

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED APR 29 1977

DATE ENTERED

NOV 17 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

Court Street Methodist Church

AND/OR COMMON

Rock County Appliance and TV

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

36 South Main Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Janesville

VICINITY OF

First

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Wisconsin 53545

CODE

55

COUNTY

Rock

CODE

105

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

Donald G. Grosenick; Donald Grosenick, Jr. and David Grosenick

STREET & NUMBER

34 South Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Janesville

VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 53545

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Rock County Court House

STREET & NUMBER

51 South Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Janesville

STATE

Wisconsin 53545

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Rock County Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE

1975

__FEDERAL __STATE COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Rock County Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Janesville

STATE

Wisconsin 53545

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

The Court Street Methodist Church of 1868, at 36 South Main Street, is an imposing brick structure, ca. 50' x 138', in restrained Second Empire style. It is located at a principal intersection in downtown Janesville and faces northeast, fronting on Main, diagonally across the street from the northwest corner of the lower Court House park. Court Street itself actually runs along the long left, or southeast, side of the building.

The exterior is relatively unaltered except for the appearance of the store fronts on the ground story, which however continue their original function as commercial space. The founding fathers of the church planned this utilitarian space to help finance the activities of the church itself, which occupied an elegant two-story sanctuary located upstairs at the rear of the second and third levels. The sanctuary space is articulated on the exterior by two-story banks of round-arched windows with ornate mouldings. The upper front third of the structure, most recently used for Masonic clubrooms, can be presumed to have originally consisted of a lobby area, Sunday School rooms and the like. The front windows in this area are more distinctly separated into two levels by the presence of continuous projecting architraves or sill moulding at the midpoint. On both facades central emphasis is given by the pavilions topped with bracketed pediments. They and the chain patterned moulding over the central front window are still intact. The projecting cornice is framed by corner brackets and emphasized by two rows of dentiled moulding. The dormered and scallop-shingled mansard roof contains an attic in front and the trusses over the sanctuary to the rear. From the back, the roof top within the mansard is revealed to be flat and slightly tilted to the rear; the parapeted mansard facing wraps around the front and sides only. The roof is fairly new and in good repair. About 1966 the brick walls of the building were painted a soft gray-green, and the then-existing exterior fire escapes were removed.

The balconied sanctuary which occupies the greater portion of the second and third stories is, along with the Myers Opera House, one of the most magnificent interior spaces in Janesville, and it has the advantage of being virtually unaltered. The focal point is a two-story arched, recessed niche (an apse with the back flattened) flanked by arched openings with balconies. Outstanding is the richly carved and stained wood moulding, which gleams against the plastered walls and the ceiling with fanciful dogtoothed "Byzantine" arches and ornate "Gothic" bosses and impost scrolls. The total effect is Northern, especially German, Renaissance. A spectator balcony wraps around the sides and rear of the sanctuary; the space under the balconies on the main level was probably originally open, although it is now enclosed.

After the Masonic organization obtained ownership in December, 1905, they added electric lights, relocated and remodeled the entranceway, the main stairs, and the rooms on the north side, including the kitchen. The Masons continued to use the upper floors as their meeting rooms until 1965, but this portion of the building has been vacant and remains unaltered since then. The ground story commercial space, now designated as 36 South Main Street, has had little remodeling since the 1920's, and is also presently vacant.

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 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 checked="" 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

1868, 1906

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Court Street Methodist Church is one of the most unusual commercial buildings in downtown Janesville. It is significant not only for the quality of its architecture, as the best preserved of two remaining Second Empire commercial buildings in the city, with a fine two-story raised sanctuary, but also for its unique function as a combined commercial and religious building, which represented a Victorian bringing-together of worship and commerce. It was constructed with retail store fronts on the ground story, and the sanctuary on the second and third floors. This arrangement was not unlike that utilized for the four story Methodist Church Block in Chicago, built on the southeast corner of Clark and Washington Streets in 1872 and razed for a new 21 story edifice in 1923. This Gothic style successor continues the combination arrangement to this day; its sanctuary is perched 20 floors up on top of a small skyscraper, and surmounted by an eight story spire.¹

The multiple purpose construction was a 19th century solution to problems of urban congestion, as well as a probable expression of the prudent concern of the founders to enhance the long range economic welfare of the congregation. The best known of the founders was undoubtedly Captain William Cargill (1813-93), father of the well known flour merchants of La Crosse and later Minneapolis. The successor to the Court Street Methodist Church in Janesville is today known as Cargill Methodist, in recognition of the gifts of the Cargill Family.

Organized in 1867 as an offshoot of Janesville's first Methodist Episcopal Church, which had grown too big for its building on the west side of the river, the Court Street Methodist Episcopal Church was constructed in 1868 in an advantageous commercial location on the east side of the river, near the courthouse and a growing section of the city. The site had become available in the fall of 1867 when the American House, a balconied stage coach inn typical of the Wisconsin frontier (similar to the Hawks Inn or Wade House) had burned to the ground. The last of the stage houses in Janesville, it had been constructed as early as 1840.² Barely 35 years after splitting, the two congregations re-united and built a new church, no longer standing, at Franklin and Court Streets, on the west side of the city. They sold the Court Street Church in December 1905 to the Masonic Western Star Lodge No. 14, which dedicated it to its uses on December 27, 1906 and maintained the structure as its temple and meeting rooms until 1965.

The ground story, originally two separate stores, was used for groceries for many years. From 1920 to 1974 it was occupied by the J. C. Penney Company as part of

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Brown, Wm. F. Rock County. Chicago: Cooper, 1908, Vol I, pp 283-4.
 Douglas N.B. Interview with Donald Grosenick, Dec. 27, 1974.
 Douglas and Hartung. Rock County Historic Sites and Buildings.
 Janesville: Rock Co, 1976, pp. 58, 207-9, 212; pl. 21 b.
History of Rock County. Chicago: Western Historical, 1879, p. 554.
Western Star Lodge No. 14 Centennial Celebration, 1848-1948.
 Janesville, 1948, pp. 16, illus.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.207

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1, 6</u>	<u>3, 3, 4, 3, 8, 0</u>	<u>4, 7, 2, 7, 2, 6, 0</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Bounded on the northeast by North Main Street, on the southeast by East Court Street, on the southwest by the drive into a municipal parking facility, and on the northwest by a contiguous building listed as 34 North Main Street. The nominated property is approximately 50' x 138' in size.

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

Nancy Belle Douglas

ORGANIZATION

Rock County Historical Society

DATE

3-4-77

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 896

TELEPHONE

608/756-4509

CITY OR TOWN

Janesville

STATE

Wisconsin 53545

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

Rebecca Kenney

TITLE

Acting Director
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

4/25/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Robert B. Rettig

DATE

11/17/77

DIRECTOR, DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Acting

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Charles [Signature]

DATE

11.11.77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET

See
ITEM NUMBER below PAGE 1

6. Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places
1975
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Madison

State

Wisconsin 53706

8. their ~~department~~ store, along with an adjoining brick building of ca. 1850 to the northwest, which had been cut down from a three-story building and now lacks architectural significance of its own. Both buildings were recently sold to a Janesville business family, who now maintain the adjacent building as their appliance store and who, along with the Greater Janesville Corporation, a downtown improvement group, would like to find tenants for the ground floor and an adaptive use for the upper floors.

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1. Randall, F.A., History of the Development of Building Construction in Chicago, Urbana: Univ. of Illinois, 1949, pp. 206-7, 261.
 2. History of Rock County, Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1879, p. 589.