

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Langdon Street Historic District

and or common N.A.

2. Location

street & number Various - See Map

not for publication

city, town Madison vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Dane code 025

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Various - See Continuation Pages

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number City-County Building

city, town Madison state WI

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title WI Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society

city, town Madison state WI

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>see text</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Langdon Street historic district is a highly dense, heavily populated, primarily student residential neighborhood located just east of the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. The district lies along four irregularly-sized blocks fronting Langdon Street between Lake Street and Wisconsin Avenue. Langdon Street is a heavily trafficked thoroughfare which has just been refurbished with widened concrete and brick sidewalks, new trees, and period light fixtures.

The density of the district makes its geography somewhat difficult to see at first glance, but Langdon Street lies at the high point of an east-west ridge. On upper Langdon Street (the eastern end), the land rises sharply from Lake Mendota to the street, then gradually lowers through neighboring residential areas toward Madison's business district. The steepness of the ridge diminishes through lower Langdon Street (the western end), to a level point at Lake Street, the district boundary. There is also a gradual incline from west to east along the street, and a wide curve in the 200 block keeps the street running parallel to the lake.

The district includes all the buildings fronting Langdon on both sides of the street between Lake Street and Wisconsin Avenue, and all the buildings filling in the area between Langdon Street and the lakefront. The district's high density means that almost all available land has been utilized for the buildings themselves, or for streets, alleys, or parking lots. What lawns there are, are generally small, although a large number of mature trees are interspersed throughout the district, left over from when the district had spacious, wooded lots accompanying the grand houses which fronted the street.

Despite the fact that streetscapes of similar buildings are rare in this district, there is a continuity of scale, building materials, and form among the contributing structures. Of the 113 total buildings in the district, most are three stories in height (73, or 65%). Only 16 (14%) are over three stories in height, and of these, 11 (61%) are post-1950 contemporary high-rise apartment buildings. Only 24 of the 113 buildings (21%) are two stories in height, and there are no single-story buildings, other than the four garages. Buildings which were constructed outside of the period of significance (after 1936) are all of brick construction except for one building which is almost totally concrete, and one building which has a stone veneer. Of the total 113 buildings in the district, 89 (79%) are contributing. Of the 89 contributing buildings, 41 (46%) are brick or brick-veneer, 41 (46%) are frame, and seven (8%) are stone buildings. Of the 41 frame buildings, 12 have been given a stucco exterior, and eight have aluminum or asbestos siding. All others are covered with clapboards. All of the non-contributing buildings in the district have flat roofs, but only 15 (17%) of the contributing buildings do. Other contributing buildings have either a gable roof (41, 46%), or a hip roof (33, 37%). These statistics illustrate the continuity of scale and form which exists in most of the district, and means that one building does not necessarily dominate any streetscape. Initially, the high percentage of non-contributing, contemporary buildings would seem to detract from the physical character of the district, but the high number and high quality of the period revival style details and the imposing nature of the older fraternity and sorority buildings makes these non-contributing buildings less intrusive than they might be in other areas. And, in the case of much of

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 1

the Langdon Street frontage, the contemporary buildings have the same height as their older neighbors, giving these streetscapes a continuity of scale, in spite of being the most eclectic combination of buildings in the district.

What gives this district its architectural character, then, is not necessarily the fact that the streetscapes are similar in age or style. The significance of this district lies in its high concentration of fine examples of period revival architecture, expressed not in single-family residences, but in large, collegiate rooming houses, primarily constructed for the social Greek letter societies affiliated with the University of Wisconsin between 1900 and 1930. In fact, of the 113 buildings in the district, 40 (35%) were constructed expressly for Greek letter societies. Further, of the 113 buildings in the district, 57 (50%) had social Greek letter societies as occupants at some time in the building's history. Many of the Greek houses constructed between 1900 and 1930 in the period revival styles were the work of some of Madison's most prolific and prominent architects. These elegant and prestigious houses were the culmination of the growth and popularity of social Greek letter societies between 1900 and 1930.

Along with the high concentration of period revival styles in the district, there are also a significant number of nineteenth century architectural styles, although they have almost all had some alterations or additions since their date of construction. Also, this district has a number of post-1900 architectural styles within its boundaries, including examples of the prairie and bungalow styles. The numerical breakdown of architectural styles in the district is as follows. There are 24 non-contributing, contemporary buildings in the district. Of the 89 contributing buildings, 40 (45%) are period revival styles, 17 (19%) are other post-1900 styles, 14 (16%) are Queen Anne, and 18 (20%) are other styles or a combination of styles. Of the four garages in the district, two are contributing.

Given the district's location within easy walking distance to the University of Wisconsin campus, and its large concentration of Greek houses, almost all the buildings if not originally constructed as apartment buildings have been subdivided into rooms or apartments and house primarily university students. Despite this high-density, the district does not have a deteriorated or run-down appearance, as found in other student neighborhoods in the community. The majority of the buildings in the district are well-maintained, and the Greek houses in particular have retained their architectural integrity, even after more than 50 years of use. Lake Mendota, bounding the district to the north, is a picturesque backdrop for many of the buildings. Even the alterations on the older buildings are of better quality than is usually seen in older residential/rental neighborhoods. Many of these alterations were done in the 1920s or 1930s, some of them designed by the same architects which were responsible for the period revival houses in the district.

The distinctive type of housing in the district, and the emphasis on post-1900 construction, sets this neighborhood apart from its surrounding built environment. There are large, institutional buildings of the University of Wisconsin campus bordering the western edge of the district, and a wide, intrusive street (Wisconsin

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic district, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 2

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Avenue), with open space and new construction beyond it, borders the district to the east. Lake Mendota, to the north, is an obvious boundary, and to the southwest of the district, bordering lower Langdon Street, are commercial buildings related to Madison's lower State Street business district. Upper Langdon Street, though, blends in with its surrounding neighborhood to a certain extent. And, up until after the turn of the century, both Langdon Street and its residential neighbors were part of a prestigious residential area, now referred to as "Mansion Hill." However, the effect of the growing University of Wisconsin was different on Langdon Street than on the rest of Mansion Hill. All the residential streets within walking distance to the university were stressed to some extent from students needing housing, but on Langdon Street, the influx of Greek letter societies and their new buildings significantly changed the nature of the street, hence its separation as a district apart from Mansion Hill. This phenomenon will be discussed in more detail in the significance section of this nomination. Suffice it to say here that the Langdon Street historic district is a significant architectural and historical entity within the City of Madison, and its physical appearance is the result of some unique historical forces which affected it during the period of significance.

BUILDING INVENTORY

There are 113 buildings in this district, plus four vacant lots (currently used for parking). Of the 113 buildings 89 (79%) are contributing, and 24 (21%) are non-contributing. There are four garages; two are contributing (50%) and two are non-contributing (50%). The following is a listing, by street number, of each element within the district along with its classification, historical name, and date of construction.

<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Classification</u>
616 N. Carroll St.	Kent Hall/residential	1963	Non-Contributing
620 N. Carroll St.	The Carrollon Apts/residential	1956	Non-Contributing
602 N. Frances St.	Ella Cochrane House/residence	1880	Contributing
613 N. Frances St.	Herman G. Kronke House	1875	Contributing
619 N. Frances St.	Craven Sisters House	1873	Contributing
621 N. Frances St.	Joseph Goodwin House	1882	Contributing
625 N. Frances St.	Kate & Cornelius Sullivan House	c.1890	Contributing
629 N. Frances St.	Frederick Jackson Turner House	1893	Contributing
630 N. Frances St.	Surfside Apartments/residential	1967	Non-Contributing
633 N. Frances St.	The French House/residential	1965	Non-Contributing
640 N. Frances St.	Delta Upsilon Fraternity House	1906	Contributing

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 3

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Inventory (continued)

<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Classification</u>
601 N. Henry St.	Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority House	1929	Contributing
610 N. Henry St.	Chi Phi Fraternity House	1928	Contributing
615 N. Henry St.	Chi Omega Sorority House	1911	Contributing
622 N. Henry St.	Willett E. & Jennie Main House	1903	Contributing
619 N. Henry St.	Spooner Apartments/residential	1911	Contributing
625 N. Henry St.	Sigma Nu Fraternity House	1916	Contributing
626 N. Henry St.	Dean John & Phoebe Johnson House	1902	Contributing
640 N. Henry St.	Alpha Delta Phi Fraternity House	1960	Non-Contributing
609 Howard Pl.	Ole Norseman House	1914	Contributing
612 Howard Pl.	The Langdon/residential apts.	1910	Contributing
613 Howard Pl.	Ole Norseman Rental House	1910	Contributing
615 Howard Pl.	Villa Maria	1925-26	Contributing
622 Howard Pl.	Mary Harnden House	1909	Contributing
632 Howard Pl.	Harry Curtis Multi-Unit House	1910	Contributing
635 Howard Pl.	W.A.P. Morris House	1901-01	Contributing
140 Iota Ct.	Cliff Dweller Apartments/res.	1973	Non-Contributing
145 Iota Ct.	Lakeview Batchelor Apts/res.	1913	Contributing
150 Iota Ct.	Chi Psi Fraternity House	1911-12	Contributing
609 N. Lake St.	J. Morgan Clements House	1896	Contributing
615 N. Lake St.	William Miller House	1898	Contributing
619 N. Lake St.	Alpha Sigma Phi Fraternity House	c.1909	Contributing
621 N. Lake St.	Kappa Sigma Fraternity House	1909	Contributing
627 N. Lake St.	Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity House	1925	Contributing
211 Lakelawn Pl.	Stanley Hanks Bungalow #1	1914	Contributing
215 Lakelawn Pl.	Stanley Hanks Bungalow #2	1914	Contributing
217 Lakelawn Pl.	Stanley Hanks Bungalow #3	1914	Contributing
219 Lakelawn Pl.	Stanley Hanks Bungalow #4	1914	Contributing
220 Lakelawn Pl.	Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority House	1924	Contributing
222 Lakelawn Pl.	Psi Upsilon Fraternity House	1913	Contributing
225 Lakelawn Pl.	Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity House	1914	Contributing
229 Lakelawn Pl.	Vacant Lot		Non-Contributing

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

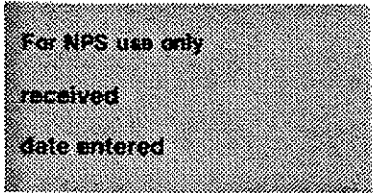
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 4



Inventory (continued)

<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Classification</u>
233 Lakelawn Pl.	Phi Kappa Sigma Fraternity House	1924	Contributing
237 Lakelawn Pl.	Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority House	1924-25	Contributing
240 Lakelawn Pl.	William Allen Rental House	1914	Contributing
244 Lakelawn Pl.	Katherine Allen Rental House	1915	Contributing
1 Langdon St.	Kennedy Manor	1929	Contributing
2 Langdon St.	Cassin Hayes House	1857 1907-major remodeling	Contributing
10 Langdon St.	Charles Morgan House	1900 1925-major remodeling	Contributing
12 Langdon St.	Alpha Xi Delta Sorority House	1924	Contributing
16 Langdon St.	Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity House	1927	Contributing
17 Langdon St.	Vacant Lot		Non-contributing
22 Langdon St.	Langdon Apartments	1972	Non-contributing
25 Langdon St.	Kate Sarles House	1910	Contributing
28 Langdon St.	Frank G. & Mary G. Brown House	1905	Contributing
29 Langdon St.	John E. & Olive Davies House	1874	Contributing
103 Langdon St.	Delta Gamma Sorority	1926	Contributing
104 Langdon St.	Romanzo Bunn House	1878-79	Contributing
108 Langdon St.	Acacia Fraternity House	1924	Contributing
112 Langdon St.	Apartment House	1966	Non-contributing
115 Langdon St.	Chi Omega Sorority House	1925-26	Contributing
120 Langdon St.	James and Flora Moseley/ Delta Sorority House	1874 1926-major remodeling	Contributing
121 Langdon St.	John J. Suhr House	1886-87	Contributing
124 Langdon St.	Kappa Sigma Fraternity House	1923-24	Contributing
126 Langdon St.	Royal Tower/private dormitory	1962	Non-contributing
127 Langdon St.	A. H. & Emma Main House	1892	Contributing
130 Langdon St.	Theta Xi Fraternity House	1929	Contributing
131 Langdon St.	John B. Winslow House	1893 1925-major remodeling 1943-major remodeling	Contributing

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

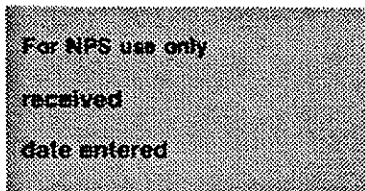
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 5



Inventory (continued)

<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Classification</u>
133 Langdon St.	Apartment House	1939	Non-contributing
135 Langdon St.	Harry B. Hobbins House	1895	Contributing
137 Langdon St.	Wm. McKee Two Unit Rental House	1910	Contributing
140 Langdon St.	Vacant Lot		Non-contributing
141 Langdon St.	Alpha Xi Delta Sorority House	1965	Non-contributing
142 Langdon St.	Delta Zeta Sorority House	1924	Contributing
144 Langdon St.	Theta Chi Fraternity House	1924-25	Contributing
146 Langdon St.	Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity House	1926-27	Contributing
148 Langdon St.	Vacant Lot		Non-contributing
150 Langdon St.	Halle Steensland House	1892 c.1927-moved	Contributing
152 Langdon St.	Alpha Chi Omega Sorority House	1927 1965-major addition (Non-contributing)	Contributing
201 Langdon St.	Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority House	1964	Non-contributing
210 Langdon St.	Congregational Church Parsonage (1st)	1875 1927-major remodeling 1964-major addition (Non-contributing)	Contributing
211 Langdon St.	Thomas E. Brittingham House (1st)	1895	Contributing
216 Langdon St.	Alpha Epsilon Phi Sorority House	1967	Non-contributing
221 Langdon St.	Sigma Chi Fraternity House	1964	Non-contributing
222 Langdon St.	Phi Mu Sorority House	1927	Contributing
227 Langdon St.	Thousand Apartments/residentail	1956	Non-contributing
228 Langdon St.	Lutheran Student Foundation	1948	Non-contributing
233 Langdon St.	Pi Beta Phi Sorority House	1912	Contributing
234 Langdon St.	Sloan-Ogilvie House	1875-76 1928-major remodeling	Contributing
237 Langdon St.	Joseph Jastrow House	1890-91 1909-major remodeling	Contributing
240 Langdon St.	Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity House	1964	Non-contributing
241 Langdon St.	Apartment House	1957	Non-contributing

