

Appendix A
Document 5.8-1
NYSHPO Historic Resource Evaluations



Bernadette Castro
Commissioner

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189

518-237-8643

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: 10/26/00

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: C & D Building at Bellevue Hospital

MCD: Manhattan

ADDRESS: First Avenue and East 27th Street

COUNTY: New York

PROJECT REF: 00PR2983

USN: 06101.012063

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
- Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
- Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

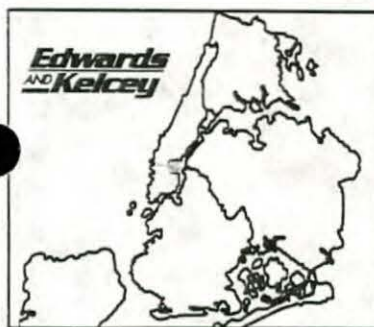
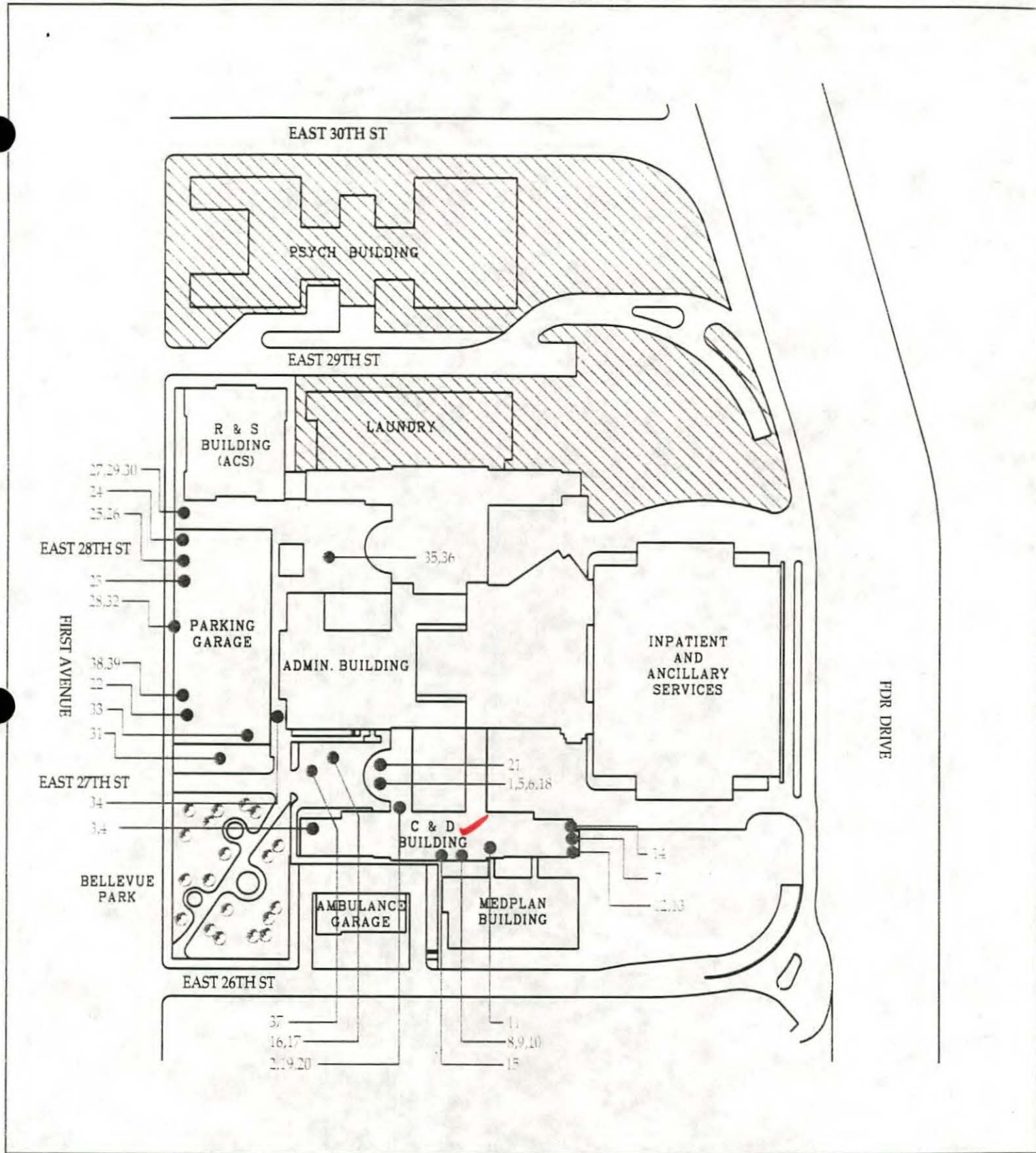
- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master;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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Bellevue Hospital's C & D Building was opened in 1938 for the treatment of tuberculosis patients. The seven-story building is constructed of structural steel framing with exterior walls of red brick and stone trim. This building remains an important physical reminder of the history of New York City's Bellevue Hospital and of the institutional architecture and master planning efforts of the nationally prominent firm of McKim, Mead & White. In style, the C & D Building embodies characteristics associated with the Italian Renaissance style, including a symmetrical façade (south elevation) with central pavilion, classical ornament, and roof top balustrade, yet represents a restrained and functional adaptation of the style to meet the needs of the institution. Of special note at the C & D Building are the intact balconies on the south façade which represent the importance of fresh air when the building was used for the treatment of

tuberculosis patients. Although changes have been made to the building, it retains sufficient period integrity to convey its historical significance. It remains a fine example of progressive hospital design of the period that also recalls the history and development of one of New York City's most important social service institutions.

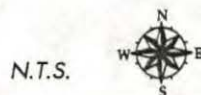
If you have any questions concerning this Determination of Eligibility, please call Kathy Howe at (518) 237-8643, ext. 3266.

