

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

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Oneida Community Limited Administration Building

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 181 Kenwood Avenue

City or town: Oneida State: NY County: Madison

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this    nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national    statewide   X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

  X A    B   X C    D

<p>_____  <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>_____  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
Name of Property

Madison Co., New York  
County and State

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- \_\_\_ entered in the National Register
- \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_ removed from the National Register
- \_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
Name of Property

Madison Co., New York  
County and State

Structure

Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
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County and State

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Late Gothic Revival; Collegiate Gothic

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Concrete; Cast Stone; Asphalt

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Oneida Community Limited Administration Building is a Collegiate Gothic-style edifice designed by architect Albert Leverett Brockway and built in 1926. It is a two-story, steel-framed construct clad in limestone with cast-stone trim and was erected above a rectangular plan. Because the building was erected on a small hill, it presents variously as a two and three-story construct depending on vantage point. Interior treatments, where they remain intact, include the extensive use of quarter-sawn oak in principal spaces and characteristic Gothic-inspired features. As the company grew and became more prosperous, additional space became necessary to accommodate it, and subsequently two additions were added to augment the original 1926 building. A complementary, Gothic-style, three-story, 13,500-square foot block was added at the north end of the original building in 1948; it provided additional office space, a new stairway, and an elevator and loading dock. The second, much larger addition was constructed in 1965. While not visible from the street, this one-story addition is aligned along nearly the entire rear (east) elevation and fronts on a large parking lot. That portion of the building houses offices, a photography studio, and an auditorium. Both the 1948 and 1965 additions were designed by the architectural firm of King & King of Syracuse, New York. The building as currently constituted contains 98,000 square feet of space.

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## **Narrative Description**

### *Location and Setting*

The Oneida Community Limited Administration Building is located on the east side of Kenwood Avenue, in the Kenwood district of the City of Oneida, Madison County, New York. About 600 feet to the south, on the west side of Kenwood Avenue, is the Oneida Community Mansion House (NHL 1965), a historic resource that shares associations with the nominated property; 1,000 feet to the north is the Oneida Creek. The City of Sherrill is located further north, directly across the creek, in Oneida County. The Oneida Community Limited company's former production facilities are located a mile further north, on State Route 5.

The nominated building faces west and is set back forty yards from Kenwood Avenue on an associated 8.26 acre lot, which features a noticeable slope, from west to east, just south of it. Landscaping consists of a large, simply manicured front lawn interspersed with a few large oak trees and evergreens, and shrubs and hedges planted along the foundation that set off the building. A slate path leads from Kenwood Avenue on a straight alignment through the lawn to the main entrance.

The sloped landscape and manner in which the building was constructed conceals the service areas and parking area located at the rear, allowing the building to better relate to the surrounding residential neighborhood. A driveway located on the south side of the building leads to a large parking lot that contains about 180 parking spaces. Adjacent to the lot is a one-story, brick and concrete block, front-gabled garage; it was built prior to 1916. Further to the northeast is an unusual, curved, wood-frame garage that accommodates twenty-seven bays; its precise date of construction is not known but it was erected between 1923 and 1945 as per Sanborn mapping. Southeast of the driveway, at the very edge of the property, is an oblong-shaped frog pond. As noted by neighbors, and confirmed by the 1945 Sanborn map, the Oneida Creek originally ran within twenty-five feet of the 1926 building. When the 1965 addition was planned, the creek was diverted, in order to allow for the construction of the addition and the parking lot.

### *Administration Building (one contributing building) Exterior Description/Overview*

The original 1926 administration building was built into the sloping grade of the site and oriented to face west towards Kenwood Avenue. It has two additions, built in 1948 and 1965, which are described separately but which collectively constitute one interconnected building. The front part of the 1926 building has a limestone veneer and cast-stone dressings; the rear elevation is narrower, brick-clad, and much less ornated in treatment. For descriptive purposes, the eighteen-bay, side-gabled façade has been divided into seven blocks (Figure 2). Starting from

the north, there is a recessed four-bay block with an end chimney; a square three-story, three-bay tower with parapet roof; a three-bay main entrance block with parapet roof; a four-bay center block; a three-bay, three-story cross-gabled block with parapet; a single bay to the south; and one-story portico in front of a recessed single bay that completes the elevation and provides secondary access through the south elevation.

Three of the four walls of the 1926 building were constructed using variably colored limestone quarried in the Credit Valley of Canada—where the company had additional factories—and were partially covered in ivy. The walls were laid up in rock-faced, random-range ashlar with cast-stone window surrounds and other details. The brick-walled portions of the building include the back wall of the stone section and the addition that spans most of the rear elevation; brick was laid up in Flemish bond. The foundation is stone above-grade with a stone water table; the roof is laid with polychrome slate shingles. There are four chimneys – one with triple cast-stone chimney pots at the north end of the building, a single large stack with decorative elements at the north end of the tower, another triple stack near the front of the tower, and a final triple stack near the intersection of the cross-gable with the center block. The recessed metal-sash multi-pane windows have cast-stone surrounds and were rendered as paired and tripartite groupings with transoms on the first floor; the fenestration pattern is matched floor to floor. A cast-stone belt course is aligned below the first-story windows and additionally serves as a sill, and it is aligned the length of the building; that feature is repeated on the second and parts of the third stories on some (but not all) of the various blocks that comprise the facade. Buttresses reinforce bay divisions and the various window groupings, which are spanned by Tudor arches, some extremely shallow, or otherwise have squared heads, some treated as Gothic label molds. The exterior exhibits distinctive features of the Collegiate Gothic style in its lively and irregular massing, picturesque use of natural and man-made materials, and overall decorative program.

#### *Façade (West elevation)*

The land slopes upwards to the three central blocks on the façade, thus revealing a lower story corresponding with the recessed north block as well as the cross-gabled block and remainder of the elevation southwards from that point. The main entrance is offset to the north. Broad slate-slab steps flanked by solid stone railings with cast-stone copings lead to large double-leaf oak doors, which are set within a Tudor-arch surround and hung on elaborate wrought-iron strap hinges. The arch and corresponding surround were formed from cast stone; the spandrels incorporate the letters “C” and “P” in low relief on circular panels, initials that denote the name “Community Plate.”<sup>1</sup> The upper portion of the surround consists of a smooth frieze enriched with evenly spaced foliate blocks, above which is a cornice with foliate enrichment and a

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<sup>1</sup> When the Administrative Building was constructed, “Community Plate” was the name of the company’s line of triple-plated silverware.

crenellations. The entry bay is framed by stepped buttresses and flanked to either side by large iron wall sconces, which have decorative wrought-iron brackets. Flanking the entrance bay and buttresses are paired twelve-lite windows with three-lite transoms, these framed by square-headed, smooth cast-stone surrounds. That window arrangement is repeated at second-story level, though without transoms, and those openings are spanned by Gothic label molds; centered directly above the entrance bay is a window band consisting of four narrow windows with eight-lite sash. In the center bay, above the second-story window band and below the crenelated parapet, is an inset panel that contains the letters "O," "C," and "L" on heraldic shields. Those initials stand for "Oneida Community Limited."

Beginning at the north end of the façade and progressing southwards, the recessed four-bay block has three sets of tripartite windows per story in the first three bays, each grouping spanned by a shallow Gothic arch; the fourth bay has a single square-headed window at each story and a small dormer with squared window at the roofline. Individual windows are varied and those corresponding with the first story have a wider central unit and transoms.

The second block moving southwards is the tower; three-stories high and three-bays wide, it projects forward from the remainder façade. Stepped buttresses serve as bay divisions and there is a centrally placed oriel window at second-story level. The first story has tripartite windows in the outer bays, those spanned by shallow Tudor arches, and two narrow windows in the center bay, situated beneath the oriel window. The outer first-story windows are identical to those employed on the adjacent block, with a central twelve-lite sash flanked by eight-lite sash, and with three- and two-lite transoms, respectively. The projecting oriel has twelve- and eight-lite windows, above and below which are panels enriched with Gothic motifs. The outer second-story windows and the three at third-story level have a central twelve-lite sash flanked by eight-lite sash; all are spanned by label molds. The upper portions of the buttresses, as well as the areas flanking the upper central window, are enriched with cast-stone Gothic detailing. A crenelated parapet terminates this block.

