

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received NOV 14 1984

date entered DEC 13 1984

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

1. Name

historic High Tops School (preferred)

and/or common Corner School, Number Nine

2. Location

street & number ~~At the intersection of Reynolds & River Roads,~~ ^{and} N/A not for publication

city, town Westmoreland N/A vicinity of

state New Hampshire code 33 county Cheshire code 005

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Westmoreland

street & number Westmoreland Town Offices

city, town Westmoreland N/A vicinity of state New Hampshire 03467

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cheshire County Registry of Deeds (Vol. 637, pp.405-6)

street & number Cheshire County Courthouse
12 Court Street

city, town Keene, state New Hampshire 03431

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state

7. Description

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

moved

date 1846

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

High Tops School is a one-and-a-half story rectangular framed building on a foundation of split granite blocks. The building measures about 25 by 29 feet. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and the eastern gable end faces the intersection of three country roads and provides a facade. Attached to the south side of the building is a low gable-roofed wing which originally provided a woodshed and privy.

The front (east) elevation of the school is treated to suggest a tetrastyle temple, with four broad pilasters spaced evenly across the facade. Between the inner pair of pilasters is a recessed porch which provides access to the building; between these inner pilasters and corner pilasters is a single six-over-six window on each side of the porch. The pilasters support a deep entablature composed of a flat architrave and a projecting cornice. This extends across the facade and along the raking eaves of the roof, creating a closed triangular pediment with a clapboarded tympanum. The face of the front elevation is clapboarded, but the east wall of the recessed porch is flush-boarded. Doors lead from the north and south walls of the porch to the interior, that on the north entering a cloak room which provides access to the main schoolroom through an interior door. The porch door on the south leads to a storage room. From this room, doors lead to the main schoolroom and to the privy in the wing. The wing is clapboarded and has simple square-edged trim. A door in its eastern elevation, near the southeast corner, leads to a woodshed which in recent years has been refurbished for the display of local historical objects. A small two-pane window at the opposite end of the shed, adjoining the wall of the main building, lights the privy.

The north elevation of the building has three large, evenly-spaced windows with six-over-six sashes. The entablature extends along this elevation under the eaves and is supported by a pilaster at the rear corner.

The west (front) elevation of the school has three similar windows. The entablature follows the raking eaves of the roof but does not return across this elevation to define a rectangular pediment as on the front. Between the northern and middle windows a single-flue brick chimney rises against the exterior wall of the building.

The south elevation has two six-over-six windows facing those opposite. The section of wall where the third window would be located is intersected by the wing. An additional small window with six panes occupies the space between the western window on this elevation and the rear corner pilaster of the building; this was added to permit the teacher to observe playground activities. There is a small window on the west elevation of the wing to light the former woodshed.

The interior of the schoolroom has wall and ceiling sheathing of pine, and oak flooring which supplanted the original pine boards in 1930. The room has a large blackboard on the east, between the doors, and smaller blackboards on the north and west walls. Bookshelves fill the area below the windows on the south wall.

The schoolhouse retains the appearance it had when it was moved to its present location and remodelled in 1846. This remodelling was so extensive and thorough that no obvious vestiges remain of the building's original 1789 appearance.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1789; 1846 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

High Tops School is an unusually well designed schoolhouse of the mid-nineteenth century, reflecting an era of concerted improvement in district schoolhouse architecture throughout New Hampshire. The building's pronounced Greek Revival character reflects not only an effort to provide students with a sound, comfortable, and attractive building that went beyond mere necessity, but also an attempt to incorporate in school architecture the strong Greek Revival feeling that pervaded both public and private buildings in southwestern New Hampshire at that period.

Significance, architecture: The attractive and carefully detailed Greek Revival elements of High Tops School result from a statewide movement to improve the architectural and structural qualities of New Hampshire district schoolhouses in the mid-1800s. This movement manifested itself not only in extensive schoolhouse rebuilding and repairs at this period, but also in the establishment of the position of State Commissioner of Common Schools in 1846, the same year that High Tops School was remodelled to its present form. The first annual report of the Commissioner in 1847 placed particular emphasis on schoolhouse architecture, lamenting the "multitudes of (school) houses, in the State, not only inconveniently located, and awkwardly planned, but absolutely dangerous to health and morals... and this in places, where private taste is adorning the town with ornaments of architecture and enriching the country with the fruits of rural industry. It is, however, encouraging to find, that a better feeling is coming to prevail on this subject. Many districts are rebuilding, and, in most instances, upon an improved plan... If the architecture is neat, and the grounds tastefully laid out... not only will the house answer the essential purpose of health and comfort, but prove a material auxiliary in elevating the minds and correcting the habits of those who receive their education in it."¹

This report and others that followed recommended care in the location of schoolhouses and taste and liberality in their construction. Subsequent reports illustrated model school buildings selected from throughout the state, or reproduced illustrations and text from Henry Barnard's School Architecture (1848).

Architecture (1846): The High Tops School remains an excellent example of the fruits of this movement. Constructed in 1789 and named for a grove of tall trees that sheltered its original location, the building was moved in 1846 to maintain its convenience to students in Westmoreland's District #9. Remodelled at this time, the building took on the character of the most stylish architecture of the period and locale. Its recessed entrance porch, in particular, reflects similar features often seen in Greek Revival houses of New Hampshire's Connecticut River Valley. Several other Westmoreland schoolhouses of the same period reflect comparable Greek Revival detailing; the District #11 (Depot) schoolhouse, in particular, was a near duplicate of the High Tops School.

