

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received FEB 26 1985
date entered

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

1. Name

Historic Resources of Harding and Perkins Counties, South Dakota
historic (Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties)

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number See Individual Site Forms N/A not for publication

city, town See Individual Site Forms N/A vicinity of

state South Dakota code 046 counties Harding- 063
Perkins- code 105

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name See Individual Site Forms

street & number See Individual Site Forms

city, town See Individual Site Forms N/A vicinity of state N/A

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Harding County Courthouse Perkins County Courthouse
Register of Deeds Office Register of Deeds Office
Buffalo, SD Bison, SD

street & number

city, town Buffalo, Bison state South Dakota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Rural Harding and Perkins County Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Summer 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Preservation Center

city, town Vermillion state South Dakota

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

See continuation sheet

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The multiple resource nomination titled the Historic Resources of Harding and Perkins Counties, South Dakota (Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties) contains twenty-seven individual sites. The properties are scattered throughout the approximately 5,542 square miles of Harding and Perkins Counties which are bounded by the state lines of Montana and Wyoming in the west, North Dakota in the north, Corson and Ziebach Counties in the east, and Butte and Meade Counties in the south. The nomination is composed of seven churches, three commercial buildings, seven ranches, six schools, and one battlefield site. The adobe, concrete, log, sod, stone and frame structures which are represented exhibit a full range of building techniques associated with the turn-of-the-century settlement of western South Dakota.

Early exploration of the area began in 1811 when the Astorians passed through the region on their way to the Pacific Northwest. During July of 1874 General George Armstrong Custer and his armies discovered Ludlow Cave in the Cave Hills. Settlement of northwestern South Dakota began in the late 1870s with the establishment of large cattle ranches along the major rivers. A large portion of the ranchers and homesteaders who pioneered in the northwestern South Dakota frontier immigrated from the surrounding eastern and southern territories as these regions developed and lost their frontier status. Several of the larger cattle outfits were established by Texans and easterners who recognized the benefits of the native grasses of the Northern Plains which provided superior forage for their cattle. In addition, Scandinavian immigration to the United States was at a high point in the late 19th century and many Scandinavians emigrated to western South Dakota.

The pioneers who settled the land in the extreme northwestern corner of South Dakota which later became Harding and Perkins Counties were in the Great Plains physiographic area. This region has remained relatively unchanged since its settlement in the late 19th century. Characterized by gently rolling prairie, the area has steep, hilly areas in the breaks of the Little Missouri, Moreau, and Grand River valleys; rough, broken, pine

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covered areas in the Cave Hills, Long Pines, Short Pines, and the Slim Buttes. Numerous streams cross the terrain. Much of the land is covered with native grass used for range and hay with wheat, oats, barley, corn and alfalfa the principal cultivated crops.

The present nomination is intended to aid the conservation of the character of the western part of the state and the built environment of the pioneers who settled it. This nomination is also an effort to preserve the last material vestiges of the pioneer spirit, which according to tradition, was the impetus behind the log and stone buildings erected on the frontier with the assistance and cooperation of neighboring ranchers and farmers. Over 280 sites were located during the fieldwork with twenty-seven sites deemed individually eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Architecture

Architecturally, the buildings can be divided into six categories:

1. Adobe construction, a most durable and inexpensive method using locally available material, one example from 1936.
2. Concrete construction, two examples from the 1910s, uncommon in the region, but a popular building material nationally at the time.
3. Log construction, generally temporary buildings erected by early settlers in the 1880s.
4. Sod construction, inexpensive and temporary housing used by homesteaders in the 1880s through the 1920s.
5. Stone construction, utilizing locally available material, structures built by early homesteaders at the turn-of-the-century or built by contractors.

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6. Wood-frame construction, the most popular category, with examples from 1895 through the 1920s.

By the first quarter of the twentieth century when adobe construction appears in western South Dakota, it had become an American building tradition with its roots in the Hispanic building technologies of the American Southwest. The Sorum Cooperative Store was built of adobe in 1936 because it was an inexpensive building material, and to insure that the new structure would be fireproof. Attractive because it was inexpensive and easy to make, adobe which could be manufactured on the construction site, was a logical alternative to other more expensive building materials which needed to be purchased, then hauled by team and wagon to the building site.

