



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

1. Name of Property

Historic name Potsdam State Normal School Campus
Other names/site number Potsdam Normal School, Congdon Campus School, Practice School
Name of related Multiple Property Listing n/a

2. Location

Street & number 41 Elm Street (Potsdam Normal School); 56-60 Main Street (Congdon Campus School) n/a not for publication
City or town Village of Potsdam n/a vicinity
State New York Code NY County St. Lawrence Code 089 Zip code 13676

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide x local
Applicable National Register Criteria: X A B X C D

Ruth A. Purpert DBHPD 12/22/14
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain:)

For Eileen H. Beall 2.23.15
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Potsdam State Normal School Campus
Name of Property

St. Lawrence County, New York
County and State

5. Classification

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

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

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/College, School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/College

SOCIAL/Civic

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals/Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: stone

walls: stone

brick

roof: metal

other: metal

wood

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Potsdam State Normal School Campus
Name of Property

St. Lawrence County, New York
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.)

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: SUNY Potsdam Archives
Potsdam Public Museum

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Areas of Significance

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1919-1958

Significant Dates

1919; 1931

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Architect: Pilcher, Lewis (Normal School)

Architect: Haugaard, William E. (Congdon)

Builders: Bradley and Weed (Normal School)

Builders: Hendrick Construction Co. (Congdon)

Potsdam State Normal School Campus
Name of Property

St. Lawrence County, New York
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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approximately 5.4 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____ (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>Potsdam Normal</u>	_____	3	_____	_____
	Latitude: 44.669488°	Longitude: _____		Latitude: _____	Longitude: _____
		-74.981303°			
2	<u>Congdon</u>	_____	4	_____	_____
	Latitude: 44.668927°	Longitude: _____		Latitude: _____	Longitude: _____
		-74.980228°			

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

_____ NAD 1927 or _____ NAD 1983

1	_____	_____	_____	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Debbie Sheals

organization Historic Preservation Consultant date October 10, 2014

street & number 29 South Ninth St. #204 telephone 573-874-3779

city or town Columbia state MO zip code 65201

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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

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

Potsdam State Normal School Campus
Name of Property

St. Lawrence County, New York
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: Potsdam State Normal School Campus

City or Vicinity: Potsdam Village

County: St. Lawrence State: New York

Photographer: Debbie Sheals (Except 2, 12, 13, which were taken by Jim McKinney)

Date

Photographed: September 2014 (Except 2, 12, 13, which were taken October 2013)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 27 Facade (west wall) Normal School
- 2 of 27 Northwest corner Normal School
- 3 of 27 North wall, Normal School
- 4 of 27 North wall, rear ell of Normal School
- 5 of 27 North wall, rear additions to Normal School, plus north rear wall of Congdon Campus School
- 6 of 27 North rear wall of Congdon Campus School
- 7 of 27 Southeast corner, Congdon Campus School
- 8 of 27 South wall, Congdon Campus School
- 9 of 27 West wall, Congdon Campus School
- 10 of 27 Northwest corner, Congdon Campus School
- 11 of 27 South walls, Normal School
- 12 of 27 Southwest corner, Normal School
- 13 of 27 West wall, Normal School
- 14 of 27 Main entrance, west wall Normal School
- 15 of 27 Normal School, first floor lobby
- 16 of 27 Normal School, first floor north hallway
- 17 of 27 Normal School, auditorium, looking east
- 18 of 27 Normal School, classroom, second floor
- 19 of 27 Normal School, south staircase, second floor
- 20 of 27 Normal School, third floor lobby
- 21 of 27 Normal School, third floor, north hallway
- 22 of 27 Congdon Campus School, main entrance, west wall
- 23 of 27 Congdon Campus School, southwest corner, first floor
- 24 of 27 Congdon Campus School, gymnasium, lower level, east end
- 25 of 27 Congdon Campus School, north side of hall, second floor
- 26 of 27 Congdon Campus School, classroom, southwest corner, third floor
- 27 of 27 Congdon Campus School, east staircase, third floor

Potsdam State Normal School Campus

Name of Property

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Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

1. Aerial photo map from Google Earth, with Coordinates. Accessed October 2014.
2. Aerial photo map of the area, from Google Earth. Accessed October 2014.
3. Site Plan, with construction dates
4. Boundary Map, base map St. Lawrence County Assessor's Office. Accessed October 2014.
5. 1939 and 1962 Sanborn Maps
6. Original Architect's Drawing of Potsdam Normal School
7. Existing First Floor Plan, Potsdam Normal School
8. Existing Second Floor Plan, Potsdam Normal
9. First Floor Plan, Congdon Campus School, ca. 1932
10. 1904 Sanborn map and image of the first Potsdam Normal School buildings
11. Historic image and photo of the Potsdam Normal School building , ca. 1920s
12. Historic rendering (exterior) and photo (interior) of the Congdon Campus School

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Continuation Sheet

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Potsdam State Normal School Campus
Name of Property St. Lawrence County, New York
County and State n/a
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Summary

The Potsdam State Normal School Campus, located in the Village of Potsdam, St. Lawrence County, New York, is a highly intact two-building complex situated on the eastern edge of the village's historic commercial center. The campus occupies a roughly rectangular lot which is bordered on three sides by busy thoroughfares--Elm, Park, and Main streets. The largest and oldest building on the campus is the Potsdam Normal School, 41 Elm Street, a three-story Classical Revival-style building which was built 1917-1919 to serve as the main classroom and administration building. The Normal School building was erected on a T-shaped plan with a wide front section that faces west towards Park Street, in addition to a long two-story rear ell that extends from, and is centered on, its east wall. It has sandstone walls and a stone foundation and is surmounted by a hipped roof that is clad with standing seam metal. The interior of the Normal School, which is largely intact, has formal staircases and tall open corridors on each floor, in addition to a large auditorium in the rear ell. The Congdon Campus School, 56-60 Main Street, was built as a practice school and was completed in 1931; it is located just southwest of the main building, in close proximity to Main Street. It is a smaller three-story brick classroom building characterized by simpler Classical Revival-style detailing which includes smooth sandstone accents and a metal roof that is similar to that of the main building. The practice school has a rectangular plan. The main entrance is on the short west wall and there are additional entrances on the north and east sides. The interior of the practice school is very intact; original features of note include all of the historic stairs and central hallways, as well as the original gymnasium, music room and kindergarten room. Both buildings are in fair to good condition and neither has seen major exterior alterations. Both have nearly all of their original multi-light wood sash windows; the Normal School has pivoting sash and the Campus School has hung sash. The Normal School is currently used for rental offices and Clarkson University functions, while the Campus School is vacant. Each building has been cited as a contributing resource; there are no other resources on the property.

Elaboration

The Village of Potsdam, population approximately 9,500, is located in the eastern part of the Town of Potsdam, in St. Lawrence County, New York. The village is located near the Canadian border on the banks of the Raquette River. Several state and county roads pass through the community, including U.S. Route 11, a generally east-west route known as Lawrence Avenue within the town limits, and State Route 56, a north-south road which follows Market Street, Park Street and Pierrepont Avenue. New York State Route 11B, also known as Elm Street, enters from the east. All of those roads border the Potsdam State Normal School Campus (See Figures 2-3).

The campus is bounded on the north by Elm Street, on the east by residential properties, and on the south by Main Street, a major east-west street. Park Street runs along the west edge of the property, and Lawrence Avenue intersects Elm Street at the northwest corner of the campus. The historic civic and commercial core of the village is located west of Park Street.

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Potsdam State Normal School Campus
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The properties directly west of the historic Normal Campus include the Potsdam Fire Station, Library, Civic Center and Public Museum. The original campus of Clarkson University is located across Main Street, to the south, and the blocks east and north of the property contain residential neighborhoods.

Site; see photos 1-13, Figures 3-5.

The current property consists of two legal parcels which together closely align with the outline of the original Potsdam Normal School Campus (See Figures 4-5). The west end of the property features a large open lawn which served as the village park in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The wide facade of the Normal School building is set back from Park Street, overlooking the front lawn, which is crisscrossed with brick sidewalks and dotted with mature trees. Concrete sidewalks edge all boundaries except on the east end of the property. The Normal School building extends to within a few yards of the north and south boundary lines, and wide concrete sidewalks lead out from doorways in its end walls. The long rear ell of the Normal School Building is centered on its back wall, and the Campus School is located between it and Main Street. There is a level lawn located between the buildings and a narrow strip of lawn along the south side of the practice school. An open paved parking lot covers the north and east sides of the lot, with corresponding driveways to Elm and Main streets. There are no other features located on the nominated property.

Potsdam Normal School, 41 Elm Street; 1917-1919 (Contributing building), photos 1-5, 11-21

Construction of the Potsdam Normal School began in 1917 and it was placed in service in 1919.¹ An older school building of comparable size was demolished to make way for its construction. It is three stories with sandstone walls and a truncated hipped roof. The walls are formed of rough-hewn stone blocks with smooth stone quoins and other architectural embellishments. The upper edges of the walls are accented with smooth flat blocks that appear to be terra cotta. The roof has a generous overhang supported by paired brackets and shaped rafter ends, and it is covered with metal standing-seam roofing. The building has a T-shaped plan. The wide front section and about half of the long rear ell is original. A mid-20th century addition links the original ell to a ca. 1920s boiler house that was expanded and reconfigured sometime after 1962.²

The symmetrical west wall of the building is seven bays wide with a central entrance bay and three wide window bays on each side. The central bay projects a few feet from the main wall and is topped with a slightly taller truncated hipped roof (Photos 1, 14). The first floor of that section has smooth stone walls and three wide recessed doorways that are filled with paired single-light wood

¹ Jane M. Subramanian and Virginia R. Cayey, State University of New York at Potsdam (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2011) 8.

² Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, Maps of Potsdam, 1905-1962.

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doors and tall transoms. The doorways are original; the doors themselves are early but may not be original.

The entrance bay features a row of oversized cast-stone columns which cover most of the second and third floors above the doorways (Photo 14). These columns are set within a shallow recess that is filled with large banks of windows. Embossed metal spandrel panels are located between the second and third story windows, and there are shallow ornamental metal balconies between the bases of the columns at second-floor level. The balconies are original; the windows behind them replaced doors at an early date (the original architectural drawings show tall single-light doors at those locations. See Figure 6).³ There is no roof overhang at the center bay, which is instead topped with a wide flat entablature and a denticulated cornice. The lower edge of the entablature appears to be constructed of terra cotta. The words "CLARKSON COLLEGE SNELL HALL" are spelled out in raised letters on a stone panel which was added ca. 1948.

The side bays of the facade each have wide banks of windows separated by spandrel panels at second and third-floor level and rows of large individual windows corresponding with the first floor. The textured stone walls are accented by smooth stone quoins and a molded stone cornice which runs along the top edge of the first floor. The first floor windows also have large smooth stone lintels, and all corners have smooth quoins.

The end walls of the front section have similar patterns of stonework, but less fenestration (Photos 3, 11). Each of those walls has a centered double doorway at first story level and tall narrow banks of windows centered at second and third-floor level. The stone walls on either side of the windows have recessed panels that are roughly the same size as the window openings.

The northeast corner of the foundation of the front section contains three date stones, one for the current building, in addition to the original date stones for its predecessors. The date stone for the current building reads "RECONSTRUCTED BY THE STATE OF NEW YORK 1917." Above that sits a smaller stone which reads "STATE NORMAL SCHOOL BUILDNG ERCETED 1868 ON THE SITE OF THE ST. LAWRENCE ACADEMY BY THE COUNTY OF ST. LAWRENCE AND THE TOWN AND VILLAGE OF POTSDAM." Another facet of that stone contains the Masonic symbol and the words "PLACED BY THE MASONIC FRATERNITY JUNE 24 A.D. 1868."⁴ A smaller stone next to that one is the original cornerstone for the first stone building constructed for the St. Lawrence Academy on this property. The lettering for that one has eroded but the date "1825" is still legible.

³ Lewis Pilcher, "Reconstruction State Normal and Training School, Potsdam New York," 1916-1917. Original architectural drawings on file with Clarkson University. The term reconstruction refers to the fact that another building at this site was demolished to make way for this one.

⁴ The stone cutter who incised the 1917 stone was named S. Locaseio, according to George H. Sweet, "Potsdam State Normal School; The Old and The New: The Laying of the Corner Stone of the New Building," Potsdam Courier and Freeman 22 Aug. 1917: 3.

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County and State n/a
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The back (east) wall of the front section is nearly identical to the side bays of the facade, with large banks of windows at the second and third-floor level and single windows corresponding with the first story (Photo 4). Those walls also have the same type of stonework and matching roof details which include paired brackets and shaped rafter ends. The rear ell is connected to the back wall by a narrow link which has covered doorways at the ground floor on both the north and south sides of the building.

The original section of the rear ell has the same type of stonework and detailing used on the front block, including the same combination of textured and smooth stone and a matching roofing system, including the same type of roofing, brackets and shaped rafter ends (Photo 4). However, it differs from the front section in that it has fewer, larger windows. Each side wall has three widely spaced two-story arched windows at second and third-floor level and paired rectangular windows at the first story. That fenestration reflects the interior layout, which includes an auditorium on the second and third floors.

A much simpler three-story brick section on the east end of the original rear ell was built between 1939 and 1962.⁵ The brick section replaced an older building that was left in place with the main building was constructed in 1917-1919 (Figures 5, 7). It has a flat roof, unadorned dark brick side walls, and early or original double-hung wood windows. A low one-story extension on the back wall of that section was built after 1962 to connect the main building to an older boiler house. The core of the boiler house may date to the 1920s, but it has either been rebuilt or greatly altered in recent decades. It is two stories with poured concrete walls, a concrete structural system and a flat roof. There are few windows or doors. A metal-clad section on the east end has a loading dock and a large modern dock door (Photos 6, 10).

