

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

**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 Scurr, Kenneth R. House  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number 121 S. Washington Ave. not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Pierre vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state South Dakota code SD county Hughes code 065 zip code 57501

**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. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official

6/17/93  
Date

SHPO South Dakota  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Certification**

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register [Signature] 8/5/93  
\_\_\_\_\_ 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): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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**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

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS  
Bungalow

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

roof asphalt

walls clapboards

other asbestos siding

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**8. Statement of Significance**  
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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)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B removed from its original location
- C a birthplace or 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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ENGINEERING  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance 1923-1943  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates 1923  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
Kenneth R. Scurr

Cultural Affiliation N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder Kenneth R. Scurr  
Onida Construction Company

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

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### 9. Major Bibliographical References

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(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 of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: State Historical Preservation Center

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### 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property less than 1

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
1	<u>14</u>	<u>394280</u>	<u>4913050</u>	3 _____
2	_____	_____	4 _____	_____

— See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuations sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====  
**11. Form Prepared By**  
=====

name/title Michele Reid with technical assistance from Melissa A. Dirr, SHPO staff

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

street & number 121 S. Washington Ave. telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Pierre state SD zip code 57501

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**Additional Documentation**  
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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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
**Property Owner**  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

=====  
Paperwork Reduction 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.

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**SCURR HOUSE--DESCRIPTION**

The Scurr house is a one story wooden bungalow designed by Kenneth R. Scurr and built by the Onida Construction Company in 1923. It is situated on two and a fraction lots between what was then the home of Scurr's wife's family, now on the National Register, and a house built in the early 1900's by and still occupied by members of the Marion family, formerly prominent landowners locally. The immediate neighborhood contains other houses dating from the close of the last century and early part of this one, including the current state governor's residence built as a W.P.A. project and situated half a block away.

The Scurr house's foundation walls are of concrete and it has a concrete basement floor now in need of some repair. The basement, extending under the entire current main floor, is largely finished and contains, among other rooms, a bedroom finished with varnished pine and a carpeted and paneled family room.

The main floor portion of the exterior walls was constructed of four inch cedar plank, and gables extending across the front (the east side) and across a part of the south side over the dining room are sided with wooden shingle. Simple bungalow style brackets run the remainder of the roof line. Upon Scurr's return from the second world war the four inch plank was covered with asbestos siding. The actual year the siding was put on is unknown. However, it is World War II era and is similar to many siding projects in the area that date from the historic period or within one or two years of the fifty year cut off date. The siding does not detract from the integrity of the house because it shows the evolution of "modern" building materials and reflects the desire of Scurr to remain up to date with new construction methods. This concern is also evident in the replacement garage discussed later in this section.

The roof is of aging asphalt shingle. Gutters installed at a late date only along the back of the house caused rot and have been removed. The doors and sash windows are original. The screens and storm doors and windows represent three successive types. Those in the dining room, kitchen and bath are original and made of wood. Those on the front of the house are aluminum, as are a later type installed in the main floor bedroom, the living room and what was originally an infant's room.

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The main floor was enlarged prior to 1930 by the enclosure of the original front porch on either side of the existing entry into niches appended to the front rooms (the living room and the infant's room, used as a second sitting room once their son became old enough to be relegated to the basement). And, sometime during the 1930's, the kitchen was enlarged via an addition on the back (the west side) of the house, and the back entry extended to accommodate additional cupboard space.

One of Mrs. Scurr's concerns, while her new husband sat drawing up the plans for the house, was for adequate cupboard and closet space, and the main floor bedroom and infant's room have large closets topped with attractive cabinets matching those in the front entry, main floor hallway, basement stairwell, and those added in the back entry. The bath and kitchen also contain generous cupboard space, and a window seat providing additional storage space extends the length of the south dining room wall, while one pine wall of the basement bedroom is made up entirely of closets.

Also of note on the main floor: The south wall of the living room niche includes a leaded glass window now needing repair. Many of the light fixtures, of various styles, have been identified as being those originally installed, as are the bathtub and kitchen sink. While the wooden double closet doors, the kitchen and bedroom doors and the double doors connecting the living room and the infant's room were replaced in the 1940's or early '50s with space saving folding doors considered "modern" at that time.

