National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

SUPPLEMENTAR	Y LISTING RECORI	
ce Number: 920001	29 Date Listed	: 3/9/92
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<u>OR</u> State		
e		
ing the National Pa ation documentation	rk Service cert	
the Keeper	D	ate of Action
s in Nomination:		
tion was confirmed	with Elisabeth in the control of the	Potter of the
	OR State OR State A	OR State Ty is listed in the National Regist cordance with the attached nominate the following exceptions, exclusion ling the National Park Service certification documentation.

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines* for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property	Manual to 1	7 - 3 77	77 (70)		
historic name			ouse and Sto	n.e	
other names/site number			iture Store	1.0001	
2. Location	racterson,	Dr. Alexa	ander, Store	and Office	
street & number	117 East P	ine Street	-		not for publication
city, town	Central Po		<u> </u>		vicinity
state Oregon	code OR	county	Jackson		29 zip code 97502
3. Classification					
Ownership of Property		ry of Property			ources within Property
X private		lding(s)		Contributing	Noncontributing
public-local	dist	rict			buildings
public-State	site	•			sit e s
public-Federal	stru	icture		1	structures
	obje	ect			objects
				1	Total
Name of related multiple p	roperty listing:			Number of cont	ributing resources previously
N/A				listed in the Nat	tional RegisterN/A
4. State/Federal Agend	v Cortification				- N/A
4. State/rederal Agend	y Certification				
Signature of certifying office	ial Oregon State		c Preservat		January 10, 1992 Date
In my opinion, the prope	erty meets doe	es not meet th	e National Regis	ter criteria. 🗌 See	continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting o	r other official				Date
State or Federal agency an	d bureau				
5. National Park Service	e Certification				
I, hereby, certify that this p	roperty is:				
entered in the National See continuation sheet determined eligible for t Register. See continu determined not eligible National Register.	t. the National ation sheet.	Autoui	eth of bea		3 9 92
removed from the Natio	nal Register.				
)	Signature of the	Keeper	Date of Action

6. Function or Use			
Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Func	tions (enter categories from instructions)	
Commerce/Trade: specialty store/office	Work in progress		
building			
Domestic: single dwelling			
7. Description			
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (ent	er categories from instructions)	
	foundation	stone, wood	
Late Victorian: Italianate (Western False Front)	walls	wood: weatherboard	
Gothic Revival (vernacular)	roof	asphalt: rolled roof cover	
	other		

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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The J. W. Merritt House and Store occupies Lot 10, Block 11 of the Original Plat of Central Point, Jackson County, Oregon.

The store is a single-story, gable-roofed volume of frame construction having a false front, or straight parapet gable and central, recessed entry between tall display windows. The store has a 15 x 40-foot print and is oriented longitudinally on its narrow, 27 x 140-foot lot, with the front facing south Pine Street, which is the main thoroughfare. The store was built as J. W. Shepard's Furniture Store in 1888, three years after the town was platted. In 1896, the store was acquired by a local physician, Dr. Alexander Patterson, who converted it to use as a drugstore and added living quarters to the north, or back end. The roof ridge of the gabled 27 x 51-foot residential volume is perpendicular to that of the store. An ell with side porch was added to the back of the living quarters in the period 1900-1910, the period of Merritt ownership.

The store and residence, technically a single building, represent simple, practical vernacular architecture of the late 19th Century. Both volumes are clad entirely with shiplap siding and are trimmed with plain corner boards. The residence has, in addition, a boxed cornice, frieze boards and architrave framements instead of the plain window surrounds found on the store's exposed side elevation on the west. Window sash in the store's side elevation are double-hung, two-over-two divided lights; those in the residence are one-over-one. The post and stone pier foundation of the residence is screened by a vertical tongue and groove waterskirt. A tiny shed porch on turned posts shelters an outside entrance to the living quarters in the angle created on the west elevation where the addition abuts the store.

The building is in deteriorated condition at present and has been covered for some years with rolled roofing. However, the current owners are embarked on reversing some of the misguided alterations of recent years, most notably removal of stucco from the storefront and re-coating the front with whitewash. Other rehabilitation measure are under consideration, such as restoration of a cornice to the store parapet and restoration of the store doorway assembly. In the pattern characteristic of this simple vernacular Italianate type, the storefront is symmetrically organized, having four-light front windows and interior bevel windows with fixed panes on either side of the central entrance bay recess. The door is bordered by

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side lights and has a two-light transom. The current door is a non-historic replacement having glazed and horizontal panels. The original door was nine feet tall. The interior of the store is finished with 1 x 12-inch rough-sawn vertical boards on the east wall and tongue and groove horizontal boards on the west wall. Floor and ceiling cover is also tongue and groove.

