Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY		<u>.</u>	
RECEIVED JUN 2 5	1979		
DATE ENTERED		JG <u>3</u>	1979

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

NAME					
HISTORIC	Masonic Block				
AND/OR COMMON					
	Dakota Business Col	lege, Watkins Block			
LOCATION					
STREET & NUMBER	11 South Eighth Stre	et			
CITY, TOWN	Fargo		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT		
STATE	14190	VICINITY OF		CODE	
	North Dakota	38	Cass	017	
CLASSIFICA	ATION				
CATEGORY	RY OWNERSHIP STATUS		PRESENTUSE		
district X_building(s)	public _Xprivate	XOCCUPIED		MUSEUM	
STRUCTURE	_APRIVATE BOTH	UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS	LCOMMERCIAL	PARK	
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMENT	PRIVATE RESIDENC	
OBJECT		YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC	
	BEING CONSIDERED	X YES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	TRANSPORTATION	
		NO	MILITARY	OTHER:	
OWNER OF	PROPERTY				
NAME	F. Leland Watkins, J	r., et. al.			
STREET & NUMBER	384 Eighth Avenue So	uth		·····	
CITY, TOWN			STATE	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
	Fargo		North Dakota	a 58102	
LOCATION	OF LEGAL DESCR	IPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ET	^{rc.} Register of Deeds	, Cass County			
STREET & NUMBER	County Courthouse		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	······································	
CITY, TOWN	county courtinouse	<u>- 2002 2011 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000</u>	STATE	、 	
	Fargo		North Dakota	a <u>58102</u>	
REPRESENT	FATION IN EXIST	ING SURVEYS			
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DATE		FFDFRAI CT/	ATECOUNTYLOCAL	*	
DEPOSITORY FOR					
SURVEY RECORDS			STATE		
GLET, LOVVIN			SIAIE		

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

X ORIGINAL SITE UNALTERED EXCELLENT ___DETERIORATED ALTERED X_{GOOD} DATE_ ___RUINS ___MOVED ___FAIR ___UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Masonic Block was constructed in 1884 as the first Masonic Temple in Fargo, with prominent facade on South Eighth Street. In 1906 a major wing was constructed which fronts on Main Avenue. The three-story brick structure dominates and terminates a block of fine brick commercial buildings on South Eighth Street between Main Avenue and First Avenue South, near the heart of the Fargo business district.

The original east facade rises in three stories, with the second and third levels divided into three bays and the ground level divided by buttressed piers into six equal bays. The facade is distinguished by an ornate tin cornice that is supported by four corbeled piers in dark red brick, and further supported by a corbel line of arcaded arches on the outside bays of the third story. The frieze of the outside bays is adorned with alternating brackets and rosettes worked in the metal. The four-pier motif through the cornice and terminates in four footed and banded knob finials. The center bay rises an additional eight feet above the horizontal cornice in an eared gable supported by alternating corbel courses.

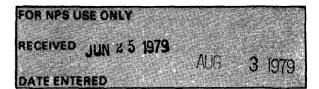
The bays of the upper two stories are symetrical, with windows crowned in segmental arches and set on light-colored stone sills. The outside bays consist of two separate rectangular windows, while the center bays have double rectangular windows with wooden mullions. All third-story windows have fixed transoms in colored glass. Above the third story central bay rises a recessed Gothic arch, within which is imbedded the tin name plate. A date plate, also of tine, is applied to the wall face above the Gothic arch. The six ground floor bays consist of five large rectangular singlepane windows and a single door in the northernmost bay. Each of the six bays has a blind transom. A sign in metal letters is applied to the spandrel between the first and second story windows.

The original facade has been altered by the removal of a plumed finial atop the gable and removal of a metal sign that was attached at the spandrel between the second and third story windows. The original ground floor treatment was in wood and cast iron, and consisted of four window bays between two doors. Transoms of colored glass, similar to the present transoms over the third story windows, topped each ground-level bay. A tin frieze with rosettes crowned the ground story, and a single scalloped awning served the forty-foot front. These features were removed or altered to the present appearance in 1921.

The facade of the 1916 wing, fronting on Main Avenue, also rises three stories, and is constructed of red brick with white marble pilaster feet and capitals, stringlines, and ornamentation. The facade is most distinguished by the appearance of the four tall third-story windows that have radiating keystone arch heads. The third story is further ornamented with band and dentil corbeling, a low arched gable, and a nameplate within the gable. The second floor of the facade features a large square central window with opaque transom, separated from a narrow rectangular light on each side by buttressed pilasters with Ionic capitals. A festoon in white marble graces

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each end of the spandrel between the second and third floor windows. The ground floor consists of three recessed bays occupied in two large show windows and a door. The upper stories of this facade have apparently not been altered from original construction, but the ground floor bay treatment and awning have been changed to accomodate modern window and door treatments.