The interior of the building is notably intact. The front doors open to a small vestibule, which in turn leads to a large formal lobby (Photo 15; Figure 7). The lobby serves as a central circulation space, with access to the central corridors of the front section and rear ell, as well as two wide formal staircases to the second floor. The double-loaded corridors, which lead to secondary staircases on the north and south ends of the building, are lined with original doorways (Photo 16). There is also an elevator in the north hallway; the elevator shaft and doorway are original, but the equipment itself is newer.

At the back of the lobby is an entrance to a secondary entry foyer which leads to the side entrances as well as a hallway in the rear ell. The foyer is original, though the hallway may have been installed later (Figure 8). The hall connects to the boiler house, which also houses maintenance and building facilities offices.

⁵ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Potsdam, 1904-1962.

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The second and third-floor plans of the front section are very similar to that of the first. Each floor has a wide lobby with paired staircases in addition to double-loaded corridors that lead to the north and south stairways. The corridors are lined with original classroom and office entrances. The north end of the third floor is the only section that no longer has an open central hallway. The central hall in that location has been shortened and new partitions have been added to create multiple small new offices. Some of the original classrooms and offices located off of the other hallways have also been subdivided, but the original doorways are intact, and original partition walls are still in place. A small enclosed stair situated off of the south hall on the third floor leads up to a largely unfinished attic space.

The central lobbies on the second and third floors of the rear ell provide access to the auditorium that occupies the upper floors of the original rear ell. The auditorium is a large open volume with a stage at the east end and a small balcony along the west wall. The main entrance to the auditorium is on the second floor and doors to the balcony seating are at third-floor level. Most of the finishes in the auditorium date to the mid 20th century, including the walls around the windows, which now cover the arched tops of the original window openings. The original arch-topped sash are still in place and visible from the exterior.

Interior finishes are notably intact, especially in the circulation areas. The finishes of the first floor lobby and hallways are nearly pristine and in very good condition. Those spaces have plaster walls and ceilings, with terrazzo floors that are bordered with tile mosaics (Photos 15, 16, 19-21). The lobbies also have beamed ceilings and square plastered columns that are topped with molded plaster cornices. All of the staircases in the building appear to be original; they have metal balustrades with paneled newel posts, paneled metal risers and smooth stone treads.

The doorways of the front halls are slightly recessed, with smooth curved plaster returns (Photos 16, 21). Almost all of the doorways on the first and second floors have early or original wood doors and transoms. Each early door has a large frosted glass pane above a smaller recessed panel, and the transoms are glazed with frosted glass as well (Photo 16). Several of the doors on the upper floors have been replaced over the years, but almost all original doorways are intact. Finishes within the original classrooms and offices have seen more changes, and many now have lowered ceilings and modern floor coverings. Several classrooms retain original finishes, however, with wood floors, plastered walls and ceilings, and early blackboards (Photo 18).

Almost all of the classrooms and offices feature early or original windows. The large window openings are filled with pivoting wood sash which have vertical muntins. Most of the upper floors have two-light sash separated by slim flat mullions, while the wider first floor windows often have three lights per sash. The windows are all in fair to good condition.

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Potsdam State Normal School Campus
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Normal School Integrity

Overall, the Potsdam Normal School looks very much as it did when it was placed in service in 1919. There have been no additions or alterations to the front section of the building, and the modern additions to the rear ell are shielded from view on the south by the Congdon Campus School. The rear ell is visible only from the parking lot or Elm Street to the north, and the changes there have a minimal impact upon the historic public views of the school. Almost all exterior finishes, including the original windows and the character-defining front columns and doorways, are highly intact. A few windows have been replaced, typically to accommodate the installation of window air conditioners, and the nameplate of the facade was changed when Clarkson University purchased the property in 1958; all are arguably minor changes. The interior of the building is also notably intact. Almost all major circulation spaces, including all original staircases and nearly all of the hallways are highly intact, in plan as well as finishes. Some former classrooms and offices have been subdivided, but most original interior partitions remain in place, and the building clearly reflects its long history as an educational facility.

Congdon Campus School, 56-60 Main Street; 1931 (Contributing building) photos 6-10, 22-27

Like the main Normal School building, the Congdon Campus School replaced an older building that had occupied the same site. It was built to serve as an elementary school and was often called a practice school, since the normal school students were involved in teaching duties. Construction began in 1930 and it was placed in service in 1931. It is three stories, with brick walls and a hipped standing-seam metal roof. The walls are constructed of dark brown brick and accented with smoothly finished sandstone which matches that used on the main building. The pattern of ornamentation used for the exterior walls is similar to that of the Normal School, except that brick is used in lieu of rough textured ashlar masonry. Like the main building, the practice school has a high stone water table of smooth stone, and a simple stone cornice at the top of the first floor. Lower floor windows also have matching wide flat stone lintels. The roof systems of the two buildings are also very similar, with wide overhangs supported by paired brackets and shaped rafter ends. It differs from the older school in the use of raised parapets over the entrances, which were probably used to address a recurring problem with ice falling from the sloped roof of the Normal School.⁶

The Campus School is smaller and less highly ornamented than the main building. It has a roughly T-shaped plan and small projecting entry bays on the short ends of the building. The front door is in the west end, which is closest to the Normal School building. That entryway is accented only by stylized classical pilasters which flank the paired entrance doors (Photos 9, 10). The southwest corner of the building is accented with polygonal bay windows at the first floor.

⁶ Interview with Potsdam resident Fred Rollins, who attended the Campus School from 1954-1963.

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The long side walls of the building are very much alike and exhibit evenly spaced banks of windows that are similar to those used on the facade of the Normal School (Photo 8). They are arranged in large groupings at the second and third stories and in corresponding rows of single windows at first-floor level. The window sash look much like those used on the Normal School, but unlike those on the former they are hung and do not pivot. Embossed metal spandrel panels between the second and third story windows include grills for the ventilations system; similar grills are also located at first and second-floor level. There are also several large brick chimneys that are filled with louvered panels which may also have been part of the ventilation system.

The east end is slightly wider than the rest of the building but otherwise very similar. A second entrance on the east wall is nearly identical to that on the front wall, but there are no bay windows on this part of the building (Photo 7). A third entry is located on the north wall, close to the wider rear section. There is also a relatively small three-story stair tower on the east end wall which was added sometime after 1980.⁷ It is set back from Main Street and connects to the building in only a few places, resulting in little impact to the overall historic appearance. There is a large gymnasium at the basement and first-floor levels of the northeast corner, and the first-story windows in that area are larger than those used elsewhere (Photo 6). The third-story windows in the same part of the building were replaced with smaller single-light sash a few decades ago. The original window openings were not altered for that project; the smaller windows are surrounded by flat frame panels to make up the difference.

The interior of the Congdon Campus School was built with fewer interior embellishments than the Normal School. The building features a simple utilitarian layout and nearly identical plans for each floor. There are three large enclosed stairways in the building, each of which leads to an outside door (Photo 27). The stairways are generally utilitarian, with woven wire in lieu of balustrades and simple metal and stone steps. The stairways all lead to wide central corridors that are lined with classroom entrances. The doorways between the stairs and the halls have multi-light wood doors that are surrounded by multi-light transoms. Many of those glass panes have been replaced with solid panels and the ones that remain are filled with wire glass (Photo 25).

While the original large classrooms are still in place, most were split into two or more rooms when the building was remodeled for use as a dorm in the 1980s. Those changes did not include adding doorways in the corridors, which therefore retain their original fenestration. Several of the larger historic rooms are also fully intact. The original gymnasium, for example, does not appear to have seen any changes since it was placed in service in 1931 (Photo 24). It is a large open room with

⁷ The stair addition is not shown on 1980s remodeling plans of the building that are on file with Clarkson University.

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painted brick walls, a wood floor and a high beamed ceiling. All of those features are in fair condition except for the floor, which has seen extensive water damage in recent years.

There is also a largely intact assembly room on the second floor, directly above the gymnasium. It has an open seating area and includes a raised stage and backstage dressing rooms. The seating area has a beamed ceiling and low wood wainscoting which appear to be original. The stage is now walled off from the main room with a lightweight plywood partition.

One of the more ornate rooms in the school is located in the southwest corner, next to the front door. That large room features two oversized bay windows as well as an open fireplace and a built-in cupboard. Historic descriptions show that this was built to serve as part of the kindergarten suite.⁸ It has original plaster walls, a newer drywall ceiling, and modern carpeting on the floor. The fireplace mantel and all millwork around the windows appear to be original.

Many rooms in the building retain at least some early or original finishes. Most of the original plastered walls are intact, as are almost all original window sash and openings. The windows are all set a bit back from the plan of the wall in simple uncased openings (Photo 26). Some rooms have original plastered ceilings as well, and several others are close to their full height, albeit covered with modern tiles. Several classrooms still have exposed wood flooring, although the majority have either tile or carpeted floors, as do the central hallways.

Congdon Campus School Integrity

The Campus School looks very much as it did in 1931. Almost all exterior finishes, including the original windows, doors, and roof details, are highly intact. The late 20th century stair tower and minor window changes on the back section of the building have had little impact and are all located away from general public view. Inside the building, all major circulation spaces are intact, and the modern changes to the classrooms have not obscured evidence of the original layout. Important interior spaces such as the gymnasium and kindergarten suite have seen notably few changes, and these continue to reflect the early educational function of the building. Like the main administration and classroom building, the practice school is intact and easily recognizable to the cited period of significance.

⁸ "Floorplans Reveal Progressive Planning." The Normal Racquette. [Potsdam, NY] Jan. 15, 1931: 1, 4.

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Summary

The Potsdam State Normal School Campus, in the town and village of Potsdam, New York, is a highly intact early twentieth century State Normal School campus. The site has a notably long connection to higher education. It has been in continuous use as an education center since the St. Lawrence Academy built a new building there in 1826. That academy became one of the first state-sanctioned normal schools in New York in 1868, and the two current buildings were built for the Potsdam State Normal school between 1917 and 1931. The campus is locally significant in the area of Education, under National Register Criterion A, for its long association with the state normal school system, which was implemented in order to educate teachers. The Potsdam State Normal School, established in 1869, was the sixth such school to be established by the state of New York, and it served in that capacity well into the twentieth century. Of note is the school's long association with Julia Crane, a faculty member who pioneered the science of teaching music instruction while on the staff. Both buildings were designed by the office of the New York State Architect and are also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as representative specimens of period educational design. The larger building on the property is also the oldest; it is the Potsdam State Normal School, which was built in 1917-19 to serve as a combination classroom and administration building. That Classical Revival style building was designed by Lewis Pilcher, who served as the State Architect of New York from 1913-1923. The Congdon Campus School was constructed in 1930-31; it was designed by William Haugaard, who held the position of State Architect from 1928-1944. Together, those two buildings housed all operations of the Potsdam State Normal School until the early 1950s, when the college began moving its campus to a new location. The administration building was vacated by the Normal School in 1958, and the campus school remained in use until 1980. The period of significance runs from 1919, when the administration and classroom building was placed in service, to 1958, when that same building was sold to Clarkson College. The property continued to serve an educational function as part of Clarkson, and it has seen few physical changes since 1958. The campus today offers a significant, highly intact link to the early history of higher education in Potsdam.

Historical & Architectural Context

The Town of Potsdam was established in 1806 as one of the original ten townships in St. Lawrence County. It was named for a distinctive local bed of reddish sandstone which resembled sandstone found in the German town of Potsdam.⁹ The Village of Potsdam developed along the banks of the Racquette River, which provided transportation as well as water power for early industries. The village had just 7 buildings in 1810, but settlement continued at a steady pace; by 1813 Potsdam had a large enough population to support a

⁹ Gates Curtis, Our County and Its People: A Memorial Record of St. Lawrence County, New York (Syracuse, New York: D. Mason and Company, 1894) 462.

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common school.¹⁰ The development of local educational facilities was spearheaded by Judge Benjamin Raymond, a business and community leader who had built one of the first houses in the village.¹¹ Raymond was one of three men appointed to serve as a commissioner of common schools in 1813. Three years later, he oversaw the creation of the St. Lawrence Academy, which was incorporated September 17, 1816.¹² Raymond was the founding chairman of that school's board of trustees and the first classes of the academy were held in a small frame church which had been erected on his land a few years earlier.¹³

There was clearly a demand for the new school. Classes commenced just two weeks after the first meeting of the board of trustees, with 42 students in attendance.¹⁴ The school was funded solely by tuition payments for the first few years of its existence. Students paid around \$7 a quarter for tuition, and those from out of town boarded with local families for another \$2.50 a week.¹⁵ In spite of opening in a frontier location during an economic depression, the St. Lawrence Academy saw a remarkable level of growth over the next decade. By 1825, the school had more than 240 students.¹⁶

The St. Lawrence Academy soon outgrew the 24 by 36-foot church on Raymond's land, and trustees authorized the construction of a large new building on a lot close to the village park. In 1825, the institution moved to the new three-story stone building constructed on Elm Street. The new building was erected on property that would become part of the Potsdam State Normal School Campus, and it housed 247 students between the ages of 10 and 20, including local residents as well as natives of nearby counties and Canada.¹⁷

The curriculum of the academy grew along with its enrollment, and the school saw particular growth after the Rev. Asa Brainerd took the position of preceptor in 1828. Brainerd became preceptor just as the State of New York was beginning to recognize the need to develop specialized teacher training programs in the state. In his annual message of 1827, New York Governor DeWitt Clinton declared that "it is necessary that some new plan for obtaining able teachers be devised."¹⁸ Reverend Brainerd also saw the need for specially trained educators,

¹⁰Curtis 462.

¹¹Charles W. Lahey, The Potsdam Tradition: A History and a Challenge (New York: Meredith Publishing Co., 1966) 9.

¹²Curtis 466, and Lahey 1.

¹³Lahey 10.

¹⁴Potsdam Public Museum, Images of America: Potsdam (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2004) 32.

¹⁵Lahey 5.

¹⁶Potsdam Public Museum 32.