8. Statement of Significance		
Certifying official has considered the significance of this prop	_ `	
nationally	statewidex_locally	
Applicable National Register Criteria A XB XC	□D	
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	□D □E □F □G	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Architecture	1888-1896	1888
Settlement	1899-1916	
Commerce		
	Cultural Affiliation	
	N/A	
		
Significant Person	Architect/Builder	
Merritt, John W. (1846-1921)	Unknown	
Chate significance of support, and invalid, without a mineria and		

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

		X See continuation sheet
Previous documentation	•	
preliminary determ	ination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)	Primary location of additional data:
has been requeste		State historic preservation office
	the National Register	Other State agency
	ned eligible by the National Register	Federal agency
designated a Natio	onal Historic Landmark	Local government
recorded by Histor	ic American Buildings	University
Survey #		Other
recorded by Histor	ic American Engineering	Specify repository:
Record #		
10. Geographical [Data	
Acreage of property	0.08 acres	Medford West, Oregon 1:24000
		<u> </u>
UTM References		
$A \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 5 & 0 & 6 & 9 \end{bmatrix}$	0_12_10 4_16 9_11 1_16_10	$B \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \$
Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting Northing
$c \sqcup L \sqcup L$		
		See continuation sheet
Verbal Boundary Desc	cription	
The nominated p	roperty is located in NE¼ NE¾	Section 10 and SE4 of the SE4 Section 3,
Township 37S, R	ange 2W, Willamette Meridian,	in Central Point, Jackson County, Oregon and
legally describ	ed as Lot 10, Block 11, Origin	al Plat of Central Point. It is otherwise
	ax Lot 9900 at said location.	
		See continuation sheet
Daniel Lance		
Boundary Justification		
The bounds of the	he nominated area (27.5 \times 140	feet) correspond to the lot lines of property
occupied by the	store and residence held by	John W. Merritt in the period 1899-1916.
		See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared	I Rv	
	Linda A . Genaw	
name/title	Morehouse Research & Publ	ications date June 1, 1991
organization	7477 Maple Lane	1cations datetelephone (503) 855-7260
street & number city or town	Central Point	state <u>Oregon</u> zip code <u>97502</u>

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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SUMMARY

The store and residence at Pine and First Streets at the hub of the historic crossroads town of Central Point in the Rogue River Valley of southern Oregon are the result of a building enlargement in 1896. The property was subsequently acquired by a leading mercantilist, John W. Merritt, who owned a store on the adjoining lot which still stands, though in altered condition. The Merritt name is now attached to both properties, but it is the more intact of the two that bears the chief association. Merritt occupied the rear living quarters through six of his years as Mayor of Central Point (1899-1904).

The Merritt expansion store is a single-story, gable-roofed volume of frame construction having a false front, or straight parapet gable and central, recessed entry between tall display windows. The store has a 15 x 40-foot print and is oriented longitudinally on its narrow, 27 x 140-foot lot, with the front facing south on Pine Street, which is the main thoroughfare. The store was built as J. W. Shepard's Furniture Store in 1888, three years after the town was platted. In 1896, the store was acquired by a local physician, Dr. Alexander Patterson, who converted it to use as a drugstore and added living quarters to the back, or north end. The roof ridge of the gabled 27 x 51-foot residential volume is perpendicular to that of the store. An ell with side porch was added to the back of the living quarters in the period 1900-1910, the period of Merritt ownership.

The store and residence, technically a single building, represent simple, practical vernacular architecture of the late 19th Century. Both volumes are clad entirely with shiplap siding and are trimmed with plain corner boards. The residence has, in addition, a boxed cornice, frieze boards and architrave framements instead of the plain window surrounds found on the store's exposed side elevation on the west. Window sash in the store's side elevation are double-hung, two-over-two divided lights; those in the residence are one-over-one. The post and stone pier foundation of the residence is screened by a vertical tongue and groove waterskirt. A tiny shed porch on turned posts shelters an outside entrance to the living quarters in the angle created on the west elevation where the addition abuts the store.

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The building is in deteriorated condition at present and has been covered for some years with rolled roofing. However, the current owners are embarked on reversing some of the misguided alterations of recent years, most notably removal of stucco from the storefront and re-coating the front with whitewash. Other rehabilitation measure are under consideration, such as restoration of the cornice to the store parapet and restoration of the store doorway assembly. The Central Point City Council endorsed the nomination with the advice that if favorable tax treatment is applied for, the State's certification be conditioned on an approved rehabilitation plan.

