

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

9 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM

For Buildings and Structures

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:	SITE NO.:		
UTM: 18/	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

IDENTIFICATION

- 1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Willbur Fisk Hall Historic: same
- 2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: _____ COUNTY: Middlesex
- 3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 262 High Street
- 4. OWNER(S): Wesleyan University PUBLIC PRIVATE
- 5. USE: Present: Educational Historic: same
- 6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain classroom use no

DESCRIPTION

- 7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Academic Classicism DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1902 to 1904
- 8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):

<input type="checkbox"/> clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> asbestos siding	<input type="checkbox"/> brick
<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt siding	<input type="checkbox"/> fieldstone
<input type="checkbox"/> board & batten	<input type="checkbox"/> stucco	<input type="checkbox"/> cobblestone
<input type="checkbox"/> aluminum siding	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete: type: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cut stone: type: <u>brownstone ashlar:</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>metal cornice</u>		<u>walls smooth finished; foundation</u>
		<u>rock-faced</u>
- 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
 wood frame: post and beam balloon
 load bearing masonry structural iron or steel
 other: _____
- 10. ROOF: type:
 gable flat mansard monitor sawtooth
 gambrel shed hip round other _____
material:
 wood shingle roll asphalt tin slate
 asphalt shingle built up tile other: _____
- 11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 3 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 114'x65'
- 12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent good fair deteriorated
Exterior: excellent good fair deteriorated
- 13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site moved, when: _____
Alterations: no yes, explain: Rear fire escape added (1969-70); interior, ex-
- 14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES: tensively renovated; room size altered
 barn shed garage other landscape features or buildings: _____
 carriage house shop garden _____
- 15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: College campus
 open land woodland residential scattered buildings visible from site
 commercial industrial rural high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This classically detailed building, part of the Wesleyan University campus, is sited on High Street among elegant former residences and fraternity houses. Its utilitarian appearance, large size and dark brownstone walls distinguish Fisk Hall from the neighboring buildings. This contrast is emphasized by its corner site. Like the other structures on the east side of High Street, Fisk Hall is on a well landscaped lot that slopes to the rear.

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: Cady, Berg & See (N.Y.C.) Builder: William Mylchreest (Middletown)

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This large building was named in honor of Wilbur Fisk, Wesleyan University's first president. It was erected during an era of university expansion that began in the 1890's. The reputable firm of Cady, Berg and See designed this building. The firm also designed Wesleyan's Fayerweather Gynasium (1894) and many notable buildings in the New York area. Excavation was begun in 1902; the cornerstone and time capsule were laid in 1903 and the structure was dedicated in 1904. Upon completion, Middletown contractor William Mylchreest had erected Fisk Hall for less than its projected cost.

Plans for this classically designed and detailed structure were well received, and described by a contemporary as follows: "Exterior decorations are not numerous, but enough to break the monotony of a perfectly plain building, without detracting from its imposing simplicity. On either side of the main entrance are double columns of brownstone. The windows of the first floor are arched..." (Wesleyan Argus 12/17/02). It originally contained fourteen lecture rooms, ten private studies for professors, seven seminary rooms, and a "psychological lab." Fisk Hall is still primarily used for lecture room space. In 1974, the

(see continuation sheet)

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Elizabeth Loomis
date: 2/78 view: west
negative on file: Roll 12, #25

COMPILED BY:

name: Robert Svec date: 5/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; "Fisk Hall File," Wesleyan University Archives



20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

none known highways vandalism developers other: _____
 renewal private deterioration zoning explanation: _____

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Item number: 18 Date: 5/78

Willbur Fisk Hall
262 High Street, Middletown, Ct. 06457

university post office opened in the basement; shortly thereafter the Wesleyan College Store also moved to this location.

This structure with its ivy covered walls continues to contribute to the diverse collection of distinguished architecture on High Street.