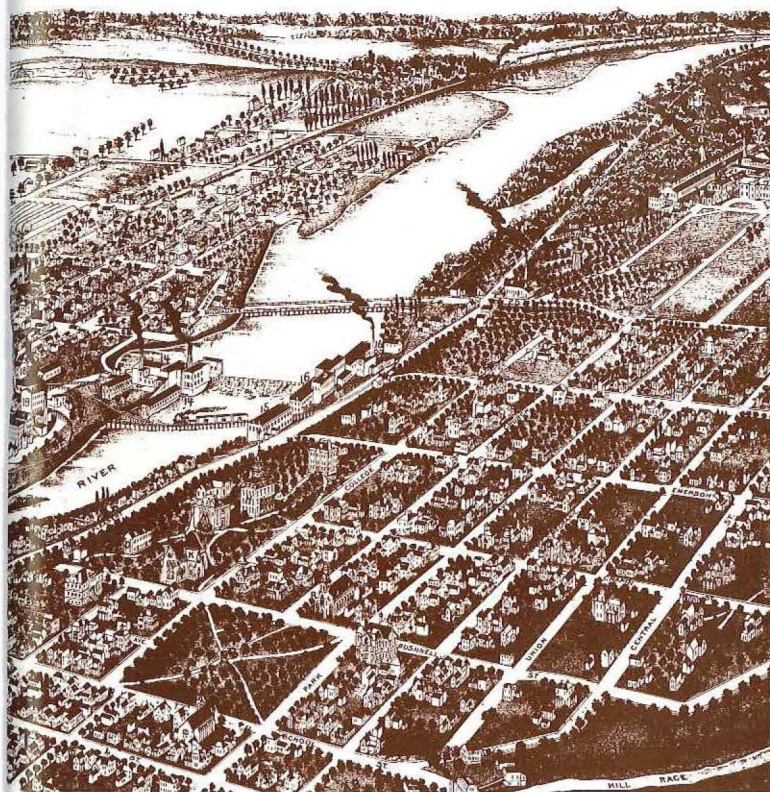


# A NEIGHBORHOOD STROLL



A Self-guided Tour of  
Beloit's  
Near East Side  
Historic District

NEAR EAST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICT  
TOUR GUIDE

The City of Beloit Planning Division wishes to thank the following contributors who participated in the production of this tour guide.

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INTRODUCTION

This brochure is designed to guide you on your tour of the Near East Side Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in January, 1983. This District is part of the larger Near East Side neighborhood located on the east side of Beloit, Wisconsin.

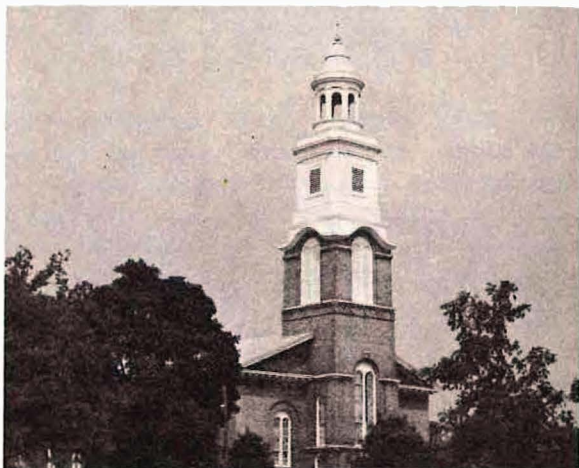
The Near East Side neighborhood continues to reflect its original development pattern established by the Original Plat of Beloit. Platted in 1837 by the New England Emigrating Company, which originated in Colebrook, New Hampshire, the village was centered around a public square or commons now known as Horace White Park. Actual development, however, began at the confluence of the Rock River and Turtle Creek as commercial ventures prospered and initial housing flourished, thereby creating the first neighborhood. It was therefore possible to locate Beloit College north of this area in 1846 on vacant lots which overlooked the Rock River. Henceforth the college continued to serve as an impetus for the development of the second or Near East Side Neighborhood. Since then, the neighborhood has changed and grown as Beloit developed, but today it still reminds us how our cities developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is this ever-changing, but somehow constant fabric of homes, college buildings and churches developed around the public square that provides the amenities of urban living for approximately 2,500 people.

Welcome to the Near East Side.



## SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE

This tour begins on Bushnell Street at Church Street. Park your car at Horace White Park and across the street is...



### 1. THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 801 Bushnell Street

The church is significant architecturally as a major work of the mid-19th century Wisconsin architect Lucas Bradley of Racine. Built of cream brick in 1859-62, the church structure reflects elements of both Greek Revival and Romanesque Revival styles. The central square tower rises from the entry through the pedimented gabled roofline and culminates in a wooden cupola which replaced the former wooden spire that soared over the city before the tornado of 1883. The facade is divided into bays by semi-circular arched windows of narrow proportion. For decades after completion, the auditorium was the largest assembly hall in the city and therefore an

appropriate site for college activities as well as religious services.

