Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination

Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, City Hall, Sixth Floor 808 Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, Washington 99201-3337

1. Nan	ne of Property			
Historic Na	me	COWLEY SCHOO	OL BUILDING	
2. Loca	ation			
Street & Nu	ımber	North 107 Maple Str	reet	
City, State,	Zip Code	Spokane, WA 99201		
Parcel Num	ber	25134.4124		
3. Clas	ssification			
Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
of Property	of Property	of Property	of Property	
x_building site	public	occupied	agricultural commercial	museum
site structure	<u>x</u> private both	x_work in progress	educational	park <u>x_</u> residential
structure object	Public Acquisition	Accessible	entertainment	
	in process	x yes, restricted	government	scientific
	being considered	yes, unrestricted	industrial	transportation
		no	military	other
4. Owr	ner of Property			
Name		Jon Snyder & Heidi	Arbogast	
Street & Nu	ımber	PMB 297, 2525 E. 2	9th Avenue, Ste	. 10-B
City, State,	Zip Code	Spokane, WA 99223	3	
Telephone N	Number/E-mail	624-2666		
5. Loca	ation of Legal Descrip	tion		
	Registry of Deeds	Spokane County Co	urthouse	
Street Numl		1116 West Broadwa		
City, State,		Spokane, WA 99260	•	
County	Spok	•		
6. Rep	vogantation in Evigtin	a Cumvava		
o. Kep Title	resentation in Existing	•	tomia I andmanle	Cumrari
Date		City of Spokane His Federal State		Local 1979
	for Survey Decords			
Depository	for Survey Records Final Draft November	Spokane Historic Pre 21, 2001, accepted by Land		

7.	Description		
Archite	ectural Classification	Condition	Check One
(enter ca	ategories from instructions)	excellent	unaltered
		good	<u>x</u> altered
		<u>x</u> fair	
		deteriorated	Check One
		ruins	<u>x</u> original site
		unexposed	moved & date
Narrati sheets.	ve description of present and orig	ginal physical appearan	ce is found on one or more continuation
8.	Spokane Register Criteria	a and Statement of	Significance
	able Spokane Register of Histori qualifying the property for Spo		k "x" in one or more boxes for the
<u>x_</u> A	Property is associated with even of Spokane history.	ts that have made a sign	ificant contribution to the broad patterns
B	Property is associated with the li	ves of persons significant	nt in our past.
<u>x_</u> C		or possesses high artistic	be, period, or method of construction, or c values, or represents a significant and l distinction.
D	Property has yielded, or is likely	to yield, information in	nportant in prehistory history.

Narrative statement of significance is found on one or more continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography is found on one or more continuation sheets.

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10.	Geograp	шсаг	HIMIA

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.

Verbal Boundary Description 2nd Addition to West Riverside Addition, East 1/2

of Lot 34, all of Lots 35, 36, 37, 38, Block 8.

Verbal Boundary Justification Nominated property includes entire parcel

and urban legal description.

11. Form Prepared By

Name and Title Linda Yeomans, Consultant Organization Historic Preservation Planning

Telephone Number/E-mail 509-456-3828 or lyeomans@qwest.net

Street and Number 501 West 27th Avenue City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99203
Date 21 November 2001

12. Additional Documentation

Map Spokane City/County plat map, 2001

Photographs and Slides 14 prints; 12 color slides; 1 photocopy of circa-

1927 photograph

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Date Received:	Attest:
Date Heard:	City Clerk
Commission Decision:	Approved as to Form: ama Rec
Council/Board Action:	Assistant City Attorney
Date:	
We hereby certify that this pro Historic Places. CITY ADMINISTRATOR, Ci	perty has been listed in the Spokane Register of
Historic Places. CITY ADMINISTRATOR, Ci	ty of Spokane
Historic Places. CITY ADMINISTRATOR, Ci or CHAIR, Spokane County Com	ty of Spokane
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CITY ADMINISTRATOR, Citor CHAIR, Spokane County Com CHAIR, Spokane City/County OFFICER, City/County Histor	ty of Spokane missioners Historic Landmarks Commission Mm 18/3/61 ric Preservation Officer
CITY ADMINISTRATOR, Cior CHAIR, Spokane County Com CHAIR, Spokane City/County	Historic Landmarks Commission Marks Commission Marks Commission Cic Preservation Officer n Office

