

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   1  

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## Summary

The Fairmount Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A as the most fashionable and affluent historic neighborhood in the capital city, home to well-to-do merchants, agricultural processing executives, and political leaders. It contains an intact collection of early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential architecture in a variety of American and Period Revival styles.

The proposed Fairmount Historic District includes 233 resources, of which 133 (57%) are contributing, and 100 (43%) are either non-contributing or were constructed after the period of significance, which ended in 1940. The resources within the proposed district are primarily one- and two-story wood-frame houses built between 1910 and 1940. The dominant architectural styles represented in the district include the Craftsman Bungalow, English Cottage, and Colonial Revival Styles, which make up 139 of the buildings. The period of significance extends from 1900 to 1940.

## General Description and Location

The City of Salem, the capital of Oregon, is located along the Willamette River 47 miles south of Portland, in the Willamette Valley. It is set in a natural basin formed by the Eola Hills to the west and the Waldo hills to the east. The city falls partially in Marion County and partially in Polk County, divided by the river. It contains over 47 square miles within its boundaries and a population of over 147,000 people. The city was established in 1845, and incorporated in 1913.

The Fairmount Historic District is located just to the south of the city center, on a hill overlooking the Willamette River to the west. It is a fairly uniform, rectangular, twenty-block area, bound by Myers Street on the north, Commercial Street on the east, Luther Street on the south (extending along a line between lots through the block between Saginaw and Commercial Streets), and by John Street on the west (extending along a line between lots from Lincoln to Myers Street). The district is contained in the 1871 Myers Addition to Salem, replatted in 1889 as the Fair Mount Park Addition to Salem.

The district is primarily residential, with just a few buildings in commercial use along the eastern edge. The streets are quiet with little traffic, except for Commercial Street, which is a major southbound arterial through the city. A number of the streets are dead ends, namely those east-west streets that terminate at the peak of the bluff over the river. Some of the mapped right-of-ways in the district have never been developed, especially those on very steep slopes. Some of these are accessible to pedestrians, while some are used exclusively by the abutting property owners.

The majority of buildings in the district are single-family residences, although there are some multiple family residences, one school, and some commercial-use buildings (some converted from residences) primarily along Commercial Street.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   2  

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The blocks within the district are uniformly arranged, approximately 300 feet by 300 feet, each bisected by a north-south alley. The streets are 60 to 70 feet wide, and most have sidewalks. Each lot as platted is approximately 50 by 150 feet, but many of the lots have been divided or combined, making the lots somewhat irregular. Setbacks are fairly uniform at 20 to 25 feet from the street. Lots have mature landscaping and trees.

The topography of the district rises from Commercial Street to the west, reaching its peak around Fairmount Avenue and Lincoln Street. West of John Street, the land drops sharply down to the west toward the Willamette River.

### Resource Types & Architectural Styles

The majority of contributing resources within the Fairmount Historic District represent Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American styles and Late 19<sup>th</sup>/Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Period Revivals. The most prevalent styles within the district are the English Cottage style, the Colonial Revival style, and the Craftsman Bungalow. Other styles are scattered in small numbers throughout the neighborhood, including the Italianate style, Queen Anne style, Arts and Crafts style, Tudor Style, Mediterranean Revival style, and French Renaissance style. The district is especially significant for its concentration of intact early 20<sup>th</sup> Century residential architecture.

#### Primary Styles

##### *Craftsman Style*

The Craftsman bungalow is an accessible, informal style related to the ideals of the English Arts and Crafts movement. In contrast to the designs of the Victorian era, the Craftsman style is characterized by an open floor plan, the use of natural materials, and simplicity of design. Simple Craftsman bungalows were popularized by trade publications and plan books. They were commonly small to moderately sized dwellings constructed of readily available materials. The style was very popular in Oregon from about 1900 to about 1925, coinciding with a period of enormous growth in the region. A typical bungalow has 1 to 1 1/2 stories, a low-pitched roof, and an integral front porch. Details include exposed eaves, decorative rafter tails and brackets, and tapered porch posts.

There are 82 examples of the Craftsman Bungalow style in the Fairmount Historic District. These are typically modest bungalows with low-pitched front or side gabled roofs and wide front porches supported by wood columns or battered posts. Contributing Craftsman bungalows in the district include 1795 Fairmount Avenue (ca. 1910), 1660 Fir Street (ca. 1910), 1455 Saginaw Street (ca 1913), and 366 Washington Street (1910).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   3  

### *Colonial Revival Style*

Colonial Revival refers to the rebirth of interest in the early English and Dutch colonial houses of the Atlantic coast of the United States. The style was an attempt to create a truly American style based on colonial architecture. In Oregon, Colonial Revival houses began to appear frequently around 1900, but the style continued to be popular for decades. The style is regionally expressed most commonly in a symmetrical form, one or two stories, with classical decorative elements such as pilasters and sidelights. There are 25 examples of the Colonial Revival style in the Fairmount Historic District. These include: 1815 Fairmount Avenue (ca. 1929), a large cross gable example with a two-story front porch; 415 Lincoln Street (ca. 1911), an unusual high style example with a corner entrance, and 1815 Commercial Street (1927), a two-story side gable example.

### *English Cottage*

The English Cottage style is a revival style that was popular in the early twentieth century, primarily between 1910-1940. It developed from the romantic ideal of an English country house. While real English cottages were constructed of genuine half timbering or stone with stucco parging, the English cottage of the northwest was constructed of stucco, brick or wood. Instead of a thatched roof, they had rolled eaves, jerkinheads, and catslide roof forms. Other possible features include small rectangular or diamond pane casement windows.

There are 32 examples of the English Cottage style in the Fairmount District. These include 495 Superior Street (ca. 1925), 1893 Saginaw Street (1920), 490 Lefelle Street (1925), and 1810 Fairmount Avenue (ca. 1926).