The J. W. Merritt House and Store is significant to Central Point under National Register Criterion C. The store is the only example of the distinctive Western False Front vernacular Italianate type remaining in Central Point, where, as in most western towns, the wood building tradition was once typical in the commercial center. The growth of the building under ownership by a professional man is illustrative of a commonplace need to provide living quarters adjacent to a place of business.

The building also is locally significant under Criterion B as the better preserved of two places importantly associated with John W. Merritt, a leading figure in Central Point's formative years. Merritt, a native of New York, was attracted to Oregon by a position as high school principal in the Jacksonville School District in 1875. By the 1880s, he had entered into the mercantile business and came to Central Point, a townsite jockeying for position on the mainline railroad, and in 1887 he opened what became the town's leading general merchandise store. In 1899, seeking to expand his base of operation, Merritt acquired from Dr. Patterson the property adjoining his store and established a connecting passageway between the adjacent properties that is no longer extant.

Merritt was involved in a number of enterprises during his time in Central Point, which ended in 1916 when he moved to Gold Hill with his second wife. He owned 2,500 acres of farmland in aggregate, was a shareholder and officer of the Southern Oregon Lumber and Manufacturing Company, and was active in the Jackson County Agricultural Association. He also had mining interests and was a trustee of the Central Point Townsite Company. He served on the Central Point city council and presided as Mayor from 1896 to 1904, during which time he effected construction of a major portion of the city's early infrastructure.

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The John W. Merritt Building and Residence is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under two criteria. Because of the significant role J. W. Merritt played in the establishment of Central Point, it is being nominated under criteria B. It is nominated under criteria C because it is one of two remaining wood commercial buildings in Central Point. The building was erected in 1888, one year before the incorporation of Central Point, February 18, 1889.

Merritt's name was synonymous with early Central Point, he performed a leading part in the political decisions that have made Central Point the town it is today. Merritt moved his business from Jacksonville, Oregon to Central Point in 1888. He operated his mercantile business for 28 years at Central Point, the last 17 of which were directly associated with the subject property.

Merritt was a well known educator, lecturer and politician as well as businessman. He served on the City Council of Central Point and presided over much of the construction of the city's infrastructure and Mayor throughout the period 1896 to 1904. Earlier, he had represented southern Oregon in the state legislature, having been elected in 1890 and 1892 to the lower house.

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The building represents the period when city of Central Point was founded. The city of Central Point, as most western towns that were planned in conjunction with railroad lines, had two main streets. Front street, facing the Oregon and California railroad was lined with warehouses and light industry. Pine street intersected Front, and was the main street. Most businesses located along Pine street. The Merritt building and residence is one of two remaining wood commercial buildings that were built when Central Point was established. The original townsite of Central Point laid out and recorded in July of 1885. At that time, it consisted of 16 town blocks that measured 220 feet by 300 feet. The enclosed 1885 plat map of Central Point shows the relationship of lot 10 block 11 to the hub of activities along the Oregon and California Railroad.

In 1875 the Board of Directors of Jacksonville, Oregon School District wrote a letter to the placement officer at the State Normal and Training School, in Oswego, New York. They were requesting a recommendation for a principal for their school. The placement officer showed Merritt the letter from the school board at Jacksonville seeking applicants for the position of principal. The challenge intrigued Merritt, and he applied for the position. His application was accompanied by a photograph and a letter from the Principal of the Oswego State Normal and Training School. The letter is as follows:

"Dear Sir:

It gives me pleasure to recommend to you Mr. John W. Merritt as a young man of more than ordinary qualifications as a teacher. He is a graduate from the Classical Department of our school. By his good scholarship, his gentlemanly manner, and high moral worth, he has won the esteem of all his teachers and associates.

Before graduation each pupil is required to teach five months under criticism, in our School of Practice. In this department he showed himself master of the situation. I do not hesitate in recommending him to you as a man eminently qualified for the position you desire to fill.

Yours truly, E.A. SHELDON Prin. Oswego State N. and Tr. School" NPS Form 10-900-a (8-86)

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the interiorNational Park Service

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The directors did not delay in hiring Merritt for fear he would be snapped up by another school board. They immediately sent him a three year contract offering him the sum of one thousand dollars a year. Merritt signed the contract, and arrived in the Rogue Valley in August of 1875.