COWLEY SCHOOL BUILDING

Section 7

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Narrative Summary

Built in 1917, the Cowley School Building is a fine example of a vernacular one-story schoolhouse embellished with Collegiate Gothic style elements. The building is located at the intersection of Maple and Clarke streets in the Peaceful Valley National Register Historic District, a working-class neighborhood in Spokane. The neighborhood is characterized by tree-lined streets, 25-to-50-foot-wide lots, and houses built during the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Cowley School Building has a side gable roof surrounded by a parapet wall and stepped parapets on the gable ends. A central projecting gable extends from the building's facade and forms the front entrance to the schoolhouse. The entryway is recessed and has a glazed terra cotta Tudor-Gothic arch with sculpted tracery. A terra cotta panel with bas relief letters that spell "COWLEY SCHOOL" proclaims the building's name and is centered over the arch and decorative tracery. Tall pairs of original multi-paned windows are located on the facade of the building. The exterior of the Cowley School building has had very little alteration since it was built in 1917 and is in fair to good condition. The property retains good historic integrity in its original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association.

2001 - Current Condition and Appearance

Site

The property on which the Cowley School Building is sited is recorded as the east half of Lot 34 and all of Lots 35, 36, 37, and 38, on Block 8 in the Second Addition to the West Riverside Addition of Spokane in Peaceful Valley. The schoolhouse is built on the east half of the combined lots on the northwest corner of the intersection at North Maple Street and West Clarke Avenue. The building fronts Maple Street at address number 107 and faces east. The schoolhouse is set slightly above the level of the street and is surrounded on the east and south by a poured concrete retaining wall that runs parallel to the sidewalks along Maple and Clarke streets. The wall is four feet high with a threaded pipe railing. Mature maple trees, perhaps planted when the schoolhouse was built, provide a canopy of shade along Maple Street in front of the building. The Cowley School Building is located in a residential neighborhood and is bordered by single-family homes to the west and north. A park and playground are located east across Maple Street from the schoolhouse.

Exterior

The footprint for the Cowley School Building forms a rectangular plan and measures 28 feet wide and 85 feet long with a central facade gable that projects 10 feet and spans a width of 25 feet. Total square feet for the building is 2630. The schoolhouse is constructed of brick masonry load-bearing walls that rise one story and are clad in red pressed brick veneer. The building has a side gable roof covered with composition shingles. The roof reveals a medium pitch and is surrounded by a low parapet wall capped with concrete coping. The gable ends of the building and the facade gable are each distinguished with a stepped parapet design. A galvanized metal cornice forms a horizontal band across the east facade and north and south elevations of the building

below the parapet. The symmetrical footprint of the schoolhouse is further accentuated with symmetrical fenestration patterns on the building's facade and north and south elevations. A poured concrete foundation supports the building.

The facade of the Cowley School Building faces east and is dominated by a symmetrical design with a central projecting gable. The gable features a stepped parapet and a recessed entrance distinguished by a Tudor-Gothic arch made of glazed terra cotta. The arch is capped and highlighted with vertical panels of sculptural terra cotta tracery characteristic of the Collegiate Gothic style. A horizontal panel located above the tracery embellishment holds Gothic-style letters proclaiming the building's name: "COWLEY SCHOOL." A bas relief cross separates the words "COWLEY" and "SCHOOL." A terra cotta disc-and-wing design is inset in the brick veneer and accentuates the parapeted gable peak.

Original double sidelight windows flank the recessed entry. Each sidelight window unit has a multi-paned, three-over-three, wood-sash transom light located above two single-pane wood-sash awning windows that pivot and open out for ventilation. The gable extension is flanked by six pairs of windows located on the facade of the building with three window pairs on the right side and three window pairs on the left side of the gable. Each window unit has a three-part vertical design similar to the sidelight windows flanking the recessed entrance to the building. The three-part window design has a multi-paned four-over-four wood-sash transom light positioned over two single-pane wood-sash awning windows.

The north elevation of the building features a stepped parapet gable end with one small segmentally arched multi-paned window in the gable peak. The north elevation is partially obscured by an adjacent two-story garage built three and one-half feet from the schoolhouse; the garage is not part of the schoolhouse property, and the property boundary is located between the garage and the schoolhouse.

The south elevation of the Cowley School Building is a mirror image of the north elevation, but in contrast, is visible from Clarke Avenue. The small segmentally arched window opening has been altered; the window is gone and a galvanized metal flue extends out and up from the window opening. The pressed brick veneer wall cladding on both the north and south elevations reveals a decorative design with brick soldier courses joined by inset concrete squares. The rear, west elevation of the building has asymmetrical fenestration and includes a door below grade, a door at grade, and various window openings with missing windows.

