

PH035081X

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	APR 30 1976
DATE ENTERED	NOV 7 1976

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

****** King Memorial Chapel

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Cornell College *Campus*

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Mt. Vernon

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

STATE

Iowa

CODE

COUNTY

Linn

CODE

113

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:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Board of Trustees, Cornell College

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Mt. Vernon

VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Linn County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Cedar Rapids

STATE

Iowa

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		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The King Memorial Chapel is a cruciform-plan structure built in the high Victorian Gothic style. It is constructed of undressed yellow dolomite, laid in a random ashlar pattern. The structure is marked by three towers. One is square-sided, with louvred, pointed-arched openings on each side; the four-sided spire bears four clocks and a mansard spire topped by a decorative iron railing. Another is round, in four sections devided by stringcourses. The lower three sections are pierced by pointed-arched openings, the fourth by circular windows. The round spire is surmounted by a molded tin pinnacle. A third tower at the rear is square-based and also pierced by pointed-arched lights.

Windows throughout the building exhibit Gothic tracery and are filled with stained glass, including the transom over the entry.

Two of the three chimneys have pressed tin decorative pinnacles above the flue openings. The gable roof is covered in composition shingle resembling slate.

The interior has undergone some alteration, but still contains much fine wood-work, including beamed ceilings. Exterior changes have been limited to the removal of decorative wrought-iron roof cresting, replacement of main entrance doors, removal of a flagpole and the original slate roof, and the addition of a spiral fire escape.

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 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 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 1875-76

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Cass Chapman

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architecturally, King Chapel is an excellent example of the high Victorian Gothic style. In addition, the chapel has served as a cultural center for Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, and a wide geographic area. The 19th-century Iowa colleges were part of a movement to spread culture among the people. The Iowa gentry supported such efforts, and colleges became the spearhead of the movement. Corness and the chapel played a role in this effort, offering lectures, concerts, and performances which were open to the public. These activities brought together town and gown, farmer and gentleman, all seeking cultural enrichment.

Providing seating for over 1000 persons was an asset. The admission fees gained from a large audience enabled the college to negotiate with a variety of artists and famous people. Among those appearing at King Chapel over the years were William Howard Taft, Amelia Earhart, Carl Sandburg, Frank Lloyd Wright, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Walter Giesecking.

As a house of worship, the chapel has a unique history, having never been the home of a formal and established congregation. Religious services were originally required as part of the educational experience provided by the college, and in later years the building has served as a worship place for meetings of the Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and for special meetings of other denominations.

While the predominate use of the chapel is currently as an auditorium, the symbolism found in the cruciform plan and the windows continues to give the building an essentially religious character. It is perhaps the largest such religious structure in the state which is not supported by an active congregation of adherents.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Centennial History of Mount Vernon, Iowa. Centennial Committee, Hawkeye Record Press, Mt. Vernon, 1948.
 King, William F. Reminiscences. New York: Abingdon Press, 1915.
 The Cornellian, Cornell College, 17 April 1931; 17 October 1952; 16 January 1967.
 "Laying Corner-Stone of the Chapel," 22 June 1876 program for the event.
 Cole, Arrola B. The King Memorial Chapel. Cornell Press, 1953.
 The Mount Vernon Hawk-eye October 1875-February 1899.

The Palimpsest, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City. April, 1953, April 1959.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

700

A	1 5	6 3 0 7 0 5	4 6 4 2 4 5 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

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

Richard H. Thomas, Associate Professor of History

ORGANIZATION

Cornell College

DATE

28 January 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Mt. Vernon

STATE

Iowa

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

Adrian A. Anderson

TITLE

Director, Div. of Historic Preservation

DATE

4/26/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Acting

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11/9/96

ATTEST:

DATE

11/2/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER