

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Glens Falls <sup>MRA</sup> ~~Multiple Resource Area~~: Buildings of Ephraim B. Potter  
Thematic Resources  
and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number See Enclosed Inventory Forms \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Classification**

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Category</b>                           | <b>Ownership</b>                                  | <b>Status</b>                                       | <b>Present Use</b>                              |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> district         | <input type="checkbox"/> public                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied        | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture            | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> building(s)      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private       | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                 | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial             | <input type="checkbox"/> park                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure        | <input type="checkbox"/> both                     | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site             | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                         | <b>Accessible</b>                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment          | <input type="checkbox"/> religious                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government             | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theme | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered         | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial  | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation               |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> no                         | <input type="checkbox"/> military               | <input type="checkbox"/> other:                       |

**4. Owner of Property**

name See Individual Inventory Forms \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. See Cover Form \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title See Cover Form \_\_\_\_\_ has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local \_\_\_\_\_

depository for survey records \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Description

|                 |                    |                     |                     |               |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Condition       |                    | Check one           | Check one           |               |
| _____ excellent | _____ deteriorated | <u>NA</u> unaltered | _____ original site |               |
| <u>NA</u> good  | _____ ruins        | _____ altered       | _____ moved         | date _____ NA |
| _____ fair      | _____ unexposed    |                     |                     |               |

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Buildings of Architect Ephraim B. Potter Thematic Resources include eight individual properties located in the city of Glens Falls which were designed by Potter between 1890 and 1911. The eight components of the thematic group consist of six residences (with one contributing carriage barn), one industrial building, and one institutional structure (total of nine contributing features). These properties are:

John E. Parry House (1890-1891), 146 Warren Street;  
Helen Wing House (1893), 126 Warren Street;  
W.T. Cowles House (1897), 43-47 William Street;  
Thomas Burnham House (1897), 195 Glen Street;  
Ephraim B. Potter House (1900), 15 Sherman Avenue;  
Martin L.C. Wilmarth House (1910-1911), 528 Glen Street;  
Peyser & Morrison Shirt Co. Building (1893), 211-217 Warren Street;  
Glens Falls High School Building (1905), 421-433 Glen Street.

The residences are generally located in neighborhoods of large detached houses which developed during the period 1890-1915. The Peyser & Morrison factory is situated in an area of mixed residential and industrial structures on the east side of Glens Falls. The former Glens Falls High School (still a public school) is located north of the Three Squares Historic District in a residential area.

The buildings included in the nomination were identified and classified as part of a comprehensive survey/inventory of historic resources in Glens Falls conducted in 1980-1981 by Richard C. Youngken of the city's Office of Community Development. As part of this survey, more than twenty extant residential and commercial structures in Glens Falls were found to exhibit the design influence of local architect Ephraim B. Potter. Further research confirmed Potter as the architect of seventeen buildings recorded in the survey. The thematic nomination includes all known intact examples of Ephraim B. Potter's designs in Glens Falls which are not otherwise included as components of other nominations within the Glens Falls Multiple Resource Area. Six commercial structures included in the Three Squares Historic District and four institutional buildings included in the Bemis Eye Sanitarium Thematic Resources are known to have been designed by Potter. The thematic nomination includes only buildings for which Potter furnished the principal design; the numerous structures in Glens Falls for which the architect designed modest additions or alterations are not included because they do not represent the overall design integrity of Potter's primary commissions. Buildings which reflect Potter's design influences but cannot be confirmed as his work based upon existing information have also been omitted from the nomination. Structures from the latter category may be nominated in the future if additional information confirms Potter as their architect.

The houses which Potter designed in Glens Falls between 1890 and 1911 reflect the eclecticism of their period of construction. Designed in the transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival styles, five of the residences exhibit common characteristics of form, decoration and materials.

## 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1890-1911      **Builder/Architect** Ephraim B. Potter

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The buildings of architect Ephraim B. Potter comprise eight principal structures designed by a significant regional architect of the late nineteenth-early twentieth century. Reflecting the eclecticism of their period, the six substantial residences which Potter designed between 1890 and 1911 are the most significant examples of transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival domestic architecture in Glens Falls. Potter's designs for the Peyser & Morrison Shirt Factory (1893) and the Glens Falls High School (1905) demonstrate the architect's experiments with Romanesque and Neoclassical forms and features, and the buildings remain prominent visual landmarks in Glens Falls. Taken as a whole, the work of Ephraim B. Potter in Glens Falls (which also includes commercial and residential structures nominated as part of other multiple resource area components) represents a significant portion of the architectural design lavished upon this wealthy industrial community during its years of peak prosperity.

Ephraim B. Potter (1855-1925), a Glens Falls native, received early training in carpentry and engineering under the tutelage of his millwright father. It is not known where, or if, Potter obtained formal architectural training, but he established a practice in the city in 1885. During the next forty years his commissions included prominent commercial buildings along South, Glen and Ridge Streets, several boarding houses, imposing upper middle class residences, at least one substantial industrial structure, and the Glens Falls High School. While Potter's work was by no means innovative or novel compared to that of his regional contemporaries such as Albany architects Albert Fuller or Marcus Reynolds, Potter's bold designs represent a sound, craftsmanlike approach which satisfied his prosperous Glens Falls clients.

