

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received

date entered

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 Galesville, Wisconsin

7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

XIII. DESCRIPTION OF GALE COLLEGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Gale College Historic District consists of a closely knit group of three buildings and a gravesite located in a picturesque setting on the far southwest edge of Galesville. From the state highway which runs south of town, the District appears to be atop a ridge, but entering grounds from 12th Street, the District appears to be sited on the continuation of the flat area on which the major residential section of Galesville lies. The immediate area surrounding the District is largely undeveloped, which gives the District the appearance of an individual entity within the town.

The buildings of the district are grouped around a central courtyard with only Main Hall not facing into this courtyard. While each building is of a different date of construction and of different materials, the placement of the buildings and their scale gives the District harmony and compactness. To the south of the buildings, immediately behind Men's Dormitory, is the gravesite of George Gale. The site sits among a grove of pine trees and is surrounded by an iron fence. Gale's grave is prominently marked with a large stone marker. Several of Gale's relatives are also buried in this location, their graves marked with much smaller stone markers.

Each building in the District is "institutional" in design and reflects the period in which it was built. Main Hall (now Gale/Chaminade Hall) is a good example of a small school building built during the 19th century. Its exterior is the rough stonework of the mid-1800's, while its more elaborate cornice and porch reflect the style of the later 1800's. The interior is very typical of late 19th century school buildings with the prominent use of wainscoting throughout. The Men's Dormitory (St. Joseph's Hall) is a simple brick dormitory and its materials and scale complement the original Main Hall. Although built of red brick, Ladies' Hall (St. Ann's Hall) is scaled and placed on the site to harmonize with the two other buildings.

The integrity and level of preservation of the buildings in the district is quite high, owing to the quality of construction and the maintenance of the occupants through the years of occupancy. The district consists of one pivotal building (25%), two contributing buildings (50%), and a contributing landscape feature, the Gale gravesite (25%). Also on the grounds of the complex is St. Mary's Hall, the building constructed in 1965 by the current owners, the Society of Mary, but this building is not included in the district boundaries.

Pivotal Building

Main Hall, constructed from 1859 to 1862 (later altered) is the cornerstone of the district, just as it was the focus of the old Galesville University and Gale College. It was originally constructed as a two-story limestone building of Italianate design (bracketed eaves; small, decorative entry porch; elaborate cupola). In 1881, a third story of matching limestone was added, and in 1884, the building was remodeled after a fire to its current appearance. In the 1884 remodeling, the porch was given the more elaborate stick-work detailing, the bargeboard and cross pieces were added

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DESCRIPTION OF GALE COLLEGE HISTORIC DISTRICT (continued)

to the gables, and the elaborate cupola was replaced with a less decorative one. The building retained its tall, narrow windows with simple stone lintels and these details are still visible. The hipped roof has been given a metal covering, as well. The interior is heavily wainscotted and resembles a typical turn-of-the-century school building because of it. Wide staircases and hallways occur on all floors with the third floor consisting mainly of a large auditorium. First and second floors have classrooms and offices of varying sizes. The building is now used primarily for storage and is in good condition.

Contributing Buildings/Landscape Feature

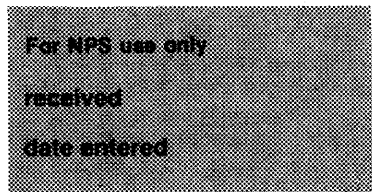
Both contributing buildings were built as dormitories for students at the Norwegian Lutheran-run Gale College. The Men's Dormitory was constructed in 1906 and is a three-story tan brick building with a flat roof with overhanging eaves "supported" with decorative modillions. The building has tall narrow windows and an ashlar foundation. The color and details of the building appear to be an attempt by the builder to harmonize with the already existing Main Hall. The entry porch is a more recent addition and consists of a brick story at basement level, concrete and brick steps, and iron railings. The interior of the building consists of three stories of dormitory rooms off a long, narrow hallway. A small frame building sits just to the rear of this building, but is considered a non-contributing structure. Ladies Hall, built in 1915 is an example of a common small-scale school building of its period. The building's design has simple Collegiate Gothic-like features with its symmetry, red brick massing, and reduced buttresses. The building also features entrances with cornices and piers and a cornice extends across the entire building. Windows are grouped in twos (with one exception) and have flat arches with keystones. This building also sits on a substantial stone foundation and has a small boiler room attached to the south facade with a large smokestack. The upper stories of this building's interior have small dormitory rooms off a long narrow hallway. The first floor/basement of this building has its original wood-paneled gymnasium, in excellent condition, along with shower rooms. Both contributing buildings are in excellent condition and have undergone only the slightest of remodeling.

Contributing Landscape Feature

The George Gale gravesite is an important landmark feature of the district. It sits directly south of the buildings among a grove of pine trees. The gravesite is guarded by a delicate iron fence in the picturesque fashion of the nineteenth century. Highlighting the site is the George Gale monument, a substantial urn-topped stone column. Other Gale relatives are buried at this site, but their monuments are small, plain markers. While it is interesting that Gale is buried on the grounds of his college, the only tangible remnant of his influence in the community, Main Hall represents Gale's influence in the founding of the college, and, therefore, the gravesite is simply a contributing landscape feature in the district.

