

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

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in 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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Rhode Island State College

Other names/site number: University of Rhode Island Historic District (use for publication)

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: Campus Avenue, East Alumni Avenue, Farm House Road, Greenhouse Road, Lippitt Road, Lower College Road, Ranger Road, Upper College Road

City or town: South Kingstown State: RI County: Washington

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national       statewide       local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A     B     C     D

Signature of certifying official>Title:

Date

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission

8/23/2017

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

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#### 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): \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local:
- Public – State:
- Public – Federal:

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s):
- District:
- Site:
- Structure:
- Object:

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### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>14</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
<u>3</u>	_____	objects
<u>18</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: college

LANDSCAPE: plaza

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

RECREATION AND CULTURE: monument/marker

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: college

LANDSCAPE: plaza

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

RECREATION AND CULTURE: monument/marker

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY REPUBLIC: Federal

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Tudor Revival

### Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE: granite, slate; WOOD: weatherboard, shingle; BRICK; METAL: aluminum; CONCRETE

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The University of Rhode Island Historic District includes approximately 29 acres within the university campus, which is located in the northern part of the town of South Kingstown, in the village of Kingston. The district is bound roughly by Upper College Road on the east, Campus Avenue on the south, Lower College Road and Farm Hill Road on the west, and East Alumni Avenue on the north. The terrain within the district is relatively level, though the grade drops off somewhat to the west. The district contains nineteen resources, many clustered around the main quadrangle, all but one of which are contributing. With the exception of the ca. 1796 Oliver Watson Farmhouse, the contributing buildings in the district were constructed between 1889 and 1937. Architectural styles include Late Victorian, Queen Anne/Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival and Classical Revival. Most of the buildings in the district, particularly those that were built for academic use, are two- to three-stories tall and are constructed of quarry-faced granite ashlar, resulting in a unified campus character. The district as a whole, and the contributing resources within it, retain a high level of integrity in terms of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

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### Narrative Description

The University of Rhode Island Historic District is focused around the main quadrangle, which has functioned as the center of the campus since being laid out in the mid-1890s. The district reflects the institution's early development, from its founding in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through a period of expansion in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, prior to the achievement of university status in 1951. The earliest building in the district is the ca. 1796 Oliver Watson Farmhouse which, along with 140 acres of farmland, was purchased in 1888 to serve as the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station. Three buildings were erected soon after, on what would become the west side of the not-yet-established quadrangle: the Agricultural Experiment Station, now called Taft Hall (1889); College Hall, now known as Davis Hall (1891, 1895); and South Hall (1890, razed 1957). Lippitt Hall was erected in 1897, though it had been designed earlier. The design of these original college buildings reflect their Late Victorian period, and included steeply-pitched roofs, towers and projecting bays. With the exception of South Hall, which was wood-frame, they are of masonry construction, built with granite from a quarry located on campus.<sup>1</sup>

In the mid-1890s, Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot provided plans for what would become the main quadrangle, and the campus's orientation shifted; while the first three college buildings faced west, with their backs to what would become the quad, subsequent buildings faced inward toward the green. Lippitt Hall, built in 1897 on the north side of the quad, reflected this change. A series of academic buildings erected in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century followed suit, including East Hall (1909), Ranger Hall (1914), Washburn Hall (1921), Bliss Hall (1928) and Edwards Hall (1928). Three buildings were completed in 1937 with funds from the Public Works Administration: Eleanor Roosevelt Hall (a women's dormitory), Quinn Hall and Green Hall. All of these early-20<sup>th</sup>-century buildings were executed in the Colonial Revival or Classical Revival style and, with the exception of Eleanor Roosevelt Hall, which is brick, all were constructed of granite, in keeping with the earlier campus buildings. Additional resources from this period include Rodman Hall (1928), originally a gymnasium that was built on what was then the northern edge of campus; the President's House, a wood-frame, Colonial Revival-style residence constructed at the south end of the district in 1931; and two memorials to those who served in World War I, both located near the intersection of Upper College Road and Campus Avenue: a granite boulder with a bronze plaque, erected in 1922, and a granite gateway to the campus, constructed in 1928.

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<sup>1</sup> The granite quarry was located to the west of the District, between where the Memorial Student Union and Butterfield Hall now stand. The granite was reportedly hauled on a narrow-gauge track by a team of oxen, uphill to the building sites. Today, the quarry site is occupied in part, at least, by a parking lot. A street called Quarry Road is located nearby. Herman F. Eschenbacher, *The University of Rhode Island: A History of Land-Grant Education in Rhode Island* (New York: Meredith Publishing Company, 1967):107. James L. Wheaton and Dr. Richard G. Vangermeersch, *Images of America: The University of Rhode Island* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1999):37. Carl Raymond Woodward, *Education's "Lively Experiment" – in Rhode Island* (New York: The Newcomen Society in North America, 1957):14.

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## Inventory

In this inventory, resources are listed in chronological order, to reflect the University of Rhode Island's historical development. The current name for the building is provided first, followed by the historic name, if applicable, in parentheses. Construction dates and architects, if known, are provided, as are the dates and architects for significant additions or renovations. Construction dates reflect the year that the building was completed, although some buildings were constructed over the course of two or more years. All resources are contributing unless marked NC (non-contributing). Resources are contributing if they were built within the district's period of significance (1888-1950) and if they retain sufficient integrity. (The ca. 1796 Oliver Watson Farmhouse is included as a contributing resource despite having been built outside the period of significance, since the purchase of the property by the state in 1888 marked the beginning of the campus's development. Similarly, a Civil War-era cannon predates the period of significance but was moved to campus in 1892 and is included as a contributing resource.)

### **Oliver Watson Farmhouse (ca. 1796; ca. 1840; restored 1964)**

The Oliver Watson Farmhouse is a wood-frame, south-facing, Federal-period farmhouse located on the western edge of the district. It consists of a two-story, side-gable main block dating from ca. 1796,<sup>2</sup> with a ca. 1840 one-story, gabled ell projecting off its northeast corner. The building rests on a stone foundation and is clad in wood clapboards. The main block is five-bays-wide by two-bays deep, and has a wood-shingled roof with a large brick chimney on the ridge, just west of center. The primary entrance is located on the main façade, roughly in line with the chimney. It features a Greek Revival-style surround, likely added around 1840, with a six-panel door, half sidelights, pilasters and a simple entablature. A secondary entrance, consisting of a six-panel door with simple wood trim, is located on the east elevation of the rear ell. Windows, which have plain wood trim, include eight-over-twelve, six-over-nine and six-over-six, wood sash on the main block, and eight-over-sixteen, wood sash on the ell. The house's small lot is delineated on three sides by a fieldstone wall and picket fence.

The Oliver Watson Farmhouse replaced an earlier residence on the site, which burned in 1792. First occupied by Jeremiah Carpenter, the house was owned by Oliver Watson as of 1857; occupied by Watson's son-in-law, John H. Tefft, beginning in 1869; and had been leased to George Potter by 1888, when it was purchased by the State of Rhode Island. The house was first used by the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station as a residence for the farm manager, then as a women's dormitory and later as a fraternity. The interior was heavily damaged by fire in 1931, after which it was refurbished as a tea room. In the 1950s, the campus

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<sup>2</sup> The exact construction date of the Oliver Watson Farmhouse is not known. According to local historian Oliver H. Stedman, a fire destroyed an earlier farmhouse on the site in 1792, and the existing house was built "soon after." Stedman states that Jeremiah Carpenter was the first occupant of the Oliver Watson Farmhouse, and that he "farmed there from 1796 to about 1815." This suggests the house had been constructed by 1796. Oliver H. Stedman, *A Stroll through Memory Lane: Stories of South County's Past*, vol. 2 (West Kingston, RI: Kingston Press, 1978):34.

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nursery school was housed here. Threatened with demolition in 1962, the building was subsequently restored to the 1790-1840 period and serves as a museum.<sup>3</sup>

**Taft Hall (Agricultural Experiment Station)** (1889, E.A. Ellsworth; ca. 1900; 1965, Kurtz and Denning Architects; 2011, Tecton Architects, Inc. and DuBose Associates Architects)

Taft Hall is a two-story, west-facing, Late Victorian-style building located just off the northwest corner of the main quad. As constructed in 1889, Taft Hall consisted of a two-story, hipped-roof main block of quarry-faced granite laid in random bond, with a conical tower at its southwest corner and two, one-story, gable-roof ells of quarry-faced granite extending to the rear (east), creating a U-shaped plan. The rear section of the building was altered sometime around 1900, when a second story, with exterior walls sheathed in wood shingles, was added and the space between the ells was filled in.<sup>4</sup> The principal entrance is located in the main block, set within an arched opening in the center of the five-bay-wide façade and consisting of a wood, four-panel door with glass in the top two panels, set beneath a fanlight. The entrance is echoed in the arched window opening above, which contains a pair of narrow, sixteen-over-one wood sash beneath a single fanlight. A secondary entrance is located in the center of the east elevation, within a shallow, shed-roof pavilion, and consists of a recessed central doorway flanked by pairs of twelve-over-twelve wood window sash and topped by a band of six, sixteen-light, fixed wood sash. Window openings are mostly arched, though at the first floor of the main block they are rectangular with flat-arch lintels. The building also has a number of dormer windows, added sometime between 1900 and 1965<sup>5</sup>: three gabled dormers on the west elevation of the main block, two gabled dormers on the north and south elevations of the rear block, and a shed-roof dormer, containing three window openings, on the east elevation. Window openings are filled with wood, double-hung sash, in sixteen-over-one, twelve-over-one, ten-over-two or eighteen-over-two configurations. The building's roof is sheathed in slate, and there are a total of eight masonry chimneys: one on the north and one on the south slopes of the roof of the main block, two exterior chimneys on the east elevation, and four interior chimneys in the rear portion of the building. Six former exterior chimneys – three on the north elevation, and three on the south – were incorporated as masonry piers when the rear part of the building was altered around 1900.

Notable historic interior features include the beadboard wainscoting and chair rail in the main stair hall; the turned-wood balusters, simple handrail and chamfered newel post; and some paneled, wood interior doors with molded wood trim.

<sup>3</sup> Stedman:34. Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, *Historic and Architectural Resources of South Kingstown, Rhode Island: A Preliminary Report*:75-76. Federal Writers' Project, Works Progress Administration, *American Guide Series: Rhode Island, A Guide to the Smallest State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937):373. "Aerial View of University of Rhode Island Campus," *Providence Sunday Journal Magazine*, 25 April 1954:20.

<sup>4</sup> Bernton Helme Photograph Collection, 1895-1930, MSS. Gr. 125, Folder 13, University of Rhode Island Library, Image Archives, Special Collections Unit, University of Rhode Island Library (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/photographs>).

<sup>5</sup> The dormers do not appear in early photos of the building, but are shown on plans for a 1965 renovation. Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, University of Rhode Island.

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Taft Hall was designed by architect/engineer E.A. Ellsworth of Holyoke, Massachusetts, who designed two experiment stations at the Massachusetts Agricultural College (now the University of Massachusetts), one in 1885 and the other in 1889.<sup>6</sup> It was named for Governor Royal C. Taft in 1897.<sup>7</sup> Renovations in 1965 and 2011 were mostly focused on the interior.<sup>8</sup> Currently, Taft Hall is home to administrative offices.

**Davis Hall (College Hall)** (1891, Stone, Carpenter & Willson; 1895, Stone, Carpenter & Willson; 1959, Robinson, Green and Beretta)

Davis Hall is a three-story, Late Victorian-style building constructed of quarry-faced granite ashlar laid in random bond, with a steeply-pitched, hipped roof sheathed in slate shingles and terminating in a balustraded roof deck. Built in 1895 on the west side of the main quad, Davis Hall replaced an 1891 building that had burned on the site; the west (front) elevation incorporates portions of that structure. The building has a raised basement, demarcated by a granite belt course running along the basement window headers. The principal entrance is located in the center of the façade, beneath a flat-roof portico supported by slender, wood Tuscan columns. It consists of a modern, steel and glass door unit topped with a transom light and flanked by side lights. Though essentially rectangular in plan, Davis Hall includes a number of prominent, three-story, semi-circular, conical-roof bays. There are two on the west façade, flanking the central entry; one in the center of the south and north elevations; and two on the east elevation, on either side of a square, six-story, crenellated tower. The semi-circular bays on the north and south elevations are flanked by slate-shingled, gabled wall dormers that project slightly from the plane of the wall. The building also has five, slate-shingled, gabled roof dormers (one on the west, north and south slopes, and two on the east slope). Otherwise, fenestration consists of rectangular window openings with quarry-faced granite sills and headers. Window sash are six-over-six, wood, double-hung units.

Davis Hall was designed by Stone, Carpenter & Willson, the foremost architectural firm in Providence at the time. Originally known as College Hall, the building housed a dormitory, recitation room, administrative office, chapel, library, laboratory, and woodworking shop. It served as a men's dormitory until at least the 1930s.<sup>9</sup> A renovation project, mostly focused on the interior, was designed by Robinson, Green and Beretta in 1959.<sup>10</sup> Davis Hall currently houses the Communications Department offices.

<sup>6</sup> The construction specifications, a copy of which are on file with the Building Construction Records in the Office of Capital Projects at the University of Rhode Island, indicate that Ellsworth was the architect. The Massachusetts Historical Commission's inventory of cultural resources attributes the West Experiment Station (1885) to Ellsworth and the East Experiment Station (1889) to Ellsworth and Kirkpatrick. Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (<http://mhc-macris.net/>).

<sup>7</sup> Eschenbacher:115.

<sup>8</sup> Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

<sup>9</sup> Eschenbacher:32. Federal Writers' Project 1937:373.

<sup>10</sup> Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

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### Civil War Cannon/“Old Ben Butler” (1861; moved to campus in 1892)

A cast-iron cannon resting on a concrete base, set on a granite slab and located within a small, concrete-brick plaza at the southwest corner of the main quadrangle. Dating from 1861, the cannon served during the Civil War, on a ship that was later dismantled in Newport. It was at some point purchased by Captain George N. Kenyon of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, who named it after Benjamin Butler, a former general and politician from Massachusetts. “Old Ben Butler” was moved to the campus on May 19, 1892, the day that the state legislature passed a bill establishing the Rhode Island College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts – elevating the status of the institution, which had been called the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station. In celebration, students fired the cannon through the night, with increasing amounts of gun powder. The final cartridge blew the muzzle off the cannon, leaving a jagged opening at the end of the barrel.<sup>11</sup>

### Main Quadrangle (1894-1897, Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot)

The Main Quadrangle was designed over the course of several years, between 1894 and 1897, by Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, one of the leading landscape architectural firms of the turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup>-century. The firm designed two adjacent quadrangles to serve as the core of the Rhode Island College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts campus, which were to be separated by a drive flanked by walkways, all lined with trees.<sup>12</sup> Only the northern quadrangle was constructed. “The quad,” which measures roughly 400 feet by 450 feet and occupies relatively level ground, has a double-row of trees along its perimeter; historically these were American elms, which, due to disease, were replaced with Japanese zelkovas in the mid-1980s. No other trees or shrubs are located on the quad. The quad is surrounded by academic buildings, including many of the oldest on campus such as Davis Hall (1891, 1895) on the west, Lippitt Hall (1897) on the north, East Hall (1909) and Washburn Hall (1921) on the east, and Ranger Hall (1914) on the south. Several pedestrian walkways cross the quad, the widest of which runs diagonally between the northeast and southwest corners. The walkways are all of concrete, with the exception of a brick walkway which runs north-south, bisecting the quad roughly in half. (The plans by Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot do not show any walkways; aerial photos indicate that most of the current walkways were in place by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The southernmost walkway and the one that cuts diagonally from the northeast and southwest corners were added in the 1980s.)<sup>13</sup> A flagpole is located near the northeast corner of the quad, just off the wide, diagonal walkway, and a Civil War cannon (described above) occupies the southwest corner.

<sup>11</sup> “The Story of ‘Old Ben Butler,’” *The Grist* (URI Yearbook), 1897 (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/yearbooks>). Biography of Benjamin F. Butler, Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774 – Present (<http://bioguide.congress.gov>).

<sup>12</sup> This proposed drive corresponds roughly to the location of present-day Ranger Road. Olmsted Plans and Drawings Collection, Job #01392, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, MA.