¹⁷Ibid.; Subramanian 7.

¹⁸First Quarto-Centennial History of the State Normal and Training School, Potsdam, N.Y., 1869-1894 (Potsdam, New York: Elliot Fay and Sons, 1895) 15-16.

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and soon after arriving at the St. Lawrence Academy, he established one of the first specialized teacher training programs in the state.¹⁹ His efforts were clearly successful, as shown by the construction of a second building on the academy grounds ten years later, specifically designated for use of the "Teacher Training Program."²⁰ About the time that second building was completed the academy began to receive state aid, which was earmarked to support the teacher training program in the 1830s.²¹

Brainerd laid the groundwork for an educational program that would come to dominate the activities of the academy and eventually lead to the creation of one of the first normal schools in New York State. The term "normal school" is based upon the French term *école normale*, a term used to describe schools which established teaching standards, or norms.²² *Écoles normales* were established in France in the late 1700s as places "where citizens of the Republic already schooled in the useful sciences should be taught to teach."²³ This concept marked a transition from earlier beliefs that one needed only a solid grasp of the subjects being taught to be a good teacher. Proponents of specialized teacher training, by contrast, believed that good teachers must also learn theories of teaching and be able to see those theories in action, via time spent in actual classrooms.²⁴

After several decades of debate about the best way students should be "taught to teach," state-sponsored normal school programs began opening in the United States. The first state normal school in the United States was established in Massachusetts in 1839, and New York followed suit a few years later.²⁵ In 1843, the New York state legislature authorized the creation of a state normal school in Albany. That school opened in 1844 and was the only state-sponsored normal school in New York until 1861, when a second one opened in Oswego.²⁶

Although the school in Albany played a leading role in the education of new teachers during the 1840s and 1850s, many of the state-supported academies, including St. Lawrence, continued to educate teachers as well. The state continued to provide financial support for the St. Lawrence Academy's teacher training program into the mid-1860s, albeit at a greatly reduced level. Finally, in 1866, the state legislature decided that the state should support the development of a network of state normal schools, which would take over all state-supported teacher training.

¹⁹Subramanian, 7; Lahey, 58.

²⁰Potsdam Public Museum, 31.

²¹Lahey, 56-59.

²²Reginald Edwards, "Theory, History, and Practice of Education: *Fin de siècle* and a new beginning," McGill Journal of Education 26 (Fall 1991) 238.

²³*Ibid.*, 240.

²⁴First Quarto-Centennial History 14.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 14, 18.

²⁶Curtis, 489.

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At the urging of Victor M. Rice, state superintendent of public instruction, the legislature authorized the creation of a commission to "receive proposals in writing in regard to the establishment of normal and training schools for the education and discipline of teachers for the common schools of this State."²⁷ The board was tasked with establishing four new state normal schools.

That legislation set off a lively competition among communities that were interested in hosting the new state institutions. Civic leaders recognized the potential boon such schools would be to local economies, and many scrambled to put together packages of incentives. Host communities were required to furnish a site, buildings, furniture, and equipment for the new schools.²⁸ Civic leaders in Potsdam knew from their experience with the St. Lawrence Academy the advantages such a school would bring to the community and they immediately began a campaign to garner public support and financial assistance to convert the academy into a new state normal school.

Being home to the St. Lawrence Academy proved beneficial in two ways: the town had a proven record of support for higher education and the trustees of the academy agreed to turn over the grounds, buildings, apparatus and libraries of the older school for use by the new normal school.²⁹ Normal school boosters, led by General Edwin Atkins Merritt, were also able to convince the city and county to pledge large sums of money, and by the end of 1866 had garnered promises of some \$72,000 in cash, plus the land and equipment of the academy.

These efforts paid off; in 1867, Potsdam was chosen as the site of one of the four new state normal schools.³⁰ That August, the state appointed a local board to manage the school in Potsdam, and in November the board entered into a contract to replace the old academy buildings with a single large new building which would meet state standards. The new building, constructed of Potsdam sandstone, was completed in 1868 and placed in service as the Potsdam Normal School. It was the sixth state normal school established in New York.³¹ By the turn of the 20th century, the state was operating 12 normal schools, listed here in the order that state funds were first disbursed: Albany (1844); Oswego (1863), Fredonia (1868),

²⁷Cutis, 489.

²⁸Lahey, 65.

²⁹The trustees of the Academy actually retained ownership of the land, but gave the state the building and free use of the property for as long as it was used to be used for teacher training. Bradford B. Broughton, A Clarkson Mosaic: Bits and Pieces of Academic, Personal, Sports...First Hundred Years 1896-1995 (Potsdam, New York: Clarkson University, 1995) 302.

³⁰Curtis, 491.

³¹H. Warren Button and Betsy C. Corby, "SUNY's Centralization: Normal Schools as Precedents," The Coming of the State University of New York Conference (Brockport, New York. April 1991), 5.

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Brockport (1868), Cortland (1868), Potsdam (1869), Buffalo (1870), Genesco (1871), New Paltz (1886), Oneonta (1889), Plattsburg (1890) and Jamaica (1877).³²

As a state normal school, the Potsdam Normal School was subject to more state controls than the St. Lawrence Academy had been, although the local board of directors retained a good deal of control, including in staffing decisions. One of that board's first actions was the hiring of Malcolm MacVicar, who served as the principal of the Potsdam Normal School for the first 20 years of its existence.

MacVicar insisted that students should have a strong grasp of the subjects they would be teaching, as well as solid experience in the classroom. To that end, he followed what was becoming standard practice for state normal schools and set up a "practice school," which was a fully accredited common school that held classes in the new normal school building. The practice school was staffed by qualified teachers who also provided instruction to student teachers from the normal school. One description of MacVicar's tenure noted that he "made the practice school the heart of his program....he felt that observation of the art of teaching and practicing it was the only way to train a teacher."³³

A report issued by a state committee in 1879 shows that they held similar views. That report identified four specific areas that should be addressed by the normal schools:

1. Culture of pupils--physical, intellectual, moral;
2. Knowledge of subjects;
3. Instruction in methods of teaching;
4. Actual practice in methods taught.³⁴

At the first Potsdam Normal School building, the practice school classrooms appear to have been distributed throughout the building. Early Sanborn maps show that the primary department was in the north wing and the intermediate department was in the south end (See Figure 10).

MacVicar was succeeded by Dr. Thomas B. Stowell, who headed the school from 1889 to 1909.³⁵ Under his leadership, the science department was strengthened, a drawing program was greatly expanded, and the normal school began working cooperatively with the Clarkson School of Technology, which had occupied an adjacent property since 1896.³⁶ Stowell was also

³²Button and Corby, 5.

³³Lahey, 91.

³⁴Ibid, 97.

³⁵Postdam Public Museum 65.

³⁶Lahey, 104-106.

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a believer in the merits of physical education, and under his stewardship the college added a new building to house a gymnasium and indoor track, which came to be known as the Stowell Annex. That three-story stone building, which was connected to the main building via an enclosed corridor, was located on the south edge of the campus, in roughly the same spot now occupied by the Congdon Campus School (See Figure 10).³⁷

By the early 20th century the Potsdam Normal School had outgrown the 1860s building, and local legislators began work to get state funding for a new building for the Potsdam Normal School. The leader in that effort was none other than the son of General Merritt, Assemblyman E. A. Merritt Jr., who had helped secure funding for the 1860s construction project.³⁸ In 1906, Merritt Jr., who also chaired the local board for the Normal School, was able to get a bill passed to provide \$125,000 for a new building, but it was vetoed by the governor. School boosters persisted nevertheless and introduced similar bills every year until 1915, when an appropriation of \$300,000 was secured. Two years later the legislature added \$75,000 to that fund.³⁹

With that funding came professional design services. As a state-run institution, the Potsdam Normal School was entitled to the services of the State Architect's office. Architectural drawings for the new building show that New York State Architect Lewis Pilcher had produced a full set of construction drawings for the "Reconstruction of the State Normal and Training School" by April, 1916 (See Figure 6).⁴⁰ Pilcher served as State Architect from 1913 to 1923. A native of Brooklyn, he was a partner in the architectural firm of Pilcher and Tau, which was based in New York City. According to a biography which was included in the 1914 state Red Book:

Mr. Pilcher has designed and constructed some of the finest buildings in the United States, including the Louisville Public Library, Squadron "C" Armory in Brooklyn; various buildings at Vassar College; the Ben Israel Synagog [sic] in Philadelphia...He is now building the Eighth Regimental Armory, the most extensive military building in the world....Since Mr. Pilcher assumed the office of State Architect he has reorganized the department and is at present working for even greater efficiency in the construction of state buildings.⁴¹

The construction drawings for the new building reflect the different appropriations approved by the legislature. There were two sets of drawings issued for the project. Those prepared in 1916 covered all aspects of the construction project, including wall sections and stair details. In June 1917 the State Architect's office issued an update to that set which showed the addition of a new bay to each end of the front section of the building, bringing it to its current width of

³⁷Postdam Public Museum 33.

³⁸Lahey, 155.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Drawings on file with Clarkson University.

⁴¹New York Red Book (New York: Williams Press, 1914) 68.

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seven bays. The second set of plans was prepared to address the new allocation of \$75,000 issued by the state in 1917.⁴²

Work on the new building was well underway by the time that second set of drawings was completed. In November 1916 the New York City firm of Bradley and Weed was named as the general contractor for the project, and by August 1917 most of the old building had been demolished and a cornerstone had been set for the new one.⁴³ One section of the older building was spared the wrecking ball: the Cook Annex, a large section that had been added to the rear of the old normal school in the 1880s, was retained and worked into the plan for the new school building (See Figure 10).⁴⁴

Pilcher's design for the new building combined local building traditions with up-to-date architectural styling. Like the school buildings that had occupied the lot for most of the preceding century, the new building was constructed of locally quarried Potsdam sandstone. Pilcher even allowed the contractors to reuse stones from the older building in the construction of the new walls. Some of those stones, from the 1869 building, had come from the 1820s and 1830s academy buildings.⁴⁵ One page of wall sections in the architectural plans included notes on which walls could incorporate older stones—not surprisingly, they were not to be used on the façade but were instead employed on the back wall of the main block as well as secondary walls of the rear ell.⁴⁶

Potsdam sandstone is a very hard, weather-resistant stone that is found in northern New York and southern Ontario, Canada.⁴⁷ It occurs close to the surface in outcroppings located on the banks of the Racquette River in the greater Potsdam area. The relatively easy access to the stone near Potsdam led to the establishment of several quarries there in the first half of the 19th century, and reddish Potsdam sandstone soon became a favored local building material.

Early buildings in the area were constructed with relatively thin slabs of the stone, which were combined with rubble walls in a technique known as slab and binder, which resulted in smooth exterior walls that were faced with rectangular slabs of stone. The first stone buildings of the St. Lawrence Academy appear to have utilized that construction technique. That method was gradually replaced with the use of ashlar masonry, which used larger, roughly rectangular

⁴²George H. Sweet, "Potsdam State Normal School; The Old And The New: The Laying of the Corner Stone of the New Building," Potsdam Courier and Freeman 22 Aug. 1917: 3. Sweet was the secretary of the board for the Normal School.

⁴³Ibid. Sub-contractors included a Syracuse company to do the heating equipment, and New York City firms for plumbing and electrical work

⁴⁴Potsdam Normal School, 5.

⁴⁵Lahey, 156.

⁴⁶Pilcher, "Drawing No. 802," March 23, 1917.

⁴⁷James D. Carl, "The Origin of Potsdam Sandstone," <http://www.potsdampublicmuseum.org/library.php,2>.

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blocks with more highly textured faces. The latter method was particularly popular in St. Lawrence County between 1868 and 1943, a period that historian Susan Omohundro has labeled "The Industrial Era of Potsdam Sandstone."⁴⁸ Omohundro identified fifteen major buildings in St. Lawrence County that were built of Potsdam sandstone using that method during that time period, the 1917 State Normal School Building being among them.

The hard red stone proved to be an ideal material with which to build heavy masonry walls, but it presented something of a challenge when the contractor of the new normal school tried to use it for other parts of the building. An article that was published on the front page of the local paper in the summer of 1918 reported that "Owing to the extreme hardness of the sandstone used in the construction of the building, it was found necessary to make the inscription of terra cotta instead of sandstone as the scrollwork could not be worked into the sandstone."⁴⁹ The article went on to explain that the large columns used on the front of the building also required special attention. The sandstone proved to be so hard that it was impossible to fabricate columns from solid blocks of stone, and the contractors instead used ground sandstone dust mixed with cement to create cast stone columns. The newspaper reported that it took several castings to get a product that would meet the approval of the state architect's office but apparently found it to be worth the effort, as they noted that the "new columns add greatly to the appearance of the exterior of the new building."⁵⁰

Those oversized columns are a character defining feature of the Classical Revival style, which had by then been extremely popular for public buildings in the United States for more than two decades. Pilcher's design for the new building utilizes many features of the Classical Revival style, including simple massing, a symmetrical facade and classically inspired systems of ornament. The Classical Revival style of the early twentieth century was the last of several American movements which incorporated design elements found on the buildings of ancient Greece and Rome. Architects and their clients of the day tended to look to more recent models for inspiration, however. One description of the movement noted that "the 20th century classical revival in the United States was the child more of the Beaux-Arts tradition than of the ancient Mediterranean world."⁵¹ Richard Morris Hunt and numerous other students of the *École des Beaux Arts* had found great success in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and by the time Pilcher drew the plans for the Potsdam school, a generalized Beaux-Arts Classicism had become almost requisite for monumental public architecture.

⁴⁸Carl 14.

⁴⁹"Stone Cast for Columns," Potsdam Courier and Freeman 8 Apr. 1918: 1.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹John C. Poppeliers, et. al. What Style Is It? (Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press, 1984) , 70.