Interior

The interior of the Cowley School Building is unfinished and is divided along a north-south axis into three levels. The east half of the building contains the first floor while the west half of the building is split vertically with a basement, and with a second floor that

rises six feet above the first floor. Exterior brick masonry walls are exposed and interior partition walls are constructed of two-inch by four-inch pine framing studs. The first floor is made of poured concrete, the second floor is plywood subfloor, and the basement is a combination of poured concrete and dirt. There are no interior doors, plumbing fixtures, light fixtures, or wall and floor coverings. Original double wood-paneled doors with nine divided lights on the upper half of the door open from the main entrance to the interior of the schoolhouse. An original multi-paned transom light is located above the double entry doors.

Original Appearance and Subsequent Alterations

When it was built in 1917, the Cowley School Building was designed as a one-story schoolhouse with a central, main hall that led back to a rear office and two bathrooms on the west wall. Two identical classrooms and cloakrooms were located on either side of the hall. A circa-1920 photograph of the south classroom reveals two walls covered with blackboards, and double paneled doors with multi-paned upper lights that opened to the main hall. The building retains original windows on the east facade; the windows are operable and include original hardware, glazing, and ebony-colored finished fir sashes and trim on the interior. When it was built, the schoolhouse had a coal-fired furnace in a small basement located below the office in the center rear of the building.

The facade of the Cowley School Building remains unaltered. The parapeted gable, brick veneer, Collegiate Gothic-style recessed entrance and sculptural tracery, name panel, doors, and windows are all original. The poured concrete retaining wall, threaded pipe railing, and steps to the front doors of the building are original. The rear, west elevation of the building retains original window openings that are covered with plywood. The window units (sash and glazing) are missing. In 1930, the schoolhouse was closed and windows and doors were covered with plywood boards to discourage vandalism. In the 1960s, the original wood shingle roof was replaced with a composition shingle roof. In 1987, the building's interior was altered to accommodate four apartment units. Rear windows and doors were removed, the south elevation window in the gable peak was removed and a metal flue installed through the window opening, and the interior of the building was completely gutted. The first floor was split in half along the north-south axis. The west half of the floor was removed, and the basement was enlarged with a dirt floor that spans the distance from the north wall to the south wall of the building. A second floor was then built above the basement and above the level of the first floor, culminating in three split levels in the building. Shortly after it began, the remodel work stopped, and the building was locked and boarded up in 1988.

In 2001, the building was purchased by the current owners. Due to deterioration and damage, a new composition shingle roof was installed, replacing the older, deteriorated composition shingle roof. Concrete steps were poured in the interior for access to the basement level. The interior of the building is being renovated for use as a duplex, using the existing split-level interior plan constructed in 1987

COWLEY SCHOOL BUILDING

Section 8

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Areas of Significance Education
Period of Significance 1917 to 1930

Significant Dates 1917 Architect Unknown

Builders Rudeen and Larson

Specific Dates 1917

Statement of Significance

Summary Statement

Built in 1917, the Cowley School Building is a finely crafted vernacular example of a small schoolhouse with Collegiate Gothic-style elements identified in a stepped parapet design at the roof, brick exterior wall cladding, and a Tudor-Gothic entry arch with sculpted tracery embellishment. The school building is the only public school ever constructed in Peaceful Valley and is one of few historic public schools remaining in Spokane. The Cowley School Building was named for Reverend Henry T. Cowley, one of Spokane's most accomplished leaders and one of the first pioneers to arrive in 1874 when settlement of the town was just beginning. Cowley's business and civic contributions span a wide range from missionary work with the region's Spokane Indian tribes to Presbyterian church organization and leadership, real estate development, and the establishment of the *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, one of Spokane's most successful newspapers. Historically and architecturally significant, the Cowley School Building is eligible for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Categories A and C.

Historical Context

Peaceful Valley and the Second Addition to West Riverside Addition of Spokane Bounded by a steep bluff to the south and the Spokane River to the north, Peaceful Valley was characterized as an undeveloped narrow strip of land with rich soil, trees, shrubs, and grassy fields in 1890. The Valley was accessible from Spokane's central business district along West Main Avenue as the street ran west and followed down the slope of the steep hillside to the valley floor by the banks of the Spokane River. According to northwest historian Nancy Compau, the valley was "once known as 'Spring Flats' because of the many natural springs in the area...and was once a favorite camping and salmon fishing site of the Spokane Indians."

