

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 6 1986
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic North Hall, River Falls State Normal School

and/or common North Hall, University of Wisconsin - River Falls

2. Location

street & number Third Street, University of Wisconsin - River Falls not for publication

city, town River Falls vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Pierce code 093

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name State of Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents.

street & number 1220 Linden Drive

city, town Madison vicinity of state Wisconsin 53706

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds Office, Pierce County Courthouse

street & number 411 West Main Street

city, town Ellsworth state Wisconsin (continued)

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978, updated 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

North Hall, located on a full block at the northern edge of the UW-River Falls campus, is a three-story, red brick structure detailed in an abstracted Collegiate Gothic style. Constructed in 1914, the imposing academic facility was the third major building to be built on the grounds of the State Normal School at River Falls and served as the home of the Agriculture and Science departments, as well as administrative offices and the campus' training school.

The 140' by 173' building is sited amidst a heavily landscaped lawn crossed by various concrete footpaths. Mature trees shade much of the building and small paved parking areas lie adjacent to the north and east elevations. To the south, across Cascade Avenue, lies the 1898 South Hall building officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

The construction of the 116,800 square foot North Hall building was completed in two phases. The original 1914 western section (84,000 sq.ft.) was L-shaped and featured a sizable auditorium/gymnasium wing attached to a main rectangular classroom structure, which faced out onto Third Street. In 1927 a complimentary, three-story addition was completed to the east, housing additional classroom and office space. (See site plan.)

The walls of the building, laid in simple English bond, are relatively unornamented except for distinctive tudor/collegiate gothic detailing at the projecting entryways. In general, the major elevations are composed of regularly-spaced bays divided by concrete detailed brick buttressing piers; each bay carrying windows grouped in sets of two or three. The window openings, which surround modern glazing units, feature simple rectangular lintels and slender lug sills. Concrete belt courses encircle the building above the second and third floor levels, while a concrete watertable caps the substantial raised basement area. The roofline is topped by an ornamented concrete coping.

The Third Street facade (west elevation) features a symmetrical elevation detailed in a distinctive 20th century Collegiate Gothic mode. Twin, raised entries flank an articulated wall of administrative offices. The projecting entry vestibules feature deeply recessed Tudor-arched openings concealing modern bronze-tinted doors. Set above the doorways are carved, "open-book" cartouches placed below a concrete capped parapet. The stairwell walls set back behind the entries are detailed with concrete window surrounds and small tudor arch motifs. A decorative pierced parapet marks the roofline. Behind the parapet lies the building's expansive flat roof, broken only by a small one-story penthouse structure.

Alterations to the exterior of the building have been minimal and involve mainly the replacement of the original window units with modern, energy-efficient sash.

The interior spaces of North Hall, though utilized for the same general purposes, have to a large extent been altered from their original design. Most of the changes reflect alterations made to meet the varying space demands of the modern university. The original pool facility in the basement of the 1927 addition and the

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gym and running track below the 1914 auditorium space have been transformed into modern office and workroom spaces. Many of the older classrooms have also been modernized into administrative offices and labs. North Hall still provides space for chemistry and physics laboratories and classrooms, facilities for instruction in guidance and journalism, an auditorium and most of the school's administrative offices, including the chancellor's office. The large 800 seat auditorium, located on the second and third floors of the main building, still features its original raised stage area, suspended balcony and coffered ceiling. Expansive floor to ceiling windows light the space. The hallways feature dropped acoustical tile ceilings and resilient tile floors throughout, with limited amounts of oak trim.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1914¹, 1927 (addition)² **Builder/Architect** -

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Period of significance: 1914-1935

North Hall on the main campus of the University of Wisconsin - River Falls is historically significant for its contributions to the continuing development of the State Normal School system in Wisconsin. The handsome, 1914 building represents a significant milestone in the development of specialized vocational training in the state normal school system, as the small River Falls campus became an important, pioneer center for the training of qualified teachers in agricultural studies and the dissemination of information concerning contemporary, scientific farming methods in the rural Pierce County region. On a local level, the building represents a good example of abstracted Collegiate Gothic design.

