

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary  
(Jefferson Community College)  
109 E. Broadway  
Louisville  
Jefferson County  
Kentucky

HABS No. KY-146

HABS,  
KY,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Architectural and Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20243

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

LOUISVILLE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
(Jefferson Community College)

HABS No. KY-146

Location: 109 East Broadway, Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky.

USGS Louisville West Quadrangle, Universal Transverse  
Mercator Coordinates: 16/609140/4233680

Present Owner  
and Occupant: Jefferson Community College.

Present Use: College.

Significance: The masterpiece of William J. Dodd, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary is an excellent example of Collegiate Gothic architecture. Its present adaptive usage is a fitting complement to its original function.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

1. Dates of erection: 1903-1909. Individual erection dates for the seven components of the seminary are as follow:

Haldeman Hall - 1903-October 13, 1904

Belknap Refectory - 1903-October 13, 1904 (named December 17, 1907)

Barret Memorial Library - 1904-October 1905

Harbison Memorial Chapel - October 1905-October 1907

Grant-Robinson Hall - October 1905-October 1907

The Annex - October 1905-October 1907

Todd Memorial Hall - Spring 1908-September 1909 (dedicated October 19, 1909)

Limited budget of the Seminary was a factor in the long construction of the complex.

Additional major pieces of architectural ornament are as follow:

John T. Cooper Gateway - dedicated December 17, 1907

William F. Booker Memorial Chimes - 1911

2. Architect: William J. Dodd (1862-1930). Contemporary sources cite the seminary as the masterpiece of W.J. Dodd. It was executed at the time when Dodd was in partnership in the firm of McDonald and Dodd.

Dodd's architectural training was undertaken in Chicago under teachers William Henney and Solon Spencer Bemen. Following his training Dodd prepared plans for the new town of Pullman, Illinois. His next employment was with the Northern Pacific Railway as an architect for several years before coming to Louisville in 1884.

One of his earliest known works, executed by the firm of Wehle and Dodd in 1887, was the Standard Club House in Louisville.

He later joined Mason Maury, Louisville's Chicago School architect, as a partner. The partnership produced the following buildings:

Louisville Trust Company  
St. John's Church (rebuilding) - Eleventh and Jefferson Streets.  
Covenant Presbyterian Church - Fifteenth and Jefferson Streets  
Kenyon Building

Following his partnership with Maury he joined the firm of McDonald and Dodd, which produced the following buildings:

Stewart Dry Goods Store.....Louisville  
Lincoln Building.....Louisville  
Citizen's Life Building.....Louisville  
Atherton Office Building.....Louisville  
Citizens National Life Insurance Company Office Building.....  
.....Anchorage Kentucky

Mary Anderson Theater.....Louisville  
Tyler Hotel.....Louisville  
Weissinger-Gaulbert Apartments.....Louisville  
First Christian Church.....Louisville  
Fourth Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church.....Louisville  
John C. Capterton Residence.....Louisville  
Hunter Raine Residence.....Memphis, Tennessee  
C. H. Raine Residence.....Memphis, Tennessee  
William J. Dodd Residence.....Louisville  
Louis Seelbach Residence.....Louisville  
Seelbach Hotel (with Frank Mills Andrews).....Louisville

3. Original and subsequent owners: The Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary is located on lot 83 of block 16-F in the City of Louisville. The following references to the title of this lot are found in the Jefferson County, Kentucky Deed Books.

1896 Deed, August 27, 1896, recorded in Deed Book 473, page 500. Fidelity Trust and Safety Vault Company, executors and trustees under the will of Thomas L. Barrett sold a 150' x 200' lot on the northeast corner of First and Broadway Streets to the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary for \$23,000. The lot was the site of the residence of Thomas L. Barrett, deceased.

1902 Deed, June 24, 1902, recorded in Deed Book 575, page 383.  
Charles R. Long and Nancy M. Long sold a 60' x 194' lot  
located 150 feet east of the northeast corner of First and  
Broadway Streets to the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of  
Kentucky for \$8,000.

1966 Deed, October 31, 1966, recorded in Deed Book 4078, page  
201. Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary sold the  
lots to the City of Louisville for approximately \$400,000.