<sup>13</sup> Rhode Island Aerial Photographs, 1939-2014 (<http://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=ea5a019b18984c21af473c5756df8fda>)

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**Lippitt Hall** (1897, Stone, Carpenter & Willson; ca. 1936; 2009, William Kite Architects)

Lippitt Hall is a three-story, Queen Anne/Tudor Revival-style building constructed of quarry-faced, granite ashlar laid in random bond. Named for Governor Henry Lippitt, the building was designed by Stone, Carpenter & Willson, architects of Davis Hall, in 1895 and constructed in 1897.<sup>14</sup> It is located on the north side of the main quad and faces south, toward the quad. The building has a slate-shingled, cross-gable roof with parapets. The principal entry is located in the center of the cross-gable, on the façade, and consists of an elliptical-arch opening with a pair of wood, paneled doors topped by a transom with heavy timber muntins. A dressed stone directly above the entry bears an embossed shield with an anchor and the building's construction date. A semi-detached, four-story, octagonal tower is located at the southeast junction of the cross-gable with the main block. Two gabled wall dormers that project slightly from the plane of the wall are located on the façade, on either side of the cross-gable, and four are placed symmetrically on the north elevation. Each dormer includes multiple window openings (some filled with fixed sash, some with double-hung) and features heavy wood mullions and half-timbering. Elsewhere, fenestration includes rectangular window openings at the basement and first-floor levels with smaller, elliptical-arched openings above. All are filled with wood sash, mostly six-over-six, double-hung units, which, at the first floor, are set beneath six-light transoms. Notable historic interior features include the beadboard wainscoting in the main stair hall, and the square wood balusters and simple handrail at the stairs.

Lippitt Hall includes a two-story, flat-roof addition to the rear (north), completed around 1936. The addition is mostly granite, with the exception of the northernmost end, which is comprised of a heating plant built of tan brick. A masonry smokestack, built sometime before 1934,<sup>15</sup> is located immediately to the west of the addition.

Lippitt Hall was built to contain classrooms, a laboratory, a chapel, a library and a drill hall/gymnasium; it later housed the Engineering Department and, as of 1937, included a dining room on the second floor and a women's gymnasium on the third.<sup>16</sup> A renovation project, mostly focused on the interior, was designed by William Kite Architects in 2009.<sup>17</sup> Lippitt Hall is currently home to the Mathematics and Africana Studies Departments.

**East Hall** (1909, Leslie P. Langworthy; 1959, John F. Hogan; 1991, David Presbrey Architects)

East Hall is a three-story, Colonial Revival-style building of quarry-faced, granite ashlar laid in random bond, constructed in 1909 on the east side of the main quad. The building faces west and is topped by a slate-shingled, hipped roof and has a raised basement. Granite belt courses run

<sup>14</sup> Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI. Eschenbacher: 115.

<sup>15</sup> The smokestack appears in a photo from that year. Image Archives, Special Collections Unit, University of Rhode Island Library (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/photographs/>).

<sup>16</sup> Eschenbacher:115. Federal Writers' Project:373.

<sup>17</sup> Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

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along the basement window headers and the third-story window sills. The façade is ten bays wide, with entrances in the fourth and seventh bays. Each entry is accessed by a set of granite steps and features a recessed, round-arched doorway set beneath an open pediment supported by engaged, Tuscan columns. The doors, which are modern, steel and glass units, are topped by fanlights. First-story window openings are round-arched, with eight-over-eight, aluminum-clad, wood replacement sash beneath fan lights, while those on the second and third floors are rectangular, filled with six-over-six, aluminum-clad, wood replacement sash. Round-arched dormers, filled with louvered vents, pierce each roof slope. Ornamentation is limited, but includes brick trim at the window heads and wood fretwork at the frieze.

As designed by Providence architect Leslie P. Langworthy, East Hall – a men’s dormitory that included a dining hall<sup>18</sup> – consisted of a three-story main block with two three-story ells extending off the rear. The ell were linked by a one-story connector that housed a kitchen. In 1959, architect John F. Hogan designed a remodel that reconfigured the interior spaces and expanded the connector to the east, converting the kitchen to a lecture hall. These alterations reflected the building’s change of use, from a dormitory to a classroom and office building. A minor remodel in 1991 included the construction of a second story on part of the one-story connector between the ells.<sup>19</sup>

#### **Ranger Hall (Science Building) (1914, Clarke, Howe & Homer; 1953, Linwood A. Gardiner)**

Ranger Hall is a three-story, north-facing, Colonial Revival-style building constructed in 1914 of quarry-faced, granite ashlar laid in random bond. Located on the south side of the main quad, the building is roughly rectangular in plan; the façade has a total of sixteen bays, including two, three-bay-wide, end pavilions. On the south (rear) elevation, the center four bays project, as well. Ranger Hall has a raised basement and is topped by a slate-shingled, hipped roof with visible rafter tails. The principal entrance is located in the center of the façade, within a pointed-arch opening, and consists of a pair of wood and glass doors (six panes of glass over two horizontal panels) topped by a transom. Just above, at the second story, is a pair of pointed-arch windows with a shallow granite balcony supported by granite brackets, whose lower rail is inscribed with RANGER HALL. A shaped parapet with a shield depicting an anchor pierces the roofline above. The rest of the window openings are rectangular; those on the first floor are filled with six-over-six, aluminum-clad, wood replacement sash with three-light transoms while those on the second and third floors have six-over-nine, aluminum-clad, wood replacement sash. Four hipped-roof dormers are located on the north slope of the roof, and a single, round-arched dormer with two window openings is located on the south slope. All the dormers were added during a 1953 renovation designed by Linwood A. Gardiner, which was mostly concerned with the interior. An approximately 40 feet by 20 feet greenhouse, attached with a one-story hyphen to the southwest corner of the building, was added at the same time.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Eschenbacher:165-166.

<sup>19</sup> Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

<sup>20</sup> Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

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Designed by the Providence architectural firm of Clarke, Howe & Homer, Ranger Hall was originally home to the Botany and Chemistry Departments and called the Science Building. In 1927, the structure was dedicated to Walter E. Ranger, who was a member of the Board of Managers – the school's governing body – and Rhode Island's Commissioner of Public Schools.<sup>21</sup> Today, Ranger Hall houses the Nutrition and Food Sciences Department, as well as other offices.

### **Washburn Hall (Agricultural Hall) (1921, Eleazer B. Homer; 1959, Robinson, Green and Beretta)**

Washburn Hall is a three-story, west-facing, Colonial Revival-style building of quarry-faced, granite ashlar laid in random bond located on the east side of the main quad. The building is rectangular in plan, is thirteen bays wide by five bays deep, and has a granite belt course running along the first-story window sills. The principal entrance is centered on the façade and consists of a pair of modern, steel and glass doors beneath a large, transom window set within a projecting, granite surround. Quarry-faced granite piers support a dressed frieze, with a center panel inscribed with WASHBURN HALL and flanked by shields depicting anchors. The frieze is surmounted by a dentilled cornice. The second-story window opening immediately above the entry features dressed-stone trim, including a wide frieze and molded cornice. The rest of the window openings are unadorned except for their quarry-faced lintels. Sash are six-over-six, aluminum-clad, wood replacement units; those at the first story also have three-light transoms. A secondary entrance is located in the center bay of the south elevation, within a wood portico with Tuscan columns. The building's hipped roof exhibits visible rafter tails, is sheathed in slate shingles and includes six hipped-roof dormers, all part of the original design: three on the west slope and one on each of the other slopes. Each dormer contains a pair of windows.

Constructed in 1921, Washburn Hall was designed by architect Eleazer B. Homer to house the college's agriculture programs. It was later named for John H. Washburn, the first principal of the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station.<sup>22</sup> In 1959, Robinson, Green and Beretta designed an interior remodel.<sup>23</sup> Washburn Hall is currently home to the departments of History, Political Science and Marine Affairs.

### **College War Memorial (1922)**

The College War Memorial is a large, roughly-dressed, granite boulder erected by the Rhode Island State College Alumni Association in June of 1922 and dedicated to World War I veterans. It is located on the west side of Upper College Road, a bit north of the intersection with Campus Avenue. A bronze plaque on the east face of the boulder reads: IN HONOR OF THE THREE HUNDRED THIRTY FOUR / MEN OF / RHODE ISLAND STATE COLLEGE / WHO

<sup>21</sup> Eschenbacher:232.

<sup>22</sup> Eschenbacher:221-222, 468.

<sup>23</sup> Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

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DEVOTED THEIR LIVES TO THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM / AND SERVED IN THE WORLD WAR and lists 23 individuals who died in the war.

**Bliss Hall** (1928, Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co.; 1965, J.D. Guillemette Engineers & Architects)

Bliss Hall is a three-story, south-facing, steel-frame, rectangular-plan building constructed on the north side of the main quad in 1928 and named for Zenas Bliss, a member of the Board of Managers.<sup>24</sup> The building has a raised basement; is topped by a slate-shingled, hipped roof; and has exterior walls of quarry-faced, granite ashlar laid in random bond, except for the north elevation, which is yellow brick. The façade has a total of thirteen bays; the three bays at the east and west ends project slightly. Granite belt courses run along the basement window headers and the third-story window sills. Bliss Hall is largely utilitarian in design, with Colonial Revival-style decorative elements limited to its principal entry bay. Located in the center of the façade, the entrance consists of a modern, steel and glass door unit with a large, transom window set within a dressed-granite surround featuring a molded cornice. The second-story window opening immediately above features dressed-stone with molded trim, cornice and sill. Just below the sill is a dressed stone inscribed BLISS HALL. Window openings are rectangular and filled with metal sash with multiple lights, most of which are fixed but some of which operate as casement or awning windows. (The existing sash are replacements, though they are similar in design to the original.) There are eight hipped-roof dormers, all part of the original design: three on the north and south roof slopes, one on the east and west. Each houses a pair of double-hung, replacement window sash. A small, concrete-block addition extends off the east end of the north elevation and is comprised of a one-story, shed-roof section and a two-story, gable-roof section. It was built sometime before 1965, when an interior remodel was designed by J.D. Guillemette.<sup>25</sup>

Designed by the engineering firm of Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co. of Boston, Bliss Hall was constructed to house the engineering program, a function it continues to serve today.

**Edwards Hall** (1928, Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co.; interior murals, mid-1930s or 1940-1941, Gino Conti; 2010, Brewster Thornton Group Architects)

Edwards Hall is a two- and three-story, north-facing, Classical Revival-style building constructed on the south side of the quad in 1928 and named for Howard Edwards, who was President of Rhode Island State College from 1906 to 1930.<sup>26</sup> The building is essentially rectangular in plan except for the south end, which bows outward. Edwards Hall is constructed of quarry-faced, granite ashlar laid in random bond; has a wide, granite cornice; and has a flat roof with parapets on all sides. The principal entrance is located in the center of the five-bay-wide façade, within a slightly projecting pavilion. It consists of a pair of modern, wood doors

<sup>24</sup> Eschenbacher:232.

<sup>25</sup> Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

<sup>26</sup> Eschenbacher:232.

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with a blind transom set within a dressed-granite, molded surround featuring a cornice supported by scrolled brackets. A three-part, round-arched window is located above the doorway. Secondary entrances, similar in design to the main entry, are located on the east and west elevations and in the easternmost and westernmost bays of the south elevation. Fenestration in the building's northern section, which originally contained a library, includes three-part, multi-light, wood window sash set within rectangular openings on the first story and within round-arched openings on the second story. In the middle section, which contains an auditorium, there are three, full-height, round-arched window openings on the east and west elevations, filled with three-part, multi-light, wood sash. At the three-story southern section of the building, where the auditorium stage is located, the lower two stories include eight-over-eight, wood sash within rectangular openings while the third-story openings are round-arched. Notable architectural details include piers that demarcate the bays in the northern section of the building and bronze shields of the state of Rhode Island located on the north, east and west elevations.

On the interior, Edwards Hall includes a set of three oil-on-canvas murals mounted above the doors from the lobby to the auditorium. Covered in drywall during a 1965 remodel, the murals were rediscovered and restored in 2010. The murals were painted by Gino Conti, a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, either in the mid-1930s or 1940-1941, and funded through the Works Progress Administration program. Executed in a stylized, late-cubist mode, the largest of the murals depicts the protection of youth, the striving for progress and the past. The two smaller murals show workers in the soil and figures representing the element of water.<sup>27</sup>

Like Bliss Hall, Edwards Hall was designed by the engineering firm of Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co. of Boston. The 2010 remodel that uncovered the Gino Conti murals also involved life safety, lighting and sound-system upgrades as well as the installation of historically-appropriate interior finishes; the project was designed by Brewster Thornton Group Architects of Providence. Edwards Hall's auditorium remains in use; space that once contained a library now holds administrative offices.

#### **Rodman Hall (Gymnasium/Drill Hall) (1928, Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co.)**

Rodman Hall is a two-story, south-facing building located in the northwest corner of the district. The building is comprised of two distinct sections. The south (front) section is constructed of random-laid, quarry-faced granite and designed to resemble a medieval fortress. It features a crenellated parapet roof; two, three-story, projecting towers at the east and west ends; and a two-story tower in the center, projecting slightly from the wall plane. Corbels support several overhanging masonry courses at the top of each tower. The principal entry is centered on the façade and consists of a pair of modern, steel and glass doors recessed within a segmental-arched

<sup>27</sup> Conti created a total of six murals for Edwards Hall, some in the mid-1930s and some in 1940-1941. All six were covered with drywall during the 1965 renovation. Three were restored and re-installed in 2010, two were removed and are being stored off-site for future restoration, and one was too damaged to be repaired. "Gino Conti Completes More Murals for R.I. State College," *The Providence Sunday Journal*, 16 March 1941. "Long-lost Murals Uncovered at URI," *The Providence Journal*, 10 August 2010.

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opening with an oversized keystone embellished with an anchor. Immediately over the entry is a dressed stone inscribed RODMAN HALL. Fenestration in the southern section of the building includes very narrow, slightly arched window openings with metal, awning sash. The north (rear) portion of Rodman Hall – which originally housed a gymnasium – is two-stories tall and clad in yellow brick. A series of buttresses divide the east and west elevations into six bays and support a barrel roof, which has a gabled skylight running north/south. Each bay is filled with groups of three, small, rectangular window openings on the first and second stories, filled with metal casement sash. A small, one-story, yellow-brick, shed-roof addition extends off the north elevation of the building and was built sometime before 1972, when a minor remodel was designed.<sup>28</sup>

Built in 1928 as a gymnasium and drill hall, the building was named for former building superintendent Thomas C. Rodman ten years later.<sup>29</sup> The School of Library and Information Sciences and Landscape Architecture Department occupy Rodman Hall today.

### **Memorial Gateway (1928)**

Built in 1928 to honor those who died in World War I,<sup>30</sup> the Memorial Gateway marks the primary entrance to the University of Rhode Island's central campus. It consists of two structures that are oriented east-west and located on either side of Upper College Road, just north of its intersection with Campus Avenue. Like the earliest buildings on campus, the Memorial Gateway is constructed of quarry-faced, granite ashlar laid in random bond. The east structure is approximately ten feet tall and ten feet wide with a round-arched opening to accommodate pedestrian traffic, flanked by piers with pyramidal caps. An additional pier, approximately twelve feet tall and with a pyramidal cap, is located at the west end of the structure. An approximately three-feet-high wall extends off the east end of the structure and curves to the south. The west structure is a mirror image of the east. A bronze plaque on the south face of the east structure's easternmost pier includes the Rhode Island State College emblem and the following: PRESENTED BY THE / ALUMNI AND STUDENTS OF / RHODE ISLAND STATE COLLEGE / AS A TOKEN OF THEIR LOYALTY / TO THEIR ALMA MATER / DEDICATED JUNE 16, 1928 / REDEDICATED JUNE 16, 2008 / ON THE OCCASION OF THE / 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY. The Memorial Gateway is located a short distance south of the College War Memorial, a boulder commemorating World War I veterans (described above); the gateway was conceived as a complementary addition to the boulder.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Rodman Hall was the subject of minor renovations in 1960, 1972, 1983 and 2003, including systems upgrades and projects to improve handicapped accessibility. Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

<sup>29</sup> Eschenbacher:232.

<sup>30</sup> Eschenbacher:233.

<sup>31</sup> University of Rhode Island History and Timeline (<http://web.uri.edu/about/history-and-timeline/>).

