Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 7 1979
DATE ENTERED SEP 20 1979

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Emerson Hall
AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Corner of Woodward & Church, Beloit College Campus NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Beloit — VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
First

STATE
Wisconsin

CODE
55

COUNTY
Rock

CODE
105

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	X 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
		X NO (while unoccupied)	__MILITARY	X OTHER: unoccupied ~~dormitory~~

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Beloit College c/o David J. Mason, Secretary, Board of Trustees
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Beloit — VICINITY OF

STATE
WI 53511

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Rock County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
51 South Main
CITY, TOWN
Janesville

STATE
WI 53545

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Rock County Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings
DATE
1975 — FEDERAL — STATE X COUNTY — LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Rock County Historical Society
CITY, TOWN
Janesville

STATE
WI 53545

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Emerson Hall is an imposing brick college dormitory located at the northeast corner of the college campus, two blocks north of the classroom buildings. It was built in the Eclectic Revival style sometimes referred to as Jacobethan Revival,[1] and is by far the most architecturally striking building of the campus dormitory complex. The outside dimensions of the main block are 138' (north-south, including corner pentagonal bays) by 36' at its narrowest width or 57' at its widest, where bays project. A one story wing of ca. 23' x 30', contemporary with the rest of the building, extends to the east (rear). The two bays near the southwest corner are one story high; the center west and east bays, and the northwest and northeast corner bays are all two stories high; and the two intersecting bays north of the entrance, one of which is polygonal and crenellated, are three stories high. The bulk of the building itself is also three stories high plus an attic story. Steep, intersecting gable roofs are fronted with parapet walls, of straight or of alternating angular and segmentally curved contours; they are topped with terra-cotta coping. Terra-cotta is also employed on the cornices, sills and ornamental string courses. The roof is now covered with composition shingles; it may have originally been slate. The foundations are of cut limestone.

The interior features an elaborate first story entrance staircase and a lounge to its right with a fine fireplace. The interior was partially remodelled in 1921, by converting the first floor, which had held the dining room, to dormitory space and providing a dining hall in previously unused space in the basement. Gymnasium facilities were removed from the fourth floor and taken to the campus.[2] This increased the capacity from 42 to 86 students. About 1930 fire escapes were added, and a 20' concrete basement was added to extend the kitchen on the east of the one story wing, but it is unobtrusive.

In 1936, the west side entrance porch was altered. The one story Ionic columned entrance, topped with a balustrade, was remodeled as a two story frame unit; the first story, now fronted with a row of Ionic columns, was enclosed, while a second story smoking room, topped with a simple balustrade, was provided over it. Other than affording an apparent nicotinic release for the students, it did not greatly change the character of the building. Otherwise the building has been little altered. It was used for both men and women in the 1960's but was closed in the autumn of 1976. The building is basically sound; however there has been some minor window damage. Interior plaster work and plumbing need redoing, so the building can be preserved as housing or for some other campus use.

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1. Coined by H.R. Hitchcock, quoted in Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles, Cambridge: MIT, 1969, p. 179.

2. Book of Beloit, 1936, p. 55.

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

1975 State

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Madison Wisconsin 53706

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	X EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1897-8 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Patton & Fisher, Chicago

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Emerson Hall is of primary significance for its architecture and of secondary importance for its connection with education. It is significant architecturally as embodying the distinctive characteristics of a relatively specialized style: the Elizabethan-Jacobean or "Jacobethan" phase of the Eclectic Revival, which was popular for collegiate and other school buildings around the turn of the 20th century. The steep roofs, fronted by steep-sided triangular or segmentally curved and angular parapeted gables, the brick walls broken by bays and turrets and tall, ridged chimneys, and the inclusion of mullioned panes among the windows, are all characteristic of the style. This long and relatively narrow 3-1/2 story building seems broader and taller than its dimensions indicate because of the complexity of its varied spaces, surfaces and stories, which give the impression of broken masses rising to substantial heights, as if they had been constructed, like an English college complex, over a period of time.

Architecture

The architectural firm which designed it, Patton and Fisher of Chicago, achieved a reputation for the design, in various Revival styles, of buildings for college campuses, which was probably abetted by their work for Beloit College. The architectural firm of Patton and Fisher was active from 1885-1899, becoming Patton, Fisher & Miller until 1901, and Patton & Miller until 1912. Normand S. Patton (1852-1915) had attended Beloit College as well as Amhurst and graduated in 1874 from M.I.T. with a degree in architecture; soon after that he established an office in Chicago and was active until his death. Among other commissions were the Armour Flats, 1886, the first large housing project built in Chicago; the Chicago Academy of Sciences building in Lincoln Park, which still houses a museum of natural history, 1893 (this of course is not the Field Museum, which is located in Grant Park and was designed by the firm of D.H. Burnham, who also designed a building in 1892 for the Beloit College campus now called the Pearsons Hall of Science); and the "English Gothic" First Congregational Church in Oak Park, Ill.[1]

In 1890 Patton designed the Beloit College Chapel (now Eaton Chapel) in Norman Romanesque style, and in 1904 Patton and Miller designed the Smith Gymnasium in modified Georgian style. It is now the student union. That same year they also designed the library, now the world affairs center, in Neoclassic Revival style. Patton's firm also designed buildings for Armour Institute (now Illinois Institute of Technology) in 1890, Oberlin (Ohio) College from 1907-12, Millikin (Ill.) University, ca. 1900-1915, Wheaton (Ill.) College, 1895-1915 and Carleton (Minn.) College, 1914.[2]

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Ballard, L., Beloit College, The Brannon Years, Detroit: Harlo, 1971, pp. 15-16.

