

RALEIGH HISTORIC PROPERTY DESIGNATION APPLICATION AND REPORT

1. **NAME OF THE PROPERTY:** (If historic name is unknown, give current name or give street address)

Historic Name Needham B. Broughton High School

Current Name, or Address _____

2. **LOCATION:** 723 St. Mary's Street Raleigh Wake County
street city and/or county 850-1600

3. **LEGAL OWNER:** Name Wake County Board of Education day phone 790-2300

Address 3600 Wake Forest Road Raleigh North Carolina 27609
street city state zip

4. **APPLICANT/CONTACT PERSON:** Name N/A day phone _____

Address _____
street city state zip

5. **REASON FOR REQUEST:** Architectural and historical significance of the school.

6. **GENERAL DATA:**

a. Date of construction and alterations: 1929, 1930s, 1950s

b. Outbuildings: Yes _____ No X If yes, number _____

c. Approximate acreage or dimensions: Approximately 7 acres

d. Architect, builder, carpenter and/or mason: William Henley Deitrick

e. Use: Original High School Present Same

f. Is the property income producing? Yes _____ No X

7. **CLASSIFICATION:**

a. Category: building(s) X structure _____ object _____ site _____

b. Ownership: private _____ public: local X state _____ federal _____

Number of resources within property:		Contributing	Non-contributing
buildings	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
structures	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
objects	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
sites	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

d. National Register of Historic Places status (check one): Entered (date) Raleigh Neighborhoods
7/29/85
nominated: eligible _____ not eligible _____ not requested _____ removed (date) _____

e. Has the property ever been recorded during a historic building survey by the City of Raleigh or by the NC Raleigh Inventory: Linda L. Harris, Mary Ann Lee State Historic Preservation Office? If so, by whom and when 1976

8. **SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:** Raleigh Historic Properties Commission, Inc. date March 13,
Post Office Box 829 1990
Century Station
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

Broughton High School

9.(c.) Justification for Land to be Designated

The proposed boundaries for the Broughton High School designation include the front lawn of the school and the footprint of the main building, plus a perimeter of ten feet, as shown on the attached map. All of this land is part of the original ten acre tract, minus areas on which unconnected modern structures have been built. The front lawn is an integral part of a building designed to be viewed from a distance, in perspective.

9.(d.) Architectural Description and Significance

The winner of a 1928 competition to design a new high school for Raleigh was a young architect named William Henley Deitrick. A native of Danville, Virginia, Deitrick (1895-1974) moved to Raleigh in 1924 after studying at Wake Forest College and Columbia University in New York. In the course of a career of more than fifty years, he designed more than 125 public school buildings, 24 state and federal government buildings, as well as numerous churches, residences, commercial and other buildings. His best known Raleigh works, in addition to Broughton High School, are the conversion of the Raleigh Water Tower to architectural offices (1938) and the completion of the design of Dorton Arena in 1951 following the death of Matthew Nowicki. The latter structure received the American Institute of Architects' First Honor Award and the Engineering Gold Medal of the Architectural League of New York. The AIA also elected Deitrick a Fellow in 1955 for his contributions to the profession.(1)

Deitrick's design for the high school, carried out in a Northern Italian Romanesque style, combines strict symmetry, a substantial horizontal expanse (414 feet), and the vertical emphasis of a 95 foot buttressed bell/clock tower that forms the central entrance to the school. The architect used small amounts of cast stone Romanesque ornament, such as columns; enriched, arched window surrounds and doorways; belt courses and friezes, together with more weighty arches, machicolation and buttresses in random ashlar granite. Combined with accents in orange brick, red/orange tile and green copper, this skillfully-handled mix of materials and forms united to create a rich and massive exterior appearance for a relatively simple plan and a moderate-sized facility. Viewed from the perspective of the original broad front lawn, it must have been quite impressive, and remains so today, despite the surrounding clutter. An American Institute of Architects jury awarded Broughton the outstanding school prize in 1930.(2)

