

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Seminary Park

AND/OR COMMON

## 2 LOCATION

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Corner of College Avenue and East Second Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Bloomington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Indiana

VICINITY OF

CODE

18

COUNTY

Monroe

CODE

105

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☒ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☒ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Bloomington

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Box 100 Municipal Building

CITY, TOWN

Bloomington

VICINITY OF

STATE

Indiana

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder of Monroe County

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Monroe County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Bloomington

STATE

Indiana

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

—EXCELLENT

☒ GOOD

—FAIR

—DETERIORATED

—RUINS

—UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

—UNALTERED

☒ ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

—MOVED

DATE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The remaining area now known as Seminary Park is bordered by South Walnut Street on the east, on the north by East Second Street and by the extension of College Avenue on the west. Beginning at the northeast corner of Seminary Square, the park runs south 185 feet; runs west 288.75 feet; runs north 185 feet; runs east 288.75 feet to the place of beginning.

This is the entire remaining public-owned undeveloped portion of the original property. As the first site of Indiana University in Bloomington, Monroe County, it is a recognized park. The site is a vacant, grassy area with a few large trees remaining. Also on the site are the original gateways from the class of 1950.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1816, 1820, 1883

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The historic foundation of Indiana University, midwestern pioneer in higher education and the oldest midwestern university in continuous operation, began with the passage of an Act of Congress on April 19, 1816, providing for the admission of Indiana into the Union and with the constitutional convention held at Corydon, Indiana in June, 1816.

The 1816 Congressional Act offered a grant by the federal government to the new state of a township of land for the use of a seminary of learning. Drafters of the constitution meeting in convention at Corydon agreed not only to accept the grant made by Congress, but also stated in Article IX, Section 2 that "it shall be the duty of the General Assembly, as soon as circumstances will permit, to provide by law for a general system of education, ascending in a regular gradation from township schools to a state university, wherein tuition shall be gratis and equally open to all." According to Samuel Bannister Harding, in Indiana University, 1820-1904, "the circumstances of time and place being considered these are notable words. In that day it was the accepted theory of education that elementary instruction might properly be undertaken by the states but that higher education should be left to the control of religious denominations or to individual benevolence."<sup>1</sup>

On July 10, 1816, President James Madison designated the seminary township in what was to become Monroe County. As James Albert Woodburn stated in History of Indiana University, Vol. 1, 1820-1902, "this township... had been surveyed under the laws of the United States as early as 1812, and the notes of the surveyors were doubtless before the president when the selection was made, for it is apparent that a better selection could not have been made within the then surveyed limits as near to the geographical center of the state."<sup>2</sup>

One of the provisions of the Indiana Constitution was that no land intended for school use be sold until 1820. Thus, it was not until January 20, 1820, that an act to establish a state seminary was approved, and not until 1824 that the first building to house Indiana University was erected on what is now called Seminary Park, City of Bloomington, Perry Township, Monroe County.

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Bannister Harding, Indiana University, 1820-1904, Bloomington, Indiana, 1904, Page 2.

<sup>2</sup> James Albert Woodburn, History of Indiana University, Volume I, 1820-1902, Bloomington, Indiana, 1904, Page 4.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

In 1828, Indiana Seminary originally chartered as a preparatory school was made a College; by 1838, Indiana University was created. From the erection of the first building in 1824 until 1883, Indiana University remained on its original site. In 1854, a fire, perhaps of incendiary nature, destroyed the principal three-story building which was rebuilt aided by a subscription of \$10,000 collected from Bloomington and Monroe County residents. However, when on July 19, 1883, a second fire occurred destroying Science Hall (completed in 1873) containing the library and the famous Owen Cabinet, the trustees decided that the size of the property was no longer sufficient for the anticipated growth and the University was moved to its present location.

Despite the move of Indiana University campus there was no cessation of educational activities on the original seminary site. From the earliest days of the institution, college and university buildings on the site had housed the Preparatory Department established in 1830, facilities for Bloomington and Monroe County High School students and a Model School which was a grammar school for Bloomington boys conducted under the University's charter. In 1878, when James A. Woodburn was appointed second assistant in the Preparatory Department, it was then serving as a combined Bloomington High School for local students and as the University's Preparatory School for students from other parts of the state. According to Woodburn, "the university and the city each paid its share of the expenses."

