

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 30 1975

DATE ENTERED

NOV 20 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1** NAME

HISTORIC

Waller Hall, (Willamette University)

AND/OR COMMON

## LOCATION

STREET &amp; NUMBER

900 State Street

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Salem

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd District

STATE

Oregon

CODE  
41COUNTY  
MarionCODE  
047

## CLASSIFICATION

## CATEGORY

 DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
 BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
 IN PROCESS  
 BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

 OCCUPIED  
 UNOCCUPIED  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 NO

## PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE  
 COMMERCIAL  
 EDUCATIONAL  
 ENTERTAINMENT  
 GOVERNMENT  
 INDUSTRIAL  
 MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 RELIGIOUS  
 SCIENTIFIC  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 OTHER:

## OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Willamette University

STREET &amp; NUMBER

900 State Street

CITY, TOWN

Salem

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Oregon

## LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Marion County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Salem

STATE

Oregon

**6** REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE

April, 1975

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Parks &amp; Recreation Branch, Highway Building

CITY, TOWN

Salem

STATE

Oregon

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

—EXCELLENT  
GOOD  
—FAIR

—DETERIORATED  
—RUINS  
—UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

—UNALTERED  
ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
—MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Waller Hall on the Willamette University Campus in Salem was finished in 1867. The building can best be described as late Federal architecturally, although other stylistic influences are present.

The following description of Waller Hall appeared in Oregon and its Institutions published in 1868, pp. 266-7.

The plan of the building is that of a Greek cross, and was recommended to the agent by Bishop James when he last visited the Oregon Conference. The two parts of the cross are each eighty-four feet long and forty-four feet wide. These cross each other exactly in the center, so that the building presents about the same appearance from whichever side you take your observation. The height of the building from the base to the top of the dome is one hundred feet, and from the base to the eaves fifty feet. The basement story is twelve feet, the first story above is sixteen feet, the second twelve feet, and the third twelve feet. There are three entrances to the building, the main entrance into the chapel being in the end of the north wing, and other entrances being in the east and west wings. These wings are mainly occupied by a broad and commodious winding stairway which lead to the school rooms above, so that the members of the school in entering are not obliged to pass through the chapel. The chapel is very commodious, occupying the entire story of the cross above the basement, running north and south. That is, the chapel is forty-four by eighty-four feet, with the walls taken out. It is nicely finished, with a broad platform at the south end, and finely and comfortably seated throughout. At each side there is a door which passes into the east and west wings to the stairways. One of these doors is designed for the ingress and egress of the ladies, and the other for the gentlemen of the school. The school rooms in the second and third stories are large and very neatly finished, and furnished with seats of the latest improvement. They are of sufficient capacity to accommodate about four hundred pupils.

The facades of the four wings are divided into three bays by means of engaged columns with capitals, the center bay being somewhat broader than the flanking bays. The gable ends are fully pedimented with a plain frieze and molded horizontal and raking cornice.

Window openings of the three stories above diminish in height with each story. Double-hung sashed of the first floor contain nine lights over nine, with six lights over six in the second and third stories. Paired windows in

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WALLER HALL

7. Description (continued)

the center bays over doorways contain four lights over four. Window openings in the first and second stories are surmounted by brick cornices with dentil detail. Paired round-headed windows containing four lights over four are set in a round-headed opening in each tympanum. The facades bear an extremely strong resemblance in composition and detail to that of Philomath College in Philomath, completed the same year. The designer or builder of neither is known.

The building still rests on the original stone foundation although the foundations to the three entrance porches have been altered. The porches themselves are intact except the echinus of all the fluted Doric columns have been removed along with the pediment of the east porch. A small addition was placed on the south side in the early 1920s to house a nineteenth century organ.

A fire in 1891 "burned out the upper floors," and a mansard roof along with a Romanesque Revival tower were replaced. A latter fire in 1919 "left little more than the brick walls." The second replacement was designed to look like the original roof and lantern.

The facade is original up to the pediment except for some replaced doors and sash. The stained glass windows in the chapel are replacements.

Although the interior is greatly changed in plan and detail, many original sash and several doors and sidelights do remain along with some early window frames and moulding.

# 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 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1864-67

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Waller Hall is important as Willamette University's first substantial and oldest extant building. Willamette University was important to Oregon as an early educational center for early missionaries and settlers. The federally styled hall is one of Oregon's oldest remaining educational buildings, and its considerable mass was a major undertaking for the 1860s.

Willamette University was founded in 1842, by Methodist Missionaries and settlers in Oregon, giving it the distinction of being the oldest institution of higher learning west of the Missouri River. In 1853, the school was officially named Willamette University by the Oregon Territorial Legislature. By 1860, the University had expanded and required larger accommodations, so the Board of Trustees began making plans for that purpose.

After four years, enough money was collected to begin construction of the building. The cornerstone was laid and construction began in 1864. It was discovered that the earth under the building was high enough in clay content to make the bricks. So, the earth removed for the basement was used to produce the bricks and a kiln was constructed near the site. The builders were careful to protect the bricks from the dampness of earth and constructed a massive foundation of stone.

Rev. Alvin F. Waller supervised the construction of the building and also served as the primary fund-raiser. It was fitting that the building was named in his honor. With Waller's guidance, the structure was completed in 1867. It became the center for the University and served as the main classroom building and administration office. The auditorium, the largest in Salem at this time, served the needs of Willamette University and the surrounding community for many years.

Waller Hall has suffered two major fires in its long and active history. Rebuilding after the 1891 fire resulted in a mansard roof, a large Romanesque Revival tower, and shifts in room sizes and stair locations. The 1919 fire did far more damage and the floor plan was altered to a greater extent in the repair. Although the interior was significantly altered in the process, it is important to note that the building was not demolished. The Willamette University Board of Directors instead, reconstructed the roof to appear as it did in 1867.

