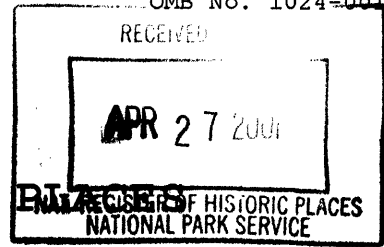


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name State Bank of Edinburg
other names/site number Citizens State Bank

2. Location

street & number 300 Main Avenue
not for publication N/A
city or town Edinburg vicinity N/A
state North Dakota code ND county Walsh code 099 zip code 58227

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Charles E. Cannon 4-17-01
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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):

Edson H. Beall 5/30/01

Joe

Signature of
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

Number of Resources within Property

| Contributing | Noncontributing |
|--------------|---------------------|
| <u>1</u> | <u>0</u> buildings |
| <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> sites |
| <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> structures |
| <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> objects |
| <u>1</u> | <u>0</u> Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: financial institution

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: business

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

ROMANESQUE

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
roof _____
walls BRICK
other BRICK; GLASS; STONE; WOOD

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE

Period of Significance ca. 1900-1950

Significant Dates ca. 1900, 1930,
1938

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder UNKNOWN

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

- 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

Name of repository: State Historical Society of North Dakota

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

| | Zone | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|--------------------------------|---------|----------|------|---------|----------|
| 1 | 14 | 583930 | 5371830 | 3 | _____ | _____ |
| 2 | _____ | _____ | _____ | 4 | _____ | _____ |
| | <u>See continuation sheet.</u> | | | | | |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Denis P. Gardner and Charlene K. Roise
organization Hess, Roise and Company
street & number 100 North First Street
city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55401
telephone (612) 338-1987
date January 2001

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Citizens State Bank of Lankin
street & number P.O. Box 155 telephone (701)593-6333
city or town Lankin state ND zip code 58227

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. 470 et seq.). Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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State Bank of Edinburg
name of property

Walsh County, North Dakota
county and state

Description

The State Bank of Edinburg is situated two blocks northwest of State Route 32 at the intersection of Main Avenue and Third Street in Edinburg. Part of the community's modest commercial district, the bank occupies Lots 13 and 14, Block 7, of the Original Townsite of Edinburg. Built circa 1900, the small building's Romanesque profile projects an air of strength and security.¹

Resting on a stone foundation, the rectangular building measures roughly forty-eight feet long and twenty-four feet wide. The front (southwest) facade and northwest side are comprised of red brick, while the southeast side is formed of beige brick. The building's rear may also be made of beige brick, although it has been painted red to match the front facade and northwest side.

A decorative cornice and parapet crown both the front facade and northwest side. The cornice is composed of a raised brick fascia accented below with corbelled brick brackets. The brick parapet is punctuated with two horizontal rows of small, deeply recessed panels. The parapet center at the front facade is constructed slightly higher than the remainder of the wall and is capped with a light-colored stone course. Although the parapet at the southeast side is not as ornamented as that at the front facade and northwest side, its top is still highlighted with two parallel rows of raised bricks. The southeast parapet is further marked by its stepped profile, whereby the wall is constructed at three different heights. The height of the parapet descends from the front of the building to the rear. A chimney is incorporated into that part of the parapet near the building's rear.

Brick pilasters edge both corners of the front facade. Brick pilasters also highlight the building's northwest side. All pilasters are capped with light-colored, square stone slabs. Semicircular arches accent the tops of the door and window openings

¹ This description is based on a site visit by Denis Gardner on September 12, 2000. A telephone interview with the current occupant of the building, Jeff Monsebroten, that was conducted by Denis Gardner on March 21, 2001, was also helpful.

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at the front facade and northwest side. The arches are formed of three parallel rows of header bricks. These arches, in turn, are surmounted by two raised brick arch courses. The arch courses merge with a horizontal raised brick course creating a pattern across the building's front facade and northwest side that is interrupted only by the pilasters. No such ornamentation exists at either the southeast side or rear of the building.

Entrance into the structure is gained through glass double doors at the southeastern bay of the building's front. An arched wood panel with incised vertical lines occupies the area just above the entryway. At one time the space was probably filled with an arch-shaped window. Access to the interior is also available through a rear door that is made of wood and punctuated with a single-pane window. The doorway at the rear is arched; the height of the arch implies that a window once occupied the space just above the door. That space is now completed with a wood panel. A single stone step edges the front entrance, while a series of stone steps descend from the rear door. A metal-hinged cellar door is located next to the rear steps.

The bank's principal window openings, one at the front and three at the northwest side, originally held large arched windows. The openings are now filled with wood panels with incised vertical lines. Each holds a medium-sized single-pane window. Light-colored stone sills accent these main window openings. An additional window is located at the rear of the building immediately adjacent the rear door. The one-over-one window is covered by an aluminum-frame combination window. The windowsill is made of brick and covered with a wood board. Two small, rectangular window openings with splayed brick lintels are situated in the building's stone foundation at the northwest side. The windows have been boarded over. A window on the southeast side has been filled with brick.

