

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Murdo State Bank

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 205 Main

City or town: Murdo State: SD County: Jones

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A ___ B x C ___ D

<u>Jay D. Vogt</u>	<u>11-17-2014</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>SD SHPO</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)



Signature of the Keeper



Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce: financial institution

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: storage

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements: Commercial Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Concrete, Synthetic: Rubber

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Murdo State Bank (1920) is a one-story, dark brown brick building located on Main Street in downtown Murdo. It is a commercial style building adorned with some Classical elements. The majority of the masonry is running, or stretcher, bond. Continuous courses of stretcher, header, and soldier bricks are also used on the upper one-third of the building to create decorative geometric motifs. Brick corbelling occurs at the cornice. There is a stepped parapet on the front of the building. The windows are wood with a large fixed pane topped by a four-pane transom. Brick pilasters separate the openings. The foundation is poured cement and the flat roof is rubber. The bank sits on a corner and shares a common wall to the south with another building.

Narrative Description

Setting

The Murdo State Bank lies on the southwest corner of Second and Main Streets in the heart of downtown Murdo. The streetscape is typical of small town South Dakota with a mixture of one- and two-story buildings. Main Street is wide and parking is vertical on Main Street and parallel on Second Street. The buildings on Main Street are a mix of wood, masonry and metal.

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The commercial buildings to the south of the bank are primarily one-story wood buildings clad in modern seam metal. The false fronts date them to the settlement period circa 1907. Across the street to the southeast is a large, one-story modern brick clad building housing the electric cooperative. Directly north of the Murdo State Bank is the Jones County Bank, which is another modern brick building. Across the street to the northeast are one- and two-story buildings constructed of a variety of materials from historic to modern. The Murdo State Bank retains the most architectural integrity of any building on Main Street.

One block north of the bank and across the railroad tracks is the farmers' elevator, grain bins and other agricultural production facilities. Murdo is a T-town, with the business and commercial section running south from the railroad tracks with the more industrial businesses north of the tracks.

Bank Exterior

East Elevation (front)

The east elevation is the front of the bank. Pilasters divide the façade into three bays. A five-layer brick motif of rowlock, stretcher, and Flemish bond brick courses cap the pilasters. The shaft and base of the pilasters are a rotation of stretcher and Flemish bond. Extending from the top of the bays to the parapet is a mixture of stretcher and rowlock brick courses, some of which are pulled forward to create a relief.

The central bay houses the entrance. The bay is recessed a half-brick from the pilasters. The original door is recessed a half-brick from the bay. The door is a single-action, wood door with a single rectangular pane of glass. It has a wood casing and a plain cap trim.

Above the door is a wood, fanlight-motif window. Around the window is an arched wood hood with brackets. A course of rowlock bricks surrounds the arch. At the top of the bay is a course of soldier bricks.

Flanking the entrance are two identical bays. Each has a large, wood fixed-pane window with a four-pane transom window on top. The windows are centered in the bay. Like the entrance bay, a course of soldier brick runs at the top of the bays. The window sills are a course of rowlock bricks.

North Elevation

The north elevation is divided into six bays. The decorative brick motifs from the front of the bank are continued on the north elevation. There are steps leading to the basement near the northeast corner. A metal pipe railing with metal gate surrounds this egress.

The first four bays - from east to west - are identical. The windows in the bays are identical to those on the façade - a single-pane window with a four-pane transom on top. A course of soldier bricks caps the window openings and single courses of rowlock

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bricks form the sills. The original glass is in the windows; however, metal currently (2014) covers some of the windows for protection until they can be repaired.

The fifth bay, from the east, is filled with stretcher bond bricks and contains a blank window. The area behind this bay housed the vault.

The last bay at the west end of the north elevation has the same single-pane window with a four-pane transom window on top. Also in this bay is a three-panel wood door with a single light of glass capped with a single-pane transom window. Above the door and transom is a four-pane window, slightly smaller than the other transom windows found elsewhere on the east and north elevations.

The west elevation has two windows. The north window is a single pane with a four-pane window on top. This looks identical to the other windows, but is slightly smaller. It has a rowlock brick sill. The south window is a one-over-one double hung wood window with a sill of rowlock bricks.

The south elevation abuts another building.

Bank Interior

The bank building was constructed in 1920, but only used as bank until it failed in 1926. Since 1926, the bank has been rehabilitated for other business and residential uses. Subsequent uses required changes to the interior over the years.

Throughout the main level, plaster and original woodwork such as baseboards, floor, and cornice molding remain in places. The bank's teller counters and wood doors have been removed (some of these are in the basement), leaving a large portion of the bank's main level open.

The original (multi-pane) wood door remains in the entry vestibule that is recessed into the lobby. On the north side of the vestibule, another wood door has been added. This space was divided into two spaces sometime before 1957 according to the Fire Underwriters Inspection Bureau maps. Up until the early 1950s, the building housed the post office.¹ After it moved across the street, the original bank lobby space was divided into two offices – one for the Farm Security Administration (FSA) and the other for the Municipal Liquor Store.² Local residents said farmers found this coupling appropriate, making it convenient for farmers to leave the FSA office with bad news and walk through the other door to the liquor store.³ The McDonald family managed the liquor

¹ Barb Hockenberry, personal correspondence 10 May 2014.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

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store and lived in the basement.⁴ The McDonalds used the original teller counters to partition off rooms in the basement (ghost marks are still visible on some walls).⁵

The liquor store/FSA division, which ran lengthwise in the building from east to west, was removed at some point. Some of the interior casings for the windows and doors remain in situ, while others are gone (some of these are stored in the basement).

Towards the rear of the main level, the vault has been removed and spaces have been altered. A 6' x 6' bump out was added as a bathroom. Above the vault, a small living space with a bathroom was added. It is difficult to date these alterations, but this rear portion was listed as a dwelling space on the 1957 Fire Underwriters Inspection Bureau map.

The basement has also been rehabilitated several times over the years. It is unfinished with concrete floors and walls, with some wood walls infilled into the space over the years. There is a bathroom, coal room and storage rooms at the west one quarter of the basement. The front portion is open and used as storage. There is an egress to concrete stairs at the northeast corner.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

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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.)

- 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.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance

1920-1926

Significant Dates

1920, 1926

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

A.J. King and Sons: Builder

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Murdo State Bank is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C. Its significance is local.

It is eligible under Criterion A under **Commerce**. It represents the extreme financial difficulties South Dakota experienced during the 1920s when it weathered one of the highest bank failure rates in the nation. The Murdo State Bank symbolizes this trend and helps explain the economic collapse in South Dakota following World War I and leading up to the Depression.