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By the spring of 1919 the new school building was far enough along to host graduation ceremonies in the auditorium, and it opened for fall classes in September 1919 (Figure 10). Work continued into 1920, however, with help from state allocations to improve the physical plant and to complete the construction and furnishing of the main building.⁵² The large new building was well-received by members of the community as well as the students of the school. The building was the site of a 50-year anniversary celebration in 1919, which was covered in a long article in the local newspaper in July of that year. The newspaper account included ample praise for the new building and for recently deceased principal Dr. Jeremiah M. Thompson, who had been a strong advocate for the construction of the new building but who had not lived to see it placed in service. One speaker noted that "this new building will ever be to him a monument of the accomplishment of the task to which he set himself," and another proclaimed that "this new building is his ideal of the most perfect expression of that education devotion of which many of you have had experience."⁵³

Dr. Thompson was also credited with expanding the practice school program and brokering a deal with the village to educate all local high school students on the normal school campus.⁵⁴ To accommodate the terms of that agreement, which began in 1917 and continued into the late 1920s or early 1930s, the Stowell Annex became the new village high school after the new main classroom building was placed in service.⁵⁵ The Stowell Annex had already been subdivided to accommodate both common and normal school classes during the construction period, which no doubt laid the ground work for the permanent transition from gymnasium to public high school.

Together, the large new college building and the remodeled Stowell Annex served the Potsdam Normal School into the late 1920s. By the time the new building was placed in service in 1919, the state had standardized most course requirements for state-run normal schools, identifying specific requirements for three fields of specialty: Elementary, Kindergarten-Primary, and Kindergarten. Each area of specialty required two years of course work which included at least 560 hours of "observation and practice" and entitled graduates to a lifetime license to teach in the common schools of New York.⁵⁶ The state did allow for some individuality among the different campuses, however, by authorizing some schools to offer "special professional courses" such as cookery, agriculture, and drawing. A 1911 Education Department Bulletin shows that Potsdam was authorized to offer special programs for both drawing and music.

⁵²Poppeliers et. al., 70.

⁵³"Normal Celebrates 50th Birthday," Potsdam Courier and Freeman 2 July 1919: 1,3.

⁵⁴Potsdam Normal School 7.

⁵⁵Sanborn Map of Potsdam 1926, and Potsdam Public Museum 44.

⁵⁶University of the State of New York, "Education Department Bulletin," Albany, 15 Oct. 1911, No. 505: 23-25.

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The music program at Potsdam was particularly strong thanks in no small measure to the long career of Julia Crane, a Potsdam graduate who opened a private voice studio in a house on the edge of the Potsdam campus in the early 1880s. In 1884, Crane was recruited to teach at the normal school but agreed to take the job only if she could keep her private studio and be given the freedom to develop a formal course of study at the college which focused upon methods of teaching music. That was a relatively radical thought at the time, when the duties of music teachers at the normal school were generally limited to preparing music for assemblies and teaching choir lessons. The school accepted her terms and she joined the staff of the normal school in 1886.⁵⁷

Crane wasted no time putting her plan into action, and a year later published the first edition of *Music Teacher's Manual*, which laid out a complete system for music instruction for primary to normal school level classes. The book enjoyed a long period of popularity with eight different editions through 1923. With it she established principles of music education that are still in use today.⁵⁸ Her first state normal school students graduated in 1888, becoming the first music teachers in the country to graduate from a normal school and earning the Potsdam Normal School the nickname of the "birthplace of modern music education."⁵⁹

Julia Crane remained on the faculty of the Potsdam State Normal School and continued to operate her private school, the Crane Conservatory, into the early 1920s. The Crane Conservatory, which supplemented the courses in the Normal School, later became the Crane Normal Institute of Music and she became a nationally recognized expert in the field of music education.⁶⁰ She died in 1923, and in her will gave the state of New York the right of first refusal for the institute, which she had been trying to get integrated into the normal school for several years.⁶¹ That type of transfer required legislative action, and when efforts to get a bill through the legislature stalled, a group of local businessmen formed a corporation to purchase it and keep it open until they could get a bill through the legislature. Finally, on July 26, 1926, the Crane Normal Institute became the Crane department of music at the Potsdam Normal School.⁶²

A few years after the incorporation of the Crane department of music, the Stowell Annex was found to be structurally deficient and was condemned amid great uproar in the local papers. The Potsdam Courier and Freeman reported in March, 1929:

⁵⁷Lahey, 124; Subramanian, 69.

⁵⁸Subramanian, 70.

⁵⁹Lahey, 126.

⁶⁰Ibid., 125-150.

⁶¹Ibid., 152.

⁶²Ibid., 153-155.

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Announcement comes that the portion of the Potsdam State Normal School, known as the Stowell Annex, is in a dangerous condition and must come down....It is now admitted that the construction was of a most faulty type...a public school building with a type of construction that makes it a death trap has the taint of murder. Fortunate it must appear that the fault was discovered before the crash!⁶³

Fortunately, the New York State Board of Regents had a meeting scheduled for just a few days after the annex was condemned, and representatives of the normal school were able to convince them to support the allocation of \$900,000 in emergency funding to demolish the old building and erect a replacement. The governor and legislators agreed with the request and within a few months the Stowell Annex had been razed and the office of the State Architect was working on plans for a new practice school.⁶⁴

One newspaper article about the project also made much of the fact that the new building would be freestanding, as opposed to the older annex, which had been connected to the main building. The article explained that this was a "modern trend" and that "state normal schools of the best type throughout the State and the United States are coming to take the form of a group of buildings... it is better to separate the different types of work done in a large teacher training institution."⁶⁵ Potsdam administrators appear to have already been working to get that type of functional separation, as shown by their decision to place the high school classes in the annex instead of the main classroom building.

Administrators once again turned to the office of the state architect for help with the construction project. The State Architect at the time was William E. Hugaard, who went by the updated title of "Commissioner of State Architecture." A sweeping reorganization of state commissions in the 1920s had put the position of the state architect under the umbrella of the state Department of Public Works.⁶⁶ The Potsdam project came relatively early in Hugaard's tenure in this position, which ran from 1928 to 1944.⁶⁷ Hugaard was well-qualified for the post; he had classical training in architecture and fifteen years of experience. He studied in New York and MIT before traveling to Europe to attend the *École des Beaux Arts* and do additional architectural research in Italy and England. Work done in private practice included design work for the Panama Canal project and a position as contracting quartermaster in Baltimore during WWI.⁶⁸ He went on to have a long productive career as State Architect, a

⁶³"Death Trap School," Potsdam Courier and Freeman 6 Mar. 1929: (Clipping on file with the Potsdam Public Museum, courtesy Fred Rollins.)

⁶⁴"Building Appropriation for Potsdam Authorized," The Normal Racquette [Potsdam, NY] 21 Mar. 1929: 2.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶"Propose Sweeping State Reorganization," Republican-Journal [Ogdensburg, NY] 27 Feb. 1923: 1.

⁶⁷"W. E. Hugaard 59, Long and Architect," New York Times 18 Sept. 1948: 17.

⁶⁸Ibid.

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Name of Property St. Lawrence County, New York
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position he held longer than any of his predecessors.⁶⁹ His 1948 obituary estimated that he supervised more than \$250 million worth of construction projects over his career, including many schools, several large hospitals and Attica State Prison.

The building that Haugaard designed for the Potsdam Normal School coordinated nicely with the existing building. The new building is similar enough to complement the older building without being overly imitative. It has comparable massing and fenestration, as well as some of the same types of exterior ornamentation, but it is generally a simpler building. The walls are brick instead of stone but are nevertheless accented with the same type of sandstone trim used on the main building. The exterior of the new school also has a practical improvement in the use of flat parapets over the entrances to minimize danger of ice and snow falling on pedestrians. That was such a problem for the Normal School building that small frame porches had to be added to all entrances in the winter months to provide shelter from falling snow.

The interior of the practice school is noticeably simpler than the interior of the normal school. There are no large formal lobbies or grand stair halls, and the central hallways and classrooms appear to have been designed more for function than architectural impact. The large staircases are decidedly utilitarian in character, with wire mesh dividers in lieu of balustrades, and there is little applied interior ornament of any kind.

However, the new building was by no means short on accommodations. A description published in the school paper after an open house included significant praise for the new facilities. The long newspaper account noted that guests were first shown the new kindergarten suite on the first floor, which was "certainly second to none in the state. Appropriate hangings, specially designed furniture, a 'homey' fireplace...elicited many 'oh's' and 'ah's' of admiration."⁷⁰ The writer also praised facilities for health and recreation, which included a suite of offices for the school nurse and a large modern gymnasium which was "furnished with much apparatus and adjoined by modern locker rooms and showers." The auditorium on the second floor was also remarked upon, and the writer pointed out that it included backstage dressing rooms and "scientifically designed" sound-proofing.⁷¹ The article ended with praise for the "new univent system" of forced ventilation which poured "balmy floods of purest air into the building...this gave a sort of Palm Beach effect."⁷²

Although the building was referred to simply as the "practice school" when it opened in the fall of 1931, it was soon named the Congdon Campus School, in honor of Randolph Congdon, the

⁶⁹Nancy L. Todd, *New York's Historic Armories: An Illustrated History*, SUNY Press, 2006.

⁷⁰"Patrons in 'House Warming' Crowd New Practice Bldg.," *The Normal Racquette* [Potsdam, NY] 19 Nov. 1931: 1.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., 3.

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principal of the Normal School at the time. The school yearbook of 1931 included a rendering of the building by W. E. Haugaard, entitled "Practice School Building State Normal School Potsdam New York," with a title block that read "DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, WILLIAM E. HAUGAARD, COMMISSIONER OF ARCHITECTURE" (See Figure 12).

The Congdon School was the first building in Potsdam that was built specifically to serve as a practice school and it enjoyed many years of service in that very function. When it opened, the Normal School still had a contract with the village of Potsdam to conduct high school classes, but it is not clear if high school students ever attended the Congdon School. The village began work on a separate high school in the 1920s and may have completed it by the time the Congdon School was placed in service.⁷³ For most of the time it was a practice school it housed students from kindergarten through eighth grade. Potsdam resident Fred Rollins, who was a student there from kindergarten through eighth grade in the late 1950s and early 1960s, recalls that those were the only classes offered. Rollins remembers that the normal school instructors used special observation rooms to watch the student teachers interact with the classes. The auditorium was used for plays and musical events, and students were even allowed to watch the 1960 World Series in the auditorium as a special treat.⁷⁴

The elimination of the high school program aligned with state educational trends; all state-run normal schools ceased operating high schools around that same time, as part of an increased emphasis on efficiency and standardization.⁷⁵ Beginning in the 1920s, with Governor Smith's belief that centralized power resulted in greater efficiency of operation, the state began a push for standardization among the twelve state-run normal schools. With that came a transfer of power from local boards to the State Education Department. State oversight was handled by a Board of Regents, which reported to the commissioner of education.⁷⁶ That change also brought greater oversight for curricula and a marked improvement in instructor qualifications among the state schools. Between 1925 and 1930 the number of state normal school faculty with degrees jumped from 50 percent to 91 percent, and the standard course of study in Potsdam and all other state schools increased from three years to four.⁷⁷

A few years after the Congdon School was placed in service the Cook Annex on the main classroom building was reconstructed for use by the music school (see Figure 5).⁷⁸ That was to be the last major change the campus saw while it was the Potsdam State Normal School. In

⁷³Potsdam Public Museum, 44.

⁷⁴Fred Rollins, who attended the school from 1954-1963, interview with Deb Sheals, September 2014.

⁷⁵Button and Corby 24. That article indicates that high schools started being phased out in the late 1920s, and all had closed by the early 1940s.

⁷⁶Ibid., 23-24.

⁷⁷Ibid., 24; Subramanian 8.

⁷⁸Lahey, 157.

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1942 the state renamed the school the State Teachers College at Potsdam, and in 1948 it became the State University of New York Teachers College at Potsdam.⁷⁹

That second name change marked the creation of the State University of New York, a process which included converting all of the state normal schools into regional branches of the State University.⁸⁰ That change also spurred the Potsdam college to begin developing a larger new campus a few miles to the south, on Pierrepoint Avenue. The first building on the new campus was placed in service in the early 1950s; in 1953 arrangements were made to sell the main building of the Potsdam State Normal School Campus to another Potsdam college, the Clarkson College of Technology.

Clarkson College was founded in 1896 as the Thomas S. Clarkson Memorial College of Technology. Established by three sisters of Thomas S. Clarkson, who died in a quarry accident, the school honored their brother's devotion to education and humanitarian concerns.⁸¹ Originally, the school was open to men and women and taught technical skills and engineering. In 1907 it was converted to a male-only institution but began admitting women again in 1964. In 1984, Clarkson College was designated as Clarkson University by the State of New York, and it continues to serve as a private university today.⁸²

The original Clarkson campus is situated on the south side of Main Street, directly across from the Congdon Campus School. Like the Normal School, Clarkson also established a second campus away from the center of town, but it has retained many of its central city buildings as well and is the current owner of both buildings on the former Potsdam State Normal School Campus. Clarkson took possession of the main building of the Normal School in 1958, at which time it was renamed Snell Hall, in honor of Bertrand H. Snell, a Clarkson trustee who gave the school the money to purchase the property and helped negotiate the real estate transaction.⁸³ That 1958 change of name and ownership marks the end of the cited period of significance for the Potsdam State Normal School Campus.

The State Teachers College became the State University College of Education at Potsdam in 1959, and finally took its present name—the State University of New York College at Potsdam, or SUNY Potsdam—in 1961.⁸⁴ SUNY Potsdam operated the Congdon Campus School as a

⁷⁹Subramanian, 8.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Potsdam Public Museum, 38.

⁸²"Thomas S. Clarkson Memorial School of Technology,"

<http://nyheritage.nnyln.net/cdm/ref/collection/clarkson/id/207>.

⁸³Broughton, 7 and 302. The property was actually purchased from the trustees of the St. Lawrence Academy, which regained control of it once it ceased being used for a normal school.