Walk one block east to Park Avenue and across the street is...



### 2. THE NEWCOMB HOUSE 905 Bushnell

Built in 1869, this house is one of the most splendid examples of Italianate style in Beloit that provides a commanding view of Horace White Park. The low pitched roof is typical of this architectural style and is crowned with a balustrade and a pair of symmetrically located chimneys. The roofline gracefully projects beyond the narrow clapboarded facades and is supported by paired scroll brackets. Similarly the large front porch is supported by paired columns and brackets topped again with a balustrade.

Continue to walk one block east to Harrison Avenue where you will see..



3. THE REITLER HOUSE  
925 Bushnell and 604 Harrison

This house was built in 1892 and first owned by Moses Reitler who was a member of a small 19th century community of German Jews and a well known clothing merchant. His store operated in the downtown for 100 years. His three-story house is Queen Anne style with a three-story polygonal tower that rises above the main entry and is capped by a bell-shaped roof. The enclosed porches recede on the south facade and extend on the east facade which gives this house a feeling of massive volume. Exterior shingles decorate the facades with fish scale, fan-like detailing.

Walk north on Harrison Avenue to Chapin Street, then turn left and continue to Park Avenue to view...



4. THE MERRILL HOUSE  
703 Park Avenue

A significant example of the Italian Villa style, rare in the area, this two story residence, built in 1869, was the home of one of Beloit's important early industrialists. Sereno T. Merrill was principal of the Beloit Seminary which became the Preparatory Department of Beloit College in 1849. He built the first paper mill on the Rock River, patented strawboard for sheathing, organized the Merrill Company which was reorganized eventually to become the Beloit Corporation, and later helped organize the Eclipse Windmill Company, the forerunner of Fairbanks Morse & Company. The outstanding features of this L-shaped residence are the tall squared tower rising three stories over the entry, the low pitched gable roof with large cornice returns that reflects a pedimented temple form, a segmentally arched entry portico supported by Ionic columns and tall, narrowly proportioned windows



typical of Italianate architecture.

Travel one block north and cross Emerson Street and across Park Avenue is...



5. THE PALEY HOUSE  
802 Park Avenue

Built in 1895, this Queen Anne style house was originally the residence of John Paley, founder and first president of the Beloit State Bank, now known as the M & I Bank. The predominant characteristics of this stately residence include a delicately proportioned circular tower that rises above the entry through the intersecting steeply pitched gable roofs. The tower is capped by a steeply pitched conical roof supported by brackets. The massive gable walls include paired rounded windows with interlacing muntins and the gables are accented with fan-shaped shingles at their peaks. The entry of the veranda is

embraced with a bas-relief within the pediment which welcomes you to this substantial dwelling.

Next door on Park Avenue is...



6. THE PHILHOWER HOUSE  
808 Park Avenue

This house was influenced by the prairie style when it was constructed in 1906. It was first owned by E. L. Philhower, a local Beloit grocer. The most remarkable features of this example of eclectic progressive architecture in Beloit are the six cubic piers that are crowned with Egyptian-like cavetto cornices. Curiously, the front porch piers are intersected by smaller pyramidal buttresses.

Diagonally across the street is...



7. THE ROSS HOUSE  
819 Park Avenue

Built in 1896, this splendid example of late Queen Anne style house was the home of Noble Ross, one of the founding partners of the Beloit Iron Works, predecessor to the Beloit Corporation. A heavy engaged tower dominates the front facade as it rises from the lower floors as a larger bay. At the roof line the tower changes to a semi-circle to be capped by a cone shaped roof. Two massive chimneys tower over the dormered gabled roof. Distinctive decorative elements are limited to an elliptical window overlooking the entry stairway with a cut nail detail piercing the four quarters. A simple garland-like moulding divides the tower at the roofline and slim turned balusters lace both porches.

Continue north on Park Avenue to Clary Street then turn left (west) and at the end of the block on the northeast corner is...



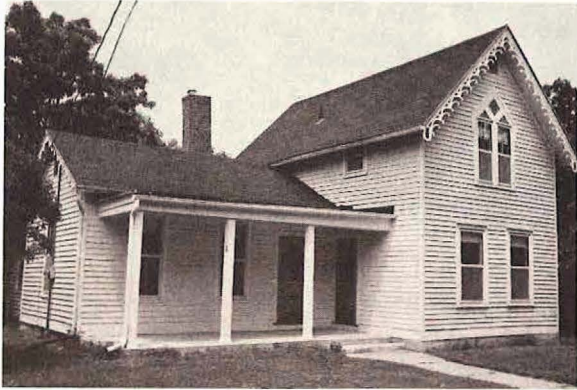
8. THE HOLDEN HOUSE  
905 Church Street

Professor Louis E. Holden, member of the Beloit College Department of Oratory, built this house in 1893. After being president of the College of Wooster and later of James Millikin University, Professor Holden returned to be Vice-President of Beloit College. The two story plus attic frame house combines elements of the Queen Anne, Shingle and Colonial Revival styles of architecture. The house is characterized by the steeply pitched gable roof. The south roof is dominated by a pair of massive dormers with round headed narrow windows piercing the gable walls. The front gable is accented with a series of windows--two framed by a swan's neck pediment, one elliptical and one narrow window similar to those on the south gable walls. The front facade is articulated by an off-centered wall chimney of



rusticated stonework with centered window.

