

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

Page 1

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Eagle Island Camp

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Eagle Island, Upper Saranac Lake

Not for publication: __

City/Town: Town of Santa Clara

Vicinity: __

State: New York County: Franklin Code: 033 Zip Code:

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X
Public-Local: __
Public-State: __
Public-Federal: __

Category of Property

Building(s): __
District: X
Site: __
Structure: __
Object: __

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

10
6
2
18

Noncontributing

9 buildings
sites
39 structures
objects
48 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 16

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: "The Adirondack Camp in American Architecture."

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

4. 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.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. 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 Keeper

Date of Action

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: Domestic

Sub: Camp

Current: Recreation and Culture

Sub: Outdoor Recreation

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: Other: "Adirondack Style"

Materials:

Foundation: Stone, Cement

Walls: Wood

Roof: Asphalt

Other: Glass, Brick

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 4

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**Location, Setting, and Overall Physical Characteristics**

Eagle Island Camp is located on Upper Saranac Lake in the Town of Santa Clara, Franklin County, New York. Upper Saranac Lake is situated in the heart of the northern section of the Adirondack Mountains, west of Lake Placid and northwest of the High Peaks, between Lower and Middle Saranac lakes to the east and Tupper Lake to the southwest. The camp is located on Eagle Island, an approximately thirty-one acre landmass situated in the lower portion of the lake, north of Deer Island and west of Gull Point, the latter a peninsula extending from the lake's eastern shore. Access to Eagle Island Camp, which is currently owned and operated by the Girl Scout Council of Greater Essex and Hudson Counties, New Jersey, is gained via boat from the mainland.

Eagle Island is relatively rugged in character, typified by stone outcroppings, a rocky shoreline, and dense stands of old and new growth conifers. The buildings that form the decentralized camp's core are situated in a cluster on a peninsula extending from the island's southeast shore, the primary units historically oriented to capitalize on views south and west over the lake. From the relatively flat shoulder of land on which the majority of the camp's buildings were erected, the grade drops steeply downward towards the lakeshore on the south side of the complex, lending the buildings a considerable visual prominence when viewed from below. Although the buildings aligned along the south shore once enjoyed filtered vistas of the lake and the surrounding Adirondack Mountain landscape, large pine and spruce trees now compromise this view shed, offering a sense of intimacy and relative seclusion within the camp's core. The current access from the freight and boathouse northeast of the core of the camp complex follows a road from the waterfront past support facilities to a mostly open yard formed by the rear of the primary buildings and the remaining units. Most of the historic buildings are cohesively grouped around this central yard, which is defined by stone outcroppings and small second-growth conifers.

The majority of the buildings that form the nomination's contributing resources were constructed in a single campaign in 1903. Drawing from the example of the decentralized camp as evolved by William West Durant at Camp Pine Knot, Raquette Lake, William L. Coulter, working for client Levi Morton, created a cohesive grouping of specialized, single-purpose buildings well integrated with the island's natural topography. The core of the architectural features comprising the camp, the Family Cabin, Main Lodge, and Dining Pavilion, were designed to take full advantage of the site and linked with one another by means of continuous rustic verandahs and walkways. With the kitchen that extends from the rear of the dining pavilion, these buildings form a broad L-shaped unit. The principal buildings are related to one another by the use of similar materials and rustic decorative motifs, including brown-stained cedar shingles and the extensive use of cedar poles and posts. Secondary buildings were relegated to positions denoting their service function and lack the rustic ornamentation of the primary elements, while non-historic features have been largely isolated away from the contributing historic features, lessening their impact on the complex's architectural character.

Eagle Island Camp was purchased by Henry Graves following Morton's death in 1920, and subsequently transferred by Graves to the Girl Scouts in 1938. The buildings that form the camp retain the majority of their character defining features and vital spatial interrelationships, notwithstanding over a half-century of use by the Girl Scouts and subsequent deterioration and modifications relating to this current function. Still clearly evident, however, is Coulter's overarching design intent for the complex.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 5

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Resource List

The nomination includes a total of eighteen contributing and forty-eight non-contributing resources. The following resource list includes all those buildings included within the proposed NHL boundary, and is grouped according to contributing and non-contributing status. This list includes the name of the resource, its date of construction, and reference numbers keyed to the enclosed site maps and photographs. Buildings are referred to by their historic names; current names, if different, are included in parentheses. Only those resources associated with the Levi P. Morton ownership period and the work of William Coulter have been deemed contributing to the nomination's significance.

Contributing Resources**Main Lodge or Recreation Hall, c. 1903.** (Map # 1, Photo # 1-3)

The Main Lodge is the centerpiece of the three principal buildings that form the core of the complex, and it offers the definitive architectural expression of the camp with its distinctive rustic details and central relationship to the other units. The building was prominently sited to take advantage of the natural topography of the site, its front-facing gable projecting outward to shield a broad piazza oriented toward the lake; a dense growth of conifers has considerably diminished this southward view and the view back towards the Lodge from the water. One story in height, the form of the rectangular building loosely follows chalet prototypes with a broad gable and deeply projecting flared eaves shielding the piazza and porches along the east and west elevations. The building was constructed above a mortared rubble foundation; the exterior is sheathed with brown-stained cedar shakes and the roof is clad with asphalt shingling. Exterior and interior door and window openings are finished with half-round, bark-clad cedar casings.

The boldly projecting roofline of the south-facing façade is carried by six cedar posts that rise from the piazza floor to support a modified king post truss; the piazza itself is carried by cedar posts the space between which is screened with smaller, vertically aligned cedar poles. The definitive stylistic feature of the Main Lodge is the rustic work set within the framing supporting the gable. The spaces between the primary supporting members are highlighted by open rectilinear pattern work formed by horizontal, vertical, and diagonally aligned bark-clad cedar poles creating a large rustic screen. Similar peeled cedar poles form braces between the posts and the log purlins carrying the roof. A small landing with stairs flanking either side is centered against the porch on the primary elevation; its base is screened like the building's foundation. Bark-clad cedar railings enclose the stairs. The opposite, north-facing elevation is dominated by a massive chimney of red brick laid in running bond, flanked by entrances to either side shielded by gable-roofed hoods; two clerestory windows with rustic hoods flank the chimney and light the interior. Approaching the building from the central yard, there is a rustic screen of curved cedar poles situated at the buildings northeast corner that terminates the covered porch. The crest of the Main Lodge's roof ridge was once highlighted at the extreme north and south sides by crossed logs,¹ perhaps mimicking a similar device known as *chigi* in Japanese architecture; this detail, which was also used by Coulter and Westhoff at the Lewisohn camp, has unfortunately been lost.