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

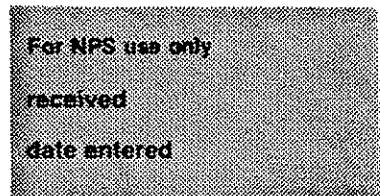
Page 6

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Inventory (continued)

<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Classification</u>
245 Langdon St.	Osborne Apartments	1961	Non-contributing
248 Langdon St.	Frank Ellsworth House	1902	Contributing
250 Langdon St.	Delta Gamma Sorority House	1906	Contributing
251 Langdon St.	Thomas Reynolds House	1875	Contributing 1894-major remodeling
252 Langdon St.	Kappa Delta Sorority House	1927	Contributing
257 Langdon St.	Gamma Phi Beta Sorority House	1900-01	Contributing
260 Langdon St.	Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity House	1925	Contributing
265 Langdon St.	Ann Emery Hall	1930	Contributing
270 Langdon St.	Gamma Phi Beta Sorority House	1926-27	Contributing
601 Langdon St.	Madison Inn/hotel	1960	Non-contributing
610 Langdon St.	Lowell Hall/offices, dormitory	1960	Non-contributing
611 Langdon St.	Bnai Brith Hillel Foundation	1955	Non-contributing
614 Langdon St.	Beta Theta Pi Fraternity House	1889	Contributing
618 Langdon St.	Frawley Apartment House	1898-99	Contributing
619 Langdon St.	E. T. Owen Rental House	1890	Contributing
625 Langdon St.	Nancy Brass House	1889	Contributing
626 Langdon St.	The Roundhouse Apartments	1969	Non-contributing
633 Langdon St.	Langdon Hall	1930	Contributing
636 Langdon St.	Alpha Omicron Pi Sorority House	1928	Contributing
616 Mendota Ct.	Delta Tau Delta Fraternity House	1911	Contributing
619 Mendota Ct.	Phyllis Frawley Building	1893-95	Contributing
622 Mendota Ct.	Beta Theta Pi Fraternity House	1925	Contributing
625 Mendota Ct.	Frawley Apartments	1905	Contributing
627 Mendota Ct.	Mendota Towers	1912	Contributing
661 Mendota Ct.	The Surf Apartments	1968	Non-contributing

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**



**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 7

DESCRIPTION OF SELECTED CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS IN THE DISTRICT

As a group, the most outstanding architectural elements in the Langdon Street historic district are the post-1900 period revival buildings which were primarily constructed for social Greek letter societies at the University of Wisconsin. But, the district also has good examples of other architectural styles, from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Many of the older houses have been altered, and sometimes several layers of remodeling and additions hide the original architecture. Both the outstanding and other interesting contributing buildings in the district will be discussed, grouped in appropriate style categories so that individual buildings may be evaluated individually and in comparison with others in their group.

Italianate

29 Langdon St. John E. & Olive Davies house¹ 1874²

Although altered, the John E. & Olive Davies house is the best extant example of the Italianate style in the district. It features the low-pitched intersecting gable roof with paired brackets supporting wide eaves typical of many interpretations of the style. The house also features some tall, narrow windows on the brick and stucco facade. The heavy porches with classical columns and tile hipped roofs are probably later additions, as are the Palladian window and dormers. John E. Davies was a prominent nineteenth century physics professor at the University of Wisconsin, one of the first to conduct the outstanding level of research which was soon to emerge at the university.

234 Langdon St. Sloan-Ogilvie house 1875-76

This two-story brick house has a square main block with low-pitched hipped roof and now-enclosed cupola. There are tall, narrow windows with wooden cornices and decorative shutters punctuating the facades of the house. The house also has some newer alterations such as the one-story curved entrance portico and side one-story addition.

French Second Empire

121 Langdon Street John J. Suhr house 1886

The Suhr house is the best example of a nineteenth century residence still extant in this district. It is a relatively intact example of the French second empire style, built by local architect John Nader for John J. Suhr, Sr.³ After John J. Suhr, Sr. died, the house was home to John J. Suhr, Jr. until his death in 1956. The Suhrs were prominent bankers, John Sr. having founded the German-American Bank in 1871. This bank is still in existence today, as the American Exchange Bank. Suhr Jr. took over his father's banking position and was active in the bank until his death. Constructed of cream brick, the house has a mansard roof, a tower projection topped with cresting which extends above the roofline, and wide eaves with paired brackets. There is an arched, hooded dormer and a round window decorating the plain mansard roof. The wide classical veranda is a later addition,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI Item number 7 Page 8

and features columns with Roman Ionic capitals, a turned post balustrade, and a matching entrance frontispiece. A c. 1914 photo shows an upper porch balustrade which has been removed. The photo also shows that there have been few other exterior changes to this house over the years.

104 Langdon St. Romanzo Bunn house 1878-79

The French second empire style house was built for Romanzo Bunn, a jurist and law professor. It is a cream brick structure with the style's trademark mansard roof. Several dormers project from the roof and have elliptically arched roofs, matching the segmental pediments of the central tower and corner bay roofs. The wide eaves of the roof have modillions and a decorated brick course running under the frieze imitating dentils. An identical belt course runs between the first and second stories of the house. Windows have carved stone lintels and the corner box bay projection has a stone cornice. A later classical veranda, part of which is enclosed, has recently been restored. Despite some lack of maintenance by previous owners, the Bunn house has retained much of its nineteenth century appearance.

Queen Anne

127 Langdon St. Alexander H. & Emma Main house 1892

This house is a very well-preserved example of the Queen Anne style with a shingle style influence. Built for prominent insurance businessman Alexander H. Main, the house has its original clapboards, an intersecting gable and gambrel roof with shingles in the gables and a large two-story projecting bay window. There is also a double leaded glass window in a projecting second story central box bay, and a semi-circular carved sunburst decoration over the three grouped attic windows on the front facade, simulating a Palladian window. The original front remains intact.

615 N. Lake St. William Miller house 1898

This house is one of several in the district which display Tudor revival details on a basically Queen Anne form. It has steeply-pitched gables and dormers, much more steeply-pitched than usual Queen Anne houses. It also has a clapboard first floor and a stucco-covered second floor. Although some decorative details have been stripped from this house, it is essentially intact.

137 Langdon St. William McKee Two Unit Rental House 1910
Remodeled 1936

This house has the Queen Anne form featuring an intersecting gable roof and bay projections, but has a stucco exterior on the attic floor and steeply-pitched gables not typical of many Queen Anne houses. Of particular interest on the front facade are the decorative crenellations on the attic story bay window, the original classical balustrades and square porch piers decorated with geometric appliques. The general configuration of the house was used throughout Madison in the early 1900s. What distinguishes this house is its intact exterior appearance and the eclectic combination of revival and modern architectural details.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 9

237 Langdon St. Joseph Jastrow house 1890-91
Remodeled 1909⁴

Alterations, probably from c. 1909, give this house an unusual, eclectic appearance. The three-story house has a stucco exterior, front projecting two-story tower and full front porch. An unusual central dormer with three sets of paired arched windows projects from a low-pitched hipped roof. According to a reprint of a 1909 House Beautiful article, Jastrow, a noted psychology professor at the University of Wisconsin, remodeled the third floor into a modern apartment for him and his wife. At the same time he converted the first and second floors into rental apartments.

211 Langdon St. Thomas E. Brittingham house (1) 1895

The first house built in the district for prominent businessman Thomas E. Brittingham has a steeply-pitched front gable roof with paired projecting gable dormers on the side facade, and a shallow shed dormer in the center of the front facade. The large gable is shingled and has a diamond decoration above the front dormer. A photo in the 1902 Chicago Architectural Club's exhibition pamphlet shows this house to be the work of Robert C. Spencer of Chicago. This house was one of his designs before his emersion into the Prairie School.

632 Howard Pl. Harry Curtis multi-unit rental house 1910

This house has a completely stucco-covered exterior and many steeply-pitched gables with half-timbering and a plain bargeboard; details which suggest the Tudor revival style. The front of the house features a two-story hexagonal bay with a flat roof. Curtis constructed the house as a multi-flat building. It was owned and partially occupied for the longest duration during the period of significance by Louise Kellogg, a noted historian at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

621 N. Lake St. Kappa Sigma fraternity house 1909

This house also suggests the Tudor revival style with stucco walls, steeply-pitched gables and wide eaves, and exposed rafters. But its form and details such as a bay and Palladian window place it in the Queen Anne category. The massive stone porch almost overpowers the facade, but gives the house a "castle-like" effect in keeping with the emphasis on Tudor revival details.

609 N. Lake St. J. Morgan Clements house 1896

This is a relatively plain Queen Anne house which features a tall front gable projecting from the hipped roof. There is a pointed arch reveal with an ornately carved railing in front of two inset windows. J. Morgan Clements, a university professor, constructed this house with its close access to the university campus.

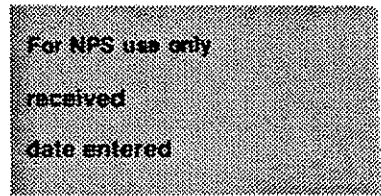
621 N. Frances St. Joseph Goodwin house 1882

This is one of several houses which illustrate how the usually rambling Queen Anne house was scaled down to fit the relatively narrow, urban lots found in this district after 1890. The Queen Anne details of the house include a tri-level hipped roof with a pediment at the peak of the hip, a decorated pedimented gable at the corner of the roof, and a dormer projecting from a lower portion of the roof.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,



Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI Item number 7 Page 10

625 N. Frances St. Kate and Cornelius Sullivan house c.1890

This house was also designed to fit a narrow lot and its Queen Anne details include a hipped and gable roof, decorative shingling in the gables, and a carved panel in the peak of the front pedimented gable. The square corner tower of this house has a steep hipped roof with a carved panel pediment, denticulated belt courses, and a high cut-stone foundation. The front porch has been enclosed and the roofline altered to add more living space in the attic.

629 Frances St. Frederick Jackson Turner house 1893

Built for the noted history professor and scholar Frederick Jackson Turner, this house has a generally Queen Anne form, a large front gable with returned eaves, a tower tucked at the intersection of the roofline, and a two-story hexagonal porch projection facing Lake Mendota to the north of the house. Aluminum siding has covered up the other details of the house, and the porches have been removed, detracting from the architectural character of this house.

150 Langdon St. Halle Steensland house 1892
Moved c.1927⁵

Some unfortunate alterations have diminished the grandness of this Queen Anne house, which was moved back to this location from a lot fronting the street around 1927. As shown in a historic photograph, and discussed in a newspaper article, the house originally had a central square tower and a lovely Queen Anne veranda. These details have been removed, but other features of the house illustrate classical elements of the Queen Anne style. There are pedimented, projecting gables with Palladian or Palladian-like windows and arched, hooded openings and cornices. There are several elliptically arched windows with stained glass transoms on the facades of the house. Designed for prominent businessman, Halle Steensland, by local architects Gordon & Paunack, this building was Steensland's home only until 1896, when he built a larger, but somewhat similar brick Queen Anne home on Carroll St.

614 Langdon St. Beta Theta Pi fraternity house 1889

Despite its false stone siding, this house has several typical Queen Anne details. The hipped roof with projecting gable and corner "onion"-domed turret add asymmetry to what is basically a square form. An historic photo shows this house to have had a shingled exterior, and like the inappropriate alterations of the Steensland house, the obtrusive siding greatly detracts from the beauty of this once-lovely house. Unlike most other nineteenth century houses in this district, the house was originally occupied by a fraternity--Beta Theta Pi--and has been in and out of fraternity hands until the present time.

Prairie Style

613 Howard Pl. Ole Norseman rental house 1910
609 Howard Pl. Ole Norseman house 1914

These fairly intact houses are nearly identical and were both constructed for long-time city clerk Ole Norseman. They both have hipped roofs, central dormers,

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 11

For NPS use only

received

date entered

wide flared eaves, stucco exteriors, belt courses, and some applied vertical half-timber. The house that Norseman rented out, then sold, at 613 Howard Pl., has its original multi-paned windows, mostly in groups, and a small corner entry porch with hipped roof, wide eaves, and stucco piers. The Norseman house at 609 Howard Pl. has a front bay window, a side box bay, and a corner porch with stucco walls, large piers, and a hipped roof with wide eaves.

615 N. Henry St. Chi Omega sorority house 1911

This three-story house is an example of a modest prairie house. It has a low-pitched hipped roof with dormer, wide eaves, and a stucco exterior. Some multi-paned windows remain, but the "ribbon-like" banks of casement windows shown in an historic photo, have, unfortunately, been removed. But the segmentally-arched entrance hood with massive double brackets, the arched entrance, and the brick veneer foundation of the original house still remain on the building's front facade. The nearby Sigma Nu fraternity house (625 N. Henry St., 1916) is similar in form and style to this house.

Bungalow

211 Lakelawn Pl.	Stanley Hanks Bungalow #1	1914
215 Lakelawn Pl.	Stanley Hanks Bungalow #2	1914
217 Lakelawn Pl.	Stanley Hanks Bungalow #3	1914
219 Lakelawn Pl.	Stanley Hanks Bungalow #4	1914

These four bungalows, sitting along a small extension of Lakelawn Pl. are all similar, but not entirely identical. They were all built in 1914 by attorney and prominent realtor Stanley Hanks. Each bungalow is 1½ stories in height with a gable roof extending down to the porch piers. Two houses have gable dormers (215 and 217) and two have shed dormers with two sets of paired multi-paned windows (211 and 219). Siding is generally wide clapboards, but 217 and 211 have shingles in their gables. Bungalow #1 (211) is the most attractive because of the classical porch columns and balustrade, as opposed to the square piers and simpler railings of the other three bungalows, and because it has the least exterior alterations of the group.

622 Howard Pl. Mary Harnden house 1909

This large bungalow has a wide sloping gable roof and a large central shed dormer. The dormer and gable ends have a stucco exterior while the first floor is covered with clapboards. A full front porch with brick piers supports a roof with wide eaves and exposed rafter ends.