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**President's House (1931, Oreste di Saia; 1969, Oreste di Saia; 1999, Arris Design, Inc.)**

The President's House is a one- and two-story, wood-frame, east-facing, Colonial Revival-style building with a concrete foundation, an asphalt-shingle roof and exterior walls of wood clapboard. The residence includes a two-story, rectangular-plan, side-gable main block with a full-height, gabled pavilion centered on its west elevation. Also on the west elevation is a one-story ell, which contains a garage at the basement level, accessed via a drive from the south. A one-story, hipped-roof sunroom extends off the south elevation of the main block and a one-story, gable-roof wing with a porch supported by paired, slender, square columns extends off the north. There is a brick, exterior end chimney on the south elevation of the main block. The principal entrance – a wood, six-paneled door with half sidelights – is centered in the three-bay-wide façade, within a slightly projecting pavilion and set beneath a one-story, semi-circular portico with Tuscan columns and a classical balustrade. Fenestration on the façade includes two large window openings on the first story, one on either side of the entrance, filled with fifteen-over-fifteen, wood sash and topped with blind fanlights. On the second floor, a pair of windows with six-over-six, wood sash occupies the first and third bays, while the center bay includes a group of three windows (a six-over-six unit flanked by narrow, two-over-two sash). A large gabled dormer with cornice returns, which contains a round-arched window, is located in the center of the roof's east slope, above the entry. The remaining windows are primarily six-over-six, wood sash. The grounds of the President's House include an expansive lawn to the east as well as evergreen plantings that provide screening along the property's perimeter, especially to the north and east.

The President's House was designed in 1931 by Oreste di Saia, a Providence-based architect who also designed additions to the building in 1969. These included a one-story wing off the north elevation, which replaced an original, one-story porch, and an extensive addition off the building's southwest corner, which appears never to have been built. An expansive, semi-circular wood deck was added to the northwest corner of the building in 1999.<sup>32</sup>

**Eleanor Roosevelt Hall (1937, Albert Harkness)**

Eleanor Roosevelt Hall is a large, east-facing, red-brick, Colonial Revival-style building located on the western edge of the district. It consists of a three-story main block with two-story wings connected to the main block by recessed, one-story hyphens. (Due to the site's sloping topography, there is an additional story on the west elevation.) The main block is seven bays wide and has a slate-shingled, side-gable roof with parapets. Four brick chimneys are located symmetrically on the roof ridge. There are two entrances on the façade, one in the second bay

<sup>32</sup> A contract between the Rhode Island State College and Oreste di Saia for the design of the President's House, signed 22 April 1931, is on file at the University of Rhode Island Library, Miscellaneous Archives, Rec. Gr. 137, Box 8, Folder 100. Plans for the 1969 addition, prepared by di Saia, are part of the Building Construction Records at the Office of Capital Projects at the University. The Sanborn map from 1935 shows a one-story porch extending off the north elevation, as does a photo from the 1953 University of Rhode Island yearbook, *The Grist* (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/yearbooks>).

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and one in the sixth, each of which consists of a modern, steel and glass door unit beneath a transom window set within a wood portico. Each portico has fluted Doric columns supporting a wide frieze with triglyphs and metopes and a flat roof with a gabled parapet. The two wings are six bays wide and have slate-shingled, side-gambrel roofs; each wing has a large brick chimney centered on its roof ridge. The small hyphens are three bays wide and have slate-shingled, side-gambrel roofs. Fenestration consists of mostly eight-over-eight or six-over-six sash, though there are some window openings on the first floor of the main block that contain eight-over-twelve sash flanked by sidelights. Hipped-roof dormers, lighted on all three sides, are located on the east and west roof slopes of the main block and wings. Each hyphen features two wall dormers on the east and west elevations, as well as a small, hipped-roof dormer on each of the roof slopes. All of the window sash are aluminum-clad, wood replacement sash.

Notable historic interior features include the first-floor Great Hall, which has wainscoting of horizontal wood boards topped with a chair rail, and two matching fireplaces, facing each other. Each fireplace includes a wood surround with fluted pilasters, molded trim and paneling above the fireplace opening.

Built as a women's dormitory in 1937 with funding from the Public Works Administration, the building was dedicated to Eleanor Roosevelt the following year.<sup>33</sup> It was designed by Albert Harkness,<sup>34</sup> a leading Rhode Island architect whose later works – including several mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century dormitories at the University of Rhode Island, now altered – tended toward modernism. Roosevelt Hall continued to serve as a women's dormitory until at least the 1950s.<sup>35</sup> Today, it houses a variety of administrative offices as well as the Department of Gender and Women's Studies.

### **Quinn Hall (1937, Monahan & Meikle)**

Quinn Hall is a three-story, Colonial Revival-style building located at the southwest corner of the quad, facing west. The building has an H-shaped plan, with a fifteen-bay-wide center section and three-bay-wide wings. It has walls of quarry-faced, granite ashlar laid in random bond and a slate-shingled, hipped roof with a wood cornice. Fenestration consists primarily of twelve-over-twelve, wood sash within rectangular openings, some of which have brick, flat-arch headers. A granite belt course runs along the first-floor window headers. A second-story Palladian window is centered on the façade of each of the wings, set within a round-arched opening. A three-bay-wide, dressed-stone pavilion is centered on the façade. It has round-arched openings at the first floor; the building's principal entrance, which consists of a single, modern, steel and glass door, is recessed within the central opening, while each of the two other openings contains a group of three, double-hung window sash over paneled wood. The door and windows are topped with filigree fanlights. At the second and third stories of the central pavilion, the bays are filled with twelve-over-twelve window sash and demarcated by wood pilasters with Corinthian capitals. The

<sup>33</sup> Eschenbacher:263. Wheaton and Vangermeersch:55.

<sup>34</sup> Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

<sup>35</sup> "Aerial View of University of Rhode Island Campus," *Providence Sunday Journal Magazine*, 25 April 1954:20.

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pavilion terminates in a wood, gabled pediment featuring a frieze with triglyphs and metopes and a dentilled cornice. A round window, flanked by festoons, is centered within the pediment's tympanum. A secondary entrance is located in the center of the north elevation, and consists of a pair of modern, steel and glass doors with a sixteen-light transom set beneath a broken, segmental-arch pediment with an urn, supported by engaged, Tuscan columns. Immediately over the entry is a window opening with fifteen-over-fifteen sash, set beneath a gabled pediment with a dentilled cornice and flanked by pilasters. Additional entrances are located on the east elevation; some include wood, semi-attached, Tuscan columns as well as fanlights and open, gabled pediments. There are a total of eight round-arched dormer windows: two on both the east and west slopes of the main block, two on the north slope of the north wing and two on the south slope of the south wing.

Named for Governor Robert Quinn, Quinn Hall was designed by the Pawtucket architectural firm of Monahan & Meikle and constructed with funding from the Public Works Administration. It was built to house the home economics program.<sup>36</sup> Today, Quinn Hall is home to the Department of Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design, as well as a variety of administrative offices.

#### **Green Hall (1937, Jackson, Robertson & Adams; 1959, Robinson, Green and Beretta)**

Green Hall is a two-story, Colonial Revival-style building located off the main quad, immediately south of Ranger Hall and facing south. The T-plan building, which originally housed administrative offices on the first floor and a library and reading room above, consists of a hipped-roof main block with two, side-gabled flanking wings and a gabled ell to the rear (north). The end-walls of the gabled wings extend above the roofline to create parapets, each of which terminates in a masonry chimney. The roof is sheathed in slate shingles. Green Hall is constructed of quarry-faced, granite ashlar laid in random bond, with dressed-granite and brick trim. The principal entrance is located in a gabled pavilion in the center of the façade, within a recessed porch with stone, Tuscan columns. It consists of a pair of wood, paneled doors with half-sidelights and a transom window with round-arched window panes. A large Palladian window with engaged columns with Ionic capitals is located above the entrance, and includes a classical balustrade with pedestals and urns. A square clock tower sits directly above the entrance pavilion, on the roof ridge. It terminates in a curved, pyramidal, gilded roof with a ball finial and weather vane. Additional entrances are located on the north elevation of the rear ell, and at the junction of the main block with the rear ell. Fenestration includes eight-over-twelve, sixteen-over-sixteen and six-over-nine, aluminum-clad, wood replacement sash. On the façade of the main block, at the second story, there are shallow, segmental-arch window openings set atop stone balusters and filled with sixteen-over-sixteen, aluminum-clad, wood replacement sash and eight-light transoms. The rear ell, which housed the library stacks, features tall, narrow window openings on its east and west elevations.

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<sup>36</sup> Eschenbacher:263-264.

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Notable historic interior features include the main entry hall, which has wood-paneled walls and an interior entry designed to match the building's principal exterior entry: a pair of wood, paneled doors with half-sidelights and a transom window with round-arched window panes. Some wood, molded window and door trim survives, as does the horizontal-board wainscoting in the main stair hall.

Named for Governor Theodore Francis Green, Green Hall was designed by Jackson, Robertson & Adams of Providence, a firm noted for its use of the Colonial Revival style. It was constructed in 1937 with funding from the Public Works Administration to serve as the University's library and administration building.<sup>37</sup> It continued to house administrative offices until the construction of the Carlotti Administration Building in 1959, at which point it was given over entirely to house the library, in a remodel designed by Robinson, Green and Beretta, another Providence architectural firm. It remained in service as the University's library until Carothers Library was built in 1964.<sup>38</sup> Today, Green Hall once again houses administrative offices, including those of the President and Provost of the University.

**Robert L. Carothers Library (University Library) (NC)** (1964, Robinson, Green and Beretta; 1975, Robinson, Green and Beretta; 1992-1993, Robinson, Green and Beretta)

Carothers Library is located at the northwest corner of the main quadrangle and faces south. It is a three-story, gray brick-sided building, with narrow, vertical windows and a flat roof. Glass-and-aluminum curtain walls occupy several bays roughly in the center of the north, east and west elevations, interrupting the fenestration pattern. The principal entrance is located on the south elevation, within a full-height pavilion with a round-arched parapet. Sheathed in dark gray, stone-composite panels and featuring extensive glazing, the pavilion contrasts with the library's main block in form and materials.

The Library has been significantly expanded and altered twice since its initial construction. As originally built, the Library was a square-plan, three-story building that has been almost entirely surrounded by later construction. The north, east and west elevations were wrapped in one-story additions, of similar design and materials as the original core, in 1975. In 1992-1993, these additions were increased to three stories and the entrance pavilion was constructed on the façade, among other changes.<sup>39</sup> The architect of both the original design and the two subsequent renovations was the Providence firm of Robinson, Green and Beretta. Originally called the University Library, the building was named after Robert L. Carothers, President of the University from 1991 to 2009, upon his retirement.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Eschenbacher:263-264.

<sup>38</sup> "23 New Buildings for URI," *The Providence Sunday Journal Magazine*, 15 September 1957. Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

<sup>39</sup> The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation Portfolio Booklet, 1955-1980 (<http://www.rgb.net/profile.php>). Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

<sup>40</sup> University of Rhode Island Libraries Web Page (<http://web.uri.edu/library/about/>).

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## 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.)

- 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

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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**Period of Significance**

1888-1950

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**Significant Dates**

1888 – Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station established

1909 – RI State Agricultural School renamed Rhode Island State College

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**Cultural Affiliation**

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**Architect/Builder**

Stone, Carpenter & Willson

Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot

Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co.

Jackson, Robertson & Adams

Albert Harkness

E.A. Ellsworth

Leslie P. Langworthy

Clarke, Howe & Homer

Eleazer B. Homer

Oresto di Saia

Monahan & Meikle

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The University of Rhode Island Historic District is significant at the state level under Criterion A in the area of education, for its capacity to illustrate the early history of public higher education in Rhode Island. The district includes a ca. 1796 farmhouse, once part of a 140-acre farm purchased by the State of Rhode Island in 1888 to serve as the campus of the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station, as well as the earliest academic buildings on campus, which are clustered around a quadrangle designed in the mid-1890s. A group of early-20<sup>th</sup>-century buildings reflects the growing enrollment and expanding academic programs of that period, as the land-grant school became the Rhode Island State College (the precursor to the University of Rhode Island). The University of Rhode Island Historic District is also significant at the state level under Criterion C in the area of architecture, for its fine collection of buildings designed by locally prominent architects such as Stone, Carpenter & Willson; Clarke, Howe & Homer; Leslie P. Langworthy; Albert Harkness; and Monahan & Meikle. Together, the buildings reflect the principal architectural styles employed on campuses from this period, including the Late Victorian, Colonial Revival and Classical Revival styles.

***Period of Significance Justification***

The period of significance encompasses the founding and early development of the University of Rhode Island, from 1888, when the State of Rhode Island purchased the 140-acre Watson Farm to serve as the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station, to 1950, just before the school attained university status. The district includes the institution's earliest extant resources, including the Oliver Watson Farmhouse, the main quadrangle, and three academic buildings. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the school moved toward more generalized education and, in 1909, was re-named the Rhode Island State College; academic programs expanded and enrollment increased, as evidenced in the twelve resources in the district built between 1909 and 1937. The college, which became a university in 1951, undertook an ambitious development program in the years following World War II, resulting in the construction of over 20 new buildings, mostly away from the historic quadrangle. Executed in the Modern idiom of the time, these buildings represented a significant stylistic break from the revivalist styles that characterized the early campus.

***Criteria Consideration F***

The University of Rhode Island Historic District includes two resources that are commemorative in nature: the College War Memorial (1922) and the Memorial Gateway (1928), both dedicated to those who served in World War I. Erected several decades ago, the memorials have become integral features of the campus that speak to a significant period in the University's history, when enrollment dropped as students, as well as faculty, joined the war effort. The Memorial Gateway, in particular, has become imbued with significance apart from its commemorative meaning; it marks the principal entrance to the historic core of the University of Rhode Island campus.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

From the colonial period through the early 1800s, colleges in America offered a classical curriculum built upon a religious foundation, in order to prepare students for careers mainly as teachers, lawyers and theologians. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, however, there was a growing need for practical scientific training, due in part to the increased mechanization of farms and factories, as well as endeavors such as railroad construction and natural history surveys.<sup>41</sup> Accordingly, some educational leaders argued for more expansive academic opportunities. Among these was Francis Wayland, President of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island from 1827-1855, who in 1850 pointed to the large number of colleges, law schools and seminaries, but the lack of even one school “designed to furnish the agriculturist, the manufacturer, the mechanic or the merchant with the education that will prepare him for the profession to which his life is to be devoted.”<sup>42</sup>

A handful of manual labor institutes and agricultural schools were founded in the 1830s - 1850s, but most were ultimately unsuccessful. A few colleges and universities – including Harvard, Yale and Brown – developed scientific curricula with a practical aspect. At the same time, the general public began agitating for specialized training. Many states had active farmers’ associations by the mid-1800s, groups that became advocates for agricultural education. A national group, the United States Agricultural Society, lobbied the federal government to support education for farmers.<sup>43</sup>

In 1857, Vermont Congressman Justin S. Morrill introduced a bill to provide federal financial support for schools offering training in agriculture and mechanics. The bill failed to make it out of committee that year, but passed the House and Senate in 1859, only to be vetoed by President Buchanan.<sup>44</sup> It passed again in 1862, in a Congress diminished through the secession of the southern states, and was signed into law by President Lincoln. Officially called “An Act Donating Public Lands to the Several States and Territories which May Provide Colleges for the Benefit of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts,” the law came to be known as the Morrill Act, after its principal sponsor. States that accepted the terms of the Act were granted federal land in an amount equal to 30,000 acres for each of the state’s senators and representatives in Congress. If a state did not contain sufficient public land, the state was granted the right to sell public land located in another state or territory, with the proceeds used to establish and endow:

at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in such

<sup>41</sup> Gordon C. Lee, “The Morrill Act and Education,” *British Journal of Educational Studies* (Nov. 1963):19. Earle D. Ross, “The Land-Grant College: A Democratic Adaptation,” *Agricultural History* (Jan. 1941):28. Paul Venable Turner, *Campus: An American Planning Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1984):129.

<sup>42</sup> Lee:23.

<sup>43</sup> Lee:22. Ross 1941:28-29. Turner:131.

<sup>44</sup> Lee:25.

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manner as the legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.

