

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received DEC 23 1986

date entered

JAN 22 1987

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

**1. Name**

historic Pillsbury Academy Campus Historic District

and or common Pillsbury Baptist Bible College

**2. Location**

street & number 315 S. Grove Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Owatonna

N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota

code 22

county Steele

code 147

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input 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 Pillsbury Conservative Baptist Bible College

street & number 315 South Grove Street

city, town Owatonna

N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota 55060

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Recorder

street & number Steele County Court House

city, town Owatonna

state Minnesota 55060

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Minnesota Statewide Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Summer, 1984  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society--Ft. Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul

state Minnesota 55111

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<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			N/A

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Pillsbury Academy Campus Historic District is located on the southern part of the block between Main and Academy Streets on the north and south between Lincoln and Grove on the east and west. The campus is located southeast of downtown Owatonna on a hill sloping down toward Grove and Main Streets. Today the campus takes up the entire double block, and is surrounded by residential areas. The east portion of the double block is occupied by newer post-1960 dormitories and private homes which are now part of the campus. To the north and east of the campus are houses dating from the 1860s-1890s; to the east and south are houses dating from the 1890-1930s. Early maps show the campus outside the city limits when it was founded.

The Pillsbury Academy Campus Historic District consists of 5 contributing buildings set back from the streets and surrounded by landscaped lawns, new plantings, and mature trees. Most of the older buildings face north and west, but the orientation is also toward an inner quadrangle, except for the Academy Building, which dominates the crest of the hill and faces west toward Grove Street. Buildings in the district are red brick. Stylistically, the Academy Building is Romanesque, but the other buildings are predominantly Classical Revival.

1. Academy Building (Old Main): 1889, Romanesque Revival, 3 stories; red brick and cream-colored limestone trim above rusticated limestone raised and battered basement; L-shaped with 144' high tower with iron filigree work in the open belfry; intersecting hipped and gabled roof with pedimented dormers flanked by brick and limestone tourelles and decorative scroll and jig saw work in the dormer gables; round-arched window heads on first story and large rose window in chapel; the chapel seating 500 now known as Kerux Hall has parapetted gables; building was retuckpointed and renovated on the interior in 1974; Warren B. Dunnell, architect; new aluminum windows and plywood panel infill above most of the windows.

2. Music Hall; Conservatory (Kelly Hall): 1892, Neo-Classical Revival, 2 stories; red brick with limestone trim, sill courses and banding; large 2-story wood fully-pedimented portico; dentilled and bracketted trim, wide frieze, and four large fluted Greek Ionic wood columns; raised dressed limestone basement and stairs; symmetrical facade with recessed wings; architect: Warren B. Dunnell, Minneapolis; poor tuckpointing on south wing with all west-facing windows in this wing bricked up; new metal awning over north entrance; converted from music conservatory to boys dormitory in 1939, now used as practice studios, classrooms, and offices.

3. Jefts Hall: 1910-1911, one story with basement; T-shaped building in red brick laid in American bond with dressed cream-colored limestone trim; wood bracketted and dentil-trimmed eaves; Classical Revival style with

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3. Jefts Hall, continued

Georgian-style arched small-paned windows; segmented flat arched brick window heads; symmetrical facade with 2 bays separated by brick pilasters on either side of a projecting pedimented north-facing entry; gabled roof with returned eaves on west and east gable ends; hipped-roofed dormers; palladian windows in rear wing; originally the dining hall, and was completely renovated on interior in 1972 for use as the campus library; original high-ceiling and walls in first floor dining room (now library reading room) are intact; architect unknown.

4. Lindsay Hall (gymnasium): 1913-1914, smoothed out classicism in red brick; 1 story with raised brick basement; symmetrical facade with cut stone trim and flat arched windows with stone keystones on first floor; brick soldier courses define the water table and spring line of the arched first story windows; arched gymnasium windows infilled with brick and glass block; projecting front wing under full pediment with fan light gabled windows; rusticated stone base; swimming pool in basement measures 50' x 20' and is still in use; brick has been retuckpointed; still serves as a gym; architect unknown.

5. Heating Plant: 1893, 1903-04, 1928: one story painted red brick heating plant with tall brick smokestack; functional L-shaped design with small-paned windows and intersecting gabled roof; connected to other campus buildings by tunnels for conduits in 1928; addition on east of 2 garages; original machinery has been replaced and updated; architect or contractor unknown.