Period Revival Styles

Spanish Colonial/Mediterranean Revival

622 Mendota Court	Beta Theta Pi fraternity house	1925
237 Lakelawn Pl.	Kappa Alpha Theta sorority house	1924-25
108 Langdon St.	Acacia fraternity house	1924
270 Langdon St.	Gamma Phi Beta sorority house	1926-27
146 Langdon St.	Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity house	1926-27

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

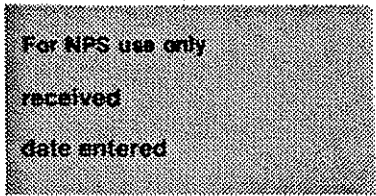
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 12



All of these large houses were constructed in the mid-1920s for social Greek letter societies as chapter houses. They are all high-style examples of the Mediterranean revival style. Common elements include tile roofs, arched and multi-paned windows, multiple arched entrances, and decorative grillwork. Four of the buildings are constructed of brown brick, and three of these same buildings have large square towers and/or projecting gables. Each building, though, has special individual qualities reflecting the architect's interpretation of the style and how it fit the needs of the client. For example, even though 108 Langdon St., 237 Lakelawn Pl., and 622 Mendota Ct. were all designed between 1924 and 1925 by Madison architects Law (James) and Law (Edward), each building is a different interpretation of the style. The old Acacia fraternity house (108 Langdon St.) is a compact, square block with small side wings and a large, sloping rear wing. The entry has three arches with simple round columns. The old Kappa Alpha Theta sorority house (237 Lakelawn Pl.) is a white stucco rectangular building with slightly projecting wings on each end. It features arched openings on the first floor and decorative grillwork balconies covering French doors on the facade. The Beta Theta Pi fraternity house at 622 Mendota Ct. is a rectangle with a raised tower at the northwest corner. The front of the building faces the lake and has a triple arched entryway. The rear facade has a gable section at the southeast corner, and an arched enclosed rear entry. Designed by local architect, Frank Riley, the Gamma Phi Beta sorority house (270 Langdon St.) is a large rectangle with a projecting arched entry, large corner square tower, and projecting gable sections. There are some classical stone pediments decorating first floor windows. An interesting third floor corner has French doors decorated by grillwork supported by very large brackets. The old Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity house (146 Langdon St.) is also a rectangle with a large square tower. An interesting castle-like detail on the west facade imitates a medieval wall with tower. The entrance has a stone segmental arched surround with a balcony and pent roof over the doorway. Clarence Shepard, of Kansas City, designed this building, which is now co-op housing.

615 Howard Pl.

Villa Maria

1925-26

Designed by Frank Riley, this apartment building is more Spanish colonial revival than Mediterranean. It has stucco walls and small, irregularly placed and irregularly sized windows along the large, plain walls. There is a row of wall dormers at the attic story, several groups of arched windows of varying sizes, some grillwork, and a square tower set into the corner of the building's L-plan. There is a large segmental stone arch with a three-part keystone surrounding the entrance. The stone arch matches the piers of the front landing which has grillwork as a balustrade. A first floor annex connects this building with its neighbor, 635 Howard Pl. and has a drive-through accented with a brick segmental arch with an identical three-part keystone as that which accents the front entrance. This building was constructed as a private rooming house/dormitory, and is now used as an apartment building.

Tudor/Elizabethan Revival

150 Iota Ct.

Chi Psi fraternity house

1911-12

This building is one of several Greek chapter houses in this stylistic category which shows the significant influence of English Medieval-Renaissance architecture.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 13

In fact, architectural historian, Marcus Whiffen, refers to these buildings as Jacobethan, meaning having an influence from both the Jacobean and Elizabethan period in English history. The Chi Psi house, one of the earlier chapter houses constructed in a revival style in the district, is constructed of irregularly coursed, rough-finished, local sandstone. It features the characteristic parapeted gables, grouped casement windows with transoms, and medieval castle-like quality found in this "Jacobethan" style. The simple and monumental effect of this design is quite elegant, while the quality of materials and construction of the building enhances its appearance.

16 Langdon St. Phi Gamma Delta fraternity house 1927

This house appears to be a modest English cottage from the street, however, a three-story sloping rear section of the building extends down toward Lake Mendota. Designed by Law, Law, and Potter, the building is constructed of rough limestone and has the steeply-pitched gable ends, casement windows with tabbed stone surrounds, and flat roof with battlements characteristic of the Tudor revival style. The entrance features a large drip molding, and there is a low, projecting tower section on the east front facade.

610 N. Henry St. Chi Phi fraternity house 1928

Another chapter house designed by Law, Law, and Potter, this rough limestone building features a front facade with overlapping steeply-pitched gables; an entry porch with stone arch, stone buttresses, and rough-hewn wooden piers; and a large bank of multi-paned windows with a stone tabbed surround. The east facade has openings with stone label moldings, tabbed surrounds, and a parapet gable highlighting the Henry Street entrance.

222 Langdon St. Phi Mu sorority house 1927

The Delta Upsilon house is a compact but pleasant interpretation of the Tudor revival style. Designed by Jennings and Kronenberg, this three-story brick building has parapeted end gables topped with large chimneys, and three shaped parapeted gables on the rear and front facades. Doors and windows are accented with cast stone label moldings which cover groups of windows either together or slightly separated.

12 Langdon St. Alpha Xi Delta sorority house 1924

This smaller and less elaborately-detailed Tudor revival chapter house, designed by James and Edward Law sits back from the street, between 10 and 16 Langdon. The brick building has steeply-pitched gables, a tower entry section on the west facade with buttresses, battlements and an elaborate label molding and tabbed surround highlighting the entry. It has a resemblance to, on a much smaller scale, 222 Langdon, which the Law brothers designed later with Potter.

252 Langdon St. Kappa Delta sorority house 1927

Another smaller and simpler Tudor revival house is the Kappa Delta sorority house, designed by Madison architect Myron Pugh. The building, constructed in three sections, has a brick exterior covering the front section, and a stucco and half-timber exterior covering the middle and rear sections. The front section features a steeply-pitched, sloping gable; a two story bank of windows with stone label molding; and an entrance decorated with a stone label molding.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet

Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 14

For NPS use only

received

date entered

622 N. Henry St. Willett E. & Jennie Main House 1903

The "Jacobethan" brick house, built for insurance businessman Willett E. Main illustrates how the English medieval style was used earlier in the twentieth century. The architect is unknown, but the house features overlapping and parapeted gables, a large chimney with corbelled cap, flat arches over openings, and a Craftsman style porch.

250 Langdon St. Delta Gamma sorority house 1906

The Delta Gamma sorority house is one of two buildings which illustrate the half-timber version of the Tudor revival style. It has a first floor of brick and a slightly overhanging second and third floor of pseudo-half-timber. The side facade has overlapping steeply-pitched gables, and there are steeply-pitched gable dormers on the front facade.

619 N. Lake St. Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity house c. 1909

This house also illustrates the half-timber interpretation of the Tudor revival style. It has a brick first story and porch, a half-timber second and third story with steeply-pitched gables, and dormers projecting from the hipped roof.

265 Langdon St. Ann Emery Hall 1930

The influence of the Tudor revival style in this district even extended to this very large women's residence hall, designed by Frank Moulton. The front section of the tan brick building has parapet gable ends and parapet gables projecting from the roof on the front facade. This facade also has stuccoed areas with a brick half-timber effect. Some of the windows have hood molds and tabbed surrounds, as well.

Colonial and Georgian Revivals

144 Langdon St. Theta Chi fraternity house 1924-25

Dominated by a large central entry pavilion, this red brick chapter house, along with several others in the district, illustrate the architectural details of the Georgian revival style. On this house, the entry pavilion has a pedimented roofline and a bracketed balconet over the simple main doorway. The house also features pilasters on the corners and the surface of the entry pavilion.

124 Langdon St. Kappa Sigma fraternity house 1923-24

Designed by Frank Riley, this elegant seven-bay chapter house also features a pedimented Georgian revival entry pavilion with a Doric lintel and columns on the doorway. The gable-roofed red brick building also features eight-over-eight windows and brick quoins on the entry pavilion. A majestic veranda with two story columns graces the lake-side facade.

233 Lakelawn Pl. Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity house 1924

Also designed by Frank Riley, this Georgia revival chapter house has a central entry pavilion with pediment and decorative doorway. The doorway has a stone surround and a segmental pediment. The building is red brick, has eight-over-eight windows,

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 15

For NPS use only

received

date entered

and features brick quoins on the central entry pavilion, and simple brick parapets hiding the roof. The Delta Zeta house (142 Langdon St., 1924) is similar in appearance to this building.

220 Lakelawn Pl. Alpha Gamma Delta sorority house 1924

This three-story, red brick chapter house was designed by the Madison firm of Balch and Lippert. It has a parapet roof defined by a prominent cornice, projecting symmetrical wings, stone quoins, arched windows with keystones and elaborate hoods on the third story front facade windows in each wing. The unusual roofline looks almost like a brick mansard, giving the building an air of French refinement.

225 Lakelawn Pl. Alpha Tau Omega fraternity house 1914

This two-story former fraternity house has both Craftsman and classical details expressed in its design. An overall symmetry, along with stone belt courses and stone keystone jack arches give the building a classical look. But there are also Craftsman details such as dormers, wide eaves, and exposed rafters accenting this building.

152 Langdon St. Alpha Chi Omega sorority house 1927/1965

This sorority house is composed of two sections. The north wing was constructed in 1927 and features a wooden frieze and belt course, six over six light sash windows, brick lintels with stone keystones and parapeted gable end which are interrupted by large brick chimneys. The west wing was constructed in 1965 with similar, but not identical classical details, and is non-contributing. The wings are visually linked by two identical two-story wooden porches on each of the wings' front facade. These porches have thin square columns and balustrades with geometric designs.

260 Langdon St. Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity house 1925

This three-story red brick building has a hipped roof, massive front chimney, and belt course between the second and third floors. The front entrance is dominated by a two-story, round portico with round columns topped with Roman Ionic capitals.

616 Mendota Ct. Delta Tau Delta fraternity house 1911

The Delta Tau Delta fraternity house is an unusual interpretation of the Colonial revival style. The three-story building has a mansard type roof and numerous projecting dormers with pronounced cornices. The end walls of the stone building have parapets, a cornice with modillions, and there is an entrance pavillion with a frieze and cornice.

233 Langdon St. Pi Beta Phi sorority house 1912

This stately three-story brick building displays classical details including a cornice topped with a roof balustrade, flat arches with keystones, and a classical entry pavillion with columns, Roman Ionic capitals topped with frieze and cornice. The second floor windows flanking a central sash window with sidelights are decorated with baloonets.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 16

For NPS use only
received
date entered

28 Langdon St. Frank G. & Mary G. Brown house 1905

This early version of the colonial revival style features an intersecting gable roof with a denticulated cornice and returned eaves. Gable roofed dormers project from the intersection of the roof and there is an elliptically-arched attic window in the peak of the front gable. A brick belt course runs between the second and third floors and there are brick quoins at the corners of the building. There is a square wooden entry porch to the left of the front facade of the building. It features round columns with Roman Ionic capitals, a frieze, and cornice topped with a balustrade. In the rear is a larger porch which takes visual advantage of the sloping lot which runs to the shore of Lake Mendota. Built in 1905 for financier and businessman Frank G. Brown, the building became the Alpha Phi sorority house in 1927.

120 Langdon St. James & Flora Moseley/
Delta Delta Delta sorority house 1874/1926

This sorority house is a 1926 remodeling of the 1874 Moseley house by Madison architect Frank Riley. Riley altered the 1874 Italianate house into a classical chapter house for Delta Delta Delta. It features a parapet roof defined by a prominent cornice. The small two-story entry pavilion has brick quoins and a doorway with sidelights, an elliptical fanlight, and a shallow porch with round columns topped by Roman Ionic capitals and simple entablature topped with a wrought iron balconet. The house is currently painted white.

103 Langdon St. Delta Gamma sorority house 1926

This stone building illustrates a more informal interpretation of the colonial revival style, and resembles a large Pennsylvania farmhouse. Although of three stories, it has a long, low appearance, with steeply-pitched gable roof, gable dormers, multi-paned windows, and massive chimneys. In 1926, Frank Riley designed this building for Delta Gamma sorority, who have maintained ownership ever since.

1 Langdon St. Kennedy Manor 1929

This large, functional apartment building was designed by Flad and Moulton of Madison, and has classical details. The building has a parapet roof defined by stone cornices. The parapet has several carved stone panels, and there is a stone belt course under the windows of the fifth floor. The building also has brick quoins, a stone water table, and stone hood molds decorating first floor windows. The entrances are simple classical frontispieces. On the Wisconsin Avenue entrance, the frontispiece has a broken pediment, double flanking pilasters, and a large fanlight topping the double doors. The Langdon Street entrance frontispiece is similar but the pilasters are divided by sidelights. A large fanlight tops this entrance as well.

Other Interesting Contributing Buildings

115 Langdon St. Chi Omega sorority house 1925-26

Dominating its streetscape, the Chi Omega sorority house is the most outstanding design in this category and, perhaps, in the district. Designed by Frank Riley, the building is a tall, elegant structure highlighted by the unusual decorative

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 17

Dutch parapeted gables on both the end walls, the similarly roofed dormers, and the overlapping front gable. Other details include brick quoins, stone trim, brick piers on the front facade topped with stone caps, two large arched French doors with transoms, and stone arches with keystones. The one-story entry pavilion has a round-arched pediment with stone cornice, frieze, pilasters, and there are stone-trimmed oval windows flanking the entrance. Two massive chimneys rise up the east facade between Dutch gabled dormers.

636 Langdon St. Alpha Omicron Pi sorority house 1928

This chateausque building was designed by Law, Law, and Potter and has a steeply-pitched hipped roof, steeply-pitched hipped roofs on dormers and a southeast tower tucked into an "L"-shaped corner. There are stone quoins on both corners of the main block, and also on the hexagonal tower. The northeast projection has a pseudo-half-timber facade overhanging the first story. Pseudo-half-timber is also used in the attic story of the tower. There are carved stone panels under the third floor windows, and there is also a hoodmold with ogee arch trim decorating the tower entrance. One of the finest and most unusual buildings in the district, this structure is currently in an unfortunate state of disrepair.

601 N. Henry St. Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority house 1929

An unusual stone building is the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority house, designed by Frank Riley and built in 1929. Constructed of rough stone, it features many dormers, round-arched windows on the first floor, a steeply-pitched gable roof, bay windows, and stepped gables on the front facade.

222 Lakelawn Pl. Psi Upsilon fraternity house 1913

This building, of smooth ashlar on the first floor, and stucco on the second and third floors has a low-pitched hipped roof, stone quoins, and a modillioned cornice. The entry pavilion has a simple doorway of pilasters, entablature, and segmental pediment. The top of the pavilion has a pedimented gable. This building, because of its ashlar surface and classical details, has almost a renaissance revival appearance, more formal than many of the other chapter houses in the district.