Concrete construction which had widespread popularity throughout the United States in the early years of the twentieth century is rarely found throughout rural western South Dakota. Two examples of houses constructed of concrete blocks produced on the building site are included in this nomination. Both houses are unusually large, and are the only known examples of this type of construction in the region.

The log structures were located in the forested regions of the survey area along the river valleys and foothills of the more mountainous areas. Historically, in frontier regions log houses and outbuildings were built as an expedient type of shelter by early settlers in timbered areas. Because of the obvious locational factors, these areas were the first to be settled and have the greatest number of late nineteenth century log and stone structures.

Representative of the Anglo-American tradition of log construction, which by the turn-of-the-century is viewed to include all eastern United States traditions, ie. Pennsylvania German, British-American, Dutch-American and so forth, is the most common log construction technique encountered in northwestern South Dakota. The logs are generally hewn and corner notched using dovetail and saddle notch techniques. Chinks are commonly filled with slats, mortar or newspaper.

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Built by settlers from Europe and the eastern United States, these buildings do not exhibit the level of technical expertise of Scandinavian log construction found in the Cave Hills vicinity of Harding County and the greater Black Hills region.

Because it was generally available and inexpensive, sod construction was employed by pioneers across the Great Plains from the earliest accounts because it was generally available and inexpensive. In western South Dakota sod construction appears throughout the 1910s with the large homestead boom. A sod house could be put up with little expense other than the cost of windows, doors, and wooden shingles, if used instead of sod on the roof. Warm in winter and cool in summer, with their thick twelve to fourteen inch walls, sod houses were economical and derived popularity among early homesteaders who needed their capital to start farming and ranching operations. The ubiquitous sod house of the turn-of-the-century was frequently replaced when the railroad reached frontier regions and made milled lumber and brick readily available to homesteaders.

The availability of natural stone in western South Dakota contributed to the masonry tradition that developed in this part of the state. Throughout most of rural western South Dakota, fieldstone construction is the most common, with stones gathered on the site or from nearby areas where the houses and outbuildings were constructed.

Throughout rural western South Dakota wood-frame construction was a popular building technique in the later years of the nineteenth century. Its prevalence increased with the introduction of the railroad after 1900 throughout the area. After that time, in regions closest to railroad centers most houses and outbuildings were built of milled lumber. As Harding and Perkins Counties were settled later than most of the state the automobile and the public roads played an important role in making milled lumber available to later settlers in the region.

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Survey Methodology

Properties included in the present multiple resource nomination were selected on the basis of a comprehensive historic sites survey of Harding and Perkins Counties conducted during the summer of 1985. An interdisciplinary study, the survey included architectural and historical research, as well as recognition of historic archeological features. Summer fieldwork was conducted by Lee Novick, a doctoral student at Washington State University, and Elisa Novick, Historic Sites Surveyor for the State Historical Preservation Center. The project personnel were trained at the State Historical Preservation Center which defined the survey and the National Register criteria.

During the survey the structures were recorded to the geographical standards set forth in the Field Guide to Historic Sites in South Dakota by Carolyn Torma. Measured drawings were used to record the log, sod, adobe and stone buildings.

All accessible roads in the two county area were travelled and historic sites were examined, and those meeting the criteria for survey were recorded. The sites included in the nomination were identified and recorded during the survey. The properties included in the present nomination were recorded with informant interviews, site maps, photographs, and archival and historical research.

The Harding and Perkins Counties survey utilized U.S.G.S. maps, and 1965 and 1983 South Dakota Highway Department maps. Atlases and early maps were examined to locate areas of early settlement with potentially early sites. U.S. Census Records (1915-1935) were used to correlate data on settlement patterns in the survey area.

During the final phase of the survey all the data was reviewed and all surveyed historic resources were assessed for their eligiblity for inclusion in the National Register. Sites were selected on the basis of criteria for registration and for their relationship to historic themes. Criteria for the selection process included the architectural integrity, character

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and quality of a site and its association with significant historical events and persons.

A number of historic and architectural resources in Harding and Perkins Counties are presently included in the National Register of Historic Places. In Harding County they include: Lightning Spring (2 August 1982). In Perkins County they include: the L.F. Harriman House (12 December 1976), the Golden Rule Department Store (12 December 1976), the G.E. Lemmon House (12 December 1976) and the Lemmon Petrified Park (21 November 1977) in Lemmon; and the Anna Carr Homestead in Bison (20 January 1978).

