

CHICAGO ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
12 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago
Cook County
Illinois

HABS IL-1226
IL-1226

HABS
IL-1226

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS
FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CHICAGO ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

HABS No. IL-1226

Location: 12 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

Significance: The Chicago Athletic Association building was constructed in 1893 and designed by noted architect Henry Ives Cobb. The principal façade is based on the Doges Palace in Venice, and was intended to give the Chicago Athletic Association a distinct identity when viewed from the lakefront, particularly by visitors to the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.

Description: The Chicago Athletic Association is an excellent example of the Venetian Gothic Revival style complete with trefoil and lancet arched windows, patterned brick, and intricately carved limestone. It is one of the few existing examples of the style in Chicago. The original 11-story building is rectangular in plan, however, due to the 1906 addition at 71 East Madison Street, it is now L-shaped. The roof is flat, and is hidden behind a parapet wall composed of grey and red diaper bond brick. Below the parapet, the building's intricate limestone cornice features various sporting equipment. Ornamental stone quoining divides the façade into three distinct bays, with a centrally located main entrance.

History: Founded in 1890 by elite Chicagoans such as Marshall Field, Cyrus McCormick, and A. G. Spalding, the Chicago Athletic Association was a not-for-profit organization that provided a setting for athletic, business, and social activities. In 1915, when member William Wrigley bought the Chicago Cubs, the team adopted the club's logo, permanently securing its place in Chicago history.

Built in 1893, the 12 South Michigan Avenue building was designed by architect Henry Ives Cobb. The architect, who was also a club member, was responsible for other Chicago landmarks, including such notable buildings such as the Chicago Historical Society and the Newberry Library as well as several structures on the University of Chicago campus.

The building's addition, located at 71 East Madison Street, was erected in 1906 and expanded in 1926 by architects Schmidt, Garden, and Martin. Both the building and its annex are contributing structures within the city's Historic Michigan Boulevard Landmark District, which extends from Randolph Street south to 11th Street. The building remains an integral part of the historic district to this day as a prominent feature of the streetwall on the western edge of Millennium Park—one of the most heavily visited sites in the city.

Sources:

Sinkevitch, Alice. 1993. *AIA Guide to Chicago*. NY: Harcourt Brace and Company.

Landmarks Illinois. 2008. Chicagoland Watchlist 2007-2008.

http://www.landmarks.org/news_road/chicago_watch_2007_2.htm (accessed June 16, 2008)

Preservation Chicago. 2008. The Chicago 7: The Chicago Landmarks Ordinance.

http://www.preservationchicago.org/chicago7/2008/1_landmarks_ordinance.html (accessed June 16, 2008)

Historian: Molly Sargent, Historic Preservation Program, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 2008.