

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

For NPS use only

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

received APR 18 1984
date entered

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

1. Name

historic W. C. Harris House
and/or common W. C. Harris House

2. Location

street & number 102 Taylor St. n/a not for publication
city, town Sterling n/a vicinity of
state Colorado code 08 county Logan code 075

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" 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	<u>n/a</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>n/a</u> 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name E. E. Tennant, MD
street & number 503 Fairhurst
city, town Sterling n/a vicinity of state Colorado

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Logan County Courthouse; Office of County Clerk and Recorder
street & number 300 Main Street
city, town Sterling state Colorado

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date Ongoing federal state county local
depository for survey records Colorado Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
city, town Denver state Colorado 80203

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 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated on the northwest corner of Taylor Street and South Division Avenue, the W.C. Harris House, characterized by the architectural massing of the 2½ story, four-square structure, is a significant large-scaled residence in Sterling. Basically square in plan, the house has a pyramidal roof with asphalt shingles and with a gabled dormer at each elevation. The shingled face and cheek dormers with gable returns originally were only on the south and north elevations. The front, south, dormer contains Palladian fenestration and the larger north dormer, its roof slopes contiguous with the slope of the main roof, contains a pair of doubled windows. Additions of 1952, the similar side dormers, with tripled windows and with two windows, completed the cross plan of the roof ridges emphasized with Mission tiles, remnants of the original roof covering.

The widely projecting soffit of the roof eave is supported on a shallow entablature, set directly above the flat stone lintels of the second floor window openings. These openings, like those of the first floor, have plain stone sills all matching the buff color of the common bond brick walling set on a rock faced, random ashlar red sandstone foundation. One over one sash fill the single, double, and triple openings which are combined with cottage window openings. A shallow projection extends the height of the east elevation through the one-story porch supported on square brick piers with simple corbeled brick capitals. The porch extends around the southeast corner. Similar to the main eave, the porch eave has a widely overhanging soffit and a shallow entablature. Flemish bond brickwork with open header spaces infills as balustrading, which is capped with red sandstone. Sandstone podia flank the stone entrance steps at the east side entrance and at the central front entranceway with its sidelights and leaded glass transom extending to the porch ceiling.

The design of the facade of the house is distinguished by the symmetrical pattern of the openings. A tripled opening, containing wider center sash, and a large opening, all with elongated hexagonal pattern leaded glass in the upper sash, flank the central entrance way. Single openings flank a similar triple opening at the second floor level which is topped by the tripartite, Palladian windows of the dormer. Interrupting this basic symmetry, the one-story porch with its massive brick piers, extends from the front entrance around to the east side entrance and relates directly to the asymmetry of the east elevation with its bay projection.

Similar in detail, the three-bay west elevation reflects the facade, while the utilitarian north service yard elevation suggests the east elevation with a projecting wall plane containing two bays. A modern, one-story porch, replacing an original back porch, infills across the receding wall plane and is attached to a low, one-story garage structure. Though of poor design and detail, including alterations to the fenestration above the porch, the additions are mitigated by setback and do not detract from the main south and east elevations of the house.

The limit of the north service yard is defined by a one-half story, two-bay, gabled roof carriage house. Though altered for a residence, with its ridge parallel to the street and having its buff brick painted, the structure retains its overall character and form which reflects the large gabled north dormer of the house, complete with gable returns, as well as the basic strong, simple geometry of the house.

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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1910 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Harris House, constructed ca. 1910, is significant for its association with its original owner and occupant, William Harris, prominent cattleman in the Sterling, Colorado area. Harris's achievements in the cattle industry contributed to much of the growth and prosperity in Logan County and the town of Sterling in the early 1900s. He opened one of the first feed lots in the community in 1906 and pioneered the use of agricultural and industrial by-products to feed cattle before shipping to market. The cattle and grain companies owned by Harris became among the best known "agriculturally-oriented business operations" in the Sterling area.¹ William Harris was also involved with irrigation projects in Logan County which led to greater productivity on the arid land in Logan County. Harris also served in the Colorado state legislature in 1901 and 1902.

William Harris was the son of one of the pioneer families who moved into the Sterling area in the early 1870s. Harris's father, W. H. Harris, a farmer from Brownville, Nebraska, brought the family to Colorado in 1875 when William was five years old. They settled on a farm northwest of Sterling where W. H. Harris became interested in stock raising.²

Harris soon accumulated the money for his own cattle herd. In 1891, Harris filed a homestead claim to acquire sufficient land to feed his cattle and between 1891 and 1893, built his own sod house to prove up his claim. During the next few years, Harris brought additional land and by 1898, he owned 1260 acres in the Sterling area. That same year, he moved into the town of Sterling and opened his office there. He became known as one of the "prosperous cattlemen" in the area.⁴

When Harris established his cattle business in the 1890s, the cattle industry was changing from the era of the open range of the 1860s and '70s, to large fenced pastures with herds of less than 1000 head.⁵ Harris played an important part in developing alternatives to open range grazing. When the sugar beet factory opened in Sterling in 1905, Harris was a pioneer in cattle feeding with by-products from the factory which stimulated the growth of the cattle industry in that area. Beet by-products, tops, pulp and refuse molasses, were cheap sources of feed. Harris led the way when he opened his feed lots on the east edge of Sterling in 1906 and began his new method of cattle feeding.⁶