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century adobe, concrete, log, sod and stone structures were deemed the most significant of the resources, because of their age and relationship to the early settlers in the region, and many have been included in the nomination. Early 20th century wood-frame structures constitute a large portion of the nomination. Only structures which were related to other buildings in the first category or were in an exceptional state of preservation have been included in the nomination. Several churches which represent a rural Gothic building tradition in the state have been included. A number of outstanding examples of the two types of rural schools found throughout western South Dakota have also been included. They are the rectangular pen, with recorded construction dates from 1871 to 1915, and the cube school with recorded construction dates from 1914 to 1930.

The ranches included in the nomination contain multiple buildings. As a result each building is designated as either contributing or non-contributing. The period of significance of this nomination is 1876 through 1936, therefore those structures known to have been built after 1936 were designated as non-contributing as were structures in an extremely deteriorated condition.

A number of historically significant sites which were located during the survey are not included in the present nomination due to extensive alterations or the deteriorated condition of the properties. Several of these sites represent the oldest

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continuously operating ranches in northwestern South Dakota, and perhaps with sympathetic restoration they may be considered for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places at a later date.

Other sites deemed eligible for inclusion on the National Register will be added to thematic nominations already in existence at the present time. They include The Architecture of Finnish Settlement in South Dakota by Carolyn Torma and The German-Russian Folk Architecture in South Dakota by Michael Koop and Carolyn Torma.

A number of historic bridges built by the Canton Bridge Company and the Minneapolis Bridge Company were deemed eligible and may be included in a future nomination to be prepared by the South Dakota Department of Transportation at a future date.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates See continuation sheet **Builder/Architect** See continuation sheet

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

- See Individual Site Forms -

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property See Individual Site Forms

Quadrangle name See Individual Site Forms

Quadrangle scale See Individual Site Forms

UTM References See Individual Site Forms

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

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F

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G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Individual Site Forms

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elisa Novick

organization State Historical Preservation Center

date December 3, 1986

street & number P.O. Box 417

telephone 605/677-5314

city or town Vermillion

state South Dakota

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title *Director, Office of History*

date 2/20/87

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

See Continuation sheet for listing date
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The historic and architectural resources of rural Harding and Perkins Counties are important because they represent the built material culture of the last phase of westward expansion in the settlement of the northern Great Plains with respect to the development of the western South Dakota frontier which spans the period from 1874 through the 1910s. Significant in the areas of agriculture, architecture, commerce, education, exploration and settlement, military history, religion and ethnic history the sites included in this nomination were selected on the basis of National Register criteria. The historic churches, ranches, schools and other sites that comprise this multiple resource nomination include sites from the earliest phase of settlement and exploration of this region from 1876 to the 1910s. Other sites included in the nomination exhibit American vernacular styles and were built after the region lost its frontier status and had been fully integrated into the national economy during the period between 1915 through the 1930s. This nomination documents the historical and economic development of western South Dakota, an area that may provide valuable information about frontier life, the evolution of ethnic and folk architecture, and mass produced material culture at the turn-of-the-century.

The history of the Trans-Mississippi West is linked to the development of the transcontinental railroad and the role it played as a colonizing agent bringing the homesteaders who settled the west. Although the west was primarily settled by agriculturalists, prior to their arrival, the lands of Harding and Perkins Counties were inhabited by the Sioux and Crow Indians and later in the 1880s by the men who ran the large cattle outfits that dotted the Northern Great Plains.

The major occupations of the region historically have been cattle ranching and farming. Most of the land is open rangeland used for grazing and a small amount of land is cropland. The major crop is winter wheat, and alfalfa and oats are grown also. Early settlement occurred along the major rivers, as they provided good water sources for the early cattle outfits. The forested areas of western Harding County were settled earlier because of the timber, numerous streams and the nearby Little Missouri River that flows near the western edge of the county at the Montana state line. Yearly precipitation in the region is around 13 inches.

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During the second half of the nineteenth century South Dakota passed through the Territorial period which ended in 1889 when the Fiftieth Congress passed the Enabling Act of February 22, 1889 which created the state of South Dakota. Actual settlement of the western half of the new state, that area of South Dakota that is west of the Missouri River, which cuts through the center of the state creating two physiographic regions, began during the Great Dakota Boom from 1878 through 1886. It was during this period that the first large cattle ranches were established in the survey area.