The third block, the entrance block, is described at the beginning of this section. Beyond it to the south is the fourth block, the widest and also the most restrained in terms of its decorative program. It consists of four symmetrically composed bays, each of which accommodates a window grouping at first- and second-story level. Each group consists of paired double windows; the double windows have two sets of eight-lite sash, separated by a mullion, with two-lite transoms above, a transom bar separating the sash and transoms. All are square-headed with cast-stone surrounds. The parapet of this section is flat and not crenelated, as it is on the adjoining blocks.

The fifth block, which is cross-gabled, is divided into inner and outer bays by stepped buttresses. It has single windows in the outer bays, paired double windows in the projecting center bay, and a single double window set within a narrow Gothic arch above. The central portion of this

elevation, between the paired double windows, is enriched with cast-stone detailing, which rises upwards to form a base for the window located beneath the gable peak. The outer portions of this elevation have a crenelated parapet; the parapet steps upwards at the buttresses before rising to a peaked center. Individual window units at first- and second-story level are hung with eight-lite sash.

Continuing southwards, the sixth block is one-bay wide; its windows are like those in the fourth block. The sixth block, which terminates the façade at its southern extreme, has a one-story entrance portico extending southwards at grade level, which at this part of the building is below the first story on the remainder of the elevation. The portico has wide arches spanning each elevation and opening; behind it is the recessed side of the south elevation with a single, paired window located at each story. There are two entrances under the portico, those facing east and west.

#### *South elevation*

The south elevation of the 1926 building is divided into a stone four-bay section and a recessed brick section, also four bays. Fenestration in the two parts is similar, but in other ways the two are dissimilar. The stone part includes the recessed side of the façade, in the first bay, and the side gable of the main building in the second, third and fourth bays. It is three stories high with paired windows aligned vertically at each story. The first story incorporates two of the portico's arches, a double-arched window, and two double windows with squared heads. The second story has four double windows with transoms and squared heads. The third story has four shorter double windows with squared heads. The end of the gable is centered over the third bay, and there is a peaked parapet with a small double window situated near the peak; the central doubled windows on the third and second stories are slightly wider than the outer ones.

The rest of the south elevation is brick walled and recessed from the stone-veneered portion. The first bay on the rear of this section contains a glass and steel entrance door located underneath a flat canopy, along with two double windows with squared heads; the door is accessed via a ramp. The double windows of the second bay are offset and elongated and provide natural light to an internal stairwell. Evident in this area is a very distinct shift in the building's design and materials. The brickwork includes the use of decorative "clinkers" that project forward from the remainder of the wall plane in a random pattern, thereby heightening the visual effect of the wall planes.

The same brick pattern was used on the rear block of the 1926 building. In addition, vertical brick piers are located between windows; these project slightly from the wall plane and are terminated by decorative stone caps. This part of the block is three-stories high and appears to be a rear projection of the gable-front block present on the façade; the rest of the rear block is two stories. There are four rectangular-shaped, metal-framed windows per story; those at second-

story level are slightly taller (and squarer) than those above and below. Each single-paned window is subdivided into two fixed, vertical units and slightly set-back with a cast-stone sill. The roof is flat and covered with a rubber membrane; the parapet is capped with stone. The remainder of the south elevation constitutes a portion of the 1965 addition.

#### *East elevation*

Most of the original 1926 building's rear elevation is obscured by the one-story 1965 rear addition and the three-story 1948 addition, situated at the northeast corner. However, the slate roof is visible above parts of that elevation and, below it, parts of the original brick rear block. This block is three stories and divided into four bays at the southeast corner; the rest of the original brick rear block is two stories. Its fenestration is the same as described for the south elevation.

#### *North elevation*

The north elevation consists of portions of the 1965 and 1948 additions (described below) and the brick and stone portions of the original 1926 building. The brick portion is three stories high with four bays. The first story lacks fenestration, excepting a steel double-leaf door on the east end; variations in the brickwork suggest this may be a later addition. Above, the second-story windows are like those on the south elevation – each is single-paned, subdivided into two vertical units, and slightly set back in the wall plane. The third-story windows are more horizontally conceived and divided into four units.

The stone section of the building projects forward, and the land slopes down from the west, presenting three stories. The stepped gable end is dominated by a massive chimney with decorative iron work and is surmounted by triple chimney pots. Flanking the chimney on each side are single windows with squared heads on the top story; there are additionally single windows with arched heads and single, square-headed windows set slightly below grade level with corresponding wells. The corners of the building have stone buttresses with corresponding caps.

#### *1948 Addition*

The north elevation is not visible from Kenwood Street, and in general is difficult to view due to landscaping located at the neighboring property line. Moving east to west, this elevation begins with the low, one-story brick addition that is punctuated by ten single-lite windows; it connects to the west with the three-story addition that has four sets of squared, four-lite windows at the second and third stories, flanking a projecting brick elevator tower with a single entrance door at its base. On the east side of this section there are no windows, and on the west side is a loading dock and large overhead door. To the west of this is the original stone building, three stories with gable roof, with chimney surmounted by three chimney pots. Flanking this projection on each side at third-story level are single windows; the second-story windows are arched and the first-

story windows are single and square-headed windows and set slightly below grade, within corresponding wells. At the building's corners are buttresses. A large portion of the stonework is covered with climbing vegetation.

### *1965 Addition*

The east elevation of the building faces a large parking lot. Moving south to north, the original stone building is screened behind the brick-walled additions. A majority of the original slate roof is visible from this location; it slopes towards the east with a low, brick parapet wall capped with stone, until, at the north end, the roofline is shielded behind a crenellated parapet. The only true bay of this elevation is the southernmost one, which is the exposed stone building of three stories with paired windows vertically aligned above an entrance door. To the north, a large rectangular-shaped tripartite window with dividing mullions is symmetrically aligned above a paired window at the first story, vertically extending beyond the flanking window to the south. To the north, the brick construction has two projections—closest to the original stone building, three stories of brick extend northwards, in front of which is a low, one-story extension that extends eastwards. The three-story mass has four windows at the second and third stories, vertically aligned; the low, one-story brick section extends across the entire elevation, with two types of rectangular-shaped, metal-framed windows, these being evenly distributed. One single metal and glass entrance door is positioned between seven, four-lite, square-shaped windows on the south, and ten single-lite, rectangular-shaped windows to the north of the door. The roof is flat with metal coping. At the north end of this elevation, behind the low, one-story brick addition, is a section of building with two additional stories, mirroring the build-out on the south end. There are eight two-lite, square-shaped windows per floor, vertically aligned. Centered beneath each is a metal grille. Between the two three-storied masses, the same square-shaped windows follow the second story pattern and punctuate the brick wall, recessed from the projecting three-story additions. The low, one-story addition has large mechanical equipment blocking most upper views of this section.

The third, east bay, is one-story; it is constructed of red brick, intermixed with decorative black and gray bricks, laid up with a thin mortar joint and in a running bond pattern. The roofline is flat and has metal coping. Windows are square-shaped and metal-framed with four lites and stone sills. There is a double-leaf door entrance at the western side of this bay, covered by a simple portico supported by two metal posts at the corners, then to the east, ten windows are evenly spaced with metal grilles centered below each. Shrubbery conceals a large portion of the lower part of this section.

### *Interior Description*

The principal entrance from Kenwood Avenue opens into the original reception area. That area has quarter-sawn oak wainscot embellished with Gothic carvings, quarter-sawn oak door casings with engaged Gothic colonettes, a stone-laid floor surface, and boxed radiators the grilles of which were fashioned from the cutlery from the manufacturing process. The decorative lighting fixtures are suspended circular chandeliers and were fashioned from ornamental iron. The ceiling is spanned by expressed framing consisting of deep summer beams which receive smaller joists, and which bear of squat piers and wall pilasters. Two small private waiting rooms flank the entrance. North and south of the lobby are ornate quarter-sawn oak doors that lead to office spaces. On the east side of the room is an open screen with heavy turned balusters, behind which is a stone staircase that provides vertical communication between floors, descending to the south. Wood doors with two vertical glass panes each and original hardware open onto the north and south corridors, and on the north side of the stairwell a door to one side of the elevator leads eastwards.