### **Secondary Styles**

In addition to the primary styles in the neighborhood, there are a number of additional styles that contribute to the district. Although small in number, many of these resources have high integrity and significance.

### *Italianate Style*

The Italianate style dominated American houses constructed between 1850 and 1880. In the northwest, the style was never dominant, but persisted longer. It is a picturesque, informal style based on the Italian farmhouse, but modified and adapted into a truly indigenous American style.<sup>1</sup> The style as expressed in the Fairmount District is characterized by a low pitched hipped roof, single story porches, two story rectangular bays resembling towers, and paired windows.

<sup>1</sup> McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   4  

There are two contributing Italianate style resources within the Fairmount District. These are 1491 Commercial Street (ca. 1910), and 1445 Saginaw Street (ca. 1900).

### *Queen Anne Style*

The Queen Anne style is characterized by asymmetrical massing, wrap-around porches, steeply pitched roofs, and a variety of decorative surface materials. In the Queen Anne style, wall surfaces are used as primary decorative elements. Plain, flat walls are avoided by the use of bay windows, towers, wall insets and projections, and by using a variety of wall materials of differing textures. It was named and popularized by a group of 19<sup>th</sup> century English architects. The style has little to do with Queen Anne or the architecture common during her reign (1702-14). This style was dominant in domestic architecture from about 1880-1900. It was popular in the Willamette Valley from about 1885-1905.

There are five Queen Anne style houses in the Fairmount Historic District, all of which are very well-preserved examples of the style. Houses were constructed in this style from 1900-1912. One, the Henry Fawk House, at 310 Lincoln Street (1902), is individually listed in the National Register. Other examples include 290 Lefelle Street (ca 1904), 1446 Saginaw Street (ca. 1900), and 155 Superior Street (1912).

### *Mediterranean Revival Style*

The Mediterranean Revival style was common in the United States from 1915 to about 1940. They are most common in the southwest and Florida. Houses in this style are typically stucco with a low pitched clay tile roof. Detailing includes arched windows and doors, elaborate chimney caps, Second story covered balconies, decorative vents, and wrought iron decoration.

All the examples in the Fairmount District are sheathed in stucco and all but one have red clay tile roofs. In many other respects, however, each of the four examples are unique. 1625 Commercial Street (1927), has a square entrance tower with a quatrefoil window and decorative vents, and an oversized chimney cap with a clay tile roof. 1635 Fairmount Avenue (1924), listed in the National Register, is a grand example with wrought iron balconettes. 1820 Fairmount Avenue (ca. 1937) is a one-story version with a hipped roof, front facing gable, and triple arched focal window. 1841 Fairmount Avenue (1926), has a square corner tower and a second story roofed balcony.

### *French Renaissance Style*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   5  

---

There are three examples of the French Renaissance style in the Fairmount Historic District. This style, which is relatively uncommon, is characterized by a tall, steeply pitched hipped roof, and brick stone or stucco wall cladding. The style, which was built in the suburbs between 1915 and 1945, exhibits a wide variety of detailing. 1825 Fairmount Avenue (ca. 1927), is a rare gable roof example with a prominent wall gable. It is sheathed in stucco and wood. 1610 Fir Street (1932), listed in the National Register, is a prominent brick example with a cross wing plan and an entrance tower with a conical roof. 445 Lefelle Street (ca. 1929) is a brick example with a pair of wall gables.

Other styles represented in the neighborhood in low numbers include Spanish Colonial Revival, Arts and Crafts, and World War II Era Cottage.

### **Infill**

Fairmount Historic District represents a cohesive and intact picture of early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential development. There are currently 50 resources in the Fairmount Historic District that were constructed after the period of significance. These buildings were constructed between 1941 and 2008 (primarily the late 1940s), and represent a variety of contemporary styles. There are relatively few vacant lots in the district, so ongoing infill opportunities are limited.

### **Changes within the District**

Aside from infill construction, the district is much as it was historically. Although the majority of resources are intact, there have been limited alterations including window replacements, the addition of siding, and the construction of additions. In general the district remains intact and conveys its historic character.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed Fairmount Historic District is a cohesive collection of early-twentieth century residential buildings representing a variety of early 20<sup>th</sup> century American and Revival styles. There are a total of 233 resources within the proposed district, with 57% of these contributing to its historic character. The resources constructed during the period of significance retain a high level of historic integrity, and have been well maintained, conveying the history of an early twentieth century upper class residential community.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   1  

### Overview

The Fairmount Historic District is a well-preserved example of residential development in Salem between 1880 and 1950. It is eligible for the National Register under criterion A, as an example of an upper class residential district that was popular with the wealthy and powerful residents of Salem. The development of the district reflects the overall development of the community. The district meets the National Register Criterion A for its significance in the area of community planning and development. Situated on a prominent hill overlooking downtown Salem and the Willamette River, the Fairmount District of South Salem was historically, and is still, an affluent neighborhood where prominent citizens, professionals, and families lived.

Although not nominated for its architecture, the Fairmount District is also significant for its collection of well preserved early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential architecture, and specifically houses designed by Clarence L. Smith, a locally prominent and prolific architect.

### Settlement and Development of Early Salem

Methodist missionaries from New York were the first to settle permanently in the area around Salem. At that time the area comprising the present City of Salem was known as Chemeketa. In 1834 Reverend Jason Lee, a Methodist missionary originally from Canada, was sent from the east coast to settle on the Willamette River ten miles north of present day Salem. In 1840 a second group of Methodists arrived and constructed a lumber and flour mill. The new inhabitants called their settlement "Salem," a word derived from the Hebrew word "Shalom", which was meant to convey a "City of Peace".<sup>1</sup> At the current site of 960 Broadway, Lee built a home that became the headquarters of the Jason Lee Mission (1840). This home initially housed four mission families, before becoming a hospital, guest house, and post office. It eventually became the site of the Marion County Courthouse. Jason Lee also constructed the first log cabin at the mission, known as the "Indian Labor School", the precursor to Willamette University.<sup>2</sup>

For twelve years Jason Lee worked to support the ideals established by the Mission in Oregon. In 1838, Jason Lee's first wife Anna Maria Pittman and her two day old son died. In 1842, his second wife, Lucy Thompson, also died, leaving a three week old daughter. Reverend Lee had disagreements with his superiors in the East, and was called back to New York in 1843 to confer with the Methodist Mission Board. Reverend George Gary was appointed to replace Lee at the mission in 1844. Jason Lee became ill, and died in 1845 while he was still in New York. The family remains lie in the mission plot in Jason Lee cemetery in Salem. A statue of Jason Lee, commemorating his early efforts to settle Oregon, stands in Washington D.C.

The City of Salem was first platted in 1846 by W.H. Willson, who was an agent for the trustees of the Oregon Institute (precursor to Willamette University). Mr. Thomas Cox, an immigrant who arrived in Oregon in 1847 built a two story house at the corner of Commercial and Ferry Streets in Salem. His store was the first building

<sup>1</sup> Fowler, Constance E. *The Old Days in and near Salem*. (Frank McCaffrey Dogwood Press; Seattle, 1940) unnumbered pages.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   2  

put up in Salem after the town was surveyed and was also the location of the first Salem post office.<sup>3</sup> This first plat was not recorded until four years later on March 22, 1850. Streets were 90 feet wide, and the plat consisted of two blocks. "The sale of these lots not only brought people closer to the Institute but also enabled the trustees to fund an endowment for their school."<sup>4</sup> The first block was bordered on the west by the Willamette River, on the south by Mission Street, on the east by Cottage Street, and on the north by State Street. The second block was bordered on the west by the river, on the south by State Street, on the east by Capitol Street, and on the north by Division Street.<sup>5</sup>

Champoeg was selected as Oregon's first capitol in 1843, however in 1844 it was temporarily moved to Oregon City. On August 14, 1848, the United States Congress proclaimed Oregon a territory of the United States. In March 1849, General Joseph Lane took over as territorial governor. Lane convened the first territorial legislature on July 16, 1849 at Oregon City. It was decided at their second regular session, on December 2, 1850, to convene the next session in Salem.<sup>6</sup> On the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1851 the Legislative Assembly of Oregon passed a law removing the Capital to Salem. The session of 1851-52 was held in the old Willamette University. The building known as the Rector Building on Commercial Street was occupied by the Legislature and the State Library.<sup>7</sup>

### Community and Industrial Growth: 1850-1900

Transportation in Salem improved tremendously in the later half of the nineteenth century. In February 1850 L.H. Judson and J.B. McClane laid out and recorded North Salem, which contained 29 blocks. At this time Wm. H. Willson also laid out the area east of Church Street out to Capital Street and north of State Street. In 1851 the passenger steamboat provided access from Salem to Portland. Plank sidewalks were constructed, and there was regular stage service between established local communities like Salem and Albany.

Government became Salem's main business. In 1852, construction of the first Capitol Building began, but in 1855 the unfinished building burned. From 1857-1876 the state legislature met in the Holman Building on the southwest corner of Ferry and Commercial Street. Construction on a second Capitol Building began in 1873 and was completed when the dome was finally added in 1892, cementing Salem's role as the seat of government.<sup>8</sup> State institutions began relocating to Salem in this period. In 1866 the State Penitentiary moved

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<sup>3</sup> Judson, Lewis Hubell. "Sketches of Salem..its History from the Date of Its First Settlement". Marion County History Vol 2. 1956 (Marion County Historical Society., Salem OR) p52. Also noted by James W. Cox in Vol 3 1957 p 37: "...my mother's stepfather-Turner Crump came in and the new name was "Wm. Cox and Co." Mr. Crump was appointed the first postmaster of Salem, the office being in this store."

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> "Original Plat of Salem 100 Years Old this Week". *Oregon Statesman*. March 20, 1950.

<sup>6</sup> Kadas, Marianne. *Historic Context Statement: Salem, Oregon*. (City of Salem, August, 1992) p 18.

<sup>7</sup> Brown, Henry J. "Sketches of Salem from 1851-1869. Marion County History Vol. 3 1957 (Marion County Historical Society, Salem OR) p18.

<sup>8</sup> Kadas, Marianne. *Historic Context Statement: Salem, Oregon*. (City of Salem, August, 1992) p 26.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   3  

to Salem from Portland. The School for the Deaf opened in 1870, and the School for the Blind in 1873. In 1883 the State Hospital and Asylum moved from East Portland to Salem.<sup>9</sup>

The City of Salem was incorporated by an act of the Legislature and the first election held on the first Monday in December 1860. Hon Lucien Heath was elected the first Mayor.

In addition to its main role as government center, Salem became a center for processing agricultural products from the outlying Willamette Valley. Salem mills, canneries and factories processed the crops, and made and sold supplies and services. Joseph Watt established a woolen mill in 1857, and by 1860 the mill had 100 employees and was producing \$100,000 worth of cloth. By 1871 the Salem Woolen Mill was flourishing, producing 56,000 yards of cashmeres, 52,000 yards of flannels, 16,000 yards of tweeds and 500 blankets a year.<sup>10</sup> This mill burned in 1875 and was not rebuilt. However, in 1889 Thomas Kay constructed another woolen mill. This mill burned in 1895, but Kay constructed a new one immediately. The Thomas Kay Woolen Mill employed 88 people and made National Guard Uniforms, blankets and other fine wool woven materials. The Salem Woolen Mill store was opened on Commercial Street in the late 1890's.

