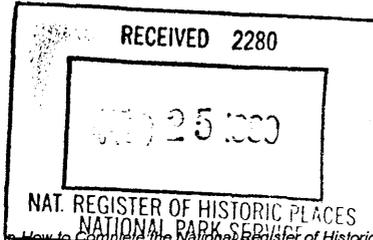


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



390

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Meisner Bank Building

other names/site number NeHBS #BF14-017

2. Location

street & number 128 C Street not for publication

city or town Shelton vicinity

state Nebraska code NE county Buffalo code 019 zip code 68876

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. (If See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

2/18/99
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

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.

other, (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

3/25/99

Date of Action

Meisner Bank Building
Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska
County and State

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
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
-0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE
 financial institution, business, professional
 recreation/culture, movie theater, dance hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instruction)

RECREATION/culture, museum
 WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Renaissance Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
 walls brick
 roof asphalt
 other

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.)

Property is:

- 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Commerce _____
- Architecture _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

1908-1948

Significant Dates

1910

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A _____

Cultural Affiliation

N/A _____

Architect/Builder

Unknown _____

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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 for Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	522445	4514220	3.			
2.				4.			

[] 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 Carol Ahlgren, Architectural Historian
organization Nebraska State Historical Society date December 1998
street & number 1500 R Street telephone 402.471.4787
city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68501

Additional Documentation

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/title Wood River Valley Historical Society
street & number P.O. Box 188 telephone 308.647.6617
city or town Shelton state NE zip code 68876

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Meisner Bank Building

Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 1

The Meisner Bank Building is located in Shelton, a small town in Buffalo County, Nebraska. Constructed in 1908-1910, the two story brick Renaissance Revival style building is located on a prominent corner at the intersection of the main commercial street and U.S. Route 30. The Meisner Bank represents a mixed-use commercial and office building that provides a visual and architectural anchor to downtown Shelton. The building exhibits good interior and exterior integrity with the exception of the c.1960 remodeling of the east first floor storefront. The nomination consists of one contributing building.

The Meisner Bank Building, constructed between 1908-1910 is located at the intersection of the main business street and U.S. Route 30 in Shelton, a small south central Nebraska town (1990 population: 952). The main business district, comprised of late 19th and early 20th century one and two story brick buildings extends north of the Meisner Building on C Street. The south facade of the building fronts on U.S. Route 30 which extends east west, parallel to the Union Pacific railroad tracks. A handful of businesses are located south of the tracks along C Street. The area south of the tracks also contains the majority of Shelton's residential and public buildings.

Designed in the Renaissance Revival style of architecture, the two story bank building is flat iron shaped. The building has two primary facades, east and south, with the main entrance located at the southeast corner. The prominent entry is accessed by curved concrete steps; similar to all of the building's fenestration, the entrance is flanked by decorative rectangular shaped brickwork. The building employs both red and tannish brick with a decorative open joint accentuating the main entrance corner to the roof line; a similar joint is found on the west commercial entrance on the first floor.

Fenestration of the building is intact with the exception of the first floor east storefront, remodeled in c. 1960. Typical of the Renaissance Revival style, the building features variation in first and second floor fenestration as well as decorative brick rectangular shapes above the second floor and brick corbelling. The roof features stepped roof crests above the southeast corner entrance, with similar crests on the east and south facades.

The former banking space which occupied the southeast corner of the building, is articulated on the exterior by paired round arch windows with Luxfer prisms and contrasting brick window surrounds. One of these windows is located on the east facade while three are located on the south facade. A secondary entrance is located on the south facade flanked with decorative brickwork, and a transom window topped by brick keystone.

Former commercial spaces are also located on the south facade at the west end of the building. According to available historic photographs, these spaces were not as elaborate as the original bank space and featured storefronts with simple glass windows. Although these two areas have since been partially in-filled they do not affect the overall integrity of the building.

The second floor is accessed a doorway on the south facade, east of the former commercial space. The doorway leads to a wide wooden staircase. The second level features a large former dance hall on the southwest side of the building. The spaces to the north and east represent former professional offices and at one time, a movie theater. These spaces have been vacant for some time; the current owner, a local historical society, is in the process of cleaning and renovating these areas.

The former banking area on the first floor, accessed through the main entrance at the southeast corner of the building, retains an exceptionally high degree of integrity. The walls of the large room feature glazed brick in shades of brown,

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Meisner Bank Building

Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

lavender, and white. The marble tile floor is white with brown and rust colored floral designs. The former vaults are located at the west side of the room and feature elaborate doors with classical details.

The building served as a bank until 1971 when a new facility was built on the east side of C Street. Since its completion in 1910 the Meisner Bank Building housed various commercial enterprises and professional offices. Additional uses included a movie theater in the north commercial space and a dance hall on the second floor. In more recent years the commercial and professional spaces have been vacant with the exception of the north first floor storefront. Most recently the former bank area was used as a bar.

Two years ago a newly formed historical organization, the Wood River Valley Historical Society, acquired the building. Since that time thousands of hours of volunteer labor have been devoted to cleaning and restoring the building for use as a regional interpretive center.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Meisner Bank Building
Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska
County and State

Section 8 Page 1

The Meisner Bank Building, located in Shelton, Buffalo County, Nebraska is being nominated to the National Register on the local level under criteria A and C. The two-story brick building, constructed in 1908-1910, is architecturally significant as a well preserved example of a prominent main street bank building. The building is also significant for its historic association with the commercial development of Shelton. The period of significance, 1908-1948, includes date of initial construction through the last year in which the 50 year age criterion is met.

