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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name State Normal School at Valley City Historic District

other names/site number Valley City State Teachers College; Valley City State College; Valley City State University

2. Location

street & number roughly bounded by College Street SE, Second Ave, SE, not for publication

Viking Drive and Second Ave. SW
city or town Valley City vicinity

state North Dakota code ND county Barnes code 003 zip code 58072

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James E. Sperry January 6, 1995
Signature of certifying official/Title James E. Sperry Date
State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota)

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Linda McClelland

2/10/95

Name of Property

County and State

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	
11	2	buildings
		sites
		structures
2		objects
13	2	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 (grammar and secondary)

EDUCATION: college

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: college

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque

Renaissance

Modern Movement

Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other Sandstone, Tin, Shingle, CONCRETE, Weatherboard

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

- [x] 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.
[x] 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.
[x] G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- EDUCATION
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1892-1946

Significant Dates

1892
1903

See continuation sheet

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Hancock Brothers
Milton Earl Beebe

X See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
[] Other State agency
[] Federal agency
[] Local government
[x] University
[] Other

Name of repository:

Valley City State University

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 10.35

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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

3 1 4 5 7 6 0 7 0 5 1 9 6 4 3 0
Zone Easting Northing
4 1 4 5 7 6 1 0 0 5 1 9 6 4 3 0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Louis N. Hafemehl, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
organization State Historical Society of North Dakota date September 27, 1994
street & number 612 E. Blvd. Avenue telephone 701-328-3566
city or town Bismarck state ND zip code 58505

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name
street & number telephone
city or town state zip code

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

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Continuation Sheet

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OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
Barnes County, ND

Description

The State Normal School Historic District is nestled on a narrow floodplain on the south bank of a loop in the Sheyenne River, as it winds its way through Valley City, North Dakota. The district is essentially rectangular in shape with dimensions of 770' x 435', with its long axis paralleling the river to its north. The district contains thirteen buildings (eleven contributing and two noncontributing) and two objects (both contributing), spanning a construction period from 1892 to 1973. Five of the buildings were connected as they were constructed during the period 1892 and 1930, thus forming an unbroken, albeit irregular, wall of construction running east/west at the district's southern edge. Its focal point is the four-story bell tower that forms the entry to the first building constructed on the campus, McFarland Hall(#1). The impact of this long, connected mass of brick construction is further enhanced by its location on a terrace slightly elevated above the rest of the district.

Brick is the dominant construction material found in the district. Secondary materials are dressed granite fieldstone, which is used extensively for the raised foundations of several buildings, as the primary building material in one of the district's secondary buildings, and for retaining walls around the president's residence.

Buildings on both the east and west edges of the district enclose a large, grassy, open expanse in the center of the district, which is crisscrossed by concrete walkways and populated by large, mature deciduous and evergreen trees. Between the district's northern boundary and the river is a campus parking lot—originally a park-like area of the campus—which is connected by a suspension footbridge to Valley City's commercial district located north of the river.

The district's southern boundary is defined by a steep, wooded bluff face that roughly parallels the river. This bluff has limited the institution's expansion in a southerly direction; more

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
Barnes County, ND

Description (continued)

recent campus construction, including dormitories, the student union, and parking lots, has been primarily to the west of the district. Beyond the campus to the east, west, and northwest are residential areas that provide housing for students, faculty, and university employees. These areas, separated as they are from the rest of the community by the Sheyenne River, contribute to a topographically defined academic village setting unique in North Dakota.

The district contains several architectural styles. Richardsonian Romanesque characterizes four (#s 1, 2, 3, and 5) of the first six campus buildings. Three of these (#s 1, 2 and 3) visually anchor the district. Though the remaining campus buildings defy rigid stylistic classification, several exhibit dominant stylistic characteristics, including those attributed to the Renaissance Revival (# 4), Art Moderne/Deco (# 9), and Georgian Revival (# 7). The two most recent buildings in the district (#s 14 and 15), both of which are noncontributing, fall into the more general category of "modern" architecture.

Contributing Elements:

- #1 Main Building (McFarland Hall) - 1892; 65' x 110'; Hancock Brothers, architects, Fargo; J. C. Drake, contractor, Valley City, Richardsonian Romanesque. This is a two-story building with attic over a raised granite foundation. It has a cross-shaped roof plan, with a gable roof across the width of the building intersected by a truncated hip roof running the length of the building. The building entrance is housed in a four-story bell tower, square in plan, with a pyramidal roof sporting dormer-mounted clock face on north, east, and west roof slopes. At the northeast corner of the building is a circular two-story tower with conical roof. Brown sandstone is used as a stringcourse and decorative trim on rose-colored brick walls. Basement and first floor level window openings are rectangular; second floor window openings are Roman arched, as is the entry doorway. The bell tower at third

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Barnes County, ND

Description (continued)

floor carries tripled, narrow, rectangular windows on the primary (north) facade, and at fourth floor level carries tripled, Roman-arched windows on all facades. The windows in the building have all been replaced; window openings, however, have not been altered. The interior floorplan has been altered, primarily by adding and removing partition walls to change original room sizes. Hallway and stairway locations have not been altered. Some interior restoration work has begun; dropped ceilings in some hallway spaces are being removed, thus exposing original ceilings, and beadboard wainscoting is being reapplied to interior hallways.