Following the second world war, the practical Scurr replaced the original wooden garage, situated on the back of the property with access from the alley, with a more spacious one--also containing a storage room and tool shed--expensive for its day but made of cinder block and bearing no physical similarity to the house. The eventual disposition of this structure is yet to be determined. The garage is considered a noncontributing building because it lacks physical integrity to meet the National Register criteria.

**SCURR HOUSE--STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Kenneth R. Scurr House is significant under criterion "B" because it is

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historically associated with Kenneth Scurr (1896-1986), who was South Dakota's State Bridge Engineer and was instrumental in revolutionizing the transportation system in South Dakota. The house was designed by Scurr, brought to South Dakota in 1920 by his Iowa State College structures professor, J.E. Kirkham, who had retired from teaching to become South Dakota's first Bridge Engineer. After marrying Lucille Pettyjohn, daughter of a prominent retailer and grain elevator operator, the Scurrs lived in Pierre's St. Charles Hotel until the Onida Construction Company completed their new home in the spring of 1923 on the lot adjacent Pettyjohn's purchased by Scurr the previous May. The Scurr house, typical of its time in materials and construction, was their home for the remainder of their lives, although standing vacant and permitted to deteriorate somewhat during Lucille's prolonged stay in a nursing home prior to her death six years after her husband's.<sup>1</sup>

Initially, Scurr worked as a designer on South Dakota's first five publicly funded Missouri River bridges open to vehicular traffic. Although railroad bridges had been constructed in 1907 at Pierre (by the Chicago & Northwestern Railway) and Mobridge (by the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad), and a pontoon bridge existed at Chamberlain, all vehicular traffic had had to be transported by ferries prior to the Missouri River bridge program, severely hampering travel and shipping, especially since ferry transport was not available during the winter months.<sup>2</sup>

The region west of the Missouri River, called "the west river country," was one of the last frontiers in the United States to be opened to settlement. Although the Black Hills in the far west had attracted miners during the gold rush of the 1870's, the area between the hills and the Missouri had remained part of the Great Sioux Reservation, and was not opened to homesteaders until after South Dakota statehood in 1889. The homesteading boom began in earnest in 1905, when the Milwaukee Railroad and the Chicago and Northwestern extended their lines west to Rapid City, and between 1900 and 1915, 100,000 newcomers settled in the area.<sup>3</sup>

In 1919, Governor Peter Norbeck, recognizing the commercial importance of linking both halves of the state, began lobbying the state legislature for a small annual tax for the purpose of building bridges across the Missouri, and in 1921 the legislature passed a bill levying a tax of one tenth of a mil on all taxable



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property in order to establish funding for the construction of three bridges. By 1923, the bridge fund had accumulated \$400,000 and, in response to lobbying by the communities followed by much horse trading in the State House, the legislature voted to construct five bridges at Wheeler (Rosebud), Chamberlain, Pierre-Ft. Pierre, Forest City and Mobridge, and Kirkham and Scurr, often accompanied by Norbeck--who had become a U.S. Senator in 1921 and remained a powerful supporter of the program--visited the proposed sites to determine the best locations for the bridges.<sup>4</sup> The legislature also authorized the communities along the roads leading to the bridges to advance monies to the bridge fund to enable construction to begin prior to the accumulation of the entire necessary levy. The counties were subsequently reimbursed by the state, and the special tax enacted in 1921 expired on schedule after eight years.<sup>5</sup> Scurr later stated that this plan to finance the simultaneous construction of all five bridges, "enabled us to proceed with the design and construction on a very expeditious schedule."<sup>6</sup>

The project attracted national attention and sensational press coverage when Kirkham announced the bridge department's amazingly low cost estimate of two million dollars for the construction of all five bridges. A bridge built across the Missouri between Bismarck and Mandan in North Dakota in 1920-22 had cost \$1.3 million, and the privately owned Meridian Highway toll bridge at Yankton, completed in October, 1924, a month before the first state highway bridge opened at Mobridge, cost \$1.4 million. Kirkham's estimate was borne out, however, by the total construction cost of \$2.1 million, making the South Dakota bridges famous for their economy as well as their designs.<sup>7</sup>