The Act required the state legislatures to decide within two years whether they would accept the terms of the act and, if they did, to establish a college within five years.<sup>45</sup>

The Rhode Island legislature voted to accept the terms of the Morrill Act in 1863, and the state was granted the right to sell 120,000 acres of public land located in Kansas. Most states opted to use the land sale proceeds to establish new educational institutions, but the Rhode Island legislature decided to transfer the funds to Brown University, where a distinct program meeting the requirements of the Act was to be established and a scholarship program created.<sup>46</sup> While on average states received \$1.65/acre from the public land sales, Rhode Island yielded just \$.41/acre, for a total of \$50,000.<sup>47</sup> Explanations for this poor return vary. The general economic conditions of the time were not favorable, and states had to act relatively quickly in order to meet the Act's requirements, thereby glutting the market and depressing the value of their scrip.<sup>48</sup> Brown's President, Barnas Sears, and Horace T. Love, a fundraiser for the University, traveled to Kansas in the summer of 1863 to select the land to be sold.<sup>49</sup> According to one account, "When they returned, they reported that the chore was quite complex, involving not only selecting the lands but also negotiating sales, defending titles, and paying taxes. Brown opted to sell the entire 120,000 acres to the fund-raiser for \$50,000."<sup>50</sup>

A new Agricultural and Scientific Department was established at Brown in 1867, with a three-year course of study leading to a bachelor of philosophy degree. The new program never fit comfortably with Brown's classical curriculum, however, and local schools were not producing many students that could meet Brown's entry requirements. Furthermore, Brown never created a military program as required by the Morrill Act, and the scholarship program did not achieve what was intended: an 1889 report found that most scholarship recipients hailed from urban areas, and not one had pursued agricultural work after graduation.<sup>51</sup>

Meanwhile, in 1887 Congress passed the Hatch Act, which gave states \$15,000 per year to establish agricultural experiment stations, with the intention that they would be under the direction of the land-grant colleges. Two organizations – the Rhode Island Patrons of Husbandry

<sup>45</sup> U.S. *Statutes at Large* 12 (1862):503-505.

<sup>46</sup> A total of six states – Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island and South Carolina – initially transferred their land-sale proceeds to existing private institutions; all but New Jersey eventually transferred the funds to public institutions. Eschenbacher:2-3. Lee:28-29.

<sup>47</sup> Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History* (New York: Knopf, 1962):252.

<sup>48</sup> Earle Dudley Ross, *Democracy's College: The Land-Grant Movement in the Formative Stage* (Ames, IA: The Iowa State College Press, 1942):83.

<sup>49</sup> Martha Mitchell, *Encyclopedia Brunoniana* (Providence, RI: Brown University Library, 1993), ([http://www.brown.edu/Administration/News\\_Bureau/Databases/Encyclopedia/](http://www.brown.edu/Administration/News_Bureau/Databases/Encyclopedia/)).

<sup>50</sup> Roger L. Williams, *The Origins of Federal Support for Higher Education: George W. Atherton and the Land-Grant College Movement* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991):47.

<sup>51</sup> Eschenbacher:4, 7-8, 45, 48.

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and the Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry – lobbied the state legislature to establish an experiment station separate from Brown, and called for Brown to surrender the proceeds realized from the land-grant sale so that an independent agricultural school could be established.<sup>52</sup> Pressure to rectify the situation intensified with the passage of the Second Morrill Act in 1890, which provided additional funding for the land-grant schools. Finally, in April 1894, after extensive negotiations and a District Court ruling, the Rhode Island legislature and Brown University agreed that Brown would no longer serve as the state's land-grant college, but would be permitted to keep \$40,000 as compensation for the cost of managing the fund from the public land sale.<sup>53</sup>

Even before resolving its dispute with Brown, the state legislature took significant steps toward creating what would become a public land-grant institution. On March 29, 1887 the legislature voted to accept the Hatch Act funds and, a year later, appropriated \$5,000 for the purpose of establishing the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station, separate from Brown. The new institution would be overseen by a five-member Board of Managers appointed by the Governor and representing each of Rhode Island's counties. A legislative committee was dispatched to select a location for the new school and settled on the Oliver Watson Farm in South Kingstown. Encompassing 140 acres, the farm included a house, a large barn and several small outbuildings, all in disrepair. It was purchased on September 27, 1888 with \$2,000 from the South Kingstown Town Council, \$2,000 from private donations and \$1,000 from the state.<sup>54</sup>

After the purchase of the Watson Farm, the work of creating an agricultural school began. In the spring of 1889, John H. Washburn was named the Principal of the Rhode Island State Agricultural School. Charles O. Flagg, President of the Board of Managers, was appointed the Director of the Experiment Station. Both were graduates of the Massachusetts Agricultural College at Amherst, as were many of the earliest faculty members.<sup>55</sup>

At the same time, new facilities needed to be built. In March of 1889, the Board of Managers contracted for the construction of a road from the main street in nearby Kingston Village (present-day Kingston Road) to the Oliver Watson Farm; this road was roughly in the location of the southern portion of present-day Lower College Road. By July of that year, overgrown vegetation had been cleared at the farmhouse and the foundation for the new Agricultural Experiment Station (now Taft Hall) was being laid. The building, which housed laboratories and classrooms, was constructed of granite from a quarry on campus<sup>56</sup> and, with its steeply-pitched, hipped roof and conical-roof tower, reflected its Late Victorian period. It was designed by E.A.

<sup>52</sup> Eschenbacher:17-18, 21.

<sup>53</sup> Eschenbacher:47-51; 57-58; 64-67.

<sup>54</sup> Eschenbacher:17, 23, 26-27.

<sup>55</sup> Eschenbacher:25, 33.

<sup>56</sup> The granite quarry was located to the west of the District, between where the Memorial Student Union and Butterfield Hall now stand. The granite was reportedly hauled on a narrow-gauge track by a team of oxen, uphill to the building sites. Today, the quarry site is occupied in part, at least, by a parking lot. A street called Quarry Road is located nearby. Eschenbacher:29-30,107. Wheaton and Vangermeersch:10, 37. Woodward 1957:14.

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Ellsworth, an architect/engineer from Holyoke, Massachusetts and graduate of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, where he had designed an Agricultural Experiment Station in 1885.<sup>57</sup>

The cornerstone for the next building, College Hall, was laid on July 23, 1890. Like its predecessor, College Hall was constructed of granite quarried on-site and was designed with Late Victorian-period details, including a mansard roof and several full-height, semi-circular, conical-roof bays. When completed in 1891, College Hall housed a dormitory, recitation room, administrative office, chapel, library, laboratory, and woodworking shop. College Hall was designed by Stone, Carpenter & Willson, Rhode Island's premier architectural firm at the time. Another building, the wood-frame Boarding Hall (also known as South Hall; not extant), had begun housing students in December of 1890.<sup>58</sup> With these first three buildings – lined up on the west side of the future quadrangle – the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station had laboratories, classrooms, administrative offices and dormitories – the fundamental facilities needed for a new school (Figure 1).

The School admitted its first class, which consisted of 24 men and two women, in September of 1890. Tuition was free, but students paid for boarding and meals and had to provide their own furniture. They could work on campus to offset their expenses by, for example, helping to construct new campus buildings. The School provided a three-year course of study, combining time in the classroom, the laboratory, the shop and in the field. The curriculum was oriented toward vocational preparation, and included courses in agriculture, horticulture, botany, veterinary science, dairy farming and market gardening.<sup>59</sup>

In May of 1892, with the passage of a bill by the state legislature, the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station became the Rhode Island College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, with John H. Washburn as President.<sup>60</sup> The state's farming interests wanted the curriculum to remain focused on agriculture, but instead it expanded to include subjects like textile fabrics, machine tool design, industrial chemistry and power transmission.<sup>61</sup> The farming lobby had viewed the Agricultural School and Experiment Station as "the resurgence of the Jeffersonian vision, the antidote for urban radicalism, and the salvation of a pastoral Rhode Island that, in actuality, could never be recaptured."<sup>62</sup> The growing emphasis on "mechanic arts" reflected the reality of an increasingly urban and industrialized Rhode Island, with an economy turning away from agriculture and toward manufacturing, particularly textile production and related industries.

<sup>57</sup> The construction specifications, a copy of which are on file with the Building Construction Records in the Office of Capital Projects at the University of Rhode Island, indicate that Ellsworth was the architect. The Massachusetts Historical Commission's inventory of cultural resources attributes the West Experiment Station (1885) to Ellsworth and the East Experiment Station (1889) to Ellsworth and Kirkpatrick. Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (<http://mhc-macris.net/>).

<sup>58</sup> Eschenbacher:32.

<sup>59</sup> Eschenbacher:37-38, 40-42.

<sup>60</sup> Eschenbacher:57-58. Wheaton and Vangermeersch:9.

<sup>61</sup> Eschenbacher:71-73.

<sup>62</sup> Eschenbacher:42.

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Changes were evident in the campus landscape, as well. The earliest buildings at the State Agricultural School – the Agricultural Experiment Station, College Hall and South Hall – were located to the southeast of the Watson Farmhouse and its outbuildings, and all were oriented to the west. The open field framed by the farmhouse and the new school buildings was used as a parade ground for military instruction, a requirement of the Morrill Act.<sup>63</sup> In 1894, the Board of Managers engaged the noted landscape architecture firm Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot to assist with campus planning, marking the beginning of a gradual shift of the campus core to the east. In a June 22 letter to the firm, President Washburn wrote:

...at the last meeting of the Board of Managers I brought up the matter of having you visit the institution to give us yearly advice. They authorized me to find out what time after July 6 you could come to meet the Board here.... I am inclined to think they will have some such arrangement with you as you have with Smith College. I am very desirous of it, and I hope you will be able to come early in July.<sup>64</sup>

A survey of the existing campus was prepared in August, and Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot began producing schematic plans for the campus in the fall.<sup>65</sup>

Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot's earliest schemes proposed a campus circulation system comprised of gently curving roads, including a kidney-shaped loop to the northeast of the three extant academic buildings (Figure 2). By the spring of 1895, however, the firm had adopted a less romantic approach; a few roads still curved around the edge of campus, but a rectilinear double-quadrangle was at its core. The Agricultural Experiment Station, College Hall and South Hall are shown on the west side of the northern quadrangle, with additional buildings anticipated around the entire perimeter. The centers of the quadrangles would be open, with tree-lined paths defining the edges (Figure 3).<sup>66</sup> The design was typical of American campuses of the period. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, leading landscape practitioners such as Frederick Law Olmsted advocated for park-like campuses, with informal groups of buildings. By the end of the century, however, campuses were embracing more formal plans emphasizing symmetry and geometry. The quadrangle provided an orderly focal point for the young college and, by drawing on European precedent, also served as a potent academic symbol.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>63</sup> William Turnbaugh, "Beginnings: The Earliest Days of the Campus," *University of Rhode Island Alumni Quarterly* (Summer 1979):11.

<sup>64</sup> Letter from John H. Washburn to James L. Olmstead [sic], 22 June 1894, Olmsted Associates Records, 1863-1971, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>65</sup> Olmsted Plans and Drawings Collection, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, MA.

<sup>66</sup> Olmsted Plans and Drawings Collection.

<sup>67</sup> Quadrangles on America campuses were influenced by, but distinct from, those in Europe. At Oxford and Cambridge universities, for example, the quadrangles were fully enclosed by connected buildings, while in America, quadrangles were more commonly characterized by isolated buildings, with space between them, arranged around an open green. Turner:140-146, 163-216. Ashton R. Willard, "The Development of College Architecture in America," *The New England Magazine* (July 1897):513.

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On March 13, 1895, President Washburn wrote to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, "Your preliminary plans have been discussed by my co-workers here, and we are all pleased with it. I shall bring it before the Board of Managers at their next meeting, the first Wednesday in April, that they may formally adopt it as a basis to work on." In another letter dated May 18, 1895, Washburn wrote, "Your plans have been discussed by our Board of Managers and they were much pleased with them."<sup>68</sup> Although the double-quad plan was never entirely implemented – by 1912, buildings were being constructed within the southern quad – the northern quad was established and survives largely intact, with tree-lined, perimeter paths and buildings arranged on the edges, mostly facing inward toward the green.<sup>69</sup> The Olmsted firm continued to consult on aspects of campus planning until at least 1903, including on topics such as the siting of greenhouses, an arboretum and professors' houses, though no additional plans appear to have been drawn up.<sup>70</sup>

On January 27, 1895, in the midst of planning for the new campus, the College experienced a major setback when College Hall burned to the ground. All but the west wall was destroyed, along with furnishings, books and equipment.<sup>71</sup> Work on replacing the building began immediately. President Washburn met with the building's architects, Stone, Carpenter & Willson, on January 29 to discuss the design of a replacement.<sup>72</sup> The new building, also called College Hall but re-named Davis Hall in 1897, incorporated the west elevation of the original and, like its predecessor, was constructed of granite from the campus quarry. Its basic plan, which included semi-circular, conical-roof bays on all four elevations, remained largely unchanged. However, the new building, at three stories, was a story shorter than the original and was topped with a steeply-pitched hipped roof rather than the original mansard roof. The new building featured a tower on its rear (east) elevation, which housed a water tank. The building was completed by October 1895, through a combination of student labor and outside workmen.<sup>73</sup>

The time and expense involved with rebuilding College Hall delayed the implementation of other campus improvements. Indeed, in December 1895 President Washburn wrote to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot:

We have done very little to carry out the suggestions you made while visiting us last for the simple fact that we have been dreadfully crippled on account of the fire and lost much apparatus which we had to replace. Because the building burned we have received very little sympathy from the state because we did not have a water supply, although we had asked for it and they had refused it.... Our drill and recitation hall we failed to get last winter.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Letter from John H. Washburn to Charles Eliot, 13 March 1895 and letter from John H. Washburn to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, 18 May 1895, Olmsted Associates Records.

<sup>69</sup> The earliest campus buildings, the Agricultural Experiment Station (Taft Hall), College Hall (Davis Hall) and South Hall (not extant) pre-dated the quad and faced away from it. The perimeter of the quad was originally planted with American elms which, due to disease, were replaced with Japanese zelkovas in the mid-1980s.

<sup>70</sup> Olmsted Associates Records.

<sup>71</sup> Eschenbacher:98.

<sup>72</sup> Letter from John H. Washburn to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, 29 January 1895, Olmsted Associates Records.

<sup>73</sup> Eschenbacher:107, 115.

<sup>74</sup> Letter from John H. Washburn to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, 18 December 1895, Olmsted Associates Records.

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Plans for a drill and recitation hall had been underway since at least August of 1894, when the building was shown in outline on a survey of the campus grounds. The College had contracted with Stone, Carpenter & Willson to design the building and, in December of 1894, the campus granite quarry was uncovered and students began excavating for the foundation, in anticipation of construction.<sup>75</sup> The College Hall fire put these plans on hold, however, and it wasn't until February of 1897 that the legislature appropriated \$45,000 for the building. Completed the following fall, the building – named Lippitt Hall, after the Governor – contained three classrooms, facilities for the new electrical engineering program, recitation rooms, a chapel and a library, as well as a drill hall/gymnasium on the third floor.<sup>76</sup> It was located on the northern perimeter of the quad and, built of granite in the Queen Anne/Tudor Revival style, harmonized with the earlier academic buildings to its west. Around the same time or soon after, the Agricultural Experiment Station (now named Taft Hall) was expanded to its rear (east), presumably in response to and in anticipation of growing enrollment and programs (Figure 4).<sup>77</sup>

The number of students enrolled at the College remained small in the early years. The first class to be admitted, in 1890, was comprised of 26 students; by 1902 the number had increased to 39. By 1908, however, there were a total of 140 students at the College, including 41 from out of state. The curriculum evolved to meet the needs and desires of the growing student body, including those who wanted more than a vocational education. General science, history, modern languages and art were added in 1902. 1908 saw the creation of a Home Economics Department, aimed at women.<sup>78</sup>

On May 26, 1908, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed a resolution to assess the purpose and performance of the Rhode Island College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. A special commission was formed, which published a report in April 1909 that argued for the expansion of educational offerings at the College, noted the lack of adequate academic facilities due to under-funding, and stated the goal of making the College the capstone of the public education system in Rhode Island. The report "provided a blueprint for development that exceeded the most fanciful expectations of the President and Board," including the construction of a science building, library and auditorium and a new gym/drill hall so that Lippitt Hall could be dedicated to the engineering program. The Commission also recommended changing the name of the school to Rhode Island State College, which the state legislature did with the passage of a bill on May 4, 1909. The special report ushered in a new era of public support for the College and a greater willingness on the part of the Assembly to fund its operation and expansion, while the change in name signaled a broadening of the school's educational mission and a new stature for the institution.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Eschenbacher:99.

<sup>76</sup> Eschenbacher:112-115.

<sup>77</sup> Bernon Helme Photograph Collection, 1895-1930, MSS. Gr. 125, Folder 13, University of Rhode Island Library.

<sup>78</sup> Eschenbacher:40, 74, 152-153, 156.

<sup>79</sup> Eschenbacher:168-176, 181.

