banker, donated the funds for construction of the original building, which was designed by architect Charles Danforth Henry. Although not exceptionally large as built (47'x30'), the library was provided with a Classical-Revival-style exterior and well-appointed interior with two floor levels (including basement). The main floor had four rooms, while the basement was divided between three principal rooms, a hallway, and two bathrooms. Prominent decorative elements on the original library's exterior include: the front entrance, which is set within a full arch and is framed by a portico supported by two Ionic columns; an entablature featuring an architrave of Bedford limestone and a cornice with modillions; brick pilasters; and the use of dressed Bedford limestone for a watertable and for that portion of the basement walls visible above grade. A 25'-0"x40'-8" addition was constructed onto the rear (east) side of the original library in 1980, providing an additional room on each floor level. The north and south walls of the addition are inset slightly from the library, giving the building a T-shape footprint overall. Although the rear addition lacks the degree of ornamental detailing found on the original library, it does have a number of elements that harmonize it with the latter, including a stone watertable and brick belt coursing (placed on-line with the cornice and stone belt course on the older building). Despite the presence of the 1980 addition, the Edward Chipman Library retains its historic integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

Exterior: Original Library

The walls of the original library building are constructed with a red-colored brick with a textured surface. The brick are laid with a salmon-colored mortar, in a running bond pattern. Brick pilasters are located on the corners of the original building and also flank the front entrance on the west side of the library. That portion of the basement visible above grade is faced with regularly coursed, polished Bedford limestone (three courses being visible), topped off with a watertable of tooled Bedford limestone. This stone veneer hides the brick foundations. An entablature, based on the Ionic order, wraps fully around the west, north,

¹ The authors would like to thank both Ms. Jean Stetson (Librarian), and Ms. Janice Schroeder (Library Trustee) for their assistance in the preparation of this nomination form. Both contributed significantly to the success of this project.

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and south sides of the building. It consists of a Bedford limestone architrave, a brick frieze, and a metal cornice with modillions. The entablature just wraps around the corners on the east elevation. A parapet wall (approximately 18" high) extends above the cornice, and this is decorated with a heavy drip molding.

The west elevation is the formal front of the library. Centered within this façade is a columned portico, which frames the main entrance to the building. The portico is shallow in depth and is supported by two Ionic columns. The base of the northern column has an inscription crediting Edward Chipman as donating the library to the City of Momence. A second inscription is found on the base of the southern column, noting the library's date of construction (1912) and the names of the first Board of Directors. The entrance to the library is positioned within a full arch opening that springs from stone capitals and has an ornamental keystone. The entrance has a set of double doors, which are flanked by sidelights. The arch above the doors is filled by four fixed windows, of which the end ones have decorative leaded glass. A set of paired (or double) windows, on the main level, is located to either side of the central portico. The windows have double-hung wood sash with one-over-one lights. Fixed transom windows with leaded glass are present above each of the double-hung windows. There are a total of four basement windows present on the west elevation (with two positioned either side of the portico). These are centered beneath the windows on the main level.

On the north elevation, the library has two sets of paired windows on the main level that are identical in size and character to those on the west elevation. Similarly, four basement windows are present on the north elevation. The south elevation, by contrast has a row of six, narrow windows arranged in two groups of three. Four basement windows also are present on the elevation.

The early character of the east elevation of the original library is not understood completely due to the later construction of the rear addition. However, there is strong possibility of there having been an exterior door here, possibly centered within the elevation. Likewise, there is suspicion of a set of large paired windows (identical to those on the north and west elevations) having been present on the north end of the elevation. Another window may have been present on the south end of the elevation. As the rear of the library, the east elevation also had less architectural detailing than the other elevations, as evidenced by the termination of the entablature and watertable just around the corners of the building. A chimney for venting a basement furnace originally rose along the east elevation as well. The chimney stack has been removed below the roof line. A bulkhead for an exterior basement entrance also was present on this elevation (removed when the addition was constructed).

Exterior: 1980 Addition

The walls of the rear addition are constructed with a brown-colored brick with a textured surface, similar to, but readily distinguished from, that used for the original library building. The addition lacks the decorative detailing found on the original library, but nonetheless has a number of decorative elements harmonizing it with the earlier building. The concrete foundations of the addition, for instance, are scored to emulate the ashlar masonry on the original library. Similarly a cast concrete watertable—of similar size and aligned to that on the original library—is present on the north, south, and east elevations. Additionally, three simple bands of corbelled brickwork on north and south elevations mimic the far more ornate entablature of the 1912 library. The north and south elevations of the addition each have a single window opening; both windows are positioned towards the west end of the respective elevations. A bulkhead entrance to the basement is located along the rear (east) side of the library. A concrete stairway to an

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exterior doorway accessing the main level rises above the bulkhead. A pent roof shelters the stair landing. No basement windows are present in the addition.

Interior

The front entrance of the library opens into a small foyer measuring approximately 10' wide. A short stairway (of seven steps) on the north side of the foyer leads up to the main level of the library, while a separate flight of steps on the south descends to the basement level. The main level is entered through a doorway equipped with paired sash doors and a large transom window with leaded glass. This doorway leads into a 13'-wide entrance hall. Two arched doorways are present on the south side of the hall, and a third doorway on the east allows access to the rear addition. It's unclear whether the latter doorway represents an original opening (i.e. a former exterior doorway or a converted window) or was added when the addition was built in 1980.

On its north side, the entrance hall essentially has no wall, and it opens freely into 17'-2"x27'-0" room spanning the width of the original library building. This room has long served as the primary reading room in the library. It is illuminated by three sets of paired windows (one the west and two on the north). Bookcases fill the wall space between and below the windows. Reading desks run down the center of the room. A U-shaped librarian's desk is located in the southeast corner. A doorway on the east wall of the reading room leads into the rear addition. Based on its size and location, this doorway is suspected to be a conversion of a window opening, mirroring the paired windows present on the opposite wall. A U-shaped librarian's desk is located at the east end of this room, and a small book nook is on the west end.

There are two rooms on the south end of the original library. The eastern of these presently can be entered through one of the arched doorways previously referenced on the south side of the entrance hall. Originally used as a "stack room" (formerly having free standing book stacks), this chamber now serves as a children's reading room. It measures 13'-2"x16'-7" and has four narrow windows along its south side. An early twentieth-century cast-iron sink is located in the northwest corner. It is unclear whether or not this sink is an original feature of this room.² The eastern arched doorway has had a short bookcase installed within it. A doorway on the east side of the children's room accesses the rear addition. It's unclear whether this doorway was added with the addition or represents an original opening (or converted window). Another doorway on the south side of the children's room leads into a small reading room, measuring 10'-0"x16'-7". The reading room has two narrow windows on its south side and a set of larger, paired windows on the west. Bookcases line the walls.

The rear addition has a single large room on the main level, which measures approximately 39'x25'. This room has a one window each on its north and south walls, and an exterior entrance door on the east. The area is filled with book stacks.

The rooms on the main level of the original library are trimmed out with varnished red oak. This material was used for the door and window trim, baseboards, and chair rails that circuit the rooms. The entrance doors also are of red oak, as are components of the stairways (i.e. newel post, handrails, and steps). Although drop ceilings have been installed, the original ceiling surfaces and crown molding remain intact.

² One thought is that this sink was installed in the library in 1918 to assist with the treatment of the Spanish Influenza patients during the short time the library was used as an emergency hospital during the pandemic of 1918-19.

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The basement level of the library is accessed from the entrance foyer via a flight of seven steps. The stairway descends to a hallway that runs north/west and is roughly 6'-7" wide (at least on its southern end). A doorway on the north end of the hall opens into a large room that spans the width of the original building and presently serves as the library director's office. This room originally served as unimproved storage space, but was converted into a meeting room not long after the library opened.³ The office has four windows each on its west and north side. An additional two windows were once present on the east wall of the office, but these were closed off when the addition was constructed. Adjoining bathrooms are located on south end (and west side) of the basement hallway. The bathrooms are original to the building and still retain their original doors and hardware; the fixtures, however, have been updated. Two rooms are located on the east side of the hallway. The northern of these is a furnace room—a function it appears to have always had. The room has brick walls and is well provided for in respect to doors, having a total of three present (allowing access from the hallway, director's office, and adjacent storage room). It also originally had an exterior doorway on its east side, but this was infilled when the addition was constructed. An original brass floor vent on the main level is located directly above the furnace room. The room lying south of the furnace room is used for storage. It measures 11'-7"x13'-4" and it has two windows on its south side. Another two window openings were once present on the east wall of the room, but one of these was enclosed when the addition was added, while the other was converted into a doorway to allow access to the basement beneath the addition. The original function of this room is unknown.

The basement of the addition consists of a single, large room measuring approximately 39'x25' in size. This room is windowless but does have an exterior entrance door on its east side (at the northeast corner of the room). The area is used for storage.

³ The room was finished out by the Woman's Club under an agreement with the Library Board, by which the club could use the room for its meetings.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1912-1966

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

Architect/Builder

Charles Danforth Henry (architect)
E. A. Barsolou (contractor/builder)

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

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

The Edward Chipman Public Library is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its local significance in the area of education. Built in 1912, the property is the only library building ever erected in Momence, and it has continuously served the community in that capacity to the present day. Throughout its history, the Edward Chipman Public Library has addressed the needs of a community that recognizes the importance of reading and the diffusion of knowledge amongst its residents in an ever-changing, modernizing world. The history of a public library in Momence actually dates to 1901, but the institution would not have a permanent home until prominent local citizen Edward Chipman bequeathed funds for the construction of the existing library building, which subsequently was named in his honor. Chipman's bequest followed a trend in the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries where private donors were primary drivers in the establishment/support of public libraries, exemplified most notably by Andrew Carnegie. The period of significance for the Edward Chipman Public Library is 1912 (the date of its construction) to 1966 (the fifty-year cut-off for National Register significance).

The Edward Chipman Public Library, although it retained sufficient integrity and was within the district's period of significance (1849-1956), was excluded from the Downtown Momence Historic District due predominately to the fact that it was not contiguous to any other contributing building in the district.⁴ (Lakota Group 2012:19).

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

A Short History of Momence

Momence, located in eastern Kankakee County, is one of the older communities in northeastern Illinois.⁵ The two factors that influenced the establishment of the community at this location was the distinctive character of the Kankakee River, and the fur-trade exploits of Gurdon Hubbard.

Momence is located along the Kankakee River immediately west of what was once a large wetland known as the Great Kankakee Marsh. This large wetland, now drained, once stretched from Momence to a point near present-day South Bend, Indiana.⁶ During the nineteenth century (and earlier), overland travel through the region east of Momence was very difficult due to the often inundated, swampy lands. It was at Momence, though, that a series of natural stone ledges (or dams) were located. These natural dams backed up the Kankakee River and caused the formation of the poorly drained lands to the east. It was at these natural stone dams that fords were located

⁴ Lakota Group, *Downtown Momence Master Plan*, Prepared for Main Street Momence, and the City of Momence (Chicago: Lakota Group 2012), p. 12.

⁵ Elizabeth B. Morrison, *Memories of Momence Township—1776-1976* (Kankakee, Illinois: Kankakee County Historical Society, 1976), p. 7. The community of Momence straddles the township line separating Ganeer Township to the west, and Momence Township to the east. The Dixie Highway (Illinois Route 1) separates the two townships. The Edward Chipman Public Library is located in Momence Township.

⁶ The river was a slow-moving, low-gradient stream that meandered greatly. Although Momence to South Bend is approximately 100 miles distance, the distance via river—with all its bends—was nearly 250 miles in length. One author refers to the Kankakee River east of Momence as "the river of two thousand bends" (Morrison, p. 41).

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which made crossing the Kankakee River (and overland travel) much easier. From Momence westward, the Kankakee River gradient increased dramatically and more effectively drained the adjacent lands.

Momence obtained the name the “Old Border Town” due to its strategic location at the western edge of this large wetland (which consisted of a major expanse of low-lying wetland marsh interspersed with timbered “oak barrens”). Traditional “backwoodsman” lifestyles (trapping, hunting, fishing) persisted in the relatively undeveloped marshland of the Kankakee River throughout much of the nineteenth century, with early Momence functioning as an entrepot community and/or connection to the outside world—and it was the contrast in lifestyles between the marsh dwellers and/or backwoodsmen (with their hunting and trapping lifestyle), and the farmers/merchants of the more settled Momence, that it acquired its nickname. Fur trappers and market-hunters played a vital role in the local economy of Momence for many decades.

It was at what was to become Momence that a series of early river crossings—or fords—were established. In 1822-23, Gurdon “Swift Walker” Hubbard—of the American Fur Company and Chicago fame—established a trail connecting his various trading posts, from Fort Vincennes (on the Wabash River) to Fort Dearborn (near the southern limits of Lake Michigan, now Chicago, Cook County). The trail passed by his trading posts at Danville (Vermilion County) and Bunkum (Iroquois County), bypassed the wetlands to the east, and crossed the Kankakee River at what became known as the Upper Crossing. The Hubbard Trail is believed to have followed an earlier Indian trail of unknown antiquity, having been established at least by the late eighteenth century, and potentially representing part of ancient buffalo trail connecting the prairies of Illinois to the salt licks of southern Indiana and Kentucky.⁷

It was not until the early 1830s that the first European settlers moved into the area and began constructing their “improvements.”⁸ The first settlers in this part of the valley settled along the both sides of the Kankakee River, where the Hubbard Trail crossed the river at a natural ford. William Lacy located on the north bank in 1833 and Robert Hill on the south bank in 1834. This small cluster of cabins became known as the Upper Crossing. Hill soon opened a tavern and/or hotel that became well known for its hospitality and service. In 1837, William Nichols settled along the trail just north of Lacy; his large brick residence still stands. By the later 1830s, the incipient community became known as Hill’s Crossing. In 1840, Hill constructed a new frame tavern from lumber hauled from Chicago, and in circa 1842 a timber bridge was constructed across the river at Hill’s Crossing for the Hubbard Trace (and state road). This was first bridge to be built across the Kankakee River within the region. By 1845, approximately twelve families were living at the Upper Crossing.⁹

⁷ By the late eighteenth century, the Pottawatomie Indians occupied this portion of Illinois, and Hubbard appears to have utilized portions of an earlier Indian trail (Elmore Barce, “The Old Chicago Trail, and the Old Chicago Road,” *Indiana Magazine of History*, Volume XV, No. 1, March, 1919).

⁸ The lands of eastern Kankakee County were not available for purchase from the U.S. Government until after 1832. It was at that time that the Pottawatomie Indians relinquished their claims to the land with the signing of the Treaty of Camp Tippecanoe (J. H. Beers and Company, *Atlas of Kankakee County, Illinois* [Chicago: J. H. Beers and Company 1883], pp. 5, 6, 8). Various Pottawatomie lingered in the area through circa 1838 (see Morrison, p. 7, which references Joe Barbee residing at Indian Garden, and the annual trading excursion made by local Pottawatomie Indians at the Upper Crossing.).

⁹ The Vincennes to Chicago Road, surveyed by the State of Illinois in 1834, closely followed the route of the old Hubbard Trail. Stone mile markers were placed along the route, one of which (the Mile 179 marker) still survives along the route just north of the Upper Crossing location (Beers, p. 125).

