

NORTH DAKOTA CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY

Base Data Form

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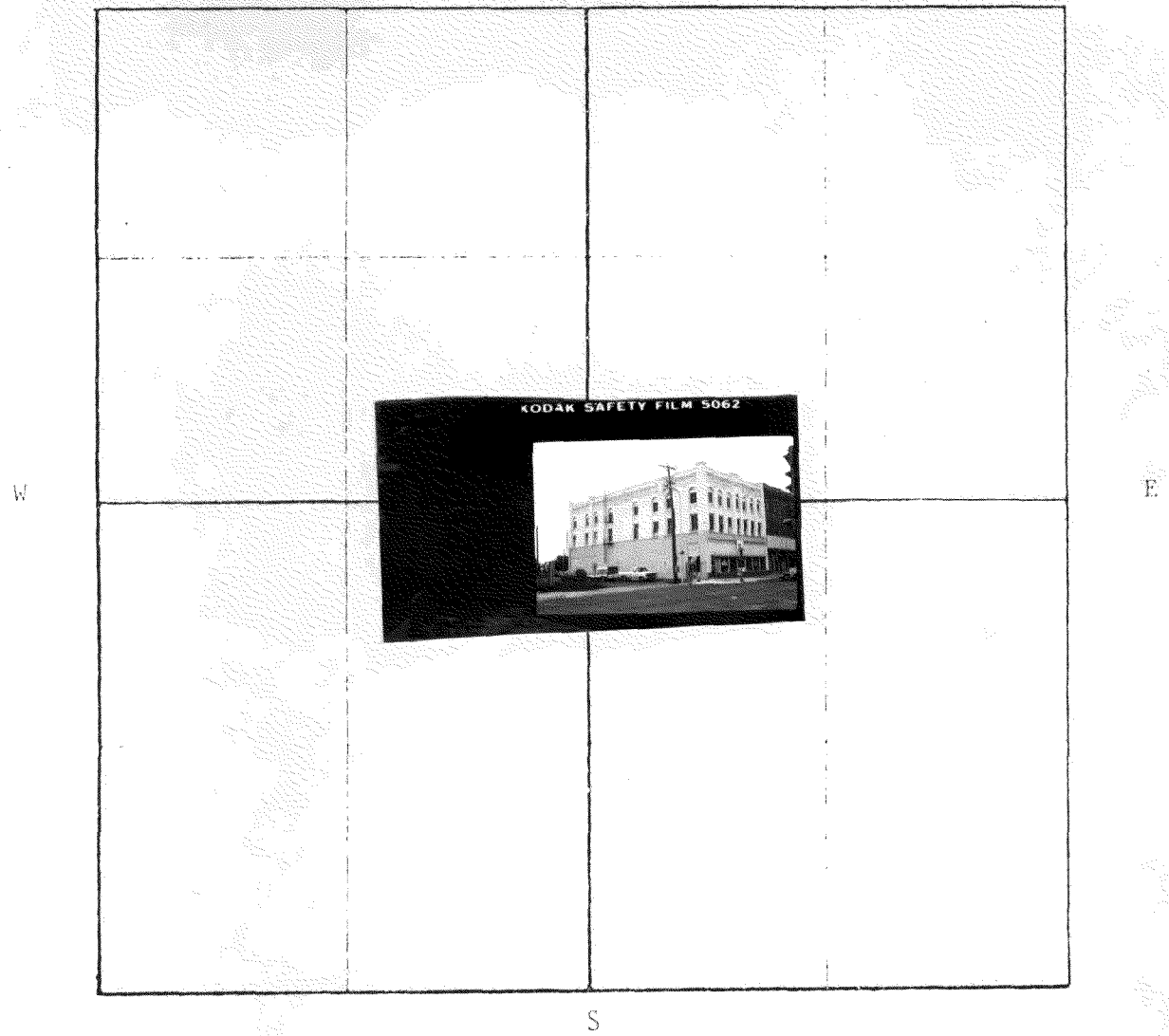
- 1. County Grand Forks, North Dakota 2. Site Number CK30
- 3. Site Name (s) Grand Forks Mercantile Co. (Downtown Grand Forks MRN)
- 4. Type of Resource: A. Archaeological Historical Architectural Paleontological
B. District Site Building Structure Object
- 5. Map Reference: USGS Quad. Grand Forks, N. Dak-Minn, 7.5' 1963 (photorevs'd 1979)
- 6. Location: 124 N. ^{3rd} Third St. Sec. 3 T 151 N / R 50 W
Plat: Original Townsite Block 17 Lot 1 & 2
UTMG: A. 14.646990.5309810 B. _____
C. _____ D. _____
- 7. Access: visible
Location: the east side of North Third St. between the Northern Pacific Depot (north) and the G.F. Social Services Building (south)
Acreage: less than one acre
Verbal boundary: lots listed above, 50 X 140 feet
- 8. A. General description of site: this is a three-story, rectangular plan, flat-roofed brick commercial structure. The north elevation of the building overlooks a dirt street which runs under the railroad tracks. The east (back) wall overlooks the railroad tracks, and a platform (now removed) at one time projected out to a spur line. The south wall adjoins the Social Services building's north wall and is not visible. The west (main) facade is set back the width of the sidewalk from Fourth Street. (Cont.)
B. Condition of site: Fair
- 9. Owner's name/address: Dorothy S. Magnuson 2805 Olson Drive GF 58201
- 10. Occupant's name/address: Pink Hanger
- 11. Historic Register value: Nat. State Untd. None On Reg. In District District
Multiple Resource
- 12. Open to public: Yes X No 13. Preservation Underway: Yes No
- 14. Endangered by: Nothing
- 15. Survey Project: Title Hist. and Arch. Survey of G.F., ND Director Norene and Joe Roberts
Other surveys in which included none
- 16. Recommendations: being nominated to NRHP in MRN: Historic Resources of downtown Grand Forks, North Dakota (Partial Inventory: Historic and ARchitectural Properti
- 17. Environment: Elevation _____ Nearest Water: Type _____
Name _____ Distance _____ Direction _____
Soil conditions: _____
Soil Texture: _____

