

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic WATSON ACADEMY

and/or common EPPING SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL

2. Location

street & number Academy Street. _____ not for publication

city, town Epping _____ vicinity of ~~congressional district~~ (first)

state NH code 33 county Rockingham code 015

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Epping

street & number Town Hall

city, town Epping _____ vicinity of _____ state New Hampshire

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Rockingham County Courthouse/Registry of Deeds

street & number Hampton Road

city, town Exeter _____ state New Hampshire

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes no

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records

city, town _____ state

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 <u>n/a</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Watson Academy is a two and one half story, five by two bay, symmetrical, wooden school located on Academy Street in Epping, New Hampshire. The structure is supported by a foundation of granite rubble and raised, random bond brick which is visually connected to the structural block by an exaggerated, flared, wooden drip cap. The principal facade (South) of the clapboard sheathed building is divided into a three part composition. This composition includes a gable front principal block flanked by slightly recessed wings. The south facade is unified by a sweeping, gable front roof.

The principal block of the south facade is articulated by wide cornerboards which rise to a projecting raking board and projecting, boxed gable returns. These returns are ornamented by a perforated circular motif and connected to the cornerboards through wooden, scroll brackets. This elaborate eave/return treatment is repeated, in a reduced scale, at the corners of both east and west wings.

The principal entrance to the structure is located in the central bay of the south facade. Access to the building is gained through double, wooden doors which include a single fixed light, upper panel and a lower section incorporating three raised panels. A six light transom spans the entry and terminates in a simple, single board surround which also frames the double entrance.

The structure's entrance is protected by an open, wooden porch originally reached by way of an open stair spanning the width of the entry bay. This porch, whose access has been shifted to an east side stair, terminates in a hipped roof with a projecting gable. Double, turned columns are connected by an arched, wooden spandrel which springs from the columns' capital level. This device is repeated on the east and west porch elevations where single engaged columns connect the porch to the structural block. Double south elevation columns are spanned by a single component, jig-saw-cut balustrade. The porch's flared eave, hipped roof terminates in a pedimented gable. The typanum of this gable includes a stylized, fiddle-head fern relief executed in wood.

First story, south elevation windows are paired, four light over four light, sash set in simple surrounds and accented by detached, arched, ornamental lintels. Second story, south elevation, principal block windows are located between ornamental wooden belt courses. East and west windows are four light over four light sash set with multi-pane Queen Anne style upper sashes enframed by simple surrounds beneath recessed, transom-like wooden panels. Central bay windows are tri-partite, four light over four light sash set in simple surrounds. The gable end of the principal block of the south facade is highly ornamented and includes Stick Style and Queen Anne style motifs. The pediment is divided into two levels containing three panels of wooden strap work. The east and west divisions of the first level are ornamented by wooden, down bracing which radiates from the junction of the projecting gable returns and raking board. The central panel of the second level includes a flush, perforated, gable screen with superimposed cross lattice ornamentation.

The east and west, single story wings are connects to the principal block by the extended, gable front roof. The triangular panels created by the roof plane and the principal block corners are accented by bull's eye windows set in simple surrounds.

-see Continuation Sheet #1

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Continuation sheet #1 - DESCRIPTION

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East and west wing windows are six light over six light sash set in simple surrounds. Two wooden panel transoms are found above each window. These panels adjoin a wooden belt course which divides the first story from the false gable end. Ornamental wooden strap-work is found in the false gable fronts of the wings.

Brick, interior end chimneys with corbelled pots and projecting stove flues originally punctuated the east and west planes of the roof. The southern peak of the roof was originally straddled by an eclectic, conical roofed tower. Both chimneys and tower have been removed.

East and west elevations of the building are defined by low gabled, wall dormers sheathed in fish-scale shingles and including eyebrow windows in the gable. These dormers spring from flaired roof pents beneath which are found tri-partite, four light over four light sash windows. South facade, gable return raking board details are repeated in the gable ends of the wall dormers.

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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates 1883 **Builder/Architect** Charles E. Joy, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Watson Academy in Epping, N.H. is a handsome vernacular Queen Anne style wooden public building which still retains integrity of design, setting, materials and workmanship. Its architectural significance lies in its individual, vernacular statement about the Queen Anne style as applied to an educational structure in a rural setting. It is the only known wooden Queen Anne School to have been built in southern New Hampshire. A few residential examples of similar design exist in the region, but Watson Academy on a larger scale, is clearly the finest interpretation surviving. This structure is also significant for its association with the late 19th century development of the public educational system in the town of Epping.

Architecture: The Queen Anne design selected for Watson Academy is architecturally interesting in several respects. Most notable, is the architect's disregard for established academic architectural formulas and use of innovative composition, scale, proportion and materials. The building is both survivalist in its use of forms and details common to the Greek Revival Period and sophisticated in its massing of structural elements integrated through staggered wall plans. The building's scale, proportions and materials are more residential than institutional in character. These residential qualities are of note owing to the period's emphasis on appropriate architectural design features with regard to architectural programs. Architecture, and particularly school architecture, was commonly held to convey educational as well as artistic meaning.

