

## Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination

Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, City Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
808 W. Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, WA 99201

### 1. HISTORIC NAME

Historic Name **LOWELL SCHOOL**  
Common Name Lowell School

### 2. LOCATION

Street & Number 2225 S. Inland Empire Way  
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99224  
Parcel Number 25254.0703

### 3. CLASSIFICATION

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both		<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> residential
	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes, restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes, unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other

### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Name Kayano Properties LLC c/o Lynda Peterson  
Street & Number 10 E. Third Avenue  
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99202  
Telephone Number/E-mail 993-4447, dickshamburgers@yahoo.com

### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Courthouse, Registry of Deeds Spokane County Courthouse  
Street Number 1116 West Broadway  
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99201  
County Spokane

### 6. REPRESENTATION OF EXISTING SURVEYS

Title City of Spokane Historic Landmarks Survey  
Date Federal\_\_\_ State\_\_\_ County\_\_\_ Local\_\_\_  
Location of Survey Records Spokane Historic Preservation Office

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

**7. DESCRIPTION**

*(continuation sheets attached)*

**Architectural Classification**

**Condition**

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

**Check One**

- unaltered
- altered

**Check One**

- original site
- moved & date

**8. SPOKANE REGISTER CATEGORIES & STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

*(continuation sheets attached)*

**Applicable Spokane Register of Historic Places Categories: Mark "x" on one or more for the categories that qualify the property for the Spokane Register listing:**

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Spokane 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 or 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 history.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

*Bibliography is found on one or more continuation sheets.*

**10. DIGITAL PHOTOS, MAPS, SITE PLANS, ARTICLES, ETC.**

*Items are found on one or more continuation sheets.*

**11. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Property	Less than one acre.
Verbal Boundary Description	Wentel Grant Acre Tract Addition, Block 11, beginning at SW corner, then east 290.40 feet, then north 150 feet to beginning.
Verbal Boundary Justification	Nominated property includes entire parcel and urban legal description.

**12. FORM PREPARED BY**

Name and Title	Linda Yeomans, Consultant
Organization	Historic Preservation Planning & Design
Street, City, State, Zip Code	501 West 27 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Spokane, WA 99203
Telephone Number	509-456-3828
Email Address	lindayeomans@comcast.net
Date Final Nomination Heard	September 16, 2015

**13. Signature of Owner(s)**

*[Handwritten Signature]*

**14. For Official Use Only:**

Date nomination application filed: 8/17/15

Date of Landmarks Commission hearing: 9/23/2015

Landmarks Commission decision: 9/23/2015

Date of City Council/Board of County Commissioners' hearing: 10/19/2015

City Council/Board of County Commissioners' decision: Approved

**I hereby certify that this property has been listed in the Spokane Register of Historic Places based upon the action of either the City Council or the Board of County Commissioners as set forth above.**

*[Handwritten Signature]*

9/24/15

**Megan Duvall**  
**City/County Historic Preservation Officer**  
City/County Historic Preservation Office  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor - City Hall, Spokane, WA 99201

**Date**

Attest:

*[Handwritten Signature]*  
City Clerk

Approved as to form:

*[Handwritten Signature]*  
Assistant City Attorney





*Lowell School in 2013*

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**SECTION 7: DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY**

***Summary Statement***

Located in the center of Latah Valley<sup>1</sup> in southwest Spokane, Washington, Lowell School was built in 1899, and enlarged/remodeled in 1917 to accommodate an increased student population growth. The stucco-clad public schoolhouse is a one-story Mission Revival-style building with unreinforced brick masonry construction, a low-pitched hip roof, widely overhanging eaves, arched windows, and a pronounced center front-facing cross-gable with a gable-shaped parapet. Distinctive interior schoolhouse features include arched multi-paned interior vestibule windows, original woodwork, built-in storage cupboards/cabinets, oak floors, and thick plaster walls with rounded molded-plaster corners and beveled molded-plaster window sills. The schoolhouse retains good/excellent integrity in original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association.

***CURRENT APPEARANCE & CONDITION***

***Site***

Lowell School is located in the southeast corner of Block 11 in the Wentel Grant Acre Tract Addition in Latah Valley (also called Hangman Valley). The school site has a level

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<sup>1</sup> Latah Valley and Latah Creek are commonly known as Hangman Valley and Hangman Creek.

**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination**  
**LOWELL SCHOOL**

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grade, measures 150 feet wide and 290.4 feet deep,<sup>2</sup> and is surrounded by single-family homes built from the early 1900s to 1945. The school is located in the west half of the property while tall 100-year-old pine trees grow in the east half of the property. Lowell School fronts west along S. Inland Empire Way, a paved north-south-direction street. A single-family home is located adjacent next north of the school, and an undeveloped pasture/field is located adjacent next south. Latah Creek runs in a north-south direction about 1500 feet east behind the school through an undeveloped flood plain dotted with natural brush and pine trees.

***School Exterior***

The footprint for Lowell School forms a wide, irregular rectangular shape, which measures 121 feet in width and 56 feet in depth. The schoolhouse is one-story high and has a symmetrical design with two hip-roof end wings joined by a low-pitched recessed center section. Clad with asphalt shingles, the roof has a very shallow pitch with three-foot-deep widely overhanging eaves. Due to the very low pitch of the roof and deep eaves, sharp horizontal shadows are cast across the building's broad façade and exterior walls, rendering a low-slung design for the building. At the building's west façade, a gable-shaped parapet distinguishes a front-facing lower cross gable in the center of the schoolhouse. The building is constructed of unreinforced brick masonry and is clad with stucco cladding. The foundation is made of a combination of basalt rock and poured concrete. Multi-paned windows with a combination of flat and curved arches punctuate exterior walls in a symmetrical pattern.

The schoolhouse faces west and is readily visible from S. Inland Empire Way and W. 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, two public streets that form a T-shaped intersection in front of the building. The west façade is prominent with a symmetrical design, broad width, low-pitched hip roof, widely overhanging eaves, and center parapet. Soffits are clad with original tongue-in-groove wood planks with mitered corners. The center shaped parapet has a gable shape with flared ends. Below the shaped gabled parapet are three symmetrical arches in a slightly recessed center bay. Of the three symmetrical arches, the center arch has an original arched multi-paned wood-sash transom window over original wood-paneled double entry doors. The two north and south flanking arches hold original arched multi-paned wood-sash transom windows which cap multi-paned casement windows. Arched 9/1 and 15/1 multi-paned double-hung wood-sash windows flank the center front bay of the schoolhouse. A horizontal water table separates a concrete foundation from the first floor.

The north and south faces of the schoolhouse are mirror images of each other. They reveal low-pitched hip rooflines with widely overhanging eaves, tongue-in-groove soffits, stucco cladding, and a symmetrical combination of multi-paned 15/1 wood-sash windows with flat and curved arches. Window sills are clad in stucco, and a stucco-clad water table extends around the building, separating the first floor from a concrete foundation. Two arched window openings at the west end of the school's south face, and two arched

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<sup>2</sup> Spokane County Tax Assessor records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination**  
**LOWELL SCHOOL**

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window openings at the school's west end of the north face do not contain windows but instead are enclosed with stucco infill (it appears from the interior of the schoolhouse that windows never existed in the window openings, which were located in girls' and boys' bathrooms).

The rear east face of the schoolhouse reveals a broad symmetrical design, very low-pitched roof with hip-roof wings, and stucco cladding that extends from a stucco-clad watertable to roof eaves. Four pairs of tall, multi-paned 4/4, wood-sash, double-hung windows are symmetrically arranged and located on the recessed center section of the building between the two wings located at the north and south ends of the schoolhouse. One back door is located in the south face of the north wing, and one back door is located in the north face of the south wing. The doors face each other across a paved patio located between the north and south wings. A square brick chimney rises from the center of the roof. A small square cupola with a low-pitched hip roof, widely overhanging eaves, and louvered vents is located in the center of the rear east-facing roof slope behind the brick chimney.

