1233

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

SEP 20 1994

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 __N/A__

other names/site number __Sidney Historic Business District; CN09: Multiple__

2. Location

street & number __roughly bounded by Hickory & King Sts. and 9th & 11th Aves.__   not for publication [N/A]

city or town __Sidney__   vicinity [N/A]

state __Nebraska__   code __NE__   county __Cheyenne__   code __033__   zip code __69162__

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

_____   Date __9/15/94__
Signature of certifying official

__Director, Nebraska State Historical Society__
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:

[x] 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   10-21-94

Entered in the
National Register
Signature of Keeper   Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

[x] private
[ ] public-local
[ ] public-State
[ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

[ ] building(s)
[x] district
[ ] site
[ ] structure
[ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
29	3	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
29	3	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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/specialty store
Commerce/financial institution
Commerce/department store
Commerce/professional
Social/meeting hall
Recreation/theater
Domestic/hotel

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/specialty store
Commerce/financial institution
Commerce/department store
Commerce/professional
Commerce/business
Commerce/restaurant
Domestic/multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation   Limestone, Brick, Concrete
walls   Limestone, Brick, Concrete,
    other - Clay Tile
roof   Not visible
other   Cast-iron, Pressed-metal

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" in one or more boxes 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.

[ ] **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.)

Property is:

[ ] **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] **B** removed from its original location.

[ ] **C** a birthplace or a 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)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1885-1922

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Forbes & Green, Omaha, NE; Noel Hogg Co., Sterling, CO; E.A. Spitler, Sidney, NE

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

---

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(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:
[x] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State agency
[ ] Federal agency
[ ] Local government
[ ] University
[ ] Other
Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ___6___

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing			Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	669900	4556670		3.	14	669800	4556440
2.	14	669920	4556450		4.	14	669780	4556660

[ ] See continuation sheet.

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title   John Kay, Principal Investigator; Lonnie Dickson, Survey Assistant

organization   Save America's Heritage   date   June 21, 1994

street & number   2714 Rathbone Road   telephone   (402) 483-0418

city or town   Lincoln   state   NE   zip code 68502

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 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

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

name Multiple

street & number _____   telephone _____

city or town _____   state _____   zip code _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

DESCRIPTION

The Sidney Historic Business District is located in a five-block area near the Union Pacific Railroad in the historic center of the original town plat of Sidney, Nebraska (1990 population: 5,959). Sidney, the county seat of Cheyenne County, is located in the Lodgepole Creek valley at the bottom of the high plains table lands in the western Nebraska panhandle. The most prominent landscape feature in the area are the rugged limestone bluffs which rise above Lodgepole Creek and provide a striking backdrop to the central business district. The district is comprised primarily of early twentieth-century commercial buildings, but does include evidence of the first enclave of buildings constructed in the late nineteenth century. The asymmetrical-shaped district consists of a virtually uninterrupted streetscape of commercial buildings which extend on both sides of five blocks with a linear emphasis on the buildings facing 10th Avenue. Thirty-two buildings are located in the district and reflect simplified applications of Late Victorian and Neo-Classical Revival style architecture. The exclusive use of brick and limestone masonry construction is a distinctive feature of the district. While alterations to first-floor storefronts have occurred through time, the district retains its historic character with 29 contributing and 3 non-contributing buildings.

Sidney is located in south-central Cheyenne County and is one of the oldest communities in the western Nebraska panhandle. The city is nestled in the valley of Lodgepole Creek near the base of 80-foot limestone bluffs that rise up from the valley floor and form the northern boundary of the community. From a distance, the dense vegetation in the valley obscures the outline of the built environment leaving only the profile of large grain elevators. Access to the city is gained by descending from the high plains into the valley where U.S. Route #30 then parallels Lodgepole Creek and intersects the city.

The historic business district is asymmetrical in shape and includes portions of five original town blocks platted by the Union Pacific Railroad in 1867. Although originally located in the geographic center of town, extensive twentieth-century growth to the south has now placed the district in the northern portion of the community. The nominated area is primarily located on 10th Avenue, the main north-south street in the central business district, and is roughly bounded by Hickory Street to the north, King Street to the south, 9th Avenue on the east, and 11th Avenue on the west (see boundary map). The 29 contributing buildings are primarily two-story masonry and masonry-clad buildings constructed between 1886 and 1922. Older buildings are concentrated at the north end of the district with newer buildings predominately located to the south.

The visual emphasis of the district is primarily focused upon the buildings that front 10th Avenue. As a transportation corridor, 10th Avenue was important as the main railroad crossing to the scattered development north of the tracks and as the primary north-south road leading to the Union Pacific passenger and freight depots (non-extant). In addition, in the mid-1880's 10th Avenue was also the primary route leading south to newly platted residential additions and rural homesteads south of Lodgepole Creek, also known as the South Divide.

The linear orientation of the district is reinforced by the nearly uninterrupted row of two-story masonry buildings on 10th Avenue (see photos 1, 4, 13). A continuous line of two-story buildings on both sides of the avenue from the Block 21 alley to Illinois Street creates a strong sense of enclosure on the street. The uniform building height and use of masonry facades lends an architectural cohesiveness to 10th Avenue that is one of the distinctive visual qualities of the district (see photos 2, 12, 13). The uniformity of building scale on 10th Avenue is evidenced by the fact that 21 of the 22 contributing building with facades fronting the street are of two-story height with nearly contiguous stringcourses and parapet lines. Buildings on 10th Avenue that reinforce these qualities include the Greenlee Building

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

(CN09-061), Cleburne-McIntosh Block (CN09-070), Tobin Block (CN09-064), American Bank (CN09-077), and the Frank Welch Lodge (CN09-073). In addition, the row of four two-story buildings on the east side of 10th Avenue between Jackson and the district boundary are also important to the continuity of scale (see photo 14, CN09-052, CN09-053, CN09-054, CN09-123).

Another important characteristic of the district is the exclusive use of masonry materials; all of the 29 contributing buildings are constructed of limestone or brick. In some cases, locally quarried ashlar masonry limestone blocks were used for the structural load-bearing walls with pressed facebrick veneer used on the main facade (see photos 7, 8, CN09-064: Tobin Block). The ashlar masonry types are composed of random-range limestone courses, generally larger in size than brick with irregular or squared beds and joints laid in mortar. In addition, five buildings contain random limestone bearing walls with either quarry-faced or dressed-faced limestone block facades (see photos 1 & 9, CN09-129, CN09-074, CN09-076, CN09-062, and CN09-142). The extensive use of limestone in the late nineteenth century is a result of the abundant outcroppings in the Lodgepole Creek valley (Haskell Hill quarry) and the lack of local brickyards (*Sidney Telegraph*, Jan. 23, 1886).

Another distinctive feature of the district is a consistent use of two-part compositional building facades. Twenty-six of the 29 contributing buildings employ the two-part design with the facade divided into two distinct horizontal zones reflecting different internal functions. The first-floor storefronts with central recessed entries and large display windows are clearly separate in visual character from the office and apartment rooms located on the second floors (see photos 6 & 11).

The visual character of the district is primarily related to early twentieth-century commercial development. Twenty-one of the 29 contributing buildings were constructed between 1908 and 1920. More specifically, 14 of the 29 contributing buildings were constructed in the five-year period from 1915 to 1920. During this five-year period, 1916 and 1917 were the most active years for construction. Eleven buildings were started or completed in these years including the two McIntosh buildings (CN09-072, & CN09-128), Greenlee Sidney Mercantile (CN09-061), Neubauer Building (CN09-381), Hardy Building (CN09-054), Stuht & Hink Building (CN09-384), Hornaday Building (CN09-053), Hahler Building (CN09-060) and the Nebraska State Bank of Sidney (CN09-052).

Most of the buildings constructed between 1915 and 1920 consist of concrete bearing sidewalls with facebrick veneer fronts, usually glazed in earth tones. In addition to similar massing and materials, these buildings are unified by contiguous stringcourse lines highlighted by polychromatic brickwork. Stepped brick parapets were also used frequently and feature recessed masonry panels bearing building names or dates.

Despite strong associations with early twentieth-century development, evidence of late nineteenth-century commercial growth from the period of historic significance still exists. The pattern of commercial development was established in the 1880's during a period of enormous economic prosperity.

The first enclave of commercial buildings was built on the south side of Hickory Street (formerly Front Street) on the north half of Blocks 20 and 21 adjacent 10th Avenue (formerly Rose Street). The Union Pacific Railroad reached the Lodgepole Creek valley in July, 1867, and subsequently platted commercial blocks with lots oriented towards its passenger and freight depots. Growth of the district developed slowly between 1867 and 1874, but was aided in part by the naming of Sidney as county seat in 1870. However, the first courthouse (c1874) was located two blocks south of the railroad where commercial buildings had already been built. Consequently, the city never developed as a central

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 3

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

courthouse square commercial district. Instead, commercial growth developed south from the railroad (Hickory Street) on 10th Avenue toward Illinois Street (formerly 2nd Street).

The slow pace with which the district grew during the early 1870's changed drastically in 1875 with the discovery of gold in the Black Hills of the Dakota Territory. Sidney became the primary distribution point for supplies carried to the gold mines via the Sidney-Black Hills Trail (see Section 8). This triggered an explosion of building in the commercial district with the remaining vacant lots facing the railroad quickly filled in and new construction occurring on 10th Avenue between Hickory and Illinois streets. Development on Illinois Street was encouraged by the construction of two pivotal buildings at the intersection of 10th and Illinois: the Exchange Bank on the southeast corner in 1870 and the notorious Capital Saloon on the northwest corner in 1876-77.

Portions of this first collection of buildings were destroyed in December, 1877, by a large fire that started on the north side of Illinois Street and spread to the rear of the buildings facing 10th Avenue. The pattern of reconstruction again focused on Hickory Street, 10th Avenue, and Illinois Street. Unfortunately, the buildings constructed on the north half of Blocks 20 and 21 in the late 1870's and 1880's (e.g. the Commercial Hotel, Oberfelder Building, Central Hotel and others) are no longer extant. However, two pivotal buildings constructed in the mid-1880's are extant in the area of the first commercial development nearest the railroad (see photo 1, CN09-074: C.D. Essig & CN09-076: Mercy Essig). In addition, the Chowins Building (CN09-142) was constructed on the south side of Illinois Street in 1887-88 and also provides a link to the late nineteenth-century commercial development.

