



STATE OF OREGON INVENTORY
OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
State Historic Preservation Office
Oregon State Parks, Salem, OR 97310

Significance Primary No. 73a
 County Jackson
 Theme _____
 Name
 (Common) "Old City Hall"
 (Historic) "City Hall"
 Address 205 West Main
Jacksonville, Oregon 97530
 Present Owner City of Jacksonville
City Hall
 Address Jacksonville, Oregon 97530
 Original Use Governmental
 Date of Construction 1880-1881

Physical description of property and statement of historical significance:

Jacksonville's old City Hall is a rectangular block, one story high, constructed in 1880-81. Flakes of brick red paint still cling to the walls. The structure is built in the vernacular of the commercial Italianate style. Local carpenter David Linn was the building contractor. George Holt is credited with the brickwork. Although the building committee of the Jacksonville Board of Trustees was no doubt responsible for specifying the dimensions for the building, there was probably no official architect.

The front (north) facade is three bays wide: a central, square-headed, double-leaf door is flanked by four-over-four, double hung sash windows with square heads. The entrance doorway consists of a rectangular transom light above the lintel and double doors with two fixed lights over two recessed wooden panels resting on a wide sandstone sill. All three bays are spanned with segmented arches. Narrow, wooden architraves fill the space between the curve of the arch and the square-headed openings.

The east elevation has six bays comprised of four windows, a doorway, and a wide "truck house" entrance. The windows are four-over-four, double hung sash, spanned by segmental relieving arches.

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Recorded by Gail E.H. Evans Date December 1979

Photographed by Gail E.H. Evans

Sources consulted (continue on back if necessary):

Please refer to footnotes

Please enclose map. Township 37 ^N _S 2 ^E _W Section 32, Block 26, part of lot 5,6
 Account No. 5000 (32BA)

The recessed calaboose door is also spanned by a segmental arch. The wide "truck house" doorway on the south end of the east facade has been partially infilled with wood and concrete cinder blocks and is at present covered by a sliding wooden door.

The roof is a slightly pitched gable sloping to the east and west from the ridge and hidden behind a high parapet extending across the front facade. An openwork wooden bell tower rises above the southeastern portion of the roof. The parapet on the north facade extends above the parapets on the other three walls. It consists of a narrow raised frieze band, inverted stepped pyramids that form corbels, three courses of slightly projecting brick, surmounted by several courses that are stepped up toward the central bay.

The City Hall is a detached block situated on the southwest corner of South Oregon and West Main Streets. Gravel sidewalks run along the north and east walls. A concrete water trough is located along the east sidewalk, and a lamp post and flag pole are implanted by the sidewalk adjacent to the main (north) facade. A young locust tree provides shade at the northeast corner of the building. Shrubbery grows along the south wall and fills an approximate two foot gap between the City Hall and a compatible, one and one half story building to the south. The west wall has a recent corrugated tin shed roof addition extending three fourths of the length of the City Hall. There is an adjacent gravel parking area used for storing city vehicles.

Originally, this free-standing structure was part of a row of pioneer wood frame buildings that extended the entire length of the West Main Street block. In the late 1800's, there was a small one story addition attached to the west wall at the southwest corner. Projecting iron brackets may have at one time supported a canopy over the north walkway. Although the wood frame of the bell tower has been rebuilt in more recent years, the bell itself is original.

For one hundred years the building has been utilized as a meeting place for city officials and town residents. A plan to restore the building has been initiated by the Jacksonville Boosters Club, with the City of Jacksonville and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office contributing funds for the project. Before actual restoration work began, the building was in poor condition.

The old City Hall stands at an intersection that was once in the heart of the original business district of Jacksonville and which later became the principal Chinese Settlement in the community. The one story brick forerunner of the present building was apparently dismantled and reconstructed in 1880¹ to be used for official city business.

