

PH0019031

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAY 23 1975
DATE ENTERED	MAY 30 1975

**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 Old Classroom Building, Union College
AND/OR COMMON Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER College Street
CITY, TOWN Barbourville VICINITY OF _____ CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 05
STATE Kentucky CODE 021 COUNTY Knox CODE 121

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Union College
STREET & NUMBER College Street
CITY, TOWN Barbourville VICINITY OF _____ STATE Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. County Court Clerk's Office in Knox County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER Court Square
CITY, TOWN Barbourville STATE Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky (Supplement)
DATE 1974 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Kentucky Heritage Commission
CITY, TOWN Frankfort STATE Kentucky

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 Old Classroom Building provides a most effective focal point for the attractively landscaped campus of Union College. The campus is located on an extensive bottomland of a wide valley formed by a sharp bend in the Cumberland River. The college is situated on the edge of the town of Barbourville, and flanked on the other side by the L & N Railroad line which brought a considerable amount of prosperity to the community beginning in the 1880s.

The Classroom Building itself lies in the center of a group of buildings, old and new, but all so far harmonious in scale, materials, and degree of trim. A long low structure, its actual height is minimized in several ways; for instance, the low hipped roof, which extends in wide eaves directly over the second-story windows. The basement story is half-set in the ground, although height for ample windows is allowed. The foundations, of tawny brick like the rest of this and other buildings on the campus, has horizontal bands of brick with deep shadow lines. The upper surfaces have subtle courses of darker brick about every eight rows and linked labels above the second-story windows reinforce the horizontal emphasis of Tennessee marble courses at the level of the basement lintels and upper-story sills.

This low-lying quality is made all the more effective in contrast to the tall central tower over the main entrance, which is a recess discreetly framed by marble Ionic pilasters and entablature with the date of construction, "1907," displayed in a rather Baroque cartouche above. The second-story windows in the tower are linked round-arched openings; there are two stories above the main roof, ending in a pyramidal cap. More brick and stone courses break the vertical shaft.

On the northwest end of the building is a connector to the Abigail E. Weeks Memorial Library (1941), rising to approximately one-half the classroom building height. The lower section, of brick, contains an arched throughway with an octagonal window on either side. The upper portion is frame permitting walking traffic to flow from one building to another.

The floor plan of the Classroom Building has been little changed. Space on the upper floor which originally composed an auditorium has now been divided into classrooms. Many of the door frames on both floors are original as are the stair cases. The original blue and white mosaic tile in the entrance lobbies remains.

The design of the building as a whole--by an as yet unknown architect--is of somewhat anomalous stylistic character (perhaps vaguely Italian Romanesque in flavor), unassuming, but well-proportioned, and exactly calculated to fulfill the role of landmark that it does.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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 1907

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Classroom Building, focal point of the Union College Campus in Barbourville, has served as an administration and classroom building for almost seventy years.

Union College was born in the late 1870s in the town of Barbourville, located along the famous Wilderness Road, one of the great trails over which the first streams of emigration flowed into the Ohio Valley. Through the years this road brought to Barbourville and to Knox County a multitude of educated visionary men such as Samuel Miller, appointed by President Abraham Lincoln a justice of the Supreme Court; Joseph Eve, appointed by President William Henry Harrison at the first attaché chargé d'affaires to the Republic of Texas; Silas Woodson, later a governor of Missouri; James D. Black, who served for a period as Governor of Kentucky.

Therefore, Barbourville, although remote, had an intellectual and cultural atmosphere which fostered the development of a college. Consequently in 1879 thirty-five local citizens interested in the education of the youth in their community purchased stock to provide capital for the founding of a college. In this way Union became the first college in southeastern Kentucky, serving not only this Commonwealth, but the neighboring regions of western Virginia and eastern Tennessee as well.

Initially the school was not affiliated with any religious or political group. The school, as the stockholders envisioned, would be devoted wholly to "schooling." It was a co-operative venture with one stockholder donating space above his store for a classroom, and another, Abraham H. Harritt, serving as the school's first principal. The formal opening was in 1880, with primary, intermediate, high school and, what may be termed college preparatory classes, offered.

In the spring of 1880 work began on a "new and commodious building" which was to be located in what was then an apple orchard bordered on two sides by cemeteries. The school, however, met with countless problems, primarily financial, and within a few

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bradley, Erwin S. Union College. Barboursville: Union College, 1954.

Collins, Lewis. History of Kentucky. Revised by Richard Collins, Vol. II. Louisville: John P. Morton & Co., 1874, p. 455.