Travel south on Church Street for half a block and on the west side of the street is...



9. THE BAILEY HOUSE  
824 Church Street

Thomas D. Bailey, a local produce merchant and grain dealer, built this vernacular style house in 1858. Later, it was occupied by members of the same family from 1881 until the 1960s when Mrs. Amos Van Tassel, the widow of one of the city's early newspapermen, died at the age of over 100. As often occurs when one family maintains long-term ownership, the architectural integrity of the building has been maintained. This frame house based on an L-shaped plan, includes elaborately carved bargeboards at the roofline and an unusual triangular louvered pediment over the paired second story window. These details give the house an appearance of the Carpenter Gothic style.

Just to the south is...



10. THE KENDALL HOUSE  
818 Church Street

Constructed in 1860, this frame Italianate residence was first owned by Elijah H. Kendall, a Beloit carpenter. Built on an L-shaped plan, this vertically oriented house has a low pitched roof with extending eaves supported by carved brackets. Windows are symmetrical, tall, and narrow, typical of the Italianate style. The entry is sheltered by a porch supported by thin pillars and saw-cut braces with a bracketed cornice.

Continue to the corner and across the street is...



11. THE HAMILTON HOUSE  
805 Church Street

William Hamilton, who owned this house when it was built in 1905, was a professor of Mathematics and Astronomy, director of the observatory and registrar of Beloit College. This two and one-half story frame house is an example of an early 20th century residence built in a transition between the late Queen Anne and Cubic styles. The round turret carries through the entire corner from porch through top finial. The veranda, supported by Ionic columns, sweeps around the front to the side which carries your eye to the side wall chimney. Rising from the rusticated concrete block, the brick chimney climbs through the eaves to match heights with the neighboring turret. The texture of the front porch is carried through to the rear of the house by two tiered verandas.

Proceed southward on the west side of Church Street to find...



12. THE EMERSON HOUSE  
732 Church Street

Built in 1894, this house was first owned by Charles Emerson, proprietor of Emerson's Drug Store in Beloit. This example of Queen Anne style is accentuated by a multitude of gables highlighted with concentric bands of siding in an inverted fan-like pattern. The pedimented entry porch has siding similar to the house and features an arcade of broad low arches supported by multiple groupings of squat columns reminiscent of the Romanesque Revival style.

Next door to the south is...





13. THE PRATT HOUSE  
726 Church Street

Mrs. Gertrude Pratt purchased this property in 1889 and this Queen Anne style residence was built during the next year affording her a domicile for 34 years. A striking feature of this frame house is the imbricated siding at the upper levels. The roof system includes a combination of hip and gable elements. The veranda contains several detailed elements including latticework at gables and below the flooring, perforated frieze, Eastlake-like porch posts, arched balusters and cyma brackets forming three ogee arches.

Proceed down the street and across Chapin Street, you will notice...



14. THE PFEFFER HOUSE  
722-724 Chapin Street

Built by John B. Pfeffer in 1874, this two-story frame house is an example of vernacular late Italianate style. Based typically on the L-shaped plan, this house includes tall, narrow windows regularly spaced throughout the clapboard facades. Bay windows project on two sides. A most distinguishing feature is the porch detail which includes spindle friezes, turned posts, knobs and perforated brackets. Mr. Pfeffer was a notable individual connected with Beloit College, in that he was a janitor for more than fifty years. Regarded as a colleague of the faculty and friend of the boys, he expanded his home in 1891 to house students and teachers alike.

Now travel west along Chapin Street and turn right on College Street to view...

