

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED **JAN 29 1980**
DATE ENTERED MAR 27 1980

**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 *Old Plover Methodist Church*

HISTORIC

The First Presbyterian Church of Plover and Stevens Point

AND/OR COMMON

Old Plover Methodist Church (preferred)

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Madison Avenue

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Plover

__ VICINITY OF

Seventh

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Wisconsin

55

Portage

097

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: empty

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Portage County Historical Society, Guy J. Gibson, President

STREET & NUMBER

1724 Franklin Street

CITY, TOWN

Stevens Point

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 54481

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Portage County Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

1516 Church Street

CITY, TOWN

Stevens Point

STATE

Wisconsin 54481

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wisconsin Survey of Historic Sites

DATE

1973

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR
 DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Plover Methodist Church building is a detached, one-story frame structure, approximately 32 x 50 feet, of Greek Revival proportions. The building, constructed in the middle of the 125 x 132 foot lot, rests on a rubble stone foundation. It faces Madison Avenue to the west. Pine trees partially screen the railroad tracks that run from east to west near the northern property line.

Early pictures indicate that a square crenellated tower with louvered belfry rose above the low-pitched gable roof. The steeple was removed sometime in the recent past--probably in 1964 when the Methodist church sold the building and removed the bell to their new church. A broad entablature encircles the building below the full pediment over the hooded main entrance. Eight full length windows light the interior--three each on the north and south sides, and one on either side of the double-doored main entrance. A small sash window over the main entrance hood helps light the balcony. In 1932, the building was raised and a basement constructed. At that time a south side doorway, giving entrance to the nave and the basement, and an east side (back) doorway giving entrance to the basement were constructed. Sometime in the recent past a vestibule was attached to the front of the building, but this was removed in 1977.

Because the building has suffered heavy use over the last ten or so years, very little of the original interior remains. However, the present owners intend to restore the interior as close to the original as possible.

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 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 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 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 1862¹, 1887² BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Plover Methodist Church is a good example of Greek Revival church architecture as interpreted by local artisans. Today it is a reminder of the early "boom" times of Plover, when in the mid-nineteenth century the village was the Portage County seat and overshadowed nearby Stevens Point.

In 1846, Moses M. Strong platted the village of Plover near a Wisconsin River portage of the same name. Named the Portage County seat in the 1850's, the town grew quickly and soon boasted numerous shops, a Masonic Lodge, and several hotels--including the Empire House, opened in 1856. Two churches also were organized in the busy village. The Methodists organized first, in the early 1850's, and built their church in 1861. This building no longer stands. In 1856, a Presbyterian church, meant to serve both Plover and the tiny village of Stevens Point, was organized. Almost immediately, the founders made plans "to proceed to the building of a house of worship at the village of Plover." Six years later the congregation finished construction of the building being nominated. The Presbyterians occupied the building until the organization disbanded in 1887. The building was sold to the Methodists that same year.³

Plover's decline was swift. In 1867, when the county seat was moved to nearby Stevens Point, the village settled into the state's backwaters as did so many other Wisconsin villages in the nineteenth century. Despite an economic flourish in the 1880's, with the construction of a sorghum factory, Plover remained a small farm village dominated by Stevens Point only three miles to the north. As a result, Plover was frozen in architectural time. While unfortunate for the village and its people, the result is a boon to the preservationist. Many of the village's Greek Revival influenced buildings remain standing and without serious alteration.⁴ Although the church has lost its belfry, its integrity is preserved by other significant architectural

¹Plover, Wisconsin, Presbyterian Church Records, manuscript, 1862. The Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

²property abstract entry #22

³History of Portage County, (The Lewis Publishing Company, Chicago, 1919), Volume I, pp. 242-243; Abstract entries #21, 22; Plover Wisconsin, Presbyterian Church Records, manuscript, 1856-1862 (The Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) Quotation from minutes of April 7, 1856 meeting.;

⁴Tax Rolls, Plover, Wisconsin, 1861-1865.

⁴History of Portage County, p. 242-243.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Plover, Wisconsin Presbyterian Church Records, manuscript, 1862. Deposited at The Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Tax Rolls, Plover, Wisconsin.

History of Portage County, (Lewis Publishing Company, Chicago, 1919).

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.38

QUADRANGLE NAME Whiting, Wis.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,6 2,9,7 8,5,0 4,9 2,5 5,4,0

B

C

D ZONE EASTING NORTHING

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Bounded on the north by the right-of-way of the Green Bay & Western Railroad line, on the west by Madison Avenue, and on the south and east by the limits of the parcel.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Wendell Nelson

ORGANIZATION

Portage County Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

Box 100

CITY OR TOWN

Amherst

DATE

January, 1979

TELEPHONE

(715) 824-5827

STATE

Wisconsin 54406

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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

Richard Henry

TITLE

Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

10/16/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. Ray Luce
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: *Kristin O'Connell*
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

3/27/80

DATE

3/14/80

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 29 1980

DATE ENTERED

MAR 27 1980

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Old Plover Methodist Church, Plover, Wisconsin

See

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER below PAGE 1

8. features. The Plover church is the only Greek Revival building in Portage County with a full pediment and the only church whose Greek Revival features have retained their integrity. Further, it is the oldest extant church building and the first Presbyterian church to have been built in the county.
10. George C. Brown, Historian, Historic Preservation Division
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
816 State Street
Madison
- September, 1979
608/262-3390
Wisconsin 53706