

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

MAY 8 2001

NATIONAL REGISTER  
& EDUCATION  
NATP

659

1. Name of Property

historic name First National Bank Building

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 100 West Main not for publication N/A  
city or town Stratford vicinity N/A  
state Oklahoma code OK county Garvin code 049  
zip code 74872

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide  locally. ( N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)



4-26-01  
Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

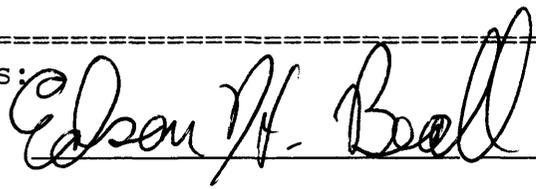
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the  
National Register  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the  
National Register
- removed from the National Register

 6-14-01

\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

  
Signature of Keeper Date  
of Action

=====

5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	buildings
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	sites
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	structures
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	objects
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   N/A  

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)   N/A

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6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: financial institution  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: WORK IN PROGRESS Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE:granite  
roof METAL:tin  
walls BRICK  
STONE:granite  
other TERRA COTTA  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance 1907-1908  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

=====  
8. Statement of Significance (Continued)  
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Significant Dates 1907  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder UNKNOWN  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References  
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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data  
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Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	14	686430	3852070	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

N/A See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====  
11. Form Prepared By  
=====

name/title Cynthia Savage, Architectural Historian, for the Stratford  
Historical Restoration Association

organization Savage Consulting date November 2000

street & number Rt. 1, Box 116 telephone 405/459-6200

city or town Pocasset state OK zip code 73079

=====  
Additional Documentation  
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
Property Owner  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Stratford Historical Restoration Association, Ms. Gene Miller, President

street & number P.O. Box 576 telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Stratford state OK zip code 74872

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SUMMARY

The First National Bank Building in Stratford, Garvin County, Oklahoma, is an outstanding example of a Late Victorian style building. The building features a variety of patterns and textures to create an opulent Victorian influenced resource. Combining the Late Victorian substyles of Romanesque Revival with Queen Anne details, the building is unique among the commercial buildings of downtown Stratford. The majority of other buildings in the central business district are relatively plain, one-story, brick, Commercial style resources.

The First National Bank Building is a brick, two-story building with a hipped, patterned, metal roof which is highlighted by a two-story turret. Also ornamenting the roof are two gabled dormers; six brick chimneys, two of which have been turned into vents with the tops removed; two small metal towerets and an ornamented ridge cap. The windows in the second floor of the building are wood, one-over-one, double hung topped by a wood, slightly smaller, transom window. The dominant style of the first floor windows are large, arched, wood, multiple pane, fixed. There is a single wood, one-over-one, double hung towards the rear of the building's first floor. The original window material was altered prior to the 1960s with replacement aluminum windows; however in 1998, the replacement windows were removed and new wood windows that imitated the original windows were installed. The only window not rehabilitated was a single horseshoe arched window on the north corner of the east elevation's second floor. This window was filled with red brick and remains as such. The original front door was altered to an aluminum replacement in the pre-1960s alterations. In 1999, the original, glazed, wood, paneled, entry door which a Stratford resident had in his possession was returned to the building. New, paneled, solid wood, side panels were also installed on either side of the single entry. Fortunately, the original stone canted entrance was not altered during the pre-1960s modernization of the building.

The First National Bank Building is located in downtown Stratford. Although the downtown has declined from its historic limits and splendor, the block on which the bank is located retains a good degree of integrity. Several of the brick, one-story buildings to the west of the bank have been sensitively rehabilitated. The buildings across Main Street have not fared as well with

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several retaining the mask of modernization. Although the overall setting of downtown Stratford has been altered by the deterioration of the central business district, there is enough historic material remaining to provide sufficient feeling and association between the current setting of the First National Bank Building and its historic setting.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

Located on the northwest corner of Main Street and Hyden Avenue, the First National Bank Building has two street elevations. The narrow south elevation fronts onto Main Street, while the longer east elevation faces Hyden Avenue. Both of these elevations are fairly elaborate, as befitting the building's original function as a bank. Both feature blond brick walls ornamented with a variety of decorative patterns. The north or rear elevation is unremarkable as only a plain, painted, red brick wall with no windows. The first floor of the rear elevation is obscured by an adjoining one-story building, now clad with stucco. Based on the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for Stratford, this adjacent building was constructed after the 1908 bank building but before 1911. The First National's west elevation is visible only above the adjacent one-story brick building. Not intended to be seen, the west elevation is built of common red brick.

