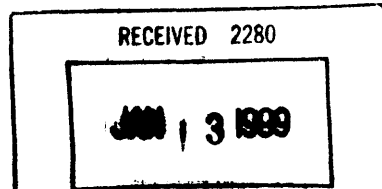


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# 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 the National Register Bulletin 16A. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If all items are not applicable, 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 Bank of Buffalo County

other names/site number Bank of Gann Valley; Gann Valley Post Office; Site # BF-EL-GV-27

### 2. Location

street & number Main Street N/A not for publication

city or town Gann Valley N/A vicinity

state South Dakota code SD county Buffalo code 017 zip code 57341

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets    does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide X locally. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jay D. Voat 10-15-98  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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 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 2.12.99  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	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**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: post office

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style

**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" on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- X 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.
X 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" on all 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 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)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1921

Significant Dates

1921

1927

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown/Hartwick Brothers

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 1

Bank of Buffalo County; Buffalo County, South Dakota

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### Narrative Description

The Bank of Buffalo County is a one-part commercial block building located on the northwest corner of Osman Avenue and Main Street in Gann Valley. The building is one of three brick veneer structures built in 1921, following a disastrous fire, which destroyed several commercial buildings in town. The Bank of Buffalo County and three adjoining buildings were built immediately after the fire. Two Gann Valley banks utilized the building at different times between 1921 and 1931. The Telephone Company and a café used the building until 1959 when the Gann Valley Post Office was moved into the building. Following this move, a plywood partition wall was installed, wood paneling was applied to interior walls, a drop ceiling was installed, and the mechanical system was upgraded. Despite these modifications, the building retains substantial "integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling and association" and embodies "the distinctive characteristics of a type, period," and "method of construction," as outlined in 36 CFR60.4. With the exception of the wall paneling and drop ceiling on interior, the building retains integrity of materials.

The building measures twenty-three (23) feet by thirty-five (35) feet and features a concrete foundation, brick veneer walls, and a shed roof. The front (east) elevation consists of a pair of large fixed-sash picture windows with transoms and concrete lug sills. These windows are next to the main entrance, located on the northeast corner of the east elevation. The door is protected by a brick entryway, which extends out from the east wall. A secondary entrance on the south elevation consists of a two cross-panel, one light, wood pedestrian door. Two transoms cap the doorway. Five one-over-one double hung windows, with transoms, flank this side entrance on the east side. Three of these windows are arranged in a band. One window has been covered with plywood and contains a swamp cooler. A four-light window is located on the west elevation.

A brick parapet extends up on the east and south elevations. The top and bottom of the parapet are set apart from the rest of the wall by two corbel bands. Each band consists of soldier bricks surrounded on the top and bottom by corbel stretcher bands. The top of the parapet is decorated with concrete elements. Three corners feature quarter arches that extend perpendicular to the wall. A series of arches are parallel to the wall (five on the east elevation and eight on the south elevation). Similar decorative elements are present on the east entryway. Two corbel courses separate it from the main brick. However, instead of soldier course, the center course is made up of headers. Concrete quarter arches and a plain concrete cap top off the porch. A brick chimney with a concrete cap protrudes through the roof in the southwest corner.

The original interior floor plan consisted of a three-room basement and a two-room, one vault main level. The original pine floor and plain square trim and base remain in the building. The main room, on the main floor, was partitioned off by an "L"-shaped plywood wall after the post office moved into the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 2

Bank of Buffalo County; Buffalo County, South Dakota

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### Description (continued)

building. Wood paneling and drop ceiling was applied over the original interior wall and ceiling plaster. The small lobby, located inside the front entrance, contains mailboxes and window to purchase postal goods and services. Most of the first floor remains open. The bank vault and an original office are located west of this room. The metal vault, located in the northwest corner of the building, features eighteen (18) inch thick walls and is currently used for postal storage. The following information is painted on the top of the vault door and door jamb: BANK OF BUFFALO COUNTY. GANN VALLEY, S.D.-THE RELIABLE SAFE & LOCK Co.-COVINGTON, KY. A wood panel door, with a frosted light and transom, permits entry into the office. A fixed-pane, frosted window, with transom, flanks the door on the left (south). A small bathroom was installed between the office and vault, over the basement stairwell. A panel door located in the northwest corner of the office, leads to the nine-step basement staircase. The basement runs under the west half of the building. Originally, the basement contained a coal-fired boiler, a coal bin, and a storeroom. The boiler was removed when a furnace was installed on the main floor. However, a circular impression, left on the concrete, marks its location.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 3

