

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received 6/15/83

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Old Chapel Hall

and/or common Alumni Hall

2. Location

street & number 2050 University Avenue _____ not for publication

city, town Dubuque _____ vicinity of 2

state Iowa code 19 county Dubuque code 061

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> n a in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name University of Dubuque

street & number 2050 University Avenue

city, town Dubuque _____ vicinity of _____ state Iowa

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds Office

street & number Dubuque County Courthouse

city, town Dubuque _____ state Iowa

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes no

date n|a _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records n|a

city, town n|a _____ state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" 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		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Alumni Hall is the second building constructed on the second campus of the University of Dubuque, and the oldest extant structure on this campus. It is a fine example of collegiate architecture of the early twentieth century, and its English Gothic Revival style is appropriate for the religious background of the 129-year-old institution.

Built in 1907 according to University records, the chapel is of brick with a tile roof and cream-colored stone trim. The stone outlines pairs of lancet windows having stained glass. A rose window and small buttresses contribute to the building's ecclesiastical demeanor as does the small open bell tower that marks the entrance.

The plan of the chapel is little changed but for the addition of some storage closets and restrooms and the enclosure of a connecting portico. Designed to be a chapel, the building is essentially a large hall with a stage at one end and an entry and vestibule at the other. Four groups of lancet windows run the length of the main hall.

The setting for Old Chapel Hall is decidedly collegiate with a dash of the medieval cloister. Lying in the midst of the campus, the hall relates well in design and building materials to other buildings nearby. The University is reconstructing an arcade taken from the razed Steffens Hall (the first building of the campus) to form an enclosed green space for Old Chapel Hall.

The Use of Old Chapel for religious purposes discontinued with the construction of Blades Chapel in 1980. Refer to Significance Statement for elaboration on current planned use for structure.

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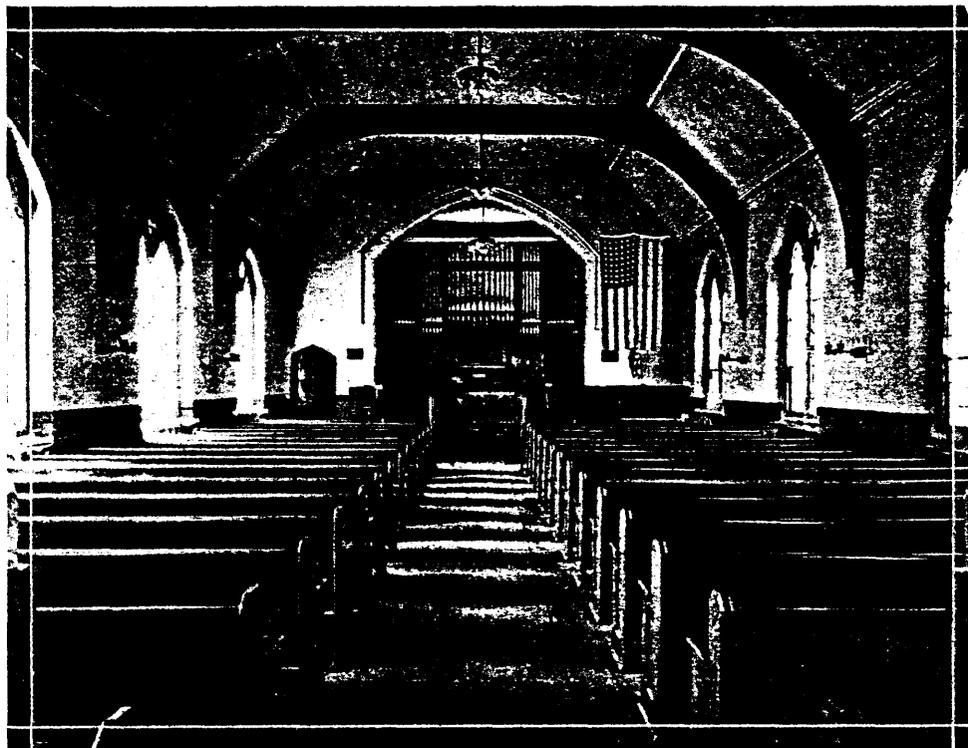
Date entered

Continuation sheet

Description

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The Chapel

Interior view of Chapel, The Key, Volume XI, 1927, page 13.
view to west.

