



VICTORIAN SOCIETY IN AMERICA / NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

**Diane Marden**

January 27, 2016

Ken Knowlton  
Member of the Save Our Gale School Committee  
128 Lamprey Road  
Belmont, NH 03220  
(603)848-2216

**From:** <kallyn1@netzero.net>  
**Date:** Saturday, January 30, 2016 1:45 PM  
**To:** <DMarden@belmontnh.net>  
**Subject:** Fw: Re: Answer to your request for support

**From:** Edward W Gordon <edwardwgordon@aol.com>  
**To:** kallyn1@netzero.net  
**Subject:** Re: Answer to your request for support  
**Date:** Wed, 27 Jan 2016 21:17:44 -0500

Dear Mr. Knowlton:

As the President of the New England Chapter of the Victorian Society in America I respectfully request that the citizens of Belmont, New Hampshire resolve to save the Gale School which is highly worthy of preservation for the following reasons:

As a fine and unusually late example of a Stick Style school house. Possessing distinctive hill top siting and memorable bell tower-topped structural form, the Gale School is a highly visible local historic landmark. The Stick Style's hay day is generally understood as the period between the end of the Civil War and the early 1880s. Built in 1894, the Gale School provides evidence that the Stick Style's emphasis on picturesquely rendered facades persisted in some parts of the country for a much longer window of time--until as late as the end of the nineteenth century and is of great design interest for that reason. The Stick Style was an off shoot of the mid nineteenth century Carpenter Gothic style --both of these self consciously romantic styles that celebrated the creativity of local wood workers. The Stick Style is more typically seen in the designs of residential rather than public buildings like the Gale School.

The Gale School provides a physical link to late Victorian era in northern New Hampshire and owes its existence to a the prominent local banker and philanthropist Napoleon Bonaparte Gale (1815-1894). Described at the time of his death as a "rugged individualist" and a "rough diamond not born to shine in society", Mr. Gale provided funding for a beautiful library in Laconia as well as the Gale School.

The destruction of the Gale School would not only mean a lost link with its salt -of- the -earth benefactor but would mean losing a touch stone for Belmont and vicinity harkening back to a time when area mills produced paper for Boston and New York newspapers a pioneering hydro electric plan produced electricity.

\*through its curriculum The Gale School helped the children of immigrants, including generations of French Canadian families, to assimilate and thrive in American society.

\* too many old school houses in and around Belmont have succumbed to the wrecker's ball during the twentieth century. The Gale School deserves better than to meet a similar fate and still has much potential for successful adaptive reuse. As someone who cares deeply about the preservation of historic design and celebrates local history I urge the citizens of Belmont, New Hampshire to save the Gale School.

Best wishes,

Ed Gordon  
President, Victorian Society in America, New England Chapter

c/o The Gibson House Museum  
137 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116  
617-267-6338