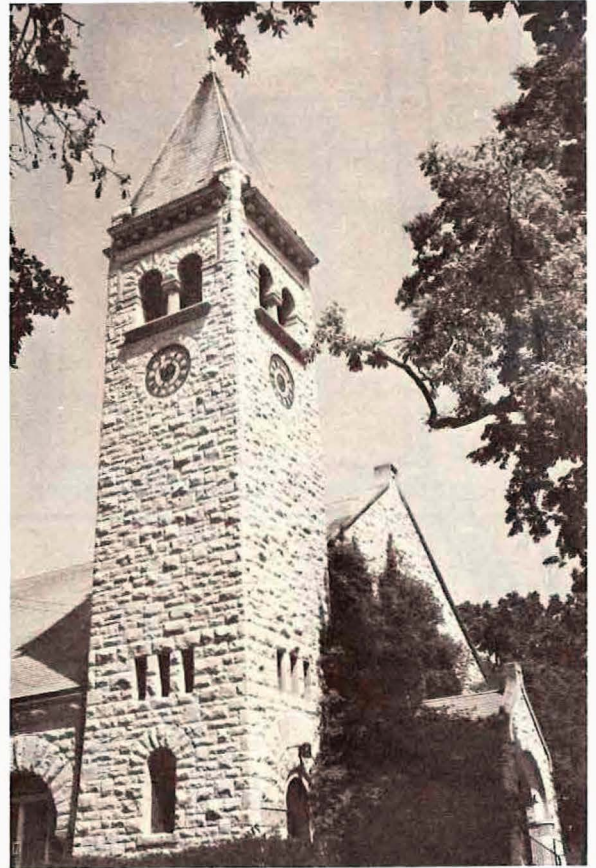




15. THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE  
709 College Street

This house was built in 1851 by Aaron Lucius Chapin, the first president of Beloit College, who commissioned Lucas Bradley of Racine to design it. As built, the house was a two-story transitional Greek Revival and Italianate residence. However, about twenty-five years later, Chapin significantly enlarged and altered his house thereby increasing the Italianate feeling. In 1937, during President Maurer's administration, the College received the house as a gift from Miss Ellen Chapin. Thereafter, it was extensively remodeled and modernized, eliminating many of the Italianate embellishments. Only the bay windows, extended roofline and high ornate chimneys remain to remind us of the original facade. The president of the college continues to reside here, in effect linking the neighborhood with the college by its location.

Walk across the street and view...



16. EATON CHAPEL  
Beloit College

The cornerstone of the college chapel was laid in 1891. Designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Patton and Fisher, the Richardsonian-Romanesque style chapel has an imposing simplicity that orchestrates the rusticated stonework, the great battered clock tower, the east entry porch and the south arcade together. All have managed to remain intact through the extensive refurbishing in 1937 by the architect Maurice Webster, and a disastrous fire in 1953. The chapel is named after the college's second



HISTORIC DISTRICT



Rock River

Pleasant Street

Clary Street

Emerson Street

Chapin Street

BELOIT COLLEGE

Church Street

begin  
1

Bushnell Street

Prospect Street

College Street

Park Avenue

Harrison Avenue

Wisconsin Avenue

HORACE WHITE PARK

East Grand Avenue

8

9  
10

11

6  
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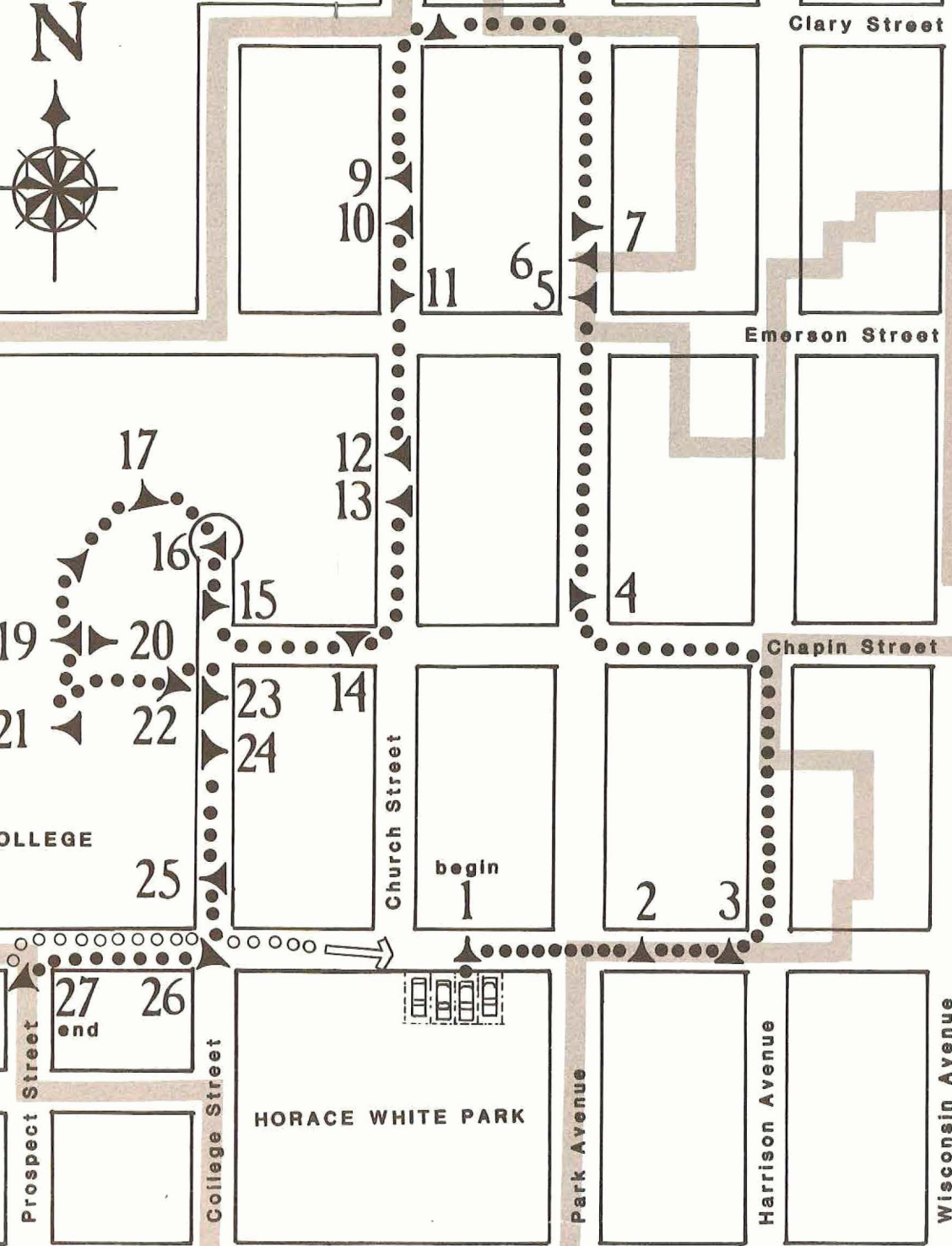
2