The doors on the north side of the lobby lead to an interior corridor with windowed offices to the west; a conference room at the north end with a small office off of each side of the terminating corridor; and, on the east side, a large open area extending all the way to the east with offices arrayed along the eastern perimeter wall. The latter accommodates flexible space in the form of cubicles and movable partitions. The spaces on the west and north sides of the building retain original 1920s windows, while the spaces to the east and at the southeast corner of the building have square-headed fixed-metal windows with vertical mullions. Some windows have corresponding blinds. With the exception of the lobby, this floor was renovated in the 1980s and is characterized by suspended ceilings with fluorescent lighting, carpeted floors, and painted drywall wall finish. South of the lobby, on the west side of the corridor, are offices. The corridor terminates at an office with corresponding door. The east side of the corridor has another large area of open floor space configured with cubicles and interior partitioning. At the south/exterior wall are two offices and a meeting room. At the southeast end of the corridor is a utility stairwell.

On the floor directly below the reception space remains the original vault, built by the Mosler Safe Company, the corridor outside of which has carved quarter-sawn oak wainscot. At the north end of the corridor is the boiler room and on the west side are stock and supply rooms; to the east, the corridor widens in front of the vault, and south of the vault, on the west side, accommodates bathrooms, offices, and storage with west-facing windows. The east side of the corridor, moving southwards, has an opening into a large cafeteria with a short corridor to the south connecting to another corridor that leads eastwards to an exit. Entrances to two rooms are located on the east side of the corridor, along with an opening to another interior corridor, one more office opening, and an entrance to an enclosed utility stair. The corridor terminates at the southern lobby with entrances to the east and west. Interior finishes in that area include

suspended ceilings with fluorescent fixtures, carpeted floors, and painted drywall walls. The 1926 building ended at the eastern edge of the cafeteria.

As part of the 1980s renovations, from the cafeteria space heading east, is a corridor aligned by space given over to conference rooms and bathrooms joined by interior corridors. Positioned roughly at the halfway point of this corridor is the auditorium, which is approached via two entrances. This east corridor terminates at an exit to the parking lot located behind the building. The interior corridors— two leading to the north and two to the south— lead to clusters of windowless office spaces on one side. On the other side, the exterior perimeter of the building, are windowed offices to the north, east and south. Two of the interior north-south corridors end at exterior doorways. The interior of this space, which consists of cubicle-type office space, has dropped ceilings with fluorescent lighting fixtures, carpeted floors, and painted drywall walls.

The basement level is below ground on the northern and western sides of the building and above grade on the southern and eastern sides. At the northern end are located heating and mechanical systems, followed by the vault/main staircase and reception. A doorway enters onto a long corridor with offices aligned along the western wall, with a small lobby and grade-accessible entrance at the southern end. There are doorways on both sides of the lobby, to the east and the west; that to the west was the original entrance with arched doorway, while that to the east appears to have been added later and provides an accessible point-of-access with electronic glass doors and a wheelchair ramp. The office closest to the lobby was used as a waiting room for limousine drivers. The next two offices were used as the Kenwood post office. The other offices down that hallway were occupied by a barber, a travel agent, a shoeshine and a doctor's office. All were located in the original 1920s part of the building.

Directly above the reception area at second-floor level is the former executive suite area with several adjoining offices on the northwest side of the corridor. The office spaces were updated in the 1980s with suspended ceilings with fluorescent lighting, wallpaper, carpeted floors, desks, bookshelves, and electrical systems. At the north end of the corridor is the large executive conference room. It is characterized by ornate treatments, with floor-to-ceiling quarter-sawn oak walls, elaborate hand-carved wood reliefs, a vaulted and beamed ceiling, and a mixture of wall-sconce, recessed canisters, and metal chandelier-style electric lighting. The north wall has a large fireplace consisting of a brick-lined fireplace and brick-laid hearth extension and a cast-stone Tudor mantelpiece; the fireplace retains the original andirons with the letter "O" on one side and "C" on the other. That room receives abundant natural light from large windows with leaded glass positioned on the north, east and west walls.

South of the executive suite are doors that open onto a long double-loaded corridor with windowed offices on the east and west sides. At the northeast beginning of the corridor, across from the executive suite, is an entrance to a window-lined corridor overlooking the roof of the single-storied addition and leading east into the 1948 addition. That large rectangular addition

has offices lining the perimeter and cubicles throughout the center of the space. That area, along with the offices off of the corridor, were also renovated in the 1980s with suspended ceilings with fluorescent lighting, carpeted floors, drywall and square-shaped fixed metal windows, some with interior blinds.

The third floor is smaller in square footage than any of the other floors and is only partially finished. Much of the space is given over to an unfinished attic, which runs the entire southern half of the building. The northern end of the third floor has offices around the perimeter and the open area in the center is configured with cubicles. The north end has a small law library with floor to ceiling bookshelves. This area has a mixture of original finishes, like heavy-wood details, and more recently updated features, such as suspended ceilings with fluorescent lighting and textured wallpaper.

*Large Garage (one contributing building)*

This outbuilding is a garage that accommodates twenty-seven vehicular bays. It has wood-clapboard siding and a shingled roof. Some areas of interior have a poured concrete floor and in other areas the floor is earthen. The garage is located behind the administration building on the northeastern edge of the property. It is semi-circular in plan, the north side housing fifteen garage bays and the south side housing twelve garage bays and a door.

*Small Garage (one contributing building)*

The small garage is a 37,000 square foot, one-story, gable-front building originally constructed as an auto mechanic's garage. It has a shingled roof and is constructed with load-bearing walls of concrete block and brick. This building has been extensively renovated several times over the years. At one point in its history it included a showroom of competitive products for contrast with Oneida Limited products. In 2012, the entire roof was replaced and the brick walls were rebuilt.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
Name of Property

Madison Co., New York  
County and State

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

COMMERCE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1926-1970

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1926

1948

1965

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Brockway, Albert L. (1926)

King & King (1948; 1965)

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Oneida Community Limited Administration Building, located in the City of Oneida, Madison County, New York is significant under NRHP Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and Social History for its association with the nationally prominent Oneida Community Limited Company, an international manufacturer of silverware, cutlery, and other tableware. Oneida Community Limited (later, Oneida Limited) was the outgrowth of the Oneida Community, a nineteenth-century utopian religious group that transformed itself into a joint stock company in 1880. The Community believed that selfishness was the biggest sin of mankind and valued sharing and caring for one another like a family. Those values did not cease to exist when the Community dissolved – in fact, they reappeared in a philosophy of welfare capitalism carried on by the children of the Community when they took over daily operations of the company around the turn of the twentieth century. In addition, the Oneida Community Limited Administration Building is significant under NRHP Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a noteworthy example of early twentieth century Collegiate Gothic-style architecture, in this instance employed for a company’s administrative headquarters. Initially constructed in 1926 to the designs of architect A.L. Brockway, the building housed all aspects of the company’s functions—except production – including the legal department complete with law library; marketing, with photography studio and darkroom; and presentation, with a room designed solely to display Oneida products to potential buyers. The original Brockway-designed building was later expanded, in 1948 and 1965, to the designs of the architectural firm of King & King. The building remains an outstanding specimen of the Collegiate Gothic style, notwithstanding interior alterations undertaken in more recent times. The period of significance for the Oneida Community Limited Administration Building begins with its initial construction in 1926 and ends in 1970, five years after the final and largest addition was made. That period also encompasses the Oneida Community Limited Company’s most active and productive years, as reflected in the expansions made to the building, and terminates at the standard 50-year cutoff given the continuation of the business into recent times.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

*Criterion A: Commerce and Social History*

*History of the Oneida Community*

The Oneida Community Limited Administration Building was originally constructed to house the offices of the Oneida Community Limited silverware manufacturer. That company had its origins in the Oneida Community, a utopian religious society that operated in Oneida, New York

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from 1848 to 1880. John Humphrey Noyes, spiritual leader of the Community, studied at the Yale School of Divinity. It was at that time that he began to practice an extreme form of Christianity known as Perfectionism. Perfectionists believed that Christ had returned to earth in AD 70, making it possible for adherents to be free of sin and perfect in this world. Noyes' beliefs revolved around two main ideas – the first being that individuals could achieve perfection here on earth, and the second being that perfection could only be achieved through communal living. Individuals were obliged to improve their character, their intellect, and their spirituality.<sup>2</sup>

Living in Putney, Vermont, Noyes's first followers were his immediate family members – his mother and three siblings; however, his father rejected his extreme religious teachings.<sup>3</sup> As Noyes began proselytizing throughout the Northeast, concentrating primarily on upstate New York, he further developed the tenets of his beliefs. Because the second coming of the Christ had already occurred, it was no longer appropriate to continue living within a process of sinning and repenting. People could now find perfection on earth, which involved complete spiritual and sexual equality.<sup>4</sup> One of the more controversial practices of Noyes' new religion was the rejection of traditional marriage. "He began to look upon monogamous marriage as a tyrannical institution that did not exist in heaven and eventually would be abolished on earth."<sup>5</sup> In 1838, Noyes married a devoted follower who shared his views on marriage and monogamy.

