

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received AUG 16 1985

date entered SEP 12 1985

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

1. Name

historic Co-operative Block Building (DW04-24)

and/or common Crawford Co-op Building or O'Doherty's Restaurant

2. Location

street & number 435-445 Second n/a not for publication

city, town Crawford n/a vicinity of

state Nebraska code 031 county Dawes code 045

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name S. Tom Spence and Donna Spence

street & number 109 Linn Street

city, town Crawford n/a vicinity of state Nebraska

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dawes County Court House

street & number 400 Block

city, town Chadron state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date on-going federal state county local

depository for survey records Nebraska State Historical Society

city, town Lincoln state Nebraska

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>n/a</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Co-Operative Block building is located in Crawford, Dawes County, Nebraska. The two-story Victorian commercial building, built of reinforced concrete and mill construction, was erected in 1909, and served as the home of the Crawford Co-operative Company from 1909-1977. Structural and historical integrity has been preserved for the most part. Alteration include removal of some cornice embellishments, the remodelling of store fronts, and the enclosure of selected window openings.

The Co-operative Block building is situated on the edge of the business district in Crawford, Nebraska a small community located in western Nebraska. The Co-op building was built in 1909, and is a two story, square in outline (100 X 100 feet), commercial building with a flat or low-sloping roof. The exterior wall structure is of reinforced concrete from the footings to the cornice. Outside walls are plastered, and scored to give the appearance of ashlar blocks. Walls are 18-22 inches thick. The internal structure is of heavy mill construction, with rows of timber posts dividing the building along the lines of the four bays of the front facade (except in the basement where the posts are reinforced concrete). Floor joists are 3 X 14 inch sections spaced at twelve inch centers.

The building exterior has been modified somewhat from its original appearance, principally in the storefronts (although they retain all glass), the closing of some second story windows, mostly on the side wall, and in the removal of finials atop the pilasters. The main mass is organized symmetrically. The facade has four bays which are divided and identified by grant order pilasters which run the entire height of the walls. The pilasters are decked with "bud" outcroppings of Acanthus leaf from the Corinthian Order. A sign, "Co-operative Block" originally embellished the top of the building. The windows are topped with headers of flat arches in which the keystone pattern is prominent. The pressed metal cornice projects from the wall, and has brackets which give the appearance of dentils. A basement entrance on the south was constructed some years ago.

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On April 4, 1908 the directors accepted the plans and specifications submitted by William Stanton and Sons for the erection of the present building. At the meeting on May 16, 1908 it was decided that two men would be authorized to visit Lincoln and Omaha to investigate concrete buildings and on June 19, 1908, a motion was made and passed "that building be constructed of reinforced concrete with cement floors and cement roof and that the spaces between piers be filled in with cement blocks" (Minutes). The Co-operative Company was dissolved by the Board of Directors in June, 1977.

Today, the building represents an important resource, reflecting the historically significant role of the cooperative in this western Nebraska community and surrounding area during its sixty-eight year history.

Architecturally the Co-operative Block is significant in the area of architectural technology, principally for pioneering the use of reinforced concrete in this high plains community, and for spurring subsequent uses in the area. While initially intended to be a fully reinforced concrete structure (minutes), the building as constructed was somewhat less adventuresome in its use of the system exclusively for the exterior bearing walls. Initial concerns over structural integrity and fire safety were still satisfied, however, in the use of "slow-burning", or heavy mill construction internally.

Concrete, and even the concept of reinforced masonry, has a long history in the building industry. Modern history, however, begins only in the mid-nineteenth century. Major structural advances in reinforced concrete were developed by the American, Thaddeus Hyatt around 1877. Simultaneously, William E. Ward of Port Chester, New York was building his own home entirely of reinforced concrete (1871-76, Condit, p. 169).

Commercial application in the building industry began as early as 1885 with Ernest L. Ransome's construction of a flour mill in the San Francisco Bay area. Ransome's early work continued along the west coast, with his first building in the east constructed in 1901 in Jersey City (Condit, pp. 172-173). Application of reinforced concrete began to expand rapidly following the turn of the century, and by 1910 it had become a generally popular technology in the United States (Condit, p. 241).

The earliest recorded examples of reinforced concrete construction in Nebraska are in Omaha, with dates of 1907 and 1908 (Fairbanks, Morse Company warehouse and John Deere warehouse respectively). Both buildings represent complete concrete frame systems (with brick exterior bearing walls). Other, perhaps less adventuresome uses will undoubtedly be found at slightly earlier dates since the Co-operative Minutes for 1908 imply a general knowledge of such construction in the Lincoln and Omaha areas. Nonetheless, it is not expected that earlier uses will precede these by more than a couple of years, based upon the national history. The use of reinforced concrete, then, in the western Nebraska area, is roughly coterminous with its use in the east, and represents both the farsightedness of the cooperative's promoter and a significant episode in the technical building history of Nebraska.