Historical Significance - EDUCATION

The construction of the River Falls Normal School's first building had begun in 1874, on a 10 acre plat of ground eagerly donated to the state by the citizens of River Falls. Competition for the location of the fourth normal school facility in the state had been keen. Following the establishment of schools at Platteville, Whitewater and Oshkosh (1866, 1868 & 1871), the Board of Normal School Regents directly sought to locate a new facility in the northern half of the state. The citizens of River Falls along with neighboring communities quickly set about petitioning the state to locate the facility in their community. In 1872, after considerable debate, the Normal Regents took official action and authorized the establishment of the state's fourth normal school at River Falls.³

Under the leadership of President, Warren D. Parker, former superintendent of schools at Janesville, the River Falls State Normal School was officially opened on September 2, 1875 with an enrollment of 104 students.⁴ A disastrous fire in 1897 destroyed the original Main building at the school. Fighting off vigorous attempts by other communities to relocate the school, the present South Hall building was completed in 1898.

In its early years the school experienced a slow but steady growth in curriculum and enrollment until the pivotal year of 1912, when the Department of Agriculture was established at the school and the campus embarked upon a marked period of new growth and expansion. North Hall constructed 2 years later is the strongest representation of that incredible growth on the normal campus.

Throughout the early 1910s, the various State Normal Schools located in Wisconsin had begun to initiate specialized training programs in vocational education. In 1912, the State Board of Normal Regents officially established a permanent Department of Agriculture at the River Falls school under President James W. Crabtree; the first such program at a normal school in the United States.⁵ (see notes)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Lankford, John "A History of Wisconsin State University-River Falls (1874-1966)", History of the Wisconsin State Universities, 1968, (Edited by W.D. Wyman), River Falls State University Press, River Falls.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3.1 acres

Quadrangle name River Falls - WI

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

1	5	5	2	9	8	2	0	4	9	6	6	6	7	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

(See continuation sheet)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul R. Lusignan, Architectural Historian

organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 1985-1986

street & number 816 State Street telephone (608) 262-4772

city or town Madison state Wisconsin

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title _____ date 2/24/86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 4/3/86

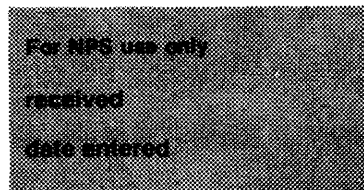

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Professor Winthrop S. Welles was named as the program's first director, a position he would hold until 1920.⁶ (The Platteville Normal School would establish the only other such specialized agriculture program in the Wisconsin system in 1914.)

The establishment of vocational training programs at the state normal schools in the early 1900s had been in keeping with the progressive ideas of upper level state educators that the training of teachers should respond directly to the growing needs of specialized academic fields and also reflect the regional differences among the various normal school sites. Between 1909 and 1914 curriculum revisions within the state normal school system resulted in the establishment of twelve new specialized departments. At La Crosse, Oshkosh, Stevens Point, Platteville, Whitewater and River Falls, the Board of Regents maintained departments for the training of teachers for rural schools, while departments for the preparation of kindergarten teachers existed in Milwaukee and Superior. The Stevens Point Normal School specialized in domestic science education, while at Whitewater a commercial education (business) program was initiated. An art department and a music department were established at Milwaukee as well as a special department for the training of the deaf. A teacher training department in industrial education was located at Oshkosh and a manual training department was instituted at Platteville. A physical education department was set up as part of the new La Crosse campus, while special agricultural departments were established at Platteville and River Falls, two areas of growing agricultural development.⁷

The agriculture programs in particular were meant to augment some of the programs already being established by the University of Wisconsin in Madison in agricultural science and farmer education. The individual most responsible for the institutional and curricular reorganization of the Wisconsin normal school system was William Kittle, the secretary of the Board of Regents of Normal Schools. His intensive study of 22 normal school systems in the midwest and east served as the basis for changes made in the Wisconsin system in the early 1900s.⁸