John Merritt was born in 1846, in Syracuse, New York, the third of nine children to be born to Ebenezer and Eliza Merritt. Merritt attended public schools in Syracuse. Before finishing secondary school, Merritt had made plans to attend the Normal School in Oswego, New York. He worked his way through Oswego State Normal, graduating at the age of 29.

During his tenure as principal of the Jacksonville school, he maintained a high standard of discipline and mental training for his pupils. The scholastic ability of his pupils was widely known, and most universities acknowledged that the school at Jacksonville was one of the top schools on the west coast.

Upon retiring from School District One, Merritt, and long time friend, Dr. J. Robinson, bought the City Drug Store. Besides the pharmaceutical items, the store carried cosmetics and an appealing collection of gift items. Merritt used clever advertising ideas to entice patrons to trade at his new store. Most merchants thought that a card with their name and some of the items that were on sale would be enough to promote trade. Merritt wrote copy and had it inserted in the local and personal. An example of the he used is as follows; "Oh Maria did you see those new dressing cases just brought on by Merritt and Robinson? Well, they're about the sweetest, prettiest and cutest things you ever saw, and so cheap. Pete would get to see them, and buy me one." After a couple of pages, you would see a paragraph stating that Pete did buy the dressing case for Maria. It was a pretty clever advertising gimmick for those days. Merritt devoted his time to the retail trade, opening a second store in June of 1884. Merritt offered the public a store where prices were discounted if you paid Although this was not a new idea, it was a novelty in southern Oregon, when most shops extended credit until harvest, or the next gold strike.

Most merchants could see the convenience of being located near a depot. As a result many of them moved to cluster in the various towns being laid out along the O & C. Railroad's route. J.W. Merritt was one such merchant, after

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four successful years in business in Jacksonville, he sold his interest in the City Drug Store to Robinson, and moved to the newly platted town of Central Point. Merritt prospered in Central Point, the <u>Democratic Times</u>, February 5, 1892 reported "Merritt is the only merchant in Central Point who buys by the carload." Another article in the December 1, 1893 <u>Democratic Times</u> had the following article:

J.W. MERRITT, DEALER IN GENERAL MERCHANDISE.

"One of the best known, largest and deservedly popular general merchandise establishments in this section is J.W. Merritt's of Central Point, ranking as it does as one of the representative houses in its line in Jackson county. This house was established about five years ago by the present owner, who was formerly engaged in business in Jacksonville. The stock carried is without doubt the largest in this part of the county, embracing clothing, dry goods, boots and shoes, hats and caps, fancy and staple groceries, etc. The stock is selected with great care for their trade, which is large, and constantly increasing. Mr. Merritt is a gentleman of long experience, and has been identified with the interests of Central Point for five years, and has gained an enviable position in the community for ability, sound business and honorable dealing."

Merritt's business did continue to grow, and it wasn't long and he opened another store in Gold Hill. The Gold Hill Store was put under the management of Robert Moore.

Merritt's interests were not confined to merchandising and teaching. He became an esteemed Rogue Valley resident, and was often asked to speak at various events of the day. Articles like the following appeared regularly in the valley newspapers from the time of Merritts arrival until his death in 1921.

Roseburg Review March 6, 1886

"The address of Prof. Merritt of Jacksonville last night before a crowed, jammed and yet almost breathless audience was way above any ordinary effort whatever. Prof. Merritt has but few equals in this state, as a thinker, orator or elocutionist. His is the proper mood of elocution as we see it--naturalness, simply this and nothing more."

Ashland Tidings June 21, 1889

Prof. J.W. Merritt, ex-principal of the Jacksonville public schools, delivered an eloquent address on the subject "Let there be Light." The effort was a masterly one, and was listened to with the closest attention by the audience."

He was elected to the state board of education in January of 1883, and involved himself in politics. He was elected to the state legislature in 1890 and elected for a second term in 1892. He served four terms as mayor of Central Point and was on the city council for 12 years.

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Merritt was a stockholder and secretary of the Southern Oregon Lumber and Manufacturing Co., Director of the Jackson County Agricultural Association, was trustee of the Central Point Townsite Co. and Treasurer of the Pearl Mining Company Inc. He engaged in sheep farming from 1893 until 1903 Merritt owned five farms, each comprising of about 500 acres, where he had several orchards, and raised hay, grain, and produce.