633 Langdon St. Langdon Hall 1930

Langdon Hall, designed by Flad and Moulton, is rectangular in shape with the attic story and the parapet roof defined by stone belt courses above and below the top story windows. There are a set of six carved stone panels symmetrically placed on the front parapet. There is also a pronounced cornice line under the top floor windows, defining a very shallow entry pavilion. Windows are paired and have flat arches and keystones, and there are large brick quoins at the corners of this building. Dominating the front facade is the elaborate frontispiece of the entrance, extending two stories in height and covering two large windows on each side of the entrance. The actual frontispiece is a large carved stone panel with a cornice, scroll bracket, and urn. The arched doorway is flanked by stone carvings, and the large arched windows to the side of the entrance are decorated with segmental stone arches and keystones.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,
Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 18

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES OF THE DISTRICT.

There are four vacant lots in this district. Two (148 Langdon St., and 229 Lakelawn Pl.) were always vacant; and two (140 Langdon St., and 17 Langdon St.) were created when existing buildings were razed.

The 24 non-contributing buildings are all structures built after the period of significance. They range in height from the three and four story contemporary apartment buildings fronting Langdon Street, to the high-rise, 13-story Surf Apartments at 661 Mendota Ct. They range in size from the relatively small apartment buildings in the 200 block of Langdon Street, to the large complexes at 22, 126 and 610 Langdon Street. The style of most of these buildings is post-World War II functional contemporary. But there are a few buildings which deserve mention. The B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation building at 611 Langdon St. (1955) is a long, low glass and metal building with a prominent fieldstone wall fronting the street. Constructed in 1964, the Sigma Chi fraternity house at 221 Langdon St. is a concrete and glass building with a wide, overhanging flat roof, and a T-plan. The French House at 633 N. Frances St. (1965) is a long, low brick and concrete structure that has a Wrightian quality to its form. Its appearance is much more contemporary than its date of construction indicates. Probably the most unusual building in the district is the Roundhouse Apartments (1969) at 626 Langdon St. This 12-story brick building has the appearance of a round building, but is actually constructed of 12 alternating brick and glazed walls. It has a raised concrete roof, supported by concrete piers. There are also two major non-contributing additions to older buildings in the district. At 210 Langdon St., there is a front addition attached to a Tudorized Victorian house. At 152 Langdon St., the 1965 west wing of this sorority building is an almost exact replica of the original north wing, constructed 40 years earlier, but due to its later construction date, it is non-contributing.

Even though there is a fairly high percentage of non-contributing structures in the district, and although many of them are quite large, the number and high quality of the period revival styles along with many of the still-extant nineteenth century houses make the non-contributing buildings less intrusive than they might be in other areas. The period revival chapter houses of the social Greek letter societies are so imposing, and have such a strong architectural character, that the modern buildings do not overly detract from the significance of this district.

Note regarding interiors: Because of the size of this nomination, a systematic survey of interiors was beyond the resources of the project. No doubt several of the interiors of buildings, particularly the period revival chapter houses, are significant, however, a discussion of significant interiors was not included because of the limitations stated above.

Notes:

¹Occupants and owners of buildings in the district were gathered from building permits located in the planning department of the city of Madison, city directories

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 19

which were located in the library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; and city tax rolls, located both in the planning department and the archives of the State Historical Society.

²All dates of construction of buildings within this district were determined by analyzing tax rolls, city directories, and plat and Sanborn-Perris maps (maps located in the archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison). Some dates were confirmed by citations in newspaper stories. Dates without c. indicate that all sources confirmed the date of construction. C. dates mean that sources were inconclusive or contradictory, and a single year could not be pinpointed, therefore, a date was determined as accurately as possible from all available information, but may err by several years.

³Information on architects was generally gathered from building permits or by local newspaper accounts, as well as the architects' files located in the historic preservation planner's office of the city of Madison.

⁴"Fabulous 'Secret Room' in Home Here, The Capital Times, "Green Section," February 19, 1953, p. 1; "A Top Floor Apartment," reprinted with additional illustrations from The House Beautiful, August 1909, Madison, WI: 1910.

⁵Information regarding the move of the Halle Steensland house from its lot fronting Langdon Street to a back lot was obtained from Sanborn-Perris maps and a building permit for the Alpha Chi Omega sorority house now on the lot on Langdon Street where the Steensland house was originally located.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 7

Page 20

For NPS use only
received
Date entered

ARCHEOLOGY

The shores of Madison's four lakes were the scene of significant pre-historic activity by native Americans, who were drawn to the waters of this small chain of lakes. However, due to the continuous construction and reconstruction in the district, filling up almost every available land space, it is unlikely that any significant archeological sites still exist anywhere in the district.

PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES

The Langdon Street historic district is currently enjoying the results of a significant amount of attention by the city of Madison and the property owners in both physical improvements and preservation activities. In the summer of 1985, as stated in the general description section, the city improved the physical appearance of lower Langdon Street by widening the sidewalks with new concrete and brick materials, and by adding new trees and street lights to help give the street more of a 1920s appearance. Upper Langdon Street is scheduled to also have street end and park improvements in 1986, and electric lines are being placed underground to create a more attractive streetscape. In the private sector, the neighborhood association is successfully cajoling some investor-owners in this high-rental district into fixing up the exteriors of their properties. It is to the credit of many fraternities and sororities that most of their outstanding period revival chapter houses are well-maintained, and have retained much of their historical character. In fact, several Greek letter society chapters have inquired or applied for local landmark status for their houses. It is the combined effort of the Langdon Area Neighborhood Association and the city of Madison planning department which produced the resources for the completion of this nomination. In 1986, the city will also fund a walking tour guide of the Langdon Street historic district, which will help educate the public about the important historic resources of this neighborhood.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1936	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates see text **Builder/Architect** see text

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Langdon Street historic district is significant for its architecture because it includes a large number of outstanding architecturally high-style period revival buildings, and because it also includes a number of good examples of other architectural styles, including second empire, Queen Anne, prairie, and bungalow. The district is significant for history because its buildings represent several historical periods of Madison's history, including the early development years when the district was part of the most prestigious residential neighborhood in the city; the years of growth of the University of Wisconsin, when the district was home to prominent businessmen, prominent university faculty, and a growing number of students, particularly chapters of social Greek letter societies; and finally, the early years of the twentieth century, when the neighborhood was, in fact, taken over by the social Greek letter societies, who built most of the outstanding period revival buildings in the district. Specific areas of significance include: architecture; association with significant persons in commerce, education, and law; and social history, development of social Greek letter societies at the University of Wisconsin.

Historical Background

The Langdon Street area was once an integral part of one of Madison's two most prestigious nineteenth century neighborhoods. Known at that time as "Big Bug Hill," Langdon Street was an important thoroughfare of the neighborhood on the ridge north and west of the capitol building, now known as "Mansion Hill." At the height of this neighborhood's prominence, it extended from the University of Wisconsin campus to the west, to State Street on the south and southeast, and to N. Hamilton St. and N. Butler St. to the east and northeast, with Lake Mendota bordering to the north and northwest.¹

Between 1836, when James Doty convinced the territorial legislature to make the "paper-city" of Madison the capital seat, and 1850, this entire area was wild and forested. Only Julius T. Clark is recorded to have ventured into the ridge area before 1850. In 1846, he purchased a large block of land in the eastern section of the ridge and built a house there. At the time, other Madisonians felt he was foolish for living so far away from the center of the city. But Clark foresaw that this picturesque ridge of good, well-drained land would one day be in demand for house lots in a city beset by swamps and marshes on an already small isthmus between two large lakes.²

Clark was soon proven correct as individuals began building houses on the ridge between 1850 and 1860. Setting the tone for the new neighborhood were two mansions said to be the first of the big houses built in the area. In 1851, Levi B. Vilas constructed a large Italianate mansion on the southeast corner of what is now Langdon Street and N. Henry Street. On the southwest corner of this same intersection, J. T. Marston built a classical temple mansion. Vilas was beginning his successful legal and real estate career when he built his house, and later he was to become president

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 1

For NPS use only

received

date entered

of the Dane County Bank, mayor of Madison, state assemblyman, and regent of the University of Wisconsin. Marston was a prominent merchant, and together, they were said to be two of the wealthiest men in the city.³

The Vilas and Marston houses remained the most outstanding houses on Langdon Street, although throughout Mansion Hill during the last half of the nineteenth century other grand mansions were constructed. Most of the houses located near the lake fronted the street, and had long, narrow lots extending back to the lakefront. Other houses on Langdon were often on double lots, and the result was a spacious neighborhood of picturesque nineteenth century houses. In fact, during the 1870s Langdon Street was considered the showplace section of Mansion Hill.⁴ Later, toward the turn of the century, as Langdon Street became increasingly crowded and more university-oriented, the nearby residences of W. Gilman Street, N. Carroll Street, W. Gorham Street, Wisconsin Avenue, and N. Pinckney Street overshadowed Langdon Street.

While the history of the Langdon street historic district is intertwined with that of the rest of Mansion Hill until the turn of the century, this narrative will discuss only the historical development within the boundaries of the district, referring to the broader context of the entire Mansion Hill area when appropriate.

By 1855, the Vilas and Marston houses had been joined by 13 other houses interspersed between Lake Street and Wisconsin Avenue. And, at the end of Lake Street Daniel Gorham's steam saw mill, founded in 1853, was the one industrial exception in the residential neighborhood. While no longer extant, the history of Gorham's Mill and its subsequent development into a manufacturing company is an important element in the history of the district. Gorham's mill operated between 1853 and about 1860. In 1860 E. W. Skinner purchased the mill and grounds and established the Mendota Agricultural Works. This firm produced reapers and sorghum mills, and city boosters hoped this firm would become the nucleus of a prosperous industrial economy in the city. The Mendota Agricultural Works, later known as the Madison Manufacturing Company, was very successful during the 1860s, however the depression of 1873 devastated the firm. The company survived, but never again reached its previous level of success, and in 1890, it went under. The valuable land on which it stood was quickly platted and sold. It was the first of many small lakeshore replats which would transform the Langdon Street historic district from a spacious residential neighborhood into a dense, primarily student housing district. In fact, almost all the houses constructed on this new replat were built to house students--especially student who were members of social Greek letter societies.⁵

While the Madison Manufacturing Company was in operation, the empty lots shown on an 1855 Madison plat map were rapidly filling up with the houses of wealthy Madisonians. Not necessarily as elaborate as the Vilas or Marston houses, nevertheless the new houses were generally spacious and well-built. The nearby University of Wisconsin had a small group of faculty who, not restricted to campus residence, moved into the Langdon Street neighborhood. They joined the social ranks of their business and professional neighbors who welcomed these cultured and scholarly men and their wives to their circles.⁶ Among the early members of the Langdon Street "clique" were of course, the families of Levi Vilas and J. T. Marston, along

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet

Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 2

with those of attorney and state supreme court reporter, O. M. Conover (222 Langdon St., 1870, demolished), history professor and mentor of Frederick Jackson Turner, William Allen (228 Langdon St., 1871, demolished), publisher of the Wisconsin State Journal, J. O. Culver (28 Langdon St., 1871, demolished), clergyman, professor, and patron of Madison's nineteenth century literati, James J. Butler (115 Langdon St., 1865, demolished); physics professor John E. Davies (29 Langdon St., 1874, extant); and Greek professor Alexander Kerr (146 Langdon St., 1872 and 1890, both demolished); among others.

The upper-class ambience of the Langdon Street area continued until about 1890. At this time, coinciding with the replat of the Madison Manufacturing Company land (and perhaps, in part, because of it), Langdon Street and its environs began to make a dramatic change. An 1890 plat map of Madison shows the still-spacious neighborhood of large houses on many of the blocks. But it also shows the just-completed replat of the Madison Manufacturing Company, which a 1902 Sanborn-Perris fire insurance map shows to be almost entirely built up. The 1902 Sanborn-Perris map also shows that many of the larger or double lots were being subdivided and built up. The 1908 Sanborn-Perris map shows that lower Langdon Street and N. Frances Street were particularly dense residential areas. Even more significant, though is the existence of Howard Place, and the first house in the new Howard Place replat, the W.A.P. Morris house (1901-02, extant). Morris' house was a harbinger of the development of the land between the streetfront of Langdon Street and the lakeshore which was soon to take place. This development would take two forms: 1) new buildings erected for both wealthy business, professional, and university persons between 1890 and 1920; 2) new buildings for students, especially social Greek letter societies built between 1890 and 1930, but especially between 1920 and 1930.

Two factors contributed to the change in the Langdon Street area from a prestigious residential neighborhood to a fraternity row between 1890 and 1930. One was a push factor from the nearby University of Wisconsin campus. The other was a pull factor from developers who were opening up new suburbs for Madison's elite residents. The push factor developed from the rapid growth of the University of Wisconsin in the last decade of the nineteenth century. During these ten years, the university grew from a small liberal arts college to a full-fledged university. Under the administrations of Thomas C. Chamberlain and Charles Kendall Adams during the turn of the century years, new, scholarly faculty were recruited, and faculty numbers grew from about 40 members in 1887 to 113 members in 1896. At the same time, student population increased dramatically. In 1886-1887, the student population was 539; in 1891-1892, it was 1,000 plus; in 1899-1900, it was 2,422; and by 1903-04, it topped 3,000. But, while the student population grew, the university administration provided housing only for female students. Male students, after the closing of North Hall in 1885, had to find their own housing. The vast influx of male students into surrounding neighborhoods looking for housing, and the many landlords who were willing to put them up in overcrowded rooming houses created a "Latin Quarter" south and east of the campus. Lower Langdon Street became part of this notorious area as more and more mansions were turned into rooming houses for male students. And, more significantly, the mansions along Langdon Street were ideal for a particular type of rooming house, the social

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,
Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 3

Greek letter society chapter. These organizations were neither sanctioned, nor welcomed by university administrators, because they were seen as undemocratic and elitist. However, given the university's unwillingness to build adequate dormitories for male students, and the growing student population, there was little the university could do to stop the development of these societies in Madison. In fact, the lack of on-campus housing for male students probably assisted in the establishment of chapter houses of social Greek letter societies since they could provide the male student with a convenient, congenial place to live off-campus.⁷

The result of this influx of students in the Langdon Street area was to drive out the businessmen, professionals, and university faculty members who had made the area a prestigious neighborhood. It is easy to see why Madison's elite no longer wished to associate themselves with Langdon Street. In 1907, in an article in the Wisconsin State Journal, former Langdon Street area resident, Professor B. H. Meyer complained that "parts of Langdon . . . had been spoiled. . ." Houses were so close, Meyer stated, that one house received "the drippings from the eaves of another."⁸ Another case was that of Thomas E. Brittingham, one of Madison's most important turn of the century businessmen and philanthropists. Brittingham made a fortune in the lumber business, both by retail sales in lumber yards which he owned and by owning thousands of acres of forests all over the country. In 1895 he constructed a house at 211 Langdon Street, and in 1901 he moved into a newly built house at 604 N. Henry St. with a lakefront access. But he only remained on N. Henry St. until 1915. In that year, complaining that fraternity noise and crowding infringed on his privacy, he moved to the Highlands, a rural suburb west of Madison.

