

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Oakes National Bank Block other names/site number N/A /32 DI 499

2. Location

street & number 501 Main Avenue city, town Oakes state North Dakota code ND county Dickey code 021 zip code 58474

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public ownership and building/site/structure/object categories.

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Resources of Oakes, North Dakota Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota) Date August 28, 1987

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official Date State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:) Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution  
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store  
RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Brick  
STONE: Limestone  
roof Not visible, Not accessible  
other Stone: Marble  
Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The former Oakes National Bank is one of two large historic commercial blocks which dominate Oakes' business district. The building stands across Fifth Street North (formerly Second Street) from the Klein and Sutmar block. Retail businesses occupy the street-level space and office/residential space the upper level. The primary facades of the building are the south (front) and west sides. The east side of the building adjoins an adjacent building, the north (rear) is open to an alley. A flat roof shelters the two story structure. Reddish Menenomie brick tinged with black and trimmed with Kasota stone serves as the facing material on the principal facades.

The most prominent feature of the 1908 building is the series of arches which stride above all fifteen of the second floor windows and above ten of the street-level windows and corner entry. The second floor arches are elliptical in shape, limestone in material, and keystone. They enclose a herringbone brick pattern, beneath which are transomed Chicago windows. The spandrel areas display relieved cross motifs formed by projecting bricks. The arches are carried on implied columns, i.e., pilasters of a Doric order which have stone bases and capitals. Above the keystones on the front facade is cornice which includes a modillion course above dentils. A craftsman style parapet with stone coping projects above the classical cornice. The west side parapet is stepped down from front to rear.

The west side of the street level is dominated by eight fully arched window openings. These arches resemble the upper floor fenestration in materials, keystone, and pilaster surrounds. The spandrels of the first floor west side arches contain floral motif paterae. The former bank's opening is canted on the main building block. That entry is placed beneath a double arch whose faces are perpendicular to each other. The two arches are supported by a polished marble corner post. Above the entry door are two fully arched transoms with a radiating muntin pattern.

Within the spandrels of the two arches on the south (front) side are circular date blocks. Above, in both the south and west side frieze, is the name of the building. East of the easternmost arch on the first floor south side is a modillion surrounding a circular window. A string course of limestone runs the length of the west and historic south side at the window sill level.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G    N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1908-09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1908-09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Architect: unknown  
Builder: R.K. Hafsos (Aberdeen, SD)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Oakes National Bank is architecturally significant in the context of Commercial Development of Oakes, North Dakota. It exhibits an outstanding design which represents one important period of the town's commercial development: 1903-1908. The building's historic importance is suggested by the quality of its design and its size; the historical significance may be demonstrated after further research defines the actual contribution of the business to commercial development in Oakes.

Architecturally the building is the single building known in Oakes with such a fine Romanesque stylistic finish. Oakes today has only one other building with similar aesthetic quality from the period 1903-08, the Klein and Sutmar block. During this short period much of the present-day commercial area was erected. Owners who constructed buildings during this time sought more diverse and ostentatious designs in an effort to signal the superiority of their business. Buildings constructed before or after this short period of decorative competitiveness are plainer in their exterior ornament. Along with the Klein and Sutmar block, the former Oakes National Bank is an outstanding example of design and state of preservation. Please refer to the contextual statement for more discussion of the architectural milieu of Oakes.

Two farmers organized the bank. H.S. Nichols of Iowa and J.H. Denning of Ohio solicited operating capital from farmer friends. With the \$25,000 collected they constructed a two-story brick building and began business in October of 1903 with Nichols serving as president. A generally rough economic period imposed itself on North Dakota during the 1920s (see treatment in Klein and Sutmar block nomination). In 1928 the Oakes National Bank was touched by this trend and closed its doors (Black: 105).

It is presumed that the nominated building represents one of the most significant commercial activities in Oakes. Future research will be necessary to document the actual economic place occupied by the Oakes National Bank and subsequent retail businesses housed within the large structure. The magnitude of the institution's contribution to commercial development in Oakes must remain an inference from the character of the building until such research is undertaken.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

For bibliography see context statement.