***School Interior***

Lowell School is one story with a partial basement. The first floor has 5,233 finished square feet and the partial basement has 1,000 unfinished square feet.<sup>3</sup> Located in the center of Lowell School's west façade, oak paneled-wood double front entry doors open into a central vestibule. The vestibule is 22 feet wide and 6 feet 9 inches deep. Symmetrically placed, two large multi-paned arched windows flank the front entry doors and illuminate the vestibule. Originally the ceiling was made of lathe-and-plaster construction; in 2013 the ceiling was removed to repair damage to the roof, joists, and ceiling beams. Ceiling height is ten feet. Exterior and interior walls are made of plaster applied over brick masonry construction. Molded-plaster corners around doors and windows are rounded, and molded-plaster window sills are beveled. The east interior wall of the vestibule is a mirror image of the west exterior wall. The east interior wall has an arched center entrance with double doors. The doors are made of fir with nine divided lights in the upper half of each door. A multi-paned arched transom window is located above the doors. Two pairs of multi-paned windows with nine lights each flank the center doors. Each window pair is capped by a multi-paned arched transom light.

The vestibule's center double doors on the east wall open to a six-foot-wide uninterrupted hallway that runs 118 feet from the north end of the hallway to the south end of the hallway. One multi-paned arched window is located at the north end of the hallway and a duplicate window at the south end of the hallway. The ceiling in the hallways is 10 feet high, the walls are made of molded plaster with rounded molded-plaster corners that abut door jams and window sashes. Window sills are beveled and made of molded-plaster.

Three doorways are located at the north end of the hallway's west wall. They open into three rooms: one room in the northwest corner of the building (public school bathroom)

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<sup>3</sup> See floorplan of school in this nomination for square feet.

**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination**  
**LOWELL SCHOOL**

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and two adjacent rooms (school offices). The south end of the hallway's west wall has a mirror image arrangement of doors that lead to a bathroom located in the southwest corner of the schoolhouse and one adjacent room (an interior wall that divided the room is missing).

The east wall in the hallway has a symmetrical design with one door at the hallway's north end that opens to a school classroom in the northeast corner of the building, and one door at the hallway's south end that opens to a classroom in the southeast corner of the building. Two doors open across from the vestibule on the east hallway wall to two classrooms in the center of the building. An interior wall that originally divided the two classrooms is missing. A corridor that measures 5 feet 8 inches-wide and runs east and west separates the northeast classroom from the large undivided center classroom. A duplicate hallway is located between the south classroom and center undivided classroom, and is also 5 feet 8 inches wide. The two east-west hallways are 33 feet. A door opens from the north hallway into the northeast classroom, and a door from the south hallway opens into the southeast classroom. A back entry door in the north hallway opens to the exterior, and an identical back entry door in the south hallway opens to the exterior. A concrete patio is located at the exterior east rear of the building between the two exterior back doors.

The north, south, and center classrooms have 10 foot high ceilings and exterior walls made of unreinforced brick masonry construction covered with plaster. Like the rest of the building, molded-plaster corners surround doors and windows. Window sills are beveled and made of molded plaster. The north hallway and the south hallway that separate classrooms have 10-foot-high ceilings and interior walls made of lathe-and-plaster construction. At present, all the floors in the hallways and classrooms are covered with plywood but will be restored with original, saved oak plank flooring. Floor molding is plain 4-inch-deep fir finished with a medium brown hue. Interior fir doors are plain with two recessed panels, and are finished in a medium brown hue that matches the floor molding. Original slate "blackboards" no longer exist in classrooms but pendant-drop "schoolhouse-style" light fixtures are suspended from classroom ceilings. Finished medium brown, plain built-in Shaker-style cabinets made of fir with recessed-panel doors exist in the building with one in the northeast classroom and two in the undivided center classroom. The original built-in cabinet in the southeast classroom is missing.

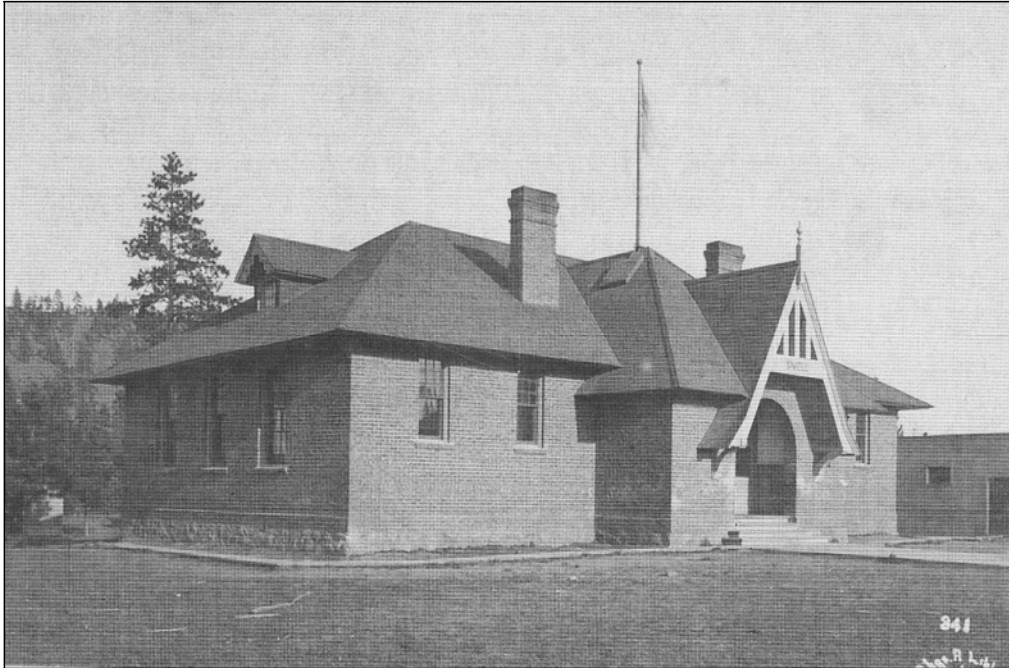
An egress stairway was built in 2014 in the center of the undivided center classroom. The framed stairway descends to a landing, turns, and descends to an unfinished basement with a concrete floor. A mechanical room is located at the north end of the basement. A back entry with double wood-paneled doors opens to an enclosed concrete staircase below grade that ascends to a concrete patio at grade at the east rear of the schoolhouse.

***ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & MODIFICATIONS***

Built in 1899, Lowell School was erected as a one-story schoolhouse with 1,000 square feet on the main floor and 1,000 square feet in a full basement. A circa 1908-1910

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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*Lowell School in circa 1908-1910*

photograph<sup>4</sup> of the school pictured an irregular rectangular one-story building with a symmetrical design, hip roof, widely overhanging eaves, and brick cladding. Fenestration patterns were symmetrical and windows were 9/9 double-hung wood-sash multi-paned units. The roof pictured in the photograph appeared to be wood shingle, and the foundation was made of basalt rock. A front-facing lower cross gable with a hip roof projected from the center of the school's west facade. The front entrance to the school was located in an arched recessed entry beneath a massive, steeply pitched, gabled pediment on the lower front-facing cross gable. A dominant feature of the schoolhouse, the gabled pediment was embellished with wide bargeboards articulated with flared ends and brackets, and false half-timbering with stucco infill in the gable field. A spire was attached to the gabled pediment's apex where the two bargeboards met at the pediment's gable roof peak. A tall flagpole was attached to the center hip roof on the school. When the school was enlarged and remodeled in 1917, the new school building was extended north, south, and west from the rear east wall of the 1899 schoolhouse. Part of the original 1899 basalt foundation is evident in the basement today. Crawl spaces were built under the remodeled extended school.