The bank is also eligible under Criterion C under **Architecture**. It is a commercial style building with Classical elements to embellish its style. It is a characteristic example of bank architecture in small town South Dakota. It also has the best architectural integrity of any styled building on Main Street in Murdo.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Founding of the Murdo State Bank and the Town of Murdo

The Murdo State Bank was organized on 16 February 1906.⁶ The bank's founding preceded the town's founding by two months, not an uncommon activity in the west river country. When rumors began to spread as early as 1904 that the Milwaukee Road and Chicago and Northwestern railroads would build west from the Missouri River, speculators began staking their claims.⁷ Murdo was no different, as the "unofficial" town of Murdo – complete with liverys, markets, laundries, and professional services – sprang up about ¼ mile east of where the town would eventually be platted.⁸

⁶ *Public Documents of the State of South Dakota Annual and Biennial Reports of Various Public Officers and Boards of the Various State Institutions to the Governor and Legislature.* (v1, 1906), 161

⁷ Paula Nelson. *After the West Was Won: Homesteading and Town-Builders in Western South Dakota 1900-1917.* (Iowa City: IA, University of Iowa Press, 1996), 84-85.

⁸ Book and Thimble Club. *Proving Up: Jones County History.* (Pischel Yearboosk Inc, 1969), 86.

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The expansion of the railroads (1900-15) into the west river country brought 100,000 settlers looking to build a new life.⁹ New towns were platted along the proposed line using the “team-haul” principle, which charted towns based on the distance farmers could travel by team and return home in a single day.¹⁰ The towns of Murdo, Draper, Presho, Vivian and others became reality based on this standard.

It wasn't uncommon for the approximate location of a railroad town to be leaked, causing a rush of speculators to commence building in the general area. Towns that were established in this fashion simply took the needed steps to conform to railroad plats when the time came.¹¹ In Murdo this occurred on 12 July 1906 when the Milwaukee Company held a lot sale.¹²

The first six lots auctioned were the most expensive corner lots. G.L Irwin of the rival First State Bank of Murdo (later Jones County Bank in 1917) purchased the first lot for \$525. The Murdo State Bank purchased the fifth corner lot auctioned for \$315.

Murdo was platted in what has been dubbed a traditional “T-town.” T-towns were laid out so that lumberyards and grain elevators were located on one side of the railroad tracks with depots, residences, and business districts on the other.¹³ This design minimized traffic across the railroad tracks and kept the heavy work wagons out of the residential and business districts as much as possible.¹⁴ Main Street in a T-town ran perpendicular to the tracks. This strip was typically lined with business buildings, with banks occupying the prime corner locations.¹⁵

Once lots in Murdo were bought and paid for, the speculators' city became a town on wheels as business buildings were hauled onto the plotted lots. The Murdo State Bank was located on a southwest corner lot (this original location was one block north of current location). It was a one-story, gabled roof building with a false-front. Peter Dirks was president and the bank was reported in the *Murdo Coyote* to be doing a good business with Olaf Nelson as cashier and John B. Wait as assistant.¹⁶

⁹ Douglas Hart, ed. *American Agriculture: A Brief History*. (West Lafayette: IN, Purdue University Press, 2002), 321.

¹⁰ Paula Nelson. *After the West Was Won: Homesteading and Town-Builders in Western South Dakota 1900-1917*. (Iowa City: IA, University of Iowa Press, 1996), 85.

¹¹ Ibid, 85.

¹² Book and Thimble Club. *Proving Up: Jones County History*. (Pischel Yearboosk Inc, 1969), 86-87.

¹³ Paula Nelson. *After the West Was Won: Homesteading and Town-Builders in Western South Dakota 1900-1917*. (Iowa City: IA, University of Iowa Press, 1996), 85.

¹⁴ Ibid, 85.

¹⁵ Ibid, 85.

¹⁶ Book and Thimble Club. *Proving Up: Jones County History*. (Pischel Yearboosk Inc, 1969), 86.

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The Murdo State Bank In a South Dakota Banking Context

The Murdo State Bank reported a total of \$24,276.16 in resources and liabilities, including \$2,976.92 in cash on hand in 1906, its first year of operation.¹⁷ Investments and returns in the west river country grew steadily from 1906 to 1910 as settlement increased and agricultural growing conditions were good. Farming drove local west river economies and successful crop and livestock production resulted in success on Main Street and for investors. The bank reported an increase to \$115,031.90 in assets and liabilities on 30 June 1910.¹⁸

By 1910, the honeymoon was over between settlers and the west river country. The drought of 1910-11 demonstrated the difficulties of practicing agriculture in a semi-arid land with unpredictable weather and soil types unfamiliar to most farmers who had migrated from the East.¹⁹ A short supply of money amongst the general population only exasperated the difficulties, causing many settlers to quit and leave. The struggle to solve the problems of drought, deprivation, and depopulation became part of everyday life west river after 1911.²⁰ As a result of the drought, resources and liabilities dropped to \$88,468.25 in the bank by 1912.²¹

Better years, however, were around the corner. The nation's farm economy was good during this period and only increased during World War I as demand for food soared. As a result, farmers expanded their holdings and their debt. In 1915, farm loans outstanding nationwide totaled more than \$1,600,000,000 and by 1920 that number reached \$3,800,000,000.²²

It was almost impossible for farmers to not want to expand during the productive war years (1914-1920). With Europe at war and unable to produce enough crops to sustain its population, commodity prices increased providing record profits. Farmers used those profits and the credit that money generated to purchase more machinery and more land, often at inflated prices. From 1910-20, land values rose sharply with many

¹⁷ *Public Documents of the State of South Dakota Annual and Biennial Reports of Various Public Officers and Boards of the Various State Institutions to the Governor and Legislature.* (v1, 1906), 161.

¹⁸ *Ninth Biennial Report of the Public Examiner on State Banks, Private Banks and Trust Companies of South Dakota.* 1910.

¹⁹ Paula Nelson. *After the West Was Won: Homesteading and Town-Builders in Western South Dakota 1900-1917.* (Iowa City: IA, University of Iowa Press, 1996), 67.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 156.

²¹ *Tenth Biennial Report of the Public Examiner on State Banks, Private Banks and Trust Companies of South Dakota.* 1912.

²² Harold Chucker. *Banco At Fifty: A History of Northwest Bancorporation 1929-1979.* (Minneapolis: MN, 1979), 3.

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high-grade farms doubling in value.²³ Improvements in farm technology and cooperative weather allowed South Dakota farmers to produce higher yields than ever before.

When the war ended and European farmers began producing food again, the bubble burst. For example, in 1920 a bushel of wheat sold for \$2.96; by 1922 it dropped to \$.92 because of the severe drop in demand. Prices for beef dropped similarly. In 1919, beef sold for \$10.70 per hundred weight; by 1921 it was down to \$5.90 per hundred weight.²⁴ The federal government was partly responsible for the crisis as they had encouraged growing on the one-crop system during the war years, which weakened the farmers' leverage as markets collapsed. In May of 1920, the federal government dropped its wartime agricultural support policies, which caused the Federal Reserve to react with deflationary measures that tended to hurt farmers first.²⁵ These actions drastically affected South Dakota banks which were largely invested in farm mortgage debt.

Rural banks were the primary lenders who financed farmers' land expansion during the war years.²⁶ In South Dakota, the establishment of the state-financed rural credit system also contributed liberally during the wartime speculation.²⁷ The wartime boom caused deposits to swell and bankers were eager to put this capital to work by lending to farmers and land speculators.²⁸ However, merchants who knew relatively little about banking owned many of these rural banks and continued to loan extensively to farmers swelled with wartime profits.²⁹

Neither bankers nor farmers heeded warnings about the end of the wartime boom, nor did they listen to those who cautioned that the high cost of land prices wasn't justified by their earning power even during prosperous times.³⁰ Land values rose between 1910 and 1920, but so did long term debt.³¹ Nationwide long-term agricultural debt was \$3.2 billion in 1910 but had reached \$11 billion by 1923.³² Deflation in the 1920s turned farm debt into a crushing burden.