- #2 Science Hall (McFarland West) - 1903; 88' x 56'; Hancock Brothers, architects, Fargo; Johnson and Powers Construction Company, general contractor, Fargo; Fargo Plumbing and Heating, heating plant; E. J. Harrington, plumbing, Fargo; Richardsonian Romanesque. This building has two stories with an attic over a raised granite foundation. It has a truncated hip roof with flush-mounted, gable-roof dormers centered on each wall. Rose-colored brick walls feature a string course of brown sandstone. Basement and first floor window openings are rectangular; second floor window openings are Roman arched (note: this window configuration is reversed in the connecting hallway between Main Building and Science Hall, which was built at the same time as Science Hall). North (front) and south (rear) wall dormers contain Palladian windows; east and west wall dormers contain paired window openings surmounted by centered semicircular windows. Windows in the building have been completely replaced though window openings remain unaltered. Hallway and stairway locations have not been altered. The second floor contains pressed metal ceilings; hallways retain original beadboard wainscoting; door and window trim remains intact.

- #3 Practice School - 1905; 64' x 82'; Hancock Brothers, architects, Fargo; N. P. Fransen, St. Paul, MN, general contractor; Richardsonian Romanesque. This is a two-story

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
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Description (continued)

building with an attic over a raised granite foundation. Its truncated hip roof contains centered flush mounted gable-roof dormers with Palladian windows on main (north) and rear (south) elevations. The west-facing roof slope sports three hip-roofed dormers, each of which contains tripled double-hung sash. The east-facing roof slope sports a centered gable-roofed dormer, flush mounted with the projecting center bay, which rises from grade beneath it, flanked by two hip-roofed dormers. Brown sandstone trim is as a stringcourse on rose-colored brick walls. Basement and first floor window openings are rectangular, second floor windows are Roman arched (note: this window arrangement is reversed in the connecting wing between the Main Building and the Practice School, which was built at the same time as the Practice School). The windows in the building have all been replaced, though window openings have not been altered. The interior floor plan remains largely intact, hallway and stairway locations remain unaltered, and interior woodwork remains largely intact. Ceilings have been lowered in some areas, but without substantial impact to the original.

- #4 Auditorium - 1907; 74' x 100'; M. E. Beebe, architect, Fargo, ND; N.P. Fransen and Company, St. Paul, MN, general contractor; Fargo Plumbing and Heating Company, plumbing/heating contractor; Richardsonian Romanesque. The building has three stories with basement. The upper two floors contain the auditorium; first floor and basement contain classrooms opening onto center halls that run the full length of the building. An octagonal-walled, dome-roofed ventilator cupola surmounts the building's truncated hip roof. The walls are rose-colored brick with brown sandstone used as a stringcourse and decorative trim. The foundation is granite. The building's primary facade (north side) has five bays, which are defined at the second and third floor levels by recessed panels penetrated by window openings and flanked by brick pilasters. The center bay contains doubled Roman-arched stained glass windows surmounted by a small, circular

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
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Description (continued)

stained glass window -- the whole contained within a single Roman arch opening. Bays flanking the center bay contain rectangular stained glass windows surmounted by circular stained glass windows. The outer bays contain two windows each -- a rectangular double-hung sash at second floor level and a Roman-arched window at third floor level. The main facade bays at first floor level are punctured by single rectangular window openings to the east of the main entry and by paired rectangular openings to its west. The raised entry contains a large Roman-arched opening flanked by pilasters supporting a classical entablature surmounted by a balustrade -- the whole rendered in brown sandstone. East and west facades are also characterized by recessed panels flanked by pilasters at the second and third floor levels. Large Roman-arched windows are contained within these panels. At the first floor on these secondary facades are rectangular window openings. Small rectangular window openings also puncture the raised granite foundation, thus providing natural light for basement level classrooms. The building interior is substantially intact. Hallways have dropped ceilings which hide door transoms; however, all woodwork remains intact. The primary features of the auditorium space, in addition to the previously described stained glass windows which light the stage at its rear wall, are: 1) the horseshoe-shaped balcony, which is both supported from the auditorium floor by slender iron fluted columns sporting capitals of a vaguely Corinthian influence, and suspended from elaborate trusswork in the attic by heavy steel rods; 2) the elaborate decorative plaster detailing at the proscenium arch and on the balcony face, and; 3) the shallow, ribbed dome centered in the auditorium ceiling. Auditorium access is via a wide stairway centered on the rear wall and two narrower stairways at either corner of the rear wall; balcony access is from two stairways running from the center of the auditorium space to the balcony level at its side (east and west) walls. The auditorium's original seats have been replaced. The building is connected at its rear (south) wall to Science Hall by a curving two-story

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
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Description (continued)

hallway, which is part of the original auditorium building design.