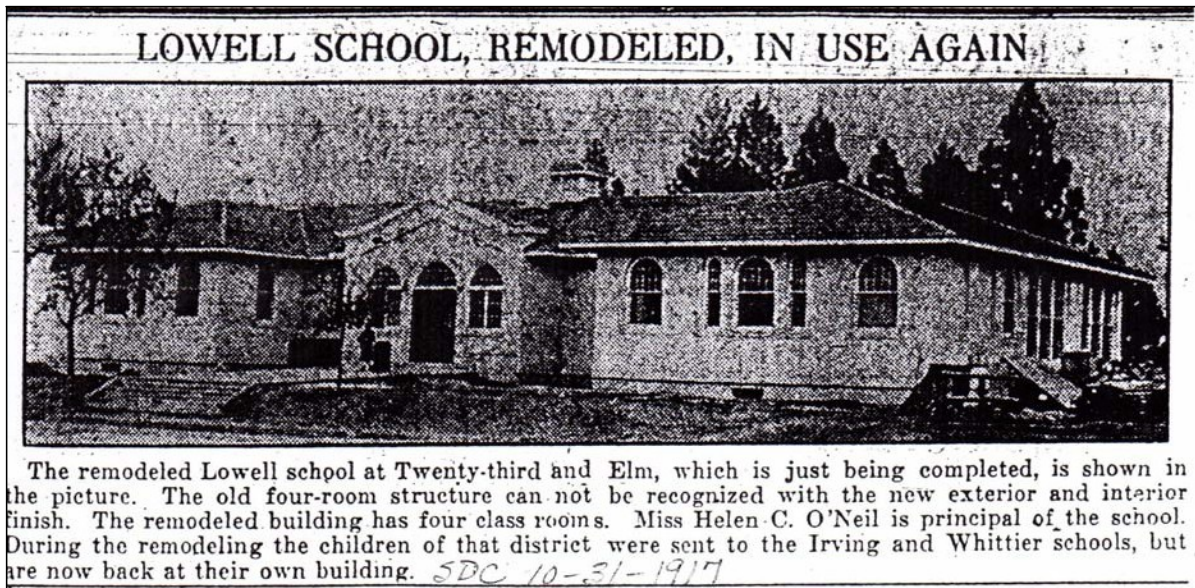
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<sup>4</sup> Eastern Washington Historical Society. *Photo archive L87-1.341*. MAC archive library, Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, Spokane, WA.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

The original appearance of the 1917 enlarged/remodeled schoolhouse is well documented in a building footprint sketch and at least seven photographs that span more than 70 years. A sketch of the school's 1917 footprint was pictured on a 1953 Sanborn Fire Insurance map. A photograph taken of the school just after it was remodeled was featured in the October 31, 1917 edition of the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* with the following headlines, "LOWELL SCHOOL, REMODELED, IN USE AGAIN."<sup>5</sup> A 1923 photograph from Spokane Public School District 81 archives pictured the school with elementary students standing in front of the school's front entry. Spokane newspapers again featured the school in 1943, 1966, and 2011. Spokane County Tax Assessor photographs pictured the building in 1959 and the 1990s. All of the photographs reveal the school's west facade unchanged today from its 1917 design. Modifications to the 1917 school have been to the building's interior.



*Lowell School in 1917*

The following is a list of modifications to the building after the 1917 enlargement and remodel:

*1950s* A wall that divided the two center classrooms was removed. It was replaced with a moveable accordion partition made of wood slats. A one-inch-thick layer of bright orange Styrofoam insulation was sprayed on perimeter plaster walls in the school, and was sealed and painted with white paint. The original multi-paned windows, doors, and transoms were removed from the vestibule's east wall in preparation for installation of the foam insulation (fortunately the vestibule's original east wall windows and doors were not destroyed but saved in a classroom).

<sup>5</sup> "Lowell School, Remodeled, In Use Again." *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, 31 Oct 1917

**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL**

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*1968* Spokane building permit #B69547, dated August 16, 1968, reported the schoolhouse was altered for use as a single-family residence. The office south of the center vestibule was stripped of plaster to expose brick masonry construction. Built-in kitchen cabinets, cupboards, counters, appliances, and fixtures were installed in the office. Carpet samples 12-inches-square were glued to the hardwood floor in the school's main north-south hallway, located between the vestibule and the classrooms. Carpet was installed over hardwood floor planks in the southeast classroom. Classroom blackboards were removed. One built-in storage cabinet/cupboard was removed. Original interior doors removed and replaced with doors from a downtown Spokane bank.

*1970s-1980s* The roof was replaced with new asphalt shingles.

*2013-2015* A rehabilitation of the school began with repairs to the roof, which had leaked for many years into the school. All ceilings, carpet, and hardwood floors were removed. Hardwood floors were saved, to be reinstalled later in school. Plywood sheeting was installed as a subfloor. Styrofoam insulation was removed from interior perimeter walls. Damaged floor molding was removed and replaced. Interior doors (1960s replacements) were replaced with new plain two-panel fir doors that replicate the building's original interior doors. Original east wall windows, doors, transoms, and woodwork from the vestibule were reinstalled. Ceilings and some interior walls were repaired with new sheetrock. Circa 1968 built-in kitchen cupboards, cabinets, counters, fixtures, and appliances were removed. A Spokane building code requirement, a stairway to the basement was installed on the first floor. Mechanical and electrical panels/equipment was replaced with up-dated code-required panels and equipment. Plumbing/AC was replaced as per building codes. A concrete patio was poured at the east rear of the school between the north and south wings. An ADA-accessible concrete ramp was built at the south end of the east rear of the school. The school's exterior stucco cladding was repaired and repainted. The concrete foundation was painted to match the stucco. Soffits and trim were repaired and repainted.

**SECTION 8: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

<i>Areas of Significance</i>	<i>Education</i>
<i>Period of Significance</i>	<i>1899-1954</i>
<i>Built Dates</i>	<i>1899, 1917</i>
<i>Architect for 1899</i>	<i>Albert Held</i>
<i>Architect for 1917</i>	<i>C. Harvey Smith</i>

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

***Summary Statement***

Built in 1899 and enlarged/remodeled in 1917, Lowell School is eligible for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Categories A and C. The period of significance for the property is defined as 1899 when the school was built, to 1954 when public education offered at Lowell School ended. The building is significant in the area, “education,” as a school that offered public education, National Youth Administration classes, and Technical & Vocational School training to the Latah Valley community. In 1899, Lowell School was erected by Spokane Public School District 81 as a public elementary school, and was named in honor of James Russell Lowell, a noted American educator, philosopher, and poet. Lowell School is further significant in the area, “architecture,” as a good example of the Mission Revival style and a product of prominent Spokane architects Albert Held (1899 school) and C. Harvey Smith (1917 school remodel). Distinguishing Mission Revival-style features of the school include the building’s wide, one-story, horizontally emphasized mass, low-pitched hip roof, widely overhanging eaves, stucco cladding, arched windows, and prominent gable-shaped center parapet. Lowell School was in use for more than five decades from 1899 to 1954, and demonstrated Latah Valley’s longstanding commitment to public education

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

***Latah Valley and Latah Creek***

In the 1870s, the city of Spokane was developed around the Spokane River and its cascading waterfalls. As the city grew outward in all directions from the city’s downtown central business core, southward settlement went up and over a high bluff to the Manito Plateau, characterized by rocky forested land that ascended further uphill to the crest of a high bluff. A U-shaped valley with fertile soil and a meandering creek lay below the high bluff on the valley floor. In the early 1800s, the valley and creek were named Latah Valley and Latah Creek. A name change took place in 1858 when a Yakima Indian chief and several Palouse Indians were hung in the valley, and the valley and creek were renamed Hangman Valley and Hangman Creek. In 1899, a Federal government act legally reversed the name to Latah Valley and Latah Creek. In 1997, local Spokane County Commissioners decreed that all county documents and maps would use the names Latah Creek and Latah Valley. At the Federal level, however, the names Hangman Creek and Hangman Valley remained unchanged on USGS maps.

Latah Creek flows northwest through Latah Valley into the Spokane River. In the 1800s, as many as 800 Indians from several Indian tribes lived on the banks of Latah Creek. By

**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL**

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the 1880s, a brickyard was built west of the creek, and employees of the brickyard began building homes in which to live in the valley. In 1888, Spokane businessman and brewer, J.G.F. Hieber, built a brewery, bringing workers from Spokane to work and live in the area. Two years later Spokane Vinegar Works began making cider, malt, and white wine vinegar at a factory, located at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Spruce Street in Latah Valley. Workers from the brewery and vinegar factory continued to flock to the area, and Latah Valley settlement increased. As the vinegar factory became one of the largest in the country, it filled the valley with the uninviting acrid smell of vinegar. Residents in neighboring upscale Browne's Addition dubbed the valley with a third name: "Vinegar Flats."<sup>6</sup> Today in 2015, the valley and creek are called by all three names: Latah Valley/Latah Creek, Hangman Valley/Hangman Creek, and Vinegar Flats.

***Lowell School***

With increased settlement in Latah Valley came the need for public school education for children of valley residents. Spokane Public School District 81 foresaw increased future settlement in Latah Valley and in 1898, purchased for \$200 a portion of Block 11 in the Wentel Grant Addition, located in the center of Latah Valley at the intersection of Inland Empire Way and West 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. The school district's speculation proved beneficial.

