

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAY 20 1979
DATE ENTERED	MAY 1 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

The Farrell Block

(AD04-12)

AND/OR COMMON

The Stone Block

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

533-537 Second Street, 112 Denver Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Hastings

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3rd

STATE

Nebraska

COUNTY CODE

031

COUNTY

Adams

CODE

001

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Vern Anderson ✓

Robert L. Clark and Juanita F. Clark ✓

STREET & NUMBER

1825 West Second St.

848 N. Minnesota Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Hastings, NE

VICINITY OF

Hastings, NE

STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds, Adams County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

500 West Fourth Street

CITY, TOWN

Hastings

STATE

Nebraska

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Adams County

DATE

1978

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Nebraska State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The 1880 Farrell Block is located on the southeast corner of Second Street and Denver Avenue in the business district of Hastings, Nebraska (1970 pop., 23,580). The building is rectangular and consists of two stories over a full basement. As constructed, the Farrell Block was twice its present size; one-half of the structure was destroyed by fire in 1953 (see reconstruction drawing). Construction is of Colorado sandstone and the rock-faced ashlar of exterior walls presents a strong textural contrast to neighboring structures of brick.

A smooth stone stringcourse is between the two stories, and bays of the upper floor are defined by pilaster strips whose capitals regularly interrupt a sawtooth band of stone near the walls' summit. The sills of second-floor windows rest on the stringcourse and corners in these windows' heads are rounded. Surmounting the two street facades is a vigorous metal cornice treated with paired brackets, incised semi-circular projections, and two shaped larger projections--the protuberance on the north (main) side being embossed with "FARRELL BLOCK, 1880."

Cast-iron shopfronts originally served the whole first-floor expanse facing Second Street, including the destroyed portion which continued eastward. On the extant half, only two square columns flanking the centered stairhall entrance remain. The essential fenestral arrangement remains somewhat the same, but much of the northwest corner has been filled with brick and a store sign occupies the upper third of the other division flanking the stairhall entrance. The central opening of a window arrangement above the stairhall entrance and three segmental-arched windows on the west wall have also been filled with brick.

Included in the nomination is a two-story brick appendage fronting Denver Street from the Farrell Block's southwest corner (see right side of accompanying exterior photograph). Added ca. 1890, this three-bay appendage is uniform in height with the Block. Also, a corbel table near the addition's apex is akin to the sawtooth band on the main building. Two openings south of the brick section's entrance have been filled with brick.

Presently, two shops occupy the Farrell Block's first level and each has its own entrance from Second Street. Principal access to the second floor is by the stairhall whose entrance is centered on the Second Street facade. Original oak flooring survives throughout most of the building. Pressed-metal ceilings are extant in the first-floor's northern half, although that in the western division is presently concealed by a dropped ceiling. The second floor, which originally housed offices, now serves as apartments.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES    1880

BUILDER/ARCHITECT    C. C. Rittenhouse

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Farrell Block, an 1880 commercial and office building, is historically significant to Hastings, Nebraska, through its associations with Thomas E. Farrell, an early settler in the community and an eminent citizen and local leader during Hastings' formative years. The building occupies a prominent corner in the community's business district and attains visual distinction as being the only 19th-century stone edifice in that area. Also, the Farrell Block is a viable reminder of the 1880s, a period of impressive population growth and financial prosperity in Hastings.

The 1870s had mostly been a period of raw growth for Hastings and Adams County, but by the beginning of the following decade the atmosphere became calmer, although rapid expansion continued. The 1880s in Hastings was essentially a period of orderly development, with institutions being established and foundations laid (Creigh, Adams County: The Story, p. 19).

Thomas E. Farrell (1852-1902) arrived in Hastings in 1872 from Illinois and is counted as one of the town's pioneer residents (Hastings Daily Tribune, Obituary of Farrell, December 8, 1902, p. 1). He performed survey work for the St. Joseph and Denver Railroad Company, was one of four men who laid out Hastings, and was largely responsible for the completion of the rail between Hastings and Denver (Burton and Lewis, Past and Present of Adams County, p. 337).