1967 Deed, March 30, 1967, recorded in Deed Book 4119, page 352.  
The City of Louisville sold the lot to the Commonwealth of  
Kentucky for use as a college

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers:

Galvin and Fox.....excavators  
Julius Piazza and Son.....foundation and other stone work  
Bowling Green White Stone Company.....stone  
Blatz and Krebs.....cut stone  
Peter-Burghard Stone Company.....stone  
George W. Seymour and Company.....concrete flooring  
John Mitchell of C.E. Moody and Company.....woodwork  
William H. Zeiser.....painting, decorating, and glazing  
The Lambs of New York City.....St. John on Patmos  
(stained glass memorial window in Harbison Chapel)  
J.F. Wagner and Sons.....tin and plate roofing

5. Original plans and construction: No plans dating from the  
construction of the Seminary are known to exist. There are  
several photographs of the exterior extant and photographs of the  
interior of the chapel extant. Early descriptions of the  
building give not only original rooms' functions and arrangements,  
but also furnishing descriptions. Tudor Revival furniture was  
used in the Refectory, the Director's Room in Grant-Robinson Hall  
given by Mrs. Grant, the Library given by Mrs. H.O. Hausen of  
Anchorage, Kentucky, and the Chapel. Mission influence  
furnishings were originally in the social room at the base of the  
Barret Library below the second floor library. A set of bowling  
alleys was in the basement of Grant-Robinson Hall, whose upper  
floors were used for administration and classroom purposes. Each  
classroom, of which there were four in Grant-Robinson Hall,  
contained an adjoining professor's study. The Director's Room on  
the second floor of Grant-Robinson was over the central doorway  
facing the courtyard. A stained glass window, "Samuel and the  
School of Prophets," lit the large wooden stairway. Dormitory  
rooms primarily designed for single occupancy were located on the  
third floor of Grant-Robinson Hall.

Haldeman Hall, named for Walter N. Haldeman (1821-1902), a prominent Louisville newspaper man, was totally devoted to student housing. It, too, contained dormitory rooms primarily for single occupancy. Because the most pressing need was living space and dining space the Refectory and Haldeman Hall were first constructed. Classes at that time were held in the Harbison House, which was later demolished to make way for Grant-Robinson Hall, and in the Second Presbyterian Church, located at the northwest corner of Fourth and Broadway Streets, now demolished.

Belknap Refectory originally consisted of a large Gothic dining room served by kitchens in the northeast corner of the building. Criticism was directed at the great outlay of money for the elaborate dining room. However, such outlay was justified by the architect because of the need to create a space visually balancing the Chapel located at the other side of the Library. The refectory was named for Mrs. Mary Richardson Belknap in recognition of her substantial financial gift to the Seminary.

Barret Library, in memory of Mrs. Lucy Stites Barret, contained social rooms behind the monumental doorway on the first floor. The second floor contained a grand reading room paneled and lit in the Collegiate Gothic style. Above the library in the tower were located stacks and the Westminster chime of bells.

At the erection of Harbison Chapel the Harbison home was demolished. Harbison Chapel originally held a seating capacity of 250 in Gothic pews. Gothic lights hung from the hammerbeam ceiling. The donor of the chapel, Mrs. Rosa Harbison McLennan, also furnished it and gave the pipe organ. The memorial window, "St. John on the Isle of Patmos," was donated by John Harbison, Isabella Stewart, and Elizabeth Berry McLennan. An endowment of \$2,000 was given by Mrs. McLennan for the upkeep of the chapel. A panel of two angels facing each other was set in the Gothic arch behind the pulpit. The chapel ceiling of oak was composed of exposed trusses. The chapel was memorial to John J. Harbison (1829-1906), who was a director of the Seminary and father of Mrs. McLennan.

The Annex, situated between the chapel and the Grant-Robinson Hall, contained two classrooms with adjoining professor's studies on its first two floors and dormitory rooms on the third floor above.

Todd Memorial Hall, the last to be built, contained only dormitory rooms, which, functionally, cause it to become merely an extension of the adjoining Haldeman Hall.

The total construction cost was \$230,000.

6. Alterations and additions: Following the purchase of the Seminary by the state in 1967 extensive renovation was undertaken to prepare it for use as a community college. The Louisville architectural firm of Lewis and Henry laid out the plans for renovation. Following is a list of major changes undertaken in 1967-1969:

Dormitory rooms refitted for classroom purposes.

Kitchen removed and library stacks installed.

Refectory converted into reading room for library.

Fire door installed between Haldeman Hall and Belknap Refectory.

Rear social room in Barret Library refitted as vestibule and a window seating removed.

Chapel refitted as reading room-auditorium; pews removed; organ removed; Gothic lights removed; spot lights installed; chancel fittings removed; pews and lights reinstalled in Jeffersontown (Kentucky) Presbyterian Church.

Booker Memorial Chimes removed by the Seminary.

Library books and furnishings removed; lights retained.

Stack area converted to music practice rooms and recording studio; steel stair installed.

Bowling alleys removed and basement refitted as commons area.

Director's Room refitted as classroom.

A stained glass window, "Samuel and the School of Prophets" removed.

All glazing and flooring replaced.

Steel fire stairs installed, and wood stairs removed - two in Grant Robinson Hall and two in Todd Memorial Hall.

Flourescent lighting replaced incandescent lighting.

Acoustical ceilings installed in all areas except Refectory and Chapel.

All interior surfaces (except woodwork) repainted - this includes painting over the angel panel in the chapel.

Interior courtyard redesigned and replanted.

Exterior doors to Barret Library replaced.

- B. Historical Context: Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, from its erection onward, served as a joint seminary for both the United Presbyterian Church (Northern) and Presbyterian Church (Southern) in America.\* The only such seminary in the United States, it provided a model of inter-denominational cooperation in a period noted for its factionalism and division. From it have graduated numerous leaders and pastors of both denominations. Once theologically conservative and now liberal, its move in 1966 to its new, spacious home on Alta Vista in Louisville, is a reflection of changing emphasis in theological education.

The original building committee which was appointed in March of 1902 consisted of the following individuals:

Rev. Peyton H. Hodge, D.D.

Mr. John Stites

Mr. F.C. Nunemacher

Dr. Cornelius Skinner

Mr. Logan C. Murray

It was this committee which commissioned William Julian Dodd as architect for the new seminary.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### General description:

The three-story Collegiate Gothic building is actually a complex of seven buildings, which form an U-shape, and of which one or more of them were built at one time over a seven year construction period. White limestone quarried from Bowling Green, Kentucky provide the stone walls for all of the buildings. Because of numerous projecting bays of various sizes, gabled dormers, battlements, irregular window arrangement and other elements all buildings, except the east wing, are generally not symmetrical in form.

Entrance to the complex from Broadway Street is by an ornate gateway which occupies a central location. The stone carvings which grace the gateway are rich in detail. The gateway was built in 1907 as a memorial to John T. Cooper. Past this is a large projecting entranceway with narrow octagonal towers. It opens onto Lucy Stites Barret Library. Its notable features include richly carved stone details and the carved stone heads of Plato, Augustine, Alfred the Great, Charlemagne, John Calvin and John Knox, which are on the frames of the arched doorway. The double doors are set back within a few feet of the entranceway. A delicate triple Gothic arched window of leaded glass is above the entranceway. Above this window is a battlement with a clock.

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\*The creation of the seminary was the result of the 1901 consolidation of the two branches, formerly known as the Danville Seminary, founded by the Northern Church in 1853, and the Louisville Seminary, founded by the Southern Church in 1893.

The front (south) facades of the east and west wings on Broadway Street are similar in appearance, though different in detail. Both have spiraled Florentine building corners with octagonal turrets and finials at the third floor level. A one-and two-story bay window projects out from the east wing-- which is not present in the other wing.

The east wing consists of Todd Memorial Hall, Haldeman Hall and Mary Belknap Refectory. Symmetrical form is evident in the east wing only. The windows, though of various sizes and types, are evenly arranged. The west facade of this wing includes a projecting central pavilion with a battlemented balcony at the third floor and a porthole window at the gabled dormer. Small round-arched doorways between the pavilion provide access for the Haldeman Hall and the Todd Memorial Hall. The door to Haldeman Hall has tapering pilasters and a pediment supported by scrolls, while the Todd Memorial Hall door has a pediment on scrolled half-columns.

The Grant-Robinson, Annex and the Harbison Chapel constitute the west wing. The Grant-Robinson Hall is entered through a projecting central entranceway which have two four-story towers. At the second floor, above the entranceway, are five windows with elaborate stone tracery grouped together. Four windows on the third floor have simple detailing. To the right of the entry are two first floor bay windows. Each bay contains three Gothic-arched windows. An unusual castle-like three-story building with battlements houses the annex, which is joined on either side by Grant-Robinson Hall or the chapel. The Harbison Chapel has double- and triple-arched windows and two gabled dormers. The Mary Belknap Refectory is similar to the chapel in general appearance.

## PART II. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Early View: Old view of interior of Harbison Chapel can be found in the handbook for the Louisville Architectural Exhibition of 1912.

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Deed Books, Clerk's Office, Jefferson County Courthouse,  
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2. Secondary and published sources:

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Prepared by: David Arbogast  
Architectural Historian  
National Park Service  
August 1974  
and  
Susan McCown  
Historian  
Historic American Buildings Survey  
Spring 1981

#### PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in cooperation with the Preservation Alliance of Louisville and Jefferson County, Inc. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1974 at the HABS Field Office in Louisville by Prof. John Haggard, (Syracuse University), Project Supervisor; David Arbogast (Columbia University), Project Historian; Mary Oehrlein, Project Foreman; Bayer Lee (City College of New York), Architect; and Mary M. Herd (University of Tennessee) and Charles Raith (University of Cincinnati), student assistant architects. Susan McCown, a HABS staff historian in the Washington, D.C. office, edited the written descriptive data in the spring of 1981, for transmittal to the Library of Congress. HABS staff photographer Jack E. Boucher took the photographs of the structures in 1979.

ADDENDUM TO  
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