With its collection of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commercial buildings, the Sidney Historic Business District conveys a strong association with a historic period of economic prosperity that was unrivaled in the western Nebraska panhandle. This prosperity was caused by a combination of historical events unique to the region during the late nineteenth century.

Historic district designation was initiated in the early 1990's by the Sidney Historic Structures Research Team. This research group consists of motivated local citizens who have shown a demonstrated commitment to the interpretation of Cheyenne County history. Preparation of the district nomination was then incorporated into the 1993-94 resurvey of Cheyenne County by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office. The Cheyenne County Historical Society has also expressed a strong interest in district designation, and the potential for several rehabilitation projects through the tax incentive program has been preliminarily discussed.

Contributing buildings in the Sidney Historic Business District are described in the following inventory and include site numbers, historic name(s), construction dates, architectural descriptions, history, and current condition. For definition of building facades, Richard Longstreth's The Buildings of Main Street, (1987) is used where appropriate.

Historic names and building histories were derived from available primary sources such as deed records, newspaper research, business directories, and Sanborn Insurance Maps dated 1887, 1892, 1903, 1909, 1915, 1921, and 1928. Descriptions are organized in a block by block sequence starting in the north portion of the district. If a building is located on a corner lot, the description will appear relative to the street it faces.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sidney Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Cheyenne County, Nebraska

Section 7 Page 4

County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

Inventory of Contributing Buildings

East Side 10th Avenue Between the Block 20 Alley & Illinois Street

CN09-074: C.D. and Mercy Essig Building ("Tyrone Building"), 1887, (see photos 1, 2). The "Tyrone Building" is a two-story limestone structure (22 x 66 feet) and is located adjacent the north boundary of the district. The primary facade of the building faces 10th Avenue and is characteristic of the two-part compositional type that predominates the district. The original first-floor storefront has been altered with the removal of the original stone columns that divided the storefront, and a thin stucco veneer was added to the front facade but does not cover the distinguishable courses of limestone blocks. The original storefront windows have been replaced with aluminum frame windows, and vertical corrugated aluminum sheathing has been placed over the transom windows. A pressed-metal cornice with end brackets is located above three rectangular window openings on the second story. The original windows in these openings have been replaced but the cornice is exceptionally well-preserved. The limestone used in the construction of this building was quarried from the Haskell Homestead site north of Sidney. Limestone from this quarry was used extensively in the construction of buildings in Sidney.

The two-story native limestone building was constructed by Mr. C.D. Essig and his mother Mrs. Mercy Essig in 1887 and became known as the "Tyrone Building" in honor of her first daughter Tyrone (Allen) Simon. The Essig family were prominent business leaders in Sidney between 1880 and 1925 and were responsible for the construction of three significant buildings on the east side of 10th Avenue (see CN09-075, CN09-076). The building was constructed in the summer of 1887 and followed a design similar to the Mercy Essig Building (CN09-076) on the lot 44 feet to the south. Prior to its completion, Curtis D. Essig (County Treasurer) secured an arrangement with the U.S. Land Office for the leasing of the first floor as offices. Consequently, the first floor was fitted with interior fixtures that were designed especially for the land office. By 1890, the Sidney Telegraph was using the second floor as their newspaper office, and by 1903 the land office had relocated to the Oberfelder Building (non-extant), and the first floor was then leased to the United States Postal Service for use as a post office. The second floor was also divided into offices that were accessed by an exterior cast-iron staircase located on the north wall of the building. The staircase was manufactured by the Paxton & Vierling Ironworks of Omaha, Nebraska.

CN09-075: Flora Essig Building, 1919, (see photos 1, 2). The Flora Essig Building is one of three contiguous buildings in the district commissioned by the Essig family. Constructed in 1919, it occupies a double-lot site directly between the other Essig buildings (see CN09-074, and CN09-076). Despite this relationship, the Flora Essig Building is quite different in character from its neighbors. This building is considerably larger (42 x 66 feet) with a double-store interior layout and is finished with a facebrick veneer. A double-door central recessed-entry provides access to the divided retail space, and a separate stairwell located on the south wall leads to the second floor. The separate first floor retail spaces were first occupied by Mrs. Essigs' hardware store on one side and the Barker Clothing Shop on the other. Three large window openings on the second story provide daylight to office rooms fronting 10th Avenue. The east (rear) portion of the second floor contained a finished apartment which was occupied by Mrs. Essig who retained ownership of the building until 1922. Subsequent owners included Henry Rex and Clayton Radcliffe. In 1947, Alvin Duis purchased the building and modified it for use as a professional photography studio.

The Essig building has retained many of its original features including the first-floor transom windows, second-story windows, brick corbeling on the parapet, and the Essig name and date plaque. The primary exterior alteration of note is the removal of the original display windows on the first-floor

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

DESCRIPTION (continued)

storefront. These have been replaced with aluminum-frame windows and three courses of opaque glass blocks.

CN09-076: Mercy Essig Building, ("Mercy Building"), 1885, (see photos 1, 2). The "Mercy Building" is a two-story limestone structure built in 1885 by Mercy Essig and was the first of three contiguous Essig buildings constructed on the east side of 10th Avenue. Excavation began in the summer of 1885 (*Sidney Telegraph*, Sept. 12, 1885), and the building was completed by the end of the year making it the oldest contributing building in the district. It was built from native limestone quarried on a site north of Sidney in part of the Haskell homestead. One of the first occupants of the building was the United States Land Office. With the largest number of homestead claims in Cheyenne County filed in 1885-86, the Mercy Building quickly became one of the busiest sites on 10th Avenue. In August, 1887, the land office relocated to the newly completed Tyrone Building (CN09-074), and the first floor was leased to the Star Clothing House.

After Mercy Essig's death in 1904, the building was owned by her daughter Tyrone (Allen) Simon, who owned the structure from 1904 until 1918. On January 17, 1909, a fire consumed the interior of the building leaving only the stone walls standing. Significant effort and the fireproof qualities of the limestone kept the fire from spreading to the adjacent frame buildings. The interior was rebuilt, and 18-inch stone firewalls were added to the original north and south walls. The west (front) facade was badly damaged during the fire and was replaced with a dressed-limestone veneer. During this renovation, the window configuration of the second story was changed from three narrow rectangular openings to two larger window openings. These windows have since been partially infilled with brick and the original frames have been replaced. The original storefront was altered in 1964 when the original door and windows were removed and a 8- x 20-foot display front was added. A pressed-metal cornice added during the 1909 renovation is still located below a single-course limestone parapet wall.

CN09-061: Sidney Mercantile Company/A.K. Greenlee Building, 1916-17, (see photos 2, 3). The Sidney Mercantile/Greenlee Building is one of the most significant structures in the district. It is located on the northeast corner of the primary district intersection (10th Ave & Illinois St.) and is one of the second-generation buildings constructed by merchants who established businesses during the late nineteenth century. Andrew Greenlee was part owner of the Greenlee & Benson General Merchandise store, a thriving business located on the site prior to the construction of the current building.

The two-story brick mercantile building was constructed in two phases. The east portion facing Illinois Street (66 x 100 feet) was completed first during the fall of 1916. Then in 1917, the two-story west portion (46 x 66 feet) was connected to the east wing to form a large L-shaped commercial block. This design gives the two-story building an impressive 132-foot frontage on U.S. Route #30 (Illinois St.) and; because of its prominent location, provides a vital sense of enclosure on the street. The construction of the building in two phases allowed the sale of goods to continue in the original frame false-front store building on the west half while the east wing was being constructed. When the east portion was completed, the frame building was sold and dismantled for salvage lumber. In October, 1916, the Sidney Rooming House (later hotel) opened for business in the second story of the east wing of the building. This portion of the hotel contained 21 sleeping rooms, each equipped with telephone service and hot and cold water. After completion of the west portion of the building, an additional 13 rooms were added.

The phased construction of the building is well-disguised by the matching facebrick veneer and the unbroken brick corbeling and parapet wall. The strongest suggestion of the two-part construction is seen

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 6

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

in the store entrances fronting two different streets. Despite the alteration of the storefronts, the building has suffered minimal alteration to its overall historic character.

West Side 10th Street Between Block 21 Alley & Illinois Street

CN09-381: Leslie Neubauer Building, 1916, (see photos 4, 5, 6). The Leslie Neubauer Building is located in the north-half of a double-wide commercial block planned and built in cooperation with J.J. McIntosh (see CN09-128). The building was constructed in 1916 following a fire that destroyed the frame false-front buildings on the site. The construction of the Neubauer building occurred during a time of prosperity in the central business district. The collaborative efforts of Neubauer and McIntosh resulted in a harmonious facade design that partially disguises the separate ownership of the interior commercial rooms. Neubauer and McIntosh were prominent business leaders in Sidney during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see CN09-077, CN09-072, & CN09-063) and constructed the building with the intent of leasing the retail spaces to local businesses. The owners employed the same contractor (Noel Hogg Co., Sterling, Colorado) and shared the cost of the large center stairwell and partition walls that separate the rooms on the first floor. Beyond this, however, each owner planned the interior layout of their buildings separately. The Neubauer Building is 24 feet wide and 66 feet deep and, unlike the McIntosh side, was originally built with no interior division. By 1921, however, the first floor had been divided longitudinally into two 12-foot wide commercial rooms. The total cost for both buildings was $15,000.

The two-story brick building exemplifies the two-part commercial facade prevalent throughout the district. The facade is divided into two distinct horizontal zones with the first-floor storefronts clearly separated from the second floor office and apartment rooms. The east (front) facade is finished with facebrick while the north (side) and west (rear) sides use common brick walls. The second floor is accessed through the wide stairwell located between buildings. Tenants of the second floor included a photography studio and professional offices. The north (side) wall of the building is located adjacent the Block 21 alley and contains nine window openings on two floors. However, each of the original windows in these openings has been in-filled or replaced. Compromises to the storefront have also occurred with the original display windows removed and replaced with anodized aluminum-frame windows. The horizontal transom window has been covered with wood siding, and a non-contributing aluminum awning is located over the main entrance. The second-story facade features an engaged limestone cornice spanning over paired double-hung windows, and a corbeled brick relief below a central segmental-shaped parapet wall. The continuous parapet wall is capped with a smooth-finished limestone coping.

