NPS Form 10-900
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NATIONAL REGISTER

**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. See instructions in *How to 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 Edwin A. Stevens Hall

other names/site number

## 2. Location

street & number Fifth Street between Hudson and River streets ☒ NA ☐ not for publication

city or town Hoboken ☐ vicinity

state New Jersey code NJ 034 county Hudson code 017 zip code 07030

## 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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date 12/9/93

Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO

State or 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:) _____

fm Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

Entered in the National Register 2/4/94

Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Name of Property

Hudson/NJ
County and State

## 5. Classification

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

- [X] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

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

- [X] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

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

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 0 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 1 | 0 | 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/college

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS/education/offices & classrooms

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions)

High Victorian Gothic

**Materials**
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite
walls Granite
roof Slate
other Sandstone, limestone

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

Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Name of Property

Hudson/NJ
County and State

## 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** N/A
(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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**
(Enter categories from instructions)
Education
Architecture
Social History

**Period of Significance**
1871-1902

**Significant Dates**
1871

**Significant Person**
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**
N/A

**Architect/Builder**
Richard Upjohn & Richard M. Upjohn

**Narrative Statement of Significance**
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** N/A

- [ ] 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 # _____

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:
NJ Historic Trust

Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Name of Property

Hudson/NJ
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 1.17 acres  Jersey City, NJ Quad

**UTM References**
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 18 | 580610 | 4510410 |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |

☐ 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 Robert P. Guter

organization ACROTERION  date 28 April 1993

street & number 161 W. 73rd Street  telephone (212) 799-0156

city or town New York  state NY  zip code 10023

## 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 The Trustees of the Stevens Institute of Technology

street & number Fifth Street  telephone (201) 216-5000

city or town Hoboken  state NJ  zip code 07030

SETTING

Edwin A. Stevens Hall stands at the foot of the Stevens Institute of Technology campus, occupying all of the Fifth Street block frontage between Hudson Street and River Steet (Map No. 1). The campus occupies historic "Castle Point," which lies almost dead center along the Hudson River shoreline of the City of Hoboken (Map No. 2), affording a splendid view of the New York City skyline.

The portion of the block occupied by Stevens Hall is essentially flat, with a nearly imperceptible rise in grade from the street frontage to the building facade. Around the front and sides are lawn, scatterd with mature deciduous trees at the periphery. A few low evergreen shrubs are planted along the main walk and the facade. Some lengths of 19th-century iron fence survive, separating sidewalk from lawn (Photos Nos. 1 and 2). Although details of the landscaping have changed over time, old photos and prints (Photo No. 13) prove that the treatment was always simple and differed little from existing conditions. The lot at the rear of the building has been paved with asphalt (Photo Nos. 5 and 6).

Immediately to the south of Stevens Hall lies Hudson Square (or Stevens) Park, a one-block-square parcel of municipally owned open space that was set aside as a public park by Col. John Stevens when he laid out the city. To the west stands a group of mid-to late-19th-century masonry row houses sited in a manner typical of the city's strict gridiron plan.

North and east of Stevens Hall stand the buildings that constitute the remainder of the most historic section of the campus. They include the Carnegie Building, (Ackerman & Ross, Architects, 1902) and Walker Gymnasium (Ludlow & Peabody, Architects, 1915). To the east lies the Hudson River shoreline.

EXTERIOR

In overall plan, the building is an E shape, although the clear identity of the rear-facing center bar of the E has been obscured by additions (Plan No. 1). All wings, with the exception of the rear center wing, are two stories in height. The combination of a high basement and a mansard roof, however, result in an effective height of nearly four stories for the main, or

Fifth Street, elevation. Materials are rockfaced granite, sandstone, limestone, and slate.

Fifth Street Facade

The Fifth Street facade is the principal elevation (Photo No. 1). Its 180' length is composed of a total of 13 bays, anchored at the center by a three-bay projecting block. This block narrows at the mansard roof and rises one additional story to become a tower 61' high. The entrance, in the projecting block, is reached by a broad flight of stone steps that leads to a double-leaf door set in a Gothic arch. The doorway is framed by a quoined, sandstone frontispiece. This entry composition is an alteration of the original, made in 1953.

Windows are 1/1 sash with stone Gothic arches set above their trabeated heads. The tower windows are finished with true Gothic arches. All of the windows were blocked down with anodized aluminum panels as part of a renovation carried out in the 1980s. The mansard roof is lighted with dormer windows. Their original gabled roofs were altered to shed roofs in the 1940s.

Ornament consists of stone trim designed to effect a polychromatic contrast when played off against the rockfaced granite walls. The principal sandstone ornamental features consist of a beltcourse above the basement windows, and window frames and continuous stringcourses that are extended to form the window sills and lintels. On the first floor the sandstone lintels are elaborated to suggest elliptical Gothic arches incised with a quatrefoil motif. On the second floor and in the projecting center bay limestone is added to the sandstone to create more complex Gothic ornament based on quatrefoils and roundels. The second-floor arches are set with alternating bands of sandstone and limestone, and the third- and fourth-stage tower windows are separated by a limestone band of three squares, each incised with a large quatrefoil ornament.

The mansard roof is clad in rectangular gray slates and has copper curbing and flashing. The tower roof is a low hip that appears to be flat when viewed from the street.

East and West Elevations

Each of these identical elevations consists of two four-bay sections (Photo No. 2). Each section is two stories. The ground-to-roof heights of the north, or rear, sections are lower, however. Ornament and windows are slightly simplified versions of those found on the facade, with the same limestone and sandstone trim employed.

The east and west entrances are double-leaf modern steel doors reached by stone steps, but their Gothic-arched surrounds are original (Photo No. 3). The quatrefoil and banded ornament found on the facade is repeated here as well. The mansard roofs are identical to the roof forms and materials described above.

Rear (North) Elevations

Here, ornament is dispensed with entirely and brick is substituted for stone. These elevations, in fact, make no pretense at Gothic; their strictly utilitarian appearance is industrial in character and has been so from the beginning (see Fig. 2).

The two projecting end-wings, the "arms" of the E shape, are two bays long. The lower grade at this point gives these wings a true, three-story height, since the level which was a high basement at Fifth Street is here almost entirely above ground (Photo No. 4).

The center bar of the E is a one-story, double-height gabled block, brick-clad in its entirety. Windows on the east and west sides are round-arched and have been blocked-in (Photo No. 5); the four-bay north elevation has trabeated windows with sash altered as part of the 1980s renovation (Photo No. 6). On the roof is a series of cylindrical, galvanized metal ventilators.

INTERIOR

The simple character of the interior has been evident from the beginning, documented in photographs in Franklin De Ronde Furman's History of the Stevens Institute of Technology. Although Furman's history was published in 1905, its illustrations show that most of the interior spaces had not yet been altered. The classrooms and laboratories were large, loftlike spaces. Their only decorative elements were chamfered posts with trusswork braces.

Successive changes, carried out for the accommodation of new equipment and technology, resulted in the loss of those original details. The earliest alterations that resulted in these changes cannot be documented.

The cross-axial center of the original circulation plan has remained unaltered (see Plan No. 1). Subsidiary corridors and stairs have been changed repeatedly.

Unlike the utilitarian laboratories and classrooms, a few other rooms were treated to more high-style details and finishes. These have remained largely intact. They include the foyer; two flanking offices; lobby and grand stair; and auditorium. These are described below.

Foyer

The octagonal foyer is entered directly through the Fifth Street doors (Photo No. 7). Opposite the exterior doors, on the north wall, is the entrance to the Lobby\Stair Hall. On the east and west walls are doors leading to offices contained in the projecting center wing.

The principal character-defining element of this room is a wooden, lancet-arched wainscot, stained a dark color like the doors and door frames. This feature establishes the Gothic style of the interior through simple architectural means. The walls above the wainscot are plastered; preliminary microscopic analysis has revealed evidence of a painted trompe l'oeil decorative scheme.

A Gothic Revival lantern contemporary with the building's original fittings is suspended from the center of the plaster ceiling; there is no crown molding. Beneath recently installed composition flooring material is a wooden floor, its date uncertain.

Offices

Entered from the foyer are two squarish rooms. On the original plan (Fig. 3) one is designated "President's Office," the other "Reception Room. Both have served as offices throughout the

20th century. Their Gothic character is established by their tall, narrow, paired windows looking out on Fifth Street.

Plaster walls, ceilings, and crown moldings, and dark-stained wooden door and window frames are original and survive in a good state of integrity. These elements are not explicitly Gothic, but represent stock millwork and plasterwork typical of the 1870s. Photo No. 8 shows the east office and represents the features found in both. The door to the right leads to the foyer, the windows overlook Fifth Street.

Lobby\Stair Hall

Directly on axis with the main entrance, this room is entered through the foyer. On the first floor the lobby space is a transverse hall running parallel to the Fifth Street facade.

The double stair rises behind a screen of three round-arched plaster arches that spring from a pair of polished oak Corinthian columns (Photo No. 9). The framing arches, like the two arches separating the lobby from the corridors, rest on cast-plaster corbels. The west-corridor arch (foreground in Photo No. 9) survives in its original condition. The east arch has been filled-in.

Like the foyer, the lobby has a dark-stained wooden wainscot, but here the detailing is a simple beaded board with base and cap molding, instead of the foyer's lancet-arched motif. The walls above the wainscot are plaster and so is the ceiling. Like the foyer floor, the floor here is hardwood, without decorative elaboration. This space is lighted by two bronze lanterns that postdate the building's period of significance.

The wooden staircase (Photo No. 10) springs from composite wooden newel posts, a combination of lathe-turned and square-in-section members. The balusters are smaller versions of the same composite form. The stair rises to the second floor where the lobby at that level repeats the features and finishes found on the first floor and depicted in Photo No. 9. At the third-floor tower level (Photo No. 11), a pair of chamfered posts replaces the columns found on the lower level.

Auditorium

The auditorium (Photo No. 12, taken from the stage, view toward lobby wall) measures 45′ x 80′, with a floor-to-ceiling height of 40′ at the roof ridge. Entry is from the lobby through a double-leaf door centered on the south wall and two single-leaf doors at the ends of the same wall.

The east and west walls are plastered above window level; below the windows is a painted wooden wainscot finished with a paneled frieze at sill height. The round-arched windows in these walls remain evident from outside (see Photo No. 5), but have been blocked-up inside. The north wall is occupied by a raised wooden stage, curtained to create a proscenium effect.

The gabled roof can be seen through a system of chamfered wooden rafters, trusses, posts, and purlins that forms a classic queen-post assembly. At the line where the rafters meet the walls is a decorative wooden cornice and frieze.

The rear third of the auditorium is occupied by a wooden balcony supported, in part, by a pair of cast iron columns. At the front of the balcony is a balustrade composed of turned wooden balusters and a wooden rail. Two single-leaf doors provide entry through the rear wall.

INTEGRITY

The architectural integrity of the important surviving interior spaces is good; most alterations have obscured original features and finishes, not obliterated them.

On the exterior, by contrast, some features have been removed entirely.

Using historical photographs, drawings, plans, and other sources that provide documentation in substantial detail, Stevens Institute plans to restore the building's character-defining exterior and interior features. See Figs. 4 and 5 for illustrations of proposed Lobby and Auditorium restoration.

Edwin A. Stevens Hall meets National Register Criterion A for its expression of the philanthropic interests and inventive genius of the Stevens family and for its identity as the first school of mechanical engineering in the United States, where all activities took place for the first thirty years of the school's existence; it meets Criterion C as an important transitional design that illustrates the change in the work of R. Upjohn & Co. from the career of Richard Upjohn to that of Richard M. Upjohn.

John Stevens and the Development of Hoboken

The creation of the Stevens Institute of Technology, which for its first thirty years was synonymous with the building now known as Edwin A. Stevens Hall, is an unusually direct outgrowth of one family's close identification with the development and prosperity of a private estate that became a municipality. The place now called Hoboken was admired by the Dutch in the 17th century. By the middle of the 18th century it had become an informal pleasure ground much coveted by urban dwellers across the Hudson River in New York City.

At the time of the American Revolution, the most prominent owner of choice acreage on the Hudson heights was William Bayard. Bayard's holdings devolved to Col. John Stevens because of a shift in political allegiance:

> After the City of New York had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and the patriot army had been driven back toward the Delaware, Mr. Bayard, who at first was active in the cause of the Colonies, withdrew his assistance, and, on May 1, 1777, joined the Army of the King. For this act his property in New Jersey was confiscated to the State, and advertised by the Commissioner of Forfeited Estates to be sold. It was purchased by. Col. John Stevens of New York, March 16, 1784, for L18,360. (1)

The estate thus procured by John Stevens (1749-1838) was "a garden spot scarcely to be equalled, and filled with the greatest plenty of the best of fruits . . . a better fishing place for catching shad, etc, there is not on the North River, with plenty of oysters in the creek before the door." (2) William Bayard had already bestowed on this garden spot the name it still bears,

"Castle Point," for the promontary that breaks the regular shoreline of the Hudson at the point where he built his house.

The scale of John Stevens' ambitions became evident once post-war conditions had begun to make development attractive and economic growth feasible. In 1804 he had his lands laid out on a map entitled "A Map of the New City of Hoboken." On the 20th of March in that same year Col. Stevens advertised a four day's sale of eight hundred lots, an act which gained for him in later histories the title of Founder of Hoboken. (3)

Steady growth slowly began to change the solitary estate into the thriving settlement Stevens envisioned. By 1834, Gordon's Gazetteer was able to report that Hoboken contained "about 100 dwellings, 3 licensed taverns, many unlicensed houses of entertainment, 4 or 5 stores, and several livery stables and gardens, and between 6 and 7 hundred inhabitants." (4)

Integral to John Stevens' hopes for Hoboken, however, was his belief in its potential as a pleasure ground instead of a thoroughly urbanized place. Toward this end he improved a walk along the river, developed a mineral spring in the rock at Castle Point, and encouraged others to develop similar attractions. Early on, one observer recognized the importance of Hoboken's bucolic charms and Stevens' role in making them accessible:

> Hoboken is remarkable chiefly as a place of resort for the citizens of New York during the hot days of summer; the bank of the river is high, and the invigorating sea breeze may be enjoyed at almost all hours . . . The liberality of Mr. Stevens has opened many attractions to visitors, in the walks along the river bank over his grounds; and in the beautiful fields studded with clumps of trees, and variegated by shady woods, the business New Yorker finds a momentary relaxation and enjoyment . . . (5)

In order to contribute fresh impetus to Hoboken's growth, the heirs of John Stevens incorporated the Hoboken Land and Improvement Company in 1838, the year of his death. A map filed with the County Clerk's Office in 1842 (a small portion of which is included here as Map No. 3) clearly shows the relationship of Castle Point to the layout of streets and public spaces that constituted the larger development scheme. The land between the Castle Point

parcel and the "Public Square" is the land that would eventually become the site of Stevens Institute.

John Stevens' hopes for his "New City of Hoboken" were realized fully only after his death. In 1849 the Township of Hoboken was set off from the Township of Bergen. It was incorporated as a city six years later, on the 28th of March, 1855.

Transportation and Philanthropy

From the beginning, Stevens' vision of a new city was coupled with his belief that better transportation was essential to unite New Jersey with New York and to stimulate commerce in the young republic. His promotion of new modes of transportation laid the groundwork for the experiments in science and engineering carried out by his descendants, which, in turn, led directly to the growth of Hoboken and the founding of Stevens Institute.

John Stevens initiated his first pioneering transportation endeavor in 1804, when he began operation of a private steamboat on the Hudson River, three years before Robert Fulton's "Cleremont." Only four years later, under the supervision of his son Robert Livingston Stevens (named for his uncle, Robert R. Livingston, Chancellor of the State of New York), Col. Stevens' boat the "Phoenix" set out from Hoboken and reached Philadelphia safely, becoming the first steamboat to travel the ocean. (6)

In 1813 Stevens appllied steam power to ferry service when he purchased the lease for operation of the Spring Street ferry, thus securing "the exclusive right to ferriage from Hoboken to New York." (7) But Stevens' most far-reaching achievement, at least with respect to the eventual founding of the Stevens Institute, involved land rather than water transportation.

In 1832, on his own estate at Castle Point, he built the first railroad track in America and on it operated the nation's first steam locomotive. Encouraged by this success, he went on to develop the Camden & Amboy Railroad, the first practical rail transport line in the United States. (8) Here, also, was the genesis of the Stevens dynasty of inventors and entrpreneurs: the Camden and Amboy's president and engineer-in-chief was Robert Livingston Stevens, while his brother Edwin Augustus Stevens served as treasurer and manager. Col. Stevens' sons were no mere business

figureheads; from this point on they were essential contributors to the family's eminence in engineering and transportation. (9)

It was his vision of the significance of rail transportation that led John Stevens to draw a remarkable connection between railroads and education. On February 18, 1830, he wrote to one George Emlen about the immense potential of a national rail system. He concluded with this startling observation:

> It therefore becomes all important to the State to anticipate any such projects, and preserve the emoluments derivable therefrom to the State. These emoluments will very soon become an immense source of revenue, and should be preserved by the Leg.[islature] as a fund for supporting schools every where thro-out the State for teaching every useful branch of science as well as every practical art. (10)

On March 17, 1830, Stevens wrote to Martin Van Buren, enlarging on his ideas in more specific terms:

> It is proposed that the net proceeds of the receipts for transportation of goods and of the conveyance of passengers after making a reasonable deduction as an indemnification for patent right, say 10 percent, should be reserved as a school fund, to be expended in the States the rail-ways shall pass through in proportion to the receipts. Such an arrangement and disposition of funds would give to New Jersey a handsome and rapidly increasing income . . ." (11)

In the event, heads less philanthropic than Stevens' prevailed, so that American railroads became not the savior of public education but the private preserve of capitalists. Nonetheless, it was Col. John Stevens' idea that ultimately bore fruit in a more limited way when the family fortune, attributable in large part to transportation-related innovations, was applied to the creation of the Stevens Institute. At the time of his own death, however, John Stevens' wish that "some of his estate might be devoted to founding an 'academy' for teaching fundamental subjects and science" remained unfulfilled. (12)

Edwin A. Stevens and the Stevens Institute

Edwin Augustus Stevens (1795-1868) combined in one person the love of experimentation and business acumen typical of his father and his brother Robert with an equally inventive mind and an unusual organizing ability. "He came to be regarded, in fact, as the family 'fly-wheel,' and in 1820, by family agreement, his father made him trustee of practically the whole of his estate." (13)

Edwin's management of the Camden & Amboy Railroad was so successful that during his tenure of thirty-five years the stock of the company constantly appreciated. His own first patented invention of note was the Stevens plough. He collaborated with his brother Robert on the "closed fire-room" system of forced draft, patented in 1842, and first applied on Robert's steamboat "North America." For more than twenty years he perservered in experiments to perfect the design for an ironclad warship, efforts which included construction of the "Naugatuck," a prototype built at his own expense. (14)

Toward the end of his life, Edwin Stevens devoted more of his energy to the public welfare of the city his father had founded. In 1858 he arranged to have built the first of Hoboken's large public schools and in 1862 the second. (15) As to his father's dream of founding an academy "for teaching fundamental subjects and science," Edwin "kept this purpose always before him and particularly after he inherited much of his brother Robert's fortune." (16)

Edwin made clear the full extent of his devotion to his own and Col. John Stevens' educational ideals when he drew up his will in 1867, one year before his death. According to its provisions:

> And I do further give devise and bequeath to my said wife Martha B. Stevens, William W. Shippen and Samuel Dod . . . to hold as joint tenants . . . all that block of land in Hoboken bounded by Hudson Street, River Street and Fifth and Sixth Streets . . . and one hundred and fifty thousand dollars in the Stocks and Bonds of the Morris and Essex Rail Road Company . . .