²³ Gary Walton and Hugh Rockoff. *History of the American Economy*. (San Diego: CA, Harcourt Brace Johanovich, 2009), 128.

²⁴ Paula Nelson. *The Prairie Wins Its Own: The West River Country of South Dakota in the Years of Depression and Dust*. (Iowa City: IA, University of Iowa Press, 1996), 5.

²⁵ Ibid, 5.

²⁶ Chucker, 2.

²⁷ Gilbert Fite. "South Dakota Rural Credit System." *South Dakota Historical Collections*. (V.24, 1949), 268.

²⁸ Chucker, 2.

²⁹ Chucker, 2.

³⁰ Chucker, 2.

³¹ Walton and Rockoff, 128.

³² Walton and Rockoff, 128.

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The state legislature had passed a bill in 1915 attempting to minimize fallout from a future banking crisis, but it proved inadequate. The Bank Guaranty Act required all state banks to set aside a sum equivalent to one-fourth of one percent of their average daily deposits to insure depositors from loss.³³ The fund failed shortly after 1920 after 147 state banks failed with aggregate deposits totaling \$43,000,000. With only \$3,000,000 in the guaranty fund applicable to the liquidation of these assets, the fund became insolvent.³⁴ The complete liquidation of so many state banks and the guaranty fund by 1920 set the stage for further economic woes in the 1920s.

As farmers defaulted on their loans, banks found that the first and second mortgages they held were horrible collateral.³⁵ Rural banks faced decreased deposits and increased demands from farmers trying to hold their farms together. The rural banks attempted to sell their real estate mortgages, but the once thriving market for such paper had vanished.³⁶ The result of this crash was that many debtors were unable to repay their loans, and even though collateral and the possibility of eventual payment existed, banks could not collect money on these debts.³⁷ Governmental attempts to help the situation had limited effects and banks began to fail. From 1920-1934, the number of state-chartered banks in South Dakota dropped from 557 to 148 while the number of national banks went from 134 to 64.³⁸ These closures left many small communities without a banking institution.³⁹

Following the drought of 1910-11, the Murdo State Bank mirrored the trend of pre-World War I growth. By the time the war ended in 1919, the bank had increased its resources to \$419,173.11.⁴⁰ At this time, the bank built a new building one block south of its original location on the location of a former drug store.⁴¹

The new building was started in the summer of 1919 but not finished until May of 1920.⁴² A.J. Kings and Sons of Mitchell were the contractors.⁴³ It took a year to

³³ State of South Dakota. "Twenty-Fourth Annual Review of the Progress of South Dakota." *South Dakota Historical Collections*. (V.13, 1924), 550.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 550.

³⁵ Chucker, 4.

³⁶ Chucker, 4.

³⁷ Suzanne Julin. *Pierre National Bank/Bankwest: One Hundred Years 1889-1989*. (Pierre: SD, 1989), 19.

³⁸ Tom Bengtson. "South Dakota Banking History: From Gold Rush to Gold Cards." *South Dakota Banker*. (June, 1992), 5.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 7.

⁴⁰ *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Banks on State Banks, Private Banks, Trust Companies and Building and Loan Associations*. 1920.

⁴¹ "Murdo State Bank Moved" *The Murdo Coyote*. 7 May 1920.

⁴² "Jones Co. State Bank Will Build" *The Murdo Coyote*. 8 August 1919. "Murdo State Bank Moved" *The Murdo Coyote*. 7 May 1920.

⁴³ "Murdo State Bank Moved" *The Murdo Coyote*. 7 May 1920.

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complete the building due to labor and material shortages, which caused an eight-month overrun.⁴⁴ *The Murdo Coyote* described the new bank building as “one of the most up-to-date, both in interior and exterior appearance, banking houses west of the Missouri River in South Dakota.”⁴⁵

Brick was the most economical choice of fireproof material and was popular with banks. The Milwaukee Railroad had reached Murdo in 1906, opening a variety of options in construction materials.⁴⁶ By the time the bank building was constructed in 1920, most of the brick being used in the state was imported from places such as Chaska, Minnesota; Mason City, Iowa; and Omaha, Nebraska.⁴⁷ Brick was imported for two reasons. First was the unsuitability of local clay for brickmaking. Second, the railroad allowed out-of-state companies to compete in price with a superior product, which drove in-state brick production to a standstill.⁴⁸

The new building is what architectural historian Richard Longstreth classifies as a one-part commercial block in his study of commercial architecture *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*. The one-part commercial block has a single story and is used for public spaces, such as retail stores, banks, insurance offices, etc. It is a simple block form with a decorated façade and thoroughly urban in its overtones.⁴⁹

The one-part commercial block was developed during the mid-19th century and soon became common in towns and cities.⁵⁰ It spread across the country, in both large and small communities, as speculators bet on growth and expansion of these communities.⁵¹ One-part commercial blocks were attractive to build because they could generate income at a relatively small expense, but they also staked a claim on urban ground that was anticipated to grow in value.⁵² More often than not, these ventures met with success and a the one-part commercial block was eventually razed for a larger buildings. Examples in cities are now rare, but one-part commercial blocks still exist in areas where pressures for development were not intense.⁵³

⁴⁴ “Murdo State Bank Moved” *The Murdo Coyote*. 7 May 1920.

⁴⁵ “Murdo State Bank Moved” *The Murdo Coyote*. 7 May 1920.

⁴⁶ Book and Thimble Club. *Murdo S.D. Diamond Jubilee 1906-1981*. (Murdo: SD, Book and Thimble Club GFWC, 1981), 5.

⁴⁷ David Erpstad and David Wood. *Building South Dakota: A Historical Survey of the State's Architecture to 1945*. (Pierre: SD, South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 1997), 25.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 24.

⁴⁹ Richard Longstreth. *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*. (Walnut Creek: CA, Alta Mira Press, 2000), 54.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 54.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 54.

⁵² *Ibid*, 55.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 55.

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Along with popular retail uses, one-part commercial blocks were also popular designs for banks.⁵⁴ Banks tend to be somewhat taller and more embellished than their retail counterparts, though façade treatments vary.⁵⁵ There was often a sizable area between windows and cornice to make the façade appear larger and provide a space for advertising.⁵⁶

Starting in the early 1900s, both retail stores and banks were designed in a more uniform manner, reflecting a concern for more dignity in the urban landscape.⁵⁷ Some are large and imposing structures, in comparison to their surroundings if located in a small town.⁵⁸ It's also not uncommon for examples from this period to have few, if any, historical references.⁵⁹ Simple designs were considered more virtuous during this period after replacing the ornate designs of the previous Victorian era.⁶⁰

Many small-town banks resembled the commercial buildings they shared with Main Street. Brick-fronted stores in formal temple- or classical-front styles were mixed in amongst banks and other buildings.⁶¹ However, a bank was often the most significant architectural building in the interior of a town. Banks were often multi-functional, providing additional space for lawyers, abstract offices, and other professional businesses.⁶² In farming communities, some banks even offered community rooms to local farmers.⁶³

Stylistically, changes were occurring in the late 1800s and early 1900s under the influence of the French Ecole des Beaux Arts and American architectural schools.⁶⁴ There was a shift from previous Victorian design tenets towards academic work emphasizing unity, order, and balance.⁶⁵ These stylistic changes did not occur all at once, but these newer schools of architecture prevailed in the new century.⁶⁶

The 1920 Murdo State Bank building fits into this influence of the new academic schools. However, building trends expressing values of these schools were varied during the period, from buildings expressing classical references to buildings using new

⁵⁴ Ibid, 58.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 58.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 55.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 59.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 59.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 62.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 62.