The latteral and rear walls of the L-shaped structure are constructed of common brick and are load-bearing walls. The slightly parapeted lateral walls of both wings step downward away from the facades. The arcaded corbel line of the original facade is continued in a corbel line along the lateral walls of the original structure. Nonfacade fenestration in both wings is asymetrical, and consists of tall segmentally arched bays. Six chimneys that rose along the lateral walls of the original building have been replaced with a single chimney at the rear of the original structure.

The interior of the original building remains much as it appeared following a remodeling in 1921. The ground floor is occupied in a single open classroom with marble officer cages, wainscoting, and low partition walls. The second floor is occupied in offices and small rooms that open off the central corridor. The corridor is treated in fir wainscoting and trim, and a partition of oak, granite, glass, and iron separates the north end of the corridor from office rooms. The third floor is occupied in a single room with sixteen-foot ceiling and has a small observation balcony on the south end. Both the first and third story ceilings are finished in ornate pressed metal. All floors on the upper two stories of both wings of the building are hardwood, in some cases covered with tile or linoleum.

The interior of the ground floor of the 1906 wing is occupied by the FM Flooring Company, and alterations have apparently been made to facilitate display and storage activities. The second story interior contains a long classroom with desks and other furniture used in the Dakota Business College. The third floor consists of small classrooms and other rooms now used for storage.

⁸ SIGN	IFICANCE			
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PERIOD	AR	EAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	
PREHISTOHIC 1400-1499 1500-1599 1600-1699 1700-1799 X_1800-1899	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC AGRICULTURE ART COMMERCE	COMMUNITY PLANNING CONSERVATION ECONOMICS EDUCATION ENGINEERING EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LAW LITERATURE MILITARY MUSIC PHILOSOPHY	RELIGION SCIENCE SCULPTURE SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN THEATER TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	ES 1884, 1906	INDUSTRY INVENTION BUILDER/ARCH	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT HITECT Charles N. Dan Andrew McHench	OTHER(SPECIFY) iels, Architect Builder

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Masonic Block is one of the outstanding examples of early commercial architecture in Fargo. The original portion of the structure was designed by Architect Charles N. Daniels, and was one of a very few commercial structures to survive a devastating fire that swept the Fargo business district in 1893. The high Victorian features of the facade looked down on a business district of fine brick buildings that were constructed between 1893 and about 1910. The Masonic Block is located about midway between the two most prominent historic structures of Fargo, the Cass County Courthouse and Cass Gilbert's Northern Pacific Depot (National Register, 1975).

The Masonic Block was constructed in 1884 as a speculative venture by Andrew McHench, second actual settler of the Fargo townsite and first Superintendent of Schools. McHench apparently built the structure in part to house the Masonic Shiloh Lodge No. 8, and that group leased the third story from 1885 until 1889. The ground floor was occupied in two small shops or stores until 1921.

The building is best known, however, for its distinguished role in the history of education in Fargo and the region. In 1887 Fargo College, a liberal arts institution promoted by the General Association of Congregational Churches, was established in the Masonic Block. Fargo College occupied the upper floors of the building until 1890, when the first of several large buildings were completed on the school campus. Fargo College operated only until 1922, however, when it was forced to close for lack of funds.

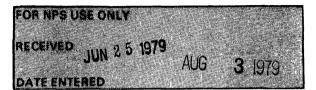
In 1891 the Dakota Business College was established in the Masonic Block by F.L. Watkins, and the building remained occupied in this commercial training school until the institution closed in 1978. Watkins acquired the property in 1903 and added the wing to the north in 1906. The Dakota Business College was the most prestigious school of its kind in the history of North Dakota, producing graduates prominant in state and national politics, industry, commerce, government, and military affairs. Many of the furnishings and some equipment of the school remain intact within the building, especially in the 1906 wing. The building now serves as a bulwark against the probable destruction of several frame commercial structures of the 1885-1905 period that are located within the ell of the business college. Because of its location and architectural character, the Masonic Block and attached wing are a focal point for the older commercial buildings of the area.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

						1 - C
		Dakota 1804	1-1964, (Graft	on: The Record Pr	inters, 1964))
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STATE	······································	CODE	COUNTY		CODE	
II FORM PRI	EPARED BY					
NAME / TITLE	Kunt Schwoigont	Anchitactu				
ORGANIZATION	Kurt Schweigert,	Architecti	Indi historian	DATE		
	State Historical	Society of	[*] North Dakota	May 22, 197	9	
STREET & NUMBER	Liberty Memorial	Building		теlерноме (701)224-267	2	
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STATE HISTORIC PR	ESERVATION OFFICER SIGNA		mes Z. M	here 6/	18/1979	
TITLE State	Historic Preserva	tion Office	r (North Dakot	ta) DATE		
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Fargo-Moorhead Centennial Corporation, <u>A Century Together</u>, <u>A History of Fargo</u>, <u>North</u> <u>Dakota and Moorhead</u>, <u>Minnesota</u>, (Fargo, 1975) p. 65.

Atlas of Cass County, North Dakota (Fargo, 1906) pp. 94, 128, 150.

"School's out at Dakota Business," The Fargo Forum, September 9, 1978, p.5.