The designs of the five pioneering bridges were very similar, with only minor variations due to local conditions. The superstructure type was dictated by the Corps of Engineers Navigation Requirements of a clear span of 250 feet and clearance of thirty-eight feet above high water. "The arrangement of spans within these criteria was the result of adhering to the classic principle of economical bridge design, that maximum economy is achieved when the cost of the foundations is equal to the cost of the superstructure less the floor system."<sup>8</sup> Scurr remarked that Kirkham was especially pleased with the substructure designs, often referring to the foundations as "patentable original designs. . . . He knew they were not [patentable] but it made good copy for the newsmen. . . . The excellence of [. . . these early] designs lay in the very intelligent use of all engineering

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principles and not in any innovative breakthrough."<sup>9</sup>

The Mobridge Bridge, comprised of five 256 foot riveted Pennsylvania through truss spans, and built by the Minneapolis Bridge Company in ten months with steel manufactured by the American Bridge Company, was the first to be opened to traffic on November 12, 1924. The Wheeler (Rosebud) Bridge followed in September, 1925. Built by the Kansas City Bridge Company with steel from the American Bridge Company, it was the only pin connected bridge of the five, having six 256 foot pin connected Pennsylvania through truss spans. The Chamberlain Bridge, with four 336 foot riveted Pennsylvania through truss spans, was also dedicated in September, 1925, having been fabricated and built by the Missouri Valley Bridge and Iron Works of Leavenworth, Kansas. In June, 1926 the Pierre-Ft. Pierre Bridge, with four 300 foot and two 336 foot riveted Pennsylvania through truss spans, was completed by the Lakeside Bridge and Steel Co. of North Milwaukee, Wisconsin. And in May, 1927 the Forest City Bridge was completed by R. L. Gaster and Company of Little Rock, Arkansas utilizing four 256 foot and two 300 foot Pennsylvania through truss spans supplied by the St. Louis Structural Steel Company.<sup>10</sup>

Historian Harold Schuler has detailed the dedication of the Pierre-Ft. Pierre structure and what it symbolized for South Dakotans of the day. It had been "a dream of the early pioneers of both cities for over fifty years," and over 2,000 people came from all over the state on June 27, 1926 to view the new 1,900 foot bridge, supported by seven white concrete piers reaching fifty feet above the river. After ceremonies and speeches in the Capitol rotunda, one of the largest parades in Pierre's history to that date, described in the Daily Capital Journal of June 28, 1926 as a "caravan of automobiles [that] contrasted the early days of covered wagons, buckboards and saddle horses," wound through the town, crossed the bridge and made its way through Ft. Pierre to the fairgrounds.<sup>11</sup>

Soon, Scurr became involved in Senator Norbeck's plans for developing Custer State Park and the Black Hills as recreational areas. One of these projects was the 1929 construction of the spectacular Beaver Creek Bridge on Wind Cave Road. "Normally we would have crossed the canyon at its head with about a triple ten by ten box culvert," but instead the road was turned south along the canyon and the open-spandrel concrete arch built where it would be visible from a quarter of a mile away.<sup>12</sup> Open-spandrel concrete arches of this type were widely constructed

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in the midwest in the 1920's and '30's, but the Beaver Creek Bridge is the only example known to have been built in South Dakota.<sup>13</sup> The construction of the Pigtail Bridges on Iron Mountain Road followed in 1930, a joint project of the bridge department, Custer Park Board and the U.S. Forest Service. Built in a rustic style of Black Hills pine, these bridges became the most photographed features in the Black Hills after Mount Rushmore.<sup>14</sup>