In February 1899, the *Spokesman-Review* newspaper outlined the plight of Latah Valley residents:

***WANT TO COME IN  
Hangman Creek Pupils Want to Attend City Schools***

*Parents of children who have no place to go to school applied to the city school board last evening for admission to the city schools. The delegation... told the members of the school board that the residents of... Hangman Creek were absolutely without school facilities. The high bluff of Hangman Creek, they said, separated their houses from the [South Hill's Irving] school, and when anyone wanted to go from their places to the schoolhouse, it was necessary to pass through Spokane.<sup>7</sup>*

In response to the pleas of Latah Valley residents and their school-age children, Spokane Public School District 81 erected a two-room public elementary school in the center of Latah Valley seven months later. Lowell School opened its doors to the school's first students on the first day of school in September 1899.<sup>8</sup>

After 70 years of ownership, Spokane School District 81 sold Lowell School to James & Janette Rogers in March 1968. Employed in Spokane as a carpet layer, James Rogers modified the schoolhouse for use as a single-family residence. After eight years, the

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<sup>6</sup> "History Alive in Vinegar Flats." *Spokesman-Review*, 17 July 2000

<sup>7</sup> "Want to Come In." *Spokesman-Review*, 7 Feb 1899

<sup>8</sup> Spokane School District 81. *First Class for 100 Years—Spokane Public Schools 1889-1989*. Spokane, WA, 1989.

**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL**

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Rogers sold the property in 1976 to George Chicha. In 2005, the property was purchased by Lynda Peterson, Kayano Properties LLC. In 2013, Peterson began carefully rehabilitating the property for use as a restaurant and community center through the United States Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*.

***HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE***

***Lowell School***

Lowell School is historically significant under Category A in the area of “education” as the one and only public elementary school built in Latah Valley. Built in 1899, the school remained in use for more than five decades from 1899 to 1954. Lowell School is further historically significant as an educational property that housed and promoted other educational enterprises. These included National Youth Administration classes, a “New Deal” program created by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt and offered by the Federal Government. Technical & Vocational School curriculum and education was offered at Lowell School through Spokane Public School District 81 in the early 1940s. The school was further used as a community meeting place for children who were transported to Irving School on Spokane’s South Hill when elementary school classes were cancelled for a short time at Lowell School. After Lowell School closed its public elementary school classes at the end of the 1954 school year, Spokane Public School District 81 leased the property to the Northwest Air College in 1955 and 1956. The college trained airline stewardesses, stewards, and other airline personnel for airline employment and careers. From 1957 to 1968, Lowell School was used as a storage center for Spokane Public School District 81.

***ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE***

A property in Category C of the Spokane Historic Register must be architecturally significant for its physical design or construction, and must embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, and/or represent the work of a master. Significant in the area of “architecture,” Lowell School is nominated for its existing 1917 design and for the architects who designed it.

In 1914, it was decided by the Spokane School Board that Lowell School would be enlarged and remodeled with two additional classrooms and two additional teachers. Vocation training was to be implemented in the school as soon as possible. Three years later work was underway. A July 1, 1917 article in the *Spokesman-Review* reported “contracts for school building additions and improvements were closed with nine Spokane architects.” Spokane architect, C. Harvey Smith, was chosen to enlarge and remodel Lowell School.<sup>9</sup> Four months later, the additions and remodel to Lowell School were completed. An October 31, 1917 photograph of the “new school” was featured in the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* with the headline, “LOWELL SCHOOL, REMODELED, IN USE AGAIN.”<sup>10</sup> The remodeled school was built onto the east basalt foundation wall of the original 1899 school. The basement area remained the same while the school was

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<sup>9</sup> “Architects Get School Jobs.” *Spokesman-Review*, 1 July 1917

<sup>10</sup> “Lowell School, Remodeled, In Use Again.” 31 Oct 1917

**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination**  
**LOWELL SCHOOL**

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enlarged forward and with two additions, one at the north end and one at the south end of the school. The remodeled school boasted a vestibule, a full-width center hallway, four offices, and four classrooms. The school was covered with a new hipped roof and stucco cladding, and finished with arched multi-paned windows. The reported construction cost was \$16,310.<sup>11</sup>

***C. Harvey Smith, Architect***

C. Harvey Smith was born in 1868 in Kansas, was educated in architecture and as a building contractor, and moved to Spokane in 1888. Smith established his architectural business in Spokane in 1893, worked alone, and for a short time shared offices in downtown Spokane with W. W. Hyslop, another prominent Spokane architect. As recounted by newspaper reporter and Spokane historian, N. W. Durham, Smith enjoyed wide recognition and prosperity from his many architectural and contracting responsibilities throughout Spokane and surrounding region as well as Chewelah, Mullan, Idaho, and Twin Falls, Idaho. He “built a number of schoolhouses” in Spokane and Southern Idaho, “business blocks in Spokane,” and “has been the architect for between five and six hundred residences” in Spokane and the Inland Empire.<sup>12</sup> Documented Spokane commissions completed by C. H. Smith include the Donald McLeod House (W. 1722 Riverside Avenue, built 1900), the R. D. Hansen House (S. 2407 Garfield, built 1911), the Opportunity Township Hall (E. 12114 Sprague Avenue, built 1912), the Lindsley-Larsen House E. 2314 South Altamont Boulevard, built 1914), the R. Gordon House (E. 808 Syringa Road, built 1923), and the enlarged/remodeled Lowell School (S. 2225 Inland Empire Way, built 1917).

The above-referenced documented homes and buildings designed by Smith reflect a variety of high styles and influences from Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival to Neoclassical, Mission Revival, and Craftsman. Examples of his work include modest dwellings and buildings to large, estate-size mansions and business blocks. One of C. H. Smith’s designs, the sprawling Colonial Revival-style Lindsley-Larsen House built in 1914 on Altamont Boulevard, won a prestigious award in the contest, “The Most Notable Architecture and Landscape Architecture of Spokane, Washington.” The contest was sponsored by the professional journal, *The Architect and Engineer*, in 1921. The Lindsley-Larsen House was selected from hundreds of Spokane homes and met the requirements of the contest as one of the most beautiful residential designs and landscaped grounds found in Spokane—a tribute to the designs rendered by C. H. Smith.<sup>13</sup>

Smith’s design for Lowell School is most like his design for the Opportunity Township Hall. Both are one story buildings, both are embellished in the Mission Revival style, both have front-facing prominent parapets, both have arched windows, and both are clad

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<sup>11</sup> “Building Permits.” *Spokesman-Review*, 29 June 1917

<sup>12</sup> Durham, N. W. *History of the City of Spokane and Spokane Country, Volume 3*. Spokane: Clark Publishing Co, 1912, pp.103-104.

<sup>13</sup> Jennings, Frederick. “The Most Notable Architecture and Landscape Architecture of Spokane, Washington.” *The Architect & Engineer*, Vol LXV, No 3, June 1921.

**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination**  
**LOWELL SCHOOL**

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in stucco. Differences occur in construction dates and use: the Opportunity Township Hall was built in 1912 while Lowell School was enlarged/remodeled five years later in 1917. Both buildings reflect C. Harvey Smith's professional success with various styles and influences, including the Mission Revival style illustrated by the Opportunity Township Hall and Lowell School remodel.

***Albert Held, Architect***

Professional architect, Albert Held, designed the Lowell School in 1899, ten years after he came to Spokane. Born in 1866 in Minnesota, Held graduated in architecture from the University of Minnesota and moved to Spokane after the devastating 1899 Spokane Fire, which destroyed 32 downtown city blocks of buildings. Held had immediate work in 1899, and was continually employed as an architect in Spokane for 35 years until his death in 1924. His designs spanned some of Spokane's most prominent buildings, including various warehouses, railroad depots, commercial buildings, schools, apartment houses, and single-family homes. Surviving examples of his work include the Holley-Mason Hardware Store, Spokane Dry Goods, Realty Building, Home Telegraph & Telephone Building, Altamont Carnegie Library, Parental School, and the San Marco, Breslin, Amman, and Knickerbocker Apartments. Single-family homes designed by Held include the historic Woldson House, Armstrong House, James Clark House, Kuhn-Reid House, Phelps House, Leo Long House, Robbins House, Page-Ufford House, Wren House, Weil House, and Williams House. Although many buildings and houses that Held designed have been demolished, examples of remaining intact work for which he was responsible is in good to excellent condition—confirming his reputation for designing strong buildings and houses that last.

