

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Massachusetts	
COUNTY: Middlesex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Harvard University Hall

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Harvard Yard, Harvard University campus

CITY OR TOWN:  
Cambridge

STATE: Massachusetts      CODE:      COUNTY: Middlesex      CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Harvard University Dr. Nathan M. Pusey, President

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Cambridge      STATE: Massachusetts      CODE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Middlesex County Court House, South District

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Cambridge      STATE: Massachusetts      CODE:

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:  
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

University Hall is a large three-story over elevated and rusticated basement structure, oblong in shape, and with a hipped roof. The building, constructed of Chelmsford granite, ashlar, is 140 feet long, 50 feet wide, and about 40 feet high. The east and west long elevations are similar and each facade is divided into three sections: a seven-bay wide middle portion, painted white, adorned by four giant wooden Ionic pilasters, with a wooden balustrade on the roof above, and two flanking three-bay-wide wings. First story windows in the wings and center section have flat arches. Second-story windows of the middle portion are very tall and round-headed; those of the wings are rectangular and above them, in the third-story, are small oblong windows.

The middle section of the west elevation once had a one-story portico supported by nine granite pillars; this feature, added to the original design in 1813 and removed in 1842, has never been reconstructed.

Two flights of stone steps, set in the end bays of the middle sections of both long elevations, lead up to the first-story level. Here round arched doors, set in rusticated stonework, give access on the first floor to four parallel halls or rooms, the central pair separated from those on the north and south by wide through (east-west) corridors paved with coarse red hexagonal tiles. These halls were originally college commons, or dining rooms, one for each class, and were served by two kitchens in the basement. The dining rooms were connected by "large round oriels" which served chiefly as tempting targets through which insults and food were hurled from class to class. The use of these rooms as commons ended in 1842.

Stone cantilevered staircases located in the east-west corridors lead up to the second floor, with a large chapel in the center and recitation rooms in the wings; corridors in the third story originally opened onto the galleries of the chapel and additional recitation rooms. The chapel, measuring 45 by 55 feet and 30 feet in height, was used until 1858, when it was partitioned into separate rooms. In 1896 the chapel was restored without its galleries, and presently serves as the faculty room. University Hall now houses the offices of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and of the Deans of Harvard College. The exterior of the building is little-altered, but the interior has been revised many times. University Hall is in excellent condition and is open to visitors.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**3. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

1813-15

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal             | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric            | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic               | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation           |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designed by the Boston architect Charles Bulfinch in 1812 and constructed by Loammi Baldwin, Jr. in 1813-14, University Hall is a superb example of a large college building built in the Federal or Classical Revival style. The exterior of University Hall is little-altered but its interior has been greatly changed over the years.

History

On November 8, 1812 a committee was appointed "to devise the form and site of a Building on the College to include a Common Hall." The committee immediately requested the assistance of Charles Bulfinch of Boston, who prepared three alternative plans for the proposed structure. On December 12, Harvard University paid the architect \$100 for his plans. Construction began on July 1, 1813 and the building was substantially completed in 1814. Loammi Baldwin, Jr. was in charge of the construction until May 1814 and Bulfinch then supervised the work through to completion in 1815. Cost of construction was \$65,000.

Of the changes in design made during construction, the most significant were the addition of "the Colonnade delineated by Mr. Bulfinch" to the west front and the omission of a proposed cupola and two flights of stairs from the east front corresponding to those on the west "on account of the expense." The omitted steps were added in 1917 and 1842 the much criticize colonnade or porch on the west front was removed. In 1842 the commons was abolished and in the following decades the interior of University Hall was substantially altered.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Charles A. Place, Charles Bulfinch, Architect and Citizen (Boston, 1925), 138, 210-12, 240.

Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Architecture, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Baltimore, 1963), 84.

Talbot F. Hamlin, The American Spirit in Architecture (New Haven, 1926).

Wayne Andrews, Architecture, Ambition, and Americans (New York, 1955), 99.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		42° 22 ' 28 "	71° 07 ' 05 "	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1 acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Division of History, Office of Archeology and  
 Historic Preservation, National Park Service 6/22/70

STREET AND NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

801 - 19th Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Washington, D. C.

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**13. NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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STATE	
Massachusetts	
COUNTY	
Middlesex	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)

University Hall

(Number all entries)

9. Major Bibliographical References for University Hall, Cambridge:

Massachusetts, A Guide to Its Places and People (American Guide Series)  
(Boston, 1937), 196.

Walter H. Kilham, Boston After Bulfinch, An Account of Its Architecture,  
1800 - 1900 (Cambridge, 1948), 11.

John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown, The Architecture of America, A Social  
and Cultural History (Boston and Toronto, 1961), 87, 189.

Harold Kirker, The Architecture of Charles Bulfinch (Cambridge, 1969), 273-  
281.