

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received **JAN 19 1984**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Tower, Dr. Charles, and Flanagan, Patrick, House

and/or common Tower-Flanagan House

2. Location

street & number 476 Newmark Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Coos Bay N/A vicinity of Fourth Congressional District

state Oregon code 41 county Coos code 011

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Coos County Historic Society Museum

street & number Simpson Park

city, town North Bend N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97459

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Coos County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Coquille state Oregon 97423

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1976 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Salem state Oregon 97310


7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____ N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Tower-Flanagan House is a detached single-family residence initially built in 1872 in the Gothic Revival style. Subsequently over a thirty to fifty year period the house has been added onto and altered in a pleasing and sympathetic manner - all significant additions and changes being more than 50 years old and now part of the historic fabric. The property retains a high degree of interior and exterior integrity.

The nominated property occupies Lots 3, 4, 5 and 6 of Block 31 of the Empire Addition and is approximately 100' by 200' in dimension. Prominently located on a corner lot with abundant mature vegetation, the neighborhood around the site has a number of incongruous distracting elements including a billboard in the lot to the west, modern "bars" across the street to the south and to the southwest, a vacant gas station across the street to the southeast, and a nondescript store across the street to the east. Zoning in the area including the historic site is commercial. However, it should be noted that the property always was in the downtown center of the old City of Empire which has been merged with the City of Coos Bay. The Coos Historical Society Museum is considering purchase or option of the vacant lot to the west (with billboard) and intends to remove the carport.

The house is  shaped in floor plan and 1½ stories. A complex roof with six gable ends (1 facing south, 1 north, 2 east and 2 west) gives considerable headroom in the upper story. The house is of wood construction throughout. Exterior walls are balloon-framed with shiplap siding on the exterior and horizontal boards on the interior. (Except the south facing gable wall and dormer walls are shingled on the exterior.) The interior wall partitions are unusual - box construction with planks set vertically without any framing - a 19th century construction system not often seen in the 20th century. The beams supporting the floor joists are set on cedar posts which originally rested on the ground but now modern concrete piers have been placed under all posts. All roofs are steep-pitched (14/12) gables except for south (front) and east (side) hip-roofed porches. The roofs were originally clad in cedar shingles with ridge board caps - the modern asphalt composition roof shingles detract from the historic character and should eventually be replaced by cedar shingles.

The double-hung windows are of two types: 1) paired one-over-one sash windows on south facing walls and the south half of both the east and west walls, and 2) single six-over-six sash windows on the north facing walls and the north half of both east and west walls. Three of the upper story paired one-over-one sash windows in the south facing gable, and the southern east and west facing gables were modified after installation with trim boards to give the appearance of having "Gothic" pointed arches. Two "Victorian" circular (port hole) windows are found under the eaves between gables on the east and west facing walls. Exterior and interior doors are all wood two-over-two paneled except the two side doors have six glass lights over two wood panels. The south (front) door has three-pane side lights and a three-pane transom light surround.

There are two chimneys: 1) an exterior early 20th century chimney on the southern east facing gable with a fireplace in the livingroom/salon, and 2) an interior chimney serving as a flue for wood stoves in the northern extension of the house (this chimney was originally on the exterior of the north gable end of the initial house.) The house has two dormers: 1) a north facing bedroom dormer rising from the wall with a 12/12 pitched gable roof, and 2) a west facing bathroom dormer rising out of the roof with a 5/12 pitched gable.

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

received

date entered

Continuation sheet TOWER - FLANAGAN HOUSE Item number 7 Page 2

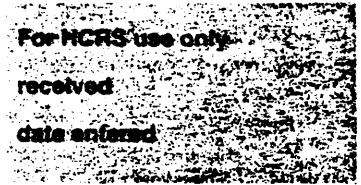
The house exterior is quite simple; decorative elements are limited to: 1) plain boards for window and door trim, corner, fascia and water table boards; 2) slight pediments over windows; 3) wooden circular "bosses" over most windows; 4) deeply molded trim around roof eaves; 5) the aforementioned three "Gothic" painted window arches.

The interior is also simple and consists of plain door, window, and base board trim, wainscoting, deep cove moulding around lower floor ceilings, and wood paneling of upstairs ceilings. The major interior features of note include: 1) an open staircase with turned wood balusters and a continuous staircase rail and railing around the stairwell upstairs; 2) sliding pocket panelled doors between front and rear west parlors; 3) French doors opening from the hallway into the livingroom/salon; 4) old wallpaper including only one layer in the upstairs southwest bedroom; 5) early 20th century cabinet work in the kitchen; 6) brass door hardware; and 7) early 20th century brass light fixtures and procelain bathroom and kitchen fixtures. The interior is largely intact except for "modern" surface wall, ceiling and floor treatments over historic finishes (i.e. reversible) in the upstairs north half.

