

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED 21 SEP 1979
DATE ENTERED JAN 15 1980

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Normal Hill Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Central Avenue-Caldwell Drive (Northwestern State University Campus)

CITY, TOWN

Natchitoches

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

5th-Jerry Huckaby

STATE

Louisiana 71457

CODE

022

COUNTY

Natchitoches

CODE

069

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Northwestern State University of Louisiana

STREET & NUMBER

College Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Natchitoches

STATE

Louisiana 71457

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Clerk of Court, Natchitoches Parish Court

STREET & NUMBER

New Courthouse, Church Street

CITY, TOWN

Natchitoches

STATE

Louisiana 71457

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Louisiana Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1979

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

Baton Rouge

STATE

Louisiana

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The proposed historic district comprises the oldest portion of the campus of Northwestern State University. It consists of three large brick buildings around a quadrangle, with three columns (all that remains of the old Bullard Hall), set in one corner (see map). The quadrangle is built thirty feet above the general floodplain level, on a site which has traditionally been known as "the Hill". Since the quadrangle was built, the university has expanded on all sides with new buildings, parking lots, and roads. So the boundaries of the nominated area were drawn to cut closely around the three buildings and the space they enclose.

The Columns

The three brick columns were once part of the four-column portico of Bullard Hall, which was built as the Bullard mansion in 1832 and demolished in 1904. The enlarged bases of the Doric columns are original.

Caldwell Hall

Built of solid masonry, four bricks thick with frame-supported floors, Caldwell Hall measures 285 feet wide by 71 feet deep. It has two full stories, a partial third story, and an English basement. Much modified, the interior has no architectural significance.

The Jacobean Revival exterior is symmetrically articulated in seven parts which vary in height from two and a half to three stories. The various roofline combinations of triangular gables, semicircular gables, and parapets have a thick and solid appearance, which is in keeping with the substantial character of the building. Each exterior feature is strongly emphasized with limestone or cement and designed to contrast with the red Flemish bond brickwork of the facade. There is quoining at each of the numerous corners and around each of the large groupings of plate glass windows. Each story is separated by a horizontal band, an effect which belies the Victorian origins of the design. There is little actual ornamentation, except at the four entrance doors. The front of the building once marked the main approach to the campus along Caldwell Avenue, and it still has the original reflecting pool in front of the central block, which was designed to monumentalize that facade.

Warren Easton Hall (1928)

Easton Hall is of brick masonry construction, two stories high with an English basement. Although the original interior is largely intact, it is undistinguished. Unlike Caldwell Hall, Easton Hall has a quiet, almost Georgian massing, with a pitched roof central block flanked by flat roof wings. The building is entered by means of a central compound four-centered lancet arch set at the end of a balustraded bridge. At one time this entrance arch was surmounted by an oriel window. This, however, has been removed, leaving a white patched area in the wall. The fenestration quoining is more restrained than at Caldwell Hall, and there is no quoining at the corners of the building. The brick is laid up in Flemish bond, with glazed headers in the parapets over the wings, which form a diamond pattern. Unlike the other buildings of the quadrangle, the rear of Easton Hall has received no decorative treatment whatever.

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Russell Hall (1938)

Built of hollow tile faced with brick Flemish bond facing, Russell Hall is a one and a half story pitch roof building with an English basement. The building is entered through a central gabled pavilion with a "U" shaped set of stairs. Though largely original, the interiors are nondescript, being composed mainly of classrooms and library stacks. At Russell Hall the limestone detailing and the massing are even more restrained than at Caldwell Hall or Easton Hall. The most noteworthy feature is the pillared, segmental pedimented front door. The rest of the fenestration consists of large rectangular medieval-looking windows.

Though a rear wing has recently been added, it is low in scale and built of brick which is of compatible color to the original portion of Russell Hall. In any case the rear wing is not visible from the Quadrangle which is the major spatial element of the district.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" 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 1908, 1928, 1936

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Normal Hill historic district is significant in the areas of architecture and education.

The idea of a University quadrangle, designed in the English-late medieval or Jacobean style, was something of a fashion for institutions of higher learning in the early 20th century. The old quadrangle at Northwestern is a fine example of this, and is one of only two examples in Louisiana. In addition, it constitutes one of only about six substantial examples of Jacobean Revival architecture in the state. Most of the Louisiana State University campuses are completely modern. LSU's campus in Baton Rouge dates from the 1920's but no other state university campus can boast a major educational building of the vintage of Caldwell Hall (1908).

The Normal Hill historic district is also of educational significance because it was the site of Louisiana's first major state-supported Normal School for the preparation of teachers. Louisiana Normal School was founded in 1884 with a two-year curriculum. It opened its doors in the fall of 1885 with a faculty of three and a student body of 27. It was converted to a senior college in 1917 and eventually expanded to become the present Northwestern State University.

