

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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



1. Name

historic John F. Boyer House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 204 Newell St. _____ not for publication

city, town Walla Walla _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 5th - Thomas S. Foley

state Washington code 053 county Walla Walla code 071

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Morton

street & number 204 Newell

city, town Walla Walla _____ vicinity of _____ state Washington, 99362

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Walla Walla County Assessors Office

street & number 321 Main Street

city, town Walla Walla _____ state Washington, 99362

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Washington State Inventory of
title Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date February, 1979 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Olympia _____ state Washington, 98504

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The John F. Boyer House is believed to have been constructed around 1883. The house stands on a corner lot at the intersection of Catherine and Newell Streets in the heart of Walla Walla's oldest and most gracious residential district. An 1815 photograph reveals that the basic physical features of the building remain much as they were originally. The house is a two-story frame structure with vertical Victorian massing and a combination of hipped and gabled roof forms. The most distinctive elements are decorative bargeboard trim, projecting bays with segmental-arched fenestration, and a graceful entrance porch with a transomed formal doorway.

Some remodelling has occurred over the years, although its effect on the visual integrity of the house has fortunately been slight. A 1905 Sanborn map shows that the rear third of the house consisted of only a single story. A member of the Lyons family, owners of the property for nearly seventy years, has indicated that some remodelling took place in the 1920's when a room was added above the present-day kitchen. At that same time, or possibly during another remodelling of the 1940's, one chimney was removed and another, with an accompanying fireplace, was added to the east wall of the house. A room or porch at the rear of the building, visible on the Sanborn map of 1905, is no longer extant. The 1940's renovation also included the closing in of porches on the east and west elevations in order to enlarge the kitchen. The back door was moved from its original position on the south side of the house to its present location on the east. Perhaps the most obvious alteration to the Boyer House has been the application of asbestos shingles which obscure the original lapped siding.

The present owners of the house have begun the slow process of restoration. They have removed the asbestos shingles from the carriage house, which stands to the rear of the property and is included in the nomination, and given it a fresh coat of paint. The house itself has undergone extensive interior work including the refinishing of floors and woodwork. On the exterior the asbestos shingles are to be removed in the near future to reveal the house's original finish material.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input 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 c. 1883 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The original builder of the residence at 204 Newell Street was John F. Boyer, a pioneer in the commerce and economics of Walla Walla. He was, beginning in 1862, a partner with Dorsey S. Baker in the Walla Walla Mercantile, one of the oldest of its kind in the territory. In 1869, Baker and Boyer opened the first bank in the territory. Its assets were based on gold and other revenues obtained from the Idaho gold rush of the early 1860's. By the time he built this house, about 1883, Boyer had become one of the leaders of his community. The Baker-Boyer National Bank continues to prosper in Walla Walla even today. The house appears to be the only remaining building in town directly associated with the pioneer merchant and banker.

John Franklin Boyer was born in Castle Rock County, Kentucky, in 1824. After a childhood spent in Indiana and Arkansas, he headed west to California to participate in the gold rush of 1849. Although he apparently enjoyed a fair amount of success as a miner, he established himself as a prosperous merchant in Sonora. In 1852 he returned east to marry Sarah E. Baker, the sister of Dorsey S. Baker, his future partner. When fire destroyed most of his property in Sonora, he elected to remain in Arkansas, which he did until 1859. In that year, Boyer and his family left again for California where he rebuilt his business.

In 1862, Boyer's brother-in-law, Dr. D. S. Baker, offered him a one-third partnership in the new Walla Walla Mercantile. Boyer accepted the offer and moved to Walla Walla. The store was immediately successful due to the new gold rush in southeastern Washington and Idaho. The miners used Walla Walla as an outfitting point. During the summer of 1861, an estimated 25,000 men came through the settlement on their way to the mines. Many returned later to spend the winter. Miners who struck paydirt often deposited their dust and nuggets at the new mercantile. These days were recalled in Boyer's obituary:

(The) picturesque incident of the miners who deposited with him for safekeeping thousands of dollars in gold dust, without any record or security, gives at once a glimpse of those pioneer days and a striking testimonial to his reputation for perfect integrity. (Walla Walla Union, February 11, 1897)

In 1869, Baker and Boyer sold the mercantile to the Paine Brothers and Miles C. Moore (later governor of Washington Territory), and moved upstairs to open a bank. At that time, Walla Walla was the largest town in the territory and a trade center with an approximately 200-mile radius. The new bank dealt in deposits, exchanges, and loans, with gold dust and gold coins the mediums of exchange. With the creation of the bank, Boyer and his partner, Dorsey Baker, divided their areas of emphasis. Boyer made the bank his principle interest while Baker went into railroads, particularly the Walla Walla and Columbia River Railroad.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Baker-Boyer National Bank. Fiftieth Anniversary: 1869-1919. Walla Walla: Baker-Boyer National Bank, 1919.
 Lyman, W. D. In Memory of John Franklin Boyer. Walla Walla: privately printed, 1897.
 Reynolds, Helen B. Gold, Rawhide, and Iron: The Biography of Dorsey Syng Baker. Palo Alto: Pacific Books, 1955.

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Walla Walla Quad.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

A

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

B

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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property consists of Lot 7, Block 13, Roberts Addition to the City of Walla Walla, Washington. The property measures 110 feet by 142 feet.

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

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

Edited by Flo Lentz, OAHF, 4/7/80

name/title Ann Hinckley Costello

organization Private researcher

date March, 1980

street & number 531 Lincoln

telephone (509) 529-8569

city or town Walla Walla

state Washington, 99362

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Janice M. Welch 5/30/80

title _____ date _____

For HCRS use only

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

for Acty
W. Ray Luce
 Keeper of the National Register

date 8/11/80

Attest:

[Signature]
 Chief of Registration

date 8-4-80

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In 1888, the Baker-Boyer Bank was nationalized and Boyer was elected president, a position he held to his death. The bank has grown and prospered and continues to play a prominent role in the economy of Walla Walla. In addition to his bank responsibilities, Boyer was County Treasurer for six successive terms (1879-1891); receiver for the U. S. Land Office (1872); and member of the Whitman College Board of Trustees for thirty years (president at the time of his death). He was a Freemason and member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. John F. Boyer died in 1897. On the day of his funeral, the banks of Walla Walla did not open.

The property at 204 Newell had originally been part of the Roberts subdivision, deeded to A. B. Roberts by the U. S. government in 1871. In 1873, John F. Boyer bought several lots in the area, on a sheriff's deed, from Roberts. However, at that time, he was apparently living some blocks away on Boyer Avenue. About 1883, Boyer built the home at 204 Newell and lived there until his death. In 1904, after his wife Sarah's death, the Boyer heirs sold the house to Thomas Lyons, a prosperous farmer. From that time until 1973, the house was lived in by various members of the Lyons family. The present owners, Douglas and Karen Morton, bought the house in 1975 and continue to reside there.

Continuation sheet

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Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps of Walla Walla Co., Washington. 1905.