- #5 Power Plant - 1909; architects and building contractors are unknown. Richardsonian Romanesque. This one-and-a-half-story building has a low truncated hip roof and sits on a very high, battered foundation wall of cut granite; the upper wall is brick of a maroon color, separated from the foundation by a thick band of limestone; the limestone banding serves as the impost for Roman-arched window and door openings, and as the window lintels for rectangular window openings which puncture the granite foundation wall. In every instance, round window openings puncture the brick walls above the rectangular window openings. Approximately two-thirds of the building is obscured from view on its west side and on all of its south side due to the addition of a flat-roofed steel enclosure used to hide from view stockpiled coal and to house vehicles used in transporting coal to the plant. Construction of the addition, though unfortunately obscuring from general view much of this lovely building, has had minimal impact on its physical integrity; the power plant's original brick smokestack has been removed and replaced with one of steel. A flat-roofed, one-and-a-half story, red brick addition has been added to the northeast corner of the building, but is not visible from the campus green.

- #6 Industrial Arts Building - 1911; Hancock Brothers, architects, Fargo; Dinnie Brothers, general contractors, Grand Forks; Fargo Plumbing and Heating Company, plumbing/heating contractor. This is a Classical Revival, three-story, flat-roofed building, rectangular in plan. It is constructed of yellow brick. The building's rectangular window openings contain four-over-four double-hung windows, symmetrically arranged within each bay but irregularly from bay to bay; its primary (north) facade, for example, from east to west has a 3-2-1-2-1 rhythm. The building carries a Classical Revival cornice with a low parapet wall above. The building has a

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
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Description (continued)

center stairwell containing a steel staircase with open balustrade and wooden handrail. The interior room configuration and finishes remain unaltered.

- #7 President's House and Garage - Built in 1901 and purchased by the school in 1921. Architect and building contractors are unknown. This is an American four-square with Neo-Colonial detailing on the north facade, the most prominent feature of which is a centered two-story bay terminating with a low spindle railing behind which sits a large gable dormer. The house is a wood frame building on a granite foundation. Its one-story front porch spans the width of the house. The roof is hipped with gable-roofed dormers on north, east and west slopes. A prominent and significant feature of this property is the dressed fieldstone retaining wall that runs along the north and west boundaries of the lot on which the house sits. A shed-roof, double-bay garage of wood frame construction, sided with wood, is approximately centered on the western edge of the lot.
- #8 Gymnasium (Graichen Gymnasium) - 1923; Keith and Kurke, architects, Fargo. This is a brick, gable-roofed rectangular building with a raised, brick-faced, basement level. The gym floor level contains large round arched window openings. Wall surfaces are subtly adorned. A soldier course runs around the round arched windows and is accented by slightly projecting header courses used at the sill line and around the outer edge of the soldier course. A similar treatment is used to form a drip course. Between the window heads and the roof line a soldier course, accented above and below with raised header courses of contrasting color, encircles the building. Into the brick band above this detail is worked a series of color-contrasting, diamond-shaped medallions. Windows have been replaced throughout the building, though window openings remain unaltered.

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Description (continued)

- #9 Model School (McCarthy Hall) - 1930; Ernest R. Boyd, architect, Jamestown; Art Moderne/Deco influences. This is a three-story, T-shaped, flat-roofed, brick building. The leg of the "T," an enclosed two-story walkway, extends the east/west axis of the five-building group, and is connected to the Practice School building by an enclosed two-story walkway. Originally the walkway connected the Practice School and Model School buildings only at the second floor level; however, the ground level space below the original walkway has been enclosed in recent years to provide protected passage between the two buildings at ground floor level as well. The building sits on a raised concrete foundation, the top of which forms the sill line for the first floor window openings. The remainder of the first floor wall is maroon-colored brick laid in common bond. The first floor is separated from the two stories above by a wide, molded limestone sill course. Above the sill course the walls are also of brick, but of variegated shades of brown and tan. The main decorative feature on the primary facade (north) is a projecting-one story entryway featuring a single set back at its roofline. The entryway contains a round-arched door opening within which the doorway is recessed. The non-original doors, aluminum storm doors, and sidelights are surmounted by a large semi-circular segmented window that lights a stair landing between the first and second stories. Decorative details on the upper floors of the north facade are quoins and a cornice of low relief rendered in brick of the same maroon color used in the first-story wall construction. This primary facade is three bays in width maintaining a 2-1-2 rhythm. The center bay projects slightly and contains a single window opening that lights a stair landing between the second and third stories. Flanking bays contain paired, large, window openings at both second and third stories. Windows are not original. Spandrel panels in the flanking bays are of brick headers laid in stacked bond and framed by a single soldier course.

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
Barnes County, ND

Description (continued)

The interior remains largely unchanged. Walls and ceilings are plaster, terrazzo floors are found in halls and stairways, and hallways contain their original steel lockers, although they have been removed along some wall sections. Original blackboards have been retained in most of the classrooms. Modern ceiling-mounted fluorescent lamps have replaced original lighting fixtures.

