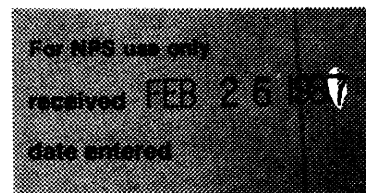


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SITE PE-11

NAME Rockford Number 40 School

LOCATION Fifteen miles northeast of Bison,
Perkins County (105), South Dakota (046)

OWNER Rockford Township Hall
Joanne Seim, Treasurer
Star Route Box 21
Shadehill, South Dakota 57653

CLASSIFICATION Buildings, private, NA acquisition,
unoccupied, restricted access, vacant

DESCRIPTION Excellent condition, unaltered, original
site

Located on the grassy rolling prairie of Perkins County about fifteen miles northeast of Bison, the county seat the Rockford Number 40 School is a one room, rectangular wood-frame structure with a gable roof covered with green composition shingles. The school is entered through a doorway which is centered in the south (front) facade. The doorway is surmounted by a single pane glass transom and a roofed entry supported simple knee braces. Fenestration includes four large rectangular nine-over-six light windows with surrounds and a smaller four-over-four light rectangular window on the east facade and a large rectangular six-over-six light window on the west facade. A red brick chimney rises through the ridgeline at the rear of the building.

The interior of the structure is in good condition with the vestibule or entry lighted by windows on both sides, and the single large classroom light by windows on the east side.

The school rests on a poured concrete foundation and has a set of three concrete steps which lead to front door.

Two wood-frame outhouses are located to the south of the school. They are painted white and the gabled roofs are covered with green composition shingles.

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Rockford No. 40 School PE-11 2

SIGNIFICANCE 1900-present, education

DATE: ca. 1900 BUILDER: Not Available

Constructed ca. 1900, the Rockford Number 40 School served the educational needs of rural northern Perkins County for many years until it was converted into a Township Hall. A common practice in rural western South Dakota, buildings that are no longer in use are converted to be used for another purpose, or moved to another location where they can be used in areas where a building of special specifications is needed, thus the Rockford Number 40 School became the Rockford Township Hall.

General William Henry Harrison Beadle was a leading figure in the early development of South Dakota's educational system. He was credited as being "the father of education in the two Dakotas, the man who saved the endowment and school lands in these states and the originator of the plan that Congress applied to many other states that have since been admitted into the Union." (3) By 1916, there were 5,041 one-teacher rural schools in South Dakota but due to a declining population and consolidation with larger schools, this number dwindled to 80 by 1986. (4) Hence, the Rockford Number 40 School represents the one-room rural school that is an important vanishing landmark in South Dakota.

The Rockford Number 40 School, like most rural schools constructed in South Dakota before 1915, was a one-room rectangular, gable-roofed structure. This type of rural schoolhouse had developed in the eastern United States around 1840 and was derived from the nave-plan rectangular churches. The school appears as it did when it was constructed with its frame siding, frame window surrounds, and interior architectural detailing intact.

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QUADRANGLE NAME Bison, NE SD UTM 13/705310/5082710

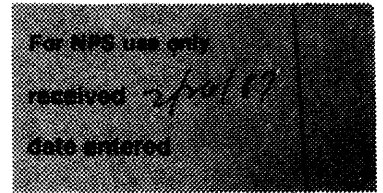
QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000 ACREAGE Less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the nominated property are considered to be a set of four imaginary lines. The north boundary lies ten feet from the northern exterior wall of the school. The east boundary lies ten feet from the swings. The south boundary lies ten feet from the exterior southern walls of the outhouses, and connects to the western boundary which lies ten feet from the exterior of the western most outhouse. The site is located in the NW quarter of the NE quarter of Section 23, Township 20 North, Range 14 East in Perkins County, South Dakota.

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