Courier-Journal (Louisville), May 9, 1954, pp. 37-42.

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 10 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	24,25,5,0	4,08,31,9,0	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
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Milton H. Townsend, Vice President for Development

WEL & GM

ORGANIZATION

Union College

DATE

December 13, 1974

STREET & NUMBER

College Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Barbourville

STATE

Kentucky

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.

~~FEDERAL~~ REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Cedric W. Melton

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

5/20/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

5/30/75

ATTEST:

Charles A. ...

DATE

5.30.75

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Acting

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Old Classroom Building, Union College

years went bankrupt. At this stage, under the leadership of Dr. Daniel Stevenson, it came under the control of the Kentucky Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Dr. Stevenson, with others, had withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church South at the close of the Civil War and united with a comparatively small number of members left in Kentucky of the older branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, commonly called the Northern Methodist Church; the separation of Southern and Northern Churches had occurred in 1844-45. During the change, a larger share of church property and all the important educational institutions had been left in the hands of the Southern Church. Thus the Northern Methodist Episcopal Church found itself without any representative college. Dr. Stevenson considered the promotion of the cause of education a duty and privilege of the church and a necessity to the permanent progress of any religious movement, and therefore took steps, with others, toward establishing a school for his denomination. A Board of Education of Kentucky Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church similar to a college board of trustees was organized. In 1879 Stevenson leased the old Augusta College Building and in Augusta, Bracken County, Kentucky, in that year the Augusta Collegiate Institute was opened. This property could not be permanently acquired, however, and the facilities were considered preparatory to an enlarged educational enterprise elsewhere. The opportunity presented itself when Union College came up for sale. In 1885 the school reopened and a year later Stevenson was appointed the President and financial agent for the college.

The school was to continue its service to the community in offering primary and secondary departments but, for the first time, contained a collegiate program. There was a religious emphasis, which attracted many young men preparing for the ministry.

Although the school increased in enrollment over the years tuition never met operating costs. Fortunately Dr. Stevenson was an extremely effective administrator and was able to raise sufficient funds to keep the doors open. Especially generous was Mrs. Fanny Speed of Louisville, who, more than anyone else, kept the college alive in those early difficult days. (Her husband, Joshua Speed, intimate friend of Abraham Lincoln, had acquired a fortune in real estate and stocks.) Mrs. Speed was acquainted with the needs of Union College through Dr. Stevenson, a former minister at the church Mrs. Speed attended in Louisville. Upon her death the school fell heir to one-half her estate, valued at \$500,000. Her donations helped pay for Union's original building, assisted needy students,

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paid for the salaries of President Stevenson and his successor J. P. Faulkner, maintained ministerial institutes and established Union's first endowment. These funds gave some financial permanence to the college and made possible the completion of the first important building program set in motion since the founding of the college.

Dr. Stevenson died in 1897 and the next few years proved critical for the young college. Attempts were made to broaden and upgrade the academic program, although for a period the college department had to be discontinued, and there was physical expansion.

In 1906 a fire destroyed the old administration building but with the help of local citizens a new structure was completed in 1907. The following description of the new administration building appeared in the 1911-12 Union Catalogue:

This is a magnificent and spacious three-story building, constructed of brick and concrete, and trimmed with Tennessee marble. The building is steam-heated and lighted by electricity...and is scientifically ventilated to insure plenty of good fresh air. In it are the classrooms, the library, the President's office, the chapel, and laboratories. The classrooms are fifteen in number. Each is equipped with single desks and slate blackboards of ample size. From the President's office are speaking-tubes to each room, and also electrical connections, so that a modern program clock situated in the office rings automatically in each room the bells for the change of classes and other signals. The chapel is commodious and is seated with comfortable opera chairs. There are three laboratories--Chemical, Physical, and Biological. These are equipped throughout with modern apparatus and enable the student to do unusually thorough work in science. (Union College 1879-1954, p. 62)

Crises--including threats by the Board of Education to close its doors--continued to plague the college during the first two decades of the 20th century but somehow it managed to weather the storms. After the hiring of E. T. Franklin, former dean and professor of philosophy at Asbury College, the school made active progress toward becoming an accredited institute of higher learning. Franklin eliminated grades one through six in 1915, the seventh and eighth grades in 1923 and the last academy class graduated in 1930. In 1919 the first A.B. degrees were conferred since 1908. By 1925 the college was permitted to issue teaching certificates for all grades. In 1927 the college obtained recognition by the State of Kentucky as an accredited college. Five years earlier, Union had obtained recognition as a legal entity and was no longer under the 'guardianship' of the Board of Education of the Kentucky Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

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Union continued to expand and now contains some twenty buildings. The academic hub of the campus remains, however, the Old Classroom Building, one of the oldest structures from the more tumultuous days of the early 20th century. It is the most conspicuous landmark of Barbourville as well, its prominent tower rising above the town, clearly visible from Kentucky Highway 25E and from many points within the town itself.