- #10 Garage (Industrial Technical Building) - ca. 1933; architect and contractor are unknown. This is a simple, single-story, hipped roof with gablet, building with walls of variegated brown brick. The primary facade (south) contains a large three-panel wood-louvered ventilator below the gablet peak. Centered on the south facade is the garage door opening. It contains a modern overhead garage door, replacing the original garage door(s) of unknown design. To the west of the overhead door is a window opening and a standard-sized door opening. To the east of the overhead door is a single window opening. West and east walls of the building contain three sets of paired windows evenly spaced along the length of the wall; the north wall contains no windows.
- #11 Energy and Power Lab - ca. 1940; architect and contractor are unknown. The building is generally considered to have been constructed by the Works Projects Administration. No documentary evidence has been found to substantiate such a belief, but the combination of the building's construction period and materials lend strong support to such an argument. This is a single-story, gable-roofed, building of coursed quarry faced granite ashlar. Window and door sills, lintels, and caps on the parapeted gable ends of the building are of concrete. The building's primary facade (west) exhibits irregular fenestration: to the left of center is a door and a narrow one-over-one double-hung window; to the right of center is a slightly wider door opening and then two, wide, one-over-one double-hung windows. Centered in the gable end is a square four-light single window. On the building's north wall

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
Barnes County, ND

Description (continued)

are four regularly spaced window openings from west to east, a garage door opening with a modern overhead door, and another window opening of the same dimension as those west of the door. The building's south wall carries a single double-hung window at its west end.

#12 Commemorative Gate - ca. 1911. Located at the center of the district's northern boundary, this gate is composed of two brick and concrete pillars spanned by a decorative cast iron light support from which the original globed light fixture has been removed. Also removed from the pillars are their original cast iron torches and the globes they supported. The pillars flank the sidewalk leading from the Sheyenne River north of the district to the entrance of the Main Building (McFarland Hall). The pillars are square in section and are supported on molded concrete bases. Atop the pillars are molded concrete caps terminating in concrete globes. Incised on the north sides of the cap bases are the word "CLASS" (east pillar) and the year "1909" (west pillar).

#13 Commemorative Pillar - ca. 1914. Located near the district's northeast corner, and at the northeast corner of the original campus plot, this pillar replicates those of the Commemorative Gate. Incised on the east and west sides of the cap base is the word "CLASS;" on the north and south sides is incised the year "1914."

Noncontributing Elements:

#14 Allen Memorial Library - 1952; Harold E. Bechtel, architect, Fargo; J.E. Krieg & Sons, general contractor; Frostad Plumbing and Heating, Valley City, plumbing and heating contractors. This is an irregularly, though roughly L-shaped, building of red brick. It contains two stories over a

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
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Description (continued)

basement. The building has a flat roof. Its entrance, centered on the north facade, is a three part composition that runs practically the full height of the building. At grade are four glass doors which are separated from a large twelve-panel, fixed light window above by a limestone spandrel displaying the building's name, Allen Memorial Library. This entryway composition is set within a stepped limestone frame. The large fixed sash window lights the main reading room from the north, while a wide band of glass block on the building's west wall provides additional natural lighting to the reading room space. Recessed, stuccoed panels on the building's south wall break the monotony of its large brick expanse.

- #15 Rhoades Science Center - 1973; Alvin Kosir, architect, Bismarck. This is a flat-roofed, three-story building of slab-on-grade construction. It is square in plan, with each side composed of five bays. Bays are separated by limestone pilasters, rectangular in section, and flanked by narrow glass panels running the building's full height. Pilasters are paired at the building's corners. At both grade and roofline, pilasters terminate in narrow limestone bands encircling the building. Between pilasters exterior walls are of gray brick veneer on concrete block.

Centered on and projecting from the building's north wall is a stairway/elevator shaft one bay wide. On its east and west walls, it is joined to the main building block by window panels running the full height of the building; at the foot of these panels are glass doors that provide access and egress to the stairway/elevator shaft. The balance of the east and west walls are of brick of the same manufacture used in the main building block. The stairway/elevator shaft north wall is completely faced with limestone, the expanse of which is broken by pilasters, rectangular in section, into three bays establishing a 1-2-1 rhythm.

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
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Description (continued)

The main entrance is centered on the building's north wall. It is three bays wide; the southernmost bay provides a single story, covered, entry portico open on the south and west. The walls of the other two bays mirror the brick wall surface/limestone pilaster treatment used in the main building block, except that here the glass panels flanking the pilasters have been eliminated. A wide limestone band caps the masonry construction and provides the base for a second-story greenhouse, two bays in width, which sits atop the entry block.