In 1869 Salem's population was 1,139. There were 700 private residences and 32 brick stores.<sup>11</sup> 1869 was a year of transition for Salem. It was transforming from a pioneer village to a more civilized frontier town. In 1869 no Salem home had running water or indoor plumbing. Salem's downtown streets were unpaved and dimly lighted. There was no hospital. On January 14, 1869 a special meeting of city council convened to discuss the spread of smallpox throughout the city. A health committee was established which discussed establishing a pest house, and construction of an invalid's home one and a half miles northeast of town. J.W. Souther, who owned the City Drug store offered to furnish medicine to the poor without charge, with a recommendation from a doctor. William Graves became the first undertaker, who offered coffins and a hearse at reduced prices.<sup>12</sup>

Agriculture was the most important trade in Salem at this time. Just north of the proposed district the Minto family settled and built their first house in 1869 at 841 South Saginaw. The family acquired what is now known as Minto Island, where they developed a hops and sheep ranch. John Minto became the first secretary of the State Agricultural Society, which held the first State Fair in 1861 up in Gladstone. He served as the editor of the Willamette Farmer, an agricultural newspaper.

The two largest flour mills in the state during this time period were located in Salem: the R.C. Kinney & Company Flour Mill and the North Salem Flouring Mill. The Salem Flouring Mills incorporated in 1870 and

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p 28.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, Section 8, page 10; also Oregon Business Directory, 1873

<sup>11</sup> Kadas, Marianne. *Historic Context Statement: Salem, Oregon*. (City of Salem, August, 1992) p 23.

<sup>12</sup> Maxwell, Ben. "Salem in 1869: A Year of Transition" Marion County History Vol 3 1957 (Marion County Historical Society, Salem OR) p27.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   4  

sold flour under the “Wild Rose Flour” label. Other industries included the Salem Iron Works, the Capital Lumbering Company and the Salem Bag Factory.

In 1870 a natural gas system was installed and the Oregon and California Railroad (Southern Pacific) provided Salem easy access north to Portland and south to Eugene and beyond.<sup>13</sup> Construction in the downtown commercial district also increased during this time period. Development occurred primarily along State and Commercial Streets. Indoor plumbing became possible in Salem beginning in 1871. The Salem Water Company incorporated in 1871. The first water was taken from a point 75 feet out in the Willamette River. A water tower was built on property owned by W.F. Boothby and H. Stapleton (sash and door manufacturers and partners). Their property was located west of Front between Court and State.

In 1878 the area between Mission Street and Fairmount Hill was first platted. This area first was developed beginning in the 1850s with the construction of a sawmill and a flour mill located at the foot of Owens Street. Logs were originally cut and taken from Fairmount Hill and cut at the mill or rafted to the Slough. The mill was purchased by David Miller (whom the street is named after). In 1865 the mill was bought by Witten and Rook, they sold the sawmill to the Moores family who then moved it to the foot of Ferry Street.

By 1880, Salem had over 2500 residents. The population was mostly white, native-born migrants, and German and Chinese immigrants. In 1884 Salem became the third city in Oregon to receive telephone service. The first bridge was built across the Willamette River at Salem in 1886. In 1888 electric lights were installed downtown, and horse drawn streetcars provided local public transportation around the city. In 1890 two electric streetcars began operating, making a two and one quarter mile circuit around the downtown.<sup>14</sup>

Suburban expansion occurred to the south of the downtown area, as large farm-estates were divided and platted, streets were laid out, and neighborhoods were established. Business owners and managers settled in South Salem, while the working class mill laborers settled to the north of the city center. Salem’s two existing residential National Register Historic Districts, Gaiety Hill/Bush’s Pasture Park Historic District and Court-Chemeketa Historic District, reflect this pattern of development. Fairmount was another neighborhood established to the south of downtown. Its prominent hilltop location attracted an affluent population.

### **Civic Growth: 1900-1950**

#### Prosperity: 1900-1929

The population of Salem tripled between 1900 and 1914 to 14,094, largely because of the annexation of North, South, and East Salem, which were previously separate towns. This city continued to thrive as a regional hub for shipping, processing, transportation and banking in the central Willamette Valley. Like much of Oregon, Salem experienced an economic boom following the Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland in 1905. The

<sup>13</sup> Evans-Hatch, Gail. *Salem Downtown State Street—Commercial Street Historic District National Register Nomination*. (Silverton, Oregon, 2000), Section 8, page 9.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Section 8 p10

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   5  

development of an expanded transportation network improved access to other communities for average citizens, but also decreased the cost of shipping and receiving goods and materials for businesses. Wheat and hops were Salem's main staple crops. Wheat was ground at Salem's flour mills. By 1913, Oregon was one of the largest hops producing states in the country, marketing over 115,000 bales of hops at an average price of \$35 per bale.<sup>15</sup> The Salem Canning Factory was founded in 1890, and the city grew to have the largest number of canneries on the west coast. The Hunt Brothers Cannery processed 75,000 cases of food annually by 1914. Additionally, agricultural and forest products could be easily transported by rail or ship to Portland for distribution. Lumber related industries also began to grow during this time. In 1920 the Oregon Pulp and Paper Company opened, followed in 1926 by the Western Paper Converting Company.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, many streets in the city center were paved, and cement sidewalks were constructed to replace the boardwalks. Additional streetlights were added throughout the city. In the first decade of the 1900's twelve new commercial buildings were constructed, eight of them on Court Street. The Grand Theatre was built by the Odd Fellows in 1900 as part of their building, and soon became one of Salem's favorite theaters. In the 1910's eleven new buildings were constructed, with a majority of these constructed along State Street.