⁶¹ Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings. *American Vernacular Buildings and Interiors 1870-1960*. (New York: NY, W.W. Norton and Company, 2009), 238.

⁶² Ibid, 238.

⁶³ Ibid, 238.

⁶⁴ Longstreth, 39.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 39.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 39.

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construction techniques to buildings that were extremely plain.⁶⁷ The Murdo State Bank loosely interprets classical historical references in its reserved styling. The arch over the entrance with brackets, pilasters framing the bays, and its overall symmetry of fenestration all reference classical precedents.

The majority of substantial bank buildings were constructed during the 1880s and from 1900 to 1920 when local and national economies were strong.⁶⁸ To convey a sense of permanence and security, banks were often constructed of brick and stone, which was also fireproof. From 1900-1920, bank buildings were designed and styled so that even a casual observer would recognize the building as bank based on its architecture.⁶⁹

The tendency for bank buildings to attract attention both on the exterior and interior within their community was definitely intentional. Part of this attention came from the often architecturally lackluster buildings surrounding the bank. This was especially true in west river South Dakota towns organized after 1900 where architectural standardization was prominent because buildings often made transitions from general store to meat market to post office to agricultural building depending on the use of the owner.⁷⁰

Banks were almost always one of the most styled and prominent buildings in a community. Styles were often chosen based on the materials available as well as architectural tastes of the time. The Murdo State Bank fits a common design trend for South Dakota banks built 1900-1920. David Erpstad and David Wood best described this style of bank architecture in their book *Building South Dakota: A Historical Survey of the State's Architecture to 1945* as having "at least a modicum of classical ornamentation applied over a sometimes nondescript commercial-building shell."⁷¹

Banks, especially in the American West, often constructed the most impressive architectural edifices in small towns to further their bottom lines. From 1849-1893, the government didn't regulate banking, allowing bankers to develop their own system for winning the confidence of potential depositors.⁷² In all cases, this system of self-regulation depended on two key components – the personal reputation of the banker and the certain architectural features of the bank building.⁷³ The bank building itself

⁶⁷ Ibid, 39-40.

⁶⁸ Erpstad and Wood, 142.

⁶⁹ Erpstad and Wood, 142.

⁷⁰ Paula Nelson. *After the West Was Won: Homesteaders and Town-Builders in Western South Dakota 1900-1917*. (Thesis University of Iowa, 1984), 188.

⁷¹ Erpstad and Wood, 146.

⁷² Lynne Pierson Doti and Larry Schweikart. *Banking in the American West: From Gold Rush to Deregulation*. (Norman: OK, University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 19.

⁷³ Doti and Schweikart, 19.

Murdo State Bank

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constituted a symbol of safety, perhaps the most significant of all symbols to the public.⁷⁴

The bank building fulfilled this symbolic role on two levels, one practical and one visual.⁷⁵ Even banks of low capitalization built impressive exteriors and interiors with ornate designs, rich woods, marble, brass and other ostentations.⁷⁶ The investment in the building itself, with its ornamentations and rich features, came to represent a sense of security similar to the way the vault represented physical security.⁷⁷

The vault performed a practical and figurative function that stood, to some degree, in direct public view in a visible position within the bank.⁷⁸ Since the vaults were visible to the patrons, the surrounds around their doors were often decorated attractively to be compatible with the finished interior of the bank. Vault locations did change over the years as the way banks conducted business changed, with some relocating their vaults to the rear of the building or to the basement. But, as prominent bank architect Alfred Hopkins noted, it was wise to keep the vault "at the highest point of visibility," which most banks found beneficial.⁷⁹

The traditional values of democracy and openness were also present in bank design of this period throughout the American West.⁸⁰ The main lobby space was open with a counter dividing the public portion from the employees' workspace behind the counter. The bank officer was usually up front in this space until design layouts began to shift in the early 1900s to remove the officer from the routine business.⁸¹ Having the manager or officer out front was thought to detract from the professional image of the position. Consequently, some plans moved the manager to rear or second floor offices.⁸²

The Murdo State Bank sought to portray an image of prosperity with the construction of their brick building with minimal Classical influences in 1920. Coming out of the profitable years occurring during World War I, the bank showed resources of \$419,173.11.⁸³ Those resources slowly dropped to around \$270,000 over the next few years as a result of the crash in the agricultural economy.⁸⁴

⁷⁴ Ibid, 38.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 38.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 38.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 39.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 43.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 95.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 95.

⁸¹ Ibid, 95.

⁸² Ibid, 95.

⁸³ *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Banks on State Banks, Private Banks, Trust Companies and Building and Loan Associations.* 1920.

⁸⁴ *Seventeenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Banks.* 1926.

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It was announced in February 1925 that the bank was being reorganized and its capital stock increased.⁸⁵ Thirty local stockholders, mostly farmers, came together to reorganize the bank electing E.B. Townsend president.⁸⁶ Townsend had been president since 1917, but had to be elected as part of the reorganization process.

The announced reason for the reorganization was the “desirability of increasing the strength and working capital of the bank.”⁸⁷ It’s likely investors sensed deeper trouble, though, given the general economic conditions in South Dakota at this time. The years 1921-25 saw the highest farm foreclosure rates in 16 of 18 counties – even higher rates than what occurred during the Great Depression.⁸⁸ Farmers who had borrowed money to expand or modernize during the productive war years suddenly had no way to repay their debts.⁸⁹ Small towns dependent on farmers as their economic engine suffered.⁹⁰ Small-town banks that had financed the run-up of land prices saw their collateral horribly devalued, causing many to fail.⁹¹

Business at the Murdo State Bank was suspended in May of 1926.⁹² The state bank examiner’s office investigated the reorganization plans and announced it was necessary to close the bank pending reorganization.⁹³ The depositors could not agree on a reorganization plan and consented to the state bank examiner’s involvement.⁹⁴ An article in *The Murdo Coyote* on 3 June 1926 announced the prospects looked good for the bank to open soon.⁹⁵ However, the bank never reopened.

The Superintendent of Banks reported that the Murdo State Bank went into liquidation in June of 1926.⁹⁶ No other mention of the bank is made in the surviving newspapers of *The Murdo Coyote* or in the newspapers of surrounding towns such as Draper, Presho or White River.