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
Barnes County, ND

Statement of Significance

Significant Dates (continued)

1905
1907
1909
1911
1914
1921
1923
1930

Architect/Builder (continued)

Keith (Fredrick W.) and Kurke (William F.)
Ernest R. Boyd
Harold E. Bechtel
Alvin Kosir

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State Normal School at Valley City Historic District
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Statement of Significance

The State Normal School at Valley City Historic District, which assumed its present appearance between 1892 and 1973, is a product of the need perceived by members of the state's constitutional convention of 1889 to provide institutions for the training of teachers to serve the new state's rural schools. Until the late 1920s its enrollment was consistently larger than any of the other normal schools in the state, and it was the only one which could honestly claim to serve the state at large. The district also illustrates the national pattern of such institutions to expand over time their educational roles. For the foregoing reasons the State Normal School at Valley City Historic District is eligible for National Register listing under Criterion A. Under Criterion C the district is eligible as a collection of stylistically varied buildings, designed by several of the state's best known and most prolific early architects, including the Fargo-based firms of the Hancock Brothers, Milton Earl Beebe, and Keith and Kurke. The campus which took shape through their designs reflects important historical traditions in American campus planning, as well as a campus planning ideal very much in vogue at the time. The district illustrates the tradition of organizing facilities under a single roof, which was characteristic of early American women's colleges. Such a tradition was appropriate to an institution that, during its early years, trained mostly women to teach. During the formative years of the institution, campus planning in the Beaux-Arts context was quite popular. The district, open to the Sheyenne River and the town of Valley City to the north, is characterized by symmetry, axiality, focal points, and geometric clarity. These characteristics make it an excellent North Dakota example of Beaux-Arts campus planning. It is a campus which is, in the North Dakota context, uniquely defined by topographic boundaries that lend powerful impact to its setting as an academic village.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

By the time North Dakota was admitted to the Union in 1889, a lengthy tradition of formal teacher education in America had developed. The first Normal School in the United States opened its doors in 1839 in Lexington, Massachusetts. Three decades later schools established specifically for training teachers existed in twenty-two of the nation's thirty-seven states. After 1870 the normal school idea witnessed rapid growth; by the turn of the century there were 170 public normal schools and 118 private ones.¹

Two of the nation's public normal schools were established by North Dakota's 1889 Constitutional Convention. They were among thirteen constitutionally established state institutions.² The communities in which the normal schools were located—Valley City and Mayville—are in the eastern half of the state. At statehood the eastern half of North Dakota was the only part of the state having sufficient population to compete politically for location of the state institutions created by the Constitutional Convention.

The intent of the normal schools was to train teachers for the state's elementary schools, most of which were "common," or ungraded, schools located in rural areas. Entrance to the state's normal schools required the equivalent of only an eighth grade education - a requirement that would not be increased until

¹ Knight, Edgar W., Education in the United States, (New York, 1969), p. 329.

² The other state institutions were the state capitol, state penitentiary, university, agricultural college, industrial school, school of science, school of forestry, hospital for the insane, reform school, school for the deaf and dumb, school for the blind, and old soldiers home.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

the 1920s. A student graduating from the normal school had the equivalency of about two years beyond high school.

State Normal School at Valley City opened in the fall of 1890. Its first home was "a commodious and thoroughly furnished room . . . in the City High School."³ In scarcely more than three months the fledgling institution had outgrown these quarters, thus forcing its relocation to four rooms on the second floor of one of the community's commercial blocks, the McConnell Building.⁴ Its stay here was quite brief, for the fall of 1891 found it in yet a new location, the McDonald Block—another commercial building—where it was housed on both floors of the building. None of these early buildings which housed the institution are extant. In 1892, land for a campus was acquired on the town's southern edge. There the institution's first permanent building was erected and opened for classes in December 1892.

Before a second building would be constructed, this school, along with the other state-supported schools of higher education, was faced with surviving the depression of the 1890s. The situation must have seemed very bleak, indeed, in 1895 when Governor Roger Allin vetoed almost eighty percent of the legislature's biennial appropriation to the school, which was, in any event, scarcely more than fifty percent of the school's estimated needs for the period. The State Normal School Board of Directors anticipated closing the school, but Valley City citizens, normal school board members and faculty, by raising and donating almost twice the funds appropriated by the state, managed to keep the school

³ Valley City Times-Record, Sept. 18, 1890.

⁴ Welsh, Donald H., Cornerstones: A Centennial History of Valley City State University, 1890-1990, (Valley City Times-Record, Valley City, North Dakota, 1990), p. 15.

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running. Consequently, it was not until the second North Dakota Boom (1898-1915)⁵ that the school's physical plant development began expanding to accommodate its growth in enrollment.

The Hancock Brothers architectural firm of Fargo, North Dakota, was chosen, to design the earliest normal school building. Their red brick, Richardsonian Romanesque building, astride a dressed fieldstone foundation, was situated on a terrace at the foot of a steep bluff several hundred feet south of the Sheyenne River. Sited on higher land than the town across the river to the north, the main building, today called McFarland Hall, with its square four-story clock tower, seemed to loom over the rest of the community and formed the visual focus for anyone looking south along 5th Avenue, Valley City's main north/south thoroughfare.

For eleven years McFarland Hall would be the only educational building on the campus. Then, in 1903, the Hancock Brothers designed the Science Building, now McFarland West, which was constructed immediately west of, and connected to, the original building. This was followed in 1905 by construction of the institution's Practice School building to the east of McFarland Hall, which, like the Science Building, was connected to the original building and also rendered in the Richardsonian Romanesque mode. While we do not know who is responsible for the design of this addition, it seems quite likely that it, too, was a Hancock Brothers creation, for in massing, scale, materials, design, and decorative detailing, it appears at first glance to be apiece with the original building.