> And this trust is this, that upon such land at such time as the acting trustee or trustees shall think proper, certainly within two years after my death . . . shall out of the proceeds of said personal property . . . erect of some substantial but economical material (as substantial and economical as trap rock) a plain building or buildings suitable for the uses of an institute of learning, which I direct my acting trustee or trustees . . . to establish there. (17)

The trustees appointed by Edwin A. Stevens made haste to fulfill his wishes to the letter. The building he had directed them to erect was completed in time for an inaugural series of "popular lectures on scientific subjects, for the convenience and advantage of the general public" delivered in the Spring of 1871; the regular course of study began in the Fall of that year. (18)

According to Franklin De Ronde Furman's history of the school, the first Board of Trustees, in the Stevens tradition of iconoclasm, defied their conservative educational advisors by deciding to found a school of mechanical engineering, which previously had been taught only in "the shops." (19) Their decision was applauded by a detailed article in the New York Times. Its author made clear that the proposed course of study was a landmark in American higher education:

> The demand for education in many special branches of scientific study is already fully met in the schools of civil engineering, mining, and metallurgy, and in the chemical laboratories already established. The one department that seems still open, and that has thus far remained uncultivated among us because it will not pay, is the department of mechanical engineering. There is no school of mechanical engineering in the United States. The course of study is down in the catalogue of some of our technical schools, covering very much the same studies as the course in civil engineering; but nowhere is there a school whose chief aim and main department of education is Applied Mechanics and Mechanical Engineering. The importance of thorough training in this department, a higher kind of training than can be obtained in the machine-shop, a practical knowledge based on and guided by a higher scientific knowledge, would seem unquestionable. (20)

In their "Announcement of the Stevens Institute of Technology," published in 1871, the trustees themselves reiterated the novelty of their scheme and took pains to emphasize the intellectual and practical aims of their undertaking. The institute "was to be of a high educational order, and to involve a general and not a merely industrial training," they cautioned. Moreover, their statement continued, "The plan of instruction to be pursued is such as may best fit young men of ability for leading positions in the department of mechanical engineering, and in the pursuits of scientific investigation, from which this and all the sister arts have derived, and are daily deriving such incalcuable benefits. (21)

The trustees' combination of pragmatic training with high academic standards reflected the traditions established by the life and work not only of Edwin A. Stevens but of his brother Robert and their father John. But how did the trustees carry out Edwin Stevens' explicit instructions for a plain building of "substantial but economical material," a building which would remain the school's entire physical plant for thirty years?

A Fitting Architectural Design

Although the original correspondence between the trustees and their architect is not availabble to document the details of the Stevens commission, secondary sources like Furman have been consistent in their reference to Richard Upjohn as the architect. A careful examination of the single original architectural drawing to survive, however, reveals that it is signed by Upjohn's son, Richard M. Upjohn. (22) In the absence of more precise information, it is more accurate to ascribe the design to both father and son, or to the firm R. Upjohn and Co., for reasons that will be made clear below. As one scholar has observed, "Their work has frequently been confused, and uncertainty may, in some instances, always persist." (23)

The reason the trustees chose the Upjohn firm is unknown, although one circumstantial connection offers a clue worth pursuing further. A biographical note on Edwin Augustus Stevens, Jr., son of Edwin A. Stevens, points out that "Like all the members of his family, [he] is an ardent and consistent churchman of the Anglican Catholic [i.e., Protestant Episcopal] type . . . (24)

By 1850 Richard Upjohn had established himself as the leading figure in the architecture of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. The fierce secterian allegiances of the day prompted diehard loyalties on the part of both clients and architects, typified by Richard Upjohn's refusal of commissions offered by other sects. Martha B. Stevens, wife of Edwin A. and one the three trustees of his will, had caused to be built the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Holy Innocents in Hoboken. (25) It may have been her previous experience with an architectural commission and her devout Episcopalianism that, at least in part, suggested R. Upjohn and Co. as the most suitable firm for the design of the new institute.

In addition to his position of leadership in the field of Protestant Episcopal church architecture, Richard Upjohn (1802-1878) was, by the 1850s, one of the foremost architects in the United States. Famed not only for his designs, Upjohn was known as a pioneer in efforts to gain respect for architecture as a profession. In 1857 he founded the American Institute of Architects and served as its first president. Of all his works, Trinity Church in New York City (1846) is the best known and the most iconic, both for his career and for American ecclesiastical architecture of the period. Trinity represents the first full flowering of his devotion to the principles of the English Ecclesiologists who, for a host of associative reasons, espoused Gothic architecture as the only proper style. (26)

In 1853 Richard Michell Upjohn (1828-1903) became a junior partner in the firm R. Upjohn and Co., and "took an increasing role in the design process." (27) He would gain fame as architect of the Connecticut State Capitol, a commission secured in 1872, one year after completion of Stevens Hall.

In that same year, 1872, his father retired and Richard M. Upjohn assumed control of the firm. Thus Edwin A. Stevens Hall is significant as a transitional work, marking the architectural passage from father to son in a way that paralleled changing tastes in American architecture.

For their commission in Hoboken the architects chose a style that came to enjoy widespread popularity during the 1870s for both ecclesiastical and public buildings. Influenced by the philosophy of John Ruskin, it has since been named High Victorian Gothic.

Notable examples include the Jefferson Market Courthouse in New York City (Withers & Vaux, 1875) and the old Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (Sturgis & Brigham, 1876-1878). New Jersey's most ambitious exemplar of the style is Chancellor Green Library at Princeton University (William A. Potter, 1873). The Stevens Hall construction date of 1871 makes it one of the earlier American examples of the secular High Victorian Gothic.

Constructional color or "permanent polychromy" was one of the principal means Ruskin advocated for achieving his ideals of "Honesty," Beauty," and "Character." The Upjohn design for Stevens Hall relied heavily on such polychromy to enliven an essentially straightforward scheme. An engraving published by the school to celebrate its opening (Fig. 1) gives some sense of the contrasting walls and trim. Especially evident are the banded arches of the second-floor windows, which recall Ruskin's beloved Venetian architecture (and which can be seen clearly in Photo No. 1).

Interior details (see Photo Nos. 7-11) are consistent with the Gothic ornament of the exterior. The most highly developed Gothic treatment of an interior space is found in the Auditorium wing (its exterior pictured in Fig. 2), which is dominated by an elaborate wooden truss ceiling based on a classic queen-post system (Photo Nos. 12 and 15).

The architectural significance of this treatment cannot be overemphasized. The great majority of Richard Upjohn's church designs that postdate Trinity Church display wooden truss ceilings of just this sort. Upjohn viewed such ceilings as accurate and "honest" alternatives to the kind of vaulted and groined stone ceilings which were beyond the reach of most clients. At Stevens Hall this treatment must have recommended itself as a practical method of imparting Gothic character while remaining true to Edwin A. Stevens' insistence on economy. Despite several Auditorium remodelings, the wooden truss system has survived as testimony to Upjohn's "archaeologically correct" Gothic intentions.

A second major Gothic feature illustrates the historical conflict between architect's vision and client's pocketbook. The Upjohn drawing referred to earlier represents a steeple meant to crown the facade's projecting tower. Its existence not only in the architect's drawing but in a published engraving that postdates construction (Photo No. 13) suggests that the trusees remained

ambivalent about its execution for a number of years. By the time the school's official history was written at the begining of the 20th century, however, the steeple's postponement was accepted as inevitable. According to Furman, Upjohn's plans "called for a more pretentious building than the one constructed, including a spire rising fifty feet above the present tower, as well as two smaller spires thirty-five feet high, on each of the rear corners of the main building, directly over the side entrances; but for economy's sake and other reasons these ornaments were dispensed with . . ." (28)

In spite of design compromises resulting from budget constraints, Edwin A. Stevens Hall represents a significant transition in American architectural taste. Summed up in a single building is the change from the "Ecclesiological Gothic Revival" of Richard Upjohn (illustrated by the auditorium's truss ceiling and the comparatively naive wooden ornament throughout the interior), to the "Victorian Gothic" of Richard M. Upjohn (carried out in Ruskinian permanent polychromy). In discussing the firm's later work as a whole, Phoebe B. Stanton recognized tendencies that coalesce in this one building. "The Gothic Revival had changed," she notes, "and the work of the firm moved with it into a High Victorian manner more varied in outline and ornament. The hand and taste of R. M. Upjohn becomes evident, but initially the influence of the senior Upjohn is still visible." (29) Stevens Hall is an apt illustration of precisely those changes.

The First Thirty Years

The significance of Edwin A. Stevens Hall is further enhanced by the fact that it remained the sole home of the Stevens Institute for the first thirty years of the school's existence. In physical terms, the building assumed its mature form one year after classes began, when the east wing was added to accommodate a High School division. Fig. 3 shows the plan as published in the Stevens "Announcement" of 1871, before construction of the east wing. In 1873 the building's completed footprint appeared for the first time on a published map (see Map No. 4).

After addition of the east wing, the building was complete, although Furman took account in 1905 of the "numerous alterations made in the interior, such as the arrangement and enlargement of rooms by the removal of hallways, partitions, etc." (30)

rooms by the removal of hallways, partitions, etc." (30)

The school's inaugural event was covered by the press in laudatory language:

> The Stevens Polytechnic Institute at Hoboken was last evening opened with the first of a series of lectures on Light by Prof. Morton. The large audience room [i.e., auditorium] of the Institute was crowded and the standing room entirely occupied. The lecture was of more than ordinary interest, aided as it was by one of the finest collections in apparatus in the country and which it is believed is unequaled by that of any of our colleges. The induction coil used is the most powerful one in the world and was made especially for this institution by E. S. Ritchie of Boston. (31)

In June, 1873, when Stevens Institute graduated its first class, with degrees in Mechanical Engineering, it claimed to have a physics laboratory "second to none in the country." (32) Its first catalogue (1871) had taken care to announce that "A department of belles-lettres will also be included, and will furnish the means of acquiring that cultivation of literary taste and the facility of graceful use of language, both in speaking and writing, which is as desirable in the engineer and man of science as in the classical student." (33)

In 1884 Stevens Hall gave birth to the "Stevens Institute Indicator," which became a regular quarterly journal in 1887. Many of its articles made original contributions to the scientific literature of their disciplines and have been reprinted in leading American and European engineering publications. (34)

In 1880 Stevens Hall was also the birthplace of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the site of its first general meeting. Its first president was a member of the Stevens faculty, and "ever since then Stevens men have been closely associated with this society and have occupied many of its offices, including that of president, several times." (35)

At one time Stevens graduates were presidents of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and the American Institute of Electrical Engineers "nearly at the same time." (36) In keeping with the tradition of

was proud to claim that its

> " . . . education has been employed for the benefit of the country in general, and more particularly for the benefit of manufacturers, owners of great industries, railroads and financiers, and it may fairly be claimed that Stevens has a valid claim to recognition on the part of those interests not only for its past work, but for the great work it can be made capable of doing in the future. (37)

This combination of high intellectual goals and practical capitalist application must have appealed to Andrew Carnegie. In 1899 he wrote to President Morton that "It would give me the very greatest pleasure to devote $50,000 to the building of the Engineering Laboratory as you suggest. We owe much to Stevens, for many valuable men have come to us from it." (38)

Carnegie's generosity made possible the completion in 1902 of the laboratory that was eventually named for Dr. Morton, who died that same year, having served as the institute's president from the beginning. Those twin events might be said to have ended the first phase of Stevens' academic history. In literal terms, the dedication of the new laboratory building ended the history of the school as a single-building institution. After thirty years the original adminstration-building-classroom-laboratory-lecture-hall was no longer solely synonymous with Stevens Institute.