3

27  
end

26

Public Avenue



president, Edward Dwight Eaton, and is the Beloit home of the Beloit/Janesville Symphony. It also serves as a place for other college events.

Stroll across the path to the northwest to see...

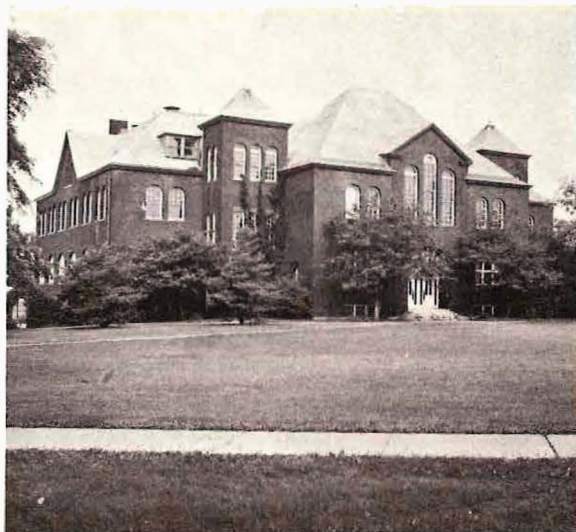


17. CAMPBELL HALL  
(formerly North College)  
Beloit College

North College was designed by Lucas Bradley of Racine and was constructed as the first college dormitory for men in 1854. Almost 40 years passed before it was converted to classroom instruction. Another 40 years later the building was reverted to dormitory use for women. Later in the 60s, it was once again returned to office and classroom use, the ground level included an infirmary for a short period. In 1983, it was renamed in honor of Samuel J. Campbell, an outstanding trustee of the college for 40 years. Now it houses

the Departments of Economics & Management and Sociology. The three-story red brick edifice retains its simple classical lines through various remodelings to include a pedimented portico supported by Doric columns, and a cornice that covers the crowns of rounded recessed panels.

Continue to the southwest and behold...



18. PEARSONS HALL OF SCIENCE  
Beloit College

Historically, Pearsons Hall of Science is significant in its association with the development of the scientific curriculum, the notable people who taught and studied there, and as the only structure in Rock County of the architectural master Daniel Burnham of Chicago. Built in 1891-92, the science hall was designed in the Romanesque Revival style popularized by H. H. Richardson. This monu-