Beloit Daily News, Aug. 2, 1975.

Book of Beloit, Beloit, 1936, pp. 55-56, illus. p. 278.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.12

Quadrangle Name Beloit, Wisconsin

Quadrangle Scale 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	16	333210	4707880
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

SW corner Woodward and Church. Lots 4-7, 10-13, South half 8 & 9, block 25, original plat. Edges of building are boundaries of nomination.

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 B. Douglas, National Register Officer

ORGANIZATION

Rock County Historical Society

DATE

February 16, 1979

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 Richard Neuner

TITLE Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE 7/25/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

William H. Bradham

~~DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION~~

DATE 9.20.79

~~KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER~~

ATTEST: Emmajane Sage

~~KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER~~

Regional Coordinator

DATE 9-20-79

GPO 892-453

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RECEIVED AUG 7 1979
DATE ENTERED SEP 20 1979

Significance (continued)

Education

Emerson Hall is significant for its association with the admission of women to Beloit College. Girls were accepted in private secondary schools, e.g., the Beloit Academy, which met during the 1840's in the basement of the "old stone" Congregational Church. These schools were not related to Beloit College, however, and women were not admitted to the college until 1895. The first female housing, Stowell Cottage, was a modest frame building which was razed in the 1940's. Mr. and Mrs. C.B. Stowell, Michigan, gave the college $18,000 to buy the land on which Emerson Hall sits, to be the women's campus, two blocks from the main campus buildings. The property was purchased in 1894-95. A gift of $30,000 from Daniel K. Pearsons of Chicago was also given to build a dormitory. Although Pearsons was at first dead set against education for women, his wife and sister-in-law, Julia Chapin, and fund raiser Louis E. Holden talked him into donating the money for women's housing. The dormitory money was stipulated to be solely for construction and not for the services of an architect, so Louis Holden, an ex-Beloit College student, drew the rough outlines of a plan and estimated the costs, using equipment from Abbot's art store in Chicago. Patton and Fisher drew the designs for the building from this rough draft, and developed the interior.[3]

The cornerstone was laid Nov. 19, 1897, and the building opened to students in the fall of 1898. It was named in honor of Classics Professor Joseph Emerson, a graduate of Yale, 50 years after he had come to the college as one of the first faculty. Emerson's Olympian appearance and devotion to the classics earned him the nickname "Zeus".[4] Ironically there are few classical allusions in the style of the dormitory, other than the porch. According to college president E.D. Eaton, "Emerson Hall marked a new era for the young women of the college, giving a dignified setting to their lives."[5]

Reception rooms, dining rooms, a gymnasium, maid service, and the protective presence of a college matron were among the amenities provided. While further college housing was built to its south and west in the 20th century, it continued as a women's dormitory until the 1960's, when it was converted to coeducational use, but it has been closed since the autumn of 1976, and can be considered to be threatened by either potential demolition or remodeling.

Significance (continued)

1. Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased Los Angeles, 1956, p. 460; Inland Architect and News Record, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1890 and Vol. 39, No. 6, 1902; The Brickbuilder, Vol. 20, 1911, p. 87.

2. Withey, Op. cit.; correspondence with Prof. Robert H. Irrmann.

3. Interview with Prof. Irrmann, Nov. 21, 1978; archives of Beloit College.

4. At the dedication of Emerson Hall, Prof. Eaton called Emerson "the father of gods and men": Beloit College archives.

5. Eaton, Historical Sketches of Beloit College, 1926, quoted in Beloit Daily News, Aug. 2, 1975.

Major Bibliographical References (continued)

Brown, William F., ed., Rock County, Chicago: Cooper, 1908, Vol. I, p. 315.

Douglas and Hartung, Rock County Historic Sites and Buildings, Janesville, 1976, pp. 103 (pl. 36, printed in reverse), 108, 192-93, 198.

Inland Architect, Vol. 29, No. 6, July 1902, illus. pl. 6.

Way, R.B., The Rock River Valley, Chicago: Clarke, 1926, Vol. I, p. 403, illus.

Withey, H.F., Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased, Los Angeles: New Age, 1956, p. 450.

Interview with Prof. Robert H. Irrmann, Beloit College, Nov. 21, 1978.

Beloit College archives; RCHS files.