Farrell became deeply involved in the development of Hastings and served the community in several public capacities: he was elected to the city council in 1874, 1875, and 1887; and was appointed County Surveyor in 1881, City Engineer in 1874 and 1875, Park Commissioner in 1886, and Street Commissioner in 1874. In addition, Farrell served on the Board of Directors of the Hastings Land, Loan, and Building Association, and in 1879 he was part of a committee that secured Hastings as the site of a four-year Presbyterian college. Farrell was also instrumental in having Hastings selected as the location for the Immaculate Conception Academy, a Roman Catholic school, donating ten acres for its campus. Prior to the construction of a Catholic church in Hastings, services were held in his residence.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Hastings West

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,4 | 5,5,1 | 7,8,0 | 4,4,9,2 | 6,6,0  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B    |    |    |    |     
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C    |    |    |    |   

D    |    |    |    |   

E    |    |    |    |   

F    |    |    |    |   

G    |    |    |    |   

H    |    |    |    |   

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

lots 9 and 10, Block 24, Original Town Plat, Hastings, Nebraska

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Daniel Kidd, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

March, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

1500 "R" Street

TELEPHONE

402/471-3270

CITY OR TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE X

LOCAL   

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Marion D. Knott

3/14/79

TITLE

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

for Charles A. Starnes  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 5-1-79

ATTEST:

William H. Graham  
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

4-30-79

DATE

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Shortly after his arrival in Hastings, Thomas Farrell became engaged in the contracting business and he acquired interest in Colorado mines: Hastings directories of the 1880s and 1890s list him as a stone contractor. In 1880, Farrell and his partner, George Mowrey, had a substantial building erected on the southeast corner of Second Street and Denver Avenue. Sandstone used for the building's construction was transported from Farrell's mines in Cripple Creek, Colorado, 450 miles southwest of Hastings. The architect engaged was Charles C. Rittenhouse, a native of Van Wert County, Ohio, who had served a carpenter's apprenticeship in his home state and had spent several months in the architectural office of Tolan and Son in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Rittenhouse arrived in Hastings in 1877 and he opened an architectural practice in 1878 (Creigh, Adams County: The People, p. 208).

As constructed, the Farrell Block, or the Stone Block as it has come to be commonly known, was twice its present size. Originally, the main facade fronted Second Street for 88 feet, but literally half of the structure was destroyed by a fire in 1953. The second floor of the destroyed section contained a large "hall" that served as offices for Adams County's government between 1880-90. Thomas Farrell had been a force in moving the county seat from Juniata to Hastings in 1880, and was part of a group that fought off Juniata residents trying to regain relocated records (Hastings Daily Tribune, April 25, 1953, p. 1). After the completion of a permanent courthouse, the second floor was pressed into service as a school, and later it served as a B.P.O.E. meeting hall (Ibid). The first floor of the destroyed section traditionally housed small businesses.

Despite alterations, the extant half of the Farrell Block retains its significant design, and the ca. 1890 brick addition at the southwest corner maintains the same scale and a similar fenestral rhythm. Much of the Farrell Block's architectural importance to Hastings is derived from its being of stone construction; it was the first stone building in the community and is the only remaining 19th-century commercial building of stone in the business district. For its historical significance, the building likewise maintains sufficient integrity to convey the period of association with Thomas Farrell. From 1880--ca. 1900, Farrell maintained an office in the extant half, as did Charles Rittenhouse, the building's architect. Farrell's residence in Hastings remains also, but it was constructed later and does not convey the same sense of Farrell's significance as an early Hastings resident and community leader.