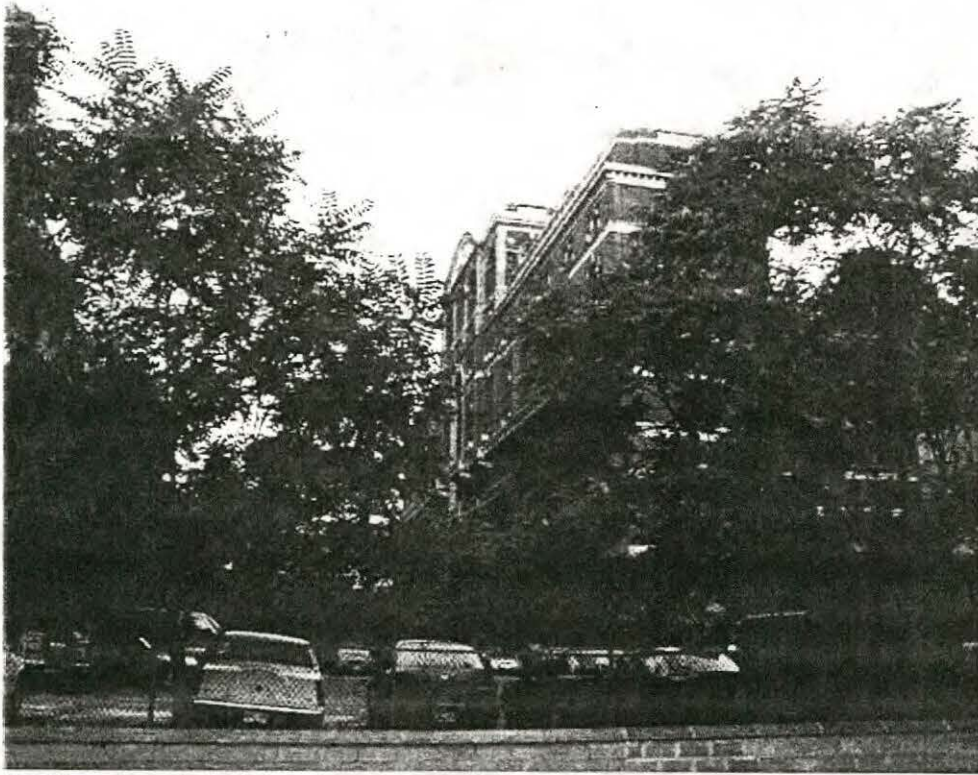


*Legend -
Proposed Campus Plan*

- Proposed Permanent Space
DNA Laboratories
- Bellevue Hospital Center
- Proposed Ambulatory Care Building
- EMS
- RFEI Development

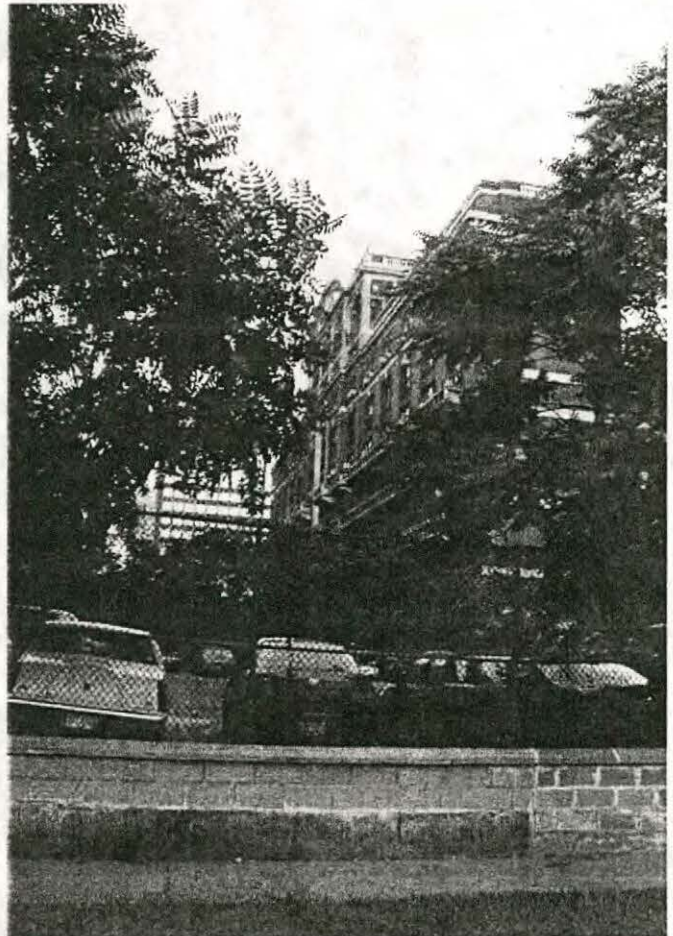
*Bellevue Hospital Center
Site and Area Conditions,
Photo Key*





12. View of southern facade from the hospital parking lot

C & D Bldg
Bellevue Hosp.

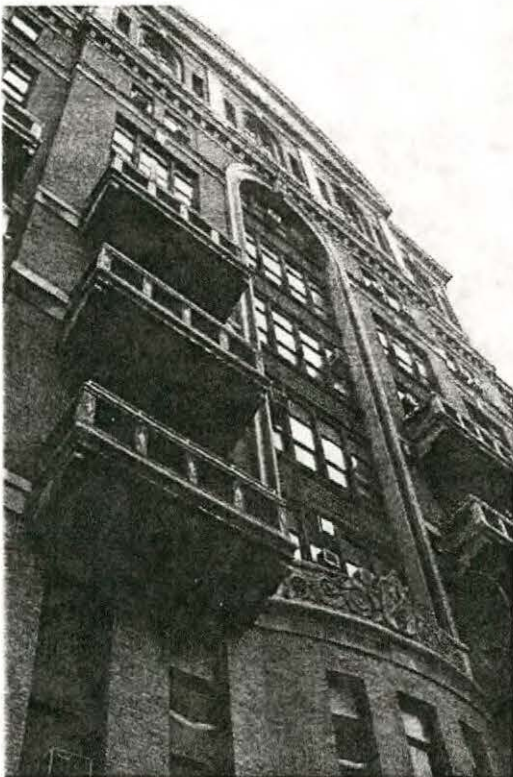


13. View of southern facade from the hospital parking lot



7. View of the western facade's corner from the hospital parking lot

C & D Bldg
Bellevue Hospital



8. View of the southern facade, near Medplan Building and Ambulance Garage



9. View of the southern facade from the Ambulance Garage



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Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189

518-237-8643

Bernadette Castro
Commissioner

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: June 21, 2006

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: Psychiatric Building, Bellevue Hospital

MCD: Manhattan

ADDRESS: First Avenue at SE corner of E. 30th St.

COUNTY: New York Co.

PROJECT REF: 06PR03521

USN: 06101.015797

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
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- Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