⁸⁴Subramanian, 8.

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practice school long after all other operations had transferred to the new campus. In 1970, the Congdon School was named the Research and Demonstration Center, and in 1980 it too was closed and transferred to Clarkson College. Clarkson remodeled it for use as a dormitory and also used part of it for campus fraternities. It was closed and vacated in 1992, reopened for a time in 1994, but fell vacant again by 2013.⁸⁵

Snell Hall is still owned and occupied by Clarkson University, although some parts of the building are now leased to other businesses and organizations. Neither it nor the practice school has seen any major alterations since the end of the period of significance and, together, they form a highly intact grouping of education buildings. The state's decision to move the campus rather than rebuild or add to the early buildings, paired with careful stewardship by Clarkson University, has left the Normal School Campus looking much as it did when the new practice school was placed in service in 1931.

Conclusion

Located on the site of one of the first Normal Schools in New York, the buildings of the Potsdam State Normal School Campus are among the oldest extant normal school resources in the state. The Potsdam Normal School building is the oldest state normal school building in the Village of Potsdam, as well as the oldest surviving building associated with the Crane department of music. The Congdon Campus School is the first building in Potsdam which was built specifically to serve as a practice school. Both buildings served in their original educational functions into the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and they continue to reflect their association with the Potsdam State Normal School. Their history is an important part of Potsdam's history, as well as a reflection of the development of state-run normal schools in New York.

⁸⁵Broughton, 300.

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Potsdam State Normal School Campus
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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of two tax parcels, 64.059-01-1 and 64.059-10-2, located in the Village of Potsdam, New York. This boundary is depicted on three maps included with this documentation, all of which are entitled "Potsdam State Normal School Campus, Potsdam, St. Lawrence Co., NY," and which were drawn at scales of 1:24,000, 1:12,000 and 1:3,000.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries has been drawn to include all of the land associated with the Potsdam State Normal School Campus during the cited period of significance, including a one-acre parcel west of the Normal School building which functioned as a small park. All of this land is historically associated with the Normal School.

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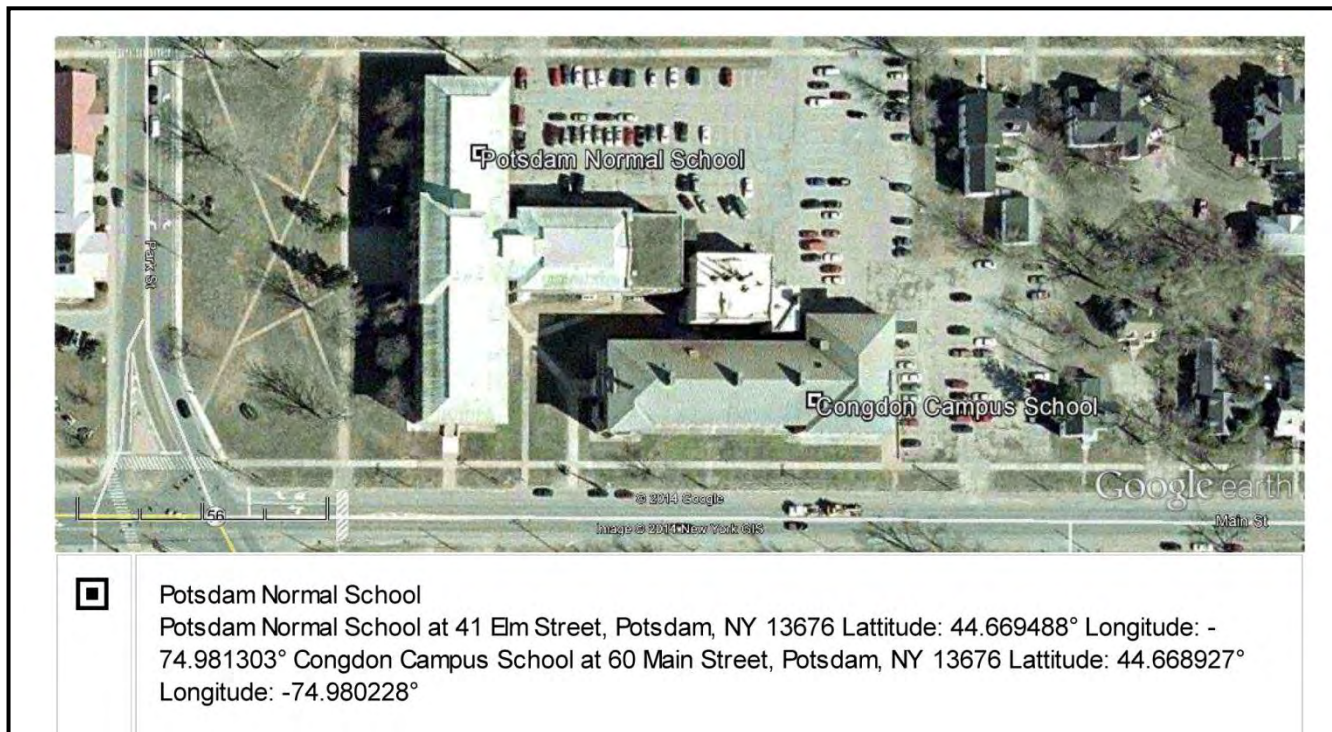


Figure 1. Aerial photo map from Google Earth, with Coordinates. Accessed October 2014.

Figure 2. Aerial photo map of the area, from Google Earth. Accessed October 2014.

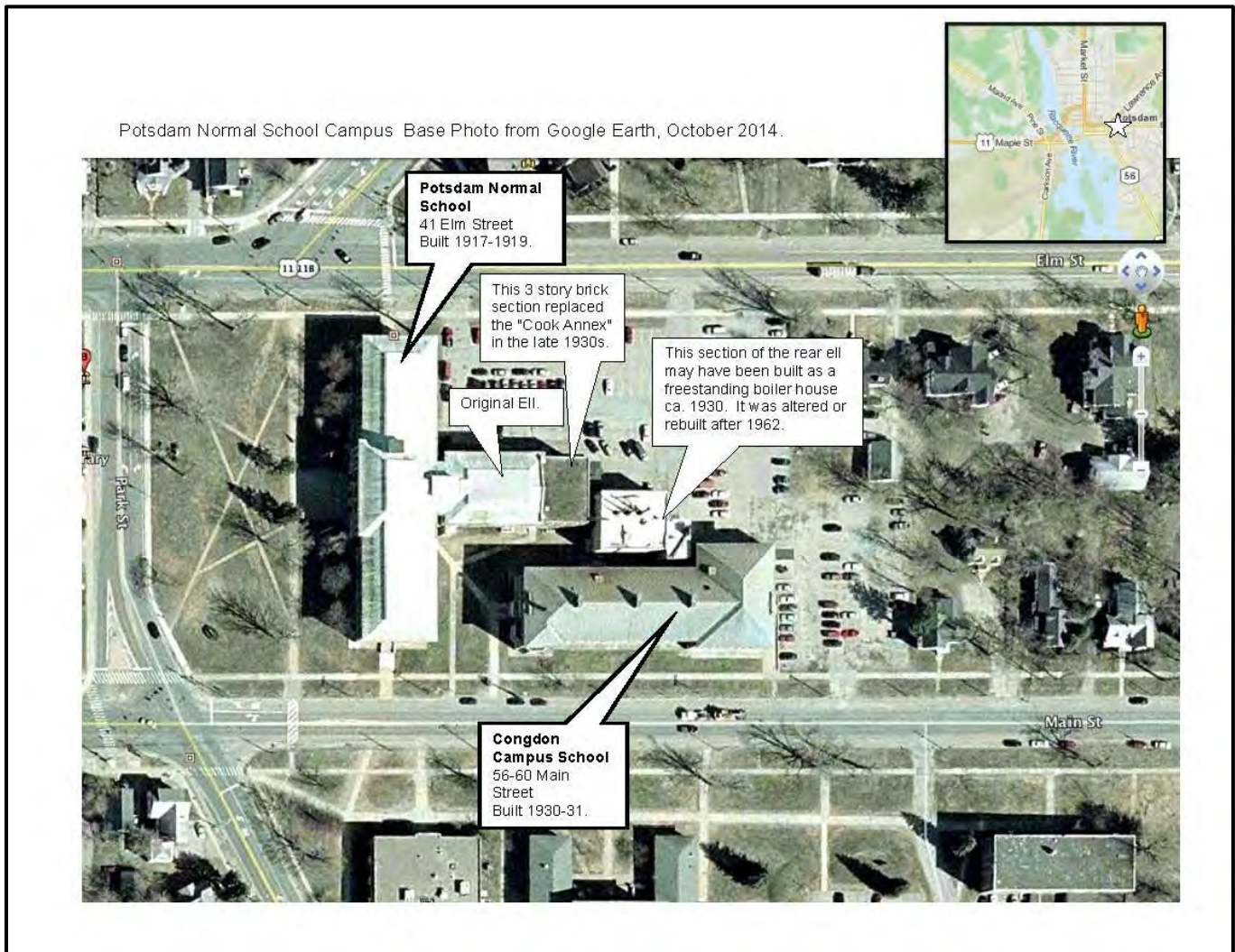


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Figure 3. Site Plan, with Construction dates.

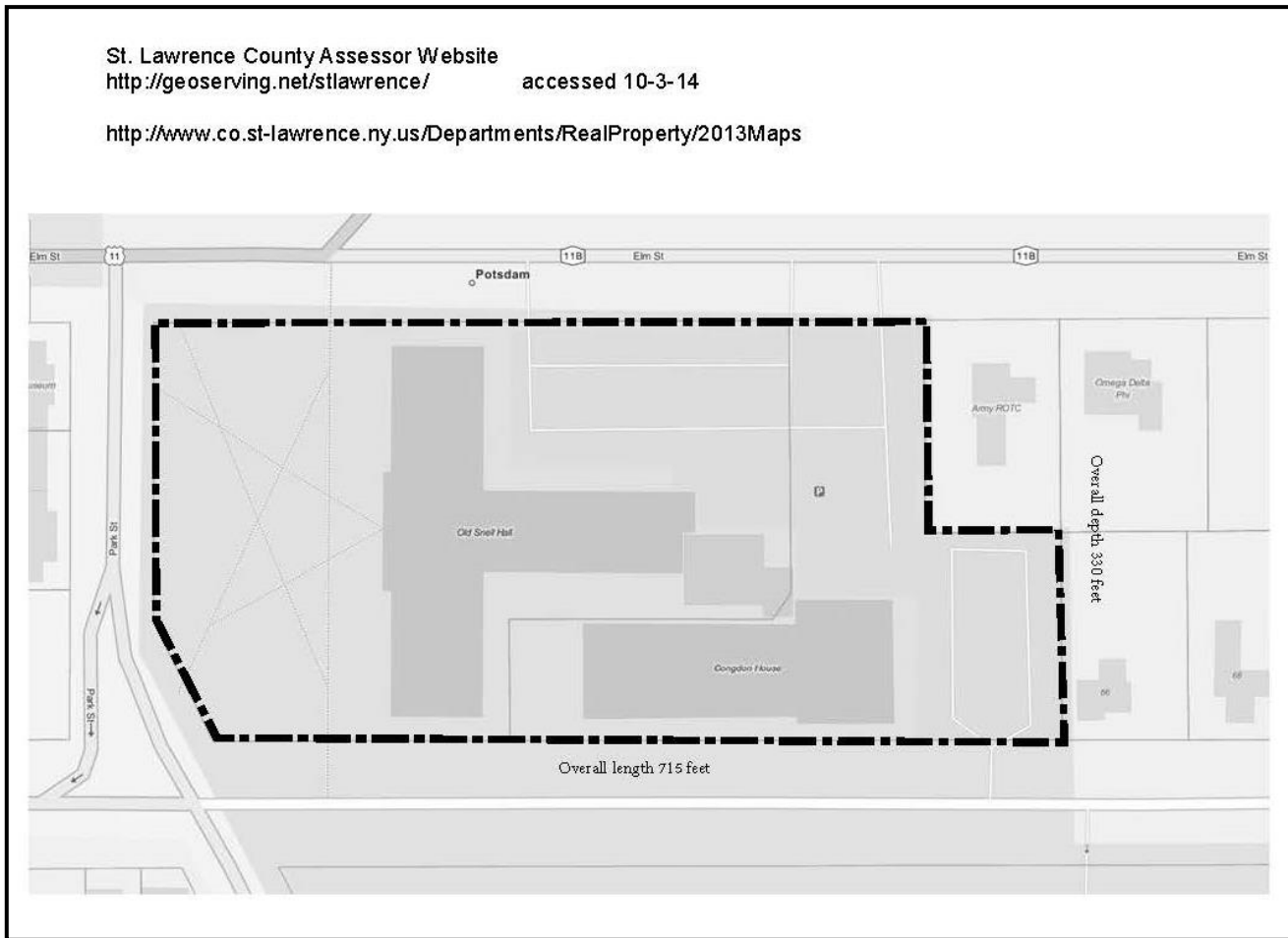


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Figure 4. Boundary Map, Base Map from the Lawrence County Assessor.