Early Settlement and Historical Overview of Harding County

Harding County was created by the territorial legislature in 1881. The county was named for J.A. Harding, the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Dakota Territory in 1881.

Originally inhabited by the Sioux and Crow Indian tribes, true ownership of the county land was continually in dispute as the two tribes fought over the land. In 1822 the Sioux nearly destroyed the Crows in a battle at Crow Butte.

It is believed that the first Anglo-Americans to arrive in Harding County were the Astorians, led by Price Hunt. They were on their way to the Pacific in 1811 from the Aricara Villages at the mouth of the Grand River.

The first recorded Anglo-American activity in the county was during the summer of 1874 when General George Armstrong Custer led an expedition from Fort Abraham Lincoln, near Bismark, North Dakota to the Black Hills of South Dakota. The Custer expedition had one encampment on the easter edge of the Cave Hills area at Ludlow Cave, named for Captain William Ludlow, a member of the expedition. The party moved in a southwesterly direction through Harding County to the site of the second encampment in Prospect Valley. This location was close to the present town of Harding in the West Short Pines Hills vicinity. Nine years later, L.W. Shevling moved into the area and built his ranch in the flats west of the foothills of the West Short Pine Hills in 1883 (HN-8). Later, in 1889 Oliver O. Stokes built the first frame house (HN-7) in the county at Harding.

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In September of 1876 on their return from the Battle of the Little Big Horn that was fought on June 25, 1876, General George Crook crossed the Little Missouri River in North Dakota and entered South Dakota. General Crook was under orders to subjugate restive tribes of the Northern Cheyenne and Teton Sioux in the area. Crook sent a detachment under the command of Captain Anson Mills to scout the route ahead for provisions and bring them back for the troops. The command of 1,260 men was extremely low on provisions and with bad weather were marching between 25 and 35 miles a day. On September 7 the command reached the Grand River and Crook ordered the detachment under Mills' command to reach the Black Hills and return with provisions for the troops. Mills found an Indian village at Slim Buttes, attacked at dawn, and General Crook arrived with reinforcements, and the battle ended in the evening of September 9, 1876. Crook's "Horsemeat March" continued until the expedition reached the Black Hills a few days later.

West of the Slim Buttes Battlefield Site (HN-6) along the Sorum Road is the Axel Johnson Ranch (HN-1) and the John and Daisy May Livingston Ranch (HN-2) both built during the homestead era in the 1910s. Farther along the Sorum Road in the town of Sorum, in Perkins County, are the Sorum Cooperative Store (PE-1) and the Sorum Hotel (PE-2) are located.

After the extremely bad winter of 1856 the buffalo moved out of the Dakota rangelands, however they moved back around 1880 and were followed by the buffalo hunters. By 1883 the buffalo hunters had wiped out most of the herds and opened the way for cattle ranchers.

In 1883 several large cattle outfits from Texas and Oklahoma herded their cattle into the region which was rich in buffalo grass and winter forage. Ranchers discovered that herds could be driven up in the summer months and left throughout the winter. As a result several large outfits developed along the Grand River area of Harding County. Sheep ranching also became an important industry in the region. One of the worst winters in recorded history, the severe winter of 1886-87 caused numerous ranches to go bankrupt and the cattle baron era nearly ended.

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The era of the large cattle ranches in northwestern South Dakota reached a transitional phase around 1891 when ranchers stopped using preemption as the major method of acquiring land. Ranchers continued to move into the region through the 1890s and in the early 1900s homesteaders started moving into the region. Throughout the early 1900s homesteaders and small ranchers put up fences across the county which put an end to the days of the open range and the large cattle outfits.

In a vote in a 1898 general election, the boundaries of Butte County were changed to include all the land to the North Dakota State line. Harding County became attached to the northern half of Butte County. In 1908 Harding County was separated from Butte County and its present boundaries were formed.

As the area was settled by homesteaders and towns were established, the people decided that a county seat should be established. Camp Crook, which was a well established community wanted the county seat, however the settlers in the geographical center of the county wanted the county seat located there. A dispute developed between the two communities.