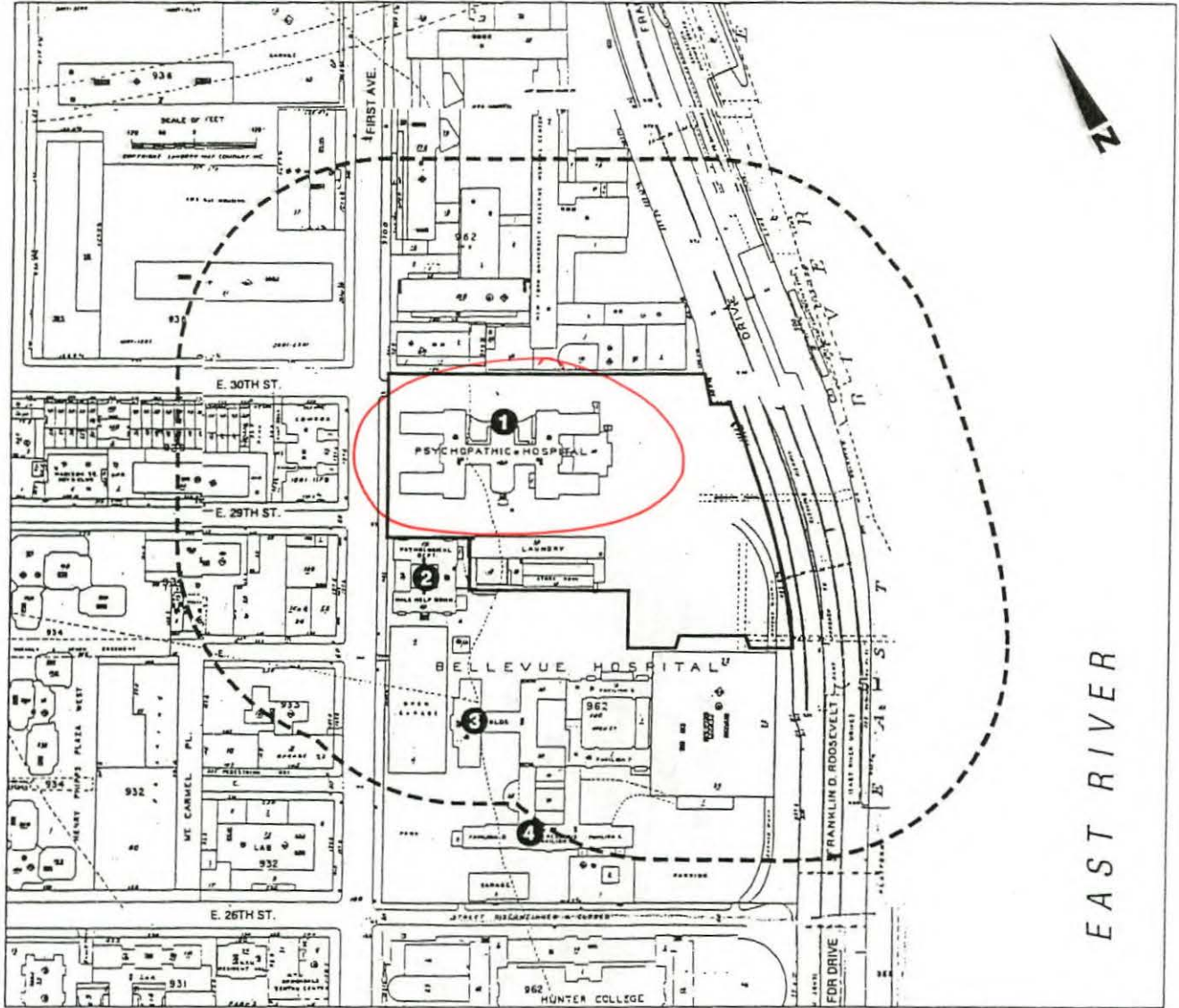
Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

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

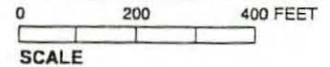
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Psychiatric Building at Bellevue Hospital was built in 1936 and designed by Charles B. Meyer and Thompson, Holmes & Converse. The building, located at the southeast corner of First Avenue and East 30th Street, is a ten-story red brick, limestone, and granite structure with a modified H-plan. Its restrained Italian Renaissance style is in keeping with the overall design of the Bellevue campus as set forth several years earlier by McKim, Mead & White. The building embodies many of the character defining features of the Italian Renaissance including a rusticated limestone base, brick quoins, entrances emphasized by columns, stone stringcourses, and a prominent cornice. A contributing fence of brick, wrought iron, and rusticated limestone columns with decorative urns, surrounds the building on three sides.

The Psychiatric Building, along with the other historic structures on the Bellevue campus (R & S Building, Administration Building, and C & D Building) is architecturally significant as an example of urban institutional design. The building also meets Criterion A in the areas of social history and health for its association with Bellevue Hospital which is reported to be the oldest municipal hospital in North America.



- Project Site Boundary
- - - Study Area Boundary (400-Foot Perimeter)

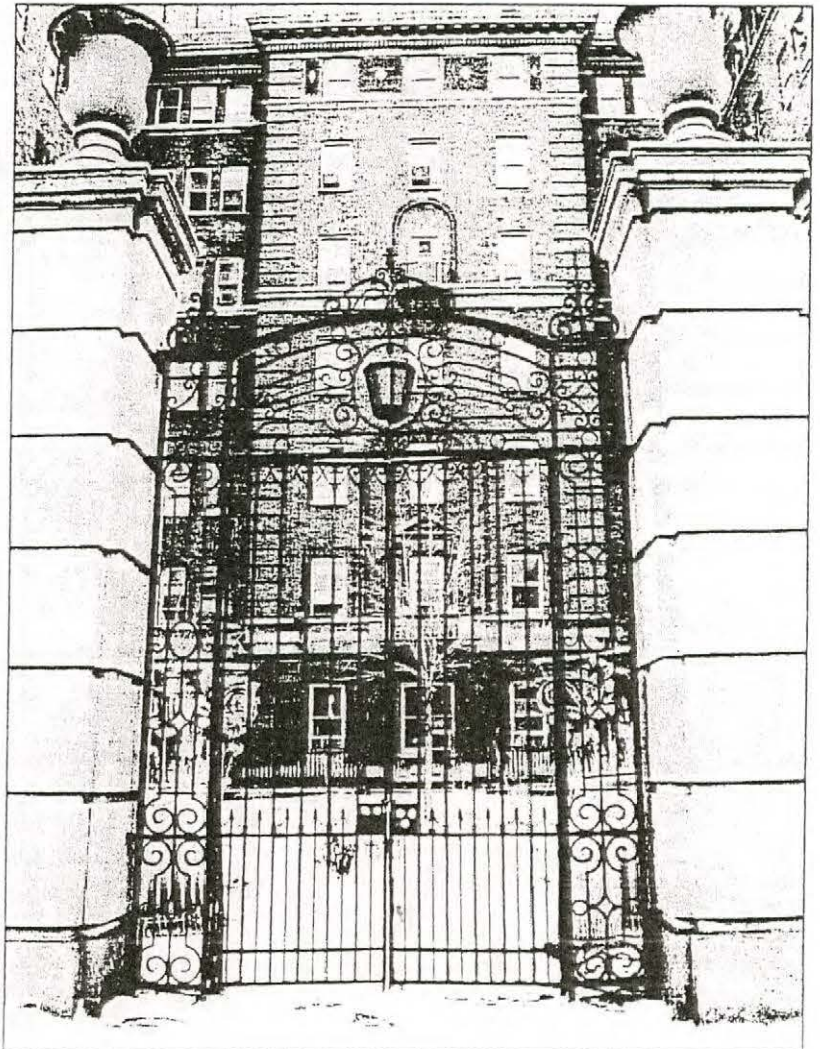


List of Resources

- 1 Psychiatric Building (potential)
- 2 R&S Building (listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places) 06101.001661 (P)
- 3 Administration Building (State and National Register - eligible) 06101.012064 (I)
- 4 Tuberculosis Building (State and National Register - eligible) AKA C a D Bldg 06101.012063 (T)



