

PHØ 367249

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
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DATE ENTERED AUG 16 1977

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Doane College Historic Buildings

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Doane College Campus

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Crete

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

First

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Nebraska

31

Saline

151

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

**OWNERSHIP**

**STATUS**

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_\_ DISTRICT

\_\_\_ PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

\_\_\_ AGRICULTURE

\_\_\_ MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

\_\_\_ UNOCCUPIED

\_\_\_ COMMERCIAL

\_\_\_ PARK

\_\_\_ STRUCTURE

\_\_\_ BOTH

\_\_\_ WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

\_\_\_ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_\_ SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

\_\_\_ ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_\_ RELIGIOUS

\_\_\_ OBJECT

\_\_\_ IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_\_ GOVERNMENT

\_\_\_ SCIENTIFIC

\_\_\_ BEING CONSIDERED

\_\_\_ YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_\_ INDUSTRIAL

\_\_\_ TRANSPORTATION

\_\_\_ NO

\_\_\_ MILITARY

\_\_\_ OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Doane College

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Crete

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

Nebraska

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Saline County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Wilber

Nebraska

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION                                     |                                       | CHECK ONE                                   | CHECK ONE   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD                 | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR                 | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    |   |   |

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Note: These three buildings--Gaylord Hall, Whitcomb Conservatory and Lee Memorial Chapel, and Boswell Observatory--are contiguous to each other but are unique enough both architecturally and historically to be addressed separately, there being nothing outside of their relationship to the College itself to tie them together in the sense of a district. It was also felt that the number of structures and the area involved did not justify district consideration.

In terms of location, all three structures are shown on the U.S.G.S. map: Boswell Observatory being the northernmost structure and Gaylord Hall the southernmost. The Whitcomb Conservatory and Lee Memorial Chapel is situated between the two, being closer to Boswell than Gaylord, as photo number four suggests.

### Gaylord Hall (SA01-7)

Gaylord Hall, built in 1884, is a large brick structure on a limestone foundation. Composed of three separate elements tied together to form a Y-shaped plan, this substantially-built structure has been a landmark on the college campus since its completion.

The long axis of the Y-shaped plan is oriented north-south, with the main central wing occupying the north end of the axis. This central wing is four stories high, measuring thirty-six by fifty-three feet, and is topped with a gabled gambrel roof (photo #1). Built upon a high limestone foundation with corner buttresses, this wing is separated from the east and west wings by a fire-resistant brick wall and features a metal roof with shed dormers.

The east and west wings, which, together with the main wing form a courtyard on the south, are each three stories in height and are built upon high limestone basements (photo #2). These wings measure thirty-six by forty-eight feet and are topped with hipped-gambrel roofs with wood shingles and pedimented dormer windows.

The substantial brick work is as solid as the day it was built. Subtly detailed, the building does not display any of the over-exuberant detailing so popular during the era. Primarily built of smooth brick walls with segmentally arched openings, diagonally set brick string courses and belt courses on the main wing (photo #2) are the only notable wall details. The date "1884" is built in brick on the north gable of the main wing (photo #1).

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Gaylord was originally built as "Ladies Hall," being primarily dormitory space for women and board space for the entire college. The Hall contained forty-two rooms with space for seventy-five to eighty women students. A chapel was provided on the first floor of the main wing, the dining hall on the first floor of the west wing, while the large basement provided for kitchen and laundry space.

With the completion of Frees Hall in 1931, a new dormitory for women, the building has gone through a number of interior alterations for adaptive use. The east wing was converted into faculty apartments, the dining room was converted into a gymnasium for women which also necessitated the filling of the courtyard for this gymnasium space, while the chapel space (which was moved into Lee Memorial Chapel upon its completion) was converted into the Little Theater with a seating capacity of 100. In 1955, the first floor of the west wing was remodeled again and became the Religion Center, while with the completion of the new Communications building in 1971, the Little Theater was abandoned and that space now houses a Head Start program. The building also presently serves as married student housing as well as the College's maintenance department.

Throughout the various adaptations of the interior spaces, the exterior has retained its original character almost completely. The addition of fire escapes and the filled-in courtyard (not readily visible) are the major changes made to the exterior.

Whitcomb Conservatory and Lee Memorial Chapel (SA01-7)

The Whitcomb Conservatory and Lee Memorial Chapel is a large, two-story brick and steel structure, pentagonal in plan with a ten-sided pyramidal roof. Designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Dean and Dean in 1905, this unique Prairie Style building was constructed in 1906-1907 for use as a chapel, music hall and music classroom space.