17. Environment, Cont. Site Number CK30
 Ground Cover: _____
 Terrain: _____

18. Local contact person or organization: _____

19. Photos: No B/W x Color Prints Slides Comments/ID code _____
 Contact Print: Roll 3 , Frame 31
8 X 10 Glossies: Roll 151 , Frame 17, 18, 19
 Negatives stored at: Division of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
State Historical Society of North Dakota
 In space below attach and identify a picture or contact print of the site.

20. Sketch Map of Site: Scale: _____



Recorded by: C. Kudzia Date July, 1981
 Revised by: Norene and Joe Roberts and Gary Henrickson Date 9/81
Historical Research, Inc. 5406 Penn Avenue S.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55419

27. Thematic category Commerce 28. Date or period 1893
29. Structures: Number standing _____ Number collapsed _____
 Number of foundations only _____ Number of earthworks _____
 Number of basement depressions _____ No structural remains observed _____
30. Architectural/Structural Detail:
- A. Style or design Italianate commercial
- B. Architect/engineer _____
- C. Contractor/builder _____
- D. Original use Commercial
- E. Present use Commercial
- F. Number of stories 3 G. Basement: Yes No Partial _____
- H. Foundation Material _____
- I. Wall Construction Brick
- J. Wall Treatment Brick, ornamented brick detailing, painted green
- K. Roof type and material Flat
- L. Number of bays: Front 3 Side 4 M. Plan shape Rectangular
31. Frontage 40' 32. Distance from road 0
33. Number of outbuildings none 34. Description of outbuildings _____

35. Changes
 Altered store front infill, some windows including replacement of third floor windows; original yellow brick now painted green; main central entrance moved to north front corner.

36. Information sources/References

This building was erected in 1893¹ for a cost of \$12,000,² for the Grand Forks Mercantile Company, wholesale grocers. According to an article in The Record magazine, Fargo, N.D., 1 (4) August 1895, p.27: (Cont.)