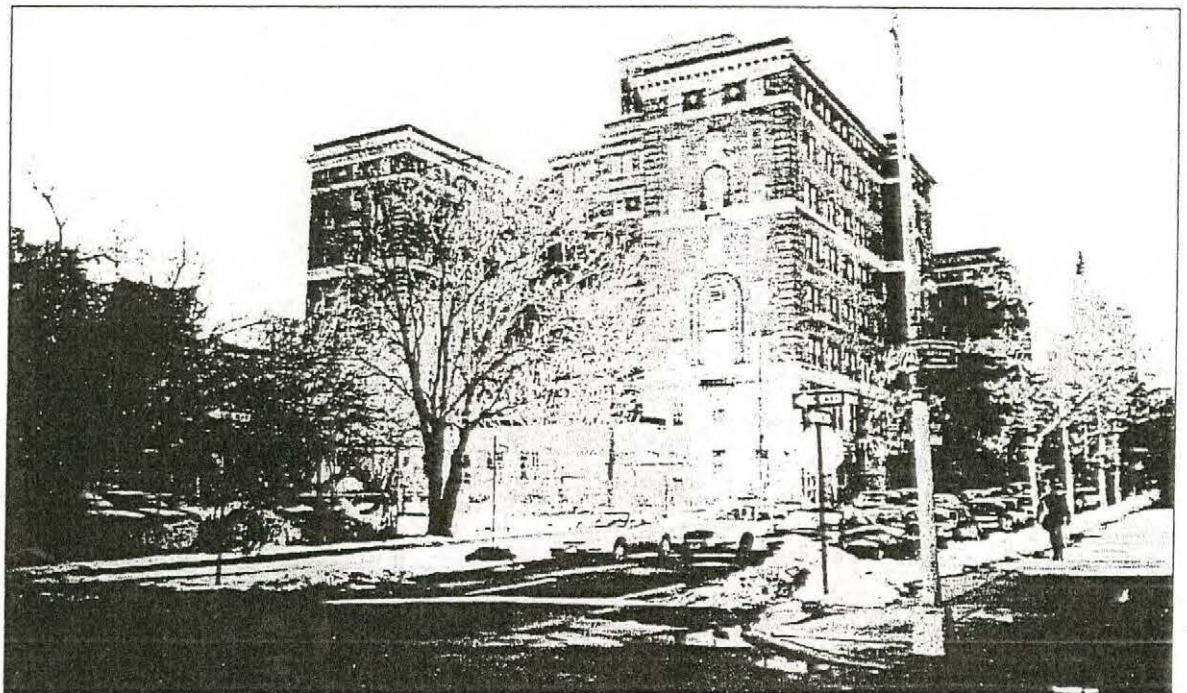
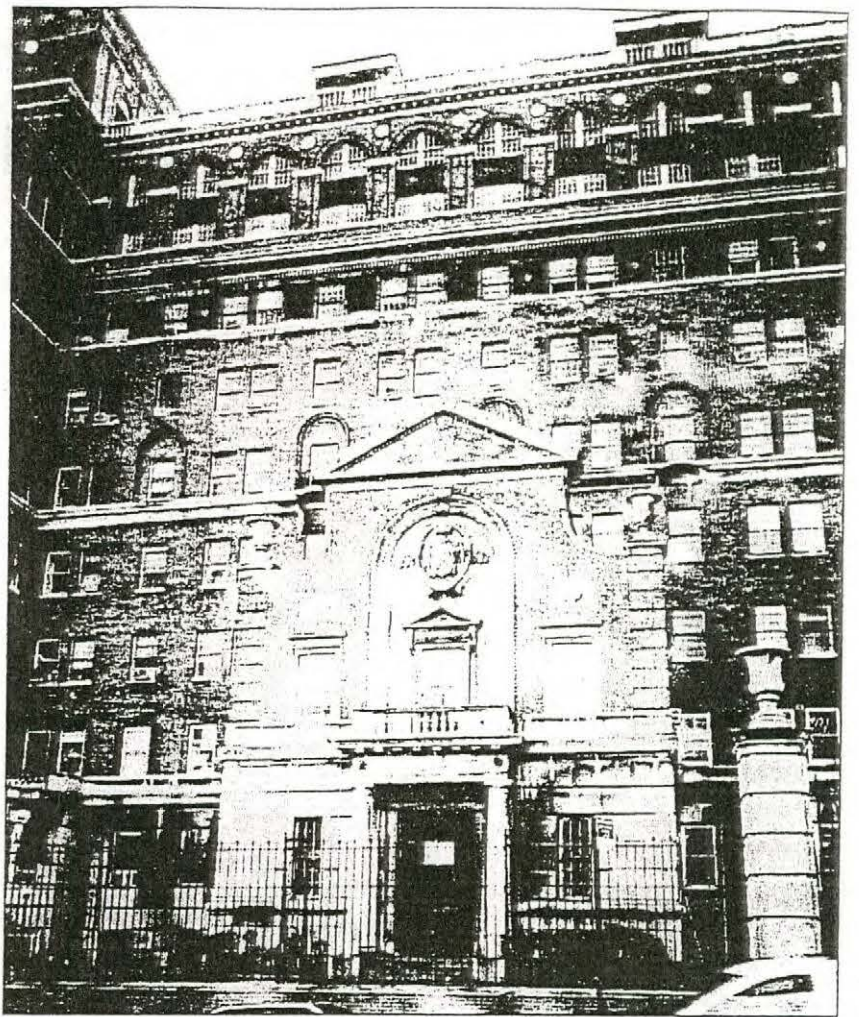
Psychiatric Building, looking southeast from First Avenue and East 30th Street 1



Psychiatric Building, detail of gateway on First Avenue 2

Views of Psychiatric Building · Historic Resources

Psychiatric Building, main 3
entrance on former East 30th Street



Psychiatric Building, view west from former East 30th Street and the FDR Drive service road 4



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RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: 10/26/00

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: Administration Building at Bellevue Hospital