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Additional significance is evidence in the manner in which the technology was applied. First, the formal design of the Co-op follows traditional (i.e., brick masonry) Victorian commercial building designs. Secondly, the exterior of the concrete was executed in plaster, scored to appear like ashlar masonry. Both treatments indicate a hybridization of the architectural product--one which was progressive in its technology, but which tempered that progressivism in a "skin" and form which was more acceptable to traditional tastes.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input 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 1909

Builder/Architect C.R. Inman/Wm. Stanton & Sons

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Architecturally significant, the Co-operative Block building represents a unique example of commercial Victorian architecture, utilizing reinforced concrete construction. This method of construction, evident in the panhandle region at this early date, represents an innovative type of building design for this particular area of Nebraska. The building also derives significance in the area of commerce for its association with the Crawford Co-operative Company, which served the community for 70 years. The period of significance is derived from the construction date of the building.

Co-operation in Nebraska began in the 1870's as a farmer's movement stimulated by the greivances of the farmers against the business community. In H. Clyde Filley's book Cooperation in Agriculture, he defines cooperation as "the voluntary union of persons for the purpose of securing savings in production, or marketing, or the rendering of other service without assistance from government and upon equitable principles," (p.7). The basic problem for many of the farmers in the late 19th century was the unfavorable exchange rate between farm and nonfarm commodities, thus their complaints included low prices for farm products, high prices for manufactured goods, inadequate service, dishonest grading, unfair commissions, middlemen fees, etc. (Fite, 1978, pp. 4-5).

While many of these farmers were protesting that government action was necessary to provide agricultural assistance, others began to look for ways to help themselves through cooperative effort, believing that they could thus increase their bargaining power. It was hoped that this cooperative effort would force manufacturers to lower their prices and reduce or eliminate the middleman profits (Fite, 1978, p.5).

The Grange, which has it beginnings in the 1860's, and in Nebraska in the 1870's, was the first organization to promote the development of agricultural cooperation on a national scale to improve the financial situation of farmers. Other notable cooperative organizations which formed in Nebraska include the Farmer's Alliance, the Farmers Union and the Farmers' Equity Union, the Nebraska Certified Potato-Growers Association (Paine, 1943, p. 254-255).

Significant in the area of commerce, the building served as the home of the Crawford Co-operative Company from 1909–1977. On June 11, 1907, Messrs. William J. A. Raum, C. H. Britton, W. A. Eversull, Bernard Sorster, J. H. Hulseman and Edwin Kluman formed the corporation known as the Crawford Co-operation Company, with the principal place of transacting business in the city of Crawford, Dawes County, Nebraska. "The nature of the business to be transacted by said corporation shall be the buying, selling and holding of real estate, engaging in the general merchandise business, the buying and selling of all kinds of farm products, poultry and eggs" (official minutes of Crawford Co-operation Company, December 1907 to June 1977, Crawford, Nebraska, p. 7). The corporation officially commenced on July 9, 1907 with a capitol stock of \$100,000.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Crawford

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	3	6	3	10	0	2	10	4	17	2	16	8	13	10
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H

Zone		Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is described as Lots 9,10,11,12 Block 10, O.T. of Crawford, Dawes County, Nebraska including all Historically associated near estate.

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

state	n/a	code	county	code
state	n/a	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joni Gilkerson, PH & Tech. Additions by D. Murphy, Survey Architect

organization Nebraska State Historical Society date February, 1984/June, 1985

street & number P O Box 82554 telephone 308-665-2021/402-471-4767

city or town Crawford/Lincoln state Nebraska

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 James A. Hanson

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society date 8-9-85

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

Alfred Byers date 9/12/85
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Books

Condit, Carl W. American Building: Materials and Technology from the Beginning of the Colonial Settlements to the Present. The Chicago History of American Civilization, Ed. by Daniel J. Boorstin. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Fite, Gilbert C., Beyond the Fence Rows, University of Missouri Press, Columbia, Missouri, 1978.

Filley, H. Clyde Cooperation in Agriculture, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1929.

Articles

Stuhr, Leo & F.E. Wolfe, "Co-operative Companies", Bulletin no. 118, State of Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Market and Marketing, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Weseen, Maurice H. "The Co-operative Movement in Nebraska", The Journal of Political Economy, Vol. XXCI, Number 6, June 1920, pp. 477-498. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

Other

Crawford Co-operative Company, "Minutes of Board Meetings," 1907-1977.