

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

received FEB 20 1986
date entered MAR 20 1986

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

1. Name

historic Ford Hospital (D009:0209-006)

and/or common Fifth Ave. Hotel

2. Location

street & number 121-129 South 25th Street N/A not for publication

city, town Omaha N/A vicinity of

state Nebraska code 031 county Douglas code 055

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA 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"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant Hotel

4. Owner of Property

name Vern Cagle - Fifth Avenue Partnership

street & number 2124 St. Mary's Ave., P.O. Box 7354

city, town Omaha N/A vicinity of state Nebraska 68107

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Omaha/Douglas Civic Center - Register of Deeds

street & number 1819 Farnam Street

city, town Omaha state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

1984 Omaha/Douglas County
title Historic Building Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 - on-going federal state county local

depository for survey records Omaha City Planning Department & Nebraska State Historical Society

city, town Omaha & Lincoln state Nebraska

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 <u> N/A </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Ford Hospital (Fifth Ave. Hotel) is functionally a former small, private hospital building; technically it is of a brick and tile exterior bearing wall construction with a concrete pan-joint floor system, concrete beams and columns; formally the building is three stories over a raised basement with a 'U' shaped plan and displays a local adaptation of elements from the Second Renaissance Revival and the Arts and Crafts Movement styles of architecture. Structural and historical integrity has been preserved.

The Ford Hospital, built in 1916, is a three story over full basement building measuring 110'-0" X 68'-0". Structurally, the building utilizes exterior brick and tile bearing walls resting on continuous concrete footings. A concrete pan joist floor system is supported at the exterior bearing walls and at mid-span by reinforced concrete beams and regularly spaced concrete columns. The result is that most all of the interior walls are non-load bearing hollow tile with a simple plaster finish. The flat roof is also a concrete pan joist system which in turn supports a small 22'-0" X 52'-0" projecting brick penthouse/sunroom structure. The basement floor is a 5" concrete slab on grade.

Formally, the building is 'U' shaped in plan; the 'U' opens to the alley bordering the eastern edge of the site, while the main or western facade contains small extensions on the 'U' plan to the north and south. A small, gabled entrance pavillion centered on the western facade marks the main entrance. Projecting above the roof line sits a small brick sunroom, the only remaining remnant of a columned and latticed pergola and roof terrace.

The building's main spaces are functionally arranged around 'U' shaped double-loaded corridors. In the main entry sequence, one proceeds up a small flight of stairs, through the western entry pavillion, immediately into a small lobby. Beyond the lobby, double loaded corridors service small (perimeter) rooms on each of the levels. Vertical circulation is provided by a main stair and elevator located adjacent to the lobby. A secondary entrance, once the emergency room entry, is located at the rear basement level in the interior portion of the 'U' plan. Secondary vertical circulation is accomplished by a set of exterior steel stairs, also in the interior portion of the 'U'. These stairs link a series of large outdoor concrete porches, provided for the patients' out-of-door activities.

Stylistically the Ford Hospital displays a unique local adaptation of elements from the Second Renaissance Revival and the Arts and Crafts Movement. The principal west facade is comprised of a dark, textured face brick and selected limestone trim. It is given a three-part composition by projecting the two end window bays slightly. A rusticated brick base is divided from the upper facade by a thick limestone water-table. The main body of the facade is punctuated by a symmetrical arrangement of single-lighted double-hung windows with limestone lintels. An entablature containing a stone architrave, or lintel course, a brick frieze and a medallioned stone cornice tops the facade.

The main focus of the west elevation is the gabled entrance pavillion with its projecting parapet containing an inset cut-stone plaque that reads "Fifth Ave. Hotel". A gabled clay tile roof with projecting rafter ends and elaborate purlins, elements usually associated with architecture of the Arts and Crafts movement, covers the entrance pavillion.

All other elevations of the Ford Hospital are unadorned and composed of smooth utility brick, punctuated by simple arrangements of single-lighted double-hung windows.

The interior finishes of the Ford Hospital are quite ordinary and utilitarian, reflecting the maintenance required by a hospital. Walls and ceilings are smooth plaster; floors are primarily terrazzo with some wood strip floors at former office locations.