The interior of the Main Lodge is given over entirely to an open room measuring approximately 35 by 25 feet, lighted by inward-opening clerestory windows in the south and north gable ends and sliding multi-pane sash aligned in bays along the side elevations at the first story level. The interior is accessed from the covered piazza

¹Photograph of Main Lodge, n.d. 82.199 (2), Adirondack Collection, Saranac Lake Free Library (SLFL hereafter), Saranac Lake, New York. This is one of a set of photographs that depict the camp during its early history, probably prior to 1920 and the Graves ownership period. The only major discrepancy between these photos and the camp complex as it now appears is the absence of walkways that once aligned the buildings on the north side of the complex, the absence of the roof that shields the elevated walkway between the Main Lodge and the Dining Pavilion, and the presence of tent platforms in an unknown location.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 6

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

via three pairs of glazed casement doors that open outward onto the piazza; these are flanked at the southeast and southwest corners by projecting alcoves that also light the interior. The interior space is highlighted by an elaborate roof support system comprised of peeled and polished log trusses, posts, and beams, and a massive, undressed granite fireplace aligned against the north wall with a segmental arched opening. Walls are finished with horizontal polished boards chinked with plaster; the floor is laid in narrow width board. Doors to either side of the fireplace lead outside; each is of the double "Dutch" type, formed of diagonally aligned tongue and grooved boards and ornamental iron strap hinges. A number of large game trophies are mounted along the walls and the open log gallery on which the trusses rest, highlighted by a large moose head centered above the stone chimney.

Dining Pavilion, c. 1903 (Map # 5, Photo # 8)

The Dining Pavilion is a one-story, octagonal-shaped building that is located west of the Main Lodge and adjoined to that building by means of an elevated covered walkway. Stylistically the pavilion exterior relates closely to the Main Lodge, with rustic cedar pole foundation screening, peeled log railings, brown-stained cedar shakes, and bark-clad log window and door casings; the roof is clad with asphalt. Prior to post-1938 modifications, the Dining Pavilion consisted of the octagonal dining area, a smaller family dining room off the northeast side, and a storage-service area below. Since 1938 the partition separating the octagonal dining area from the family dining area has been removed, the original pantry was modified, and additional dining space added. The pavilion is of wood frame construction above a mortared rubble foundation. Although modifications have been rendered subsequent to the pavilion's construction, the original design intent of the architect is still clearly readable and the building retains the majority of its interior and exterior character-defining elements. The building was oriented to take advantage of views to the southeast, south, and southwest.

Access to the interior of the Dining Pavilion is gained via an entrance at the building's southeast corner via a glazed and paneled door with sidelights. The pavilion benefits from a well-thought out fenestration system whereby three large plate glass windows can be lowered into pockets in the walls below to create a screened-in dining area; the room is additionally lighted by one west-facing window and three casement windows set at the clerestory level. The definitive feature of the interior is the elaborate framing system of log construction that consists of a large central member suspended from the roof peak from which horizontally aligned posts radiate towards the ceiling. There is a brick fireplace with a key-stoned round arched opening on the northwest side of the room; walls are covered with organic matting, possibly sweet grass, above which is an overlay of halved saplings and logs while windows are finished with bark-clad casings. The floors are laid in thin width board and the ceiling consists of tongue-and-grooved board. Below the dining level, a portion of the basement is given over to a metal-lined cold storage area.

Covered Walkway, c. 1910 (Map # 4, Photo #6-7)

The covered walkway is an elevated platform that links the Main Lodge with the Dining Pavilion. The walkway is constructed of cedar log posts that support the elevated platform and a system of king post trusses with curvilinear bottom chords upon which the roof, carried by whole log rafters and a ridgepole, rests.

Rustic railings span the space between the posts at platform level, continuing from the lodge to the pavilion, and curvilinear braces are situated between the uppermost section of the posts and the log rafter plates. Strangely, an early, undated photograph² of this feature shows the platform uncovered and with sawn-lumber railings instead of the current rustic cedar log posts and trusses. The current covered walk relates very closely to the adjoining units stylistically and was likely modified early in the camp's history.

²Photograph of platform looking east from dining pavilion to main lodge, n.d. 82.207, Adirondack Collection, SLFL.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 7

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Family Cabin, c. 1903 (Map # 2, Photo #4 and #5)

The family cabin, situated east of the Main Lodge, is attached to the lodge by means of an uncovered porch. The cabin consists of a rectangular-shaped, one and one-half story building with a gable-ended roof with deeply projecting eaves and an L-shaped, hip-roofed one-story unit. Exterior decorative features include the extensive use of cedar bark-clad poles, logs and log slabs for foundation screens, porch supports, braces, brackets, beams, rafters and rafter plates, gable-end screens and window and door casings. On the north side of the gable-roofed building the roof is broken by a long shed-roofed dormer unit within which is centered a projecting gable-roofed porch of cedar log construction with rustic screening; the south elevation also has a projecting porch at the half-story level with a rustic gable truss. The hipped roof unit, attached to the adjacent gable-roofed building by a small covered hyphen, forms the easternmost anchor of the L-shaped unit, and is itself terminated by a massive chimney on its east elevation, constructed of brick above a substantial coursed granite base. Some of the original cedar post elements have been lost and replaced with sawn lumber.

The interior of the Family Cabin includes six bedrooms with a total of three fireplaces. On the first floor is a common area linked to four bedrooms, and on the second floor two bedrooms with a dressing room and bath. Interior features and finishes include walls fitted with horizontal board chinked with plaster, peeled and polished exposed log beams at the ceiling level, granite rubble fireplace surrounds, and built-in window settees in projecting bays.

Kitchen Building and Servant's Hall, c. 1903 (Map # 7, Photo # 11)

The Kitchen Building-Servant's Hall is a long, rectangular-shape edifice that extends on a north-south axis from the north side of the dining pavilion. The building has a wood frame built above a poured concrete foundation and is one and one-half stories in height; it is sheathed with wood shakes and is covered by an asphalt shingle roof. The northernmost end of the building is terminated by a two-tiered projecting porch of sawn timbers which faces east into the open courtyard. A portion of the building was given over to cooking and food preparation areas, while the remainder of the interior consisted of staff housing and the servant's dining area.

Guest Cabin, c. 1903 (Map # 6, Photo #9)

The Guest Cabin is a freestanding building situated west of the octagonal dining pavilion. The one-story, wood frame building is built above log and sawn timber posts rising from stone footings, and is sheathed with cedar shakes; the roof is clad in asphalt. The building features a complex interplay of gabled projections and is ornamented like the other principal architectural units, with log poles screening the foundation, whole cedar post porch supports and rustic cedar post gable trusses. A covered porch with whole log cedar posts and rafters extends from the south-facing lake elevation, further strengthening the relationship between the cabin and the adjacent units; a pent-roofed rustic window bay projects from the extreme western corner of the south elevation. Some original cedar railing has been lost and replaced with sawn lumber. The interior includes two bedrooms with horizontal beveled-board pine walls, exposed studs, brick fireplaces, and built-in window seats. A historic photograph³ of the camp indicates that the Guest Cabin was linked to the main units by way of an elevated, uncovered wood walk.