The majority of Potter's residential designs reflect the transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival styles popular during the eclectic decades of the 1890's-early 1900's. The Parry House (1890-1891) is the earliest extant example of Potter's large-scale residential designs. Building upon this success, Potter successfully incorporated the significant details of the Parry House design in three other residences: the Helen Wing House (1893), the W.T. Cowles House (1897) and in the architect's own residence of 1900. Potter's struggle to juxtapose picturesque Queen Anne stylistic elements and the emerging forms of the Colonial Revival is best represented in the Thomas Burnham House (ca. 1897), a shingled transitional pile of extravagant proportions. The Burnham house is of particular significance as a watershed in the architect's career, marking Potter's initial acceptance of the Colonial Revival while still influenced by the earlier picturesque styles on which he built his career.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Individual Inventory Forms

# 10. Geographical Data

See Individual Inventory Forms

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References

A [ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]  
Zone Easting Northing

B [ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]  
Zone Easting Northing

C [ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]

D [ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]

E [ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]

F [ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]

G [ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]

H [ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ] [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title See Cover Form

organization date

street & number telephone

city or town state

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title See Cover Form date

For NPS use only  
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
*See Continuation Sheet for Listings* date  
Keeper of the National Register  
Attest: date  
Chief of Registration

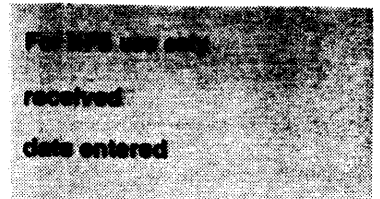
**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Ephraim B. Potter Theme

Continuation sheet Glens Falls, Warren Co. Item number 7

Page 2



Irregular massing with multiple gables, dormers, bay windows, galleries; broad, bracketed porches with pediments; irregular fenestration and contrasting textures of clapboard and wood shingles are common characteristics of the Parry, Wing, Cowles, Potter and Burnham houses, built between 1890 and 1900. The Wilmarth House, designed a decade later, differs from these residences, exhibiting strong Colonial Revival influence in its formal square massing and ornamentation. A hipped roof with balustrade, classical pilasters, formal entrance, tripartite second-story window and narrow clapboard sheathing distinguish the Wilmarth House.

The only industrial building included in the nomination is the Peyser & Morrison Shirt Company building on Warren Street, which Potter designed in 1893. An eclectic composition of Romanesque arcades and monumental pavilions with pediments, the highly embellished factory building is constructed of pressed brick and terra cotta.

The Glens Falls High School building of 1905 is the only extant civic structure in Glens Falls which Potter designed. The light-colored brick school building exhibits the Georgian Revival and Neoclassical stylistic influences which Potter embraced late in his career.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Ephraim B. Potter Theme

Continuation sheet Glens Falls, Warren Co. Item number 8

Page 2

For NPS use only

received

date entered

By the time he designed the Wilmarth house in 1910, it is clear that Potter was more comfortable working in the Colonial Revival style. The imposing Wilmarth house, with its Georgian Revival stylistic details and form, was one of the earliest Colonial Revival style houses on fashionable upper Glen Street and is significant evidence of Potter's successful transition to this popular design idiom.

During the mid-1890's Potter was commissioned to design several boarding houses for patients undergoing treatment at the Bemis Eye Sanitarium. These buildings are the identical frame boarding houses at 5 and 7 Sherman Avenue, the brick Marion Boarding House at 6 East Notre Dame, and the frame Marion Annex at 7A & B Union Street. While unique among Potter's residential designs for their mansard roofs, the Bemis Sanitarium buildings nevertheless exhibit many of the same Romanesque and transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival decorative elements which Potter employed in other contemporary designs. The boarding houses nominated as components of the Bemis Eye Sanitarium Complex are significant as a group of structures representing Ephraim B. Potter's institutional designs.

Besides the sanitarium buildings and the numerous fashionable residences which he designed for the city's wealthy upper middle class families, Potter also designed a number of Glens Falls commercial buildings, six of which are located in the Three Squares Historic District (also nominated as part of the multiple resource area). These commercial structures are the only extant examples of Potter's commercial designs remaining in the city of Glens Falls, and they are a significant representation of the styles Potter employed over the period of his greatest productivity.

Potter's earliest extant commercial structure, the Hotel Madden (1889), and the Ferris Building (1895) he designed using vernacular Queen Anne style forms and decoration. The popularity of Richardson's Romanesque designs greatly influenced Ephraim B. Potter early in his career, an influence reflected in his designs for the I.N. Scott Building (1891) and the Dolan Building (1893). By the early twentieth century, Potter embraced the emerging Neoclassical style in his commercial designs. The B.B. Fowler Company Building and the Potter and Cowles Building, both completed in 1903, represent Potter's interpretation of Neoclassical forms.

The prolific record of Ephraim B. Potter in Glens Falls includes two additional structures which demonstrate the range and versatility of his designs. The Peyser & Morrison Shirt Company Factory Building, which Potter designed in 1893, is significant as the most highly embellished utilitarian structure in the city of Glens Falls. Using a Romanesque-inspired arcade superimposed upon a series of monumental pavilions, Potter relieved the monotony of a long utilitarian street facade. The imposing industrial building reflects the strong influences exerted by Romanesque and Classical design precepts upon Potter's early work and is significant as Potter's only extant industrial design.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Ephraim B. Potter Theme

Continuation sheet Glens Falls, Warren Co. Item number

8

Page 3

For NPS use only

received

date entered

The old Glens Falls High School building, which Potter designed in 1905, is the architect's only design for a civic building in Glens Falls. Built of yellow brick with Neoclassical and Georgian Revival style decorative features, the high school building is significant as an imposing institutional structure of the early twentieth century in Glens Falls and a unique example of Ephraim B. Potter's civic designs within the multiple resource area.