In 1931, in response to President Hoover's campaign promise to dam the Missouri to improve navigation, and to encourage a favorable report by federal engineers sent to investigate possible sites in North and South Dakota, Scurr and Doane Robinson prepared a prospectus, entitled Navigation of the Missouri River Through the Dakotas: Navigation, Electrification, Irrigation, Recreation, Flood Control, Many Bridges Secured by a System of Dams and Locks, at Low Cost, on behalf of the Pierre Commercial Club. It included a detailed map by Scurr, envisioning dams at sites including Fort Randall, Oahe, Gavins Point and Chamberlain (Big Bend), locations also selected, more than twenty years later, by the Army Corps of Engineers in drawing up their Missouri River Development Project.<sup>15</sup>

Locally, during this period, Scurr designed the stables for the Pierre Polo Club he had helped organize in 1922 and subsequently captained,<sup>16</sup> and, in the 1930's, designed and superintended construction of Pierre's Hyde Stadium baseball park<sup>17</sup> and prepared the plans for the Pierre City Auditorium. The latter structure, intended for use as a National Guard Armory as well as a civic auditorium in order to qualify for federal funding, was the first in the state to be completed and dedicated under the W.P.A. Armory Building Program, and is still in use. Upon its completion, Scurr reported that it was "unique in its reinforced concrete design and outside finish. The interior finish of masonite, which provides decoration, and insulation to sound, heat and cold is also unusual, both in appearance and in method of application. The indirect lighting system also merits special comment as well as the very modern so-called bakelite floor finish which insures against stains from water and damage from ordinary wear and tear."<sup>18</sup>

Bridge construction increased dramatically in the mid 1930's with Roosevelt's New Deal programs, including National Work Relief, under which the federal government funded labor intensive projects on county and township roads. This required Scurr--who, in 1931, had been promoted to State Bridge Engineer succeeding Harper

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Hamilton who had succeeded Kirkham upon his retirement in 1928<sup>19</sup>--to furnish plans for county and local bridges utilizing low cost materials such as concrete that required more labor than did steel.<sup>20</sup> These projects resulted in "some very finely designed and crafted bridges" such as the multi-plate arch bridge over the Big Sioux River in Watertown. Designed in 1935, the 111 foot five-span arch is faced with uncoursed gray and pink granite. Today it not only continues to carry traffic but serves as an "ornamental landscape feature in its city park setting."<sup>21</sup> In 1934, another jobs creation project, the Grade Crossing Elimination Program was initiated to reduce railroad fatalities, and some thirty grade separation bridges were designed by the bridge department and built in South Dakota.<sup>22</sup>

As it became increasingly evident in the late 1930's that the United States would enter another major war, state bridge construction all but ceased, and Scurr undertook a survey of inadequate bridges in South Dakota, concluding that the state had approximately 2200 bridges, of which 1478 did not meet then current requirements for loading and/or width, and anticipating the massive bridge building program he would direct during the 1950's and '60's.<sup>23</sup> In 1940, Scurr began a five year military leave of absence,<sup>24</sup> following which this second phase of bridge building surpassed the first in magnitude, and included "the greatest project both in cost and in importance undertaken by the State during that period." The Pict-Sloan Plan and the Army Corps of Engineers' Missouri River Development Project called for the construction of four rolled earth multi-purpose dams at Fort Randall, Oahe, Gavins Point and Big Bend. Since the dams inundated the original five crossings over the Missouri built during the 1920's, they required their replacement with "a series of very high and very long bridges . . . greater in cost and engineering complexity than any other engineering project that [had] been built by private or state enterprise in South Dakota."<sup>25</sup>

The first replacement bridge was built at Chamberlain in 1952-53, utilizing the spans from the old Chamberlain and Wheeler bridges built in 1925. Significantly, its completion was hastened by the pioneering use of innovative insulating materials permitting bridge construction during all seasons of the year in the northern United States, where previously engineers were limited to building during only seven months of the year. The only alternative had been the expensive use of external heat and housings over the concrete once poured. In Scurr's project,

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conducted during a severe winter, the concrete used in the Chamberlain bridge piers was poured into specially designed balsam wool insulated forms that maintained the temperature required for the concrete to harden. This was the first use of such forms in winter construction, and Scurr was invited to prepare a paper describing the project for the National Academy of Sciences' Highway Research Board Bulletin that was later reprinted in other national technical journals. The 1953 Chamberlain bridge still serves as a local connection between Chamberlain and Oacoma, supplementing the 1963 Interstate bridge (see below).<sup>26</sup>