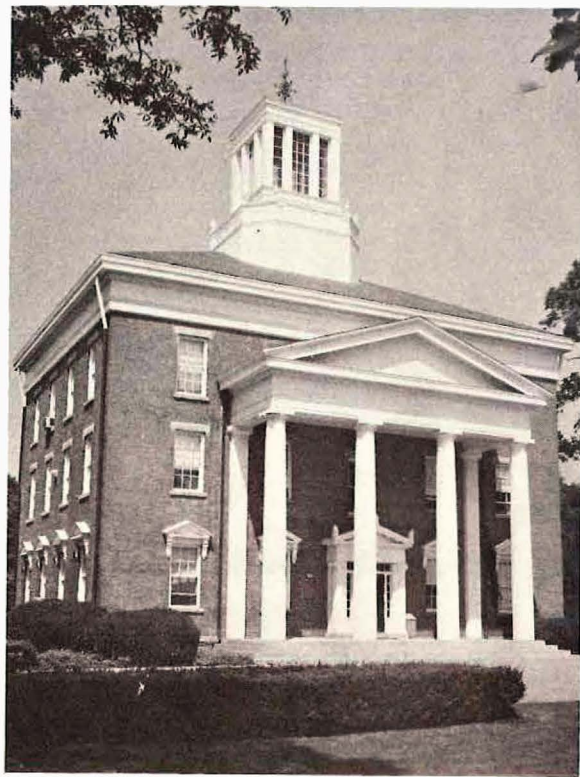


mental building, enhanced by its location, is faced with plum brown brick with a skeletal framing system of iron posts. The building's symmetrical form is established by a central section with an apse at the rear flanked by two setback, matching wings all capped by hipped roofs and central gables. The middle section is framed by twin towers rising a full three stories and finished with pyramidal roofs crowned by decorative metal finials. Romanesque Revival elements are expressed in massive blocks of wall accented with a series of round-arched windows of various proportions.

After the Chamberlin Science Center was built in the 1960s, Pearsons at times housed art studios, an experimental theater, costume storage, the print shop, and other functions until it eventually stood vacant and was "reluctantly" recommended for demolition. Fortunately it had been "built to last;" demolition estimates were expensive. The College decided on renovation, carried out by the architectural firm of C. Edward Ware and Associates of Rockford.

Pearsons re-opened in 1985 as the Jeffris-Wood Campus Center containing a union, bookstore, meeting rooms, offices and other functions.

Now stroll in a southeasterly direction, beyond the "rock" (Rostra Beloitensia), and view...



19. MIDDLE COLLEGE  
Beloit College

Constructed in 1847-48, "The College" initially housed everything--classrooms, chapel and dormitory. It was a simple three story red brick structure with a dramatic cupola centered among four end wall chimneys. A dramatic change occurred in the 1879-80 when the building, then known as Middle College, was transformed into a Second Empire style edifice with a mansard roof as the fourth floor, massive central tower and ornate double tiered porch. Today Middle College reflects the 1939 renovation by Allen and Webster, architects from Chicago, who chose to bring back its original simplicity.

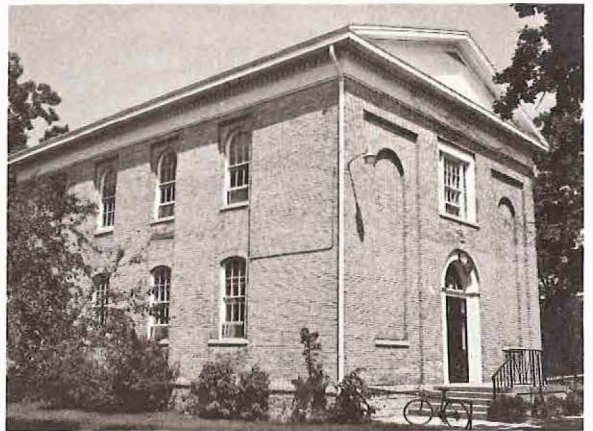
The Second Empire embellishments were removed, the cupola similar to the original was re-introduced, and a colossal Doric pedimented portico was added to the front facade. Middle College still remains as the central focus of the campus and the administrative heart of the college, and is considered to be the oldest college building still in continuous use northwest of Chicago.

Turn around and face the east to see...

20. THE EFFIGY MOUNDS  
Beloit College

These mounds are the remnants of an Effigy Mounds Culture, part of the Post-Hopewell developments in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. Dates for this prehistoric hunting and gathering culture indicate a range from about 500 to 1300 A.D. These mounds are in various configurations including linear, conical and animal effigies, of which only a few contained buried artifacts.

Walk to the southwest to see...



21. SOUTH COLLEGE - CHAPEL  
Beloit College

Constructed in 1858, this two story cream brick chapel was an adaptation of a design for the Racine High School by Lucas Bradley of Racine. The first floor housed the Academy and the second floor contained the cove ceilinged chapel. Since its initial uses, the building has served a number of campus functions including the art hall, the Rockford Lounge, administrative offices, student union, bookstore, faculty offices, language laboratory, and now it is the student service center. Exterior remodeling was less dramatic however. The hip roof, extending frontal blind gablet and four end wall chimneys were eliminated to give way to the present pedimented gable roof. The upper central window was originally a pair of round arched windows. One continuous theme of the facade is the recessing of all windows including the two story blind arches flanking the front arched doorway.



Now travel eastward to College Street and see...



22. THE PETTIBONE WORLD AFFAIRS CENTER - Beloit College

Constructed originally as a Carnegie Library, the Pettibone World Affairs Center is architecturally significant as a fine example of Classical Revival style. Built in 1904, the facility continued as a library until 1962 when the Morse Library was completed. Currently, international studies and languages occupy the structure which is faced with rectangular block separated by broad horizontal joint work. The Chicago architectural firm of Patton and Miller designed this stately structure which includes a recessed entry. The architrave and frieze that surrounds the top of the building is supported in the entry by two colossal Corinthian columns and similar engaged pilasters.