The house, initially constructed in 1872, consisted of only four gable ends with a  shaped floor plan (i.e. the south half of the house), a hip-roofed front porch and no "gothic" pointed arch windows. Probably after the departure of Dr. Tower and his wife in 1874, a subsequent occupant (Patrick Flanagan family) extended the north gable end of the house and added two more gable ends giving the house an  shaped floor plan. Stylistically the single six-over-six windows of the north half of the house appear to be older than the narrower one-over-one sash windows of the south half and may have been recycled from another house. A narrower hip-roofed side porch on the east was probably concurrent with expansion to the north. By about 1890 to 1900 the following changes had probably been made: 1) the front bay window on the south facing gable was added, the trim on this addition is different in detail from the rest of the house and has 12/12 pitched hip-roof; 2) the shingled bedroom dormer off the northwest corner of the original with its 12/12 pitch gable was added; 3) the "Victorian" circular (port-hole) windows were added; 4) three windows were modified with new trim to give the appearance of "Gothic" pointed arches; and 5) the south gable end which is exposed to winter storms was shingled. Perhaps around 1910 to 1920 the following changes were made: 1) a low pitched (5/12) gable roofed dormer was added on the west for an indoor upstairs bathroom; 2) the small parlor rooms on the east were combined by removing an interior box construction partition to create a livingroom/salon with french doors added off the entry hall; 3) a chimney with fireplace in the new livingroom/salon was added on the east facing gable end (and the interior chimney on the southeast removed); 4) kitchen cabinets were built; 5) kitchen and bathroom plumbing and electrical lights were added; and 6) the side porch was increased in width approximately three feet, with the new roof intruding on the moulding of a "Victorian" circular window and six-over-six window.

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Continuation sheet

TOWER - FLANAGAN HOUSE

Item number

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Immediately to the north of the house off the kitchen is a gable roofed outbuilding used for a storeroom which matches the kitchen addition to include six-over-six and wood panelled door. And at the rear of the property line is a relatively intact 19th century 1½ story gable roofed stable/carriage house. There are also some mature ornamental landscape plant materials on the grounds. Incongruous "modern" site improvements include a concrete block garage in the rear yard, a fiberglass carport off the southwest corner of the house and a galvanized chainlink fence around the property replaced the old wood picket fence.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	1872	Builder/Architect	Dr. Charles W. Tower (builder)
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Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Tower-Flanagan House, built in 1872, is significant for its associations with Oregon pioneers Dr. Charles Tower, and Mr. Patrick Flanagan. In addition, the house is important as an intact example of Gothic Revival architecture. Therefore, it is proposed that the property is eligible under criteria "b" and "c".

Dr. Charles Tower constructed the house in 1872 in what was then Empire City - the first settlement on Coos Bay (and now part of the City of Coos Bay.) A pioneer physician, Dr. Tower practiced medicine in the Coos Bay area from 1870 until 1920. A subsequent owner, Patrick Flanagan, was a pioneer industrialist involved in the mining and shipment of coal from the Coos Bay area to San Francisco between 1855 and 1885. From coal, Mr. Flanagan went on to organizing Coos County's first bank in 1889. Mr. Flanagan was probably responsible for some of the additions and alterations that add to the character of the house. In addition to having been the residence of two prominent pioneer families, the house is one of the oldest surviving in the Coos Bay Area. The house is an important example of the Gothic Revival style in Oregon with the exterior and much of the interior intact. Further, the house presents a record of evolutionary changes done in a pleasing and sympathetic manner with shifts in taste, design, craftsmanship, and family requirements over a thirty to fifty year period - all significant changes to the house being more than 50 years old. The site, in addition to the house, has two 19th century out-buildings - a storage shed off the back of the house and a stable/carriage house at the rear of the property that will be retained. The grounds include some late 19th, early 20th century ornamental landscape plant materials which will also be retained.

Dr. Charles Tower was born in New Hampshire in 1842, was educated at Harvard with medical training at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York and Harvard Medical School. A Union veteran of the Civil War, he came to Coos Bay area in ill health to be with his sister in 1868. Recovering, he completed medical training at Willamette Medical School in Salem. In 1869 he built an office with living quarters and a drugstore on the site, opening his medical practice in 1870. Dr. Tower married Minnie Burrell, daughter of Dr. & Mrs. Burrell of San Francisco in 1872. For his new bride, Dr. Tower constructed a new house - the subject of this nomination. (His old office and living quarters were moved one block north to become his brother Colonel Morton Tower's house, which also still survives.) Dr. Tower and his wife moved to Marshfield in 1874 (according to an abstract of title the Towers did not sell the house until 1888 and Mr. Flanagan took legal possession of the house probably on foreclosure proceeding in 1893.)

