NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Female Seminary

other names QA-258

2. Location

street & number 205-207 South Commerce Street ☐ not for publication

city or town Centreville ☐ vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Queen Anne's code 035 zip code 21617

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date: 10-28-03

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby, certify that this property is:
- ☐ entered in the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ 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
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: school

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls BRICK
roof ASPHALT
other WOOD
SYNTHETICS

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Description Summary:

The Female Seminary is a large 2-story gable-roofed brick building constructed ca. 1876 in a prominent location on a major thoroughfare in Centreville, seat of Queen Anne's County, Maryland. The building exhibits Victorian eclecticism in its combination of elements from various popular styles applied to a traditional side-passage floor plan. Despite the school's conversion for residential use in the early 20th century, its exterior retains integrity to reflect its original function and exhibits the careful craftsmanship typically applied to public buildings of the period in the region.

General Description:

The Female Seminary is located on the east side of South Commerce Street, one of the main streets in Centreville. It is constructed of pressed brick laid in common bond; the T-shaped building stands 2 stories high. The west façade, originally two bays wide, was altered in the early 20th century when the school building was converted to a pair of residences; a central window opening on the first floor was altered to a door and another door was installed in the north bay for a total of three entrance doors. The original entrance was located in the south bay of the west facade, with double paneled doors surmounted by a transom. The entrance bay projects forward slightly and rises to suggest a tower. The upper stage of the tower is lighted by a narrow four-over-four window surmounted by a semicircular brick arch and is capped with a hipped dormer. Three narrow four-over-four windows, grouped closely together, on each story originally lighted the south bay. A gabled dormer that contains signage with the designation "D.NO3 S.NO9" caps this arrangement. The gabled roof, originally cedar, is now covered in asphalt shingles.

The building was converted to residential use in the early 20th century. Windows with one-over-one sash were installed near the center of the west facade, and two one-over-one windows were added on the east facade to light the upstairs.A porch was added spanning the west facade.

On the south gable end of the main block, a group of three narrow windows is centered on each story. The three bays of the rear wing are defined by six-over-six windows on both stories. The east gable end of the wing has a shed-roofed porch across the first story; two entrances are offset to the corners, and the area of the porch between them is enclosed. Two one-over-one sash light the upper story.

The interior originally contained four classrooms, two on each floor, accessed by a side stairwell and passage. The stair, located at the southern junction of the main block and the wing, features turned balusters and newels. Bead-board wainscoting survives along the south wall of the stairwell.

When a transverse partition was installed to convert the schoolhouse to two residences, another stairwell was added at the center of building. Elements of the original decorative detailing such as door and window trim survive throughout the building. Original interior shutters and hardware remain on the windows in the upper northwest room. Original bead-board wainscoting remains exposed in the upper southeast bedroom and the bathroom adjoining that room on the west.

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 pattern of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property 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)

Property is:

- ☐ **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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Area of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1876-1907

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Capt. James Smith, builder

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (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

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

#

Summary Statement of Significance:

The Female Seminary is significant under Criterion A for its association with the development of education in Queen Anne's County in the late 19th century as the county's only public schoolhouse built exclusively for females. Built in 1876, the school was hailed as "an ornament to the town" of Centreville, the county seat, and reflects the county's civic pride and its interest in providing women with an education separate from their male counterparts. Despite its initial success—a ca. 1880 class photograph shows eighty-four female students and three teachers--this experiment in education proved short-lived. Within thirty years the county returned to teaching both sexes in the same building. In 1907, the schoolhouse--deemed "unsuited and unnecessary" for school purposes--was sold and converted to residential use.

The period of significance, 1876-1907, begins with the construction of the school and ends with the cessation of educational use of the building

Resource History and Historic Context:

In 1876, the year of the Centennial, and following the passage of several state school laws, the Board of County School Commissioners of Queen Anne's County undertook to provide a separate school building in Centreville for the instruction of girls. On the 8th day of August, 1876, the "female school board," consisting of Messrs. Nathan H. Green, John T. Hand and Wm. W. Busteed, organized and elected Mr. Busteed president." (Emory, Frederick, Queen Anne's County, Maryland, Its Early History and Development, Maryland Historical Society, 1950, p. 567). The following month, the board awarded Capt. James Smith a contract to construct a two-story brick schoolhouse on a parcel of land they had acquired two years earlier (Emory, p. 567; Deed, W.A.G.H. Liber 1 folio 254, October 23, 1874, Land Records of Queen Anne's County). In his report to the state superintendent in 1876, James W. Thompson, Secretary to the Board of County School Commissioners, wrote that

> We have under contract a school house in Centreville, in which we expect to open a Female Graded School. We have needed this school for years, but as our motto has been "pay as you go" we have not been able to open it before. The house when built will be the only school property in the County Town belonging to the Board, while every village in the County has a schoolhouse. The house will be two-stories high, built of brick, an ornament to the town and a credit to the Board (DeVilbiss, Dr.Wilbur, "Education in Maryland with Particular Reference to Queen Anne's County", lecture to the Queen Anne's County Historical Society, n.d.)