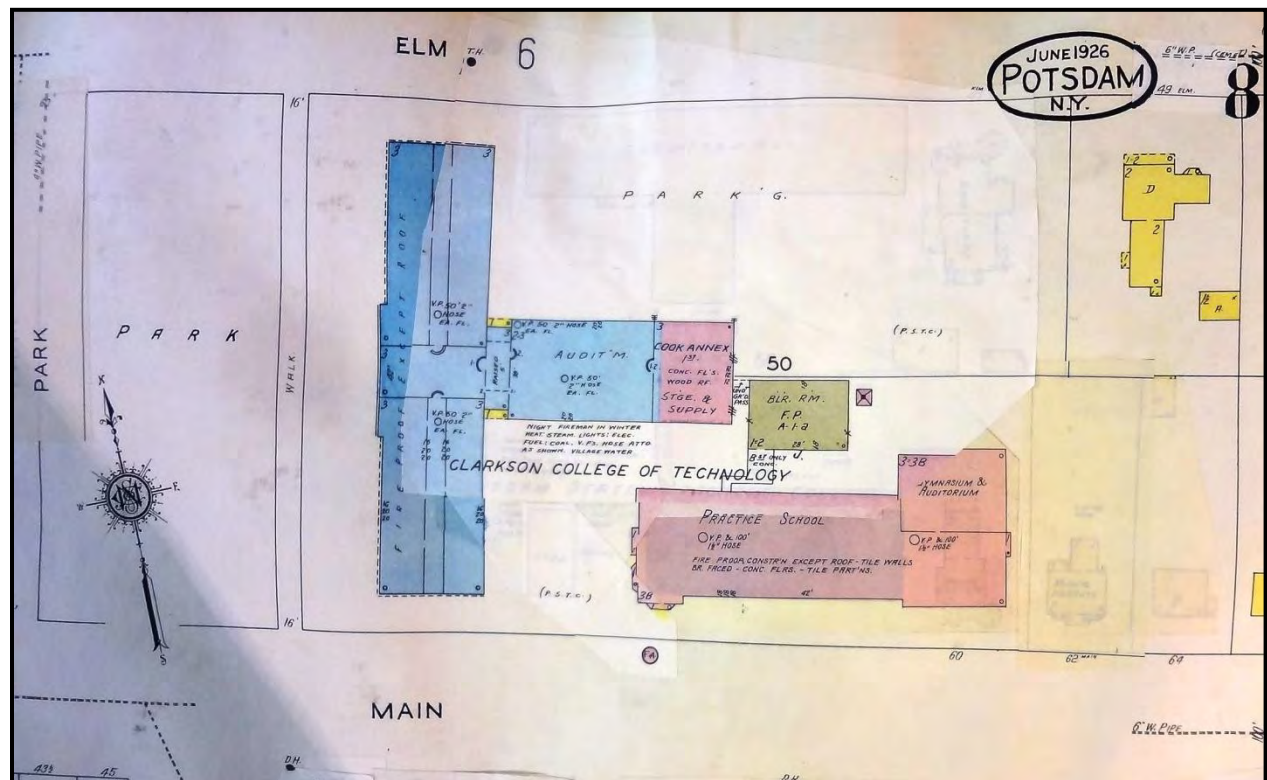
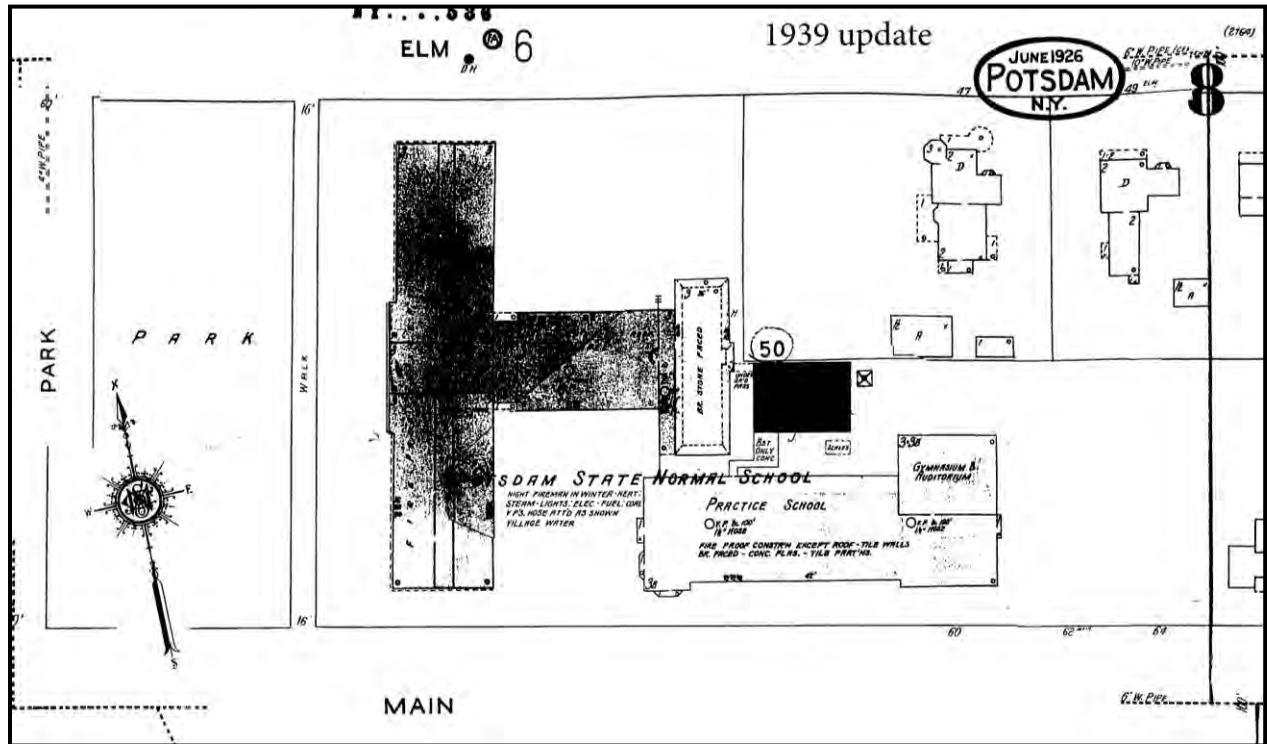


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Figure 5. Sanborn Maps of the Campus: Top, 1939; Bottom, 1962.



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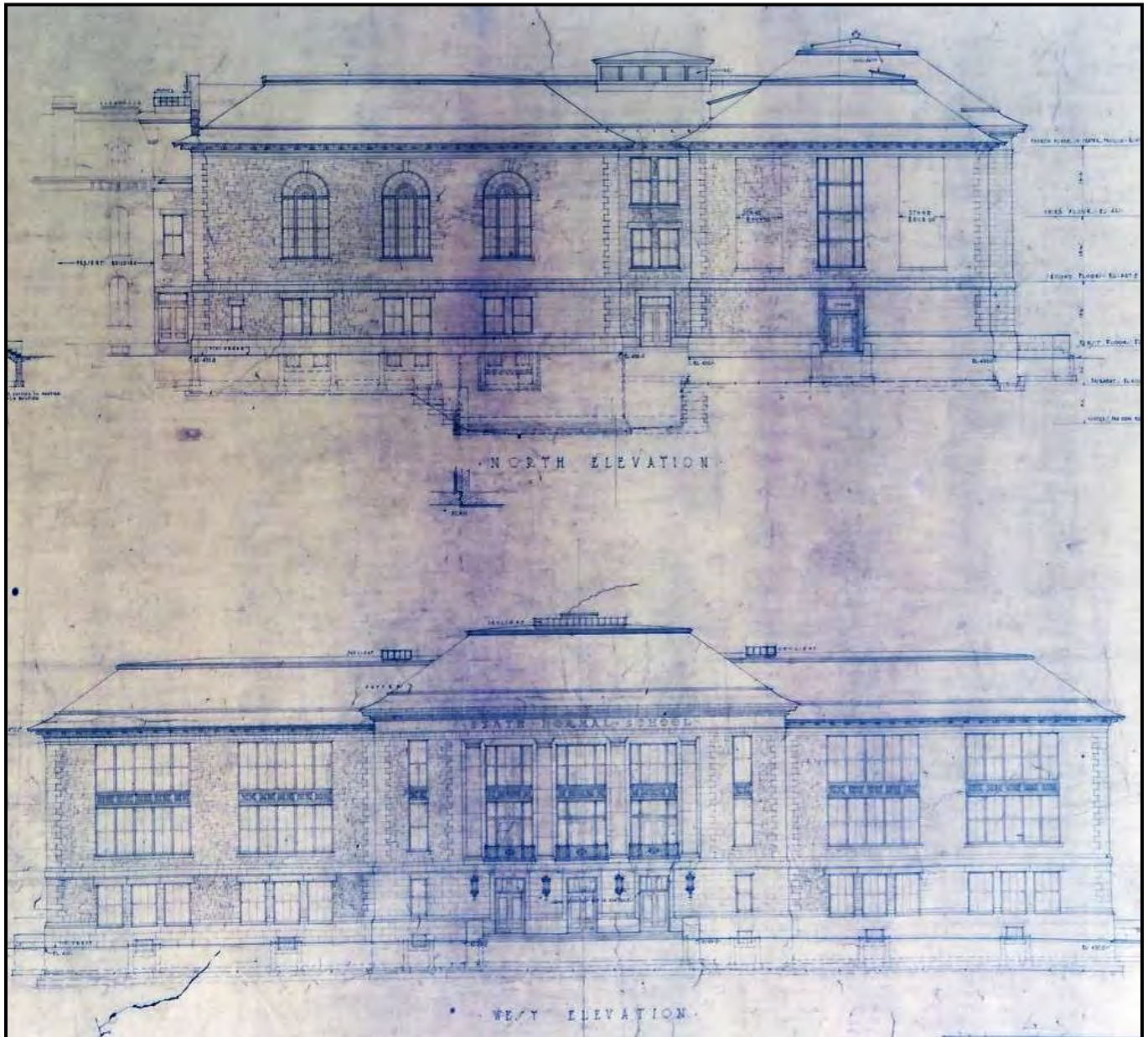
St. Lawrence County, New York

County and State

n/a

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 6. Original Architect's Drawing of the Potsdam Normal School. Lewis Pilcher, "Reconstruction State Normal and Training School, Potsdam New York," 1916-1917. Original architectural drawings on file with Clarkson University.

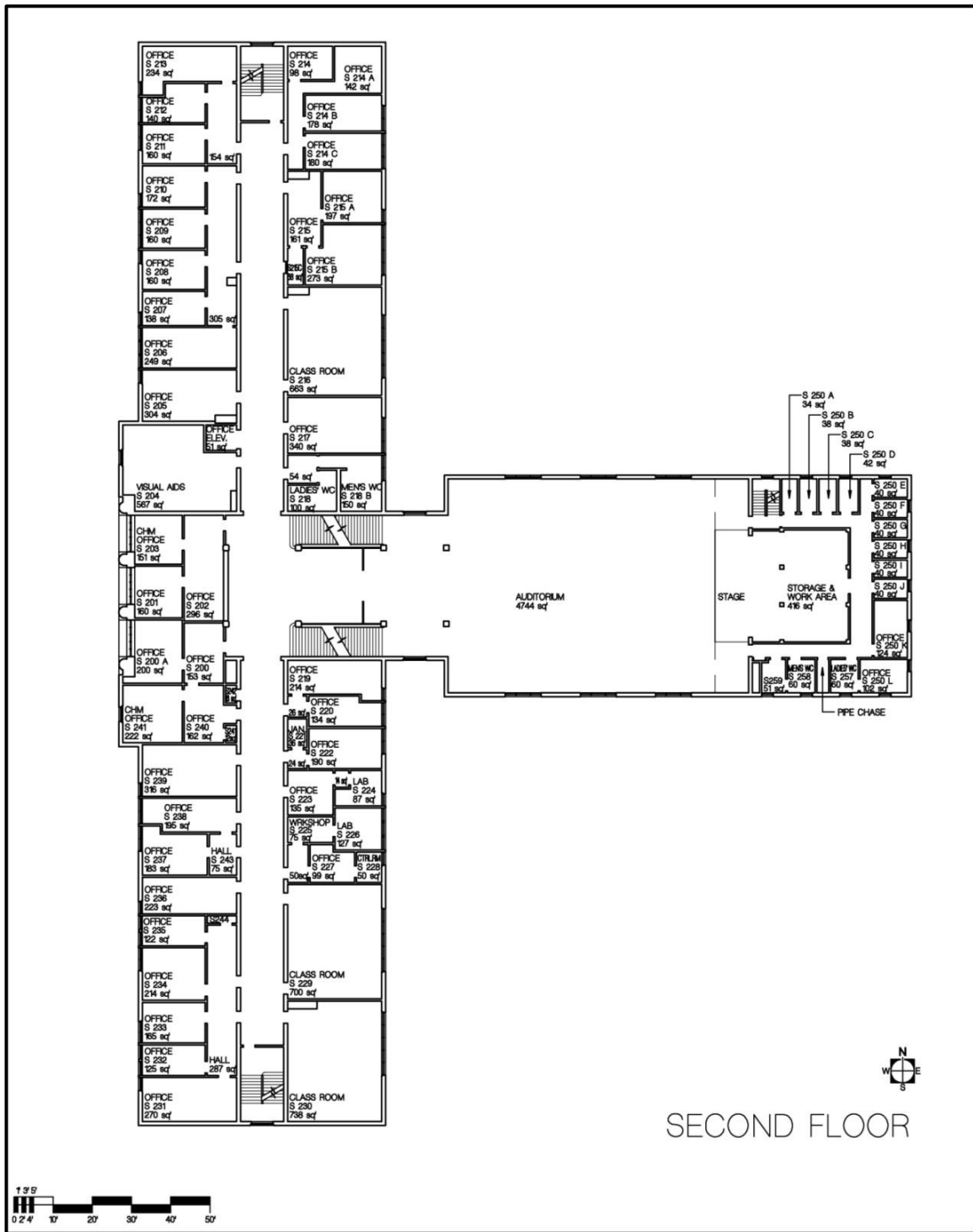


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Figure 8. Existing Plan of Potsdam Normal School, Second floor.