Straddling the corner, the First National Bank Building features a canted entrance. Canted entrances were often the hallmark of small town bank buildings. The First National Bank's entrance is constructed of rough cut stone. Similar stone is also used for the building's foundation. The entrance is ornamented with a short column with a Corinthian type capital. The two round arched entries are set off by wedge shaped vouissoirs. Within the canted entrance is located a single, glazed, wood, panel door with wood side panels. The door is original to the building but was only recently reinstalled in the building. When the building was modernized, a modern aluminum door and sidelights were placed in the entrance. The original door was returned to the building as part of the current rehabilitation project. The door was found in the possession of a local resident. The solid wood, paneled, side panels are not historic but mimic the original side panels.

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Above the entrance is the striking two-story turret. Beginning on the second floor, the turret extends upwards as a third story; however, it does not create a true third story. The turret is topped by a bell-shaped roof with a metal imbrication covering similar to the principal roof. Immediately below the bell-shaped roof is a band of blond bricks. Under this is an open area which is ornamented with six, miniature, terra cotta, Corinthian columns which have been painted red to match other ornamentation on the building. Wire has been strung behind the columns to keep birds out of the turret. The wire is not readily visible. Above and below the columns are narrow bands of rough stone. The rough stone trim was used only on the turret. Although stone trim is found above and below the windows elsewhere on the south and east elevations, that trim is smooth.

Forever marking the building of its original owner is the name plate above the second floor windows in the turret. The name plate, wrapping around the turret, reads "First National Bank". The name plate is apparently metal and has been painted silver to match the roof. Below the name plate is another band of blond brick, followed by a rough stone band above the second floor windows. This stone band is wider than the other bands of stone on the turret. Identical to the other second floor windows, the turret's windows are wood, one-over-one, hung topped by a smaller, wood, transom window. The two sets of paired windows are centered along the turret. Underneath the windows is a narrow, rough, stone band with another strip of blond brick below this. The bottom of the turret is marked by a narrow band of rough stone and two smooth bands of stone. The top band of smooth stone projects further than the rough band above and the smooth band below.

The south elevation is the narrow, approximately twenty-five feet wide, street elevation which fronts onto Stratford's Main Street. As such, it is the building's primary elevation. The south elevation features many of the same decorative details as on the longer east elevation; however, the ornamental features are not centered on the facade as on the east wall. The southwest corner of roof is marked by a metal toweret. The toweret is painted silver to match the rest of the roof. It has a steep conical roof topped by a small ball. East of this, set back on the principal roof, is a gabled dormer. Covered with gray shingles, the dormer has a single one-over-one window. Due

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to the narrowness of the south elevation, the dormer is located close to the two-story turret. Located in the corner between the south elevation and the turret is a brick chimney. In front of this is the corbelled stone coping which extends the length of the elevation. Below this is a terra cotta band of rosettes, consisting of a center flower with radial leaves. Matching other decorative terra cotta details on the building, the rosettes are painted red. Ornamenting the upper wall by the turret is a pedimented entablature above a Composite order pilaster. The pedimented entablature is metal, painted silver, while the capital of the pilaster is terra cotta and painted red. The capital is topped by a single centered flower matching the flowers along the upper wall. The column of the pilaster is blond brick with a narrow, vertical, incised band which contains a repetitive design made of terra cotta and painted red. The bottom of the pilaster is stepped in with a narrow, rough, stone base which matches the stone trim on the turret.

