

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

FEB 28 1979

RECEIVED

MAR 29 1979

DATE ENTERED

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

HISTORIC

Croxtton (Thomas) House

AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1002 N.W. Washington Boulevard

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Grants Pass

\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
4th

STATE

Oregon

CODE  
41COUNTY  
JosephineCODE  
033**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

James A. &amp; Yolanda G. Smithson

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1002 N.W. Washington Boulevard

CITY, TOWN

Grants Pass

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE  
Oregon

97526

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Josephine County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Grants Pass

STATE  
Oregon

97526

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_ STATE \_\_ COUNTY \_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In its present form, the Thomas Croxton House is rectangular in plan and measures 42 x 52 feet, presenting the longer frontage to Evelyn Avenue. The oldest portion of the house (ca. 1866) faces south onto Evelyn Avenue. It is a 1½ story clapboarded frame structure with lateral gable roof and a shed-roofed porch with chamfered posts and railings extending fully across the front. What is presently the main block of the house--an L-shaped addition of 1889-1890--wraps around the east end and north side of the old wing. A tall two stories, the later wing is also gable-roofed and clapboarded. Both old and new wings are simply finished with plain corner boards and window and door framements. Typical windows are fitted with double-hung sash with one over one lights.\* Gable ends of the new wing have verge board decoration and a return of eaves. A porch with shake-clad hipped roof with deck and railing supported by chamfered posts extends 25 feet along the southerly end of the east elevation and shelters the main entry.

The interior of the house has two main stairways leading to the second floor. The original two-flight closed-string stairway has two roman columns and the stairway leads out of the formal dining room, which was originally the parlor. The other stairway in the entrance hall is an open-string, open well with three flights. The square newels have chamfered corners and fluted trim as does the balusters. The front and side porch columns have the same chamfered corners with the fluted trim. The dining room, parlor and the sitting room are off the entrance hall with a large sliding wooden six-panel door closing off the sitting room. The interior door and window trim is plain in the informal areas and fluted with round corner blocks in the formal areas. The original wide plank flooring is still intact and in excellent condition. The interior walls are lath and plaster, and the original wall paper still intact on the ceilings.

Very few structural changes have been made since the first major addition. A laundry room, patio, deck and second story bath have been added to the rear elevations, and three appropriately-framed small picture windows have been added also. Despite the horizontality of the latter, their scale and proportion keep them from being overly intrusive.

The south and east gable ends have the original lattice barge boards and pendant. The original 1889 double brick foundation is still intact and in excellent condition. The oldest portion of the house has a new concrete foundation. The gable roofs and porch roofs were recently recovered with cedar shakes.

The garage to the west of the house was built in 1976 with a conscious effort to achieve compatibility through use of a shake-clad gable roof and clapboard siding. A vegetation screen has been planted which, in time, will further mask the garage from view.

\*Paired openings are used in the second story of the gable ends of the 1889-1890 block. In the ground story of the east-facing gable end of later addition is a tripartite grouping in which a central double-hung window is flanked by narrower side openings.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES    ca. 1866; 1889-1890    BUILDER/ARCHITECT    unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The 1½ story clapboarded frame house built for Thomas Croxton (1817-1868) around 1866 was enlarged by the addition of a two story L-shaped block to the east end after the property passed from family ownership in 1888. The house is significant as the property most directly associated with early settler and first post master of Grants Pass, Thomas Croxton. As a Methodist local preacher, Croxton organized the Kerbyville Mission Circuit in 1857, following the close of the Rogue River Indian War, and thus laid the foundation of the Methodist Church in Josephine County. A lay leader, Croxton was the first pastor of the congregation which evolved as Newman United Methodist Church and whose church of 1889-1890 is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Croxton served the circuit he had organized until 1867, a year before his demise. The post office of the settlement which grew up on Croxton's and adjoining claims was established March 22, 1865. While the name "Grant's Pass" appears to have been in use prior to that time, having been applied first to a nearby topographic feature, it was Croxton who accomplished official recognition of the settlement's name. He petitioned postal authorities to name the new office in honor of General Ulysses S. Grant's Civil War Victories.

The property which Croxton owned at this location was first settled by Orson Gilbert in 1854. Croxton acquired Gilbert's claim in 1859, adding to it, in 1863, 120 acres upon which the house was built; and, before his death in 1868, he had been granted another 80 acres. In 1868 the Jackson County Court established the voting precinct of Grants Pass at the home of Thomas Croxton.

Upon Croxton's death at the age of 51 in December, 1868, the house passed with 221 acres to Croxton's daughter, Sarah Jane, wife of Ebenzer Dimmick, a Methodist who later was to serve as Superintendent of the local congregation's Sunday School. The Dimmicks occupied the Croxton house for twenty years, during most of which time it continued as a polling place (the precinct polling place was moved to a schoolhouse in 1884). In 1888, Sarah Jane and Ebenezer Dimmick sold the house and 160 acres to Arthur Conklin, a developer. This transaction brought about the major improvement, for it may have been Conklin who added what is now the main volume of the house in 1889-1890. In any event, it was Conklin who made of the 160 acres the Lincoln Park Addition, thought to be the town's first subdivision. In 1890 Conklin sold eight lots, including those upon which the house stands, to prominent local merchant Robert L. Cole, who occupied the property until 1931.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Sutton, Jack, 110 Years with Josephine: The History of Josephine County, Oregon  
(Josephine County Historical Society, 1966).

Abstract of title.

The Will of Thomas Croxton.

90th Anniversary of the Newman Methodist Church, Grants Pass, Oregon, 1857 to 1947. Com-  
memorative Program, November 30, 1947. "Historical Highlights" by Mrs. W.C. Harmon.  
McArthur, Lewis A. Oregon Geographic Names. (Portland: Binford & Mort, 1965), 272-273.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one.  
UTM REFERENCES

A | 1 0 | 4 7 3 3 0 0 | 4 6 9 9 3 9 0 |  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property nominated is a rectangular lot 100' by 140'. Lots 11 and 12, Block 13, Lincoln Addition to the Plat of Grants Pass, Josephine County, Oregon.

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 James A. & Yolanda G. Smithson

ORGANIZATION DATE December 1, 1978

STREET & NUMBER 1002 N.W. Washington Boulevard TELEPHONE (503) 479-6160

CITY OR TOWN Grants Pass STATE Oregon 97526

# 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.

*Handwritten signature: Fred L. Tolbert*

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE February 14, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>Bill Labouch</i>	DATE <i>March 29, 1979</i>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: <i>Bill Labouch</i>	DATE <i>March 29, 1979</i>
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	<i>3/29/79</i>
<i>W. Ray Luce</i>	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Croxton (Thomas) House, Grants Pass, Josephine County, Oregon

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Although it has not been possible to document precisely the date of construction of the later wing which now constitutes the main volume of the house, it seems clear that the addition was standing at the time a birdseye view of Grants Pass was published in August, 1890. In the lithographed perspective view of that date, the enlarged house appears in a marginal detail of "Lincoln Park Villa Addition," which is labeled the "finest resident property in Grants Pass, Arthur Conklin, Agent.)\* It is generally understood that Conklin never lived in his subdivision. There is some oral tradition which points to the possibility that the addition had been made by Croxton's daughter and son-in-law prior to the sale of the property in 1888.

\*The view is reproduced in Jack Sutton's 110 Years with Josephine: The History of Josephine County, Oregon, 1856-1966 (Medford: Josephine County Historical Society, 1966), page 22.