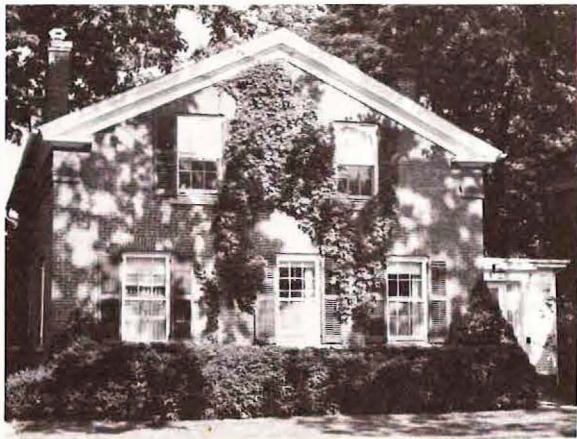
Cross the street and leave the college momentarily to walk to College and Chapin and see...



23. THE BRINSMADE/BLAISDELL HOUSE  
647 College Street

Although built in the mid-1850s by H. N. Brinsmade, minister of the First Congregational Church, this house is most closely associated with James J. Blaisdell, professor of Rhetoric and English Literature at Beloit College. Not only was Blaisdell superintendent of Beloit Schools and director of the local YMCA but he was instrumental as an active conservationist in the creation of Beloit's Big Hill Park. His two story frame house is an expanded one-story vernacular cottage built on an L-shaped plan with gable roof. Most noticeably, the labeled window hood molds frame the window openings.

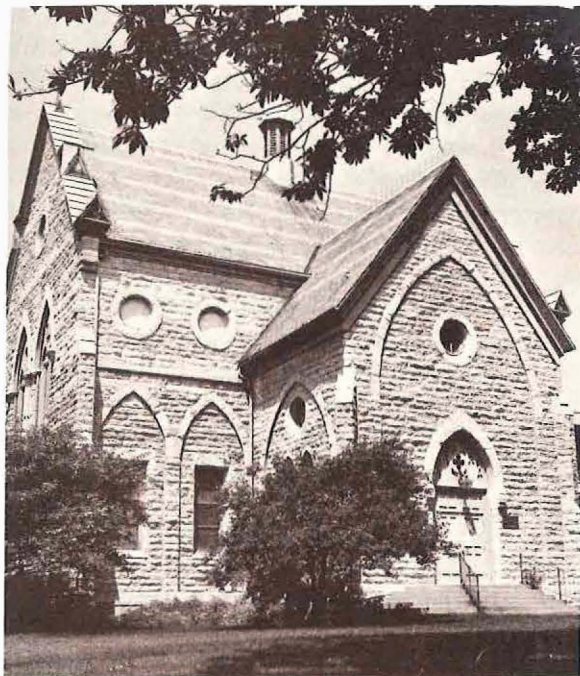
Next door to the south is...



24. THE McQUIGG HOUSE  
635 College Street

Records indicate that Jesse McQuigg owned this property from 1857 to his death in 1886. Built sometime before his tenure, this house remains today as the best preserved example of Greek Revival architecture in Beloit. Rising one and one-half stories, the gable roof terminates with cornice returns at the four corners. Bricked bands create an entablature below the cornice which continues along the side walls to duplicate at the rear wall.

Continue south toward Bushnell Street, look to the west and behold...



25. MEMORIAL HALL-LOGAN MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY - Beloit College

Memorial Hall was designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Cochrane and Garnsey and is one of the finest examples of remaining Victorian Gothic architecture in the area. The exterior has remained almost unchanged since its construction in 1869. Based on a modified T-shaped plan, the edifice is distinguished by massive rusticated limestone walls penetrated by appropriately placed round windows. Recessed, pointed stone arches lace the stone facades creating an arcade effect. The two-story structure is crowned with a steeply gabled roof (once topped with cresting) and a gracefully pointed cupola. Projecting gablets ornament the north and south gables while



corner buttresses are capped by stone weatherings. The east entry is surmounted by wood tracery and quatrefoil windows. Built as a memorial for housing mementos of the Civil War, the hall was later assigned the library holdings until the Carnegie Library was built. For a brief period, it contained the Music Department and part of the natural history collection. Finally, the Logan Museum of Anthropology took permanent residence there.

As you leave Beloit College and cross Bushnell Street to the south you can view a parking lot - former site of the Gillespie /Waterman house.