In the early 1900's the streetcar service expanded and transportation in Salem continued to improve. The street car provided service to South Salem out along Commercial to the cemetery. At this time stores began to spring up along Commercial along the edge of the proposed district. For example, the Miller Street Grocery was constructed in 1907 by O.L Townsend, which provided groceries and meat to many residents of Fairmount. Local produce like potatoes, onions and fruit in season were available. It was possible to order groceries by phone and have them delivered.<sup>16</sup> The Oregon City Transportation Company offered passage to Portland every other day as well as service to Corvallis and Independence. The City was also served by Southern Pacific and the Oregon Electric Railway. By 1913, the Southern Pacific Railway offered seven mainline passenger trains. Oregon Electric made ten trips per day between Portland and Eugene, running on tracks down the center of High Street in Salem.<sup>17</sup>

This prosperity continued into the 1920s, especially in the period right after World War I. The services and facilities improving the quality of life in the city continued to expand during these decades, which, in turn, caused further growth. This growth stalled during the Great Depression, but picked up again after World War II. The character and growth of the Fairmount District reflects the cycles of development in Salem at large.

### Depression Years: 1930-1940

After the regional boom following the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition and the prosperity that the country enjoyed during the twenties, the Great Depression hit. As it had in the rest of the nation, it began with the stock

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p 31

<sup>16</sup> Duniway, David. South Salem Past. (Marion County Historical Society, Salem OR, 1987)p13

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. Section 8 p14

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   6  

market crash of 1929. Because of the diversity of its economic base, Salem fared better than many small cities during the Depression. Its stable economic drivers--state and county governments and essential industries such as food processing and lumber and paper processing, kept the city afloat.

The Depression lasted through the thirties, but due to efforts by Franklin D. Roosevelt many federal programs were put in place during this period to offset the economic hardships felt by many. In the 1930s, Salem benefited from federal relief from State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA) programs. Farmers cooperating with the agricultural administrations production control programs didn't suffer due to failure of their crops. This helped support the 27 canneries operating in Salem in 1930.<sup>18</sup>

Government programs also employed laborers to pave roads, which by 1930 connected Salem with McMinnville, Portland and the coast. Commercial traffic on the Willamette was all but ended by the mid-1930s, replaced by train and truck shipping. In 1929 Salem citizens passed a \$50,000 bond issue for construction of an airport. By 1930, McNary Field, southeast of downtown Salem, had four runways and hangars for 12 planes. United Airlines began service to Salem in 1941.<sup>19</sup>

### WWII Years through 1950

Population growth continued in Salem in the 1940s, a decade of demographic change inside and outside the district. Population continued to grow, increasing from 30,908 in 1940 to 43,140 by 1950.<sup>20</sup> The population growth was primarily a result of an increase in the migrant population, which moved to the area to work in the fields, taking the place of many agricultural workers who had left to fight in World War II or work in the shipyards in Portland.

### **Development of the Fairmount District**

The Fairmount District is entirely contained on the original Myers Addition to the City of Salem, the plat for which was filed by T. W. Davenport on January 11, 1869 and recorded on May 29, 1871. The Myers Addition plat was bound by Myers Street on the north, "State Road" (now Commercial Street) on the east, Luther Street on the south (with a few lots south of Luther Street), and Maple Street (now Rio Vista Way) on the west.

The Fair Mount Park Addition to Salem was filed by the Fair Mount Park Co. on April 25 1889. This plat had the same boundaries as the Myers Addition plat, and the streets were the same, but the lots were replatted to be smaller. These two plats are the foundation of the Fairmount District. This area was known for awhile as Reservoir Hill, because an open reservoir which was built on the southwest corner of John and Lincoln Streets around the turn of the century. This reservoir provided water for Fairmount Hill homes. There was even a platted Reservoir Street from Lincoln to Luther, which was renamed Rio Vista in 1955. Duniway describes the

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p 41.

<sup>19</sup> Kadas, Marianne. *Historic Context Statement: Salem, Oregon*. (City of Salem, August, 1992) p 40.

<sup>20</sup> Oregon Council of Governments; City of Salem.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   7  

reservoir: “This old reservoir was not rectangularly shaped. The east edge was slightly curved, and the north corners were cut across, as can be seen in our picture (see Appendix). The reservoir held 2,000,000 gallons and was 176 feet above the town. Ten-inch mains ran down Lincoln, Washington, Superior, and Luther Streets to the east. There was a wooden water tower on the hilltop alley between John and Reservoir Streets, and south of Superior Street. It provided pressure for Fairmount Hill homes.<sup>21</sup>

Between 1880 and 1900, census records show a wide range of occupations among those employed and living in Salem. These included physicians, attorneys, bookkeepers, bankers, and merchants as well as contractors and laborers. Early settlement of the Fairmount area was sparse. There are a small number of residential resources in the study area dating to this period, primarily the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These include two prominent houses, 310 Lincoln Street, a Queen Anne house constructed by successful agriculturist and real estate investor Henry Fawk, and 1445 Saginaw Street, a stately Italianate house built in 1890.

The period between 1900 and 1929 saw the largest period of construction in the Fairmount District, accounting for its preponderance of Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Styles and Period Revival Styles. As a newly developing affluent neighborhood, many prominent citizens built their homes there. Physician Dr. William A. Cusick completed his Colonial Revival house at 415 Lincoln Street in 1913 from plans by locally prominent architect Frederick A. Legg. Curtis Cross, an executive in the Valley (meat) Packing Company, engaged well-known architects Clarence Smith and Jamieson Parker to design his landmark Mediterranean Revival style house in 1924. Ulysses Grant Shipley, a prominent merchant, constructed his Arts and Crafts style home at 260 Washington Street in 1926.

In addition to the large executive homes constructed during this period, a great number of more modest Craftsman bungalows were built in the district. These include the Donald D. Gordon House, constructed in 1910 at 190 Superior Street, the Darrell Dearborn House at 366 Washington Street, also constructed in 1910, and the 1915 Chesley E. Jansen House at 1775 Fir Street. In 1916, Ms Minnie Downing had a Bungalow constructed at the southwest corner of Saginaw and Washington Streets (220 Washington). She was secretary to Attorney General George M. Brown and later to I.H. Van Winkle. Van Winkle was known as the boss of the Republican Party in Oregon. According to Duniway, she had the house built for her parents, Colonel John H. and Florence Cradlebaugh. Mr. Cradlebaugh was the city editor of the Capitol Journal newspaper. Bruce Baxter, President of Willamette University from 1934 through 1941 owned the house, as did Willard and Margaret Marshall. Willard Marshall was mayor of Salem from 1963-1965.

