

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED NOV 2 1976  
RECEIVED MAR 25 1977  
DATE ENTERED DEC 22 1978

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

A.H. Brown Public Library

AND/OR COMMON

Mobridge Public Library

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

North Main Street

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Mobridge

\_\_ VICINITY OF

2nd

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

South Dakota

046

Walworth

129

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER: Library

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Mobridge

STREET & NUMBER

205 East 2nd Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Mobridge

\_\_ VICINITY OF

South Dakota

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Walworth County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Selby

South Dakota

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

South Dakota Historic Sites Survey

DATE

September 1975

\_\_FEDERAL  STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Historical Preservation Center

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Vermillion

South Dakota

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The A.H. Brown Public Library design is basically English medieval with Jacobethan Revival windows and a Neo-classical entrance. The mixture of styles was common during the eclectic period of architecture from which this building belongs.

The basic construction plan is a steep-pitched, stepped cross gable structure with the left or west facade projecting out further from the wall's surface than the east facade. An engaged chimney on the rear facade scales the height of the library and tops the gable's peak.

The building's facing materials consist mostly of a light brown brick and some similarly stained cement. The latter material appears above the front facade's window in a plaque that says "The A.H. Brown Public Library" and also in the surrounds of the building's openings. A belt-course of brick is found in each gable.

Windows and doors provide the structure its most interesting features. The front entry has an Adamesque appearance with simulated pilasters, a pediment, a fanlight, and a simulated round arch with keystone. It projects outward from the wall's surface and contains the foyer. The rear has a superimposed brick appearance with a brick pedimental surround; it is an excellent display of brick work.

The building's fenestrations are highly irregular especially in size. Windows on the west facade are a great deal smaller in height than those on the east. The prior openings appear in groups of twos; are double hung and are four sash over four sash. While the latter have a single window, and groups of two bracketing a group of three windows, all are double hung with a six sash over six sash division. A large front window has sidelights and is double hung with two sashes. One six sash opening, and an extremely small window appear on the rear facade. All of these fenestae are heavily adorned with muntin, have lugsills and almost merge into the roofline.

Some amenities for the building include a corner lot, landscaping and a park-like backyard. This 1929 building appears to be in excellent condition and has a picturesque setting.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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 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

1930

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

George Fossum

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The A.H. Brown Public Library is significant to Moberge architecturally, educationally, and in the social humanitarian context. It provides a good example of the type of architecture prevalent during the eclectic period: The library borrows from the classical, Jacobethan, and English Medieval modes. The library has been and continues to be a purveyor of educational material to the community. Also the building is important because it represents the philanthropy of A.H. Brown, a successful local businessman. Although this 1929 library is not quite fifty years old, it is still one of Moberge's most important buildings, and it should be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Moberge's first public library opened in July of 1922 in the Mascot Theater building. After its first year it had 663 volumes and seven hundred dollars in cash and had a full time, trained librarian. It moved twice before it became on this corner lot.

The city library board had purchased two lots for the future site of a new library. They had hoped to receive a Carnegie grant. However, A.H. Brown, a local businessman offered the city two lots and a building that would cost between ten and twenty thousand dollars. The city agreed to give him their lots, promised to maintain it as a library forever, and accepted the condition that made the building available to all Walworth County and not just Moberge.

With these conditions met, Brown had his architect, George Fossum of Aberdeen, South Dakota, draw up his plans, with Leora Lewis, director of the South Dakota Free Library Commission helping on certain aspects of library construction. Construction began in 1929 and the structure was dedicated on November 17, 1930. At that time it contained 4,000 books and by 1956 the number had risen to 12,000.

Brown died in 1941 and it was at this time the city formally adopted the name "The A.H. Brown Public Library". He was the first citizen of the state to have presented such a building to a community. The library has become a monument to one of Moberge's most important pioneers.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gardner, Ray, et al., Mobridge: Its First Fifty Years, ed. Julius Skaug.  
Mobridge: privately printed, 1957. 250 pp. illustrated.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>14</u>	<u>388050</u>	<u>5043510</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Scott Gerloff

ORGANIZATION

Historical Preservation Center

DATE

February 1976

STREET & NUMBER

USD Alumni House

TELEPHONE

(605) 677-5314

CITY OR TOWN

Vermillion

STATE

South Dakota

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*John ...*

TITLE

Director, Historical Preservation Center

DATE

Oct. 28, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

*William ...*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

*12/22/78*  
DATE *12/21/78*