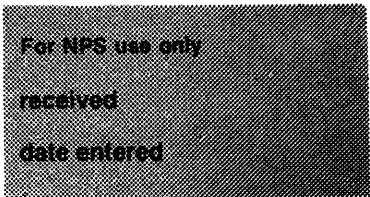
Camp Crook was the oldest town in the county. It was founded in 1883 and originally named Wickhamville, after one of the first families to settle in the region. In 1885 the town was renamed in honor of General George Crook, who led his army through the region in 1876. Today Camp Crook has the largest number of historic buildings of all the towns in Harding County. Two of these structures, St. Ann's Catholic Church (HN-11) and the Little Missouri Bank Building (HN-10) are included in the nomination.

A new town of Buffalo was created in the center of the county in 1909. The new town grew very rapidly and became the largest town in the county nearly overnight. When the general election was held in November 1910 Buffalo was victorious and became the county seat much to the dismay of the Camp Crook residents. The county fair is still held in Camp Crook every summer.

The homestead era in Harding County began around 1907 and continued through the 1910s. This influx of settlers required the addition of new schools, churches and community halls. Many of the older towns built new structures to replace the original

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log and sod structures that served as public buildings. The Vessey School (HN-14), located in the old community of Vessey just south of the North Dakota state line is a fine example of a rural cube school that was popular throughout the state from 1914 through 1930.

Around the present town of Ralph are several outstanding examples of rural Gothic churches that were built during this time. They include the Emmanuel Lutheran Church (HN-5), the Golden Valley Norwegian Lutheran Church (HN-12) and the Peace Valley Evangelical Church (HN-13). The only physical reminders of the ghost towns and early Harding County homesteader communities they once served, the churches stand on the landscape as the only monument to those early settlers who conquered this bleak environment.

The Thomas Ashcroft Ranch (HN-4) was built on the flats of the South Fork of the Grand River about five miles south of where the town of Bratsberg was located. Bratsberg, along with several other towns appears on the maps of South Dakota for a short time period in the 1910s and 1920s. At many of the old town sites nothing remains, as the buildings were moved away or dismantled over fifty years ago. The Giannonatti Ranch (HN-3) with outstanding examples of Danish vernacular stone architecture is located north of the Ashcroft ranch and east of Ludlow.

The Blake Ranch House (HN-9) located north of the abandoned town of Gustave, is an outstanding example of concrete block construction. It is the only example of concrete block construction recorded in the county.

One of the most serious problems that early settlers had to overcome was that of communications. The telephone and improved mail service helped the towns as well as the homesteaders and ranchers. However, with the advent of the automobile, travel was made easier, and some of the towns were by passed by the construction of new roads that replaced the old overland trails. Thus, contributing to the abandonment of some of the early Harding County towns. At the time of the 1985 survey only six towns remained with post offices and inhabitants. Although Harding was inhabited by two people, there was no post office.

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Early Settlement and Historical Overview of Perkins County

Perkins County, with a total land area of 1,864,960 acres is the second largest county in the state of South Dakota. The county was created in 1908 and organized in 1909. Named for Henry E. Perkins, a Vermont native, the county was established because Perkins, a lawyer and South Dakota State Senator, was instrumental in securing passage of the act that created the county.

Historically, Perkins County was originally part of the Great Sioux Reservation which was ceded to the United States Government by the Treaty of 1889. The east line of the ceded land corresponds very closely to the present eastern boundary of the county.

With the discovery of gold in the Black Hills in 1874, the advent of roads and trails became a necessity. One of the primary trails to cross through the county was the Bismark Trail, so named because its point of origin was in Bismark, North Dakota. The trail entered the county at the northeastern corner where it angled to the southwest passing several communities, including Shadehill, Meadow, Chance, Ada and Bixby. The trail then headed in a westerly direction where it exited the county near the southwestern corner. Although it was traveled in 1874, the Bismark Trail was not officially marked until 1876 when Colonel Ben Ash led a party along the trail.

Perkins County was settled first in the early 1880s by the cowboys and ranch managers of the large Texas and Oklahoma cattle outfits that moved into the region for winter pasture. These cattle outfits established themselves along the Grand River and some of the earliest log structures were built by these ranchers. The severe winter of 1886 and 1887, one of the worst in the recorded history of the Northern Great Plains, caused a number of cattle ranches to go bankrupt in the region.

