

BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY _____

UNIQUE SITE NO. _____
QUAD _____
SERIES _____
NEG. NO. _____

YOUR NAME: Matt O'Brien
YOUR ADDRESS: 106 W. Sibley Hall, Ithaca, NY
ORGANIZATION (if any): Cornell University

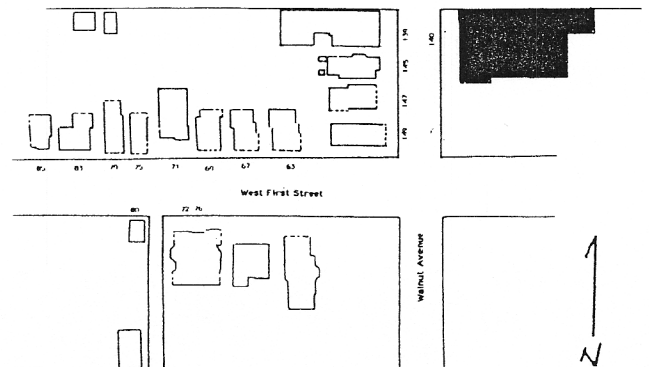
DATE: May 11, 1992
TELEPHONE: (607) 255-6851

IDENTIFICATION

- BUILDING NAME(S): Frank B. Hower Scottish Rite Cathedral
- COUNTY: Steuben TOWN/CITY: Corning VILLAGE:
- STREET LOCATION: 140 Walnut Street
- OWNERSHIP: a. public [] b. private [X]
- PRESENT OWNER: Corning Consistory ADDRESS: P O Box 24, Corning
- USE: Original: Masonic Temple Present: Masonic Temple
- ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes [X] No []
Interior accessible: Yes [x] No [] Explain:

DESCRIPTION

- BUILDING MATERIAL
a. clapboard [] b. stone [x] c. brick [x] d. board & batten []
e. cobblestone [] f. shingles [] g. stucco [] other:
- STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
a. wood frame with interlocking joints []
b. wood frame with light members []
c. masonry load bearing walls []
d. metal (explain) Structural Steel with masonry veneer.
e. other
- CONDITION: a. excellent [] b. good [x] c. fair [] d. deteriorated []
- INTEGRITY: a. original site [x] b. moved [] if so, when?
c. list major alterations and dates (if known):
- PHOTO:
- MAP:



14. THREATS TO BUILDING:

- a. none known b. zoning c. roads
d. developers e. deterioration
f. other:

15. RELATED OUT BUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:

- a. barn b. carriage house c. garage
d. privy e. shed f. greenhouse
g. shop h. gardens
i. landscape features
j. other:

16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (CHECK MORE THAN ONE IF NECESSARY)

- a. open land b. woodland
c. scattered buildings
d. densely built-up e. commercial
f. industrial g. residential
h. other:

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDINGS AND SURROUNDINGS:

(Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

See Continuation Sheet

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE:

(Including interior features if known):

See Continuation Sheet

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: 1919-1920

ARCHITECT:

BUILDER: Corning Building Company

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

See Continuation Sheet

21. SOURCES:

See Continuation Sheet

22. THEME:

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140 Walnut Street
Corning, New York

11. INTEGRITY

The Frank B. Hower Scottish Rite Cathedral was built in 1919-1920 by the Corning Building Company and has not changed significantly since then.

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS

The section of Walnut Street between the alley to the north of West First Street and West First Street itself has a total of six buildings, none of which are used as a primary residence by the owners of the properties. There are three social organizations, an orthodontist and a funeral home, among others, in this area. There is no consistent massing or style of building in this one block area of Walnut Street and the buildings on the west side of Walnut are overshadowed by the two larger buildings on the east side of Walnut Street.

Walnut Street is a busy thoroughfare that serves as a major arterial into the Southside neighborhood. On-street parking further divides Walnut Street into two unrelated halves, adding to the lack of identity in this neighborhood. One of the buildings on this side of the street dates from 1857 or earlier, unlike the other side of West First Street. Finally, there is a church in this row of residences that further detracts from the whole.

