

North Wing:

A Work in Progress

No matter how permanent an institution seems, change is constant, both in practices and physical structure. This exhibit attempts to document this phenomenon as it applies to Salisbury School.

When the school commenced operations in the fall of 1901, the newly completed Main Building consisted of a large central block and two small wings, located at the north and south ends. During the next few years, enrollment grew rapidly and the need for more space became acute. Work commenced on a major expansion of the South Wing in 1906, adding dormitory rooms and servants' quarters and relocating the kitchen and laundry to the basement level.

A seriously cramped and dark chapel located beneath the current Admissions office, and limited gymnasium facilities in the basement of the North Wing, necessitated further construction, completed in 1908-1909. This entailed a large extension to the wing. Work included converting the gym into a chapel, the woodwork designed by Salisbury graduate Herman Kahle, '03. The new chapel remained in use until replaced by the present sanctuary completed in 1961. The space later served as the school library, a faculty meeting room, offices for the school counselors, and finally the Development Office.

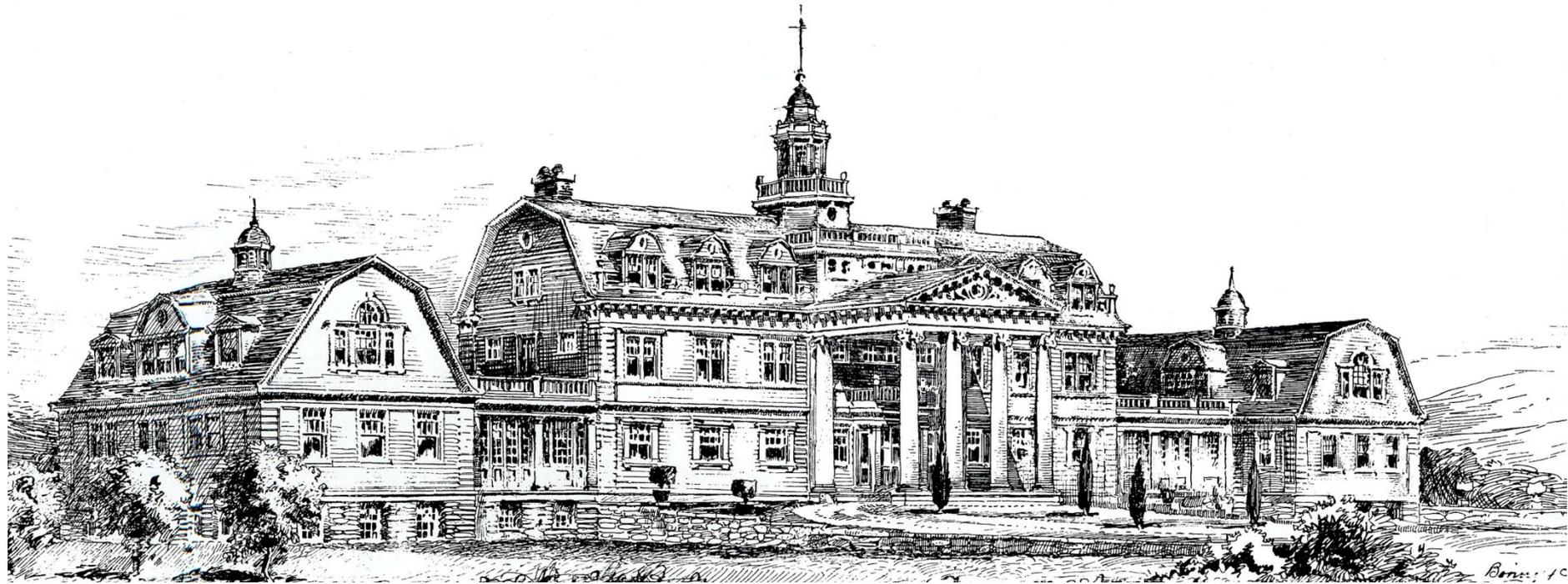
The new extension, measuring 70' x 30', contained a 50' x 20' gymnasium at the basement level, which opened upwards 20' to the second floor. Dormitory rooms to house a master and 14 boys were constructed above. The new spaces would be heated by a separate boiler room.

The gym was only intended to be temporary, however, as a new, larger, separate structure was planned, also designed by Kahle. When finished, a floor would be inserted into the old gym and the basement level converted into two classrooms and a bathroom. The new first floor would become a study hall capable of accommodating the entire school.