CN09-128: J.J. McIntosh Building, 1916, (see photos 4, 5, 6). The J.J. McIntosh Building is part of a two-story brick commercial block designed and built in cooperation with Leslie Neubauer (see CN09-381). This building was constructed on the site where some of Sidney's oldest frame false-front commercial buildings were destroyed by fire on January 17, 1908. The McIntosh Building occupies the south-half of the double-store building. The building was planned and built in the summer of 1916 as part of a cooperative effort between McIntosh and Neubauer, both prominent business leaders in Sidney during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The collaborative effort resulted in a harmonious facade that partially disguises the separate ownership of the interior. The owners employed the same contractor (Noel Hogg Co., Sterling, Colorado) and shared the cost of the large center stairwell and partition walls that separate their respective retail spaces. The central stairwell provided access to the entire second floor where McIntosh leased office rooms. The McIntosh Building is 26 feet wide and 66 feet deep with the first floor divided longitudinally into two separately leased commercial rooms (13 x 66 feet). A central recessed double-door entry allowed access to each side.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Sidney Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Cheyenne County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 7

DESCRIPTION (continued)

The building exemplifies the two-part composition type with a primary (front) facade divided into two distinct horizontal zones. The first-floor storefront is visually distinct from the second floor office and apartment rooms. Compromises to the storefront occurred when the original display windows were removed and replaced with anodized aluminum-frame windows. The horizontal transom window over the display windows has been covered with vinyl insulation boards, and a non-contributing aluminum awning is suspended over the front entrance. Beyond these compromises, however, the McIntosh Building has retained an acceptable level of integrity. Unaltered features of the second-story facade include an engaged limestone cornice spanning over paired double-hung windows and a corbeled brick relief below a central segmental-shaped parapet wall. The continuous parapet wall is finished with smooth-finished capstones.

CN09-129: Scanlon/Western Drug Building, 1906, (see photos 4, 5). This two-story native limestone building was constructed during the summer of 1906 by Dennis J. Scanlon. It features a two-part compositional facade with storefront windows and retail space on the first floor, and separately accessed offices on the second floor. Rough-textured limestone blocks are still extant on the second-floor wall but have been covered with corrugated metal siding on the storefront surround. Three rectangular window openings with smooth limestone lintels are located on the second story. The original windows in these openings have been removed, and the large transom windows below the first-floor ceiling have been covered. However, these alterations have not permanently altered the building and are reversible.

Mr. Scanlon first entered business in Sidney in 1885 as a partner in the Pioneer Drug Store (non-extant) located on Hickory Street. By 1887, he had relocated to the Oberfelder Building (non-extant) on 10th Avenue establishing the D.J. Scanlon Druggist & Apothecary store. He operated his business in this location until approximately 1899 when he purchased a small frame false-front building on the current site. Scanlon renamed his business City Drug Store and used this building until the present structure was completed in October, 1906. The fireproof qualities of the limestone walls were tested on January 17, 1908, when fire destroyed several of the frame buildings on surrounding lots. The Scanlon building survived, and "Sidney limestone" was heralded as a proven fireproof material.

In 1910, Scanlon installed the first soda fountain in Sidney on the first floor while maintaining his retail drug business. After his death in 1912, the business changed ownership frequently until approximately 1915 when it was purchased by William E. Swatzlander who renamed it Western Drug Company. Swatzlander, later dubbed the "millionaire wheat king" by the *Omaha World-Herald*, ran the business on the first floor while his brother, Dr. John Swatzlander, used the second floor for medical offices.

CN09-382: Bridget O'Kane Building, 1908, (see photos 4, 7). The Bridget O'Kane Building is one of three contiguous brick buildings located on the northwest corner of the primary intersection in the district (10th and Illinois). These two-story buildings were constructed in a cooperative effort by Bridget O'Kane, George Moore (CN09-383) and Michael Tobin (CN09-064) in 1908 on lots where original frame buildings had been destroyed by fire. As a result of the fire, these building were constructed from locally-quarried limestone (Haskell site) and finished with a facebrick veneer. The cooperation of the owners in the construction of the buildings resulted in a cohesive second-story facade that partially masks the separate ownership and functions of the interior spaces. Part of the cohesiveness of the design and materials is attributed to the use of the same general contractor for each building, Forbes & Green of Omaha. A corner entry detail on the Tobin Building and an uninterrupted limestone stringcourse on the second-story facades enhances the appearance of a single commercial block.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7   Page 8

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

The separation of each building within the block is most noticeable on the first-floor storefronts where partitioned rooms are identified by separate entries. The O'Kane Building is located in the north portion of the block and occupies a two-story volume measuring 21 feet wide and 50 feet deep on each floor. A later 8-foot addition to the west (rear) wall expanded the first-floor space. Upon completion, the first-floor room was leased to Lee Yee Hong for use as a Chinese restaurant. However, by December of 1909, it had been converted to an office. It remained an office until the mid-1920's when it was converted to a saloon. The O'Kane Building is flanked to the south by the Moore Building and a common central stairwell provided access to the second floor of both buildings. The stairway led to a shared central hall with offices on each side of the respective buildings. While the O'Kane Building has retained its original cast-iron column storefront and brick corbeled parapet wall, the glass transom and display windows on the first floor have been partially infilled. Likewise, the second-floor windows have been covered with horizontal siding, and the original storefront has been replaced with aluminum-frame windows. However, these alterations are reversible.

CN09-383: George Moore Building, 1908, (see photos 4, 7). The George Moore Building is one of three contiguous two-story brick buildings located in a commercial block on the northwest corner of 10th and Illinois, the primary district intersection. The two-story buildings were constructed in a cooperative effort by George Moore, Bridget O'Kane (CN09-382) and Michael Tobin (CN09-064) in 1908 on the site where original frame buildings had been destroyed by fire. Buildings in the vicinity constructed from limestone withstood the heat of the fire (see CN09-129) and prompted the owners of these buildings to specify the use of limestone load-bearing walls finished with a facebrick veneer. The cooperation of the owners in the construction of the buildings resulted in a cohesive second-story facade that partially masks the separate ownership and functions of the interior spaces. The result is a combination of three buildings that appear as a single unified commercial block. Part of the cohesiveness of the design and materials is attributed to the use of the same general contractor for each building (Forbes & Green, Omaha). Visual separation of the buildings is also made difficult by their location on a corner lot. A corner entry detail on the Tobin Building and an uninterrupted limestone stringcourse on the second-story facades creates the appearance of a single commercial block.

The identification of individual buildings within the commercial block is most noticeable on the first-floor storefronts where partitioned rooms are identified by separate entries. The Moore Building is located in the middle and occupies a narrow two-story volume measuring 16 feet wide and 50 feet deep on each floor. The Durnell and Moore Barber Shop occupied the first floor and included bathing rooms and a clothes press *(Sidney Telegraph,* Nov. 28, 1908). A common stairwell located along the north wall between the Moore and O'Kane buildings provided access to the second floors of both buildings. By 1915, Moore had left the barbering trade and opened a painting business, adding a small one-story garage and paint shop onto the west (rear) end of the building, *(Sidney Telegraph,* Dec. 10, 1915). In 1943, Moore exchanged deeds with Otto Hink, Jr., for ownership of the Hink Building (CN09-384) and relocated his paint business. Merrick's Shoe Store relocated to the Moore Building and still operate their retail shoe store from this location.

Minor alterations to the Moore Building have occurred through time. These include the covering of transom windows and the infill of second-story windows. However, like the O'Kane Building (CN09-382), these alterations are not permanent and could be reversed during a building rehabilitation.

CN09-064: Michael Tobin Building, 1908, (see photos 4, 7, 8). The Michael Tobin Building is one of three contiguous two-story brick buildings located in a commercial block on the northwest corner of 10th Avenue and Illinois Street, the primary district intersection. The buildings were erected in 1908 on the site where some of Sidney's oldest frame buildings were destroyed by fire. One of these, the Capital

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 9

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

Saloon was owned by the Tobin Family and was perhaps the most well-known saloon in Sidney during the late nineteenth century. The three buildings were constructed as part of a cooperative effort by Tobin, Bridget O'Kane and George Moore. This resulted in a cohesive second-story facade that partially disguises the separate ownership of the interior spaces. Part of the cohesiveness of their appearance is attributed to the use of the same general contractor (Forbes & Green, Omaha). The consistent facebrick veneer and an uninterrupted limestone stringcourse on the second story further emphasizes the appearance of a single commercial block. As a result of the fire, Tobin specified the use of limestone load-bearing walls in the construction of this building. These walls, however, are only visible from the service alley behind the building (see photo 8).

The Tobin Building is the largest of the three contiguous buildings and is located south of the O'Kane and Moore buildings. It consists of two connected but separately accessed portions that form an L-shaped plan. In this configuration, the Tobin Building wraps around the rear of the Moore Building while sharing a north partition wall. The east wing presents not only a "front" on 10th Avenue, but also a longer 50-foot frontage on Illinois Street. Consequently, the west wing is less visually dominant because of the comparatively smaller street frontage. Additional emphasis was placed on the east portion by incorporating a full-height beveled wall on the corner entry, and a raised parapet wall bearing the Tobin nameplate and 1908 building date. Tobin's Capital Saloon was the first occupant of the east wing, and Redington's Pool Hall rented the west wing.

Although the building has been compromised by alterations to the storefront and windows, the importance of its location and association with merchants who established businesses during the gold rush have resulted in its inclusion in the district.

North Side Illinois Street Between 10th & 11th Avenue

CN09-065: U.S.A. Theater, 1919. The U.S.A. Theater is a large three-story building with a blonde-facebrick veneer highlighted by a symmetrical Neo-Classical Revival brick relief. The Neo-Classical relief is set against a plain brick backdrop and occupies much of the three-story height of the front facade. In this sense, the engaged relief on the front facade is itself reminiscent of the stagesets found on the interior of theaters. The relief is highlighted by 86 terra cotta tiles set into the brick veneer in a symmetrical pattern around the perimeter. The square terra cotta tiles were fitted with electric light fixtures that created a dazzling display of lights facing onto the Lincoln Highway (Route #30). A large two-story rectangular opening is located in the center of the facade. This opening was divided into two horizontal portions with a double-door entry on the street level and two double-hung windows above an elaborate marquee. Small retail shops were located on each side of the street-level entry and were first leased by the Pierce Cigar Stand and the Wallick & McFadden Millinery Parlor (*Sidney Telegraph*, Feb. 7, 1919).