The roof drainage system is partially visible from the rear. It appears to consist of a fabric sheet that covers at least part of the structure's flat roof. The flat roof is slightly angled from front to rear, allowing water drainage through a galvanized metal pipe that descends the rear wall near its center.

The interior of the bank has also undergone some change. The

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polygonal foyer inside the front entry is formed from two exterior walls and three interior walls. All walls within the foyer are covered with brown wood paneling. A single-pane window highlights the wall at the chamfered corner of the foyer. Carpeting covers the stone steps that lead to the bank's main interior space, which is accessed through a wood door marked with a single-pane window. It is unclear if the current foyer layout was original to the building.

The bank's main interior space is dominated by a teller partition that stretches from near the southwest corner of the building to an office in the northeast corner. The partition is believed original to the building.² The front of the oak divider is accented with rectangular recessed panels that are beaded at the edges. The top third of the partition is made of glass supported by oak bracing. The baseboard consists of brown-colored marble. The partition holds two teller windows. At the front of each window the divider is formed with an ornately engraved bowl-shaped sill. A marble sheet covers the sill and spans the width of the partition. Drawers and shelves command the partition's opposite side. A built-in flat file marks its extreme northeast end.

Another oak divider extends from the southwest end of the teller partition to the southwest wall. The divider is ornamented with the same pattern as the teller partition, although it contains no glass section. A small swing door provides access to the opposite side, an area that once served as workspace for bank employees.

An office constructed in 1988 is located in the northeast corner of the building. It is separated from the rest of the facility by an oak and glass partition. Its principal entrance door is made of wood and holds a single-pane window. Another doorway leads from the office to the area behind the teller partition. A third door provides access to the building's cellar, and a fourth door leads outside to the rear of the bank.

Immediately adjacent the office and occupying the northwest corner

² Telephone interview with Marjie Jonasson, president of Citizens State Bank, October 16, 2000.

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of the building is a very small closet/storage space and the bank vault. The interior of the vault is deep. The vault's gold-colored entryway is handsomely made, with original detailing displaying Classical Revival motifs. The doorway is bordered by ornately designed pilasters crowned with a decorative cornice and broken arched pediment. A winged figurine is mounted on the cornice. Just above the figurine an urn rises through the break in the arch. A thick steel outer door masks narrow, metal double-doors on the vault interior.

The building's interior walls were remodeled in 1988 with oak paneling, trim, and off-white wallpaper. The hanging ceiling formed of white rectangular tiles and the fluorescent lighting may also have been installed at that time. The hanging ceiling covers the original plaster ceiling. The carpeting dates from a later period as well. It covers the original hardwood floor. The radiators are original and match the gold color of the vault. They are further embellished with fanciful cursive relief detailing.

In contrast to the inviting main floor, the cellar is stark. Stone walls embrace a floor that appears half concrete and half dirt. A partitioned area against the northwest wall contains a sink and stool. These architectural elements may have been added in the early 1960s when the boiler system in the basement was improved.

Despite some alterations, the State Bank of Edinburg can claim good historic integrity. Positioned along Edinburg's main commercial avenue, the building continues to reflect its origins as an early twentieth-century banking institution.

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Statement of Significance

I. Introduction

The State Bank of Edinburg in Edinburg, North Dakota, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under both Criteria A and C. It exemplifies late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century small town bank architecture and presents a general plan once common to the region. Furthermore, the State Bank of Edinburg is a notable example of a commercial institution vital to the economic development of many small towns in North Dakota in the early 1900s. The State Bank of Edinburg represents Edinburg's last remaining banking house that dates to this period. It has outlasted many other structures in the community's small commercial district and is a well-preserved remnant of an important period in Edinburg's history.

II. The Development of Banking in North Dakota

To understand the history of the State Bank of Edinburg it is useful to briefly review the evolution of banking within North Dakota. In the early 1800s the region that would eventually mark the Dakotas was regarded as "frontier." Euro-American inhabitants of the land were principally trappers. The trappers bartered for food, supplies, and other goods with the local native population and with regional trading posts. The Hudson Bay Company and the Northwestern Company, both Canadian concerns, were the first incorporated trading companies to operate within the Red River Valley area. The Hudson Bay Company began operation in 1793 and the Northwestern Company established a post near modern-day Pembina around 1797 or 1798. The American Fur Company, chartered by John Jacob Astor in 1808 and headquartered at Mackinac near the northern peak of Lake Michigan, eventually became a trading force in the Red River Valley region as well. The company established a trading post at Pembina around 1829 or 1830. By 1834, Henry Sibley, a man who would eventually become the first governor of the state of Minnesota, was the American Fur Company's chief representative in

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the valleys of the Minnesota and Red River.³