The week before business was suspended in May of 1926, president E.B. Townsend auctioned his farm. Townsend left Murdo and was working in the real estate business a few years later in Mitchell.⁹⁷ That is the last account of Townsend in South Dakota.

⁸⁵ “Local Bank is Reorganzied” *The Coyote Murdo*. 19 February 1925.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Paula Nelson. *The Prairie Winnows Its Own: The West River Country of South Dakota in the Years of Depression and Dust*. (Iowa City: IA, University of Iowa Press, 1996), 7.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 5.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 5.

⁹¹ Ibid, 5.

⁹² “Business at Bank Suspended” *The Murdo Coyote*. 6 May 1926.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ “Prospects Good For Murdo State Bank to Open Soon” *The Murdo Coyote*. 3 June 1926.

⁹⁶ *Seventeenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Banks*. 1926.

⁹⁷ 1930 Federal Population Census.

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Neither he nor his wife, Florence, are listed in the South Dakota death index (1905-1955), making it probable that they left the state. A Murdo State Bank deposit bag was purchased in the 2000s from an estate auction in eastern Iowa. Townsend was from eastern Iowa and may have eventually returned home.⁹⁸

The building was used as the post office from the late 1920s through the 1950s. The main lobby was subdivided sometime before 1956 with the Municipal Liquor Store on one side and the Farm Security Administration on the other. The McDonald family managed the liquor store and lived in the basement. The Book and Thimble Club also used the basement in the 1960s for children's story time.⁹⁹

Architectural Integrity of the Murdo State Bank

The Murdo State Bank has good integrity, particularly on the exterior. The original design and fenestration of the bank has not been altered. Further, all the original windows and doors remain (some are temporarily covered with metal) in their original openings. The building is sound structurally and the masonry is in good condition.

The interior has been changed since the banking era (1920-26). The original teller counters have been removed along with some woodwork. The lobby space was subdivided in the past, but is open as of 2014. Plaster and original woodwork remain in places, but are in need of repair.

The Murdo State Bank is the best one-part commercial block in Murdo. It has the best integrity of any building on Main Street and is able to convey all seven aspects of integrity. There are currently (2014) no properties listed on the National Register in Murdo. The only other structure in the SHPO database that has been determined eligible is the water tower.

A windshield survey was conducted in Murdo (pop. 488) in 2013. Every public road in town was driven. The vast majority of houses and buildings in town do not meet the requirements of Criterion C and/or have diminished integrity. Most of the buildings from 1907 to 1945 are not eligible under Criterion C. The Murdo State Bank retains excellent integrity compared to other properties built 1907-c.1945. At this time (2014), only the bank and a water tower in Murdo have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register.

⁹⁸ Barb Hockenberry, personal correspondence 10 May 2014.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

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Developmental history/additional historic context information

Bank Presidents

1906-08 Peter B. Dirks
1908-10 W.L. Montgomery
1910-16 J.E. Townsend
1917-26 E.B. Townsend

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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The Murdo Coyote. 7 May 1920 – 3 June 1926.

Public Documents

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Eighth Biennial Report of the Public Examiner on State Banks, Private Banks, and Trust Companies of South Dakota. 12 November 1906 – 2 June 1908.

Eleventh Biennial Report of the Commissioner of School and Public Lands to the Governor of the State of South Dakota. 1 July 1908 – 30 June 1910.

Eleventh Biennial Report of the Public Examiner on State Banks, Private Banks, Trust Companies and Building and Loan Associations of South Dakota. 4 June 1913 – 30 June 1914.

Message of Retiring-Governor Frank M. Byrne to the Fifteenth Legislative Session, State of South Dakota. 1917.

Ninth Biennial Report of the Public Examiner on State Banks and Trust Companies of South Dakota. 28 May 1909 – 30 June 1910.

Public Documents of the State of South Dakota Being the Annual and Biennial

Murdo State Bank
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*Reports of Various Public Officers and Board of the Various State
Institutions to the Governor and Legislature. 1906.*

*Public Documents of the State of South Dakota Being the Annual and Biennial
Reports of Various Public Officers and Board of the Various State
Institutions to the Governor and Legislature. 1908.*

*Tenth Biennial Report of the Public Examiner on State Banks, Private Banks and
Trust Companies of South Dakota. 7 June 1911 – 14 June 1912.*

Maps

Fire Underwriters Inspection Bureau Map. Murdo, 1957.

Correspondence

Hockenberry, Barb. 10 May 2014.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than one

Murdo State Bank
Name of Property

Jones County, SD
County and State

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 14 | Easting: 362362 | Northing: 4861030 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Murdo State Bank
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Jones County, SD
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
Lot 5 Block 3 Original Town of Murdo.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The boundary only includes the lot of the Murdo State Bank.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: C.B. Nelson
organization: SD SHPO
street & number: 900 Governors Drive
city or town: Pierre state: SD zip code: 57501
e-mail chrisb.nelson@state.sd.us
telephone: 605-773-3458
date: 8 June 2014

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Murdo State Bank
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Jones County, SD
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Murdo State Bank

City or Vicinity: Murdo

County: Jones

State: SD

Photographer: C.B. Nelson

Date Photographed: 1 May 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 10.

SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank_0001	SW
SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank_0002	SW
SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank_0003	W
SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank_0004	E
SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank_0005	W
SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank_0006	W
SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank_0007	E
SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank_0008	NE
SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank_0009	W
SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank_0010	W

Murdo State Bank
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Jones County, SD
County and State

