

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Leyden Common School No. 2

other names/site number Talcottville School; Leyden Town Hall

2. Location

street & number 6606 School Road N/A not for publication

city or town Talcottville N/A vicinity

state NY code 36 county Lewis code 049 zip code 13309

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Ruth Purpoint DBHPO 4/28/16
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

For Edwin H. Beall 6-21-16
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	3	buildings
0	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
1	4	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT: City hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Mid 19th CENTURY

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone, Wood

walls: Wood

roof: Metal

other:

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Cruciform in plan, with pitched intersecting gable roofs, Leyden Common School No. 2 – now the Leyden Town Hall – is a one-and-a-half story wood building built in 1870. From its construction, the building was also known as the Talcottville School. The first floor held separate vestibules for boys and girls, one classroom, and two privies (apparently added in the early twentieth century). The second floor appears to have always been an attic space and is now used for storage. The building incorporates a combination of late Greek and Gothic Revival woodwork and trim. The roof was originally wood shingle and is now metal.

In 1985, a handicap ramp was added to the front of the building. The following year, the first floor wall in the south gable (which held the school privies) was replaced with concrete blocks. After much use, the privies were replaced with a restroom; the remaining space became a fireproof storage room now humidity-controlled for town records. Water was piped into the building in the early 1990s. The handicap ramp was expanded sometime after 2010.

Location and Site

Leyden Common School No. 2 is located on the south side of School Road in the hamlet of Talcottville, Lewis County. The community is situated in the center of the Town of Leyden where State Route 12-D crosses the Sugar River, a tributary of the Moose that flows into the Black River. Talcottville is 3 miles north of Boonville (Oneida County), 18 miles south of the Lewis County seat in Lowville, and 2 miles west of the Black River. The now almost-forgotten hamlets of Locust Grove and Barretts Corners were just 1 mile north on Leyden Hill and 1 mile south at the intersection of West Road, respectively.

The hamlet consists of the intersection of Domser Road (running west along the Sugar River) and Denley Road (running east toward the Black River) with Route 12D (running north from Boonville to Lyons Falls); School Street parallels and is south of Domser Road.

Although settled before the end of the eighteenth century, the village of Talcottville was not laid out until the 1830s and never grew large. The Turin Turnpike (Route 12D) came into existence in 1847 and ran through the village from Boonville to Turin, easing the transport of goods out of the township and facilitating the influx of new settlers. The 1850 arrival of the Black River Canal in Port Leyden and the 1857 opening of the Black River and Utica Railroad in Boonville further improved transportation – especially the shipment of raw milk and cheese as the county shifted to dairy production. The population of the village probably reached its peak around 1875, shortly after the school was built. However, with time, both the canal and railroad shifted

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economic focus to the east and south, away from the hamlet. The 1935 completion of State Route 12 through Port Leyden further isolated Talcottville.¹ Today, the community is mainly residential with one church and no businesses.

The front of the Talcottville School House faces north along School Road. To the west is the Town Barn Complex (three noncontributing buildings and a fuel canopy) and an open lot used for storing sand for the winter months.² A farmer's field is directly south at back. When the school was built, its lot was smaller; the 1902 "Trustees Annual Report" gives its historic size as six by eight rods (roughly 100 by 130 feet) and it probably held a privy (or privies) for the use of the children plus recreational space.³ An early twentieth-century postcard also shows a one-story, unpainted shed (now gone) to the west that may have housed the teacher's horse or firewood, and a shade tree outside the front doors. Today, the land directly around the building is an unimproved parking lot.

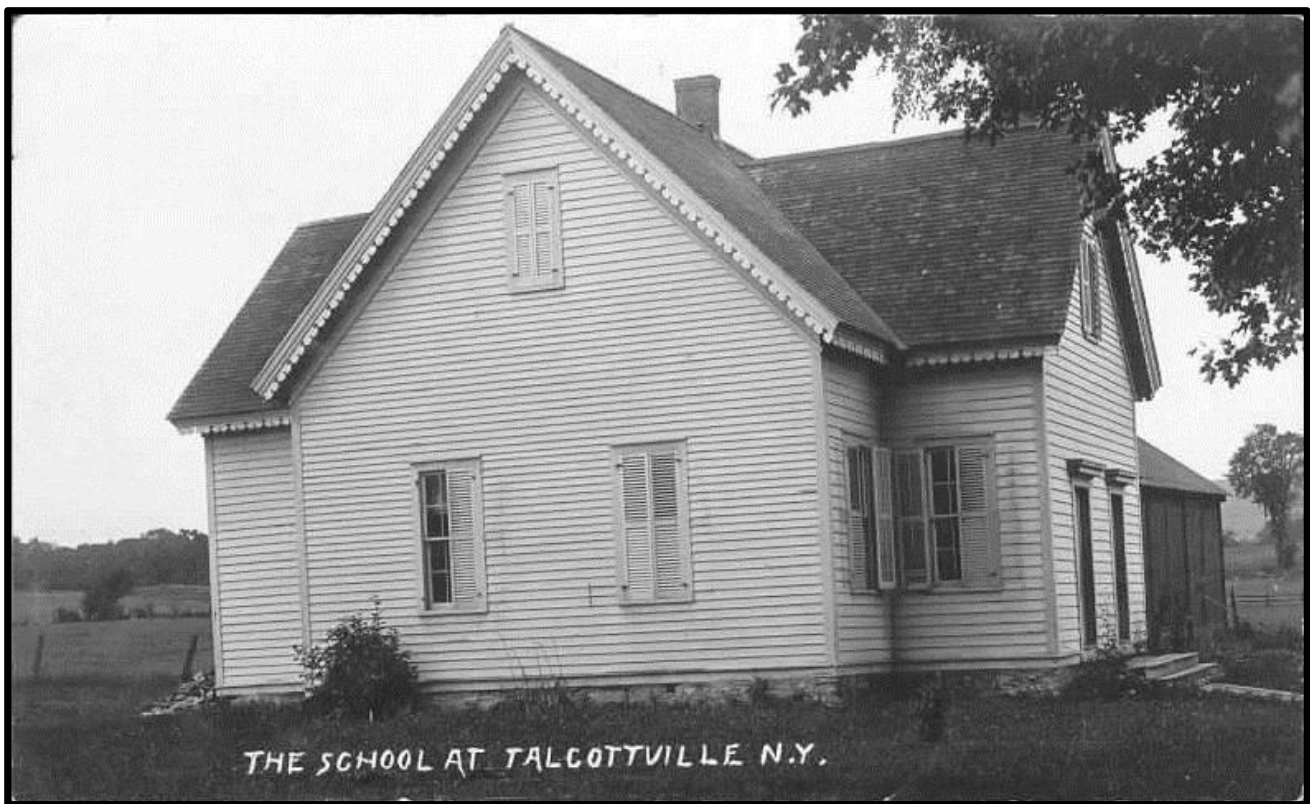


Figure 1. Postcard of Leyden Common School No. 2, circa 1910, Lewis County Historical Society.

¹ G. Byron Bowen, Ed., *History of Lewis County, New York, 1880-1965* (Lowville, NY: Board of Legislators of Lewis County, 1970), 77.

² These buildings are to the west of the original school; the land they are on is not part of the historic school property but is now in the same tax parcel.

³ "Trustees Annual Report for Common School District No. 2, Town of Leyden, for the School Year Ending July 31, 1902," 5. Original located at Lewis County Historical Society.

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Plan and Construction

Leyden Common School No. 2 is cruciform in shape, 40 feet from the north to south gable and 33 feet from the east to west gable. The north and south gables are approximately 20 feet wide; the east and west gables are somewhat broader, at 24 feet. The north gable held separate exterior doors and vestibules for girls and boys to enter separately; the classroom ran through the center from the east to west gable and is now used for town meetings. The historic use of the south gable is unknown (perhaps the teacher's office and/or library); it now holds a restroom and a fireproof and humidity-controlled storage room for town records.⁴

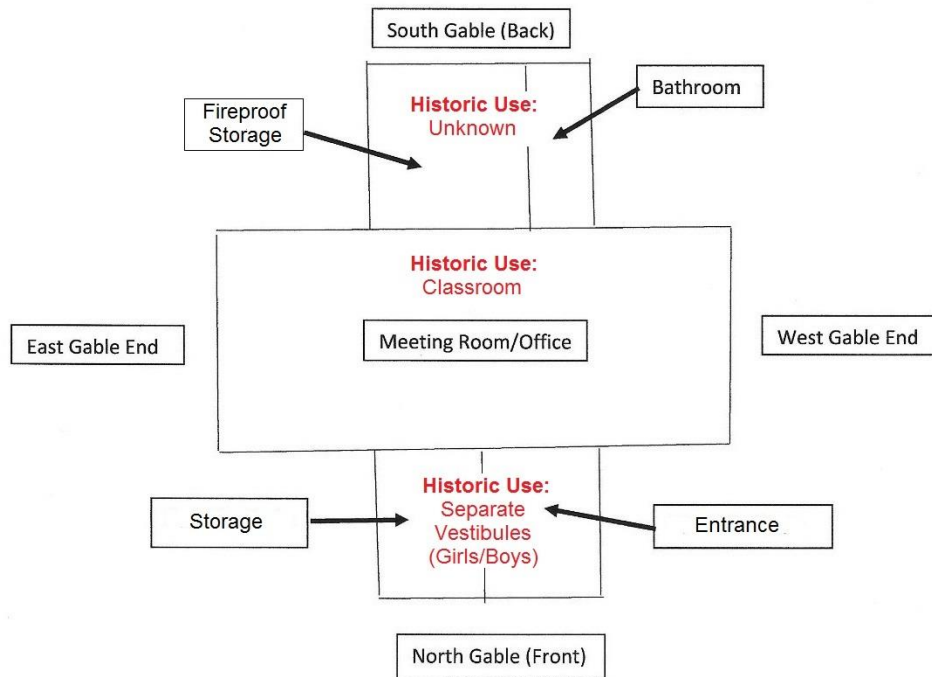


Figure 2. Current Floorplan of Leyden Common School No. 2.

The original three-over-three paneled exterior wood doors survive. The original windows were six-over-six wood sash, but only a few have been retained on the interior corners of the building. The remaining windows are narrow, fixed six-pane wood windows in the peaks of the gables; four-over-four wood sash (installed during the period of significance) on the first floor, plus a late twentieth-century steel window in the rebuilt south gable. Three windows (two in the peaks, one on the first floor) are closed with original shutters.

Decorative Greek and Gothic Revival woodwork and trim are original. According to a *Condition Assessment Report* prepared in 2003 by the preservation firm of Crawford & Stearns:

⁴ The "Trustees Annual Report" for 1902 (page 4) stated that the school had a library of 108 books.

