

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

24

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

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

1. Name

historic 1892 KUTZTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING

and/or common

2. Location

street & number White Oak and Normal Avenue ___ not for publication

city, town Kutztown ___ vicinity of congressional district 6

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Berks code 011

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> 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 Kutztown Area Historical Society

street & number White Oak and Normal Avenue

city, town Kutztown ___ vicinity of state Pennsylvania 19530

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Berks County Courthouse

street & number Sixth and Court Street

city, town Reading state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes ___ no

date December 1979 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

city, town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The schoolhouse is a 2 story, 8 room victorian structure of brick and stone construction. It has an attic and a basement with a cement floor. The building measures 76' x 84' with a 13½' x 40' tower in the front and a later 2 story addition in the rear (27' x 25') dating from 1936. In front, facing west on White Oak Street, there is a 3 story bell tower with the words "Built, 1892 Public School" embossed in blue King of Prussia marble. An arch and pediment porch with four columns graces the marble steps which lead into the tower's vestibule. Above the modern firedoors, which hopefully can be replaced by the original ones, are two stained glass windows. A three-sectioned window is above the porch in the tower. To the right and left of the tower are spacious stairways leading to the basement and second floor. Each stairwell has 8 narrow windows, 3 being trimmed with a marble arch at the top and 3 others of plainer design on the basement level. To either side of the stairwell are 2 large 5½' x 9' windows bordered by 2 more narrow windows measuring 2½' x 7'. To each side of the tower on the roof is an ornately decorated pediment with arched dormer window. The corners of the building do not meet at a 90 degree angle, but rather at two 45 degree angles allowing enough room for another window across each irregular corner. All windows on the second story are arched and trimmed in blue marble except those located in the rear of the building. Windows on the southside are in the same configuration as in the front of the building. The only difference is that here the two sets of classroom windows are interrupted by a large chimney rather than a bell tower and stairwell. Resembling a pilaster, the chimney extends partially from the wall and rises from the basement level to above the roof. To each side of the chimney is a rectangular dormer window. Windows in the rear, east side, are identical to those in the front, but not trimmed in blue marble. Again there is an arched dormer window on each end of the roof. Between the 2 sets of classroom windows on this side is a 27' x 25' addition that houses the restroom facilities. On the south side of this addition there is a window on each story and a basement window as well. There are no openings on the addition's east face, except for a basement door. There are 7 windows to the north side of the addition, two on each level and one at a stairway landing. The windows on the north side are identical to those on the southside. The chimney on this side is also the same, however, it is perhaps 15' or 20' higher on this side.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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 1892 Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Architect: M. B. Bean / Builder: Daniel W. Kline & Lewis Dietrich

The 1892 Kutztown Public School building is a fine example of the larger public school buildings built throughout Pennsylvania toward the end of the 19th century. This particular school is more ornate than most and is one of the best preserved of these structures in Berks County. Because of the stricter state fire codes for these wooden floored structures many of these ornate turn-of-the-century school structures have been or will be demolished.

School accomodation in Kutztown in 1892 was inadequate to serve the 5 grade-levels of primary, secondary, intermediate, grammar and high school. As early as 1880, school authorities had been forced to transfer high school students to the old town hall. Remaining grade-levels held sessions at the two story, 4 room schoolhouse located where the Kutztown Bottling Works now stands.

On January 22, 1892, the Kutztown School Board held a meeting to explore the possibility of adding two suitable rooms to the old structure. What exactly transpired at this meeting is not known, however, shortly thereafter the school board payed Augustus Wink \$850.00 for a 200' x 185' lot at the corner of White Oak and Normal Avenues. Here a brand new public school building was to be erected.