Albert Held came to Spokane to help rebuild the city, and was always interested in its positive growth. He was appointed to the Spokane Parks Commission for a time, was a member of the American Institute of Architects and the Washington State Association of Architects, and served as a prominent member of the Spokane Chamber of Commerce, Spokane City Club, and the Spokane Realty Company. He belonged to the Imperial Oddfellows Lodge, the Spokane Club, Spokane Amateur Athletic Club, and was director of the Exchange National Bank. Albert Held died in June 1924 after 35 years in Spokane as one of the city's most accomplished master architects.

Albert Held was praised and featured in numerous newspaper articles, promotional booklets and pamphlets, advertisements, and city directories throughout his career in Spokane. One promotional booklet was *Western Progress: Spokane, Washington, Queen of the Inland Empire*, published in 1902—three years after he designed Lowell School. The promotional booklet listed Held as the architect for the Lowell School, and lauded Held as “an able, progressive architect, and a capable, honorable businessman...thoroughly versed in all that pertains to architectural and building affairs.”<sup>14</sup> Like all of Held's work, Lowell School was designed and built as a sturdy

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<sup>14</sup> Murphy, I. I. *Western Progress: Spokane, Washington, The Queen of the Inland Empire*. Chicago, August 1902.

brick building. The school's basalt foundation and basement survives partially intact, and helps support the enlarged and remodeled school built in 1917.

### ***Mission Revival Style***

Identifying features of the Mission Revival style include:

- Built dates 1890-1920
- Shaped parapet on the main roof or porch roof, many shaped dormers and roof parapets mimic those found on Spanish Colonial mission buildings
- Red tile roof covering, common on most examples
- Hipped roofs
- Widely overhanging eaves, usually open (not boxed)
- Symmetrical plans (more than 50%), simple square or rectangular plans with hipped roofs
- Porch piers, large and square, some with arches and arcades
- Stucco wall surface, smooth
- Arched windows and/or doors
- Bell towers or cupolas similar to those seen on Spanish Colonial missions, an infrequent and uncommon detail

California was the birthplace of the Mission Revival style—a revival of earlier Spanish Colonial mission forms and architectural elements. The Mission Revival style was popular in California and southwestern cities, with fashionable architects and national builders' magazines, and spread east and north across the country. Short-lived, the style quickly faded from favor after World War I as "architectural fashion shifted from free, simplified adaptations of earlier prototypes to more precise, correct copies."<sup>15</sup>

### ***Mission Revival Style Features of Lowell School***

The enlarged/remodeled Lowell School is a good example of the Mission Revival style. Architectural features and elements that embellish Lowell School include the building's symmetrical design, low-pitched hipped roof, widely overhanging eaves, shaped façade parapet, roof-top cupola (mimics mission bell towers), arched windows and doors, and smooth stucco cladding. Interior Mission Revival-style features at Lowell School are found in plain, square-cut woodwork and two-panel wood doors—elements borrowed from early Craftsman traditions. Lowell School's unique interior molded plaster formed as beveled window sills and rounded corners around doors and windows resemble exterior features of Mission Revival-style houses and buildings with smooth stucco exterior wall surfaces and rounded corners around arched porches and porch arcades.

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<sup>15</sup> McAlester, Lee & Virginia. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1989, pp.408-410.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

