

PH0368598

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 9 1976

DATE ENTERED APR 11 1977

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
 AND/OR COMMON

Hurd Round House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

7 miles southeast of

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Hurdsfield

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1

STATE

North Dakota

VICINITY OF

CODE

38

COUNTY

Wells

CODE

103

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY		OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Wells County Historical Society

(1-acre easement from Junius and Eldora Ryberg, Hurdsfield, North Dakota 58451)

STREET & NUMBER

Post Office Box 554

CITY, TOWN

Fessenden

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Dakota 58438

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Wells County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Post Office Box 125

CITY, TOWN

Fessenden

STATE

North Dakota 58438

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

North Dakota Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1976

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of North Dakota  
Liberty Memorial Building

CITY, TOWN

Bismarck

STATE

North Dakota 58505

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Not actually round in plan, the 2-story, 16 by 24-foot Hurd Round House, a former land office, derives its name from a circular roof which is supported by six columns (four of which are replacements) upon a nearly circular porch floor and cut-stone foundation. There are also two half-round columns at each corner on the rear of the white frame structure, where the west elevation meets the porch. A dentiled molding follows the curved line of the fascia around the entire exterior. Shingles on the truncated conical roof are not original, but the flag pole still atop the circular deck was raised with the building. The deck, approximately twenty-five feet from the ground, is also pierced by a yellow brick chimney and the roof slopes by four gable dormers with overhang. The north, south, and east dormers contain windows, and the vertical board door in the west dormer formerly gave access to the upper story by means of an outside stairway (now removed for the safety of visitors). When the Round House was used as a land office, buyers would mount to the second story to view the countryside through telescopes from the dormers. The ten 1 over 1 windows on the main floor, as well as the single entrance on the east elevation, are all framed with cornice headings. The door has a large, ornate lock plate with thumb latch, and its original frosted upper light has been replaced with wood panels.

On the interior is a reception room with two smaller offices located west of it and entered through single 5-panel doors from which the hardware has been removed. Walls and the 9-foot high ceilings are white plaster, and the exposed floor is painted brown and bordered by wide baseboards. Windows have cornices enriched with egg-and-dart molding, and all standing wood trim is black walnut painted a dark russet. On the west wall of the reception room is a fireplace with a cast-iron firebox and grate labeled "Peerless Mfg. Co. Pat. July 19, 1892." Furnishings, sparse to deter vandalism since the building is isolated and unguarded, consist of two wooden pew-type benches and a pair of tall rectangular wall mirrors in varnished frames. The appointments only suggest the original décor, which included scenic wallpaper, green tiles in the fireplace surround, settees with carved walnut frames and leather upholstery, chairs, and a parlor table.

The grounds of the Hurd Round House are planted in prairie grass and enclosed by a wire fence on wooden posts. Southwest of the site is a stone springhouse which once provided water for both the Round House and the ranch house of its builder, down the hill to the southeast, and which still supplies the present proprietor of the ranch.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1900

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Warren Hurd (Builder)  
Elgin Hurd (Architect)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Hurd Round House is significant for its unique architectural form and for its role in the settlement of Wells County, North Dakota. It was erected in 1900 on the northwest quarter of Section 17 in Silver Lake Township, high on the eastern slope of a hillside which forms part of a range stretching approximately twenty miles westward. The Round House was designed and built as a land office for Warren Hurd by his brother Elgin, a carpenter and stonemason who had also studied architecture. Warren Hurd was born in Fillmore County, Minnesota, in 1865, and later was a farmer, merchant, banker, and realtor in Superior, Iowa. He suffered severe losses in the nationwide panic of 1893 but within a few years recouped sufficiently to purchase for resale and development ten sections of Northern Pacific Railway lands in Wells County.

Chartered by Congress to build a railroad from Duluth, Minnesota, to Seattle, Washington, the Northern Pacific had received in 1864 a land grant of over 50 million acres, 8 million of which were in North Dakota, to help finance construction. Checker-boarded across the state on odd-numbered sections in a strip 50 miles wide on either side of the right-of-way, the grant included roughly all of the southern portion of Wells County. The Northern Pacific tracks reached Bismarck in 1873, but in the economic collapse of that year the company became bankrupt, its stocks falling from \$100 a share on the market to less than \$10. It then initiated an intensive sales campaign, advertising its North Dakota lands at \$2.00 to \$6.00 an acre and offering to redeem its shares of stock at full value in exchange for the lands. Spurred on by the success of bonanza wheat farms in eastern North Dakota, eager settlers and speculators, including Warren Hurd, in time brought a "boom" to Wells County, typified by the founding of the town of Hurdsfield in 1902 on land donated by Hurd.