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Description

Item number 7

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The Pillsbury Academy Campus Historic District contains  
5 contributing buildings:

Academy Building  
Jefts Hall  
Music Hall/Conservatory  
Lindsay Hall  
Heating Plant

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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** 1889-1914      **Builder/Architect** Warren B. Dunnell- Music Hall and Academy Building

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Pillsbury Academy Campus Historic District is significant as one of the few remaining physical links to the early period in private higher education in Minnesota between 1850 and the mid-1880s. Although founded in 1851 the state university did not function as an institution of higher learning until the 1870s. Dozens of "paper universities", private seminaries, and colleges were chartered by the legislature, many of which lived only in their promoters minds. Motivated by a desire to keep young people at home, boom a townsite, exercise moral influence over the young, or lay the groundwork for collegiate-level work, the Baptists founded Pillsbury College just as their denominational counterparts founded Macalester (Presbyterian), Augsburg (Norwegian Lutheran), Northfield (Congregational), Hamline (Methodist), Gustavus (Swedish Lutheran), and St. Johns (Catholic).

Pillsbury Academy was the only Baptist denominational educational institution in Minnesota founded in the nineteenth century. The district is strongly associated with Mark H. Dunnell and George A. Pillsbury. Dunnell was instrumental in locating the campus in Owatonna. Philanthropist George A. Pillsbury of Minneapolis, a leading Baptist, donated money for several of the early buildings (three of which remain and are part of the district: the Academy Building, the Music Conservatory, and the Power Plant). Mr. Pillsbury left an endowment for the continuation of the school after his death in 1898. Architecturally, the district has retained its turn-of-the-century feeling and displays fine examples of Romanesque and Classical Revival institutional architecture.

Pillsbury Academy began in the boom year of 1854 when the Territory of Minnesota saw the start of many "paper towns" and universities on paper whose purposes were as much to boom the new towns as they were to meet a future demand for education. The original charter from the Territorial Assembly was to an institution called "Minnesota Central University," with trustees to be elected by the Minnesota Baptist Association. Hastings subscribed the greatest amount of money and land for the first campus. Classes (corresponding roughly to junior high level) were held in Hastings until 1867 when the school closed.

In 1875, the State Baptist Convention received offers from several cities to relocate the University. The City of Owatonna offered city bonds and cash to locate the school there. The driving force behind the Owatonna offer was Hon.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet # 5

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 8.75 acres

Quadrangle name Owatonna, Minn. 1962

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

1	5
Zone	

4	8	1	9	2	0
Easting					

4	8	8	0	6	2	5
Northing						

B 

1	5
Zone	

4	8	1	9	4	0
Easting					

4	8	8	0	3	2	0
Northing						

C 

1	5
Zone	

4	8	1	7	6	0
Easting					

4	8	8	0	3	2	0
Northing						

D 

1	5
Zone	

4	8	1	7	6	0
Easting					

4	8	8	0	5	2	0
Northing						

E 




F 




G 




H 




**Verbal boundary description and justification** From the SE curb line of Academy and Grove Streets 200' E; thence, 85' N; thence 100' E; thence, 85' N; thence 300' W; thence 60' S, thence 80' E; thence 60' S; thence 60' W; thence 50' S to the point of beginning.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Norene A. Roberts, Ph.D

organization Historical Research, Inc.

date February 23, 1986

street & number 5535 Richmond Curve

telephone (612) 929-2921

city or town Minneapolis

state Minnesota 55410

# 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

*Russell W. Fridley*

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 12/18/86

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

**Entered in the National Register**

*for Allous Byer*  
Keeper of the National Register

date 1-22-87

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Mark H. Dunnell, an active Baptist and president of the Minnesota Baptist Convention in 1872-73, who worked on behalf of the Owatonna site for eight years. Dunnell had already served as consul in Vera Cruz, Mexico, under Secretary of State William Seward and served in the Minnesota House in 1867, and again between 1872-1880. Dunnell became the State Superintendent of Schools in 1868, but was also an ardent believer in Baptist education. On September 11, 1877, classes opened in Owatonna and the charter of Minnesota Central University was secured by Minnesota Academy through a legislative act in February, 1878. During the late 1870s and 1880s between 120-175 boys and girls were enrolled annually taking grammar through high school courses, but money was an ever-present problem and the school nearly failed.

A new era for the school began in 1882 when George A. Pillsbury was elected President of the Minnesota Baptist Association. In 1882 and again in 1885, Mr. Pillsbury offered to donate money to build a girl's dormitory if the Baptists could raise money for a substantial endowment. His challenge was met, and in 1886 Pillsbury Hall was built as a girl's dormitory. It stood as the first permanent building on the campus until 1977 when it was razed and replaced with a new modern Pillsbury Hall next to the Academy Building. In appreciation for his good work, the 1886 Baptist State Convention successfully passed a resolution renaming Minnesota Academy "Pillsbury Academy."