MCD: Manhattan

ADDRESS: First Avenue

COUNTY: New York

PROJECT REF: 00PR2983

USN: 06101.012064

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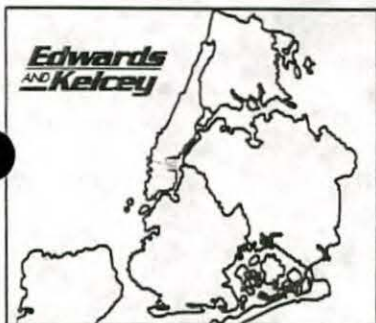
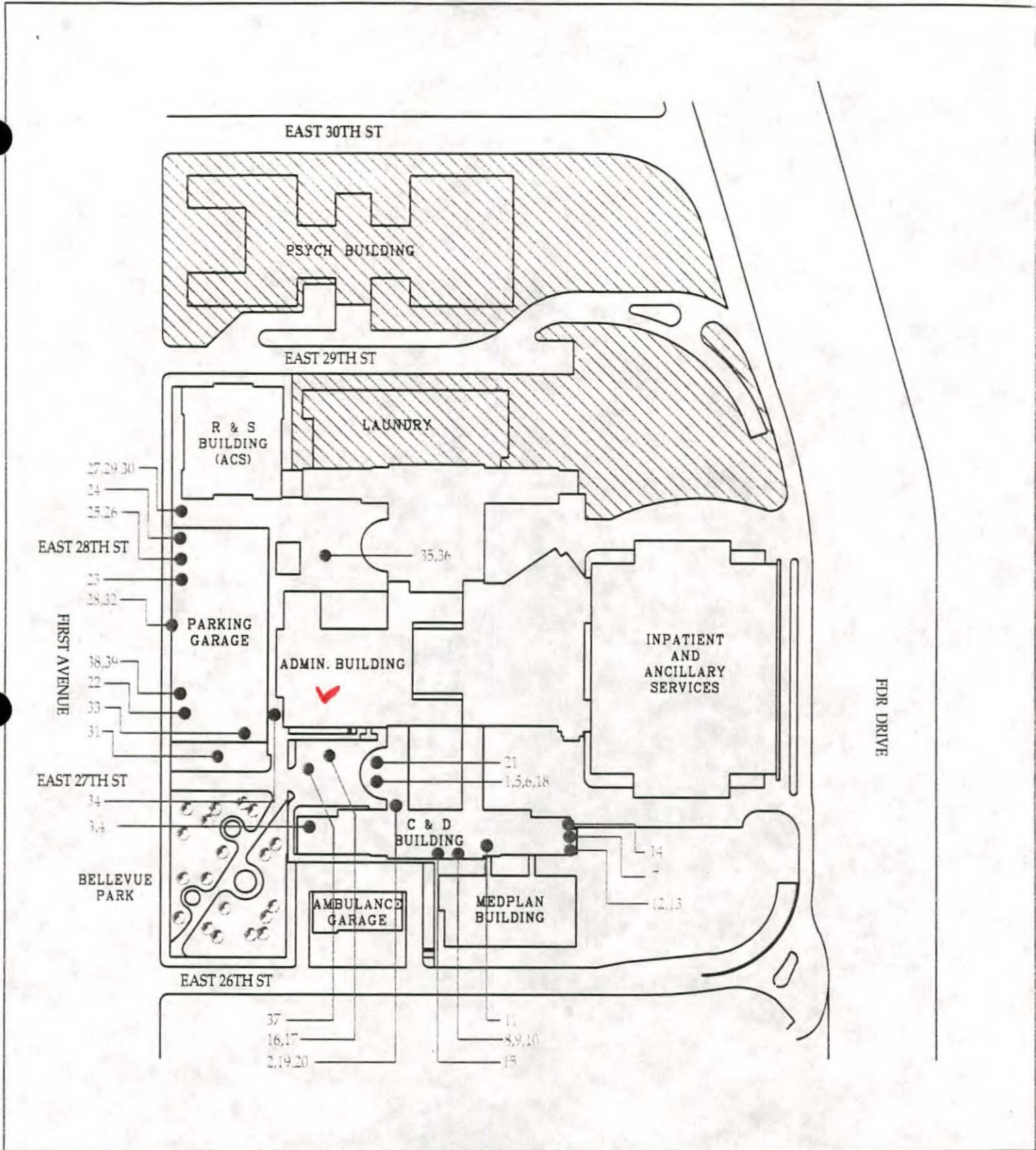
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- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Bellevue Hospital's Administration Building (also known as Building E), located in the center of the hospital campus, opened in 1940. The nine-story building is constructed of structural steel framing with exterior walls of red brick and stone trim. This building remains an important physical reminder of the history of New York City's Bellevue Hospital and of the institutional architecture and master planning efforts of the nationally prominent firm of McKim, Mead & White. In style, the Administration Building embodies characteristics associated with the Italian Renaissance style, including a symmetrical and hierarchical façade (west elevation), a pedimented center pavilion, and classical ornament, yet represents a restrained and functional adaptation of the style to meet the needs of the institution. Included in the design of the Administration Building was a "Chapel Hall" which accommodates various religious

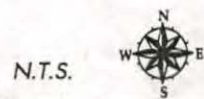
denominations. Although changes have been made to the building, it retains sufficient period integrity to convey its historical significance. It remains a fine example of progressive hospital design of the period that also recalls the history and development of one of New York City's most important social service institutions.

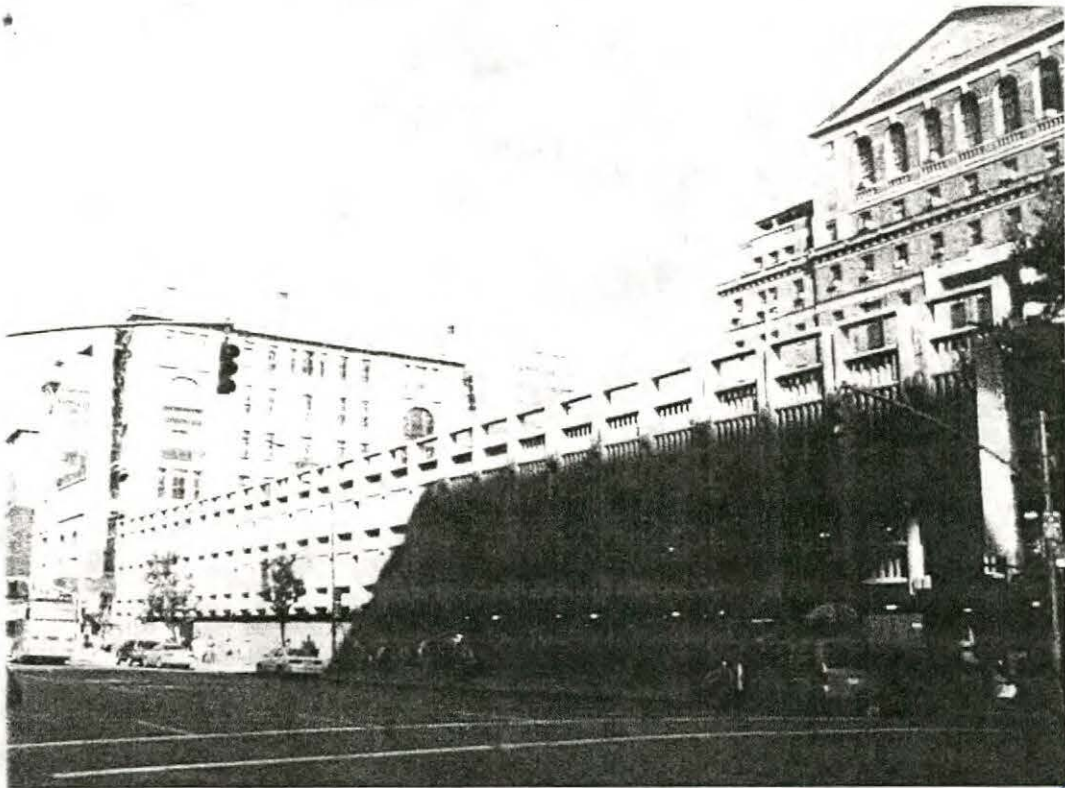
If you have any questions concerning this Determination of Eligibility, please call Kathy Howe at (518) 237-8643, ext. 3266.



- Legend - Proposed Campus Plan*
- Proposed Permanent Space
DNA Laboratories
 - Bellevue Hospital Center
 - Proposed Ambulatory Care Building
 - EMS
 - RFEI Development

*Bellevue Hospital Center
Site and Area Conditions,
Photo Key*





22. View of the Parking Garage facade on First Avenue taken from the west side of First Avenue and East 27th Street.

Administration Bldg - Bellevue Hosp



23. View of the western facade of the Parking Garage with the upper facade of the administration building above and the inpatient hospital building seen behind. Taken from First Avenue and East 28th Street.