No matter how many buildings the future of the campus holds, however, Stevens Hall will remain that extraordinary confluence of philanthropy, invention, education, and architecture that signaled the advent of a new chapter in American higher education.

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27. Hall, 244.

28. Furman, 3.

29. Stanton, 242.

30. Furman, 36.

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33. Furman, 5.

34. Furman, 65.

35. "Stevens Tech." [brochure, 1912?] n.p.

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## Verbal Boundary Description

From the southwest corner of Tax Block 227, the boundary line runs northerly 225 feet, then easterly 58 feet, northerly 43 feet, easterly 142 feet, southerly 268 feet, then westerly 200 feet to the point of beginning.

## Boundary Justification

The south, east, and west boundary lines are the original boundaries of the historic resource. The north boundary line is a line of convenience drawn to divide the resource from later buildings constructed on the same parcel.

FORM 10-900a OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES/CONTINUATION SHEET

Section: Photographs Page 1 of 1
Edwin A. Stevens Hall, Stevens Institute of Technology
City of Hoboken Hudson County, New Jersey

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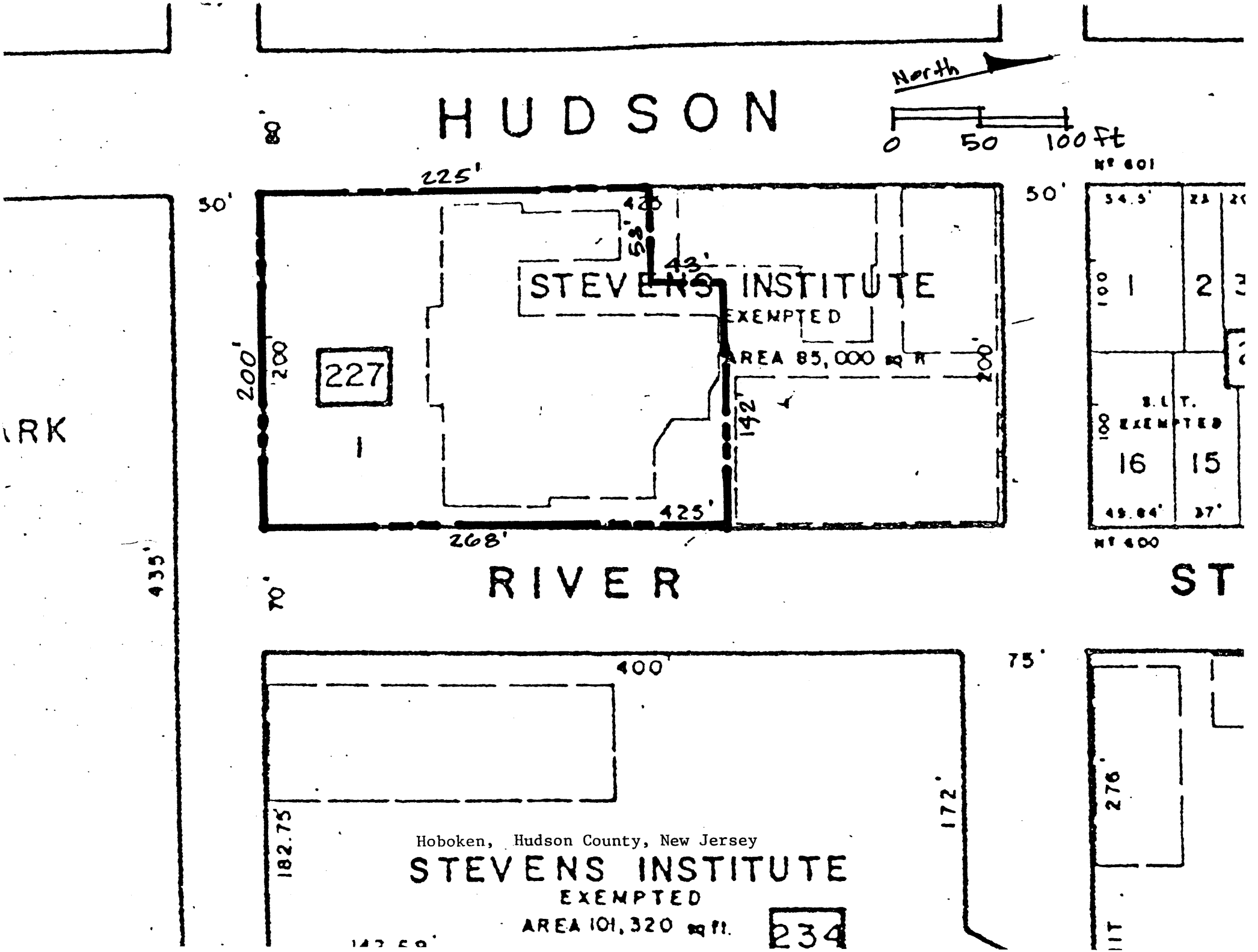
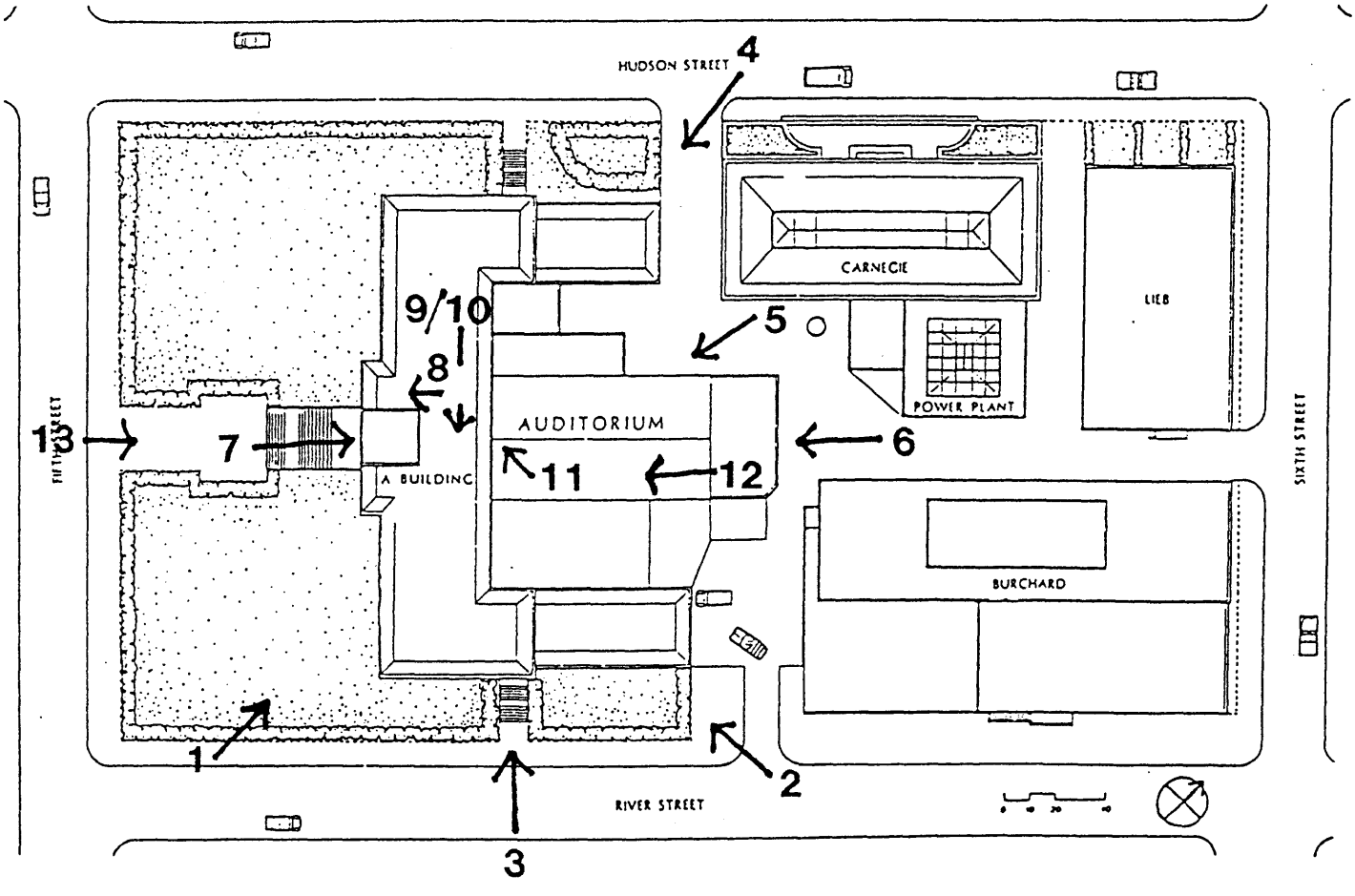
Photographer: Will Cofnuk
Date: April 1992
Location of Negatives" Will Cofnuk
P.O. Box 1152
Paramus, NJ 07653