George Alfred Pillsbury left New Hampshire at age 62 after a successful business and political life to settle in Minneapolis and work with his son in the Charles A. Pillsbury and Company Flouring Company. He served many positions, among which were president of the Minneapolis City Council, the Minneapolis Board of Trade, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Northwestern National Bank. He was elected mayor of Minneapolis in 1884. He was president of the Minnesota Baptist Convention from 1880 to 1887 and chairman of the building committee for the First Baptist Church of Minneapolis. His donation of Pillsbury Hall for a girl's dormitory was only the first of his many gifts to Pillsbury Academy. At his own expense in 1889, he built the Academy Building (later Old Main) which stands today as the centerpiece of the campus. He also donated money for the Music Hall (now Kelly Hall), the drill hall (built in 1894 and now the totally altered Koinonia Hall), and the Heating Plant in 1893. During the 1890s, Pillsbury gave an additional \$25,000 for the endowment and was known to have donated almost all the yearly operating expenses for the Academy in 1890. When the Music Hall burned just after completion in 1892, Pillsbury stood the expense of erecting the building anew, paying the contractor twice for the structure. George Alfred Pillsbury died in July, 1898 and left \$10,000 to the Minnesota Baptist Convention and \$250,000 to the Endowment Fund of Pillsbury Academy.

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Many of the early buildings were donated by George A. Pillsbury during the thirteen years that Dr. James W. Ford was principal of Pillsbury Academy, a tenure which started in 1889. When Kelly Hall, a boy's dormitory, burned in 1939, the Music Hall, one of Pillsbury's donations, was renamed Kelly Hall. Under Ford more college preparatory courses were added to the curriculum and the school generally prospered. In 1896-97 a four year college course was introduced. Enrollment grew steadily to an 1895 peak of 339 students and then began a gradual decline.

The early campus buildings were completed under the administration of Dr. Milo B. Price, who served as head of Pillsbury Academy from 1903 until 1931. In the first decade of Dr. Price's administration enrollment averaged around 200 students. In 1911, Charles Jefts of Owatonna donated, along with other smaller donations, a large sum for the building of a new dining hall. This building, known as Jefts Hall, served the Academy for years. In 1972, it was completely renovated inside to serve as the college library. In 1914 the Lindsay Gymnasium was dedicated. This building was a gift of Mr. Thomas B. Lindsay of Minneapolis, one of the founders of the Lindsay Brothers warehouse company and a strong supporter of Baptist education. It still serves as the location of the swimming pool, weight lifting room, and wrestling room.

In 1920, Pillsbury Academy became a military school for boys, known as Pillsbury Military Academy, and coeducational classes were dropped. In the early 1920s, enrollment dropped to 90 students, and by 1934 only 58 students were enrolled. From about 1916 to 1960, the Pillsbury campus remained much as in was during the early administration of Milo Price. The fortunes of the school rose again in 1957 when Pillsbury Academy became a co-educational Baptist Bible College. Since 1957, the school has flourished once again under first, the Conservative Baptist Association of America, and later, as Pillsbury Baptist Bible College, a fundamentalist Christian four year college. The newer portion of the campus, to the east of the district, was constructed in the early 1960s, and renovations to the older buildings, along with the new 1978 Pillsbury Hall, have been largely accomplished since the early 1970s.

Architecturally, the district reflects the fashionable styles of the times in the midwest. Generous donations for the buildings in the district are reflected in the quality of the design. The Academy Building was built in the Romanesque style. Its monumental size and massiveness dominates the hill above Grove Street. The Music Hall, Jefts Hall, and Lindsay Hall (gymnasium) reflect the highly fashionable Classical Revival style of the turn-of-the-century, a popular style used for public and private buildings of



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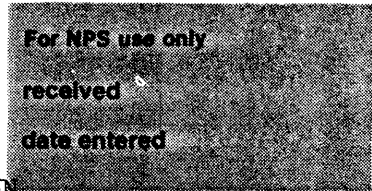
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the time. An architect named J. Anderson designed the Academy Building. No other records of this architect exist and he may have been an itinerant practitioner. Warren B. Dunnell, son of Mark H. Dunnell, designed the Music Hall. Dunnell was noted for his designs of public buildings and churches in Minnesota in later life, but Dunnell also worked as supervising architect of the Treasury Department in Washington in the 1870s. He worked, as well, under Abraham M. Radcliffe in the early 1880s, before starting his own practice prior to designing the Music Hall. The buildings within the district are of excellent design quality for a denominational college in Minnesota.

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Continuation sheet Major Bibliographic Reference item number #9

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Catalogue of Minnesota Academy, for Fall Term, 1877, Owatonna, Minnesota.

Correspondence between Norene A. Roberts (August 20, 1985) and Dr. Joseph A. Rammel, President, Pillsbury Baptist Bible College (October 25, 1985 and November 15, 1985). On file: State Historic Preservation Office, Minnesota Historical Society.