In November, 1890, C. F. Clough, a Spokane mayor and real estate developer, platted the First Addition, and in 1891, platted the Second Addition of the West Riverside Addition in Peaceful Valley. In search of affordable land in close proximity to downtown Spokane, immigrants flocked to Peaceful Valley when calls went out for skilled craftsman to help rebuild the town after a devastating fire destroyed nearly all the city's central business district in 1889. Finns, Swedes, Germans, Italians, and other immigrants brought their knowledge of stone and brick masonry construction, carpentry, and market gardening to Peaceful Valley. They purchased or leased lots and built small, wood-frame cottages and a few brick homes.

The working-class neighborhood was nicknamed "Poverty Flats" and was a haven for immigrants who were looking for low-cost housing and fellow countrymen with which to keep company.

As neighborhood settlement expanded, the nickname "Poverty Flats" was dropped and replaced by a more amenable name, "Peaceful Valley." Valley developer C. F. Clough was credited with this positive change. The little river valley continued to prosper. Lots were sold, cottages and homes were erected, stores and markets were built, streets were regraded, and Peaceful Valley grew into a neighborhood characterized by its strategic geographic boundaries and its working-class residents.

The Cowley School

Because Peaceful Valley had no school of its own, the children of the neighborhood attended Washington School located on West Riverside Avenue in Browne's Addition. Children as young as five and six had no other option but to climb up a steep flight of wooden, sometimes unstable, stairs from the Valley floor to the top of the bluff overlooking the Peaceful Valley neighborhood. Peaceful Valley parents were unhappy with the situation and were concerned for their children's safety. A *Spokesman-Review* newspaper article printed on May 22, 1915, reported the following headline and excerpt:

"URGES NEW BUILDING IN VALLEY"

"Mrs. George Holly of Peaceful Valley spoke for a new building in the Valley, and said one of her children had been advised by the family physician not to climb the long flight of stairs that leads to the Riverside Avenue level on which the [Washington] school is located. She insisted that the location of the [Washington School] building is a hardship to the small children residing in the Valley..."

Peaceful Valley's pleas were noted and less than two years later, a neighborhood school was constructed. On April 16, 1917, James Hanley signed Spokane County statutory warranty deed #502117, conveying the east half of Lot 36 and all of Lots 37 and 38 located on the northwest corner of Maple Street and Clarke Avenue to Spokane School District 81 for \$1400. Before the sale, James Hanley, an early Spokane miner, and his wife Bridget, lived in a frame house located on the property, and their address was listed as 1602 West Clarke Avenue.

The Hanley's house was replaced by construction of the Cowley School, Peaceful Valley's first and only public school. An article in the July 1, 1917 edition of the *Spokesman-Review* newspaper lists contracts for new improvements and additions to existing public schools in Spokane, and for the construction the Cowley School in Peaceful Valley. Spokane building contractors Rudeen and Larson were chosen for the

job; Axel Rudeen was a bricklayer and Larson was a carpenter. The specified contract amount was reported at \$8539. A Spokane School District 81 report entitled "Expenditures of the Spokane Public Schools by Schools for the Year Ending June, 1918" stated the final outlay for Cowley School was \$10,177, which included the cost of construction, furniture, equipment, and miscellaneous apparatus. An additional outlay for the Cowley School occurred in 1922 when Spokane School District 81 purchased the two and one-half vacant lots adjacent west of the schoolhouse for \$850 from St. Joseph's Orphanage Corporation. Perhaps originally planned as the site for a future playground for the school, the lots were never improved and were left vacant during the school's tenure.

School Named for Reverend H. T. Cowley

The Cowley School was named in honor of Revered Henry T. Cowley, one of the earliest and most influential pioneers in Spokane. In addition to Cowley's name, the sculpted "COWLEY SCHOOL" name panel above the school building's front entrance also depicts a Christian cross, a symbol associated with Cowley's life as a Presbyterian missionary and church leader. Cowley has been memorialized several ways in Spokane. These include commemorative plaques, the development of Cowley Park (located between East 6th and 7th Avenues on the west side of South Division Street), a monument marking the Cowley log cabin in Cowley Park, the naming of Cowley Street located east of the park and located in an addition that Cowley helped develop, and the construction of the Cowley School in Peaceful Valley.