1. Fifth St. facade, view looking west
2. East elevation, view looking southwest
3. East elevation, entry detail, view looking west
4. Rear elevation, west wing, view looking southwest
5. Rear elevation, center wing, view looking southeast
6. Rear elevation, center wing, view looking south
7. Foyer, view looking north
8. Office, view looking south
9. Lobby/stairhall, first floor, view looking east
10. Lobby/stairhall, stair detail, view looking east
11. Stairhall, third floor, view looking southwest
12. Auditorium, view looking south
13. 19th-century engraving showing building with intended tower, view looking north


HUDSON
North
0 50 100 ft
225'
50'
80'
53'
43'
STEVENS INSTITUTE
EXEMPTED
AREA 85,000 sq ft
200'
227
1
142'
425'
268'
RIVER
70'
435'
RK
Nº 601
Nº 400
100
1
2
16
15
S.L.T.
EXEMPTED
400'
75'
182.75'
172'
276'
Hoboken, Hudson County, New Jersey
STEVENS INSTITUTE
EXEMPTED
AREA 101,320 sq ft.
234

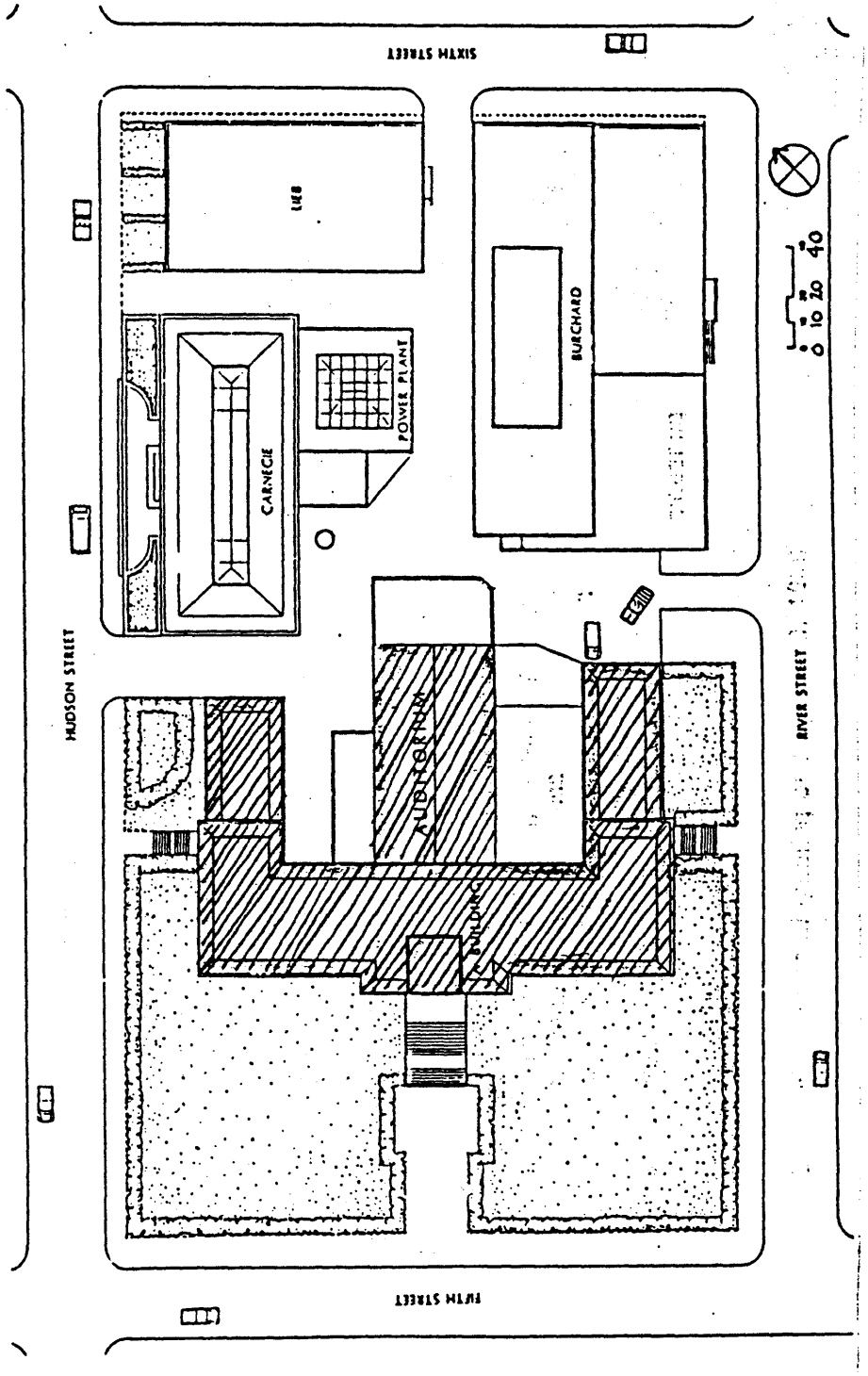
Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Hoboken
Hudson County, New Jersey




LEGEND:

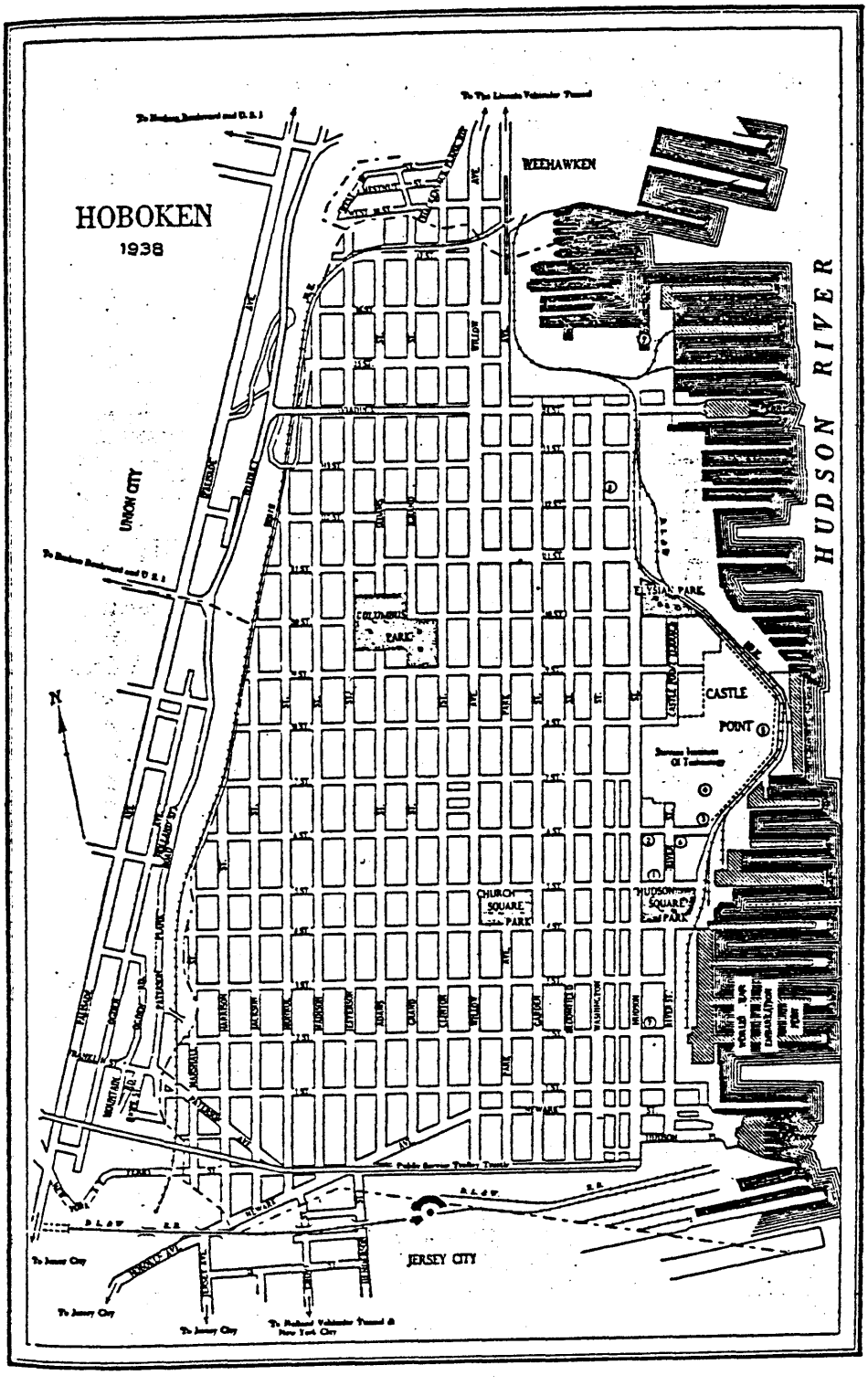
# ↗ DIRECTION OF PHOTO VIEW

Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Stevens Institute of Technology
Hoboken, New Jersey
Hudson County