⁵ A period in which the state's population increased by almost 80%, railroad mileage almost doubled to 5,200 miles, practically all of the unappropriated public lands passed into private ownership, and the acreage planted to wheat in the state doubled.

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The precedent for placing all facilities—classrooms, dormitories, dining halls, administrative offices, and even professors' lodging—under one roof was the most striking architectural aspect about early women's colleges. It "was motivated by a concern for the protection and safety of the students, as well as a desire to emphasize the family-like nature of the institution."⁶ Perhaps because attendance at North Dakota's normal schools early in their history was predominantly female, the Hancock Brothers used that precedent in their design for the Valley City institution. It is perhaps equally likely that the idea of a campus "under one roof" for the Valley City institution was a practical response to the harsh Dakota climate or to the constraints placed on the designers by the rather narrow plot of land on which the institution would develop. Whatever the reason, the principle would continue to be followed in the construction of additional classroom space in the years to come.

The organization of the campus was also influenced by what has been called the Beaux-Arts context, in which the most suitable plan for the American college was perceived as "an elongated campus, open at one end or partially at one side. . ."⁷ In the Beaux Arts context it was not the architectural style of campus buildings that was important, but the ground plan—characterized by symmetry, axiality, focal points, and overall geometric clarity—that was supreme.⁸ A ground plan designed on such principles could accommodate buildings of almost any architectural style.

⁶ Paul Venable Turner, Campus: An American Planning Tradition, (MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1984), p. 133.

⁷ Ibid. p. 188.

⁸ Ibid. p. 204.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

In 1907 the Hancock Brothers lost their seeming monopoly on campus design at the school. Another Fargo architect, Milton Earl Beebe, was hired to design an auditorium, for which the school had lobbied for several years. In 1904, for example, the institution's biennial report called for "another extension . . . large enough for a general assembly room for the school with a seating capacity of from twelve to fifteen hundred . . . [because] . . . the school is growing so rapidly . . . [and] the present capacity of our [assembly] room is only two hundred and eighty-nine, too small for the present school."⁹ Beebe's design placed the new 74' x 100' auditorium forward of the Hancock Brothers' linear composition and joined to it by a curving, two-story, connecting hallway. Beebe's choice of materials—granite, brick, and sandstone—complemented those used in the earlier buildings. Rather than the Richardsonian Romanesque, however, he drew on the Renaissance Revival for stylistic influence. Such divergences were not unusual for Beebe; in creating an addition to the state's first capitol building just three years earlier he had shown an even greater willingness to diverge from the original architect's design. Beebe was not unusual in this trait among his fellow practitioners. Almost contemporaneously with Beebe's normal school work, the architectural critic, Montgomery Schuyler, caustically observed "the history of American Collegiate architecture [shows] that the original architect, essaying to set a point of departure for his successors, is commonly found to have done so in the sense only that they depart from his work as speedily and as widely as possible."¹⁰

⁹ Report of the Board of Management of the State Normal School at Valley City, North Dakota, for the Biennial Period Ending June 30, 1904. Public Document No. 25, 1904, p. 26.

¹⁰ Turner, p. 188. Quoting Schuyler's "Architecture of American Colleges. V," Architectural Record, September, 1910, p. 187.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

The school returned to the Hancock Brothers for design of the next two buildings in the district. For the earliest of these, a power plant constructed ca. 1909, the designers returned to Richardsonian Romanesque as the style of choice, and the materials used were consistent with those used earlier by both the Hancocks and Beebe. The building was sited on what was, at the time, the eastern edge of the campus and roughly opposite the recent Beebe-designed auditorium.

The last building at the school definitely attributable to the Hancock Brothers was the Industrial Arts building, constructed in 1911. This building might have completed the Beaux-Arts plan, but for the existence of the Practice school to which it would have to have been attached. Sufficient space existed between the power plant and the Practice School to accommodate a wing that would mirror Beebe's auditorium at the opposite end of the campus. Such siting would have been consistent with the "under one roof" approach to building development as well as with the previously mentioned Beaux-Arts planning principles. As a functioning grade school, however, the Practice School would not have conveniently accommodated normal school traffic between the campus buildings located to its west and any new building attached to it on the east. Placing a new building anywhere to the north of the existing construction would have flown in the face of the Beaux Arts principles. The best remaining location was to the south of the existing construction, wedged into the little available space left between the foot of the high bluff and the rear of the original campus building. This site was not publicly visible. Consequently, there would be less need for any building constructed thereon to conform closely in either materials or design to the earlier campus construction. The Hancocks gave the school a simple three-story building, unadorned except for a projecting Classical Revival cornice with a low

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Statement of Significance (continued)

parapet wall above. The Industrial Arts building was connected to the main building at its rear wall by an open brick pedestrian bridge (removed in 1973) under which vehicular traffic could pass.

Completion of the Industrial Arts Building brought construction on the campus to a halt for more than a decade. This was due, at least in part, to changing population patterns in the two decades since statehood. Increased settlement in the western part of the state brought with it demands for public services which had previously been available only by traveling to its more populous eastern half.¹¹ One such demand was for a state normal school in Minot. In 1910 the state's constitution was amended to allow its construction.