Organized around the geometry of the pentagon, the plan-form was generated as an expression of the varied functions of the building (photos #3-5). The pure pentagon shape forms the interior halls of the chapel-auditorium and measures thirty-five feet on a side. This is surrounded by a six-foot strip of space which forms either the hallway or becomes a part of the auditorium itself--creating a pentagon whose outside dimensions measure forty-seven feet on a side. Centered on the outside wall of each side of the pentagon are five fifteen by thirty-eight foot appendages which form extensions to the auditorium on three sides of the ground floor; the remainder being used for office and music classroom space. On

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the second floor these appendages or pavilions define classroom and music studio spaces which gain access off of the circumferential single loaded hallway on that level.

Formally the building rises in the shape of its plan, building to the peak of the pyramidal roof over the chapel auditorium space. The basement-foundation wall which is wider than the walls above and forms a water table creates a solid base for the building (photo #3) and subtly reinforces the vertical rise to the roof and its slope to the peak. The chapel-auditorium space (or the main pentagon) rises to the full height of the building inside (twenty-nine feet) and is protected by a ten-sided pyramidal roof. The roof formerly had a skylight at its peak, while the original wood shingle roof is presently shingled with asphalt roofing. The two-story pavilions are protected with a hipped roof which meets the pyramidal roof at five of its ten ridges. This roof then extends to create a deep overhang, supported by braces and protecting the ribbon windows on the second level. The ends of the pavilions are clasped between hollow piers which provide vertical accents to the overall horizontality of the building. These piers provide space for ventilation and hot-air supply to the interior spaces.

The building is oriented along an east-west axis with the west pavilion aligning with the cardinal directions. One of the building's two entrances is in the center of the west pavilion and enters through a small vestibule into the chapel-auditorium space facing a raised stage in the east corner of the pentagon. The remaining entrance is in the east corner of the pentagon form (photo #3) and provides access to the hall behind the stage and the single stairway to the studio spaces above. The west entrance is labeled "Lee Memorial Chapel" while the east bears the plaque "Whitcomb Conservatory of Music," the labels referring to the two functions as well as the names of a founder of the College and a major donor for the building respectively.

Materials and details (Roman pressed brick and wood, articulated piers, hipped roof, wide overhanging eaves, ribbon windows and the window surrounds on the ground floor) are exemplary of the motifs incorporated by Frank Lloyd Wright and a small group of Chicago architects just after the turn of the century, and are characteristic of what has come to be known as the Prairie Style of architecture.

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Boswell Observatory

The Boswell Observatory (photos #6-8) is a small, irregularly-shaped building of considerable interest. The structure, which was built in 1883-84 with an 1892 addition, was constructed to house Doane College's program in astronomy and weather science. The program was conducted by Goodwin D. Swezey, Professor of Natural Sciences. The low one-story building originally contained four rooms (clock room, office, transit room and scope room), while the 1892 addition provided space for a classroom and the self-registering equipment of the Nebraska Weather Service.

In form, the building is quite articulated, to some extent indicating the nature of the various functions inside. Initially the building was composed of three distinct parts: the office/clock room wing with its low-pitched gable roof, the domed scope room, and the transit room which connected the two. With the addition of the 1892 wing, the building became of irregular cross-shaped plan, measuring sixty by twenty-seven feet at its extremes. The domed scope room dominates the building formally, rising nearly a full story above the rest of the building and drawing attention to itself through the careful juxtaposition of octagonal, circular and spherical elements (photo #6).

Structurally, the building is a well-detailed example of late nineteenth century construction. Built of brick, the building rests firmly on a rough-cut ashlar limestone foundation which accents the meeting of brick and stone with a smooth-cut limestone water table. While the clock room section and the 1892 wing exhibit rather ordinary brickwork, the more technically-oriented portions of the building display more elaborate work. The scope room, which is octagonal on the ground floor, becomes circular at the floor of the telescope itself. The circular form, which was required to accept the rails for the revolving dome, meets the octagonal form through a corbelled brick transition. This corbelling, which also terminates the eaves of the transit room, is protected on its exposed face (of the scope room) with sheet metal flashing which conforms to the shape of the corbelling (photo #6).

Above the low circular wall of the scope room is the sheet metal-covered, wood lattice structured dome. The dome, which rotates a full 360°, is equipped with a sliding door which opens a full one-quarter

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|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|------|---|
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|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|------|---|

quadrant (90°). This feature, in conjunction with the rotating dome, allows views of the sky from horizon to horizon in all directions.