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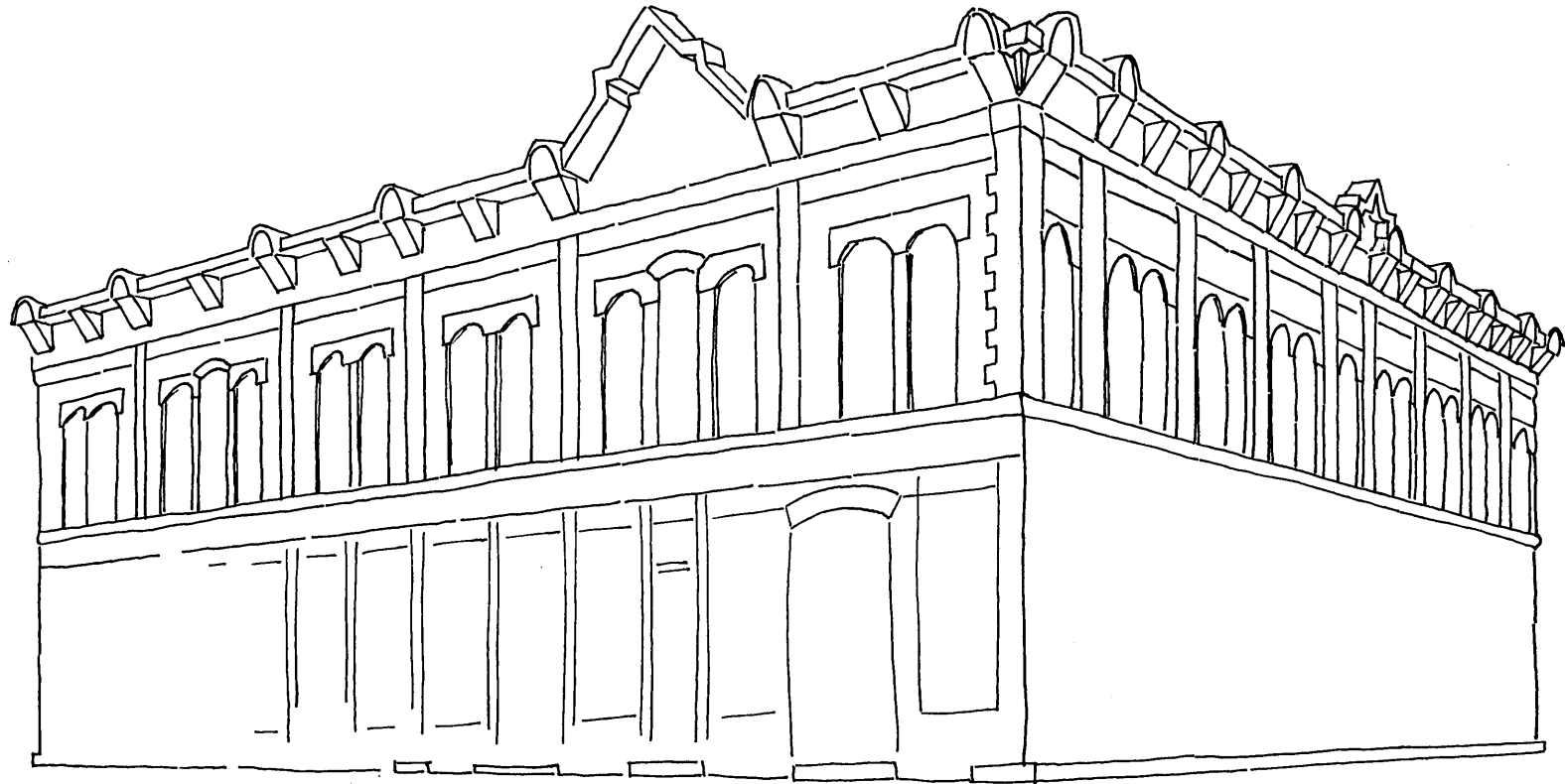
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The Farrell Block (AD04-12),  
Hastings, Adams Co., Nebr.  
Reconstruction drawing  
based on 1887 illustration

MAY 1 1979

in the Hastings Gazette  
Journal.

Steve Ryan, Staff Artist,  
Nebraska St. Historical

MAY 1 1979  
Society, March, 1979.