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The exterior head casings at the twin front doors have the appearance of late Greek Revival molded lintels. They also have an Italianate flavor, and when viewed with the tall and narrow gable window above them, could be said to be reminiscent of late Gothic Revival style. The coped verge boards are patterned as paired, inverted mushroom caps and the planceer pieces slope in the plane of the rafters. The bed molding is an almost flattened ovolo and the frieze board is banded with a double fillet at its bottom intersection with the clapboard siding. The roof edge crown molding is a cyma recta (O-G) with a large square fillet at its base, projecting it outward from the coped verge boards. The proportions of the window panes in the front windows and the cross gable windows (as opposed to the vestibule windows and the larger schoolhouse sash) are particularly tall and Victorian looking.⁵



Figure 3. Detail of roof trim, west gable

The condition report also discusses construction details:

The sawn timber frame consists of relatively light versions of heavy timber posts, roof plates and gable wall girts. The exterior walls are infilled with 2" hemlock plank, set vertically and ranging in width up to 20". Attached directly to this structural sheathing is the exterior siding which is beveled clapboard.⁶

Because the clapboards reach down to the ground, the foundation is not readily accessed. Older residents claim that the building is set on rough timber framing on stone pilings, but the 1910 postcard image seems to

⁵ Crawford & Stearns, *Condition Report for the Leyden Town Hall, Prepared for the Town of Leyden* (March 2003), 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*

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show a stone foundation along two elevations. There is no access to a basement, so this foundation may exist simply to reduce cold air infiltration under the building.

In the 1910 postcard, the steeply pitched roof appears to be wood shingle; today, it is metal with standing seams. A small, square brick chimney extends above the center roofline of the west gable.

Exterior: Facade (North Elevation)

Due to the cruciform plan of Leyden Common School No. 2, each elevation is similar – a one-and-one-half story gable end, with one-story profiles of the adjoining gables.

The façade on School Street is dominated by two front doors. (Nineteenth-century school houses typically had separate entrances for boys and girls.) The doors lead to separate vestibules, each with one of the few original six-over-six windows and an interior door to the classroom. There is a narrow, central six-pane window into the attic; ogee molding around the gable end; a mid-twentieth century light; and a sign for the “Leyden Town Hall.” The side elevations of the east and west wings hold four-over-four wood sash windows that provide light into the central classroom. The handicap ramp and bulletin board between the doors are non-historic additions, the ramp having been added in 1985 and expanded across the front of the building circa 2010.

Exterior: West Elevation

The west elevation has two four-over-four wood sash windows on the first floor overlooking the parking lot; a shuttered second-floor window; and ogee molding around the gable end. An original six-over-six sash window on the north wing allows light into one of the vestibules. A non-historic 18” x 30” steel awning window has been inserted into the rebuilt first floor of the south wing. The furnace chimney is located on the interior of the wing and extends through the ridgeline; an oil tank is located adjacent to the building.

Exterior: East Elevation

The east elevation is dominated by a ganged row of four tall, four-over-four windows on the first floor; an original six-pane fixed wood sash window on the second floor; and more ogee molding around the gable end. The 1910 postcard makes it clear that the original window arrangement mirrored the west side; the four windows were probably added within the next decade to meet state standards for light and ventilation. The addition of a suspended ceiling in 1986 blocks the top pane of the four windows on the interior, but the windows are intact on the exterior. In the north wing, another original six-over-six wood sash window provides light into the second vestibule in the north gable. A non-historic steel door, added in 1986, provides access to the rebuilt first floor of the south wing.

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Exterior: South Elevation (Back)

The south elevation has been significantly changed. In 1986, the first-floor portion of the wall was replaced with concrete block to create a fireproof storage room. Above it, in the process of pouring the room's concrete roof, a band of second-floor siding was also removed and replaced with T1-11 grooved plywood siding. (A hatch in the center of this siding provides the only access to the second floor.) Only the gable retains integrity with the original ogee molding, wood siding, and attic window (in poor condition and boarded with plywood.) The side profile of the east wing holds a six-over-one wood sash window that provides light into the central classroom. The matching window on the west wing has been removed on the inside and shuttered on the exterior.

Interior: First Floor

The original floorplan of the first floor survives (with the exception of the concrete-block south wing). Most of the finishes are also original. The vestibules have vertical wainscot with hardboard above, and are mirror images of each other. The original flooring in the east vestibule has been covered in plywood to make it level with the exterior access ramp, but survives in the west vestibule.

The central meeting room has a dropped ceiling (installed in 1986), which obscures the top panes of the ganged windows in the east gable, and interior walls covered in horizontal bead board with simple reeding. According to the *Condition Assessment Report*, similar bead board covered the original ceiling and is still extant above the suspension tile.⁷ The oak strip floor in the main room is in relatively good shape and thought to be another early twentieth century replacement. The western end of the room holds the furnace (between the windows of the gable end), an office desk in the southwest corner, and files in the northwest corner. As noted above, the window behind the desk has been removed.

The central meeting room is currently furnished with several conference tables. Regular office chairs around the tables are augmented with double folding chairs taken from a movie theater and pews from St. Martin's Catholic Church in nearby Port Leyden. A piano, donated to the Talcottville school by Mrs. Libbie Cone in 1931, is set against the north wall between the inner doors to the vestibules.⁸ One blackboard and a small desk used by students in the 1950s remain.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Lowville Journal & Republican* (May 21, 1931), 9.

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Figure 4. Boonville School Yearbook (1950s) with photo of the “Rural School” – a similar desk remains in the town hall. Yearbook from the Leyden Town Hall.

The south wall of the central room contains three doors, leading into the reconstructed south wing. The two outer doors are original to the building and led to the indoor privies (one for boys and one for girls) that were probably installed in the early twentieth century to meet NY State Education Department requirements. The south door is fixed; the north door remains operable and leads into a rest room. The central steel door leads into the fireproof storage area built in 1986. Before that time, access to the second-floor attic was made by ladder through a ceiling hatch above the current bathroom.

Interior: Second Floor (Attic)

The second floor is attic space used for storing items such as school desks. The roof is supported with coupled rafters and a centerline truss. The furnace chimney is located against the interior wall of the west gable, but originally the chimney was located in the center of the building as evidenced by the 1910 postcard view and framed timber supports. The north and east windows remain intact; the shuttered west window is blocked by the chimney and has lost some panes of glass; the south window is in poor condition and covered with plywood. The attic is now accessed from the outside south gable through a hatch in the T1-11 plywood above the concrete block wall. There is no insulation in the walls, but insulation has been placed above the drop ceiling on the first floor to insulate that space.

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Major Changes

Two periods of change have removed some original features of Leyden Common School No. 2. One, in the early twentieth century, is within the period of significance and probably reflects mandates imposed by the State Education Department. The ganged windows on the east gable seem to have been installed in the decade after 1910; these increased morning light and reduced afternoon glare. The indoor privies may have been added at the same time. State regulations required separate facilities for girls and boys, and winter weather in Lewis County is severe.

These toilets were maintained for more than fifty years. Ultimately, however, they became the reason for closing the school and, perhaps, part of the reason for reconstructing the south wing. In 1985, twenty years after the building became the Leyden Town Hall, an access ramp was installed on the façade. A year later, the first-floor walls of the south gable were rebuilt with concrete block and T1-11 plywood; the west bathroom was reduced in size to hold a portable toilet; and the door to the second bathroom was permanently closed. The room on the east of the south gable became storage and new, more secure steel doors were installed for access from the interior and exterior. Plumbing was finally brought into the building in the early 1990s to ensure that the town hall could continue to be used as a polling place; the ramp was extended across the full front of the building around 2010 for the same reason. Despite the non-historic changes, the school retains a high level of integrity to its period of significance and clearly manifests the character-defining features of a one-room rural school.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

1963 (School closes; becomes town hall)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1870 - 1963

Significant Dates

1870 (Construction)

1944 (Becomes part of Boonville School District)

Period of Significance (justification): The period of significance extends from the construction of the Leyden Common School No. 2 (also known as the Talcottville School) in 1870 to its closing in 1963. Throughout that period, the building was used as a school and for community events.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Leyden Common School No. 2 (Talcottville, Town of Leyden, Lewis County) is locally significant for education and school architecture. The building meets Criterion A for its association with the development of the educational system of Lewis County. Beginning from its construction as a common school, to its incorporation into a centralized school district in the mid-20th century, to its obsolescence and closure in 1963, Leyden Common School No. 2 reflects the course of education in much of rural upstate New York. Throughout its life as a school, it also served as a social center for its community and was used to administer tests for teacher certification. It is believed to be the second-to-last common school to close its doors in Lewis County – and the most unaltered.⁹

Leyden Common School No. 2 also meets Criterion C as an atypical example of a one-room school. Its cruciform shape is unusual for a rural school and allowed for good ventilation and lighting. In addition, the style

⁹ The last school to close was the Martinsburg Common School No. 2 – built in 1828, rebuilt 1879, closed 1965, and torn down in 1967. It had a longer life span but underwent significant modification around 1880 with the addition of a full second floor.

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and interior finishes show strong community investment in their school. The period of significance is from the building's construction in 1870 to its closing as a school in 1963.

Criterion A: Leyden Common School No. 2 and Rural Education in Lewis County

Maps of Lewis County show the growth and fading of communities over the course of more than 200 years from 1800 to the present. By the 1930s many hamlets had disappeared or existed only as place names on a map. The presence of a functioning school was critical to community survival and pride. Leyden Common School No. 2 in Talcottville was the second-to-last one-room school in Lewis County to close its doors. Its story starts with the settlement of Lewis County in the late eighteenth century, highlighting the growth and stagnation of rural communities in upstate New York from the nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries.

Setting and Context:

The school building is located in the hamlet of Talcottville, Town of Leyden, Lewis County. Lewis County is bisected by the Black River, running roughly southeast to northwest. On the east side of the river are the Adirondack foothills; on the west side are the beginnings of the Tug Hill region. Both sides of the river have very fertile soil suitable for farming, and the river and its tributaries contain many waterfalls that provide waterpower. The Sugar River has a significant waterfall at Talcottville.

This part of New York State remained closed to settlement until after the Revolutionary War. Two events facilitated change. In 1784, the New York State Legislature established a land commission to sell patents and raise money to pay off war debts and, in 1788, the Oneida Nation was persuaded to surrender ownership of most of its lands through the Treaty of Fort Stanwix. In 1792, Alexander Macomb, William Constable, and Daniel McCormick purchased more than 3.6 million acres of land for the purchase price of 8 pence per acre. Great Tract No. 6 (of 6) was granted to Macomb on January 10, 1792, and a triangular, 26,250-acre area around Talcottville was subdivided out to William Inman (an agent for Patrick Colquhoun, high sheriff of London and a friend of William Constable) on February 20, 1793.¹⁰ "Inman's Triangle" was split into lots and the first deeds granted in 1795, mostly to settlers from the area of Middletown, Connecticut. By 1797, there were 40 settlers in the region, most of them voters – people with enough property to receive the privilege.

The Town of Leyden was formed from the Town of Steuben in 1797. At that time Lewis and Jefferson Counties were still part of Oneida County, and it would be another eight years until Lewis County became a separate

¹⁰ Verplanck Colvin, *State of New York Report on the Topographical Survey of the Adirondack Wilderness of New York for the Year 1873* (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1874), pp. 249, 251, 258-259.

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political entity. Of the five original townships in Lewis County (Lowville, Turin, Martinsburgh, Leyden, and Harrisburgh), Leyden was initially the largest, comprising nearly all of the county on the east and north side of the Black River. However, as the population grew, the town was continually subdivided until it comprised only the original 26,250 acres of Inman's Triangle. In 1852 the western tip of the triangle seceded to form part of the Town of Lewis. Today Leyden is the second smallest township in Lewis County.

