

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

For HCRS use only
received MAY 28 1980
date entered JUL 3 1980

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

1. Name

historic Trinity Seminary Building (WN02-5)
and/or common Old Main, Dana College

2. Location

street & number College Drive _____ not for publication
city, town Blair _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district second
state Nebraska code 031 county Washington code 177

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name The American Lutheran Church
street & number _____
city, town Minneapolis _____ vicinity of _____ state Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Courthouse
street & number _____
city, town Blair _____ state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Preservation in Nebraska has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1971 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local _____
depository for survey records Nebraska State Historical Society
city, town Lincoln _____ state Nebraska

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Old Main is situated near the center of Dana College's 250 acre hilltop campus in the western section of Blair, Nebraska. Built over a twenty year period from 1885-1905, the present structure reflects changing attitudes toward the building and major renovation work undertaken in the mid-1950's when a decision was made to keep the building instead of razing it for a new structure.

Constructed as the Trinity Seminary Building in 1885-86, the original building (presently Old Main's central section) was a symmetrical rectangular structure, four stories in height with a five story projecting entrance tower on the east front. The ground floor or raised basement of the building is of solid masonry construction while the upper stories are of frame construction with a brick veneer except for the top floor whose mansard walls are clad in shingles. Segmentally arched openings are featured on the first floor, stilted arched hoods on the second and third floors while pedimented hoods adorn the top floor windows. A decorative tile string course surrounds the building at the springlines of the second and third floor windows. Other notable details include the pressed metal cornice, the Palladian arched windows at the belfry level, lunettes on each side of the tower's mansard and the iron cresting atop the tower. The present cresting is a replication of the original which was removed after 1910.

Two wings were added to the building as enrollment grew and additional space was needed. In 1893 the north wing was built on to the northwest corner while the larger, south wing was added in 1905. Both wings match the original in materials and detailing with only minor variations in decorative motives evident due to the range of construction periods. The end result of this building program manifests a quite picturesque building--three receding rectangular blocks from the front, a U-shaped court at the rear--one which was rather plain at the walls but which was considerably enlivened above the cornice where the dormers, chimneys, cresting and tower provided adequate architectural interest.

Old Main appears today from the outside very much as it did upon the completion of the 1905 wing. The original iron cresting of the main roof of the central section has been removed as has the original, modest wooden stairway and porch on the east front. The stairway was removed for safety reasons in 1956. The existing door into the ground level then became the main entry. All original brick flues, formerly located above the outside walls, have also been removed. The interior, which is not a part of this nomination, has been extensively remodelled.

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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Ethnic
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1885-86, 1893, 1905 **Builder/Architect**

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Old Main is significant to Nebraska in the areas of architecture, education and religion, and culturally as an important Danish institution.

In 1884, Pastor A. M. Andersen, a Danish immigrant, began teaching theology and general academic subjects from his house in Blair at the direction of the newly formed Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Association. These classes mark the beginning of Trinity Seminary and Dana College.¹ Dana became the only four-year liberal arts college in the United States to be established by Danish immigrants.² As such, Old Main stands today as an important symbol of the early theological and academic life of the Danish-American community.

Architecturally, Old Main exists as a fine, vernacular product of the French Second Empire Revival style, a style not well-represented by the extant nineteenth century academic architecture in Nebraska and one which was congenial to nineteenth century Danish tastes.³

1. A brief chronology: In 1886 an academy became part of Trinity Seminary; 1899 saw a merger with Elk Horn College, the first Danish folk high school in the United States (later a college), in Elk Horn, Iowa; in 1903 the name "Dana College and Trinity Seminary" was adopted; in 1956 Trinity Seminary moved to the Dubuque, Iowa campus of Wartburg Theological Seminary in preparation for the 1960 merger of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church; with the merger, Dana became one of eleven senior colleges of the new American Lutheran Church.

2. Their successful efforts can be seen on campus today, almost 100 years later. Campus life is still enriched with classes in the Danish language and in literature, by the student-sponsored Danish Folk Dancers, by the 10,000 volume Scandinavian Collection in the library and archives and by frequent visits of performing groups and lecturers from Denmark including a recent (1976) visit by Queen Margrethe II of Denmark. Today, Dana's students come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, but many are of Danish descent. (James Cass and Max Birubaum, Comparative Guide to American Colleges, 8th Ed., New York: Harper and Row, 1977, p. 156).

3. Nineteenth century Danish architecture was characterized by many different stylistic currents but conservative tendencies remained strong. Danish tradition was carried forward through Free Historicism (Faber, n.d.: 121, 123) or Liberal Historicism (Millech, 1951: 353-54) movements during the second half of the century and later through National Romantic developments before and after the turn of the twentieth century (Hitchcock; 1958: 395). Characterized by a preference for simple brick construction, picturesque qualities were achieved above the cornice with steep roofs, a profusion of chimneys and dormers and liberal use of towers and turrets (Cervin, 1905: 91; Hitchcock, 1958: 395).

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 4.14 acres

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name Blair, Nebr.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

A

1	1	4	7	3	1	8	2	1	0	1	0	4	1	6	0	1	3	6	1	1	0
Zone	Easting			Northing																	

B

Zone	Easting			Northing																	

C

Zone	Easting			Northing																	

D

Zone	Easting			Northing																	

E

Zone	Easting			Northing																	

F

Zone	Easting			Northing																	

G

Zone	Easting			Northing																	

H

Zone	Easting			Northing																	

Verbal boundary description and justification

Tax lot 76 in Section 10, T18N, R11E.

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 D. Murphy, Survey Architect; Ann George, Director Public Relations
Nebraska State Historical Society Dana College
1500 R Street (402/471-3270) March, 1980
Lincoln, Nebraska Blair, Nebraska

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Martin E. Kinnett

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society date 5/12/80

For HCRS use only

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

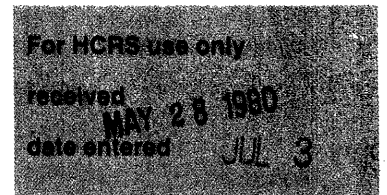
John W. Ray Luce date 7/3/80
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: William H. Brabham date 6-23-80

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Bibliography

Item number 9

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Books and Articles

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Cervin, Olof Z. "Sweden Today." The American Architect and Building News 88 (Sept. 16, 1905), pp. 91-95.

Christiansen, William E. Saga of the Tower: A History of Dana College and Trinity Seminary. Blair, Nebr.: Lutheran Publishing House, 1959.

Christiansen, G. B. Recollections of Our Church Work. Blair, Nebr.: Danish Lutheran Publishing House, 1939.

Danske i Amerika. Minneapolis, Minn.: C. Rasmussen Publishing House, 1908.

Faber, Tobias. A History of Danish Architecture. translated by Frederick R. Stevenson. Copenhagen: Det Danske Selskab, [1963 ?]

Hitchcock, Henry Russell. Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1958.

Millech, Knud. Danske arkitekturstrømninger 1850-1950: En arkitekturhistorisk undersøgelse. København: Østifternes Kreditforening, 1951.

Nielsen, H. Skov (Ed.). Dana College and Trinity Seminary: A Retrospect over Half a Century of Usefulness and Growth. Blair, Nebr.: Danish Lutheran Publishing House, 1936.

Unpublished Materials and Photographs

American Lutheran Church Archives, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa.

Dana College Archives, Dana College, Blair, Nebraska.