The cost of the building was set at $1725 ("Public Education Starts One Year After Paper", *Record Observer*, May 1958). The contract for the two-story brick school-house was awarded to Capt. James Smith in September,

1876 (Emory, p. 567). Early maps including the 1877 map of Centreville and the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1885 show a school building on the lot. The 1877 map of Centreville shows the lot shaded pink, as are the other public buildings in Centreville, and the school is labeled as "No. 15 Female Seminary" (The 1877 Atlases and Other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Bicentennial Edition, 1776- 1976, pp. 126, 107).

The collection of the Queen Anne's County Historical Society includes two historic photographs taken in front of the school. The earlier picture, ca. 1880, shows a class of eighty-four female students and three teachers. The students appear to range in age from approximately five to fifteen. Their dresses are worn below the knee or longer ankle length and their hair is usually worn pulled back in a bun. The second picture, ca. 1895, shows a class comprised of forty-one male and forty-nine female students. The students appear more expensively dressed. The girls wear shorter dresses, often with sailor ties and large bows, while the boys wear mostly jackets and ties. In both pictures chalk graffiti is apparent on the front of the school, and a great mass of ivy or Virginia creeper grows up the middle of the schoolhouse.

Thirty years after the school's construction, the idea of separate public education for females had fallen out of favor, and the building became obsolete. Stating that the property had "become unsuited and unnecessary for school purposes", the Board of County School Commissioners of Queen Anne's County sold the back half of the property to Robert R. Price, for four hundred dollars. The deed was signed by James W. Cookman, as President of the Board of County School Commissioners of Queen Anne's County (Deed, J.E.G. Liber 3 folio 101, March 29, 1902, Land Records of Queen Anne's County). Five years later the Board of County School Commissioners sold the remaining front half of the property, referred to as the "Primary School Lot", to J.H.C. Legg for two thousand dollars (Deed, W.F.W. Liber 4 folio 557, March 10, 1907, Land Records of Queen Anne's County). Thus ended Queen Anne's County's provision of a separate education for its female students, although a private institution continued to offer secondary education for female students for several decades thereafter.

Major Bibliographical References:

See parenthetical references, Section 8

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References Centreville, MD quad
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	407687	4322000	3			
2				4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Daniel and Temple Worth

Organization _____ date October 2001

street & number 207 South Commerce Street telephone (410) 758-1941

city or town Centreville state MD zip code 21617

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Statement: This information is being collected for applications 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. 470 et. seq.).