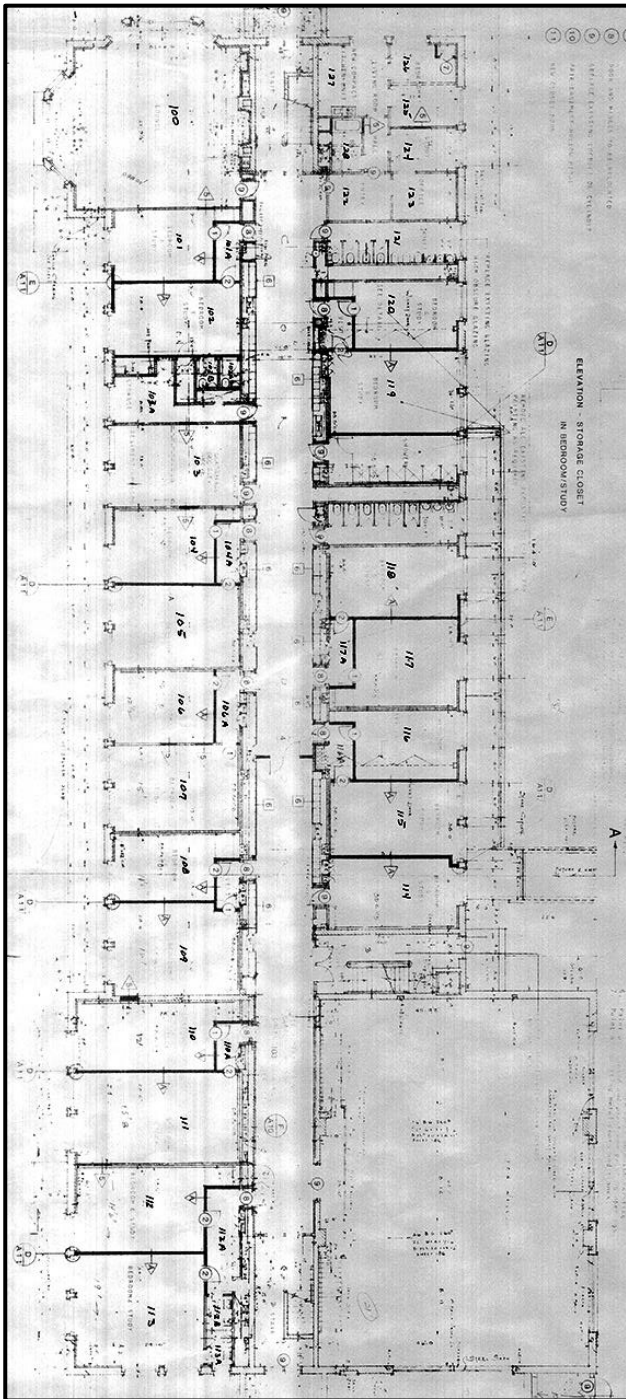


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Figure 9. First Floor Plan of the Congdon Campus School, ca. 1982. There have been no changes of note since this plan was rendered.

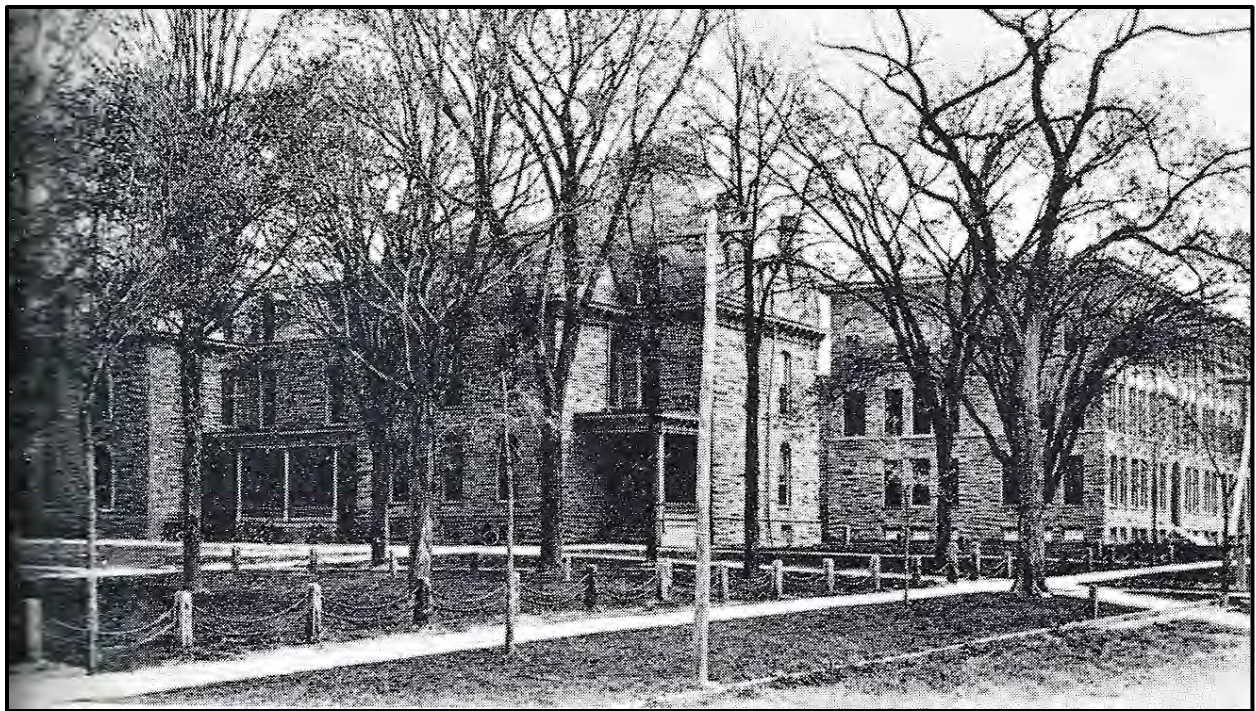
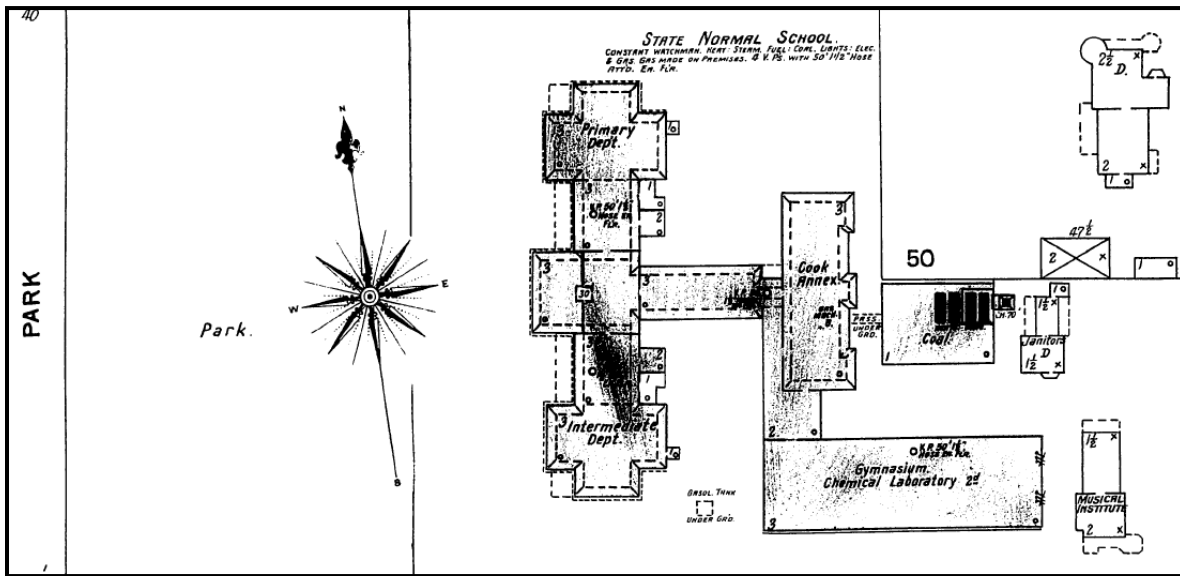


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Figure 10. The Potsdam School at the turn of the 20th century; Top, 1904 Sanborn map; Bottom, historic image.



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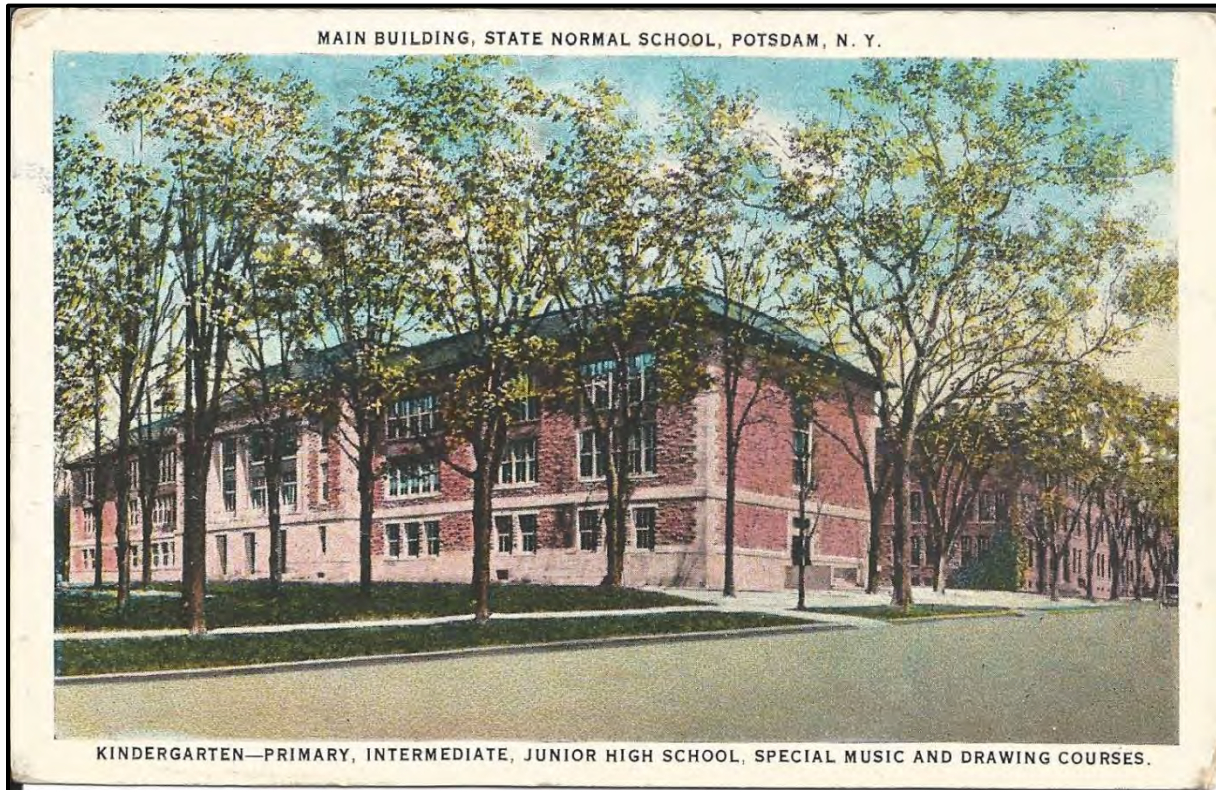
Potsdam State Normal School Campus

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n/a

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 11. Historic photos of the Potsdam Normal School building with the Stowell Annex in the background: Top, postcard view, ca. 1920; bottom, 1919 photo, from Our Goodly Heritage. Potsdam Normal School, ca. 1934.



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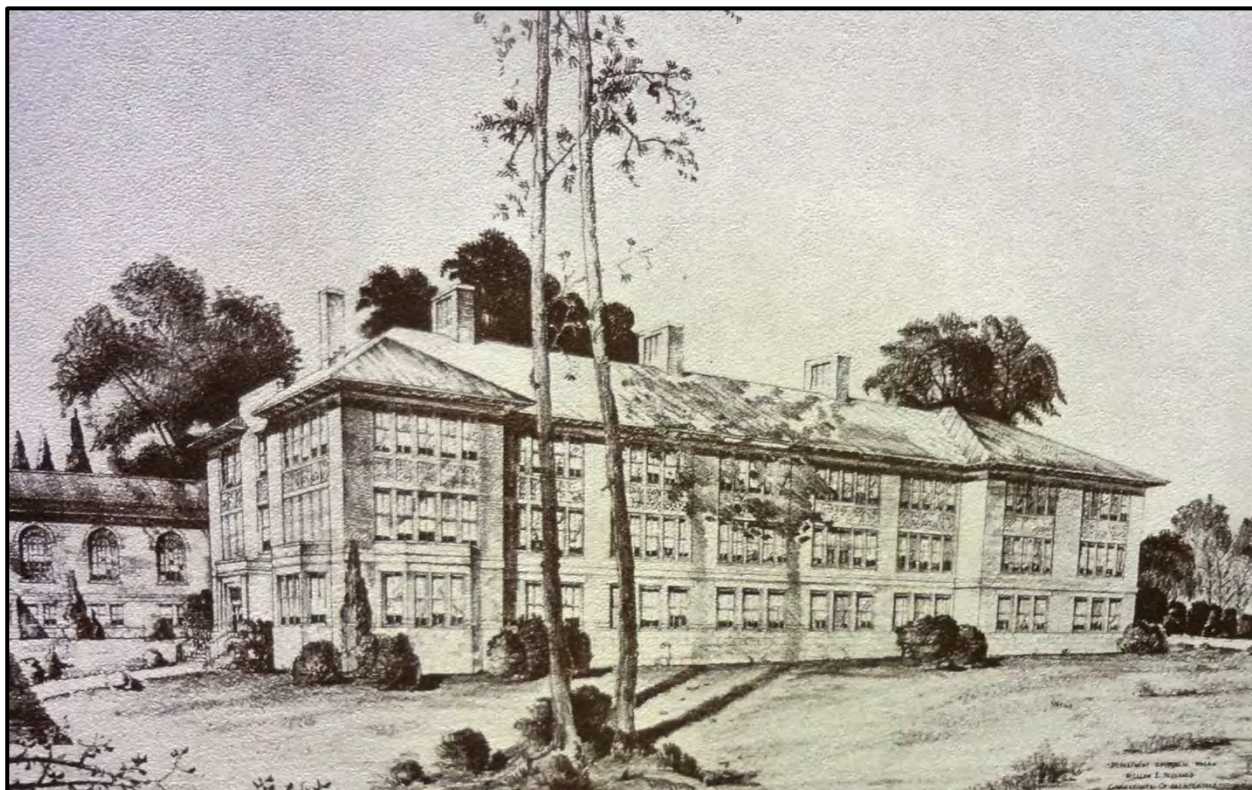
St. Lawrence County, New York

County and State

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Figure 12. Congdon Campus School. Top, architect's rendering, ca. 1930; Bottom, photo of the Kindergarten room from the 1935 Yearbook.

