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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

OCT 27 1989

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Harder Hotel

other names/site number Scribner Hotel; DD10-063

### 2. Location

street & number 503 Main Street

not for publication

city, town Scribner

vicinity

state Nebraska

code NE

county Dodge

code 053

zip code 68057

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

#### Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

#### Number of Resources within Property

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

Name of related multiple property listing:

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

James A. Hanson  
Signature of certifying official

October 13, 1989  
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Nebraska State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Alvina Byer

National Register

11/27/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: hotelCommerce/Trade: restaurant

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: restaurantDomestic/multiple dwellingVacant/not in use

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late VictorianOther: American Rundbogenstil

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brickwalls BrickMetal: tinroof Asphaltother \_\_\_\_\_

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Harder Hotel is prominently located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and Howard streets in downtown Scribner, Nebraska. The three-story brick hotel, with a two-story west wing, was constructed in 1901. The building is the state's only recorded example of the Atrium Type hotel and is also a distinctive expression of the American Rundbogenstil architectural style designed by Omaha architect Frederick A. Henninger. The building displays an exceptional degree of interior and exterior integrity. The nomination consists of one contributing building.

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The Harder Hotel is located in the central business district of Scribner (population 1,010, 1980 census) in east-central Nebraska approximately 60 miles northwest of Omaha. Since its completion in 1901, the hotel has been a prominent landmark in the community. The three-story brick hotel is located at the northwest corner of Main and Howard streets, a major intersection which retains its original brick paving. The railroad tracks are located less than one block west of the hotel, near the former location of the Chicago & Northwestern passenger depot. The hotel's principle east and south elevations front onto Main and Howard streets respectively, with entrances at the corner and along the east facade.

Structurally the building is of solid brick masonry construction on a brick foundation. Interior floors, walls, and the roof are of standard wood joist construction.

Composed of two prominent masses-- a three-story square block at the corner with a two-story wing to the west-- the hotel is among Scribner's most impressive edifices, including the brick city hall building (another Scribner example of the Rundbogenstil) at the west end of Howard Street, one block away. The main block measures 50 X 54 feet, while the wing measures approximately 50 X 30 feet. A beveled corner faces the street intersection, which at one time featured a brick pediment-on-panel, covered with tin,

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which read "H. HARDER" and "HOTEL". Two hotel signs of later vintage are intact-- one is painted on the west exterior wall, the other a neon sign over the hotel entrance.

A brick watertable divides each section of the building into a ground floor and upper stories, while metal cornices cap the building. Exterior walls are divided regularly-- five bays each on the south wall of the main block and the wing, while the east front facade displays four bays which are balanced by the beveled corner. Windows throughout are segmentally-arched, except for the third floor which is round-arched, and all display slightly projecting hoods. Brick belt-courses connect the springlines of the window hoods on the first and third floors. Second- and third-story windows of the main block are connected in panels which are recessed slightly from the main wall, enhancing the articulation of facade. Both sections of the building are capped with metal cornices-- bracketed on the main portion, and dented on the wing.

The east facade is the most elaborately articulated. Here the window panels of the three center bays of the top floors enframe paired windows, culminating in emphasized arches at the third story. Top floor round arched windows here are biforiated, and a brick lunette is displayed in the tympanum, resulting in the most explicitly Romanesque-derived motif evident in the building. Ground floor fenestration adheres strictly to the four/five part composition, though window and door openings are modulated in size to accomplish functional needs. A main entrance in the beveled corner leads both historically and currently into the restaurant-tavern, while the main door in the east facade leads to the hotel lobby. Lesser doors in the wing lead to sample rooms (more recently a game room and storage room).

The overall form, character and articulation of the Harder Hotel marks this building as one of Nebraska's finest examples of the American Rundbogenstil. Characterized by a preference for plain brick masonry, simple walls, sharply cut openings, clearly articulated geometric massing, and a prolific use of both segmented and round arched openings, the Harder Hotel clearly exhibits features common to the style, as well as its tendency toward modernity in design as opposed to a strict historicism (Pierson, 230).

Functionally the building's arrangement is characteristic of the Atrium Hotel Type (Murphy). The main corner block is a

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nearly square mass organized around a square open stairhall or atrium. Hotel rooms on all four sides of the upper floors open onto this hall, while the open stair is also a central feature of both the hotel lobby and restaurant-tavern on the first floor. A diminutive skylight is still extant, though temporarily covered, which provided light and ventilation to the atrium space below. The only recorded example of the type in Nebraska for hotel use, the Harder's atrium, in part because of its wood construction, is confined to the open staircase rather than being open to a circumferential balcony as is possible with more elaborate versions of the type. The space is nonetheless still an architecturally distinct feature of the building, as is the winding stairway itself with its turned newels and balusters.

