

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATA SHEET

RECEIVED SEP 27 1977

DATE ENTERED

FEB 23 1978

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

First Bank of Joseph

AND/OR COMMON

Same

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Corner of Second and Main

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Joseph

VICINITY OF

2nd

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Oregon

CODE

41

COUNTY

Wallowa

CODE

063

CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☒ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Joseph

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall

CITY, TOWN

Joseph

VICINITY OF

Oregon

STATE

97846

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Wallowa County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Enterprise

STATE

Oregon

97828

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE

1973

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Parks and Recreation Branch

CITY, TOWN

Salem

STATE

Oregon

97310

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

The First Bank of Joseph is a fine example of High Victorian Italianate Commercial architecture. Although the style was common in Portland and the Willamette Valley, in the isolated town of Joseph in the northeast corner of the state, such a fine example of the style is quite unusual. Dimensions of the two-story building are 25 X 91 feet.

On the exterior, the vocabulary employs the basic components of High Victorian Italianate architecture as described in Marcus Whiffen. First floor windows are stilted, flat-headed arches; windows on the second floor are rectangular arches with architectural moldings. Other detailing on the exterior includes metal brackets on the upper cornice and metal moldings on the belt-course around the building. The entrance is a truncated opening at the corner of the south and west walls that is flanked with two cast-iron crocketed columns supporting a portico.

In the original configuration of the building, the first floor was occupied by the bank in the front, and a newspaper office occupied the back room. A covered exterior stairway led to an upstairs room that was used as a meeting room.

The bank moved from the building in 1914, at which time the building was taken over by Dr. Verdo Gregory. He installed his office and waiting room in the banking headquarters and a kitchen in the former newspaper room. He converted the second floor into hospital wards and an operating room and replaced the exterior stairway with one inside.

In 1927, the City of Joseph acquired the building and it became a community center. The upstairs became a meeting room and performing arts theater. The first floor was used for various civic purposes. Among other functions, it served as the city hall and library until the city vacated the building in 1973. After standing unoccupied several years, the building was restored by the Wallowa Bicentennial Committee in 1976, and it is now operated as the Wallowa County Museum.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION	
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE	
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE	
☐ 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER	
☒ 1800-1899	☒ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION	
☐ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		☐ INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1887 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The First Bank of Joseph is significant as an example of High Victorian Italianate architecture and as one of the earliest commercial structures in northeastern Oregon.

Wallowa County and the City of Joseph developed after the famous Nez Perce Indian War of 1877. Chief Joseph, for whom the town was named, lived with his tribe in the Wallowa Valley very near the town of Joseph. After the Indians were forced out of the area, white settlers moved in rapidly. By 1879 a new road was built into the Wallowa Valley with a stage line and by 1887 Wallowa County was formed. In that same year the First Bank of Joseph was organized with a capital stock of \$25,000. By 1890 this amount was increased to \$50,000.

The president of the bank was F.D. McCully, who had moved to the Wallowa Valley from Salem. McCully's connection with Salem and the Willamette Valley probably explains the sophisticated use of High Victorian Italianate architecture in the bank building. McCully lived in Salem when the Ladd and Bush Bank was constructed in 1869, and the elaborate Victorian detailing on this building no doubt influenced him.

Architecturally, the First Bank of Joseph building is one of the finest examples of the High Victorian Italianate commercial style in eastern Oregon. Many of the popular architectural styles during the late 1800s appeared in eastern Oregon, but they were usually vernacular interpretations of these styles. The First Bank of Joseph is not only an attractive building, but it is unusual as a pure example of the High Victorian Italianate style.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Union and Wallowa Counties. Spokane, WA: Western Publishing Company, 1903.
Holman, F.V. "History of Counties of Oregon" Oregon Historical Quarterly (March, 1910)
P. 60.
Joseph Women's Club, Minutes.
Wallowa County Chieftan, Wallowa Herald.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY ca. .13 acres (50 X 117', or 5,820 sq. ft.)

UTM REFERENCES

A 11 482100 5021740
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 6, Block 7 of the Original Town of Joseph

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

Robert K. Sutton

ORGANIZATION

Oregon State Parks

DATE

February 8, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

525 Trade St. SE

TELEPHONE

(503) 378-6118

CITY OR TOWN

Salem

STATE

Oregon

97310

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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 State Parks Superintendent (Preservation Officer)

DATE September 19, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
DATE 2-22-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



FIRST BANK

EPH FIRE DEPT.

NO
PARKING

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

First Bank of Joseph
Joseph 1 of 4
Wallowa County, Oregon
West elevation prior to
restoration **SEP 27 1977**

Historic Preservation Office
Photo 1970
State Parks Branch
525 Trade Street SE
Salem, Oregon 97310

FEB 23 1978



First Bank of Joseph
Joseph 2 of 4
Wallowa County, Oregon
South elevation prior to
restoration

Historic Preservation Office
Photo 1970
State Parks Branch
525 Trade Street SE
Salem, Oregon 97310

SEP 27 1977

FEB 23 1978



First Bank of Joseph
Joseph 3 of 4
Wallowa County, Oregon
West and south elevations, showing truncated entrance bay at corner

Historic Preservation Office
Photo 1975
State Parks Branch
525 Trade Street SE
Salem, Oregon 97310

SEP 27 1977

FEB 23 1978



First Bank of Joseph
Joseph 3 of 4
Wallowa County, Oregon
South and east, or rear eleva-
tions showing effects of restor-
ation, including reconstructed
covered stairway.

SEP 27 1977

Historic Preservation Office
Photo 1975
State Parks Branch
525 Trade Street SE
Salem, Oregon 97310

FEB 23 1978