While bartering was hardly banking, it was a beginning. Trading organizations like the American Fur Company extended credit to trappers and tribes, establishing for the first time a common characteristic of modern banking. The traditional role of the trading companies was further altered as the demographic in the territory changed. Immigrants from the East began settling and farming the land. Trading companies developed retail commerce with the new arrivals whereby cash displaced pelts as the principal means of commercial exchange. The needs of this new population proved quite different from that of the trappers before them. Some wanted to send money to desperate families in the East, while others were desperate themselves and hoped to have money sent to them. A few settlers found they had surplus income and wished to store it for safekeeping. Since no banks existed, the trading companies took on these roles. Some banking practices were now in place. It was simply a matter of time before the institutions themselves arrived to supplant the trading companies.⁴

With the organization of the Dakota Territory in 1861, settlement in the region increased. Realizing the banking opportunities, Lyman W. Gilbert appealed to the First Territorial Legislature for the right to incorporate a bank. The legislature granted its permission with an act creating the Mining Manufacturing and Banking Company of North America. Oddly, it appears as though the company never organized and operated as a financial entity. It is unclear why. The ensuing years brought the formation of several "private" banks, institutions created without being incorporated. Not until 1878 did the territory receive its first incorporated bank. On February 13 of that year the First National Bank of Fargo was chartered with a capital value of \$75,000.⁵

³ Oscar E. Heskin, "The Early History of Banking in North Dakota" (master's thesis, University of Minnesota, 1926), 1-3; Elwyn B. Robinson, *A History of North Dakota* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 72-74.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 7, 16-18; John Jay Knox, *A History of Banking in the United States* (New York: Bradford Rhodes and Company, 1903), 794-795.

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III. The National Bank Act

Well before the First National Bank was formed, serious political debate surrounded the exclusionary banking laws dominating the country. Prior to the early 1860s a special legislative charter was required to own and operate a bank, a legal process similar to that in Europe. The system created monopolies since many of those without political influence were not granted the necessary permission. With the passage of the National Bank Act in 1863, a system of "free banking" was instituted. No longer was a special charter from the legislature a prerequisite. Instead, a prescribed group of individuals with the required qualifications could incorporate and enter into the banking business. The law effectively destroyed the monopoly system and quickly led to a proliferation of banking houses.⁶

In the late 1800s, the Dakota region reflected this trend even more than the rest of the country. This was due in large measure to timing. Dakota was just beginning to grow financially when the National Bank Act was passed. Since the traditional banking structure no longer existed the Dakota Territory was unencumbered with transitional problems from an anachronistic system. Further, although the territory was undergoing some settlement it was still at the edge of Anglo civilization and continued to reflect the "spirit of the frontier," a sense of unrestricted possibility. In the early 1880s just about every small town in the region had its bank, although the facilities were crude. A vault, partition, and money were all that were needed to set up shop in whatever building or section of building was available. By 1887, Dakota Territory contained about 280 banks; sixty-one were national banks and 219 were private. This incredible growth was touted by W. E. Scarrett in his presidential address to the Dakota Bankers Association in 1889: "Our Territory has more banks than the eight states of North Carolina, West Virginia, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Delaware and Nevada combined."⁷

⁶ Heskin, 12-13; Leonard C. Helderman, *National and State Banks: A Study of Their Origins* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931), 145-147.

⁷ Heskin, 13, 21-22.

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In 1889, the states of North Dakota and South Dakota were created out of the Dakota Territory. The following year, the North Dakota State Legislature passed a law requiring all banks to be organized under either state or national law. The requirement spelled the end for many private banks, since they were now under oversight of the state and forced to abide by strict regulations. Even though there was a dramatic decline in the number of banking houses operating within the state immediately after the new law took effect, the industry proved resilient. Roughly eight years later eighty-seven state banks were doing business in North Dakota.⁸

IV. The State Bank of Edinburg

It was within this period of bank expansion and growing fiscal professionalism that the State Bank of Edinburg was founded. A small rural community, Edinburg is located in Walsh County, roughly thirty miles northwest of the county seat, Grafton. Originating in 1882, the town was named by its first postmaster, Christian Buck, who called it "Edinburgh" in honor of the Scottish city where he had attended school. In November 1892, the moniker was changed to its current spelling.⁹

The Edinburg settlement was initially established in section five of Lampton Township, about three miles northwest of its current location. In the mid-1880s, after learning that the construction of a railroad through the county was going to bypass the community, the settlement relocated to its present site so as to be in line with the train route. Several years later, in June 1896, Edinburg officially incorporated as a village. Many business enterprises soon followed, including a creamery, elevator, and flourmill. Doctor A. A. Flaten, one of the village's leading citizens, opened a drugstore and began practicing medicine. Demonstrating the entrepreneurial nature of many early pioneers, he also helped establish the State Bank of Edinburg. His partners in this venture

⁸ Ibid., 43; State Examiner, *Ninth Annual Report of the State Examiner to the Governor of North Dakota*, 1898, 141.

⁹ Douglas A. Wick, *North Dakota Place Names* (Bismarck: Hedemarken Collectibles, 1988), 54.