Bank of Buffalo County; Buffalo County, South Dakota

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

The Bank of Buffalo County building is significant, at the local level, under Criterion A as an intact remnant of the rebuilding of the Gann Valley Main Street commercial center following a fire that destroyed several commercial buildings in 1921. The building is also eligible under Criterion C as an excellent example of a one-part commercial block building. Three brick-veneer buildings were constructed following the fire. These buildings represent the oldest known commercial buildings in Gann Valley. The Bank of Buffalo County building has undergone the least modification since its construction. The building still retains its original block-like appearance, large front windows, and simple exterior ornamentation, which characterized one-story commercial buildings during the early twentieth century.

Intensive settlement in Buffalo County began in the early 1880's, as the first Dakota Boom reached its peak. The county's population swelled, however it lacked a suitable community to fulfill local commercial and social needs. These problems were rectified in 1885 when A.L. Spencer, a county homesteader, donated thirty acres in Section 33, Township 107 North, Range 68 West for the establishment of a town<sup>1</sup>. Another county settler, Herst C. Gann, donated a courthouse building to administer county governmental affairs. On January 19, 1885 the county commissioners met and accepted the donations and assigned a name to the new community. The county seat was named Gann Valley after Herst Gann and the Crow Creek Valley, which flows through the county<sup>2</sup>. Following the county's controversial first election the county seat was moved to Buffalo Center. This decision was reversed in 1888, and the county seat returned to Gann Valley. The community quickly began to grow and prosper. By the turn-of-the-century the town boasted a permanent newspaper, the Gann Valley Chief, a hotel, a creamery, and a dry goods store<sup>3</sup>. In 1902, the Bank of Buffalo County opened its office in the community to assist area farmers and residents with their financial affairs<sup>4</sup>. Growth continued with the agricultural prosperity Buffalo County farmers enjoined from World War One. The Bank of Buffalo County moved into a new "metal lath and concrete" building in 1917<sup>5</sup>. By the early 1920's, Gann Valley had sidewalks, a electric light plant, and a large two-and-one-half story frame courthouse<sup>6</sup>. As the community grew, businesses built new buildings or relocated into existing structures. The majority of the commercial buildings were wood frame structures, prone to damage by violent wind storms or fire.

In the early morning hours of February 16, 1921, a fire broke out along Gann Valley's Main Street and destroyed a hotel, the telephone office, the Gann Valley Chief building, Fraser's Store, and the Bank of Buffalo County building<sup>7</sup>. Work commenced immediately to rebuild the buildings. Three brick veneer buildings were constructed simultaneously and featured similar designs. In the mean time, the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 2

Bank of Buffalo County; Buffalo County, South Dakota

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

businesses forced out by the fire took up shop at other places. By February 24, the Bank of Buffalo County was in operation at the Implement Company<sup>8</sup>. The *Gann Valley Chief* and the post office were temporary relocated in a local commercial building. The newspaper chartered the progress of the rebuilding. Throughout March, workmen dug basements and hauled building materials for the new structures<sup>9</sup>. In April, the Hartwick Brothers, contractors from Sioux Falls, arrived in Gann Valley to begin laying brick for the new Bank of Buffalo County and Gann Valley Chief buildings and completed their work by the end of May<sup>10</sup>. Local residents Herman Wulff and Ed Henrichsen installed some brick trimmings on the building prior to the re-opening of the bank on August 22, 1921<sup>11</sup>.

Unfortunately, the Bank of Buffalo County had a short tenure in its new building. By February 1927, the institution closed and another Gann Valley bank moved into the building<sup>12</sup>. By 1931, the building was vacant once again. A café briefly occupied the structure after the Bank of Gann Valley moved and the town Telephone Company operated out of the rear office for several years<sup>13</sup>. However, most of the building remained vacant until the U.S. Postal Service began leasing it in 1959.

