

PH0067354

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Kansas
COUNTY:	Douglas
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	JUL 15 1974

**1. NAME**

COMMON: Spooner Hall, (preferred name)

AND/OR HISTORIC: Spooner Library

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: University of Kansas Campus, northeast corner, 14th Street and Oread Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Lawrence

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: No. 2 Bill Roy

STATE: Kansas

CODE: 66044

COUNTY: Douglas

CODE: 045

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: State of Kansas

STREET AND NUMBER: State House

CITY OR TOWN: Topeka

STATE: Kansas

CODE: 66612

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Register of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER: Douglas County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Lawrence

STATE: Kansas

CODE: 66044

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: Federal Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

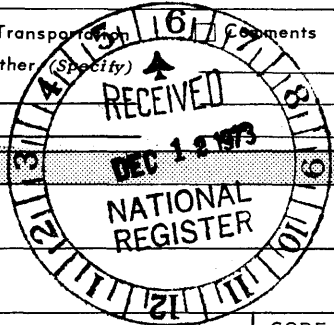
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Records destroyed. A guidebook, Kansas, was published in 1939.

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Kansas  
COUNTY: Douglas  
ENTRY NUMBER: 15  
DATE: JUL 15 1974  
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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Spooner Hall, located near the east end of the campus of the University of Kansas, is a rectangular structure which faces west on Oread avenue.

The architect, Henry Van Brunt, was an admirer and an imitator of the work of his friend Henry Hobson Richardson. Van Brunt identified the style of Spooner Hall as derived from the Southern French architecture of the tenth century, or as Southern Romanesque Revival. The ribbon windows with colonnettes, the rectangular fenestration and the triple-arched portal are some of the evidences of Richardson's influence on Van Brunt.

The exterior walls are basically of rough-faced limestone blocks quarried on the site. The size of the individual stones varies. The corners feature an interlocking quoin of red smooth-faced Dakota sandstone. Belt lines of the sandstone circumscribe the building both at the floor line and the sill line. The west facade is enhanced by an entry porch with arched openings on three sides. The porch also features a sandstone band with the inscription, "Whoso Findeth Wisdom Findeth Life."

The main roof form is a tall gable with clay tile roofing. The building is designed with two roof levels with the subordinate level sloping up to the sill line of the second floor. At the apex of the gable on the west front a sculptured owl stands as a sentinel.

The windows on all floors are simple rectangles. Most are trimmed with sandstone columns and quoins, and a continuous sandstone lintel continues around the perimeter of the building. Each gable end also has a circular window.

The building is situated on two levels to provide for two essential components of a library--public reading areas and storage. When viewed from the west the structure appears to have two stories; seen from the rear it seems to consist of four stories. The rear portion, which was the stacks, was filled by an iron cage; the five levels, each eight feet in height, were supported on iron uprights extending from floor to roof.

The interior has been completely altered in its usage as a museum of art. The exterior remains virtually as Van Brunt designed it.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1894

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Spooner Hall on the University of Kansas campus at Lawrence was built in 1893-94 as the first structure designed exclusively to house the university's library.

Funds for the erection of the building were bequeathed to the university by William B. Spooner, a prominent leather merchant from Boston, Mass., who died in 1880. His contribution, which at that time was reportedly the largest ever bequeathed a state university, was given because of his fondness for Francis H. Snow, Chancellor of the University of Kansas from 1890 to 1901, who was his niece's husband. (Snow was appointed professor of mathematics and natural sciences in 1866 when the university first opened its doors and served the school until his retirement in 1901.) Under the terms of Spooner's will the estate was not settled for ten years; therefore, it was not until November, 1891, that the university finally received the bequest of \$91,618.03. Chancellor Snow expressed the desire that the major portion of the sum be used to construct a library building, and the Board of Regents and the state legislature agreed. Some of the funds were also used to build an official residence for the chancellor. After a competition held by the State Board of Regents, Van Brunt and Howe of Kansas City were chosen to prepare architectural plans for the library. The contract with this firm was officially signed in June, and erection of the structure began shortly thereafter, with John Cox supervising the construction. By October the student newspaper reported that the foundation, which was built on two different levels, could be seen. The library was completed in the fall of 1894, with Chancellor Snow presiding at the dedicatory ceremonies.

The two-story building housed a large reading room on the first floor and a public hall on the second floor. A five-story, fire-proof book stack area at the east end of the structure was capable of storing 100,000 books. (There were only 20,000 books on the shelves in 1894, but even so it was the largest library in Kansas.)

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15/305330  
4314360

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Amerine, Dick, "Many Collections Contained Within Spooner Thayer,"  
 University Daily Kansan (Lawrence, Kan.), May 28, 1939.  
 Connelley, William E., History of Kansas (Chicago, The American Historical  
 Society, Inc., 1928), v. 2, pp. 1056-1059.  
Eighth Biennial Report of the Board of Regents and Officers of the Uni-  
versity of Kansas, Lawrence, 1891-92 (Topeka, Kan., State Printer  
 1892), pp. 19, 20.  
 "K. U. Launched a Century Ago," University of Kansas Newsletter,  
 August 28, 1965.

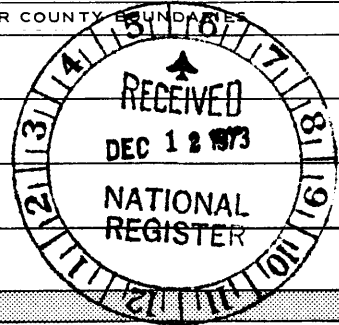
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	39°	57'	31"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	95°	14'	33"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **one acre**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



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**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **Charles Hall, Architectural Consultant**  
**Richard Pankratz, Planner**

ORGANIZATION: **Kansas State Historical Society** DATE: **Oct. 30, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER: **120 West Tenth Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Topeka** STATE: **Kansas 66612** CODE: **20**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**      **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Nyle H. Miller  
 Title Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society  
 Date December 5, 1973

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

W. Pankratz  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 7/15/74

ATTEST:  
Ronald M. Greenberg  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 7/12/74

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Kansas	
COUNTY	Douglas	
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(Number all entries)

8. In the fall of 1924 new library facilities were completed on campus and the library was moved from Spooner. Two years later the Spooner building became a museum of art to house a \$150,000 art collection donated to the university in 1917 by Sallie C. Thayer in memory of her husband, William B. Thayer. The building, now known as the Spooner-Thayer Museum of Art, continues in use as an art museum.

Spooner Hall is an important landmark at the east end of the university campus. Together with nearby Dyche Museum and Green Hall, it forms a small cluster of architectural tradition on the campus.

9. Kull, Ron, "You Could Get Immortality Cheap in Those Days...", University of Kansas Alumni Magazine, v. 50, no. 2 (October, 1951), pp. 10, 11.
- Neuman, Robert M., "A Modern House for Books: Van Brunt and Richardsonian Romanesque," The Register of the Museum of Art, v. 4. nos. 4 and 5 (March, 1971), pp. 49-59.
- Sterling, Wilson, editor, Quarter-Centennial History of the University of Kansas, 1866-1891 (Topeka, George W. Crane & Co., 1891), pp. 111-115.
- The Students Journal of Kansas State University, September 15, 1893, October 13, 1893, December, 1893, October 12, 1894.
- Taft, Robert, Across the Years on Mount Oread, 1866-1941 (Lawrence, Kan., The University of Kansas, 1941), pp. 58, 59.
- "The Thayer Collection of Art in the Spooner-Thayer Art Museum University of Kansas" (n. p., n. d.), pp. 1, 4, 6-8.