In the course of a decade, Noyes developed a small community of followers in Putney, all the while writing prolifically about his new religion.<sup>6</sup> About half of the 37 members of his group lived communally, sharing their financial affairs.<sup>7</sup> This small community soon began practicing "complex marriage," which meant they disavowed monogamy and had sexual relations with other members of their community. Soon word spread around Putney, and adultery charges were brought against Noyes.<sup>8</sup> He was arrested in October 1847, and warrants were issued for other members of the group.

In early 1848, another group of Perfectionists who were living in Madison County, New York, invited Noyes to come to their community. A member of the Oneida group, Jonathan Burt, owned a large parcel of land and offered it to members of the Putney group to come live communally in Oneida. Noyes and his followers accepted the invitation to merge with the Oneida Perfectionists, and the Oneida Association (later, Oneida Community) was formed.<sup>9</sup>

The members of the Oneida Community were dedicated to living selflessly, sharing all aspects of family life from marital relations to work to child rearing. The Community grew more than 300

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<sup>2</sup> Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, xiii.

<sup>3</sup> Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Edmonds, *The First Hundred Years*, 15.

<sup>5</sup> Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 8.

<sup>6</sup> Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 18.

<sup>7</sup> Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 19.

<sup>8</sup> Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 22.

<sup>9</sup> Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 22.

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members strong, most of whom lived under one roof in the Oneida Community Mansion House. The group supported itself by canning fruits and vegetables and manufacturing animal traps, silk, and silverware. In the 1860s, Noyes proposed a form of eugenics, known as stirpiculture, and fifty-eight children (“stirpicults”) were born in an attempt to maximize the spiritual, intellectual, moral, and physical makeup of the group. Those children were raised separate from their parents in the Children’s Wing of the Mansion House.

The Community broke up in 1880 due to internal and external pressures – internal pressures from members doubting Perfectionist ideals and teachings, and external pressures from local people who disagreed with the group’s radical lifestyle. Dissolution brought a host of problems, particularly in determining how to divide assets and how to care for individual members. Upon entering the community, members had turned over all their property. Subsequently, they lived together as a family – their food, clothing, education, and other needs were all provided by the Community. Keeping in mind that the group practiced complex marriage and stirpiculture – and that all children were cared for as a group – there were complex issues of how to deal with the women and children upon breakup. Many women married the men they were married to prior to entering the Community, and others married men who had fathered their children. This still left some women with children and no husband to marry. The members of the Community felt an obligation to these women and felt responsible for their care. The decision was made to divide the assets of the Community amongst the members.

The value of the businesses, property, and all other resources was determined to be \$600,000, which was divided into \$25 shares. Each member received shares of stock equal to half the value of the assets they brought into the Community. All children who turned sixteen while they lived in the Oneida Community, and those who turned 16 after the breakup, were given an additional \$200 in shares. The remaining shares were distributed to individuals based on how long they had been members of the Community.<sup>10</sup> Some members married, took their children, bought houses, and lived “normal” lives in the neighborhood, while others continued to live in the Mansion House.

### *History of the Oneida Community Limited Company*

The Oneida Community Limited came into existence on New Year’s Day 1881. The company was the extension of all the industries undertaken by the spiritual community. The Oneida Community was one of the only communal groups to sustain itself through manufacturing, selling fruit preserves and silk from the beginning. Silverware production began in 1877.<sup>11</sup> However, their most successful business endeavor was manufacturing and selling animal traps. Blacksmith Sewell Newhouse made traps in nearby Oneida Castle prior to joining the Community in 1848. Upon joining, he continued his trade and taught the skill to other members.

<sup>10</sup>Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 114.

<sup>11</sup>Edmonds, *The First Hundred Years*, 24.

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The first trap shop provided sufficient space for three individuals to work shoulder-to-shoulder, forging each piece by hand.<sup>12</sup> The superior quality of Newhouse's traps was well recognized, and the Community began to market and sell them across the entire Midwest. As sales increased, the shop was moved into a mill, and mechanical processes were designed to manufacture parts of the trap. Again, sales increased. The traps were sold throughout the United States, Canada, and South America – even Russia and Australia. Next, a larger trap-making factory was constructed in 1864, just down the road in Sherrill. This allowed the Community to double its production, manufacturing over 400,000 traps a year. The profits from this venture allowed them to build a second factory, that one to manufacture silk thread used in sewing machines.<sup>13</sup>

The Community's first venture into making silverware began in 1877 at one of the Community's satellite locations, in Wallingford, Connecticut. The Quinnipiac River ran through the property where Community members lived, and they decided to dam it and capitalize on its waterpower to operate a mill. Their first product was ungraded, tinned, iron spoons in two patterns. The following year, they began producing steel spoon blanks, which were sold to another company just up the river that plated the spoons. That venture into spoon manufacturing became profitable, just as the Community broke up. Soon thereafter, a decision was made to move spoon manufacturing from Wallingford, Connecticut to Niagara Falls, New York. Malaria was epidemic in Wallingford, and Niagara Falls offered waterpower and access to John Humphrey Noyes, who had relocated before the breakup to Niagara Falls, Ontario.<sup>14</sup>

Oneida Community Limited was run by a nine-member board of directors. This board consisted of John Humphrey Noyes's closest allies, who continued to consult with him on all important matters during the first turbulent year. With the exception of the silverware division, the company continued as it had with members of the community running the same daily operations they had prior to the breakup.<sup>15</sup>

The first fifteen years of Oneida Community Limited were rocky; business decisions were often secondary to the social concerns of the aging board members. However, one of the board's first decisions was to start producing a lower-quality line of silverware. That occurred in 1881 and laid the foundation for further expansion later in the century. In 1884, George Campbell took over as the president of Oneida Community Limited, serving from 1884-1889. His term was marked by an unsuccessful effort to bring Protestantism to ex-members of the Community. In 1889, John Lord became president of the company. He was one of a small faction of former members who practiced Spiritualism, believing they received messages from beyond. Lord's term brought a sharp decline in the Oneida Community Limited. Noyes had died in 1886, and Lord claimed his decisions were guided by messages from Noyes in the afterlife.

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<sup>12</sup>Edmonds, *The First Hundred Years*, 23.

<sup>13</sup>Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 164.

<sup>14</sup>Edmonds, *The First Hundred Years*, 24; Wonderly, 164.

<sup>15</sup>Edmonds, *The First Hundred Years*, 28.

