

STATE:  
Minnesota

COUNTY:  
Blue Earth

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE  
JUL 30 1974

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Old First National Bank of Mankato

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
First National Bank of Mankato

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
229 ~~South~~ Front Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Mankato

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
Second

STATE: Minnesota CODE: 22 COUNTY: Blue Earth CODE: 013

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PUBLIC ACQUISITION: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered			
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify)

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
First National Bank of Mankato

STREET AND NUMBER:  
229 South Front Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Mankato

STATE:  
Minnesota

CODE:  
22

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Blue Earth County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
204 South Fifth Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Mankato

STATE:  
Minnesota

CODE:  
22

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Minnesota Historical Society - Statewide Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: August 1, 1973  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Minnesota Historical Society

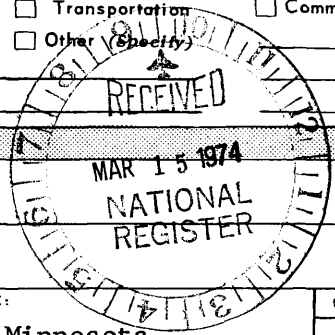
STREET AND NUMBER:  
Fort Snelling, Building 25

CITY OR TOWN:  
St. Paul

STATE:  
Minnesota

CODE:  
22

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: Minnesota

COUNTY: Blue Earth

ENTRY NUMBER: JUL 30 1974

DATE: [ ]

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The First National Bank is a two story rectangular volume of brick, stone and terracotta occupying an urban corner site. The exterior of the building consists of a seven and a half foot base of tan ashlar sandstone surmounted by walls of deep red rough-faced Roman brick over an underlying structure of reinforced concrete piers and lintels. On the Hickory street side of the bank eleven symmetrical strip windows in stained glass alternate with stone and brick pilasters capped by organic voluted capitals in terracotta. This strong vertical emphasis is stabilized by the insertion of terracotta panels in green, buff, red and slate blue which separate the base from the brickwork, by steel transoms in the plate glass windows protecting the stained glass, a row of brick headers over the windows and by the horizontal accents of the terracotta frieze and cornice. A similar arrangement is employed on the Front Street entrance except that a heavy sandstone encasement around the recessed bronze door frame with foliate ornamentation. The only other openings in the field of masonry are four rectangular plate glass windows capped with flat, sandstone arches and terracotta keystone ornaments at the first floor level between the corners and strip windows.

The two story interior space over the central, public area has a reinforced concrete ceiling divided into coffers with a central, stained glass skylight. This atrium repeats the proportion, ornament, color, and materials of the exterior decorative program on all four walls with the sandstone encasement of the main entrance echoed over the vault doors on the northeast wall. Light fixtures and teller cages have been frequently remodeled over the years with no major change to the basic structure.

In December 1962 the bank expanded the atrium space 22 feet to the north on the first floor level which caused a change in the board room staircase, but care was taken by Allen Ross, the architect, to preserve the visual integrity of the original Ellerbee & Round design.

Urban renewal will cause the replacement of three adjacent buildings to the north by the Nelson developing firm of Mason City, Iowa, and the attachment with flashings of a two-story climate controlled mall along the front and flank of the bank building. Since the firm will be moving to its new location, the First National Bank of Mankato building is to be put up for sale.



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **August, 1913**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |  |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture  | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art          | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |                                      |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Recognized by local residents as one of Mankato's most handsome commercial structures, the First National Bank of Mankato is indeed the area's finest example of organically integrated Prairie type architecture. Designed by the St. Paul firm of Ellerbee and Round in 1913 and a fine example of their work outside of the Twin Cities area, this well-preserved bank demonstrates the Minneapolis circle of progressive architects' (including Purcell & Elmslie, Colburn & Kees) dedication to Louis Sullivan's Prairie School style and the principles of Complete designing. Its most famous precursor in the region was Louis Sullivan's National Farmers Bank erected in 1907 at Owatonna, Minnesota, to which it can favorably withstand comparison.