The first recorded settler in the Town of Leyden was William Topping, a Revolutionary War veteran from Meriden, Connecticut. In 1795, he received a deed for Lot 60 (139 acres northeast of the Sugar River), onto which he had moved the previous year. Topping and Bela Butterfield were the first settlers to winter in Leyden.¹¹

Butterfield seems to have owned most of what is now Talcottville. In 1795, he built the first sawmill in the county (the Sugar River provides a head of nearly 100 feet in a quarter mile) but lost it the following spring during the annual flood. In 1798, he sold his land to the Talcott families (father Hezekiah and two sons, Elisha and Daniel) from Middlefield, Connecticut. The Talcotts played a prominent – or, rather, hindering – role in the development of the hamlet of Talcottville. Hezekiah chose to retain the water power rights on the Sugar River for his family and built a grist-mill in 1803. Around the same time, he and his sons (Jesse and Johnson) built themselves a fine stone house (Edmund Wilson House, NR listed 1973) with stone from the river bed. Although entrepreneurial, the Talcotts were not ordinary land speculators – they refused to sell lots in their village to “mechanics.” As a result, the hamlet stayed small.

Talcottville did develop some basic institutions. The Talcott House was often used as a meeting place. A memorial service for George Washington was held there in the winter of 1800, and five years later people assembled to decide the dividing line between Lewis and Oneida Counties. In 1803, the First Baptist Church of Leyden was organized with five members at the house of Thomas Brayton. Benjamin Starr opened the first store in the Town of Leyden – perhaps before 1807, when he is listed in the Census of Electors.¹² He may have run the first post office as well; however, critic Edmund Wilson says that the Talcott House pantry served as the first Leyden PO.¹³ Local people made an unsuccessful effort to incorporate an academy in Talcottville in March, 1829, but the subscribers lacked sufficient funds for approval by the state Regents.¹⁴

¹¹ Franklin B. Hough, *History of Lewis County, N.Y.* (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co., 1883), pp. 260-261.

¹² Hough, 266.

¹³ Hamilton Child, *Gazetteer and Business Directory of Lewis County, N.Y., for 1872-73* (Syracuse, NY: Journal Office, 1872), 114; Edmund Wilson, *Upstate* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 49-50.

¹⁴ Hough, 267.

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With limited opportunities to settle in Talcottville, many people looked to an area one mile north of the Sugar River called Leyden Hill. Located on the south end of a minor plateau stretching north toward the county seat in Lowville, the surrounding countryside was ideal for farming and had a spectacular view of the Adirondacks to the east. Here, the first school house in the Town of Leyden was built in 1802, and the first school organization was established at a special town meeting on December 27, 1813. In addition, the First Baptist Church erected its first church building in Leyden Hill (not Talcottville) in 1821.

Elisha Talcott was killed in 1807, and Hezekiah Talcott died in 1813. In 1832, Thomas Baker is thought to have acquired the family property from the last Talcott son and begun selling lots to new arrivals.¹⁵ Many of the larger homes in the village were built in simple Federal or Greek Revival styles. Transportation links improved, and the village started to expand. The Turin Turnpike opened in 1847 and ran through the village from Boonville to Turin. In 1850 the Black River Canal came into operation two miles east of Talcottville, and the Black River & Utica Railroad reached Boonville in 1855. After the Civil War, the reorganized Utica & Black River Railroad reached Lyons Falls (1867) and Lowville (1868). Transportation increased the influx of settlers and provided a means for getting local products (mostly dairy) to markets outside Lewis County.

The village grew, if not by leaps and bounds, at least steadily. A vignette of the village from an 1857 map of Lewis County shows a tiny hamlet with two mills, hotel, store, church, and about fifteen houses.

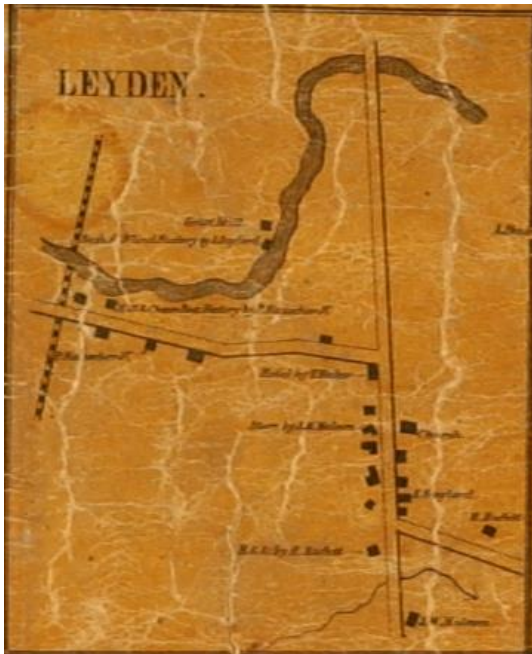


Figure 5. Talcottville became known as Leyden in the 1830s and officially reverted to its original name at the end of the century.¹⁶

Neither School Street, nor Leyden Common School No. 2 yet existed, but the community was beginning to evolve. The First Baptist Church of Leyden moved back to Talcottville from Leyden Hill in 1862, erecting a building that could seat 300 (for a membership of 67) on a new side street. The First Methodist Episcopal Church of Leyden (with a membership of 20) built a new building in 1868 that could seat 275.

¹⁵ Wilson, 49-50.

¹⁶ A. Ligowski, *A Topographical Map of Lewis Co, N.Y.* (Philadelphia: S. & R.S. Traintor Jr. & Co., 1857).

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The 1871 Asher & Adams map still shows Leyden Hill in preference to Talcottville, but the latter village had grown significantly since 1857. Child's 1872 *Gazetteer and Business Directory of Lewis County, N.Y.* describes Talcottville as:

...a thriving village of about 175 inhabitants, and contains three churches, (Baptist, Methodist and Universalist) one hotel, a saw mill, cheese box factory, a grist mill, sash, door and blind factory, two stores, two blacksmith shops, a quarry (the stone quarried here is highly esteemed for building purposes), and a wagon shop. Its smooth, macadamized streets, neat dwellings and out-buildings, supplemented by charming flower gardens, and the deep interest manifested in its schools, evince the industry and property of its citizens, many of whom are retired farmers, who are engaged in mercantile and mechanical pursuits.¹⁷

The 1875 Beers map of Lewis County shows this growth. More houses have been constructed on Main Street and along the south side of Water Street; School Street has been extended beyond the new Baptist Church; and Leyden Common School No. 2 has recently been built on land deeded from farmer Albert Jones:¹⁸

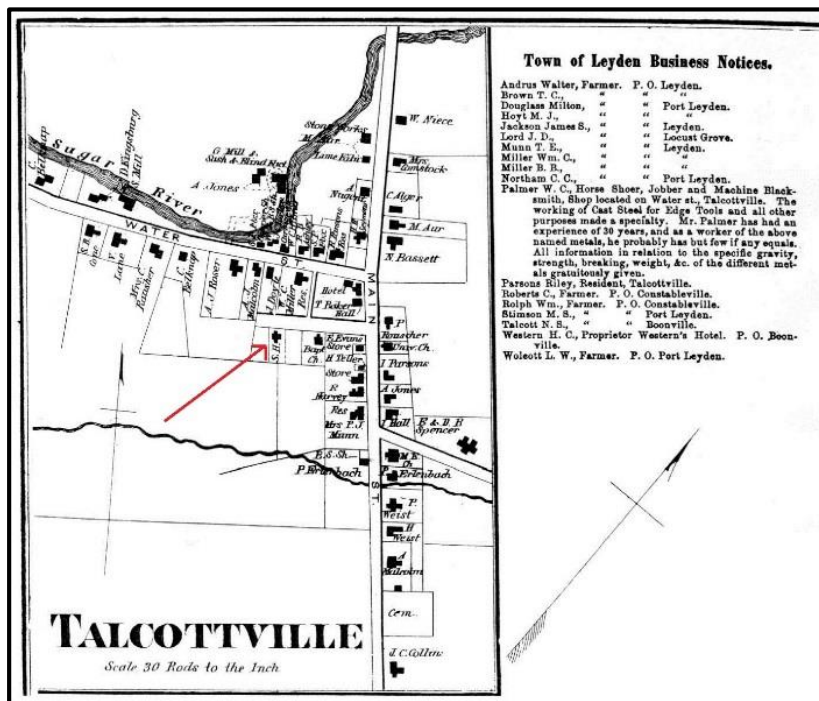


Figure 6: D.G. Beers. *Atlas of Lewis County*. Philadelphia, PA: Pomeroy, Whitman & Co., 1875.

¹⁷ Child, 111-112.

¹⁸ Deed, Libre 43,, 473.

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The Development of Public Education in New York State and Lewis County

[NOTE: The information on the general history of education in New York State is taken almost verbatim from James D. Folts, *History of the University of the State of New York and the State Education Department 1784 – 1996*, (available online: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/edocs/education/sedhist.htm>) with additional information on Lewis County schools.]

Four things tend to preoccupy settlers opening up new country: erecting shelter, planting crops, building a house of worship, and educating their children. The people who came into western New York State and Lewis County in the late eighteenth century were no exception.

Creation of the Common School System: Almost yearly after 1784, the New York State regents and governor urged the State Legislature to establish and endow a system of common schools. Just as Lewis County began to be settled, the Legislature passed a law in 1795 which authorized spending 20,000 pounds annually for five years to support schools. This state aid was augmented by a local tax and benefited about 1500 existing neighborhood schools. The Legislature ended the program in 1800 and designated the proceeds of a statewide lottery to assist the common schools. (Lotteries were made illegal in 1822 but legalized again in 1966; the proceeds were once more designated for support of education!)

The earliest known school house in what is now Lewis County was built near Constableville in 1798. In the Town of Leyden, Silas Southwell was the first recorded teacher (perhaps as early as 1798, when he qualified to serve on the grand jury, or as late as 1803, when he served as fifth town superintendent).¹⁹ By 1801, 1802, and 1804 there were schools at Turin, Leyden Hill (in the Town of Leyden) and Martinsburg, respectively. Early school buildings were constructed from available materials particular to each location. In Lewis County, with its wealth of timber, many were made from logs and extremely basic in design, consisting of a simple square or rectangular plan. These schools were supported by “rate-bills” – assessments on the parents of students based on daily attendance.

In 1805 the State Legislature set up a fund for the support of the common schools, allocating to the fund the proceeds from state land sales and other assets. This legislation did not cover high school; beyond eighth grade, students needed to attend a private academy for instruction. The only successful secondary school in Lewis County during much of the nineteenth century was the Lowville Academy, chartered in 1808 (and absorbed into the public school system in 1905). For students outside the village, boarding was provided. From the beginning the academy was co-educational and trained men and women to take positions of responsibility in their communities. In addition, it had the distinction of being one of the outstanding institutions of learning in

¹⁹ Hough, 257-258.

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the state. Nearly all the famous or important people who stayed in Lewis County or went out into the world to make a name for themselves attended Lowville Academy.

In 1812 a landmark law established a statewide system of common school districts and authorized distribution of interest from the Common School Fund. Town and city officials were directed to lay out the districts; the voters in each district elected trustees to operate the schools. State aid was distributed to those districts holding school at least three months a year, according to [sic] population aged 5-15. Revenue from the town/county property tax was used to match the state school aid. While the 1812 act authorized local authorities to establish common school districts, an 1814 amendment required them to do so. After 1814, if the cost of instruction exceeded the total of state aid plus local tax, as it generally did, the difference was made up by charging tuition, or "rates," itemized on "rate bills." The 1812 common school act shaped the future of public education in New York by establishing that 1) common schools are a state function under state control; 2) funding of public schools is a joint state-local responsibility; 3) the school district – not the county or the town – is the primary administrative unit for public education.

