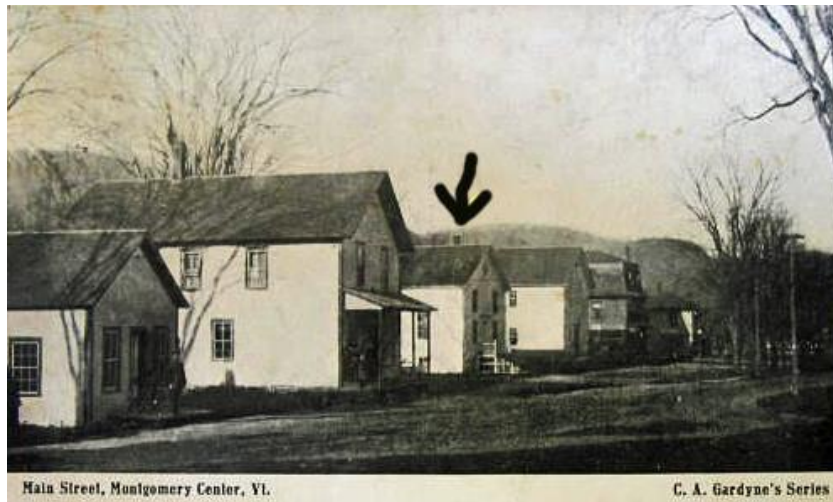


**UPDATED OCT 27,2024**

## **A Short History Of The Montgomery Town Hall: Church - Theater - Grange - Town Hall**

The building now known as the Montgomery Town Hall has an interesting past. The original building was completed in 1841 and served as the Congregational Church. It was the second church built in Town and the first in the Center. It was a place of worship for the Town's first organized congregation.

Originally it was a plain building, some describe as Vermont vernacular. It had little decoration or architectural detail. (shown below under the arrow).

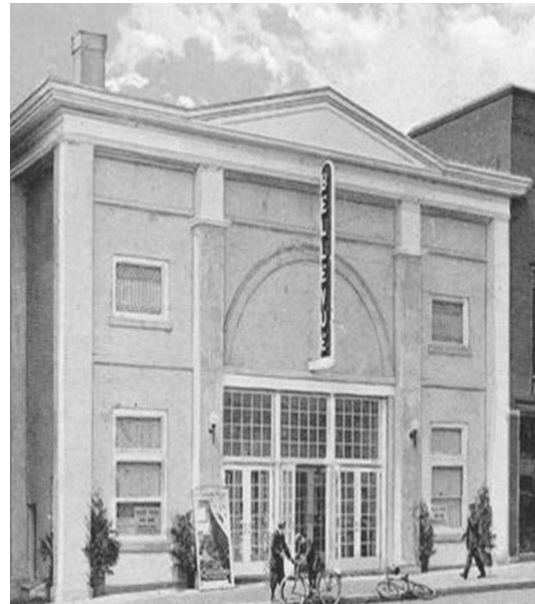


Sometime in the period after the Civil War it was renovated. The front entrance was moved to the side as part of a steeple tower which also housed a bell and its familiar triangular windows. The street facing façade was adorned with three large stained glass windows and stained glass was added to the side windows as well.



By the early 1900s the congregation had shrunk and services were suspended for extended periods for want of members. By 1917 the remaining congregation merged with the Baptist congregation. The Congregationalist Church was sold to C.T. Hall in 1922. <SEE UPDATE BELOW> Hall was a prominent mill owner who was a member of both the Congregationalist and Baptist churches. He owned many buildings in the Center and his home is now “The Inn”. Hall soon began work to convert the church into the Crescent Theater.

A whole new front extension was added which housed a box office and balcony equipped with a projection booth. The style was nearly identical to other theater buildings in the region, like St. Albans’ Bellevue Theater shown below right.