Lansdale architect M. B. Bean was hired to draw up the blueprints, for the school board was apparently impressed with his design of the Lansdale schoolhouse which they had visited. No expense was to be spared to make this school the envy of every community in the county. Classrooms were to be spacious, measuring 34' x 25' x 12½'. Only the finest materials were to be employed in its construction. The basement walls were to consist of the best blue limestone, the joists of the strongest black oak, the mortar of "showy" Fleetwood sand, the wood trim of the finest hemlock, the roofing squares of "Big Washington Vein" slate, and the steps, trimmings and corners of the "very best hard, blue, King of Prussia marble." Over 130,000 bricks were supplied by Josiah Fisher and Grim Brothers of Allentown. Ten thousand of these were expensive pressed bricks used for the exterior walls. Gasser and Johnson's Northeastern Planning Mill made 79 inside shutters at a cost of \$400.00.

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1892 KUTZTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING, Berks County

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Throughout the project the board advertised for bids by printing hand bills, thus tending to keep most of the labor within the local area. Daniel W. Kline became the chief carpenter at \$1.75 per day while his hired hands received 18¢ per hour. Lewis Dietrich was engaged as the stone mason on the project while Phillip Wentz got the bid for doing the marble work. Wanonhorst and Smith did the tinwork for the steeple and William Quigly was the plasterer receiving a wage of 24¢ per square yard. Other familiar names who were employed as laborers included Solon Boyer, John J. Sharadin, William and Nicholas Scheidt, John Angstadt, Chester Betz, E. H. Fenstermaker, Howard Geiger, Julius Schneider, Jonothan Mertz, Addison Billig, Wilson Brown, Charles Christman and Peter and Edward Steckel.

By the end of the summer, 1893, most of the work remaining to be done was all but completed. The opening of the school was postponed in order to permit a proper dedication to be held on October 1, 1893.

School began in 1893 with the following instructional staff: George Bordner, High school; Alice Hottenstein, grammar; Laura Gross, intermediate; Rosa Christ, secondary; and Annie Stein, primary. Salaries ranged from \$45.00 to \$25.00 a month.

In 1909 the high school was raised to a third-grade high school and by 1912 it had been elevated to a second--grade level by adding one year to its course and employing an additional teacher. That was also the year Kutztown became the first county school to install playground equipment for its children. The educational program was further improved a year later by inaugurating a music program with employment of George W. Fichthorn as Superintendent of Music.

Events moved along swiftly toward the ground breaking for a new high school located directly across White Oak Street from the 1892 building. Because outsiders could attend the high school for one dollar a month, enrollments had increased sufficiently by 1916 to justify a new \$31,000 educational facility with assembly - room gymnasium and principal's office. The present building was not big enough for all the children so that high school classes were held in Trinity Lutheran's Parish House until the new school could be completed. On December 7, 1917, the students and faculty marched across the street to take up classes in the new building, leaving the old schoolhouse exclusively for elementary use.

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During the Depression, Kutztown, like many other communities, took advantage of WPA projects to make improvements in facilities and services. One such project in 1936 involved the construction of a fire tower addition to the 1892 elementary school to replace the old iron fire escape.

In 1956, the elementary school was moved to a new building near the Saucony Creek, and once again the 1892 schoolhouse was recycled. Thereafter it served as the junior high school annex until 1977 when it was vacated in compliance with a state condemnation citing wooden-floored schools as firetraps.

The structure today serves as the Kutztown Historical Society and community meeting hall.

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .84

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing		
C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	D	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	H	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification Starting at a point on the southside of Normal Avenue moving southeast for 200', then west for 183', then north-west for 200', then east along southside Normal Avenue for 184' to starting point.

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

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert A. Pawling

organization Kutztown Area Historical Society date _____

street & number R. D. #1, Box 124 telephone 215-926-3853

city or town Leesport state Pennsylvania 19533

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

ED WEINTRAUB, Director

title Office of Historic Preservation date _____

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

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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1892 KUTZTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING, Berks County

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Bonner, Ruth E., Sesqui-Centennial Commemorative Book. Kutztown: 1965.

Kutztown Centennial Association. Centennial History of Kutztown, Pa.
Kutztown: 1915.

