



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**WINSLOW SCHOOL AND LITTLEFIELD LIBRARY, TYNGSBOROUGH,
APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF
HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Winslow School and Littlefield Library in Tyngsborough for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its September meeting. The nomination will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of the Winslow School and Littlefield Library in the National Register will help to raise awareness of the historical and architectural significance of this visually harmonious pair of municipal buildings that mark important milestones in Tyngsborough’s growth and development at the turn of the 20th century.”

The Winslow School and Littlefield Library, located at 250 and 252 Middlesex Road in Tyngsborough Center, stand side by side on a low hill overlooking a broad front lawn. The Winslow School is the only school in Tyngsborough Center, and it educated the town’s children for 110 years. Its construction in 1892 marked the beginning of a consolidated school system and the end of the district system in Tyngsborough. The building began as a two-room schoolhouse designed with Craftsman and Colonial Revival features, including a bungalow form with high hip roof, banks of windows, dormers, a center chimney, and classical front porch.

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As the need for more classroom space arose, additions in 1915 and 1948 were placed at the rear and set back along the sides, so that they did not alter the character of the original building. The Winslow name was carried over from a late 18th century schoolhouse that was the gift of Sarah Tyng Winslow, the granddaughter of Jonathan Tyng, the town's namesake.

The Littlefield Library, built in 1904, is an excellent and architecturally intact example of a small early 20th century library, and it is the only masonry building in Tyngsborough Center. The Littlefield library also reflects the patterns of library philanthropy and construction that accompanied the Free Library Movement in late 19th and early 20th-century America. The building served the community for nearly a century before being superseded by a new library and town hall complex.

Designed in the Colonial Revival style by the notable firm of Stickney and Austin, it was the town's first purpose-built library, a new building type—the free public library—laid out so that patrons could peruse and select books arranged on easily accessible bookshelves.

Significant architectural features include its side-gabled roof, brick body, modillioned cornice, triple windows, classical front porch, and gable-ends with parapets and a chimney centered on each side elevation. The interior has a cross-shaped plan with corner alcoves framed by pine dividers, full entablatures, and posts with classical capitals. The plaster ceiling rises to barrel vaults above the entry, the rear, and each side. A fireplace anchors the south end of the room. Other features include built-in bookcases/stacks, wood paneling, leaded glass, and light sconces.

The Littlefield Library was a gift from the estate of Lucy Littlefield in memory of her daughter, but the building also honors the spirit of Littlefield's grandfather Jonathan Bancroft, who was the town's first librarian.

Together the Winslow School and Littlefield Library reflect the commitment of the town to educating its children and providing a free public library. In addition, their functions of school and library were often intertwined. When the Winslow School opened, it housed the Free Public Library. Once the Littlefield Library opened, it served both as the school library and the public library. When classroom space in the school was overcrowded, students attended class in the library.

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Both buildings embody in their names the contributions of Tyngsborough benefactors, in this case women who traced their roots back to the earliest families to settle in the area.

The Winslow School and Littlefield Library property is one of 6 historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation's official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are over 70,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

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