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PLAN OF CAMPUS

This campus view was used between 1915 and 1922. The view is to the southeast and the Chapel is not visible but stands directly in rear of Steffen's Hall at the far left. This campus view clearly indicates the widespread use of the Flemish gable, an element also employed by the Chapel.

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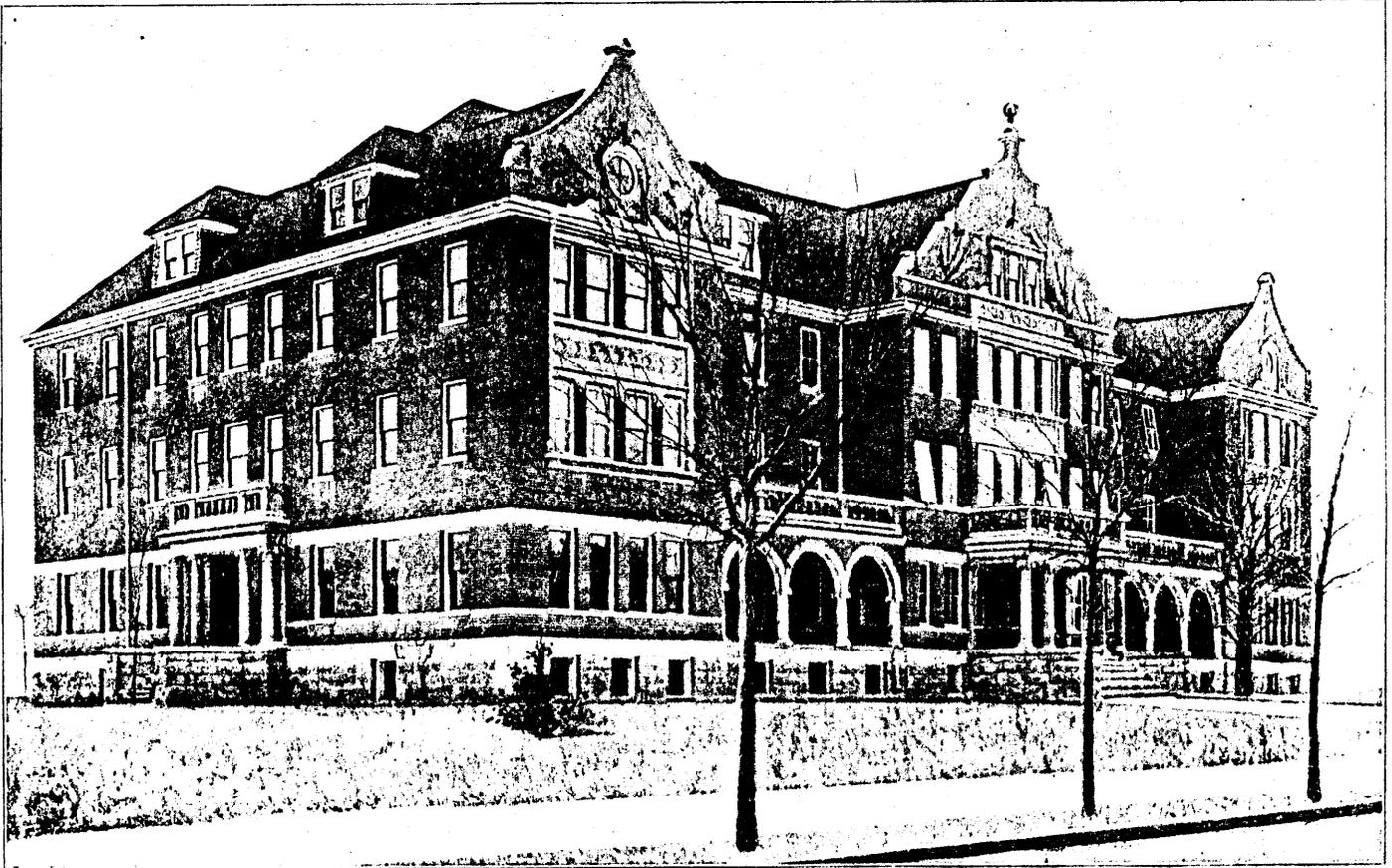
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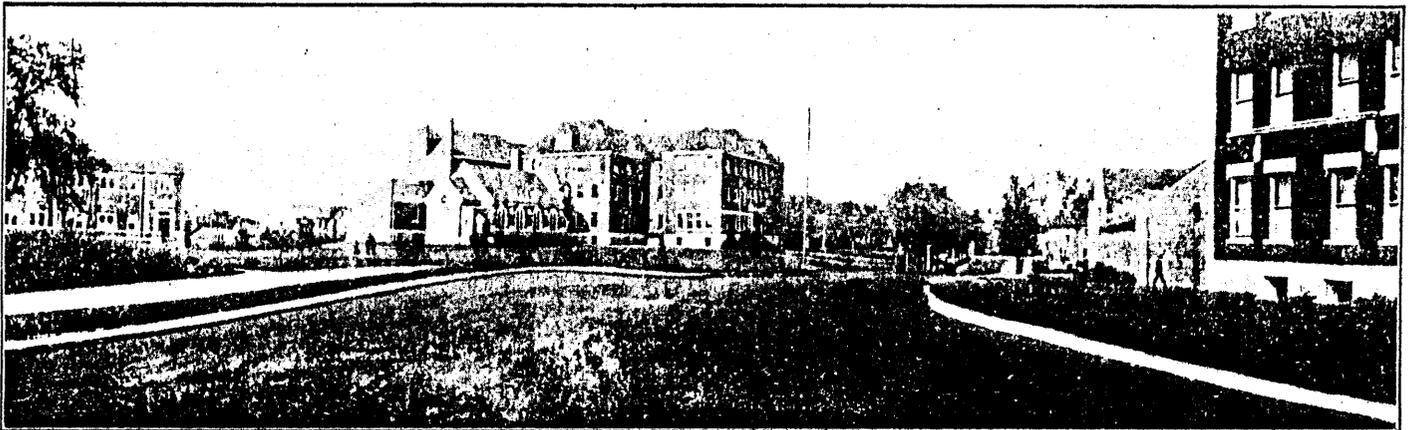
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ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