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Everything changed when twenty-three-year-old Pierrepont Burt (P. B.) Noyes returned to Oneida in January of 1894. Noyes, a stirpicult, had been educated at Colgate and Harvard universities. After graduation, he worked in New York City as a wholesaler for Oneida and ran his own silverware distribution company. His experience working for the company in New York City, as well as experience running his own company, allowed him to see the problems that threatened the company's existence.<sup>16</sup> Within a couple months of returning, P. B. Noyes led a proxy fight against John Lord and the other Spiritualists. When the nearly 24,000 shares were voted, P. B. Noyes had won by just 16 shares. That vote signified an end to the old ways of doing business and ushered in a new era. Theodore Noyes was elected president of the board and P. B. Noyes spent the following year in Niagara Falls, as plant superintendent of the silverware factory where he doubled productivity.<sup>17</sup>

P.B. Noyes eventually took full control as president of Oneida Community Limited, bringing in his own team of trusted advisors to run the company. Most of these were fellow stirpicults who grew up in the Community and left to attend college and find their own careers.<sup>18</sup> Noyes, realizing that further growth of the animal trap business was limited, decided that the company should focus on a different line of production. The company had developed a method of electroplating three times as much silver on each piece of silverware in 1900, and four years later the Oneida Community Limited began to concentrate on the production of silverware.<sup>19</sup> Seeing the importance of advertising, Noyes increased the advertising budget from \$5,000 in 1903 to \$30,000 in 1904.<sup>20</sup> The gamble paid off, demand surged, and the production of silverware became very successful.

Oneida Community Limited did not abandon its communal ideals as a joint stock company. By 1909 the Board of Directors had been completely taken over by the younger generation of direct descendants of the community.<sup>21</sup> P. B. Noyes instituted a policy to cap executive salaries at a very low level and reduced management salaries when the company was having financial difficulties.<sup>22</sup> Those policies had the effect of boosting the morale of the employees who believed that the executives cared about the success of the company and of the welfare of its workers.

The company sold its Niagara-based trap and chain business in 1912, its silk business in 1913 and discontinued canning production in 1914. In 1912, the company also relocated its silverware production – and several hundred employees – from Niagara Falls to Oneida.<sup>23</sup> This left the

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<sup>16</sup>Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 125- 127.

<sup>17</sup>Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 168.

<sup>18</sup>Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 130.

<sup>19</sup>Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 2.

<sup>20</sup>Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 130.

<sup>21</sup>Noyes, *A Goodly Heritage*, 223.

<sup>22</sup>Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 144.

<sup>23</sup>Noyes, *A Goodly Heritage*, 223.

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company free to focus solely on the production of high-end silverware and to do it all in Sherrill, New York.<sup>24</sup>

The site of the Oneida Limited knife plant, still extant and located a half-mile from the administration building on the east side of Kenwood Avenue, was originally the silk factory, which was built ca. 1901. The silk factory machinery was dismantled in late 1913 and the building repurposed for the Community's canning industry. Explosions and fire caused significant damage at the building in December 1929, and in August that year the press shared news of a building and reconstruction of the knife plant, including redirection of the nearby creek channel. The knife plant had a new building built in late 1945, adding 7,700 square feet to the existing space. In 1972 plans for an 80,000 square foot addition were announced. Once that new building was constructed, the former facility would be torn down. As noted in one source, "the present site of the knife plant originally had served as the industrial heart of the Oneida Community, first having been the location of the lumber mill, then fruit processing plant, and later the silk mill."<sup>25</sup>

The company made it through the First World War, altering their manufacturing processes to support the war effort. They produced combat knives, ammunition clips, and surgical equipment. After the war, sales temporarily soared as soldiers returned, married, and set up new homes. However, within a few years, the national economic panic of 1921 sent Oneida Community Limited into a financial downturn. During that period, Pierrepont Noyes shared the financial realities of the company with the workers and proposed restructuring compensation to include pay-cuts if Oneida Community Limited promised to share profits with workers once profit had been earned.<sup>26</sup> The workers agreed and salaries and workweeks were successfully reduced to avoid lay-offs. By 1922 and in the years following, workers' wages increased more than twenty percent through profit sharing. The new prosperity of the company led its leaders to build a new administrative building.

Since 1912, the administration of the various businesses of Oneida Community Limited had been run out of an old dairy barn, built in 1863 near the site of the future Administrative Office. That building, known as the Arcade or "Ark," was renovated twice in order to convert the first floor into administration offices – the second time in 1923 by local architect Theodore Skinner.<sup>27</sup> However, that building never really lost the look of a repurposed barn. In 1926, P. B. Noyes and the board decided to construct a new administration building that more accurately conveyed the financial and social success of the company. They chose Syracuse, New York architect Albert L. Brockway to design it, following his previous work on an Oneida Community Limited factory

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<sup>24</sup>Carden, *Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, 145.

<sup>25</sup>*Rome Citizen*, February 5, 1901; *The Rome Daily Sentinel*, December 4, 1913, Page 10; *Rome Daily Sentinel*, December 17, 1929; *Madison County Leader*, August 3, 1939; *Madison County Times*, December 28, 1945; source not identified, September 21, 1972, Page 3.

<sup>26</sup>Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 191.

<sup>27</sup>Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 191.

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building built on the Canadian side of Niagara Falls.<sup>28</sup> The new building demonstrated the success of the company's progressive labor relations by including the name of every employee and the constitution of the Community Associated Clubs within its cornerstone. Once completed, the Arcade was dismantled to showcase the new building.<sup>29</sup> As a result, the Administrative Office is situated back from the south side of Kenwood Avenue, across a large lawn that once held the Ark.

In 1929, the company purchased the Wm A. Rogers and Rogers silverware companies.<sup>30</sup> To avoid continuing confusion about the Oneida Community and Oneida Community Limited, the company changed its name to Oneida Limited in 1935. During the Second World War, it produced a wide variety of matériel, including silver-plated jet engine bearings and quick-release parachute buckles. The government awarded it four excellence awards. Silverware production resumed after the war and soared through the 1950s. The company celebrated its centennial in 1948 – more than 30,000 people attended. Pierrepont Noyes retired as company president in 1950.

Around 1961 the company added the production of stainless-steel silverware to its manufacturing; this quickly became its most profitable line of production and pushed the company to new heights. In 1971, it purchased Camden Wire and began the production of industrial wire products. However, stainless steel flatware continued to be its main focus – in the 1980s, Oneida produced half of all the flatware purchased in the United States. Nonetheless, Oneida decided to continue acquiring companies and diversify its product line. In 1983 it purchased Rena-Ware, a Bellevue-based kitchenware manufacturer and, in 1984, it purchased D.J. Tableware, a flatware and china manufacturer that targeted the foodservice industry. In the 1990s the company decided to refocus on being a provider of all tabletop products. In 1996 they purchased Rego China, a major marketer of commercial dinnerware, and in 1998 they purchased Stanley Rogers and Westminster China, an Australian company which marketed flatware and dinnerware.<sup>31</sup> “Also during this period, Oneida significantly expanded its crystal and glassware product lines through several marketing and distribution agreements with independent companies.”<sup>32</sup>

However, its business model changed around the turn of the twenty-first century. In 2003, Oneida decided to sell its 100-year-old Buffalo China plant and four other factories in China, Italy, and Mexico. At that point, the company focused on distributing products under the Oneida brand name rather than producing its own products. Through 2004 and 2005 Oneida sold off assets, closing manufacturing facilities and eventually the two factories in Sherrill. In 2011, Oneida Limited was acquired by Monomoy Capital Partners.

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<sup>28</sup>Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 192.

<sup>29</sup>Wonderly, *The New Circular*, 4.

<sup>30</sup>“Gold Notes,” 31.

<sup>31</sup>Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 192.

<sup>32</sup>Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 191.

*History of Sherrill and Oneida*

Most of the population of Sherrill and Kenwood had family members who worked – or had worked – for the company, and many descendants of Oneida Community members still lived in houses near the Oneida Community Limited Administration Building. In fact, the City of Sherrill had developed early in the century as the home of the company’s employees. It was a primary focus of Oneida Community Limited’s efforts at welfare capitalism.