Brittingham's case represents not only the push factor of loud university students which drove him out of the neighborhood, but also the pull factor of new suburbs which, because of streetcar service and the growing popularity of the automobile, appealed to those who could afford to move out of the isthmus of Madison. Especially university faculty members, who had long made the Langdon Street area their home, after the turn of the century began building impressive homes in University Heights. Many business and professional men and their families also found that the spacious suburbs of University Heights, Nakoma, Maple Bluff, and Shorewood Hills were much more to their liking than the crowded Langdon Street area. The exodus from the Langdon Street area, and the rest of Mansion Hill was not entirely complete, though as many prominent families continued to stay on well into the twentieth century. For example, bankers John J. Suhr Sr. and Jr. both lived in the house at 121 Langdon Street, Suhr Jr. staying until his death in 1957. But he was the exception, as the Langdon Street area became more and more detached from the rest of Mansion Hill.

By 1920, there was no question that the Langdon Street area was a student enclave, particularly as home to social Greek letter societies. Around 1883, reportedly the fraternity of Chi Psi began the trend by establishing their chapter house at 602 N. Frances St.⁹ In 1889, Beta Theta Pi fraternity rented 614 Langdon St. for their chapter headquarters. Delta Tau Delta fraternity claims they built the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet

Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 4

For NPS use only

received

date entered

first house designed specifically as a fraternity in 1892 (619-621 N. Lake St., demolished), although the old Chi Psi fraternity house (627 N. Lake St., demolished) was also built in 1892. Fast on their heels was Rho Kappa Epsilon and Sigma Chi fraternities that rented newly constructed houses at 16 (616) Mendota Ct. and 19 (619) Mendota Ct. (both demolished), respectively, in 1893. The influx of Greek letter societies into the Langdon Street area peaked during the 1920s when Greeks built many new and impressive chapter houses on lots between the Langdon Street streetfront and on vacant land created after older houses were razed.

On January 29, 1922 the Wisconsin State Journal declared that "Langdon Street Falls Into Hands of University Frats," and proceeded to write the street's obituary thusly: "Langdon Street, through all the years regarded as the choicest residential section of Madison, has been besieged and taken by University Greeks. . . Fraternities and sororities now own 20 places in the three best blocks on Langdon Street between Frances Street and Wisconsin Avenue, as well as an occasional lot on the lakeshore . . . it is accepted as a certainty that this whole beautiful street is destined early to become pan-hellenic." The physical change in the Langdon Street area, lamented above, was a mixed blessing for the architecture of the neighborhood. The Greek letter societies, along with landlords and developers cashing in on the demand for student housing, demolished or altered most of the older buildings in the district. But, they also erected some distinctive high-style replacements, executed in the latest period revival architectural styles by some of Madison's best architects. This new construction of Tudor, Georgian, colonial, and Mediterranean revival buildings, alongside the older styles, resulted in an eclectic mix of buildings which distinguishes the Langdon Street historic district from any other area in the city.

The economic problems of the Great Depression lowered the number of social Greek letter societies that the University of Wisconsin student body could support, and some chapters folded or lost their chapter houses. Then, during World War II, Greek letter societies took a back seat to the larger events happening around them. In fact, some fraternity houses actually were used as army barracks during World War II. After the war, the influx of returning student-veterans created a different atmosphere at the university, but during the 1950s, fraternities and sororities re-established themselves as the provider of campus leaders both in campus politics and social activities. The social Greek letter societies remained in the Langdon Street area, with only a few chapters located outside of the historic district boundaries.¹⁰

The mid-1950s to the mid-1970s saw a new building boom in the Langdon Street district, and like the social Greek letter society building boom of the 1920s, this boom replaced a number of historic houses with new construction. Among the many houses demolished during this era were the houses of prominent businessmen and professionals such as William Dudley, Oscar Brandenburg, Burr Jones, Charles Harper, Thomas E. Brittingham (second house), Lucien Hanks. Prominent university faculty whose old houses were demolished during this era included Alexander Kerr (this house is also reportedly the birthplace of writer Thornton Wilder), John C. Freeman, Reuban Thwaites, William Allen, E. B. Fred, Charles Van Hise, and Charles Slichter. But, probably the biggest loss during this period was the demolition of both

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 5

the Levi Vilas house (which later was the long-time home of stockman A. O. Fox), and the J. T. Marston house, the first mansions built on Langdon Street, and, as stated earlier, the houses which set the tone for the entire Mansion Hill neighborhood. These houses were replaced with nondescript, relatively unattractive brick and concrete sorority houses, and the loss of the Vilas and Marston houses was a significant loss for both the neighborhood and the city as a whole.

During this period, though, the Greek letter societies, for the most part, maintained their early twentieth century chapter houses. Today, it is these chapter houses which give the district much of its architectural significance. Ironically, the social Greek letter societies, which were the "urban renewers" of the 1920s, are the preservationists of the post-World War II era.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

ARCHITECTURE

The Langdon Street historic district is significant for architecture because it includes a number of buildings which are good examples of nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural styles. Specifically, the district contains a plethora of fine quality high-style period revival houses constructed primarily for Greek letter societies at the University of Wisconsin. These chapter houses also represent the work of several of Madison's most talented and prolific architectural firms, two of which--Law, Law, and Potter and Frank Riley--have several high-quality designs in the district. Also significant is the level of integrity of many of these buildings, particularly the fraternity and sorority houses.

Madison's two nineteenth century prestige neighborhoods, Mansion Hill and the area south and west of the capitol, had many fine examples of nineteenth century architecture. Unfortunately, most of these fine examples are gone or significantly altered. In the Langdon Street historic district, most of the architecture of the nineteenth century has been altered or demolished. As a result, there are no identifiable Greek revival houses in the district, and only a few known Italianate houses, all with significant alterations. That two examples of the second empire style have survived this attrition rate is significant. Both the Romanzo Bunn house (104 Langdon St.) and the John J. Suhr house (121 Langdon St.; NRHP: 1982) are good, although not elaborate, examples of the style. They both have the trademark mansard roof, and central tower. They are both constructed of cream brick and have had "classical" porches added to their facades, although on the Bunn house the porch has been partially enclosed. The Suhr house has the best integrity; a c. 1914 photo shows few changes to the house since that time. In fact, the Suhr house is the best example of nineteenth century architecture in this district and the finest example of the French second empire style remaining in Madison.

The best examples of the Queen Anne style within the district were victims of the bulldozer during the twentieth century. Extant Queen Annes are generally smaller

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,
Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 6

and less complex than the best Queen Anne buildings constructed in Madison, and most have been extensively altered. Even though there are no outstanding examples of the style left in the district, there are four buildings within the district which retain a great deal of their original integrity and are illustrative examples of the various phases of the long-lived Queen Anne style. The A. H. and Emma Main house at 127 Langdon St. is an essentially Queen Anne house that illustrates the simpler massing and wall surfaces of the shingle style. Its intersecting gable and gambrel roof is shingled, and the front gable features a semi-circular carved sunburst decoration over the three grouped attic windows.

The Joseph Jastrow house (237 Langdon St.) was constructed in 1890, with the third story added in 1909. The 1890 details are basically classical, although the composition is one of balanced asymmetry. In the 1909 remodelling the details tend to be Prairie style in influence. The significance of this structure lies in its lovely Queen Anne first and second floor interior, with panelled walls, ornate fireplaces, and a grand wooden staircase. The third floor apartment, has fine Prairie style stained glass ornament and particularly the otherworldly Moorish study on the attic. The study remains virtually intact, from its stained glass skylight, intricately carved wall panels inlaid with ivory and exotic woods, glittering wallpaper, to its wrought iron light fixtures. The Jastrow house was featured in the August, 1909 issue of House Beautiful.

On the other end of the spectrum is the McKee two-unit residence at 137 Langdon St. Constructed as rental units, the basic form of this house was repeated over and over in Madison during the pre-World War I building boom. The distinction of this house lies in its intact exterior appearance and in its combination of classical and vaguely Prairie style geometric details.

Finally, there are several houses in this district that show Tudor revival style details on a basically Queen Anne form. Probably the best example is the fraternity house at 621 N. Lake St. which has stucco walls, steeply-pitched gables with wide eaves, exposed rafters and a bargeboard. Another example of a house with a basic Queen Anne shape, but important progressive architectural details is the Dean John B. and Phoebe Johnson house at 626 N. Henry St. This house was designed by noted local architects Claude and Starck in 1902. Its importance derives from its combination of a Queen Anne shape and some classical details with a strong emphasis on the horizontal as well as modernistic porch posts decorated with Sullivanesque terra cotta panels. The simple porch design and the abstracted Palladian style dormer are obvious borrowings from the work of the influential and progressive Chicago architect, George W. Maher. A fire escape and a generally run-down condition detract from the beauty of this important transitional design.

There is no question that the outstanding architecture in this district exists in the period revival buildings. The intense competition of Greek letter societies and their alumni to present themselves as the best fraternity or sorority on campus, or in the country, resulted in each chapter trying to outdo the other in construction of their chapter houses. The period revival houses cover three major style categories: Mediterranean revival, Tudor/Elizabethan revival, and colonial/Georgian revival.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,
Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 7

There is no best example of the Mediterranean revival style in the district. Rather, as a group, they represent outstanding interpretations of this style. The Greek houses at 622 Mendota Ct., 237 Lakelawn Pl., 108 Langdon St., 146 Langdon St., and 270 Langdon St. all feature the arched openings, tile roofs, iron grillwork, and classical details which are typical of the style. The Villa Maria apartment building at 615 Howard Place is probably the most unusual of the group, with its large, plain walls, punctuated with irregularly-shaped openings, but little other detail. All of these buildings are fairly intact on the exterior and are elegantly detailed and well-proportioned examples of the style. For some reason, the Mediterranean revival style was not popular in Madison for single family residences. A few were constructed, notably in the early twentieth century suburb of University Heights and on a two-house estate owned by millionaire Magnus Swenson on the far west side (NRHP: 1980). The Mediterranean revival style buildings in the Langdon Street historic district constitute the finest group of buildings in that style remaining in Madison.

The Tudor/Elizabethan revival buildings in the district generally fall into two groups. There are the buildings, mostly large Greek letter society chapter houses, which illustrate the influence of the grand English Medieval-Renaissance manor house on the style. They range from the sandstone, "castle-like" Chi Psi house at 150 Iota Court to the Phi Gamma Beta house at 16 Langdon Street, which appears to be a "quaint" English cottage at the street level, but which has a large wing sloping down toward Lake Mendota. Another interpretation of this style may be seen in the Chi Phi house at 610 N. Henry St., which presents a front facade of overlapping gables and a large multi-paned front window decorated with a stone tabbed surround. The Delta Upsilon house at 640 N. Frances Street is a more elegant, yet compact version of the style, and features shaped parapeted gables. Illustrating how the style can be used in a smaller residence is the Willett E. and Jennie Main house at 622 N. Henry St. This house features overlapping and parapet gables which are similar to those on the larger, Greek chapter houses nearby. There are two houses which illustrate the half-timber version of the Tudor revival style, the version seen more often on smaller residences, particularly in Madison. The sorority house at 250 Langdon St. is the best example of this interpretation of the style. It features a first floor of brick and a second floor of stucco and half-timber. On the front facade, the upper stories are given a slightly overhanging appearance, and steeply-pitched dormers highlight the roofline of the street facade. There are many fine examples in Madison of residences constructed in the Medieval styles. University Heights has several Tudor revival houses constructed in the 1910s and 1920s and Nakoma has many fine Medieval style houses from the 1920s and 1930s. Because of their larger size and more institutional nature, the Medieval style fraternities and sororities on Langdon Street tend to have a heavier, more monumental and more formal appearance than the single family residences designed in the style. The Tudor and Jacobethan chapter houses in the Langdon Street historic district are among the most stately and imposing buildings of the style remaining in Madison.

The majority of the period revival styles in the district can be classified as belonging to the colonial and Georgian revival styles. They are mostly brick buildings, and retain a number of fine colonial details. Many buildings feature gracious central entry pavilions on rectangular blocks, and are very good examples

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,
Dane Co., WI

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

8

For NPS use only

received

date entered

of the Georgian revival. They are also, as a group, elegant designs with a high level of integrity. One of the best examples in the district of the formal Georgian revival style is the Kappa Sigma fraternity house at 124 Langdon St. The design of this red brick, gable-roofed fraternity house is a fairly archeologically correct rendition of a Georgian style house from the mid-Atlantic states. In addition, it has a refined and graceful multi-story porch on the lake side and is excellently proportioned throughout. Other outstanding Georgian revival buildings with a large central entry pavilion include the Theta Chi fraternity house at 144 Langdon St., the Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity house at 233 Lakelawn Pl., and the Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity house at 260 Langdon St.

Other colonial revival buildings in this district have less emphasis on the central entrance pavilion than those houses mentioned above. One of the most elegant of these is the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority house at 220 Lakelawn Pl. Its unusual mansard-like third story, smooth stone quoins and projecting wings to each side of the central entrance gives the building the delicate grace of a French country chateau. One of the stone buildings in the district is a good illustration of the romanticized farmhouse version of the colonial revival style. This gable-roofed house was designed to look like a Pennsylvania farmhouse, although on a larger scale than most farmhouses. The architectural distinction of this building derives from its very plain but pleasingly proportioned design and the soft warm glow of its rusticated sandstone walls.