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Located about one mile downriver from the Upper Crossing was another natural stone dam and ford, known as the Lower Crossing. In 1834, Asher Sargent constructed a double log house on the north side of the river at the Lower Crossing. He was joined in 1836 by the A. S. Vail and the Orson Beebe families, who constructed log houses on the south side of the river. Sargent erected a dam (with associated sawmill) across the north channel of the Kankakee River in 1837, and a year later a dam across nearby Trim Creek (with associated grist mill).¹⁰ By 1838, the small community was set with both a saw mill and grist mill.¹¹

By the late 1840s a toll bridge had been established at Momence, and the growth of the Lower Crossing soon outpaced that at the Upper Crossing. Beers (1883) notes that “there is no agreement whatever in regard to the present bridge, as about the time it was first put up it was borne off by the ice and water, and seems to have been re-constructed once or twice before a structure was obtained sufficiently permanent to withstand the spring floods.”¹² In 1846, the City of Momence, located at the Lower Crossing along the north banks of the Kankakee River, was laid out and surveyed by Dr. Hiram Todd. At that time, the town plat consisted of twelve blocks, bounded on the north by Fourth Street, on the east by Maple, on the west by Range Street, and on the south by the river.¹³ At that time, Momence—or rather the platted community located on the north side of the river—was part of Will County, with the county seat located at Joliet.¹⁴ That part of the unplatted community lying south of the river was located at that time in Iroquois County, with the county seat being located at Middleport (present-day Watseka).¹⁵

Kankakee County was created from portions of Will and Iroquois Counties in February 1853. Although Momence, the largest town in the new county at the time, sought to become the county seat, the establishment of the Chicago Branch of the Illinois Central Railroad line (and the platting of the small community named Kankakee Depot) through the mid-section of the county that same year clinched the establishment of the county seat at that location.¹⁶ In that same year [1853], a greatly expanded plat of the *Town of Momence* was filed with the Will County Recorder’s Office.

Agricultural development of the rural countryside around Momence developed dramatically during the 1850s and 1860s. During these early years, extensive land-use policies were common. Low-lying grounds of eastern Kankakee County consisted of vast expanses of marsh grasses and represented ideal lands for grazing cattle.

¹⁰ Morrison, 1976, pp. 3.

¹¹ The island forming the two channels of the Kankakee River at Momence was known as “Strunk’s Island,” in reference to the flouring mill established by John Strunk on the island (Beers, p. 125).

¹² Beers, p. 125. Morrison (p. 8) relates that Isaac Olds claimed to have built the first bridge over the north channel of the river at the foot of Range Street in 1845, with the bridge over the south branch by John Force at an unknown date shortly thereafter.

¹³ Morrison, p. 8.

¹⁴ Will County was partitioned from Cook and Iroquois Counties in 1836, with the southern limits of much of the county being the Kankakee River (Beers, p. 9; Illinois Secretary of State, *Counties of Illinois: Their Origin and Evolution* [Springfield: Illinois State Journal, 1919]).

¹⁵ Since 1826, that area south of the Kankakee River was part of Vermilion County. In 1831, it was incorporated in the newly created Iroquois County (Beers, p. 9; Illinois Secretary of State).

¹⁶ Beers, p. 11.

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Large cattle ranches took advantage of the resource, and the region became known for its hay production. Although the 1860 *Map of Iroquois and Kankakee Counties* illustrates some of the more prominent rural settlers in the vicinity of Momence, it indicates large expanses of undeveloped wet prairie lands surrounding the early community.¹⁷ These rural lands were much more developed by 1883, when J. H. Beers' *Atlas of Kankakee County, Illinois* was published.¹⁸ By this time, all of the lands of eastern Kankakee County had been purchased from the U.S. government and broken into a variety of farms, many being 160 or 320 acres in size. Nonetheless, several large blocks of land (often comprising whole sections) located in the far eastern portion of Momence Township were owned by the Momence Live Stock and Farming Company. Speaking of Ganeer Township in the early 1880s, Beers (1883) wrote that "quite a number of the successful and well-to-do farmers of Kankakee County have homes in this township."¹⁹

One such "successful and well-to-do farmer" in eastern Kankakee County at this time was Edward Chipman, the benefactor and namesake of the public library in Momence. In 1883, the entire north half of Section 6 of Momence Township (consisting of 378 acres of ground), the NE1/4 of Section 1 (160 acres, with the family residence) and 180 acres in adjacent Section 12—all in Ganeer Township—was owned by Edward Chipman. The 1883 *Atlas of Kankakee County* contained a lithographic view of the Edward Chipman farmstead, located three miles north of Momence, in Section 1 (Ganeer Township). This lithographic view depicts a large, presumably successful, farm complex devoted to cattle ranching, typical of many of the local farmers at that time (see Figures 3-5).²⁰ An 1893 county history described Edward Chipman as "a prominent and extensive farmer of Ganier [sic] Township." Foreshadowing his later role in the construction of a new library in Momence, the history further noted that "Mr. Chipman... assists and takes an active part in all public enterprises and has been an important factor in the development and progress of this county."²¹ His career is discussed in more detail below.

Momence experienced rapid growth during the immediate post-Civil War years. As Morrison (1976) noted, "rapid population growth began before 1870 and was responsible for a great deal of building in the early seventies [1870s]."²² In March 1870, a large new addition known as the *South East Addition to Momence* was surveyed and platted on the south side of the river. The 1880 *Bird's Eye View of Momence* illustrates the greatly expanded community of Momence.²³

¹⁷ John Wilson, *Map of Iroquois and Kankakee Counties* (N.p., 1860). It is interesting to note that this published wall map contains no illustrations of buildings or business from Momence in its margins.

¹⁸ Beers, pp. 54, 56.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

²¹ Lake City Publishing Company, *Portrait and Biographical Record of Kankakee County* (Chicago: Lake City Publishing Company, 1893), p. 222.

²² Morrison, p. 16. During this period, the town's "central business district" shifted from River Street to the Front (now Washington) and Range Street location that is currently the center of the business activity today (Jane Johnson, Fran Le Beau, and Lisa Wogan, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Downtown Momence Historic District* [Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2006]).

²³ Beck and Pauli, [*Bird's Eye View of Momence, Illinois* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin, [1880?])].

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This growth in population and new construction was spurred, in part, by the construction of the Chicago, Danville, and Vincennes Railroad. The construction of this rail line through Momence launched the community into the modern era. Construction of the Chicago, Danville and Vincennes Railroad began in 1869 and in 1871 had established a route from Dolton (south of Chicago) to Danville—passing through Yellowhead Township (resulting in the founding of nearby Grant Park), Momence Township (along the east side of Momence, and crossing the Kankakee River at that location), continuing through southeast Ganeer Township, and on to St. Anne.²⁴ This rail line roughly followed the course of the old Hubbard Trail and Illinois State Route 1 from Chicago to Danville. Initially, seven northbound and seven southbound trains passed along the corridor each day (with five passing through Momence). Economic issues initiated by the Panic of 1873 hit the company hard, with a major reorganization occurring in 1877. At that time, the line was re-established as the Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad (C. and E. I. Railroad).

The C. & E. I. Railroad was quick to realize the tourism potential of the Kankakee River and the marshlands to the east. By the 1870s, the Kankakee Marsh was touted as the best waterfowl hunting locale in the world—and both Theodore Roosevelt and Grover Cleveland were among the many who traveled to the Indiana resorts to experience the “hunter’s paradise.”²⁵

The east/west-running Indiana, Illinois and Iowa Railroad traveled along the north side of the Kankakee River and crossed the C. and E. I. Railroad at the north edge of Momence continuing on to Plymouth, Indiana. This line (also known as the Plymouth, Kankakee, and Pacific Railroad; later Union Pacific), which was envisioned by developers as early as 1868, was an extension of the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne, and Chicago Railroad. The line was constructed from Momence to Streator (passing through Kankakee City) in 1881-82, and eventually was pushed through to Bureau Junction, near Hennepin on the Illinois River).²⁶ Similarly, in 1887-88, the Momence and State Line Railroad Company was constructed, heading to the southeast from Momence to Percy Junction, one mile north of Goodland, Indiana (and passing through Tallmadge, Hopkins Park and Morocco, Indiana),²⁷ further connecting the agricultural and industrial interests of Momence to the greater outside world.

In 1883, one Kankakee County history noted that

Momence is the principal village in the eastern half of Kankakee County, and contains about 1,200 inhabitants; has a fine school building, four churches, about twenty stores, one printing office, one large grain elevator, several ice-houses, two banks, two hotels and another now building, and many other minor industries incidental to a thriving, prosperous village.²⁸

²⁴ Beers, p. 11.

²⁵ <http://www.thekankakeeriver.com/KankakeePintails.html>; Morrison, pp. 41, 44.

²⁶ Beers, p. 11; G. W. and C. B. Colton and Company, *Map Showing the Line of the Plymouth, Kankakee and Pacific Railroad and its Connections* (New York: G. W. and C. B. Colton and Company, 1871), p. 38.

²⁷ Will H. Lyford, *History of the Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad Company to June 30, 1913* (Chicago, 1913).

²⁸ Beers, p. 125.

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By the end of that decade (the 1880s), four railroads intersected at Momence, which had developed into a significant railroad hub for northeastern Illinois. These intersecting rail lines increased the modernization and intensification of the regions agricultural pursuits, and introduced new industrial ventures to the community. Significant new industries introduced to Momence during the 1880s included a burgeoning ice business (with multiple ice houses located along the river), and the Tiffany Brick Works. During the later 1880s, the C. & E. I. Railroad greatly increased their presence in Momence. By the mid-1880s, the C. & E. I. Railroad had constructed a large round house and repair shops adjacent to their tracks on the south side of the river.²⁹ Additionally, in 1887, the C. and E. I. Railroad purchased the eastern end of Strunk's Island, developed the property as an amusement park (which opened in June 1887), and initiated daily excursion trains from Chicago to Momence.³⁰ The railroad constructed boathouses, a dance pavilion and bandstand, playground and refreshment stands.³¹

By 1890, the population of Momence had reached 1,635 individuals.³² The early 1890s were a period of dynamic growth for the community of Momence, spurred in part by a sense of community boosterism that manifested itself as the Inter-State Hay Palace Expositions—which was held in Momence during the fall of 1890 and 1891. The two expositions highlighted the varied products and resources of eastern Illinois and western Indiana “in hope of attracting investments, and immigration from the older Eastern States.”³³ The exposition ran for only two years, and although it was not financially successful for its investors, it was tremendously successful in bringing additional industry and improvements to Momence as well as the surrounding communities. Major improvements to the city's infrastructure (including the introduction of electricity) were initiated during the Exposition years.

Commercial development along Washington and Range Streets continued to grow in Momence during the later 1890s and early years of the twentieth century. In 1900, the population of Momence had expanded to 2,026 individuals.³⁴ New commercial structures—many of brick construction—were constructed along these two streets during these years. The First National Bank was organized in the closing years of the nineteenth century, with Edward Chipman being one of the founders of the new banking institution. In 1906, the bank constructed a new brick Classical Revival building at the northwest corner of Front and Range Streets to house their bank—a building that was to house the Momence library for a few years prior to the construction of the existing library building in 1912.

²⁹ In 1899, the railroad also established a large stone quarry adjacent to their repair shops. The quarry continued operation through 1904. Upon closure, it filled with ground water, and is today known as Mirror Lake.

³⁰ Lyford.

³¹ The railroad stopped excursions to Island Park in the early years of the twentieth century after a tragic train accident in July 1904 that resulted in the death of approximately eighteen children on their return to Chicago. The story was carried by newspaper from Los Angeles to New York City. The island property was eventually deeded to the City of Momence, and its use has continued as a city park to the present day (Morrison, pp. 22, 32).

³² Newton Bateman and Paul Selby, *Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Kankakee County*, Volume I (Chicago: Munsell Publishing Company, 1906), p. 381.

³³ *The Chicago Evening Journal*, 3 September 1890.

³⁴ Bateman and Selby, p. 381.

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In 1906, only a few years before the construction of the Chipman Library, the county history described Momence as such:

MOMENCE, a town in Kankakee County, situated on the Kankakee River and at the intersection of the Chicago & Eastern Illinois and the Indiana, Illinois & Iowa Railroads, 54 miles south of Chicago; has water power, a flouring mill, enameled brick factory, railway repair shops, two banks, two newspapers, five churches, and two schools....³⁵

By 1910 the population of Momence had reached 2,201 individuals. Momence continued to grow as an important commercial center at the turn-of-the-century becoming an industrious manufacturing and distribution center.³⁶ In 1918, the *Automobile Blue Book* noted that Momence was

situated on the beautiful and historic Kankakee river, part of the early water route from Detroit to St. Louis. This river for many miles east of the city is noted for its wild, natural scenery, numerous bayous, duck-hunting grounds, ideal camping and fishing grounds, etc. Many resorts exist along its edge.³⁷ With five railroads and its river, Momence offers exceptional advantages as an industrial center, and counts among its thriving plants the Tiffany Enameled Brick Works, American Ladder Co., Momence Tannery and Momence Bottling Works.³⁸

At this time [1918], Momence boasted a population of 3,000 inhabitants, and the country was engaged in a bitter world war. Like most small towns in Illinois, Momence contributed both personnel and funds for the Great War (later referred to as World War I). In part due to the effects of the Great War, the Spanish Influenza (or Spanish flu) struck the country—and Momence—with a vengeance in the spring of 1918 and continued relatively unabated through early 1919. As quoted from the City of Momence webpage

As Momence entered the 20th century, new forces shaped its evolution... The sudden emergence of World War I in the early 20th century took local boys from Momence only to see them return and make the city more modern. As with all wars, a burst of local improvements following the first war, and the automobile led the way to American modernization.³⁹

By the later 1910s, change was apparent in Momence, and the surrounding countryside. The rise of the automobile had a dramatic impact on the landscape. Gasoline filling stations sprouted up, a variety of service-oriented industries shifted their attention to the automobile—and new resorts adapted to the new form of

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Lakota Group, p. 19.

³⁷ Resort development along the stretch of the Kankakee River between Momence and the state line accelerated following the dredging and channeling of the Kankakee River within Indiana between 1902 and 1917. Known as the “Kankakee Ditch,” this effort drained the Indiana portion of the Kankakee Marsh and effectively destroyed the resort industry there.

³⁸ Automobile Blue Book Publishing Company, *Official Automobile Blue Book*, 1918, Volume 5 (Chicago: Automobile Blue Book Publishing Company, 1918), p. 141.

³⁹ <http://www.cityofmomence.com/history.aspx>

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transportation (such as the Garden of Eden) developed along the river. One of the earliest cross-country highways—the north/south Dixie Highway (Illinois State Route 1)—was established in 1915 with the western branch eventually connecting Chicago to Miami, Florida, and passing through the center of Momence (basically following the path of the old Hubbard Trail to Danville). The route through Momence was opened in 1921 and at that time, the name of Front Street was changed to Washington Street, and Range Street was changed to Dixie Highway.⁴⁰

Although Momence experience growth and many improvements to the community’s landscape during the 1920s, growth came to a frightening halt on October 24, 1929 with a precipitous decline in the stock market, which ushered in a great economic depression that endured for over a decade. In 1932, during the height of the Great Depression, the community of Momence celebrated its Centennial with a grand pageant, and an outgrowth of that celebration was the creation of the Gladiolus Festival in 1938—a tradition that is still ongoing to this day.