The Round House was the scene of Hurd's sales transactions and was located on a ranch which he also operated, although he continued to make his permanent home in St. Paul, Minnesota. Potential buyers were driven out to the Round House by surrey or spring wagon from Bowdon, the nearest railroad station, and were boarded at the nearby ranch house. Visitors usually stayed for several days to inspect tracts available for purchase or homestead entry, and sales were concluded over drinks and cards in the reception room of the land office. The building presumably continued to serve the purpose for which it was built until 1909, when Hurd's personal property at the ranch, including furnishings, stock, and equipment, was sold and the land leased. In 1912 Hurd sold Section 17 itself, and after a succession of owners, the Round House was saved from dereliction a decade ago by the Wells County Historical Society. After obtaining a 1-acre easement on the site from the owners, Albert E. and Nels Thormodsgaard (a right continued by Junius and Eldora Ryberg), the newly formed society expended \$1500 on the restoration of the Round House as its initial project, with labor done by members without compensation. Despite its remote location, the landmark is visited by hundreds of tourists monthly during the summer season.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- "Hurd Round House; A Brief History." Pamphlet published by Wells County Historical Society.  
 Killie, E.S. Curator, Wells County Historical Society Museum, Fessenden, North Dakota. Personal interview, August 3, 1976.  
 Maddox, Dawn. Personal inspection, August 4, 1976.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES not available because USGS map not yet published.

Longitude: 99° 52' 40.1"

Latitude: 47° 23' 03.4"

A 


ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 


B 


ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D 


VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Dawn Maddox, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society of North Dakota

DATE

October 20, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

Liberty Memorial Building

TELEPHONE

(701)224-2666

CITY OR TOWN

Bismarck

STATE

North Dakota 58505

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE X

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Jana E. Sherry*

TITLE

N.D. State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

10/26/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

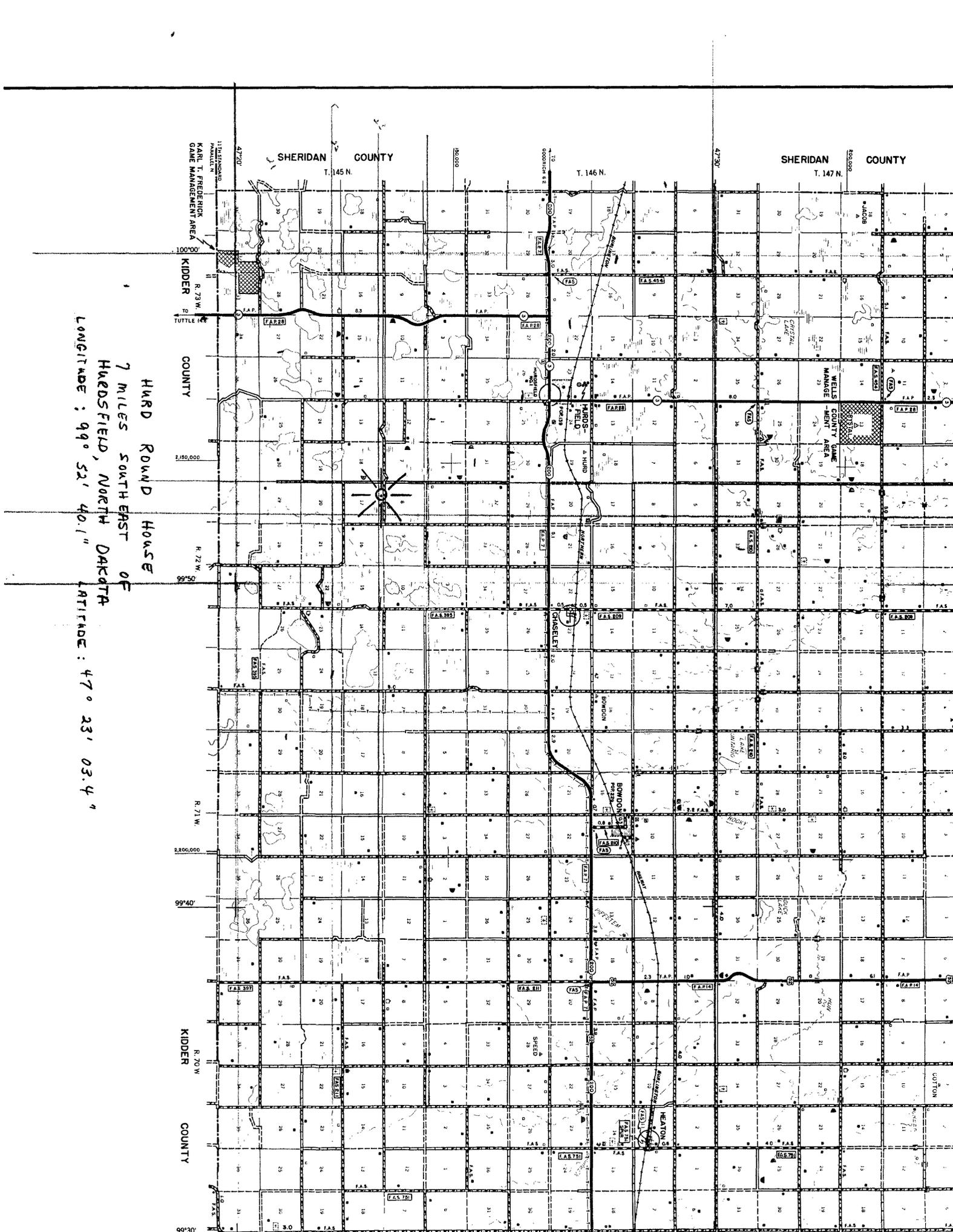
4/11/77

ATTEST

DATE

3/15/77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



7 MILES SOUTH EAST OF  
 HURDSFIELD, NORTH DAKOTA  
 LONGITUDE : 99° 52' 40.1"    LATITUDE : 47° 23' 03.4"