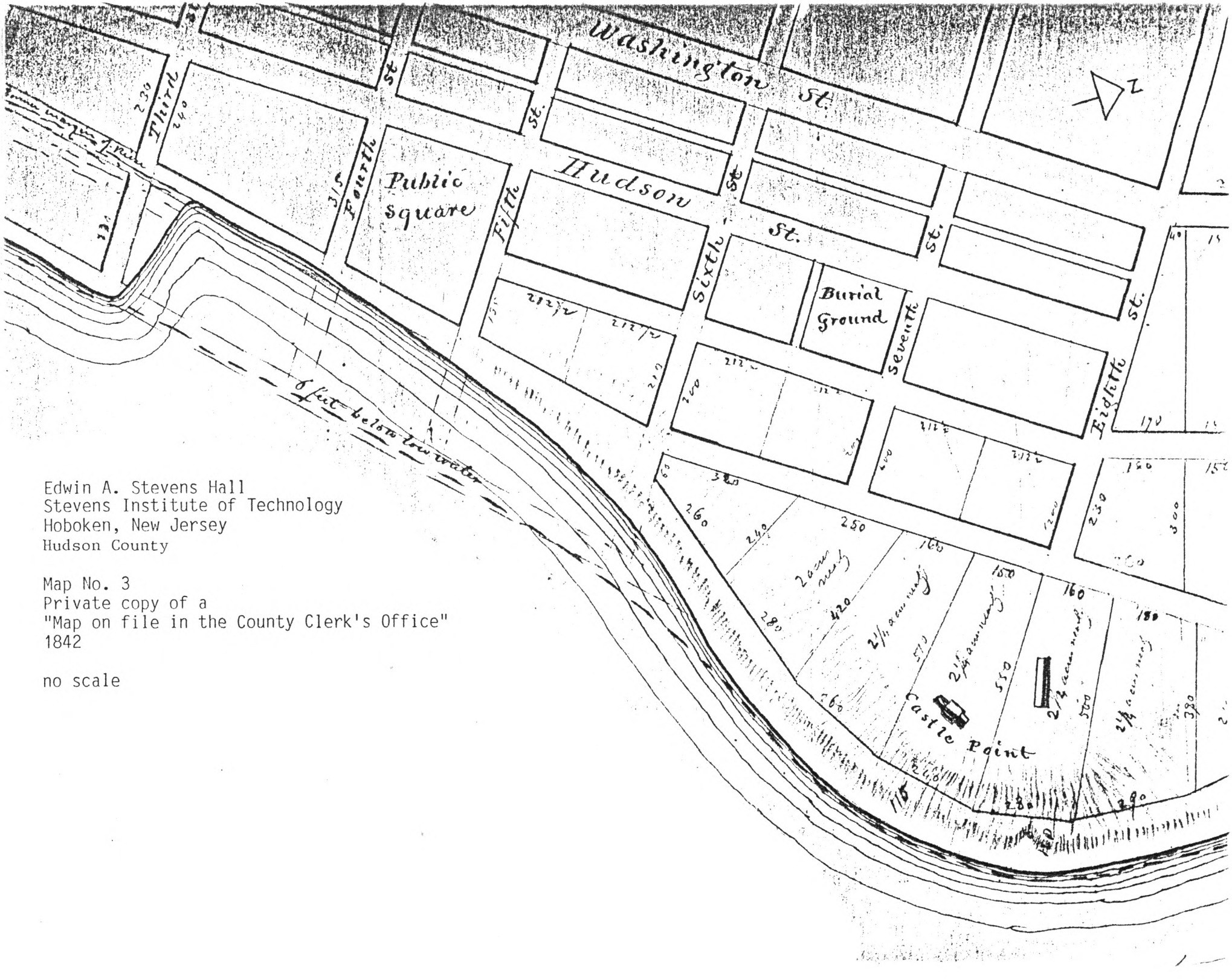



Map No. 1
Detail of Stevens Institute campus
Original portion of Edwin A. Stevens Hall
is hatched

Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Stevens Institute of Technology
Hoboken, New Jersey
Hudson County




Map No. 2
Hoboken in 1938, showing prominence of Castle Point
and Stevens Institute (right),
from Federal Writer's Project history of New Jersey, 1938
no scale




Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Stevens Institute of Technology
Hoboken, New Jersey
Hudson County

Map No. 3
Private copy of a
"Map on file in the County Clerk's Office"
1842

no scale

Hudson County
Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Stevens Institute of Technology
Hoboken, New Jersey

Map No. 4
traced from "Combined Atlas of the State of New Jersey and the County of Hudson," G. M. Hopkins & Co., Phila., 1873

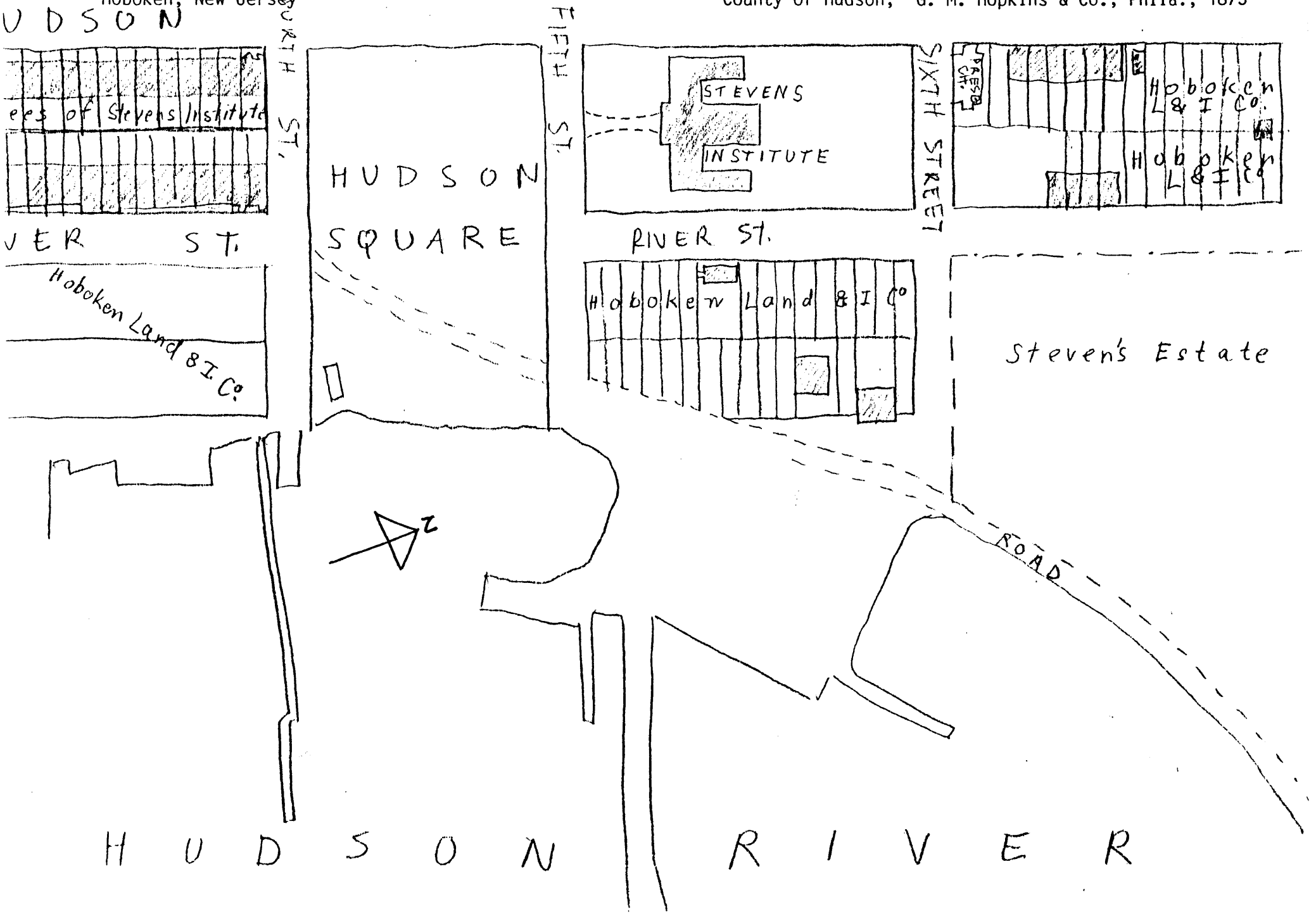
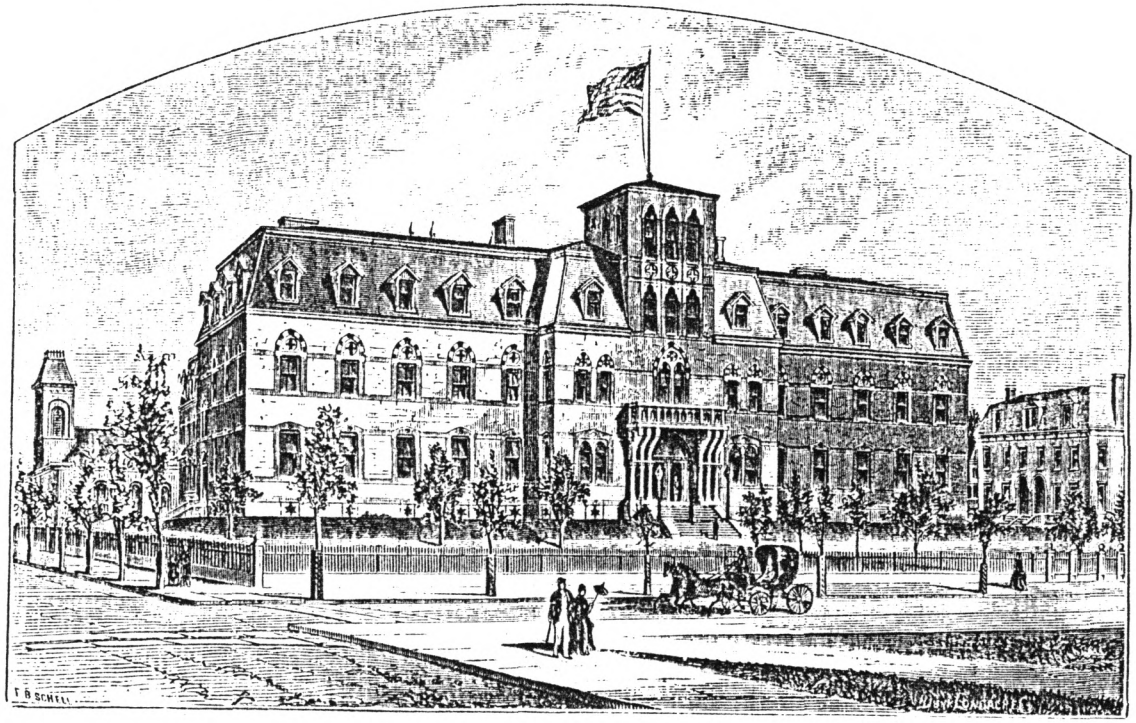