Appendix A
Document 5.8-2
National Register of Historic Places
Evaluations

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic R & S Building

and or common

2. Location

street & number 492 First Avenue not for publication

city, town New York vicinity of

state New York code 036 county New York code 061

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name New York City Department of Real Property
Attn: Terrence Moan, Commissioner

street & number 2 Lafayette Street, Room 2000

city, town New York vicinity of state New York 10007

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Surrogate's Hall

street & number 31 Chambers Street

city, town New York state New York

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town 70 state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>NA</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

From its prominent location at the corner of First Avenue and 29th Street in Manhattan, the R & S Building remains an important vestige of the history of New York City's Bellevue Hospital Center and of the institutional architecture and master planning efforts of McKim, Mead and White.

Constructed as the "Pathological Department and Male Dormitory," the R & S Building occupies a rectangular lot along the First Avenue frontage of the Bellevue Campus. The Bellevue campus represents the heart of one of the city's premier medical centers extending eleven city blocks (from East 23rd Street to East 34th Street) and containing not only Bellevue, but also the New York University Hospital, the Veterans Administration Medical Center, the Chief Medical Examiner's Office, and the Public Health Laboratory. Thus, the character of the neighborhood is strongly institutional -- juxtaposed against the dense residential developments west of First Avenue.

The buildings erected from this original plan included: the A&B, C&D, F&G, L&M, R&S, I&K, OPD, and the Laundry Building. Of these, only the C&D, the R&S and the Laundry buildings survive and only the R&S building appears to meet the National Register criteria. Although the Bellevue campus was never comprised exclusively of McKim, Mead and White buildings, the McKim, Mead and White Master Plan can be credited with establishing the basic character, texture and pattern for Bellevue as we know it today.

The R&S building is "landlocked" in its corner location, bordered by a parking garage (south), the Laundry Building (east) and the Psychiatry Building (north). The parking garage, an unattractive pre-cast concrete structure, occupies a large segment of the site's First Avenue frontage south of the R&S building, creating an effective visual and physical barrier between Bellevue and First Avenue. The Laundry Building is of an industrial utilitarian quality quite different from the other McKim, Mead and White buildings.

In terms of its actual siting, the R&S building occupies a rectangular lot 189 feet long on its east and west fronts and 150 feet long on its north and south fronts. The building itself measures 140 feet 10 inches by 120 feet. This nomination includes only the R&S building and its lot of less than one acre and features one contributing building. The plan of the building on its ground level is rectangular. Above the second story the building changes to a "U" plan with a side open to the west. This lights a rectangular interior light court which is open from the first floor up.

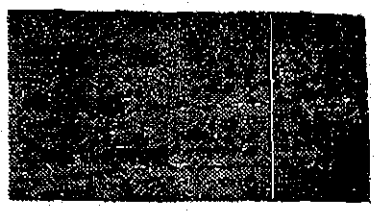
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

R&S , 492 First Avenue, New York City, New York,
Continuation sheet New York County

Item number 7

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The building rises just under 100 feet from its first floor level to its roof level. A roofhouse raises the total height an additional twenty feet. The building has a cellar which is completely underground and a ground floor which is partly below street level. There are six stories above the ground floor. The first floor, the entry level, has a floor to floor height of 18'-6." The second floor has a floor to floor height of 15'-8." The remaining four floors have a floor to floor height of 15'-0," with the exception of the sixth which has a floor to floor height of 19'-6."

Like all of the original McKim, Mead and White Bellevue buildings, the structure is extremely well lit. Abundant windows fill all sides of the building and the inner court. Skylights illuminate what were the undertaker's and embalmer's rooms, below the central light court at the first floor.

Originally skylights also illuminated what was the general autopsy room on the west side of the second floor, in the area adjacent to the central light court. However, this space was subdivided over time and a mezzanine was added to create additional floor space.

The building is built of steel beam and column construction, clad with granite, red Harvard brick, limestone and terra cotta. Granite slabs are used to sheath the lowest level of the exterior, a level that corresponds with the upper portions of the ground floor. The granite masonry is purely decorative. It gives the building a strong visual base and calls to mind the strength of the actual foundation walls, which are considerably lower in the ground.

Above this granite "base" level, the facades of the building are divided into four principal horizontal courses. The arrangement alternates groupings of two and one floors, so that the first two stories are articulated together in a high imposing group which is then topped by the comparatively narrow horizontal level of the third floor. In this context, the full third floor looks like a half, or mezzanine, level. This same arrangement is repeated for the remaining three upper floors, which are then capped with a terra-cotta cornice.

The facades have something of the organization of large Renaissance palaces. Single courses of limestone blocks mark the horizontal divisions. The facades are thus given order and their imposing height is apparently lessened by the intimation that there are only four stories, or even two stories with mezzanines, rather than the actual six.

All of the horizontal courses are pierced by large groups of sash windows. In the taller courses the windows appear to be double-tiered. Cast-iron panels between the windows of each floor are pressed with

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

R&S Building, 492 First Avenue, New York City, New York,

Continuation sheet New York County

Item number

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simple geometrical designs. The two-tiered window groups are topped with flat arches of brick, with limestone keystones. The third and sixth story windows have no decoration at all. The effect of this facade is very severe. It is reinforced by the small, simple, classically inspired doorway on the East 29th Street facade. This is a two-leaf door surrounded by a spare Doric molding and topped by an unembellished pediment support by brackets. The door is reached by a flight of six steps. It is no wider than the flanking window groups and it is only one story high, leaving room for a double sash window immediately above it.

The First Avenue facade is more impressive. The facade here is not so massive and monolithic because the center portion only rises three stories before the building opens up into the U-shaped plan of its upper stories. The architect's design recalls that of a Renaissance palace. The striking element of this elevation is a series of three tall arches in the center encompassing the height of the first two stories.

These arches are filled with the same type of window grouping found in the 29th Street facade and they give the building, when seen from the west, an airy open quality. This low loggia is flanked by the tall narrow north and south wings of the pavilion.

The rear (east) elevation is also brick but is relatively plain and unadorned.

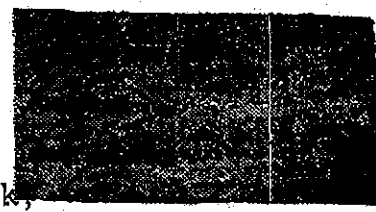
The interior arrangement of the building is quite simple. The only strong interior wall is that dividing the dormitory from the Pathology Department. Part of this wall is the south face of the light court, but it continues straight through the rest of the building. The interior of the pathology section was used almost exclusively for laboratory work, so it consisted of large open spaces. Some of these areas were divided by thin brick partition walls to make individual office spaces. When the building was declared "practically complete" by the architects in 1910, the disposition of the interior spaces was as follows:

The cellar housed machinery and two large storage rooms and a narrow room gauge track running through an underground tunnel which was to connect with other buildgings and a dock at the foot of 29th Street.¹

The ground floor housed cold storage boxes for the dead, a small cold storage room for the bodies of children, an embalmer's and undertaker's room and a sitting room for employees. The ground floor

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National Park Service**

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R&S Building, 492 First Avenue, New York City, New York,

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was used for administration purposes and also contained a chapel, a room for keeping the clothes of the unidentified bodies and an exhibition chamber for exposure of the unidentified dead.