New bridges were also built at Forest City (1957-58) and Mobridge (1958-59), their construction being featured in Civil Engineering and Engineering News Record. The senior editor of Engineering News Record spent a week inspecting the sites, as they were then "the longest bridges over any national inland waterway," (longer bridges were found only in coastal or in the Great Lakes areas), and also impressive for their low building cost.<sup>27</sup> The bridges at Pierre (1960-62), Grand River (1962-63), and Platte/Winner (1962-64), upon its completion the "longest bridge in the United States west of the Mississippi," followed.<sup>28</sup> In 1986, when the Department of Transportation dynamited and sold for scrap the 1926 Pierre bridge removed from service in 1962, its dedication plaque was donated to the State Historical Society to display in honor of the recently deceased Scurr.<sup>29</sup>

Scurr received additional attention for the design and construction of the Bad River Bridge at Ft. Pierre in 1955-56, the first bridge in the United States to utilize end welded stud connectors between the floor and girders, and another of the first structures to be poured under winter conditions using balsam wool insulating material. He was invited to write an article on the project for both Civil Engineering and Engineering News Record, and became a nationally recognized authority on welded stud connectors as well as on insulated forms and cold weather construction, composite concrete construction, and economical construction practices.<sup>30</sup> Scurr also became influential in the Bridge Subcommittee of the American Association of State Highway Officials' efforts to establish construction standards and specifications.<sup>31</sup> His last major project before retiring as State Bridge Engineer in 1963 was the design study for the Chamberlain Interstate Bridge, which was completed the following year. Following retirement, he continued as a consultant on bridge design until his death in 1986.<sup>32</sup>

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Scurr's significance is enhanced by his military service. In 1917, he had been commissioned in the regular army from the ROTC and served with distinction as an artillery officer in France, receiving the Purple Heart and other decorations. He returned from an invitational course at the Sorbonne in 1919 to complete his engineering degree in Iowa, and, moving to South Dakota, became Executive Officer of Battery C, 147th Field Artillery Regiment of the South Dakota National Guard in 1921. He commanded Battery C from 1922 until 1938, when he assumed command of the 147th's 2nd Battalion.<sup>33</sup>

In 1940, the 147th Field Artillery became the first South Dakota regiment to be inducted into active federal service, after a period of training embarking for overseas duty fourteen days before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Scurr served as Executive Officer and acting Regimental Commander until the unit was split up in 1944 and he found himself writing his own orders to take command of the 147th Field Artillery Battalion. The 147th was first sent to Australia, where it assisted in preparations to defend Darwin against possible invasion. Subsequently, it saw heavy action in the Dutch East Indies, New Guinea, Dutch New Guinea, the Bismarck Archipelago and the Philippines. Scurr, determined to be on the beaches at the earliest possible moment personally readying and directing his guns, and his unit were decorated for meritorious service and in 1945 he was promoted to Colonel.<sup>34</sup>

After the war, Scurr remained active in the National Guard. In 1946 he organized and assumed command of the 196th Regimental Combat Team, a unit made up of the 196th Infantry Regiment, the 147th Field Artillery, the 200th Engineer Combat Company and the 43rd Army Band. At the outbreak of the Korean Conflict in 1950, the 196th, because of its excellent training record, was one of the first Guard units called to active duty.<sup>35</sup> First stationed at Camp Carson, Colorado, it later formed part of the Alaskan defense force at Anchorage, where Scurr was instrumental in formulating the ground defense plans of Fort Richardson-Elmendorf Air Force Base.<sup>36</sup>

Anson Yeager stated in the Sioux Falls Argus Leader that "few South Dakotans have served their country and state so long and well as Col. Scurr," and that Scurr's distinction as a bridge pioneer and National Guardsman "became legendary long before he left either role in retirement."<sup>37</sup> Scurr's distinguished career as a

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bridge engineer led to his receipt of awards from state and national engineering societies as well as to being named South Dakota Citizen of the Year by the South Dakota School of Mines in 1957.<sup>38</sup> Among honors given by the Guard were the naming of the Col. K.R. Scurr Superiority Award and the Scurr Achievement Award, for best and most improved units.<sup>39</sup> In recognition of accomplishments both civil and military, he was inducted into the South Dakota Cowboy and Western Heritage Hall of Fame.<sup>40</sup> And locally, Mr. and Mrs. Scurr were named king and queen of Pierre's Centennial in 1981.<sup>41</sup> Kenneth Scurr died in 1986 at the age of 90, his wife, Lucille, in January, 1992 at the age of 96.