Throughout his career, Pierrepont Noyes retained his father’s idealism; he believed that he could create a utopia on earth. He wanted company employees to have good homes, high wages, various recreational opportunities, healthcare, and high-quality education. That was the lifestyle he had grown up with in the Oneida Community and he believed all Oneida Community Limited employees deserved the same. In 1905, the company started to lay out streets on their old farmland across the Oneida Creek in Oneida County, naming streets after members of the old community. They opened up the streets one by one, providing each with electricity, sewage, and water lines. The company then sold eighty-five-foot by one-hundred-sixty-five foot plots to their employees at below market value.<sup>33</sup> To ensure that employees could and would build their houses, the company offered to pay ten percent of construction costs and offered a bonus to help pay for the remainder.<sup>34</sup>

When in 1912 the company decided to move its production from Niagara Falls to Sherrill, it needed to convince its workers to move to Sherrill as well. In order to attract them, the company spent three years planning the move. New factories were constructed at the north end of Sherrill. More roads were laid out, radiating from the main street through town (Sherrill Road). The company began to construct speculative dwellings. They even commissioned architect Theodore Skinner to construct a large dormitory where workers could stay when they visited the community. In 1913, the company chartered a special train to bring potential workers east from Niagara Falls. In all, 351 workers took the overnight train to Sherrill and, when they arrived in the morning, they were greeted with music, vaudeville, cigars, and games.<sup>35</sup> They engaged in sporting events and enjoyed a large dinner. By mid-afternoon the workers re-boarded the train and headed back to Niagara Falls. The event was so successful in attracting employees that Sherrill grew from 89 at the beginning of 1914 to 1,200 in 1915 to 3,750 in 1916.

The culture of the Community did not end with the development of the joint stock company; their values carried through into their treatment of employees and local people. Oneida Community Limited paid higher than average wages, shared company profits, and helped employees build houses in Sherrill. They offered sick time and provided healthcare with a staff of doctors and nurses on site, who also made house calls. As the city of Sherrill grew, the

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<sup>33</sup>Wonderly, *The New Circular*, 3.

<sup>34</sup>Wonderly, *The New Circular*, 3.

<sup>35</sup>Wonderly, *The New Circular*, 3.

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company constructed parks and recreation facilities.<sup>36</sup> They matched education funds raised through taxes, donated lots for school construction, and paid at least half the cost of building the schools. The company even paid half of all teachers' salaries and provided free room and board for teachers at the Mansion House.<sup>39</sup> Most importantly, Pierrepont Noyes and the Board of Directors insisted that Sherrill should remain politically independent of Oneida Community Limited. Despite being one of the most successful "company towns" to be created in New York State, the city never became subservient to its major employer.

As Oneida Community historian Anthony Wonderly has aptly stated, "The Sherrill of Pierrepont Noyes, of William Hinds, and of Albert Kingsley [later company presidents] was long regarded locally as something like a second utopia, one that grew directly out of the values and people of the Oneida Community."<sup>37</sup>

### Criterion C: Architecture

#### *History of the Oneida Community Limited Administration Building*

Prior to the construction of the Oneida Community Limited Administration Building in 1926, the company's sales office was located in a dairy barn constructed on Oneida Community property in 1863. For unknown reasons, that building was always known as the "Ark," or Arcade. By 1873, the dairy barn had been remodeled to serve as the canning facility for fruits and vegetables produced by the Community. The company ended production of canned goods in 1914, and the building evolved into a multi-use facility, housing offices, a post office, a barber shop and a general store. Around 1923, Theodore Skinner, a prominent local architect, remodeled the inside of the Ark, specifically to house the silverware business.<sup>38</sup> The first floor of the "Ark" became known as the "Sales Office." Soon thereafter, Oneida Community Limited decided to build a new building to house all of its administration functions. In 1926, it hired A.L. Brockway of Syracuse to design a Collegiate Gothic building. Over the years, as the company grew, two additions were made to the building. The first addition was constructed in 1948, followed by a second one in 1965. Both additions were completed by the architecture firm King & King of Syracuse.

Oneida Community Limited was one of a few companies that conducted all of its administrative functions in-house. The original Community had placed an emphasis on work achieved through group collaboration; perhaps that legacy survived in this decision to centralize, which had an impact on the physical layout of the Administration Building.

In both design and function, the Oneida Community Limited Administration Building was different from both the Ark and from earlier types of factory offices. During much of the

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<sup>36</sup>Wonderly, *The New Circular*, 3.

<sup>37</sup>Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 190.

<sup>38</sup>Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 190.

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nineteenth century, a factory office often consisted of a small, two-story masonry or wood-constructed building set amongst other works buildings. General offices were commonly located on the ground story, while the upper level – with its improved access to natural light and distance from the vibration and debris of the surrounding factory – served as a firm’s drafting or plan room. Those modest office buildings were either built in a central location at the factory site or near the main gate, where they could also support security and supervision of the site. Occasionally, an office building was located more remotely from manufacturing buildings, perhaps across a street, to help shield the clerical work, records storage, and design work from the threat of fire and pollution. Stylistically, nineteenth-century office buildings were typically modest, often designed in the same functional architectural vocabulary as neighboring production buildings.

The Oneida Community Limited Administration Building is a good example of a newer type of administrative office building that began to be constructed across the country in the early twentieth century. During that era, administration buildings gained a new level of functional and architectural prominence amongst the factory buildings. Some were removed from manufacturing facilities entirely. As production processes, company structures, and product designs became increasingly sophisticated, earlier office buildings began to be transformed into larger buildings that provided space for business and executive offices, as well as workspaces for engineers and product designers. Further, administration buildings began to emerge as a source of corporate identity and were increasingly designed by skilled architects and designers using a range of architectural details and embellishments. By the 1900s, these buildings were generally given prominent sites, often shielding the public from a view of the company’s dirty, ramshackle, manufacturing buildings.<sup>39</sup>

The Oneida Community Limited Administration Building, which became a corporate symbol for the company, was designed by architect Albert L. Brockway (1864-1933) of Syracuse. Brockway was born in Utica, New York and was sent to school in Brooklyn, where he attended the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute. While traveling abroad, Brockway decided he wanted to be an architect and began taking classes in Paris at the École des Beaux Arts. Upon returning from Europe, Brockway moved to Syracuse, where he began to practice his craft. His career took a detour when Syracuse University offered him a position as chair of their architecture school. He accepted the position in 1893 but served only two years; however, during his brief time at the post, he worked tirelessly to transform the university’s architecture program – modernizing and modeling it after École des Beaux Arts.<sup>40</sup>

Following his resignation from Syracuse, Brockway returned to architectural practice, where he developed a reputation as an authority. He was a member of many organizations, among them the Beaux Arts Society, and served as president of the American Institute of Architects, the

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<sup>39</sup>Bradley, *The Works*, 35-37.

<sup>40</sup>Fitch, “Encyclopedia of Biography of New York,” 336.

American Institute of Architecture, the National Housing American Institute of Architecture and in 1918 was made chairman of Syracuse's first city planning commission.

Between 1913 and 1914, Brockway was a construction architect for the New York State Architect's Office; he also served as a consulting architect on the New York State Agricultural College at Cornell University and the State Capitol in Albany. In 1936 he designed the United State Post Office in Rome, New York, which now houses the Rome Historical Society.<sup>41</sup> He designed three buildings for the New York State Fair Grounds in 1937 and was honored with an award from Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt for his plan to extend the fairgrounds.<sup>41</sup>

Brockway's design for the original 1926 administration building is an outstanding regional representation of the Collegiate Gothic mode. This style, which formed a continuation of longstanding American interest in Gothic forms, was inspired by the Tudor architecture of England, and the architecture of Oxford and Cambridge universities more specifically. The style enjoyed substantial popularity in the early twentieth century period, at which time many prominent American architects designed new buildings for American universities and colleges in that idiom. Although more commonly associated with collegiate and other educational architecture in the United States, in this instance it was employed for an administration building. Brockway's design employed many characteristic features and decorative devices of the mode, as manifested in its highly picturesque, asymmetrical form and silhouette; its robust Gothic-inspired decorative program inclusive of stepped buttresses, Tudor-arched windows and those with label molds, crenellations, clustered chimney pots, and an oriel window; and in its expressive use of materials, contrasting rough-hewn and smooth-textured expanses. Although a historicist design drawing from distant Gothic sources, the building nevertheless employed contemporary construction technology as acknowledged by its steel framing and cast-stone dressings.

When Oneida Limited decided to put an addition on the administration building in 1948, they looked to the well-known Syracuse firm of King & King for a compatible design. King & King was founded in 1868 and designed many buildings in and around Syracuse, including the National Grid building; the Onondaga County Courthouse; Crouse College, Bird Library and Manley Fieldhouse on the Syracuse University campus; the Center State CEO headquarters; and the Galleries.