The above is just a small sampling of the many colonial/Georgian revival style buildings within this district. Other good examples include the Frank G. and Mary G. Brown house (28 Langdon St., 1905), the Delta Tau Delta fraternity house (616 Mendota Ct., 1911), the Pi Beta Phi sorority house (233 Langdon St., 1912), the Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity house (233 Lakelawn Pl., 1924), the Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity house (260 Langdon St., 1925), the James and Flora Moseley/Delta Delta Delta sorority house (120 Langdon St., 1874, remodeled in 1926), and the Alpha Chi Omega sorority house (152 Langdon St., 1927). The colonial/Georgian revival was the most popular style for the many residences built in Madison between World War I and the Great Depression. As with the Medieval revival style houses, it would be a difficult task to determine the finest examples of the style in Madison. Suffice it to say that the colonial/Georgian revival fraternities and sororities in the Langdon Street historic district are some of the best renditions of the style in the city.

One of the distinctions of the Langdon Street historic district is the inclusion of not only the popular Mediterranean, colonial/Georgian, and Tudor revival styles, but also some well-designed examples of more unusual styles. The Chi Omega sorority house at 115 Langdon St., was designed by Frank Riley and built in 1925-26. This three and one-half story building features unusual and elegant Dutch parapet gables, massive chimneys, and two large arched French doors with transoms and a stone arch with keystones decorating each door. Another unusual design by Frank Riley is the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority house, built in 1929. Its rough stone exterior, dormers, round-arched windows on the first floor, and stepped gables on the front facade is an example of a Dutch South African colonial revival house. Also, the Alpha Omicron Pi sorority house, designed by Law, Law, and Potter in 1928 at 636 Langdon St.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 9

For NPS use only

received

Date entered

has chateausque details including steeply-pitched hipped roofs on the main block and dormers, stone quoins on both the main block and the hexagonal tower and hoodmold with ogee arch trim decorating the tower entrance. These buildings are good examples of the willingness of some chapters to let their architects create an unusual design which would distinguish its occupants as people of taste and refinement.

Responsible for most of the outstanding period revival buildings in the district was a "Who's Who" of Madison architects. These architects were prolific in the number of buildings they designed during the early twentieth century. A brief discussion of the most significant architects and their work will illustrate the legacy they left in the Langdon Street historic district.¹¹

Claude and Starck

Both Madison area natives, Louis W. Claude and Edward Starck were responsible for many of the outstanding prairie style buildings in Madison. After working in Chicago for Louis Sullivan and other progressive designers, Claude returned to Madison and formed a partnership with Edward Starck, who had worked in Chicago and also for noted Milwaukee architect, E. T. Mix. Their firm, Claude and Starck (1896-1929), not only was noted for their many fine buildings in Madison, but also for their small library buildings constructed throughout the upper midwest. The houses they designed in the Langdon Street historic district were the Charles Morgan house (10 Langdon St., 1900), the Dean John B. and Phoebe Johnson house (626 N. Henry St., 1902), the J. Morgan Clements house (609 N. Lake St., 1896), and the William Miller house (615 N. Lake St., 1898). All of these houses date from the first years of the firms' existence when its designs often included progressive elements on an essentially Queen Anne form. The only Claude and Starck house in the district which retains a high degree of exterior integrity is the Johnson house. Its transitional design, which is part nineteenth and part twentieth century in inspiration, is a very interesting example of the firm's work and shows particularly the strong influence of the designs of George W. Maher on Louis Claude's work.

Law and Law; Law, Law, and Potter

This firm was one of the most respected and prolific in Madison between 1920 and 1930. James R. Law, a Madison native, worked for Claude and Starck and state architect, Arthur Peabody, until beginning his own firm in 1914. His brother, Edward J. Law, joined the firm within the year. Ellis Potter was the senior draftsman for the brothers, and was made a partner in 1925. The Law brothers and Potter practiced adeptly in all of the period revival styles, and were also responsible for some of the most outstanding office and commercial buildings in Madison, such as the Tenney Building, the Holstein and Friesian Association of America building, and the recently demolished Manchester's department store. Their designs within the Langdon Street historic district represent the high-quality work of the firm in the period revival styles. They designed three Greek chapter houses in the Mediterranean revival style at 622 Mendota Ct., 108 Langdon St., and 237 Lakelawn Pl. Each of these houses have a unique interpretation of the style, although they were built within only a couple of years of each other. The house at 108 Langdon St. is a square block with a large sloping rear section; 622 Mendota Ct. is a rectangle with tower and projecting gable

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,
Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 10

For NPS use only

received

date entered

section; and 237 Lakelawn Pl. is a white stucco rectangle with slightly projecting wings. All of the houses show the common details of tile roof and arched openings typical of the style, but each house has an individual character illustrating the firm's ability and talent.

The same is true of this firm's Tudor revival designs at 12 Langdon St., 16 Langdon St., 222 Langdon St., and 610 N. Henry St. These designs range from the imposing brick structure at 222 Langdon St., with its large, square tower and battlements, to what appears to be a modest English cottage at 16 Langdon St., which has a large sloping wing hidden in the rear of the lot. The quality of their colonial revival work is shown in the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity house at 627 N. Lake St. (1925). It is a simple square, red brick building with a large semi-circular portico facing the lake, giving this facade the look of a gracious mansion. There are other Law and Law, and Law, Law, and Potter period revival houses in Madison which illustrate the firm's talent in residential design. However, their work within the Langdon Street historic district is significant because the nature of the sorority and fraternity houses allowed the firm to create more majestic and more intricately detailed designs than normal single-family budgets allowed.

Frank Riley

Frank Riley was another Madison native who had a successful career in the community, and was responsible for some of the best period revival homes in Madison. After attending the University of Wisconsin and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Riley worked in Boston until 1911. Between 1911 and 1915, he worked in Europe, then upon returning to Madison, he began his architectural career in the community. His work is prolific in the high-style neighborhood of University Heights (NRHP: 1982) where there are a number of excellent examples of period revival houses. His work in the Langdon Street historic district, like that of Law, Law, and Potter, illustrates his talent at larger, collegiate type buildings. He designed the colonial revival sorority houses at 601 N. Henry St. and 103 Langdon St. which have similar stone construction, as well as the very elegant Georgian revival fraternity house at 124 Langdon St., and a less elaborate fraternity house at 233 Lakelawn Pl. He also designed the more classical remodeling of the 1874 Moseley house for Delta Delta Delta sorority, at 120 Langdon St., the Mediterranean revival house at 270 Langdon St., and the unusual but outstanding Chi Omega sorority house at 115 Langdon St. which features the shaped Dutch gables and paired massive chimneys. Frank Riley's designs, including those he did for the sororities and fraternities in the Langdon Street area are noted for their refined proportions and details. His experiences working on the east coast, particularly with the firm of McKim, Mead, and White, gave him an excellent grasp of the colonial and Georgian revival styles for which he earned his well-deserved reputation. His designs in the Langdon Street area are a representative sampling of his mastery in the revival styles.

Other noteworthy firms

There are several other architectural firms which bear mention, as they contributed outstanding designs to this district. Jennings and Kronenberg, practicing from around 1905 to 1907, designed the Delta Upsilon house at 644 N. Frances St. which is an elegant interpretation of the early Tudor revival style. Balch and Lippert (1917-1923, and again 1927-c. 1940), who practiced extensively in the period revival

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 11

styles and the Art Deco style, designed the gracious, French-influenced Alpha Gamma Delta sorority house at 220 Lakelawn Pl. which is one of Balch and Lippert's finest residential designs. John Nader designed the John J. Suhr house at 121 Langdon St., which is a fine example of the French second empire style. The Suhr house (1874) is one of only a few of Nader's known residential designs remaining in the area as well as probably his finest remaining design. David R. Jones designed the other second empire house in the district, 104 Langdon St. (1878-79), the Romanzo Bunn house. Jones practiced in Madison between 1872 and 1885, and the Bunn house is probably his best remaining residential design in Madison. He later designed a number of fine Queen Anne and later style houses in the Cambria, Wisconsin area.

Finally, Flad and Moulton (1927-1931) designed three impressive buildings in this district. Their work together during their brief partnership indicates a talent for the period revival styles, but they were also responsible for a number of designs for commercial buildings in Madison. Ann Emery Hall at 265 Langdon St. (1930) shows the firm's use of the Tudor revival style on a large apartment building. The front of this building is decorated with parapet gables, pseudo-half-timbering of stucco with brick timbers, and tabbed window surrounds. The two other buildings Flad and Moulton designed are large apartment buildings that are classically inspired. Kennedy Manor (1 Langdon St., 1929) and Langdon Hall (633 Langdon St., 1930) both have parapet roofs, cornice lines, and decorative doorways, which on Langdon Hall is an outstanding carved panel highlighting more than just the entrance.

Conclusion

The architecture of the Langdon Street historic district makes it an unusual neighborhood, different from any other area in Madison. Other areas of the community have concentrations of period revival architecture, such as University Heights, but the large, mostly Greek chapter houses in the Langdon Street historic district are unique in their scale and use. They also have, in many cases, an outstanding degree of integrity and level of preservation, expressing their fraternity or sorority's pride of ownership. They are so dominant that they totally changed the appearance of the neighborhood from that of a nineteenth century residential area to the student enclave that still exists today. Because of the quality and quantity of fine architecture, produced by some of Madison's most prolific and talented architects of the 1920s and 1930s, the Langdon Street historic district is a significant entity within the city of Madison.

ASSOCIATION WITH SIGNIFICANT PERSONS IN COMMERCE, EDUCATION, AND LAW

Introduction

When the Langdon Street historic district was still an integral part of Mansion Hill, one of the most prestigious neighborhoods in nineteenth and turn-of-the-century Madison, the neighborhood was filled with prominent and successful businessmen, prominent university professors, and a number of attorneys, judges, and other members of the legal profession. Since the 1920s, the houses of these important men and their families have gradually disappeared as the neighborhood changed into the fraternity row of today. Therefore, the district as a whole does not represent the themes of commerce, education, and law. But, there are a number of individual houses that are significant for these themes, because they are still extant in the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 12

For NPS use only
received
date entered

district, and they have retained enough integrity to still be associated with the important people who lived in them.

Commerce

Of the many businessmen and their families who lived in the district, probably the most important was Thomas E. Brittingham. Brittingham, reportedly Madison's wealthiest man when he died in 1924, made his fortune in the lumber business. He began with one lumber yard in McFarland in 1885, moved to Madison in 1888, and while he amassed holdings which would eventually total 126 lumber yards and thousands of acres of timberland, he lived in two different houses in the district. One of these houses, 211 Langdon St. (1895) is still extant. The other house in the district associated with Brittingham was at 640 N. Henry St., built in 1901, and Brittingham's home until 1915, when he moved to an estate in the Highlands. This house was eventually a fraternity house, and in 1959, was razed for a new structure. Brittingham was not only one of Madison's most successful businessmen, but also one of Madison's most generous philanthropists. His will turned his University Heights estate over to the University of Wisconsin, and also set up two foundations, one to benefit the university and one to benefit the community. Brittingham's estate became the home for presidents of the University of Wisconsin and is significant for both the man who had it built and the subsequent persons who have lived in it. The house at 211 Langdon St. is also significant because it represents the period of time in which Brittingham amassed the fortune which not only benefited people by contributing to economic growth wherever his businesses operated, but also would continue to benefit people, through Brittingham's foundations, well into the twentieth century.¹²

Banking is one of the most important commercial activities in any community. As the state capital and a significant commercial center, Madison has had a significant number of financial institutions which have thrived in the community. One of these banks is the American Exchange Bank, founded as the German, or German-American Bank, in 1874 by immigrant John J. Suhr. Suhr came to Milwaukee in 1857, then shortly thereafter, to Madison. He worked at the State Bank in Madison for 14 years, and in 1871 founded the German Bank which was incorporated in 1885 as the German-American Bank. Shortly after this, Suhr, as a successful banker, built his second empire house (1886-87) along prestigious Langdon St. (121). The bank thrived, and during World War I, when associations with anything German were discouraged, Suhr changed the bank's name to the American Exchange Bank. Suhr, and his son John J. Suhr, Jr. both worked in the bank until their deaths (Suhr, Jr. in 1957), and both made their homes at 121 Langdon St. The Suhrs were one of the longest-lived families to maintain residence in the Langdon Street area, and their house, which still retains a great deal of integrity, is a physical reminder of this important family's contribution to the economic success of Madison.¹³

Halle Steensland, like John J. Suhr, was a European immigrant who made good in the new world. He came to Madison in 1855, was a clerk, ran his own retail businesses, and eventually began two important Madison firms, the Hekla Fire Insurance Company and later the Savings, Loan and Trust Company. But Steensland is probably best remembered for his role as a leader in the Scandanavian community. In 1872, he was appointed vice-counsul in Wisconsin for Norway and Sweden, and held this position until 1905. The house, now at 150 Langdon St., originally fronted the

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 13

street and was Steensland's showplace home when it was built in 1892, when Steensland was at the heights of his prominence in Madison. Unfortunately, he vacated the home in 1896 for a larger, but similar home on Carroll Street, further southeast in Mansion Hill. In 1926, his Langdon St. home was moved back from the street to make way for a new sorority house. Although the house has suffered from some unattractive alterations, and Steensland's second home still stands, the house at 150 Langdon St. still represents Steensland's importance in the community during the late 1800s and early 1900s.¹⁴

Frank G. Brown, son of wealthy Timothy Brown, was also a businessman and financier in Madison at the turn of the century. In particular, he managed his father's real estate and lending company, helped found the Central Wisconsin Trust Company and the French Battery Company, now Ray-0-Vac, one of Madison's most successful industries. His house at 28 Langdon St. (1905), now the Alpha Phi sorority house, represents Brown and his wife's tenure as residents of Langdon St. when Brown was an integral component in the development of Madison's future economic growth.¹⁵

Other well-known business and professional persons whose houses are still extant in the district include businessmen H. B. Hobbins (135 Langdon St., 1895) and Alexander H. Main (127 Langdon St., 1892), and retailers Herman G. Kroncke (613 N. Frances St., 1875) who founded the Kroncke brothers hardware store; James E. Moseley (120 Langdon St., 1874), who established a still-functioning book and stationery business, and who was also instrumental in helping establish the popular Monona Lake Assembly--the Chatauqua--held in Madison between 1881 and 1901; and Charles E. Morgan (10 Langdon St., 1900), pioneer dry goods merchant.¹⁶

Education

For over 130 years, the University of Wisconsin has been an important part of the Madison community. It has effected the physical, economic, and social development of the city, and in particular, had a major effect on the Langdon Street area. The university began as a small liberal arts college and remained as such until the 1880s. The faculty was small, and although competent, not particularly scholarly. The majority of students were from Madison and their existence on campus consisted of flexible studies and casual living. Many of the faculty members during the early years lived in the nearby Langdon Street area, setting a precedent which would continue well into the twentieth century.¹⁷

There is only one house in the district which represents the early years of the university. But it is the house of one of the most scholarly of the early faculty members. Professor of physics John E. Davies built the house at 29 Langdon St. (1874) and he and his wife lived there until 1903. During his academic career, Davies helped establish the only magnetic observatory in the country (in 1876). He built an outstanding electrical experiment laboratory, and gained a national reputation for his work on potentials and the magnetic polarization of light for the Geodetic Survey.¹⁸

Between 1887 and 1903, a significant transition took place at the university. There was an increase in the size of the student, the number of university buildings, and the number of faculty. But, more significantly, there was an increase in the

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,
Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI Item number 8 Page 14

quality of scholarship produced at the university. This formative period resulted in a national reputation for Wisconsin as a center of high quality research and scholarship which still exists today. Like their former counterparts, many of these new faculty members lived in the Langdon Street area, and, unfortunately, most of their houses no longer exist. For example, between 1892 and 1905, professors Moses Slaughter, Frederick Jackson Turner, Charles Slichter, and Charles Van Hise all lived in the district on N. Frances Street. Referred to as the "Frances Street Cabal," these prominent professors were said to have wielded great influence with the university administration. All of the homes of these professors, except Turner, were destroyed for a high-rise apartment building.