The popularity of the new agriculture programs at the River Falls school quickly took on sizable proportions. Two, three and five year study programs were established as part of the teacher training curriculum in the agriculture department and by 1917 enrollment at the school had risen from 319 in 1912 to 627 students. The School of Agricultural Education had begun with an initial enrollment of 40 students in 1912 and by 1917 that number had increased to 135 men and over 149 students had already completed courses of study in the program⁹. In 1913, the first farm extension course was held on campus, in which numerous farmers were invited to campus for intensive surveys of contemporary farm practices. The seven week winter "short courses" were among the most popular programs introduced at the school; bringing modern, scientific farming practices directly to the local farmers in the rich St. Croix Valley agricultural regions.

Prompted by the dramatic rise in popularity of the new specialized program at River Falls, the Board of Normal Regents authorized school president James Crabtree

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to commission plans for a new academic facility on campus in 1913. Construction of North Hall officially began in early 1914 and the new 84,000 sq. ft. facility was completed and ready for occupancy in the fall of 1914.¹⁰

In order to provide a suitable site for the new home of the Agricultural studies department, 10 lots in Block 16 of the city were purchased and cleared, directly across from the original campus building. The newly completed North Hall provided the campus with an 800 seat auditorium and a fully equipped men's gymnasium. The Science Department was located in labs on the third floor, while the first and second floors were given over to the training school and administrative offices. The Agriculture Department utilized the entire basement area of the building which featured fully equipped lab space and lecture rooms. The total cost of the building was estimated at \$140,000.¹¹

Over the next several years, the agriculture department based in North Hall played an important role in the dissemination of information and the advancement of scientific agricultural ideas and theories in the farming regions of western Wisconsin, both as a teacher training facility and as a regional extension center. Coinciding with the progressive movement to stretch government services to more people and along with the University of Wisconsin's efforts to broaden the scope of its services, River Falls became a focus for agricultural studies in the rich farming region. Over the years, the school supplied educators to grade schools, rural schools and especially high schools throughout Wisconsin and the upper Midwest.

In 1925 an \$150,000 addition to North Hall was begun, ostensibly to house a new, modernly-equipped campus training school and allow for the enlargement of program areas for the Agriculture and Science Departments housed in the older section of the building. Completed in 1927, the addition contained 10 full sized grade rooms, 18 recitation rooms, offices and a basement swimming pool.¹²

North Hall began to lose its prominence as the center of Agricultural education on campus in the late 1930s, with the construction of newer facilities on the River Falls campus designed solely for the purpose of specialized agricultural study. Class continued to be taught in the building however for an extensive period.

Architecture

The imposing, red brick structure is a fine representation of the Collegiate Gothic style popularized during the early decades of this century. Designed to compliment the 1898 South Hall facility, the 1914 building is among the most handsome academic structures in the city and its only intact example of the Collegiate gothic tradition.

NOTES

¹ River Falls Journal, June 11, 1914.

² Bulletin of the State Teachers College - River Falls. 1932, pp. 38-44.