Since many of Scurr's accomplishments as a bridge engineer are no longer standing or are not of the historical period, the modest but becoming house he designed for his wife remains a significant opportunity for recognition of this innovative engineer in that it reveals the dislike of pretension and reflects many of the functional characteristics manifested in his engineering achievements.

**Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup>Kenneth R. Scurr, "Drawings for a House at 121 S. Washington Ave., Pierre," and "Specifications for a House to be Built for Kenneth R. Scurr [sic.], Pierre, S. Dak.," in the possession of William and Michele Reid; Onida Construction Company Contract, February 27, 1923, also in the Reids' possession; Hughes County [SD] Register of Deeds, Hughes County Deed Record, vol. 170, p. 601; Sanborn Map Co., "Pierre, Hughes County, S.D., October, 1927" (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1927), sheet 9, and Sanborn Map Co., "Pierre, Hughes County, S.D., May, 1941" (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1941), Sheet 11; Ruane Pringle, ed., Hughes County History (Pierre: State Publishing Co., 1964), p. 118; Kenneth R. Scurr, Reflections of Service: 147th Field Artillery Group, 1917-1977 (Pierre, SD: K.R. Scurr, 1977, pp. 1-2; Daily Capital Journal, October 12, 1921, p. 1; "Obituary, Lucille Scurr," Pierre Capital Journal, January 10, 1992, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Herbert S. Schell, History of South Dakota, 3rd ed., rev. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), p. 365; Doane Robinson, Doane Robinson's Encyclopedia of South Dakota (Pierre: by the Author, 1925). pp. 530-33; Harold H. Schuler, A Bridge Apart: History of Early Pierre and Fort Pierre (Pierre: State

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Publishing Co., 1987), pp. 55-65; Scurr, Reflections, pp. 1-2.; Anson Yeager, "Eulogy," Sioux Falls Argus Leader, September 5, 1986; "Obituary," Pierre Daily Capital Journal, June 20, 1986, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>"Historic Bridges in South Dakota: Final Report on the Determination of Eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places for Historic Bridges in South Dakota," prepared for and submitted by the South Dakota Department of Transportation, Pierre, South Dakota, and prepared by Fredric L. Quivik and Lon Johnson, November, 1990, pp. 46-7.

<sup>4</sup>"Missouri River Bridges of South Dakota, 1920-1980, An Oral History Project; Kenneth R. Scurr, former South Dakota Bridge Engineer, interviewed by Professor Emory Johnson, So. Dakota State University," transcript in the South Dakota Department of Transportation, Office of the Bridge Engineer, Pierre, pt. 1, p. 1. The program was sponsored by the major engineering societies to "record the details surrounding the outstanding engineering projects over the nation." (pt. 1, p. 1).

<sup>5</sup>Robinson, pp. 530-533; "Missouri River Bridges," pt. 1, p. 2; "Historic Bridges," pp. 48-50.

<sup>6</sup>"Missouri River Bridges," pt. 1, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup>Robinson, pp. 532-33; "Historic Bridges," p. 49; Kenneth R. Scurr, "Two Pierre Bridges," manuscript, Scurr Collection, South Dakota National Guard Museum, Pierre, p. 1; "Missouri River Bridges," pt. 1, p. 4, lists the individual bridge costs:

Mobridge	\$339,128.43
Chamberlain	425,534.30
Wheeler	403,337.42
Pierre-Ft. Pierre	461,124.20
Forest City	450,586.92

<sup>8</sup>"Missouri River Bridges," pt., 1, p. 3.



