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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The twin towers of the administration building of the Buffalo State Hospital dominates the northwest section of the Buffalo skyline. The administration building is at the apex of the complex with a flattened "V" shaped plan. When designed by H.H. Richardson in 1870-1872 five connected wards radiated from the east and west sides of the central unit of this outstanding example of late nineteenth institutional architecture. Unfortunately the three eastern most wards were torn down in the 1960's. This reduced the original overall length of 2,200 feet. Today twelve buildings of the Richardson complex survive including the administration building, five wards on the west, two wards on the east, and four service buildings in the inner courtyard.

The monumental hospital is located in a parklike setting in a residential area near the Albright Knox Art Gallery and the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society. Today the wards are hidden by landscape features but earlier their gable ends created a rhythm which climaxed at the matching towers rising from the administration building. These towers with steep hipped roofs and round corner turrets help make the administration building the focal point of the grouping. This three and one half story building has a greater vertical emphasis and general massiveness than do the three and one half story domestically scaled wards. The low service buildings "are broader, simpler, and more characteristically Richardsonian than the central pavilion and the wards".¹

The material used to construct the walls of the central unit-rough faced random ashlar brown sandstone add to its massiveness. The first two wards on either side of the central core are also constructed of sandstone, while the other buildings are common brick of somewhat irregular texture. Originally these buildings were decorated with patterns created by tarred bricks, but the tar has been washed off.

While the hospitals plan owes a debt to Richardson's training at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, "the other sources of the design seem to have been mostly English particularly projects of Burges"² The buildings have machicolated cornices, windows with flat or segmentalarches and dormers with quatrefoils in the tympanae. An interesting feature of the administration building is the entrance loggia with three round arches set between slightly projecting pavilions.

Richardson was a traditionalist with respect to structure and the hospital has masonry bearing walls with brick partitions. Interior features such as iron staircases and

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Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

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Number 7 Continued:

and heavy hardwood trim are plain, reflecting the function of the buildings.

¹Henry-Russell Hitchcock. <u>The Architecture of</u> <u>H.H. Richardson and His Times</u>. Cambridge, Mass: M.I.T., 1966, p.123.

²Henry-Russell Hitchcock. Architecture: Nineteenth andTwentieth Centuries. Baltimore: Penguin, 1968, p.222.



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/The Buffalo State Hospital, and insame asylum built between 1872 and 1890, is an early institutional design by Henry Horson Richardson/(1838-1886), one of America's most important architects. This complex which was designed between 1870 and 1872 during a period when Richardson was developing his personal style is significant to understanding the evolution of Richardson's style towards simplification and effective disposition of masses. The grouping retains the picturesqueness desired by contemporaries in architecture of the 1870's but this is desciplined to create a unified composition. Frederick Law Olmsted(1822-1903), the leading American landscape architect of the late 19th century, planned the hospital's location and grounds and for this reason it is important to the history of landscape architecture.

Henry-Russell Hitchock, believes that "the formation of Richardson's style took place when he designed the Brattle Square Church (in 1870) and the Buffalo State Hospital."¹ The hospital "opens the line of monumental designs for utilitarian structures along which Richardson was to advance furthest. The dark rough stone; the great scale; the simple detail largely of structural character and only generically derived from mediaeval precedent; the bold silhouette and the solid mass; the adjustment of the parts of the complex programme, not only in plan, but in an exterior composition that expresses that plan: these are, in the best sense of the word, Richardsonian"²

History:

In 1869 the city of Buffalo gave New York State the site for a mental hospital. Soon the committee of ten managers chose Richardson to design the buildings. Richardson was probably chosen because of the influence of William Dorsheimer, a Congressman who later became Lieutenant Governor. In 1868 Richardson had designed a house for Dorsheimer. A.J. Warner of Rochester was chosen supervising architect for the hospital and Olmsted was given responsibility for locating the complex on the site and for landscaping.