Laundry, c. 1903 (Map # 9)

The Laundry is situated north of the Kitchen Building across a small access road. Oriented to face east toward the open yard, this gable-roofed building is two stories in height with an exterior stairway to the second floor adjoining the east elevation and an open porch, created by the projection of the second story, on the south elevation. The exterior is clad with brown-stained wood shakes and the roof is shingled with asphalt; the building rests on stone and cement-block footings. Like the other secondary buildings in the camp, the laundry

³View looking east from north side of Main Lodge, n.d. 82.201, Adirondack Collection, SLFL.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 8

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

lacks the rustic ornamentation of the primary architectural units with details, such as railings and porch posts, fashioned from sawn timbers. The interior historically had laundry and ironing facilities on the first floor and staff housing on the second; surviving period features include narrow beaded-board pine paneling, door casings with corner blocks, and brick chimney pieces.

Boathouse #2, c. 1903 (Map # 13)

Boathouse #2 is located on the north side of the complex, away from the historic core, and consists of a hexagonal hip-roofed pavilion to which is attached twin boat bays. The building is of wood frame construction, the pavilion resting above a rubble granite foundation and the two boat bays above rubble-filled cribbing. The building is sheathed with cedar shakes and has an asphalt-clad roof. The two boat bays were historically articulated by their own front-facing gable, each of which still exist, with rustic cedar pole screening, below a larger, non-historic, single gable. Projecting from the hexagonal unit is a projecting gabled hood with rustic screening that shields an entryway; other intact features include period casement windows with diamond-pane glazing.

Guide's House (Infirmary), c. 1903 (Map # 14, Photo # 12)

The Guide's House, the current Infirmary, is situated at the northern end of the open yard. The wood-frame building, rectangular in shape and oriented with the ridge of its gabled roof parallel to the long axis, is built above a mortared granite rubble foundation and is sheathed with cedar shakes and covered by an asphalt shingle roof. The west side of the roof is punctuated by three dormers consisting of a central unit with a gabled roof flanked by shed-roofed units. The north and south-facing gabled elevations have deeply projecting eaves supported by sawn timber posts and braces. The interior included two bedrooms, a kitchen and a work area; surviving details include beaded-board southern pine walls and ceilings, reeded door casings with corner blocks, medium-width flooring, pressed tin ceilings in two rooms, and period doors and hardware.

Carpenter's Shop, c. 1903 (Map # 11, Photo # 13)

The Carpenter's Shop is a simple gable-ended building of wood frame construction. Rectangular in shape, it is covered by horizontal clapboard siding and an asphalt shingle roof. Fenestration consists of a single door and window on the east elevation.

Woodshed/ Icehouse, c. 1903 (Map # 17, Photo #14)

The Woodshed-icehouse is a mostly open building of both wood frame and post and beam construction, sheathed with clapboard and wood shakes.

Water Tower, c. 1903 (Map # 10)

The water tower consists of a concrete foundation above which rises an open steel frame carrying a large wood drum.

Pump House (Powerhouse), c. 1903 (Map # 16)

The powerhouse is a rectangular, square-shaped wood framed building with horizontal novelty siding and a steeply pitched roof sheathed in asphalt. The building rests on a concrete slab foundation and is lighted by fixed casement windows with diamond-pane glazing.

Barn, c. 1903 (Map # 19)

The barn is situated outside the core of the camp complex on an access road. It is a wood frame building built above a rubble stone foundation, and features a front-facing gambrel roof sheathed in raised-seam metal. The primary elevation consists of a large bay corresponding with the ground story, an access bay and flanking double-hung windows with six-over-six sash corresponding with the hayloft, and a hoist situated at the apex of

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 9

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

the roof. The building is sheathed with novelty siding and doors and windows are finished with plain casings; a brick chimney rises from the roof ridge opposite the primary elevation. Interior features include a tack room and stalls, an enclosed stair to the loft, and horizontal board walls.

Flagpole Stand, c. 1903

The flagpole stand is situated near the lakeshore south of the camp complex, and is a pylon-like form constructed of concrete.

Tennis Court, c. 1903 (Map # 20)

Although the original surface is now covered, the tennis area is still clearly readable and defined on two sides by a rubble retaining wall with concrete coping.

Iron Roller, c. 1903

Immediately to the northeast of the former tennis court is an iron roller, used to maintain the court surface. The roller is deemed a contributing object.

Gazebo, c. 1903 (Map # 21)

The gazebo was constructed in association with the tennis court; it is situated at the court's southeast side. The gazebo is a small open rustic building with two benches and a raised-seam metal roof.

Non-contributing resources**Boathouse #1, c. 1903 (Map # 3)**

Boathouse #1 is located on the shore of the lake, east of the main cluster of buildings. Moved from its original location and likewise modified in form, the boathouse is a rectangular-shaped, gable-ended, wood frame building sheathed with cedar shingles and covered by an asphalt shingle roof. The lakefront elevation is fronted by a full-length porch, formed by the projecting eaves of the roof and carried by cedar posts that rest on cement footings, that extends beyond the north elevation of the building. The center of the porch is highlighted by a front-facing gabled projection with decorative rustic truss work; the railings, presumably originally cedar posts, have been replaced with sawn lumber. The building was originally a full two-stories in height, but at the time it was moved back from the shore the first story, with boat bays, was removed; stone cribbing where the building originally was situated is visible a short distance out in the lake. Subsequently the focal point of the building, the east elevation-- that which would greet guests upon their arrival-- has been downplayed by the modification of the building from its original function and its subsequent reorientation to be accessed from the west, or land side. The interior retains a variety of period elements including horizontal pine paneling and window seats, while original fenestration includes French doors and sliding windows with multi-paned sash. The original second floor historically contained three bedrooms and a bath.

Shower House, post-1938 (Map # 18)

The shower house is a wood frame building built above a poured concrete foundation, sheathed with rustic siding, an asphalt shingle roof, and fiberglass screening. It is located south of the woodshed/ice house and west of the guide's house.

Privy, post-1938 (Map # 8)

The privy is a wood frame building built above a poured concrete foundation located west of the kitchen building. The frame is sheathed with novelty siding and the roof with wood shakes.

Trash Incinerator, post-1938 (Map # 15)

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 10

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The trash incinerator is an open structure of post and beam construction with an aluminum roof and a poured concrete foundation located along the shore north of Boathouse #2.

Boathouse, c. 1970 (Map # 13)

This non-historic boathouse is situated across from boathouse #2. It is a wood frame building with two open bays facing the water and is sheathed with horizontal clapboard siding; the pitched roof is clad with asphalt shingles. Three open bays on the north side access the interior from the adjacent wood dock between this building and the historic unit.