In Lewis County, districts were soon established in all the towns, and money raised by local taxation (along with funding from the state) defrayed the expense of opening and operating a network of common schools. In Leyden, a special town meeting was held December 27, 1813, to set up a school board as required by law. Thomas Wolcott, David B. Miller, and Winthrop Felshaw became school commissioners, while six others were made inspectors.²⁰

The development of these boards triggered a building boom. The process followed by the school board in the Town of Martinsburg to build Common School No. 7 is illustrative. Discussions of an appropriate site location, cost of land, materials, construction specifications, and furnishings can be found in minutes in the school board's ledger.²¹

Typically, early to mid-nineteenth century schools had a summer and a winter term, the length of each determined by the local school board. The Sept 14, 1829, minutes of Martinsburgh School No. 12 recorded one start date:

*Carried that we have a school of four months this winter, taught by a woman if we can find one competent – otherwise by a man.....school to commence on the third Tuesday in November next.*²²

The next meeting on April 11, 1829 authorized a longer summer term:

²⁰ Child, 114.

²¹ Town of Martinsburgh School Board, *School Minutes*, 1819-1820. Collection of Lewis County Historical Society.

²² *Ibid.*

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Carried by a majority of voters present that we have five months school this season taught by a woman beginning the last Monday in April.²³

Split terms were a boon to farming families, their children being able to help with farm work during the busiest times of the year. In addition, parents were only charged rates for the terms their children attended class. Leyden Common School No. 2 had summer and winter terms as late as 1900 – elsewhere in the state, single school terms were inaugurated much earlier.

By the mid-nineteenth century, New York had over 10,000 common school districts. The typical district had a one or two-room schoolhouse where children learned reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, and geography. Lewis County had 224 common school districts in 1875.²⁴ Seven years later, the number was down to 214 and, by 1901, to 205. Unusually for any county in New York State, Lewis County reached its peak population in the 1880s and steadily declined until 1960.²⁵

In the summer of 1870, during this period of population growth, the land for Leyden Common School No. 2 was deeded from neighboring farmer Albert Jones. Talcottville, now prosperous from the export of dairy products and cheese, put extra thought into the school's construction. The Greek and Gothic Revival details suggest that the community considered the new school very important and invested in architectural ornamentation like that seen on the homes of important people in the hamlet. Construction must have been swift because the new school was the site of a teacher's examination the following March, 1871.

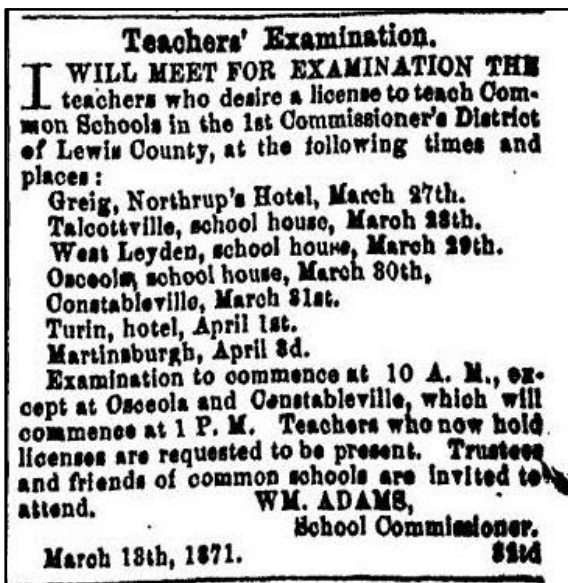


Figure 7. "Teacher's Examination," *Lowville Journal and Republican* (March 29, 1871), p. 3.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Beers, Map.

²⁵ Even with a slow but steady increase, the population of Lewis County has not returned to its peak.

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Free Secondary Education and Consolidation: In 1853, the New York legislature established union free school districts, which are districts resulting from a "union" of two or more common school districts, "free" from the restrictions that previously barred them from operating high schools. Most of these union schools were established in large villages and towns to meet urban needs.

In Lewis County, union schools did not develop until the twentieth century. By that time, the rural public school system was in deep financial trouble. The center of population within the county had shifted to the Black River transportation corridor. More and more businesses that had been located "inland" began to decline. By the early 1920s, the timber industry on the west side of the Black River was gone. As a result, most rural schools had declining enrollments and tax bases. Their number fell from 224 in 1875 to 214 in 1882 to 205 in 1901. For decades state school officials called for consolidation of small country districts. Legislation passed in 1914 allowed Central School Districts to form from any number (including one) of Common and Union Free School Districts. During the 1920s several major studies of public school facilities, programs, performance, and finance were carried out by the Joint Committee on Rural Schools, the Friedsam Commission, and other groups. These studies concluded that state aid must be increased – and must be equalized – to relieve poor districts and provide equal educational opportunity.

During the 1920s state aid to public schools increased dramatically, from under 10 percent to about 27 percent of total costs. Generous 50 percent transportation aid and 25 percent building aid prompted steady growth in the number of centralizations, especially during the economic depression of the 1930s. Motorized school buses in the 1920s also made longer distances possible. Statutes passed in the 1950s permitted consolidation of common school districts with smaller city districts, and by the 1960s centralization was essentially complete.

Central school districts became the most prevalent type of school district in New York and in July 2004, there were 460 such districts in the state. Currently, Lewis County has five such districts – Lowville Academy, Copenhagen, Beaver River, South Lewis and Harrisville – and five cross-county districts – Harrisville, Adirondack, Copenhagen, Camden, and Carthage. Leyden Common School No. 2 became part of the Boonville Central School District in 1944, and the school continued as a satellite teaching space for kindergarten through sixth grade until 1963. Students from the area originally served by the Talcottville school now attend classes in the Adirondack Central School District (Boonville, Oneida County)

Governance: The oversight of public schools was an early focus of state law. Between 1795 and 1856 elected town commissioners or superintendents of schools licensed teachers, distributed state aid, and compiled statistical reports. The 1812 legislation created school boards. Locally appointed county superintendents of schools oversaw the common school districts from 1841 to 1847. Their reports to Albany deplored the poor

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condition of country schools. (A survey in 1842 found that most of them lacked outhouses and playgrounds.)

These school commissioners visited schools, examined and certified teachers, organized teachers' training, and established or altered school district boundaries. The school commissioners were the local agents of, and reported to, the superintendent of public instruction. An 1880 law permitted women to serve as school commissioners.

In 1843, a county superintendent of common schools for Lewis County was named by the County Board of Supervisors. In 1865 the county was divided into two districts: Number 1 South (encompassing what are now the Towns of Greig, High Market, Lewis, Leyden, Lyonsdale, Martinsburg, Osceola, Turin, and West Turin) and Number 2 North (which included Croghan, Denmark, Diana, Harrisburgh, Lowville, Montague, New Bremen, Pinckney, and Watson).

In the early part of the twentieth century there was a strong feeling throughout the state that education officials should have special training for their positions, which should be separated from politics. (At this time in Lewis County, both parties ran slates of candidates for the positions of school director in each town.)²⁶ With this in mind, the Lewis County Board of Supervisors (in accordance with the Education Law of 1910) divided the county into four supervisory districts. The towns then elected two school directors who made up a board in each supervisory district. Each board appointed a superintendent for their district from applicants who met the qualifications set up by the State Education Department. The four district superintendents had direct supervision over the teachers in their districts and were in close touch with school trustees. They made suggestions relative to the physical condition of schools and saw that the teaching program was carried out in accordance with the state syllabus. They were in fact the liaison between what was now the State Education Department and the local schools.

The superintendents served for a term of five years and were eligible for reappointment. As roads throughout the county improved, and the winter road program was developed so that transportation became less of a problem, it became evident that four supervisors were unnecessary. As supervisors retired, they were not replaced and, in 1953, a single superintendent was given responsibility for the entire county.

The Town of Leyden, along with the Towns of Lewis, Osceola, and West Turin, was included in the fourth district.

²⁶ *Lowville Herald and Lewis County Democrat* (Nov 4, 1910), p. 3.

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Teacher Certification: Teachers in one-room schools were often former students themselves. Between 1814 and 1856 town school officials had the authority to examine and license teachers; the law prescribed no qualifications except good moral character and ability to teach.

However, many teachers sought opportunities to improve their pedagogy. An Educational Society of Lewis County was formed in 1845 with meetings held semi-annually in December and June in different parts of the county. At the meetings, addresses and essays were read and discussions held on various educational methods. At least one Talcottville teacher – Eve Weist in 1884 – is known to have been an active participant.²⁷

In 1844, the first Normal School for the State of New York at Albany was established by an act of the Legislature for “*the instruction and practice of Teachers of Common Schools in the science of Education and the art of Teaching*”. Its sole purpose was to improve the teachers of common schools. Each county was entitled to send a number of pupils (male and female) to the school free of charge; the number was twice the number of State Assembly members for the county. Lewis County in 1847 was entitled to send two pupils for training. The pupils were selected by town and county supervisors at a special meeting called by the county superintendent of schools.

Until 1924, it was still possible to teach in rural schools with just a high school diploma and a temporary license; however, by 1936, a four-year degree program was required for all new teachers.

A Snapshot of Lewis County Schools in 1881²⁸

In 1880, ten years after the construction of Leyden Common School No. 2, Lewis County reached its peak population – though, according to school statistics gathered the following year, that peak population was less than 1 percent of the state. The 7,309 students (aged 5 to 21) were about 70 percent of the county population aged 5 to 21 (10,326) and 23 percent of the total population (31,416). Due to the rural nature of the county, there were 214 common school districts (three times the average per capita) and one private school (Lowville Academy). Mandatory schooling ended at age 14, and few students went on to further education after they graduated from common school.²⁹ Classes were significantly smaller than the state average (16 vs. 27), and the number of students in school was above average – but average daily attendance was lower. Most schools still operated separate summer and winter terms, allowing students from family farms to help with the harvest. Overall, the class year was six weeks shorter in Lewis County than the state average (29.5 vs. 35.5 weeks).

²⁷ “Proceedings of the Lewis Co. Teachers Association,” *Lowville Journal & Republican* (Jan. 31, 1884), 3.

²⁸ Hough, 85.

²⁹ In 1874, state law mandated education for children 8-14; thirty years later, the age for leaving school was raised to 16.

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Less than fifteen years later, population was in decline and so were the schools. By 1896 the number of school districts had fallen to 173 and the number of teachers to 210.³⁰

School Life in Lewis County

Information contained in Lewis County school account books (though not Leyden Common School No. 2) includes inventories of movable property (books, maps, desks), lists of parents of students, the number of children attending school in each family, and (very rarely) births, deaths, and marriages which occurred in the school district. In addition, the account books tell a lot about the general operation of the common schools. For the Talcottville, only one trustee account from 1902 survives.