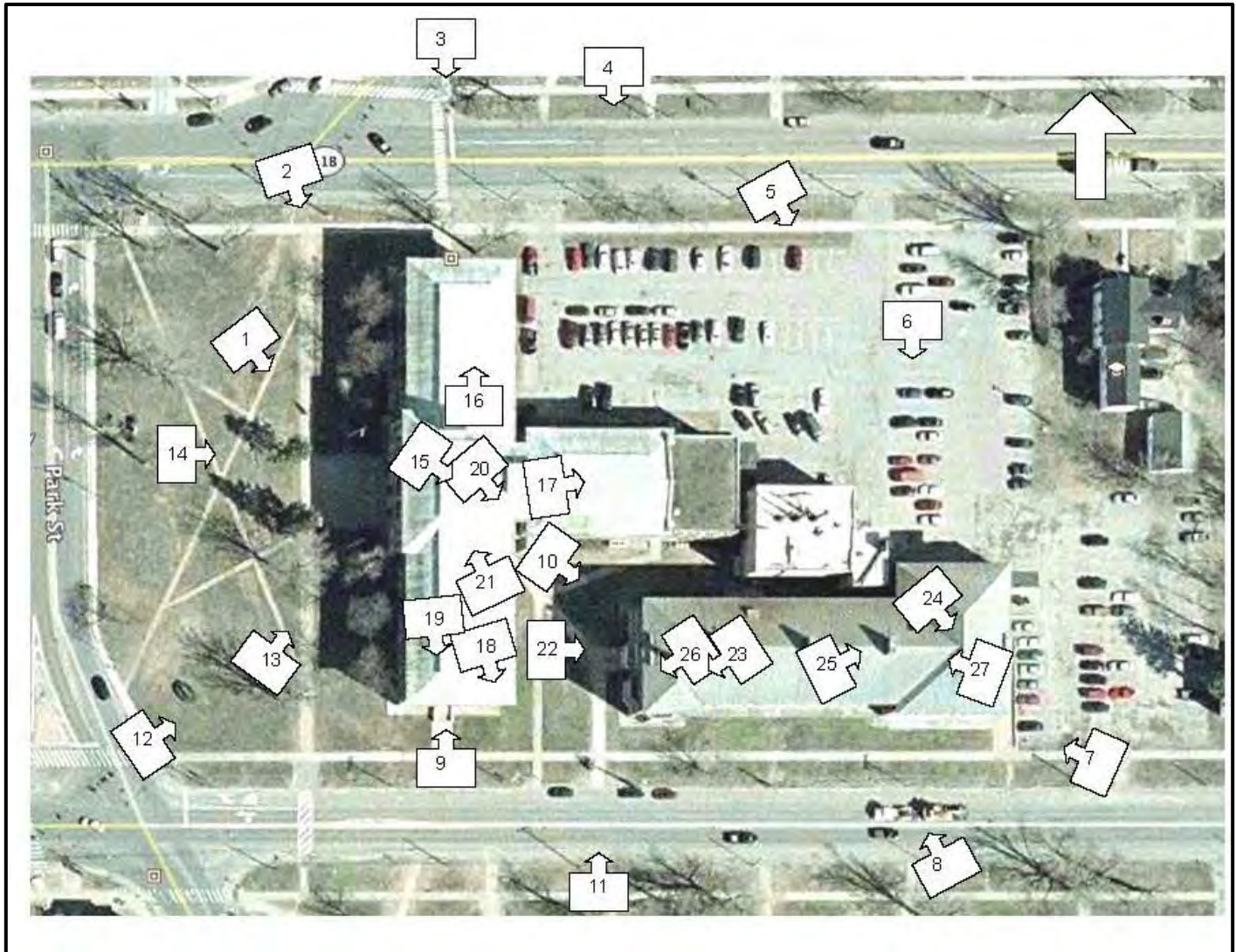


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Photo Key.



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Potsdam, NY
Quadrangle

Potsdam State Normal
School Campus



1:24,000
1 in = 2,000 ft

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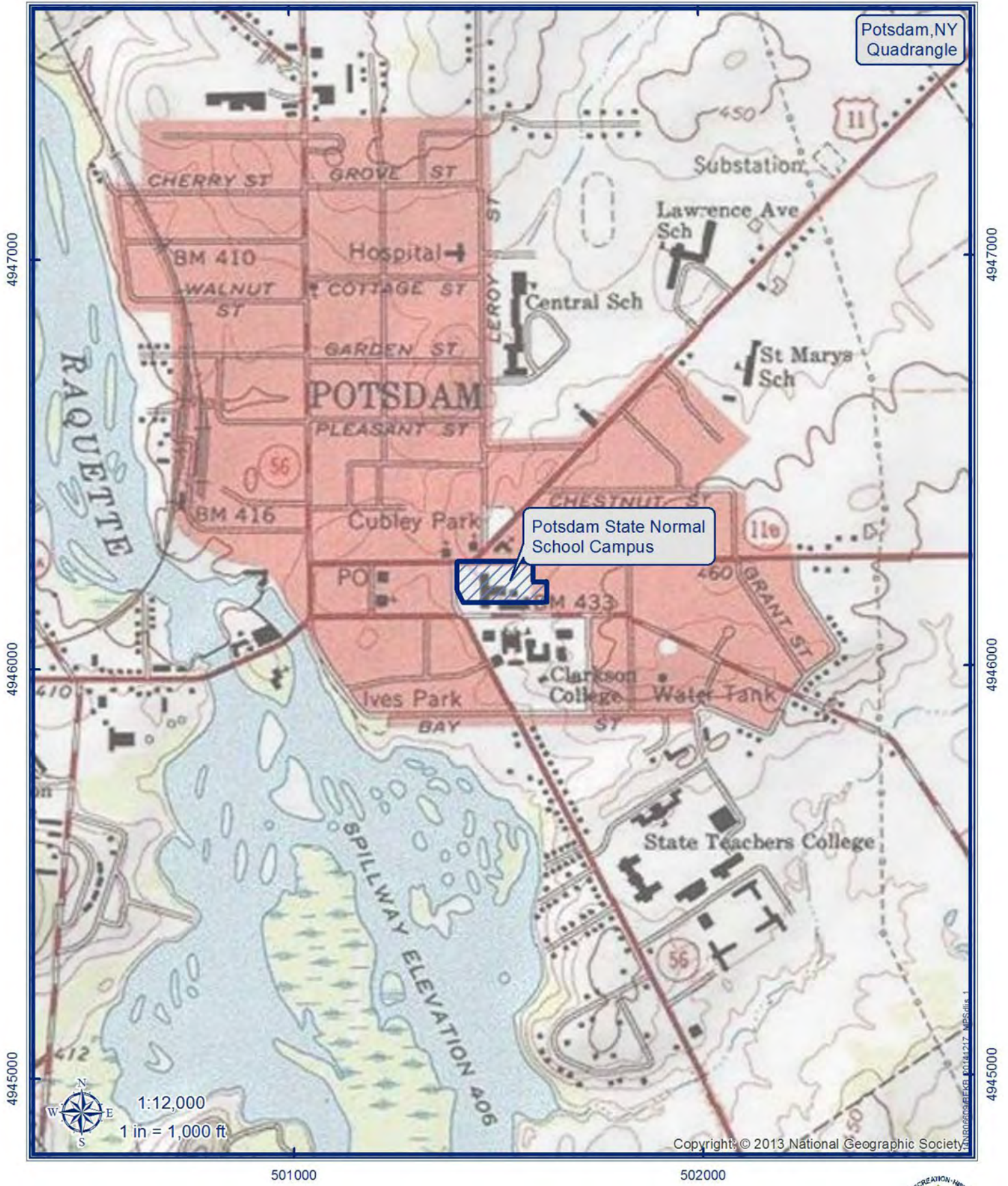
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Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Tax Parcel Data:
St. Lawrence Co. RPS
opengeohost.com/maps/stlawrence





Potsdam, NY
Quadrangle

Potsdam State Normal
School Campus

RAQUETTE

POTSDAM

State Teachers College

Clarksom
College

Water Tank

Ives Park

Cubley Park

Substation

Lawrence Ave
Sch

Central Sch

St Marys
Sch

Hospital

BM 410

WALNUT
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GARDEN ST

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BM 416

BM 433



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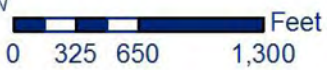
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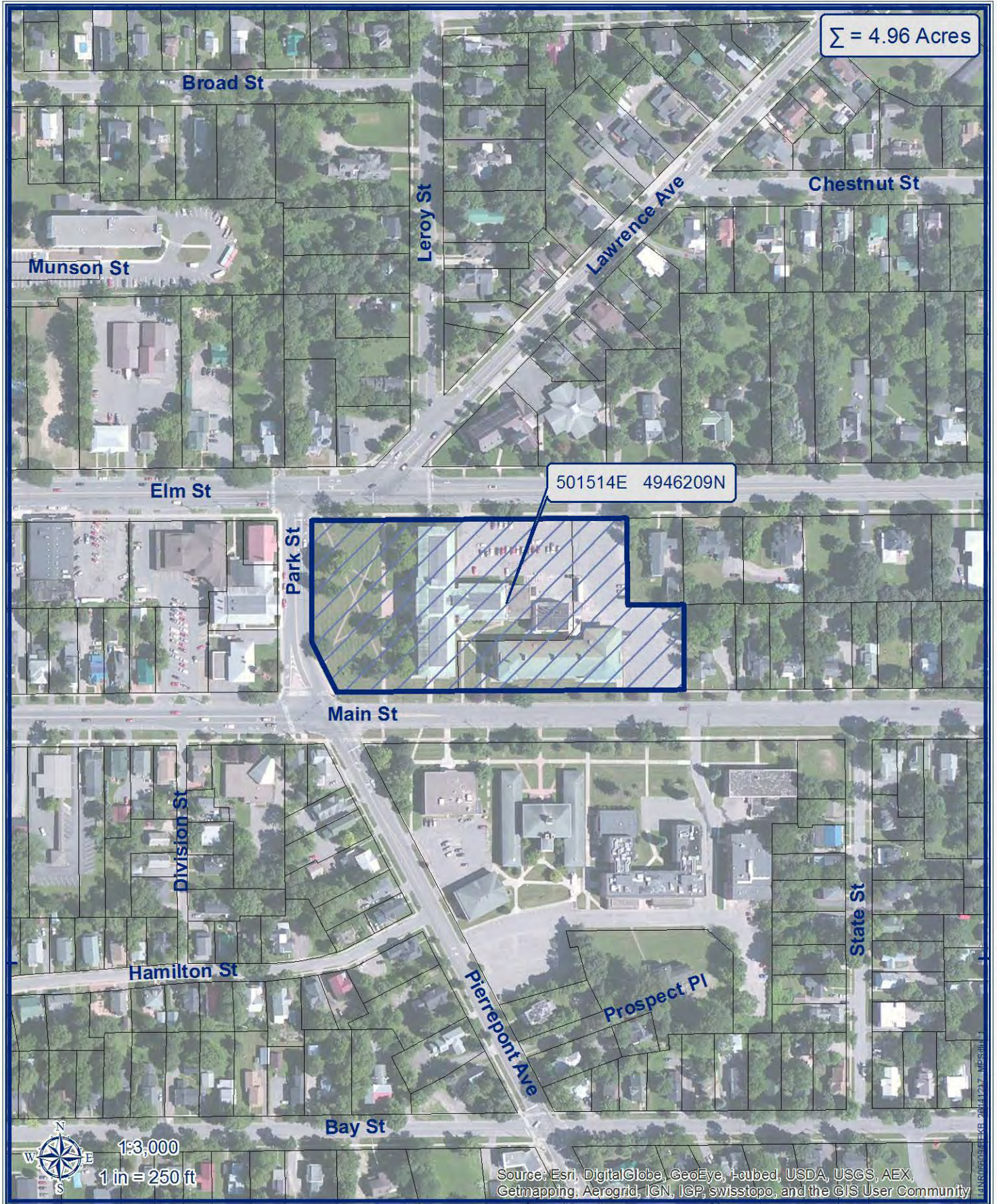
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Clarkson
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EXIT



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THE SCHOOL OF
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School of Management



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Potsdam State Normal School Campus

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, St. Lawrence

DATE RECEIVED: 1/09/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/06/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/23/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/24/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000032

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 2-23-15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

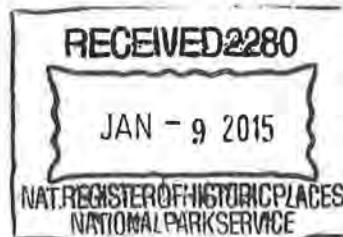
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

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



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Division for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643



Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner

26 December 2014

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

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

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

Congregation Shaare Zedek of Harlem, New York County
Elmwood, Livingston County
James Bolton House, Steuben County
Potsdam State Normal School Campus, St. Lawrence County
Washington Park Historic District (Boundary Increase), Albany County

Please note that there is an additional submission for the Washington Park Historic District. The original Washington Park Historic District, listed in 1972, did not include a building list. As part of the project to add two small areas to the district, a building list for the original district was prepared according to current standards. The new building list is included on a separate disc because it should be filed with the 1972 district.

Please feel free to call me 518.237.8643 x 3261 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office