The transit room fills the space between the clockroom and the scope room and exhibits interesting detailing as well. The room, which houses the meridian transit donated to the College by Thomas Doane (photo #11), is detailed to allow full view of the sky from horizon to horizon on a north-south axis. This view is made possible by swinging doors which form the roof and open completely to the outside, while on the side walls triple-hung windows slide down to the sill, opening the building from horizon to horizon. Narrow brick pilasters on either side of these windows accent this technical detail.

Other structural details of technical importance to the building are the isolated brick piers which support the clock, the meridian transit and the telescope (photos #9-11). These piers are structured separately so that any movement which may occur in the building will not disturb the setting and the accuracy of the instruments themselves. It should be noted that the foundation for another pier is extant below the office floor and indicates (along with an early engraving of the building) that an east-west transit was planned for the building as well. There is no indication, however, from records or the extant structure, that this transit was ever installed and used. Exterior treatment in addition to that mentioned above includes small circular windows which penetrate at the floor level of the scope room, a finely carved limestone name and date plaque, a small wood-panelled vestibule into the clock room, and segmentally arched openings in the walls for doors and windows. The roof on the building (with the exception of the dome) is low-pitched, being gabled on the original building and hipped on the 1892 addition.

The interior remains much the way it was originally built (photo #9). Simply detailed with wood floors and trim, plaster walls and ceiling, the major change was the result of a 1930 fire in the clock room. This room today has been repaired in a manner compatible with the original interior. The interior of the dome is presently open to the wood lattice structure, but was originally finished with an oilcloth lining (photo #10).

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

|   |  |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC          | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC     | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION           | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS              | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION   | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSIC       | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |   |  |

SPECIFIC DATES 1884; 1905-07; 1883-84 BUILDER/ARCHITECT See Below

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### Gaylord Hall (SA01-7)

The prehistory of Doane College dates from 1857 when the General Association of Congregational Churches, in its first annual meeting at Fremont, resolved to "Lay the foundations of a literary institution of a high order in Nebraska." Fourteen years later and after several unsuccessful attempts to establish Congregational schools across the state, an academy was founded at Crete on May 22, 1871. The Crete Academy Building which was constructed in 1871 (demolished ca. 1885) at the corner of 6th and Ivy Streets held classes from 1871 to 1876.

The efforts of the local pastor and Thomas Doane, chief engineer for the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad, were instrumental in advancing the idea of the Academy and on July 11, 1872, Doane College pre-empted the old Crete Academy. As enrollments increased, and a new building was contemplated, the site of the College was moved to its present location on a hill east of town. This land was donated by Thomas Doane's employer. On April 12, 1879, ground was broken for the construction of the first building erected on the site of the present campus, Merrill Hall. This landmark structure was destroyed by fire in February of 1969.

Gaylord Hall, which was built in response to the needs of a growing campus in 1884, reflects many of the forms and details employed in Doane's first building. The brick and limestone detailing as well as the roof forms are all identical to those employed on the original Merrill Hall. In this sense, then, Gaylord Hall stands as a landmark, but a landmark which recalls much of the imagery of Doane College's first building. Since the destruction of Merrill Hall by fire, Gaylord Hall has formed Doane's closest link with its nineteenth century past. "With its long and varied history, the building is the object of great affection among many generations of alumni and particular value attaches to the structure as a symbol of higher education for women in the State of Nebraska." (Heilman manuscript, n.p.)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet, Item 9

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 8 acres

UTM REFERENCES- See map + Info. dated 5.18.77

|   |      |           |             |   |      |           |             |
|---|------|-----------|-------------|---|------|-----------|-------------|
| A | 1,4  | 67,36,7,0 | 4,49,86,7,0 | B | 1,4  | 67,33,9,0 | 4,49,84,9,0 |
|   | ZONE | EASTING   | NORTHING    |   | ZONE | EASTING   | NORTHING    |
| C | 1,4  | 67,32,6,0 | 4,49,84,8,0 | D | 1,4  | 67,32,6,0 | 4,49,86,7,0 |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|       |      |        |      |
|       |      |        |      |

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

D. Murphy, Architect

ORGANIZATION

Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

December 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1500 R Street

TELEPHONE

(402) 432-2793

CITY OR TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE X

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Marian E. Knott

1/26/77

TITLE

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Wm. J. Murtagh

DATE

8/16/77

ATTEST:

Charles W. ...