As completed in 1929, Broughton included a central, H-shaped classroom and office block, gymnasium and auditorium wings, and a pair of rear stair towers. During the 1930s another set of stair towers was added and the north courtyard enclosed by a classroom addition matching the original construction. Although the building is faced with random ashlar, tan local granite and orange brick and trimmed with cast stone, it has a steel frame with brick and tile interior and exterior curtain walls. Similarly, while the original roofs appear to be of red/orange Spanish tile, most of the roof surface is actually flat, built-up roofing. The original, multi-paned, double hung windows have been either filled in with recessed stonework, or replaced in the past few years with anodized aluminum thermopane windows that have four over four imitation muntins.

The center section of the front elevation is three stories tall, arranged in a shallow U with three bays of windows on either side of the tower and a projecting, gable-ended pavillion on each end. A pulvinated belt course provides a horizontal emphasis between the second and third floors, and on the gable ends divides the brick upper portion from the ashlar and cast stone lower floors. The end pavillions provide separate entrances to the lobbies of the auditorium on the east and the gymnasium on the west. Each entrance is marked by a triple arch with Romanesque columns and ornate wrought-iron gates.

The pyramidal-roofed central clock/bell tower rises two stories above the main building, reinforced at the corners with buttresses topped by attached columns, and with an upper floor that contains triple-arched windows, cast stone machicolation, a molded copper cornice, and a standing seam copper roof.

Flanking this central block on the east, the auditorium wing terminates in a fortress-like pavillion with a machicolated cross gable that faces the front. The auditorium's side is presented as its front elevation and has recessed vertical panels filled with round-arched blind windows, originally real windows with multi-pane sash. Small windows in the end pavillion have also been filled in. Now converted to classrooms, the original cafeteria was located in the basement of the auditorium.

The auditorium design, including window changes, is echoed by the west wing of the building, which included the original gymnasium, with locker rooms beneath it.

Behind the auditorium and gym wings the three-story stair towers project slightly from the wall surface. Originally flat-roofed with cast stone parapets, they now have metal caps.

Two large, three-story, flat-roofed wings, clad in a similar granite ashlar with cast stone trim on their outer elevations, and with orange brick otherwise, were added to the north end of the building during the 1950s. A one-story cafeteria structure, faced with stone on the street elevation, was also built east of

the main building in the 1950s to replace the cafeteria below the auditorium.

A large, free-standing gymnasium building of orange brick was built northwest of the main school in the early 1960s.

Most of the building originally received a very simple interior finish of plaster walls and linoleum floors with plain door casings. The area on the first floor directly behind the original main entrance retains some slightly more decorative elements, such as pilaster strips.

The 1450 seat auditorium, which originally had a panelled ceiling and ornamental frieze, was renovated in the late 1960s, removing all ornament from the interior and closing up the window openings with recessed stone panels.

The substantial front lawn of the high school, originally nearly without plantings, now has a number of sizeable, mature hardwood trees. Most of the southeast corner of the lawn has been converted to paved and gravelled parking lot in recent years, while the southwest portion of the lawn is occupied by a bevy of temporary classrooms.

9.(e.) Historical Significance

In 1924 the school committee of Raleigh Township purchased a ten acre wooded tract of Cameron land from Annie Graham Smallwood to use as a site for a proposed new high school.(3) Late in 1927 the board announced plans to construct a facility to be open by September of 1929. Hugh Morson High School, occupied in 1925, was already nearing capacity, and the Junior High on West Morgan Street, occupied solely by seventh graders, was badly obsolete. Members of the school board travelled to High Point, Salisbury, Hickory, Asheville, Hendersonville and Gastonia to look at newly constructed high schools in those towns.(4)

The late 1920s were a boom period in the development of large, city high schools in North Carolina. Rapid urban growth, consolidation of schools, increased state funding, and relatively successful local economies spawned a demand for educational facilities that were showplaces on a par with facilities anywhere in the country. Virtually every town of any pretensions in North Carolina built a large, new high school between the end of World War I and the early years of the Depression.