The home of Frederick Jackson Turner (629 N. Frances St., 1893) is still extant, and, although altered from its historic appearance, it represents the period in which Turner was a noted history scholar, and also when Turner was particularly influential at the university. Trained by an earlier scholar at the University of Wisconsin, William Allen, Turner developed into an important scholar who made a national reputation for himself and Wisconsin with his address to the American Historical Association on the significance of the frontier in American history. The address, delivered in Chicago in 1893, discussed the relationship of westward movement to society and its effects on sectionalism and nationalism. The paper also discussed the effect of free land on American society, and the significance of the closing of the frontier in 1890. Until 1910, when Turner left Wisconsin to take a position at Harvard, he was involved in a number of academic advances which were made at the university. He played a significant role in bringing Richard T. Ely to the university and the subsequent establishment of a school of economics for Ely. He also was influential in the establishment of the schools of history and political science, and helped make Wisconsin a pioneer in the midwest in the development of advanced study in all areas of the social sciences.¹⁹

There is only one other house in the district which is associated with the formative turn of the century scholarship at the university. This is the Joseph Jastrow house, at 237 Langdon St. (1891), where Jastrow and his wife lived between 1891 and 1928. Although not as significant as Turner, Jastrow was one of the many new scholars populating the university at the turn of the century. Jastrow helped improve the psychology program at Wisconsin, particularly in the area of experimental psychology, a field which the university is still noted for today.²⁰

Law

The establishment of the state capital at Madison drew a number of persons associated with the legal professions to the city. Madison was the home base for the State Supreme Court and other courts, and many judges and lawyers made their homes in Mansion Hill and along Langdon Street before the fraternity-sorority period. One of the most important houses in the district in this category is the Romanzo Bunn house at 104 Langdon St. (1878). Bunn's legal career was long and prestigious. A native of New York, Bunn came to Wisconsin in 1855 to Galesville in Trempealeau County. He served as county district attorney from 1857 to 1858, and as state assemblyman in 1860. In 1861 he moved to Sparta and practiced law. He was elected to the old sixth district circuit court judgeship and served from 1869 to 1877. In 1877 he was appointed U.S. district court judge, and served in this capacity until 1905. During his tenure in Madison between 1877 and 1909, he lived at 104 Langdon St. The house, although somewhat altered, is a physical reminder of Bunn's illustrious career.²¹

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 15

For NPS use only
received
date entered

At 131 Langdon St. (1894), the remodeled John B. Winslow house was the home of another important jurist between 1894 and 1919. A New York native, Winslow came to Racine in 1856 where he received his education and legal training. He held local offices in Racine, and in 1883 he was elected judge of the first judicial district. Appointed to the State Supreme Court in 1891, he was elected to numerous terms and in 1907 became chief justice. Winslow helped define Wisconsin law during the progressive era in state politics, and laid a foundation for the highly-competent judicial system Wisconsin has had in the twentieth century. Winslow lived at 131 Langdon St. until his death in 1920. The house was extensively remodeled in 1925 and was a fraternity house for a number of years. But the house still retains enough integrity to be associated with the important career of John B. Winslow.²²

Another prominent person associated with the legal profession, and whose house is still extant in the district was Willett S. Main. After coming to Wisconsin from New York in 1846, Main worked numerous years as both under-sheriff and sheriff. He eventually attained the position of U. S. Marshall (1871-1902), but is also remembered for helping bring the Chatauqua to Madison. He was president of the Monona Lake Assembly, one of the largest of these functions in the United States in the nineteenth century. Main built the Tudor revival house at 622 N. Henry St. as a retirement home, and he and his wife after him lived there from 1904 to 1921. W. A. P. Morris, another native New Yorker, came to Wisconsin in 1857, the year he was admitted to the Bar. He established a successful law practice and founded the Dane County Title Company, an important legal research company which still exists today. Morris was the first person to build a house in the Howard Place replat of the Lakelawn plat of block four in 1901-1902. He lived at 635 Howard Pl. between 1902 and 1919.²³

SOCIAL HISTORY: DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL GREEK LETTER SOCIETIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Social Greek letter societies have played a significant role in the formation of student life on campuses across the nation. Fraternities and sororities, in the past, have provided both campus political leaders, and campus activity leaders. While they have not always been welcomed at universities and colleges at times, they had provided housing, social interaction, and a high quality of student life for many students, both in and out of fraternities and sororities.

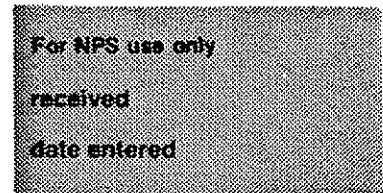
The social Greek letter societies originated in 1777 at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. The first society was called Phi Beta Kappa, and it was formed for social and literary purposes. This society and its branches established later at Yale and Harvard, met regularly until the later years of the Revolutionary War disrupted their activities in Virginia. The society grew to only a total of five chapters, and by the Civil War era, it had become the scholastic honor society it is today. Attempts in the early 1800s to re-establish the social fraternity on college campuses met with failure. The competition from student literary societies, popular during the nineteenth century, which stressed writing and speaking, and which were encouraged by university administrations and faculty members, hampered the growth of social Greek letter societies.²⁴

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI Item number 8 Page 16



In 1825, senior students at Union College formed the Kappa Alpha society; and in 1827, Sigma Phi and Delta Phi were also established at the college. Termed the "Union Triad," they were the pattern for the American fraternity system. Fraternities grew throughout the established universities prior to the Civil War, and flourished after the war ended.²⁵

The first sorority, Alpha Delta Pi, was founded as the Adelphean Society in 1851. Pi Beta Phi began in 1867, and what is considered the first modern sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta, was founded in 1870. Sororities grew at a somewhat slower pace, due to fewer women students and strong support by women students of the literary societies still in vogue in the post-Civil War period.²⁶

Unlike professional fraternities whose members all belong to a particular field of study, or honor societies which gather members based on scholastic achievement, the social Greek letter societies formed groups of socially compatible people who possessed common goals and interests. The primary interest of social Greek letter societies has always been brotherhood/sisterhood and social interaction. And, Greeks were seen as elitist and restrictive for this reason during their historic period, as well as today. However, they have enhanced campus life for students by stressing leadership both in political offices and student activities. Often, the Greeks are the most energetic and enthusiastic students on campus, keeping up many of the traditions associated with university life. After World War II, Greek letter societies increasingly participated in philanthropic activities such as scholarship fund-raising and charity fund-raising, partly to improve their image to both students and university administrators. Although the first social welfare program begun by a sorority was in 1912, the emphasis of Greeks as philanthropists has significantly increased during the last 30-40 years.²⁷

At the University of Wisconsin, social Greek letter societies developed along similar lines as at other universities. Wisconsin had a thriving group of literary societies and like many other colleges, Greeks were seen as elitist and undemocratic. Still, Greek chapters developed at the University of Wisconsin, and eventually, most societies received national affiliation with a fraternity or sorority. The Greek movement reached a peak during the 1920s when a traditional fraternity row developed along Langdon Street and throughout the Langdon Street historic district. The first fraternity established at Wisconsin was Phi Delta Theta, founded in 1857. Then, in 1873, Beta Theta Pi established its organization, and is currently the oldest Greek chapter in the historic district. Other early fraternities include Phi Kappa Psi (1875), Chi Psi (1878), Sigma Chi (1884), Delta Upsilon (1885), and Delta Tau Delta (1888). Except for Phi Kappa Psi, all these fraternities have maintained chapter houses in the historic district, beginning with Chi Psi, who rented 602 N. Frances St. around 1883 as their chapter house. In 1889, Beta Theta Pi followed suit by renting 614 Langdon St. as their chapter house. Chi Psi and Delta Tau Delta both built the first houses used expressly as chapter houses in 1892. The first sorority on campus was Kappa Kappa Gamma, founded in 1875. Delta Gamma was founded in 1881, Gamma Phi Beta in 1885, and Kappa Alpha Theta in 1890. Sororities have often had houses outside of the historic district, but today, most sororities reside within the boundaries of the district. Greek letter societies established chapter houses in the Langdon Street area because of the convenience to the university campus, and because, during the early years of chapter houses, the large mansions of Langdon St. provided ideal living quarters for the organizations. By the 1920s, the Langdon

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 17

Street historic district was almost totally Greek, and today, Greek houses still dominate the district, even though they no longer make up the majority of the student population in this area.

Established in 1873, Beta Theta Pi fraternity is the oldest existing fraternity on the university campus. Founded in 1873, it erected its Mediterranean revival house in 1925, and has maintained it ever since. Chi Psi was founded in 1878, and its current home at 150 Iota Ct. was built in 1911-12. Delta Upsilon, founded at Wisconsin in 1885 constructed a chapter house at 640 N. Frances St. in 1906, and still reside there. Phi Gamma Delta's current home was constructed at 16 Langdon St. in 1927 for this fraternity founded in 1893. Other long-term fraternities in the district include Kappa Sigma, founded in 1898 and living at 124 Langdon St. since 1923-24; Sigma Alpha Epsilon, founded in 1903 and living at 627 N. Lake St. since 1925, and Chi Phi, founded in 1916 and living at 610 N. Henry St. since 1928.

Sororities which have maintained chapter houses for extended periods of time include include the oldest sorority at Wisconsin, Kappa Kappa Gamma, founded in 1875, and residing residing at 601 N. Henry St. since 1929. Delta Gamma, founded in 1881 has had two long-time chapter houses in the district. From 1906 to 1926, they resided at 250 Langdon St., built expressly for them; and in 1936, they built the larger colonial revival house at 103 at 103 Langdon, where they have resided ever since. Gamma Phi Beta, founded in 1885, built their current house at 270 Langdon St. in 1926-27; Kappa Alpha Theta, founded in 1890, built the Mediterranean revival house at 237 Lakelawn Pl. in 1924-25, then moved into the old Acacia fraternity house at 108 Langdon St. in 1965, where they have resided ever since. Chi Omega, founded in 1902, built the prairie house at 615 N. Henry St. in 1911, stayed until 1926, when their elegant sorority house at 115 Langdon was completed, and it has been their home ever since. Alpha Chi Omega, founded in 1903, built the north wing of their colonial revival house in 1927, then added the west wing in 1965. Finally, Alpha Gamma Delta, founded in 1905, has resided at 220 Lakelawn Pl. since it was built in 1925.

Social Greek letter societies have had a long tenure at Wisconsin, surviving both the economic hard times of the Great Depression, and the political hard times of the 1960s. They have kept traditions alive and have provided housing and social interaction for many students at Wisconsin. Because they are an integral part of the history of student life on campus, and because they are such a strong physical force in the Langdon Street historic district, social Greek letter societies are a significant part of the social history of Madison.

Notes to Item 8

¹"Mansion Hill," brochure published by the Madison Landmarks Commission, March, 1981, pp. 1-11.

²David V. Mollenhoff, Madison: A History of the Formative Years, Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1982, pp. 22-54; Daniel Durrie, A History of Madison, Madison: Atwood & Culver, 1874, p. 170.

³Mollenhoff, p. 54; Durrie, p. 221.

⁴Madison Plat Maps, 1855, 1872, 1890; Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Maps, 1902, 1908, on file, Archives, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; Mollenhoff, p. 141; "Mansion Hill," pp. 32-33.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet

Dane Co., WI

Item number 8

Page 18

For NPS use only

received

Date entered

⁵Mollenhoff, pp. 124-126; B. W. Suckow, "History of Madison," in the Madison City Directory for 1866, Madison: Atwood & Rublee, 1866, p. 29. Information about the rapid replat came from Madison Plat Map, 1890, and the tax rolls of 1890, which show rapid development in the new replat.

⁶Mollenhoff, p. 156.

⁷Mollenhoff, pp. 192-194, 352; Merle Curti and Vernon Carstensen, The University of Wisconsin A History 1848-1925, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1949, Vol. I, pp. 502, 660-665.

⁸Mollenhoff, p. 352 and note # 272 of Chapter 6, p. 478.

⁹There is some question as to when Chi Psi began occupying 602 N. Frances St. Neither tax rolls nor city directories list them as owners or occupants. Chi Psi literature claims they began residing in 1880. Both Curti and Carstensen and Mollenhoff use the date 1888. Other dates are from tax rolls and city directories.

¹⁰Correspondence and Miscellaneous files, Division of Student Affairs Collection, University Archives, Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

¹¹Information about the following architects was taken from the architects' files at the State Historic Preservation Office, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; the architects' files of the Historic Preservation Planner for the City of Madison, City Planning Department, Municipal Building, Madison, WI, and architectural survey cards housed at the Historic Preservation Office.

¹²Dictionary of Wisconsin Biography, Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1960, p. 50; Mollenhoff, p. 327.

¹³American Exchange Bank 100th Anniversary, Madison: American Exchange Bank, 1971, pp. 7-13; Madison Past and Present, Wisconsin State Journal Semi-Centennial, 1902, p. 234.

¹⁴History of Dane County Biographical and Genealogical, Madison: Western Historical Association, 1906, pp. 841-842; Madison Past and Present, p. 222.

¹⁵Madison Past and Present, p. 205; Madison Landmarks nomination form, October, 1982-January, 1983.

¹⁶Madison Past and Present, 195-196, 169, 216; Mollenhoff, 175; History of Dane County, p. 637; Biographical Review of Dane County Wisconsin, Chicago: Biographical Review Publishing Co., 1893, pp. 603-04.