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8.15.77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



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Whitcomb Conservatory and Lee Memorial Chapel (SA01-8)

The need for an expanded physical plant for Doane's continued growth in enrollment was becoming quite apparent around the turn of the century. The need for chapel facilities and space for the music program were especially acute. At the annual meeting of June 10, 1903, the Board of Trustees decided to make a special effort to alleviate these needs and a fund raising campaign was initiated. By 1904 they voted to erect a \$30,000 structure to house the chapel and music program.

The building was to be called Lee Memorial Hall in honor of George F. Lee who helped found the College and served on its Board of Trustees from 1874 to 1883. But with a pledge of \$10,000 from Mr. Henry Whitcomb of Worcester, Mass., a change was made so that each separate entrance would bear the names of the two individuals, resulting in its present name.

Construction started in 1906 on the basis of the plans prepared by Dean and Dean. The contractor was Fred Young of Bethany (Lincoln), Nebraska and Doane's fifth building was completed in 1907.

The building has a great deal of interest both architecturally and historically. Architecturally, the building is the only non-domestic example of the Prairie School movement identified thus far in Nebraska and may be among the finest works of this movement executed by the firm of Dean and Dean. A unique building literally responding to the "Form Follows Function" battle cry of Louis Sullivan, the structure displays many of the motifs which have come to be called Prairie Style (see description) and stands today as the most sophisticated example of the movement in Nebraska.

The building's relationship with the Prairie School is complete. Designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Dean and Dean, this firm played at least a peripheral role in the movement architecturally and, in the person of George R. Dean, an active role intellectually.

George R. Dean was born in Satara, India, in 1864 and came to the United States with his missionary parents in 1872. They pioneered in Jefferson County, Nebraska, where his father, Samuel Amhurst Chase Dean, set up a church. In 1879 he went to Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, graduating in 1885. After leaving Crete, he worked for architect W. C. Whitney in Minneapolis (1886-89) and then Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge in Boston (1889-91) before leaving for Rome and Paris, where he studied at the atelier of Henri Duray and at the Ecole des Beaux Arts returning

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to the United States in 1893. He is said to have rejoined the office of Shepley Rutan and Colledge upon his arrival in the U.S., but his tenure there must have been shortlived since he was the architect for the Whitten Library building at Doane college in 1894. It would appear that by 1893 he had formed a partnership with his brother, Arthur R. Dean (also a graduate of Doane), forming the firm of Dean and Dean.

Although the firm is considered as having a short "flirtation" with Prairie School architecture, George played a significant intellectual role. His activity must have begun shortly after his return to the United States when he began an association with several other architects known as the Steinway Hall colony. Dean didn't have an office in Steinway but was part of an expanded group of architects including Frank Lloyd Wright, Robert Spencer, Gamble Rogers, Hardy and Cady, Dick Schmidt, Hugh Garden, Perkins and Shaw and several others called "The Eighteen." "The Eighteen" began meeting in the late 1890's for informal dinners on a monthly basis at the Bismarck Restaurant, where discussions of architectural problems and theories occupied their time.

These architects were also finding a useful forum for expression in the Chicago Architectural Club of which Dean was President in 1895-97. By the turn of the century they were increasingly active in Club affairs, holding top administrative posts, and, in 1902, controlling the majority of these positions. Among the most active were Spencer, Perkins, Garden, Schmidt and George Dean. The year of the famous Prairie School-dominated exhibition of the Club, 1902, saw Spencer as president of the group with exhibition jurors including Dean, Spencer and Schmidt. Dean also edited the 1902 catalog.

Among the efforts of "The Eighteen" and the Chicago Architectural Club prior to 1902 was the initiation of the formation of the Architectural League of America. Delegates from Chicago to the founding convention in Cleveland in 1899 included George Dean, Long, Perkins, Tomlinson and Wright (even though Wright was not actually a member of the Club).

While the years following 1902 through the First World War saw the greatest productivity of building for some of the architects, the waning influence of the group in the Chicago Architectural Club also brought the movement of other architects away from the Prairie School fold and back

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into more conservative architectural thought. Dean and Dean are considered to have been among those moving back to the Revival Styles but probably not completely until after the death of George in 1919 as their Club Building at Morgan Park in Duluth, Minnesota would indicate (Architectural Record, Vol. 46, 1919, pp. 542-43). The firm continued for some time with Arthur and his sons as Dean and Dean but all vestiges of the earlier radical thought were gone. The dormitory the firm designed in 1929 for Doane College (Men's Hall) is a thoroughly Collegiate Gothic structure.

