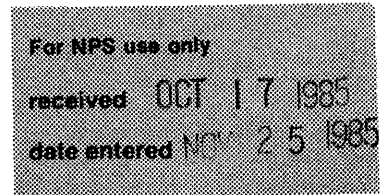


**United States Department of the Interior  
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**National Register of Historic Places  
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NAME: Ransom County Courthouse

LOCATION: Fifth Avenue West, bounded west by Elm Street and east by Forest Street, Lisbon, North Dakota 38, Ransom County 073.

OWNER: Ransom County, Lisbon, North Dakota.

ACREAGE: Less than one acre.

VBD (LEGAL): South 1/2 of lots 2 and 7, all of lots 3-6, Block 4, Burhytes First Addition, Lisbon, North Dakota.

UTM: Zone 14, Easting = 601065, Northing = 5143800; Lisbon, N. Dak. Quad.

DESCRIPTION: Ransom County's courthouse has three stories under a flat roof. The 60'x 100' building is composed of five structural components, or bays. The outside bay on each side of the front facade is smaller than and set back from the three central bays. The central bay, i.e. the entrance, bears pronounced decorative elements in boldly fluted pilasters which frame the door and stairwell windows, comparably lined spandrels, and a patterned lintel over the stairwell windows and pilasters. "RANSOM COUNTY COURT HOUSE" appears on the freize. Steel joists wrapped in concrete slab support the center of the building; the floors and ceilings of vaults are of reinforced concrete. Common brick makes up the interior walls. The building rests upon a granite base, and load bearing hollow tile backs up the Bedford stone exterior. Floors are finished with terrazzo. Marble wainscoating accompanies stairs, bathrooms, and public corridors. The visual lines of the courtroom continue the exterior Deco styling. The walls convey vertical lines; lines on the wood paneling behind the judge's bench are on a diagonal; and the hanging light fixtures carry horizontal lines. The site also contains a stone memorial in front of the courthouse. No noticeable alterations to the building could be detected.

SIGNIFICANCE; Date: 1935-38

Architect: Ira Rush  
Contractor: Unknown

This building is significant in Ransom County history for representing the decision among county residents to maintain the county seat at Lisbon. Although the seat had been located at Lisbon for fifty years by mid-1930's, a sentiment grew to have it relocated north, to Enderlin. A bond issue to finance construction of a new courthouse in Lisbon failed in two 1935 elections due to efforts of those who supported the move. Another bond election in 1937 proved successful for Lisbon. The construction expenses incurred as a result, and the perceived permanence of the new structure, provided a stabilizing effect on the seat's location. The work was more than 25% of a \$400,000 construction boom that year which signaled the end of the severest effects of the Depression on the area's economy. WPA financing and acceptance of bonded indebtedness by county voters together formed an innovative economic package which revitalized the depressed economy of Ransom and other counties throughout the state.

The building is significant in architectural history as one of Minot architect Ira Rush's several courthouse commissions. Also, it is a distinctive representative of the Art Deco style among the state's courthouses, and is the only example in the

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southeastern portion of the state. A windshield survey of Lisbon revealed that no local buildings approach the courthouse's expressive Deco styling. The courthouse appears to be exceptionally significant in both the local historical and architectural contexts.

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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.