SEE INSTRUCTION

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See Continuation Sheet

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Form	10-300a
(July	1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Number 8 continued:

The general plan of the complex which was adopted on August 25, 1870 by the managers was determined by Dr. Joseph P. Gray, head of the State Lunatic Asylum in Utica. The plan was probably influenced by the Erench inspired plan of the Connecticut State Hospital begun in 1867 by Sloan and Hutton.

In January 1871 Olmsted, Richardson, and Warner inspected the site and stone was ordered. Excavation began in June, 1872. Surviving drawings show that between 1870 and 1872 the design of the hospital buildings were changed to gain greater simplification. By September 18, 1872 the final design had been determined and the buildings in the Richardson grouping were builtfollowing this design except brick for economy was substituted for stone in the outer buildings.

By 1878 the east half of the complex was largely completed and in 1880 patients were received. The formal opening took place on November 13, 1881 although all the buildings were not completed until around 1890. At this time the remaining buildings still serve as part of the state mental hospital, although the continued use of the complex as it exists is very much in question.



¹Henry-Russell Hitchcock. <u>The Architecture of H.H.</u> <u>Richardson and His Times</u>. Cambridge, Mass: M.I.T., 1966, p.181

²Ibid., p. 123.

Form	10-300a
(July	1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

New York

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

(Continuation Sheet)

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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(Number all entries)

Number 9

Buffalo State Asylum Board of Managers. Annual Report to the N.Y. State Legislature. 1871-1890.

Hitchcock, Henry Russell. The Architecture of H.H. Richardson and His Times. Cambridge, Mass: M.I.T., 1966, pp. 117-124, 181.

HitchcockHenry-Russell. Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. Baltimore: Penguin, 1968, p.222.

Van Rensselaer, Mariana Griswald. Henry Hodson Richardson and His Works. New York: Dover, 1969, p.53.

Works Projects Administration. New York: <u>A Guide to the</u> <u>Empire State</u>. American Guide Series. New York, Oxford, 1962, p.221

Files of the New York State Historic Trust.





Buffalo State Hospital Buffalo, Erie County New York

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National Register write-up Federal Register entry36		Acknowledge Send-back Re-submit Register no.	HASI 1 9 10078	

addendum To: Buffalo State Hospital OLLOW-UP SLIP "Special" hote Date 1-5-73 The building belongs to the N.Y. Department of mental tygene who finds it no longer workable for a state Hospital. A fearibility study is being made by a consulting firm of Taylor, Lieberfeld & Heldman, 235 Pank Ave S, N.4C. 10003, Mrs. Lawrence Lieberfeld is making the study to determine alternate uses. One possible use is additional dormitory space for the adjacent state university. N.Y. state SLO wants

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WASHINGTON OFFICE

NOT TO BE FILED

WASO-9 (Nov. 1966)

Signature

to put it on the Register as an added incentive to its retention.

Info. from Nini Brooke N.Y. State SLO Office 518-474-0479

Kate 1 billes



NEW YORK STATE INSANE ASYLUM.

WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE BUFFALO AND ERIE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BUFFALO, NEW YORK. NPS Number Title: burty lig. Only two words closest to central Bldg Looking notteast Certral are s Standing,

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PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	New York	
	NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES	Erie	
	PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM	FOR NPS USE ONL	Y
	(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)	ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
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0	COMMON: Buffalo State Hospital	611118	
	AND/OR HISTORIC: Buffalo State Asylum		
-	2. LOCATION	AST SE CONST SA	
U	street and number: 400 Forest Avenue	AN IS ED E	
RU	CITY OR TOWN: Buffalo	El Signa F	/
ST	New York CODE COUNTY:	Erie	CODE
z	3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
_	PHOTO CREDIT: Buffalo & Erie County Historical	Society	
	DATE OF PHOTO: Ca. 1900		
ш	NEGATIVE FILED AT: Buffalo & Erie County History Nottingham Terrace, Buffalo, N.Y.	ical Society,	
ш	4. IDENTIFICATION		
S	DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		
	Looking northeast showing south side of central building. Only two wards closest are still standing.		ding