Steffin's Hall (1906-7) for many years obscured the Chapel which stood in the rear of the building. View to southwest. Dubuque College and Seminary Catalogue, 1916-1917. The porch and arcade of this building have been incorporated into the Blades Chapel Project.



CAMPUS FROM GRACE STREET

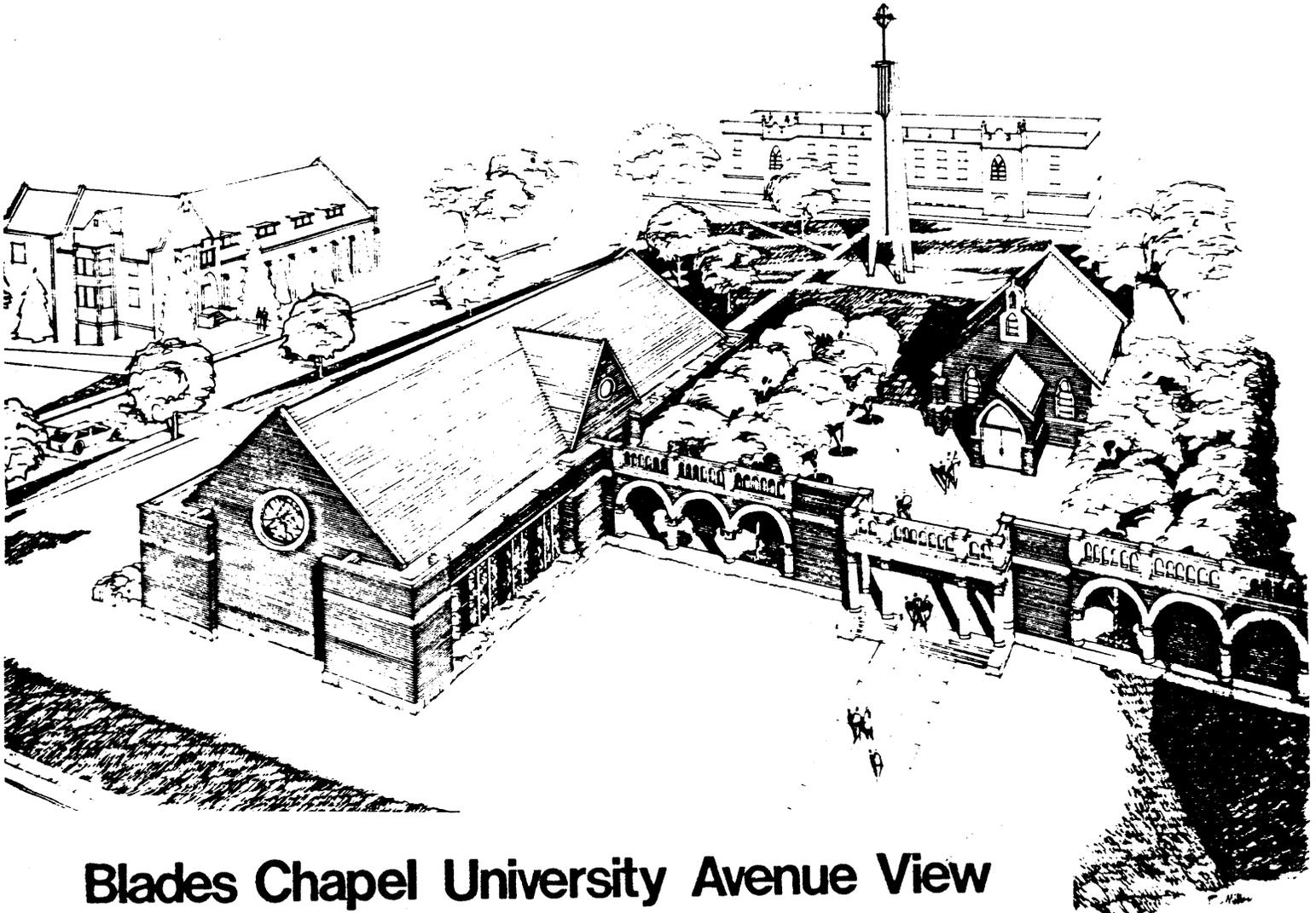
View towards rear of Steffin's Hall (to northwest) shows Chapel in center of the rear of that building. University of Dubuque Catalogue, 1919-1920.

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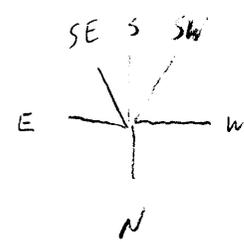
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Blades Chapel University Avenue View

Old Chapel (center right) as it currently appears, with the arcade/porch of Steffin's Hall in foreground and Blades Chapel at the left hand side. View to southeast.



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 checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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 1907 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Old Chapel Hall (1907) is the oldest surviving structure which represents the significant period of growth of the University of Dubuque during the years 1904-1922. The structure has recently been developed by that institution for use as an Alumni Hall in conjunction with the newly constructed Blades Chapel and an award-winning landscaping scheme in the central campus area.

The University of Dubuque has its origins in 1852 as Van Vliet's Theological School of the Northwest. This parish-based "institution" attempted to fill the immediate need for German Evangelical Presbyterian ministers on the developing frontier. By 1864, its eighteen students required an organized institution, and the German Theological School of the Northwest resulted, that title remaining in use for six years. In 1871 the school relocated to a former female seminary building (still extant, presently the Dubuque Womens' Club) and remained at that site for thirty-six years, functioning as a seminary on a very small scale, under the name of the