Pump House, post-1957 (Map # 12)

The pump house is a gable-ended wood frame building with rustic siding and a cement block foundation; asphalt shingling covers the roof. Its function is to house the pump that transfers water from the lake to the storage drum on the tower.

Waterfront Building, 1988 (Map # 22)

The waterfront building was built in association with the camp's beach, a non-historic feature located immediately to the west of the contributing tennis court. It is of post-and-beam construction with board-and-batten exterior sheathing and an asphalt roof.

Archery Range, post-1970 (Map #23)

Located to the north of the camp core.

Non-historic Tent Platforms and Cabins, post-1970

Outside of the core of the historic camp complex there are seven areas which accommodate Girl Scout campers. Between the seven areas there are five non-contributing buildings and thirty non-contributing structures located as follows:

- Hilltop site: 5 cabins (Map #25)
- Lower Hilltop site: 3 tent platforms (Map #24)
- Lakeside site: 5 tent platforms (Map #30)
- Windy Pines site: 5 tent platforms (Map # 29)
- Drifters site: 5 tent platforms (Map # 28)
- Adirondack site: 6 tent platforms (Map # 27)
- Islanders site: 6 tent platforms (Map #26)

SUMMARY OF CONTRIBUTING AND NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCESContributing Buildings:

Main Lodge or Recreation Hall, Dining Pavilion, Family Cabin, Kitchen Building and Servant's Hall, Guest Cabin, Laundry, Guide's House, Carpenter's Shop, Pump House, Barn

Contributing Structures:

Covered Walkway, Boathouse #2, Woodshed/Icehouse, Water Tower, Tennis Court, Gazebo

Contributing Objects:

Flagpole Stand, Iron Roller

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 11National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Non-Contributing Buildings:

Shower House, Privy, Pump House, Waterfront Building, (5) Cabins at Hilltop Site

Non-Contributing Structures:

Boathouse #1, Trash Incinerator, Boathouse, Archery Range, (3) Tent Platforms at Lower Hilltop Site, (5) Tent Platforms at Lakeside Site, (5) Tent Platforms at Windy Pines Site, (5) Tent Platforms at Drifters Site, (6) Tent Platforms at Adirondack Site, (6) Tent Platforms at Islanders Site

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 12

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally: X Statewide: Locally:

Applicable National

Register Criteria: A X B C X D

Criteria Considerations

(Exceptions): A B C D E F G

NHL Criteria: 4

NHL Theme(s): III. Expressing Cultural Values

5. Architecture, landscape architecture and urban design

Areas of Significance: Architecture
 Entertainment/Recreation

Period(s) of Significance: 1903-1920

Significant Dates: 1903, 1920

Significant Person(s):

Cultural Affiliation:

Architect/Builder: Coulter, William L. with Westhoff, Max, Architects
 Trombley and Carrier, Contractors.

Historic Contexts: "The Adirondack Camp in American Architecture"

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 13

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.**Introduction**

Eagle Island Camp, located on Eagle Island on Upper Saranac Lake in the Adirondack Forest Preserve, is exceptionally significant as a quintessential and highly intact example of an American Adirondack camp, a property type that was influential in the development of numerous private camps, lodges, organization camps, and state and national parks throughout the country during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Constructed in 1903 for prominent American financier and statesman Levi P. Morton (1824-1920), Eagle Island retains an extremely high level of integrity of setting, plan, design, style, materials, and method of construction, and is considered the finest example of the work of architect William L. Coulter (1865-1907), one of the region's premier camp designers. Coulter is widely recognized as the first trained architect to settle and practice in the Adirondack region. Afflicted with tuberculosis, Coulter arrived in Saranac Lake for treatment in 1896 and subsequently secured camp commissions in the area. Based on the prototype developed by William West Durant at Camp Pine Knot, Eagle Island Camp is a fully developed example of an Adirondack camp and, through Coulter's highly imaginative use of building elements and decorative features, marks an important phase in the development and evolution of the property type.

Set on a private thirty-one acre island, the camp's individual buildings are artfully arranged to blend with their rugged waterfront setting as well as take advantage of the surrounding views. Among Adirondack camps, Eagle Island's site plan is particularly significant as its design encompasses the entire island and successfully achieves a harmonious balance between the natural and built environments.

Architecturally, the complex exhibits all the distinguishing characteristics of the Adirondack camp type as well as the creative elements that were the hallmarks of William Coulter's Adirondack camp design, including the use of chalet-inspired and octagonal building forms, covered walkways and verandahs connecting buildings, and the construction of elaborate ornamental wood screens over gable ends. These elements became part of the standard design vocabulary for the Adirondack camp property type. Eagle Island remains remarkably unchanged, including its remote setting; highly organized, multiple building compound plan; and built features that were created using stylized adaptations of regional forms and native materials. Eagle Island Camp is an extraordinarily well preserved and highly sophisticated example of the Adirondack camp property type.

William L. Coulter retains a position of considerable importance in the development and evolution of American Adirondack camp design.⁴ Working for the New York City architectural firm of Renwick, Aspinwall and Renwick, Coulter arrived in Saranac Lake because of his own sickness and the expansion of the Adirondack Cottage Sanitarium, a center for the treatment of tuberculosis operated under the guidance of Dr. Edward Livingston Trudeau.⁵ During a brief span of approximately ten years, Coulter enjoyed a lively professional

⁴The New York State Historic Preservation Office (NYSHPO) has identified that in addition to Santanoni Preserve, Sagamore Lodge, Camp Pine Knot, and Eagle Island Camp, one other Adirondack Camp as worthy of designation as a National Historic Landmark. That property is Camp Uncas, built 1893-95 for financier J. Pierpont Morgan. It is one of the most sophisticated of the camps designed under William West Durant's supervision. Camp Uncas, which retains a high level of integrity, was designed as a complete unit, including primary camp buildings and support structures all constructed with native materials and sited to blend in with the lakeside environment. The NYSHPO has also identified a number of other Adirondack Camps that could possibly be eligible for NHL designation. However, these properties would require additional evaluation to determine if they would meet the criteria and registration requirements as outlined in the *Adirondack Camps National Historic Landmarks Theme Study*. The SHPO will evaluate these additional properties as time and resources are available.

⁵The majority of biographical information on Coulter included in this nomination has been drawn from Mary Hotaling's 1995

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 14

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

practice and planned and designed a number of high profile and significant camp buildings and complexes. Among the projects he fielded prior to establishing a full partnership with Max Westhoff, who collaborated on the Eagle Island design, was the six-family complex known as the Knollwood Club on Lower Saranac Lake (c. 1900), the Otto Kahn Camp on Bull Point, Upper Saranac Lake (c. 1901), and the Recreation Hall at Sagamore Lodge near Raquette Lake (c. 1901) (NHL, 2000).⁶ Following Westhoff's arrival in 1902, the office designed Adolph Lewisohn's Prospect Point Camp on Upper Saranac Lake, a commission nearly contemporary with Morton's Eagle Island complex. Prior to the commission for Eagle Island, Morton relied on Coulter's services for modifications to Camp Pinebrook, also on Upper Saranac Lake, acquired by Morton around 1898. Eagle Island is arguably Coulter's finest extant rustic camp with design integrity to the original construction period.