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The structural integrity of the building is excellent. Some remodeling has occurred to bring the building up to code and to accommodate the later residential uses. The empty building has suffered some damage from vandalism (broken windows, fixtures, etc.) and from being open to the elements for several winters. All of these problems will be addressed in the future by a certified rehabilitation.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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 1916-1922 **Builder/Architect** Berak & Wind - Contractors
James T. Allan - Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Omaha's Ford Hospital achieves significance in the social/humanitarian area by its direct relationship to Dr. Michael J. Ford, its founder and "one of the leading physicians and surgeons of the Nebraska Metropolis" (Sheldon) and from being the last known remaining small, privately-owned hospital founded in the early years of Omaha's emergence as a regional medical center. The period of significance is derived from the original construction date of the building (1916) through Ford's ownership of the property (1922).

The Ford Hospital, 121 South 25th Street in Omaha, was constructed in 1916 by its owner and founder Dr. Michael J. Ford. Its building marks a time when Omaha was beginning to emerge as one of the important health care centers of the Midwest. This growing medical industry was a result of Omaha's reputation for high standards of excellence in its hospitals and for the skill, integrity and knowledge of its surgeons, internists, neurologists, pediatricians and other specialists. Dr. Michael Ford has a significant role in Omaha's medical history by building and equipping the Ford Hospital in 1916 and by his high status in the medical community until his death in 1935.

Dr. Ford was born May 10, 1872 in New Castle-on-Tyne, England, the fourth of nine children. His Irish parents immigrated to the United States when he was one, settling in the coal mining region of Allegheny County, Maryland. They moved permanently to Omaha in 1882, where Dr. Ford acquired his education at public and parochial schools. He was employed early on as a railroad switchman and served as president of the Switchman's Union of North America at the age of 24.

Dr. Ford soon found ways and means of enrolling as the first matriculant of Creighton College of Medicine. There he founded the Creighton Medical Bulletin and was initiated into the Eta Chapter of Phi Rho Sigma, Nebraska's first medical fraternity. Upon graduating as valedictorian in 1901 and receiving his Doctor of Medicine, he established his own private practice. Also, due to his high academic rating, he continued to teach anatomy at Creighton for eight years. Dr. Ford then completed post-graduate work at Johns-Hopkins, Boston General and Bellvue Hospital in New York. He also received special distinction as a founder and fellow of the American College of Surgeons. A zealous communicant of the Catholic Church, Dr. Ford served as president of the Omaha's Men's Service League for boys and received honors from Pope Pius XI in recognition of his work.

In 1916 Dr. Ford erected the Ford Hospital, "...one of the excellent institutions of Omaha..." (Sheldon). It was a small private hospital of 75 rooms with a large sun parlor and roof garden and a complete hydro-therapy department. Probably the most sensational case of the Hospital's history must have been the treatment of Mayor Ed Smith after he was nearly lynched by the mob of Omaha's Courthouse Riot on September 28, 1919.

Dr. Ford owned the Ford Hospital until 1922, when he sold his interest "...owing to the exigencies of his other professional services..." (Sheldon). It was renamed the Paxton Memorial Hospital with Dr. Ford serving as staff surgeon. By 1928 the hospital was purchased and remodelled as the Fifth Ave. Hotel, a name derived from a nickname Douglas Street acquired after the installation of new electric lights in 1927. In 1941, it was sold to the Milner chain of hotels, and remained as a hotel until its recent closing.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .345 acres

Quadrangle name Omaha North, Nebr. - Iowa

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	5	2	5	3	0	4	0	4	5	7	1	4	9	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

Lot 4 and N 50' feet of Lot 5, Block 1, Henry & Sheldon's Addition to the City of Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, including all historically associated real estate.

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

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dan M. Worth/Architect & Planner

organization Omaha City Planning Department date December, 1984

street & number 1819 Farnam Street, Suite 1110 telephone 402/444-4927

city or town Omaha state Nebraska 68183

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 James A. Hanson

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

date February 4, 1986

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

Joyce M. McPherson
Keeper of the National Register

date 3/20/86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Whiffen, Marcus American Architecture Since 1870, A Guide to the Styles. Cambridge;
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