The incorporation of earlier architectural forms may have been influenced by the innovative interpretations of eighteenth and early nineteenth century motifs characteristic of the first Colonial Revival (1870's). Designs integrating "colonial" forms with those characteristic of the Queen Anne style were widely published in architectural periodicals such as the American Architect and Builders News, which first appeared in January, 1876.

Regardless of Joy's sources, Watson Academy remains unique among the extant school buildings in the Piscataqua region of New Hampshire and is notable for its application of innovative period design.

Education: The establishment of a public secondary school in the town of Epping was a major advancement in the quality and availability of secondary education in the community. Although Epping had established and maintained a district school since the first, formal town meeting in 1741, this district school was intended as an elementary institution.¹ Students desiring academic advancement were therefore forced to leave the community to attend one of the numerous private academies operating in the region during the period. Formal education was subsequently, largely restricted by financial security.

-see Continuation Sheet #2

9. Major Bibliographical References

Allen, Frances, History of Epping Schools from 1749 (unpublished).

"Dedication of Watson Academy, Epping, New Hampshire" The Epping Leader, Sept. 29, 1883.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3/4±

Quadrangle name Mt. Pawtuckaway, NH

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UMT References

A

1	9	3	3	0	9	2	5	4	7	6	7	5	0	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 #3-

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathryn M. Kuranda

organization Strafford Rockingham Regional Council date Sept. 1, 1981

street & number One Water Street telephone (603) 778-0885

city or town Exeter state New Hampshire 03833

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 *[Signature]*

Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development
 title NH State Historic Preservation Officer date September 23, 1982

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

[Signature] date 11/5/82
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet #2 - SIGNIFICANCE

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These constraints were recognized by Daniel Watson Ladd, and indeed, the town of Epping as a whole. The purpose of public involvement in the construction and operation of Watson Academy was articulated by Frank Chase, Chairman of the Watson Academy Building Committee in his address delivered at the September 17, 1883, dedication of the building,

"... we take our fellow citizens at their word and give them credit due to intelligent voters; namely, a school in their own town affording facilities for a limited academic education without the expense of sending their boys and girls to schools in other towns at great cost for board and tuition. It is, therefore, of the working sons and daughters of the working fathers and mothers of Epping that we expect this school to be made up."²

History: Daniel Watson Ladd, a prominent Epping merchant and businessman, was the first to recognize the need for a local secondary school in the Epping community. Upon his death in 1874, Ladd bequeathed the sum of \$3,000.00 to be held in trust for the establishment and maintenance of "... an Academy for the instruction of youth, in Epping ..."³ Ladd's will further provided for a board of trustees to administrate the construction and operation of the proposed institution, as well as guidelines for site selection. The terms of the endowment also stipulated that the school be known as Watson Academy in honor of Ladd's adopted parents, the Watsons.⁴

The Ladd legacy, however, proved inadequate in meeting the total cost of construction and operation of the envisioned academy.⁵ The challenge of raising additional capital for construction of the school was met by the town of Epping, which, in a November, 1882, town meeting allocated \$5,000.00 towards the building project. During the town meeting a building committee was appointed and general guidelines for an appropriate architectural program adopted.⁶

The building committee subsequently retained the architectural services of Charles E. Joy, a Dover, New Hampshire architect who is responsible for the design of the existing structure. Construction of the school was undertaken by the general contracting firm of Beede & Shaw of Dover in 1883 at a total cost of \$4,738.84, exclusive of site and furnishings.⁷

In compliance with the terms of the Ladd will, the newly constructed building was leased to the appointed Academy trustees for a period of five years. The school then reverted to town control and subsequently served as the Epping Public High School from 1888 to 1966.⁸

FOOTNOTES:

¹ Frances Allen, History of Epping Schools from 1749 (unpublished).

² "Dedication of Watson Academy, Epping, New Hampshire" The Epping Leader, Sept. 29, 1883.

³ Daniel Watson Ladd, Will as quoted in "Dedication of Watson Academy, Epping, New Hampshire" The Epping Leader, Sept. 29, 1883.

⁴ Ibid. Allen.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid. Dedication...

⁸ Ibid. Allen.

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Continuation sheet #3 - GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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Verbal boundary description and justification:

The Watson Academy lies on the parcel designated Map 10/Lot 20 in the tax records of the Town of Epping, N.H. This 21+ acre parcel also contains the new Epping Junior-Senior High School and associated lands. The boundary of the nominated 3/4 acre± portion of this parcel is traced as follows:

Beginning at the southeast corner of the parcel (20) the boundary proceeds west along the north side of Academy Avenue to its intersection with the lot line of parcel (19). Here it turns north and follows the lot line co-terminus with the western edge of the access road to the Epping Junior-Senior High School and follows this road edge until it forks where it crosses the road and follows the southern boundary of the same road east for a distance of approximately 280 feet until it intersects with the northwest corner of Lot (21). At this corner the boundary turns south and follows the lot line between parcels (20 & 21) until it reaches its starting point at the southeast corner of parcel (20).

These boundaries are indicated in red on the attached map.