In 1890, when the Preparatory Department was discontinued, the Old College building originally built after the 1854 fire still continued to serve local students as a high school. In 1897, the City of Bloomington finally purchased the site and building from the University. In 1914, because of rapid growth in enrollment the school board built a new brick high school east of the Old College building, and in 1927 a large brick gymnasium was erected facing Second Street near the railroad. In 1935-36, the third floor of the Old College building which had been unoccupied for many years was removed. The destruction of the upper floor also removed the distinctive Gothic gables, the many chimneys and the cupola. However, the now architecturally undistinguished old 1854 building continued to serve scores of Bloomington and Monroe County children as a junior high school until another fire in April, 1967 destroyed the High School building. Although the Old College building escaped destruction in this third fire on the site, it did not escape the wreckers' ball when the school board sold the original site to the City of Bloomington and moved the Bloomington High School to another location.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Now what remains of the original Seminary site belongs to the Department of Parks and Recreation, City of Bloomington. The site contains several fine old trees planted by earlier generations of high school students; artifacts of great value pertaining to the history of the local school which had been originally on the site are now in the possession of either the local school corporation or in safe storage with the Monroe County Historical Society waiting to be replaced on the site as a memorial to its past importance to the history of education in the State of Indiana and in Monroe County.

Although the site has been diminished in size, that which remains is the last remnant of the original grant made by that historic Act of 1816. This site was continually occupied by Indiana Seminary, College, and University until 1884; by the Indiana Preparatory School until 1890 and by the original Old College Building until 1967. In a memoir written in 1958 for a reunion of the Bloomington High School class of 1908, Arda Weir, its author, stated the feelings of generations of Bloomington high school students and many Indiana University alumni "... For we went to school on grounds and in a building such as no other high school in Indiana, and perhaps no other high school in the country, had ever had. From the beginning of their occupation by civilized man to this day, both campus and building have always been used for educational purposes."

In existence is an architect's rendering and a plan to mark the site with a series of limestone markers commemorating the historical significance of the site to the history of Indiana University and to Bloomington and Monroe County. All the large trees on the site will be preserved and additional landscape materials will be added.

CONTINUATION

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Weir, Arda, unpublished memoir for the 50-year reunion of the Bloomington High School class of 1908. Bloomington, Indiana, 1958.

Woodburn, James Albert, History of Indiana University, Volume I, 1820-1902. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1904.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Clark, Thomas Dionysius, Indiana University, Midwestern Pioneer.  
Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1970.

Harding, Samuel Bannister, Indiana University, 1802-1904.  
Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1904.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,6 5,4,1 2,0,0 4,3 3,4 5,6,0

ZONE EASTING

NORTHING

B 1,6 5,4,0 3,0,0 4,3 3,4 5,6,0

ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

C 1,6 5,4,0 3,0,0 4,3 3,4 5,0,0

D 1,6 5,4,1 2,0,0 4,3 3,4 5,0,0

ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Seminary Park area is bordered by South Walnut Street on the east, by East Second Street on the north, and by the extension of College Avenue on the west.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mary Alice Gray, Chairwoman

ORGANIZATION

Bloomington/Monroe County Bicentennial Commission

DATE

July 30, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1913 Sussex Drive

TELEPHONE

(812) 332-2877

CITY OR TOWN

Bloomington

STATE

Indiana

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

The following is a brief listing of outstanding graduates of Indiana University who were students during the period before 1884.

- 1) David Harvey Maxwell, 1786-1834. Father of Indiana University. Delegate to the 1816 Indiana Constitutional Convention; lobbyist for the bill to establish a state seminary in Bloomington; member of the Indiana House of Representatives and Senate; thirty year member of the Board of Trustees of Indiana College and University and twenty-eight year President of the Board.
- 2) Governor Joseph A. Wright, one of the first ten students admitted on opening day May, 1824. Served as a member of Indiana State Senate, Representative, United States Congress, 2 terms as Governor of Indiana, twice United States Minister to Prussia.
- 3) Walter Quintin Gresham, student in Indiana University "Prep" beginning in September, 1851; in the scientific course the next year; member of the Indiana General Assembly in 1861; United States district judge, 1869-1883; cabinet member under President Arthur, 1883-1884, first as postmaster-general and later as secretary of the Treasury; judge of the United States circuit court, 1884-1893; Secretary of State under President Cleveland, 1893-1895.
- 4) John Watson Foster, 1855 graduating class; United States minister, in succession, to Mexico, Russia, and Spain; special plenipotentiary, agent, commissioner on numerous important diplomatic assignments of an international character; Secretary of State, 1892-1893; "America's first professional diplomat," as he has been called, "he came nearer being an all-round diplomatic expert than any other living American," said an editorial writer of Foster's latter years.
- 5) Ida Husted Harper, student at Indiana University in 1869; journalist for the Terre Haute Evening Mail; managing editor of the Terre Haute Daily News for one year; did editorial work for the Indianapolis News for several years, Harper's Bazaar for four years; speaker and delegate to the various meetings of the International Council of Women and the International Woman Suffrage Alliance; co-author of first two volumes of Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony and author of three volumes of the History of Woman Suffrage in 1920, the year of the ratification of the twentieth amendment to the Constitution.