The Scottish Rite Cathedral is newer than the other buildings in this block of Walnut Street and significantly larger in mass than the buildings across the street. While it is similar in mass to the Elks Lodge next door, its setback more closely matches the residences on the west side of Walnut Street.

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE

The four story brick Scottish Rite Cathedral was built between 1919 and 1920 by the Corning Building Company. The building is an eclectic representation of the Exotic Revival style with Oriental or Moorish inspired ogee arches and quoin detailing on the two flanking tent-roofed tower forms. Its Walnut Street facade is characterized

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18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE, continued:

by a steeply pitched hipped roof and a row of prominent ocular windows along the length of the facade above the second floor.

In the center of the main facade there is a large elaborately carved stone panel with ogee arches and quatrefoils that frame the name of the building.

Sandstone detailing divides the facade horizontally and vertically into smaller areas. The second floor windows are linked together by a horizontal ribbon of sandstone and tie together the second floor windows into a single band.

The cathedral sits on a massive masonry block raised basement that has eight double-hung sash windows cut into it.

The roof is covered with black composition shingle roofing and there is an elaborate corbelling detail on the underside of the eave.

The brick detailing continues alongside the alley face where the building towers over the other buildings that face onto the alley. The 7000+ square foot footprint of the cathedral covers the entire width of the parcel and most of the length of it, too. There have been no subsequent additions or outbuildings built since 1921.

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

The Scottish Rite Cathedral was built on what was originally the site of the Charles C. B. Walker home. Mr. Walker was a prominent local and state politician in Corning who also was a partner in the prominent local construction firm of Walker and Lathrop. His widow, Margaret, lived at the home that was on this site until at least 1893 along with M. D. Walker, owner of a local sawmill on Market Street and his wife, Maria. This previous house had, itself, been enlarged between 1888 and 1893, based upon the view of the house shown on the 1882 Birdseye Map of Corning and the footprint shown on the 1857 Map of Corning.

The Masonic Order of Corning purchased the property from the Walker estate for

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20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE, continued:

the purpose of constructing a Scottish Rite cathedral on the site. The cathedral serves as a home for the local members of the Corning Masons and a location for consistory classes. There is no evidence in Corning history books or in Cornell's libraries concerning Frank B. Hower but it is speculated that he is the person who provided the gift that instigated the construction of the cathedral.

21. SOURCES:

Texts and Miscellaneous:

Boyd's Corning City Directories 1872-73, 1874-75.

Clayton, W. W. History of Steuben County, New York, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers. Philadelphia: Lewis, Peck and Company, 1879.

Corning Building Company. 100 Years in Corning: The Corning Building Company, 1848-1948, Corning (?): Cartwright and Sons, 1948.

Corning City Hall Tax Assessment Rolls.

Corning-Painted Post Historical Society photographic files.

Dimitroff, Thomas P. and Lois Janes. History of the Corning Painted Post Area: 200 Years in Painted Post Country. Corning: Corning Area Bicentennial Commission, 1977.

Hakes, Harlo. Landmarks of Steuben County, Syracuse: D. Mason and Company, 1896.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Adolph A. Knopf, 1990.

McMaster, Guy H. History of the Settlement of Steuben County, New York, Including Notices of the Old Pioneer Settlers and their Adventures. Bath, New York: R. S. Underhill and Company, 1853. (Reprint: Geneva: Humphrey Press, 1975).

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21. SOURCES, continued:

Roberts, Millard F. Historical Gazetteer of Steuben County, New York with
Memoirs and Illustrations, Syracuse: By the author, 1891.
(Reprinted in two parts by the Steuben County Historical
Society, 1979).

Maps and Directories:

Atlas of Steuben County, New York. M. Levy. Philadelphia: J. E. Gillette,
publisher, 1857.

City of Corning. Corning: Harry C. Heermans, City Engineer, 1893.

Fire Insurance Maps of Corning, New York 1888, 1893, 1898, 1903, 1908, 1913, 1921,
1930, 1948.

Steuben County directory. Syracuse: Hamilton Child, 1868-69.

View of Corning, New York, Looking Toward the South. Philadelphia:
Philadelphia Publishing House, C. J. Corbin, Field Manager,
1882.

140 Walnut