The south elevation's second floor features two sets of paired, wood, one-over-one, hung windows topped by transom windows. Above the windows is a smooth band of stone which extends from the pilaster on the east side of the elevation to the plain brick pilaster on the west side. This band of stone is wider than the other stone bands on the elevation. Ornamenting the area above the wide stone band are two panels of terra cotta decorated in a dogtooth pattern. The panels are painted red and are the same width as the windows. Above the panels is a narrow strip of blond brick, then a narrow band of smooth stone. The panels sit directly on the wide stone band above the windows. Below the windows is another narrow, slightly projected, smooth band of stone which serves as the sill for the windows. The band extends from the turret to the plain brick pilaster on the west side. Under this is a small band of blond brick, followed by a stone stringcourse which extends the length of the south and east elevations.

The first floor of the south elevation contains a single, arched, multiple pane window. The six pane fixed window consists of three equal sized panes topped by a square center pane flanked by two smaller panes. An arched, smooth, stone header flares out at the sides to extend the length of the elevation. Another straight, smooth, stone band below the window acts as a sill. This gives way to a small section of blond brick. Below this is a wide, smooth, stone band

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immediately above the rough cut stone foundation.

The west elevation was intended to be abutted by another building. As such, it was constructed of common red brick with no ornamentation or fenestration. An adjoining, one-story, red brick, Commercial style building was built between 1908 and 1911. Because the neighboring building is only one-story, the second story of the First National's west elevation remains visible. Two blond brick chimneys on the roof are the only architectural features found on the west elevation.

The north elevation is even plainer than the west elevation. The back of the building was also constructed of common red brick. However, the red brick has been painted gray, although along the upper wall the red brick is visible in spots. There are no windows or doors in the west elevation. A one-story, brick, Commercial style building was constructed adjoining the rear elevation. Built between 1908 and 1911, the building originally housed a barber shop. At an unknown time, the adjacent building's original brick cladding was covered with stucco.

The east elevation is ornamented nearly identical to the south elevation. The outside corner of the wall is marked with a metal toweret, while the inside corner by the turret contains a pedimented entablature above a terra cotta Composite style capital and brick pilaster. The toweret on the east elevation is slightly different from the one on the south elevation. The east elevation toweret has a bottom half which is more ornamented than the top. The bottom piece consists of a cylinder with an upside down conical shape below. The cone has deep cut channels with a ball on the end. The south elevation had a similar bottom piece as the ghostlines remain visible but, for unknown reasons and at an unknown time, it has been removed. The pedimented Composite order pilaster on the east elevation matches the detail of the one on the south elevation. On the roof, behind the pilaster, is a brick chimney.

The east elevation is longer than the south wall and the ornamentation is symmetrically placed. The east wall is, however, also divided into two bays. The southernmost bay is larger than the northern bay and contains the majority of architectural features. The northernmost bay is narrow, slightly projected

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and includes a second story horseshoe arched window which has been bricked in and a single, metal, slab pedestrian door on the first floor. The door provides access to the second story stairway. Both the window and door in this bay do not match the height of the fenestration in the larger southern bay. The door is topped by a transom window and a rough stone header. The second story window has a stone horseshoe arched header. The window was infilled with red brick probably during the pre-1960s modernization of the building. Below the window is the narrow stone band which serves as the sill for all of the second floor windows on the east elevation. Under this is the stone stringcourse which delineates the two stories of the building. The roofline in the northernmost bay is ornamented with a brief expanse of corbelling. The inside corner of the northernmost bay's upper wall has a square, metal, painted silver ornament which is similar to the corner markers by the turret, except this marker does not have a pedimented top and the bottom of the marker is detailed with a dentil-like design.

Centrally located along the larger southern bay of the east elevation is a shingled gabled dormer with a one-over-one wood window. The east elevation's dormer is flanked by two brick chimneys. The corbelled tops of the chimneys have been removed. Although vent covers were placed on both chimneys at an unknown time, only the cover on the south chimney remains. Like the south elevation, the roofline of the east elevation is ornamented with a corbelled stone coping which extends the length of the elevation. A single band of terra cotta rosettes, painted red, decorates the upper wall. Symmetrically placed along the second floor of the east elevation's southern bay are three sets of paired, wood, one-over-one, hung windows with transom windows. Identical to the south elevation, the windows are topped by a smooth band of stone which extends the length of the southern bay. Red terra cotta panels featuring a dogtooth pattern above each window and another narrow band of stone further ornaments the upper story of the building. A narrow, slightly projected, smooth band of stone immediately underneath the windows and extending the length of the elevation acts as the sill for the windows. A smooth stone stringcourse below this provides a visual separation between the floors of the building.

The first floor of the east elevation's southern bay has two arched, multiple

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pane windows. The arched windows and ornamentation along the lower portion of the wall are identical to that of the south elevation. However, the east elevation also includes a single, wood, one-over-one window topped by a transom window to the north of the arched windows. North of this is a single, glazed, wood, panel, pedestrian door which leads to the back of the first floor. The stone band above the arched windows drops down and flattens out to extend along the top of the single window and door. The base of the east elevation is treated identical to that of the south elevation.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

Currently, the interior of the First National Bank Building in Stratford is a work in progress. The owner of the building, the Stratford Historical Restoration Association, is planning to open a museum in the building. Included in their plans is the recreation of the bank area on the first floor. The original teller cages and other bank paraphernalia has been acquired from local residents. The second floor, originally containing various professional offices, will also be returned to use. The bank has stood vacant for a number of years so the owner has been engaged in repairing the damage wrought by disuse, as well as touching up some of the decorative finishes which remain in the building.

The first floor of the building consists of a large main room with a vault room in the northwest corner. The wood floor is tongue and groove with a decorative pressed metal ceiling above. Some repairs have been made to both the floor and ceiling. In 1999, eight-seven ceiling tiles were replaced with identical patterned tiles. Additionally, the first floor interior walls were re-plastered in 1999. The vault room has not been rehabilitated as of yet.

As was typical of bank buildings, the second floor of the First National Bank originally contained three professional offices. Both a doctor and a dentist officed in the First National Bank's second floor for a number of years. The second floor is accessed by a set of wood stairs located to the rear of the building. Having their own entrance in the northernmost bay of the east elevation, the stairs are separated from the main first floor area by a wall. Entering the east elevation entrance, the stairs proceed west until near the

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top where they turn to the south. Off a single corridor are located the three offices. Two of the offices branch off to the east of the corridor with the third office located at the end of the corridor. The southernmost office enjoys the rounded corner provided by the turret. The wood floors on the second floor are also tongue and groove and the walls and ceilings are plaster. Although planned, rehabilitation work has not been undertaken as of yet on the second floor.

ALTERATIONS

Overall, the First National Bank Building retains a fairly high degree of integrity on both the interior and exterior. Due to the rehabilitation work undertaken by the Stratford Historical Restoration Association, the majority of alterations on the exterior consist of missing decorative details. The return of the original door and installment of new but historically accurate wood windows in 1998 has allowed the building to regain the majority of historic integrity the pre-1960s modernization robbed the building of. The integrity of the interior has been damaged more by disuse rather than alteration. Work done by the group on the interior, as well as the exterior, has been remarkably sensitive to the historic characteristics of the building.

Alterations to the exterior which remain include the conversion of two brick chimneys on the east elevation to vents; the removal of the bottom piece of the toweret on the south elevation; the bricking of the horseshoe window on the rear of the east elevation; and, the painting of the rear elevation. Most of these alterations probably occurred during the pre-1960s modernization of the building.