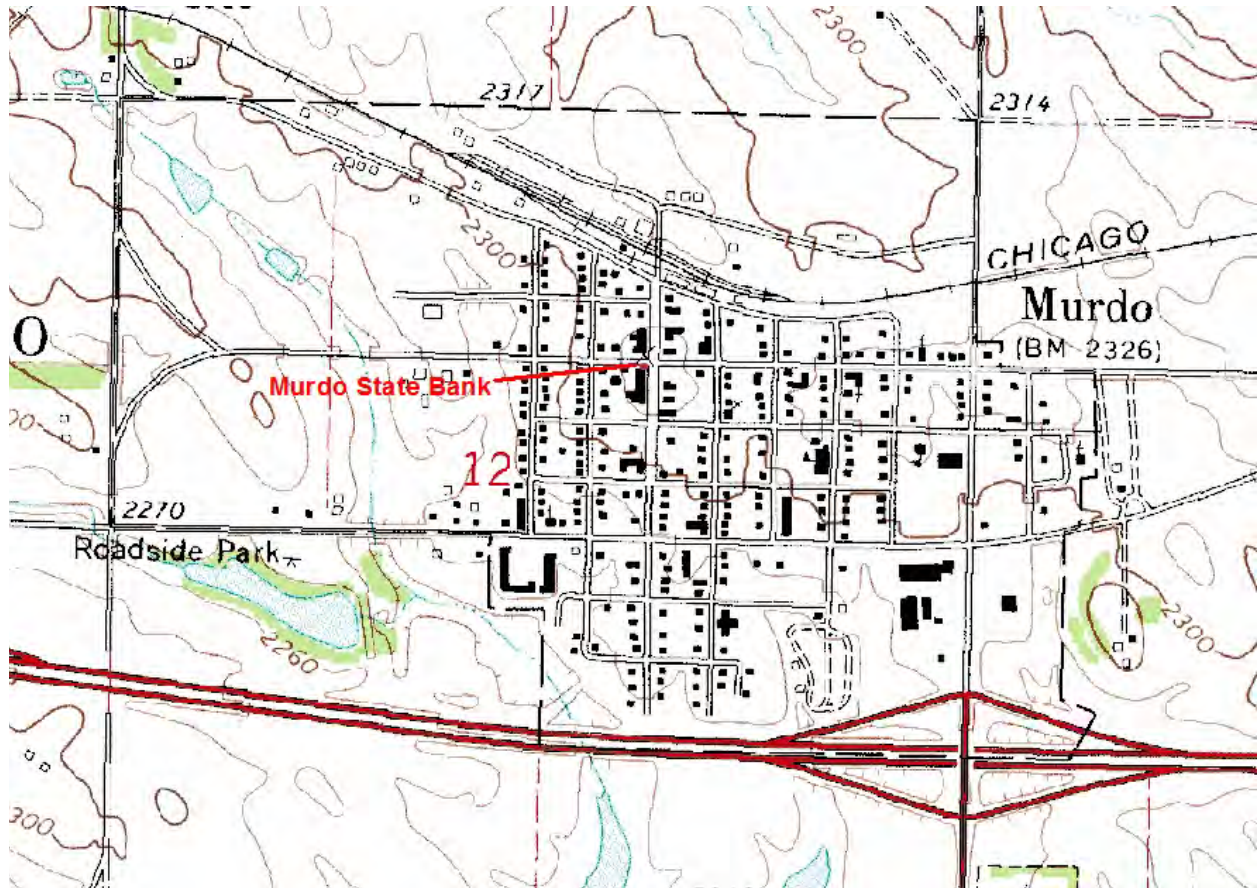
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

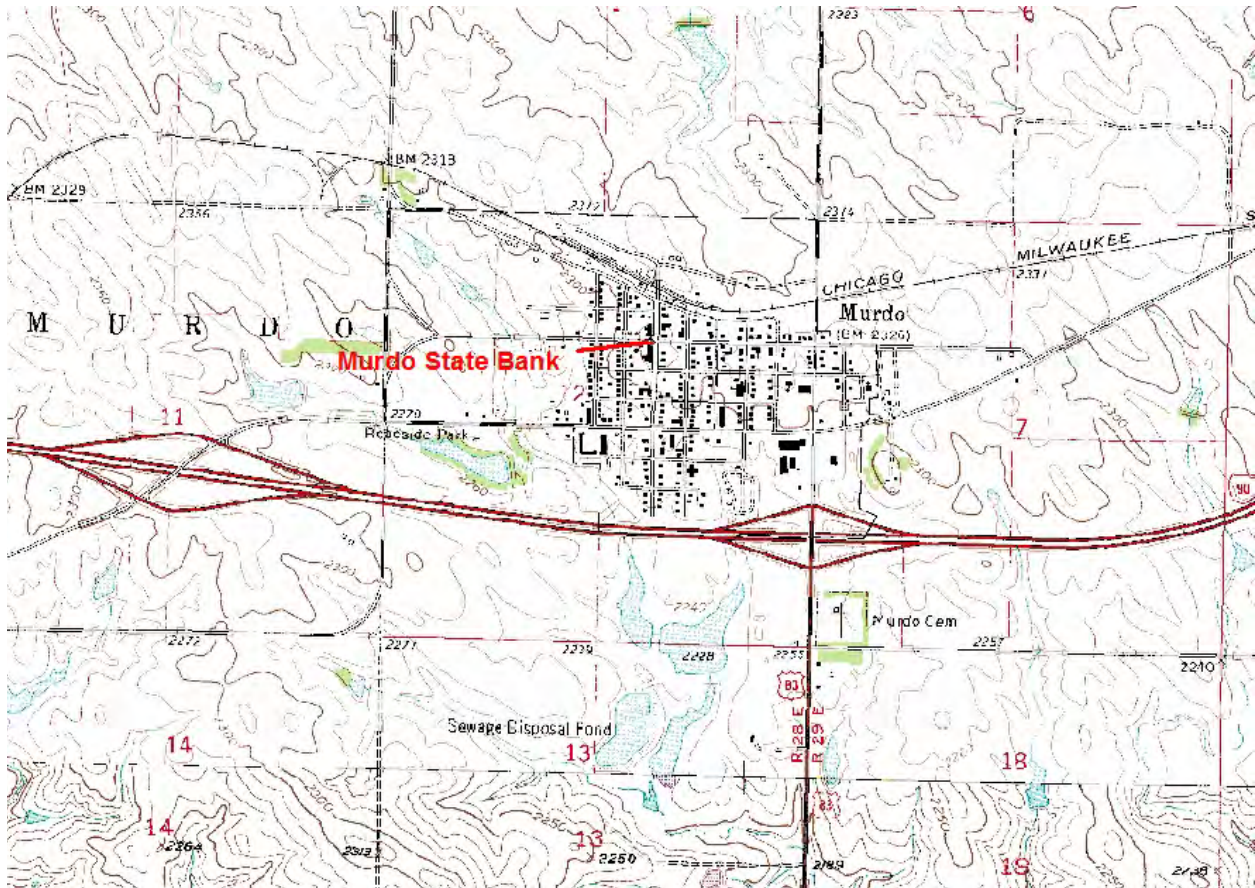


SD_JonesCounty_MurdoStateBank: SW¼, NE¼, S12, T002S, R028E ; UTM Z=14 1.E=362362, N=4861030. 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map, 1:24,000. Produced in ArcMap 16 June 2014.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2