The ground floor of the main block is composed of four rooms, organized around the open stairway which rises in the center of the block. The restaurant-tavern is accessed from the main entry in the beveled corner of the building, while the hotel lobby is entered through the east facade. A large dining room and a party room are also located in the main block. Functions in these rooms have changed little over the years, resulting in excellent architectural integrity.

Ground floor rooms in the latitudinal west wing consist of kitchen, storage and other service-related spaces (some originally sample rooms) in addition to a game room which also has separate exterior access on the south. On the second floor, additional hotel rooms are arranged in typical latitudinal hotel block fashion, being located on both sides of a double-loaded corridor which parallels the street. This corridor connects to the atrium via hallway, while a second exit is located at the west end of the wing.

Architectural integrity remains very high. On the exterior, however, portions of the south metal cornice were removed during a roof rebuilding many years ago. The pediment-on-panel above the beveled corner is lost (parts were blown off during a wind-storm shortly after construction, though it was rebuilt); the pediment was an early loss and the panel since 1987. The essential characteristics of form and style, however, are still very much evident in the building. The only other exterior changes have been the replacement of the double doors in the entrances with single doors and sidelights. Interior changes, other than conventional remodeling, has been confined to the covering of the skylight and a new ceiling on the third floor.

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Use has also changed little over the years. While some hotel rooms had been converted to apartments on the second floor, the building essentially operated as a hotel until recent years. The upper floors are currently vacant save for a single occupied apartment, though re-use plans are under consideration. Ground floor rooms have largely retained their historic functions, though for a period the restaurant area was used as a barbershop. This space is once again a restaurant. The building was not in use for two years in the 1980s, but has since reopened, focusing on the restaurant and bar on the main floor.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance

1901

Significant Dates

1901

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

Henninger, Frederick A. /

Stabenow, Fritz

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Harder Hotel, constructed in 1901 in Scribner, has been compared to similar properties on a statewide basis and is significant on a regional level under Criterion A. It has been evaluated within the Retail Commerce context for the Northeast Nebraska Region and found to be significant for its association with the commercial development of Scribner and as a very early manifestation of the building boom of second generation hotels that was occurring on a statewide basis during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The hotels built during this period, as exemplified by the Harder, were multi-floor, brick buildings that offered the most "modern" conveniences and catered especially to the businessmen that traveled via railroad. The Harder Hotel is especially interesting because it was built right at the turn of the century and contrasted sharply with what appears to be the only other hotel in the town (the Clifton, not extant); a first generation hotel of wood frame construction with limited facilities.

Architecturally the hotel is significant under Criterion C on a statewide level as the only recorded example of the Atrium Type hotel in Nebraska, and as a premier example of the American Rundbogenstil, a significant mid-nineteenth century Romantic style with roots in the German states, but which also played a significant role in German-American identity. The period of significance is 1901 which is the year the hotel opened.

Although Scribner was on the railroad line, research indicates that the town only had one hotel (the Clifton) in 1901. Even though boosterism, which encouraged communities to build hotels to attract businessmen and as an indication of economic prosperity, was still about ten years away, towns realized that

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Curren, Kathleen. "The German Rundbogenstil and Reflections on the American Round-Arch Style," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 48:4 (1988), 351-373.

Geraniotis, Roula Mouroudellis. "German Architectural Theory and Practice in Chicago, 1850-1900," Winterthur Portfolio 21:4 (1986), 293-306.

Miller, Greg. "Retail Commerce: Towns in Northeast Nebraska," Historic Context Report 12.02.02.03. Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1989.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Nebraska State Historical Society

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one.

UTM References

A 

1	4
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6	9	4	3	2	0
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4	6	1	5	2	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is described by all of lots 11-12, Block 10, First Addition to Scribner, Dodge County, Nebraska.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary describes all of the real estate historically and significantly associated with the historic resource.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title David Murphy, Architect; Greg Miller, Historian; Carol Ahlgren, Arch. Historian  
organization Nebraska State Historical Society date August 1989  
street & number 1500 R Street telephone (402) 471-4787  
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it was important to offer "modern" lodging facilities if they were to compete with other stops on the line. Aside from the aspect of community spirit, the hotel business offered a good opportunity for anyone willing to invest the capital.

Hans Harder, of Scribner, was one person who realized the potential advantages of constructing a new hotel, and he had the money to invest in such a project. A native of Schleswig-Holstein, Harder plied his trade as a mason in Chicago before moving to Dodge County, Nebraska, where he amassed some wealth (The Scribner News, March 6, 1919, p.1). On January 3, 1901, The Scribner Rustler reported that Mr. Harder was taking bids for the construction of a brick hotel. He had already selected F. A. Henninger of Omaha as the architect and determined that the building would be three stories tall with dimensions of 50 X 54 feet.