The second floor had a large general autopsy room, a special autopsy room, two rooms for coroner's physicians, a small assembly room, storage rooms and room for museum purposes.

The third floor had a room for microscopic examinations, a preparation room, two rooms designed for chemical and toxicological purposes, a laboratory for the chief of the floor, a washroom, a balance room, and a room for general chemical work.

The fourth floor consisted of a series of rooms designed for clinical microscopy and pathological chemistry, with an office and laboratory for the chief of section. The important chemical and metabolic work of the four divisions of the hospital was performed on this floor.

The fifth floor was designed for the pathological work of the hospital. It contained a general laboratory, preparation room, workshop, a assistant's room, a special laboratory for the director, an office, a secretary's room and the library (see photograph).

The sixth floor was designed for the bacteriological and serological work of the hospital. It also contained two large rooms for photography and a darkroom.

The roofhouse housed the small stock animals used for experiments in the various laboratories and had a single operating room and a room for the distillation of water.

Today, the R&S building retains almost complete architectural integrity on the exterior and is in very good repair. The building interior, however, has become badly deteriorated due to almost 10 years of abandonment. Every interior wall shows severe effects of long term unprotected exposure to moisture. Many ceilings have collapsed due to the weight of water leaking from the roof. The interior does not contain any significant architectural features, with the exception of small open-air porches covered with Guastavino tiles.

¹ This interior description appeared in the Ninth Annual Report of the Trustees of Bellevue and Allied Hospitals, 1910, page 3.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1903-1912

Builder/Architect McKim, Mead & White

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The R&S Building is architecturally significant as an example of urban institutional architecture designed by the nationally prominent architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White. Designed and built between 1903-1912, the R&S Building was the work of Charles Follen McKim, who was responsible for the overall plan and design of a large complex of buildings for Bellevue Hospital, one of New York City's oldest and most distinguished institutions. McKim's innovative plan for Bellevue represented a significant departure from traditional nineteenth-century hospital design in that it was compactly, yet ingeniously, sited on a relatively small site. Its multiple, connected high-rise pavilions were influential in the design of later single block high-rise hospitals. The R&S Building, built to accommodate the hospital's pathological department and dormitories for male staff, is only intact surviving component of McKim's plan. In style, the R&S Building embodies characteristics associated with the Italian Renaissance style, including a symmetrical composition, central arched loggia and roof top balustrade, yet represents a restrained and functional adaptation of the style to meet the needs of the institution. Surviving with a high degree of integrity, the R&S Building is a fine example of progressive hospital design of the period that also recalls the history and development of one of New York City's most important social service institutions.

Bellevue Hospital is the oldest municipal hospital on the North American Continent.¹ Its origins date to the seventeenth century when the Dutch West Indies Company donated five workshops to serve as a hospital and almshouse for the city that was then known as New Amsterdam. The city-run almshouse was moved in 1700 to a building at Warren Street and Broadway. During the smallpox epidemic of 1731 a new site was selected for the almshouse north of the city limits near the present city hall. A "Public Workhouse and House of Correction" was built on the site of what is now City Hall Park in 1736.

During a yellow fever epidemic in 1794 it was decided to provide a place of isolation for the sick. A site was chosen near the East River that belonged to a Mr. Brockholst Livingston and was known as the Belle Vue Farm. The city purchased a six-year lease on the property, purchasing it outright a short time later.

By 1811 the growing city needed a larger site for its almshouse and hospital. Additional land was available next to the Belle Vue farm. Together, these two properties became the site of the expanded facility formally known as the Bellevue Establishment. Construction

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

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

R&S Building, 492 First Avenue, New York City, New York,
Continuation sheet New York County

Item number 8

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began at once on a new almshouse but was interrupted by the War of 1812.

As completed in 1816, Bellevue Establishment consisted of a series of buildings combining the city's social services of the day. The main building contained a House of Correction and a poorhouse, with large sections devoted to classrooms for children, rooms for the poor, cells for the insane, and workshops for the inmates. There were separate hospital buildings for men and women, each containing six wards. The grounds also had a morgue, a bakehouse, a soap house, two engine houses and a superintendent's house.

The hospital expanded continuously throughout the nineteenth century on this site. An operating amphitheater was opened in 1849, beginning the long clinical and teaching tradition at Bellevue. In 1853 a new morgue was established, and on 1861 it was decided to erect a medical college at the hospital. Within a short time, Bellevue had evolved into a large general hospital and a medical college offering among the best clinical training in America.

In 1897, a devastating fire destroyed most of the medical school of Bellevue. A year later, Bellevue Medical College merged with the New York University Medical School. The fire necessitated the rebuilding of much of the nineteenth-century hospital complex, and it also drew attention to the inadequate state of the extant buildings.

The hospital, despite its fame in medical circles, was often the subject of scandalous reports in the press, sensationalized to the extent that Bellevue's reputation could evoke outright terror in many of its patients. Lack of maintenance due to limited public funds and widespread political graft and the lack of patient services and care due to overcrowding greatly diminished Bellevue's effectiveness as a health care center.

To combat this situation, Bellevue Hospital was separated from the city's Department of Charities and Corrections and placed under a new board of trustees in 1902. This new arrangement put Bellevue and its allied hospitals under more competent and independent direction. The new board, under the direction of Dr. J.W. Brannan, began to assemble a hospital staff of highly skilled practitioners and to attack the problem of the physical plant.

A report prepared for Bellevue's Trustees tells of airless rooms, glaring fire hazards, faulty plumbing, crowded sleeping quarters for both patients and staff, and unsanitary toilet and cooking facilities. It was decided that under these circumstances, a rearrangement of the existing wards was totally inadequate and the board recommended that an entirely new hospital complex be built.

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As a first step to implement this recommendation, the Board of Estimate of the City of New York appropriated funds in 1902 for the preparation of plans for a new Bellevue Hospital. Sometime in late 1902 or early 1903 the firm of McKim, Mead and White, one of the most prestigious architectural firms of the country, was asked to prepare a master plan for a new Bellevue Hospital to be built in stages on the old site.

Charles Follen McKim was responsible for the overall design of the new hospital complex, sited on a rectangular parcel comprising three city blocks between First Avenue and the East River and East 26th Street to East 29th Street. At this time, McKim was widely acknowledged to be among the finest planners in America. He had recently been a member of the board of architects at the Chicago World Exposition of 1893 and was achieving wide recognition for the "ensemble" work of his firm. This included designs for New York University (1892-94), work on the University of Virginia, a new campus for Radcliff College (1897) and the Brooklyn Museum (1893-1915). In addition, McKim was responsible for the plan of Columbia University that had been approved in 1894 and was overseeing an extension of that plan to include a South Campus across 116th Street in 1903, the same year as the Bellevue commission. In 1902 McKim had collaborated with Chicago architect and planner Daniel Burnham and landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted in putting forth a plan for the restoration of the mall in Washington D.C. - a project championed by President Theodore Roosevelt.

In conjunction with that work, McKim had taken one of his many tours to Europe, and both the influence of his stay in Washington and of his European trip are evident in the Bellevue design. As a result of the work in Washington, McKim received the commission for the restoration of the White House and a major urban planning project, Pennsylvania Station in New York, a project that would be developed and carried through during the same years as Bellevue.

