

Chapel of St. Mary The Virgin
Nashotah House Episcopal Theological Seminary
1-1/2 miles west of Nashotah
on Upper Nashotah Lake
Nashotah Vicinity
Waukesha County, Wisconsin

HABS No. WIS-163

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

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CHAPEL OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

Location: On grounds of Nashotah House, Episcopal Theological Seminary, 1-1/2 miles west of Nashotah on Upper Nashotah Lake, Nashotah Vicinity, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

Present Owner: Nashotah House Episcopal Theological Seminary

Present Use: Seminary chapel

Brief Statement of Significance: This building is a rather unusual example of a mid-nineteenth century Gothic Revival chapel and is the work of Richard Upjohn, distinguished American architect.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: Ground was broken on September 7, 1859, and the corner stone was laid on September 29, 1859. Under construction in 1860.
2. Architect: This building has been attributed to Richard Upjohn (Upjohn, Richard Upjohn) on the basis of two letters dated July 14, 1858, and July 15, 1859, respectively. In the Minutes of the Proceedings of the Trustees of Nashotah House (see I.B.), reference is made to the chapel at the annual meeting June 16, 1859. At this time, receipt was acknowledged of partial plans as a gift of Mr. Upjohn, but at the same meeting, a resolution was passed to return the plans as Nashotah House could not afford the cost of building from them. Since the letter of July 15, 1859, cited above postdates this resolution, and since it specifically mentions, "new plans for Nashotah," and since the chapel was under construction at the next annual meeting May 31, 1860, it is reasonably certain that Upjohn submitted revised plans although no further mention of plans occurs in the minutes.
3. Notes on alterations and additions: Except for the fact that the chapel has now been incorporated into a much larger building group, the exterior has undergone very little change. The interior, however, has been greatly elaborated to serve its present function as a seminary chapel.

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4. Sources

a. References

- (1) Richard W. E. Perrin, Historic Wisconsin Architecture (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, 1960).
- (2) Everard M. Upjohn, Richard Upjohn, Architect and Churchman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939).

b. Important old views: Several old undated photographs in the library at Nashotah House show the original interior of the church and also the exterior when it was an isolated building.

B. Supplemental Information: The following are extracted from Minutes of the Proceedings of the Trustees of Nashotah House, Nashotah House Episcopal Theological Seminary, Nashotah, Wisconsin.

- 1. Annual meeting at the residence of Bishop Kemper, Thursday, June 16, 1859.

"The wants of the institution are as usual many. The most pressing is that of a new chapel. For this purpose, April 1, \$1076.37 has been received. Fifty dollars of this is in a note given by E. W. Edgerton as his subscription to the chapel. 668-10/100 has been deposited in Bank to account of "Mission Chapel Fund." The balance, 358-27/100 less \$1-25/100 paid on Chapel account will be deposited to above account as soon as possible. It is really a debt of the House to this fund. The 1-26/100 was paid for freight on plans which are here in part, being the gift of R. Upjohn and Company. They are in every way suitable to the needs of the institution, and being freely given are worthy our most sincere gratitude. Two letters from Mr. Upjohn are also submitted with the plans.

"Resolution: Whereas the trustees of Nashotah House feel incapable of spending more than \$500 on 2 chapel therefore Res. that we hereby present our best thanks to Mr. Upjohn for his plans and beg to return them with sincere regret that we cannot avail ourselves of them."

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2. Annual Meeting at the Residence of Bishop Kemper, May 31, 1860.

"Since the last meeting of the trustees the new Chapel has been commenced. The first earth was moved by Bishop Payne on Sept. 7th and the corner stone was laid by Bishop Kemper on Sept. 29th. The present condition of the edifice requires no remark. The Building Committee was directed to have it of brick, but finding themselves thereby debarred from the use of two thousand dollars, they very properly arranged for a stone edifice."

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: This is a Gothic Revival chapel with an unusual, high screen-type belfry and made of attractive limestone masonry.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent and cared for.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: 40' x 90'.
2. Foundations: Limestone.
3. Wall construction: The walls, 1'-11" thick, are made entirely of native limestone, random ashlar with tooled joints. The exterior is very weathered.
4. Chimneys: None.
5. Openings
 - a. Doorways and doors: Double wood doors on the front and vestibule (former side porch): vertical V-joint, wood, painted, set in pointed Gothic openings. Service door at rear (west) corner.
 - b. Windows: Pairs of narrow Gothic Lancets in wood frames with leaded glass.
6. Roof
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable type with semi-octagonal hip

over chancel. Slate covering.

- b. Cornice: Roof slightly overhangs with two corbelled stone courses and gutter.

C. Technical Description of Interiors

1. Floor plans: Single 3-aisled auditorium with choir, semi-octagonal chancel, and side altars. The former side porch opened out to the southeast but has now been made into a vestibule connecting with another building.
2. Stairways: None (no choir loft).
3. Flooring: Wood with simple marquetry in chancel area.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: All plaster walls. Ceiling is pointed barrel vault of wood with small transverse wood ribs.
5. Trim: Interior columns, triumphal arch, high arcade, etc. molded wood with Gothic profiles, painted. Rood screen, choir and chancel furniture, pulpit, and other decorative woodwork, oak natural finish (Note: all of this decorative woodwork has been added to the original interior).
6. Hardware: Nothing unusual.
7. Lighting: Electric.
8. Heating: By central steam plant in another building.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: Chapel faces northwest overlooking the lake. Building is now part of larger setting and has no particular landscaping of its own.

Prepared by Henry C. Edwards,
National Park Service, 143 South
Third Street, Phila. 6, Pa. -
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