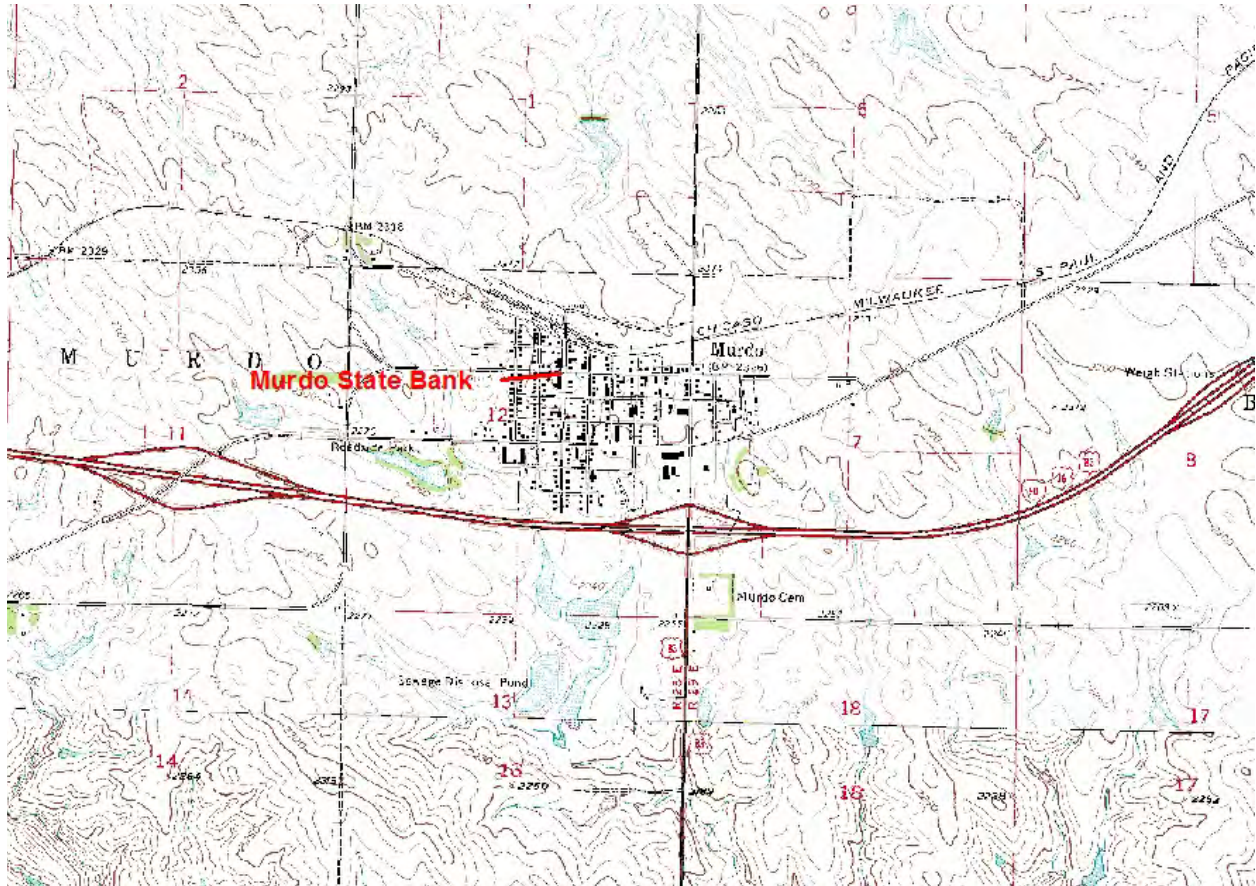


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 3



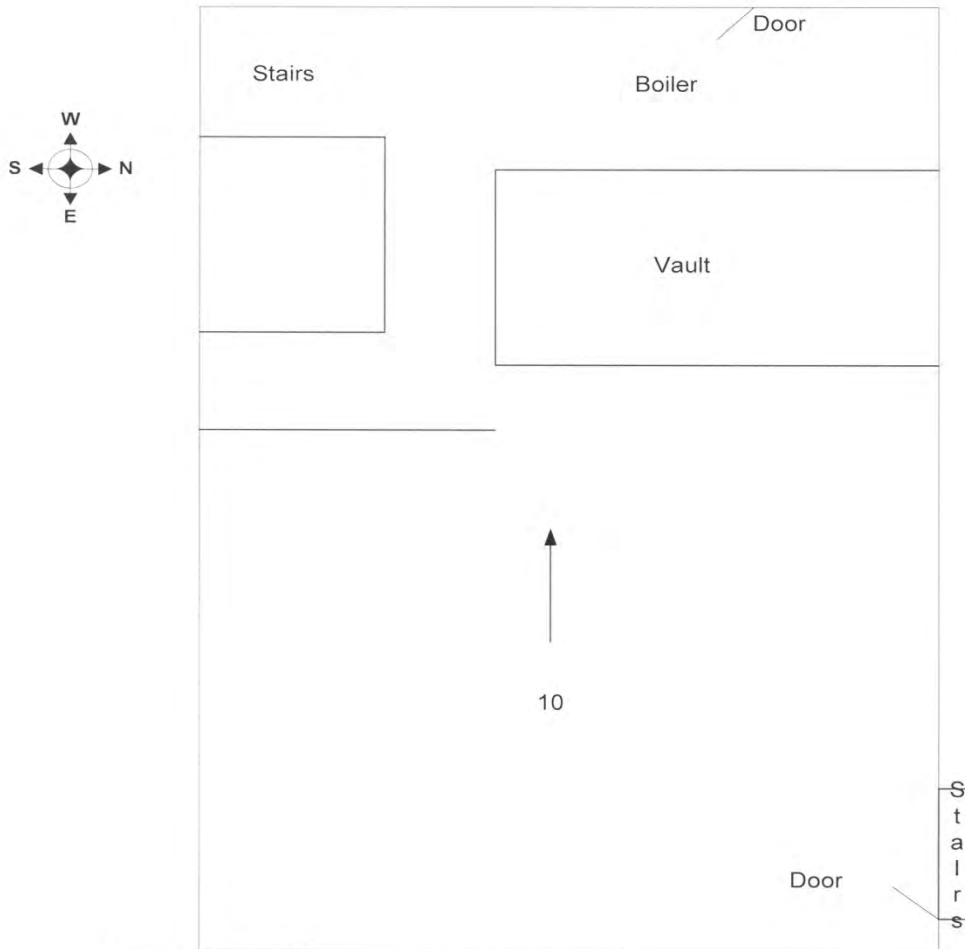
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10

