

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For NPS use only
received FEB 28 1985
date entered MAR 28 1985

1. Name

historic Valier Public School

and/or common Old School House

2. Location

street & number 820 Third Street n/a not for publication

city, town Valier n/a vicinity of

state Montana code 1190 county Pondera code 073

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: warehouse

4. Owner of Property

name Douglas Bowman

street & number 704 Minnesota

city, town Valier n/a vicinity of state Montana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Pondera County Courthouse

street & number 24th Ave. S.W.

city, town Conrad state Montana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" 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

The Valier Public School is a two story, stone building with a full daylight basement, located near Lake Frances in Valier, Montana. The building sits on the original school block in the community and is surrounded by playground. The three bay sandstone structure is symmetrically composed, with a projecting central bell tower. A sandstone corner stone dates the building at 1911.

The building features large double doors at the front, primary entrance, side doors at the center of the north and south facades, and a rear door that enters what was the boiler room, a 20' x 16' attached concrete addition. The front double doors are flanked by sidelights. Above these doors are the words "Public School" carved in sandstone. A tall, half circle arched window, flanked by two smaller arched windows, light the interior stair way that rises two stories. The windows are primarily 3/1 double hung sash and are evenly placed with two windows on each level of each bay on the front and rear facades and three windows on each of the side walls. A galvanized metal fire escape shoot is attached to the rear facade and accessed from a second story window.

The locally quarried sandstone is set in regular coursing at the basement level of the building and random coursing above the water course on the upper two stories. The basement walls flare slightly at ground level. Sills and lintels are also of sandstone.

The hipped roof is covered with cedar shingles. During the early 1960's the original bell tower roof was replaced with a more gently sloped hipped roof. The bell tower itself is finished in stucco with decorative applied metal detailing surrounding the tower openings on the north, south, and east sides.

The interior of the building was originally divided into four classrooms with central corridors. The basement was left unfinished at the time of construction and was later completed for additional classroom space. The stairs are of oak, the landings of maple. Coat closets are set at the end of the hallways on each floor.

In 1960, each of the four classrooms were partitioned & sheetrocked for conversion to two bedroom apartments. The ceilings were lowered from 10' to 8'. The renovation of the school house was never completed, and the building has been used only for storage since that time.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
..... prehistoric	..... archeology-prehistoric	..... community planning	..... landscape architecture	..... religion
..... 1400-1499	..... archeology-historic	..... conservation	..... law	..... science
..... 1500-1599	..... agriculture	..... economics	..... literature	..... sculpture
..... 1600-1699	...x architecture	..... education	..... military	..... social/
..... 1700-1799	..... art	..... engineering	..... music	..... humanitarian
..... 1800-1899	..... commerce	..... exploration/settlement	..... philosophy	..... theater
...x 1900-	..... communications	..... industry	..... politics/government	..... transportation
		..... invention		..... other (specify)

Specific dates 1911 **Builder/Architect** Geo. H. Shanley, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Valier Public School is significant for its historical association with the early development of the town of Valier and as a fine example of stone architecture, designed by the prominent Montana architect, George H. Shanley of Great Falls. The construction of the 1911 school building in Valier demonstrates the high aspirations the citizens of Valier had for the future growth and prosperity of their community.

The town of Valier was founded in 1909 by the Conrad-Valier Land and Water Company, an investment firm that, under the Carey Land Act of 1894, had undertaken the development of irrigation systems, the promotion of agricultural settlement, and the sale of land. The Company commenced extensive predevelopment in anticipation of settlement. Three forks of the Marias River--Dry Fork, Birch Creek, and Dupuyer Creek -- were diverted by the Company and water was stored in the Lake Frances reservoir. Water for irrigation was made accessible for approximately 150,000 acres of potential agricultural land. The company sponsored the construction of a railroad branch line from Conrad that was built under the supervision of a Peter Valier, after whom the new townsite was named. The Company held a land sale in October, 1909, and 30,000 acres of agricultural land and city lots worth a total of \$63,000 were sold during the first day of the sale. Settlers could purchase tracts of land in 160 acre parcels for \$40.50 per acre; each tract had access to water for irrigation within one-half mile. The Land and Water Co. collected \$40.00 per acre on a time payment basis, and the State of Montana received the additional 50 cents, as specified by the Carey Act.

Not two years after the town of Valier was founded, the school board initiated the replacement of the first, wood frame schoolhouse with this larger and more substantial structure. As early as 1910, the local school trustees advertised the sale of school bonds to help finance the construction of a new school. In the spring of 1911, the composition of the school board changed. One trustee, in an attempt to curtail the fragmentation of the Valier School District into smaller units (as had occurred in the nearby town of Williams) as well as the consolidation of their district with that of Conrad, urged the citizenry to immediate action. With \$12,575.00 in the school fund, the Board retained George H. Shanley to help with the planning of a new building in Valier. Typical of the local boosterism of the period, the school board decided upon stone as the primary building material so that most of the construction funds would remain in the community rather than be spent for imported materials. Shanley visited Valier within the week and selected the quarry site on Dupuyer Creek, located about three miles from town. By June, the excavation work was completed and the stone masons were put to work. At the quarry, William Young of Great Falls supervised the cutting and hauling of stone. The stone was transported to Valier by horse drawn wagons. But the end of August, the walls were completed. On November 22, 1911, seven months from the start of the project, the school building was opened with an attendance of 121 pupils.

The four room stone schoolhouse served all of the students in Valier until 1918 when a new high school was built. Then, in 1952, a new grammar school was constructed and the stone building was abandoned. During the early 1960's, the classrooms were subdivided into four rooms each for conversion of the building into apartments. This work was never completed. Although the building has not been well maintained over the years, the exterior has retained a high degree of integrity of design, materials, and detailing.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Valier Book Committee, Harvest of Memories, Historical Events of Valier, Montana, Griggs Printing and Publisheing, Havre, Montana
Dewar, R., ed. The Valerian (Newspaper), Valier Montana, Apr. 14,21; May 12, 19; June 9; Oct. 6; and Dec. 1, 1911

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Lake Frances, MT

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References UTM references unavailable for Lake Frances Quad (see longitude/latitude below)

A

Zone	Easting									

B

Zone	Easting									

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The property nominated is in Block 95 in "First Addition" lots 6, 7, and 8. Plus south 50' of lots 9, 10, and 11. It measures 150' x 210'.

Longitude: 112° 15' 21" Latitude: 48° 18' 16" T29N; R5W Section 4

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

state	n/a	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Debra L. Bowman

organization

date 10-17-84

street & number 704 Minnesota

telephone (406) 279-3796

city or town Valier

state Montana

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

Marcella Steffy

title SHPO

date 2-15-85

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date

3-28-85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration