

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received NOV 7 1984  
date entered DEC 6 1984

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

1. Name

historic Thomas R. Wall, Residence

and/or common Multicultural Education Center, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

2. Location

street & number 751 Algoma Boulevard

not for publication

city, town Oshkosh

vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55

county Winnebago

code 139

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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
	N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name State of Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin System

street & number 1930 Monroe Street

city, town Madison

vicinity of

state Wisconsin 53701

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Winnebago County Courthouse, 415 Jackson Street

city, town Oshkosh

state Wisconsin

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of  
Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1980

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town 816 State Street, Madison

state Wisconsin 53706

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Thomas Wall house is a substantial, two and one-half story, wood-frame residential structure set upon a well landscaped lot within the heart of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh campus directly opposite the school's main administrative building. One of the few residential buildings remaining along this portion of Algoma Ave., the building was designed and completed between 1898 and 1900 by prominent local architect William Waters.

The imposing structure, now crowded on one side by a modern brick dormitory building, rises from a foundation of rough cut stone a full two-and-one-half stories to a tall, illuminated attic space. Clad in narrow clapboard siding, the entire structure is capped by a tall hipped roof, the top of which features a flat deck area once encircled by a decorative wood balustrade. The distinctive roof, with its widely flaring eaves, is punctuated by a series of stylized Colonial Revival dormers on each of its slopes. Each of the tall, projecting dormers features a triangular pediment supported on short engaged pilasters and infilled with decorative wood shingles. Also containing simple denticulated trim below the pediments, the dormers shade handsome, rounded arch window openings, which in most cases still retain their original sash. Countering the calculated symmetry of the dormers is a striking red brick chimney that rises dramatically from the northwestern roof slope. The chimney, which can be seen rising along the exterior of the northwestern elevation before penetrating the roof eaves, ends in decorative brick corbeling.

The building's northeastern facade, facing on Algoma Boulevard, is dominated by a one-story front porch which combines cut stone piers with grouped columns in a manner typical of Colonial Revival designs found in the city. The broad balustraded porch area is shaded by the deeply overhanging eaves of the porch roof, which similar to main roof features simple wooden bracketing. A second balustrade, detailed with swags and garlands, originally graced the roof of the slightly pitched porch area.

Basically rectangular in form, the main block of the building is marked by a series of projecting bays and oriel windows. To the front, a squared projection is found above the entrance and mimics the entry projection of the porch stairs. To its left (east) is a simple second story bay which terminates at the porch roof. Both facade projections feature three grouped window openings which brightly illuminate the north-facing interior rooms. The facade's main doorway is located off-center from the porch stairs and opens into a simple entry foyer.

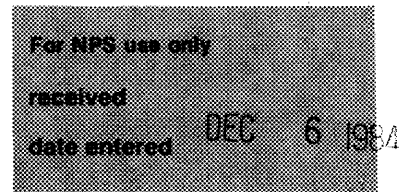
The northwestern elevation, dominated by the soaring brick chimney, features a simple rectangular bay on the first floor capped by a short pent roof, and an angular two-story bay housing the interior stairway. A plain, wooden belt course, similar to the frieze found at the cornice, separates the first floor from the second. The second floor clapboards form a small flair above this horizontal detail. On the southeastern elevation a single two-story bay window surmounted by a projecting dormer and a slight roof projection dominates the elevation. On the first floor of this projection, a large picture window is flanked by twin side windows, while on the upper floor only the side windows appear and the central window is replaced by clapboard siding. The same belt course and flaired clapboards as seen on the opposite elevation are visible here also.

The rear of the structure consists of an enclosed second story porch space supported over an open ground floor area on heavy timber bracing. While the porch features a simple flat roof, the main roof is dominated by a single large dormer. A simple walk-up first floor entry is positioned to one side.

(continued)

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

The windows of the residence are simple 1/1 sash set in simple wooden frames, and appear to be original. Alterations to the exterior of the building appear minimal except for the enclosing of an unobtrusive area of the front porch carried out soon after the building was completed, and the removal of the decorative balustrades from the roof deck and the porch. Overall, the structure exhibits a remarkable sense of integrity of both form and detail, which is carried over into many areas of the interior.

