

Saint Ignatius College Building (St. Ignace High School)
1076 West Roosevelt Road;
near northwest corner of Roosevelt
Road and Blue Island Avenue
Chicago
Cook County
Illinois

HABS No. ILL-1056

HABS
ILL,
16-CHIG,
58-

PHOTOGRAPH
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington Planning and Service Center
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

SAINT IGNATIUS COLLEGE BUILDING

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Location: 1076 West Roosevelt Road; near northwest corner of Roosevelt Road and Blue Island Avenue; Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

Present Owner: The Chicago Province of the Society of Jesus.

Present Use: Jesuit Preparatory High School; Rev. Robert Koch, S.J., Rector.

Statement of Significance: The building was built in 1870, a year before the Chicago Fire. It is unusually well-preserved, and is one of the few existing examples of the pre-fire architecture in Chicago.

PART 1. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description of the property: block 27 of Crane and Wesson's subdivision of blocks 27 and 28, Canal Trustees subdivision of the south-east 1/4 of section 17-39-14.

The chain of title for St. Ignatius College is contained in book 474 E, pp. 2, 8-9, in the Cook County Recorder's Office. It is essentially the same as that for the Holy Family Jesuit Church, 1140-14 W. Roosevelt Road, Chicago (HABS No. ILL-1048). St. Ignatius College is first mentioned in a report of ownership on December 23, 1871 (Document 6886). The property has remained in the hands of the Jesuits to the present.

2. Date of erection: 1868-1870.
3. Architect: Unknown. An interview with one of the Jesuits at the school has suggested that the building's design is similar to that of other Jesuit schools built at approximately the same time in other parts of the country.
4. Original plan, construction, etc.: There is no record of the original building permit for the college building.

The cornerstone for the original St. Ignatius college building was laid in 1868. The site was previously occupied by a Lutheran church. Actual construction was not begun until 1869; the building was not yet completed when

it was opened on September 5, 1870 [Thomas M. Mulkerins (ed.), Holy Family Parish, Chicago, Priests and People, arr. by Joseph T. Thompson, Holy Family Parish history Commission (Chicago: Universal Press, 1923), pp. 44, 494, 500].

Below are two early descriptions of the college building:

Gill, J. Thompson. History of the Organization and Growth of the Holy Family, Jesuit Parish, Chicago. Chicago: S. I. Bradburty & Son, Printers, 1878.

The college as it now stands is one of the most complete structures of its kind in this country. It is built of pressed brick with stone dressings similar to that used in the structure of the church [Holy Family], its dimensions being 170 x 160 feet, and is five stories in height, the upper story comprising principally a large hall 32 feet high, and running the whole depth of the college building. The seating capacity of this hall is 1,500 with gallery capable of containing 400 more, and is used chiefly for the oratorical exercises of the students. The college is complete throughout, and was built at a cost of \$250,000, not a dollar of which was solicited from the parishioners, although designed to a large extent, for their benefit. . .

The great attractions of the college to a visitor are the library and museum. The latter is situated on the fifth floor, east of the hall.

Andreas, A. T. History of Chicago. Vol. 3. Chicago: The A. T. Andreas Company, Publishers, 1886. p. 771.

"St. Ignatius' College -- This building was erected for the education of the Catholic youth of Chicago, in 1869, through the efforts of the Society of Jesus. It was chartered by the Legislature of Illinois on June 30, 1879, with power to confer the usual degrees. The college stands on Twelfth Street, just east of the church of the Holy Family. It is of brick, with stone trimmings, and consists of a main building flanked by two wings. There are thirty class-rooms, all well lighted and ventilated. It has a hall seating fifteen hundred, with a gallery which will accommodate four hundred. The entire cost was \$200,000."

5. Additions and alterations: There have been several additions to the original school building (see architectural description).

On June 24, 1895, in commemoration of the School Jubilee of its founding, an addition to the college was dedicated. This addition, adjoining the original school at the rear and oriented longitudinally north and south, measured 128' x 66', was of "fireproof" construction, and had a seating capacity of 500 /Mulkerins, op. cit., p. 500/.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

Founded by the Jesuits, St. Ignatius College eventually became the present-day Loyola University of Chicago. The original college on Roosevelt Road and Blue Island was untouched by the Chicago Fire of 1871. Soon after the fire, the school began one of the first natural history museums in the area, as well as a new college library. In 1906 the institution purchased 22 acres of land in Rogers Park, on Chicago's north side; the first building was completed there in 1909. After the University was completely established on the north side, the old St. Ignatius College building was used as a Jesuit Preparatory High School /Ibid., pp. 494-500/.

C. Old Views:

Loyola University Catalogue (1870/71 - 1877/78): frontispiece

of Holy Family Church and St. Ignatius College;
drawing of a projected design more in keeping with
the Gothic revival church--additional pinnacles,
spires, turrets, and cupola.

Prospectus. St. Ignatius College (1895):

Exterior views: facade
rear from 11th Street
Interior views: Students chapel
Gymnasium
Students library

Mulkerins (1923): p. 500 -- museum interior;
also several miscellaneous
exterior views.

See Bibliography for additional sources of old views.

D. Bibliography:

Andreas, A. T. History of Chicago. Vol. 3. Chicago: The
A. T. Andreas Company, Publishers, 1886. p. 771.