It was not until the U.S. entry into World War II in late 1941 that the U.S. economy finally recovered from the Great Depression. As with the Great War, Momence again contributed significantly to the war effort. After World War II and the return of the soldiers to their hometown, the community grew and experienced a post-war boom that began in the very late 1940s and continued through the 1950s and 1960s.⁴¹ As noted in the City of Momence web page, “the impact of two major wars, a ten-year depression, and massive industrial modernism created challenges and opportunities for Momence as it did for every community in the country.”⁴²

The Establishment of a City Library in Momence

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, no public library was available to the majority of the citizens of Momence. For the most part, books and periodicals were limited to personal libraries owned by the wealthy. A fledgling library may have operated for a short time during the 1890s from a community hall located on North Range Street. Little information is known about this early attempt.⁴³

The first move towards establishing a public library in Momence occurred in the fall of 1901, when a group of interested citizens met at the Baptist Church and laid out the framework for such an institution. Officers for a library board were selected, and Miss Zoe Coyle was chosen as the librarian. During these early years, funding the library was difficult, and “the struggle of this board to keep this library open is well known by most of our readers.” Public funding for the library came about through an effort by interested citizens, headed by D. C.

⁴⁰ Morrison, p. 33.

⁴¹ According to Johnson et al. (Section 8, page 9), no buildings were constructed in the downtown of Momence from 1931 through 1950.

⁴² <http://www.cityofmomence.com/history.aspx> (see also Kevin McNulty, Sr., *Images of America, Around Momence* [Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2007]).

⁴³ Morrison (1976:25), in discussing the formation of a “Dramatic Club” at an unknown later nineteenth century date (circa 1890s?), states that “the Y.W.C.A. organized a library with a membership fee of \$1.00 entitling the member to a book a week.” The Drama Club performed in Murphy Hall (later the location of Lang’s garage in 1976); the renovated hall was later known as the Momence Opera House. Presumably, Morrison suggests that the Y.W.C.A operated from either Murphy Hall or the Opera House. Additionally, Morrison mentions the existence of several literary societies, of which the Historical Club was the best known. The relationship of these literary societies to the early establishment of the library is unclear.

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Riker, which resulted in the city council appropriating an annual sum for the support of the institution, "and since that time the board has had easier sailing." Presumably, the collections of the library were located at the Baptist Church during these early years.⁴⁴

In mid-November 1907, a meeting of the Library Board was held in the lecture room of the Baptist Church, with Reverend Vreeland officiating. New board members were elected, with Rev. Vreeland being elected chairman, and R. E. Selby, Charles Hack, W. L. Clapsadle, Mrs. Ed Sweet, and Dr. Nickerson elected as board members.⁴⁵ It was during this meeting that a motion was made to rent "a suite of three rooms in the north end of the Second floor of the Momence State and Savings Bank Building, for a library and reading room at \$6 per month, heat and water furnished."⁴⁶ It was decided to use the west rooms for the library.⁴⁷ At this same meeting, library hours were established, as well as rules for issuing and using a library card (which could be purchased for ten cents each). The library card allowed for the holder to borrow up to ten books for a period not to exceed ten weeks. The Board hoped to open the library on the forthcoming Thanksgiving afternoon, 1907. A few days later, Miss Coyle resigned her position as librarian, and Miss Lucy Atherton was appointed to replace her.⁴⁸ The salary for the librarian was set at \$10/month. In December of that year, the Board reported that besides "about 160 books" within the library, they offered numerous magazines for the patrons to use (*Minutes*, December 3, 1907).⁴⁹

⁴⁴ "The New Edward Chipman Free Public Library. Magnificent Building Which Has Just Been Completed at a Cost of \$8,000.00," *Momence Press Reporter*, (27 December 1912). This news article began with the words "From small acorns great oaks grow." This newspaper article acknowledges the superior efforts of Mrs. C. A. Wikstrom during these hard times, noting that "mention of the Momence Public Library would not be complete without credit being given to Mrs. C. A. Wikstrom, who by her liberal donations from time to time, at times when it seemed the doors must be closed, made it possible to keep it open and later develop into an institution that is a credit to the city and a source of much pleasure to its citizens." [See Morrison, pp. 24-25, for information on the Wikstrom family.]

⁴⁵ Mr. C. Frank Vreeland was the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Momence. R. E. Selby was the Superintendent of the Public Schools. Charles Hack was a prominent dry goods merchant in town. Clapsdale was president of the Momence Building and Loan Association.

⁴⁶ This prominent red-brick building is located at the northwest corner of Dixie Highway and Washington Street, in downtown Momence. The Classical Revival building, which is a contributing element of the Downtown Momence National Register of Historic Places Historic District, was constructed only a short time earlier in 1906. This building was also referred to as the Exchange Bank (Johnson et al., Section 7, p. 6).

⁴⁷ Momence Public Library [MPL], Board of Directors and Trustees Minutes (15 November 1907). Much of the information obtained regarding the history of the Edward Chipman Public Library was obtained from a series of handwritten ledger books recording the minutes of the Library's Board of Directors and Trustees meetings. Unfortunately, a complete set of these minute books apparently have not survived. The earliest book is entitled *Minutes Momence Public Library, 1907-1908*; whereas the second is entitled [*Minutes*] *Edward Chipman Public Library*. The latter book begins in September 1911, and continues through late-1925. In the back of the earlier document is a financial account which documents the Library's expenses from November 1907 through February 1910. A variety of expenses are noted, including such monthly expenses as "Telephone \$1.30," "*Press Reporter* \$2.00" [for printing placards], and "Librarian \$10.00." Three other *Minute Books* were located and reviewed during this research. These included books that documented meetings from May 1939 through July 1942, from August 1942 through June 1944, and from July 1947 through May 1951. It is unclear as to whether additional *Minute Books* are extant.

⁴⁸ Momence Public Library (20 November 1907).

⁴⁹ At that time, the Library had been "offered" [given?] the *Literary Digest*, *Success*, *Youth's Companion*, *Colliers Weekly*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*. Additionally, the Library subscribed to the magazines *Every Body's Magazine*, *World To-Day*, *McClures*, *Scientific American*, and the children's magazine *St. Nicholas*.

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Additionally, the Library offered a series of monthly guest lectures, guest readings, and concerts for the public's enjoyment.⁵⁰

In February of the following year (1908), a Library Association was formed, and over the following summer and early fall, a constitution was adopted, and by early September of that year new trustees were elected and included Rev. Eglin, D. C. Riker, Clyde Tabler, Dr. A. S. Buritt, Mrs. D. E. Styles, and Dr. A. L. Nickerson. In an effort to raise money, the Library Association initiated their "Foot of Pennies" program.⁵¹

In April 1910, approximately 2½-years after the Library opened in the newly constructed Momence State and Savings Bank Building, the principal stockholder of the bank—Edward Chipman—passed away.⁵² Apparently, over the previous couple of years, Mr. Chipman had noticed the work (and financial need) of the fledgling library that had operated from the second story of his bank, and he bequeathed \$10,000 to the Momence Public Library. The *Momence Press Reporter* certainly felt that way, as conveyed in its May 6, 1910 edition:

The gift of \$10,000.00 left by the will of Ed Chipman to the Momence Public Library is one that came as a genuine surprise to all, even to those who had charge of the library. During his life Mr. Chipman gave no hint this action on his part would be forthcoming. What prompted him to leave that sum is only a matter of conjecture, for his was not a literary man, reading only daily and weekly home papers. The gift is one that is and should be fully appreciated by everyone, as it ensures a permanent library building which will stand as a monument to Mr. Chipman.

It is unfortunate that he did not donate to the library in his lifetime and enjoy the praise that would necessarily arise from such a gift. But it was not his nature. He cared nothing for praise although he took pride in having things well done.⁵³

Up to this point in time, the library had no permanent home, and the monies donated to the City of Momence were to be used to secure a permanent home for the library and reading room.

Edward Chipman was born in Brookville, Canada⁵⁴ on July 14, 1824. As a child, the family moved to St. Lawrence County, New York. At age fourteen, he entered the employ of man for whom he worked for seven years. In 1847, when twenty-three years of age, Edward left New York for the Old Northwest, traveling via the Great Lakes. Landing in Racine, Wisconsin, he moved south to join his parents in Momence that same year,

⁵⁰ Momence Public Library (3 December 1907). The Methodist orchestra presented a concert at the Momence Opera House in an effort to raise awareness for the library ("Benefit Concert for Momence Library Fund," *Momence Progress*, 10 December 1910; see also "Many Making Donations to Library; Several Respond Same Day Call is Made," *Press-Reporter*," *Momence Press-Reporter*, ? December 1910).

⁵¹ Momence Public Library (25 February 1908; 8 September 1908).

⁵² "Edward Chipman Dead," *Momence Progress* (22 April 1910).

⁵³ "Library Gift," *Momence Press-Reporter* (6 May 1910).

⁵⁴ It's unclear whether Chipman was born in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, as both Canadian provinces have towns named Brookville. However, Brookville, New Brunswick is located very close to the Maine border, which may make it the more likely candidate, given the Chipman family's subsequent relocation to New York state.

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where he purchased 80 acres from the federal government.⁵⁵ This 80-acre tract would be his home farm for almost forty years and served as the foundation for his later financial success.⁵⁶ Discussing Edward Chipman's early career, an 1893 history states that he

again returned to Kankakee County, where he purchased ox-teams and commenced breaking the prairie. At this time he built a small log house, where he lived until enabled to build a more pretentious one. After raising a crop he hauled his grain to Chicago, purchased lumber and hauled it back by ox-team. With this lumber in the year 1849, he erected a frame dwelling. In one year Mr. Chipman made thirty-six trips to Chicago by teams. He lived on the property which was his first purchase until 1887, when he bought the farm he now lives in Ganier [sic] Township, which consists of one hundred and sixty acres situated on Section 1. He is now the owner of about fifteen hundred acres of well-improved and valuable land, all in Kankakee County. This property represent the industry and hard labor of years, and he is well entitled to the rest from toil which he is now enjoying.⁵⁷

Chipman devoted most of business career to farming and stock raising, and "being a close buyer as well as a saver of his money, he soon added to his landed possessions."⁵⁸ He eventually acquired 1,500 acres of land in Momence, Ganer, Sumner, and Yellowhead Townships in Kankakee County, besides purchasing "considerable city property" in Momence, Chicago, and Chicago Heights. In 1893, the newly published Kankakee County history noted that Chipman was "living a retired life, but still supervises his farm property..."⁵⁹ Around 1898, Chipman relocated from his farm to Momence, where he participated in the organization of the Momence

⁵⁵ Truman and Sarah Chipman were Edward's parents. Beers (1883:145) notes that Truman "was one of the early pioneers of this county, coming from Vermont on October 16, 1845." According to Beers (1883:146), the couple's younger son, Walter B. Chipman, also arrived in Momence at the same time. Beers (1883:147) suggests that Walter (and/or the extended Chipman family) purchased land in Section 6, Momence Township at that time (Beers 1883:146). The 1893 Kankakee County History suggests that Edward had purchased 80-acres of land in Section 6, which was then still part of Will County (Lake City Publishing 1893:221). In 1883, Beers (1883:146) noted that Walter Chipman "has 200 acres of fine land, and owns the old homestead of his father, who died in 1870"—suggesting that the Truman Chipman family farm was probably located in the SW1/2, Section 6, Momence Township. In 1883, the entire north half of Section 6 was owned by Edward Chipman.

Edward married Mary Delana [Delaney] in October 1850, and together they had four children: Ellis (an invalid); Merril (or Merrill; who died in infancy), Alvira (who died in 1902), and Anna (wife of J. E. Paradis; who resided in Chicago at the time of Edward's death). His wife Mary preceded him in death, passing away in May 1902 (Lake City Publishing Company 1893:221-222).

Beers (1883:145) states that "Mr. Chipman came to the county with little means, purchased land from the Government at Congress price, but through industry has become one of the most successful farmers of the county, owning at the present time nearly 1,200 acres of as fine land as there is in the State, which is nearly all under a high state of cultivations."

⁵⁶ The location of Edward's original landholdings is unknown. In 1883, Edward's home farm was located in the NE1/4, Section 1, Ganer Township. Beers (1883:57) illustrated the farmstead, and noted that "Mr. Chipman now resides on Section 1, in Ganer Township, in one of the finest residences in this part of the county"—suggesting that the original landholdings were probably elsewhere (perhaps in adjacent Section 6, Momence Township) (Beers (1883:145).

⁵⁷ Lake City Publishing Company, pp. 221-22.

⁵⁸ "Edward Chipman Dead," *Momence Progress* (22 April 1910). Mr. Chipman was buried in the Momence Cemetery.

⁵⁹ Lake City Publishing Company, pp. 221.

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Banking Company, of which he was the principal stockholder. This institution later was renamed the First National Bank of Momence, and Chipman served as its president until his death at age 85 in April 1910 (see Figure 6).⁶⁰ An obituary for Chipman described him as a “retired farmer, banker, and capitalist” and as one of the wealthiest men in Kankakee County—if not the wealthiest in the eastern part of the county. Even after his “retirement” to Momence, Chipman reportedly “looked after his farms and other affairs with a jealous care, that being his nature instilled through years of saving. He detested waste and [was] a spendthrift. He had the faculty of not only accumulating money but of saving it as well.” The obituary further noted that:

[Chipman] was a shrewd man in monied affairs and would fight to the last for that which he believed was due to him. Securing his wealth through his own ability he was slow to respond to the appeals of other when any project was presented that would benefit the city or others as well as himself. He believed that every individual and institution should stand on their own financial basis and not ask assistance.⁶¹

Given this hard, though probably honest, assessment of Edward Chipman’s character, it must have come as a shock to Momence residents when it was announced that Chipman had bequeathed \$10,000 to the Momence Public Library in his will.

Although the \$10,000 bequest represented only a small portion of Edward Chipman’s estate (which had an estimated worth of \$400,000, including real and personal property), it still posed a considerable sum of money for a small-town library.⁶² A library building could now be envisioned, as well as an expanded book collection, though there was some concern as to whether the \$10,000 would be sufficient to address both needs. In early May 1910, the *Press Reporter* noted that

The library association has not at this time received the amount donated, and have not yet formed any plans for the future. However it is not thought that the entire amount will be used in the purchase of a site and erection of a building. A suitable building for the purpose and one large enough for the city for many years to come, can be erected for less than half the amount donated. It would not do to use \$10,000 for a building and have no books. The income from the tax levied by the city for library purposes is not sufficient to meet the requirement in the purchase of volumes that are needed, but a portion of the gift placed at interest and revenue of it used. This would insure an annual income to the association.⁶³

⁶⁰ “Edward Chipman Dead,” *Momence Progress* (22 April 1910).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*; “Inventory Filed,” *Momence Press-Reporter* (3 July 1910). Besides stock and notes owed to him, Mr. Chipman had slightly over \$16,300 in cash, \$31,000 in personal property, and farm land. In describing Chipman’s real estate holdings, the article noted that “the estate include[s] 1,200 acres of rich farming land in a high state of cultivation in Momence which is easily work \$150.00 an acre.” Mr. Chipman’s son (William Ellis) was determined to be feeble minded. The estate was to be evenly divided between William, and his sister, Mrs. Anna Paradis.

⁶³ *Press-Reporter* (5 May 5 1910). This newspaper account suggests that the City of Momence had already passed an ordinance to create a tax levy to support a public library. Our research is unclear as to whether the City of Momence was financially supporting the library during these early years. As noted, in August 1911, the City of Momence passed an ordinance creating a tax to support the new library.

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It was proposed that Andrew Carnegie might be approached to supplement the Chipman bequest. "It might be possible that the association could get Andrew Carnegie interested and he might assist in furthering the good work that has a splendid start. It would not take a great amount of time and energy to inform him of the conditions that now exist and he could do nothing worse than turn the matter down. Then again he might assist materially. It is worth the effort."⁶⁴ There is no evidence that Carnegie was approached for such a donation.