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The period from 1909 to the onset of World War II was marked by significant growth and expansion at the College, in terms of both enrollment and the number and type of campus facilities. The College had 156 full-time students in 1910, a figure that had grown to 1,216 by 1940.<sup>80</sup> Ten new buildings were constructed during this period. The earliest of these, a dormitory called East Hall, hewed to the double-quad plan proposed by Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot. Located on the east side of what was to be the northern quad, East Hall was the first building constructed on campus since Lippitt Hall (1897). Its construction was funded with a hard-fought legislative appropriation for \$55,000 – considerably less than anticipated. The original, four-story design by Stone, Carpenter & Willson was abandoned as too costly. Leslie P. Langworthy, a Providence architect chosen through a design competition, prepared more modest plans. Construction on the three-story, Colonial Revival-style building began in the spring of 1909 and was complete the following October. Constructed of granite from the campus quarry, East Hall included a chapel, dining hall, kitchen and social room on the first floor, with dormitory suites above.<sup>81</sup>

Science Hall (later re-named Ranger Hall) was built in 1912-1914 to house the botany and chemistry programs, with a \$75,000 legislative appropriation. The building was designed by Clarke, Howe & Homer of Providence and constructed on the southern edge of what was to be the northern quad (thereby interrupting the double-quad plan). Like the buildings that preceded it, Science Hall was constructed of granite from the campus quarry.<sup>82</sup> The three-story building's design was simple, with elements of the Colonial Revival style that was prevalent in the period.

Around the time that Science Hall was being completed in 1914, the College began making plans for a building that would consolidate its agricultural programs. The outbreak of World War I, however, delayed construction. After the United States joined the War in the spring of 1917, the operation of the College was “virtually suspended” while the War Department put campuses to use for military training and students dispersed to join the armed forces or to work on farms to increase food production. Enrollment declined, with 20% fewer in the freshman class of 1917 than in the previous year.<sup>83</sup> A total of 334 College students, graduates, faculty or staff joined the armed forces and 23 were killed in the War. They are memorialized with a bronze plaque in a granite boulder, installed in 1922, and at the Memorial Gateway, built in 1928 at the intersection of Upper College Road and Campus Avenue.

Agricultural Hall (later re-named Washburn Hall), originally conceived of around 1914, was not constructed until 1920-1921. It was designed in the Colonial Revival style by Eleazer B. Homer, formerly of Clark, Howe & Homer, the firm that had designed Science Hall. Ground was broken in March 1920 and the campus quarry was uncovered; by the fall, however, it was apparent that the quarry was running out of large pieces of granite, which instead had to be imported from Massachusetts – increasing a budget already bloated by inflated post-War building costs. Agricultural Hall was dedicated in November 1921, occupying a spot on the east side of the

<sup>80</sup> Eschenbacher:181, 298.

<sup>81</sup> Eschenbacher:164-166.

<sup>82</sup> Eschenbacher:180.

<sup>83</sup> Eschenbacher:189-190.

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quad, just south of East Hall. It housed administrative offices, classrooms and a laboratory, as well as a dairy lab and refrigeration plant in the basement.<sup>84</sup>

The decrease in the student population during World War I was followed by a post-War surge in enrollment. The 1919-1920 academic year saw 342 students enrolled, and by 1923 there were 495. For the first time, some qualified students were turned away. The College developed a five-year building program in 1924, to address academic needs in the face of this growing enrollment. The Board of Managers requested \$600,000 for the construction of three buildings (an engineering building, a library-auditorium and a gymnasium/drill hall), and, if the budget allowed, the construction of a power plant and the renovation of Lippitt Hall into offices and lecture rooms. The size of the request required a popular referendum, a first for the College. The issue was put on the November 1926 ballot and passed easily – a sign of strong public support for the institution. Bonds were issued in January 1927 and planning for the new construction began.<sup>85</sup>

Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co., an engineering firm in Boston with three Rhode Island State College alumni on staff, offered to design and oversee the construction of the three buildings at cost. Like the earlier buildings, these would be built of granite from the increasingly depleted campus quarry. Construction of the Engineering Building, named Bliss Hall after a member of the Board of Managers, began on the north side of the quad, to the east of Lippitt Hall, in June 1927 and was complete twelve months later. The three-story, rectangular-plan building was rather utilitarian in appearance. Historian Herman Eschenbacher opined, “With large, many-paned windows, in its unrelieved utility it resembled a bakery and injected a dissonant note into the quiet harmony of the elm-shaded quadrangle.”<sup>86</sup> The building’s rear elevation was constructed of yellow brick, reflecting the scarcity of usable granite from the quarry.

Construction of the two other buildings funded through the 1926 bond referendum began in October 1927 and was complete the following fall. The library/auditorium, named Edwards Hall for the College’s president, Howard Edwards, was built to the east of Ranger Hall. It was designed in the Classical Revival style, with full-height, round-arched windows illuminating the auditorium in the southern half of the building, which was separated by a fire wall from the library in the northern half. The auditorium could seat 630 on the main floor and 370 in a balcony. The library had room for 50,000 volumes and could accommodate 100 readers at tables. The new gymnasium/drill hall, later named Rodman Hall, was located off the quad, on the site of a horse barn that had burned in 1924, to the northeast of the Watson Farmhouse. Designed to resemble a medieval fortress, the building includes a granite section containing the main entrance and two crenellated towers (“made of the final bits and pieces that the quarry could be made to disgorge”<sup>87</sup>) and a larger, two-story rear section of yellow brick.

<sup>84</sup> Eschenbacher:219-222, 468.

<sup>85</sup> Eschenbacher:211-212, 228, 231.

<sup>86</sup> Eschenbacher:231-232.

<sup>87</sup> Eschenbacher:231-233.

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The onset of the Great Depression slowed construction on campus. The President's House was erected in 1931, to the southeast of Ranger Hall, in what would have been a secluded corner of the campus. It was designed in the Colonial Revival style by Oreste di Saia, a Providence-based architect who was later the Director of the State Department of Public Works.<sup>88</sup> Some athletic facilities, including a concrete grandstand, were built in 1933-1934.<sup>89</sup> but there were no other significant additions to the campus.

In 1933, the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works (later named the Public Works Administration) was established, with the goal of combatting the Depression through the expenditure of over \$3 billion in public works construction. In a May 1934 special election, Rhode Islanders voted, by a 2:1 margin, in favor of issuing bonds totaling \$860,000 for the construction of several new buildings at Rhode Island State College. This commitment of state funds would enable Rhode Island to access Federal public works funding. The bonds were issued quickly and plans for the buildings were approved in late 1934, but the projects moved slowly. "The special nature of the financing, the need to deal with agencies of both the state and Federal governments, and an exquisite care that all phases of the operation observe every possible safeguard to avoid later charges of mismanagement caused the project to move with maddening slowness."<sup>90</sup>

By the end of 1937, however, three new buildings had been completed. The first to be finished was Quinn Hall, which opened in February. The large, three-story, granite building was designed in the Colonial Revival style by Monahan & Meikle, an architecture firm from Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Located to the west of Ranger Hall, the building consolidated the home economics programs, and included classrooms, laboratories, offices and a lecture hall for 300. When built it was the largest building on campus. A women's dormitory, Eleanor Roosevelt Hall, was designed by Albert Harkness of Providence and completed in September 1937. Built of brick and comprised of a large, three-story main block with two-story wings connected by recessed, one-story hyphens, the building projects a strong Colonial Revival-style image. Roosevelt Hall is located off the main quad, at some distance from Davis Hall to the east, and therefore does not disrupt the granite character of the main quad. When built, it provided housing for about 90 women; Harkness' plans show that it was designed for future expansion, with large ell's extending off the east elevations of the wings (never built). September 1937 also saw the completion of Green Hall, a library/administration building designed by Jackson, Robertson & Adams of Providence.<sup>91</sup> The Colonial Revival-style building was constructed to the south of Ranger Hall, roughly in the center of what would have been the southern quad in Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot's double-quad plan (Figure 5). The Federal public works funding also supported the construction of a dairy barn (not extant) and an addition and steam plant attached to the rear of Lippitt Hall.<sup>92</sup> The College benefitted from another Depression-era program with the

<sup>88</sup> Virginia H. Adams, *National Register Nomination for Veterans Memorial Auditorium/Masonic Temple, Providence, Rhode Island*, 1993.

<sup>89</sup> Eschenbacher:249.

<sup>90</sup> Eschenbacher:262-263.

<sup>91</sup> Eschenbacher:263-264. Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, URI.

<sup>92</sup> Wheaton and Vangermeersch:48.

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installation in Edwards Hall of six murals by Gino Conti, created in the mid-1930s and 1940-1941 with support from the Federal Art Project, a part of the Works Progress Administration. Covered with drywall during a 1965 renovation, three of the murals were restored in 2010.<sup>93</sup>

With the exception of this Federal funding, however, the College's financial resources during the Great Depression were severely limited. In 1935, the College requested just under \$280,000 from the state legislature but got only \$180,000, the least it had received since 1929. As a result, out-of-state tuition was raised and dormitory fees were increased. The College attempted to leverage additional Federal funding in 1938, but voters rejected a bond referendum that would have provided over \$1 million in state money for building and infrastructure projects. Although enrollment grew steadily over the course of the decade – from 646 in 1930 to 1,216 in 1940 – capital improvements were largely deferred.<sup>94</sup>

After the United States entered World War II, at the end of 1941, enrollment at the College plummeted, dropping to 363 by the spring of 1944, the lowest it had been since 1920. The draft age had been lowered to 18 and it became increasingly difficult for college students in technical programs to obtain deferments. As of 1943, with many young men fighting the war, women outnumbered men on campus by 3:1. The administration implemented a variety of measures to reverse the trend, including lowering admissions standards, with some success.<sup>95</sup> But, overall, the Rhode Island State College campus entered a period of stasis, with no new construction projects completed during the war.

The war's end in 1945, however, ushered in a new period of growth. Students whose educations had been disrupted by the war returned to finish their degrees, and the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (commonly called the G.I. Bill) provided veterans with cash assistance for tuition, leading to a surge in enrollment on campuses across the country. At the Rhode Island State College, the student body grew to 1,828 in 1946 and then to 2,284 in 1948, an all-time high. Campus facilities could not accommodate the population growth. By early 1946, at least 70 Quonset huts had been erected on campus, mostly in the area to the north of Bliss Hall, providing student housing and dining facilities, as well as classrooms, laboratories and offices.<sup>96</sup>

Significant changes to the College curriculum were also taking place. Some vocational offerings, like the agriculture program, were in sharp decline, while others, like the nursing program, established in 1945, flourished. Overall, the 1940s were characterized by a shift away from technical training and a move toward a more generalized academic education. A liberal studies curriculum was launched in 1944, offering courses in the humanities and social sciences and leading to a Bachelor of Science degree. By 1946, there were 168 students in the program, making it the largest on campus. Two years later, the College's Board of Trustees (which had

<sup>93</sup> "Long-lost Murals Uncovered at URI," *The Providence Journal*, 10 August 2010.

<sup>94</sup> Eschenbacher:247-251, 265, 298.

<sup>95</sup> Eschenbacher:298-299, 303.

<sup>96</sup> Eschenbacher:314-318. Wheaton and Vangermeersch:65-66.

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replaced the Board of Managers) voted to expand the liberal studies curriculum and to have it lead to a Bachelor of Arts degree, a first for the College.<sup>97</sup>

In July 1950 the Board of Trustees, emboldened by the success of the liberal arts curriculum, submitted a proposal to the Rhode Island state legislature that the State College be made a university. The *Providence Journal* opposed the change, arguing that the college did not yet have a well-established liberal arts school, a strong graduate program, nor faculty committed to research. The general public, however, was supportive, and a bill establishing the University of Rhode Island passed easily on March 23, 1951.<sup>98</sup>

The pressure to expand campus facilities, already acute in the years following World War II, only intensified now that the college was a university. In 1946, the College's Planning Committee had called for nearly \$7 million worth of campus improvements over several years, including the construction of badly-needed dormitories as well as classrooms, laboratories, administrative offices and athletic facilities.<sup>99</sup> These plans were partly realized with the construction of two men's dormitories, Bressler and Butterfield Halls (1949-1950; altered and outside the district); the Pastore Chemistry Laboratory (1949-1953; altered and outside the district); and the Keaney Gymnasium (1950-1953; outside the district).<sup>100</sup> Between 1958 and 1961, 22 new buildings were constructed at the Kingston campus, along with the remodeling of a few existing buildings, for a total cost of \$10,445,000 – the largest building campaign in the school's history. The new buildings were concentrated mostly to the north and west of the main quadrangle, preserving the historic core of the campus. Almost all reflected the growing presence of modern design on mid-century American campuses and represented a dramatic stylistic break from the university's earlier buildings. As the *Providence Journal* noted in 1957:

The campus of the University of Rhode Island is soon to be transformed. Within three years or less the granite, ivied and elm-shaded face of the institution that now awes the freshmen and sends alumni into transports of wistful nostalgia will be swallowed up in great new structures of brick and glass – the collegiate dress of the mid-twentieth century.<sup>101</sup>

The mid-century buildings on campus were designed with economy in mind and, by and large, their designs were simple and, in some cases, plainly utilitarian. The most intact example is the Carlotti Administration Building, a low-slung, sleek, Modernist building designed by Cull, Robinson and Green to house the offices of the president, vice-president, deans and registrar, among other functions.<sup>102</sup> Constructed on the west side of the quad, on the site of South Hall (1890, razed 1957), the Carlotti Administration Building projected an image of modern, almost

<sup>97</sup> Eschenbacher:323-324, 342.

<sup>98</sup> Eschenbacher:348-350, 355-359, 383.

<sup>99</sup> "Dividends Unlimited: Some Facts about Rhode Island State College, Its Services and Plans for Development" (Box 62, Folder 170 of the Carl R. Woodward Papers, MSS. Gr. 1, University of Rhode Island Library Special Collections and Archives Unit, South Kingstown, RI.)

<sup>100</sup> Eschenbacher:329-332.

<sup>101</sup> "23 New Buildings for URI."

<sup>102</sup> Eschenbacher:247. "23 New Buildings for URI."

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corporate, authority. Indeed, a 1959 article in the *Providence Journal* called it the “most striking of the new structures.”<sup>103</sup>

In the years to follow, the University of Rhode Island continued to evolve and expand, adding new classroom buildings, research facilities, dormitories and other amenities, though at a slower pace. Again, new construction was kept largely away from the campus’s historic core, with the exception of Carothers Library (NC; 1964, 1975, 1992-1993) and Ballantine Hall (1967, 2003; outside the district), which housed the College of Business Administration.<sup>104</sup>

Focused on the main quadrangle and surrounding buildings, the University of Rhode Island Historic District embodies the institution’s origins as a land-grant school and its growth in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, prior to becoming a university. The earliest buildings on campus, constructed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, provided the laboratories, classrooms and dormitories necessary to establish a new educational institution, while the quadrangle created a focal point and a collegiate image. Buildings constructed in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century reflected the school’s evolution from an essentially vocational institution to a college offering a more generalized academic curriculum to an increasing number of students. The University of Rhode Island Historic District therefore represents the establishment and early development of public higher education in Rhode Island.

### ***Architectural Significance***

The architectural character of the University of Rhode Island Historic District reflects the campus’s early development, with examples of Late Victorian, Colonial Revival and Classical Revival style buildings. Many of the buildings in the district were designed by locally prominent architecture firms, while the heart of the campus – the main quadrangle – was laid out by Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, the leading American landscape architecture firm at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Designers associated with the University of Rhode Island Historic District are discussed briefly, below.

#### ***Stone, Carpenter & Willson***

*Davis Hall (College Hall) (1890, 1895), Lippitt Hall (1897)*

The most prominent architectural firm in turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup>-century Rhode Island, Stone, Carpenter & Willson (1883-1907) was comprised of three partners: Alfred E. Stone, Charles E. Carpenter and Edmund R. Willson. Alfred E. Stone (1834–1908) established a private practice in

<sup>103</sup> “University Shows a Sprightly Face,” *The Providence Journal*, 6 December 1959. The Carlotti Administration Building is extant and largely intact. It falls outside the district’s period of significance, however, and is not included in the district boundaries.

<sup>104</sup> Eschenbacher:384, 527. The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation Portfolio Booklet, 1955-1980. University of Rhode Island History and Timeline.