Page 4

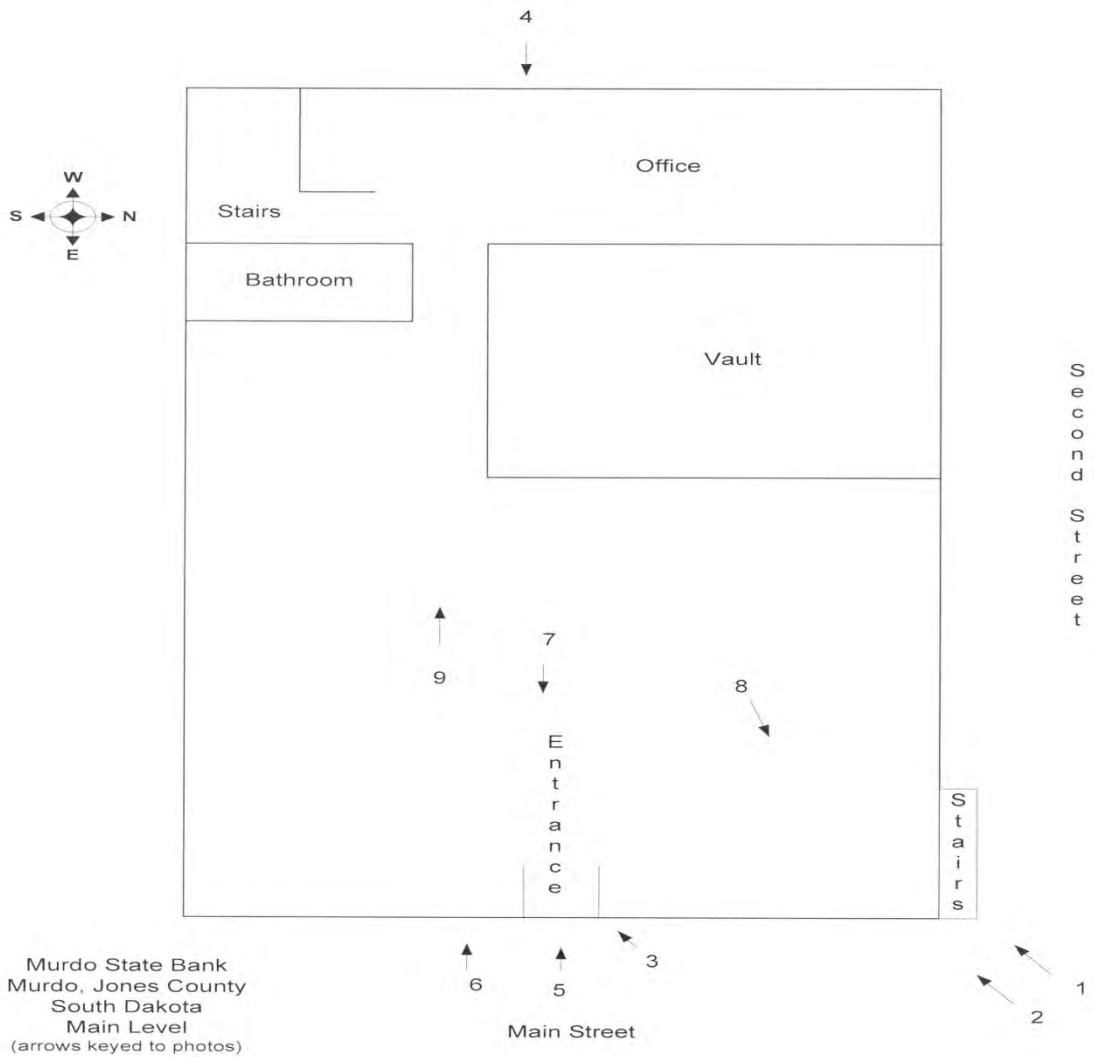


Murdo State Bank
Murdo, Jones County
South Dakota
Basement
(arrows keyed to photos)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

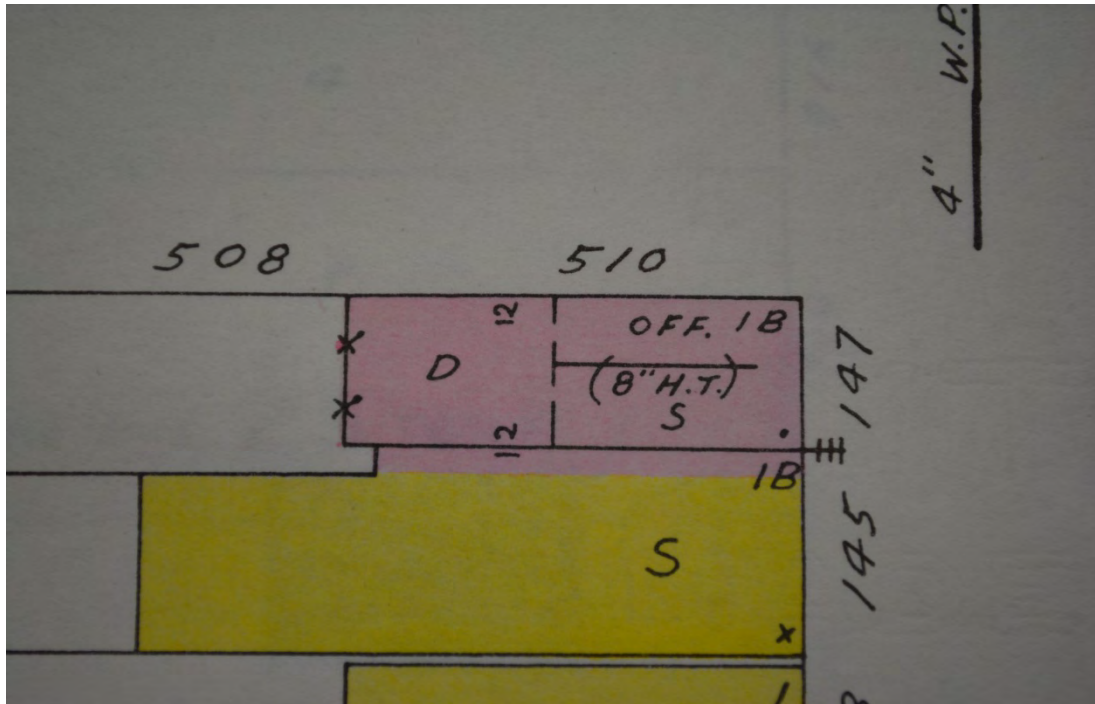
Section number 10 Page 5



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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 6



Fire Underwriters Inspection Bureau Map, Murdo, 1957. Shows interior division of front space and dwelling space in the back.

SNOW
ROUTE
NO PARKING
5 AM - 7 AM
OR UNTIL REMOVAL
IS COMPLETE
VEHICLES WILL
BE TOWED





PLOWING
SERVICES

HAWK'S
BLANK

SNOW
ROUTE
NO PARKING
EXCEPT FOR
VEHICLES WILL
BE TOWED





first fidelity bank
5 10











Advertisement by [unreadable]
Breakfast Menu
[unreadable]
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Danby
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MOBILE WORKS
The BODY



FRAGILE HANDLE WITH CARE
Folding
• Lighter and more portable
• High strength
• Powder coated
• Long lock in place
• Great for indoor and outdoor use
• 10 Year Limited Warranty



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Murdo State Bank

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: SOUTH DAKOTA, Jones

DATE RECEIVED: 12/05/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/05/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/20/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/21/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14001178

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT _____ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA 4, C

REVIEWER R. Reed

DISCIPLINE Historic

TELEPHONE _____

DATE _____

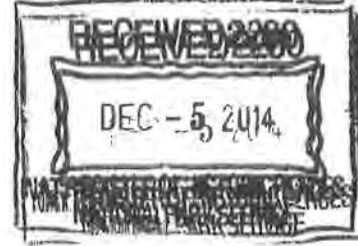
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



28 December 2013

Keeper of the National Register
National Register of Historic Places
National Parks Service
1201 Eye St NW
8th Floor (MS 2280)
Washington DC 20005



Dear Keeper of the National Register:

Enclosed are six new National Register nominations and one multiple property submission with nine submissions. The nominations are *Josef and Marie Kudrna Homestead and Ranch*, *Ole Quamman House*, *Murdo State Bank*, *Frank and Sarah Drake Claim House*, and *Norbeck-Nicholson Carriage House* and *Rasmus and Elemine Anderson Homestead Ranch*. The multiple property submission is Concrete Interstate Tipis of South Dakota. The submission under the mpl are *Chamberlain Rest Stop Tipi*, *Spearfish Rest Stop Tipi*, *Salem Rest Stop Tipi – Westbound*, *Salem Rest Stop Tipi – Eastbound*, *Wasta Rest Stop Tipi – Eastbound*, *Wasta Rest Stop Tipi – Westbound*, *Valley Springs Rest Stop Tipi*, *New Effington Rest Stop Tipi*, and *Junction City Rest Stop Tipi*.

If you have any questions regarding any of these submittals, please feel free to contact me at 605-773-3103 or at chrisb.nelson@state.sd.us.

Sincerely,

Chris B. Nelson
Historic Preservation Specialist