Evident in the design of Eagle Island Camp are the distinctive elements that formed Coulter's unique interpretation of the Adirondack camp. The use of both chalet-inspired and octagonal units, walkways and verandahs linking separate buildings, and the extensive application of open rustic screening are all characteristic of Coulter's work and essential to the success of his Eagle Island scheme. Although utilized for well over half a century by the Girl Scout Council of Greater Essex and Hudson Counties as a summer camp, Eagle Island Camp retains the majority of its character-defining features and exterior and interior historic fabric and finishes, and remains an outstanding representation of Coulter's work in the rustic vein.

William Lincoln Coulter

William Lincoln Coulter was born in Norwich, Connecticut in October 1865, the son of William and Hannah Coulter.⁷ His earliest professional experience in architecture came as a draftsman in the New York City office of William Halsey Wood⁸ while he was still in his teens. By 1890 Coulter had advanced himself considerably and was first listed as an architect in a directory of city professionals. Beginning around 1893, Coulter began an association with the New York City architectural firm of Renwick, Aspinwall and Renwick, office of nationally prominent architect James Renwick (1818-1895), then nearing the end of a productive life and career. After a brief period of employ in the Renwick office, Coulter was diagnosed with tuberculosis, necessitating a paid leave of absence from the firm that saw him remove to Montana. Returning east the following year, 1896, Coulter relocated his family to Saranac Lake, to both recuperate from his illness as well as field a commission for the firm.⁹

Given the circumstances of Coulter's life, Saranac Lake provided an ideal location for the young architect. The village was quickly emerging as the preeminent center for the study and treatment of tuberculosis, under the

Master's Thesis from the University of Vermont, "W.L. Coulter, Adirondack Architect."

⁶In 2000, the Secretary of the Interior designated two of the Adirondack Camps, Sagamore Lodge, Hamilton County, and Santanoni Preserve, Essex County, as National Historic Landmarks. Constructed in 1897, Sagamore Lodge is an outstanding example of a large-scale Adirondack wilderness retreat, a property type that was influential in the development of numerous camps, lodges, organization camps, and state and national parks throughout the country during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Its architect, William West Durant, who also designed Camp Pine Knot, is widely regarded as the most important innovator in the evolution of the Adirondack camp property type and was a prominent figure in the development of the Adirondacks as a fashionable resort. Within the Adirondack camp context, Sagamore Lodge is exceptionally significant as one of the more fully developed examples of its type. Santanoni Preserve is also an outstanding example of an Adirondack camp. As a property type, the Adirondack camp also influenced the development of environmentally responsive resort facilities in the state and national park systems, and contributed to the development of open informal planning in American residential architecture. Built within the context of a large private forest preserve, Santanoni provides insight into the origin of American environmental consciousness, especially the preservation of wilderness, and contributes to our understanding of public resort development in our state and national parks.

⁷ Hotaling, "Coulter." The following overview of Coulter's life is paraphrased from Hotaling's "Coulter," 1-9.

⁸ Mary Hotaling, personal communication, October 2002.

⁹ Hotaling, "Coulter," 4-6.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 15

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

leadership of Dr. E.L. Trudeau, a cousin of Lawrence Aspinwall. Aside from his need for treatment, the village offered Coulter the opportunity to continue in practice with the Renwick, Aspinwall and Renwick firm, engaged there with a number of commissions recalling the growth of the village at the end of the century. According to Mary Hotaling, during the summer of 1896 Coulter was involved with a number of projects fielded by the firm, including pro bono work for the design of an administration building at Trudeau's Adirondack Cottage Sanitarium.¹⁰ Other notable commissions included a design with Aspinwall for the Baker Chapel at the Sanitarium, a non-denominational chapel of eclectic derivation distinguished by irregular and highly picturesque stonework and Shingle-style gabled elements. Around this time Coulter also appears to have designed a modest home for himself and his family, "Perch Cottage," located on Shepard Avenue and built in 1896.¹¹ Thus it appears Coulter's first year in the village was occupied with work as much as with recovery from tuberculosis.

Sometime during the period from late 1896 to early 1897, Coulter discontinued his formal association with the Renwick office, though it appears he continued to act as a liaison for the firm's work in the region.¹² In a letter to Coulter written about this time, his mentor, J. Lawrence Aspinwall, provided a sense of the young architect's character and professional abilities:

I have often wished for you this spring as there are times when I have been so pushed I hardly knew which way to turn and only wished I had somebody to rely upon as I did on you. Although we have very good men, somehow or other they do not seem to take the interest that you did or do not understand me as well as you did. I hope some day that you will be able to come back again.¹³

During the period beginning in 1897, Coulter established an individual architectural practice in the village and began fielding commissions for "cure cottages," and that summer appears to have engaged in his first camp design, an as yet-unidentified project for W.W. McAlpin on Spitfire Lake. Other early camp commissions gained by Coulter included designs for Mrs. Robert Hoe, John S. Ward, and William H. Penfold on the St. Regis Lakes.¹⁴ It was also during this period that Coulter provided drawings and specifications for St. Eustace-By-The-Lakes, a modest Shingle style seasonal church in Lake Placid built for the Episcopalians.

Around 1899 Coulter fielded at least two projects on Upper Saranac Lake, Moss Ledge for Miss Isabel A. Ballantine of New York, and modifications to Camp Pinebrook, commissioned for Levi P. Morton, who subsequently engaged Coulter for the design of Eagle Island. Pinebrook, the former Howell camp, appears to have been acquired by the Morton family around 1898 and was sold sometime during or immediately after the completion of Eagle Island; it was destroyed by fire in 1911.¹⁵ An influential businessman and politician, Levi P. Morton's presence in the Adirondacks is representative of the region's popularity with the country's economic and social elite beginning in the latter stages of the nineteenth century. Morton (1824-1920) was born in Shoreham, Vermont, the son of a Congregational minister and a descendant of the early colonial settler George Morton (1585- 1624).¹⁶ Educated in public schools in Vermont, Morton worked during his youth as a clerk in a dry goods store in Concord, New Hampshire. Among Morton's earliest business enterprises was as a member of

¹⁰Ibid., 6-7.

¹¹Ibid., 8.

¹²Ibid., 9.

¹³Aspinwall to Coulter quoted in letter from Coulter to his mother, June 1897, quoted in Hotaling, "Coulter," 9.

¹⁴Ibid., 14-15.

¹⁵Ibid., 24-25.