Mr. Merritt was married first, in Jacksonville to Mary Belle (Mollie) McCully, who was a native. Mollie's parents, Jane and Dr. John McCully, arrived in Jacksonville in the spring of 1852. Dr. McCully was one of the first doctors to hang out a shingle in the Rogue Valley. Mollie died in January of 1884, leaving a son, George Henry. George attended the University of Oregon, graduating in 1906. George married the colorful actress, Grace Wick, who later became well-known in Portland for her political stand and her campaigns for bizarre causes. John Merritt married Jennie Moore, December 10, 1891. To them was born one daughter, Esther Louise. Miss Moore was the sister of Robert Moore, who managed the Gold Hill store. Merritt closed his store in Central Point, and moved to Gold Hill in 1916, where he lived out his life. He died in 1921 and is buried in the Jacksonville cemetery, in the company with many other early pioneers.

Central Point was properly named, being the center most point of the inhabited portion of the Rogue Valley. It was established when Indian Agent, Alonzo Alphonzo Skinner settled there in the fall of 1851. The agency farm was conveniently located. Little by little a community was established, and in 1854 Manzanita precinct, and School District Six was designated by the County Commissioners. Theopholas and Constantine Magruder started a store in 1868 along the intersection of the north-south, and the east-west roads through the Rogue Valley. The community was officially named Central Point,

when the post of was established in Magruder's store in 1872.

The railroad had quite an impact on the valley, not only did it miss Jacksonville, it missed Central Point. As a result, the town had to be moved west one half mile. Three land owners made deeds to each other to "pool and consolidate" their land for a townsite. (See enclosed map for the men involved.) The trustees began selling lots as soon as the plat was recorded. Merritt bought lots 11 and 12 in block 11, which adjoins the nominated property to the east, and opened his General Merchandise store in 1887. The March 23, 1888 nominated property lot was purchased by J.W. Shepard. Democratic Times had the following; "J.W. Shepard of Ashland has opened up The building was used for various businesses, from a a furniture store." saloon to a Dr.'s office. Dr. Alex Patterson bought it in 1896. That same year, he had the residence portion built. The <u>Democratic Times</u>, November 20, 1896 contained the following: "Dr. Alexander Patterson's new residence recently erected in the rear of his drug store is a very neat and substantial structure." Patterson sold the building to Merritt for \$300 in May of 1899. At one time there was a door that connected the two buildings, making it convenient for Merritt to move from one building to the other. The location is noted on the enclosed sketch.

In recent years, several homes that were built in the late 1880's and early 1900's have been razed. The Morris, Purkeypile, and Owens houses are a few of the more notable. The enclosed map of Central Point, 1900-1910

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drawn by Frank Ross shows the relationship of the Merritt building to those mentioned. The buildings that remain are the Cooksey house on West Pine Street, the Peart house and the Moore house on the east and west side of First Street and the south side of Oak, and the Leever house on the corner of 1st and Oak, which is marked for destruction.

The current owners of the Merritt building want to restore the building to its original appearance and once again open it for business. The stucco that had covered the storefront already has been removed to reveal the original weatherboards of the false gable and the paneled bulkheads beneath the display windows.

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John C. Poppeliers, S. Allen Chambers Jr., Nancy B. Schwartz <u>What Style Is</u> <u>It? A guide to American Architecture</u> The Preservation Press National Trust for Historic Preservation 1785 Massachusetts, N.W., Washington D.C. 20036 John Gloag, <u>Guide to Western Architecture</u> The Mac Millan Company New York 1958

Ernest Pickering <u>Architectural Design</u> John Wiley & Sons Inc. New York, John J.-G. Blumenson <u>Identifying American Architecture A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945</u> American Association for State and Local History 1400 Eighth Avenue South Nashville, Tennessee 37203 fourth printing 1977 <u>Built in the U.S.A.: American buildings from airports to zoos</u> edited by Diane Maddex National Trust for Historic Preservation Published by Preservation Press, 1985 Washington D.C.

At The Crossroads A History of Central Point 1850-1900 Linda Morehouse Genaw 1989 Self Published.