¹⁷Curti and Carstensen, Vol. I, pp. 179, 196.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 345-347, 355.

¹⁹Ibid., 502, 616-618, 631-643, Vol. II, p. 12

²⁰Ibid., Vol II, p. 334; Wisconsin Biography, p. 333.

²¹Wisconsin Biography, p. 59.

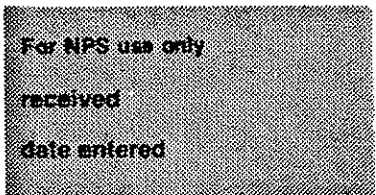
²²Ibid., pp. 378-379.

²³Madison Past and Present, p. 56; "Mansion Hill" p.33.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,



Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI Item number 8 & 9 Page 19

²⁴ John Robson, ed., Baird's Manual of American College Fraternities, 17th Ed., Menasha, WI: The Collegiate Press, 1963, pp. 7-8.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 8-9.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 8-10.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 22.

ITEM 9

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Primary Sources

Madison City Directories, 1858-1985, Library, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, WI.

Madison Tax Rolls, 1856-1936, City Planning Office, Municipal Building, Madison, WI and Archives, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, WI.

Photography Files for Madison, Iconography department, Archives, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, WI.

Photography Files for Fraternities and Sororities, University of Wisconsin Archives, Memorial Library, Madison, WI.

Plat Maps for Madison, 1855, 1872, 1890, Archives, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, WI.

Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Maps, 1902, 1908, 1939, 1942 updated to present, City Planning Office, Municipal Building, Madison, WI and Archives, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, WI.

Student Affairs, Division of, Collection, University of Wisconsin Archives, Memorial Library, Madison, WI.

Secondary Sources

Biographical Review of Dane County Wisconsin. Chicago: Biographical Review Publishing Co., 1893.

Butterfield, C. W. History of Dane County Wisconsin. Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1880.

Curti, Merle and Vernon Carstensen. The University of Wisconsin A History 1848-1925. Vol. I and II. Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1949.

Dictionary of Wisconsin Biography. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1960.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,

Continuation sheet

Dane Co., WI

Item number

9

Page 1

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Durrie, Daniel S. A History of Madison. Madison: Atwood & Culver, 1874.

History of Dane County Biographical and Genealogical. Madison: Western Historical Association, 1906.

Madison Past and Present. Wisconsin State Journal Semi Centennial, 1902.

"Mansion Hill." Pamphlet. Madison Landmarks Commission, March, 1981.

Mollenhoff, David V. Madison A History of the Formative Years. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1982.

Robson, John, Ed. Baird's Manual of American College Fraternities, 17th Ed. Menasha: The Collegiate Press, 1963.

Thwaites, Reuben Gold. The Story of Madison. Madison: The University Historical Publishing Co., 1900.

Wisconsin State Journal Centennial Edition, September 24, 1939.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Pages

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 19 acres

Quadrangle name Madison West, Wis.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	6
3	0
4	8
4	0

4	7	7	1	9	2	0
Zone	Easting		Northing			

B

1	6
3	0
4	8
4	0

4	7	7	1	7	6	0
Zone	Easting		Northing			

C

1	6
3	0
5	1
3	0

4	7	7	1	7	5	0
Zone	Easting		Northing			

D

1	6
3	0
5	5
0	0

4	7	7	2	0	8	0
Zone	Easting		Northing			

E

1	6
3	0
5	4
2	0

4	7	7	2	1	7	0
Zone	Easting		Northing			

F

Zone	Easting		Northing			

G

Zone	Easting		Northing			

H

Zone	Easting		Northing			

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Pages

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 Carol Lohry Cartwright, Consultant and Katherine H. Rankin, Preservation Planner

organization City of Madison date 1/2/86

street & number 945 Dane St. (consultant) Municipal Building (Rankin) telephone (608) 251-4784 (608) 266-6552

city or town Madison state WI

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 _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Langdon Street Historic District, Madison,
Continuation sheet Dane Co., WI

Item number 10

Page 1

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Boundary Description

Beginning at the intersection of the northern terminus of N. Lake St. and the shoreline of Lake Mendota, then south along the right of way line of N. Lake St., to the intersection with the rear lot line of 633 Langdon St., then east along the rear lot lines of 633, 625, 619, 611 and 601 Langdon St., across N. Frances St. to the rear lot line of 265 Langdon St., then east along the rear lot lines of 265, 257, 251 and 245 Langdon St., then northeast along the rear lot lines of 241, 237, 233, 227, 221, 211 and 201 Langdon St., across N. Henry St. to the rear lot line of 141 Langdon St., then northeast along the rear lot lines of 141, 137, 135, 133, 131, 127, 121, 115, and 103 Langdon, across N. Carroll St. to the rear lot line of 29 Langdon St., then northeast along the lot lines of 29 and 25 Langdon St., then southeast along the southwest lot line of 17 Langdon St. to the rear lot line of 17 Langdon St., then northeast along the rear lot lines of 17 and 1 Langdon St., then northwest along the right of way line of Wisconsin Avenue to the rear lot line of 2 Langdon St., then southwest along said line to the intersection of the rear lot line of 10 Langdon St. and the south and east lot lines of 12 Langdon St., then northwest along the east lot line of 12 Langdon St. to the shoreline of Lake Mendota, then generally southwest along the shoreline to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

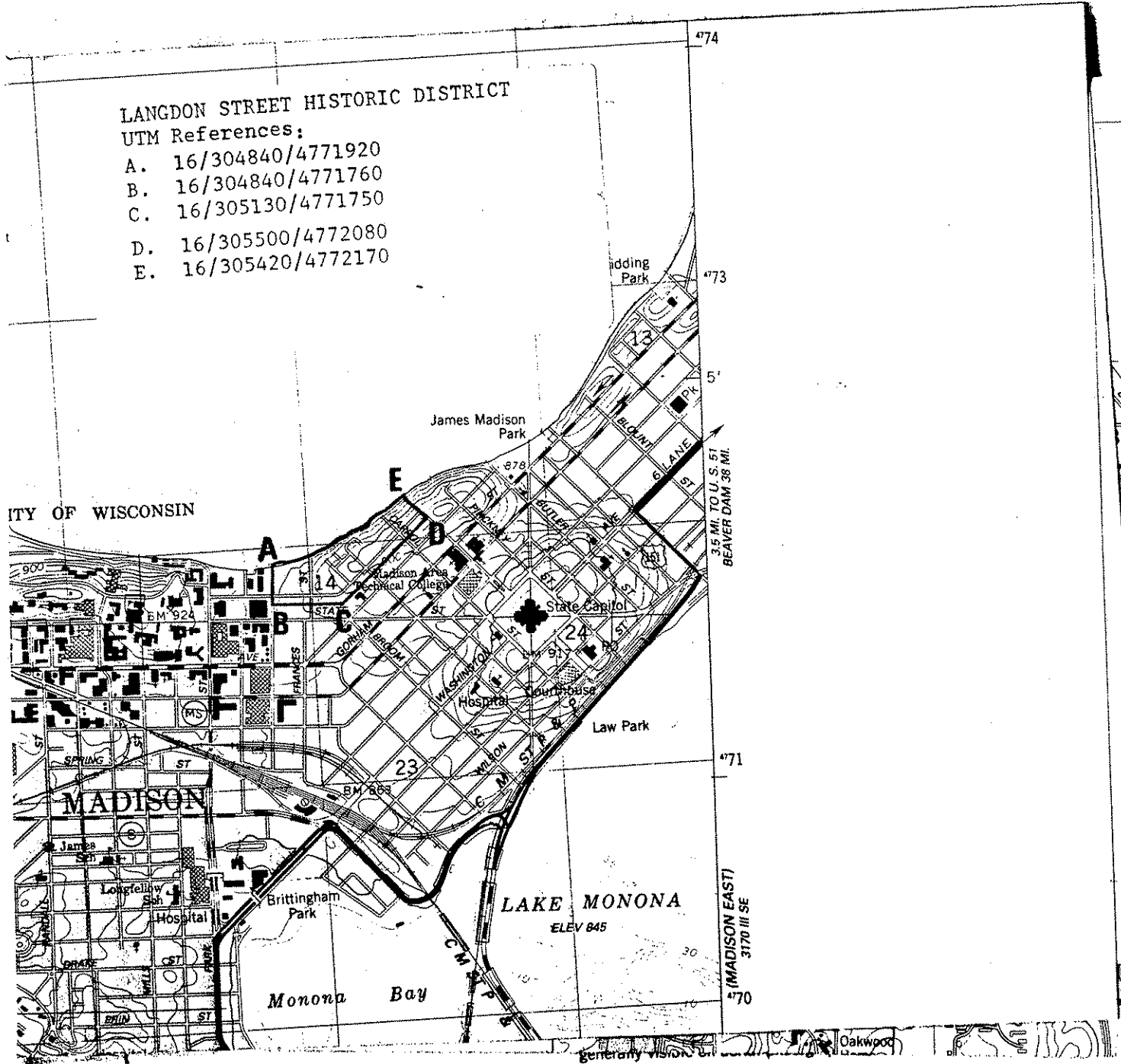
The boundary was determined using the following criteria: Lake Mendota was the obvious northern boundary. The northeastern boundary was determined by the intrusive street, Wisconsin Avenue, and the 1940s hotel at its end, as well as the open space and high rise office building beyond Wisconsin Avenue. The southeast boundary between Wisconsin Avenue and the curve in the 200 block of Langdon St. was determined primarily for historical reasons. The neighboring streets have housing stock similar to the older private residences in this area of Langdon St. However, these streets do not have the concentration of fraternities and sororities which occurs along Langdon Street, an historical element which differentiates Langdon St. from its neighbors. The southern boundary, from the curve in the 200 block to N. Lake St., borders on commercial streets associated with the lower State Street business district. The western boundary borders on large, institutional buildings affiliated with the University of Wisconsin.

These boundaries include the most significant architectural and historical structures as possible within the district, while eliminating as many non-contributing buildings as possible.

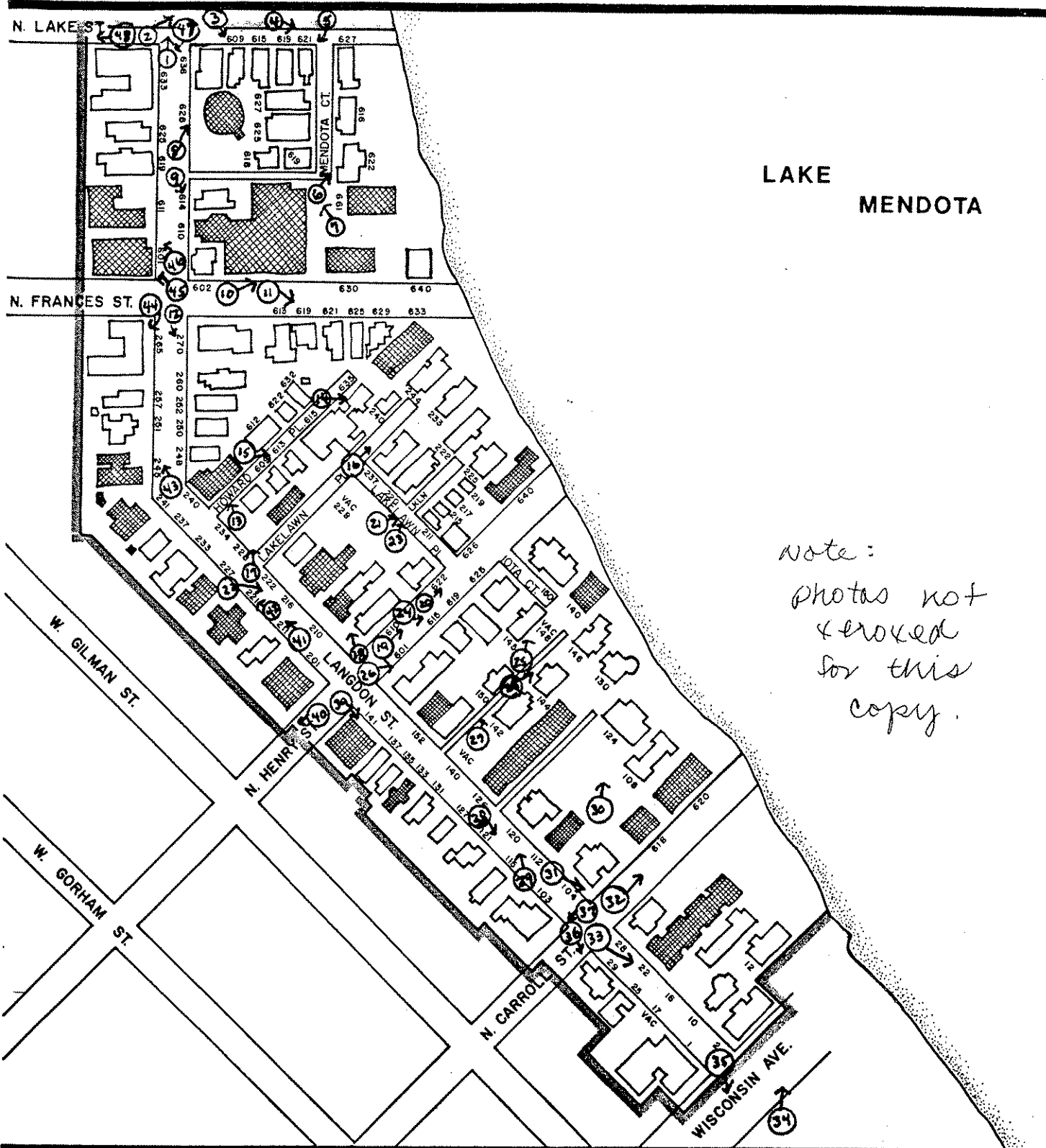
LANGDON STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

UTM References:

- A. 16/304840/4771920
- B. 16/304840/4771760
- C. 16/305130/4771750
- D. 16/305500/4772080
- E. 16/305420/4772170



generally visible on Oakwood



LAKE
MENDOTA

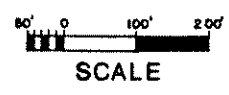
*Note:
photos not
xeroxed
for this
copy.*

LANGDON STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT MADISON, WISCONSIN

Location of Photographs

LEGEND

- DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- 200 PROPERTY ADDRESS
- CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES
- NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES
- 41 PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER AND VIEW



DECEMBER, 1985