"Mr. Fixit, handyman, craftsman, teacher, missionary, pioneer, and builder" are words used to describe Henry T. Cowley in a *Spokesman-Review* newspaper article from July 22, 1964. The article further says,

"Henry T. Cowley exemplified the physical and mental dexterity that made him not only a minister in the Presbyterian and Congregational faiths, but an outstanding educator, an ardent worker for the Indians, a successful farmer, a responsible journalist, and an astute businessman."

Born in 1837 in Seneca Falls, New York, Henry T. Cowley was a man of singular achievement. He learned the printing trade, taught school, and graduated with a degree in theology in 1871. In 1874, Rev. Cowley and his wife, Abigail Peet Cowley, and their four children arrived in Spokane. Cowley and his family were some of the first pioneers to settle in Spokane and described the town as an "embryo hamlet" that consisted of just two other permanent families (the Glovers and the Yeatons). Cowley was employed as a subagent and teacher for the Spokane Indians and worked as a missionary among the Spokane and Nez Perce tribes. The following year, he opened the town's first school in his home that was located in Cowley Park. Described in newspaper accounts as an

energetic man with unbounded physical and mental dexterity, Cowley was responsible for a long list of accomplishments in the Spokane community. During his first 15 years in Spokane, Cowley founded the city's first school for both Indian and White children; conducted the first church services; donated land and established the First Congregational Church; won a land settlement for his Indian friends, the Silaquoyas; and co-founded and published the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* newspaper. He went on to write a column for the newspaper, chronicling events of his missionary work and his association with the early settlement of Spokane. Saluting his significant contributions to Spokane, the Cowley School bears Reverend Henry T. Cowley's name.

The Cowley School was built with two classrooms for grades one and two only. The older grade school children continued the climb up the steep stairs that clung to the bluff, to the Washington School in Browne's Addition. Wilho Williams, who attended the Cowley School from 1927 to 1930, said the little Cowley School was a much-appreciated amenity in Peaceful Valley. During its 13-year period of enrollment, the school educated more than 560 elementary school children and employed more than 15 teachers, principals, and janitors as stated in reports published by Spokane School District 81. In 1930, at the height of the Great Depression, the school was closed due to decreased enrollment and cost-prohibitive expenses.

In 1940, the school was opened briefly and was occupied by members of the National Youth Association, a service organization. A few years later, the school closed again and the windows and doors were locked and covered with plywood. In 1964, the schoolhouse was sold to insurance company manager Roy F. Hanney. He made plans to renovate the school for use as an apartment house, but never began the project. In 1978, Hanney sold the property to Ralph and Sherry Dahman, and James and Nancy Danner. In 1979, Dahman applied for and received a variance to convert the school to a four-unit apartment building, and in 1987, he began to remodel the building. He stopped short of finishing the work, and sold the building in 2001 to current owners Jon Snyder and Heidi Arbogast. They began remodeling the schoolhouse in 2001 for use as a duplex and plan to live in the north half of the building. Bradley Sweek of Flux, Inc. designed the interior, and Dave Sanders of S & P Construction was hired as the general contractor.

Significance

Category A

The Cowley School Building represents the development of Peaceful Valley and the trend in Spokane to the commitment of public education. Even though Peaceful Valley represented Spokane's working-class immigrant population, the educational needs of the neighborhood were not ignored. The heartfelt cries and very real concerns of Peaceful Valley parents for their children's education and safety were heard as evidenced in newspaper accounts in the May 22, 1915 edition of the *Spokesman-Review* and in the November 16, 1916 edition of the *Spokane Press*. The *Spokane Press* featured a photograph of Henry Sigg, at that time a six-year-old boy living in Peaceful Valley.

Referring to the 75-plus stair steps built up the steep rocky slope of the bluff that rose to the Washington School in Browne's Addition, the caption in the newspaper posed a wrenching question to readers, "Can This Child Climb the Steps to Get to School?" Spokane resident Wilho Williams was raised in Peaceful Valley during the 1920s and 1930s and remembers the large and treacherous obstacle the bluff and steep steps presented to small children. He says the stairs were dangerous, especially when covered with snow and ice, and were almost impossible for first and second-grade children to navigate. He recalled that until the Cowley School was built, the Washington School in Browne's Addition was the only public school designated for children from Peaceful Valley. Built less than two years after the newspaper articles appeared, the Cowley School demonstrates the eagerness of the early 20th-century Peaceful Valley immigrants to educate their children and is especially associated with the community's settlement from 1917 to 1930. It also demonstrates the commitment made by Spokane School District 81 to provide a public education to all residents of Spokane, even if it required the construction of an addition school.