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Providence in 1864, hiring Charles E. Carpenter (1844–1923) in 1867 and taking him on as a partner six years later. Stone was born in Maine, received formal training in Salem, Massachusetts and apprenticed at several firms in Boston in the 1850s. Carpenter was born in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, attended public schools and was trained as a civil engineer. In January 1882, Stone & Carpenter hired Edmund R. Willson (1856–1906), who was made a partner the following year. Willson graduated from Harvard in 1875 and worked for Peabody & Stearns in Boston and McKim, Mead & Bigelow in New York City before leaving for Europe in 1879, where he received training at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.<sup>105</sup> With Willson's arrival, the firm "began to plunge into a variety of historical and traditional styles," exploring the Queen Anne, Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival and Colonial Revival.<sup>106</sup> By the early 1880s, Stone, Carpenter & Willson was "well established as a leader – if not *the* leader – on the Providence architectural scene."<sup>107</sup>

Stone, Carpenter & Willson was prolific, completing a wide range of projects for both public and private clients. Examples include the Rhode Island Pavilion at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago (1893), Union Station in Providence (1896-1898), the Providence Public Library (1900 et seq.) and the Union Trust Company building in Providence (1901), as well as a large portfolio of residential projects. Academic commissions include Lyman Hall (1890-1891), Pembroke Hall (1896–1897) and Sayles Gymnasium (1907), all at Brown University, in addition to Davis Hall (College Hall) and Lippitt Hall at the University of Rhode Island.<sup>108</sup>

***Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot***  
*Main Quadrangle (1894-1897)*

Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot operated from 1893 to 1897, a successor to the firm of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., who is widely considered the father of American landscape architecture. After Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.'s retirement in 1895, the firm continued with three partners: Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., John Charles Olmsted and Charles Eliot. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. (1870-1957) graduated from Harvard in 1894 and immediately began working with his father. He was a founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. John Charles Olmsted (1852-1920), Frederick Law Olmsted's nephew and stepson, joined the firm after graduating from Yale's Sheffield Scientific School in 1875. Charles Eliot (1859-1897), a protégé of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., attended Harvard, studying botany, horticulture, farm

<sup>105</sup> Karen L. Jessup, "The Architecture of Edmund R. Willson (1856-1906)" (master's thesis, Boston University, 1983):xiv-xv, 4-25. William Jordy and Christopher P. Monkhouse, *Buildings on Paper: Rhode Island Architectural Drawings, 1825-1945* (Providence, RI: Brown University, the Rhode Island Historical Society and the Rhode Island School of Design, 1982):233.

<sup>106</sup> Ronald J. Onorato, "Providence Architecture 1859-1908: Stone, Carpenter and Willson," *Rhode Island History* 33, nos. 3 & 4 (August & November 1974):91-92.

<sup>107</sup> Jordy and Monkhouse:233.

<sup>108</sup> Jordy and Monkhouse:26-27, 154-156, 233. William McKenzie Woodward, *Guide to Providence Architecture* (Providence, RI: Providence Preservation Society and American Institute of Architects Rhode Island Chapter, 2003):86, 90, 104, 168, 176.

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management and surveying, and also traveled and studied independently in Europe. He interned with Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. in the 1880s and joined the firm in 1893.<sup>109</sup>

The Olmsted firm, in its various iterations, completed hundreds of projects across the United States, including the design of dozens of academic campuses. In New England alone, the firm developed plans for Trinity College (1873-1897), Mount Holyoke College (1882-1922), Amherst College (1882-1925), Smith College (1891-1909), Harvard University (1893-1951), Worcester Polytechnic Institute (1899; 1906-1914), and Wellesley College (1901-1920), among others. The firm was also involved with several campuses in Rhode Island, including Brown University (1899-1906) and at least three private preparatory schools: Saint George's School (1904-1906), Saint Andrew's School (1909-1925) and Moses Brown School (1911-1926). It appears that the Rhode Island State School and Experiment Station, the earliest plans for which date to 1894, was the first campus in the state designed by the Olmsted firm.<sup>110</sup>

***Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co.***  
*Bliss Hall (1928), Edwards Hall (1928), Rodman Hall (1928)*

According to Herman F. Eschenbacher, author of *The University of Rhode Island: A History of Land-Grant Education in Rhode Island*, Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co. was a Boston-based engineering firm that included three Rhode Island State College alumni: Carle M. Bigelow, President (Class of 1912), Robert W. Kent, Vice-President (Class of 1911) and Arthur J. Minor (Class of 1911). The firm designed and oversaw the construction of Bliss Hall, Edwards Hall and Rodman Hall at cost.<sup>111</sup>

Carle M. Bigelow was born in Woonsocket, Rhode Island in 1889 and was a mechanical engineer by training. He served as President of Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co. from 1924 to 1934 and later worked as the director of the pharmaceutical department at the Calco Chemical Division of the American Cyanamid Company in New Jersey.<sup>112</sup> Research has yielded no additional information about Bigelow, Kent, Willard and Co. or its staff.

***Jackson, Robertson & Adams***  
*Green Hall (1937)*

A leading force in Colonial Revival-style architecture in Rhode Island, the Providence-based firm Jackson, Robertson & Adams was established in 1912 and remained in business until 1956.

<sup>109</sup> Charles A. Birnbaum and Robin Karson, eds., *Pioneers of American Landscape Design* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2000):107-109, 273-285.

<sup>110</sup> Examples of the Olmsted firm's college and school campus projects were obtained through a search of the Olmsted Research Guide Online at <http://ww3.rediscov.com/olmsted/> in February 2016.

<sup>111</sup> Eschenbacher:231.

<sup>112</sup> William Starr Myers, ed., *Prominent Families of New Jersey* vol. 1 (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2000):661.

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Frederic Ellis Jackson (1879-1950) grew up in Providence, earned an architecture degree from Cornell University and studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. His early career was spent in partnership with Howard K. Hilton, with whom he formed the firm Jackson & Hilton. He joined forces with Wayland T. Robertson (1873-1935) and John Howard Adams (1876-1924) in 1912. Robertson was a native of Providence whose architectural training was obtained on the job, including four years with the firm Clark & Howe. Adams, born in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and in Paris, and worked for five years at McKim, Mead & White in New York.<sup>113</sup>

Jackson, Robertson & Adams designed important civic buildings in Providence, most notably the Georgian Revival-style Providence County Court House (1923-1933) and the Neo-Federal-style Federal Building Annex (1938-1940). Commercial commissions included the Mortgage Guarantee and Trust Company Building (1927) in Providence, while academic projects included the Georgian Revival-style Metcalf Building at the Rhode Island School of Design (1936), in addition to Green Hall at the University of Rhode Island. The firm completed numerous residential projects, as well.<sup>114</sup>

***Albert Harkness***  
*Eleanor Roosevelt Hall (1937)*

Albert Harkness (1886-1981) earned a degree in architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1912. As a student he interned with the Providence firms Clark, Howe & Homer and Jackson, Robertson & Adams and, upon graduation, moved to New York where he worked at Delano & Aldrich and McKim, Mead & White. Harkness opened his own firm in Providence in 1919, completing a number of private residences that drew on English Renaissance, French Provencal and American Colonial precedent. In the years following World War II, Harkness increasingly worked in the Modern style, in partnership with Peter Geddes, with whom he established the firm Harkness & Geddes in 1948.<sup>115</sup>

Harkness' work encompasses a wide range of building types and demonstrates a facility in a number of architectural styles. They include the Georgian Revival-style Smith Hill branch library (1932) in Providence, the Moderne-style California Artificial Flower Company Building (1939) in Cranston, the neo-Georgian Friends Meeting House (1953) in Providence, and an extensive residential portfolio. Harkness & Geddes teamed up with The Architects Collaborative of Cambridge to design the Brutalist Central-Classical High School complex in Providence (1966-1970).<sup>116</sup> Harkness designed at least four buildings under the auspices of the Public Works

<sup>113</sup> Jordy and Monkhouse:219.

<sup>114</sup> Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, *Downtown Providence: Statewide Historical Preservation Report* (1981):53, 61. Edward F. Sanderson and Keith N. Morgan, *National Register Nomination for the College Hill Historic District, Providence, Rhode Island*, 1976.

<sup>115</sup> Jordy and Monkhouse:216.

<sup>116</sup> Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, *Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources* (1986):96-97, 160, 201, 219.

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Administration: Chepachet School and Harmony School, two small public school buildings erected in the town of Glocester in 1934-1935; the Gymnasium at the Sockanosset Training School (1936-1938, demolished), a boys' reform school in Cranston; and Eleanor Roosevelt Hall at the University of Rhode Island.<sup>117</sup> In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Harkness & Geddes designed several Modern dormitories, all significantly altered and outside the district, and a women's dining hall (not extant) at the University of Rhode Island.<sup>118</sup>

**E.A. Ellsworth**

*Taft Hall (Agricultural Experiment Station) (1889)*

Emory Alexander Ellsworth (1852-1915) was born in Hardwick, Massachusetts in 1852 and graduated from the Massachusetts Agricultural College (now the University of Massachusetts) at Amherst in 1871. He served as City Engineer for the City of Holyoke, Massachusetts from 1884 to 1890, during which time he designed several city schools, fire stations and reservoir dams. Ellsworth worked in private practice as part of the engineering firm of Davis and Ellsworth in Holyoke from 1873 to 1876; at D.H. and A.B. Tower, Architects and Mill Engineers in Holyoke from 1880 to 1884; and again from 1890 until his death, sometimes in partnership with John J. Kirkpatrick or Lyman R. Howes. He was a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the Boston Society of Civil Engineers.<sup>119</sup>

Either independently or as part of a firm, Ellsworth designed a number of academic and institutional buildings in Massachusetts, including the West Experiment Station (1885), the East Experiment Station (1889) and Draper Hall (1903) at the Massachusetts Agricultural College; the High School (1893) and the South Street School (1901) in Ware; and the South Infirmary (1905), North Infirmary (1905) and Horse Barn (1914-1915) at the Northampton State Hospital.<sup>120</sup>

**Leslie P. Langworthy**

*East Hall (1909)*

Leslie Pendleton Langworthy (1848-1919) was born in Little Genesee, New York but had moved to Rhode Island by 1885, when he was practicing architecture at 32 Gilmore Street in Providence. By 1895 Langworthy's office had moved to 37 Weybosset Street in downtown Providence, where it remained until at least 1915.<sup>121</sup> Langworthy designed the Beacon Avenue

<sup>117</sup> These projects are included in "The Living New Deal," an online catalog of projects completed as part of New Deal public works programs (<https://livingnewdeal.org/>).

<sup>118</sup> Architectural Drawings Collection, Rhode Island Historical Society Library, Providence, RI.

<sup>119</sup> "Memoir of Emory Alexander Ellsworth," *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers*, v. 80 (1916):2136-2137.

<sup>120</sup> Examples of Ellsworth's projects were obtained through a search of the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System at <http://mhc-macris.net/> in February 2016.

<sup>121</sup> *The Langworthy Family; Some Descendants of Andrew and Rachel (Hubbard) Langworthy who were Married at Newport, Rhode Island, November 3, 1658* (Hamilton, N.Y.: W.F. and O.S. Langworthy):121. *Directory of Architects and Classified Directory of First Hands in the Building Trades* (Springfield, MA: Clark W. Bryan,

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Primary School in Providence (1891) and two schools in East Providence, the Riverside Grammar School (1912) and the Rumford Grammar School (1912; demolished).<sup>122</sup> He is perhaps best known for his design of the Washington County Courthouse in South Kingstown (1892-94), a random-course, rough-face, granite ashlar building executed in a Richardsonian Romanesque style.<sup>123</sup>

**Clarke, Howe & Homer**  
*Ranger Hall (1914)*  
**Eleazer B. Homer**  
*Washburn Hall (1921)*

Prescott Orloff Clarke and Wallis Eastburn Howe established the firm Clarke & Howe in 1901, a partnership that would last until 1929. For a brief period, from 1907 to 1913, the firm operated as Clarke, Howe & Homer, reflecting the addition of a third partner, Eleazer B. Homer. Clarke (1858-1935) was a native of Providence, attended Brown University and graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's School of Architecture in the early 1890s. Born in Bristol, Rhode Island, Howe (1868-1960) likewise earned an architecture degree at MIT in the 1890s, following undergraduate studies at Lehigh University. Homer (1864-1929) was born in Somerville, Massachusetts and graduated from MIT in 1885, where he served as the campus architect from 1896-1900; he left to become the first director of the Rhode Island School of Design, where he remained until 1907. He practiced architecture independently after 1913.<sup>124</sup>

Clarke & Howe was known primarily for its residential work until 1903, when it received the commission for the Post Office, Court House and Custom House building (1904-1908) in downtown Providence, which they designed in the Renaissance Revival style. Other important commissions include the Georgian Revival-style New England Telephone and Telegraph Building (1917), the Colonial Revival-style Providence Gas Company Building (1924) – both in Downtown Providence – and numerous churches. As Clarke, Howe & Homer, the firm designed the Blackstone Hotel (1911), the Rhode Island Medical Society Building (1911-1912) and the main building at the Lincoln School for Girls (1913), all in Providence, as well as the South Kingstown High School (1911), while continuing with numerous residential commissions.<sup>125</sup>

1885):32. *The Providence House Directory* (Providence, RI: Sampson, Murdock & Co., 1895). *The Providence House Directory* (Providence, RI: Sampson & Murdock Co., 1915).

<sup>122</sup> *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Buildings for the Year 1891* (Providence, RI: Snow & Farnham, City Printers, 1892):6. *Report on the Condition and Improvement of the Public Schools of Rhode Island* (Providence, RI: B. Cranston & Co., 1913):80-82.

<sup>123</sup> William McKenzie Woodward and Robert O. Jones, *National Register Nomination for Washington County Court House, South Kingstown, Rhode Island*, 1992.

<sup>124</sup> "Eleazer B. Homer," *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, v. 3, pt. 2 (Dec. 1915):540. Jordy and Monkhouse:217. Christine Longiaru et al., *National Register Nomination for Wayland Historic District, Providence, Rhode Island*, 2005. *Representative Men and Old Families of Rhode Island*, vol. 2 (Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1908):1240.

<sup>125</sup> Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, *Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources* (1986):263-264. Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, *Historic and Architectural Resources of the*

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***Oresto di Saia***  
***President's House (1931)***

Oresto di Saia (1900-1976) established his architectural practice in Providence in 1926. His best-known works include the Uptown Theatre (now known as the Columbus Theatre) (1926), Aquinas Hall at Providence College (1939) and the Veterans Memorial Auditorium (1949-1950), all in Providence. Di Saia served for some time as the Director of the State Department of Public Works, and was active in the Rhode Island chapter of the American Institute of Architects.<sup>126</sup>

***Monahan & Meikle***  
***Quinn Hall (1937)***

Robert C.N. Monahan (d. 1963) opened an architectural practice in Pawtucket, Rhode Island in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, later adding a partner, Robert R. Meikle. Monahan & Meikle was a locally prominent firm, designing residences, commercial buildings, schools and church structures in Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. The firm designed seamless additions to the Wheaton-Toole Building (1892) in 1922 and the Pawtucket Mutual Insurance Company Building (1906) in 1936, both in downtown Pawtucket, and added a Federal Revival-style parish house to the Pawtucket Congregational Church (1867-1868) in 1936.<sup>127</sup> Monahan & Meikle designed a number of public schools in the Colonial Revival style, including Tolman High School (1925-1926) and Lyman Goff Jr. High School (1930), both in Pawtucket, and Hope Elementary School (1929) in Scituate, Rhode Island.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Virginia H. Adams, *National Register Nomination for Veterans Memorial Auditorium/Masonic Temple, Providence, Rhode Island*, 1993. Joseph M. Muratore, *Images of America: Italian-Americans in Rhode Island*, vol. 2 (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000):114.

<sup>127</sup> Kathryn Cavanaugh, *National Register Nomination for the Downtown Pawtucket Historic District, Pawtucket, Rhode Island*, 2006. Judith Sullivan and Ancelin Lynch, *National Register Nomination for the Pawtucket Congregational Church, Pawtucket, Rhode Island*, 1978.

<sup>128</sup> *Iron Age*, v. 128 (9 July 1931):160. Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, *Pawtucket, Rhode Island Statewide Historical Preservation Report* (1978):51. Elizabeth S. Warren, *National Register Nomination for the Hope Village Historic District, Scituate, Rhode Island*, 1995.

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### ***Manuscripts and Archives***

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Building Construction Records, Office of Capital Projects, University of Rhode Island, South Kingstown, RI.

Bernon Helme Photograph Collection, 1895-1930. MSS. Gr. 125, University of Rhode Island Library, South Kingstown, RI.

Miscellaneous Archives. Rec. Gr. 137, University of Rhode Island Library, South Kingstown, RI.

Olmsted Associates Records, 1863-1971. Job #01392. Box 90, Reel 65. MSS. 52571, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

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### ***Historic Maps and Atlases***

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### ***National Register Nominations***

*The following National Register nominations are on file at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission in Providence, RI.*

Adams, Virginia H. *National Register Nomination for Veterans Memorial Auditorium/Masonic Temple, Providence, Rhode Island*. 1993.

