Coburn Hall
1897

Building History

Coburn Hall was built for the Lowell Normal School, a state teaching college founded in 1894. The Classical Revival building, built in 1897, was named for Frank Coburn the first dean of the school. The architects of Coburn Hall were Frederick Stickney and William Austin who also partnered to design Lowell High School (1892) on Kirk Street while Stickney designed many other Lowell buildings. Born in Lowell, Stickney studied architecture at MIT and achieved a national reputation by designing buildings in Chicago, Cincinnati, and New York.

The Lowell Normal School became Lowell Teachers College in 1932 and by 1960, Lowell State College. Lowell State and the Lowell Technological Institute (the present day North Campus) merged in 1975 to form the University of Lowell and in 1991, became UMass Lowell.

Coburn Hall underwent a $47 million rehabilitation that was completed in early 2020 and received an award in 2022 from the Boston Society for Architecture for accessible design. The building underwent extensive renovations, including an addition, along with accessibility upgrades and smart classroom technology. In addition, 1930s era murals were uncovered and restored.

Coburn Hall as seen in 1899.. (Photo – UMass Lowell Center for Lowell History)