Interior: Although altered to meet the needs of its university-related programs, the interior of the turn of the century residence remains remarkably intact. All major wall and room partitions have been retained and much of the original woodwork is also still extant. Inside the front entrance is a small entry hall marked by a winding staircase with a decorative wrought iron bannister set into a polygonal bay on the northwestern wall. To the left of the entry hall (SE) is a large parlor space now utilized as a lounge. Entered through a pair of original wooden pocket doors, the parlor area features an elaborately carved fireplace and mantle trimmed in tile. A simple cove ceiling detailed with thin wood molding strips, and handsome oak trim are also featured in the room. A deep window bay marks the south corner of the room. To the right of the entry hall, directly inside the front door, is the former study (now an office) which also features extensive wood trim and a handsomely detailed cast iron and tile fireplace. To the rear of the first floor area are the former dining room (office) and kitchen areas.

The second floor contains five rooms, including a large, remodeled conference room located above the first floor parlor. As on the first floor, this large room also features a formal fireplace and window bays on the southeastern and northeastern elevations. Although more altered than the first floor spaces--with new paint, paneling, and carpeting--the upstairs rooms still retain much of their original wood window and door trim, as well as a fine turn of the century bathroom area with apparently original fixtures, including a claw-foot tub, and a pedestal sink.

Many of the interior spaces were reported to have been originally decorated with extensive wall and ceiling paintings by prominent local craftsman Gustav Behncke.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately none of this decorative work is presently visible, although it may be hidden under various coats of paint or paneling. At present the top (third) story attic space is unused due to the lack of sufficient fire safety exits.

Although an imposing structure of stylish design, the Wall house appears like a turn of the century residential oasis set as it is among the larger scale buildings of the modern University of Wisconsin campus at Oshkosh. Increasing space demands over the years have served to impinge on the building's once extensive site. At present, Taylor Hall, a 1963 dormitory facility, crowds the building on the west and a large parking area is located to the southeast.

<sup>1</sup>Wisconsin Necrology, Vol. 38, pp. 50-51.

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input 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 1898-1900 <sup>1</sup>

Builder/Architect William Waters <sup>1</sup>

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Thomas R. Wall residence is a locally significant representation of the elaborate and grand architectural traditions of late 19th century residential design in the city of Oshkosh. Designed by prominent local architect William Waters,<sup>1</sup> the Wall residence is a fine example of the blending of late Queen Anne and emerging classical Colonial Revival forms and details in an imposing residence for one of Oshkosh's more prominent industrial entrepreneurs.

Historical Background: Thomas Wall's father had come to Oshkosh in 1855 and within a few years had joined in with numerous other early industrialists in establishing the local lumber industry. Upon his death in 1896, the elder Wall's sons Thomas and James took over the family businesses, which at the time included interests in local steamship lines, the Wall-Spalding Lumber Co., the Winneconne Lumber Co., and the Torrey Cedar Co.<sup>2</sup>

In 1898-99, Thomas R. Wall had the imposing, two and one-half story, Colonial Revival-influenced home at 715<sup>1</sup> Algoma Blvd. (originally noted as 415 Algoma) built for himself. Located in the affluent Algoma Boulevard area, home to many of the city's leading business and professional people, the house was designed by prominent 19th and early 20th century Oshkosh architect William Waters,<sup>3</sup> who had designed a number of residences along Algoma and in various other areas of the city. One of these residences, the Hooper-Oviatt house at 842 Algoma Blvd. (NRHP 1979), is also on the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh campus. Perhaps one of the city's most prolific designers, Waters was also responsible for numerous commercial, church and school designs in the region, all of characteristically handsome design.<sup>4</sup>