¹⁶Background on Morton has been drawn from Thomas Herringshaw, *Prominent Men and Women of the Day* (New York: A.B. Gehman and Co., 1888) and Dumas Malone, ed., *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964), X: 1060.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 16

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

the mercantile firm of Beebe, Morgan and Company in Boston, beginning around 1850, followed by a similar venture in New York, Morton, Grinnell and Company, which was founded in 1855 and failed with the onset of the Civil War. In 1863 Morton established the New York banking house of Levi Morton and Company, which, in 1869, reorganized as Morton, Bliss and Company, during which time the company emerged as a leader in American finance. Morton's first political position came as a Republican in the House of Representatives, where he served beginning in 1879 before resigning during his second term. Next Morton served as the United States Minister to France, 1881-1885, before being elected Vice President on the Republican ticket with Benjamin Harrison, serving one term from 1889-1893. Morton also served as the Governor of New York State for one term, 1895-97, before retiring from the political scene. A man of considerable wealth and stature, a period source characterized Morton as "a man of fine personal presence. . . companionable and liberal. . ."¹⁷

Architectural commissions continued to be fielded by Coulter at a considerable pace as his professional reputation grew and his network of clients expanded. Additional commissions prior to 1900 included the Ladd Cottage at the Sanitarium, and two large-scale camp projects, the Otto Kahn Camp, Bull Point, on Upper Saranac Lake, and the Knollwood Club, a camp complex on Lower Saranac Lake built for six families. The Bull Point and Knollwood commissions represented Coulter's first work for Jewish clientele, who, having been excluded from public resorts and hotels in the region, sought instead to construct their own retreats.¹⁸ Kahn's Bull Point was a major commission for Coulter, highlighted by a considerable main building with both rustic and Tudor-inspired decorative references. The designs for the six Knollwood Club villas related very closely on a stylistic basis to the Main Lodge at Eagle Island, employing as they did rectilinear log gable screens, railings and cedar pole foundation screens; the families shared a central "casino," boathouse, and support facilities. By the time Coulter was engaged by Morton for the design of Eagle Island in 1902, the architect appears to have been well established in the region, with an impressive resume of domestic and institutional commissions already fulfilled and other projects looming. Along with the Morton camp, Coulter was engaged with designs for copper magnate Adolph Lewisohn's Prospect Point near Eagle Island, which, though it survives, has been significantly altered.

Sometime in 1902, with business thriving, Max Harold Westhoff (c. 1870-1954) began working with Coulter, joining William G. Distin and likely George F. Schrader in the office.¹⁹ Westhoff arrived with respectable professional credentials, having worked in the New York City office of Eidlitz and McKenzie. The specifics of Westhoff's arrival in Saranac Lake remain unknown; Hotaling suspects he may have arrived, like Coulter, seeking treatment for tuberculosis.²⁰ Westhoff's precise contribution to the firm and its designs remains a matter of speculation. Although the finished Eagle Island plans carry both his name and Coulter's, it wasn't until 1905 that the firm name of "Coulter and Westhoff" appeared on a building contract or the office's stationery.²¹

Eagle Island Camp: Design and Construction

It is unknown when Coulter and Levi P. Morton first became associated with one another. Coulter was first engaged by Morton for architectural services around 1899, just as his practice appears to have been taking off, to render modifications to Camp Pinebrook. Since no documentary evidence exists, it is impossible to determine the specific reasoning behind Morton's desire to leave Pinebrook so soon after its acquisition and the undertaking of improvements. As pointed out by Mary Hotaling, the move may have been one made for the sake of additional privacy, as the island afforded a heightened sense of seclusion from the mainland.²²

¹⁷Herringshaw, *Prominent Men*.

¹⁸Hotaling, "Coulter," 30-31.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 66.

²⁰*Ibid.*

²¹*Ibid.*, 104.

²²Conversation with Mary Hotaling, September 2002.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 17

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Likewise, since the Pinebrook property was not constructed under their direction, regardless of modifications it would never have accurately reflected the Morton family's tastes and needs the way a project conceived from the beginning with client input would.

Surviving documentation provides some insight into how the Eagle Island scheme evolved. The earliest surviving materials from the Coulter office for the Eagle Island project are three plans for the complex dated November 1902.²³ These first plans indicate a scheme different in conception from the camp complex as built, with linear living quarter wings radiating outward from a central living room block, and an octagonal dining hall and kitchen wing set behind the central block. A verandah, both covered and uncovered, is shown fronting the length of the primary elevation. Although subsequently oriented differently, the dining-kitchen unit as depicted in the 1902 drawing is essentially as built; the other units, however, continued to evolve into the complex as it was later built. The early plan suggests an almost institutional arrangement, lacking the notion of distinctly separate units. Some notations made on these early drawings, which carry only Coulter's name and indicate they were drawn for Mrs. L.P. Morton, provide further information. One notation, made on the plans for the boathouse and guides quarters, noted the drawings were rendered on November 3, and sent to Mrs. Morton on November 20 in advance of a November 24 visit to their Saranac Lake office.²⁴ Following Mrs. Morton's presumed visit to the Coulter office, significant changes were rendered to this first plan. Another notation on these early plans suggests that the Main Lodge interior plan would follow the dimensions of the living room at Camp Pinebrook; this would seem to indicate the Morton's desire to recreate this space at the new camp.²⁵ As designed and built the lodge came close to following this original directive, presumably made by the Mortons.

Only one elevation of the complex's buildings, rendered in December 1902,²⁶ appears to survive for the project; though this elevation depicts elements of Eagle Island camp as built, it is clear that this drawing chronicles the continued evolution of the project. The drawing depicts an interrelated group of distinctly separate but attached architectural units that bear little relationship to the November plan; between the mailing of the plans to Mrs. Morton and this rendering by Coulter, significant changes were made to the scheme. Notes on the drawing by the architect suggest his or the client's approval of certain elements of the scheme; underneath the Guest Cabin and the Lodge-- both of which were built in a manner similar to their appearance in the rendering-- are the notation "O.K." Underneath what were to be the family quarters is the notation "n.g."-- no good-- indicating that the elevations required further development. Flanking either side of this grouping of buildings, which incidentally show no indication of the extreme downward grade of the site where they were later constructed, are two tent platforms, essentially open gable-ended buildings with chimneys, with interiors concealed by fabric screening. Although it appears these were never built, an historic image²⁷ indicates a series of at least three platforms were constructed at the camp but not in the manner suggested by the drawings, i.e. as fully developed architectural counterparts to the primary buildings. Though it is impossible to determine the precise location of the platforms from the image, they were clearly constructed on a sloping site, perhaps to the east of the family quarters. Nonetheless, the elevation rendered in December indicates the camp scheme had advanced significantly from the first plans rendered the previous month.

²³These are drawn in pencil on tissue paper and marked in red pen "1st set." Archives of Wareham-Delair Architects, Saranac Lake, New York (WDA hereafter). These three plans are for the main building and lodge, the dining room and laundry building, and the boat house and guides quarters.