The formal opening of the theater occurred on Feb. 8, 1919. At the time of its opening, the building was considered the most lavish theater in western Nebraska and rivaled the well-known Princess Theater 100 miles west in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The interior of the building featured terra-cotta tiles, solid oak millwork, stenciled wall panels, and an orchestra pit fitted with a Wurlitzer pipe organ. Dressing rooms and a musicians room were located under the stage at the north (rear) end of the building. A raised roof is located over the stage for the storage of stage curtains. Minor alterations to the facade have occurred through time. The marquee has been removed, and the original doors and stained-glass windows on the street-level have been replaced. In addition, all second- and third-floor windows have been covered with a corrugated metal siding. However, these coverings are removable and represent only minor alterations.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

DESCRIPTION (continued)

The U.S.A. Theater is one the largest buildings in the district measuring 41 feet wide and 132 feet deep. This permitted a seating capacity of 1,100 with 400 of these in a balcony. These numbers are especially significant when compared with the 1920 population of Sidney which recorded 2,852 residents. Noah G. Brewer commissioned the building, and E.A. Spitler of Sidney was the General Contractor. Spitler was also responsible for the construction of the Hornaday Building (CN09-053) in 1918. In 1929, the theater was purchased by 20th-Century Fox Intermountain Theaters, a large corporation owning over 200 theaters in the Midwest states. Fox ran the theater in this building until the late 1940's when they constructed a new theater one block west on Highway #30.

South Side Illinois Street Between 10th & 11th Avenue

CN09-142: Chowins Building, 1887-88, (see photo 9). The Chowins Building exemplifies the two-part commercial block that predominates the district. This type is characterized by a horizontal division into two distinct zones. The two-part division reflects differences in uses inside the building. The two-story native limestone building was constructed in 1887 by Harry and Mary Chowins who had established separate businesses in Sidney during the 1870's and were well-respected retailers in the community. Mrs. Chowins operated a millinery business from a small frame false-front building on Hickory Street (formerly Front St.). Mr. Chowins owned a hardware and supply business also located on Hickory Street facing the Union Pacific Railroad. In May, 1887, the couple purchased the site of the current building to consolidate their businesses under one roof. Excavation began in September, 1887, and the building was completed by the summer of 1888. It was one of several large limestone structures built in the central business district in 1887-88 reflecting a trend toward more durable "fireproof" buildings.

The first occupants of the commercial rooms were Chowins Millinery and Dry Goods on the east and Merchants Bank on the west. In 1900, the building was sold to Charles Callahan (see also CN09-070) who leased the second floor to the Sidney Telegraph newspaper. The building survived a large fire on January 23, 1904, that destroyed the three frame commercial buildings immediately to the east. By 1909, a meat market had replaced the grocery business on the east side of the first floor; and by 1915, the first-floor rooms had been converted to an electric theater and billiard hall. During the conversion to a theater, a small concrete wing was added to the south end (rear) of the west side. By 1921, a large 44- x 70-foot addition had extended the rear of the building south to the alley.

The facade of the building has been altered on at least two occasions. The first-level storefront originally consisted of a large recessed bay-shaped entry located in the center of the front facade. A large stairwell in the center of the recessed entry provided access to the second floor with separate doors in the bay leading to rooms that flanked the central stairwell. This configuration has been replaced with separate entries on the front facade and the infill of the large central bay entry with a single aluminum-frame door.

CN09-062: Daniel McAleese Building, 1904, (see photo 9). The two-story limestone McAleese Building is one of several district buildings with a two-part compositional facade. This type is characterized by a horizontal division of the main facade into two visually distinct parts. The first-floor storefront has large display windows that contrast with the solid limestone wall of the second story. The storefront has undergone two known renovations. The first involved the installation of an arcade front (c1935) and large bronze window frames. Another remodeling removed the first-floor cornice, covered the arches with stucco, and replaced the bronze window frames with aluminum. The integrity of the second story however, is intact. The original pressed-metal cornice is extant with only a central pedimented parapet bearing the McAleese name removed. Three rectangular window openings on the second story remain intact but have been filled in with removable wood siding. The building measures 31 x 75 feet including

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Sidney Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Cheyenne County, Nebraska

Section 7 Page 11

County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

a small one-story wing on the south (rear) that housed the bakery oven. A restaurant originally occupied the second floor; but by 1915, the building was converted to a billiard hall and soft drink/tobacco store. During this conversion, a tinshop and warehouse were added to the rear of the building with entrances on the alley. By 1921, the building was converted back into a restaurant with a kitchen added to the rear which enveloped the tin shop and warehouse, and extended the original building south to the alley. Between 1921 and 1928, the first floor was remodeled for a saloon and the stairway to the second floor was moved from the west to the east interior wall.

The building was constructed on a lot next to the two-story limestone structure built by Harry and Mary Chowins in 1887 (see CN09-142). These two limestone buildings feature similar facade details and formed a commercial block that was a significant addition to the central business district. Their location on Illinois Street was also significant. Until their construction, only a scattered handful of less-permanent frame commercial buildings were built on Illinois Street. Most of the limestone or masonry buildings were constructed on Hickory Street (facing the railroad) where the first commercial enclave in Sidney was established, or on 10th Avenue between Hickory and Illinois.

CN09-063: Leslie Neubauer Building, 1908-09, (see photo 10). The Leslie Neubauer Building was constructed in 1908 on the site of his father's (Judge Julius Neubauer) grocery and meat market building. This original frame building was constructed during the 1880's but was destroyed by an uncontrolled fire on January 23, 1904. Following the fire, the Neubauer lot remained vacant until July 13, 1908, when excavation for the present building began. The concrete foundation for the two-story building was completed in August, 1908, by contractors Duggan and Harper who worked on buildings elsewhere in the district. The east and west partition walls are constructed of concrete blocks with a facebrick veneer on the north (front) facade. The two-part compositional type building now contains a recessed storefront entry, but historic photographs show an original recessed entry located adjacent the east partition wall. The transom window has been covered with vinyl-sheathed insulative panels, but the original steel lintel spanning the storefront is still extant. Two second-floor window openings infilled with horizontal wood siding are located below a brick corbeled cornice with a central stepped parapet wall. A one-story, rough-coursed limestone wing on the south wall is visible from the service alley behind the structure.

South Side Illinois Street Between 9th & 10th Avenue

CN09-060: Frank Hahler Building, 1916-17, (see photo 10). The Frank Hahler Building, located on the south side of Illinois Street (Highway #30), is one of 11 district buildings initiated or completed in 1916-17. This building also represents the second generation of commercial development on Illinois Street. The Hahler Building exemplifies the prosperity of this time through its location, scale, architectural detailing, and multi-functional design. The two-story building consists of a 40- x 132-foot plan with a double-store on the first floor, and 14 "sleeping" apartments on the second floor.

The symmetrical facade clearly articulates the interior functions of the building. On the first floor, a central stairwell and partition wall divides the space into two narrow rectangular commercial rooms. The second-story facade contains eight rectangular window openings reflecting the division of the plan for the sleeping rooms. The City Meat Market occupied the west side of the first floor, and the Sidney Steam Bakery, owned and operated by William Breternitz, leased the east room. The bakery contained a brick oven capable of baking 2,000 loaves of bread at once. Each store was accessed by a central, recessed-entry which have since been altered with aluminum frame display windows. Transom windows have also been covered with corrugated aluminum sheeting. Above the transoms are three limestone relief panels with brick corbeled surrounds. The second-story facade retains much of its integrity with the original window

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 12

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

openings, engaged cornice with exaggerated dentils, and stepped brick parapet bearing the Hahler nameplate.

CN09-059: Harper & Wright Building, 1904, (see photo 10). In April, 1904, Charles Wright and Charles Harper contracted the construction of a two-story limestone building on the south side of Illinois Street. The facade of this building exemplifies the two-part compositional type. This facade type was the most widely used design in the district. The two-story facade was divided into two distinct horizontal zones that reflected the different internal functions on each level. Local research and on-site inspections have revealed that the 30- x 128-foot building may have been built in three phases. Each addition extended the building another 35 feet to the south (rear) which is consistent with the leasing of additional retail space. J.W. Slingluff cut the limestone blocks for the building front, and Bockstadter and Sons provided the masonry work.

The Harper's were a well-respected family in Sidney with many business interests. During the 1870's, they ran a freighting and stage coach line on the Sidney-Black Hills Trail. Charles Harper's relatives also owned and operated the Water Holes Ranch (NRHP, 1992) and held title to seven miles of surrounding rangeland. In later years, the family had interests in the First National Bank, Commercial Hotel, and a lumber, coal and implement business. They also furnished money and equipment for railroad contract work on the Burlington line. Upon completion of this building, Harper & Wright operated a hardware store on the first floor and soon installed an undertaking parlor on the second floor. In later years, the building housed a plumbing shop, grocery store and print shop. In 1913, William Breternitz leased the south portion of the first floor for his bakery which he operated until 1917 when he relocated to the east-half of the adjacent Hahler Building (CN09-060).

Despite alterations, the building still conveys a sense of historic character. The first-floor storefront has suffered the greatest alterations. The original front was divided into a three-bay configuration with a central recessed-entry flanked by large display windows. The central entry was placed immediately below a large segmental window opening on the second floor. This entry was relocated in later years to the west bay, and the original entry and east display window were altered with brick infill and aluminum frame windows. The second-story facade retains a comparatively higher level of integrity with unaltered segmental window openings and original pressed-metal cornice.

CN09-133: Harper Building, 1918, (see photo 10). This large two-story brick building was commissioned in 1918 by Charles and Elizabeth Harper and is located on the eastern edge of the district boundary. The 44- x 132-foot building was constructed with a two-part compositional facade. Charles Harper, in partnership with Charles Wright, was also responsible for the construction of the Harper & Wright Building (see CN09-059). The Harper family ran a freighting and stage coach line on the Sidney-Black Hills Trail during the 1870's. Charles Harper's relatives also owned and operated the Water Holes Ranch (NRHP, 1992) and held title to seven miles of surrounding rangeland. In later years, the Harper family had interests in the First National Bank, Commercial Hotel, and a lumber, coal and implement business. They also furnished money and equipment for railroad contract work on the Burlington line.

The first-floor storefront consists of a central recessed-entry flanked by large display windows. The second floor is accessed through a stairwell on the east partition wall and contained rental apartments. The storefront has been altered with plywood sheeting over the transom windows, and the original display windows were replaced with aluminum frame windows. The second-floor windows retain their original openings but have been infilled with vertical wood siding. A brick corbeled parapet and limestone stringcourse remain unaltered. The construction system of the building consists of concrete partition walls on the east and west, with a clay-tile north wall supporting a facebrick veneer.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sidney Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Cheyenne County, Nebraska

Section 7 Page 13

County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

North Side Illinois Street Between 9th and 10th Streets

CN09-061: Sidney Mercantile Company/A.K. Greenlee Building, 1916-17. See description on Section 7, page 5. This commercial block building has entrances on both Illinois Street and 10th Avenue. The primary entrance to the building faces west onto 10th Avenue; therefore, the description was included above with other contributing buildings facing 10th Avenue between Illinois and the Block 20 alley (district boundary).

West Side 10th Street Between Jackson & Illinois Streets

CN09-070: Cleburne-McIntosh Block, 1908, (see photo 9, 12). The Cleburne-McIntosh Block was commissioned in 1908 by Charles Callahan, a prominent Sidney businessman with ownership interests (at various times) in the Sidney Telegraph, First National Bank of Sidney, and the Sidney Electric Light Plant. The two-story limestone and brick building is located on the southwest corner of the primary district intersection (10th & Illinois) and was constructed on the site of the James McMullan General Merchandise store which was destroyed by fire in January, 1904. Although Callahan purchased the lot in 1905, it remained vacant for three years. Specifications for the construction of the building, named for Mrs. Mary Cleburne Callahan, were prepared in June, 1908, and excavation work began the following month (Duggan and Harper, contractors). After the completion of the foundation, the remaining portion of the 22- x 132-foot structure was built by the Forbes-Green Construction Company of Omaha who also constructed the O'Kane (CN09-382), Moore (CN09-383), and Tobin (CN09-064) buildings on 10th Avenue. The building was completed by January, 1909. However, Mr. Callahan sold the building to J.J. McIntosh in April, 1912, and the building was renamed the McIntosh Block.

The north and east facades are finished with a pressed-facebrick veneer with Bedford limestone trim. However, rough-dressed limestone walls are visible on the south facade revealing the fact that the structural integrity of the building is actually reliant upon 22-inch thick limestone walls. The first floor was originally divided into three retail spaces with the Sidney Drug Company occupying the largest room in the north portion, and stationary and dry goods stores in the two smaller rooms in the south end of the building. Sidney Drug was accessed by an integral corner entrance, and the other stores had separate entries on the east facade. A popular soda fountain was located in the rear of the Sidney Drug Company room. The second floor contained professional offices and an elegantly finished apartment for the Callahans. The building was designed with a visual emphasis on the east facade suggesting that the "front" of the building faced 10th Avenue. This is reinforced by historic photos that show a symmetrically designed east facade with an engaged pedimented-entry placed directly below the Cleburne (and later McIntosh) nameplate in the parapet.

The historic character of the Cleburne-McIntosh Block has been compromised by alterations to the east facade which include the application of corrugated-shaped aluminum panels and a prefabricated stone veneer. These alterations are primarily limited to the covering of historic features and are, therefore, considered reversible.

CN09-384: Stuht & Hink Building, 1916, (see photos 11, 12). The Stuht & Hink Building was commissioned in 1916 as part of a collaborative venture by Otto Hink, Jr., and his brother-in-law, Ernest Stuht. Construction of the two-story building began in September, 1916, under the supervision of the Noel Hogg Company (Sterling, Colorado) who also built the Leslie Neubauer (CN09-381) and J.J. McIntosh (CN09-128) buildings in the same year. The 40- x 74-foot structure was divided into two stores on the first floor by a partial center wall. Each store had a separate entrance with the south-half first occupied by Hink's Boot & Shoe Shop and the north-half leased to the Red Cross Drug Store. The physical separation of the stores is somewhat in question as Hink's major shoe line was manufactured by the Red

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

DESCRIPTION (continued)

Cross Shoe Company, and the first floor is now a large open space. The second floor was divided into 14 offices which were rented to various professionals including physicians, dentists, and optometrists. Private access to the second-floor offices was provided through a stairway on the south partition wall.

This two-story brick commercial building occupies an important site on the south side of the Block 28 alley. Because of this, both the east (front) and north (side) facades are visible from 10th Avenue. It is also noteworthy for the facade design which was duplicated in 1917 by the Osborn Building (CN09-071) to form a single cohesive 80-foot building front. The architectural details on the east (front) facade are typical of buildings constructed in the area between 1910 and 1929. These features include polychromatic brickwork, corbeled window surrounds, limestone stringcourses, and a multi-stepped brick parapet. The original storefront has been altered with aluminum frame windows and plastic panels over the transom. Aluminum awnings have been placed over the second-story windows and a front brick wall relief now bears the name of George Moore who purchased the building in 1943.

CN09-071: Anna Osborn Building, 1917, (see photos 11, 12). The Anna Osborn Building is one of four contiguous buildings on the west side of 10th Avenue that provide an important sense of historic character to the district. These buildings, through their similar scale and massing, form a unified streetscape that has remained virtually unchanged since 1917. Completed in 1917, the two-story facade of the Osborn Building replicated the design of the adjacent (north) Stuht & Hink Building (CN09-384) to create an image of a single 80-foot wide structure. Through an agreement with Ernest Stuht and Otto Hink Jr., Mrs. Osborn arranged for the use of an identical facebrick veneer and brick corbeling pattern. The building also shares a similar stepped parapet wall and paired second-story windows.

Upon completion of the Osborn Building, the first floor was leased to the W.H. Weeden Furniture Store and second-floor offices were rented to various professionals. The first-floor storefront has been altered with the covering of transom windows and the installation of aluminum-frame display windows. However, the second floor retains much of its original historic character.

CN09-072: J.J. McIntosh Building, 1916, (see photo 12). This two-story commercial building was commissioned by James J. McIntosh in 1916. Mr. McIntosh was a civic and business leader in Cheyenne County during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He arrived in Potter in 1869 working as a telegraph operator for the Union Pacific Railroad and was voted County Commissioner in 1873. He moved to Sidney in 1874 and was elected County Clerk in 1885 when Sidney was incorporated. He also served as Mayor of Sidney and was President of the American Bank (see CN09-077). Mr. McIntosh commissioned two other district buildings in 1916 (CN09-077: the American Bank, & CN09-128: McIntosh Building). He also purchased the Cleburne Block (CN09-070) in 1912 and renamed it the McIntosh Block.

The two-story building has common brick walls on the west (rear) facade with a facebrick veneer on the east (front) facade. The two-part compositional type building contained leased retail space on the first floor which was initially occupied by the C.W. Vest Variety Store. The second floor was designed to join the Masonic Hall (CN09-073) on the west wall in compliance with an agreement for the leasing of entertainment rooms by the Frank Welch Lodge. The second floor was also accessed by a stairwell located along the north partition wall. Entry to the first-floor commercial room was located in a recessed entry adjacent the south partition wall. This created a symmetrical facade design that was highlighted on the second floor by an engaged limestone cornice and Neo-Classical Revival window surrounds. The limestone cornice includes end brackets, dentils, and an egg and dart moulding under the dentils. Segmental window openings are found on the east (rear) facade adjacent an alley service entrance.

CN09-073: Frank Welch Lodge of the A.F. & A.M., 1908, (see photo 12). The Frank Welch Lodge building is a two-story brick structure located on the prominent northwest corner intersection of 10th

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 15

Sidney Downtown Historic District

Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska

County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

Avenue and Jackson Street. The lodge was one of six buildings in the district constructed in 1908 and reflects the prosperity of the community during this time. The building was constructed by the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons Lodge for use as a meeting hall. The second floor served as the lodge hall and was accessed by a separate stairwell located on the west end of the south facade facing Jackson Street. The first floor was initially leased to the United States Postal Service for use as a post office. The post office remained in this location until the current post office was built in 1933-34.

The two-story rectangular-shaped building measures 26 feet wide by 74 feet long and provided the growing membership of the lodge with a generous meeting space. Distinguishing features of the building include a large round-arch window on the second floor of the east facade and a large pressed-metal cornice with a full dentiled entablature. Limestone window sills and lintels support all openings on the first and second floors. Compromises to the historic integrity have occurred over time such as removal of the original east entrance storefront windows and the replacement of the window in the round-arch opening on the second story. In addition, all window openings on the first and second floors have been covered and smaller casement windows framed into the opening. These changes however, are considered reversible and therefore do not eliminate the building from inclusion in the district.

East Side 10th Avenue Between Jackson & Illinois Streets

CN09-077: American Bank, 1915-16. The former American Bank (now American National Bank) is located on the southeast corner of the pivotal intersection of Illinois Street (Highway #30) and 10th Avenue. The current bank building is part of a legacy of financial institutions that have occupied this site since 1869. The first bank on this site was a two-story frame building constructed in 1869 and known as the Exchange Bank. In 1889, the American Bank incorporated and occupied the former Exchange Bank building. This building was replaced in 1906 by a one-story brick building with an engaged Neo-Classical Revival entrance on the north side facing Illinois Street (*Sidney Telegraph*, June 30, 1906). Finally in 1915, under the leadership of bank president J.J. McIntosh, work was begun on the current building with construction completed by February 18, 1916. Mr. McIntosh was a prominent business and civic leader in Sidney having served as County Clerk, County Commissioner and Mayor of Sidney during his professional career. He was also responsible for the construction of two other district buildings completed in 1916 (CN09-072, CN09-128) and purchased the Cleburne Block (CN07-070) in 1912, just three years after its completion.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, the design of bank buildings on America's Main Streets were inspired by academic movements that emphasized the use of Greek and Roman temple fronts. The use of the temple front facade became synonymous with bank design and was a popular way of establishing an identity within a cluster of commercial buildings. The American Bank represents a simplified version of the temple front facade and employs Neo-Classical Revival style elements to create the identity associated with bank buildings constructed during this time. The 40- x 66-foot brick structure has an engaged limestone Neo-Classical entry on the west (front) facade with Ionic column capitals and a pedimented door hood. A limestone stringcourse and dentiled limestone cornice are placed below the brick parapet wall and unify the west and north facades. Brick corbeled window hoods with limestone keystones accent all window openings on the north and west facades. A terra-cotta medallion with the American Bank name and eagle symbol crowns the engaged Neo-Classical entry. The original windows have been replaced with aluminum frame windows, and the openings have been partially infilled with vinyl-sheathed insulative panels. An entrance lobby and second-floor balcony on the east wall have survived more recent interior alterations.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 16

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

CN09-127: Gapen Telegraph Building, 1909-10. This building was commissioned by Fred A. and Henry E. Gapen in 1909 for use in their printing and publishing business. The Gapen's printed the Sidney Telegraph newspaper and Henry Gapen also practiced law in Sidney during the early twentieth century. Excavation of the basement was completed in December, 1909, but further construction was suspended until March, 1910, due to poor weather conditions. The two-story 29- x 76-foot structure consists of reinforced concrete walls with a pressed-brick veneer. Upon completion, the first floor housed the Sidney Telegraph printing plant, with medical and dental offices located on the second floor. The basement was leased to Adolph Swenson for use as a tailor shop. Access to the basement was gained through a stairwell located below the sidewalk on the west (front) facade. Pedestrians were protected from the open stairwell by a cast-iron balustrade that enclosed the sidewalk opening. However, the stairwell and balustrade have been removed and covered. Construction of the building was contracted to C.R. Inman of Sidney.