In early August 1911, the City of Momence passed an ordinance (Ordinance No. 80, ratified on August 7, 1911) in support of the Library and to assist with the management of the Chipman donation. The new ordinance established a governing body (Board of Directors), and, importantly, a taxing district to help support the library. As one author has noted, "on account of a movement led by D. C. Riker and others, the people voted a tax to sustain the Library, and the City Council under Mayor Chatfield passed the necessary ordinance, and the tax was laid."⁶⁵ Just over two weeks later, the local newspaper announced the appointment by the mayor of Momence (George Chatfield) of a new library Board of Directors, which included Dr. A. L. Nickerson, Rev. T. C. Eglin, Rev. A. L. Labrie, J. L. Cleary, E. P. Harney, S. E. Roush, J. J. Kirby, Fred Sandstrom, and E. G. Wicks. Eglin, Roush, Nickerson and Sandstrom were carry over's from the earlier board "and have done much in the interest of the library."⁶⁶ On September 11, 1911, the first regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Edward Chipman Public Library was held. Officers were elected, and included E. P. Harney (secretary), A. L. Nickerson (Chairman), Reverend Labrie (Vice Chairman), and E. G. Wickes (Treasurer).⁶⁷ Besides establishing a committee for drawing up a new set of by-laws, "The matter of a site for the new building was discussed in an informal way but no action was taken. It is expected that this matter will be settled on Tuesday, September 19." Miss Lucy Atherton was retained as the librarian.⁶⁸

It was not until the fall of 1911 that plans were finally coming together for the Library to have its own building. During the October 3, 1911 board meeting, the President of the Board "appointed a Committee on Building, Lighting, and Grounds to secure plans for the building of the library, not to exceed the sum of \$6,000."⁶⁹ At that same meeting, the Chairman of the Board (Mr. Nickerson) notified the Board "that certain parties desired to give a lot for the building site for the library [and a] Committee [was] appointed to receive the offer of such persons in writing of the Board...." The Board learned more as to the specifics of this offer on October 20, 1911. The city

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Frank Johnson, "History of the Library," Edward Chipman Public Library webpage (2016). This article was reprinted from the *Momence Progress Reporter* 1 January 2003, and cites a 20 December 1912 newspaper article. The 20 December 1912 newspaper article could not be relocated.

⁶⁶ "New Library Board Appointed," *Momence Progress* (25 August 1911). Although several women had contributed to the success of the library earlier, and had served on the earlier Board of Directors, no women were appointed to this new board. "The mayor was under the impression that it would be the best policy not to have [a] woman on the board for at least the first year, as she would probably not care to meet with a board composed of eight men. The mayor fully realized the importance of the work done by Mrs. Styles the retiring member, but for reason stated decided to have the first board composed entirely of men" ("New Library Board Appointed," *Momence Progress*, August 25, 1911).

⁶⁷ Edward Chipman Public Library, Board of Directors and Trustees Minutes (11 September 1911).

⁶⁸ Ibid (19 September 1911).

⁶⁹ Ibid (3 October 1911).

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lot consisted of "65 feet off the north side of Lot 8 in Block 5 in the town of Momence," and was to be "conveyed as a gift to the City of Momence for the purpose of locating said library on the same." The lot (which was known as the Cooke Lot) was being offered to the City of Momence, free of charge, by C. A. Violet, R. R. Ruger, W. H. Bennett, D. E. Styles, M. F. Chipman, C. F. Hayden, and D. C. Riker. Apparently there was some concern that the lot was too small for a respectable sized library, and a motion was made to accept the property, if the City could get an option on the 17½ feet adjoining the property to the south "at a price satisfactory to the library board."⁷⁰

By this time, things were moving along fairly quickly, and in early November the Board of Directors reported that a Mrs. Mary E. Hall had offered another piece of property to the City of Momence for consideration for the library (Lot 1, Block 10). At the November 3, 1911 board meeting, the Board made a motion to defer actions pertaining to Mrs. Hall's offer, and to move forward with an option to buy the "North [?] 17½' of the south side of Lot 8, Block 5" from Mark Atherton for the sum of \$300. As part of this agreement, Atherton was to retain rights to a barn located on the property and guarantee its removal within six months of the agreement.⁷¹ Finally, in early December 1911, the Board of Directors agreed that the Cooke and Atherton lots were the preferred location for the library, provided proper deeds and abstracts could be provided by the various parties involved.⁷² It is interesting to note that previous Sanborn fire insurance maps from 1897 and 1907 indicate the presence of both a large carriagehouse/barn and house at this location⁷³ (see Figures 8-10).

Apparently, there were some concerns with getting clear title to the property offered, and the appropriate deeds and/or abstracts were not forthcoming in a timely fashion. In early February 1912, the Board of Directors made a motion that the Board should receive clear title to the property by February 20, 1912, "or else consider other options...."⁷⁴ On February 20, 1912, the appropriate deeds and abstracts were received by the Board, and the location of the Library had been finalized.⁷⁵ Subsequently, in early March, "plans and profiles of [the] Library were submitted to said Board by the architect C. D. Henry and the same accepted."⁷⁶ At the same board meeting, a decision was made to advertise for construction bids to build the proposed library.⁷⁷ Notices were published in the local newspaper, and bids were presented to the Board of Directors at their April 26 board

⁷⁰ Ibid (3 October 1911; 20 October 1911).

⁷¹ Ibid (3 November 1911).

⁷² Ibid (5 December 1911).

⁷³ Although the barn is also documented on the earlier 1892 Sanborn fire insurance map, the house was absent from this earlier map, suggesting that it had only recently been constructed (sometime between 1892 and 1897). It is unclear as to what became of this house in circa 1911 with the construction of the library. Although the library board makes reference to the barn on the lot, there is no reference to the moving or demolition of the earlier house.

⁷⁴ Ibid (6 February 1912).

⁷⁵ Ibid (20 February 1912). It is interesting to note that many years later, in April 1942, the Board called a special meeting to address the fact that the deed for the library property had apparently never been filed or recorded with the County. The outcome of this meeting is not known (Edward Chipman Public Library [22 April 1942]).

⁷⁶ The *Minutes* make no mention earlier as to the selection of Henry as the project architect.

⁷⁷ Ibid (5 March 1912).

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meeting. Three bids had been received: Walter H. Smith (\$7,450), Fred Benjamin (\$5,990), and Esidore Barsalou (\$5,850).⁷⁸ A few days later, after a review of the bids, the board accepted the bid of Esidore Barsalou on April 29, 1912. All that stood between the Board of Directors, and the issuing of a “final notice to proceed” with construction was a \$2,000 performance bond from Mr. Baraslou.⁷⁹ It is assumed that construction must have begun shortly thereafter, and it is not until early July of that year that we again read about the progress of the Library construction in the Board minutes.

Charles Danforth Henry, the architect who designed the Edward Chipman Library, was born in Bonfield, western Kankakee County, in late 1859. His father was both a mason, and a farmer by trade.⁸⁰ He married his wife, Viola Linton, in September 1889. Smith (1927) notes that Charles Henry was “a leading builder and architect at Kankakee,” and he:

had a public school education, and after leaving high school was a teacher for two years. He then took up building and architectural lines, and has followed that trade and occupation ever since. Mr. Henry has had his office in the Arcade Building since March 8, 1893....⁸¹

By 1900, the Henry family was residing on Harrison Avenue in Kankakee, with Henry being the principal in an architectural firm located in that city. At that time, Charles and his wife had two children named Charles Henry, Jr. (age 9), and Madeline (age 8). Also at that time, William Henry—Charles Henry’s younger brother whose occupation also was listed as “architect”—was residing within the household. In 1910, the federal census indicates that the fifty-one year old Charles and his family were living at 249 Chicago Avenue, Kankakee, and Charles, Jr. was working as a book keeper for the “E. I. & S. Railroad.”⁸² In 1911, the *Kankakee City Directory* listed Charles as an architect with offices in the Arcade Building. He and his wife Viola resided at 249 Chicago Avenue. The same directory noted that their son was a “car acct Big 4” and that he was residing at the same address as his parents.⁸³ Mr. Henry died in February 1932 in Kankakee.⁸⁴ It appears that Charles Henry had little formal training as an architect, beginning his career as an architect/builder; no other examples of his work are known (see Figure 7).

⁷⁸ Ibid (26 April 1912).

⁷⁹ Ibid (29 April 1912).

⁸⁰ Ancestry.com; George W. Smith, *History of Illinois and Her People. Volume VI* (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1927), p. 276.

⁸¹ Smith, p. 276.

⁸² United States Bureau of the Census (USBC), Population Schedule for the City of Kankakee, Kankakee County, Illinois (1900; 1910).

⁸³ Charles Samson, *Samson’s Kankakee, Illinois City Directory and Kankakee County Directory*, 1911 (Bloomington, Illinois, 1911), pp 204-205. The 1916 *Kankakee City and County Directory* lists Charles Henry as an architect operating from 219 Cobb Building, and residing at 215 South Chicago Avenue, both in Kankakee. The younger Charles Henry, Jr. was listed in the same directory as a lawyer operating from 301 Cobb Building, and residing at the same address (215 South Chicago Avenue, Kankakee) (Leshnick Directory Company, *Kankakee City and County Directory, 1916*, Peoria).

⁸⁴ Ancestry.com

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As noted above, the general contractor responsible for the construction of the Chipman Public Library was Esidore Barsalou. The 1910 federal census indicates that Mr. Barsalou was a 47-year-old “house carpenter” residing on Indiana Street in 1910 (presumably on the south side of the river). Although born in Illinois, Barsalou’s parents were both born in French Canada.⁸⁵ The 1900 federal census indicates that Isadore, his father Henry, and brother Trefflay were all working as carpenters in Momence at that time. Apparently, a Mr. E. G. Wicks was Barsalou’s foreman and/or project supervisor.

Work had progressed well on the library during the early summer of 1912. In early July of that year, the Board of Directors authorized partial payment of \$1,000 to Barsalou. The Board also passed a motion to authorize the payment of day laborers to dig and haul dirt “from the sewer” (presumably in reference to the excavation of the sewer line from the Library to the city street). The Building Committee was also empowered to have a new concrete walk and curb to be constructed along the public thoroughfare fronting the Library.⁸⁶ In August 1912, the Board of Directors mandated that the names of the present directors, and the words “Erected 1912” be chiseled “on the front stones” of the new Library.⁸⁷

Work progressed on the Library through the late summer and early fall of 1912. The *Momence Press Reporter* noted that E. G. Wicks “devoted most of the summer to the supervision of the building and filling in of the grounds.”⁸⁸ In October and November of 1912, the Board authorized payment of several invoices relating to the construction of the sidewalk, curbs, and general landscaping around the building.⁸⁹ By early November 1912, the Board made a motion to purchase electric light fixtures, window shades, and a book stack. In December 1912, Mr. Harold Wicks was hired as a janitor at a salary of \$10/month.⁹⁰

In December 1912, the *Momence Press Reporter* wrote that “the new Edward Chipman Free Public Library... building is now completed and is one of the showplaces of the city. It is built of red brick and Bedford stone. The interior is of beautified oak, and everything has been provided to make the building complete in every detail... The total cost of the building together with the fixtures will be about \$8,000.00. This will leave a maintenance fund of about \$2,000.00.” The article continued by noting that the “library now has about 1,000 volumes but the board hopes to be able to greatly increase this number in the near future...” The new library

⁸⁵ USBC, Population Schedule for Momence, Kankakee County, Illinois (1910). The adjacent household listed in the U.S. federal census was that of the 76-year old Henry Barsalou and his wife—presumably Esidore’s father. The census indicates that Henry immigrated to the United States in 1870. The next entry in the federal census is that of Conrad Han [Hahn] and his family—which included the 15-year old Nellie Hahn (my grandmother, who resided in the 200 block of South Walnut Street, on the south side of the Kankakee River).

⁸⁶ Edward Chipman Public Library (5 July 1912). The Committee was authorized to pay up to 10 cents per square foot for side walk, and 40 cents per lineal foot for curb.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 6 August 1912.

⁸⁸ *Momence Press-Reporter* (7 December 1912).

⁸⁹ Edward Chipman Public Library (1 October 1912; 6 November 1912; 5 December 1912). In October, payment of \$254.23 was authorized to D. E. Rosetter for construction the sidewalk and curbing around the Library. In November, payments were authorized for: 1) \$15 labor to Hiram Storey, 2) \$9.50 labor to George Mitchel, 3) \$4.00 labor to Henry Lamport, and 4) \$65 for walks to D. E. Rosetter. Additional payments to Baraslou were made in October (\$1,500) and December (\$2,000).

⁹⁰ *Ibid* (6 November 1912; 5 December 1912).

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was open every evening (to 9pm) but Sunday and also on Saturday afternoon (to 5pm). At that time, the Board of Directors consisted of J. J. Kirby, E. P. Harney, John L. Cleary, Reverend A. L. Labrie, Dr. A. L. Nickerson, C. H. Bellinger, J. Fred Sandstrom, E. G. Wicks, and S. E. Roush. The librarian was Miss Bertha Durham.⁹¹ In late December 1912, The *Momence Press-Reporter* published a multiple page story on the unique qualities of the community entitled “City of Many Beautiful Houses.”⁹² Among the various articles touting the benefits of living—and visiting—the city, was a short article announcing the opening of the newly completed Chipman Library (complete with a partial photograph of the building) (Figure 11).

The new year—1913—dawned with the library all-but complete. On January 7, 1913, the Board authorized the balance of \$350 be paid to Mr. Barsalou on his contract for the construction of the new library, and the committee was looking at fitting up and furnishing the interior of the new building. Additionally, an invoice for the purchase of carpet (from Thomas Newsam for \$100.03) recently placed down in the Library was approved. The Board also approved the balance of \$56.94 be paid to the architect at this time. With regard to the architect’s invoice, the *Minutes* noted that the “bill of C. D. Henry, architect, was presented for balance due in the sum of \$56.94. Motion was made... that said bill be paid less the sum of \$33.39 which was paid to Barsalou for extras, which was caused by an error of architect in drawing plans and specifications of [the] building...” The Board *Minutes* indicate that Bertha Durham was the librarian at this time, and earned a salary of \$15/month.⁹³

At this time, the Board also authorized the Committee “to investigate the price of stacks, tables and chairs for [the] library...”⁹⁴ Initially, the Committee was mandated to “get prices from local merchants for 18 chairs, 3 tables, one magazine rack, one paper rack, one desk and one librarian’s chair” as well as a “card index outfit” for the library.⁹⁵ Apparently, the Committee may have had difficulty getting prices from local merchants for these specialized goods, for on February 4, 1913, the Committee authorized Father Labrie and Dr. Nickerson to “be empowered to go to Chicago at the expense of the Board and purchase one newspaper rack, one magazine rack, two tables, one index card cabinet, one desk card stand, and twelve chairs for [the] library.”⁹⁶ Final landscaping was conducted around the new building in the spring of 1913.⁹⁷

Minutes of subsequent Board meetings during the 1910s contain little information on the new Library building or grounds.⁹⁸ In March 1913, the local newspaper announced the establishment of a system for issuing library

⁹¹ “The New Edward Chipman Free Public Library. Magnificent Building Which Has Just Been Completed at a Cost of \$8,000.00,” *Momence Press-Reporter* (27 December 1912).

⁹² “Momence. A City of Many Beautiful Houses,” *Momence Press-Reporter* (27 December 1912). Nearly an entire page of this issue was devoted to the resorts located along the Kankakee River.

⁹³ Edward Chipman Public Library (7 January 1913).

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* (13 January 1913).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* (4 February 1913).