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SUMMARY

The First National Bank Building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its architectural significance as an excellent, unusual example of Late Victorian style commercial architecture in Stratford, Garvin County, Oklahoma. Constructed in 1907/1908, the building features a combination of the Late Victorian substyles of Romanesque Revival with Queen Anne details. The building stands out among the other buildings of downtown Stratford as the only elaborately styled building. The other buildings in the central business district are relatively plain, one-story, brick, Commercial style resources or have been so modernized that their historic character has been lost.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The town of Stratford, Oklahoma, originated as the community of Walling, Indian Territory, in August 1906. At that time, the Canadian Valley Construction Company offered towns lots for sale. Previous to this, many of the occupants of the newly platted town resided in McGee, Indian Territory. Although McGee was prospering at the time, the community relocated in response to a major early twentieth century economic force, a rail line. The Oklahoma Central Railway, running from Lehigh through Ada and Purcell to Chickasha with the primary purpose of hauling coal from southern Oklahoma to western Oklahoma, laid track two miles south of the town of McGee. Wanting to enjoy both the economic and social advantages of being located along the rail line, residents of McGee, including the First National Bank of McGee, packed up their belongings and, in many cases, moved their buildings to the newly created town of Walling.<sup>1</sup>

Although Walling got off to a heady start with two newspapers, two banks, two lumberyards, one gin, fourteen stores, three hotels, four restaurants, two barber shops, one millinery shop, one butcher shop, one cotton buyer, one

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<sup>1</sup>The Pauls Valley (Oklahoma) Daily Democrat, 21 September 1999.

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lawyer and one real estate office projected by October 1906, the town quickly ran into difficulty over its name. The name "Walling" was arrived at to honor the Oklahoma Central Railway's company treasurer, Willoughby Walling. Although M.M. Ledford of McGee and James H.E. Moorehead of Hickory both applied to be postmaster of Walling, the federal government refused to organize a post office in the town until the name was changed, probably due to the replication of the name with another town. Occupants of the new town debated a new name through the months of September and October 1906 with suggestions of "Willoughby," put forth by the railway's general attorney Mr. Sharp and still in honor of the company's treasurer, and "Stratford," suggested by George Northrup, "...the popular agent of the townsite company." On 2 November 1906, the newspaper proclaimed the settlement of the issue with the simple statement "It is Stratford instead of Walling."<sup>2</sup>

With the name issue settled once and for all, the town of Stratford continued to prosper. Numerous buildings were constructed in the downtown core, as fine residences went up in the surrounding areas. Typical to the period, the majority of these buildings were frame. Included among these was a frame building housing the First National Bank of Stratford, formerly the First National Bank of McGee.

A common hazard to commercial areas composed of primarily frame buildings struck Stratford on the night of 17 May 1907. Beginning at about one in the morning, a fire, originating in W. D. Jackson's livery barn, swept rapidly to the north to Main Street, destroying the frame buildings in its path. Although the First National Bank Building was not in the line of disaster, the town's other bank, the United States Bank, received damage to its building and

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<sup>2</sup>The Chickasaw News, McGee, Indian Territory, 27 September 1906, 25 October 1906 and 2 November 1906. See also The Pauls Valley Daily Democrat, 21 September 1999.

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furniture in the estimated amount of \$1,200. However, at the time of the local newspaper's publication of the event six days later, the bank's fireproof safe had not been opened so the loss in money and securities was not yet known.<sup>3</sup>

Prompted at least partially by fear of a reoccurrence of fire, the businessmen of Stratford quickly began work on erection of more permanent, fire-proof buildings. By late July 1907, five brick buildings were under construction, as well as one new frame building. The five buildings consisted of the two-story Jackson-Shi building; the one-story W.D. Strother Building; the Jackson Drew livery barn; the A.M. Jackson building; and, the two-story First National Bank Building. Although no details were offered, the newspaper proclaimed that the First National Bank Building would be "...second to none in this part of the new state."<sup>4</sup>

The building boom in Stratford continued through August of 1907 with several other brick buildings slated for construction. By late August, brick for the First National Bank Building had begun to arrive. At that time, it was announced that the bank building was to "...be constructed out of the Kansas Buff and the famous Carthage (Mo) Stone finished in terra cotta which means one of the finest Bank buildings in Garvin County." Additionally, the newspaper revealed that the United States Bank was also to erect a building which would "...keep space with the business interests."<sup>5</sup>

Construction of the First National Bank went fairly rapidly. By 6 February 1908, the bank was "...comfortably and securely housed in their handsome new brick building." Within a week, The Stratford Chronicle moved into the First National's former building. The second floor of the new First National Bank

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<sup>3</sup>The Stratford (Oklahoma) Chronicle, 23 May 1907.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 25 July 1907.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 22 August 1907.