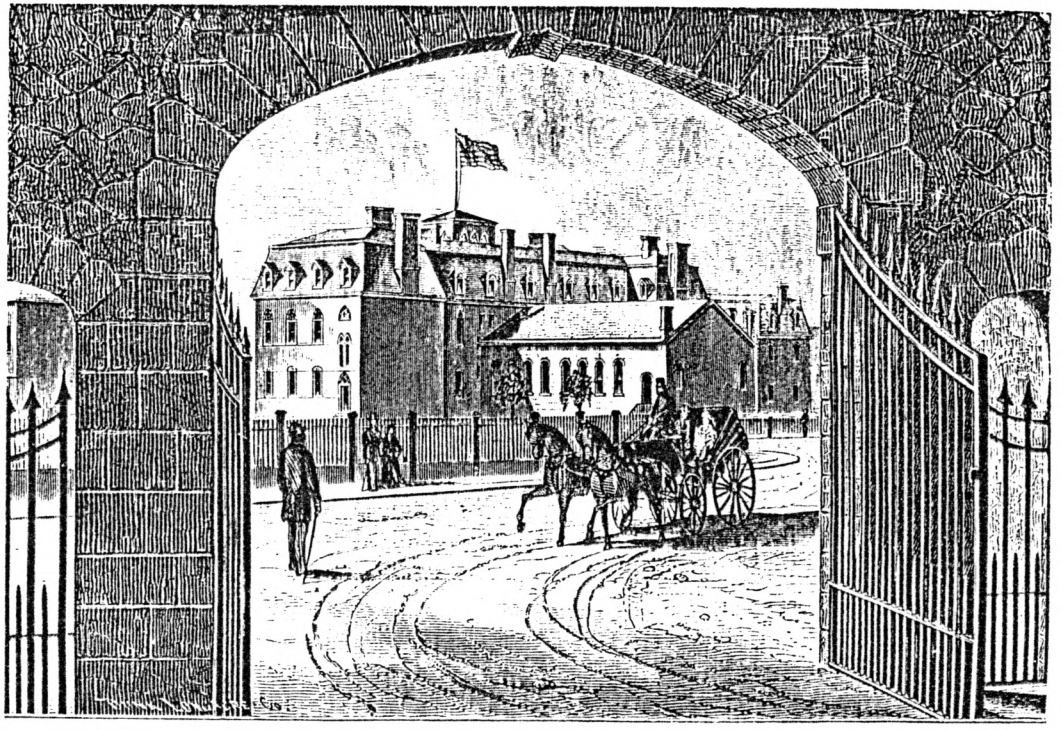
*PLATE I.*



Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Stevens Institute of Technology
Hoboken, New Jersey
Hudson County

Fig. 1
Fifth Street Facade
View looking north

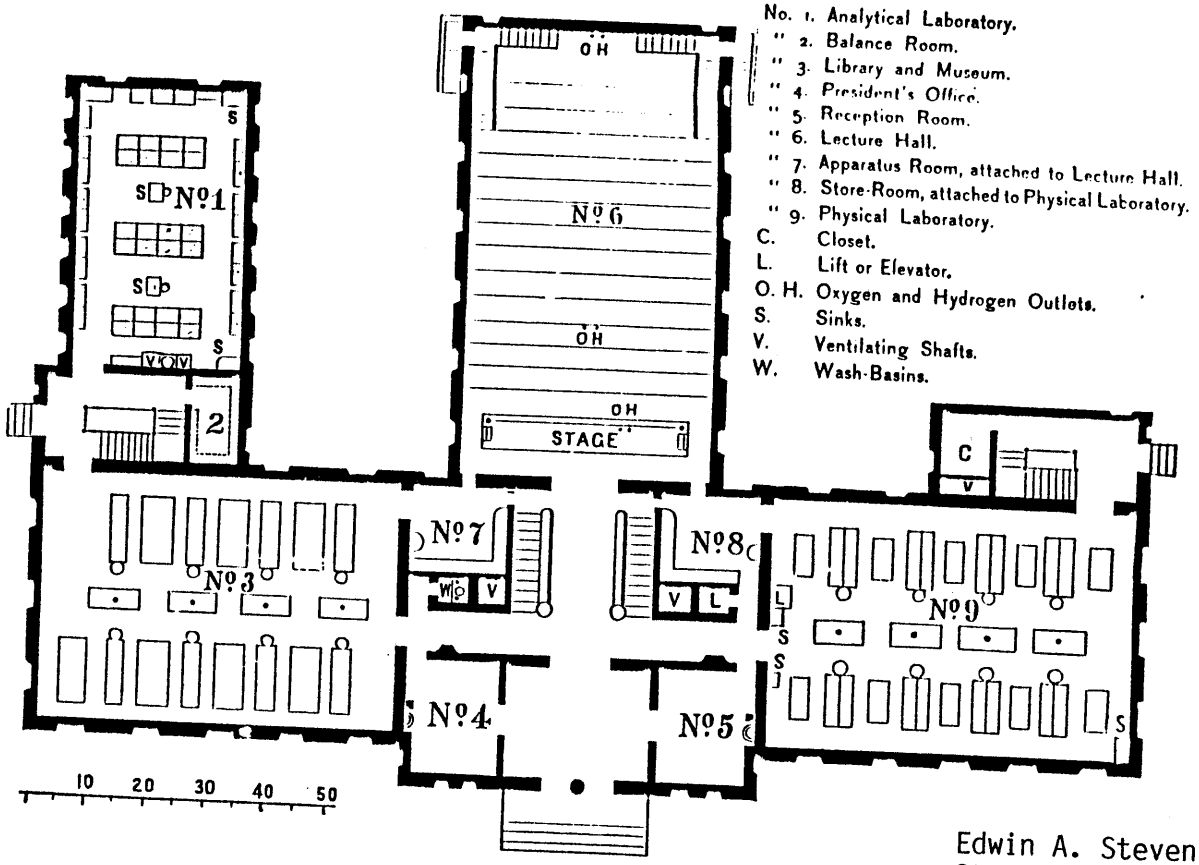
*PLATE II.*



Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Stevens Institute of Technology
Hoboken, New Jersey
Hudson County

Fig. 2
Rear elevation
View looking southwest

Stevens Institute of Technology. *PLATE IV.*




FIRST FLOOR.

Edwin A. Stevens Hall
Stevens Institute of Technology
Hoboken, New Jersey
Hudson County

Fig. 3
Plan prior to completion of
east wing in 1872

EDWIN A. STEVENS HALL AUDITORIUM RESTORATION

STEVENS
Integrating Knowledge To Create Leaders
Stevens Institute of Technology ◆ Castle Point on the Hudson ◆ Hoboken, New Jersey

NK
NADASKAY | KOPELSON
ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING INTERIOR DESIGN
90 WASHINGTON ST. MORRISTOWN, NEW JERSEY

FIGURE 5

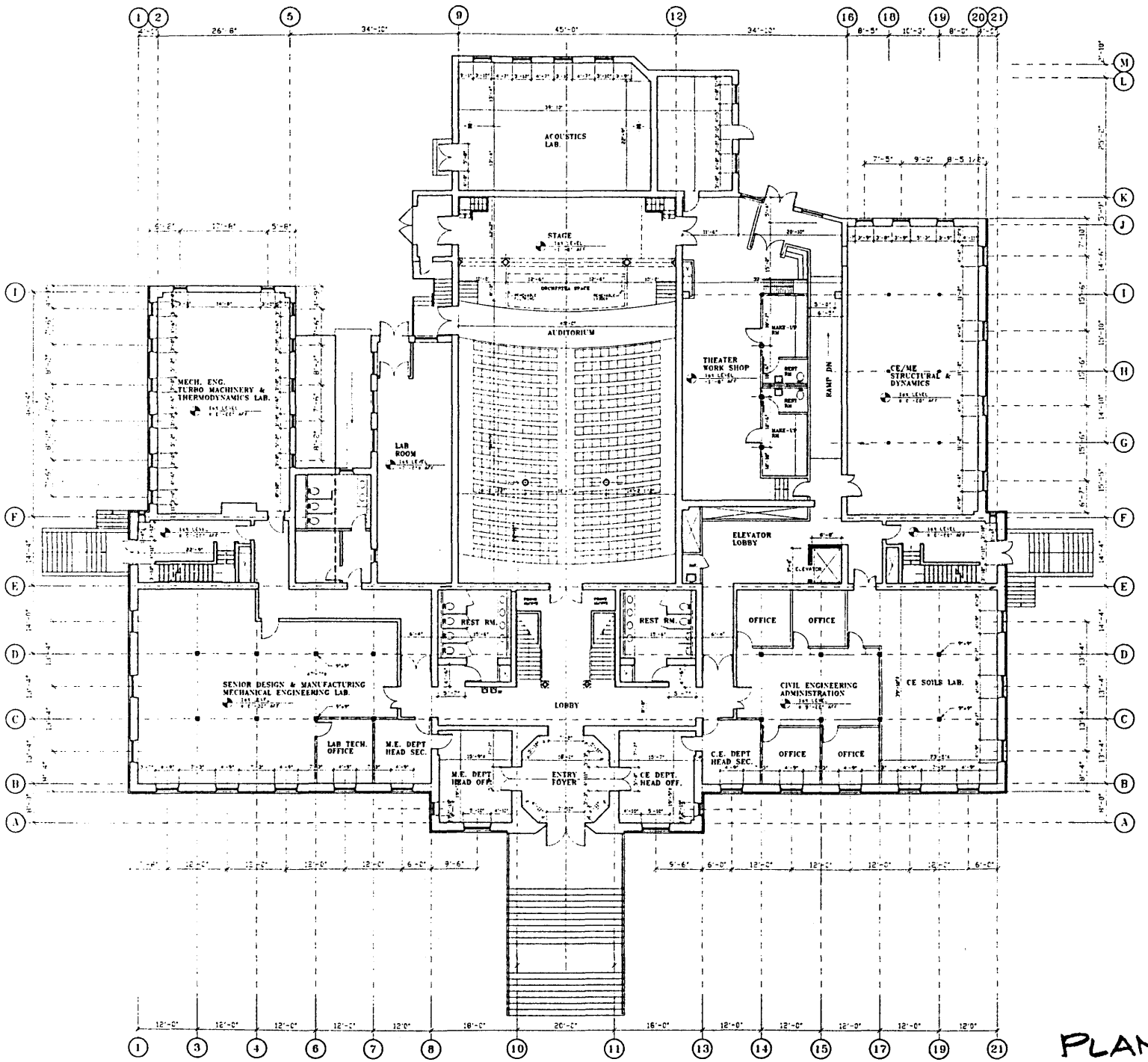
EDWIN A. STEVENS HALL

ENTRY LOBBY RESTORATION

STEVENS
Integrating Knowledge To Create Leaders
Stevens Institute of Technology ♦ Castle Point on the Hudson ♦ Hoboken, New Jersey