The location of the building on the south side of the Block 29 alley allowed the north wall to be articulated with window and door openings. Six window and/or door openings are located on the first floor with four rectangular window openings on the second floor. However, the first-floor windows on the north wall have been partially infilled and smaller windows were framed into the original openings. In addition, the original first-floor windows on the west facade have been replaced with aluminum frame windows and vinyl-sheathed insulative panels cover the transom windows. The second story of the west facade has retained its original character with unaltered window openings, a brick corbeled parapet, and the limestone Gapen name block.

CN09-126: McLernon-Jorgenson Building, C1922. The McLernon-Jorgenson Building is significant as the only contributing building in the district that was not designed with a two-part compositional facade. Instead, this building exemplifies the Enframed Window Wall type developed in the teens and twenties and used primarily on small to moderate-sized commercial buildings (Longstreth, 1987). This facade type is treated as a single compositional unit by enframing a large center glass section with a continuous masonry border. Despite its 20-foot height, the McLernon Building reads as an exaggerated single-story structure. The original interior configuration of the building included a mezzanine above the east (rear) portion of the ground floor. The enframed window wall of the west facade, with its exaggerated transom window, allowed a deeper penetration of daylight in comparison to the two-part compositions used elsewhere in the district. The west (front) facade of the building is highlighted by polychromatic brick corbeling inset on a facebrick veneer. Common brick load-bearing walls are found on the south and east sides with the north partition wall adjoining the Gapen Telegraph Building (CN09-127). The original storefront was replaced in the mid-1960's with aluminum frame windows, and the transom was covered with vinyl-sheathed insulative panels.

Deed and mortgage records indicate the building may have been built by prominent Sidney businessman Ed McLernon in the summer of 1922 and sold to Mary Jorgenson in October of the same year. However, extensive mortgages were secured by Ms. Jorgenson in 1922-23 perhaps indicating that she alone had commissioned the construction of the building. Originally constructed as a store, the building in later years served as the home of Model Cleaners.

East Side of 10th Street Between King & Jackson Streets

CN09-052: Nebraska State Bank of Sidney/Roche Hospital, 1916-17, (see photos 13, 14). The Nebraska State Bank of Sidney is located near the northeast corner of the courthouse square and is one of three contiguous two-story buildings on the east side of 10th Avenue that define the southern boundary of the district. Construction on the building began in 1916 and was completed for the official opening on March 16, 1917. The bank was active in the financial affairs of Sidney until its failure in 1934 during the

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 17

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

Great Depression. The building was purchased in 1926 by Julia Roche; and in 1935, a hospital and medical office was opened by her husband, Dr. Riley Roche. In 1937, Dr. C.B. Dorwart joined the practice and continued in partnership with Dr. Roche until 1950. During this time, the original ten-bed hospital expanded into the second floor of the Hornaday Building (CN09-053) increasing the capacity to 25 beds. Medical offices were located on the first floor; and in 1940, a new basement was excavated for the purpose of installing additional patient rooms, an elevator and kitchen. In 1950, the hospital was purchased by Doctor's Grim and Babbitt who continued its operation until 1955. In subsequent years, Dr. Roche repurchased the building and converted the second floor to apartments with first-floor office spaces maintained.

The two-story brick building incorporates elements of Neo-Classical Revival style architecture as seen in the entrance with engaged columns and pediment, and exaggerated limestone stringcourse. Brick corbeling, limestone window sills and capstones complete the architectural detailing. Alterations to the building include the replacement of a first-floor window and an altered door and sidelight detail on the entry.

CN09-053: Charles W. Hornaday Building, 1918, (see photos 13, 14). This two-story brick building was constructed in 1918 by C.W. Hornaday, owner of the Hornaday Merchandise and Grain Company. This firm was responsible for the construction of the first grain elevator in Sidney. Hornaday commissioned the construction of the building to meet the increased demand for retail store space in Sidney during the early twentieth century.

The Hornaday Building exemplifies the popular two-part compositional building type that predominates the district. The first-floor storefront with its large display windows and central entry are clearly separate in the facade articulation from the offices and apartments located on the second floor. Access to the second floor is gained through a stairway on the north partition wall. The first-floor storefront has been altered with aluminum frame windows and vinyl covered insulation panels over the transom and lower display windows. The second-floor facade, however, has retained much of its original integrity with three large window openings capped with brick corbeled hoods. A corbeled stringcourse, pedimented parapet wall and limestone capstone highlights the top of the second-story facade.

The entire first floor of the 37- x 60-foot structure was first used as a general store with the second floor housing offices and apartments. In later years, Hornaday and his wife operated a furniture store from the building. E.A. Spitler of Sidney was the general contractor for the building and was also responsible for the construction of the U.S.A Theater (CN09-065) the following year.

CN09-054: Arthur S. Hardy Building, 1916, (see photos 13, 14). This two-story brick commercial building was constructed in the summer of 1916 (*Sidney Telegraph*, June 23, 1916) by Arthur Hardy to provide much needed retail space in the central business district. Hardy was a prominent local businessman and was the former owner of the prosperous Commercial Hotel (non-extant) and the first public indoor public swimming pool. The Hardy Building was the first among eight district buildings constructed in 1916 to incorporate apartments in the second floor. Six apartments were located on the second floor and all were leased prior to the completion of the building. The apartments included all-electric kitchens, bathrooms, bedrooms, dining rooms and sitting rooms. The first floor was divided into three 22- x 60-foot stores that initially housed a meat market, grocery and hardware stores.

The Hardy Building is a 66- x 60-foot structure with stuccoed common brick walls on the south and east, and a facebrick veneer on the west facade. The three-room configuration on the first floor is clearly articulated on the storefront facade by three separate entries. The original transom windows over the storefronts span the length of the west facade but have been covered with vertical wood siding. Five

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 18

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

DESCRIPTION (continued)

large window openings linked by a brick corbeled stringcourse are located on the second-floor facade. A corbeled stepped parapet with brick corbeled capstones complete the second-story facade and match the height of the adjacent Hornaday Building (CN09-053).

CN09-123: Harry A. Stover Building, C1922, (see photos 13, 14). The Stover Building is one of four two-story buildings on the east side of 10th Avenue near the south boundary of the district. Due to its height and location, the Stover Building defines the visual edge of the district boundary where the concentration of commercial buildings gradually yields to churches and residential neighborhoods. Based on mortgage records, the building appears to have been built in 1922 for use as a tin shop and plumbing office for Harry Stover.

Structurally, the 26- x 66-foot building is supported by concrete foundation walls with exterior common brick walls on the north and east, and a face brick veneer on the west (front) facade. The original storefront of this two-part compositional type was replaced in 1965 with aluminum frame windows. The facade of the second story retains its original character with an unaltered corbeled stringcourse above the transom windows and a brick corbeled cornice below a stepped parapet wall. The second floor contained apartments and is accessed through a separate entry and stairwell located along the south partition wall. Additions to the east (rear) facade were constructed in later years. These include a two-story 10- x 18-foot addition that was later enveloped by a one-story stucco addition.

Non-Contributing Inventory

East Side 10th Avenue Between Jackson & Illinois Streets

CN09-078: J.W. McDonald Co. Building, 1913
CN09-125: Professional Building, C1946-47
CN09-124: Professional Building, C1949

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8   Page 19

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sidney Historic Business District is significant on the local level under National Register Criterion A in the area of commerce. Founded by the Union Pacific Railroad in 1867, Sidney experienced a period of economic prosperity in the late nineteenth century that was unrivaled in the western Nebraska panhandle. The prosperity resulted from a combination of factors that were unique to the region. While many towns in the panhandle benefitted from the presence of the Union Pacific railroad, Sidney was also the home of an important military post (Fort Sidney, NRHP 1973), a railhead for the shipment of Texas cattle, and most significantly, the primary distribution point for overland freighting to the gold mines in the Black Hills. These influences resulted in the development of Sidney as a center of regional commercial activity. Merchants who founded businesses in Sidney during the 1870's and 1880's were directly responsible for the construction of buildings extant in the district today. While most of their original wood frame buildings are non-extant, the merchants used the profits reaped during this time to construct more permanent (masonry) buildings, often on the same site. The strong association to the tremendous prosperity of the late nineteenth century continued through the early decades of the twentieth century. The period of significance, 1885-1922, encompasses the date of the oldest extant building associated with the gold rush commerce through construction of the final building associated with the district's early twentieth-century development.

The Sidney Historic Business District represents the culmination of economic prosperity that occurred in the 1870's and 80's and continued during the early decades of the twentieth century. The district conveys a strong association with commercial activities that began with the arrival of the Union Pacific Railroad and the establishment of Ft. Sidney in 1867, and exploded with the discovery of Black Hills gold in 1875. These factors resulted in a period of prosperity that made Sidney a regional commercial center. Business owners and retailers who participated in the commercial trade of this time reaped the benefits of the prosperity. Merchants who founded businesses during the 1870's and 1880's were directly responsible for the construction of nominated buildings. For those who were not directly responsible, the family wealth was passed to sons and daughters who then built many of the early twentieth-century buildings. Early merchants such as Tobin, Greenlee, Essig, McIntosh, Neubauer, Harper, Wright, McAleese, Chowins and Scanlon had established businesses in Sidney during the 1870's and 1880's and were active members of the business community. They operated saloons, hardware, millinery, drug, and dry goods stores and some were bankers, doctors, and attorneys. They conducted their trade from the enclave of buildings fronting the Union Pacific railroad which represented the city's first commercial area. Most of the buildings were small frame false-front structures that lacked durability and were especially susceptible to fire. Historic photographs taken in the 1880's show a continuous row of these buildings lining Hickory Street (formerly Front Street). While none of these buildings has survived, the legacy of their owners did. With the profits reaped during the 1870's and early 80's, the merchants constructed larger, more permanent masonry buildings which comprise the Sidney Historic Business District. This collection of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century buildings imparts a strong sense of Sidney's historic role as a regional commercial center.