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<sup>9</sup>Ibid; "Historic Bridges," p. 50; "Obituary," Pierre Daily Capital Journal, June 20, 1986, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup>"Historic Bridges," p. 50.

<sup>11</sup>Schuler, p. 65.

<sup>12</sup>"Missouri River Bridges," pt. 1, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup>"Historic Bridges," pp. 52-53, Appendix A.

<sup>14</sup>"Missouri River Bridges," pt. 1, p. 6; "Historic Bridges," p. 52.

<sup>15</sup>Navigation of the Missouri River Through the Dakotas: Navigation, Electrification, Irrigation, Recreation, Flood Control, Many Bridges Secured by a System of Dams and Locks, at Low Cost (Pierre: Hipple Printing Co., 1931).

<sup>16</sup>Scurr, Reflections, pp. 12-16; miscellaneous Pierre Polo Club papers in the Scurr Collection, South Dakota National Guard Museum.

<sup>17</sup>Scurr, Reflections, p. 16.

<sup>18</sup>Kenneth R. Scurr, "Consulting Engineer's Report on the Completion of W.P.A. Project No. 692, An Armory, Sponsored by the City of Pierre, to J.E. Hipple, Mayor of Pierre, S.D.," p. [3]; Scurr, Reflections, pp. 12, 16.

<sup>19</sup>"Historic Bridges," p. 52; "Missouri River Bridges," pt. 1, p. 6.

<sup>20</sup>Kenneth R. Scurr, "Recent Developments in Design and Construction of Structures as Applied to Counties," undated, typed paper in the Department of Transportation Collection, 41/109 S Misc., State Archives, Pierre; "Missouri River Bridges, pt. 1, pp. 6-7.

<sup>21</sup>"Historic Bridges," pp. 53-55.

<sup>22</sup>"Missouri River Bridges," pt. 1, p. 7; "Historic Bridges, pp. 53-54.

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<sup>23</sup>Kenneth R. Scurr, "Memorandum to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission, November 15, 1940," Folder 5, Files on the 1940 Survey of Inadequate Bridges, Department of Transportation Collection, State Archives, Pierre.

<sup>24</sup>"Missouri River Bridges," pt. 1, p. 7; "Historic Bridges," p. 56.

<sup>25</sup>Kenneth R. Scurr, "Bridging the Great Lakes of South Dakota," paper presented to the Midwest Regional Meeting, American Association of State Highway Officials, Committee on Design, Sioux Falls, SD, October 1-2, 1962, pp. 1-2.; Schell, pp. 304-308; Kenneth R. Scurr, "Who's Who in Engineering Biographical Data," 1963, Scurr Collection, South Dakota National Guard Museum; "Missouri River Bridges," pt. 2, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup>"Missouri River Bridges," pt. 2, p. 2; Interview with Mr. Clyde Jundt, South Dakota State Bridge Engineer, Pierre, November 3, 1992; Kenneth R. Scurr, "Insulated Forms for Winter Construction of Bridges," National Academy of Sciences. Highway Research Board, Bulletin 162, 1957, pp. 13-19; "Historic Bridges," p. 51.

<sup>27</sup>"Missouri River Bridges," pt. 2, p. 3; Kenneth R. Scurr, "Forest City Bridge," Civil Engineering, 1958; Kenneth R. Scurr, "Forest City and Mobridge Bridges," Engineering News Record, 1959; Kenneth R. Scurr, "The New Missouri River Bridges," Northwest Construction Bulletin, 1957-58 series.

<sup>28</sup>Schell, p. 356; "Missouri River Bridges, pt. 2, pp. 3-5.

<sup>29</sup>Schuler, p. 65; "Plaque Presentation Honors Scurr," Pierre Daily Capital Journal, September 30, 1986.