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included C. D. Lord, T. L. Tillich, and Karl Farup.¹⁰

Unfortunately, little information on the State Bank of Edinburg's early years seems to have survived the century. Flaten, originally from Park River, North Dakota, dwelled in Edinburg for about ten years before he and his partners opened the bank in November 1899. It is unclear where precisely they established the facility, but it is likely that it was situated somewhere along the principal commercial boulevard, Main Avenue. A physician, David Bell, opened a practice in offices over the bank. One month after the bank began operation its resources were estimated at more than \$35,000, and a couple months after that they totaled more than \$52,000.¹¹

The first president of the bank was Flaten. He held the position for about three or four years. He was notable in Edinburg for over forty years, although he did leave for a short period to practice medicine in Grafton. It is uncertain exactly how long he remained active in the bank's day-to-day operation. Sometime in 1902 or 1903 another founder, C. D. Lord, took over the bank presidency. Flaten remained as vice president for at least a few years. Lord continued as president into the 1910s.¹²

The bank was in operation for only about six months before it faced its first crisis. In fact, the entire town faced a crisis. On April 20, 1900, fire gutted the entire commercial district. The fire apparently started at the rear of Domstad and Company's drugstore, a building previously owned by Flaten. Like many small towns, several buildings in Edinburg shared common walls. Once flames reached one structure, it became likely they would reach the next. Events were made worse because of the high winds, which blew flames

¹⁰ Booklet Committee, *The Edinburg Story* (n.p., 1982), 3, 32.

¹¹ Booklet Committee, 6, 18; State Examiner, *Eleventh Annual Report of the State Examiner to the Governor of North Dakota*, 1900, 90; "The News of North Dakota," *Grafton News and Times*, November 10, 1899.

¹² Booklet Committee, 18; State Examiner, *Eleventh Annual Report*, 90; State Examiner, *Thirteenth Annual Report of the State Examiner to the Governor of North Dakota*, 1902, 88; State Examiner, *Fifteenth Annual Report of the State Examiner to the Governor of North Dakota*, 1904, 110; State Examiner, *Twenty-first Annual Report of the State Examiner to the Governor of North Dakota*, 1910, 139.

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across the road and ignited buildings on that side of the street. By the time the fire was extinguished only Christian Buck's office, an elevator, and a mill remained standing in the business district. In addition to the commercial structures destroyed a few residences also burned down. The most unfortunate circumstance of the fire, however, was the loss of two lives. Mrs. Bjornson and Mrs. Lindal, sisters who were staying in an apartment above Field's Store, were trying to remove effects from the building when they became trapped and perished in the blaze.¹³

The town began to rebuild immediately after the disaster. Within a week ten of the businesses were already in the process of being rebuilt and five were once again doing business. The losses were heavy, though. J. E. Peterson's general merchandise store suffered \$12,000 in damage. The loss of Edward Field's store totaled about \$18,000. John Buck's hardware business was a \$5,000 loss, and the destruction of Joe Christa's blacksmith shop cost roughly \$3,000. Fortunately, most of the businesses appeared to have insurance, although the money did not cover the total losses. Damage to the State Bank of Edinburg building came to \$4,500. Insurance covered two-thirds of the rebuilding cost.¹⁴

Review of the state examiner's annual reports implies that banking business in Edinburg was uninterrupted during this period. It was probably at this time that the current bank building was constructed. Its location at the corner of Main Avenue and Third Street has the distinction of being the site of the Field Store, where the lives of Mrs. Bjornson and Mrs. Lindal came to a sad and abrupt end. It is interesting to note that the new bank building was constructed almost entirely of brick and stone. Actually, many of the new buildings were probably built of the material--the destruction wrought by the April 20, 1900, fire undoubtedly made a profound impression on most townsfolk.¹⁵

¹³ Booklet Committee, 6; "A Fatal Fire," *Grafton News and Times*, April 27, 1900.

¹⁴ "A Fatal Fire."

¹⁵ Booklet Committee, 6; State Examiner, *Eleventh Annual Report*, 90; State Examiner, *Twelfth Annual Report of the State Examiner to the Governor of North Dakota*, 1901, 89.

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V. Bank Architecture

Historically, there has been no standard plan for banking houses. Unlike bridge engineers who are constrained by site conditions, nature rarely forces those who design banks to assume a specific architectural plan. Instead, the architecture of bank facilities has traditionally reflected the significance of the institution to the community. Some designs are simple and elegant, others are elaborate, or even ostentatious, but the intent of the architecture generally remains the same: to draw attention. Throughout the nineteenth and into the early twentieth century, many banks in this country drew their plan from the works of Sir John Soane, Benjamin Latrobe, and William Strickland. These architects relied heavily on ancient Greek and Roman schemes. For them, as well as the bankers who adopted their designs, the style symbolized confidence, a sense of security. Such emotional bolstering was important in an age without a Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Even if a bank was fiscally unstable it was commercially imprudent to convey that image.¹⁶