Teachers were paid at the end the school term, but not much. Cash accounts for West Turin School No. 8 state that Mary Kilhan was paid \$10 on January 22, 1848, for teaching summer school. More than sixty years later (1911), Bert Markham was paid \$9 a week for teaching at the same school. However, in many cases, the schools covered some of the teachers' living expenses. Teacher residences were often attached to the school, or very close by; as a result, a male teacher's wife and family became an integral part of the management and support system for his school. Single, female teachers were more often billeted or boarded with local families, supporting social norms that required social supervision of single females. In Talcottville, Miss Lillian Lashuay was paid \$306 for teaching 160 days (plus five holidays and five days at the annual Teachers' Institute.)³¹

A typical school day ran from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with morning and afternoon recesses of 15 minutes and an hour period for lunch. The many oral histories in the collection of the Lewis County Historical Society and the many "*Remember...*" articles in local newspapers show that the teachers who taught in the one-room rural schools were very hardy. During the winter months they would get to the school early to start a fire in the wood stove so that the building would be warm for the students. In addition, they might prepare a hot, noon meal on top of the stove, usually consisting of soup or stew.

The children were also hardy. Many walked to school. However, others who lived too far away were often transported by horse-drawn carriage in the warm months and sleighs in the winter. Some of these sleigh-type vehicles were enclosed and continued to be used into the 1930s.

³⁰ William Adams, *Business Directory of Lewis County, N.Y. With Map, 1895-1896* (Lowville NY: J.P. Fralick, 1895).

³¹ "Trustees Report," 3.

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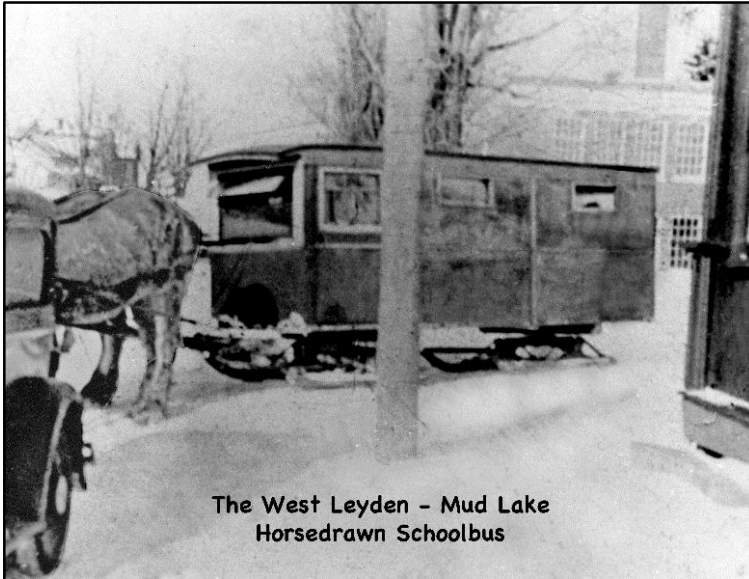


Figure 9. Horse-drawn school bus, from the Collection of the Lewis County Historical Society, 1930.

Despite the hardships for all, the school systems worked well. The portraits of local citizens included in Hough's 1883 *History of Lewis County, NY* show that many who received "their education in the common schools" went on to become successful farmers and entrepreneurs.³² A newspaper article on *Early School Houses and School Life in Lewis County* by Professor Henry C. Northam from 1910 to 1914 gives the reason. Dr. Northam was born in the Town of Leyden in 1826, educated at Lowville Academy, received his certificate to teach in the Town of Leyden in 1845, resigned in 1860 to serve as school commissioner for the southern part of the county, and ended his career as superintendent of schools for various counties in New York State, including Lewis. He authored *Northam's Civil Government and Helps in History*; conducted many teachers' institutes; and mentored generations of teachers. One of his articles particularly evokes the allure of the one-room school:

*One incident connected with my first visit in the Town of Osceola explains the matter very well. In one district, I found at that time a little log school house and, knocking at the door, was welcomed in the heartiest manner possible, and in less than a minute was perfectly at home, and the air seemed full of the love the teacher had for the children, and the children had the same love for the teacher. A two hours visit in the log school convinced me that a thoroughly devoted teacher, true to her profession, was of far more value than a costly school building.*³³

School Life at Leyden Common School No. 2

Presumably, the teachers at Leyden Common School No. 2 shared these virtues and created a similarly strong learning environment. Only one trustee report for the Talcottville school survives, but a great deal of information

³² Hough, *passim*.

³³ Henry C. Northam, "Early School Houses and School Life in Lewis County," *Lowville Journal & Republican* (Dec 31, 1914), 6.

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is available from newspaper reports, scrapbooks at the Lewis County Historical Society, and miscellaneous Internet sources.

Until the turn of the century, the school year was divided into two terms – the winter term ran from November to March and the summer term from April to August. Teachers were hired by the trustees for each term. Often, the teacher who was hired for the winter was not the same for the summer. In addition, teachers would rotate among the different school districts, so that a teacher who instructed at Talcottville for a winter or summer term would teach at a different (but nearby) school the next term.

The names of the teachers at the Talcottville school are instructive. Their surnames represent many of the families living in the Town of Leyden and Lewis County in general, such as Higby, Kelpy, Seymour, and Smithling. Indeed, a search of census records shows them to be the very daughters of town residents – most often, unmarried.³⁴ Records that have survived from other Lewis County common schools show this to be a preference.³⁵ Very few career opportunities were open to young women in rural communities. They could marry or move to an urban area to work in the mills, or they could teach.

A partial list of teachers comes from newspaper announcements:

- 1871 to 1880 - Helen Seymour, Jennie Cory, Eva West (or Wiest)
- 1876 - Mr. S.M. Claus (winter)
- 1881 - Jennie Cory (summer)
- 1882 - Miss Helen Seymour (winter) Mary Dodge (summer)
- 1883 - Arthur M. Johnson
- 1884 - Eva Wiest (summer)
- 1885 - Arthur M. Johnson (winter), Mary Dodge (summer)
- 1891 - Mr. F.S. Beares (winter)
- 1892 - Mr. A.B. Maine (summer)
- 1893 - Perry Williams
- 1898 - Cora A. Smithling
- 1900 - Anna McPhilmey (winter); John B. Cranner (summer)
- 1901 - John B. Cranner
- 1902 - Miss Lillian Lashuay
- 1905 - Miss Marion E. Higby
- 1906 - Marion Higby
- 1912 - Miss Mary Dosmer
- 1929 - Huldah Wendt
- 1931 - Huldah Wendt
- 1933 - Nina Fitch
- 1936 - Cecelia Kelpy
- 1937 - Lila Higby
- 1950s - Mrs..Johnson

A little is known about a few of them. In January 1884, Eva Weist was elected treasurer of the Lewis County Teachers' Association, read a poem, and was appointed to the committee arranging the next meeting. In 1902, Horace C. Eagan (teaching term unknown) was awarded the rank of 2nd Lieutenant in the Marine Corps by

³⁴ Ancestry.com – Miscellaneous Census records.

³⁵ Martinsburgh, *Minutes*.

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President Theodore Roosevelt.³⁶ Around 1912, teacher Mary Dosmer is shown with her students:



Figure 10. Photographic Postcard of Leyden Common School No. 2, circa 1912.

In 1937, Miss Lila Higby returned to the Potsdam Normal College after serving a term at the school.³⁷ (After 1938, new teachers needed a four-year degree from a Normal School.)

Class size at Talcottville varied significantly. Mary Dosmer is shown with nineteen students in the above figure, but, ten years earlier in 1902, there had been almost twice as many students. The 1902 "Trustees Annual Report" named 38 children (14 boys and 24 girls) attending Miss Lillian Lashuay's classes.³⁸ That year, Leyden Common School No. 2 had the second highest class in the township, as compared to Common School No. 15 at Port Leyden, which had four teachers and 85 students. Most of the teachers at the Talcottville school were well liked, competent, and repeatedly rehired for the job. In 1883, two-term teacher Arthur Johnson was singled out:

³⁶ *Lewis County Democrat* (Dec 3, 1902), 3.

³⁷ *Black River Democrat* (May 13, 1937), 3.

³⁸ "Trustees Report," 3. Official enrollment was 35 students with an average daily attendance of 29.

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The Talcottville school closed Friday last. The teacher, Mr. A.M. Johnson, has taught a good school. He, from the beginning, seemed to appreciate the situation, and has governed his scholars as intelligent beings, capable of moral and intellectual development. Thus he has "bent" his "twigs" by the soothing influence of passive firmness, rather than by sterner methods, which ruffle but do not convince. This school is American in sentiment – immensely capable of self-government – hence it is every ready to resist every appearance of too much consolidation. To stimulate to study, modes of competition were adopted, which proved successful, and his school progressed finely. As a token of the appreciation of his efforts, his pupils made him the recipient of a fine present – a book entitled "Picturesque American Scenery." It was quite a pleasant and agreeable surprise to their teacher. Thus has ended, in a manner most satisfactory to all, his second term in the village.³⁹

Besides the day-to-day instruction of students, Leyden Common School No. 2 had a variety of other functions, including teacher training and certification, fundraising, health, and community events. During the 19th century, the building was often used to help teachers and those who wished to be teachers. From 1871, teaching exams were regularly conducted at the school, and at least one meeting of the Lewis County Teachers' Association.⁴⁰ From 1936, student teachers were sometimes assigned to Talcottville to gain experience before graduating from Potsdam Normal School.

Children were encouraged to be civic-minded and participated in many fundraisers and plays (though not always at the school itself) to raise money for the school library.⁴¹ At the beginning of WW II the students raised \$1 for the Navy Relief Fund.⁴² A year later, commitment to the war effort had clearly increased; in 1943, eleven students purchased thirteen war bonds for a total of \$243.75.⁴³ The school was also a meeting place for local children's organizations such as the 4-H.

³⁹ *Lewis County Democrat* (Aug 29, 1883), 3.

⁴⁰ *Daily Rome Sentinel* (Nov 28, 1933), from binder at the Lewis County Historical Society entitled, "Talcottville."

⁴¹ *Lewis County Democrat*, Apr 29, 1903, p. 3. This "entertainment consisting of music, recitations, drills and dialogues" took place at the Grange Hall.

⁴² "Navy Relief Drive Nets \$1,375.82," *Lowville Journal & Republican* (Sept. 24, 1942), 4, from binder at the Lewis County Historical Society. County schools contributed between \$6.25 and \$0.25.

⁴³ "Eleven Pupils Purchase Total of 13 War Bonds," *Rome Sentinel* (June 22, 1943), 12, from binder at the Lewis County Historical Society entitled, "Talcottville."

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Few things except winter weather closed the Talcottville School, but health issues were always a concern. Diphtheria was a particular scourge, and the school closed periodically because of diphtheria outbreaks.⁴⁴ When immunization became accessible in the 1930s, the building was used for a clinic.

Finally, the larger community sometimes attended public addresses at the school, one being a presentation by the Prohibition Party (which scheduled almost 100 meetings around the county in 1910).⁴⁵ People also voted at the Talcottville school and, in 1926, it was the site of a literacy test administered to new voters. During WW II, local residents participated in scrap metal drives and the school was the site of a tire rationing center.⁴⁶ Five years before the school closed, it remained an important part of life in Talcottville. A photo hanging in the building shows students with their parents (mostly, mothers) and teacher enjoying an end-of-year picnic.



Figure 11. Picnic at the Talcottville School, June 19, 1958. Copy from the Leyden Town Hall.