²⁴Coulter, "Boat House and Guide Quarters at Lodge for Mrs. L.P. Morton, Eagle Island, Upper Saranac Lake, NY." Pencil on tissue paper; notation reads "Mrs. Morton visit Nov. 24, send plans Nov. 20, Nov. 3 [date of drawing]." WDA.

²⁵Coulter, "Main Building and Lodge for Mrs. L.P. Morton, Eagle Island, Upper Saranac Lake," Nov. 3, 1902. Pencil on tissue paper; notation reads "Living room size of Lodge at Pine Brook camp." WDA.

²⁶Coulter, untitled drawing, pencil on tissue paper, n.d. WDA.

²⁷View of tent platforms, unknown location within camp complex, n.d. 82.532, Adirondack Collection, SLFL.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 18

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

One set of plans, a total of five drawings on linen, apparently dating from late 1902 and carrying the name Coulter and Westhoff, Architects, survive to depict the camp complex as constructed.²⁸ These are clearly finished plans that appear to have comprised a bound set probably compiled following the Morton's final approval. By early 1903, with the design approved by the Mortons, plans for the complex's construction continued to progress. Coulter undoubtedly consulted with the Mortons on Eagle Island prior to finalizing the specific location and layout of the complex, more than likely early in the process. According to an account published in a periodical in 1918, Coulter "was able to go over a piece of ground with a prospective owner and picture the buildings and possibilities so vividly and eloquently that the prospect was practically hypnotized into purchasing and falling in love with the architect's plans."²⁹ In January contracts for the construction of the camp were let to Trombley and Carrier, the builders, and the Adirondack Hardware Company, for the plumbing.³⁰ The builder's contract specified that Trombley and Carrier, a local firm working out of Saranac Lake village, would be responsible for "the excavations, mason work, carpentry, roofing, and painting of the main group of buildings, dining building and boat house and steamer dock" at a cost of \$26,387.³¹ The plumbing contract, let for \$2,966, brought the cost of the project, minus the architect's fees and the price of acquiring the island, to just under \$30,000. [Serving as witness to both the contracts was William G. Distin (1884-1970); then a teenage draftsman in the Coulter office, Distin later emerged as a significant regional architect responsible for the design of numerous Adirondack camps]. Construction likely commenced at the earliest possible juncture in the spring, as the builder's contract specified that their work would be completed by the first day of June that year; a considerable force of workers was undoubtedly necessary to complete the project within the specified time frame. Materials were probably dragged across the ice by sled in advance of the initiation of construction at first thaw, in addition to transport via boat from the mainland during the spring.

It is interesting to speculate to what extent, if any, Max Westhoff, who began working with Coulter during the period in which the Eagle Island design was being formed and modified by the office, influenced the final conception of the scheme. Also of interest is Coulter's first known exposure to the design philosophies of William West Durant, which as noted by Mary Hotaling occurred in 1901, when Coulter designed the amusement hall for Sagamore Lodge,³² the interior of which shared many similarities to the Morton lodge. Nonetheless, with major camp projects conceived for Morton and Adolph Lewisohn at nearby Prospect Point, Coulter reached what Hotaling described as "the zenith of his practice,"³³ just four years in advance of his death.

The Mortons presumably used the camp for the first time in the summer of 1903. They retained ownership until 1920, the year of Levi Morton's death.

Between his acquisition of the property and his transfer of it to the Girl Scout Council of Greater Essex and Hudson Counties in 1937, Henry Graves apparently made little or no changes to the original Coulter and Westhoff program. One change that may have been rendered by Graves, though it is more than likely that it was carried out at some point during the Morton ownership period, was the replacement of the original sawn-lumber elevated walk between the lodge and dining pavilion with a new covered walk comprised of bark-clad cedar posts and railings.

Eagle Island Camp and Coulter's Personal Style

²⁸Coulter and Westhoff, plans for Dining Building, Boat House, Main Lodge, Guest's Cabin, Laundry Building and Guide's Cabin; Blue ink on linen, WDA.

²⁹Quoted in Hotaling, "Coulter," 80.

³⁰Contract between Morton and Trombley and Carrier, 6 January 1903; Contract between Morton and the Adirondack Hardware Company, 6 January 1903. Both contracts are maintained in the WDA archive.

³¹Morton-Trombley and Carrier contract, WDA.

³²Hotaling, "Coulter," 52.

³³Ibid., 82, 145.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 19

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

A survey of known Coulter-designed camps reveals a skilled architectural practitioner who worked comfortably with the eclectic-rustic vocabulary popularized in the Adirondack region by William West Durant. The design elements which Coulter brought together for Eagle Island Camp are nonetheless representative of his own distinctive approach to rustic camp design and provide considerable insights into his mature personal style. Some elements, including the use of elaborate gable and rustic pole screening, broad covered verandahs, and walkways linking separate building units, had already appeared in Coulter's work, most notably at Knollwood Club on Upper Saranac Lake, circa 1899. Others, however, including the use of an octagonal plan for the dining room, possibly influenced by Westhoff's input,³⁴ were only then emerging in the architect's designs. In addition to highlighting his command of rustic vocabulary, Eagle Island likewise communicated his ability to effectively situate camp buildings to achieve a balanced synthesis of the natural and built environment. At the same time, the buildings and site plan reveal an interest in what Mary Hotaling terms "fresh-air features," partly inspired by designs rendered for tuberculosis-treatment buildings.

As noted by Hotaling, at Eagle Island Coulter employed an architectural vocabulary different than that used for the contemporaneous Lewisohn's camp and one considerably removed from the earlier formality of the Tudor-inspired program employed at Bull Point camp in 1899.³⁵ The highlight of Lewisohn's Prospect Point was a dramatically sited chalet-form building, perhaps inspired by Durant's Sagamore Lodge, its lakefront gable embellished with half-timbering rendered in rustic materials. At Eagle Island, Coulter used a purer rustic vocabulary of bark clad cedar poles and logs as the primary exterior stylistic devices and achieved a striking effect, particularly with the gable screen of the Main Lodge. This elaborate screen, which forms the definitive stylistic feature of the complex, is a hallmark of Coulter's rustic work. Similar screens were used by Coulter for the buildings comprising the Knollwood Club complex and for the Mark Twain Camp on Lower Saranac Lake, 1900. In comparing these elevations with the Main Lodge at Eagle Island, it is clear that for Morton's lodge Coulter brought the application of this device to its fullest rustic development. Not only does the screen offer a dramatic statement when viewed from the water, it likewise creates a complex interplay of light and shadow as filtered sunlight pours through the screen during the day. One possible source for Coulter's use of the open screen motif were the open trusses used by architect Robert H. Roberstson for the Main Camp at Camp Santanoni, though there the effect is more structural than rustic as at Eagle Island. Similar devices had likewise appeared in American architectural publications as early as the 1850s.³⁶ On the interior of the Main Lodge, Coulter provided a decorative program of considerable interest, highlighted by a freestanding log gallery supporting the roof trusses and a massive stone fireplace.