Cavanaugh, Kathryn. *National Register Nomination for the Downtown Pawtucket Historic District, Pawtucket, Rhode Island*. 2006.

Longiaru, Christine and Virginia H. Adams with Mary Kate Harrington and Robert O. Jones. *National Register Nomination for Wayland Historic District, Providence, Rhode Island*. 2005.

Sanderson, Edward F. and Keith N. Morgan. *National Register Nomination for the College Hill Historic District, Providence, Rhode Island*. 1976.

University of Rhode Island Historic District  
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Sullivan, Judith and Ancelin Lynch. *National Register Nomination for the Pawtucket Congregational Church, Pawtucket, Rhode Island.* 1978.

Warren, Elizabeth S. *National Register Nomination for the Hope Village Historic District, Scituate, Rhode Island.* 1995.

Woodward, William McKenzie and Robert O. Jones. *National Register Nomination for Washington County Court House, South Kingstown, Rhode Island.* 1992.

***Historic Resource Survey Reports***

*The following survey reports were published by and are on file at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, Providence, RI.*

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. *Downtown Providence: Statewide Historical Preservation Report.* 1981.

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. *Historic and Architectural Resources of the East Side, Providence, Rhode Island.* 1989.

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. *Historic and Architectural Resources of South Kingstown, Rhode Island: A Preliminary Report.* 1984.

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. *Pawtucket, Rhode Island Statewide Historical Preservation Report.* 1978.

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. *Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources.* 1986.

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**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: University of Rhode Island Special Collections

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_**

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property:** approximately 29 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 41.488216° Longitude: -71.530287°
2. Latitude: 41.488666° Longitude: -71.529084°
3. Latitude: 41.488656° Longitude: -71.528762°
4. Latitude: 41.487431° Longitude: -71.526067°
5. Latitude: 41.483183° Longitude: -71.525715°
6. Latitude: 41.483354° Longitude: -71.527733°
7. Latitude: 41.484988° Longitude: -71.528987°
8. Latitude: 41.486151° Longitude: -71.530001°

University of Rhode Island Historic District  
Name of Property

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**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927      or       NAD 1983

1. Zone: \_\_\_\_\_ Easting: \_\_\_\_\_ Northing: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Zone: \_\_\_\_\_ Easting: \_\_\_\_\_ Northing: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Zone: \_\_\_\_\_ Easting: \_\_\_\_\_ Northing: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Zone: \_\_\_\_\_ Easting: \_\_\_\_\_ Northing: \_\_\_\_\_

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The University of Rhode Island Historic District encompasses approximately 29 acres focused on the main quadrangle, the historic center of the campus, as shown on the scaled district map submitted with this nomination. It includes all of Lot 3 and portions of Lots 2, 4, 5, 39 and 42 on the Town of South Kingstown Assessor's Plat Map 23-2. The district is bound roughly by Upper College Road on the east, Campus Avenue on the south, Lower College Road and Farm House Road on the west, and East Alumni Avenue on the north.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include almost all of the extant resources built by the University of Rhode Island from the school's founding in 1888 through 1950, the year before the college became a university. Exceptions include Meade Stadium (1938), separated from the district by several dormitories constructed in 1966 and 1970; Pastore Chemical Laboratory (1948-1953; altered); two dormitories, Bressler and Butterfield Halls (1949-50; altered); and Keaney Gymnasium (1950-53), located in the western part of the campus. The district is comprised of a high concentration of resources that effectively convey the University's origins and early development.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Joanna M. Doherty, Principal Architectural Historian

organization: Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission

street & number: 150 Benefit Street

city or town: Providence state: RI zip code: 02903

e-mail: joanna.doherty@preservation.ri.gov

telephone: 401-222-4136

date: August 25, 2017

University of Rhode Island Historic District  
Name of Property

Washington County, Rhode Island  
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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### 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:	University of Rhode Island Historic District
City or Vicinity:	South Kingstown
County:	Washington
State:	Rhode Island
Name of Photographer:	Joanna M. Doherty
Date of Photographs:	May 2013 (Photos 6, 8, 11, 16), October 2013 (Photo 15) and December 2013 (Photos 1-5, 7, 9, 10, 12-14, 17)
Location of Original Digital Files:	Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, 150 Benefit Street, Providence, RI 02903
Number of Photographs:	17

Photo #1 Oliver Watson Farmhouse, view looking northwest, showing south (front) and east elevations.

Photo #2 Taft Hall (Agricultural Experiment Station), view looking southeast, showing west (front) and north elevations

Photo #3 Davis Hall (College Hall), view looking northeast, showing west (front) and south elevations.

Photo #4 Main Quadrangle, view looking southeast toward Washburn Hall and Edwards Hall, showing double-row of trees along east perimeter of quad.

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Photo #5 Lippitt Hall, view looking northwest, showing south (front) elevation.

Photo #6 East Hall, view looking northeast, showing west (front) and south elevations.

Photo #7 Ranger Hall, view looking southwest, showing north (front) and east elevations.

Photo #8 Washburn Hall, view looking southeast, showing west (front) and north elevations.

Photo #9 College War Memorial, view looking southwest.

Photo #10 Bliss Hall, view looking northwest, showing south (front) elevation.

Photo #11 Edwards Hall, view looking southeast, showing north (front) and west elevations.

Photo #12 Rodman Hall (Gymnasium/Drill Hall), view looking northwest, showing south (front) and east elevations.

Photo #13 Memorial Gateway, view looking northeast from intersection of Upper College Road and Campus Avenue.

Photo #14 President's House, view looking west, showing east (front) elevation.

Photo #15 Eleanor Roosevelt Hall, view looking northwest, showing east (front) elevation.

Photo #16 Quinn Hall, view looking northeast, showing west (front) and south elevations.

Photo #17 Green Hall, view looking north, showing south (front) elevation.

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University of Rhode Island Historic District – District Map Keyed to Photos



**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 100 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.

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### Additional Information

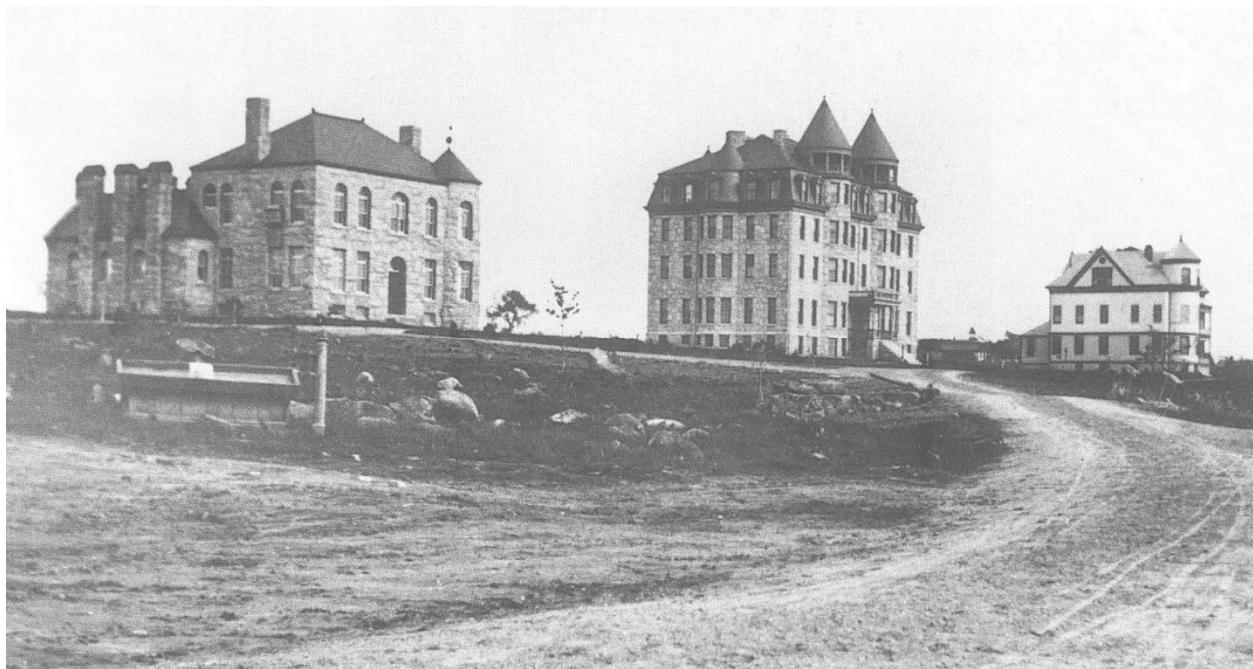


Figure 1 A photograph taken in 1894, looking southeast, showing the first three buildings of the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and Experiment Station: Taft Hall (left), College Hall (center; burned and rebuilt as Davis Hall in 1895) and South Hall (right; razed in 1957, now the site of the Carlotti Administration Building).

Image Archives, Special Collections Unit, University of Rhode Island Library.  
<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/photographs>.

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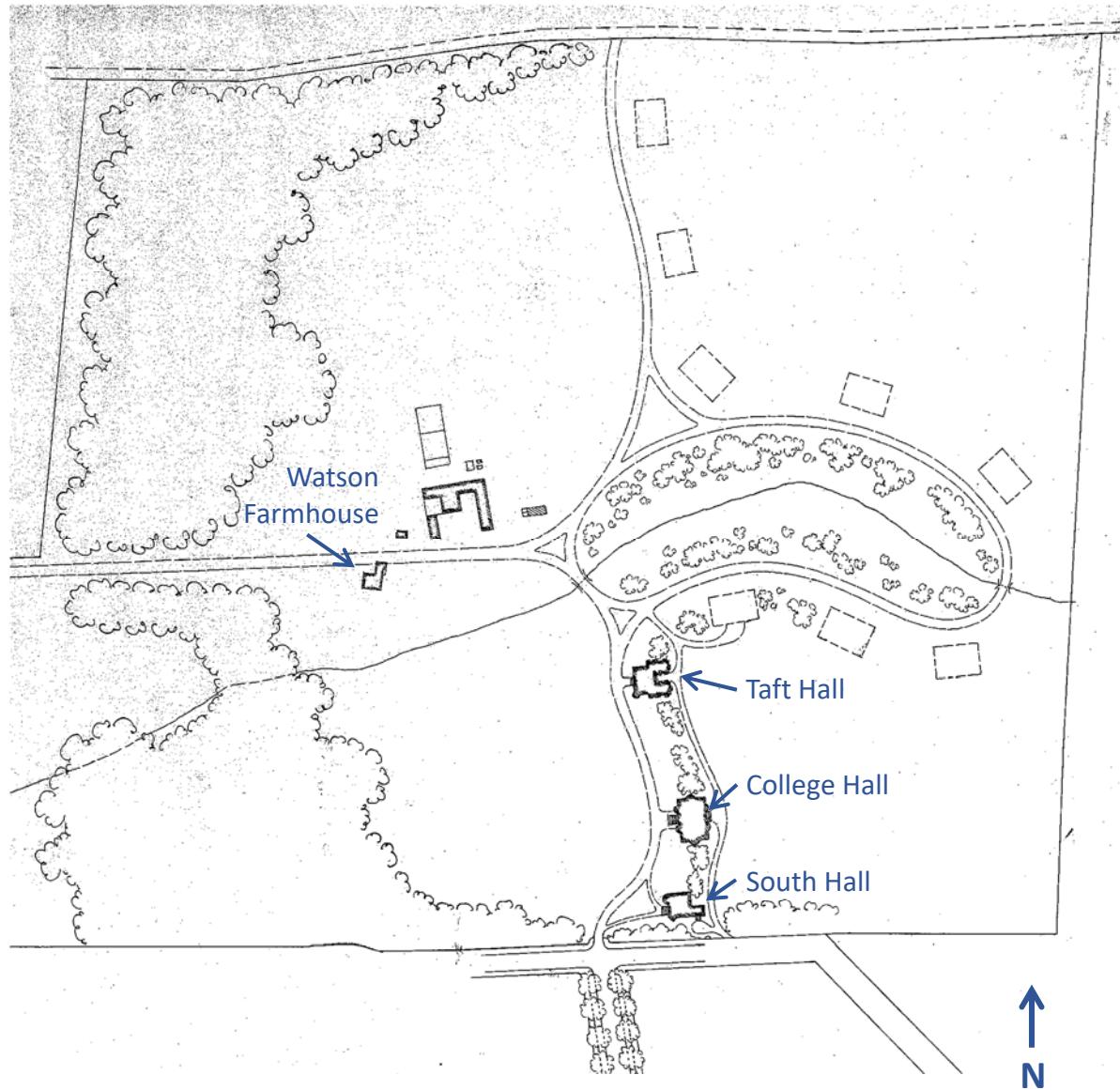


Figure 2 Detail of plan by Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot Landscape Architects titled, "R.I. College of A. & M. Arts / Kingston R.I. / Preliminary Sketch," September 29, 1894. Plan shows existing buildings (labeled, in bold outline) and a curvilinear circulation system. Annotated by author.

Olmsted Plans and Drawings Collection. Job #01392. Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, MA.

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Name of Property

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County and State

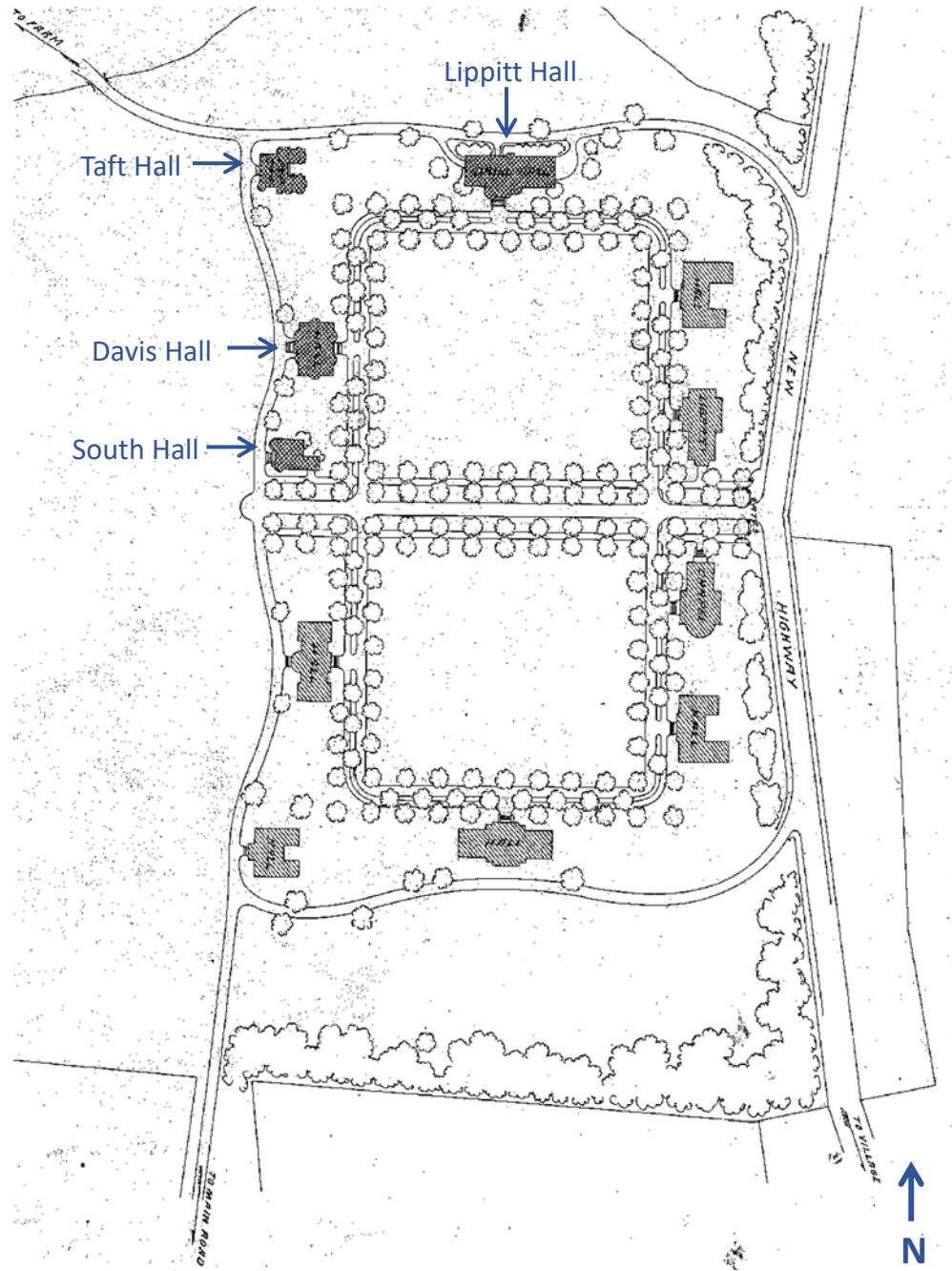


Figure 3 Detail of plan by Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot Landscape Architects titled, "R.I. College of A. & M. Arts / Kingston R.I. / Preliminary Sketch," March 6, 1895. Plan shows three existing buildings (Taft, Davis and South Halls) and the planned drill hall (Lippitt Hall) in dark shading, and a rectilinear, double-quadrangle plan with tree-lined paths. Annotated by author.