By the mid-1950s, the end of the one-room school house was in sight in New York State and in Talcottville. At the state level, centralization policies had already closed most small schools and school districts. In Talcottville, new health and safety mandates put the school out of business. A 1962 fire inspection report recommended that the school move its heating system to a fire-resistant room and install plumbing. In August, 1962, the

⁴⁴ The United States recorded 206,000 cases of diphtheria in 1921, resulting in 15,520 deaths.

<http://www.historyofvaccines.org/content/timelines/diphtheria>

⁴⁵ *Utica Herald Dispatch* (November 15, 1910), from binder at the Lewis County Historical Society entitled, "Talcottville."

⁴⁶ Owners Register Tires Next Week," *Rome Sentinel* (November 19, 1943), 5, from binder at the Lewis County Historical Society entitled, "Talcottville."

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parents of the children attending the "Rural School" voted to transfer their children to the central school at Boonville, less than 3 miles away. The following year, the taxpayers of the Talcottville School District voted 10 to 1 to permanently close the school and 8 to 4 to transfer ownership to the town of Leyden.⁴⁷ Since 1963, the town has occupied the former Leyden Common School as its town hall.

Criterion C: Leyden Common School No. 2 and Late Nineteenth-Century Rural School Architecture

The earliest one-room schools in Lewis County were often small, rough buildings. As Dr. Northam found during his period as school commissioner in the 1840s and 1850s, many log schools remained. He described the school where he received his own education in the 1830s:

*The school houses of olden time were not very large, 20 by 24 or 30 feet. The earliest ones had a fire place in one end, the entrance on one side of [sic] fireplace, and a closet for the girls wraps on the other side. All the oldest school houses I ever saw had a writing desk around on three sides, and a permanent board seat in front of the desk. When we wrote we usually faced the teacher. There were other movable seats made of heavy slabs, with four legs in them. Those were for small children, or to place before the fire for getting warm.*⁴⁸

In 1842, Henry Barnard (later the first US Commissioner of Education) published an influential book on *School Architecture; or Contributions to the Improvement of School-houses in the United States*. Ten editions were published up to 1884, which focused attention on the condition of the common schools. In the 1850 edition, Barnard justified his recommendations by quoting a survey of 9,368 common schools reported to the New York State Legislature in 1844.

Of these, 3,160 were found in good repair; 2,870 in ordinary and comfortable repair; and 3,319 in bad repair, or totally unfit for school purposes. The number furnished with more than one room was 544, leaving 8,795 with one room only....

*No subject connected with the interests of elementary instruction affords a source of such mortifying and humiliating reflections as that of the condition of a large portion of the school-houses, as presented in the above enumeration... [One-third] were to all intents and purposes unfit for the reception of man or beast.*⁴⁹

⁴⁷ "Talcottville Taxpayers Vote to Close School," *Lowville Journal & Republican* (Sept 12, 1963), 16.

⁴⁸ Northam.

⁴⁹ Henry Barnard, *School Architecture* [Fourth Edition] (New York; A.S. Barnes & Co., 1850), 17-18.

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Few schools had the simple resources that Barnard considered essential for learning – playgrounds, appropriate seats and desks, adequate ventilation, and basic sanitation.⁵⁰ As a result, he felt students were learning to dislike learning and parents were often right to keep their children at home to avoid unhealthy conditions.

...it is in these miserable abodes of accumulated dirt and filth, deprived of wholesome air, or exposed without adequate protection to the assaults of the elements, with no facilities for necessary exercise or relaxation, no convenience for prosecuting their studies, crowded together on benches not admitting of a moment's rest in any position, and debarred of the possibility of yielding to the ordinary calls of nature without violent inroads upon modesty and shame; that upwards of two hundred thousand children, scattered over various parts of the State, are compelled to spend an average period of eight months during each year of their pupilage!⁵¹

Barnard recommended flower gardens, swings, child-sized desks, movable blackboards, interior vents, awning windows, and separate privies for girls and boys. Ceilings should be high to give children a lot of fresh air; in winter, air should be heated before being distributed into the building. His book contained plans for schools – most of them, larger buildings with more than one classroom. Examples of well-designed schools were also described in detail. As the first commissioner of public schools in Rhode Island (1845 to 1849) and Connecticut (1851 to 1855), Barnard had an opportunity to put his ideas into action, establishing teaching institutes in both states and influencing adjoining states.

But funding for improving old schools – or building better ones – remained problematic. A large part of the cost of education was paid by the parents of the pupils, and rural parents often had few funds to invest in better buildings. Finally, in 1867, after prolonged discussion within New York State about whether education was a necessity or a luxury, public schools became free to all.⁵² The number of children attending school rose by an unexpected 2 percent – with most of those new students reporting to poorer country districts like Lewis County.⁵³ Leyden Common School No. 2 was built in 1870, incorporating many of the recommendations made by Barnard in the many editions of his book.

⁵⁰ Only 1,012 schools had separate privies for girls and boys; 1,810 had a single privy; and 6,423 had no privies set up for the school children at all. Barnard, 17.

⁵¹ Barnard, 18.

⁵² Susanne R. Warren, *The Schools of New York State: Development of the School as a Building Type* [Context Study], (Albany, NY: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, 1990), 11.

⁵³ Warren, 22.

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
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The school was on a side road backing on fields where the children could safely play. Girls and boys were educated together but given separate facilities – separate entrances with separate cloak rooms. (The state of the privies is not known.) The cruciform shape gave students light from at least two (if not three) directions. The ceiling was high, which ensured sufficient fresh air. The stove, in the middle of the room, distributed heat equally. The room had at least two blackboards attached to the wall at a relatively low level so that the children could write on them and contribute to the class.

But the school at Talcottville was not perfect, and state recommendations for one-room schools were changing. In 1884, the New York State Department of Public Instruction held a competition for model schools as a technique for solving key architectural problems like ventilation, sanitation, and seating that continued to hinder rural education. In her study of the evolution of school buildings in New York State, Elizabeth Warren noted that the 1884 solutions were similar to – but better defined than – those promoted by Barnard thirty years earlier. School grounds should allow children to play “shinny, base-ball and marbles” in an area separate from “a bit of lawn [and] the pleasing effect of a few shade trees.”⁵⁴ Outbuildings (separate privies for girls and boys) should be screened with plantings, surrounded by “tight” fences, and connected to the school with covered walks, lattice fences, and another tight fence separating the children.⁵⁵ With appropriate drains and ventilation, earth closets or toilets could be moved inside school buildings.

Pure air was a special concern:

*Nothing adds more to the enjoyment of life, nothing is more absolutely necessary for mental work, than pure air and an abundance of it. A school-room fitted for children to occupy must have two essential provisions. There must be adequate supply of pure, warm air, and the foul air must be removed in order to give place to the pure air.*⁵⁶

Air should be brought in under the stove to warm it and prevent cold drafts, and fresh air should come from outside and not from the cellar or schoolroom itself. Separate vestibules were essential for preserving fresh air: “...there is nothing more disagreeable than the odor of drying boots and clothes in a room used for daily school work.”⁵⁷ The size of the schoolroom was linked to the number of students, with 200 cubic feet of air per student. The main classroom at Leyden Common School No. 2 was 33 feet by 24 feet and between 9 and 10 feet tall. According to the 1884 recommendations, it could accommodate about 35 students and their teacher.

⁵⁴ New York State Department of Public Instruction, *Designs for School-houses* (Albany: Weed Parsons Printing Co., 1895), 9.

⁵⁵ State law mandated separate facilities in 1887. *Designs*, 16.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Designs*, 17.

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

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County and State

The one area in which the school failed to meet recommendations was lighting:⁵⁸

The source of light-supply in school buildings should admit of being so governed as not to come from opposite directions. Seats and desks should be so arranged that the quantity of light required comes from above and from the left side.

The main classroom in Leyden Common School No. 2 was oriented east to west, rather than north to south. As a result, large classes must have sat along this axis and most of their light would have come from the gable ends. The upgrades to the school that took place in the early twentieth century fixed both this problem of lighting and the problem of sanitation.

A few years after the circa 1910 postcard of “The School at Talcottville, N.Y.” (Figure 1), the two windows in the east wing were replaced with four 68” x 40” wood sash. These provided much more light and allowed small classes to sit parallel to the windows with the light coming in from the left. Perhaps around the same time, the privies were moved inside, with one for the girls and one for the boys in the south wing.⁵⁹

These changes may have been triggered by one (or several) sets of recommendations for rural schools. In 1916, the State Education Department required “an approved system of sanitary closets” in new or remodeled schools. Small school districts (under \$20,000 valuation) were exempt, but the pressure for school boards to comply was growing.⁶⁰ In 1922, a Joint Committee on Rural Schools with representatives from the State Grange, Department of Education, Dairymen’s League, Farm Bureau Federation, State College of Agriculture, Home Bureau Federation, and State Teachers’ Association put out a multi-volume report, one of which focused on school buildings and grounds. Almost 1500 one-room schools – including all of those in southern Lewis County – were analyzed using a scorecard developed by Julian Butterworth. A. Winfield Trainor collected the data for schools in Lewis County, with extensive information on the size of the classroom, shape, window placement, glass area, use of shades, floor, walls, color scheme, inside finish, blackboard, bulletin board, desks, seating arrangements, sanitation, fuel room, cloak room, workroom, library, and far, far more.⁶¹ This level of detail allowed county superintendents to identify the most critical deficiencies in individual schools and to push for improvements.

⁵⁸ *Designs*, 19.

⁵⁹ The flooring in the main classroom also may have been replaced at this time.

⁶⁰ Julian E. Butterworth, *Rural School Survey of New York State: School Buildings and Grounds* (Ithaca: [No printer], 1922), 55.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 23-24. The score card identified 51 elements to be scored on a sliding scale depending on the importance of the feature.

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
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Leyden Common School No. 2 apparently met minimal standards, even after the building was consolidated into the Boonville Central School District in 1944. Little changed. Local students continued to receive their elementary education in Talcottville before attending high school in Boonville. Classes were relatively small; students could face south, parallel to the row of windows in small individual desks, while their teacher sat with one of the two blackboards behind her. The town hall has three yearbooks from the 1950s, two of which show students in this recommended seating configuration (see Figure 3). There was still no water in the building.

Finally, in 1962, the building failed a safety inspection. The Talcottville School District was told to install a fire-resistant room for the furnace and flush toilets. When faced with these mandates, the district taxpayers voted to send their children directly to Boonville. The following year, another election was held. Eleven people voted 10 to 1 in an election to permanently close the school, and twelve voted 8 to 4 to transfer ownership of the building to the Town of Leyden for use as the town hall.

Twenty more years passed. The privies were replaced with chemical toilets but the building still lacked water. In 1985, a ramp was added to the façade. In 1986, the town received a grant for work by the Green Thumb group and for other projects. Insulation was installed above a drop ceiling to conserve heat. The south wing was reconstructed with a fireproof room for town records and an adjoining rest room. In the early 1990s, the Board of Elections threatened to move its polling place if the building did not add a flush toilet. Finally, water was piped into the building from the town garage. Around 2010, the handicapped ramp was extended across the full front of the entrance gable.

CONCLUSION

Overall, Leyden Common School No. 2 (Talcottville) represents the educational experience of many Lewis County students in the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries and stands as a monument to New York State's Common School system. Very few one-room schools remain standing in Lewis County – even fewer are recognizable as such. Leyden Common School No. 2 retains high integrity as a late nineteenth century example of rural school design. The Town of Leyden wishes to list its school to recognize and preserve one of the most important civic institutions in its rural community.