The addition of stainless-steel silverware in the early 1960s was very successful and profitable for Oneida Limited. The company required additional sales support and built one more addition in 1965, designed again by King & King. Additional space was needed to house more marketing and sales support folks, additional photography and packaging spaces.

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<sup>41</sup>The Preservation Association of Central New York, "Albert L. Brockway."  
[http://syracusethenandnow.org/Architects/Brockway/Albert\\_L\\_Brockway.htm](http://syracusethenandnow.org/Architects/Brockway/Albert_L_Brockway.htm)

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*After 1970*

In 1971, Oneida Limited purchased Camden Wire and began the production of industrial wire products. However, stainless steel flatware continued to be its main focus – in the 1980s Oneida produced half of all the flatware purchased in the United States. Nonetheless, Oneida decided to continue acquiring companies and diversify its product line. In 1983 it purchased Rena-Ware, a Bellevue-based kitchenware manufacturer and, in 1984, it purchased D.J. Tableware, a flatware and china manufacturer that targeted the foodservice industry. In the 1990s the company decided to refocus on being a provider of all tabletop products. In 1996 they purchased Rego China, a major marketer of commercial dinnerware, and in 1998 they purchased Stanley Rogers and Westminster China, an Australian company which marketed flatware and dinnerware.<sup>42</sup> “Also during this period, Oneida significantly expanded its crystal and glassware product lines through several marketing and distribution agreements with independent companies.”<sup>43</sup> However, its business model changed around the turn of the twenty-first century. In 2003, Oneida decided to sell its 100-year old Buffalo China plant and four other factories in China, Italy, and Mexico. At this point, the company focused on distributing products under the Oneida brand name rather than producing its own products. Through 2004 and 2005 Oneida sold off assets, closing manufacturing facilities and eventually the two factories in Sherrill, New York. In 2011, Oneida Limited was acquired by Monomoy Capital Partners.

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<sup>42</sup> Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 192.

<sup>43</sup> Wonderly, *Oneida Utopia*, 191.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Oneida, NY 13421

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Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 8.44

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
Name of Property

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3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

**Or**  
**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 18 Easting: 450888 Northing: 4767919

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property boundary is outlined on the attached map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the boundary that has been associated with the Oneida Limited Administration Building since it was constructed.

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
Name of Property

Madison Co., New York  
County and State

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Nell Ziegler  
organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number: 101 Skinner Road  
city or town: Oneida state: NY zip code: 13421  
e-mail nwziegler@gmail.com  
telephone: 315-363-0886  
date: December 5, 2016

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

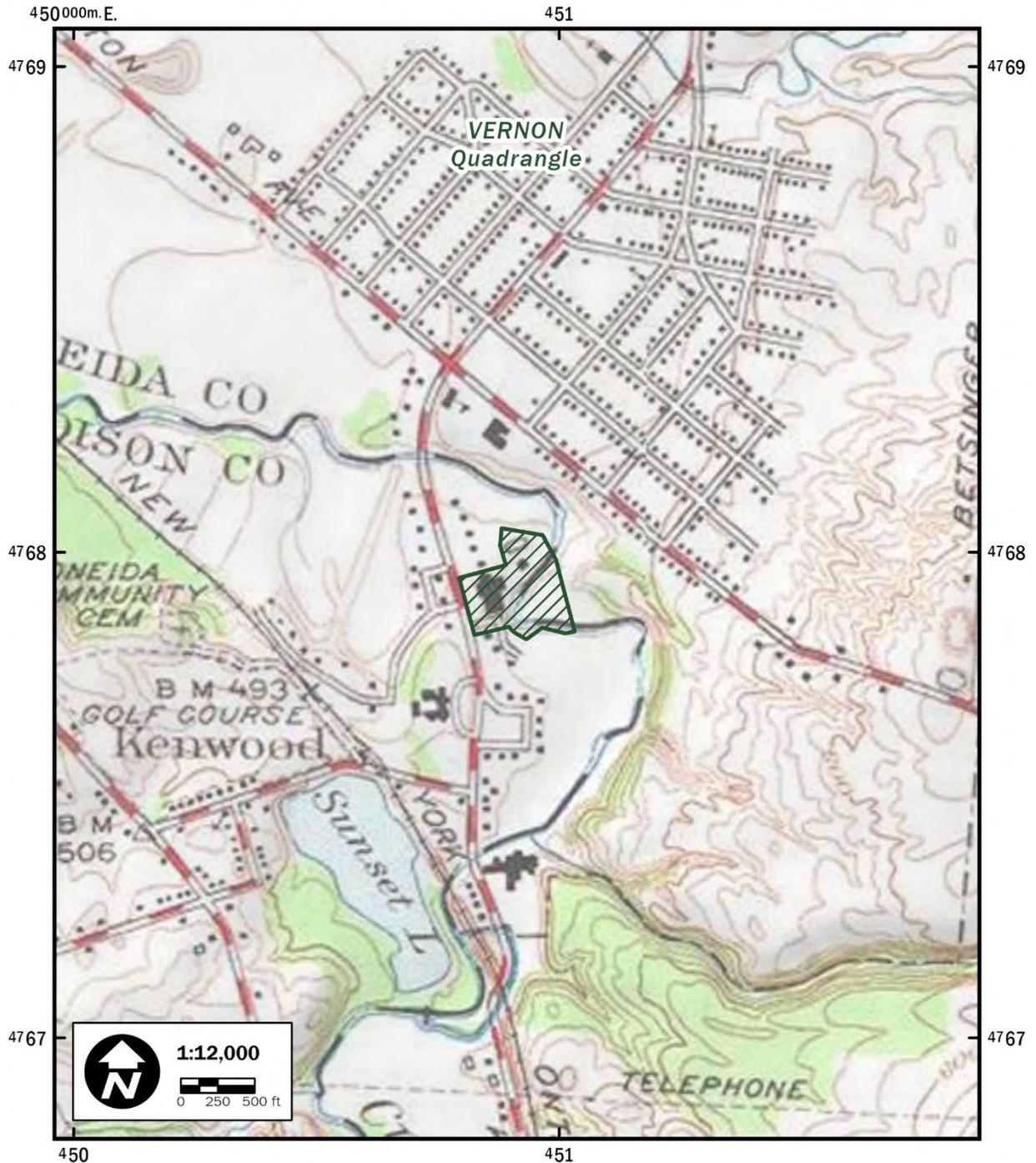
- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
Name of Property

Madison Co., New York  
County and State

Oneida Limited Administration Building  
City of Oneida, Madison County, New York