The primary architectural units of Eagle Island, formed to follow the island's topography, are successfully integrated with their site to take full advantage of, yet at the same time exist in relative harmony with, their natural setting. As noted by historian Paul Malo, Coulter had already expressed a strong sensitivity in site planning apparently inspired by Japanese precedent at the Knollwood Club complex.³⁷ The architect's use of crossed rafters on the roof ridge of the Main Lodge at Eagle Island and other camps, seemingly distilled from *chigi*, asserts his apparent familiarity with Japanese design elements. At Eagle Island Coulter applied site-planning principles akin to the Japanese tradition, with low-profiled buildings adapted to conform to the site's topography and features, thus reflecting a kinship with, and not competition with, the natural environment. Following the advice of contemporary architect William S. Wicks, Coulter had likely carefully studied the site,

³⁴Information provided by Mary Hotaling, October 2002.

³⁵Hotaling, "Coulter," 81.

³⁶Henry Cleaveland, William and Samuel Backus, *Village and Farm Cottages* (New York: D. Appleton, 1856), 91. Design XIII.

³⁷Paul Malo, "Nippon in the North: Japanese Inspiration in Form and Philosophy," quoted by Wesley Haynes in the National Historic Landmark Cover Document entitled "The Adirondack Camp in American Architecture," March 2000, 24.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 20

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

"mark[ing] well its commanding and beautiful views, its background, its foreground."³⁸ Like Prospect Point, the principal units of Morton's camp benefited from an elevated site that rises quickly from the lake; from the broad verandah fronting the lodge and family quarters, the guest is afforded a commanding prospect of the lake, with the grade falling away below. Although historic images indicate that some natural tree screening was left between the buildings and the lake, clearing was conducted to the rear of the complex to provide the open courtyard around which the support facilities were clustered. According to his own testimony, Coulter believed that heavily wooded sites such as Eagle Island required some clearing to facilitate the circulation of air. "Camp sites in virgin forests are usually so heavily wooded," the architect wrote, "that the air gets little chance to stir in the rear of the buildings."³⁹ Isolated to the service courtyard behind the primary elevation, this clearing failed to significantly impact the aesthetic quality of the camp's principal units, oriented to face south and west. The overall layout, displaying the distinctive characteristics of decentralized planning, may owe a debt to the design philosophies evolved by William West Durant at Camp Pine Knot, though there is no evidence that Coulter ever saw this prototypical camp on Raquette Lake.⁴⁰

As part of the camp scheme Coulter utilized an octagonal-shaped unit for the dining room pavilion, apparently the first time this form was employed by the architect; thus it is not entirely unlikely that the form's use was introduced by Max Westhoff. The interior of the octagon is highlighted by the elaborate log framing system that supports the roof, the use of organic matting on the walls and another of Coulter's "fresh-air features," windows that slide downwards into pockets in the walls to facilitate open-air dining. Coulter and Westhoff subsequently utilized an octagonal dining area for the Henry Smith Camp on Lower Saranac Lake, c. 1905. Coulter's student William G. Distin acknowledged his mentor's influence by utilizing the octagon form for the living room building of the Henry Bladgen Camp, Upper Saranac Lake, built in 1930, and the entrance pavilion to Camp Wonundra, built in 1932, also on Upper Saranac Lake. Like the Main Lodge's gable screen, the application of the octagon emerged as a trademark of Coulter's personal expression of Adirondack camp design and was carried into other commissions executed by his protégé Distin.

Eagle Island represents a fully developed decentralized rustic camp conceived at the height of William Coulter's life and career. Here the distinctive elements of his mature style were brought together to create a complex distinguished by a cohesive rustic decorative program and dramatic and well-thought out site planning. Continued use has failed to significantly diminish the distinctive physical attributes of the camp.

Conclusion

William Coulter's significance as an architect in the Adirondack region includes both the legacy of his executed projects as well as his influence on the careers of William G. Distin and Max Westhoff. Both Westhoff, who continued to practice under the firm name until sometime around 1917, and Distin, credited by Craig Gilborn with designing the last of the "great" or "trophy" camps,⁴¹ benefited from their association with Coulter. Distin's work, in particular, offered distinctive elements of camp design forwarded by Coulter, evident in a cursory review of Distin's executed commissions and his own testimony.⁴² Coulter, who fielded numerous high-profile commissions for camp complexes in the Saranac Lake vicinity, stands with William West Durant and Benjamin

³⁸William S. Wicks, *Log Cabins: How to Build and Furnish Them*, quoted in Haynes, "The Adirondack Camp," 14-15.

³⁹Coulter quoted in Hotaling, "Coulter," 152.

⁴⁰As noted by Mary Hotaling, there is no evidence that Coulter ever saw Camp Pine Knot. It is possible, however, that the notion of decentralized camp planning was known to Coulter due to his work in the St. Regis lakes region, where decentralized camps composed of multiple tent platforms were known to exist. Communication with Mary Hotaling, October 2002.

⁴¹Craig Gilborn, *Adirondack Camps: Homes Away From Home, 1850-1950* (The Adirondack Museum and Syracuse University Press, 2000), 260.

⁴²Ibid.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 21

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

A. Muncil as a major figure in the evolution of Adirondack camp design and planning. His presence in Saranac Lake and his connection to the region is particularly poignant given his affliction with tuberculosis, the disease that brought him to the region and eventually took his life.

Eagle Island Camp may well represent the finest extant rustic camp conceived by one of the preeminent architects working in this idiom and in the region during the late nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth century. The complex survives with a considerable level of physical integrity considering its continued use as a summer camp during the past six decades. Although some details have been lost due to deterioration, the overall scheme as executed by Coulter and Westhoff remains clearly readable, particularly as the individual units compare to the final plans produced by the firm for the project. Adaptive re-use of the camp has failed to significantly diminish the cohesiveness of the architectural program, as it has nearby at Coulter and Westhoff's Prospect Point, a high-profile commission contemporary with Eagle Island that has unfortunately suffered from major physical alterations to accommodate its present-day function. The setting at Eagle Island likewise continues to provide an evocative context for the camp; secluded from the mainland, its rocky shore and dense stands of trees offer a fitting backdrop to one of the Coulter office's premier camp commissions.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 22

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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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: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other (Specify Repository): Archives of Wareham-Delair Architects, Saranac Lake.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 23

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: Approximately 31 acres.

| UTM References: | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|-----------------|------|---------|----------|
| A | 18 | 553300 | 4902970 |
| B | 18 | 553440 | 4902190 |
| C | 18 | 552740 | 4902410 |

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary has been drawn to encompass the entire island, the historic boundary for the property.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary has been drawn to take in the historic resources within the historic land holding.

EAGLE ISLAND CAMP

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 24

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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August 18, 2004