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- 3 Lankford, History of Wisconsin State University—River Falls (1874–1966), (River Falls: River Falls State University Press, 1968), pp. 135–136.
- 4 Ibid, p. 140.
- 5 Herrmann, The Rise of the Public Normal School System in Wisconsin, (Madison: Board of Regents of State Universities, 1971). pp.443–445.
"The Agriculture school of this (River Falls Normal School) institution is receiving the attention of the whole country and is looked upon as the beginning of a movement, which within the next 10 years, will assume proportions in every state." article in the June 11, 1914 River Falls Journal concerning the recently established Agricultural studies program.
"The River Falls Normal School is the first school of its kind in the U.S. to offer a full, well-rounded course as a special school for the preparation of teachers of agriculture in the public schools." article in the 1914–1915 edition of the Bulletin of the State Normal School at River Falls – Annual Catalogue.
- 6 Bulletin of the State Normal School River Falls,–Annual Catalogues, 1914, 1920.
- 7 Board of Regents of Normal Schools, The Organization of Special Departments in the Normal Schools of Wisconsin, (Madison: Board of Regents,1915) p.3–4.
- 8 Herrmann, op cit., p. 432–436.
Kittle, History of the Special Departments in the Normal Schools of Wisconsin, 1914–1925, (Madison: Board of Regents, 1925.) pp. 5–7.
- 9 Bulletin of the State Normal School River Falls– Agriculture Department, 1917, 1920.
- 10 River Falls Journal, June 11 and June 18, 1914.
- 11 Building plans on file at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin dated 1917.
Bulletin of the State Teachers Col.–River Falls, "The River Falls State Teachers College, 1874–1932." Special edition, 1932 pp. 38–44.
- 12 Ibid, pp. 38–44.

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5. Location of Legal Description

Office of the Chancellor
University of Wisconsin - River Falls
River Falls, Wisconsin 54022

9. Bibliography

Herrmann, William Harold, The Rise of the Public Normal School System in Wisconsin, 1971, The Board of Regents of State Universities, Madison, WI.

Kittle, William, History of the Specialized Departments in the Normal Schools of Wisconsin, 1914-1925. 1925, Board of Regents, Madison, WI.

River Falls Journal, June 11, June 18, June 25, 1914.

Bulletin of the State Normal School River Falls, various years, 1894-1918.

Bulletin of the State Teachers College-River Falls, various years. 1925-1928.

10. Verbal Boundary Description

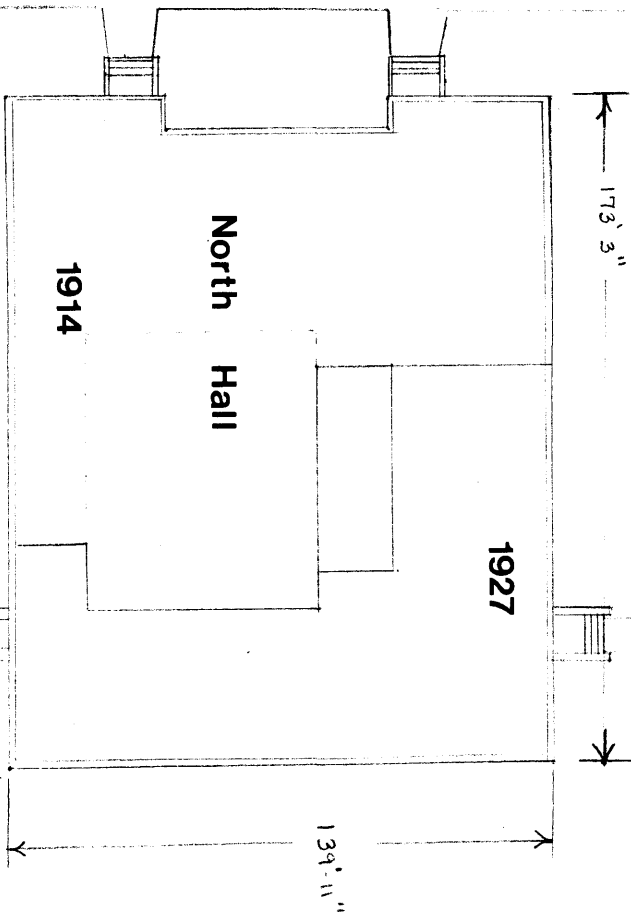
The property being nominated includes the entire block located between Third Street and Fourth Street, and Cascade Avenue and Spring Street in the city of River Falls. Formerly known as Block 16 of G.W. Pratts addition to Greenwood Falls.

Third Street



Walkways

Cascade Ave. (Hy 35)



Spring St.

Forth St.