Patrick Flanagan was born in Ireland in 1829, immigrated to America about 1843, went to the California gold fields in the Rush of 1849, and was a member of the Winchester Expedition to Oregon in 1850. He was one of the first white settlers in the Coos Bay area. He was associated with Dr. Tower's brother-in-law Samuel Stillman Mann in the coal mining/shipping firm of Flanagan and Mann from 1855 to 1883. Mr. Flanagan married Ellen Winchester in 1861. Patrick Flanagan with J. W. Bennett organized the Flanagan and Bennett Bank in 1889, the first in Coos County. Descendants of both Dr. Charles Tower and Patrick Flanagan still reside in the Coos Bay area.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Larsell, Olof, The Doctor in Oregon - A Medical History
Peterson, Emil R., and Powers, Alfred, A Century of Coos and Curry
(Portland, OR: Binford & Mort, 1952)
Dodge, Orvil O., Pioneer History of Coos and Curry Counties,
(Salem, OR: Capital Printing, 1898)

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property 0.5 acres

Quadrangle name Empire, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:2400

UTM References

A

1	0	3	9	6	7	1	2	5	4	8	0	5	0	4	5
Zone			Easting						Northing						

B

Zone			Easting						Northing						

C

Zone			Easting						Northing						

D

Zone			Easting						Northing						

E

Zone			Easting						Northing						

F

Zone			Easting						Northing						

G

Zone			Easting						Northing						

H

Zone			Easting						Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property occupies Lots 3, 4, 5 and 6 of Block 31, Empire Addition and is approximately 100' by 200' in size.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state None code county code

state None code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Andrew Wenchel (graduate student-historic preservation, Univ. of Oregon, Eugene)

organization for Coos County Historical Society date September 14, 1983

street & number 1475 Pine Street telephone N/A

city or town Coos Bay state Oregon 97420

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date January 6, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