It is unfortunate that Barbourville, located in one of the first explored areas in Kentucky, does not have more buildings of historical or architectural merit to survive. However, as in much of eastern Kentucky few of the important older buildings remain as interpreters of the past. It is good that the Old Classroom Building remains--part of a school with a troubled history that survived because of effective leadership. A great debt, of course, goes to generous benefactors such as Fanny Speed and Anna Merner Pfeiffer, but the college's existence can truly be credited to the people of Barbourville, a town who wanted a college, and never permitted it to die.

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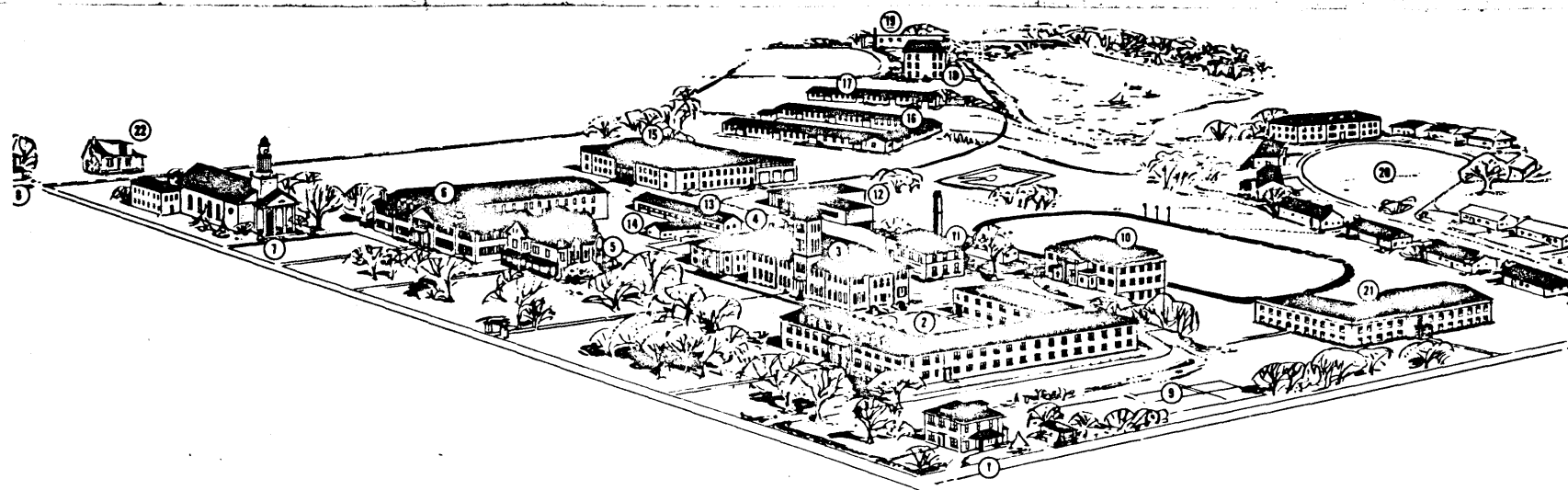
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Old Classroom Building, Union College

Lewis, Alvin Fayette, History of Higher Education in Kentucky. Washington: Government
Printing Office, 1899, pp. 221-225.

Union College Bulletin. Barbourville, March 1974.

"Union College in Kentucky"



- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1. Baldwin Place, President's Residence | 8. Home Economics Building | 16. College Courts, Married Students' Apartments |
| 2. Stevenson Hall, Men's Residence | 9. Tennis Courts | 17. College Courts Addition |
| ③ Classroom Building | 10. Dramatic Arts Center | 18. Lakeside Hall, Men's Residence |
| 4. Library | 11. Business Department | 19. Bureau of Mines
Education Center |
| 5. Speed Hall, Administration Building | 12. Student Center | 20. College Park, Faculty Housing |
| 6. Pfeiffer Hall, Women's Residence | 13. Storage Buildings | 21. Mahlon Miller Science Center |
| 7. Conway Boatman Chapel—Fine Arts Building | 14. Data Processing Center | 22. Mental Health Center |
| | 15. Physical Education Building and Swimming Pool | |