German Presbyterian Theological School of the Northwest. In its first nineteen years, the number of graduates was two dozen, yet the school played a crucial role for church and the immigrant German population, providing ministers and a basic education and cultural focal point. A school newspaper, Der Presbyterian, was established by graduates and functioned in the German language until 1949.

The Old Chapel is associated with the period of expansion which occurred between 1904 and 1922, under the leadership of President Cornelius M. Steffins, the first elected president of the school. His election marked the diminished role of the Seminary and the appearance of liberal arts degrees and departments. Formerly, the Professor of Theology had automatically served as school head. 1904 also saw the admission of large numbers of eastern and southern European students to the school with the resulting appearance of a host of ethnic literary and cultural organizations on campus. These were to dominate school social life through the mid-1920's. The school had marked its fiftieth year in 1902 but that year had found only thirteen students enrolled. The new direction as a liberal arts school and seminary (with the resulting name change in 1911 to the Dubuque German College and Seminary) took concrete form in early 1906 when a new campus site was purchased in West Dubuque (the present location) and a new building program was initiated. Steffen's Hall, the first building was constructed 1906-07, and in late 1907, the Chapel was added directly in the rear of Steffen's Hall, being the gift to the school from the Frank Peters family in St. Louis. The contractor and architect remain unidentified. By 1916, five new buildings had been added, three of which remain today; McCormick Gymnasium (1914, altered considerably 1964, the first combination gym and indoor pool in the state), Peter's Commons (1914), Severance Hall (1911-12). Women were first admitted in 1912, and in 1920, due largely to anti-German feelings, the school took on the present title of the University of Dubuque.