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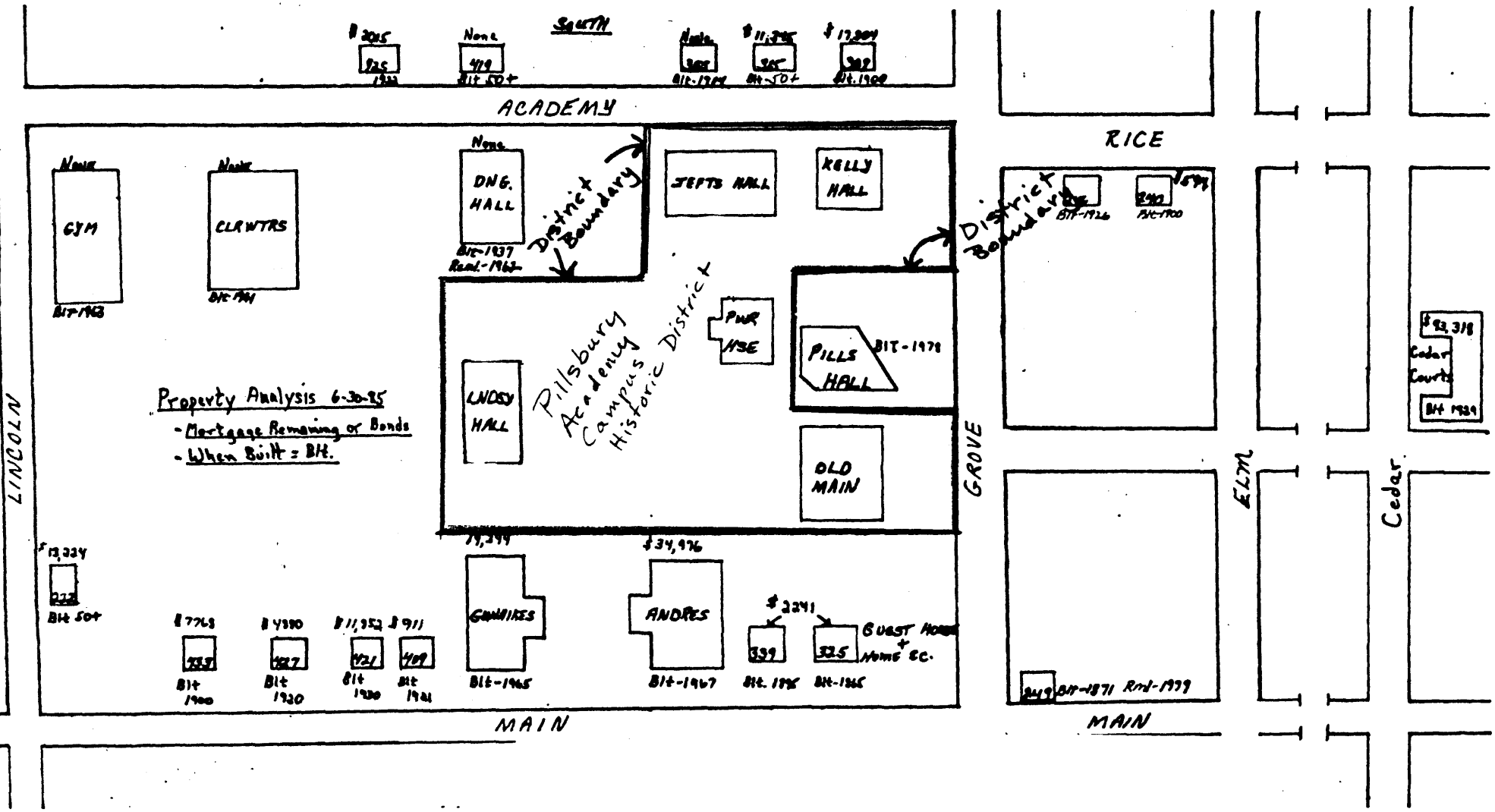
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Pillsbury Academy Campus  
Historic District



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

for Keeper *Melvin Lynn*  
1/19/89

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National Park Service

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Note: These changes apply to  
Pillsbury Academy Campus Historic  
District in Steele County,  
Minnesota.

REFERENCE NUMBER: 86003680

STATE: MINNESOTA

COUNTY: Steele

RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC):

CITY:

VICINITY OF:

ADDRESS: vicinity of Academy, Grove, and Main Sts.

CERTIFICATION DATE:

REMOVED DATE:

COMMENTS:

Nina M. Archabal  
Nina M. Archabal  
State Historic Preservation Officer

JUN 17 1988  
Date