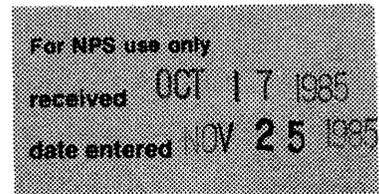


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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NAME: Renville County Courthouse

LOCATION: Main Street, bounded west by City Hall and east by Second Avenue NE,
Mohall, North Dakota 38, Renville County 075

OWNER: Renville County, Mohall, North Dakota.

ACREAGE: Less than one acre

VBD (LEGAL): Lots 6-12, Block 11, Original Townsite Plat.

UTM: Zone 14, Easting = 315635, Northing = 5404010; Mohall, N. Dak. Quad

DESCRIPTION: The Renville County courthouse is a two-story structure with an L-shaped plan and south-facing entrance. Brick facing composes the majority of the facade with the exception of the parapet, which is sheathed in Kettle River sandstone. The building's original nine-paned casement windows were replaced in 1984 by two-paned casement windows; in both window systems is an awning window. Steel joists support the flat, concrete slab roof. Decoration at the entryway includes four pillars, vertical lines in the rounded corners, and side openings with covered grilles. The frieze carries the name "MEMORIAL COURT HOUSE." Dark brick is laid into string courses at the lintel and sill level of the windows, and also near the base. Exterior and interior wall corners are rounded throughout the building. Bronze entrance doors lead to the first floor corridor which has walls sheathed in Montana travertine marble and floors of terrazzo. The second floor courtroom has rounded corners, a wooden wainscoat, and painted plaster walls with horizontal metal bands. A memorial monument and flagpole rest in front of the building. Window changes represent the major alteration to the building.

SIGNIFICANCE: Date: 1936

Architect: E.W. Molander
Contractor: I.E. Orheim
Engineer: C.H. Ordning

The Renville County Courthouse is significant for having served since 1936 as the storehouse for official local records and as the center for county government. Its partial funding through a WPA grant made its Depression-era construction possible. The building represents the largest county expenditure for construction in the 1930's. The project helped support many workers during difficult economic times.

The building is also significant for its architectural styling. The nine courthouses constructed in the state from 1929-1940 all contain some decorative motifs associated with the architectural movement which sets itself in opposition to the classically-inspired academic revival styles. Eight of those nine could be classified as Art Deco because of, among other design elements, their vertical emphasis. The Renville County building stands alone among North Dakota courthouses by giving architectural expression in terms of Art Moderne styling. The Art Moderne style has much less visibility in the state than does the Deco style popular during the same years. Rounded corners, a low, horizontal profile, and circle-window doors in the courtroom are hallmarks of the style present in Mohall's courthouse. Since few examples of Moderne styling exist in the state this courthouse represents a valuable architectural resource. Because of the magnitude of its cost in its rural county context and in view of its fine architectural expression, the building appears to be exceptionally eligible to the National Register of Historic Places.

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NORTH DAKOTA COUNTY COURTHOUSES TR
Adams, et. al. counties

Less-than-50-year-old courthouses: Ranson County Courthouse
Renville County Courthouse
Sheridan County Courthouse
Stark County Courthouse
Walsh County Courthouse

North Dakota has demonstrated through both its survey methodology and findings, and its discussion of exceptional significance of the courthouses within their historic context that the five courthouses that are less than fifty years old should be accepted as part of the State's thematic submission of courthouse nominations. The survey revealed a historical and architectural cohesiveness to courthouses constructed between 1929 and 1940, and a logical historical and architectural break in courthouse design and construction after 1940. The State's Art Deco and Art Moderne courthouses possess exceptional significance to their communities and to the State in the areas of architecture and history. Architecturally, they have among the most sophisticated designs, impressive materials, and retained integrity of the State's courthouses. Additionally, they are extremely impressive examples of their styles in sparsely populated areas (approximately 9 persons per square mile) where such accomplished designs might not be expected. Historically, the courthouses represent exceptional tenacity and confidence in rural communities hard hit by the Depression through the citizens' willingness to commit themselves to the construction of unusually expensive courthouses.