Beginning in the 1920s, the Craftsman Bungalow was replaced in popularity by the English Cottage style. Many of these are moderate to large dwellings, built by the affluent businessmen that Fairmount continued to draw. These included the Burt Ford House built in 1925 at 490 Lefelle Street, the James S. Sears House at 1893 Saginaw Street, constructed in 1920, and the James E. Smith House at 1855 Saginaw Street, also constructed in

<sup>21</sup> Duniway, David. South Salem Past. (Marion County Historical Society, Salem OR, 1987)p35.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   8  

1920. The Harry and Laura Hawkins House was constructed in 1922, and was the first Salem house designed by architect Clarence Smith in the California Mission Revival style. Hawkins was a mortgage agent who helped organize the financing of projects like the Elsinore Theatre and the Oregon Pulp and Paper Company. In 1935 he personally acquired the Marion Hotel from Ladd and Bush Bank.

While located just outside the proposed district boundary, it is worthy of noting the Thomas and Edna Livesley house, which was constructed in 1924 at the west end of Lincoln Street on Fairmount Hill. This Tudor house was designed by Ellis F. Lawrence, founder and first Dean of the University of Oregon's school of Architecture. Thomas A. Livesley was known as the 'hop king', who began his career in Salem in 1894. He is reputed to have been the largest grower of hops in Oregon. He served as Mayor from 1927 to 1930 and as State Representative for Marion County from 1937-1939. The house became the Governor's mansion in 1987, with Governor Neil Goldschmidt and his family the first official residents.<sup>22</sup> The house is now called Mahonia Hall and is listed in the National Register.

Beginning in the late 1920s houses built on speculation can be seen in the Fairmount area. For example, the house at 415 Leffelle S. was constructed by Hawkins and Roberts in 1927-1928. Even though the house wasn't sold for several years, it was eventually purchased for \$6,200 by Ernest A Miller, a farm loan manager for Hawkins and Roberts. As noted by Duniway:

*"When acquired, the garage was under the house and no bathroom was on the first floor. Access to the garage was from Meyers by way of Fairmount, and the dedicated street was not completed to Leffelle. In March 1952, Mr. Miller arranged with the city to build a carport in the dedicated street, under the agreement which he signed he must 'remove said carport from said avenue whenever requested to do so by the city,... (and) also agrees to construct and maintain a pathway four feet in width along Fairmount Avenue.' The bathroom on the main floor was constructed the next year."*<sup>23</sup>

Construction did not halt altogether in the Fairmount District during the difficult economic times of the 1930s, possibly because its affluent citizens were the least affected by the Great Depression. However, it did slow. There were 19 houses constructed in 1930, but none in 1931. There were only 13 houses constructed for the rest of the decade. Although there were fewer houses constructed, some of those were quite grand. The Dr. Charles G. Robertson House was constructed in 1932 at 460 Lefelle Street. Robertson, a wealthy doctor, employed Clarence Smith, a prominent Salem architect, to design the large English Cottage style house. Smith also designed the French Renaissance style house on the southeast corner of Fir and Lincoln for Edgar and Ursula Pierce. This house was completed in 1932 at a cost of \$17,000. Pierce was the Deputy State Superintendent of Banks. He also served as Finance Officer for the WPA in Oregon and was also an adviser to

<sup>22</sup> The Livesley mansion is individually listed on the National Register and is now known as "Mahonia Hall".

<sup>23</sup> Duniway, David. South Salem Past. (Marion County Historical Society, Salem OR, 1987)p39

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   9  

the State Land Board. While finances were tight during the Great Depression, the Pierces leased their home to Governor and Mrs. Charles H. Martin from 1935 through 1938.<sup>24</sup>

Another large house built in the 30s is the Conde McCullough House constructed in 1934 at 465 Lefelle Street. McCullough, the Oregon state bridge engineer responsible for designing many of the bridges along the Oregon coast, had his large and impressive house built in the Arts and Crafts style. Much of the new housing in Salem during the thirties was modest and unadorned, reflecting the public's reduced disposable income. While construction did not halt in the district, this trend can be seen there. Most of the houses constructed during this era are modest bungalows or English cottages.

The City of Salem took possession of the Salem Water Company in 1935 after a condemnation suit. A new double covered reservoir was built two blocks away on the north side of Luther, which holds 10,000,000 gallons, and a new water tower was built on the hilltop to improve water pressure. The original reservoir doesn't exist any longer, but it has been replaced by lawn trees and a street, the block was sold for development in 1946.<sup>25</sup> In 1955 the Utilities Department agreed to the use of its Fairmount Hill Reservoir property as a neighborhood park now known as Fairmount Park. An additional 12 acres were purchased in the 1960s and the development includes tennis courts on top of the reservoir, a wading pool, restroom facilities and play equipment.<sup>26</sup>

The period of significance for the district ends at 1940. The onset of World War II put an end to building in the district, and when it resumed after the conclusion of the war, the housing styles were dramatically different.

By this time, the Fairmount District was nearly completely built out. There were a few scattered lots available for building, but the major building of the district was completed.

There were no houses built in the Fairmount District from 1941 through 1945. In 1946, infill building resumed in the district with the construction of three houses. For the rest of the 40s and into the 50s, the houses constructed in the district were predominantly ranches and post-WWII cottages. These houses differed from the houses built in the previous decades in that they were simple, easily constructed one-story houses with little embellishment. 495 Luther Street, built in 1948, 140 Myers Street, built in 1946, and 1795 Fir Street, built in 1946, are representative of the houses of this era.

<sup>24</sup> Duniway, David. South Salem Past. (Marion County Historical Society, Salem OR, 1987)p41

<sup>25</sup> Duniway, David. South Salem Past. (Marion County Historical Society, Salem OR, 1987)p35.

<sup>26</sup> The park is located at 650 Rural South [http://www.cityofsalem.net/departments/parks/fairmount\\_park.htm](http://www.cityofsalem.net/departments/parks/fairmount_park.htm), accessed September 21, 2008.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   10  

### Residents of Fairmount

The Fairmount neighborhood attracted residents of means throughout its history. These residents represented the elite of Salem businessmen, government officials, and doctors. Salem attracted prominent and well-educated residents due to the location of both the University and government offices. As noted by Judson: "Thus from year to year, Salem increased in population, and it is no exaggeration to say that the education facilities of Salem with the well established reputation of the place for good morals and business enterprise made the place attractive for all good citizens, who desired to make money or to enjoy good society and a quiet home."<sup>27</sup> Due to the location of the Fairmount District close to downtown, yet up on a hill with views of the river and plains below, it became a desirable place to live. As described by Duniway and Hawkins, a resident of Fairmount: "The view to the north was of Salem and the Cascades, and as Harry Hawkins said "the house looked down on the lights of Salem and they were too enticing."<sup>28</sup>

Residents with children especially enjoyed the benefits of living on the hill. As Duniway describes:

*"Ernest H. Miller, son [of Ernest A. Miller], reports that Leffelle street was wonderful all those years. There was many boys, and only one girl on the dead end from Fir Street, and she was Dan Fry's daughter. The vacant lot at the southeast corner of Fir furnished a major play field, and in the winter a place to sled, if there were snow. A joy were coasters made from old iron boards with wheels. One could have a great ride down Leffelle and around the corner onto Fir as far as one could go."<sup>29</sup>*

A few of the many prominent residents of the district are listed below.

#### *Curtis Cross (1635 Fairmount)*

Curtis Cross, a meat packing company executive, was the descendent of Thomas Cross and George Baskett, both pioneers who arrived in Oregon in the 1850s. Cross's wife, Barbara Durbin Cross, was a descendant of pioneer John Smith Durbin, who arrived in Oregon even earlier. Cross represented the third generation of Crosses in the meat packing and butchering business in Salem. In 1907, he became a partner of his father, Edwin Cross, in the family business. Curtis Cross gained full control of the company in 1912 upon his father's retirement. In 1919 Curtis Cross consolidated his wholesale and manufacturing interests with the Steusloff Brothers to form the Valley Packing Company. Cross was secretary and eventually became president of the Valley Packing Company in 1927. This became the Cascade Meat Company in 1955. The business, with the exception of the stockyard, was sold and liquidated by 1962. The stockyard closed in 1980, the last business of its type in Salem.

<sup>27</sup> Judson, Lewis Hubell. "Sketches of Salem..its History from the Date of Its First Settlement". Marion County History Vol 2. 1956 (Marion County Historical Society., Salem OR) p52.

<sup>28</sup> Duniway, David. South Salem Past. (Marion County Historical Society, Salem OR, 1987)p37

<sup>29</sup> Duniway, David. South Salem Past. (Marion County Historical Society, Salem OR, 1987)p39

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

### *William A. Cusick (415 Lincoln Street)*

William A. Cusick arrived in Oregon via the Oregon trail with his family about 1851, when he was fourteen years old. He studied medicine at the Tolland Medical College in San Francisco, later attending Willamette University and becoming one of the three members of the first graduating class of the medical school there. He was post surgeon at Camp Lyon, Idaho for two years before opening an office in Gervais, Oregon. He relocated to Salem in 1882, where he continued to practice medicine with great success. Cusick also served as the president of Capital National Bank in Salem. From 1938 to 1945, Oregon Governor Earl W. Snell shared the residence with then owner Willis Morse. This period coincided with Snell's first term in office.

### *Robert Elfstrom (325 Lincoln)*

Robert Elfstrom was the mayor of Salem from 1947-1950. He served in the Oregon State House of Representatives in the 1950s, and in 1963 he was elected to the Oregon State Senate, serving until 1971. In 1970, he was appointed to the Oregon State Nuclear and Thermal Energy Council and served at its first chairman. Later, his house was purchased by Willamette University and used as the president's residence.

### *Henry Fawk (310 Lincoln)*

Henry Harvard and Ella Richards Fawk descended from Polk County pioneer families. Henry was the second son of Englishman James Fawk, who settled a donation land claim on Salt Creek in 1851, eventually expanding his holdings to Oak Grove and an area west of Salem generally identified as Brunk's Corner. Henry Fawk was given a part of his father's holdings and was a successful farmer and rancher. The Fawk family was among the early growers of Hops in Polk County. Henry Fawk invested in real estate in the Salem area, including residential and commercial buildings, accumulating a modest fortune. The Fawks moved to Salem in part to introduce their three daughters to society. Their fashionable house was the setting of many social events. The two older daughters, Lizette and Moree were married within five years of the move.

### *Harry M. Hawkins (355 Lincoln)*

Harry M. Hawkins was born near Paris, Illinois, and came to Salem in 1916 to go into business with his friend Tommy Roberts, in the firm of Hawkins and Roberts. They worked as mortgage agents for Prudential Life Insurance from 1918 through 1947. Hawkins helped organized the funding of projects including the Elsinore Theatre and the Oregon Pulp and Paper Company. In 1935, he bought the Marion Hotel, which was the center of Salem's political and economic life until it burned. He also owned the Senator Hotel for a time. Hawkins played a major role in the development of downtown Salem, especially after the depression. Later residents of the Hawkins house were William and Harriet Walton. Mr. Walton was a vice president of the Ladd & Bush Bank.

### *Conde B. McCullough (465 Lefelle)*

Conde B. McCoulough arrived in Oregon in 1916 to teach engineering at the Oregon Agricultural College (now OSU) in Corvallis. In 1919 he joined the State Highway Department as a "specialist in concrete construction." In 1928 he obtained his law degree from Willamette University and was admitted to the Oregon Bar.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   12  

McCullough's time with the Oregon Highway Department coincided with the productive period between World Wars I and II, the Good Roads movement and the development of Oregon's highway system, most notably highways 99 and 101. McCullough was a bridge engineer and favored the arched bridge form, which became his signature. There are 32 extant major arch bridges in Oregon. He also designed a prototype for a covered bridge which was a model for many of the 450 covered bridges constructed in Oregon. The McCullough designed coast bridges at Newport, Umpqua River, Coos Bay and Gold Beach have been documented as part of the Historic American Engineering Record. In 1935-36 McCullough traveled to Central America to supervise the design and construction of bridges on the Inter-American Highway for the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads working in Panama, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica. McCullough was also an author, who, with his son, John, an attorney, wrote The Engineer at Law, and some works of fiction. He died suddenly at home in Salem in 1946.

### *Carl Nelson (460 Lefelle)*

Carl Nelson, wrote the words to the University of Oregon fight song. He was the president of the Miles Linen Mill before the depression, and after was a manager for Clifford Brown, a wool broker, and then in 1946 he became a partner in the firm of Nelson and Fizmaurice, wool dealers.

### *Dr. Charles Robertson (460 Lefelle)*

Charles Robertson followed his father in to the medical profession, joining him in the firm of Morse, Robertson, Power, Buren and Robertson. He joined the naval reserve in 1924, and was called to service before Pearl Harbor. After the war he remained in the service as an administrator of hospitals until his retirement in 1960 as Captain. His wife, Mildred Apperson, was descended from Oregon pioneers.

### *Clarence L. Smith (architect of many Fairmount houses)*

Although not a resident of Fairmount, Clarence Smith designed more houses in the Fairmount neighborhood than any other single architect. Smith was one of the most prolific residential architects in Salem. He designed at least 24 houses in the city, probably more.

Smith was born in Portland in 1894. He studied architecture at Cornell University and worked as a draftsman in the New York firms of Gibb and Waltz in Ithaca, New York and Green and Wicks in Buffalo, New York, and Kid and Kid of Buffalo, before returning to Portland in 1919 to work as a draftsman for the firm of Sutton and Whitney. He relocated to Salem in 1921 to work as a draftsman for the contractor Cuyler Van Patten before striking out on his own. He worked until at least 1942, the construction date of the last Salem house which can be attributed to Smith. He attracted a clientele of Salem's elite business executives, designing houses primarily in period revival styles such as Georgian and Colonial Revival and English Cottage. In 1928 he began collaborating frequently with the landscape architecture firm of Lord and Schryver, which resulted in a number of outstanding house and garden designs. The Charles G. Roberson House, located at 460 Lefelle Street in the Fairmount district, is an example of this collaboration.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   13  

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Smith's designs in the Fairmount District represent some of the most architecturally prominent houses in Salem. Clarence Smith's work in the Fairmount District includes the Curtis Cross House at 1635 Fairmount Avenue, the Samuel Adolph Jr. House at 1625 Commercial Street, the P.D. and Clara Quisenberry House at 360 Lefelle Street, the Charles Robertson House at 460 Lefelle Street, the Conde McCullough House at 465 Lefelle Street, the Burt Ford House at 490 Lefelle Street, the Otto Johnson House at 325 Lincoln Street and the Harry M. Hawkins House at 355 Lincoln Street, among others.

Houses designed by Smith outside the district include the Custer Ross House at 787 Cross Street, the Walter Smith House at 460 Mission Street, the Chester Downs House at 2121 High Street, the Elizabeth Lord House at 545 Mission Street, and the David Eyre House at 505 Mission Street.

### Summary

The Fairmount Historic District in Salem is an affluent residential neighborhood that reflects the cycles of development in Salem at large. As Salem grew into a larger community in the late nineteenth century and throughout the mid-twentieth century, many prominent Salem residents chose to settle in Fairmount including merchants, bankers, and civic and state leaders who shaped and guided the development and growth of the City of Salem as well as the State of Oregon. Therefore, the Fairmount District meets the National Register criterion A for its local significance in the area of planning and community development.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   1  

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   2  

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

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## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Fairmount district is bound by Myers Street on the north, Commercial Street on the east, by Luther Street on the south (extending along a line between lots through the block between Saginaw and Commercial Streets), and by John Street on the west (extending along a line between lots from Lincoln to Myers Street). The district is contained in the 1871 Myers Addition to Salem, replatted in 1889 as the Fair Mount Park Addition to Salem.

## BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundary was determined using the National Register *Bulletin Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties*. The major considerations applied to this district are the historic boundaries, exclusion of peripheral areas which no longer retain integrity, and physical barriers.

The district boundaries have been drawn to generally follow those of the Myers Addition To Salem Plat of 1871. The proposed boundaries encompass those portions of the present Fairmount neighborhood that contain the predominance of buildings constructed between 1900 and 1940. The proposed boundaries are based on boundaries at a specific time in history, visual changes, and visual barriers.

Myers Street is the northern boundary because it is the northern limit of the Myers Addition To Salem Plat of 1871. Furthermore, the concentration of contributing resources immediately north of Myers Street is low.

Commercial Street is the eastern boundary of the district. It is a major arterial and delineates a historic and contemporary boundary for the neighborhood.

Luther Street is the southern boundary of the district. The neighborhood was generally developed from north to south, and there is a high concentration of later constructed resources in the southern portion of the study area. As the proposed period of significance is 1900-1940, the area south of Luther Street was excluded for a lack of contributing buildings.

The western boundary is John Street. West of John Street the topography begins to slope steeply down to the west toward the river. This area is excluded because it was clearly developed much later, as very few of the buildings are historic.