The framing and exterior of the hotel were quickly completed and work immediately began on the roof and the interior walls (Rustler, May 23, 1901). In June work began on the interior with the tile floor being placed in the bar and plastering started throughout the hotel. By August 1, the bar in the hotel was completed and George Harms, the proprietor, announced he was moving in and would be open for business the following day. In the same month the gas lighting plant was installed and was being used in the bar. The same issue of the newspaper stated the completion of the brick sidewalk around the hotel. One week later it was announced that the plasterers had finished their work (Rustler, June 20, Aug. 1, Aug. 8, 1901).

On October 10 a newspaper article stated that the hotel was finished and would be open for business in early November. It described the hotel as having three floors with an annex on the west. Constructed of brick, it was equipped with all the modern conveniences including a "complete system of water works, with bath rooms, a fine gas light, the gas being manufactured by a private plant belonging to Mr. Harder, and with steam heat over the entire building." The paper editorialized that the hotel was "the most complete and comfortable home for the travelling public in this part of the state." The article ended by stating that the "building is a great improvement to Scribner and will probably be headquarters for a large number of commercial pilgrims" (Rustler, Oct. 10, 1901).

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The hotel did indeed open on November 1, 1901, and the newspaper published the names of the first guests to register (News, November 1, 1901). It also listed Charles Todenhoff as the landlord and his mother, Augusta Todenhoff, as landlady. In the same issue it was noted that Henry Schulz opened a barber shop on the south side of the hotel. Two weeks later he "secured control of the bath room on the second floor" and ran it in connection with his barber shop (News, Nov. 15, 1901). After the opening, advertisements stated that the hotel had an office, dining room, kitchen, sample rooms, and thirty-five sleeping rooms (News, Nov. 15, 1901).

Given these circumstances, the Harder Hotel, then, is significant on a regional level under Criterion A, particularly as one of the earliest of the modern hotels to be constructed in northeast Nebraska. Evaluated within the Retail Commerce context for the Northeast Nebraska Region, the Harder Hotel has great historic significance for its association with the commercial development of Scribner. The hotel is also significantly associated with a general expansion in hotel construction that occurred on a statewide basis during the early twentieth century. The Harder Hotel, though not constructed of fire-resistant materials, nonetheless is one of the earliest "modern" hotels in northeastern Nebraska in all other respects.

Architecturally (Criterion C) the Harder Hotel is significant on a statewide level as a distinct example of the Atrium Type hotel in Nebraska. As defined in the NeSHPO property type analysis, the Atrium type is characterized by large cubic massing of three or more stories and a full-height interior public circulation space or atrium. The Atrium accommodated the light and ventilation needs of hotels (which are typically composed of subdivided interiors) through the use of a skylight over an interior "light court." The atrium space also serves as a circulation core. The Harder Hotel is a distinct yet modest product of the type; modest because the atrium effect is achieved exclusively by the space around the open winding wood stairway in the center of the square public stairhall. In all other respects, however, it is exemplary of the type and is currently the only recorded hotel example in Nebraska.

Architectural significance is also evident in the stylistic associations of the hotel, being one of the state's premier examples of the American Rundbogenstil. A mid-nineteenth century Romantic style which originated and flourished in the German

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states, both the style and its theory were brought to the United States by German and Czech immigrant architects. While its introduction into the eastern United States resulted in the development of an American Round-Arch style, in Chicago and the multi-ethnic midwestern and plains states, German-American architects worked not only in the style but with the content of the German Rundbogenstil as well (Curren; Pierson; Geraniotis).

In Nebraska, the style is seen as a relic of German-American Romanticism in architectural design. Of fourteen Rundbogenstil buildings currently listed in the National Register, all are by German-American architects or for German-American clients. While the oldest identified to date is the St. Benedicts Catholic Church in Nebraska City by August Gerhardt (1861; OT06:F-009), the finest non-religious examples include Henninger's Harder Hotel, the Anheuser-Busch Beer Depot (Henry Voss, 1887, D009:0121-030), and the Dodge County Bank in Hooper, (1899, DD06-038). The Harder Hotel is significant as an expression of the American Rundbogenstil in the German-American community of Scribner.

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Murphy, David. "Atrium Hotels," Property Type Analysis  
12.3.1:4. Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1989.

Pierson, William H., Jr. "Richard Upjohn and the American  
Rundbogenstil," Winterthur Portfolio 21:4 (1986), 223-242.

The Scribner (Nebraska) News, 1901.

The Scribner (Nebraska) Rustler, 1901.

"Worthy Citizen Laid to Rest; Hans Harder, Prominent in City  
Affairs, Dies After Illness of Some Months," The Scribner  
(Nebraska) News, March 6, 1919, p.1.