The predecessor of the present brick edifice was reportedly the first brick building in Jacksonville and the first store that had brick burned from a local kiln.² It was completed in the spring of 1854 for Maury and Davis, one of the main businesses in the burgeoning town, who carried one of the heaviest stocks of goods.³ An 1856 lithograph of the Maury and Davis building in no way resembles the present structure confirming the more recent construction of the present building.⁴

Maury and Davis continued to conduct business at this location until the summer of 1861 when the firm of Miller and Owen took over the general merchandise business in the building.⁵ Fourteen years after its construction, the building was referred to as the "old

tumble down brick"⁶ by one of the local newspapers, and labeled as "Dilapidated" on an 1868 map of Jacksonville.⁷ In mid 1868 the building was substantially rebuilt or repaired.⁸ Morris Mensor, born in Prussia and father of seventeen children,⁹ relocated his general merchandise store in the "new brick building" apparently just after work on the building was completed.¹⁰

Mensor, whose home and business establishments were involved in a number of fires over the years, was besieged by fire at his store at Oregon and Main in 1874 within months after two destructive fires had leveled nearly half of Jacksonville's business district on California Street.¹¹ The Oregon Sentinel reported news of another disastrous fire on October 24, 1874: "...our citizens were again startled by the cry of fire and the ringing of bells [and it was] soon ascertained that [it was] the store of Morris Mensor, filled with an immense stock of general merchandise inside. The heavy brick walls and strong fireproof roof prevented the immediate bursting out of the flames...the roof fell in [in] about two hours, and the flames from the burning mass within shot up above the walls to a height of forty to fifty feet..."¹²

It is uncertain what use, if any, was made of the burned-out building - Mensor opened his "New York Store" directly across the street from the burned-out building on the northwest corner of Oregon and Main in 1876.¹³ It may have sat vacant for several years when the Jacksonville Board of Trustees took steps to purchase "Mensor's Old Store" in 1880.¹⁴

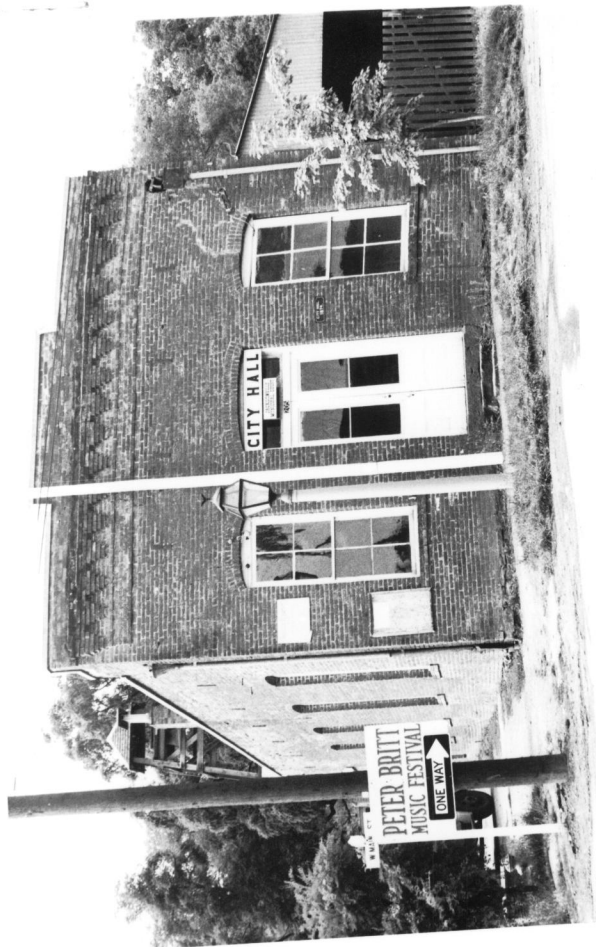
It was subsequently determined that the west wall was unsafe,¹⁵ and by July of 1880 the Board of Trustees had appointed a Building Committee comprised of Nathaniel Langell and Christopher Ulrich¹⁶ to construct a new town hall¹⁷ to be used for "public assemblages of every nature as well as a place of meeting for the city fathers" ¹⁸ "The taking down of the old walls and cleaning out the cellar was let to Peter Brevert."¹⁹ David Linn, prominent Jacksonville furniture maker and builder, was awarded the contract for building the "new town hall" for \$1995.²⁰ The contractor was to furnish everything "except the brick which [was] on the ground."²¹ One account indicates that George Holt, local brick and stonemason of some repute, was responsible for laying the brick walls.²² The local press reported that it would be a "handsome brick structure twenty-five feet high, seventy-five feet long and twenty-five feet wide" with a council room, calaboose [jail] and truck house with a "commodious cellar underneath... The architecture will be of the latest and most convenient, and Jacksonville will have a building she may feel proud of and which would be a credit to much larger places."²³

Before the building was completed, a petition was circulated among Jacksonville residents to add a second story to the building, but it did not meet with approval from the city fathers.²⁴ In December, 1880, "work on the roof was progressing."²⁵ All but the painting of the building was completed by early 1881 and the building was turned over to the Board of Trustees in January of that year.²⁶

