

HISTORIC NAME: Skinner Memorial Chapel

COUNTY: Rice

CURRENT NAME:

CITY/TWP.: Northfield

LEGAL DESC.:

Block 3, Original Town of Northfield

ADDRESS:

First Street between Winona
and College

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u> X </u>	Excellent <u> </u>	Local <u> X </u>	Primary <u> Architecture </u>
Structure <u> </u>	Good <u> X </u>	State <u> </u>	Secondary <u> Education </u>
Object <u> </u>	Fair <u> </u>	National <u> </u>	Others <u> </u>
District <u> </u>	Deteriorated <u> </u>		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes X No Restricted X

PRESENT USE:

VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes X No

Chapel

OCCUPIED: Yes X No

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1916

ORIGINAL USE: Chapel

ORIGINAL OWNER: Carleton College

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Patton, Holmes, & Flynn
ChicagoOWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Carleton College
Northfield, MN 55057ACREAGE: Less than one acre X LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: Northfield Historical Society, Box 372,
Northfield, MN 55057

UTM REFERENCE:

Northfield Quad. 7.5

FORM PREPARED BY: Britta Bloomberg

15 / 487725 / 4922770

DATE: April 1981

DESCRIPTION:

The Skinner Memorial Chapel is located on First Street on the south edge of the Carleton College campus in northeastern Northfield. The building faces a residential neighborhood with its back to the campus' central open quadrangle, which is lined by the principal campus buildings.

Skinner Memorial Chapel was constructed in 1916 and designed in the Late Gothic Revival Style by the Chicago architectural firm of Patton, Holmes, and Flynn. The building is of reinforced concrete construction faced with random coursed Bedford stone. It has a Latin cross plan with a prominent tower at the south end, intersecting transepts, and flanking side aisles. The large square tower is the dominant element of the design. Main floor tower features include a central transomed doorway in a receding arch with low relief carved tracery and the Carleton shield overhead, and three arched windows above the doorway. The upper portion of the tower features an open belfry defined with stone tracery, and corner piers topped by finials with crockets, and openwork balustrade. Tripartite stained glass windows set in hooded Tudor arches are utilized throughout; engaged buttresses further define the bays and accentuate the corners. Large stained glass windows are centered in the transept and apse ends; transept ends feature stepped coped gables, and the apse end a standard coped gable. A red tile roof with exposed rafter tails covers the main mass of the building. Most of the original interior features remain intact, including original woodwork, stained glass, tile flooring, furnishings, and the Emily Willey Skinner Organ (rebuilt in 1952).

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Skinner Memorial Chapel is significant as a well-executed example of the Late Gothic Revival or Academic Gothic Style as per Bertram Goodhue and Ralph A. Cram. It is also an important visual focus of Carleton College, which had been established in 1866 as a Christian college of the Congregational Church. The chapel was a gift of Mrs. Emily Willey Skinner in memory of her husband, Miron W. Skinner, a trustee of the college from its founding to his death in 1909. At the donor's request, the building was constructed to face First Street rather than the campus to symbolize the cordial relations between the college and the town. In keeping with the tradition established at institutions of higher learning, architects were commissioned to design a chapel of landmark quality in the Academic Gothic style. The restrained use of detail, academic exactness, careful proportions, and the monumentality of the building's mass within its setting make the chapel an excellent example of the Academic Gothic and a strong visual focus on the campus.

Skinner Memorial Chapel

Northfield, Minnesota
Rice County

Bibliography:

Carleton College Archives, miscellaneous notes and clippings.

Carleton College Catalog, 1915-1916, Northfield: March 1916.