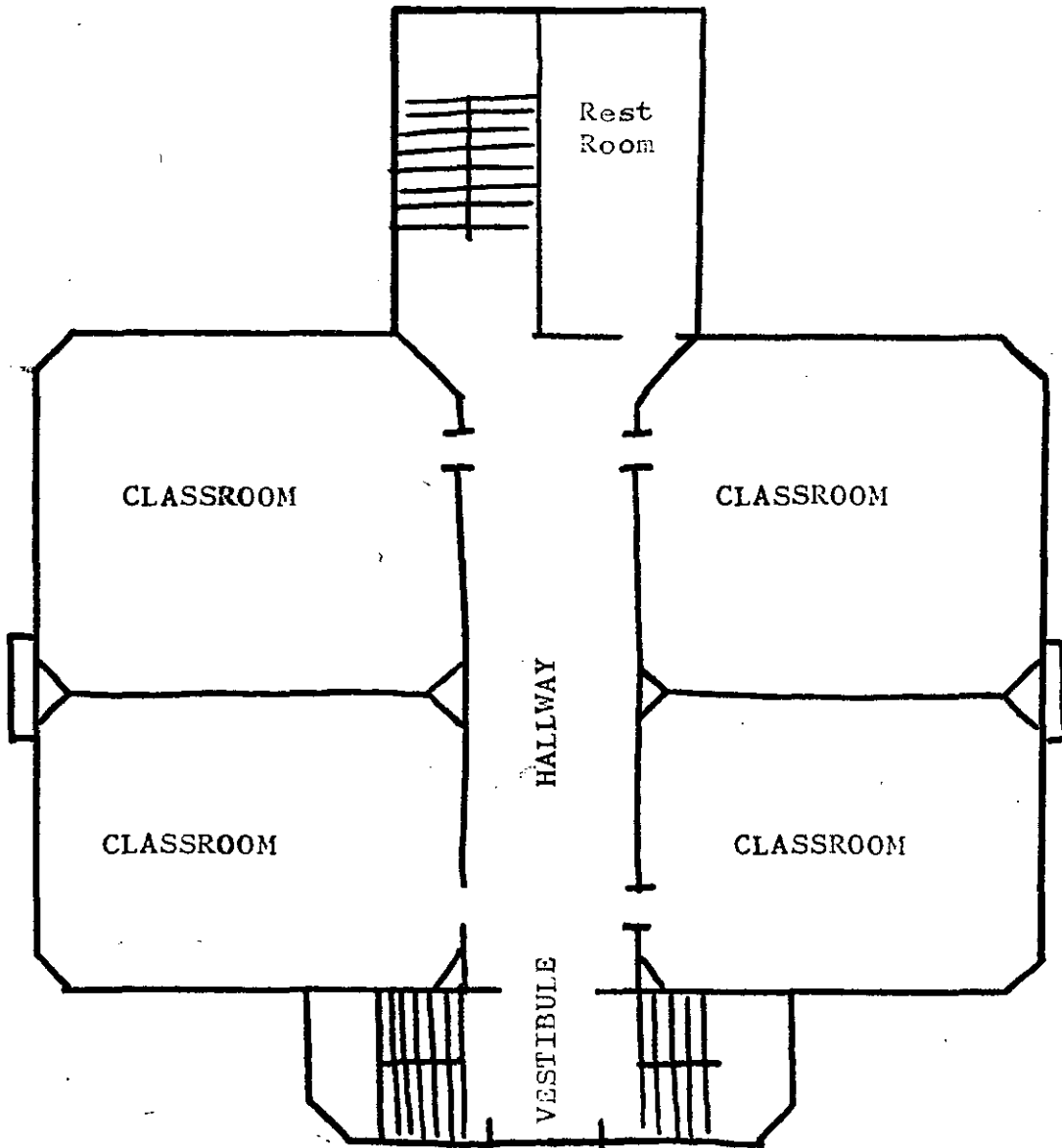
"Kutztown School Board Minutes."