Prior to 1909, Butte County, also included the present Harding and Perkins Counties. On April 1, 1909 the Perkins County commissioners attended a joint meeting of the Butte, Harding and Perkins county commissioners in Belle Fourche. It was decided at this meeting that the affairs and indebtedness of

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Butte County should be divided by the three counties. February 5, 1909 was selected as the date of official organization of the county and their share of the bonded indebtedness was \$987.78 and the assessed valuation of the county was \$35,778.86.

On May 18, 1909 at a meeting of the Perkins County Board of Commissioners the deed to Perkins County for Block 2, original town, Bison was accepted by the Board together with the building. Later that year in June a petition was presented to the board and accepted which organized the county into five commissioner districts.

As with Harding County, the decision of where to put the county seat caused quite a stir in the communities of Bison and Lemmon where the residents believed their town to be the most qualified location for the county seat. After many hearings were held and the official papers for the county moved under the cover of darkness several times in an effort to secure custody of the coveted position of county seat, the decision was made during the election on January 9, 1909. Bison became the county seat with a margin of 14 votes.

The homestead era in the county began around 1907 and continued to around 1920. Many of the homesteaders were brought to the county by the Milwaukee Railroad which had a terminus in Hettinger, North Dakota and Lemmon. Other homesteaders moved north from the Black Hills and other southern areas after their luck ran out or they sold the patents on their land. Landseekers flocked to the area that was opened under the Homestead Law and staked claims on 160 acre plots throughout the county. In a very short time the rangeland was all fenced off and small towns developed.

This development was enhanced by the good weather in 1908 and 1909 that produced one of the highest rainfalls in years. The crops were harvested, and the results were overwhelming. In 1910 and 1911 one of the worst droughts in history occurred in the region. Almost overnight the homesteaders who had severe crop failures and starving animals moved out of the county.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century a number of small towns developed throughout Perkins County with most serving as post

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offices and service centers for the local homesteaders and ranchers. After 1911, due to the drought, and in the 1930s when the depression and drought again plagued the region, many homesteaders sold out upon receipt of patent to the larger ranchers who stayed, many of these towns continued to serve only as post offices. By the mid-twentieth century many of these early towns ceased to exist with their buildings being sold and moved to outlying ranches or other communities many miles distant. At the time of the 1985 survey eight towns remained in Perkins County.

In addition to Bison, the county seat, and Lemmon, Lodgepole, Meadow, Shadehill, Prairie City, White Butte and Zeona remain as towns or communities throughout the county. Sorum has an active volunteer fire department, but no post office at the present time.

Two sites in the Zeona vicinity, the Immanuel Lutheran Church (PE-5) and the Spring Creek School (PE-4) are included in the present nomination. Zeona was founded in 1910 by a group of settlers under the leadership of H.E. Rowson, and was named after his daughter. The Beckon Ranch (PE-3), built in 1910 and located southeast of Zeona, has the only known sod house in the county to be continuously occupied since its construction.

The town of Sorum was founded in 1908 by Chris Sorum, an early area homesteader, on a proposed railroad survey. The railroad was never built, but the town was fairly prosperous through the years. Two structures in Sorum, the Sorum Cooperative Store (PE-1), the only adobe structure located during the survey, and the Sorum Hotel (PE-2) are included in the present nomination.

The Foster Ranch House (PE-7), an excellent example of a concrete block house dating to 1918, is located near the site of Coal Springs. Although the town is presently abandoned, it was founded in 1908 because there were coal mines located to the north. The town was named after the nearby mines.

Located at the old townsite of Chance, the Thomas J. Veal Ranch is one of the best examples of an early twentieth century ranch plan in the county. The house constructed in 1916 was the most modern house in the county at the time of its construction, with its own power plant for electricity. Chance was founded in 1900 by Thomas Veal, who named the town Chance because he

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it to be his last chance. Other versions of the name Chance are attributed to Mrs. Veal who believed that they were taking quite a chance settling there, and that when the application for a post office was first made in 1902 that the community believed that there was little chance that their request would be granted.

The churches and schools included in the present nomination represent some of the finest examples of rural Gothic church architecture and rural school architecture existant in the county at the present time. The rural Gothic churches are the Bethany United Methodist Church and the Duck Creek Lutheran Church which are located west of the present community of Lodgepole. Although they are located near the sites of old towns no records of those towns exist with the exception of the names of the buildings and the town names on old maps from the 1910s.