The narrow, flat-roofed design of the one-story State Bank of Edinburg Building followed the simple and elegant model: a vernacular Romanesque motif that blended well into its prairie setting. The architecture seems to have been common to the region in the early 1900s. Images of the Farmers State Bank at Fairdale and the Scandia-American Bank at Adams can be found in a Walsh County atlas from 1910. Both banks resembled the circa 1900 construction of the Edinburg facility. Even the 1905 plan of the two-story Citizens State Bank at Lankin, a community about two-and-a-half miles south of Edinburg, approximated the State Bank of Edinburg structure. Architectural firms probably utilized the general design in other parts of the country as well. In fact, in the early 1900s, the Radford Architectural Company, with offices in Chicago and New York, promoted at least three narrow, flat-roofed schemes for bank buildings. Plan number 4049, a two-story building, presented architectural characteristics similar to the two-story bank built in Lankin, as well as the single-story banks that were

¹⁶ Brendan Gill, introduction to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and Parnassus Foundation's *Money Matters: A Critical Look at Bank Architecture* (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1990), 3-4.

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erected in Edinburgh, Fairdale, and Adams. Regrettably, time proved an enemy to the banks in Lankin, Fairdale, and Adams. Several years ago the original Citizens State Bank at Lankin was removed and another bank was constructed on the same site. The Scandia-American Bank in Adams was also torn down about four or five years ago. Fairdale has been without a bank for decades. The Farmers State Bank faltered during the Depression and was eventually removed.¹⁷

VI. Depression

It appears that the State Bank of Edinburg operated profitably for close to three decades. During that period it had only moderate competition within the village. The Merchants Bank opened its doors sometime in late summer or early fall 1904 with resources totaling just over \$18,000. J. E. Peterson operated as president, J. B. Jamieson as vice president, J. E. Arnot as cashier, and Christian Buck as assistant cashier. The bank lasted only a few years and appears to have been purchased by the State Bank of Edinburg sometime in 1907. State records note that "other real estate" assets for the State Bank of Edinburg increased from \$500 in May 1907 to more than \$3,300 by December 1907. It is unclear precisely what happened to the Merchants building, but it would seem that it was sold. Real estate assets for the State Bank of Edinburg decreased by \$2,350 by the middle of 1908. Another bank was started in the village after July 1, 1916. The Farmers Bank opened its doors with a capitalization of \$10,000, but it soon closed as well. Although the Farmers Bank building appears to have remained standing for some time, it no longer exists in Edinburg today. With the closing of the Farmers Bank, the State Bank of Edinburg remained the only financial institution in the village. Unfortunately, the depression climate in the late 1920s and early 1930s would take a toll on many banking houses, including

¹⁷ *Standard Atlas of Walsh County, North Dakota* (Chicago: Alden Publishing, 1910), 115, 117; *Radford's Stores and Flat Buildings* (Chicago: Radford Architectural Company, 1909), 10; telephone interview with Edward Kuchar, mayor of Fairdale, March 21, 2001; telephone interview with Marjie Jonasson, president of Citizens State Bank, March 21, 2001; telephone interview with an employee of First United Bank of Park River, a fiscal institution that previously had a branch facility in the original Scandia-American Bank structure in Adams, March 21, 2001.

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Edinburg's.¹⁸

There were several reasons that led to the Depression, including a downturn in farm prices. Low wages in major industries like coal mining and textile manufacturing also contributed. One of the most significant reasons may have been overconfidence. Early in the 1920s the soaring stock market convinced many that prosperity in the country would continue. People began buying on credit, some borrowing to make stock purchases. The sad economic state of the country was made clear in October 1929 when the stock market crashed. The banking industry felt the financial pinch. A decade of poor lending policies had left them with debtors who could not afford to repay their loans. Even so, for some time after the crash many banking officials continued to believe that the country's economic woes were not nearly as dire as others professed. It is curious that so many in the banking profession felt this way given the contrary evidence within their industry--large numbers of banks had already begun failing by the early 1920s. The end of the decade brought even more bank closures, and the worst was still to come. The early 1930s would be marked by a torrent of bank suspensions. Between 1921 and March 1933 more than 11,200 banks with resources totaling over \$5.2 billion closed. This compares to the fifty-five years from 1865 to 1920 when only 3,108 banks with resources totaling about \$1 billion failed.¹⁹

In late 1930, though, even with increasing bank failures and the jolt of the stock market breakdown, some banking officials could not read the signs of a collapsing economy. For them, the financial funk was merely a pause on the road to prosperity and the banking industry remained stronger than ever. An article in *North Dakota Banker* in October 1930 asserted:

¹⁸ Booklet Committee, 32; site visit; telephone interview with Mike Olafson, local resident and historian in Edinburg, December 6, 2000; State Examiner, *Sixteenth Annual Report of the State Examiner to the Governor of North Dakota*, 1905, 74; State Examiner, *Report of State Examiner to the State Banking Board of North Dakota*, 1917, 8.