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Galesville, Wisconsin

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

XIV. INVENTORY OF GALE COLLEGE HISTORIC DISTRICT PROPERTY OWNERS

<u>Property</u>	<u>Owner-Address</u>	<u>Evaluation</u>
Main Hall	Society of Mary Marianist Provincialate P. O. Box 23130 St. Louis, MO 63156	Pivotal
Men's Dormitory	"	Contributing
Ladies Dormitory	"	Contributing
George Gale Gravesite	"	Contributing Landmark Feature

XV. BOUNDARY OF GALE COLLEGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

The boundary of the Gale College Historic District is formed in the following manner: Commencing at the center line of 12th Street at the intersection of 12th Street and the driveway to the complex, running south along this center line behind the Ladies Dormitory to the intersection with an east-west line running 10 feet behind the gravesite of George Gale, thence west along this east-west line, behind the gravesite to the intersection of a north-south line running 10 feet west of Men's Dormitory, running along this north-south line past Men's Dormitory to the intersection with an east-west line running north of Main Hall, running along this line to the point of beginning. The area thus enclosed is equal to approximately 2 acres.

XVI. JUSTIFICATION OF THE GALE COLLEGE HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY

This boundary was selected because it encompasses the most significant historical and/or architectural structures of the district. The more recently constructed St. Mary's Hall was not included because it is not affiliated with the activities of Galesville University or Gale College during the period of significance (1859-1934).

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Historic Resources of
Galesville, Wisconsin

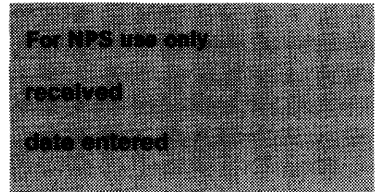
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III. AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORIC DISTRICTS:

Gale College Historic District (Period of Significance: 1859-1934)

The Gale College Historic District is significant for education, ethnic history, and association with George Gale. Main Hall (1859-1862) housed the original Galesville University, a frontier college established in 1854 by Galesville founder, George Gale. Gale's attempt to bring higher education to a frontier area is significant, and for a time the college's supporters hoped it would rival similar institutions in other areas of the state. Originally under the control of the Methodist-Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church acquired control of the university, holding it between 1876 and 1901. Under this administration, the Main building was remodeled and expanded but the college declined and in 1901 the college was taken over by the Norwegian Lutheran Synod. The Norwegian Lutheran Synod brought the school its largest growth and most stable period, and up to the 1930s, the college (by then mainly an academy and normal school) attracted a steady enrollment. The Norwegian control of the college during this period is significant because the Galesville area sat, at the time, in a geographic area with the highest concentration of Norwegian-Americans in the United States. Gale College under Norwegian Lutheran control is a significant example of this ethnic group's growth and subsequent effect on the area. During the Norwegian Lutheran period, the school built two dormitories, but by the Depression years, enrollment declined and in 1939 the Norwegian Lutheran college closed. In 1941, the Lutherans sold the grounds of the college to the Catholic Society of Mary religious order.

The buildings in the Gale College Historic District are the structures associated with both the early Galesville University (Main Hall) and the later Gale College (Men's Dormitory, Ladies Hall). They reflect the two important periods in Galesville's educational history. The first is the frontier college-founding era of George Gale; the second is the turn-of-the-century period when an increasingly populous ethnic group, the Norwegians, established a school of higher education to help perpetuate their cultural and educational goals.

The Gale College Historic District is also significant for its association with a locally significant person--George Gale. Main Hall is the only remaining remnant of Gale's importance to Galesville and the founding of the original school. And, the George Gale gravesite is a contributing landscape feature in the district.