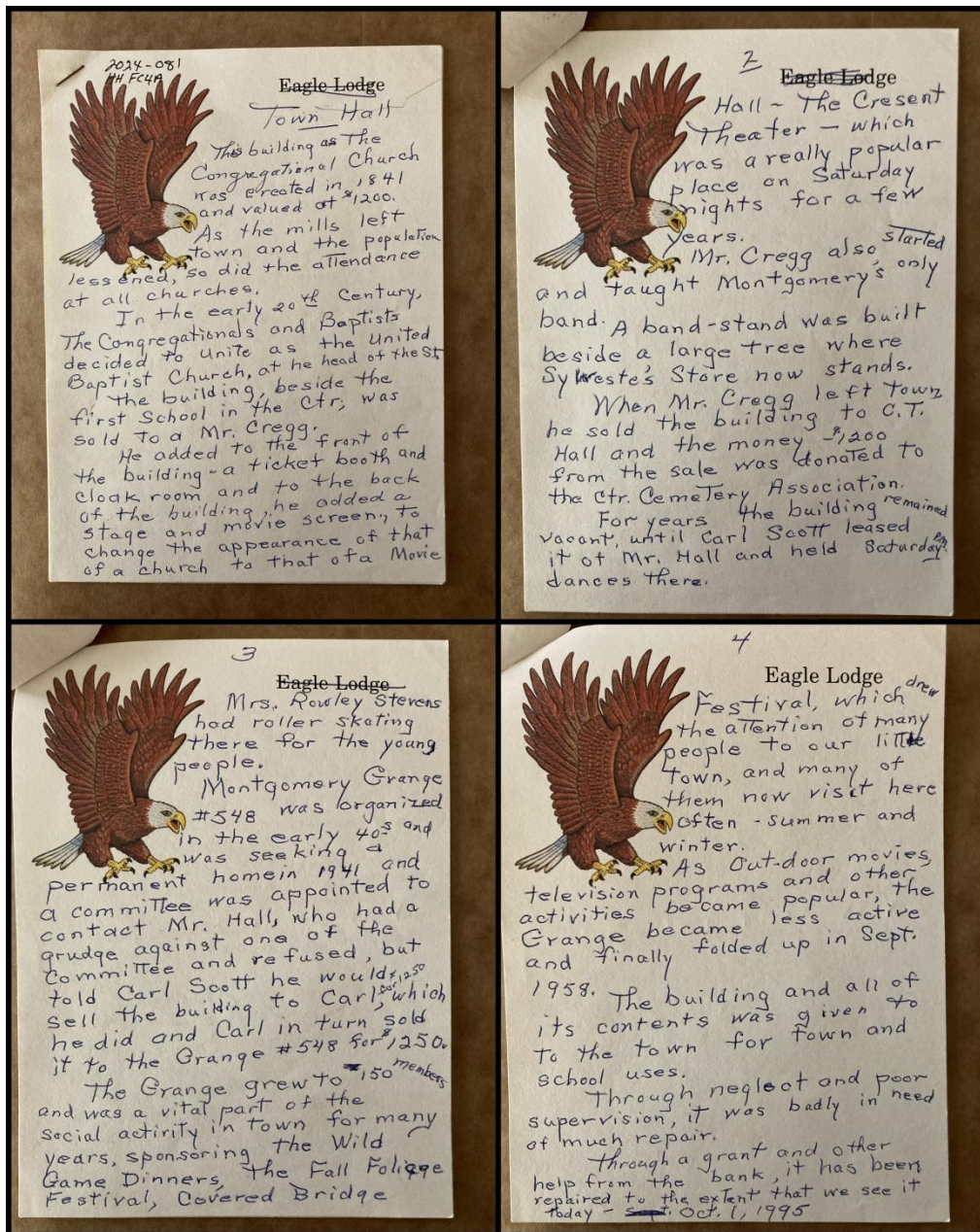


In 1953 Hall sold the building to the newly formed Montgomery Grange 548 who operated it for the next 26 years. It hosted Grange meetings and many community events, as had the theater before it. In 1979 the Town assumed ownership. Recent work by the Historical Society on behalf of the Selectboard secured an eligibility determination from the State Division for Historic Preservation which will make it easier for the Town to attain preservation grants in the future.

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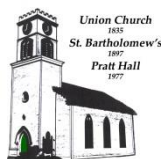
#### UPDATE

According to handwritten notes from Irene Scott discovered in the MHS archives in 2024 (see images below), a gentleman by the name of Mr, Cregg, purchased the church and converted it to a theater in 1922, adding to the back and front to accommodate the stage/screen, coat room, and ticket booth. He ran the building for several years even organizing a Town band, teaching music, and helping to construct a gazebo-like bandstand for concerts at what today is the intersection of Routes 118 and 242. Other events were held at the theater as well, like “Talkies”, and dances. C.T. Hall bought the Crescent Theater from him and it sat vacant for a time. Carl Scott, her husband, leased the building and eventually bought it and re-sold it to the Grange.



Courtesy of the Montgomery Historical Society  
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