Nonetheless the Whitcomb Conservatory and Lee Memorial Chapel stands as a landmark in Nebraska, recalling that period of intense activity in Chicago just after the turn of the century.

Boswell Observatory (SA01-9)

The Boswell Observatory (1883-84) is the second building erected on the Doane campus and is the oldest surviving structure. At the time of its construction there was a great deal of interest in things astronomical, and apparently a dearth of observatories and telescopes west of the Mississippi River. Due to the efforts of Professor Swezey and a \$5000 bequest from the wealthy financier Charles Boswell (West Hartford, Connecticut) plans were begun in the late summer of 1883. Professor Swezey visited the observatories at the University of Wisconsin, Beloit College and Carleton College that summer. As a result of his investigations he prepared plans, along with Doane president Perry, for the building. Ground breaking occurred that fall.

The Boswell bequest was more than enough to construct the building and by the time the building was dedicated (May 1884) the structure was equipped (or equipment ordered) with substantial astronomical instruments. The equatorial telescope which the building was constructed for had an eight-inch aperture and was considered at the time to be the largest of its kind west of the Mississippi. This telescope is still extant in the scope room of the observatory (see photo #10). Other equipment in the observatory includes a weight-driven astronomical clock with a mercury-compensated pendulum for measuring mean and standard time (mounted on an isolated brick pier), a self-winding regular clock with an ordinary pendulum used as a governor for the telescope, a chronometer or ship's clock for measuring sidereal time and the meridian transit which was used to ascertain the slightest variations in the clocks and chronometer-- thereby using the stars to compensate for the inaccuracy of contemporary man-made time pieces.

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The meridian transit is of special interest to the college (see photo #11) as it was donated by Thomas Doane, chief engineer of the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad at the time that line was built through Crete. Doane (along with the Reverend Frederick Alley) helped found and lay out the college in Crete on land which was previously owned by the railroad. This particular transit was one of a set of two used in an amazing (for its time) feat of alignment for a five-mile-long tunnel through the Hoosac Mountains, establishing a railroad line between Greenfield, Massachusetts and Troy, New York. This work was supervised by Doane.

Other instruments which are no longer housed in the building included a full set of self-registering meteorological equipment, including a thermograph, barograph, hygrometer, sunshine recorder and instruments to record wind direction and velocity and precipitation. These instruments were moved to the 1892 wing upon its completion. Professor G. D. Swezey had been installed as director of the Nebraska Weather Service replacing S. R. Thompson who retired in 1884. (Boswell Observatory is purportedly the first weather service headquarters building in Nebraska. Weather data is still being recorded in Crete by the last director of the Observatory, Loyd C. Oleson.) Swezey continued in this capacity until 1894, when he left Doane College to go to the University of Nebraska as Meteorologist and later to chair the Department of Astronomy.

Goodwin Deloss Swezey was one of Nebraska's most important early scientific investigators and educators. Born in Rockford, Illinois, in 1851, he was educated in the schools of Rockford, Beloit College Academy, Beloit College, Yale Divinity School, and Andover Theological Seminary, receiving degrees at several of the schools. His educational career in addition to his meteorological activities included Professor of Natural Sciences (Doane, 1879-92), Professor of Biology and Geology (Doane, 1892-94), Professor of Astronomy at the University of Nebraska (many years as department chairman) from 1894-1932. He was the author of several books and numerous scientific reports and articles.

Boswell Observatory is the only known extant nineteenth-century observatory in Nebraska which has maintained its architectural and scientific integrity. The observatory which Swezey built at the University was roughly similar in design but has long since been destroyed. His plans for an expanded observatory were never carried out but were used in modified form for the observatory at Peru Normal Training School (Peru State Teachers College) in ca. 1917. Other, later, observatories

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are known to exist (i.e. Creighton University in Omaha and Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln) but none equal the historic, architectural and scientific significance of Boswell.

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Doane College Historic Buildings  
Crete, Nebraska

A. Boswell Observatory

Zone 14

E 673 350

N 4498 650

B. Whitcomb Conservatory

Zone 14

E 673 320

N 4498 630

C. Gaylord Hall

Zone 14

E 673 300

N 4498 520

Each property is less than one acre. Total acreage including green areas is eight acres.