The origin of the Sidney Historic Business District is directly associated with the arrival of the Union Pacific Railroad in the Lodgepole Creek valley in July, 1867, and the establishment of a military camp (Sidney Barracks) in November of the same year. During the first months of settlement, Sidney consisted of little more than a collection of temporary structures housing railroad workers (Fuller, 1975). As rail activity increased in the latter months of 1867, Sidney became a major refueling and repair stop on the Union Pacific line between North Platte and Cheyenne. Through a petition by the railroad, Sidney

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sidney Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Cheyenne County, Nebraska

Section 8   Page 20

County and State

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Barracks was established to protect rail workers and provide protection for overland supplies distributed to military camps and Indian agencies north and west of Sidney (Deadwood Draw, NRHP 1992).

From 1867 to 1869, the military camp consisted of a series of tents located north of the rail line near the limestone bluffs that form the northern boundary of the city. In 1869, Sidney Barracks was relocated one-half mile southeast and permanent structures replaced the tent camp. The relocation of the camp, however, did not affect the first enclave of commercial buildings on the south side of Hickory Street facing the railroad tracks. As the first commercial buildings constructed in Sidney, their location near the intersection of 10th Avenue (formerly Rose Street) and Hickory emphasized the importance of the railroad. Simultaneously, dispersed commercial development began on Illinois Street (formerly 2nd Street) due to the street's role as the primary east-west transportation route linking Sidney Barracks and the business district. These first buildings were hastily constructed and consisted primarily of modest frame false-front structures.

Sidney grew slowly until the fall of 1874 when Gen. George A. Custer led an expedition to the Black Hills that confirmed the presence of placer gold in the Dakota Territory (Deadwood Draw, NRHP 1992). At the time, the Black Hills were part of the Sioux reservation lands and, by treaty, the U.S. army was forced to expel gold seekers. This proved a difficult task and the great rush of prospectors led to conflict with the native Sioux tribes making Fort Sidney an important regional military reservation. The Fort formed a buffer between the conflicts in the Dakota Territory to the north and the settled regions of Nebraska to the south. The conflicts culminated in the Sioux War of 1876 when the Black Hills were ceded to the United States.

With the Black Hills opened for mining and settlement, the opportunities for commercial profit were enormous. The shipment of supplies to the Black Hills became an immediate priority and the freighting companies first turned to the overland trail used by the military to supply Camp Robinson (later Fort Robinson). This route was greatly enhanced in 1876 by the opening of the Camp Clarke bridge (NRHP 1974) over the North Platte River in what is now Morrill County. The closest Union Pacific railhead on the trail was located in Sidney and many freighting firms used the city as their supply point. As a result, a large number of prospectors arrived in Sidney intent on reaching the gold fields as quickly as possible. Sidney quickly became the major outfitting terminal for supplies to the Black Hills with the Sidney-Black Hills Trail the primary supply route (Deadwood Draw, NRHP 1992).

As traffic increased, so did the number of soldiers assigned to Fort Sidney. By 1876, the city had become a regional center of commerce with gold seekers, freighters, cowboys, and soldiers intermingling in a 24-hour frenzy of activity. The "wild west" had arrived in Sidney with full force. Prospectors and freighters departed with mining supplies bound for the gold mines in the Black Hills. Soldiers, cowboys, and railroad workers celebrated pay day in the saloons and gambling houses of the central business district. All-night saloons where "drunken soldiers made a show of themselves" were reported frequently in the *Sidney Telegraph* in the 1870's and 1880's.

While many were seeking wealth in the gold mines, others saw the opportunities in the trade and supply of the miners' needs. Business owners and retailers who participated in the commercial trade of this time reaped the benefits of the prosperity. Saloons, hotels, stage and freight stations were hastily erected, catering to the expanding population. Commercial buildings were constructed on the few remaining lots on Hickory Street, and growth spread south on 10th Avenue between Hickory and Illinois. An 1876 engraving of the district depicts a nearly uninterrupted row of commercial buildings on the south side of Hickory Street between 9th and 11th Avenues.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Sidney Downtown Historic District

Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska

Section 8 Page 21

County and State

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Construction also began on Illinois Street, encouraged by the location of two pivotal buildings on the intersection of 10th and Illinois. William Raynolds and A.H. Wallace built the first bank in Sidney (later the American Bank) on the southeast corner in 1876 and the Capital Saloon was constructed on the northwest corner in the following year. Illinois Street was also an important east-west transportation route through Sidney linking Fort Sidney and the central business district. Consequently, commercial buildings were also built on Illinois but were generally confined to the south side of the street. The impact of the freighting industry on Sidney was enormous. From 1874 to 1879, an estimated 35,000,000 pounds of freight was transported over the trail to the Black Hills. Stage and freight companies made several daily runs from Sidney to Custer City in the Black Hills. In 1876, $9,000 to $12,000 worth of gold was shipped east daily from Sidney on the Union Pacific railroad (Buhrdorf/Quint, 1986). By 1877, 50 to 75 freight wagons departed every day; and within ten months, the city's population increased from 475 to 1,560. One million pounds were shipped daily and there were two daily lines between Sidney and Deadwood (Herman, 1967). Even a large fire (1877) that destroyed buildings on Hickory and Illinois streets did not stop the rapid development of the commercial area.

By 1879, the gold rush was diminishing and company mining began to dominate in the Black Hills (Steinacher, 1992). The freight demand remained high, however, and Sidney continued as a supply point until 1882 when the Chicago and Northwestern railroad line to Pierre, South Dakota, was completed. Sidney was still a railroad town, however, as well as the seat of Cheyenne County which covered the entire southern half of the Nebraska panhandle. During the early 1880's the character of Sidney changed from a "wild west" town to a stable commercial center. The Union Pacific assigned security officers to patrol its line, reducing the lawless element in the region. As a result, the district grew at a more steady pace and the inordinate number of saloons and gambling halls were gradually replaced by other types of businesses.

In October 1884, a petition was filed by the residents of Sidney for incorporation. Homesteaders began arriving in the county in 1885 and 1886, increasing the trading activity in Sidney. To accommodate this growth, a large residential addition (Clarkson's Addition) comprising 80 acres was platted and added 224 building lots to Sidney (Buhrdorf, 1986). This addition extended 10th Avenue to the south making it the primary access route to the table lands south of the city. Following the platting of Clarkson's Addition, the town board secured an agreement with the Union Pacific for a crossing on 10th Avenue. The north and south sides of the track were subsequently filled in with cinders and the first rail crossing in Sidney was established at 10th and Hickory.

With the extension of Clarkson's Addition in 1885 and the establishment of the crossing, 10th Avenue became a primary north-south transportation route for those entering the central business district. This encouraged commercial development south of Illinois Street on 10th Avenue. In addition, the county courthouse and Tobin's Opera House were located two blocks south of the district between Tenth and Eleventh, and Jackson and King. Tobin's Opera House (non-extant) was the hub of social activity for Sidney in the late 1880's and further encouraged the growth of the business district south on 10th Avenue.

By the mid-1880's, the district was comprised primarily of wood-frame structures that included a mix of commercial buildings and dwellings, and even store/house combinations. Historic photos from this time show several false-front buildings. Businesses included hotels, saloons, a meat market, and hardware, clothing, jewelry, dry goods and furniture stores. By 1887, 17 businesses had been constructed on 10th Avenue between Hickory and Illinois streets. Both sides of 10th Avenue featured uninterrupted rows of commercial buildings including the C.D. Essig (CN09-074) and Mercy Essig (CN09-076) buildings. This reflected the importance of 10th Avenue as the primary railroad crossing, making 10th and Hickory the city's main intersection.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8   Page 22

Sidney Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Cheyenne County, Nebraska

County and State

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

The late 1880's also proved a benchmark period for development on Illinois Street. In 1887, Mr. & Mrs. H.W. Chowins began construction of a two-story limestone commercial building on the south side of Illinois Street between 10th and 11th Avenues. When it was completed in 1888, the Chowins Building solidified commercial trade on Illinois Street. Prior to its completion, the only other limestone commercial buildings had been constructed on either Hickory Street or 10th Avenue, and only scattered less permanent frame commercial buildings had been built on Illinois.

The closing of Ft. Sidney in 1894 and nation-wide economic distress in the mid-1890's limited commercial growth in the district. During this time, business owners were forced into conservative management and no construction occurred. However, unlike other panhandle communities, Sidney recovered quickly. In 1900, the Burlington Railroad built a north-south line through the county and selected Sidney as construction headquarters. Known as the Alliance-Brush (Colorado) line, it connected the coal fields of South Dakota and Wyoming with a large smelter in Pueblo, Colorado. This made Sidney the principal trading center for a vast farming and ranching territory that extended into northeast Colorado and southeast Wyoming. In addition, the Union Pacific began upgrading their lines with a double track in 1908, adding significantly to the railroad activity in the area. Aided by these events, business owners in Sidney embarked on a twenty-year period of commercial development which began in 1904 and lasted into the early 1920's. During this time, 26 of the district's 29 contributing buildings were constructed.

The first significant development in the early twentieth century occurred in 1904 on the south side of Illinois Street when Charles Wright and Charles Harper constructed a two-story limestone building (CN09-059). This was followed by the construction of the two-story McAleese Building (CN09-062) in May of the same year. These buildings represented the second generation of commercial development on Illinois Street. The first development had occurred in the late nineteenth century when businesses located on Illinois Street in response to the traffic between Fort Sidney and the district. These first buildings consisted of one and two-story frame, false-front structures. Eventually, these buildings were replaced by more permanent masonry structures.

The use of masonry construction imparted a greater sense of permanence when compared with the modest frame commercial buildings of the late nineteenth century. Limestone was a popular building material due to its fireproof qualities and local availability. In fact, shortly before construction of the McAleese and Harper & Wright buildings, a large fire (Jan. 23, 1904) destroyed three frame commercial buildings on the 1000 block of Illinois Street but the limestone Chowins Building (CN09-142) survived with little structural damage. As a result, limestone became the popular choice among building owners with the Haskell homestead quarry site north of town supplying much of the stone.

Once completed, the McAleese and Harper & Wright buildings represented a benchmark in the history of the district. The construction of limestone buildings following the fire reinforced the role of Illinois Street as a commercial corridor and represented the growth of the district south from the railroad frontage to the intersection of 10th and Illinois. In addition to the 1904 fire, two other fires occurred during the early twentieth century (1908, 1909) and also resulted in the destruction of frame commercial buildings. The 1908 fire destroyed frame buildings on the northwest corner of 10th and Illinois and was followed by the construction of the Tobin, Moore, and O'Kane buildings (CN09-064, 383, & 382).