The competition for students and for legislative appropriations for much needed capital construction and operating funds represented by the newly authorized institution was not lost on its older sister institution. In its report to the governor, submitted shortly after the Minot institution was established and appropriations for its construction authorized, the Valley City institution complained bitterly. Citing already inadequate classroom space in the recently completed Industrial Arts building and the need for a building in which to house its newly created Department of Physical Education, its board of trustees terminated its report with the complaint that:

"when [the state] is in a position to appropriate \$200,000 for a building for an institution without either faculty or students, [we are] satisfied that the state can provide buildings for an

¹¹ The population Missouri Plateau, the largest portion of western North Dakota, for example, increased by almost 300%, from 47,000 to 187,000, between 1900 and 1910.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

institution of six or seven hundred students and a faculty of more than fifty, and especially so when the entire cost of all its present buildings is far below the cost proposed for a building to be used by an institution that doesn't yet exist."¹²

The competition for students and state appropriations, however, would only increase. In 1916 a second normal school to be located at Dickinson, in the southwest corner of the state, was established by constitutional amendment. Appropriations for this new institution were made the following year, and classes began in 1918.

In the face of competition from the new institutions, it was not until 1923 that the normal school at Valley City would get its long-awaited physical education building (now Graichen Gymnasium), designed by the Fargo architectural firm of Keith and Kurke. It was built on land acquired in 1921 lying immediately west of the original campus. An important aspect of this land acquisition was the inclusion of a 1901 residential structure, which served from the time of its purchase until 1992 as the institution's president's residence.

The physical education building, at the time of its construction, was separated from the rest of the campus by a north-south street that had formed the western edge of the original campus tract. Until this street was closed in 1952 to accommodate construction of Allen Memorial Library, it constituted a visual barrier that somewhat excluded the gymnasium from the Beaux-Arts campus composition.

¹² Report of the State Board of Normal School Trustees for the Biennial Period ending June 30, 1912, Public Document 18, 1912, p.15.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

More important to the institution in 1921 than this property acquisition, however, was the passage of legislation allowing the state's normal schools to extend their course offerings so bachelor's degrees in education could be awarded, thus paving the way for their transformation to four-year teachers' colleges. This change brought to an end the monopoly previously held by the University of North Dakota and the state's agricultural college in training high school teachers.

The normal schools had lobbied to expand their educational influence for many years. As early as 1905 they promoted conversion of their institutions into teachers' colleges. The University of North Dakota, mobilizing a vocal alumni, successfully resisted the change but could not end the normal schools' continued agitation for change. In its 1908 report to the governor, for example, the Valley City institution pleaded to expand its departments of domestic science, manual training, and agriculture, and charged the legislature with preventing "by accident or design" extension of the normal school's educational training beyond the two years of post high-school work prescribed by law. "What schools in this or any other state," demanded the report, "are thus limited by legislation?"¹³

Whether limited by legislation or not, North Dakota's normals in the early twentieth century provided about the same level of training as the rest of the nation's normal schools. Clearly, however, the movement converting the nation's normal schools into teachers colleges granting four-year degrees in education had begun. In 1900 there were 170 publicly supported normal schools;

¹³ Biennial Reports of the Boards of Management and Faculty of the State Normal Schools at Valley City and Mayville, North Dakota, for the Biennial Period Ending June 30, 1908. Public Document 27, 1908, pp. 48-49.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

in 1920 their number had declined to 137; by 1933 there were only 50.¹⁴

The State Normal School at Valley City, in 1923, was the first of the state's normal schools to make the transition to a teachers' college. The transition would be completed eight years later when the State Normal School in Dickinson, the most recently established normal school in the state, began offering a B.A. in Education.

The decade of the thirties brought construction of one major building on the campus—the new Model School. It was designed as a junior/senior high school, serving the community, in which students from Valley City State Teachers College could both observe and practice teaching methods. Though the building may have been an excellent model functionally in terms of educational theory and practice of the day, it failed to contribute, at least to the extent it might have, to the Beaux-Arts campus plan. Had the new Model school been sited opposite the campus green from Beebe's auditorium and connected to the earlier Practice School building by a curved connecting wing, such as Beebe had used, symmetry and geometric clarity would have been reestablished to the campus plan. The visual disruption caused by the choice of siting for the Model School was reinforced by the building's style, Moderne, and the choice of materials used in its construction (several varieties of brick, the most predominant of which was highly variegated in color).

¹⁴ Donald H. Welsh, Cornerstones - A Centennial History of Valley City State University, 1890 - 1990, (Valley City Times-Record, Valley City, ND, 1990), p.3. See also Edgar W. Knight, Education in the United States, (Greenwood Press, New York, 1969), pp. 29-30.

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Two minor buildings were added to the campus during the district's period of significance: a garage built in 1933, which has since been converted to classroom use, and a gable-roofed fieldstone warehouse building, believed to have been constructed as a Works Projects Administration project in 1942, which has also been converted to classroom use. These are located east of the power house along the easternmost boundary of the district.