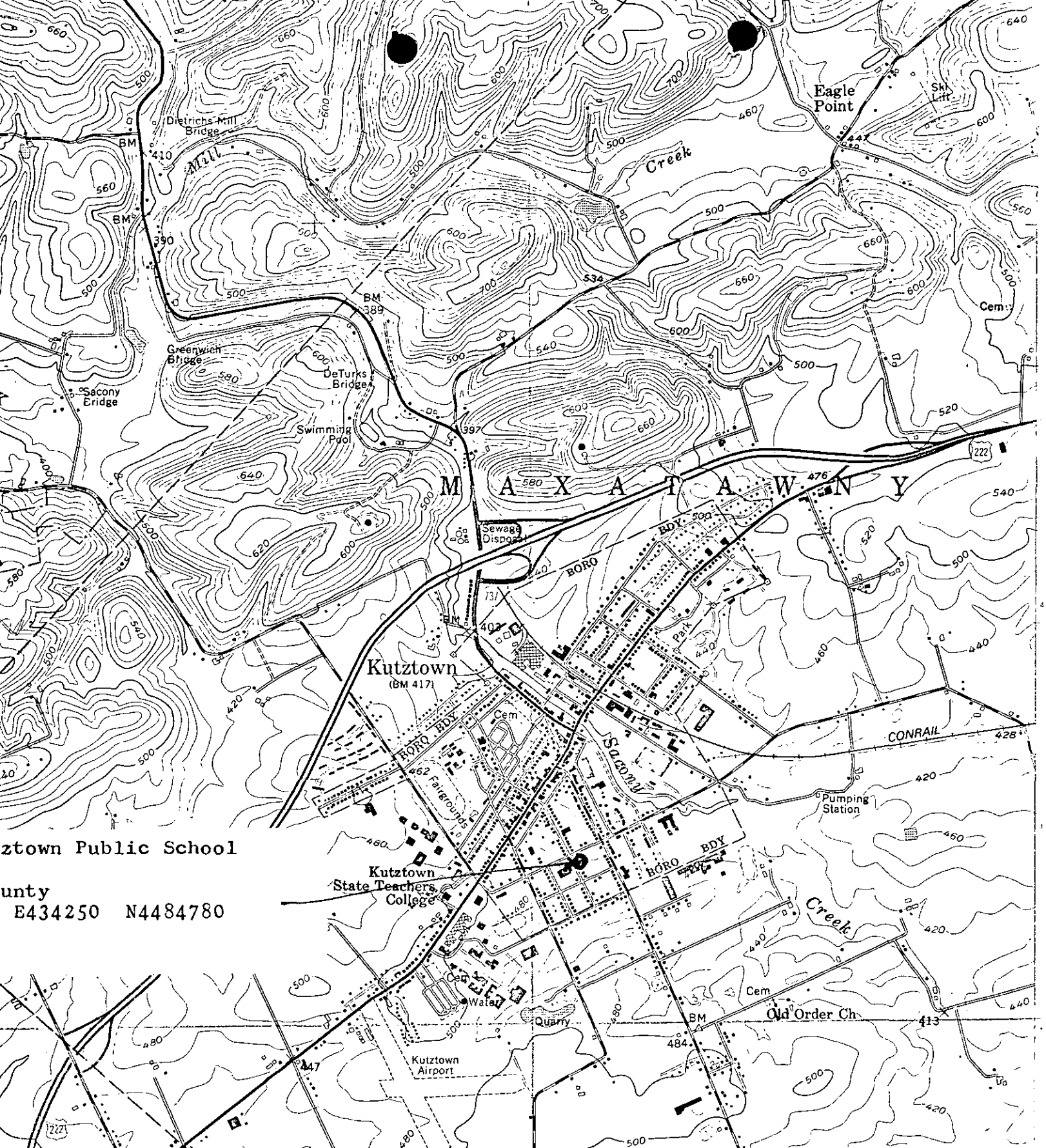
The Patriot, (October 7, 1893 - August 4, 1916)

Reading Eagle. (September 1893 - October 1893)

1892 Kutztown Public School
Berks County
Floor Plan

Scale: 1/16=1'





Kutztown Public School
 County E434250 N4484780

READING 15 MI. 432 47'30" 134 4360000m.E. 75'