The boundary of the property surrounding The Watson Academy has been drawn to include only that portion of the parcel which contains The Academy and its historic landscaping. The academy rests on the breast of a hill which continues to rise a distance of approximately 100 feet beyond its rear elevation. This rise and a grove of mature pines makes a natural visual separation from the new high school which has been built on this parcel. The road which runs east-west on the crest of this hill makes a convenient boundary line. All other boundaries are co-terminus with the existing lot lines of parcel (20) in the Epping, N.H. tax records.

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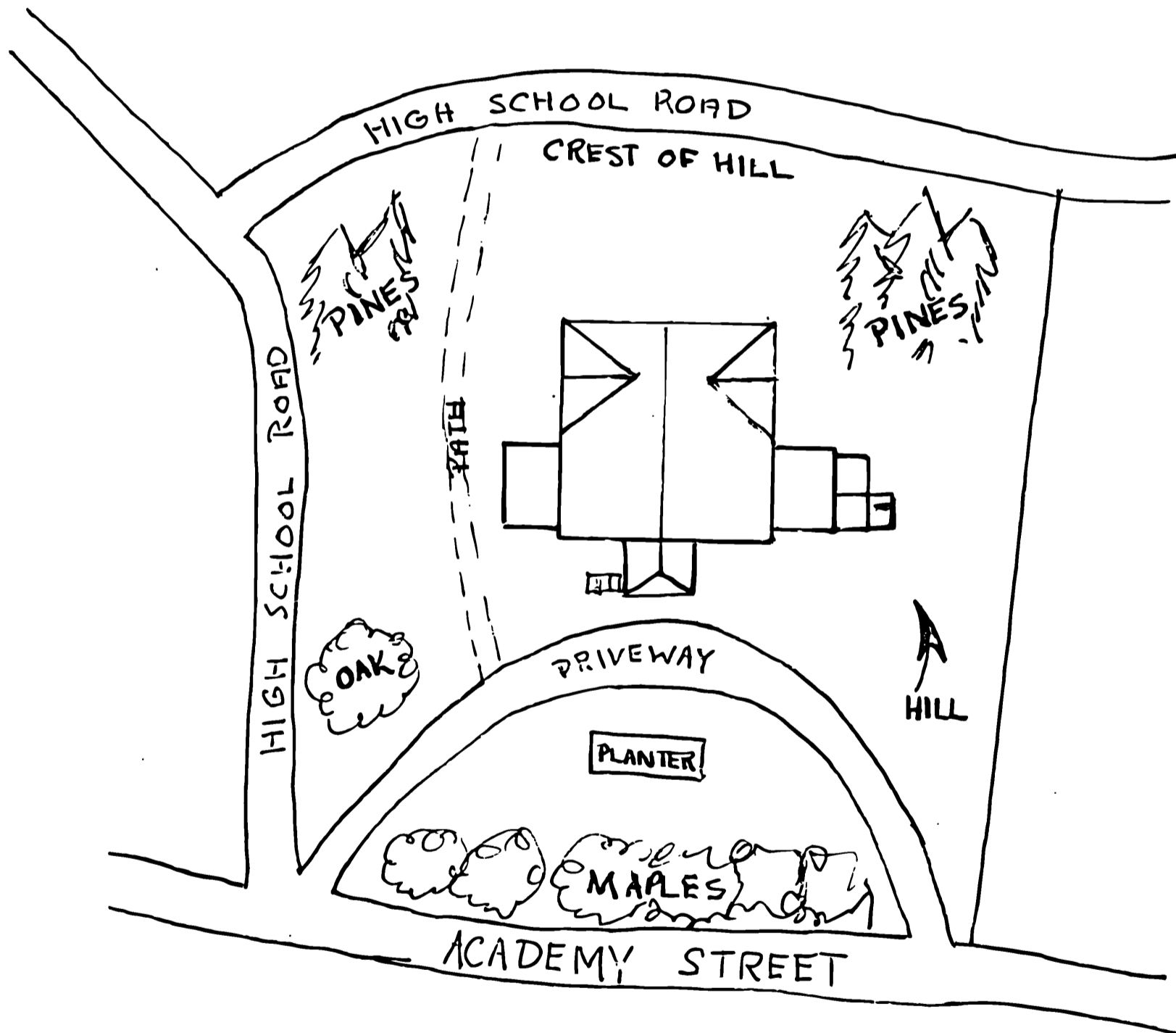


Continuation sheet #4 - Sketch map

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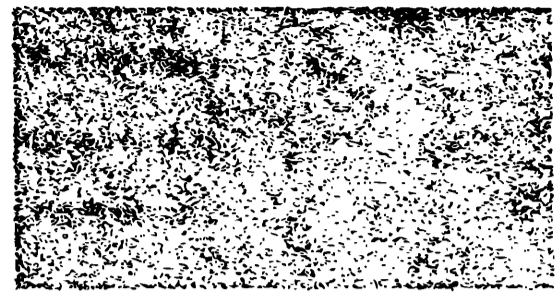
WATSON ACADEMY SKETCH MAP
EPPING, N.H.



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New Hampshire



Continuation sheet #5 - Boundary map

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WATSON ACADEMY
EPPING, NH
Scale 1" = 200'

North