=====

The Meisner Bank Building, constructed between 1908-1910, is a two story brick Renaissance Revival style multiple use commercial building. The Meisner Building is prominently located at the north west corner of the main commercial street and its intersection with U.S. Route 30. Shelton, a small town in south central Nebraska (1990 population: 952) is approximately equidistant between the larger cities of Kearney and Grand Island.

Typical of multiple-story mixed use bank buildings from its period of construction, the Meisner Bank Building provides a visual and architectural anchor to the adjacent commercial district (Puschendorf, 1989). The main business area of Shelton extends one and a half blocks north of U.S. 30 and is comprised of a mix of one and two story late 19th and early 20th century brick buildings. The south facade of the triangular shaped Meisner building is parallel to U.S. Route 30, which parallels the Union Pacific railroad tracks.

Shelton's commercial area also extends south of the tracks along C Street; although the town's main residential area is also south of the tracks, the north side represents the main business district with the large Meisner Bank Building providing a visual and architectural anchor to the downtown.

Shelton originated as the settlement of Wood River Centre in the Platte River valley of south central Nebraska which was a major transportation corridor during the 19th and 20th centuries. The Wood River settlement originated in the 1850's due to its location on the 19th century overland trails. By the early 1870's with the arrival of the Union Pacific main line through the region, the small community relocated a short distance to the present town site. In 1873 the name was changed to Shelton; three years later a depot was constructed.

Typical of railroad towns throughout the Great Plains, Shelton's initial commercial development consisted of frame buildings constructed parallel to the tracks. Subsequent commercial development occurred at a right angle from the railroad tracks, forming a "T town" as defined by cultural geographer John Hudson (Hudson, 1990). In many cases, however, commercial and residential development occurred on both sides of the tracks in the T town form. Usually, however, one side of the tracks would become the predominant commercial area.

During the 1870's and 1880's both the north and south sides of the railroad tracks in Shelton witnessed commercial development. The north side of the tracks, however, although far less developed residentially, was destined to become the central business district. During the 1880's substantial brick business blocks were constructed. One of these, the original Meisner Bank and Opera House (BF14-018), constructed in 1884, is immediately north of the nominated property.

George Meisner, who resided in a Queen Anne mansion north of Shelton (NRHP 1988), was a prosperous area rancher who owned thousands of acres in the region. Meisner also invested in the community of Shelton, and constructed or

United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation Sheet

Meisner Bank Building

Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 2

assisted in the construction of several business buildings. During this period he was instrumental in the formation of a local private bank, later incorporated as a national bank and reorganized as Meisner's Bank in 1894 (Bassett, 1916).

In the fall of 1908 it was announced that Meisner would construct a new large bank immediately south of his existing bank. The proposed building site was occupied by two frame commercial buildings. The new bank it was reported, would be the "finest building in the city," covering the entire lot with a flat iron shape. The building would be constructed of vetrified brick in the "most modern style of architecture," and the two fire proof vaults would be the "best available" (*The Shelton Clipper*, 9-4-1908). Construction of the new bank building proceeded rapidly during the next year with the newspaper noting the arrival and installation of building materials such as the windows and interior glazed brick (*Clipper*, 12-4-08; 5-21-09).

The scale, massing, and prominent location of the new bank building would ensure the predominance of Shelton's business district on the north side of the tracks. Further, two years after the building was completed, the route of the Lincoln Highway was designated immediately south of the Meisner Bank Building. As the nation's first transcontinental highway, the Lincoln Highway would have a tremendous impact on the towns through which it passed, similar to the Union Pacific railroad in the 19th century.

Overall, the Meisner Bank Building cemented the formation of the downtown commercial core on the north side of the railroad tracks. Development of this core as well as the building's financial and commercial contribution to Shelton marks the significance of the Meisner Bank under criterion A. The building is also significant under criterion C representing the small town bank mixed-use commercial building. Located on a prominent intersection, the Meisner Bank Building conveys a strong sense of its architectural and historic importance to the community.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Meisner Bank Building

Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska

County and State

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Bibliography

Ahlgren, Carol. "George Meisner House," National Register of Historic Places nomination form, 1988. On file, Lincoln, NE: Nebraska State Historical Society.

Bassett, Samuel Clay. *History of Buffalo County, Nebraska, Its Land and Its People*. Vol II. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1916.

Hudson, John, "Settlement of the American Grassland," in Michael P. Conzen ed. *The Making of the American Landscape*. NY: Harper Collins Academic, 1990.

Puschendorf, Bob. "The Age of Main Street Banking: The Dual System in Nebraska (1889-1920). Historic Context Report, 1989. Lincoln NE: Nebraska State Historical Society.

Thomas, Beverly: Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey form, 1994. Lincoln, NE: Nebraska State Historical Society.

The Shelton Clipper, 1908-1910.

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is a tract of land described as follows: Lot 1, except the North 9 feet 7 inches thereof, Block 6, Original Town of Shelton, Buffalo County, Nebraska.

Boundary Justification

The nomination includes the tract of land historically associated with the Meisner Bank Building.