37. Reason for significance:

This building is the only original structure on the east side of North Third Street which represents the wholesale district of Grand Forks in its heyday during the period from 1890-1920 when the city was a major distributing point via the Northern Pacific and Great Northern railroads to the vast agricultural hinterland to the west, east, and north.

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8.A. ...The style of the building is commercial vernacular with suggestions of Italianate and Richardsonian Romanesque details executed entirely in brick. The first floor storefront is of vitreolite and glass with sheet metal fill in the lights above the plate glass windows. A course of decorative brick corbelling runs across the front facade above the store front, beneath the bays. The second and third stories of the west (main) and north facades are divided into bays by pilaster strips which project above a parapeted wall and are topped with a brick coping. The central bay with the width of a single window is defined by pilaster strips which also project above the parapet. The bays between the pilasters are inset, with corbelling top and bottom. Each bay has stilted arches extending two floor (with a brick sill course below the second story windows) and bracketed brick corbelling forming the sills of the third story windows. Below the corbelling at the top of each bay is checkered decorative brick work. A parapet capped with a brick coping projects above the roof. Fenestration is two-over-two, double-hung wood frame sash (which have replaced the original round arched windows on the third floor).

36. ... "Grand Forks Mercantile Company,
Wholesale Grocers."

"The advantages of Grand Forks as a center for wholesale trade may be briefly stated. It is far enough from St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Duluth to be independent, and yet near enough to the Great Lakes to have practically the same transportation facilities enjoyed by the Twin Cities. It has the distributing rates of the Northern Pacific and the competition of the Great Northern. On shipments from China, Japan, and the Sandwich Islands it has the same rate as the Atlantic seaboard cities, the same as Chicago and St. Louis. On California fruits and canned goods of every kind from the coast it has superior advantages. Its wholesale business is in its infancy, but it has commenced to grow and its traveling men now wrestle successfully for the trade of the northern part of North Dakota and Northwestern Minnesota. The principle lines now fully established are groceries, fruits and dry goods. Of course the farm machinery business has been a feature from the beginning, as has been the produce and milling business.

"The Grand Forks Merchantile Company, wholesale grocers, was incorporated January 1, 1893, as

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36. ... wholesale grocers , purchasing the stock of Messrs. Stockdale, Tuttle & Co. They have done a large business from the very commencement, and it has constantly increased in volume. They are heavy importers of teas, and have from the beginning made this one of the leading and special features of their immense business. Their China and Japan teas are brought to Grand Forks direct in car lots from the best and well known tea districts of China and Japan, and they purchase direct from the growers for their special trade and upon their special orders, thus enabling them to furnish their trade at all times with the very best qualities of tea at the lowest possible cost.

" The Grand Forks Merchantile Company is composed of the following well known business men: E.C. Bates, president; C.F. Williams, vice president; W.A. Currie, treasurer; F.S. Lycan, secretary. They are comparatively young men and are well and favorably known throughout the State. They handled over 300 cars of merchandise last year. Handling all their goods in car lots they are enabled to supply the trade with any and all classes of groceries and distribute them at the very shortest notice to all points promptly."

By 1897, the Grand Forks Merchantile Company had moved to the adjoining Peerless Block (since burned and rebuilt) to the south. The location on the east side of N. Third Street had become the wholesale district of Grand Forks by the 1890s with the rear of the buildings facing the NP spur tracks.³ The G.F. Merchantile Co. building was also used as overflow storage for the Grand Forks Woolen Mills in 1901.⁴ This building was later used by two other wholesalers: Nash Brothers wholesale fruits in 1897, and Rasmussen Bemis and Co., wholesale dry goods, in 1912.

Notes

¹City Assessor's description #161.

²The Record magazine, Fargo, N.D., 1(5) September-October 1895, p.17.

³William L. Dudley, City of Grand Forks Illustrated. Herald Printers, Grand Forks, 1897, p.74.

⁴Sanborn Insurance Map, 1901.

⁵Sanborn Insurance Map, 1897, 1912.