Raleigh's school committee held a competition to select an architect, picking a Northern Italian Romanesque design by William Henley Deitrick, a relatively young architect, but one trained in the Beaux Arts tradition of classical design at Columbia University.

The contractor for the high school was John W. Hudson, Jr., who already had to his credit construction of the Carolina Hotel, the Raleigh Bank and Trust Company Building, the State Fair

Pavillions, the West Raleigh School (later Fred Olds Elementary) and an addition to the Sir Walter Hotel.(5)

Not quite finished, the new high school opened on time for the 1929-30 school year with more than 700 students, beginning at grade seven.

Although the city's residential development was clearly moving to the west and northwest, the new high school was located on the edge of town. A newspaper article at the opening remarked,

The site of Raleigh's new high school building is ideal, meeting all the requirements which must be considered in locating an educational institution of its importance. It has a commanding view of a large portion of downtown, affords natural drainage, pure air and quiet for needed concentration on the part of Raleigh's future citizens.(6)

It was not until near the close of the first school year that the facility was known other than as the New High School or West Raleigh High. At the request of a number of citizens it was named for Needham B. Broughton (1848-1914). Broughton, a Baptist church leader, printer, and community leader was instrumental in saving the public schools in Raleigh from bankruptcy through his advocacy of a property tax increase in 1888:

Public education which is taken for granted today was unpopular, particularly with the large taxpayers, in those days but with Mr. Broughton leading the fight, legislation was secured for an eight-month school.(7)

Broughton was also a long-time school committee member, was partially responsible for bringing North Carolina A & M to Raleigh, and was an advocate of educational opportunities for women.(8)

Between 1955 and 1962, when Enloe High School opened, Broughton was the only high school in Raleigh for white students, and one of the largest high schools in the state. In 1971 it became completely integrated. Over the years it also gained a reputation for being one of the state's best secondary schools, a reputation which has carried into the 1980s.(9)

Notes

- ¹"Deitrick Paralleled--and Made--Architecture History," The (Raleigh) News and Observer, 21 July 1974 and "Architect Deitrick Dies at 79," The (Raleigh) News and Observer, 15 July 1974.
- ²Elizabeth Waugh, North Carolina's Capital, Raleigh, (Raleigh: Junior League of Raleigh, 1967) p. 177.
- ³Wake County Deeds, Book 438, page 370.
- ⁴"Erect News High School by 1929," The (Raleigh) News and Observer, 29 September 1927, p. 8.
- ⁵"Native Talent and Material Displayed in New Raleigh High School Building," The (Raleigh) News and Observer, 0-4.
- ⁶Ibid.
- ⁷Mrs. J. M. Barbee, Ed., Historical Sketches of the Raleigh Public Schools 1876-1941-1942 (Raleigh: Barbee Pupils' Assn., 1943) p. 67.
- ⁸William S. Powell, Ed., Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, Vol. 1, A-C (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979) p. 239.
- ⁹Vertical File for Broughton High School, Wake County Public Library, Cameron Village Branch, Raleigh.

Bibliography

Barbee, Mrs. J. M. Historical Sketches of the Raleigh Public Schools. Raleigh: Barbee Pupils' Association, 1943.

Dutton, Marilyn and Brown, Charlotte V. National Register nomination for Cameron Park: Early 20th Century Raleigh Neighborhoods, 8 July 1982.

The (Raleigh) News and Observer, 29 September 1927, p. 8. "Erect New High School by 1929."

The (Raleigh) News and Observer, 1 September 1929, p. O-4. "Native Talent and Material Displayed in New Raleigh High School Building."

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Wake County Deeds.

Waugh, Elizabeth Culbertson. North Carolina's Capital, Raleigh. Raleigh: Junior League of Raleigh, 1967.

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