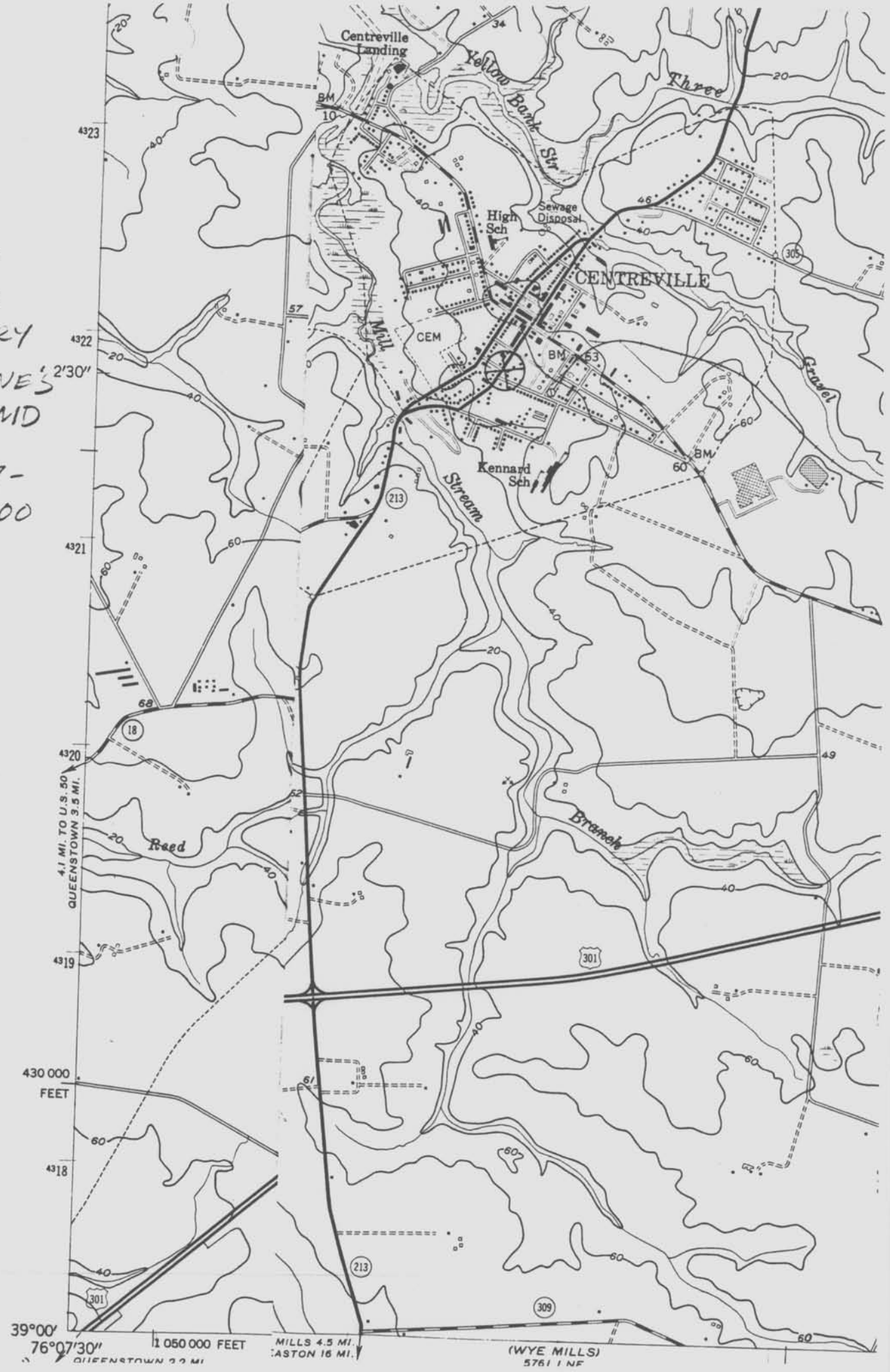
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is shown as Parcel 700 On Queen Anne's County Tax Map 301. A plat describing metes and bounds is recorded among the Land Records of Queen Anne's County in MWM Liber 477, folio 394.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property, 0.274 acre, comprises the land historically associated with the resource, and encompasses the building within its immediate setting.



QA-258
FEMALE
SEMINARY
QUEEN ANNE'S
COUNTY, MD

18-407687-
4322000

QA-258, Female Seminary
Queen Anne's Co., MD
"No.15 Female Seminary," ca. 1880

#1 of 10

PTOP2.BMP 29 11 -1 N/ N/ N 000400

QA-258, Female Seminary
Queen Anne's Co, MD
"Primary School, Ca. 1895"
#2 of 10

<PTOP4.BMP> 29 15 N/ N/ N N 000+00

QA-258, Female Seminary
Queen Anne's Co, MD
Maryland SHPO
"Schoolhouse, west facade"
#3 of 10

Oct.16 '95 11 30 T116 N N-1 N +13 000

QA-258, Female Seminary
Queen Anne's Co, MD
Maryland SHPO
"View from northwest corner"
#4 of 10

<No.13 >s 11 40 T116 N N-1-1 +25 000

QA-258, Female Seminary
Queen Anne's Co, MD
Maryland SHPO
"View from Northeast corner"
#5 of 10

No.22 xs 11 22 T116 N N-1 N +17 000

QA-258, Female Seminary
Queen Anne's Co, MD
Maryland SHPO
"View from southeast corner of lot"
#6 of 10

No.23 '95 11 19 T116 N N-1-1 +20 000

QA-258, Female Seminary
Queen Anne's Co, MD
Maryland SHPO
"Commerce Street view southwest"
#7 of 10

No.16 xs 11 34 T116 N N-1 N +12 000

QA-258, Female Seminary
Queen Anne's Co, MD
Maryland SHPO
"View down staircase"
8 of 10

MD.31 >s 11 4 T116 N N-1-1 +12 000

QA-258, Female Seminary
Queen Anne's Co, MD
Maryland SHPO
"Schoolhouse, wainscoting, upper floor"
#9 of 10

Oct.29 '98 11 8 T116 N N-1-2 +23 000

QA-258, Ferrole Seminary
Queen Anne's Co, MD
Maryland SHPO
"school house, original front door"
#10 of 10

No. 27 xs 11 12 T116 N N-1-1 +03 000

QA-258
Female School, 1876

Mary McCarthy
Spring/Summer 2003
Digital color photo on file at MHT

QA-258
205 South Commerce St.
Centreville, Maryland
Orlando Ridout V 1980
View from West

QA-258 1876 School
South Commerce Street
Centreville
Orlando Ridout V 1981
Rear view from East