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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- Crawford & Stearns. *Condition Report for the Leyden Town Hall, Prepared for the Town of Leyden* [Report]. March 2003.
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- New York State Department of Public Instruction. *Designs for School-houses* Albany: Weed Parsons Printing Co., 1895.
- Northam, Henry C., "Early School Houses and School Life in Lewis County," *Lowville Journal & Republican* (Dec 31, 1914), 6.
- Warren, Susanne R. *The Schools of New York State: Development of the School as a Building Type* [Context Study]. Albany, NY: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, 1990.
- Wilson, Edmund. *Upstate*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1971.

Historic Newspapers:

Black River Democrat.

Daily Rome Sentinel.

Lewis County Democrat.

Lowville Herald and Lewis County Democrat.

Lowville Journal & Republican.

Utica Herald Dispatch.

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
County and State

Archival Materials:

Boonville Central School District Yearbooks. Various (1950s). Located at the Leyden Town Hall [Leyden Common School No. 2].

Deed, Libre 43, 473. Located at the Lewis County Court House.

Ligowski, A. *A Topographical Map of Lewis Co, N.Y.* Philadelphia: S. & R.S. Traintor Jr. & Co., 1857. Located at the Lewis County Historical Society.

"Talcottville." Clipping book located at Lewis County Historical Society.

Town of Martinsburgh School Board. *School Minutes, 1819-1820*. Located at Lewis County Historical Society.

"Trustees Annual Report for Common School District No. 2, Town of Leyden, for the School Year Ending July 31, 1902." Original located at Lewis County Historical Society.

U. S. Census, various. Accessed through Ancestry.com.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Name of repository: Lewis County Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.94 acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18N 470275E 4820167N
Zone Easting Northing

3
Zone Easting Northing

2
Zone Easting Northing

4
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property boundary is contiguous with Lewis County tax map #380.04-01-22.000, the current tax parcel associated with Leyden Common School No. 2.

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.



Lewis County Tax Map, showing Leyden Common School No. 2 in Parcel 380.04-01-22.000. The original school parcel was smaller; the current parcel includes the Town Highway Department buildings.

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
County and State

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary includes the lot historically linked to Leyden Common School No. 2, which was described as 6 x 8 rods in the "1902 Trustees Annual Report" (available from Lewis County Historical Society). It also includes the Town Barn Complex for the Town of Leyden (three noncontributing storage barns and a fuel canopy) which was later joined to the school lot.

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
County and State

Leyden Common School No. 2
Leyden, Lewis Co., NY

6606 School Road
Boonville, NY 13309



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



 School No. 2



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
County and State

Leyden Common School No. 2
Leyden, Lewis Co., NY

6606 School Road
Boonville, NY 13309



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

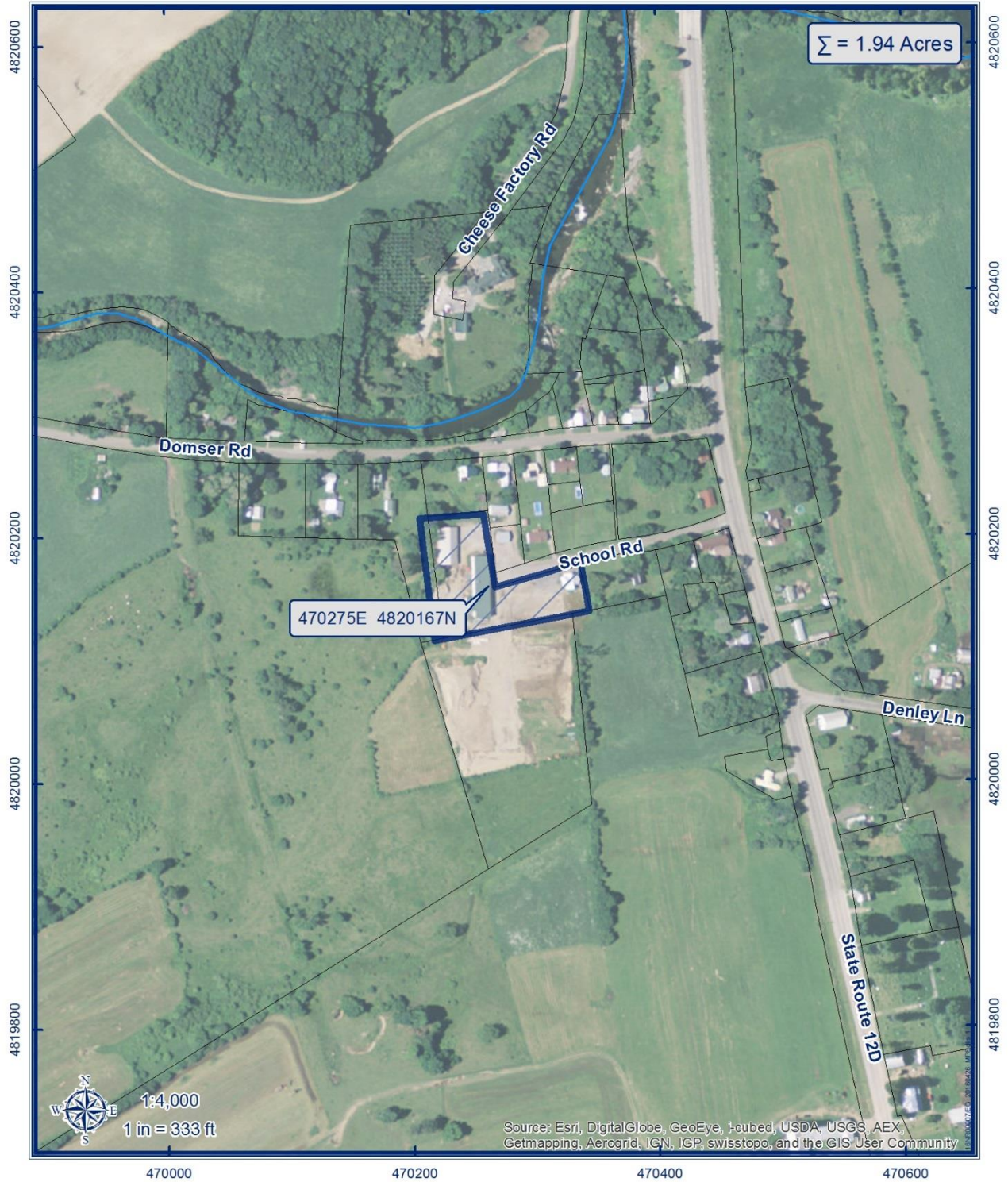


Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
County and State

Leyden Common School No. 2
Leyden, Lewis Co., NY

6606 School Road
Boonville, NY 13309



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School No. 2



Leyden Common School No. 2
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County and State

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Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



School No. 2



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

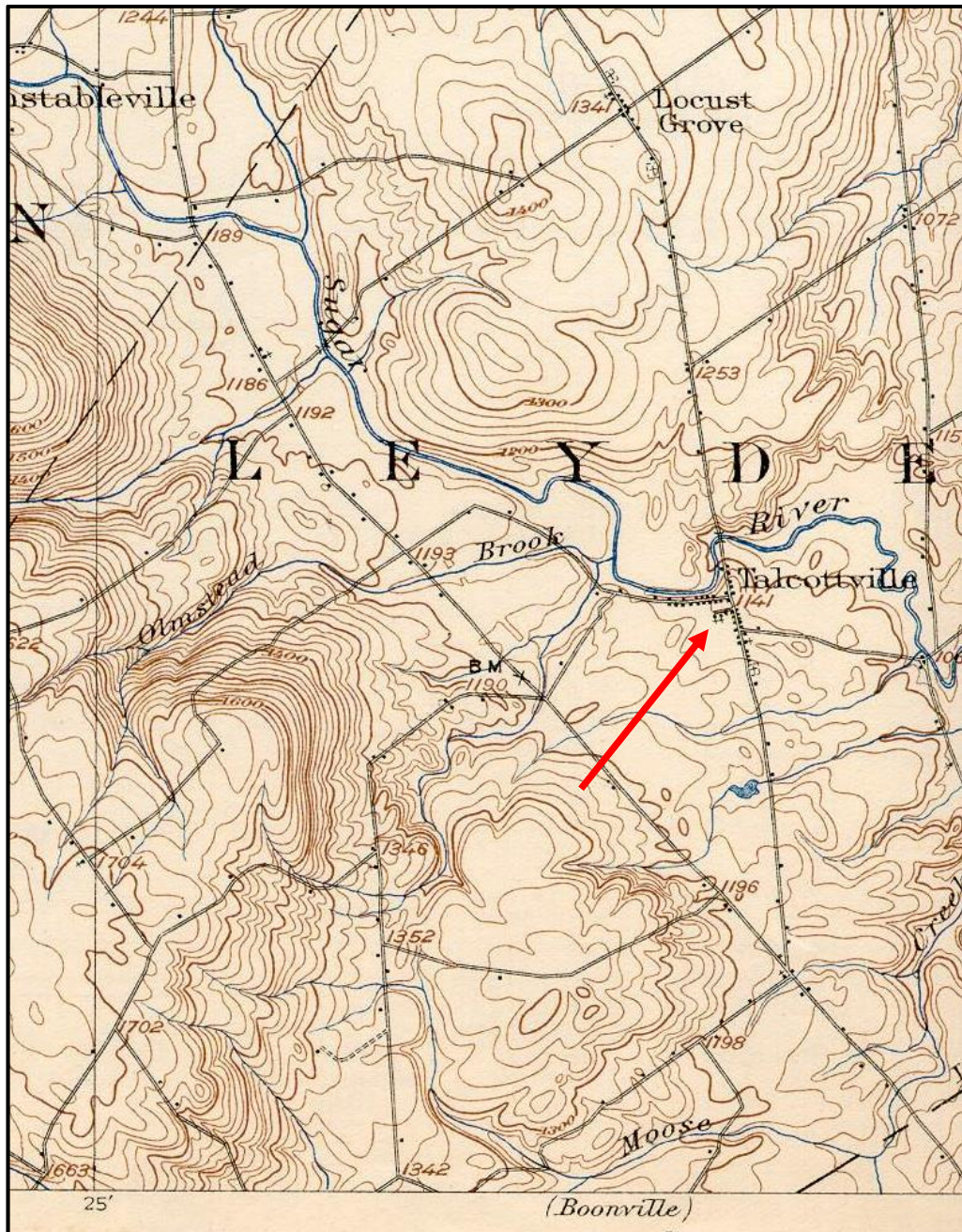
Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jerry Perrin – Leyden Town Historian (edited by Emilie Gould, NY State Historic Preservation Office)
organization Town of Leyden date 12/20/15
street & number PO Box 395 telephone 315-942-4891 or 315-376-8957
city or town Boonville state NY zip code 13309
e-mail jerryperrin@yahoo.com or lewiscountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Additional Documentation



USGS Map, Port Leyden, 1904, showing location of Leyden Common School, No. 2.