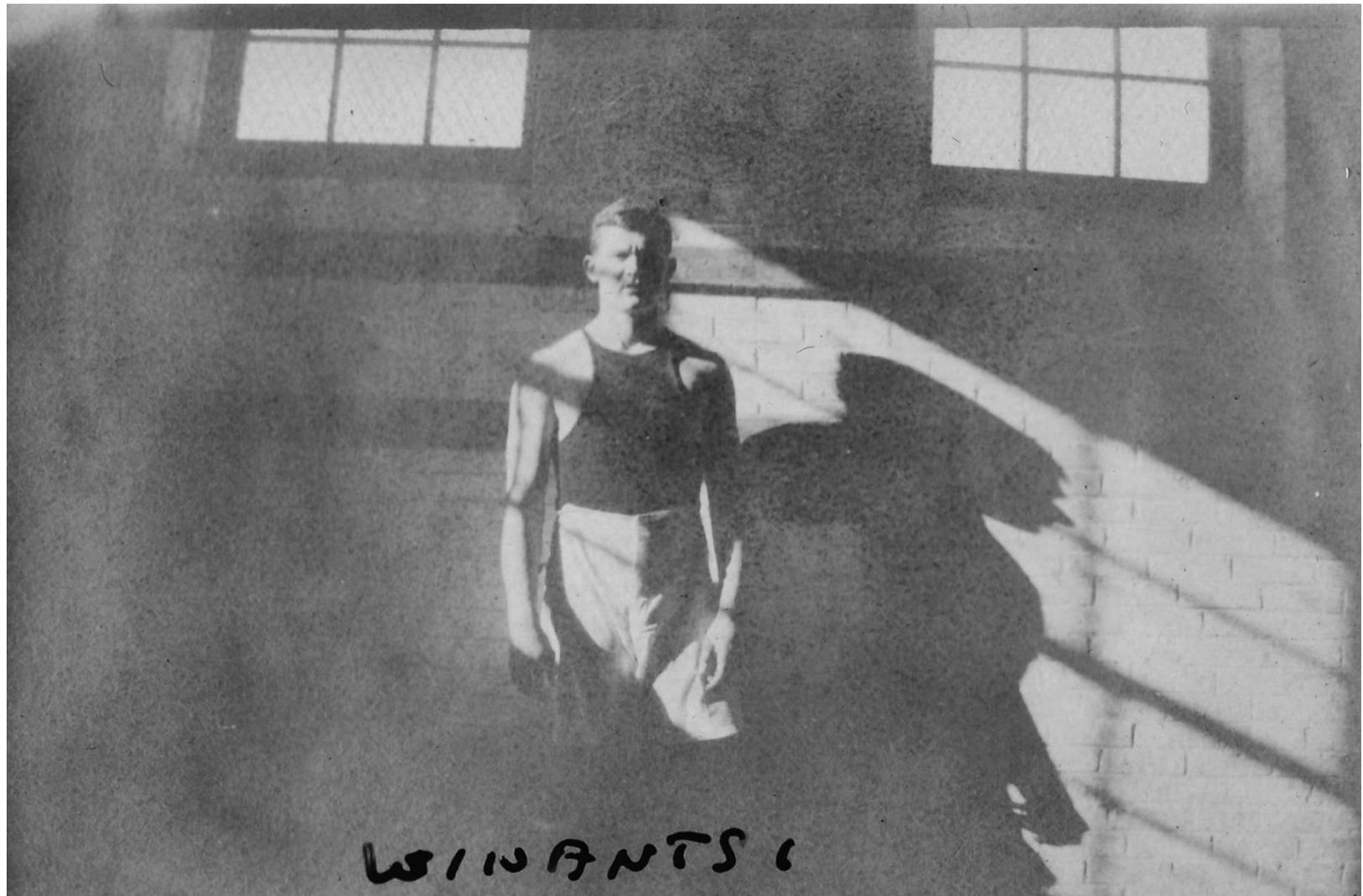
The exterior end wall of the extended structure was stuccoed and without windows, intended as a site for handball matches. Handball had become quite a local craze, competing for interest with mandolins and log cabins in the woods.

Though the exterior of the North Wing extension looks almost exactly as it did in 1909, the internal spaces have undergone continuous conversion and adaptation, a process once again unfolding right before your eyes.

The photographs presented in this exhibit were drawn from a series of scrapbooks held in the Archives. Many students of this era were avid photographers and took numerous snapshots of the school, their classmates, activities, and the surrounding landscape and villages.



Salisbury School as originally envisioned by the architectural firm of William Boring and Edward Tilton, the men responsible for the buildings that accommodated the immigration reception center on Ellis Island in New York harbor. Note the limited size of the North Wing on the left side of the drawing.



A c. 1907-1908 photograph of Garrett Winants, '08, standing in the athletic space located beneath the original portion of the North Wing. The room was converted into the chapel shortly after this picture was taken.



The new chapel, photographed c. 1909. Services were held here for more than 50 years. Herman Kahle, '03, who designed this space, enrolled in St. Austen's School in 1897 and followed the Rev. George Quaile to Salisbury in 1901, one of the first "Old Boys." Following graduation, he attended the Columbia University School of Architecture.

Herman Kahle, '03, architect of the new chapel, gymnasium [1911-1912], and Mountain View Cottage, now the Salisbury School Health Center.





A c. 1908 photograph of the original North Wing, with excavation for the expansion underway and construction supplies piled at the site. Enrollment had increased more than three-fold since 1901, necessitating a major building program. Note the narrow connecting hallway, later expanded to accommodate a large, open meeting space.

