

OHIO HISTORIC INVENTORY

Ohio Historic Preservation Office
567 E. Hudson St. Columbus, Ohio 43211
614/297-2470



1. No.	2. County LOR	4. Present Name(s) Finney Chapel		<input type="checkbox"/> Coded
3. Location of Negatives O.H.I.O. Resource		5. Historic or Other Name(s) Finney Chapel		
Roll # Exp. # Facing Rear 1 23A NW Front 2 33A W				
6. Specific Address or Location 90 North Professor		17. Date(s) or Period 1908	17b. Alteration Date(s)	30. Foundation Material Stone
6a. Lot, Section or VMD Number 09-00-085-106-070		18. Style or Design Romanesque	High Style <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	31. Wall Construction Stone Bearing
7. City or Village Oberlin		18a. Style of Addition or Element(s) Renaissance Revival		32. Roof: Type Gable Pitch Steep Material Clay Tile
8. Site Plan with North Arrow		19. Architect or Engineer Cass Gilbert, New York		33. No. Bays Front 8 Side
		19a. Design Sources		34. Exterior Wall Material(s) Stone, Smooth Dressed
9. U.T.M. Reference		20. Contractor or Builder		35. Plan Shape Other
Zone Easting Northing <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		21. Building Type or Plan Other Building		36. Changes (Explain in #42) Restoration
10. <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Object		22. Original Use, if apparent College Chapel		37. Window Type(s) Other
11. On National Register ? Yes		23. Present Use Auditorium, Chapel		38. Bldg. Dims.
12. N.R. Potential ?		24. Ownership <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private		39. Endangered? No Explain:
13. Part of Estb Hist Dist? No		25. Owner's Name & Address, if known Oberlin College 135 West Lorain Street Oberlin OH 44074		40. Chimney Placement No Chimney Observed
14. Dist. Potential ? No		26. Property Acreage 1.250		41a. Distance from road
15. Name of Established District (N.R. or Local) NR: Oberlin College thematic nomination		27. Other Surveys in Which Included McQuillin (75)		41b. Frontage on road
16. Thematic Association(s) Education: Parochial/private: Higher		28. No. of Stories 2		
29. Basement? Yes		29. Basement? Yes		
42. Further Description of Important Interior and Exterior Features This two-story, Romanesque, red and brown sandstone church has a red tile, gable roof with a square bell tower with pyramidal roof and ball finial. The east-facing, front façade has five sets of double doors with cast-iron hinges, centered below a prominent circular window. The center set has the widest opening and a trumeau supports its large, arch tympanum. The bands of stonework surrounding the tympanum are progressively less ornate from the center outward. The other sets of doors have slightly smaller arch tympanums. Two, red, sandstone, Corinthian colonnettes flank each entrance. Four more columns support stone piers that protrude from the wall space between the tympanums of the main entrance. Two wall-length, stone piers separate (cont.)				
43. History and Significance In 1903 Oberlin College president Henry Churchill King approached Frederick Norton Finney, former President Finney's son, about construction of a new chapel to honor the former president. F.N. Finney responded favorably to the idea of the chapel and suggested two architects, Charles Follen McKim and Cass Gilbert. King selected Gilbert, however, disagreements quickly developed between Finney and Gilbert, and King became the mediator (Blodgett). The architect struggled with the effort to find the correct blend of college's restrained austerity and the environment created by Peters Hall, Carnegie Library and Warner Gymnasium. He finally settled on (cont.)				
44. Description of Environment and Outbuildings (see #52) This building is located at the southwest corner of Lorain (State Route 511) and North Professor Streets. It is north of Cox Administration building and central to the college pedestrian traffic.				
45. Sources of Information Lorain County Courthouse: Lorain County tax records. O.H.I.O. Resource Center: Oberlin Historic Preservation Commission Files; Klukas, Arnold W and Margarita J. Wuellner. "Beauty, Utility and Fitness: Cass Gilbert in Oberlin," <u>Building Utopia: Oberlin Architecture 1833-1983</u> , Bulletin, Allen Art Museum, O.C. XLI, 1. 1983-84; <u>General Catalogue of Oberlin College</u> , 1908. Blodgett, Geoffrey. <u>Oberlin Architecture College and Town: A Guide to its Social History</u> . Oberlin College, 1985.				
46. Prepared by M. Fedelchak Harley; L. Preville				
47. Organization O.H.I.O. and H.P.C.				
48. Date Recorded 10-14-2000				
49. Revised by				
50a. Date Revised				
50b. Reviewed by				

51. Condition of Property

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruin
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good/Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Destroyed/Burned
<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	Date _____

54. Farmstead Plan



52. Historic Outbuildings and Dependencies

Barn Type(s)

<input type="checkbox"/> Corn Crib or Shed	<input type="checkbox"/> Summer Kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/> Silo
<input type="checkbox"/> Smoke House	<input type="checkbox"/> Spring House	<input type="checkbox"/> Ice House
<input type="checkbox"/> Designed Landscape Features	<input type="checkbox"/> Privy	<input type="checkbox"/> Garage

53. Affiliated OAI Site Number(s) _____

OAI Completed? _____

Archaeological Feature:	Observed	Expected on Basis of Archival Research
Well	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Privy	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Cistern	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Foundation	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Structural Rubble	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Formal Trash Dump	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Other _____	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>

42. Further Description of Important Interior and Exterior Features (Continued from page 1)

the main entrance from the tower on the south side, and the one-story wing on the north side. The bell tower has an entrance at its east-facing base. The tower has a pair of arches on each wall, centered below a row of stone brackets. A red sandstone colonnette bisects each of these arches, and above each colonnette sits a round incised carving. The sidewalls of the building have six bays separated by stone piers and one-story, shed-roof wings. Each bay has a window with multiple panes of leaded glass. Every window along the sides and rear is arched except the windows on the single-story side wing. The rear of the building has a two-story, seven-bay projection with a bracketed stone cornice and narrow arched windows. Two other projections, on each side of the rear projection, have conical roofs and exit doors. This building has been recently renovated.

43. History and Significance (Continued from page 1.)

"the language of the Romanesque of southern France...as the eclectic foundation for a uniquely Oberlin style" (Klukas and Wuellner).

The building was built on the site of President Finney' s former home at Lorain and Professor Street. Construction began in June 1907, and the chapel was dedicated June 21, 1908, as part of the seventy-fifth anniversary. The total cost was \$135,000 and the seating capacity was 1,960 (OC General Catalogue). Gilbert' s vision for the building' s interior was not realized, however, as the college was unwilling to expend funds to achieve his aesthetic goals. In 1982, architect William Blunden, using a Gilbert drawing, guided a renovation of the chapel and the interior colors that brought the space closer to Cass Gilbert' s original intention (Blodgett).

This building is significant for its architect, its architecture and for its long association as an important center for college religious and secular life. It was listed on the National Register as part of the Oberlin College thematic nomination in 1978. it was listed by the City of Oberlin as an Oberlin Historic Landmark in November 1997.