See continuation sheet

- Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
- 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 of additional data:
- State historic preservation office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other

Specify repository:  
North Dakota Cultural Resources Survey  
Site # 32 DI 499

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A              
 Zone Easting Northing

C

B              
 Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 1-4, Block 8, Original Townsite Plat of Oakes, North Dakota

N/A  See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire resource which coincides with the city lot, the two of which constitute the property.

N/A  See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title L. Martin Perry/Architectural Historian date 7/15/1987  
 organization State Historical Society of North Dakota telephone 701-224-2672  
 street & number Heritage Center state North Dakota zip code 58505  
 city or town Bismarck

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Alterations to the building have resulted from the original intent of the developers. The bank company constructed the building with the plan to sell portions of it to other businesses. The original plans called for a three-bay building, with 25' east-west bays. The bank was to occupy the westernmost bay, E.J. Walton the central bay, and the Palace Clothing Store owned by Friedman and Company, the eastern bay. Each bay was designed with a full basement and a 90' north-south length. Interior finishes in the two retail stores included oak woodwork and tile floors. Birch woodwork dominated the apartments on the second level. Two apartments took space above each storefront. Store owners were among the first occupants of the building's upper level apartments; two doctors set up independent practices in the offices above the bank (Oakes Times, January 28, 1909: p. 1).

Documentary evidence suggests that a fourth bay with 25' frontage was added to the eastern portion of the south (front) facade during or shortly after construction of the original three-bay structure. A news report of the construction states that the original building was three bays wide (Oakes Times, May 6, 1908: p. 1). However, little more than six months later news reports lauding completion of the structure listed a fourth business, E.A. Moe Jewelry and Wood Drug Company (Oakes Times, January 28, 1909: p.1). The primary distinguishing feature of the added bay is the slightly darker color of the parapet bricks and a noticeable joint where the cornices meet. Otherwise it appears to complete the original design by mirroring the parapet and cornice treatment on the opposite side of the facade.

Despite the exterior consistency found on the upper floor office space, retail businesses on the main floor distinguished themselves with individualized storefronts. The present storefronts have transoms, one of which has glass blocks and the other which has been boarded over. Little historic, beyond perhaps the original opening positions, remains on the central and eastern bay storefronts. Historic photographs have not been found to aid in determining the extent of alterations.

The current businesses in the main floor are a pharmacy/card shop (Western two bays), a clothing store (third bay), and a theater (fourth bay). The upper floors are locked, indicating their underutilization. The storefront lacks the unity of the second floor facade, but contains an interesting assortment of period commercial fixtures. The multi-light transom of the second bay and streamlined marquee of the fourth bay are quite old while not from the period of the building's construction. Interiors of the four bays do not reveal any historic finishes. However, dropped ceilings are present in all of the commercial spaces; it is possible that historic ceiling materials still exist beneath the present ceilings.

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Former Oakes National Bank  
Oakes, North Dakota  
Geographical Data

The Oakes, N. Dak. Quad Map, 1952, expresses Easting and Northing values in feet units. The property's UTM coordinates according to the map's unit of measurement are:

Zone: 14  
Easting: 2610 200'  
Northing: 181 690'

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Former Oakes National Bank  
Oakes, Dickey County, North Dakota

Photo credit: L. Martin Perry  
Date of photo: September 30, 1986  
Location of negative:       State Historical Society of North Dakota  
                              North Dakota Heritage Center  
                              Bismarck, ND 58505

Klein and Sutmar Block (left) and former Oakes National Bank (right) camera facing northeast.

Photo 1 of 3

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Former Oakes National Bank  
Oakes, Dickey County, North Dakota

Photo credit: L. Martin Perry  
Date of photo: September 30, 1986  
Location of negative:       State Historical Society of North Dakota  
                              North Dakota Heritage Center  
                              Bismarck, ND 58505

Exterior, camera facing northeast.

Photo 2 of 3

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Former Oakes National Bank  
Oakes, Dickey County, North Dakota

Photo credit: L. Martin Perry  
Date of photo: September 30, 1986  
Location of negative:       State Historical Society of North Dakota  
                              North Dakota Heritage Center  
                              Bismarck, ND 58505

Exterior, rear, camera facing southwest.

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