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* (8 May 1913). In May, the Board authorized the payment of \$14 to E. G. Wick for “labor on filling lot”, and \$20.80 to Henry Halpin for “labor and teams hauling dirt from lot.”

⁹⁸ These subsequent minutes contain details on the expenses, and monthly purchases of the Library. An exception is the October 6,

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cards.⁹⁹ Although the Minutes of the Board of Director's meetings had been recorded on a regular basis since late 1911, the last minutes to be recorded during the 1910s occurred on March 6, 1917. Nothing in the minutes of this meeting indicated anything out of the ordinary, but no new entries were made in the minute book until June 1920.

It is interesting to note that the minutes of the library Board of Directors go strong through the spring of 1917—and then stop abruptly until June 1920 when they then begin again, albeit intermittently. The early 1917 date corresponds to the beginning of the World War. Although the lack of board minutes might suggest the closure of the library at this time, there is no reason to suspect that the library was not active at this time. One potential thought is that perhaps the board members were too involved with other war-related activities during these years to get the necessary quorum for the board meetings? But the minutes continue to be absent during the post-war months of 1919 and early 1920, which does correspond to the time that the Spanish Influenza was most virulent in the United States. The flu pandemic didn't subside until the early months of 1920—which corresponds to the reappearance of the Board minutes later that summer.

It was only a few short years after its opening that the Chipman Public Library was commandeered for use as a hospital during the influenza epidemic of 1918-1919. *The Progress Report* (October 18, 1918) noted that

The Spanish Influenza has gained such a foothold in Momence and vicinity during the past two weeks that schools, churches and all places of amusement will remain closed until the disease subsides. At present there is about 380 cases in and around our city, some are very serious while others are in a mild form. Several deaths have occurred within the past few days. The cases have been so numerous that it is almost impossible for our physicians to take care of the patients, so on Monday it was arranged to turn the Public Library into a hospital which will prove to be a great relief to all concerned....

On Wednesday D. E. Styles motored to Kankakee, where he secured the services of a trained nurse who will take charge of the hospital and she will be assisted by anyone who will volunteer to help look after the patients that will be brought there for treatment.¹⁰⁰

That same day, the *Kankakee Daily Republican* (October 18, 1918) wrote that "The Red Cross extended its activities to Momence today with the establishment of an emergency hospital there. Miss Hattie Cornwell, an experienced nurse, was placed in charge of the Momence institution. She was scheduled to take up her work late this afternoon and expected to have the hospital going by evening." At a later date, the *Kankakee Daily Republican* (date unknown) noted that "John Waltman and Mrs. Dyer, both of Momence, died in the Red Cross

1914 minutes which document a motion "to have someone to cement the bricks on the roof of the building." On March 2, 1915, at the request of the librarian, the board agreed to increase the librarian's salary from \$15/month to \$20/month).

⁹⁹ "Public Library Notice," *Momence Progress* (21 March 1913).

¹⁰⁰ "Untitled," *Progress-Reporter* (18 October 1918). The use of the Chipman Library as a temporary emergency hospital during the 1918-1919 pandemic has been briefly touched upon by two previous authors. Hess (1985) simply notes that "the Momence Public Library had been turned into an emergency hospital, for there were so many flu cases during that terrible epidemic." The book entitled "Walking the Ol' Border Town" also noted that "The Momence Public Library was used as a hospital during the terrible flu epidemic that broke out at the end of World War I" (Kay Hess. *Momence—The Making of a River Town* [1985]; Momence Jayettes. *Walking the Ol' Border Town* [1984]).

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hospital in Momence yesterday from Spanish Influenza. Mrs. Dyer leaves a baby and another small child. The two deaths yesterday added to those of the past week make six deaths in all. The epidemic seems to be abating in Momence."¹⁰¹

On June 3, 1920, the secretary of the Board of Directors again began entering the minutes of Board meetings in the *Minutes* book. During the latter half of 1920, it appears that the Board had difficulty in getting a regular quorum to hold board meetings, and the minutes are intermittent (reflecting the irregular meeting schedule). In early December 1920, the Board of Directors noted that

The question of holding an open house to stimulate new interest in the library was discussed at some length. It was decided that if nothing prevented such an event would be held on December 27.¹⁰²

Subsequent minutes from the early 1920s contain limited information regarding the use of the library during these years. In April 1921, the minutes note that "it was decided to seed that part of the library grounds now used as a tennis court, and that the court be no longer used."¹⁰³ In March 1925, the Board was reviewing bids for the re-decorating of the Library building, and authorized a Mr. Zufall to proceed with the project for the sum of \$180.¹⁰⁴ In June of that same year, the minutes note that

The question of placing shelves in the children's room was discussed, and Mr. Munson reported the contract for same had been awarded to Chas. McMann and that work would start at once. The cost to be about \$20.00.¹⁰⁵

At the same meeting, the question of replacing parts of the furnace were discussed, as well as

The question of allowing the Woman's Club to use the basement room as a meeting place was discussed. On motion the club was granted the use of the room on condition the Club pay all expenses in installing heat or other expense associated thereto.¹⁰⁶

The last minutes of the Library Board of Directors entered in this book were for the November 3, 1925 board meeting. After that date, there is a hiatus in the minutes, and the next available *Book of Minutes* covers May

¹⁰¹ "Two Deaths in Hospital," *Kankakee Daily Republican* (18 October 1918); "Momence Deaths," *Kankakee Daily Republican* (28 October 1918); "Momence Schools to Open Monday," *Momence Progress* (1 November 1918). One hypothesis is that the small sink located on the main floor of the library may have been installed during this period. The sink would have been very useful in the care of sick individuals housed in the temporary hospital.

¹⁰² Edward Chipman Public Library (7 December 1920). If a public event was undertaken, nothing has been located on this event in the local newspapers.

¹⁰³ *Ibid* (5 April 1921).

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid* (3 March 1925).

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid* (6 June 1925).

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*.

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1939 through July 1942. In June 1940, the Minutes note that bids had been received (and opened) for “decorating the building,” and the low bid of \$160 from Mr. Wille—for work on the upstairs—was accepted. The redecorating of the basement was put on hold, pending “matters needing immediate attention” (presumably roof repair). In December 1942 [?], the Board the Building, Lighting, and Grounds Committee reported that the roof was in poor condition, having been patched and in need of being replaced. Additionally there was discussion regarding the need for additional book cases.¹⁰⁷ No doubt due to the war effort, maintenance on the building was deferred, and the issue was again taken up in April 1944. At that time, the board noted that the current “gravel roof” had been in place for 32 years and was in bad condition. The Board authorized installing a quality (“the best”) roof available, which consisted of a four-ply felt, pitch and gravel roof with a twenty-year warranty. The proposed work was also to include the repair of the firewalls, water proofing the coping and cornice, tuckpointing the chimney and water proofing and fireproofing the chimney on the inside and cleaning up all the debris. The contract was awarded to a Mr. McMann, for the price of \$257.50.¹⁰⁸

The 1940s were a time of social change, as documented in the library’s *Minutes*. In January 1941, the *Minutes* reflect that the Library owned only a child’s version of the book *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, and as this book was on the school’s reading list, it was felt that an unabridged copy should be purchased for the library. Perhaps, in response to the “appropriateness” of this book, the March 1941 *Minutes* note the discussion of the “matter of a ‘hidden shelf’ for books in general demand but which were not considered desirable for general use was discussed. Reports of librarians elsewhere indicate the practice is rather general. [It was] Decided to leave [the decision] to the discretion of the librarian.” The librarian’s salary was also raised to \$65/month (and the janitor’s to \$20/month) that same year.

The next available *Book of Minutes* covers the war years of August 1942 through June 1944. In January 1944, the board noted that

[there has been] a general slowing down in circulation during the past two years, seemingly because of young men in service, war work, etc. The decline is general in most libraries. The high year in this period [1938-1943] was 1939-40.¹⁰⁹

By early 1947, the library board began to address several of the maintenance issues that had been deferred during the war years. A *Momence Progress-Reporter* article dated February 21, 1947 referenced the recent work on the library:

The re-decorating and re-modeling of the Edward Chipman Public Library has just been completed, and patrons and friends of the library are asked to stop by and see how attractive this community enterprise is. Walls of the interior, back rooms and basement have been tinted in soft shades of green. Venetian blinds have been re-done, and the installation of new book shelves has added greatly to the book capacity of the library. More book shelves for storage use of magazines and pamphlets have been placed in the basement. One of the best improvements to the library facilities has been the creation of a small kitchenette in the basement. This will be of value

¹⁰⁷ Ibid (12 December [1943])

¹⁰⁸ Ibid (April 1944).

¹⁰⁹ Ibid (10 January 1944).

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to the Woman's Club, which maintains a club room at the library. The members of the club re-decorated this club room last fall. In addition to the re-decorating and re-modeling, the building has been completely re-wired. The old wiring was outmoded and unsafe, so a modern, 3-wire service has been put in. A new out-door entrance light is soon to be installed. Outdoor painting and repairing were done late last summer so the library now presents a most pleasant appearance inside and out.

Board members of the Chipman Library are Mrs. H. C. Cromwell, president; Mrs. Walter Johnson, Mrs. J. T. Baker, Mrs. Roy G. Hess, Mrs. Wesley Ruge, Mrs. C. H. Ruch, Fr. T. U. Demarais, Frank Tilton and Leo Costigan. Paul Corey, a well-known author, has recently presented the Chipman library with a gift of nine books, some of them best sellers of late years. These books have been given to Momence as a memorial to the author's mother, Margaret Morgan Brown Corey, who was a member of the first graduating class of Momence High School. Four of these books have been received and are on the library shelves. The others are to come soon. Mr. Corey will also send copies of all books he plans to write in the future to add to this memorial. Some of his novels have his Iowa farm community as their locale, but in at least one of them Momence is mentioned in connection with one of his characters.¹¹⁰

In June 1947, the local newspaper reported on the status of improvements at the Momence Public Library. The newspaper wrote:

The Chipman Library has undergone considerable repair and housecleaning activities. The furnace, sewer and electric wiring have been checked; wall outlets and new switch boxes were installed, many feet of new shelving in the basement for book storage, a washroom dismantled and a kitchenette installed; the entire interior was given two coats of green paint with ceilings and borders in contrasting shades; the receiving desk as well as some of the reading tables were refinished; blinds were washed, repaired and replaced, and the exterior of the building was given two coats of paint; damaged and dangerous trees were removed from the premises; [and] a five-year insurance plan with higher content and building evaluation was taken out to safeguard the property.

On order is a round juvenile table with six small chairs for the children's section, and an entrance light to replace the ornamental city light which is to be discontinued in the near future.

The Library Board is to be congratulated on their progressive outlook for our community needs. All their time spent on the Board is non-remunerative and public-spirited. Mrs. Harold Cromwell is president; Mr. Walter Johnson is chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee.¹¹¹

The next *Book of Minutes* covers the post-war period of July 1947 through May 1951. By this time, as noted above, additional maintenance issues were apparent. During the August 18, 1947 meeting, the board discussed the need to repair, or replace the library's windows. On September 14, 1947, the board decided "it was not a

¹¹⁰ *Momence Progress-Reporter* (21 February 1947).

¹¹¹ "Improvements Noted At Momence Public Library," *Momence Progress-Reporter* (6 June 1947).

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good time...” for these expenses, and decided to save the doors and windows, and would repair (caulking/re-glaze) and paint them, as needed. At this same time, the board noted that the shrubbery needed pruning and thinning, and recommended that the stumps around the library be removed (suggesting trees had been cut down earlier; see postcard, Figure 12). At the October 20, 1947 board meeting, the board was “rejuvenating the landscape plan” and recommended the planting of new hardwood maples. The April 19, 1948 Minutes indicate that new red maples had been planted, and at the July 19, 1948 board meeting, the board noted that they had received praise and/or compliments for of the looks of the new grounds.¹¹²

Although subsequent newspaper coverage of library events no doubt were reported in the local newspaper, none have, as yet, been located. Similarly, more recent minute books (post-dating May 1951) also have not been located. This lack of coverage pertaining to the programming of the library by the local newspapers and published histories is apparent from an early date. Even though the lack of documentary information regarding the library’s programming during its period of significance has been documented, the vital role played by a library in a small community’s educational and social development cannot be underestimated. As Janice Schroeder (Library Trustee) so well stated

Over 100 years ago, Edward Chipman and several other prominent citizens of Momence recognized the importance of reading and the need for a building to house the reading material. It is safe to assume that they also realized that knowledge empowers those who read. In addition, the library provided a place to socialize, as it remains today. Our goal in seeking recognition on the National Registry of Historic Places is to preserve and protect the physical integrity of this major cornerstone of our city, in addition to preserving the vision that Mr. Chipman projected for the betterment of the citizens of our community... It is safe to assume that Mr. Chipman and other community leaders involved in the formation of our library recognized the importance of reading and the fact that reading provides education, enlightenment, and entertainment. These are the benefits of reading that would be returned to the community through its members.

In February 2006, Main Street Momence (a non-profit downtown revitalization organization) conducted an architectural survey of the community’s central business district, and successfully prepared a National Register of Historic Places nomination form for the Downtown Momence Historic District. The Edward Chipman Library was excluded from the Momence Historic District, as it was not contiguous to the core of the identified district. In late 2011, the Lakota Group produced a master plan for the City of Momence (and Main Street Momence). Although the Chipman Public Library was located immediately outside of their study area, they recognized the integrity and significance of the library (as well as the nearby U.S. Post Office), and its potential eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.¹¹³

¹¹² Edward Chipman Public Library (18 August 18, 1947; 14 September 1947; 20 October 1947; 19 April 1948).

¹¹³ Johnson et al., p. 19.

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Kenaga, W. F. and G. R. Letourneau

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Momence Progress-Reporter

Momence Press-Reporter

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Edward Chipman Public Library

Kankakee, Illinois

Name of Property

County and State

- 1885 *Fire Insurance Map of Momence, Illinois.* New York.
1887 *Fire Insurance Map of Momence, Illinois.* New York.
1897 *Fire Insurance Map of Momence, Illinois.* New York.
1907 *Fire Insurance Map of Momence, Illinois.* New York.
1913 *Fire Insurance Map of Momence, Illinois.* New York.
1924 *Fire Insurance Map of Momence, Illinois.* New York.
1931 *Fire Insurance Map of Momence, Illinois.* New York.

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- 1927 *History of Illinois and Her People. Volume VI.* American Historical Society, Chicago.

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- 1900 Population Schedule for Kankakee, Kankakee County, Illinois.
1910 Population Schedule for Kankakee, Kankakee County, Illinois.
1910 Population Schedule for Momence, Kankakee County, Illinois.

Momence Jayettes

- 1984 *Walking the Ol' Bordertown: A Guide to Walking Tours of Momence, IL.* Sesquicentennial Celebration [Committee], Momence.

Wilson, John

- 1860 *Map of Iroquois and Kankakee Counties.* N.p.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: Edward Chipman Public Library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Edward Chipman Public Library
Name of Property

Kankakee, Illinois
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than one acre.
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

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

1	<u>41.163947</u>	<u>87.660917</u>	3	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

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

Lot 8, Block 5 of the Original Town of Momence.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary selected incorporates the land historically associated with the Edward Chipman Public Library

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Floyd Mansberger and Christopher Stratton date 9/21/2016
organization Fever River Research telephone (217) 525-9002
street & number P. O. Box 5234 email fmansberger@comcast.net
city or town Springfield state IL zip code 62298

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Edward Chipman Public Library
Name of Property

Kankakee, Illinois
County and State

Photographs:

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: Edward Chipman Public Library
City or Vicinity: Momence
County: Kankakee **State:** Illinois
Photographer: Floyd Mansberger
Date Photographed: 12 September 2015; 29 February 2016

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

Photo 1 of 15: West façade; camera facing west (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0001).

Photo 2 of 15: West façade, detail of front entrance portico; camera facing east (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0002).

Photo 3 of 15: West and north facades; camera facing southeast (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0003).

Photo 4 of 15: North and east facades; camera facing southwest (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0004).

Photo 5 of 15: South and west facades; camera facing northeast (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0005).

Photo 6 of 15: Detail of south façade, showing windows and foundations; camera facing northwest (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0006).

Photo 7 of 15: Detail of column base on west portico; camera facing northeast (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0007).

Photo 8 of 15: Interior, first floor, view of foyer and front entrance; camera facing west (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0008).

Photo 9 of 15: Interior, first floor, view of west side of hall and entrance doors; camera facing northwest (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0009).

Photo 10 of 15: Interior, first floor, view of north side of hall, looking into east end of main reading room and showing librarian's desk; camera facing northeast (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0010).

Edward Chipman Public Library
Name of Property

Kankakee, Illinois
County and State

Photo 11 of 15: Interior, first floor, view of primary reading room on north end of library; camera facing west (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0011).

Photo 12 of 15: Interior, first floor, view of south side of hall, showing arched doorways accessing children's room; camera facing south (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0012).

Photo 13 of 15: Interior, first floor, view of south side of children's room; camera facing south (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0013).

Photo 14 of 17: Interior, basement, view of basement stairway and balustrade, looking up towards entrance foyer; camera facing northwest (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0014).

Photo 15 of 15: Interior, first floor, detail of doorknob on front entrance doors to hall; camera facing south (IL_Kankakee County_Edward Chipman Public Library_0015).

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Edward Chipman Public Library
Name of Property
Kankakee, Illinois
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 36

List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.)

- Figure 1:** Location of the Edward Chipman Public Library (Momence, Illinois), as depicted on the Momence, Ill. U.S.G.S. topographic map.
- Figure 2:** Location of the Edward Chipman Public Library (Momence, Illinois) in relationship to the National Register Downtown Momence Historic District and the Downtown Momence Master Plan Study Area.
- Figure 3:** Mr. and Mrs. Edward Chipman, as depicted in the 1883 *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Kankakee County, Illinois*.
- Figure 4:** Location of the Edward Chipman family landholdings in 1883.
- Figure 5:** Detail of the Edward Chipman farm located three miles north of Momence in Section 1 of Ganer Township, as depicted in the 1883 *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Kankakee County, Illinois*.
- Figure 6:** Photographs of Edward Chipman later in life.
- Figure 7:** Photograph of the Andrew Henry family of western Kankakee County.
- Figure 8:** Location of the future Edward Chipman Public Library in Momence, as depicted on the 1883 city plat.
- Figure 9:** Comparison of the 1892 and 1897 Sanborn fire insurance maps of Momence, showing the future site of the Edward Chipman Public Library.
- Figure 10:** Comparison of 1907 and 1913 Sanborn fire insurance maps of Momence showing library site.
- Figure 11:** Photograph published in 1912 accompanying short news article announcing the opening of the newly completed Edward Chipman Free Public Library.
- Figure 12:** Three historic postcard views of the Edward Chipman Public Library, Momence, Illinois.
- Figure 13:** Current plot plan illustrating the Second and Locust Streets intersection (Google Earth image).
- Figure 14:** Site plan for the Edward Chipman Public Library, showing property boundary.
- Figure 15:** Ground floor plan of the Edward Chipman Public Library, showing existing conditions.
- Figure 16:** Basement floor plan of the Edward Chipman Public Library, showing existing conditions.

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

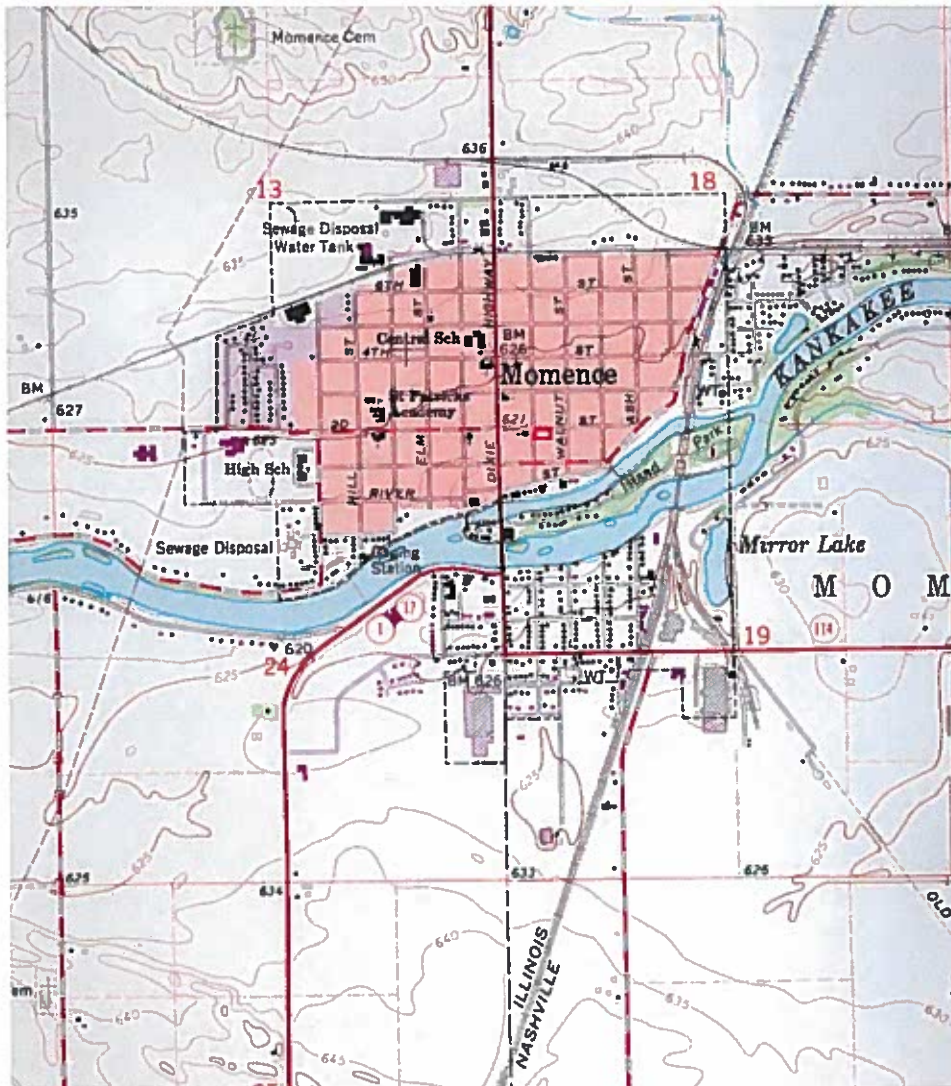


Figure 1. Location of the Edward Chipman Public Library (Momence, Illinois), as depicted on the Momence, Ill. U.S.G.S. topographic map (U.S.G.S. 1964; Photorevised 1973). The location of the Library is outlined in red.

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

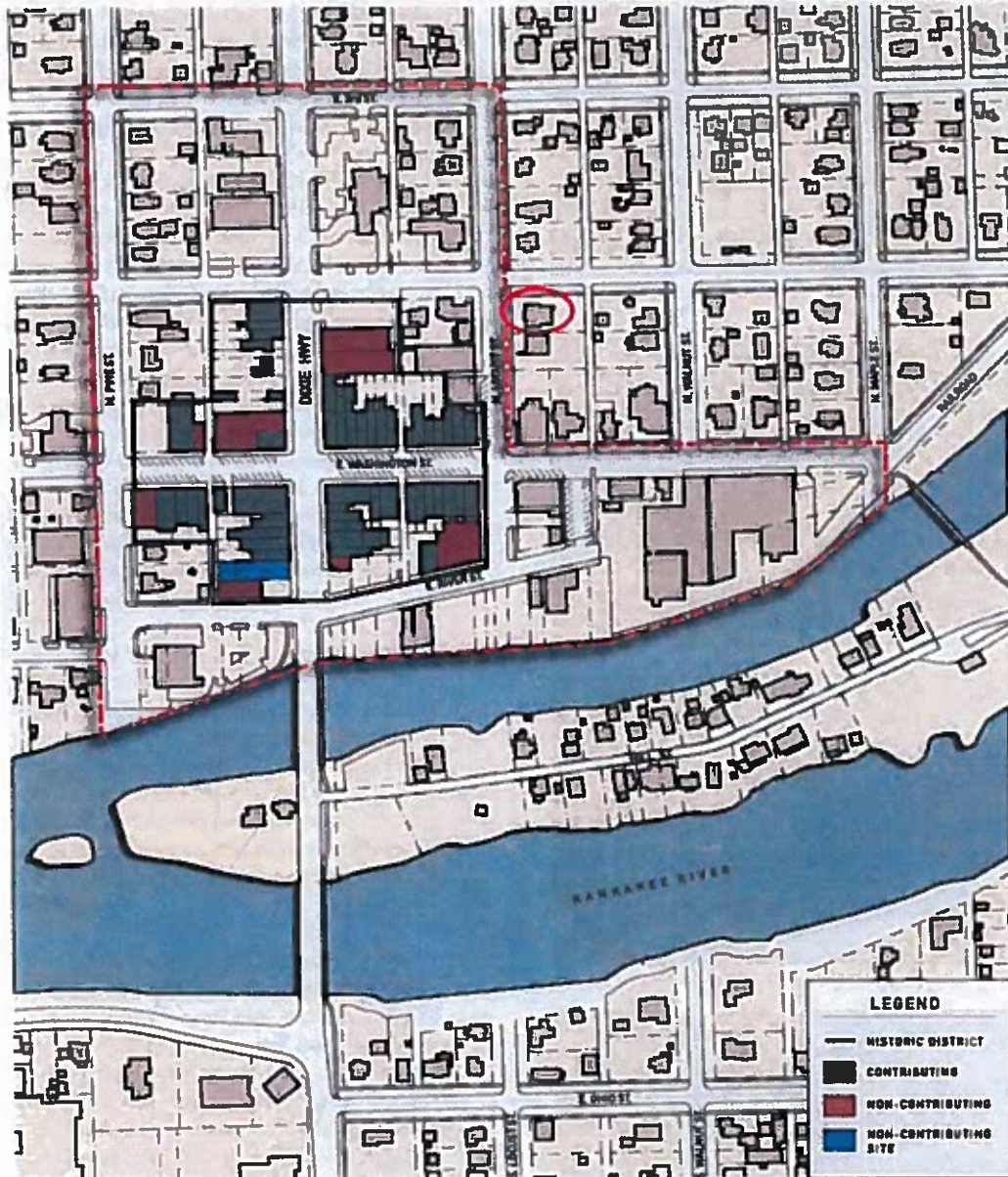


FIGURE 3. NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT
DOWNTOWN MOMENCE MASTER PLAN

Figure 2. Location of the Edward Chipman Public Library (Momence, Illinois) in relationship to the National Register Downtown Momence Historic District (outlined in a heavy black line) and the Downtown Momence Master Plan Study Area (outlined in a dashed red line) (Lakota Group 2012:16). The Chipman Public Library is encircled in a solid red line.

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee



Figure 3. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Chipman, as depicted in the 1883 *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Kankakee County, Illinois* (Beers 1883).

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

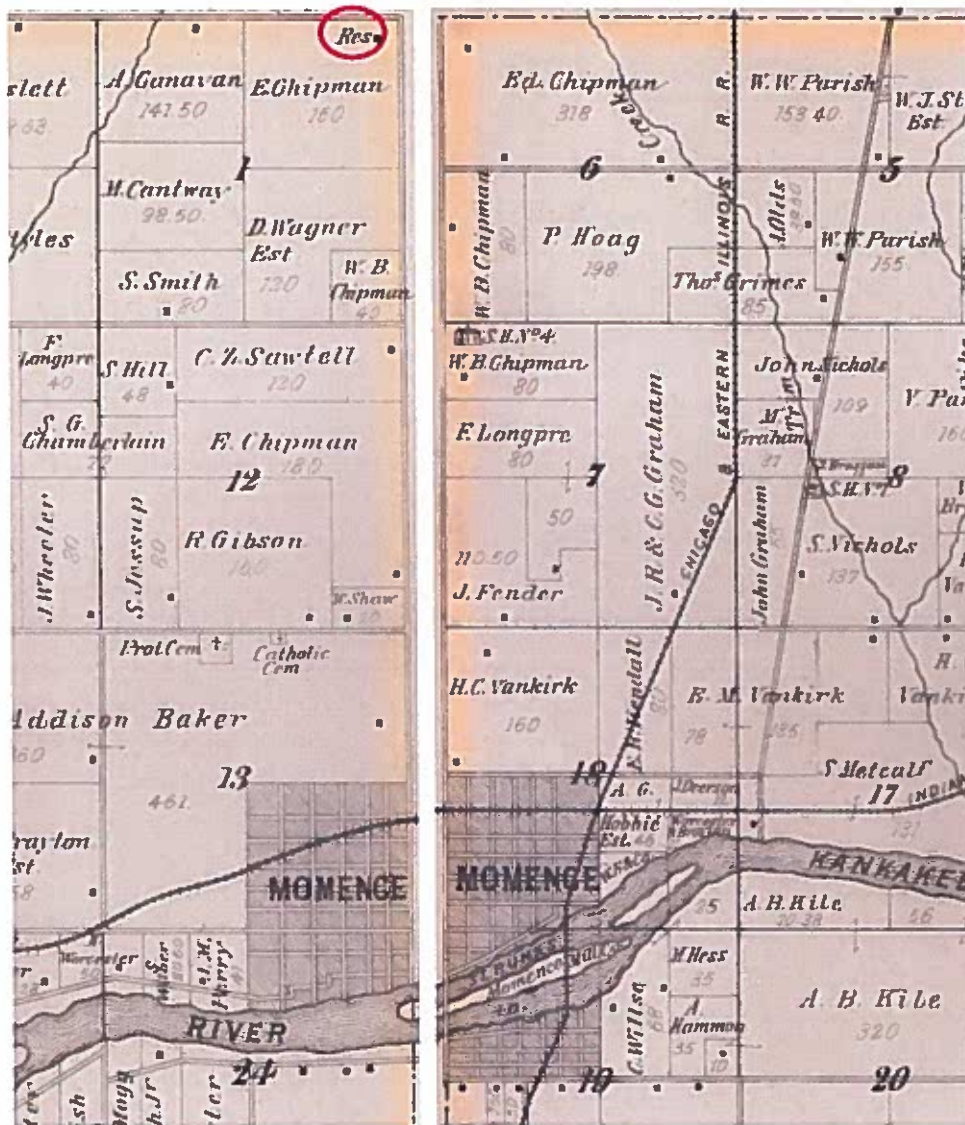


Figure 4. Location of the Chipman family landholdings in 1883 (Beers 1883). Left: Eastern section of Ganeer Township. Mr. Chipman and his family were residing in a farmhouse located in Section 1 of this township in 1883 (circled in red). Right: Western section of Momence Township. The family farmstead, which was homesteaded by Edward's father, was located in Section 6 of Momence Township, and occupied by W. B. Chipman (Edward's brother) at this time. The "S.H. No. 4" (School House No. 4) located in the northwest corner of Section 7 on this map is also known as the Chipman School (a brick structure that is still extant, albeit converted into a dwelling).