Conroy, Joseph P. and Arnold Damen, S. T. A Chapter in the
Making of Chicago. New York: Benziger Brothers, 1930.
pp. 164-176, "History of the founding of St. Ignatius College."

Gill, J. Thompson. History of the Organization and Growth of the Holy Family, Jesuit Parish, Chicago. Chicago: S. I. Bradburty & Son, Printers, 1878.

Old view on cover; history and description of Holy Family Church and St. Ignatius College.

Industrial Chicago. Vol. 1. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1891. pp. 103, 274.

A description.

Loyola University, Chicago. Catalogue, 1870/71 - 1877/78.
Library of the Chicago Historical Society.

Frontispiece: view of projected college and church (drawing).

Miscellaneous pamphlets; programs, etc., filed under Loyola University, Chicago, in the Library of the Chicago Historical Society.

Historical interest - programs.

Mulkerins, Thomas M. (ed.) Holy Family Parish, Chicago, Priests and People. Arr. by Joseph T. Thompson, Holy Family Parish history commission. Chicago: Universal Press, 1923. pp. 494-500.

Best collection of information relating to the early history of the college and its building.

Onahan, William J. The Jesuits in Chicago. Address delivered on the occasion of the silver jubilee of St. Ignatius College, Auditorium, Chicago, June 24, 1895. Chicago: Cameron, Amberg & Co., 1895.

Primarily of historic interest.

Orear, G. W. Commercial and Architectural Chicago. Chicago: G. W. Orear, Publisher, 1887. pp. 118-119.

Short history of the institution.

Prospectus, St. Ignatius College. Chicago: Cameron, Amberg & Co., 1895.

Filed under Loyola University, Chicago in the Library of the Chicago Historical Society.

D. Additional material may be obtained in the Library and records of Loyola University, 6525 North Sheridan Road, Chicago.

See also HABS report on Holy Family Jesuit Church for information closely related to St. Ignatius College.

Prepared by Larry J. Homolka
Historian
National Park Service
August, 1964

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A pre-fire example of Chicago Architecture.
2. Condition of fabric: Good. Some spaces have been changed in use, but the building is well-maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 170' x 160'; five-and-one-half stories on a raised basement; five unequal bays on south front; t-shape plan.
2. Foundations: Limestone.
3. Wall construction, finish, color: Brown brick with limestone first floor, limestone surround at openings, and limestone quoins. Stone surrounds at openings only on south (front) elevation.
4. Structural system, framing: Masonry bearing walls.
5. Chimneys: Originally, there were a number of tall chimneys around the building, but most have now been removed.
6. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: A large projecting porch on the south (front) facade at the second level is reached by steps located at either side of the porch.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: A large entrance at the second floor level off the projected porch has two large wood-paneled doors with a lion-head sculpture in the center of the door. The door is surrounded by a moulding of egg and dart motif. Additional minor entrances are located in the rear, on the west side of the first floor and under the second floor porch.
 - b. Windows: Double-hung with semi-circular heads.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Mansard attic with hipped roof over. Surface with asphalt shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Simple cornice without dentils or brackets.

- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: The center bay of the south (front) facade is steeply gabled. Six small, gabled dormers on south (front) facade at level of mansard roof. Additional dormers at same level on other elevations are arched. The large cupola in the center of the roof has had the top removed.

D. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Ground floor: Rectory and class-rooms (original exercise room was also located on this level).
- b. First floor: School offices, lounge and class-rooms.
- c. Second floor: Class-rooms and library.
- d. Third floor: Class-rooms.
- e. Fourth floor: Living quarters and Gymnasium, which was originally an auditorium, as well as the present faculty library, which was a former Natural History Museum.
- f. Fifth floor: Living quarters and the old balcony which is used for storage.

2. Stairways: Main wooden stairways are located on either side of the main entrance hall and on the north side of hall, running east and west. Secondary stairs are just east of the main east stair, and just west of the main west stair. The original stairs to balcony have been removed and the space is now used for storage. An elevator has been added in the east wing.

3. Flooring: Originally wooden flooring. Some is now covered with asphalt tile.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Painted plaster.

5. Doorways and doors: Wide wooden trim with wood-paneled doors. Many now painted. Original doors from entrance vestibule into corridor at second floor have been removed.

6. Decorative features and trim: The fifth-floor east wing originally had a two-story high space with coved ceiling and elaborate ceiling painting. The space has had a floor added at sixth floor level and cells for faculty have false ceilings in them on that floor. The cove ceiling is still apparent above these cells. The faculty library has a gallery at the sixth floor level which surrounds a

two-story space; it has a large number of built-in cabinets originally for museum display which are now used for book-cases. This room is decorated in a Gothic Revival style. There is a fireplace on the west wall.

7. Lighting: Electrical.

8. Heating: Central.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The school faces south on the north side of Roosevelt Road, and is east of Holy Family Church.
2. Outbuildings: There is one storage shed on the east side of the building which appears to have been built about the same time as the school. A later addition to the school was built on the north-west corner of the north leg of the "T".
3. Landscaping, walks, enclosures: The original fence on Roosevelt Road has been removed. A brick wall along the east side and north side to the rear of the side still exists and defines a play-yard which was originally grass but is now paved with asphalt.

Prepared by J. William Rudd
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National Park Service
July, 1964