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
County and State

Photographs:

Name of Property: Leyden Town Hall

City or Vicinity: Talcottville

County: Lewis

State: NY

Photographer: Jerry Perrin (Photos 1-5, 8-9) and Emilie Gould (Photos 6-7, 10)

Date Photographed: Jerry Perrin (2/4/16); Emilie Gould (2/26/16)

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 0001 of 10 Façade (North)
- 0002 of 10 West Elevation (Side)
- 0003 of 10 East Elevation (Side)
- 0004 of 10 East Elevation (side): Town Barn in Background
- 0005 of 10 South Elevation (Back)
- 0006 of 10 Northwest Vestibule
- 0007 of 10 Classroom, looking at the east gable with ganged windows
- 0008 of 10 Classroom, looking at the west gable with office area and files
- 0009 of 10 Fireproof Storage Room
- 0010 of 10 Second Floor (Attic), Showing Roof Trussing and Chimney Support.

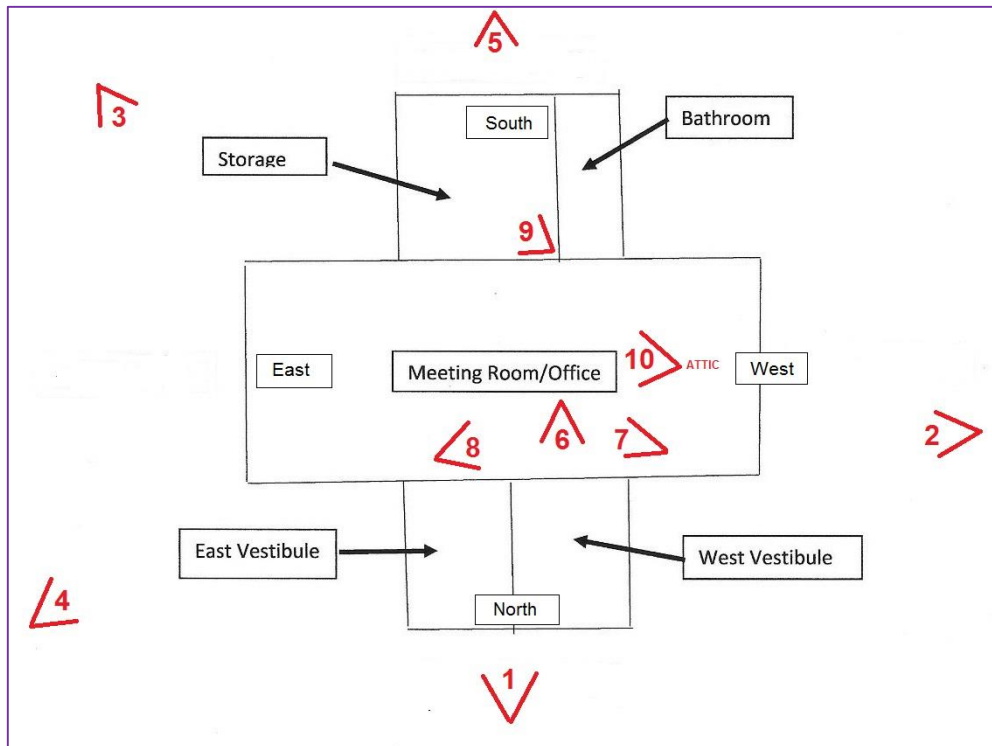


Photo Key

Leyden Common School No. 2
Name of Property

Lewis County, New York
County and State

Property Owner:

name Town of Leyden
street & number 6606 School Road telephone 315-942-3444
city or town Boonville state NY zip code 13309

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



LEYDEN TOWN HALL

6606



H. B. WOODS, INC.
1400 N. 7
RUST CAPACITY 070
DESIGN CAPACITY 300



33











TOWN
ASSESSOR



OfficeMax
copy

DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY

STOR-ALL Perma

ABSTRACTS

DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY

STOR-ALL Perma

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DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY

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CONTENTS Warrant Sheets
FROM 2007 to 2009
Dig Reports
2001 - 2010
LEWIS

DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY

STOR-ALL Perma

DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY

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DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY

STOR-ALL Perma



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Leyden Common School No. 2

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Lewis

DATE RECEIVED: 5/06/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/25/16
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/09/16 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/21/16
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000392

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6-21-16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

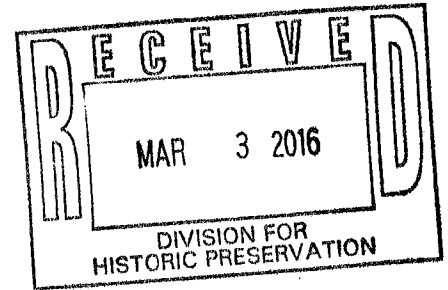
REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

Constable Hall Association, Inc.
P. O. Box 36
Constableville, New York 13325
315-397-2323



February 27, 2016

Ruth L. Pierpont
Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Division of Historic Preservation
PO Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

Re: Talcottville Common School #2

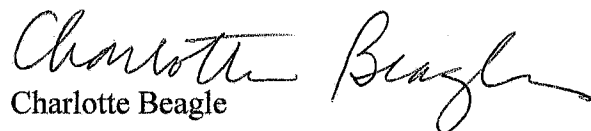
Dear Ms. Pierpont:

The Constable Hall Association, Inc. supports the nomination of the Talcottville Common School #2 to the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

Since the Constable family was instrumental in the settlement of the North Country, the Association is interested in the preservation of all historic properties in Lewis County.

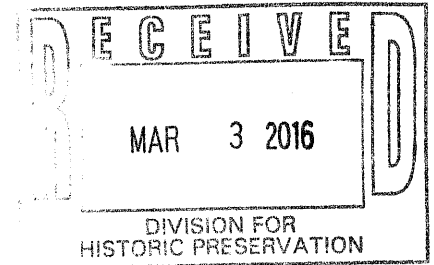
As Talcottville is one of the earliest settlements in Lewis County its historic structures need to be recognized for their significance. Schools as the center of each neighborhood created a hub for each community. In addition the architecture of this school building is uncommon for such a rural setting as the Town of Leyden and should be preserved.

Sincerely,


Charlotte Beagle

Director

Ruth L. Pierpont
Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Division of Historic Preservation
PO Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189




Re: Talcottville Common School #2

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

The Talcottville Cemetery Association supports the nomination of the Talcottville Common School #2 to the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Talcottville was one of the earliest towns to be settled in Lewis County, many of those same settlers are now buried in the Talcottville cemetery. Many of their descendants who are still living attended School #2. Much of the original village is disappearing and it is important to save and preserve what remains.

Sincerely,

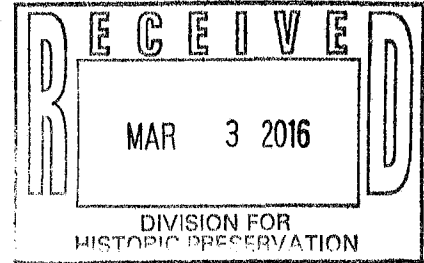
 2/29/2016
- President of the board for
Talcottville Cemetery Association

March 1, 2016

Ruth L. Pierpont
Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Division of Historic Preservation
PO Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

Re: Talcottville Common School #2

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

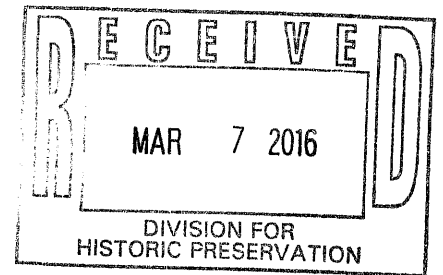


As Leyden Town Historian I support the nomination of the Talcottville Common School #2 to the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Talcottville was one of the earliest settlements in Lewis County and many of those early families still have descendants in the area. The Talcottville School may not be the oldest school to be built in the County, but it is certainly one of the longest in continual use. All others have since been destroyed or repurposed beyond recognition. From searching county records, I find that the cruciform shape and Greek revival details in the architecture were particularly unusual for our area and reflect the importance the citizens thought of the new school when it was planned and built.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jerry Perrin
Town Historian, Town of Leyden

LYONS FALLS HISTORY ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 1
LYONS FALLS, N.Y. 13368
MARCH 3, 2016



Ruth L. Pierpont
Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Division of Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189
Waterford, N.Y. 12188-0189

Re: Talcottville Common School #2

Dear Ms. Pierpont,

The Lyons Falls Historical Association supports the nomination of the Talcottville Common School #2 to the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The Lyons Falls Historical Association is interested in the preservation of all historic properties in southern Lewis County, in which this building stands. As we understand, the building has been used as a school for over 90 years and continues to serve the community as a town hall and meeting place for local non-profit groups. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Roy Hammecker, President
Susan Hammecker, Secretary
Shirley VanNest, Archivist

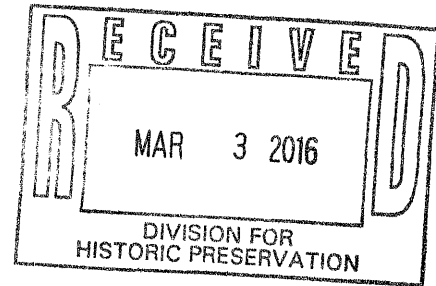
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Division of Historic Preservation

PO Box 189

Waterford, NY 12188-0189

Re: Talcottville Common School #2



Dear Ms. Pierpont:

The Preservation Committee of the Lewis County Historical Society supports the nomination of the Talcottville Common School #2 to the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The Preservation Committee is interested in preserving and restoring all historic places of Lewis County. The school is one of the last remaining buildings recognizable as a school house in the County and the cruciform shape and architecture is particularly unusual for Northern NY.

Sincerely,

Mitch Fidler

Preservation Committee Chair

Lewis County Historical Society

TOWN OF LEYDEN
 6606 School Road
 Boonville, New York 13309
 (315) 942-3444

Supervisor
 Rosalie White

Council
 Lois Compo
 Andrew Millick
 Steve Fox
 Helen McHale

Supt. Of Highways
 Bruce Myers

Town Clerk
 Janice Dosztan

March 14, 2016

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation
 and Historic Preservation
 Division for Historic Preservation
 Peebles Island, P O Box 189
 Waterford, New York 12188-0189

Subject: Letter of Support, Proposed Nomination – Talcottville Common School #2
 6606 School Road
 Boonville, NY 13309
 Lewis County

New York State Board for Historic Preservation:

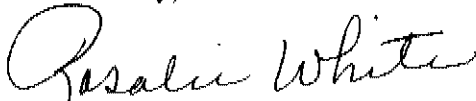
As Chief Elected Official for the Town of Leyden, I am pleased to learn that our application will be considered for nomination to the National and State Registers of Historic Places at your upcoming meeting on March 22, 2016.

The "One-Room" school house setting embodies the distinctive characteristic of a period when our children were educated in small rural groups at several locations throughout the community. Most of these buildings have been demolished and are gone from the countryside.

It is also important to note that the Talcottville Rural School is still in use by our Local Town Government for monthly meetings, the Leyden Senior Citizens and as the Towns' polling place for Elections and Primaries.

Thank you for considering our application. Nomination to the National and State Registers would greatly help the Town to preserve the character of the building along with its heritage.

Sincerely,



Rosalie White, Supervisor
 Town of Leyden



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

29 April 2016

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following five nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Edmund B. Hayes Hall, Erie County
Leyden Common School No. 2, Lewis County
Crescent Corset Company, Cortland County
Lemuel F. Vibber House, Otsego County
Callicoon Downtown Historic District, Sullivan County

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office