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

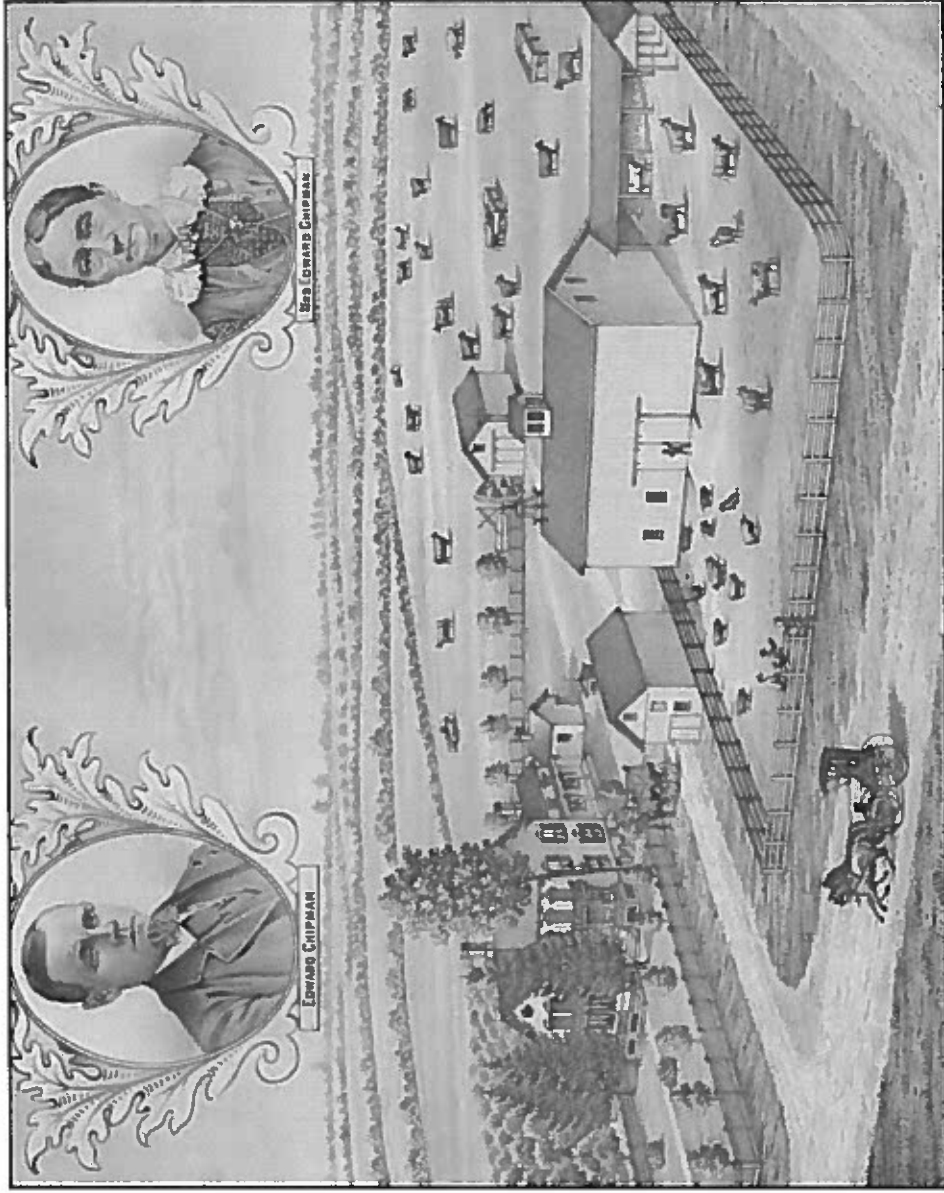


Figure 5. Detail of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Chipman's farm located three miles north of Momen in Section 1 of Ganer Township, as depicted in the 1883 *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Kankakee County, Illinois* (Beers 1883:57).

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee



Ed. Chipman



Figure 6. Edward Chipman later in life. Left: In 1893 (Lake City Publishing Company 1893). Right: Undated (Momence Public Library).

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee



Figure 7. The Andrew Henry family of western Kankakee County. Charles Danforth Henry, Sr., the architect of the Edward Chipman Public Library, is circle in red (Ancestry.com).

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

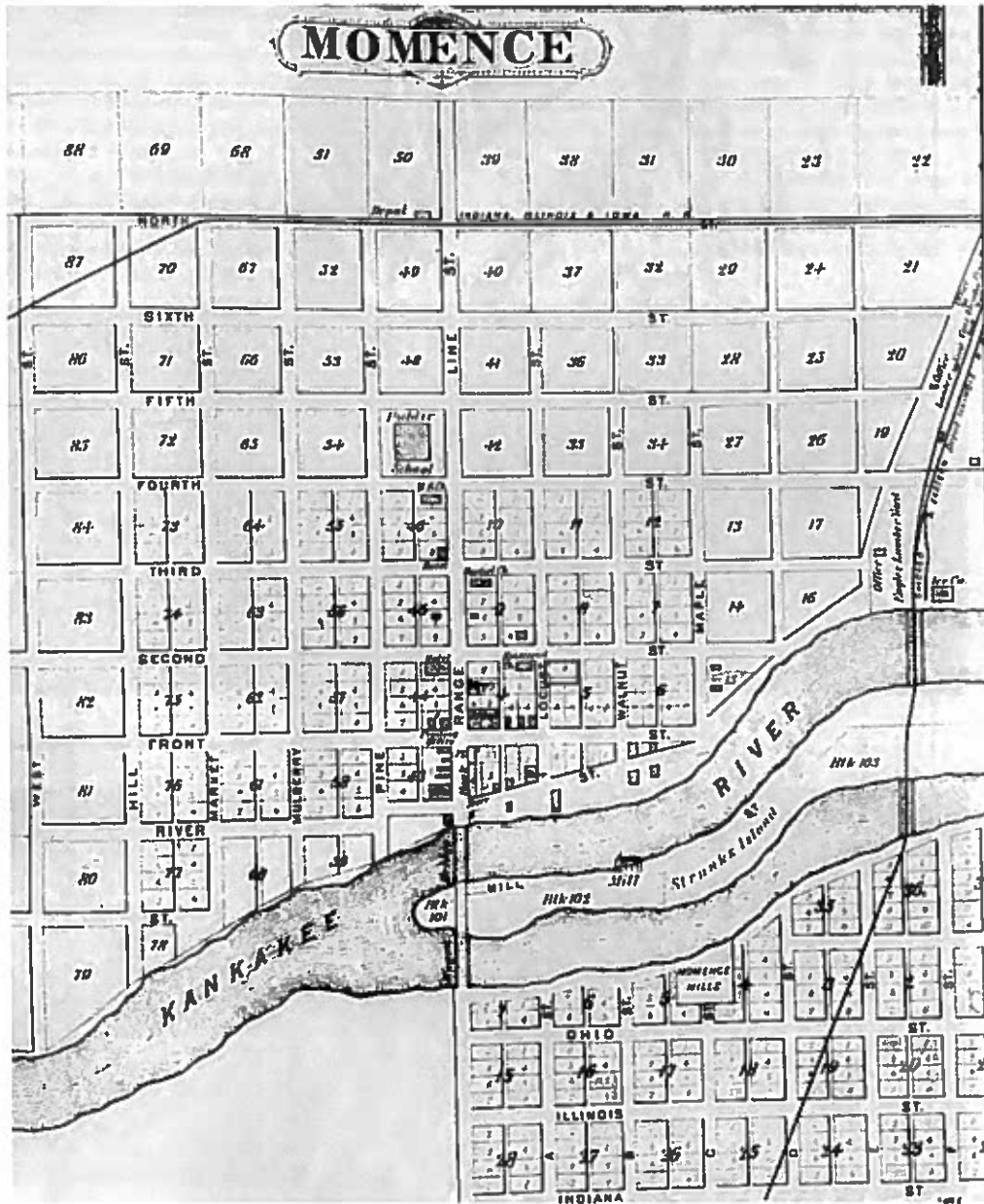


Figure 8. Location of the future Edward Chipman Public Library in Momence, as depicted on the 1883 city plat (Beers 1883:53). The site of the library is outlined in red.

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

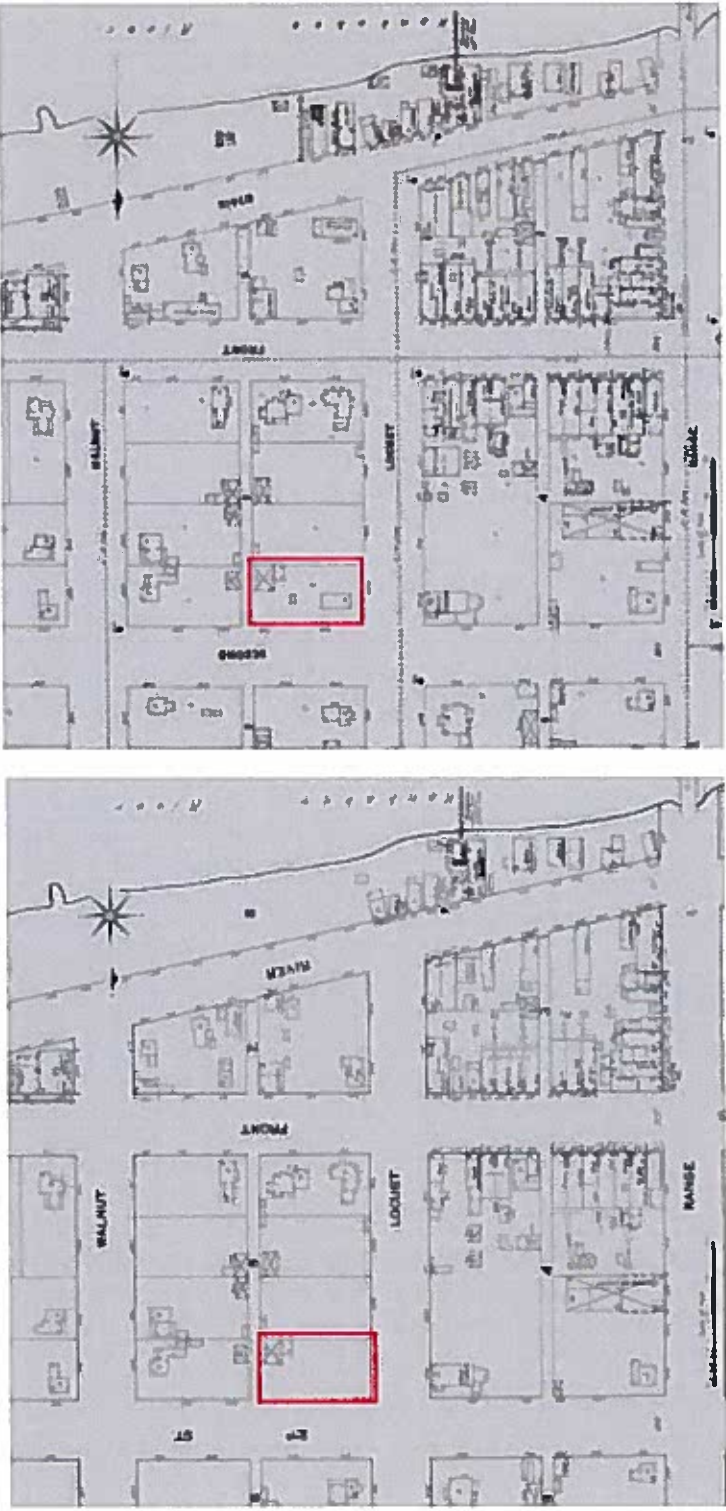


Figure 9. Comparison of the 1892 (left) and 1897 (right) Sanborn fire insurance maps, which illustrate the presence of a previous barn (constructed sometime prior to 1892) and a house (constructed sometime between 1892 and 1897) on the future site of the Edward Chipman Public Library.

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

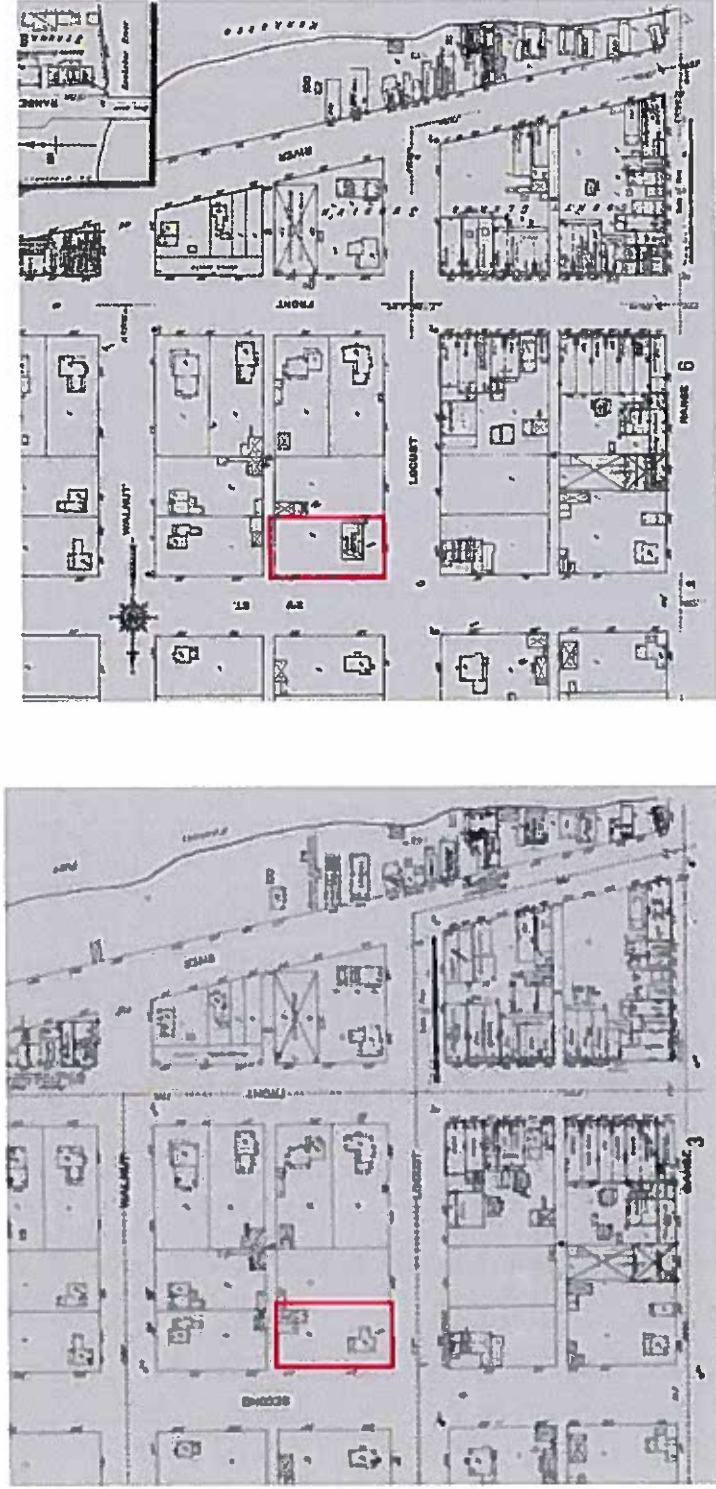


Figure 10. Comparison of 1907 and 1913 Sanborn fire insurance maps. Left: Library property as depicted in 1907, illustrating a slightly enlarged house and barn. Right: Detail of the 1913 Sanborn fire insurance map illustrating the recently constructed Edward Chipman Public Library.