Olmsted Plans and Drawings Collection. Job #01392. Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, MA.

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Figure 4 A photograph taken in 1900, looking southwest across the quadrangle, showing Lippitt Hall (center foreground) and, in the background, South Hall (left; not extant), Davis Hall (center) and Taft Hall (right). The one-story buildings in the foreground do not survive.

Bernon Helme Photograph Collection, 1895-1930. MSS. Gr. 125, Folder 13. University of Rhode Island Library, South Kingstown, RI.

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Name of Property

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County and State

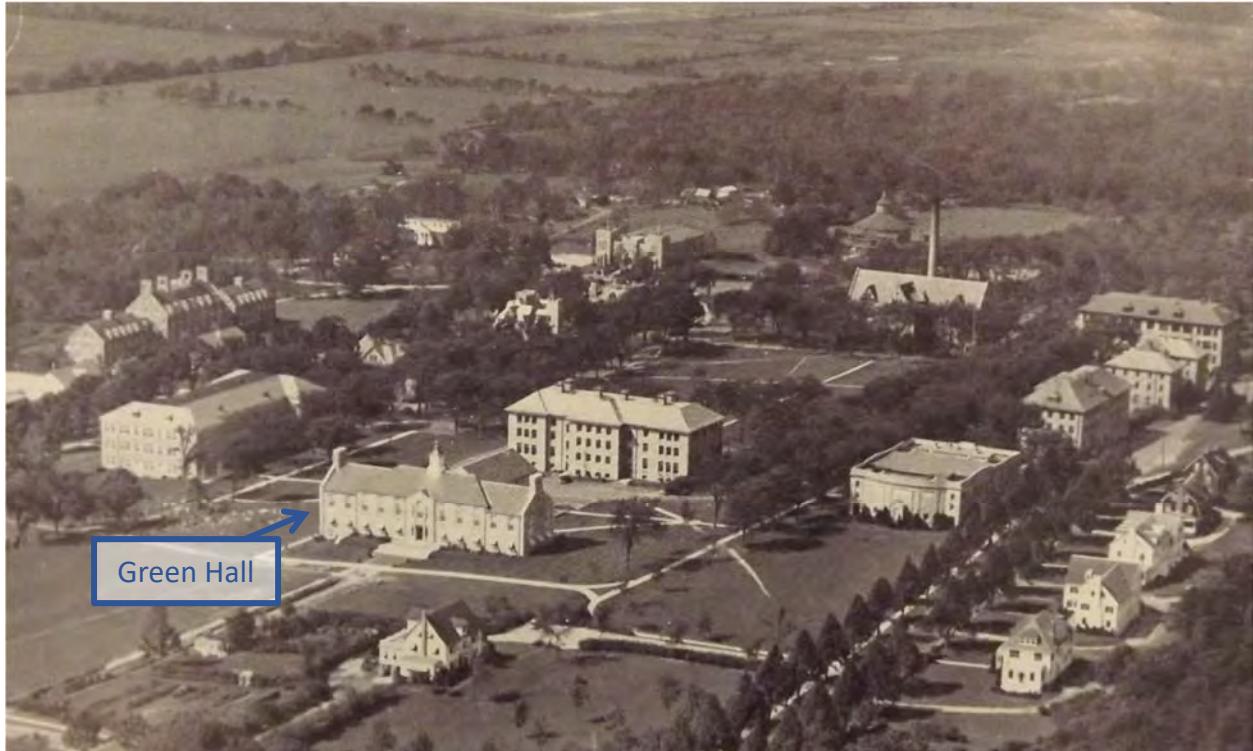
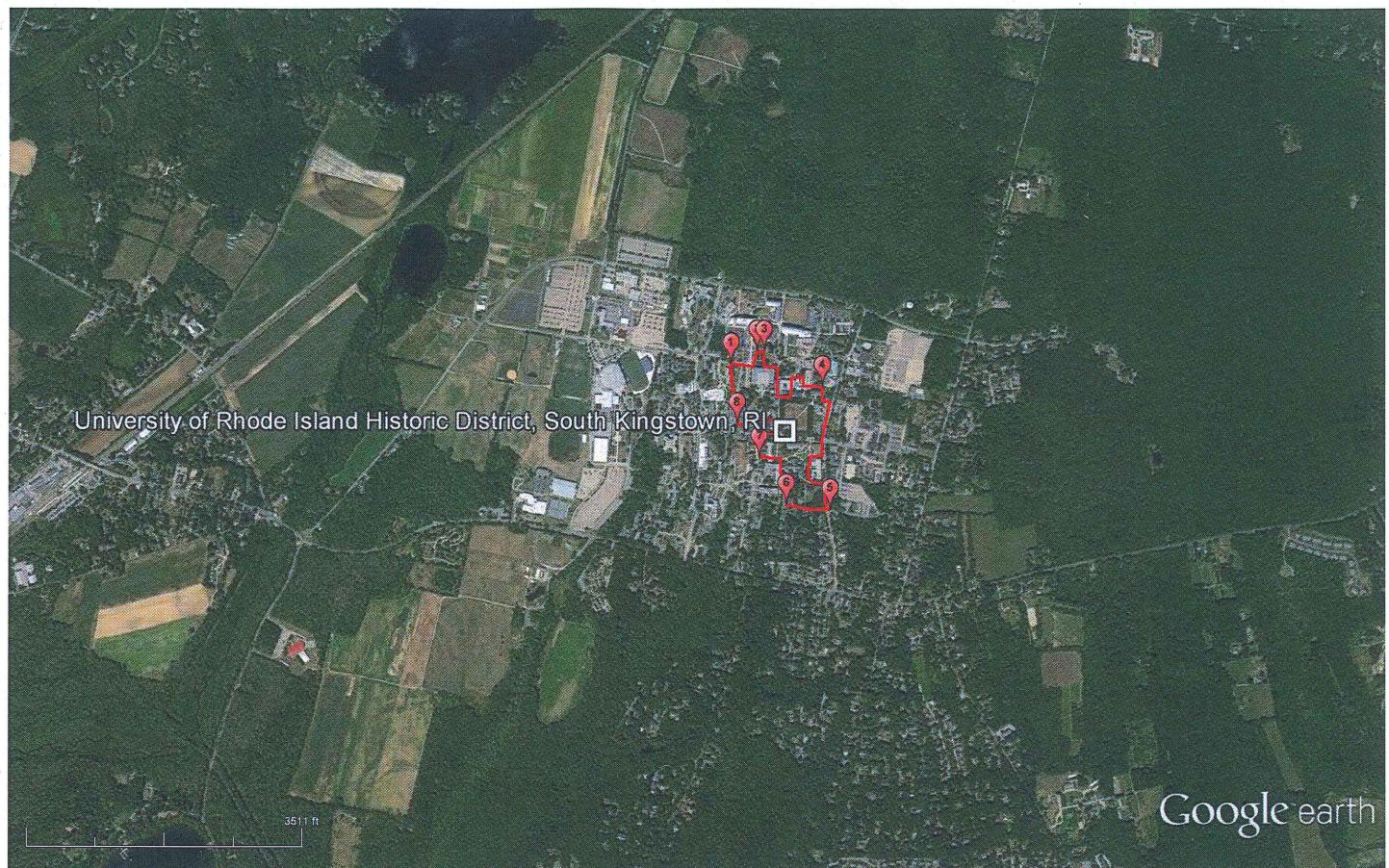


Figure 5 This aerial photograph, which appears on the back cover of "Dividends Unlimited: Some Facts about Rhode Island State College, Its Services and Plans for Development" (1946), shows the University of Rhode Island campus, looking northwest. Note Green Hall located roughly in the center of what would have been the southern quad in Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot's double-quadrangle plan. Annotated by author.

Carl R. Woodward Papers. MSS. Gr. 1, Box 62, Folder 170. University of Rhode Island Library Special Collections and Archives Unit, South Kingstown, RI.



Google earth

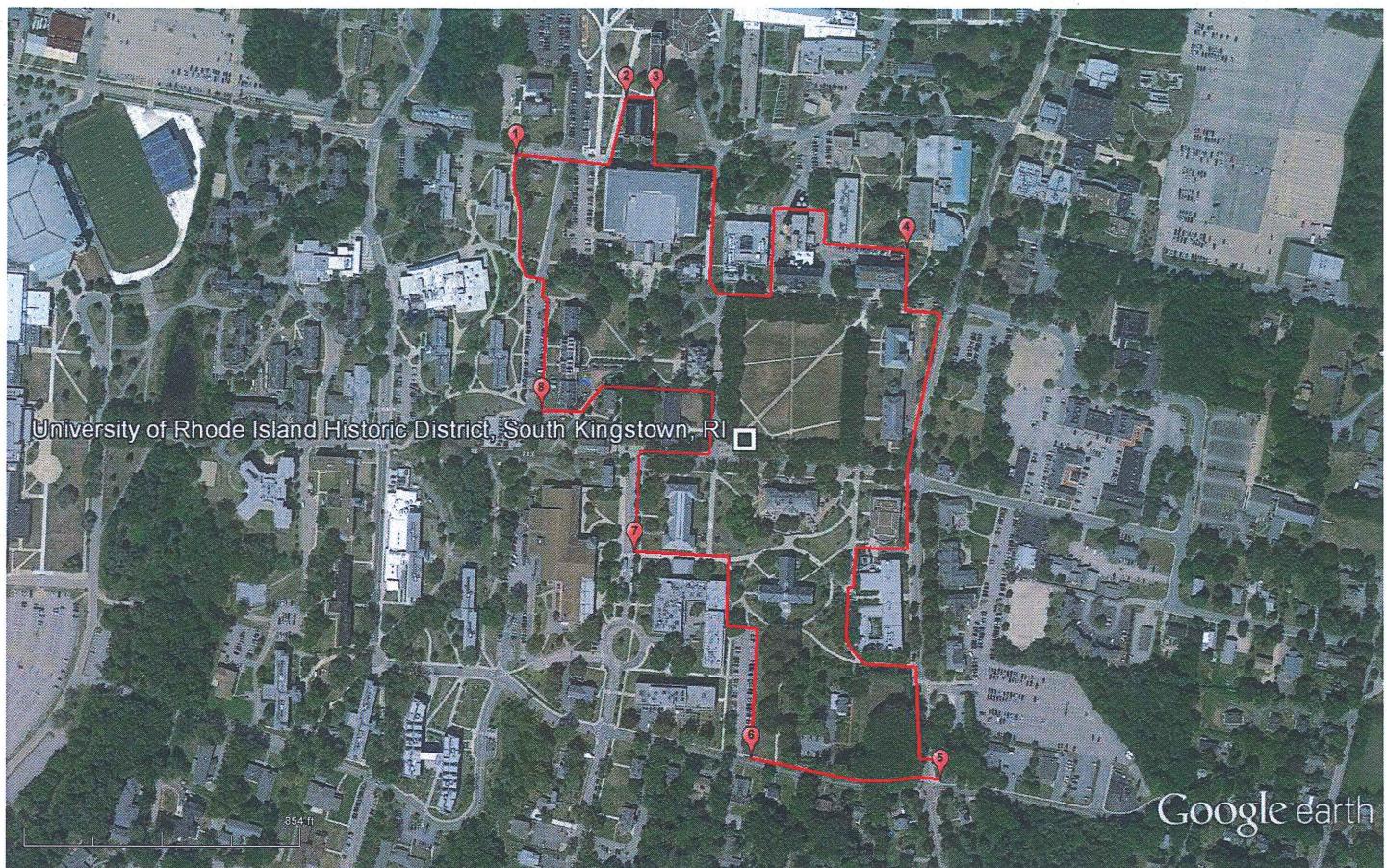
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**University of Rhode Island Historic District  
South Kingstown, Washington County, Rhode Island**

**Coordinates**

- |    |                      |                        |
|----|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1) | Latitude: 41.488216° | Longitude: -71.530287° |
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Google earth

feet  
meters

2000  
600



### University of Rhode Island Historic District South Kingstown, Washington County, Rhode Island

#### Coordinates

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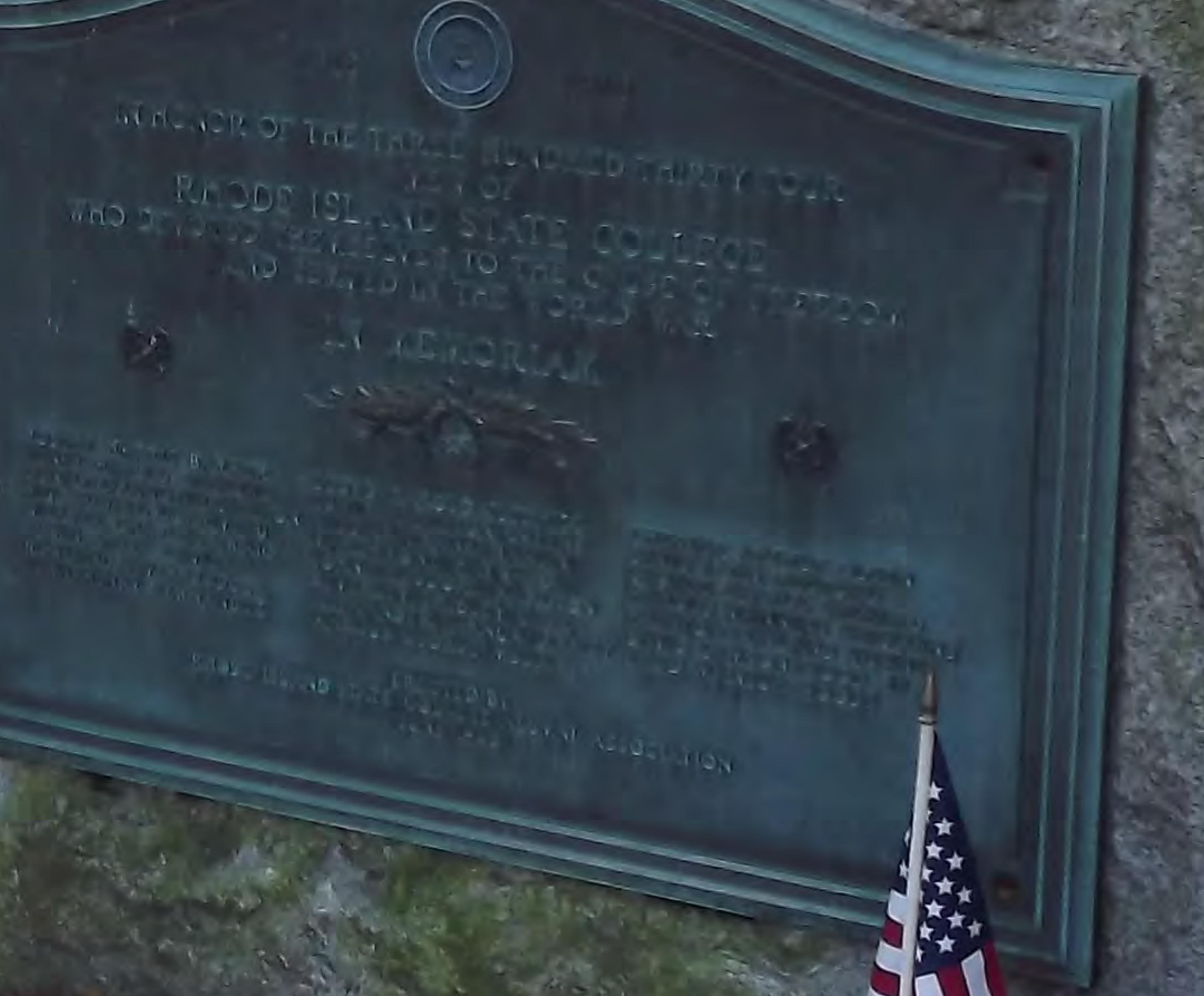
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