Wall, who by 1928 had held positions as president of the Commercial National Bank of Oshkosh, president of the Winneconne and Wall Lumber companies, and secretary-treasurer of the Wall-Spalding and Torrey Cedar Lumber companies, eventually sold the home to his son-in-law, Oshkosh businessman Morgan Davies.<sup>5</sup> Davies, who was closely associated with the Morgan Co., a sash and door factory in the city, lived in the house until 1930-31 when it was again sold, to John H. Bartlett, Jr. of the Oshkosh Trunk Co.<sup>6</sup> Wall, himself, had moved from the city to a country home in Windemere, south of the city, where he died in 1928. The residence on Algoma Boulevard was finally purchased by the University of Wisconsin (then the Wisconsin State Teachers College) in 1947 and served various uses, including faculty housing, dormitory space, and a music facility.<sup>7</sup> The building is now utilized as the home of the university's Multi-Cultural Education Center, which traces its roots to November 1968.

Architectural Significance: Typical of the picturesque designs of the late nineteenth century, the Wall residence, with its two and one-half stories, tall multi-angled roofline, clapboard siding, and carefully integrated projecting bays and oriel windows, is a dramatic example of the blending of late Queen Anne building forms and traditions with strongly emerging Colonial Revival influences. Typical of many of Oshkosh's finer residences from the period are the building's massive front porch, featuring stone and wood detailing, an abundance of classically based details, and decorative window and cornice ornamentation.

(continued)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one

Quadrangle name Oshkosh

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 16 375730 4876500  
Zone Easting Northing

B                    
Zone Easting Northing

C                  

D                  

E                  

F                  

G                  

H                  

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Situated within Lot 14 Block U of Jackson & Martins Addition , 5th Ward, City of Oshkosh; constituting an area approximatly 25' out from the exterior walls of the house.

### 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 Paul R. Lusignan/Acting Architectural Historian

organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date September, 1984

street & number 816 State Street telephone 608/262-4772

city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

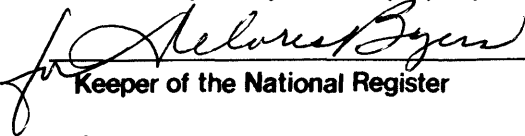
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Jeff Dean  
Director of Historic Preservation date October 25, 1984

### For NPS use only

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

  
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register date 12/6/84

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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

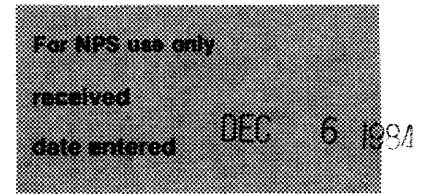
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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Maintained in fine condition by the university, the building represents a significant example of late nineteenth century residential design in the community of Oshkosh as designed by one of the city's most prolific architects.

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<sup>1</sup>Howard Needles Tammen and Bergendorff, Final Report, Intensive Historic Resource Survey, Oshkosh, pp. 153-154.

<sup>2</sup>"Oshkosh of Today," The Northwestern, Special edition 1898, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup>Howard Needles Tammen and Bergendorff, pp. 153-154.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 153-154.

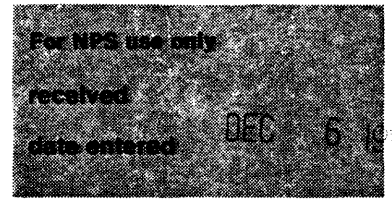
<sup>5</sup>Wisconsin Necrology, vol. 25, pp. 184-185.

<sup>6</sup>Oshkosh City Directories, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932 in possession of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

<sup>7</sup>Wisconsin State University and Wisconsin State Teachers College catalogues, in possession of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Howard Needles Tammen and Bergendoff, Final Report - Intensive Historic Resource Survey for the City of Oshkosh, Wisconsin

City of Oshkosh, Oshkosh, 1981.

"Oshkosh of Today," The Northwestern, (Special edition, 1898), Oshkosh, Wisconsin, 1898.

Wisconsin Necrology, Volume 25, pp. 184-185.

City Directories for the City of Oshkosh, Wisconsin (State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library, Madison).

University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Archives, Area Research Center, Oshkosh, Wisconsin.