¹⁹ C. D. Bremer, *American Bank Failures* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935), 12.

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The general condition of banking in the United States is undoubtedly better than it has been since 1921. In fact, one might conservatively state that banking is on a sounder basis now than it has ever been in all of its history. Even before the period of deflation set in, when banks were so prosperous and so many new ones were being chartered in order to accommodate the people who wished to get into the banking business, even then, the business did not begin to be so sound as it is today.²⁰

While some in the industry remained confident in a faltering system, others did not share the positive feelings. Bank owners who had lost their banks and depositors who had lost their savings and investments certainly did not believe that the country's financial institutions were fiscally stable. This must have been true in North Dakota where banks tumbled into receivership at a record rate. In mid-1919, 703 state banks existed in North Dakota. Three years later the state still had 660 state banks. The number soon plummeted. By the end of 1925 only 478 state banks remained, and by the end of June 1928, that number was reduced to 350. The trend continued into the 1930s. At the beginning of 1934 only 143 state banks were left in North Dakota.²¹

At the beginning of January 1930, barely two months after the stock market disaster, the State Bank of Edinburg closed its doors. It appears as though the bank was financially troubled even before the crash. In mid-October 1929, its available assets totaled about

²⁰ Dan V. Stephens, "A Survey of State Bank Activities," *North Dakota Banker* 20 (October 1930): 4.

²¹ State Examiner, *Report of the State Examiner to the State Banking Board of North Dakota, 1919*, 11; State Examiner, *Report of the State Examiner to the State Banking Board of North Dakota Together with the Report of the State Banking Board to the Governor, 1920-1922*, 24; State Examiner, *Report of the State Examiner to the State Banking Board of North Dakota, 1928*, 9; State Examiner, *Report of the State Examiner to the State Banking Board of North Dakota Together with the Report of the State Banking Board to the Governor, 1928-1930*, 12; State Examiner, *Report of the State Examiner to the State Banking Board of North Dakota Together with the Report of the State Banking Board to the Acting Governor, 1932-1934*, 17.

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\$30,000, while its deposits came to roughly \$97,000. After reviewing the bank's records, John Nesvik, an investigator from the state examiner's office, declared that the facility's reserve was insufficient to keep it operating. J. A. Wilkins was designated as receiver. At the time of its closing the officers of the bank included O. O. Torgerson, president; S. A. Gire, vice president; N. Ordahl, cashier; and O. A. Florence, assistant cashier.²²

Wrapping up the financial affairs of the defunct bank required more than sixteen years, at which time the books, files, and records of the institution were destroyed by the state. Also, at some point during this period L. R. Baird replaced Wilkins as receiver. Difficulty in collecting the debt owed the bank explains why it took so long to pay off creditors and officially bring the existence of the State Bank of Edinburg to an end. For example, a seventy-year-old farmer with a wife and seven children owed the bank \$150. He was unable to pay the entire note. Baird remarked in his correspondence to the state: "Maker had been paying a little but has a large family to support. We concluded to accept this amount [\$41.79] and get the claim paid out." In another instance involving a seventy-five-year-old farmer Baird again settles for a payment below the note value so as to close the claim: "This fellow has a cow or two which he makes his living on. We never have been able to get anything out of him since the bank closed. I made him the proposition that if he would send me \$50.00 I would cancel the note, which he did. I think it is a good settlement under the circumstances." Both of these claims were not settled until 1942.²³

VII. Citizens State Bank

The community of Edinburg was without a bank for eight years. During this period the nearest bank was in Gardar, a village a few miles north in Pembina County. On April 30, 1938, a branch facility of the Citizens State Bank of Lankin opened in Edinburg in the former State Bank of Edinburg building. At least one employee of

²² "State Bank at Edinburg Closes," *Walsh County Record*, January 9, 1930.

²³ For information regarding the liquidation of the bank see "Record of Closed Banks, 1925-1942" and "Closed Bank Files, 1910-1980." Both collections are available at the State Historical Society of North Dakota, Bismarck.

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the State Bank of Edinburg was hired to help manage the new bank: "N. Ordahl, a former cashier of the Edinburg bank, is again employed here [Edinburg] and is taking full charge of all deposits and banking business."²⁴

The Citizens State Bank in Lankin had existed for almost as long as the State Bank of Edinburg. It opened for business around fall 1905 with J. R. Holton as president and C. R. Verry as cashier. Its resources in early November of that year came to almost \$29,000. Seven months later those resources were up to just over \$45,000. The bank made a significant decision soon after opening. They opted to employ James H. Vorachek. Vorachek would ultimately become the bank's principle driving force--and savior.²⁵

Vorachek was born in Spillville, Iowa, in 1880. His parents moved to Walsh County, North Dakota, the following year. He was raised on a farmstead near Fordville, a small community in Medford Township about four miles south of Edinburg and roughly two miles southeast of Lankin. He graduated from the Minnesota School of Business in Minneapolis in 1904, then returned to Walsh County and established a drugstore. He was also hired as part-time help at the bank only a few weeks after it opened. He sold his drugstore three years later when the bank promoted him to cashier. Banking would remain his vocation for the rest of his life.²⁶

Like other banks during the Depression, Citizens State Bank suffered financially, although it was, perhaps, better managed than many. In 1930, when the State Bank of Edinburg was being liquidated, Citizens State Bank remained solvent. In fact, a 1930 advertisement noted that the bank had \$30,000 in capital and surplus. Apparently this heartening pronouncement masked some

²⁴ Ibid.; "Branch Bank Opens," *Walsh County Record*, May 5, 1938.