Following World War Two, Gann Valley's population began to diminish. This was due, in part, to an improved road network and the widespread use of the automobile, which allowed rural residents to move to larger communities and commute to work. Gann Valley businesses began to move with other residents. Their vacant buildings were either torn down or destroyed by fire. The last hotel, for example, was torn down in 1945. Today, six commercial buildings survive in the town and only three, including the Bank of Buffalo County building, are occupied. Despite interior alterations, the application of wall paneling, the installation of a drop ceiling, the addition of a small restroom, and the upgrade of the mechanical system, the Bank of Buffalo County building retains its exterior integrity and is a focal point of Gann Valley's dwindling Main Street architecture.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 3

Bank of Buffalo County; Buffalo County, South Dakota

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## Statement of Significance (continued)

### Endnotes for Section 8

1. Lady Helpers Society, comp., *History of Buffalo County, 1885-1985* (Chamberlain, South Dakota: Register-Lakota Printing, 1985), 3.
1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Barbara Speck, *Of Rails and Trails: A Centennial Journey, 1889-1989* (Chamberlain, South Dakota: Register-Lakota Printing, 1989), 110.
4. "Gann Valley Swept by Disastrous Fire," *Gann Valley Chief*, 17 February 1921, 1, microfilm on file, South Dakota State Archives, Pierre, South Dakota.
5. Speck, 110. The courthouse was completed in 1914.
6. "Gann Valley Swept by Disastrous Fire," 1.
7. "After Fire Business as Usual," *Gann Valley Chief*, 24 February 1921, 1, microfilm on file, South Dakota State Archives, Pierre, South Dakota.
8. *Gann Valley Chief*, 17 March 1921, 3. *Gann Valley Chief*, 31 March 1921, 3, microfilm on file, South Dakota State Archives, Pierre, South Dakota.
9. *Gann Valley Chief*, 28 April 1921, 3. *Gann Valley Chief*, 26 May 1921, 3, microfilm on file, South Dakota State Archives, Pierre, South Dakota.
10. *Gann Valley Chief*, 4 August 1921, 3. *Gann Valley Chief*, 25 August 1921, 1, microfilm on file, South Dakota State Archives, Pierre, South Dakota.
12. Although an exact date of Bank of Buffalo County's closing is not known at this time, a short January 6, 1927 *Gann Valley Chief* article simply states that the "...building is locked up these \_\_\_\_\_ days," page 1, (microfilm on file, South Dakota State Archives, Pierre, South Dakota). The Bank of \_\_\_\_\_ Gann Valley moved into the building at the end of January. *Gann Valley Chief*, 3 February 1927, 5, \_\_\_\_\_ (microfilm on file, South Dakota State Archives, Pierre, South Dakota).
13. Ellen Cain Speck, Gann Valley Postmaster, personnel interview with Kevin C. O'Dell, 14 March 1998.



9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Gann Valley Chief. Microfilm on file, South Dakota State Archives, Pierre, South Dakota.

Lady Helper's Society, comp. History of Buffalo County, 1885-1985. Chamberlain, South Dakota: Register-Lakota Printing, 1985.

Speck, Barbara. Of Rails and Trails: A Centennial Journey, 1889-1989. Chamberlain, South Dakota: Register-Lakota Printing, 1989.

Speck, Ellen Cain. Personal interview with Kevin C. O'Dell. 14 March 1998.

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:

\_\_\_\_\_

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property less than one acre

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

A 14 501090 4875320      B / //// ////  
Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing  
C / //// ////      D / //// ////

**Verbal Boundary Description**  
(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property consists of the east 100 feet of lot 12, block 3, in the town of Gann Valley, TWP. 107N  
RNG. 68W SEC. 33.

**Boundary Justification**  
(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include the parcel historically associated with the Bank of Buffalo County.

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kevin C. O'Dell  
organization O'Dell Preservation Consulting date August 30, 1998  
street & number 820 Monroe Blvd., Apartment #76 telephone 801-627-8186  
city or town Ogden state Utah zip code 84404

#### 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/or 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

name Larry Abernathy  
street & number 110 West Clemmen telephone 605-734-6858  
city or town Chamberlain state South Dakota zip code 57325

**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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.