Documentation of the Sites

The properties included in this nomination are scattered throughout an approximatley 5,542 square mile area that constitutes Harding and Perkins Counties. Located on unpaved county roads, most site locations, as stated in the following inventory, are described by their distance and direction from major United States and South Dakota highways or rural communities and towns, as available, when not located on named roads. Each site in the nomination is referred to by its historic name, with the exception of those sites where the original owner was not located.

All of the nominated properties are noteworthy in the areas of significance previously mentioned and for their state of preservation. Each nominated property is accompanied by a site plan which delineates the exact area to be nominated. Although each site has a verbal boundary, most boundaries follow the physical features, the creekbeds, windbreaks, roads, and fence lines on the properties. Where physical features are unavailable, a boundary is selected in relation to the structure of the property which is being nominated.

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Harding and Perkins Counties MRA
SOUTH DAKOTA

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Harding and Perkins Counties MRA
State SOUTH DAKOTA

Nomination/Type of Review

- | | | | Date/Signature |
|---|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Substantive Review COVER | | <u>William B. Bushong 4/10/87</u> |
| 1. Ashcroft, Thomas, Ranch | Substantive Review for Keeper | | <u>William B. Bushong 4/10/87</u> |
| | | Attest | |
| | | Determined Eligible | |
| 2. Battle of Slim Buttes
Historic Site | Substantive Review for Keeper | | <u>William B. Bushong 5/19/87</u> |
| | | Attest | |
| | | DOE/OWNER OBJECTION | |
| 3. Bekon, Donald, Ranch | Substantive Review for Keeper | | <u>William B. Bushong 4/10/87</u> |
| | | Attest | |
| 4. Bethany United Methodist
Church | Substantive Review for Keeper | | <u>William B. Bushong 4/10/87</u> |
| | | Attest | |
| 5. Blake Ranch House | Substantive Review for Keeper | | <u>William B. Bushong 4/10/87</u> |
| | | Attest | |
| 6. Carr No. 60 School | Substantive Review for Keeper | | <u>William B. Bushong 4/10/87</u> |
| | | Attest | |
| 7. Duck Creek Lutheran
Church and Cemetery | Substantive Review for Keeper | | <u>William B. Bushong 4/10/87</u> |
| | | Attest | |
| 8. Emmanuel Lutheran Church
and Cemetery | Substantive Review for Keeper | | <u>William B. Bushong 4/10/87</u> |
| | | Attest | |
| 9. Foster Ranch House | Substantive Review for Keeper | | <u>William B. Bushong 4/10/87</u> |
| | | Attest | |
| 10. Giannonatti Ranch | Substantive Review for Keeper | | <u>William B. Bushong 4/10/87</u> |
| | | Attest | |

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Harding and Perkins Counties MRA
State SOUTH DAKOTA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Golden Valley Norwegian
Lutheran Church

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper
for
Attest

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

12. Immanuel Lutheran Church

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper
for
Attest

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

13. Johnson, Axel, Ranch

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper
for
Attest

William B. Bushong
5/19/87

14. Liberty No. 70 School

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper
for
DOE/OWNER OBJECTION
Attest

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

15. Little Missouri Bank
Building

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper
for
Attest

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

16. Livingston, John and
Daisy May, Ranch

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper
for
Attest

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

17. Peace Valley Evangelical
Church and Cemetery

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper
for
Attest

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

18. Rockford No. 40 School

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper
for
Attest

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

19. St. Ann's Catholic
Church

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper
for
DOE/OWNER OBJECTION
Attest

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

20. Shevling, L.W., Ranch

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper
for
Attest

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Harding and Perkins Counties MRA

State SOUTH DAKOTA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Sorum Hotel

~~Substantive Review~~ for Keeper

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

Attest

22. Sorum Cooperative Store

~~Substantive Review~~ for Keeper

William B. Bushong
4/16/87

Attest

23. Spring Creek School

~~Substantive Review~~ for Keeper

William B. Bushong
4/16/87

Attest

24. Stokes, Oliver O.,
House

~~Substantive Review~~ for Keeper

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

Attest

25. Veal, Thomas J.,
Ranch

~~Substantive Review~~ for Keeper

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

Attest

26. Vessey School

~~Substantive Review~~ for Keeper

William B. Bushong
4/10/87

Attest