²⁵ State Examiner, *Seventeenth Annual Report of the State Examiner to the Governor of North Dakota*, 1906, 140; "Lankin Man Serves Bank for 50 Years," untitled newspaper, circa 1955, in possession of Marjie Jonasson, president of Citizens State Bank.

²⁶ "Lankin Banker, 86, Still Active," *Grand Forks Herald*, January 1, 1967; "J. H. Vorachek is Leading Citizen," untitled and undated newspaper, in possession of Marjie Jonasson, president of Citizens State Bank.

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skepticism among its owners, however. At some point between 1930 and 1932, the bank's owners decided that the institution was teetering at the edge of failure and must close. By this time Vorachek was a major officer at the facility. He was operating as vice president at least by 1930. Ignoring the advice of a friend that he abandon the bank, Vorachek bought out the other shareholders and resolved to stay put. It was a difficult choice given the harsh economics of the day, but he felt a responsibility to the depositors. Many years later Vorachek would remark: "I had second thoughts about staying, but I had depositors who trusted me and I couldn't let them down. I became the bank's owner at the worst possible time." By 1932, Vorachek alone was keeping the bank afloat, pouring all his assets, including his life insurance policy, into the bank. His efforts paid off.²⁷

Not only did Vorachek's hard work keep his bank from collapsing, but by 1937 he was looking to expand. In October of that year, Citizens State Bank of Lankin opened a branch office in Edmore, a town several miles west in Ramsey County. It was the first bank at Edmore in a number of years. Harold J. Vorachek, one of James Vorachek's sons, supervised the office. Over the years, management of Citizens State Bank and its branches would come to include much of the Vorachek family. James's wife, Mayme, played a role in the organization's operation, as did many of their children and grandchildren.²⁸

In January 1938, the local county newspaper announced that the previous year at Citizens State Bank at Lankin had been a success and deposits had increased substantially. The establishment of a branch at Edmore was further indication of the bank's skillful management. Probably the most significant proof that the bank was on the right track was the fact that it was still around in 1938. Further evidence of the bank's health came in late April of that

²⁷ "Lankin Banker"; *Walsh County Directory* (n.p.: Robert E. Flynn, 1930), n.p.; "Lankin Man"; interview with Marjie Jonasson, president of Citizens State Bank, September 12, 2000.

²⁸ Jonasson interview; "Lankin Bank Has Branch in Edmore," *Walsh County Record*, October 14, 1937.

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year when it expanded into Edinburg.²⁹

Citizens State Bank continues to maintain a presence in Lankin, Edmore, and Edinburg. Today, not as many members of the Vorachek family oversee the day-to-day operations of the bank, although its current president, Marjie Jonasson, is the granddaughter of James Vorachek. Additionally, control of the bank still resides with the Vorachek family. Over the years, the Edinburg facility has undergone some change. Part of its interior was remodeled in 1988. A new office was constructed at the northeast corner of the building and new oak panels and wallpaper were added to the walls. The hanging ceiling and fluorescent lighting were probably also installed at that time. The exterior has received some modification as well. The current glass double-door entryway apparently replaced one of wood and glass as part of the 1988 remodeling. The original windows have been changed too, although it is uncertain exactly when this took place. It appears that it happened sometime after 1939.³⁰

On August 1, 2000, Citizens State Bank at Edinburg moved from its original building across the street to a modern facility. Presently, ownership of the old bank building is being transferred to its new tenant, Jeff Monsebroten, proprietor of Main Street Computers. The bank building appears to be one of the few remaining structures of its type in Walsh County that was constructed around the turn of the twentieth century. A half dozen banks in Walsh County have been inventoried by the North Dakota Archeology and Historic Preservation Division but only two are near the age of the

²⁹ "Lankin Bank Reports a Satisfactory Year," *Walsh County Record*, January 27, 1938; "Branch Bank Opens."

³⁰ A circa 1939 photograph presents a birds-eye view of downtown Edinburg. The photograph was taken just northwest of the commercial district looking southeast. The angle provides a view of the west side of the bank building and its windows. At the time the photograph was taken the windows consisted of two sections; a large glass sheet comprised the lower part of the opening and a smaller arched glass section marked the top. The two sections were apparently partitioned by a narrow row of bricks. The photograph is located in the photographic collection at Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections, Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.