Democratic Times 1887-1901

Gold Hill News 1890-1926

Central Point Herald 1906-1920

Jackson County Assessment Rolls

Jackson County Field Appraisers Books 1912-1920

Central Point Council Minutes

Jackson County Deeds Records Vol. 20 Pg. 541, Vol. 20 Pg. 311, Vol. 21 Pg. 275, Vol. 22 Pg. 123, Vol. 22 Pg. 167, Vol. 25, Pg. 501, Vol. 28 Pg. 221, Vol. 28 Pg. 382, Vol. 32 Pg. 480, Vol. 36 Pg. 280

Southern Oregon Historical Society Vertical File Merritt

J.W. Merritt Obituary Notice

Portrait and Biographical Record of Western Oregon, Western Oregon Illustrated

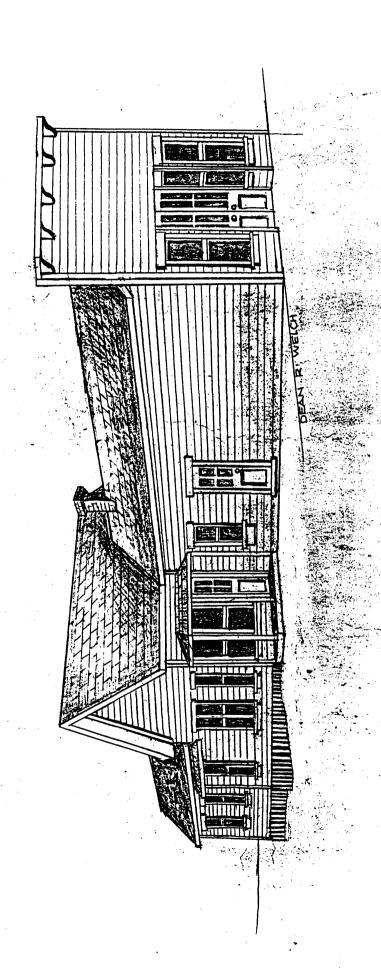
Table Rock Sentinel published by the Southern Oregon Historical Society



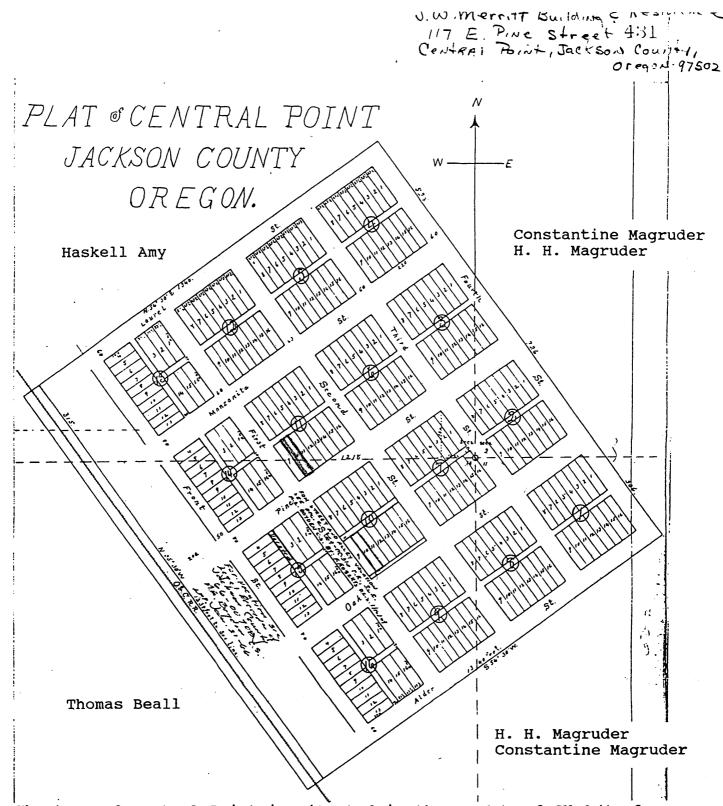
MERRITT, JOHN W., HOUSE AND STORE (1888-1896) CENTRAL POINT JACKSON COUNTY, OREGON

May 1991 Photo showing 1888 storefront (far left) after stucco was removed.

J.W.MERRIT BLDG.
CIRCA 1890
PROPOSED CONICLUSION
TO PROVIECT.







The town of Central Point is situated in the SW 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Section 2, SE 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Section 3, NE 1/4 of NE 1/4 of Section 10, and the NW 1/4 of NW 1/4 of Section 11, all in Township 37 South Range 2 West of the Willamette Meridian. The NW corner of Block 7 is 108 1/2 feet West and 160 feet North from the section corner. The lettered streets are S 54 degrees 30 minutes, West and are named Alder, Oak, Pine, Manzanita, Laurel. Streets are all 80 feet wide except Alder and Laurel which are 60 feet wide. The numbered streets run at right angles with named streets. Numbered streets ate all 60 feet except Fourth, which is 50 feet wide. All alleys are 20 feet wide.*

*This has been retyped from a hand written document, for easier readability.