The Bullard Mansion, whose three columns remain, was built in 1832 as a private home. In 1857 it became part of the Convent School of the Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Soon after the Civil War, the nuns left. The mansion was occupied briefly in 1878 by federal troops. In 1884 the Bullard Mansion became part of the new Normal School. During this period the house was generally known as the "Matron's building." It was finally demolished in 1904 to make room for Caldwell Hall.

Caldwell Hall is named for Beverly C. Caldwell, who was president of the Normal School at the time it was built. On a trip east around the turn of the century, Caldwell read a newspaper article describing a new education building recently completed at the Rhode Island State Normal School in Providence, which was said to be the outstanding structure of its type in the nation. Caldwell wrote to Rhode Island Normal for information on the building and eventually received a complete set of blueprints and a list of building materials. These plans had considerable influence on the construction of Caldwell Hall.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Fredericks, Albert A., "Louisiana State Normal College, Natchitoches," in Edwin A. Davis(ed.), The Historical Encyclopedia of Louisiana (Louisiana Historical Bureau, n.d.), pp. 39-40.
- Guardia, J.E., Unpublished manuscript (Scrapbook No. 68), Melrose Collection, Louisiana Room, Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University.
- Knowles, Eliot S., Jr., "The Life and Career of Beverly C. Caldwell," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern State University.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 6 acres

UTM NOT VERIFIED

QUADRANGLE NAME _____

QUADRANGLE SCALE _____

UTM REFERENCES

A 1, 5 4, 9, 11, 2, 5, 0 3, 5, 1, 2, 6, 5, 0

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

see attached scale map.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

George A. Stokes

ORGANIZATION

Northwestern State University of Louisiana

DATE

June 1979

STREET & NUMBER

College Avenue

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Natchitoches

STATE

Louisiana 71457

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Bernard Larrier

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 8/16/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Sally G. Giddell
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 1/5/80

ATTEST: *Boyl G. Gougeon*
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 1/11/80

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Caldwell demolished the Bullard House and another building, and used the brick obtained from them for the foundation of the new building. Making the most efficient use of meager state appropriations, gathering the required materials from a variety of sources, and departing from the plans when necessary, Caldwell completed the new building in 1908. It has been occupied continuously since that time and has won a place in the hearts of thousands of students who attended classes there when it was the center of the college's academic and administrative life.

Warren Easton Hall, built in 1928, was for many years the center of the college's teacher training activities and is today still used for classes. Russell Hall, constructed in 1936, was once the college's main library and is now in limited use as a classroom building.

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2

State Normal School, Biennial Report, 1906-1907, pp. 120-121.

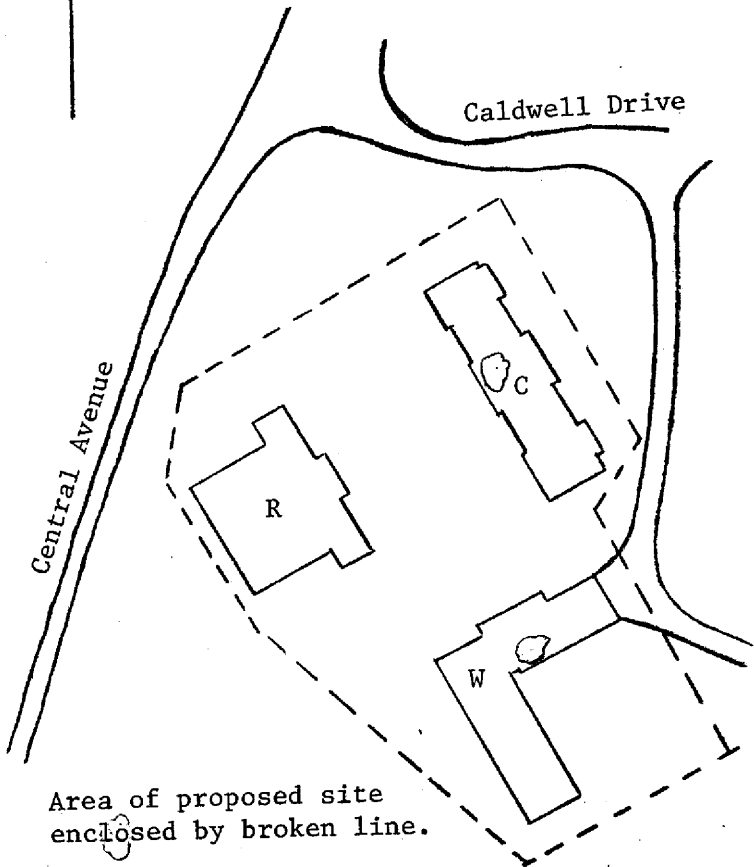
"State Normal School," in Alcee Fortier, Louisiana (Century Historical Association, 1914), Vol. 2, pp. 492-494.