The finishing touches were added in 1881 and 1884. A man named Richardson painted the exterior walls in early 1881,²⁷ and in 1884 a belfry, fashioned by local tinsmith and hardware merchant, Jeremiah Nunan, was placed on the southeast corner of the roof.²⁸

Since then the building has been used continuously as the meeting place of the town officials, storage of city vehicles and equipment, and until the 1920's and 30's, for safekeeping of the

STATE OF OREGON INVENTORY
 HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS
 State Historic Preservation Office
 Oregon State Parks, Salem 97310



County Jackson
 Theme 8-D, 10-A
 Name (Common) Jacksonville City Hall
 (Historic) (same)
 Address 205 West Main Street
Jacksonville, Oregon
 Present Owner City of Jacksonville
 Address Jacksonville, Oregon
 Original Use City Hall
 Date of Construction 1874 c. 1880 (L.S. Clay)

Physical description of property and statement of historical significance:

The Jacksonville City Wall is a rectangular, brick building of one story which faces north on West Main Street. This building is constructed of brick from the burned remains of the Maury and Davis General Store. Davis, a nephew of Jefferson Davis, was a partner with Maury until the outbreak of the Civil War. The partnership then dissolved. The City Hall, erected in 1874, has four-over-four, double hung sash windows set in four bays on the east elevation and has similar windows which flank the center entry bay on the north (front) elevation.

For more information on the architecture and history of this structure see the forthcoming publication:

Ross, Marion D. and Christopher Owens. "An Area Study of Jacksonville, Oregon: The Commercial District and the Churches and Courthouse."

For photographs of this building see pictures #1, 2 in the HABS files taken 2-5 August 1971 by Jack E. Boucher. This collection is on file in the Southern Oregon Historical Museum, Jacksonville, Oregon.

Built on the site of Maury and Davis General Store. (L.S. Clay)

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Recorded by Stephen Dow Beckham Date 28 Aug. 1976

For Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

Sources Consulted:
Historic Jacksonville Oregon. n.p.: U.S. National Bank, [1976].

enclose map Township 37^N_S 2^E_W Section 32

more info see p. 121 1979 Jacksonville Survey Vol. 1

L. Scott Clay - Letter of Aug. 23, 1977

city's delinquents. The organization of the interior space of the meeting hall has been somewhat altered. The Judge's bench, at one time located against the east wall, and the original benches for spectators, have both been removed. The present audience "pews" are believed to have come from a local church.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Democratic Times, January 21, 1881. (Marshall Lango)
2. Walling, A.G., History of Southern Oregon Comprising Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Curry and Coos Counties, Portland, Oregon, Publishing House of A.G. Walling, 1884, p. 364.
3. Ibid., p. 365.
4. Kuchel and Dressel, "Jacksonville, Jackson County Oregon, Oregon T. Territory," 1856.
5. The Oregon Sentinel, June 1, 1861. (Marshall Lango)
6. Jacksonville Reveille Weekly, August 15, 1868. (Christopher Owens)
7. "Silk Map," Jacksonville, (approximately 1868).
8. Jacksonville Reveille Weekly, August 15, 1868.
9. Jackson County Census, 1860.
10. Jacksonville Reveille Weekly, August 2, 1868. (Christopher Owens)
11. The Oregon Sentinel, April 5, 1873; April 18, 1874.
12. Ibid., October 24, 1874.
13. Ibid., October 11, 1876.
14. The Democratic Times, January 2, 1880. (Marshall Lango)
15. Jackson County Deeds, January 9, 1880. (Christopher Owens)
16. The Democratic Times, April 30, 1880. (Marshall Lango)
17. Ibid., July 23, 1880. (Richard Engeman)
18. Ibid., July 23, 1880. (Marshall Lango)
19. Ibid., January 2, 1880. (Marshall Lango)
20. Ibid., August 27, 1880. (Marshall Lango)
21. Ibid., August 27, 1880. (Marshall Lango)
22. The Oregon Sentinel, August 25, 1880. (Marshall Lango)
23. The Democratic Times, October 15, 1880.
24. Ibid., August 27, 1880. (Marshall Lango)
25. Ibid., November 12, 1880.
26. The Oregon Sentinel, November 17, 1880.
27. The Oregon Sentinel, December 1, 1880.
28. The Democratic Times, January 21, 1881. (Marshall Lango)
29. Ibid., January 28, 1881.
30. Ibid., July 11, 1884. (Marshall Lango)