NK
NADASKAY | KOPELSON
ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, INTERIOR DESIGN
85 WASHINGTON ST, MORRISTOWN, NEW JERSEY

FIGURE 4




PLAN No. 1

NK

NADASKAY I KOPELSON

RAYMOND NADASKAY C4518
ALLEN R. KOPELSON C5644
RUSSELL H. SAGE GE17049

STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Castle Point on the Hudson
Hoboken, New Jersey

EDWIN A. STEVENS HALL

Hudson County

NO REVISION DATE

DRAWING TITLE
FIRST LEVEL, PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN

DATE
SCALE
DRAWN
CHECKED

DRAWING NUMBER
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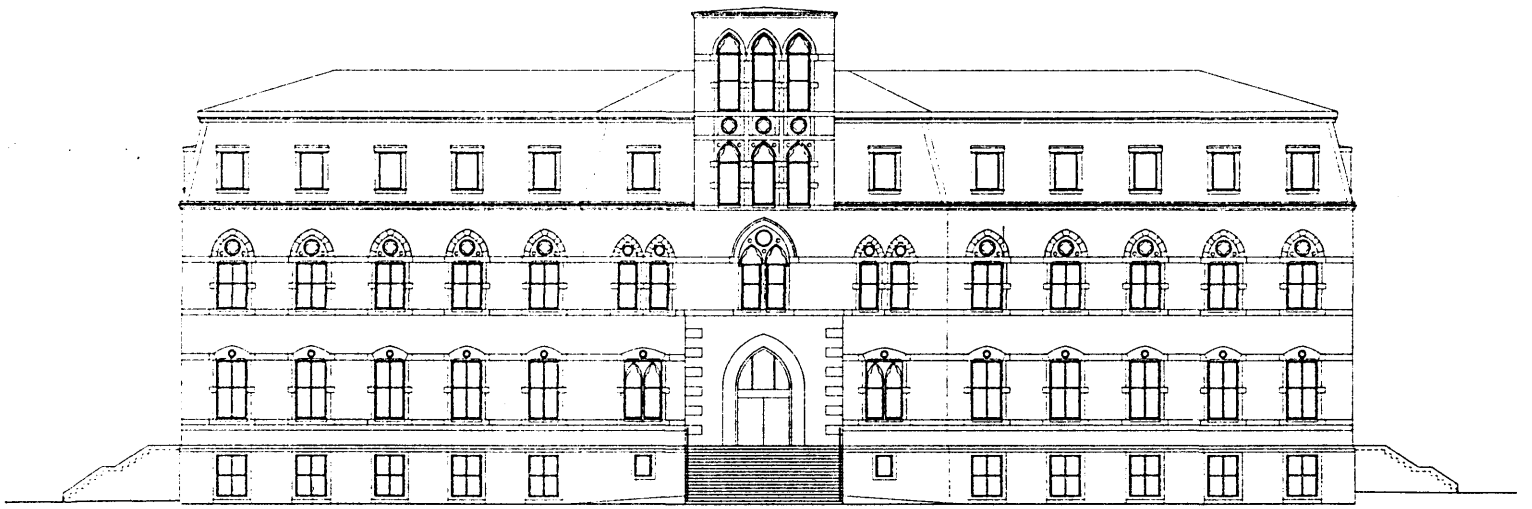

NADASKAY | KOPELSON

RAYMOND NADASKAY C-4518
ALLEN R. KOPELSON C5644
RUSSELL H. SAGE GE17049

STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Castle Point on the Hudson
Hoboken, New Jersey

EDWIN A. STEVENS HALL

Hudson County

NO REVISION DATE

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SOUTH ELEVATION

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RAYMOND NADASKAY C4518
ALLEN R. KOPELSON C5644
RUSSELL H. SAGE GE17049

STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Castle Point on the Hudson
Hoboken, New Jersey

EDWIN A. STEVENS HALL

Hudson County

NO REVISION DATE

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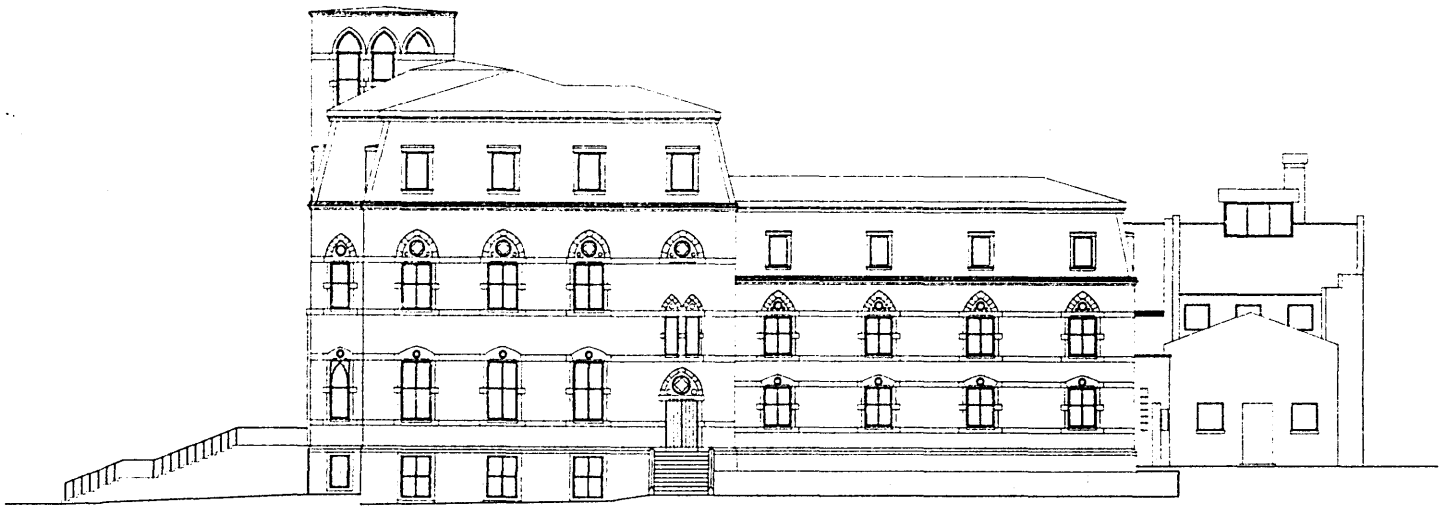

NK
NADASKAY | KOPELSON
ARCHITECTS ENGINEERS PLANNERS & INTERIOR DESIGNERS
90 WASHINGTON STREET MORRISTOWN, NJ 07960
(973) 539-1666
(973) 971-7696
RAYMOND NADASKAY C4518
ALLEN R. KOPELSON C5844
RUSSELL H. SAGE GE17049

STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Castle Point on the Hudson
Hoboken, New Jersey

# EDWIN A. STEVENS HALL

## Hudson County

| NO | REVISION | DATE |
|---|---|---|

DRAWING TITLE
**EAST ELEVATION**

DATE
MAY 6, 1998
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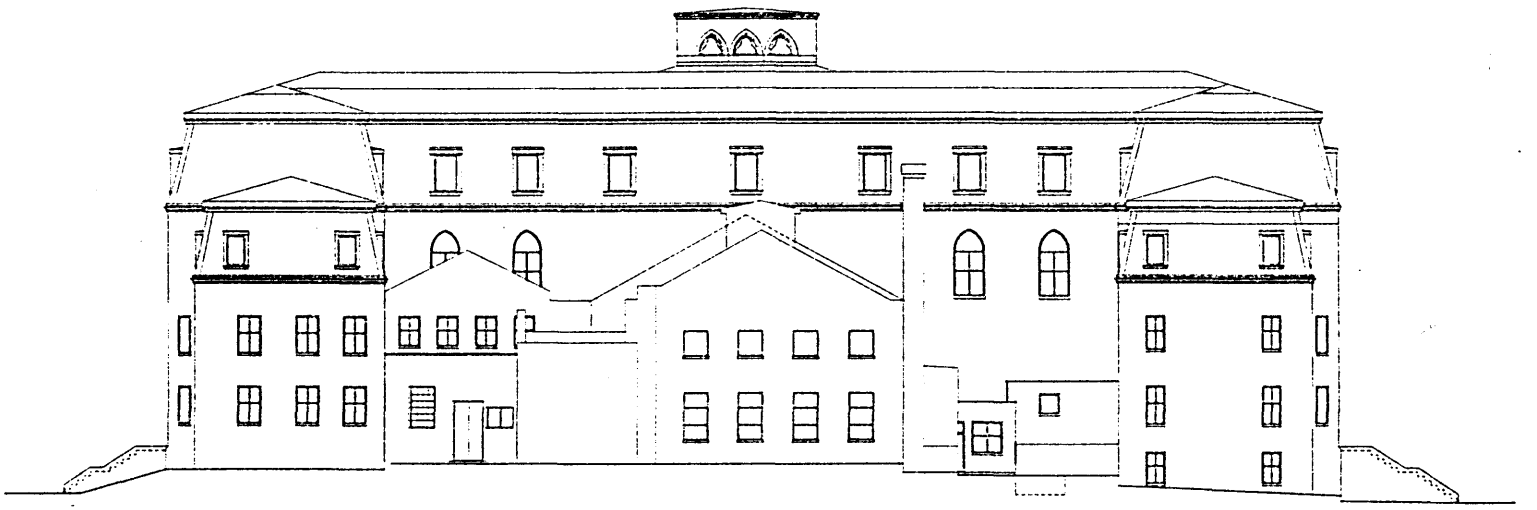

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ALLEN R. KOPELSON C5844
RUSSELL H. SAGE GE17045

STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Castle Point on the Hudson
Hoboken, New Jersey

EDWIN A. STEVENS HALL

Hudson County

NO REVISION DATE

DRAWING TITLE
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DATE
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