<sup>30</sup>Kenneth R. Scurr, "Composite Concrete Construction With Welded Stud Connectors," Civil Engineering, June, 1956, pp. 38ff.; Kenneth R. Scurr, "Fort Pierre Bridge," Engineering News Record, May 10, 1956; Kenneth R. Scurr, "[Bad River Bridge]," Construction Bulletin, July, 1956, pp. 52-53; Kenneth R. Scurr, "Cohesive Mix Obtained with Pozzolite Aids Construction on Bridge of Unique Design," Master Builders Reporter, no. 11, 1956, pp. 6-7; Kenneth R. Scurr, "Economical Construction Practices Inseparable From Structure Design," National

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Academy of Sciences, Highway Research Board, Bulletin 362, 1962, pp. 1-7; Kenneth R. Scurr, "Structural Tolerances, the Problem and the Approach," National Academy of Sciences, Highway Research Record 85, 1965, pp. 1-2.

<sup>31</sup>Clyde Jundt, Interview, November 3, 1992; in the 1960's Scurr chaired the National Academy of Sciences' Highway Research Board Committee on Construction Practices-Structures, see National Academy of Sciences, Highway Research Record, no. 14.

<sup>32</sup>"Obituaries, Col. Kenneth R. Scurr," Army Times, 1986.

<sup>33</sup>Scurr, Reflections, pp. 1-2; Kenneth R. Scurr, World War I Diary, 1918, in the South Dakota National Guard Museum; Scurr's other World War I papers and maps are in the Field Artillery Museum, Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

<sup>34</sup>Schell, p. 299; see also Richard Cropp, The Coyotes: A History of the South Dakota National Guard (Mitchell: South Dakota Board of Military Affairs and the National Guard Officers Assoc., 1962); Pringle, pp. 81-83; South Dakota, World War II History Commission, South Dakota in World War II (Pierre: n.p., 1947), pp. 233-357, Scurr, in his Reflections (p. 84), mentions that he and Will Robinson, the State Historian, furnished the material on the 147th for this history; Kenneth R. Scurr, World War II Diaries, 1941-1944, in the South Dakota National Guard Museum; "WWII Diary Given to Guard Museum," Pierre Capital Journal, May 12, 1992.

<sup>35</sup>Regimental Editorial Staff, 196th Regimental Combat Team [Regimental History], 1951.

<sup>36</sup>Commendation Letter from Col. Carl F. Duffner to Kenneth Scurr, August 9, 1952.

<sup>37</sup>Anson Yeager, "Eulogy," Sioux Falls Argus Leader, July 5, 1986.

<sup>38</sup>"South Dakota Bridge Engineer Honored," Construction Bulletin, June 6, 1957, p. 59; "Honored by Engineers," Sioux Falls Argus Leader, November 21, 1966, p. 1; see also Fox's Who's Who Among South Dakotans, 2 vols. (Pierre: Statewide Service Co., 1924/5-1928), vol. 1, p. 178, vol. 2, p. 205-206; Who's Who for South Dakota

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(Pierre: H.L. White, 1956), pp. 9, 12; and (1961), p. 210; "Obituary, Kenneth R. Scurr," Pierre Daily Capital Journal, June 20, 1986, p. 2, also mentions his induction into the South Dakota Highway Hall of Honor.

<sup>39</sup>Pierre State News, May 6, 1963, p. 1; National Guard Magazine, January 1982, p. 11; "SD Guard Honored at Camp McCoy," Sioux Falls Argus Leader, August 12, 1962, p. 14A; "Gov. Boe Reviews Guard at Ripley," Sioux Falls Argus Leader, June 8, 1968; in 1982 Scurr received the South Dakota National Guard Distinguished Service Medal (Medal in the South Dakota National Guard Museum).

<sup>40</sup>"Obituary, Kenneth R. Scurr," Pierre Daily Capital Journal, June 20, 1986, p. 2.

<sup>41</sup>Carla Sahr and Henrietta Roberts, 100 Years of Pierre, Centennial Edition, 1881-1981 (Pierre: State Publishing Co., 1981), pp. 121-122; "Obituary, Lucille Scurr," Pierre Capital Journal, January 10, 1992, p. 2.

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**SCURR HOUSE--VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The Kenneth R. Scurr House is bounded by lots 11 and 12 and the West 50 feet of the North 6 Feet of Lot 13, Block 28, 4th Railway Addition, Pierre.

**SCURR HOUSE--BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries of the Scurr House encompass the original building lot including the house and the noncontributing garage.