The years of the latter fires (1908, 1909) represented a significant time in the district's development when commercial growth south of Illinois on 10th Avenue began to predominate. This growth linked the 1870's commercial enclave facing the railroad with the courthouse square located two blocks south on 10th Avenue. Development on these blocks was aided not only by the location of the courthouse, but also by

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sidney Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Cheyenne County, Nebraska

Section 8 Page 23

County and State

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

the construction of three masonry buildings, the Frank Welch Lodge 1908 (CN09-073), the Gapen Telegraph building 1909 (CN09-127), and Dr. Stowitts office building C1905 (non-extant). In addition, the Tobin Opera House (non-extant) and Sidney City Hall (non-extant) were located south of Illinois on the north side of Jackson.

Following the construction of these buildings, however, commercial growth in the district over the next six years was limited. Then, in 1915, a dramatic period of growth began that resulted in the construction of sixteen buildings during an eight-year span. During this period (1915-1922), eleven buildings were started or completed in 1916-17 alone. This development was made possible by a period of economic prosperity that peaked between 1913 and 1920 when Illinois Street was designated as the route of the Lincoln Highway through Sidney. As the nation's first transcontinental highway, the route of the Lincoln through the district resulted in significant automobile traffic and commercial activity on both 10th Avenue and Illinois Street. The impact of the early twentieth-century prosperity resulted in the near doubling of the city's population. During this time commercial buildings were constructed on the vacant lots on 10th Avenue south to the courthouse, and the remaining frame 1880's buildings on Illinois were replaced with large masonry structures.

Noteworthy examples of buildings constructed in 1916-17 include the Neubauer and McIntosh buildings (CN09-381, CN09-128) on the west side of 10th between Illinois and Hickory (see photos 5, 6) and the Osborn, McIntosh and Stuht & Hink buildings (CN09-071, CN09-072, CN09-384) on the west side of 10th between Illinois and Jackson (see photo 12). Construction of commercial buildings on 10th Avenue east of the courthouse represented the expansion of the district into an area that was formerly a residential neighborhood. Development on this block began with the construction of the Nebraska State Bank of Sidney (CN09-052) in March of 1916 and was followed by the Hardy Building (CN09-054) in June of the same year (see photo 13).

Construction in the district lost momentum in the mid-1920's, but not until after two buildings were erected on 10th Avenue in 1922: the Stover Building (CN09-123) and the McLernon-Jorgenson Building (CN09-126), which represented the final additions to a period of dramatic growth. By the onset of the Great Depression in 1929, construction in the district had ceased and remained generally inactive until the onset of World War II. In 1942, the Sioux Ordnance Depot was established northwest of town and was followed by the discovery of oil in 1949. These events had a significant impact on Sidney, but the construction that resulted was primarily located in outlying residential areas. Today, the Sidney Historic Business District continues to serve as the focal point of commercial activity. With its collection of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century buildings, the district imparts a strong sense of Sidney's historic role as a regional commercial center.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 24

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Buecker, Thomas R. A Short History of Fort Sidney, Nebraska, np 1977.

Buhrdorf, Audrey J, director. History of Cheyenne County Nebraska. Curtis Media Corporation, 1987.

Cheyenne County Assessor Records, 1970-1993, Sidney, NE, County Assessor.

Cheyenne County Deed Records, Numeric Index of Lands, 1875-1993, Sidney, NE, Register of Deeds.

Cheyenne County Historical Association. Historic Structure Research Team files, Sidney, NE: 1991-93.

Draper, LaVern. Private Photograph Collection.

Fuller, Clark. Pioneer Paths. Broken Bow, Nebraska: Purcells, Inc., 1975.

Herman, Dick. Cheyenne County Historical Association Interviews. 1956.

Hurst, Robert. Private Photograph Collection.

Lincoln Highway Association. The Complete Official Road Guide to the Lincoln Highway. Detroit, MI: 1916.

Longstreth, Richard. The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture. Washington D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987.

Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey, files. State Historic Preservation Office, Lincoln, NE.

Nebraska Legislative Council. Nebraska Blue Book. 1976-1977. Lincoln: 1977.

Nebraska State Historical Society Manuscript Collection.

Nebraska State Historical Society Photograph Collection.

Nebraska State Historical Society. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form-Deadwood Draw. Lincoln: NE 1992.

Olson, James C. History of Nebraska. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, Sidney, Nebraska, 1887, 1892, 1903, 1909, 1915, 1921, 1928, on file, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, NE.

Sidney Telegraph. Aug. 8, 1881; Sep. 12, Nov. 28, 1885; Jan. 22, Feb. 26, Apr. 17, 1886; Mar. 26, July 18, Aug. 20, Sep. 3, Sep. 10, Oct. 15, 1887; Jan. 23, Dec. 17, 1898; Oct. 8, 1904; May 12, Oct. 13, 1906; Jun. 6, 20, Jul. 13, Aug. 1, 22, Sep. 5, Oct. 17, Dec. 26, 1908; Jan. 23, Feb. 6, Mar. 27, 1909; Jan. 6, 1912; Feb. 18, May 19, Jun. 6, 23, July 7, 21, 28, Sep. 8, Nov. 3, 22, Dec. 22, 29 1916; Jan. 15, 26, Mar. 2, 16, 1917; Apr. 13, May 18, Nov. 16, 1917; Apr. 12, 19, 1918; Feb. 7, Aug. 11, 1919; Sep. 2, 1921.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10   Page 25

Sidney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Cheyenne County, Nebraska
County and State

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the nominated property is delineated by the area whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference points: 1. 14 669900 4556670, 2. 14 669920 4456450, 3. 14 669800 4556440, 4. 14 669780 4556660. The district includes the following parcels in the Original Town Plat of Sidney: Lots 12 & 13 on Block 20, Lots 14 & 15 on Block 21, Lots 1, 2 & 8 on Block 28, the west 44 feet of Lot 2 & all of Lots 3, 4, & 5 on Block 29, Lot 4 & the north 26 feet of Lot 5 on Block 36. Boundary lines for the district are shown on the accompanying map entitled "Sidney Historic Business District."

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The asymmetrical-shaped boundaries of the district capture the essence of the linear orientation of the district as well as recognizing the subsequent development that occurred on Illinois Street. During the late nineteenth century, Illinois Street became the primary east-west route through Sidney linking the Fort to the east with the central business district. This route caused dispersed construction of commercial buildings in the 1880's on the north sides of Blocks 28 & 29 facing Illinois Street. An I-shaped district was formed consisting of the first buildings on Hickory Street (east-west) and south 10th Avenue (north-south) to Illinois Street (east-west). This pattern was reinforced in the early twentieth century when Illinois Street became the location of the Lincoln Highway (later U.S. Highway #30). Consequently, commercial buildings on Illinois (U.S. Highway 30) are also included in the district and reflect the spread of commercial development during the early twentieth century.

The district does not include the Cheyenne County courthouse block because of the construction date of the courthouse (1967). In addition, there are no contributing commercial buildings south of the courthouse and there are several vacant lots north of the square. Further judgements regarding historic integrity caused the elimination of buildings facing Illinois Street (adjacent the boundary) on Blocks 20, 21, 28, and 29. The south boundary on Block 36 was established to exclude the non-contributing Sidney Federal Savings and Loan (1976) and former Stover Plumbing Garage constructed in the 1930's (CN09-122).

Hickory St.

North

21   20

381
120
65   129
382
64   383

74
75
76
61

Illinois St.
(U.S. HWY #30)

142   62   63   70

77   60   59   133
78

28   29

384
71
72
73

127
126
125
124

Jackson St.

37

52
53
54

36

123
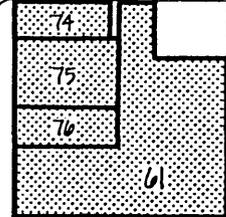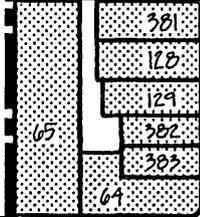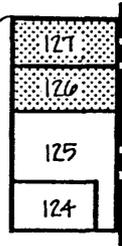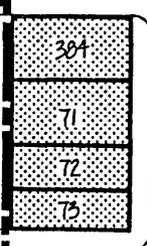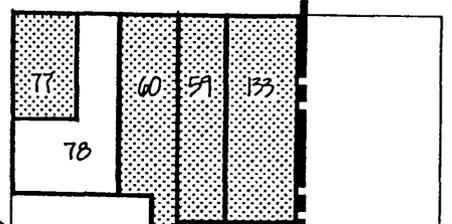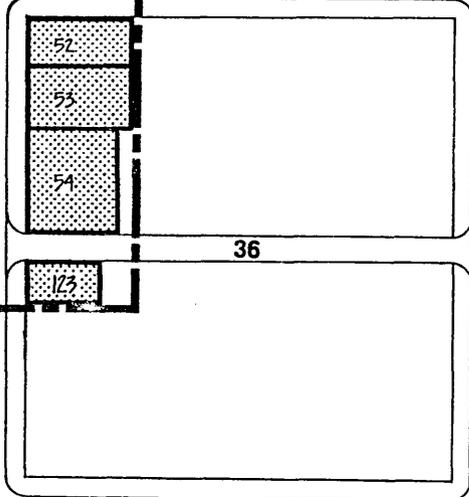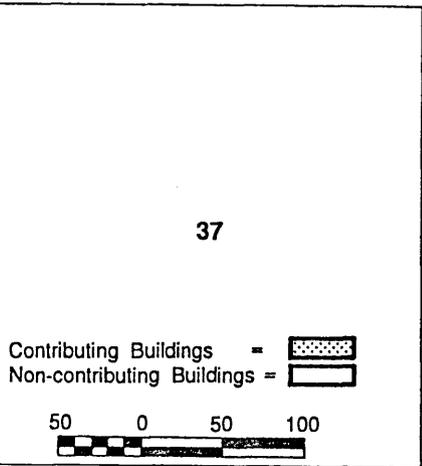
Contributing Buildings =
Non-contributing Buildings =

50   0   50   100

11th Ave.

10th Ave.

9th Ave.

King St.

Sidney Historic Business District
Sidney, Cheyenne County, Nebraska

Drawn by: Lonnie Dickson 6/7/94