2/16/84


Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

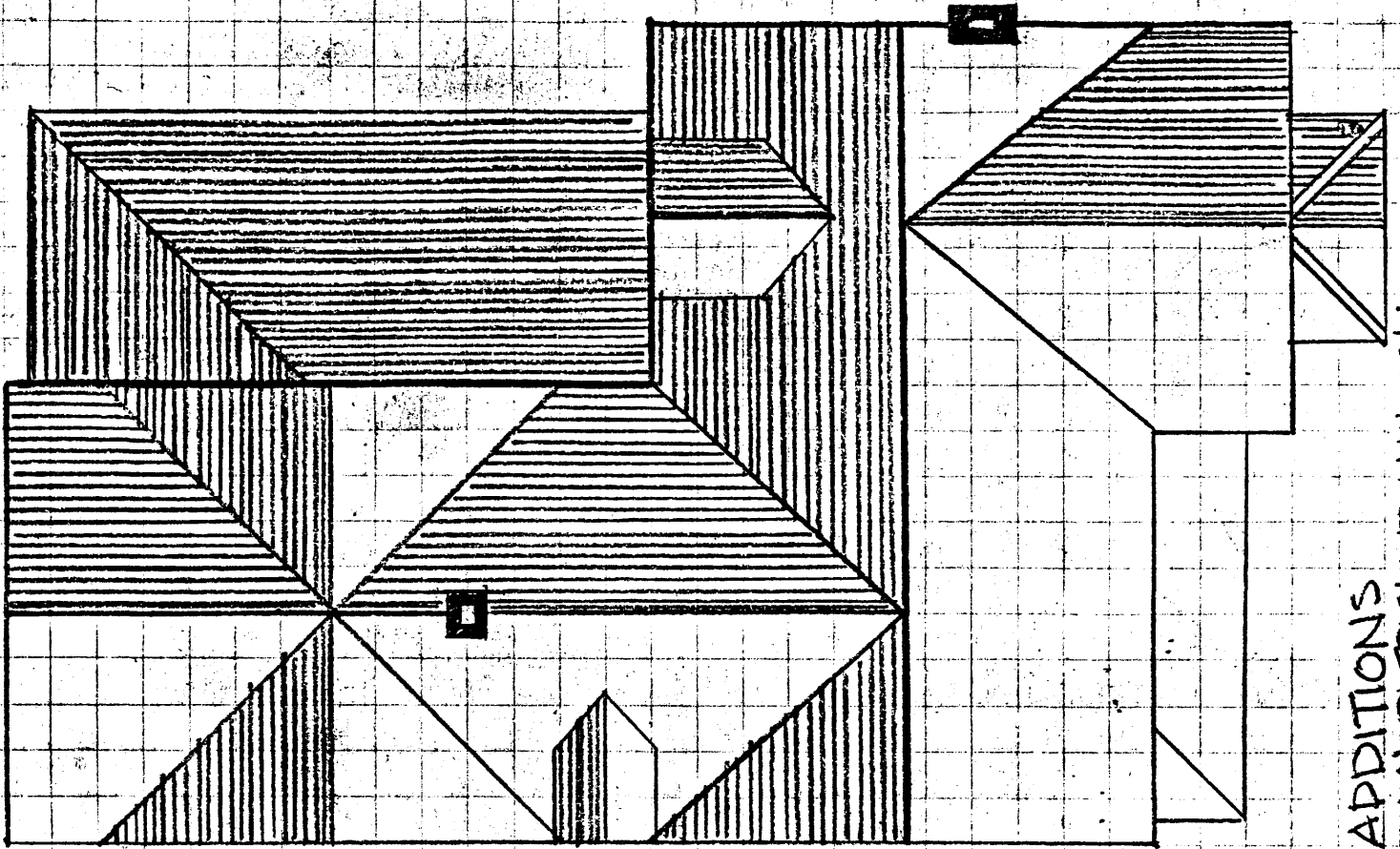
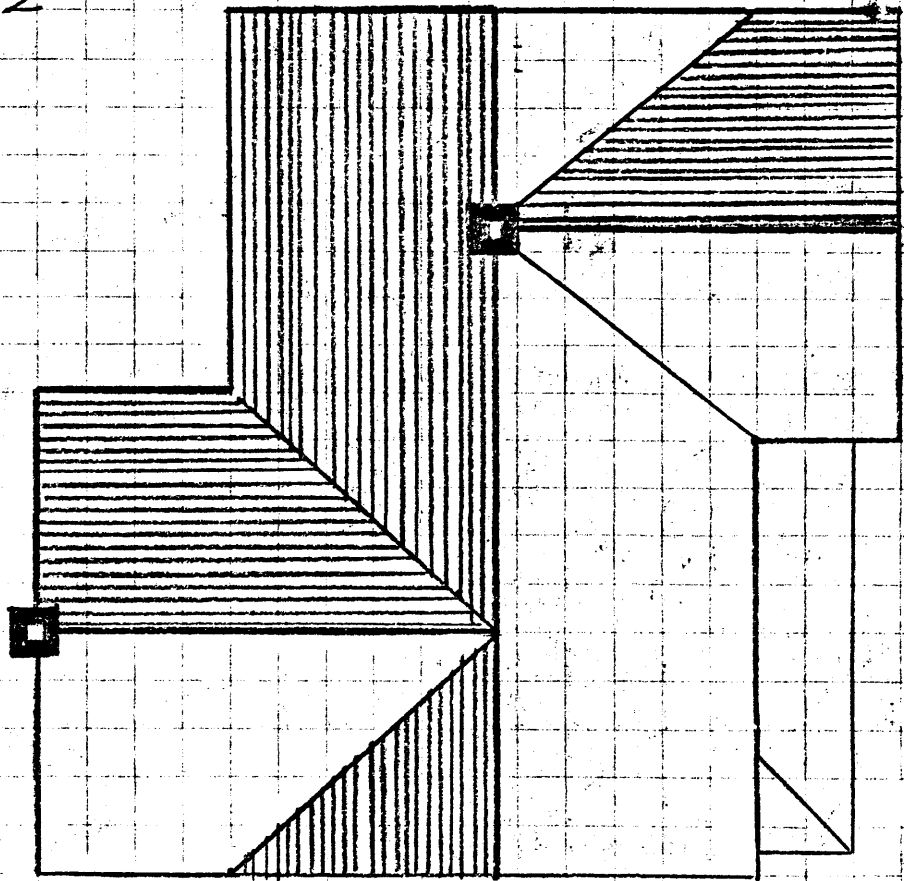
Chief of Registration

ROOF PLAN

$\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$



NORTH



HOUSE CONSTRUCTED
BY DR. CHARLES TOWER - 1872

ADDITIONS
BY PATRICK FLANAGAN
& HEIRS - 1890S - 1910S