*ADDITION INFORMATION*

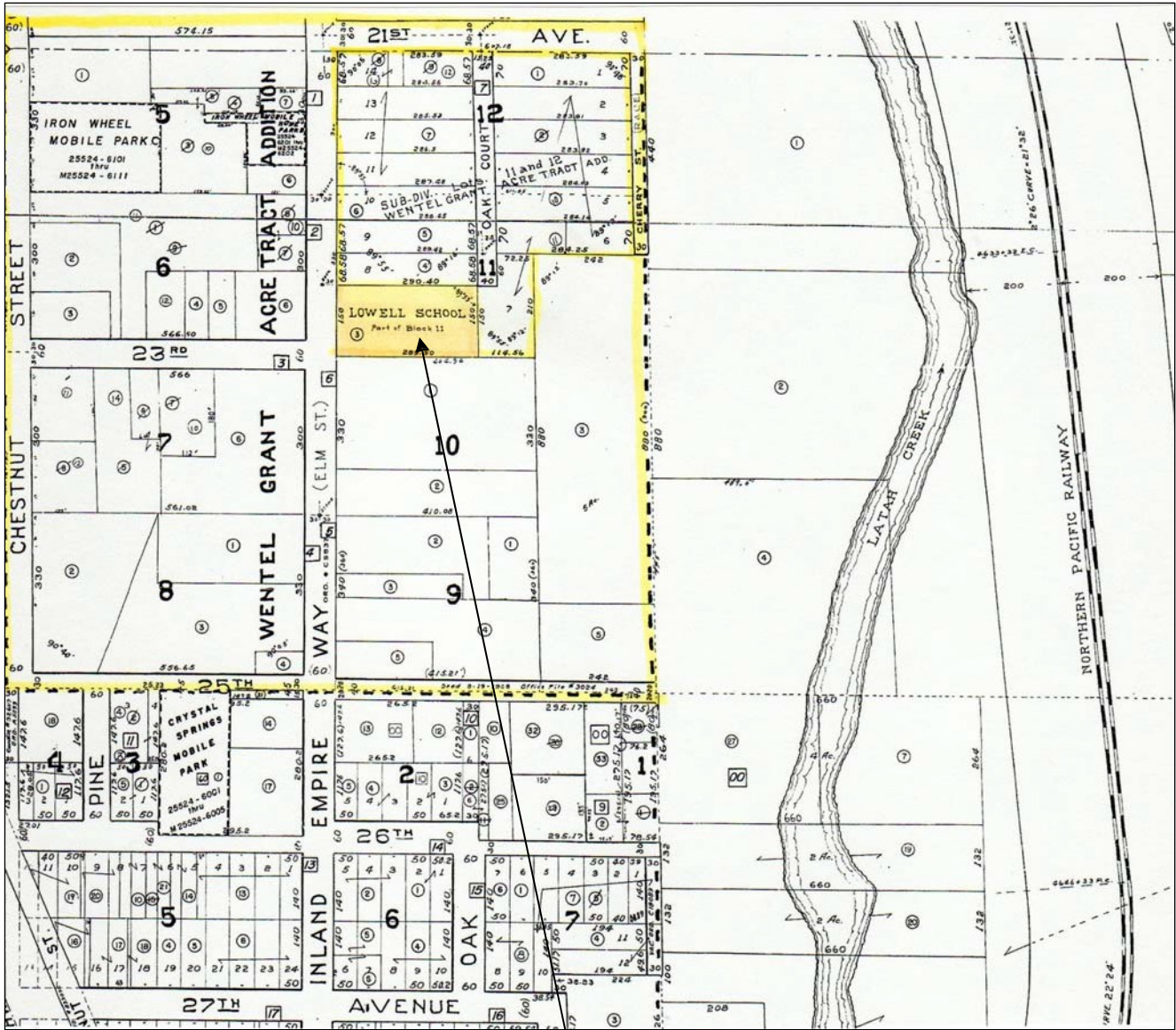


*Lowell School in 2015*

*Source: Google Maps with Latitude and Longitude Coordinates*



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

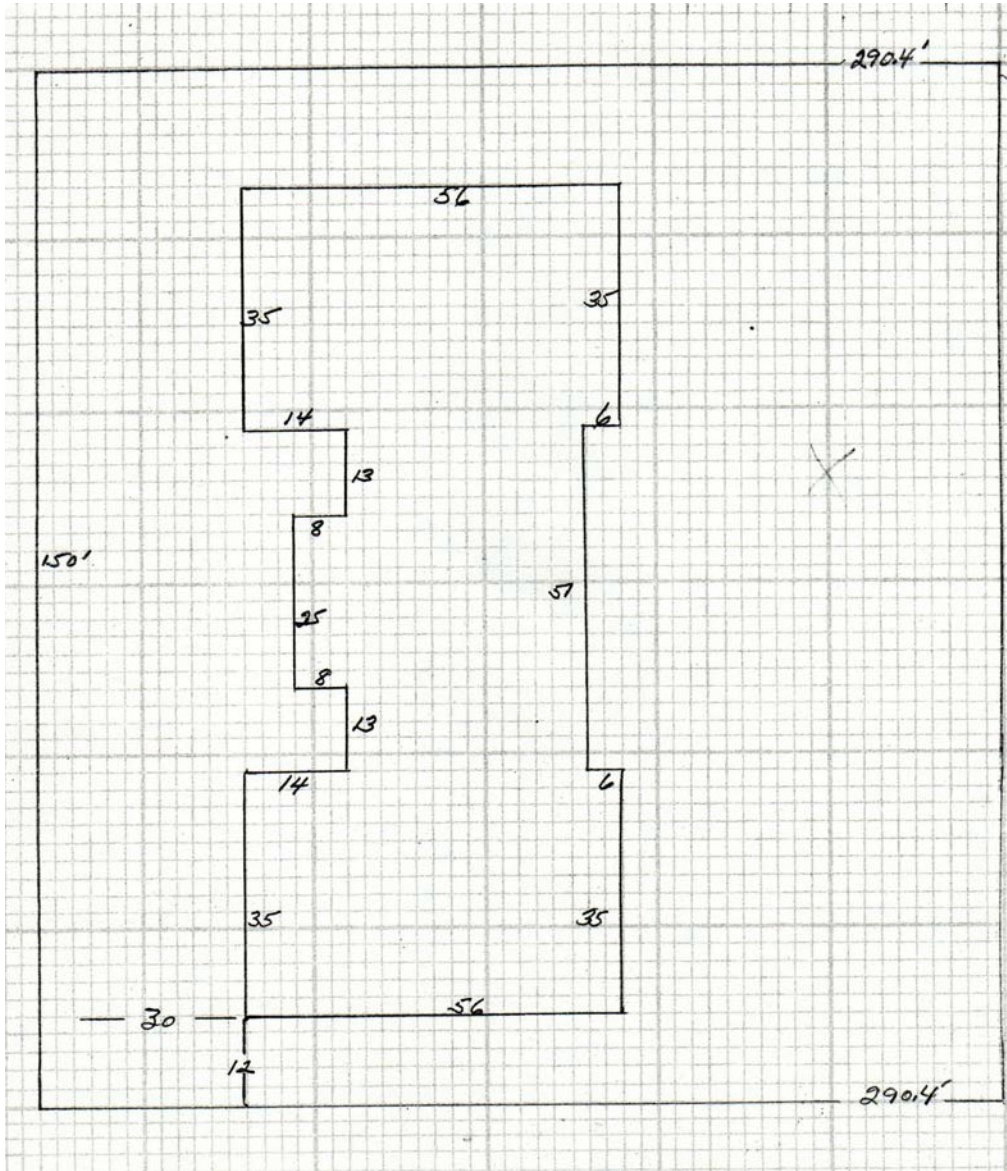


Lowell School

2015 Spokane County Plat Map  
Source: Spokane County Assessor Records



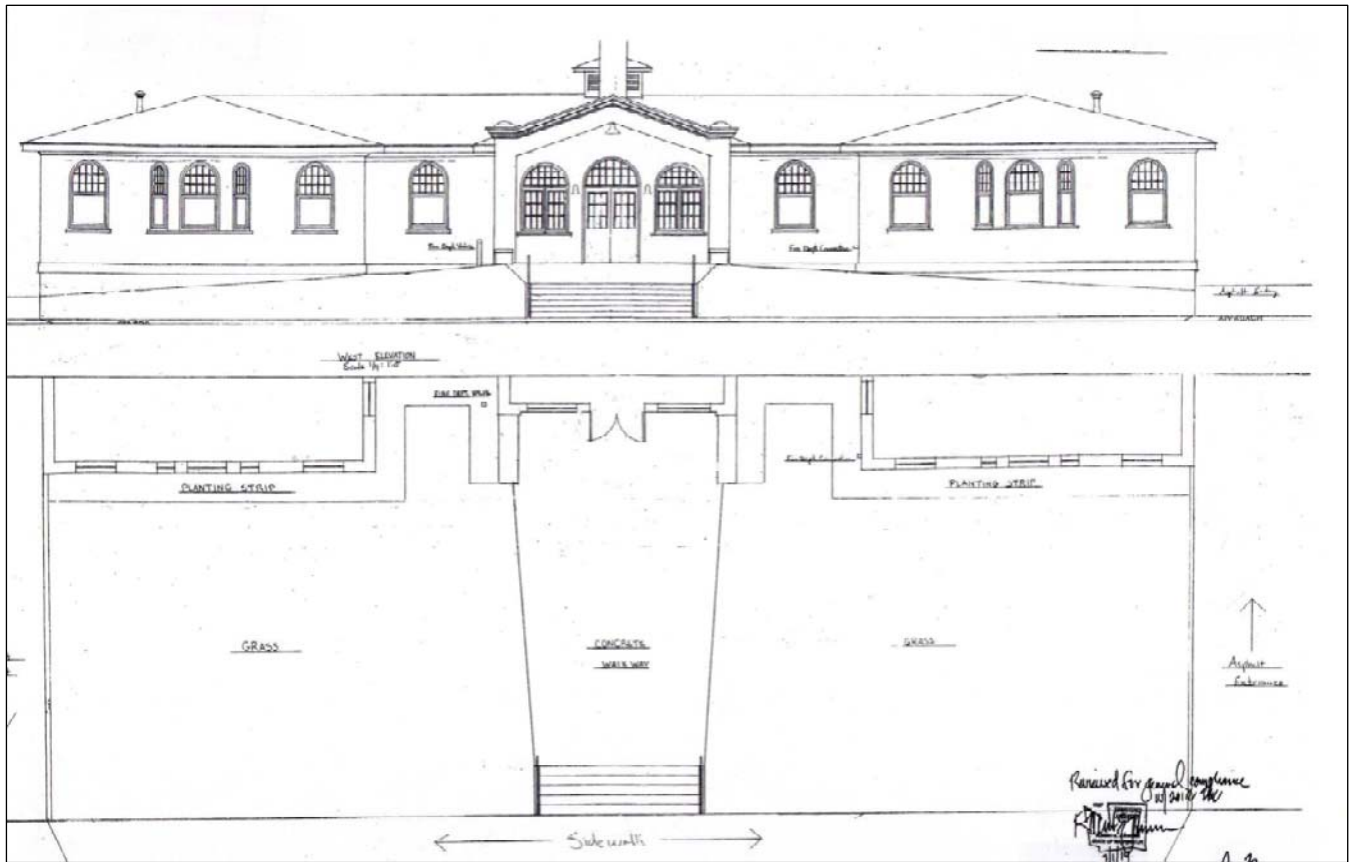
Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL



*Plat Map of Lowell School*  
*Source: Spokane County Assessor Records, Spokane, WA*

North ↑

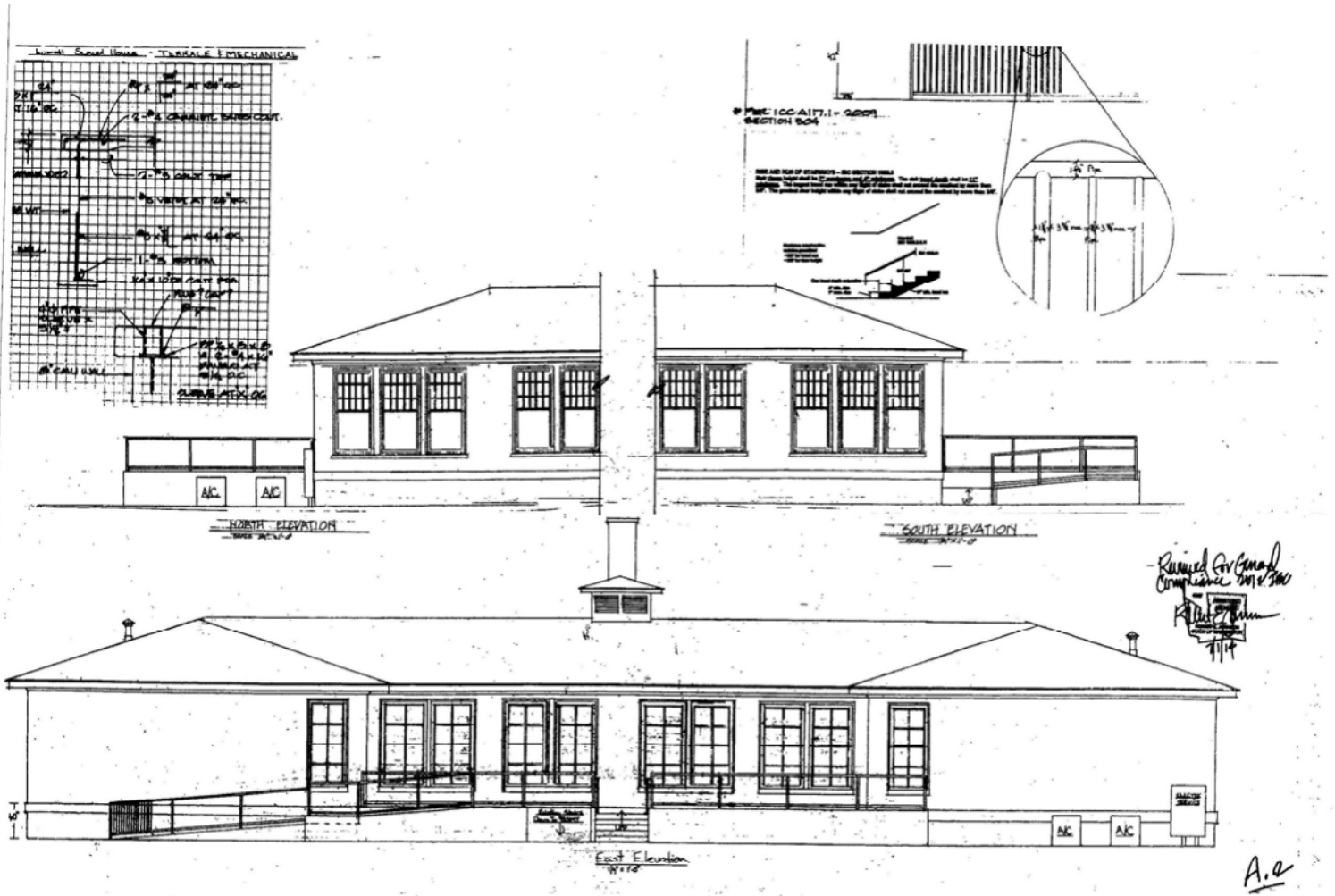
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LOWELL SCHOOL