All details of fixtures, materials, decoration and proportion are designed especially for this bank and meticulously fitted into the structural scheme. Although an earlier commercial structure in Mankato (Fred Drohn Department Store, 1895, 101 N. Front St., also inspired by Chicago School architecture) attempted an organic designing, its thematic detail was based on McKim's Neo-Classic eclecticism rather than the innovative motifs, rich color, and revealed materials of the First National Bank.

That the oldest banking firm in Mankato should choose to have its edifice erected in the most progressive style of the day at the fantastic sum of \$85,000 is a reflection on the early 20th century businessman's attitudes towards symbolic structure and commercial public relations.

A bank has been located on the corner of Front and Hickory Streets ("the best business corner of the city") since 1865, when J.J. Thornton & Co., Mankato's first permanent banking institution, opened for business. The First National Bank of Mankato bought them out in November of 1868 and has been open for business at that location ever since, replacing the original wood frame structure with a Venetian Gothic brick edifice in 1876, and eventually engaging Ellerbee & Round to erect the nominated building in 1913.

The First National Bank of Mankato in 1868 was the seventh of Minnesota's nationally chartered banks and a growing business in a community of 2,000 to 2,500 people. Mankato at that time was the most important trading center in Minnesota southwest of St. Paul. The firm has chosen to remain in the same block and is constructing a new bank building on the half block facing Second Street. The Ellerbee & Round building is now up for sale.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

newspapers: Mankato Daily Review (defunct) & Mankato Free Press  
 Larson, Drew A. Stylistic and Structural Trends in Selected Mankato Commercial Architecture from 1890 to 1920. Mankato State College thesis. Mankato State College thesis. Mankato, Minnesota. 1971.  
The Western Architect. 1913 Minneapolis, Minnesota (monthly journal) January, 1913  
The Record of 40 Years. 1908. Booklet published by First National Bank of Mankato.  
 resource person: Donna Alexander, executive secretary to the President, First National Bank  
 Nancy Luomala: Mankato, Minnesota, August 1973 Survey Report

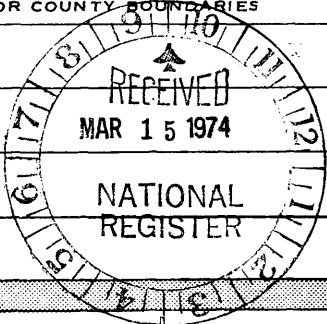
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		44 ° 09 ' 58 "	94 ° 00 ' 13 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **less than 1 acre**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



NO COPY CD SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **Henry M. Harren (Approved by Charles W. Nelson, Supervisor)**

ORGANIZATION: **Minnesota Historical Society** DATE: **March 5, 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Fort Snelling, Building 25**

CITY OR TOWN: **St. Paul** STATE: **Minnesota** CODE: **22**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: Russell W. Fridley  
 Russell W. Fridley, Director

Title: Minnesota Historical Society

Date: March 11, 1974

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

A. R. Montrose  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 7/30/74

ATTEST: W. J. [Signature]  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 7.26.74





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

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**Note: These changes apply to  
Old First National Bank of Mankato  
in Blue Earth County, Minnesota.**

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** 74001004

**STATE:** MINNESOTA

**COUNTY:** Blue Earth

**RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC):** First National Bank of Mankato

**CITY:**

**VICINITY OF:**

**ADDRESS:**

**CERTIFICATION DATE:**

**REMOVED DATE:**

**COMMENTS:**

*Nina M. Archabal*

**Nina M. Archabal  
State Historic Preservation Officer**

**JUN 17 1988**

**Date**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)*

STATE Minnesota	
COUNTY Blue Earth	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JUL 30 1974	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

<b>1. NAME</b>			
COMMON:	Old First National Bank of Mankato		
AND/OR HISTORIC:	First National Bank of Mankato		
<b>2. LOCATION</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
229 South Front Street			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Mankato			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Minnesota	22	Blue Earth	013
<b>3. MAP REFERENCE</b>			
SOURCE:			
Plat Map of Mankato (Locator Map Section of Plat)			
SCALE:	1" - 200'		
DATE:			
<b>4. REQUIREMENTS</b>			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