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Building was not immediately occupied due to a delay in obtaining some of the windows. By the 12th of March, however, Dr. Joe Eden opened his office on the second floor of the First National Bank Building.<sup>6</sup>

Although the First National Bank occupied the building until approximately 1938 when they purchased land for a new building, the bank sold the building in April 1911 to Whit W. Hyden for the amount of \$10,000. At the same time, Hyden leased the front corner room, termed the "banking room" and measuring twenty-five feet by fifty feet, back to the bank for fifty dollars a month for a period of five years with an option for the following five years. In December of 1911, Hyden and his wife, Dovie L. Hyden, mortgaged the building to the Deming Investment Company of Oswego, Kansas, for \$1600.<sup>7</sup> Following the relocation of the bank in the late 1930s, the building continued in use for a number of years as offices for various local professionals.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The First National Bank Building of Stratford is an outstanding example of a Late Victorian style resource. The building is unique among the building stock of downtown Stratford. The majority of other commercial buildings in the central business district are relatively plain, Commercial style resources. The variety of materials, as well as the mix of decorative treatments, used in the First National Bank Building creates an outstanding resource which clearly deserves recognition for its unusual quality within the local community.

The construction of such an elaborate resource was typical of bank construction in the early twentieth century for eastern Oklahoma, as well as other parts of the country. The building constructed by the First National Bank at Wynnewood,

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 6 February 1908, 13 February 1908, 27 February 1908 and 12 March 1908.

<sup>7</sup>The Guaranty Abstract Company, Abstract for the First National Bank Building, prepared at an unknown date.

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Garvin County, was also a luxuriant, brick, Late Victorian style building. Although not constructed by the First National Bank, the building occupied by the bank following its consolidation with another bank in 1908, was a fine brick building heralded as the first brick building constructed in Pauls Valley, the county seat of Garvin County.<sup>8</sup>

Bankers in the western part of the United States expended a considerable amount on the construction of their facilities to reinforce the belief that their bank was trustworthy and a safe repository for the community's money. According to Banking in the American West: From the Gold Rush to Deregulation, rather than relying on capital brought in by well-to-do investors from the east,

    "...western bankers followed a different pattern. They established their personal reputations, then constructed imposing, solidly built, permanent facilities to prove that their bank was indeed safe."

In addition to representing physical security for the community's valuables, bank buildings also served as a symbol of the community itself. As summed up by Banking in the American West

    "Just as the banker himself had announced his permanence in the community by constructing a magnificent banking house at no small cost to himself, so the community announced to the world that it was indeed "here to stay" by virtue of the fact that it now had a real bank."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>From Bluestem to Golden Trend, (Fort Worth, Texas: University Supply & Equipment Company, 1957), n.pg.

<sup>9</sup>Lynne Pierson Doti and Larry Schweikart, Banking in the American West: From the Gold Rush to Deregulation, (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 4 and 44.

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Thus, it is understandable that the local newspaper proclaimed that the First National Bank Building in Stratford was to be "...one of the finest in Garvin County..." even before construction was finished. As a symbol of the community's assets, both real and imagined, the First National Bank Building of Stratford served its purpose well for nearly one hundred years. Although no longer functioning as a banking institute and, indeed vacant for a number of years, the building still proclaims the stability of the community of Stratford. As the hallmark of the community, the building remains an excellent, unusual example of the Late Victorian style.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

South 50 feet, Lot 12, Block 12, Town of Stratford, Oklahoma, Northwest 1/4,  
Section 26, Township 4 North, Range 3 East.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries include the property historically associated with the First  
National Bank Building in Stratford, Garvin County, Oklahoma.