*Lowell School  
West Façade Elevation in 2014*

*Source: Matt Gentry, Professional Contractor*

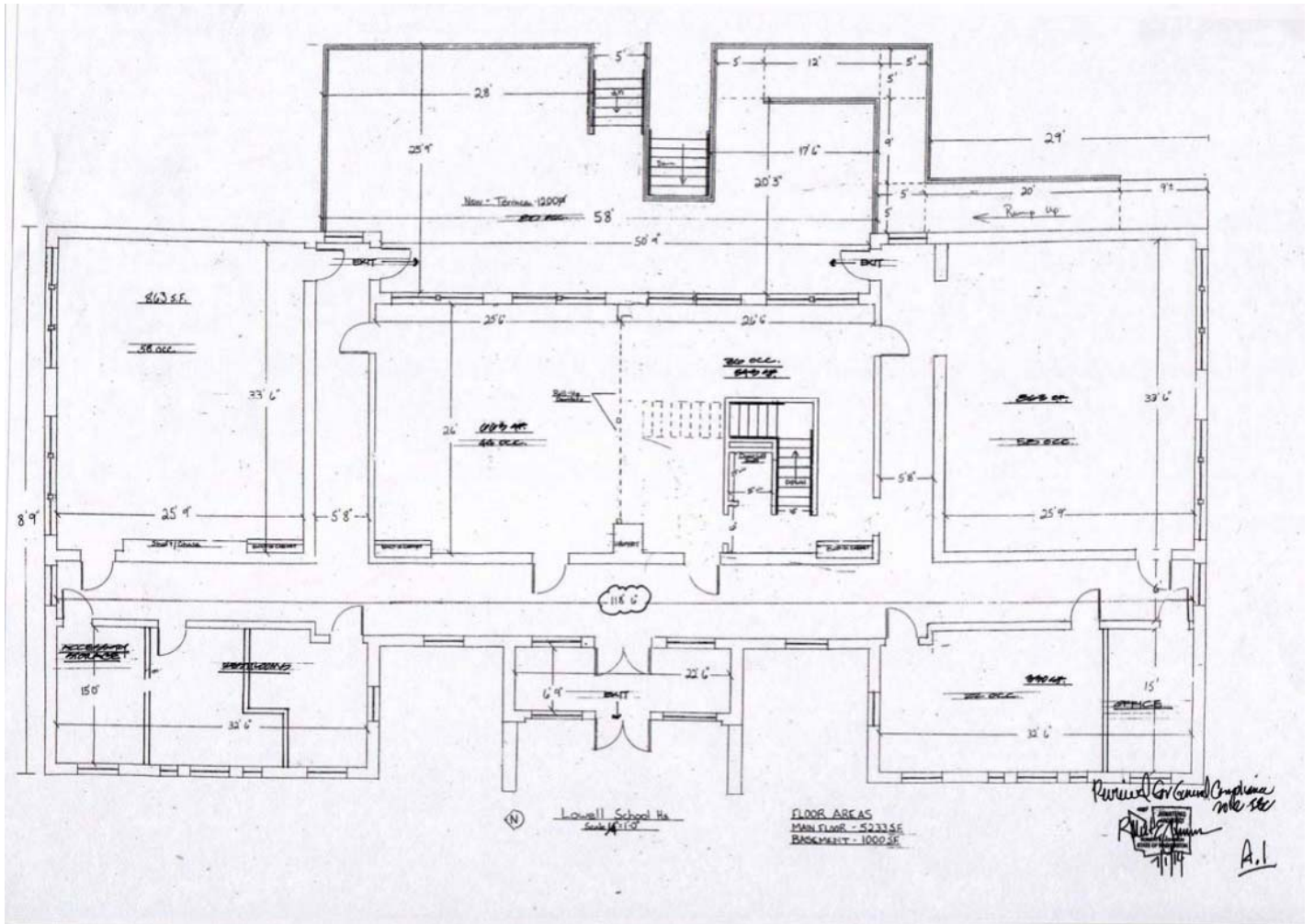
Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL



*Lowell School  
North, South, and East Elevations in 2014*

*Source: Matt Gentry, Professional Contractor*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