Category C

The Cowley School Building is significant as a fine vernacular example of institutional architecture with Collegiate Gothic style elements. A Dictionary of Architecture and Construction written by Cyril M. Harris describes the Collegiate Gothic style as "a secular version of Gothic architecture characteristic of the older colleges of Oxford and Cambridge," and says the style "was adopted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by a number of other colleges in other countries." The style is most closely influenced by the Tudor Revival style. Identifying elements of the Collegiate Gothic style include side gable buildings with multiple cross gables and parapeted gables, brick wall cladding, rows of narrow vertical windows with multi-paned lights, and recessed entrances embellished with Tudor-Gothic arches and decorative sculptural or glazed tracery made of wood, stone, concrete, or terra cotta.

The Cowley School Building can be compared to other historic public schools in Spokane that have similar Collegiate Gothic embellishment. These include Lewis and Clark High School (built in 1912) and Wilson Elementary School (built in 1927). The Cowley School Building is much smaller than Lewis and Clark or Wilson, but all three schools have similar Tudor-Gothic entry arches with sculptural or glazed tracery, symmetrical fenestration patterns, and building materials such as brick veneer and glazed terra cotta. Regrettably, many other schools in Spokane designed with Collegiate-Gothic elements have been demolished such as Brown, Bemiss and Roosevelt elementary schools, and North Central High School.

The Cowley School Building is the one and only public school built in Peaceful Valley. With the demolition of so many historic public schools throughout Spokane, it is a credit to Spokane School District 81 and subsequent owners of the building that the Cowley School Building still exists. The schoolhouse with its original exterior design continues to serve as a historic landmark and an educational symbol, conveying the style, design, materials, and workmanship representative of many early 20th-century schools in Spokane.

COWLEY SCHOOL BUILDING

Section 9 Page 11

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Williams, Wilho. Interview with Linda Yeomans, October and November, 2001.

Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet COWLEY SCHOOL BUILDING Section 10

Photocopy of circa-1927 photograph of facade of Cowley School and first and second-grade children who attended the school. Photo courtesy of Wilho Williams.



East facade of building and front entrance; photos taken in October, 2001.

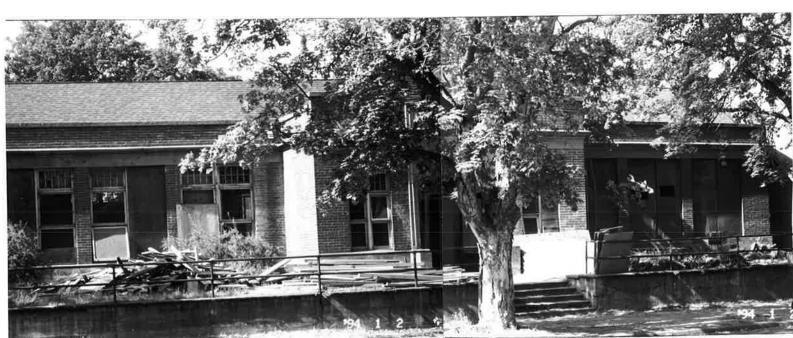






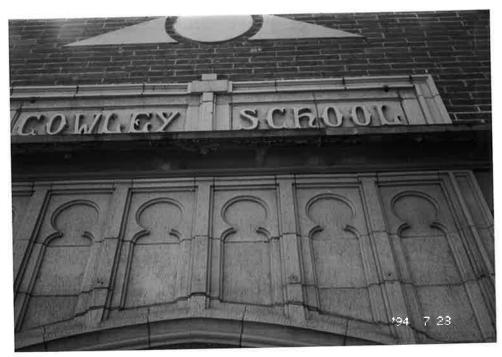
East facade of building; photos taken in October, 2001.





Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet COWLEY SCHOOL BUILDING Section 10

East facade's front entrance detail and original windows to south of recessed entry; photos taken in 2001.







Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet COWLEY SCHOOL BUILDING Section 10

South elevation and rear, west elevation of building; photos taken in 2001.





Building interior looking southeast in both photos; pictures taken in 2001.





Building interior looking at windows on east wall; pictures taken in 2001.