High Tops School is one of the few district schoolhouses of its region which have escaped destruction or conversion to dwellings. Reflecting the best precepts of an era of progressive developments in school architecture, the building is one of the finest examples in New Hampshire of the impact of American educational reform on country school architecture.

¹ Report of the Commissioner of Common Schools to the Legislature of New Hampshire. June Session, 1847 (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth Press, 1847), pp 13-14.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Marjorie W. Smith, Keene Evening Sentinel. August 1968. pp. 224, 231.
Westmoreland Town Records, Volume One. 1780-1851.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property $\frac{1}{4}$ acre \pm

Quadrangle name Keene, NH - Vermont

Quadrangle scale 1:625 000

UMT References

A

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

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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Verbal boundary description and justification

(see continuation sheet)

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

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Benton D. Mellinger

organization Westmoreland Historical Society date May 1984

street & number RFD #1 - Box 207 telephone (603) 399-4947

city or town Westmoreland state New Hampshire 03467

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

Deputy
State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title New Hampshire Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date 10/20/84

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date

12-13-84

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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Continuation sheet 1

Item number 10

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Verbal Boundary Description & Justification:

The nominated property is bounded on the north by River Road, on the east and south by Reynolds Road and on the west by Lot #24 of the Westmoreland Tax Map (lot 24 is owned by David and Laura Ulitch, Westmoreland, NH).

These boundaries reflect the tract of land associated with the school since its move and alteration in 1846.

The boundaries of the nominated property have been highlighted in yellow on the attached sketch map.

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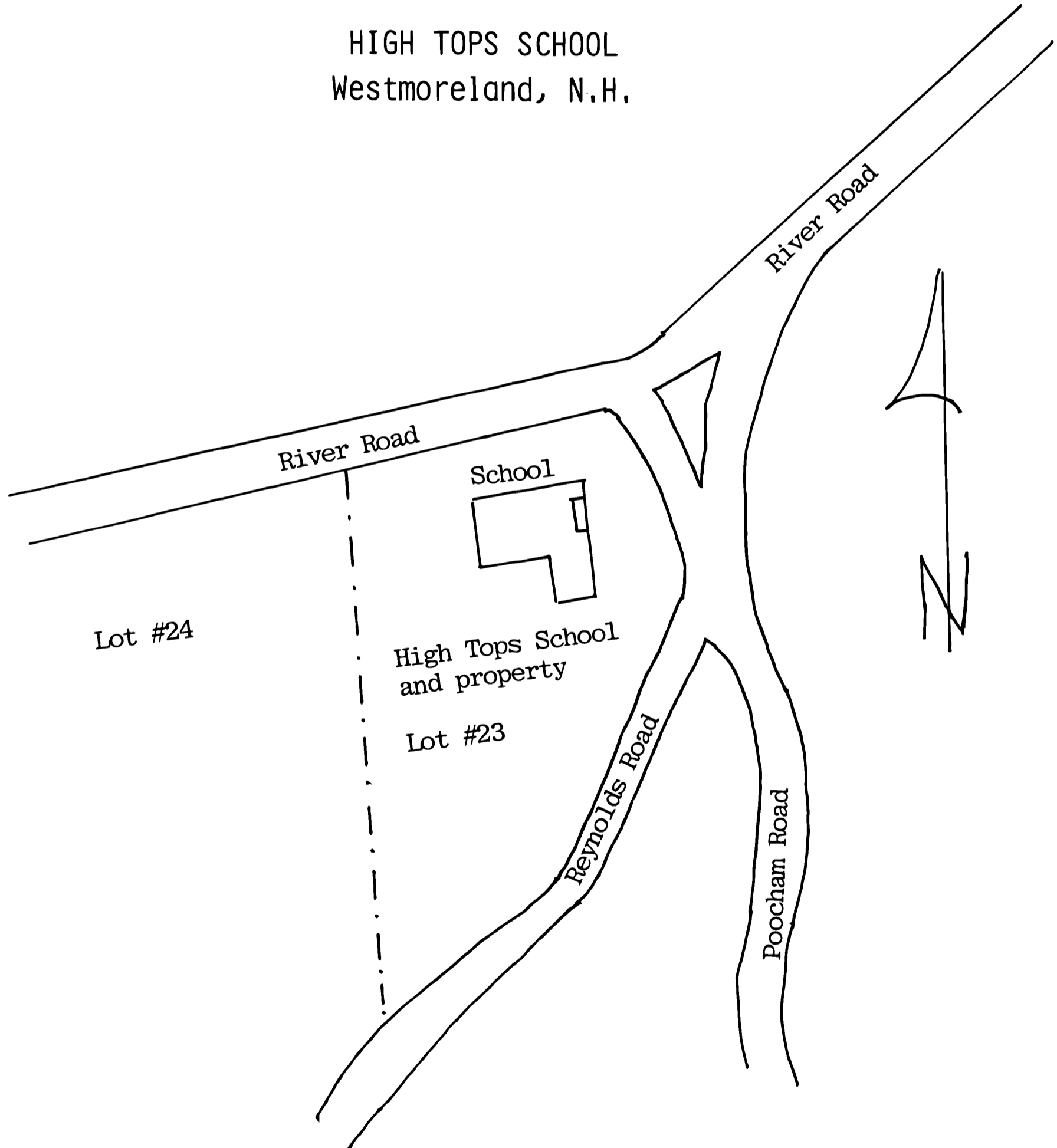
Continuation sheet 2

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Sketch Map:

HIGH TOPS SCHOOL
Westmoreland, N.H.



1" = 40'
SCALE