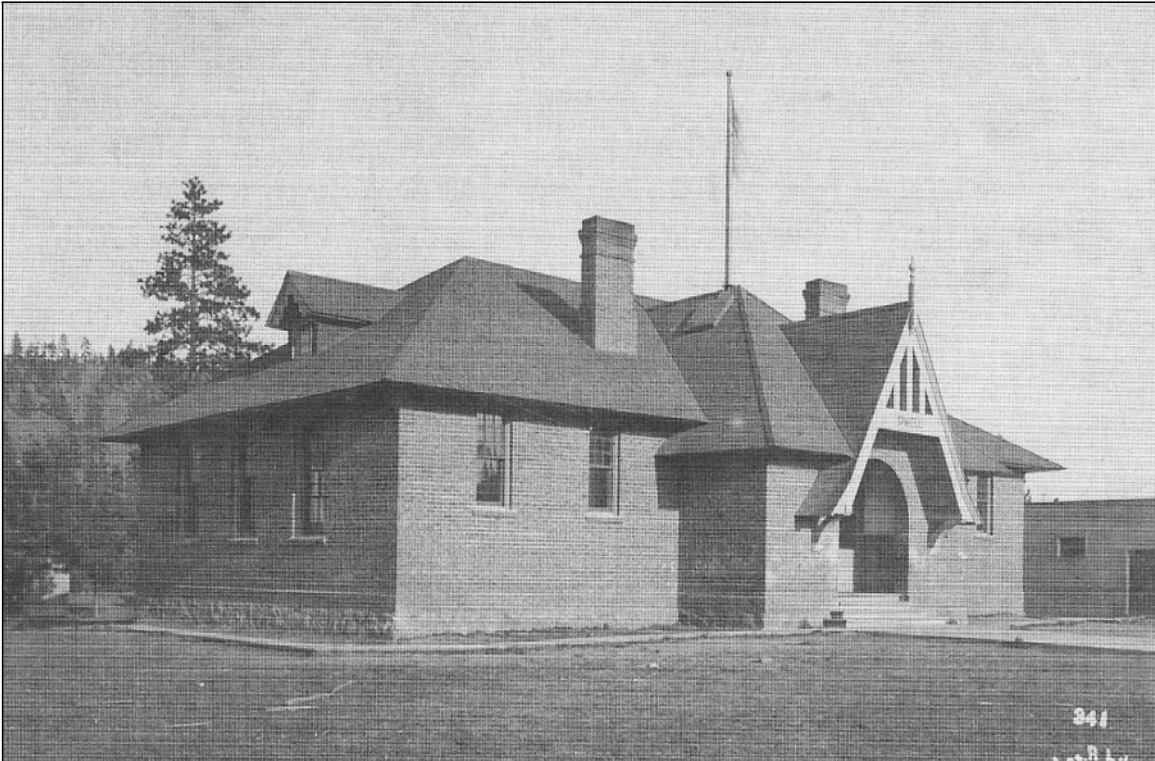


*Lowell School  
Floor Plan in 2014*

*Source: Matt Gentry, Professional Contractor*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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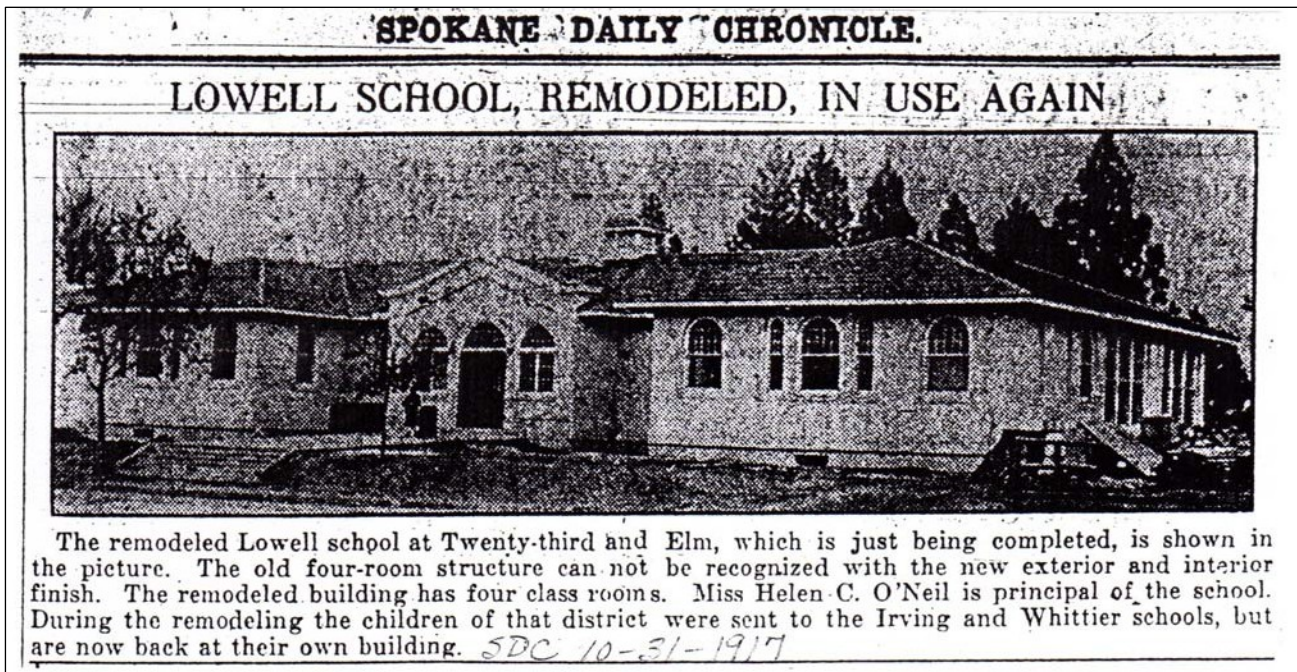
*Lowell School  
circa 1908-1910*

*Source: Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, Spokane, WA  
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Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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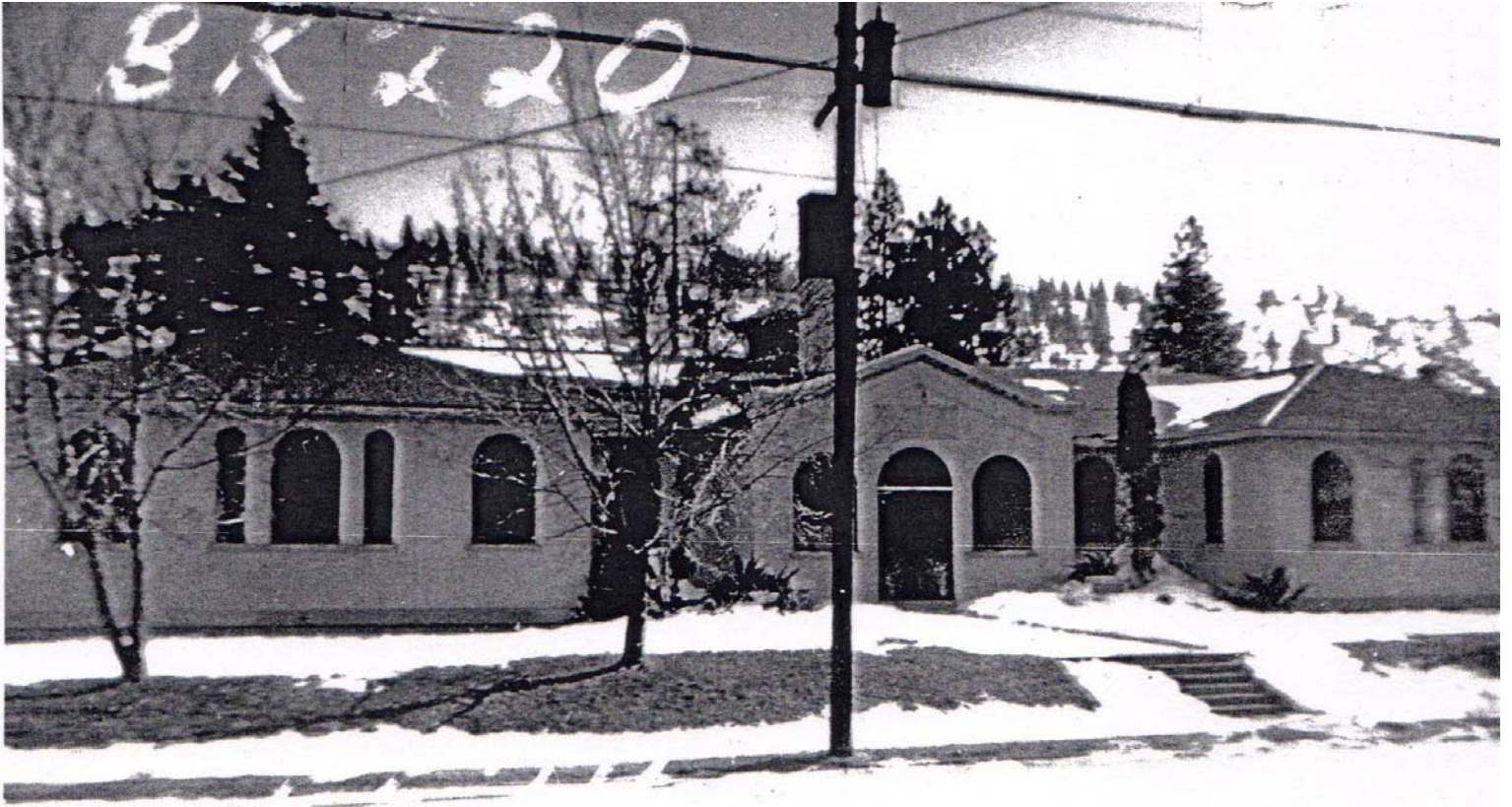


*Lowell School*

*Source: Spokane Daily Chronicle, 31 October 1917*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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*Lowell School in circa 1959*

*Source: Spokane County Assessor Records  
Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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*West façade in 2015*



*West façade in 2015*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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*South face in 2015*



*North face in 2015*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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*Rear east face in 2015*



*First floor, looking northwest into front vestibule and front door in 2015*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL



*First floor, looking northwest in 2015 into front vestibule*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL



*Looking from front vestibule into hallway and center classroom in 2015*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL



*Looking south down center hallway on first floor in 2015*



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL



*Looking north down center hallway on first floor in 2015*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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*Looking south in center classroom on first floor in 2015*



*Looking north in center classroom on first floor in 2015*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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*Looking east in north classroom on first floor in 2015*



*Looking west in southwest room on first floor in 2015*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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*Window sill detail in 2015*



*Window sill detail in 2015*

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination  
LOWELL SCHOOL

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*Basement, looking southwest in 2015*



*Basement, looking east in 2015*