181 Kenwood Avenue  
Oneida, NY 13421



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter

 Nomination Boundary



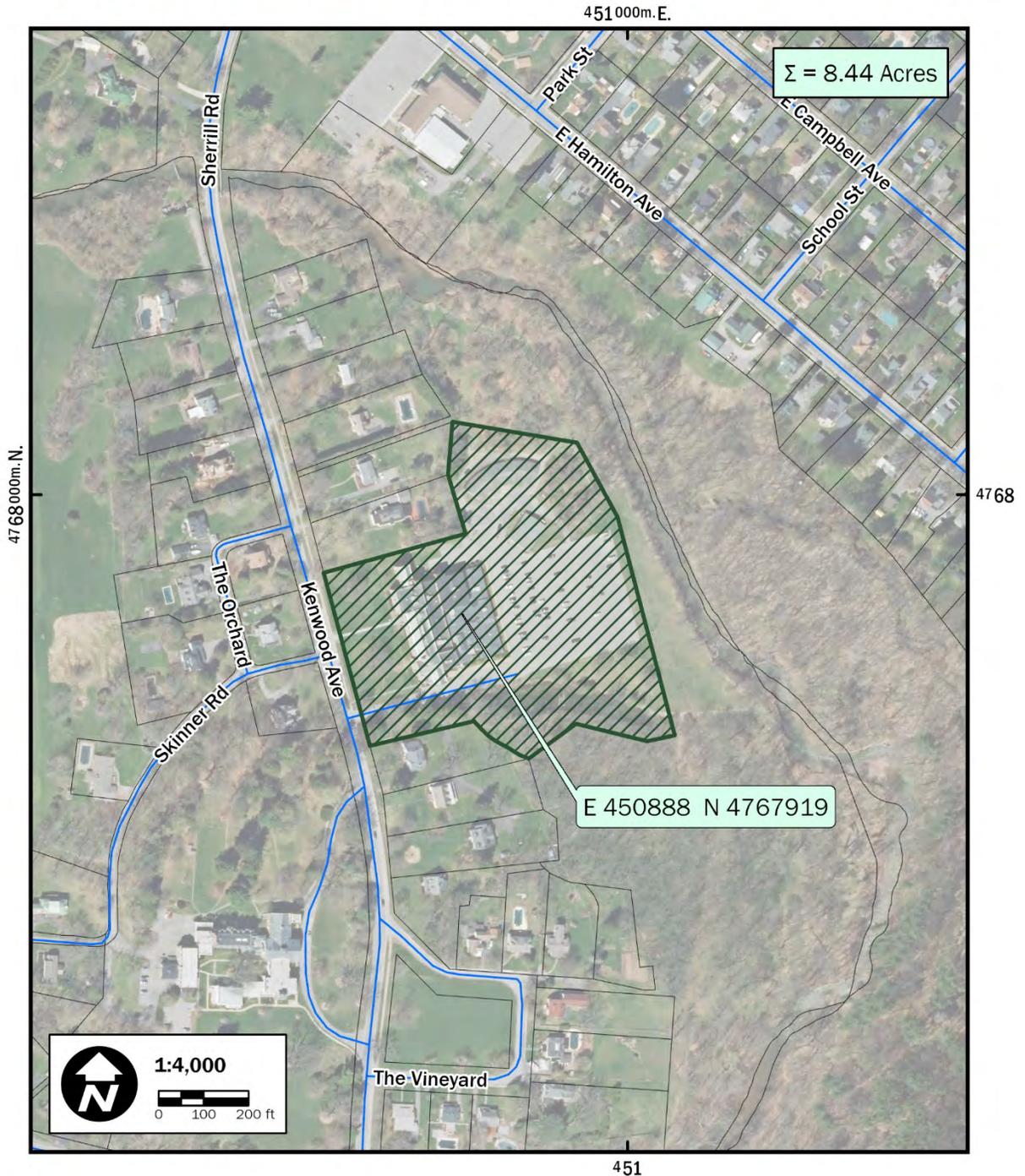
Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
Name of Property

Madison Co., New York  
County and State

**Oneida Limited Administration Building  
City of Oneida, Madison County, New York**

181 Kenwood Avenue  
Oneida, NY 13421



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter

 Nomination Boundary



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**



Oneida Community Limited Admin Building

Madison Co., New York

Name of Property

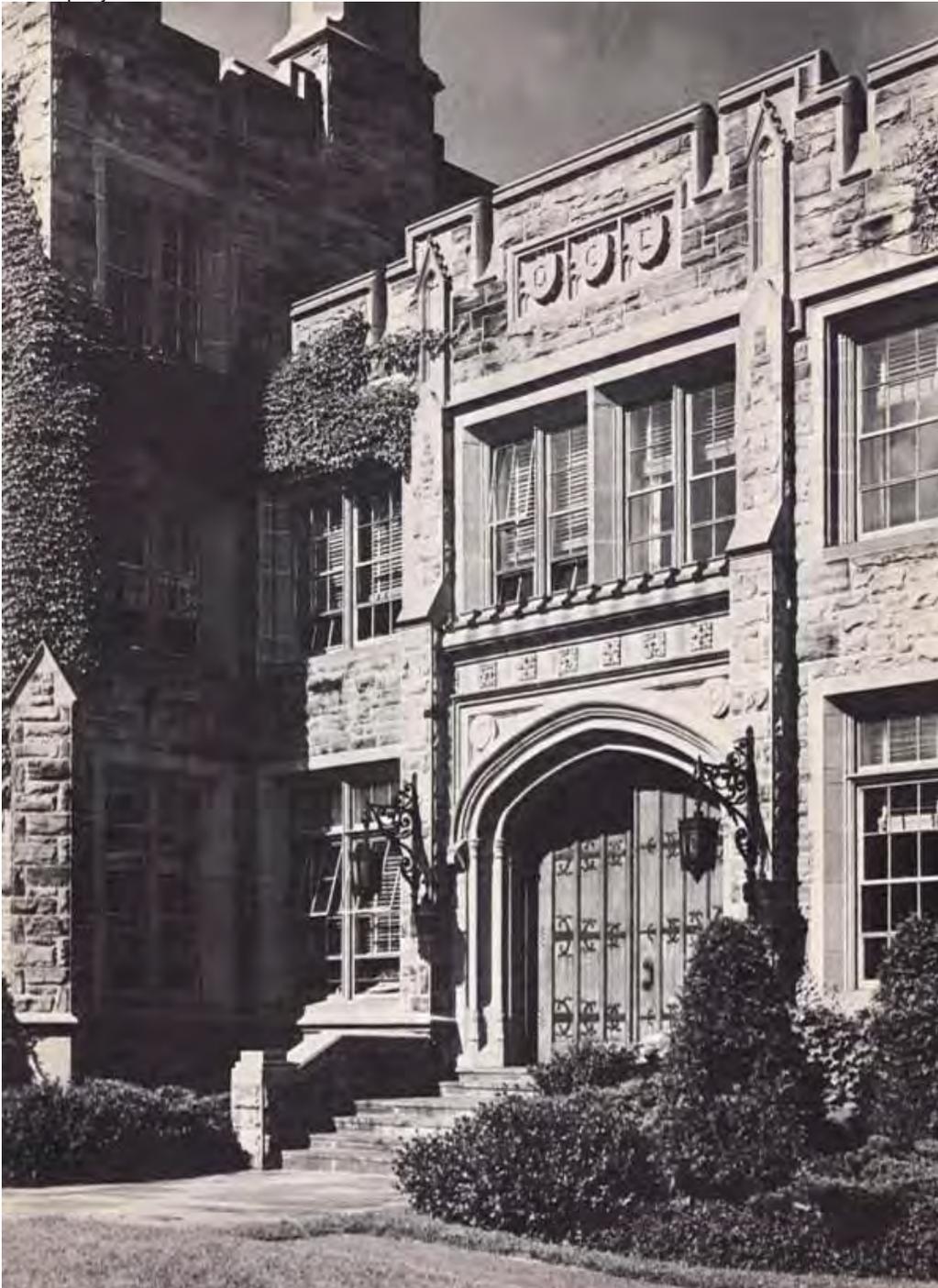
County and State



*Figure 1: View of the Oneida Limited Administration Building (ca. 1948) From: The First Hundred Years 1848-1948, page 75.*

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
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*Figure 2: Main Entrance to the Administration Building, which housed Executive and Sales Offices of Oneida, Limited (ca. 1948) From: The First Hundred Years 1848-1948, page 75.*

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building  
Name of Property

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### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Oneida Limited Administration Building

City or Vicinity: Oneida

County: Madison

State: New York

Photographer: Nell Zeigler

Date Photographed: 2018-2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0001  
West façade, camera facing east

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0002  
West façade, camera facing northeast

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0003  
North elevation, camera facing south

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0004  
East elevation, camera facing west

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0005  
South elevation (west, left side), camera facing north

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0006  
South elevation (middle), camera facing north

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0007  
South elevation (east, right side), camera facing north

Oneida Community Limited Admin Building

Madison Co., New York

Name of Property

County and State

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0008

Main Lobby/Entrance – camera facing east

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0009

Typical open office space with cubicles

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0010

Typical open office space with cubicles

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0011

2nd Floor Corridor, camera facing north

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0012

Board Room, 2nd Floor, camera looking north

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0013

Typical interior corridor, 2nd Floor, camera facing east

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0014

Typical interior stairwell

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0015

Typical doored office – 1st floor, camera facing west

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0016

1st Floor Cafeteria, camera looking east

NY\_MadisonCo\_OneidaLimitedAdminBld\_0017

1st Floor, Auditorium, camera facing east

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

Tier 2 – 120 hours

Tier 3 – 230 hours

Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.



KENWOOD AVE

SUMNER ST

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