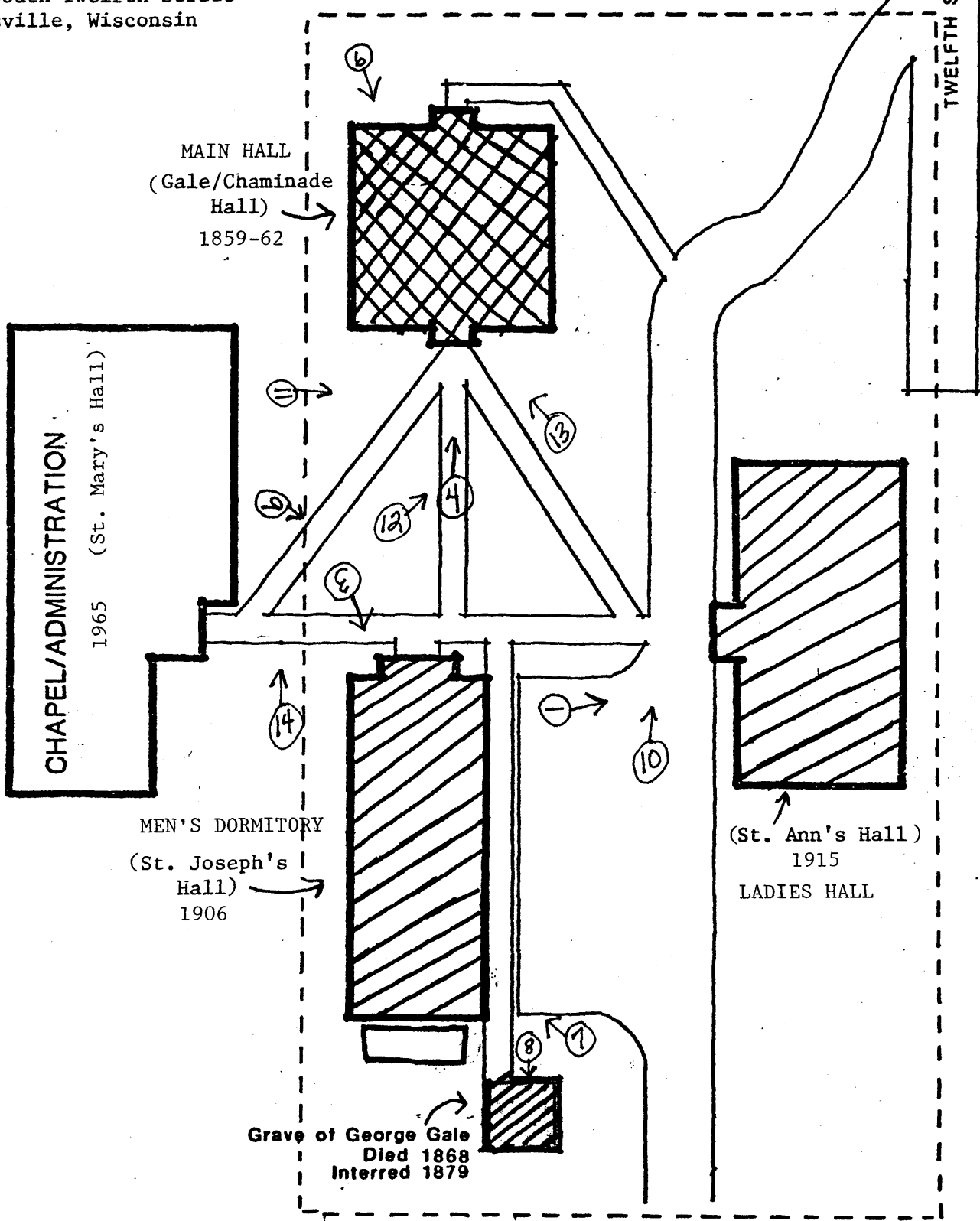
The Gale College Historic District has statewide significance because of its early date of founding and its association both with George Gale in the mid-1800's, and the Norwegian ethnic population after the turn of the century. Galesville University's 1854 founding date make it one of the earliest colleges in Wisconsin. George Gale was not only a locally prominent citizen, he was well known in the more settled areas of the state having been a delegate to the Wisconsin constitutional convention and circuit judge. As Gale College, the District after the turn of the century was a reflection of the growing influence of the Norwegian ethnic group in Wisconsin along with being one of the few Norwegian institutions of higher education to survive into the twentieth century.

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GALE COLLEGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

500 South Twelfth Street
Galesville, Wisconsin

TWELFTH STREET



Key:

-  - Pivotal
-  - Contributing
-  - District Boundary
-  - Non-Contributing

Numbers correspond with black/white photo codes and direction of photo





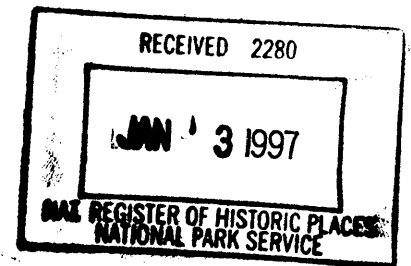
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State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Division of Historic Preservation

816 State Street • Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1488
• (608) 264-6500 • FAX (608) 264-6404

January 9, 1997



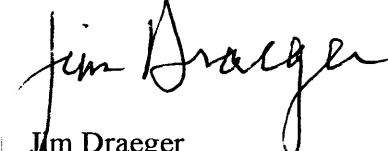
Carol Shull, Keeper
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Dear Carol:

The Gale College Historic District located in Trempealeau County, Wisconsin was determined eligible for listing in the National Register, due to owner objection, as part of the Galesville Multiple Resource Area on 9/18/84. The city of Galesville is now owner of the property and wishes to remove that objection and have the district formally listed. Attached is a notarized letter from the owners withdrawing their objection to listing. Please consider this letter as a formal request to remove the objection and list the Gale College Historic District.

If you have any additional questions or need any additional information concerning this property. You may contact me at (608) 264-6511.

Sincerely,


Jim Draeger
Architectural Historian