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Edinburgh facility. The Bank of Grafton was constructed in 1883 and the Scandia-American Bank, also in Grafton, was erected in 1914. Both of these banks, however, have been considerably altered. At some point the first-floor facade of the Bank of Grafton was modified with modern materials. A modern awning was also added to the building. The changes significantly altered the bank's historic appearance. The Scandia-American Bank received an addition in 1937. It was again enlarged in 1958.³¹

VIII. Conclusion

The State Bank of Edinburg Building stands today as a physical reminder of early commercial development in the village of Edinburg. Seemingly doomed as a financial institution by the cruelest economic period in our history, the building was later given another chance to operate in the manner for which it was designed. It is a fine example of early twentieth-century banking in the sparsely settled prairie regions; although it has undergone some alteration, it has endured for a century maintaining good historic integrity. The facility appears to be one of the few remaining bank buildings in Walsh County that dates to North Dakota's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century banking period. It is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C.

³¹ Jonasson interview; North Dakota Cultural Resource Survey Site Forms for Walsh County banks, available in property inventory files, located at North Dakota Archeology and Historic Preservation Division Office, North Dakota Heritage Preservation Center, Bismarck.

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Jonasson, Marjie, president of Citizens State Bank. By Denis Gardner. September 12, 2000.

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Monsebroten, Jeff, current occupant of the State Bank of Edinburg Building. By Denis Gardner. March 21, 2001.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies Lots 13 and 14, Block 7, of the Original Townsite of Edinburg, North Dakota.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the village lots that have historically been associated with the property.

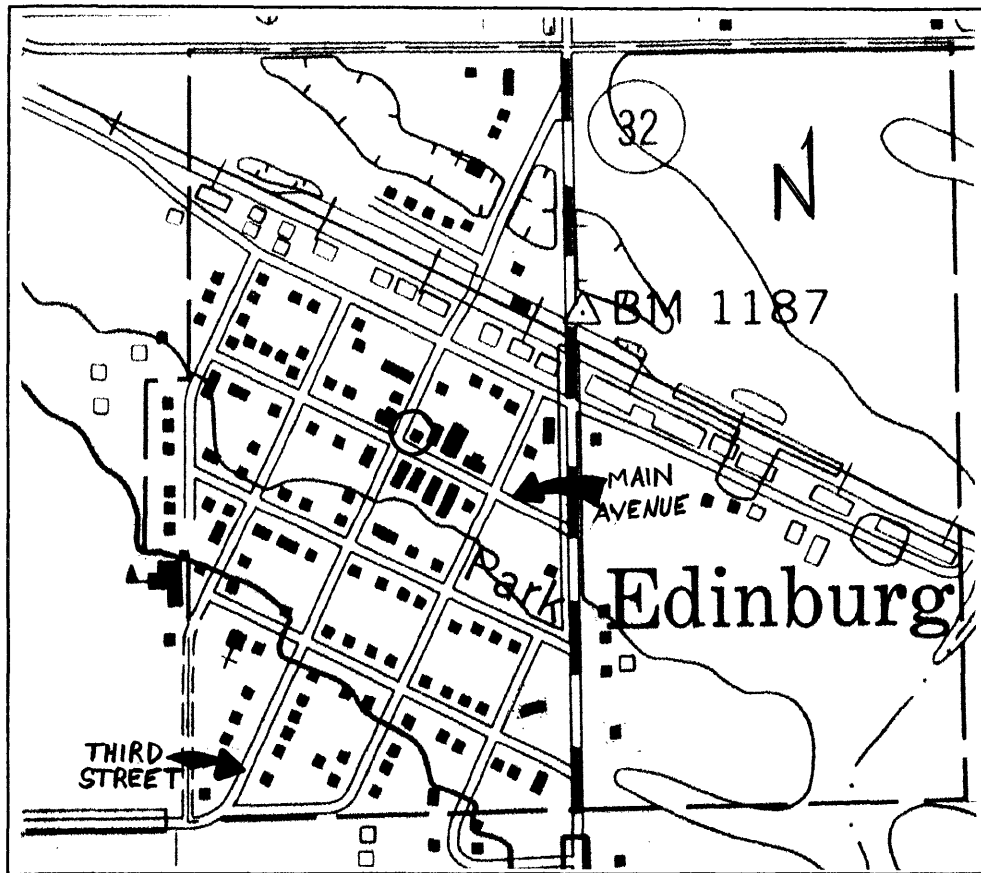
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Site map showing location of State Bank of Edinburg (Citizens State Bank). The map is adapted from "Edinburg, North Dakota, Quadrangle," 1963.

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Photographer: Denis Gardner, Hess, Roise and Company

Date: September 12, 2000

Negatives: Hess, Roise and Company, Minneapolis

- No. 1 Front (southwest) facade and southeast side. View to northwest.
- No. 2 Northeast rear and northwest side. View to southeast.
- No. 3 Detail of teller window. View to north.
- No. 4 Entrance to bank vault. View to northeast.