26. THE GILLESPIE/WATERMAN HOUSE  
516 College Street

Built by A. Gillespie in 1870-1871, the house was soon sold to Anson P. Waterman. Waterman was a hardware merchant, as well as the second mayor of Beloit, vice-president of the former First National Bank, and treasurer of Beloit College. The house which was demolished in 1993 was a tall proportioned balloon frame house that reflected a variety of mid-

Victorian styles combined in a vernacular fashion. The simple clapboarding, gabled roof and rectilinear massing implies a Beloit vernacular style. The tall narrow window enframements, which are highlighted by ornate incised detail, reflect the late Italianate style. The front steeply pitched cross gable suggests Gothic Revival influence. However, the rounded headed windows and classical ornament are reminiscent of Italian villa motifs.

Continue to the west along Bushnell Street to Prospect to view...



27. RASEY HOUSE  
517 Prospect Street

Uniquely associated with the growth of Beloit College, the Rasey House was constructed in 1850 as a fund raising project for the college. Originally it was occupied by A. L. Chapin, the college's first president. At the end of 1851, it was sold to Deacon Samuel Hinman with proceeds restoring funds bor-

rowed from the college endowment. Prior to its current occupant--the DAR Beloit Chapter--the house was owned and named after Edwin Rasey. He owned a large farm just northwest of Beloit and was active in various farming organizations.

The house is a significant and well-preserved example of Rock County cobblestone houses. The house is an unassuming one and is a one-half story rectangular building, with the extended gable roof supported by wood purlins. The exterior facade is adorned with row upon row of cobblestones, a type of construction frequently practiced at the time which originated in Tunbridge Wells, England, Ontario, Canada and New York State. Stone blocks accent the structural qualities of window sills, lintels and corner quoins.

Now you may return to your point of beginning by traveling east along Bushnell Street to Horace White Park.

This marks the completion of your historic stroll.

Thank you for touring the Near East Side Historic District.

## GLOSSARY

APSE - A semicircular space terminating an axis usually in a church.

ARCHITRAVE- The beam that spans from column to column resting directly upon their capitals.

BALUSTRADE - A series of columns set on a bottom rail supporting a hand-rail.

BARGEBOARD - A board, often elaborately carved, that hangs from a projecting end of a roof covering the gables.

BATTERED - A wall or support that recedes as it rises.

CAVETTO - A simple concave shaped moulding.

CORINTHIAN ORDER - The slenderest and most ornate of three Greek orders characterized by acanthus leaves in the capital and fluted columns resting directly on the ground.

CORNICE - The exterior trim of a building at the meeting of the roof and wall.

CRESTING - A detailed ornament that is repeated along the top of a wall or roof peak.

CUPOLA - A spherical roof on a varied shaped based often set on the ridge of a roof.

CYMA - A moulding having the profile of two contrary curves.

DORIC ORDER - The column and entablature developed by the Dorian



Greeks, sturdy in proportion but simple in design.

END-WALL CHIMNEY - A chimney that rises within the walls of a building and protrudes through the roofline near the eave.

ENTABLATURE - The elaborated beam member carried by columns horizontally divided into the architrave, frieze and cornice.

FINIAL - An ornament which terminates the point of a spire.

FRIEZE - The middle horizontal member of classical entablature above the architrave but below the cornice.

GABLE - The vertical, usually triangular, portion of the end of a building having a sloping roofline.

GABLET - A small ornamental gable usually decorating a roof edge or bell tower.

IMBRICATION - An overlapping of shaped shingles perpendicular to the joint of the shingle below.

IONIC ORDER - Includes the capital of a column, developed by Ionian Greeks, having large spiral scrolls and elegant detailing.

LABEL - A square molding extending horizontally across the top of an opening and returning vertically downward a short distance.

LINTEL - A horizontal structural member over an opening which carries the weight of the wall above it.

MANSARD - A roof with a steep lower

slope and a flatter upper slope named after the French architect Francois Mansart, who revived the use of such roof.

MUNTIN - A framing member to hold panes within a window.

OGEE ARCH - A pointed arch composed of reversed curves, the lower concave and the upper convex.

PEDIMENT - The triangular gable end of the roof above the horizontal cornice, also located over porch entries.

PILASTER - A decorative feature usually in the form of a column projecting only about one-sixth of its width from a wall.

PORTICO - Roof supported on at least one side by columns.

PURLIN - A horizontal beam in the roof resting on the principal rafters usually extended and supported by diagonal brackets.

QUATREFOIL - A four lobed pattern divided by cusps or points.

QUOINS - A hard stone or brick used to reinforce an external edge or corner of a wall usually in the form of alternating stretchers and headers.

RUSTICATED - Cut stone having strongly emphasized recessed joints with a smoothly or roughly textured block face.

SEGMENTAL ARCH - A circular arch in which the inner curve is less than a semicircle.

TRACERY - The curvilinear openwork shapes of stone or wood creating a pattern within the upper part of a Gothic window.

TURNED - Pieces of wood or stone having a circular outline such as columns or balusters.

VERNACULAR - A style of building based on regional forms and materials.

WEATHERING - The slope given to offsets on buttresses to throw off rain.

A major source of information for this guide originated from the Beloit Intensive Survey, partially funded by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.



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