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PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	state New York	
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	PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM	Erie	
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ш	ham terrace, Buffalo, N.Y.		
S	4. IDENTIFICATION		
	DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		
	Old print showing south facades		
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	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES			New York County Erie			
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	IDENTIFICATION						

Missing Core Documentation

Property Name Buffalo State Hospital County, State Erie County, NY Reference Number 73001186

The following Core Documentation is missing from this entry:

_ Nomination Form

_X_Photographs (#3)

USGS Map

Form 10-301 (July 1969)	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM		STATE New York COUNTY Erie FOR NPS USE ONLY
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1948. Revised 1965 Canadian portion mapped by the Surveys and Mapping Branch, Dept. of Mines and Technical Surveys 1961 Selected hydrographic data compiled from U.S. Lake Survey Charts 312 and 314 (1965). This information is not intended for navigational purposes Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum 10,000-foot grid based on New York coordinate system, west zone 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

UTM GRID AND 1965 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

THE U.S. AREA OF THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET-DATUM IS LOW WATER 568.6 FEET



NEW YORK

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

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Form 10-301 July 1969)	Charles of Alles of Allentine Allention		STATE New York	
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Form 10-301 (July 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
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		JAN 2 4 1973 NATIONAL REGISTER



NEW YORK STATE HISTORIC TRUST Parks & Recreation • State Campus • Albany, N.Y. 12226 • 518 457-4194



Louis C. Jones Chairman Conrad L. Wirth Vice-Chairman Ewald B. Nyquist Seymour H. Knox John H. G. Pell Laurance S. Rockefeller Mildred F. Taylor C. Mark Lawton Director

Dr. William Murtagh Keeper of the National Register Room 3209 1100 L Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20005



Dear Dr. Murtagh:

As the State Liaison Officer, I am forwarding the enclosed nomination to the National Register of Historic Places:

Buffalo State Hospital, 400 Forest Avenue Buffalo, Erie County, New York

The above nomination has been reviewed and approved by the Governor's Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation in accordance with the criteria outlined in Section 2.2 of the Grants Guide.

The staff of the Trust, the officially designated Preservation Agency, would welcome the opportunity to discuss this submission with your office.

Sincerely,

In Aldrich

ALEXANDER ALDRICH State Liaison Officer





NEW YORK STATE PARKS & RECREATION

South Swan Street Building, South Mall, Albany, N.Y. 12223

Alexander Aldrich Commissioner

January 9, 1973



Ms. Nadine Jones National Register

Dear Ms. Jones:

Enclosed is the revised map for the Buffalo State Hospital as you requested on the telephone on January 5th.

From now on we will make sure that all nominations have at least one corner of the original map.

Please don't hesitate to call us if any more complications arise.

Sincerely,

Cornelia E. Brooke Research Assistant Board for Historic Preservation

CEB/k1 Enc.

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE NEW YORK

Date Entered JAN 1 2 1973

Name

Location

First Baptist Church of Ossining

Oblong Friends Meeting House

Buffalo State Hospital

Smith (Abigail Adams) House

Ossining Westchester County

Pawling Dutchess County

Buffalo Erie County

New York New York County

Also Notified

Hon. Jacob K. Javits

Hon. James L. Buckley Hon. Hamilton Fish, Jr. Hon. Howard Robison Hon. Thaddeus J. Dulski Hon. Edward I. Koch State Liaison Officer Mr. Alexander Aldrich Commissioner of Parks & Recreation Room 303, South Swan Street Bldg. Albany, New York 12223

Director, Northeast Region PHR NRowland 1/12/7

Buffalo State Hospital mention that some of ony bldg has been torn down. -Jashlar frown sandstone Excellent Coucher Photo.

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