McKim's Columbia work led to other large-scale campus planning projects which precede and parallel his work at Bellevue. In 1902, McKim was asked to develop a general scheme for the University of Cincinnati and, in 1903, to serve on an advisory commission to prepare a comprehensive plan for Amherst College. From 1902 to 1907 McKim was also involved in the planning of the United States Army War College in Washington, D.C.

McKim's master plan for the new Bellevue was an ingenious adaptation of traditional Beaux-Arts planning to the needs of a large modern hospital in an urban setting. The nineteenth-century tradition of designing separate pavilions for separate functions was impossible

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to maintain at Bellevue's overcrowded east side site. Further, new knowledge about the spread of disease, the use of antiseptic surgery and improvements in building technology had rendered traditional hospital planning obsolete by the turn of the twentieth century. Architect George B. Post had been the first to develop the idea of a compact high-rise hospital building with his design for the modest, three-story New York Hospital in 1876-77.

In McKim's plan of 1903, the hospital complex formed a giant H. The key elements of the design were four large corner pavilions which formed the sides of the H plan. These two long wings were formed at their centers by a multi-storied north-south pavilion across the center of the hospital property. The new Bellevue complex broke with traditional hospital planning in two important aspects. First, all the parts of the hospital were physically connected which allowed for increased circulation. Secondly, all the buildings were multi-storied, with the different facilities stacked one upon the other. The Bellevue Hospital plan played an important role in the transition from Post's New York Hospital design to the concept of single block towering hospitals, such as Mount Sinai Hospital in Manhattan's upper East Side, designed by Dr. S.S. Goldwater in 1910. Of McKim's original plan for Bellevue, only the northwest corner pavilion, the R&S Building, survives intact. The other pavilions have either been demolished or substantially altered by additions.

In style, the design of the Bellevue complex was a restrained interpretation of the Italian Renaissance style. Loosely based on the classically inspired forms and decoration of Italian fourteenth- and fifteenth-century architecture, the Italian Renaissance had become a popular idiom for those architects seeking to express the ideals of the so-called "American Renaissance" of the late nineteenth century. It was especially popular for the designs of large-scale public and institutional buildings. McKim, Mead and White had introduced the style into their oeuvre with the design of the New York Life Insurance Building of Omaha, Nebraska in 1887-90 and were widely recognized as among its most accomplished masters.

The R&S Building, the second pavilion of the Bellevue complex, exhibits distinctive characteristics associated with this style, including a symmetrical composition incorporating pavilions, a central arched loggia and a rooftop balustrade; however, this building presents an especially restrained and undecorated example of the style suited to its functional and institutional character.

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Completed in 1912, the R&S Building was built to house the hospital's pathological department and dormitories for its male staff. The building was divided by an interior 12-inch brick wall that allowed for two separate building uses under one roof. The dormitory housed in the south side of the building had sleeping rooms, lavatories, showers, bathrooms, a sitting room, a library and an assembly room. The pathological department in the north side of the building consisted mostly of laboratory space and doctor's offices on the first and second floors and a large morgue with attendant rooms and chapel on the ground floor.

Bellevue Hospital had been a pioneer in the advancement of pathological research. By the third quarter of the nineteenth century, Bellevue had established a pathology laboratory. The new pathological department in the R & S Building was equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. These new facilities gave Bellevue a head start in developing the field of pathology, and Bellevue quickly became a prime center for pathological research in America.

The establishment of the "New York City Medical Examiner" position to replace the corrupt and inefficient office of Coroner in 1913 established the R&S Building in the public eye. For the first time trained pathologists, instead of incompetent political appointees, determined the cause of mysterious deaths in the city. The new independent city department was, by law, required to employ the services of only highly trained pathologists. Most of the qualified candidates for the office's positions were associated with Bellevue.

All sutopsies for the borough of Manhattan and select autopsies for other boroughs were performed within the R&S Building until 1961. Through the medical detective work of the Chief Medical Examiner's office, many important pieces of evidence were uncovered for a variety of notorious homicides. As Dr. Milton Halpern, the last Chief Medical Examiner to practice at the R&S building, has described in his autobiography, hundreds of New York's most celebrated criminal trials and thousands of lesser cases revolved around evidence gathered in the laboratories at the R&S building.²

The office of the Chief Medical Examiner during its tenure in the R&S building also pioneered several techniques in the 1930s and 40s which have become routine procedure in the practice of forensic medicine. Foremost among these contributions were methods for detecting and identifying blood stains from evidence such as weapons and clothing. Techniques were further developed for using blood for purposes of identification.

The Chief Medical Examiner relocated its headquarters to new facilities in 1961. Over the next fifteen years the R&S Building was used for a variety of laboratory-related functions by both Bellevue

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and New York University. By the late 1970s the R&S Building was removed from service by the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, Bellevue's parent agency. The building was scheduled for demolition shortly afterwards, but was spared for economic reasons.

In 1984, the R&S Building was declared by the city to be "surplus property" and made available for other uses. Today, the R&S Building is about to undergo a major restoration as a high technology research facility.

- 1 For the history of Bellevue Hospital see Dr. Robert J. Carlisle, Bellevue Hospital, New York, 1893, and John Starr, Hospital City, New York, 1957. The annual reports of the Trustees of Bellevue and Allied Hospitals which begin in 1902 offer valuable information on the hospital from the beginning of this century. Numerous articles have appeared in popular and medical journals about various aspects of Bellevue's past. Some of the more informative of these are "Bellevue Hospital - The Old and The New" in The Medical News, New York, May 7, 1904, Vol. 84, No. 19, pp. 865-72, and "Bellevue of the Past and Present," New York Times.
- 2 Milton Helpern, Autopsy, The Memoirs of Milton Helpern, the World's Greatest Medical Detective, New York, 1977.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name Brooklyn

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 18 586510 4510250
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line with dimensions on the enclosed property map.

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

NA

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Merrill Hesch, Field Representative

organization New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation date July 1986

street & number Empire State Plaza Agency Building One telephone 518-474-0479

city or town Albany state New York 12238

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Julia S. Stoker

title Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation date 15 aug 86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only
received
date entered

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

R & S Building, 492 First Avenue, New York, New York City

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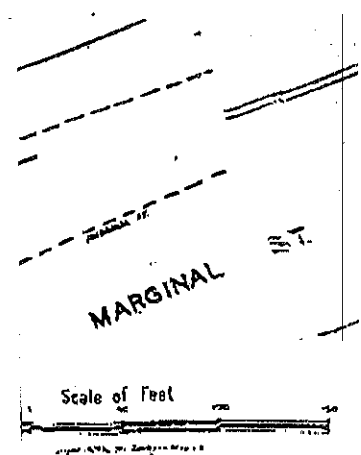
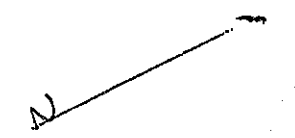
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R & S Building
492 First Avenue
New York, New York Co., N.Y.
Sanborn Map Co.
Vol. 4, Plate 14
1929, updated 1985
Boundary indicated by heavy line (not to scale) with dimensions.



MARGINAL