Excavation for the North Wing extension is clearly visible in this snap shot.





The new foundation of the North Wing being dug and the underpinning being constructed.



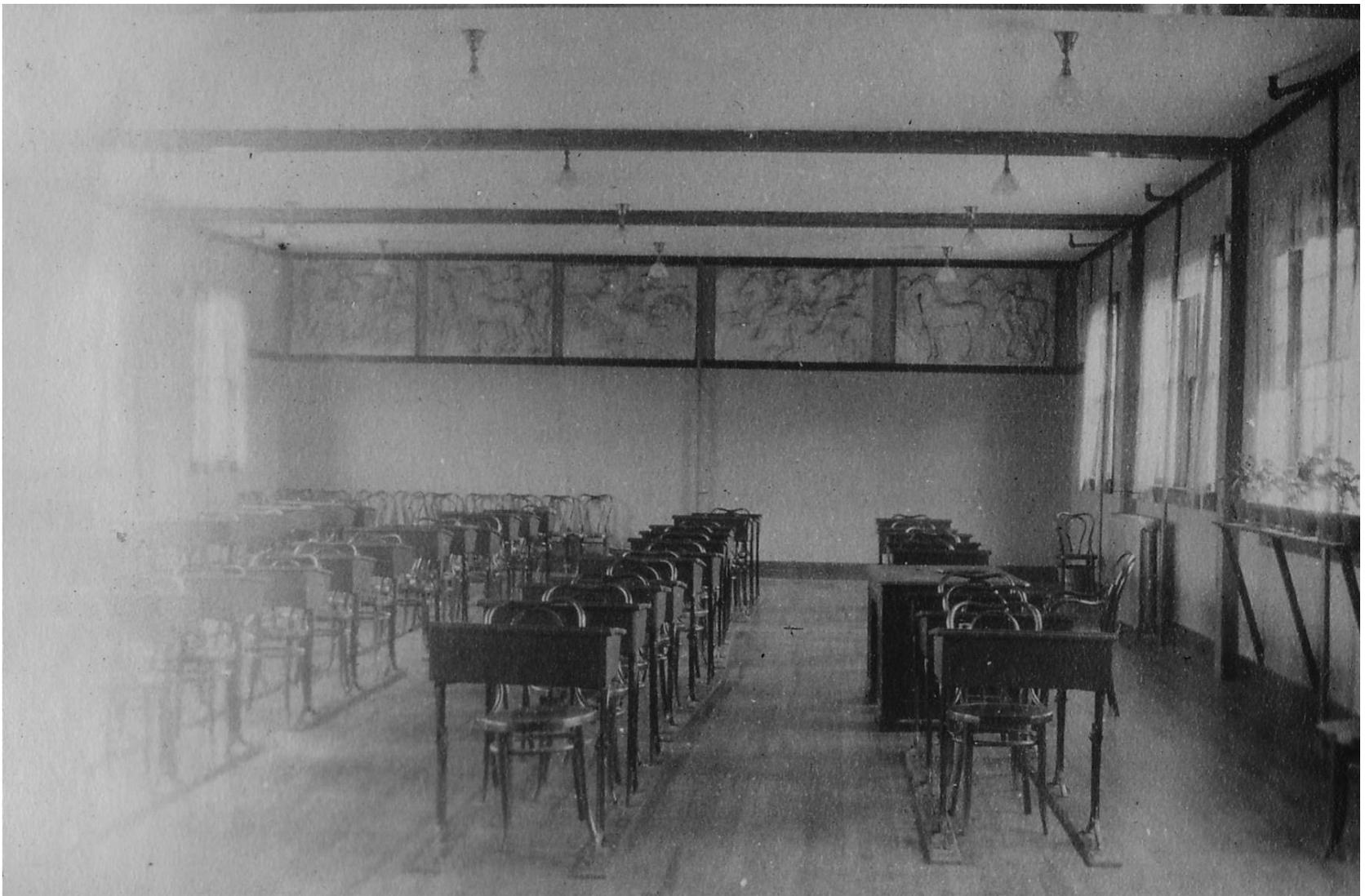
Construction of the South Wing has been completed [background] and excavation and foundation and stone work on the North Wing is progressing rapidly.



Both North and South Wing extensions have been completed in this c. 1910 photograph. Note the blank wall on the North Wing, intended as the site of outdoor handball matches. In later years, a window was cut into this wall and a fire escape added.



Following completion of the new Kahle-designed gymnasium in 1911-1912, a floor was inserted between the basement and the second level of the North Wing to accommodate a large study hall. Here carpenters are hard at work remodeling the space. This facility remained in use for many decades until converted into offices.



Decorations in the newly refurbished study hall included a selection of plaster casts of the frieze from the Parthenon in Athens produced and marketed to schools by the P. P. Caproni and Brother firm in Boston, Massachusetts.



A panoramic view of the school taken c. 1910-1911 shows the completed North and South Wing extensions, which survive in this general form to the present day. Work on a new gymnasium has not yet begun.