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

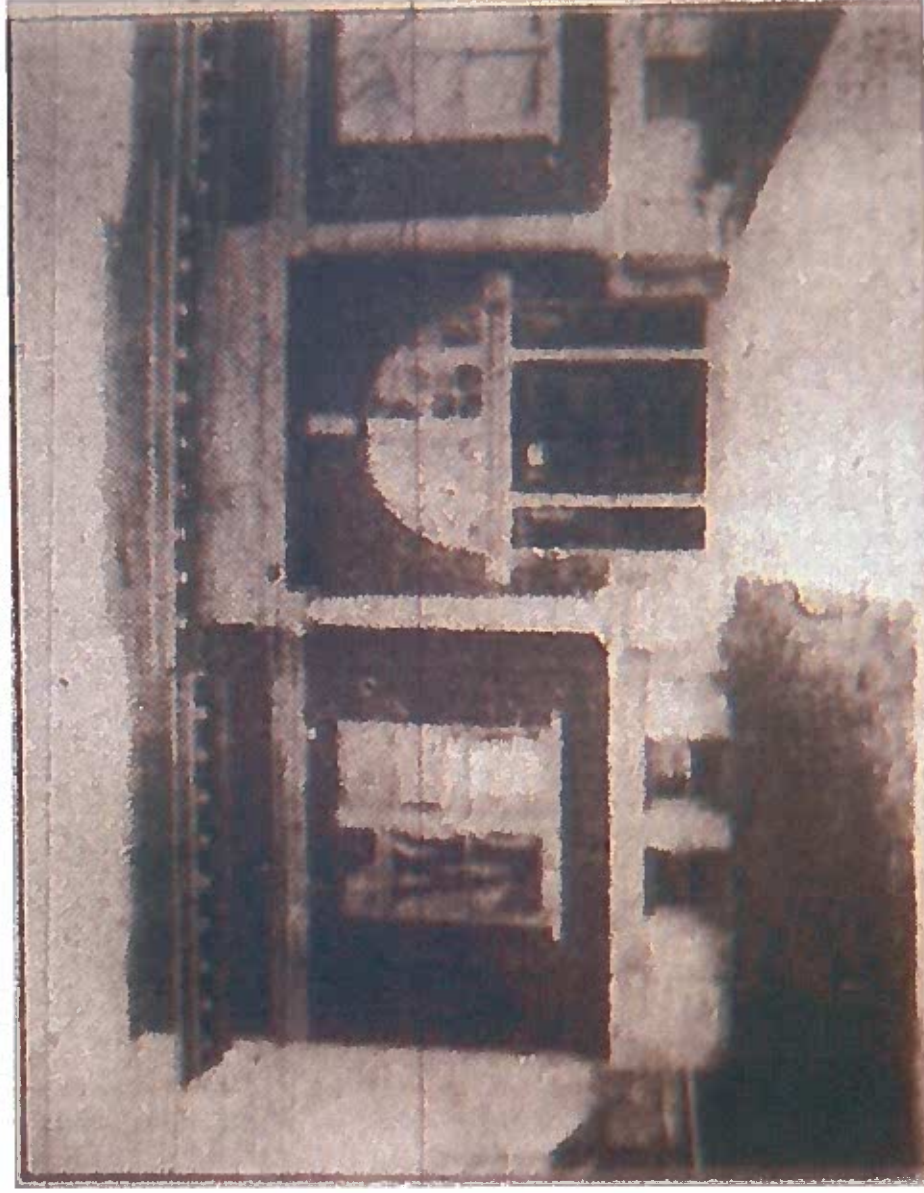


Figure 11. Photograph published in 1912 accompanying short news article announcing the opening of the newly completed Edward Chipman Free Public Library (“The New Edward Chipman Free Public Library. Magnificent Building Which Has Just Been Completed at a Cost of \$8,000.00,” *Momence Press Reporter*, 27 December 1912).

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee



Figure 12. Three historic postcard views of the Edward Chipman Public Library, Momence, Illinois. Top: Early twentieth century view (circa 1910s-1920s). Middle: Mid-twentieth century view (circa 1930s; one online example has a 1945 postmark; Curt Teich and Company suggests circa 1936 printing). Bottom: Circa 1947 (?) postcard (see *Minutes* from September 1947 referencing removal of stumps; Booth Library Postcard Collection, Eastern Illinois University).

**Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee**



Figure 13. Current plot plan illustrating the Second and Locust Streets intersection (Google Earth 2016). The Edward Chipman Public Library is located at the southeast corner of this intersection. The landholdings associated with the library are outlined in red [Latitude 41.163947; Longitude 87.660917].

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

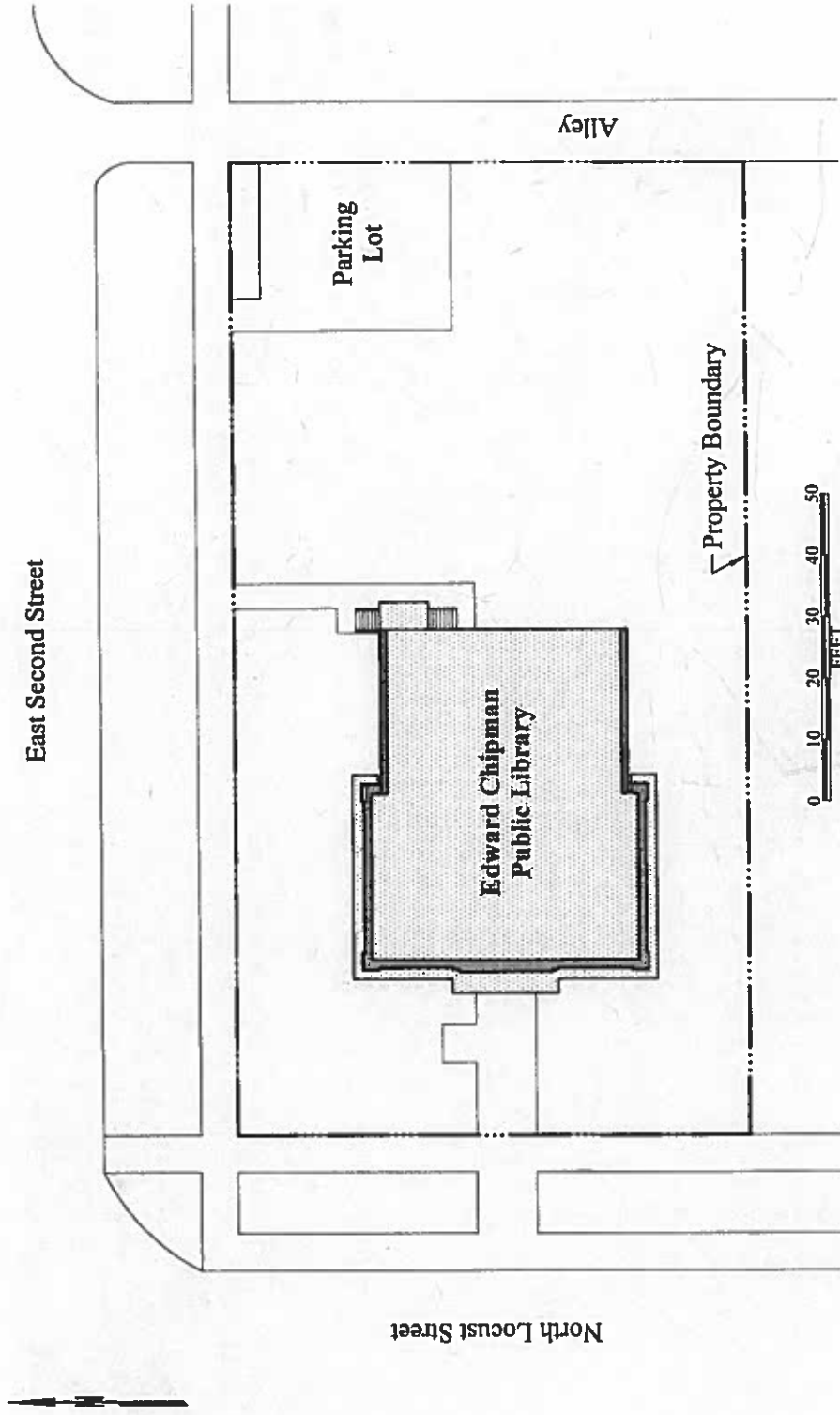


Figure 14. Site plan for the Edward Chipman Public Library, showing property boundary (Fever River Research 2016).

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

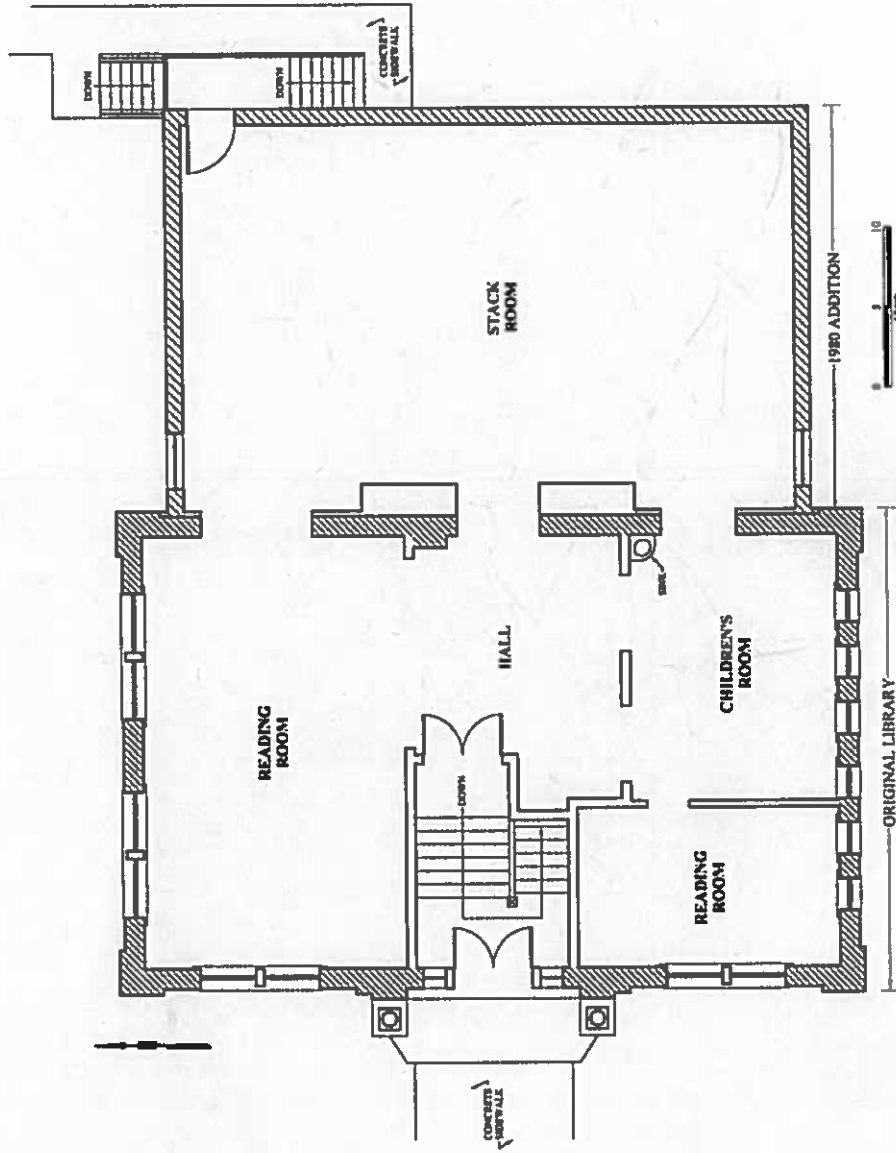


Figure 15. Ground floor plan of the Edward Chipman Public Library, Momence, Illinois (Fever River Research 2016).

Property name: Edward Chipman Public Library
Illinois, County: Kankakee

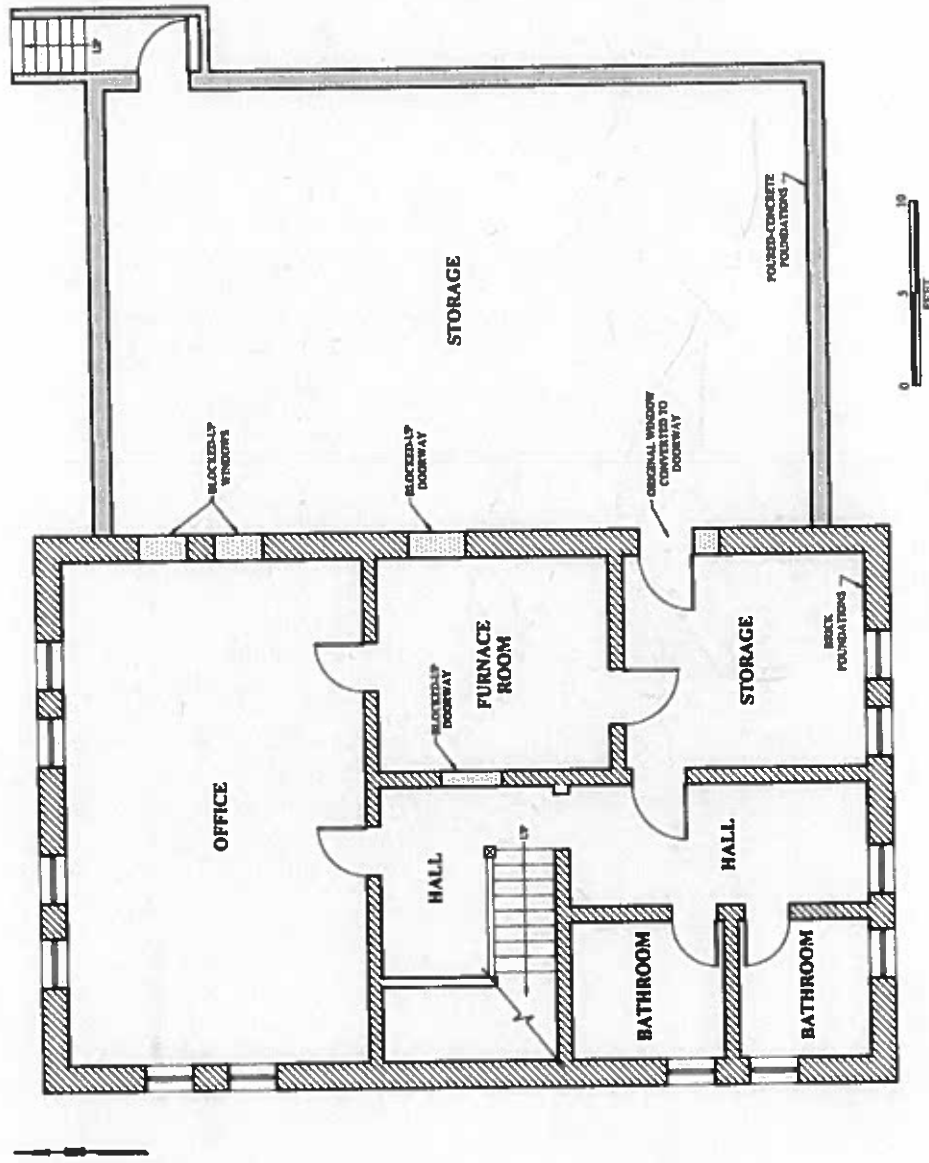


Figure 16. Basement floor plan of the Edward Chipman Public Library, Mokenca, Illinois (Fever River Research 2016).