In 1914, William Harris and Ora Haley of Denver formed the Haley-Harris Company, a cattle ranching and farming operation. Following Haley's death in 1920, the W. C. Harris Grain Company and the W. C. Harris Cattle Company were established.⁷ Harris continued to expand his business interests and located grain elevators and cattle feed lots in Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming, Illinois, Montana, Idaho and California. They were located in regions where the best purchases could be made in industrial and agricultural by-products such as beet pulp, brewers mash, grains, potatoes, carrots and grape residue--all containing large amounts of protein, vitamins and minerals. The company experimented with finding the most economical and nourishing formula for feeding grain which resulted in their being the first to feed large quantities of millet, barley and wheat to fatten cattle for market.⁸ By the 1930s, Harris was a nationally recognized cattleman and his company was

9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .28 acre

Quadrangle name Sterling South, Colorado

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	<u>13</u>	<u>651360</u>	<u>4497795</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 16 and E/2, sometimes described as the East 25 feet, of Lot 15, Block 42, B & M Addition to Sterling, Logan County, Colorado.

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

state	<u>n/a</u>	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sue Baker Josties
Rodd L. Wheaton / Barbara Norgren

organization National Park Service/ preservation consultant date

street & number 1212 S. Third Avenue
655 Parfet St/P.O.Box 25287/ 7453 E. Jefferson Drive telephone (303) 234-2560

city or town Sterling state Colorado 80751
Denver /Denver (80237) Colorado 80225

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 Barbara Sudler

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 4/10/84

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date 5/17/84

for Alvin Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet W. C. Harris House Item number 8 Page 2

considered the largest cattle feeder in the country.⁹ In Sterling alone, Harris fed 5,000 head during the winter in 1927.¹⁰

Because of his farming activities, Harris had a great interest in irrigation. The first Logan County irrigation canal was built in 1872. Others followed in the 1870s and '80s. In the 1890s, more than twelve additional canals were built, including the Bravo Canal constructed by William Harris in 1893.¹¹ Harris, well aware that irrigation was the key to consistently successful crops and greater productivity of the arid land in Logan County, led the way to establish the North Sterling Reservoir and Irrigation District in 1907. This 120-mile network of canals brought water to 40,000 of Logan County prairie land.

William Harris died in 1940, with the business continuing under the direction of Glenn Morris, a long time business associate, until 1959, when both the cattle and grain operations were desolved.¹³

There are several locations other than his house that were associated with William Harris. Harris Square, originally Virginia Square and renamed for Harris, is located on Poplar Street and is where Harris had his office in the 1930s. The Harris Grain Elevator still stands along the railroad right-of-way. In Pioneer Park is the Girl Scout Cabin, constructed in the 1920s with funds contributed by Harris.

¹Dale Wells, The Logan County Ledger. Sterling: Logan County Historical Society, Inc., 1976, p. 56.

²Emma Burke Conklin, A Brief History of Logan County, Sterling: Elbridge Gerry Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, 1927, p. 350.

³W. C. Harris, "Autobiography".

⁴"W. C. Harris Empire A Vision Come True", The Herford Journal, August 15, 1936.

⁵Conklin, Logan County, p. 191.

⁶Wells, Ledger, p. 57.

⁷The Hereford Journal, p. 76.

⁸Wells, Ledger, pp. 56, 57.

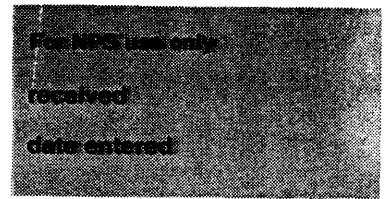
⁹Hereford Journal, p. 76.

¹⁰Conklin, Logan County, p. 193.

¹¹Conklin, Logan County. p. 206.

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Continuation sheet W. C. Harris House

Item number 8

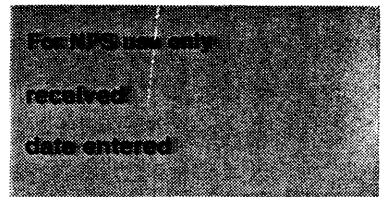
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¹²Wells, Ledger, p. 56.

¹³Harris was buried at Sterling's Riverside Cemetery with a large granite monument marking his grave. The monument contains a large bronze plaque with sculpted figures of a pioneer walking beside his ox-drawn covered wagon. The monument was designed by nationally recognized sculptore, Mabel Landrum Torrey, a native of Sterling, and her husband, Fred Torrey. Etched in the granite beneath the plaque is William Harris's life-long motto, "They dreamed dreams and had visions, and they came true."

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Continuation sheet W. C. Harris House Item number 9 Page 2

Books:

Conklin, Emma Burke. A Brief History of Logan County, with reminiscences of the Pioneers. Sterling: Elbridge Gerry Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution.

Wells, Dale. The Logan County Ledger. Sterling: Logan County Historical Society, Inc. 1976.

Periodicals:

The Hereford Journal. "W.C. Harris Empire a Vision Come True," 15 August, 1936.

Sterling Advocate. Four column, 20-inch photo and story, untitled. (preserved in historical compendium, Sterling Library) 5 December, 1940 p. 25.

Unpublished Materials: (all at Sterling Museum)

Harris, W. C. "Autobiography"

Morris, Glenn "Recollections"

Unidentified anonymous materials

Interviews:

Virginia Herschner, Denver, nee daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harris.

Glenn Morris, Sterling.

Wilma Dillon, Director, Sterling Museum.

Merle Sherwin, Sterling, wife of a Harris cowboy.