Taylor, Joe G., Louisiana: A Bicentennial History (New York: Norton, 1976), p. 150.

Varnado, Ethel D., Undated letter to Mamie B. Tarleton, Tarleton Collection, Louisiana Room, Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University.

PROPOSED NORMAL HILL SITE
Northwestern State University of Louisiana
Natchitoches, Louisiana

N

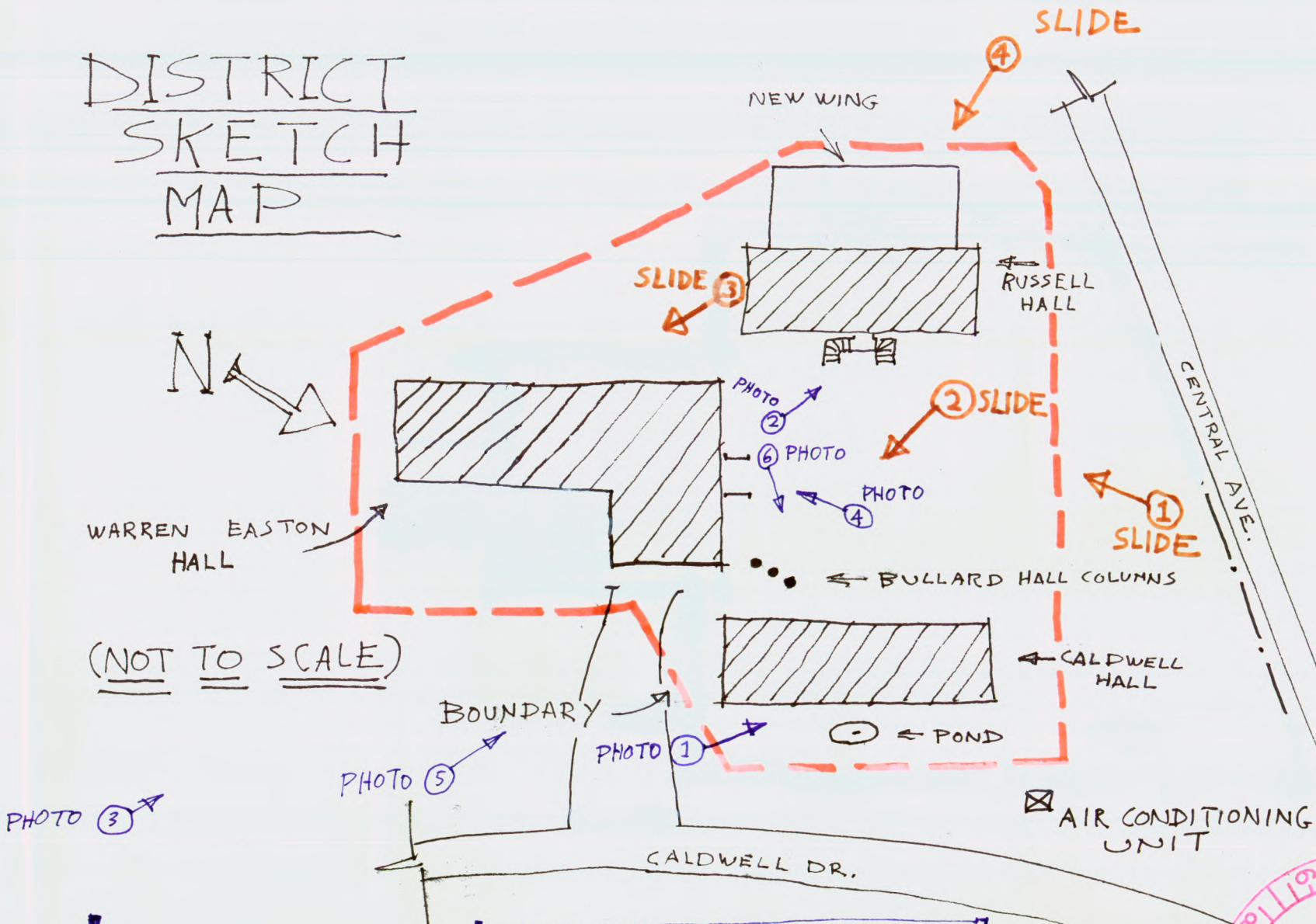


Area of proposed site
enclosed by broken line.

- C = Caldwell Hall
- R = Russell Hall
- W = Warren Easton Hall

0 100 200 feet
scale

DISTRICT SKETCH MAP



(NOT TO SCALE)

LEGEND

- PHOTOS SHOWN IN BLUE
- SLIDES SHOWN IN BROWN
- BOUNDARIES SHOWN IN RED