The years that followed were lean ones. The school suffered through the depression, survived two World Wars and by 1945 was ready to resume normal operations with the same campus buildings. The most recent campus expansion, 1953-67 largely modernized the campus with the completion of two libraries, another classroom building, and four

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Dubuque South Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1/24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	6	8	9	6	0	0	4	7	0	7	5	0	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet 10-2.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara Beving Long & Ralph Christian, Architectural Historians

organization Office of Historic Preservation date July, 1982

street & number East 12th & Grand Avenue telephone 515-281-3306

city or town Des Moines state Iowa 50319

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state 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 *Alvin B. Anderson*

title Executive Director, Iowa State Historical Department date 5/10/83

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

Beth Grosvonts date 8/5/83
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Chief of Registration date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET SIGNIFICANCE ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE One

residence halls. The school was in the forefront of the local ecumenical movement after 1967 and the three Dubuque area colleges (University of Dubuque, Loras College and Clarke College) briefly cooperated in a "Tri-College" program in an attempt to successfully compete with the twenty-six other state private colleges for survival. A severe retrenchment, involving large scale faculty reductions in the early 1970's produced a balanced budget by 1977 and the school enrollment subsequently increased to 1200 by 1981.

In 1980 Steffen's Hall, the original college building, was demolished, except for the front arcade and porch and a landscaped open campus in conjunction with the newly built Blades Chapel to the south was created (refer to Continuation Sheet 7-5). The Chapel had served for services, convocations, lectures, special events, musical concerts, and recitals for many years. In its new life as Alumni Hall, the Chapel will function to house lectures, musical events, continuing education programs and a variety of student activities. The Blades Hall project (including the Chapel refurbishing which involved the addition of two small interior storage rooms and a new front entrance) received a design award from the Dubuque County Historical Society in early 1982 and an Honor Award from the Annual Iowa American Institute of Architects in October of 1982.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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Continuation sheet Bibliography

Item number 9.

Page 1.

*University records.

Des Moines Sunday Register, 24 April 1946.

Federal Writers' Project, A Guide to Dubuque (Dubuque: Hoermann Press, 1937), p.18.

Rev. W.O. Ruston, The Presbytery of Dubuque. A History (n.p.: The Presbytery, 1889), p.5

The Key , Volume XI, 1927, page 13.

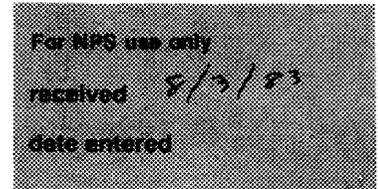
Our German Work, Volume XV, Dubuque, January 1908, pp. 1-3.

Dubuque Daily Times-Journal, 1 December 1907, 2 December 1907.

A Survey Of The History Of The University of Dubuque 1846-1979. Joseph L. Mihelic.
Dubuque: University of Dubuque, 1979.

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National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet Geographical Data Item number 10 Page 2

Legal Description:

A part of Reche's Subdivision of Finley Waple's & Burton's Addition, City of Dubuque.

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at the surveyed point located at the southeast corner of University Avenue and McCormick Street, 200 feet east parallel to University Avenue, 296 feet south parallel to Algona Street, then west 200 feet and north 296 feet to the survey point. This area encompasses the Steffen's Arcade and Old Chapel with the landscaped area surrounding.

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Legal Description:

A part of Reche's Subdivision of Finley Waple's & Burton's Addition, City of Dubuque.

Verbal Description:

Beginning at a point 100' west of a point 15' north of the west side of the arcade porch, thence south 75' in a line perpendicular to said arcade line, thence east 50', thence north 75', thence west 50' to place of beginning.