The significant end date for the district corresponds approximately to the transition of the school from a teachers' college to an institution that granted liberal arts degrees as well. It was a change justified on the grounds that returning World War II degree-seeking veterans could not all be expected to attend the state university or agricultural college nor to receive degrees only in education at the state's teachers' colleges. Though allowance to grant Bachelor of Arts degrees was extended to all of the state's teachers' colleges in 1946, Valley City State Teachers College did not change its name to Valley City State College until 1963.

Several important changes in the campus occurred during the post-World War II period. One was the introduction of vehicular parking and classroom functions into the space fronting the Sheyenne River on the south edge of the river. This was originally a park-like area that served as an extension of the campus green. Because of its adaptation for non-original uses, it is excluded from the district.

Two other changes have had important impact within the district. One was construction in 1952 of Allen Memorial Library. Stylistically modern, it is unfortunately unsympathetic in almost every conceivable way to the campus of which it is a part. Its siting, almost cheek-to-jowl with Beebe's auditorium building, necessitated closing the north/south street which had previously separated Graichen gymnasium from the original campus tract. Siting of the library again defied some of the principles on

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Statement of Significance (continued)

which the Beaux-Arts campus ideal was founded, further divorcing the institution from that tradition.

Post-war planning critics viewed earlier efforts to develop grand campus schemes as failures. One such critic claimed that "Every attempt to bind [universities] to a pattern laid out in advance has failed—and ought to have failed. . . . We must set them free to develop their own environment in whatever way may best suit their existing needs . . ." ¹⁵ The implication of this viewpoint for Valley City State Teachers College, and for a great many colleges around the country, was to encourage administrators, architects, and planners to focus on the individual parts (i.e., individual campus buildings) at the expense of the whole composition. As one historian of American campus planning has observed, "If it was impossible or undesirable to conceive the whole campus as a unified 'grand composition,' then each component could be given its own character, with little or no responsibility to the whole." ¹⁶ For better or worse, Allen Memorial Library is exemplary of this post-war campus planning philosophy.

The final important post-war change within the district was the construction of Rhoades Science Center. Built in 1973, it provides further evidence of the philosophy that placed supremacy of the part over the whole. It, too, in almost every way, appears out of step with the earlier campus buildings. Though its siting at the northeast corner of the district appears to have been an effort to preserve the integrity of the campus green, it, in fact, results from a 1964 campus development plan prepared by the firm of Harland Bartholomew and Associates of

¹⁵ Turner, p. 260. Quoting Joseph Hudnut, "On Form in Universities," Architectural Forum, 1947, pp. 90-92.

¹⁶ Ibid.

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Washington, D.C. That plan called for a science classroom building to be sited at the northeast corner of the district.

The Bartholomew plan, which was based on a projected full-time enrollment of 2,100 students, recommended the destruction of buildings "which are functionally if not structurally obsolete". Not surprisingly, those buildings were the original building on campus, Science Hall, the Practice School Building, Vangstad Auditorium, the Industrial Arts Building, and Graichen Gymnasium.¹⁷

Fortunately, unmet enrollment projections, the continuing difficulty in obtaining legislative appropriations for campus development, placement of capital improvement priorities on expanding and improving student housing and services, rather than administrative and classroom space, and, in very recent years, a university administration sympathetic to historic preservation issues have all combined to prevent implementation within the district of the changes called for by the Bartholomew plan. As a result, Valley City State University faces the twenty-first century with the opportunity to maintain and enhance a campus which so clearly reflects the historical forces that shaped it.

¹⁷ Harland Bartholomew and Associates, Valley City State College Master Plan, 1964, pp. 38-40.

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UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
5.	14	576100	5196370
6.	14	576070	5196340
7.	14	575880	5196330
8.	14	575890	5196260
9.	14	575830	5196260

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary, which is indicated on the accompanying base map, includes all historic buildings and objects constructed within the district's period of significance and which retain sufficient integrity to contribute to the character of the district. Please note, however, that at the time the nomination was researched, written, and presented to the State Review Board a steel suspension footbridge, which had for many years spanned the Sheyenne River approximately 200' north of the district's north boundary, had been removed for rehabilitation. This bridge and a very small park-like area immediately adjacent to it on the north bank of the Sheyenne River are logical future additions to the district. Their eventual inclusion would result in a discontinuous district.

Map adapted from Valley City State University Master Plan, Volume One, prepared by Foss Associates, Fargo, North Dakota

Contributing Elements:

- #1 Main Building (McFarland Hall)
- #2 Science Hall (McFarland West)
- #3 Practice School (McFarland East)
- #4 Vangstad Auditorium
- #5 Power Plant
- #6 Industrial Arts Building
- #7 President's House and Garage
- #8 Graichen Gymnasium
- #9 Model School (McCarthy Hall)
- #10 Garage (Industrial Technical Building)
- #11 Energy and Power Lab
- #12 Commemorative Gate
- #13 Commemorative Pillar

Non-contributing elements:

- #14 Allen Memorial Library
- #15 Rhoades Science Center

