

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received **APR - 7 1983**

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Powers Hotel (Preferred)

and/or common The 400

2. Location

street & number 400 Broadway _____ not for publication

city, town Fargo _____ vicinity of

state North Dakota code 38 county Cass code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name The 400 Associates

street & number 1700 S. 8th St.

city, town Fargo _____ vicinity of state North Dakota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cass County Courthouse

street & number 211 S. 9th St.

city, town Fargo _____ vicinity of state North Dakota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title _____ has this property been determined eligible? yes _____ no

date _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of North Dakota

city, town Bismarck _____ vicinity of state North Dakota

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The east facade of the Powers Hotel is a symmetrical, balanced composition rendered in cream white terra cotta, white stone, and hard red face brick. It is broken horizontally by belt and trim courses at the first floor and between the third and fourth floors. Originally the building was three stories with a brick and stone parapet. This parapet was removed in the 1919 addition of two floors by Fargo architect William F. Kurke. The windows are symmetrically arranged and are composed as one-over-one panes. Windows on the edges of the facade are trimmed with terra cotta toothed into the brick on the top two floors, and stone toothed into the brick on the second and third floors. The entry is unaltered and is covered by a large metal canopy which carries the name "Powers Hotel." Above the front doors, as above all first floor windows, are stained and beveled glass transoms set in a simple vertical pattern of a geometrically stylized plant form, which was a popular ornamental theme of Sullivanesque designers. Large square single pane windows flank the hotel entry and have a transom panel of the leaded glass pattern as occurs over the hotel entry.

The north half of the first floor on the east facade was divided into two commercial areas. In 1938 the space was remodeled from two shops into one coffee shop. This coffee shop was designed in the art moderne style and was good example of the style's emphasis on the surface, reflective claddings, continuity of line, and simplicity of form, emphasizing the curve. The coffee shop remodeling added a large rectangular storefront window terminating in a semicircular end. This curve also occurred in the canopy over the cafe entry. A neon sign advertising the coffee shop was in a continuous reveal which was above and parallel to the window. This art moderne front was damaged when it was remodeled in 1975. The structural pigmented glass was replaced with stucco and a mansard style canopy. The window with its semicircular end remain as well as an untouched interior.

The south facade is much the same as the east. It is approximately one third longer than the east and is not divided into any vertical bays with the exception of the southeast corner which protrudes approximately 8 inches from the remainder of the wall to add some emphasis and verticality to the corner. Materials are the same as the east facade, as are the distinctive terra cotta ornamental "badges" which, along with an increase in parapet height, help accentuate the corners or limits to the facade composition. The ornamental pattern is distinctively a Sullivanesque, organic theme, although its shallow relief and occurrence on a few other structures around the midwest mark this ornament as a stock pattern, perhaps from the American Terra Cotta Company, and was probably not an original composition by Kurke. This ornament, nonetheless, may be the best example of Sullivanesque ornament surviving in Fargo.

Other features of the south facade are the large single pane and double hung windows of the first floor. All have transom lights of leaded glass in the same pattern described on the east facade. A black painted iron and steel fire escape is hung on the eastern half of this facade. It extends from the fifth floor to the first floor and appears to have been added in the 1919 addition of the top two floors by Kurke.

The west and north elevations are quite unlike the south and east in that they are treated as the "back door," which they are for this building. These elevations are constructed of common yellow brick. Although this is a very soft brick no major signs of deterioration are visible.

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The west facade is composed only to the extent of aligning vertically most openings. This effort was not carried through to the center, where a stair occurs inside and disrupts window placement. A fire escape on the outside lends an asymmetrical balance to the two story chimney on the north edge. The facade is stepped at the point of the addition of 1919, apparently to avoid placing guest windows too close to the existing chimney. The lower portions of this facade show evidence of the removal of small sheds or additions. At the top is visible a sign painted on the brick which reads "Hotel Powers Fireproof."

The north elevation is for the most part not visible, concealed by an adjacent three story building, also constructed by T. F. Powers at approximately the same time as the Powers Hotel. The visible portion is the two floor addition by Kurke in 1919, and is constructed of soft yellow Fargo common brick. There are few openings, and as such, few elements to compose. A sign painted on the brick which reads "The Powers Hotel" in art moderne letters on the east edge of this facade is visible from Broadway.

The building is rectangular in plan and occupies a lot which has street exposure from Broadway on the east, Fourth Avenue on the south, and Roberts Street on the west. The building is built up to lot lines on the north, east, and south. It occupies roughly two-thirds of its lot and has parking and service access from Roberts Street on the west.

The basement occupies the full building footprint, is rectangular in plan, and is served by two elevators; one passenger elevator in the east core and one for service in the west core. The basement's principle use was as mechanical and storage. A small barber/beauty shop, accessible from the east elevator or stair and from a sidewalk stairwell, occupies the east portion of the basement under the hotel lobby.

The ground floor, rectangular in plan, is divided by a party wall down the center into the hotel lobby on the south and the coffee shop on the north. The hotel lobby was designed as a large single room with coffered plaster ceiling. The stair to the guest rooms winds around the elevator and is the only object in the lobby to touch the ceiling. The desk and office are in the northwest corner of the space and extend only eight feet up, stopping four feet short of the twelve-foot-high-ceiling. A single line of columns extends through the center of the space running east-west. Interior plaster ornamentation is restricted to a simple cove at the ceiling and a shallow relief pattern of blocks as a wainscot. Behind the desk is a large meeting room separated from the lobby by a pair of leaded and beveled glass doors. This room has a door to the kitchen of the adjacent coffee shop. The coffee shop is a large room with three columns down the center running east-west. The major features are high-backed booths, painted in a high gloss enamel, and a continuously curving soffit which extends from facade back to coffee bar and back to facade. The soffit is striped with an indirect blue neon light which is continuous for the soffit length. The coffee bar is centered in the space and is clad in black structural pigmented glass, as are the columns and the wall behind the coffee bar separating eating from food preparation areas.

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The second and third floors are similar in their square doughnut shape and arrangement of 28 hotel rooms along a double loaded corridor and looking out into a lightwell or the building perimeter. The rooms were generous in height having nine-and-a-half-foot ceilings, double hung windows, and transoms over room entries which aided natural ventilation. Most rooms had their own baths in the room. These were separate rooms with floor levels six inches above the hotel rooms, presumably to accommodate plumbing. Walls between rooms and corridor walls were pyro bar gypsum block covered with painted plaster.

The fourth and fifth floors were added in 1919 by Kurke, and are similar in their "L" shaped configuration and layout of 22 rooms along a double loaded corridor extending along the east and south portions of the buildings. The rooms look into the lightwell to the north or the perimeter of the building. Rooms on these floors are similar in type, finish and condition to those described in the second and third floors.

The structural frame and floor system for the Powers Hotel is poured in place concrete column and slab. Hollow clay tile blocks are cast in the slab in locations where the more expensive and heavier concrete is not structurally required. This system acts structurally in much the same way a coffered slab does today.

The building is in excellent condition for its age, having a dated mechanical and electrical system. It is a prime property for a sensitive rehabilitation so it may continue to anchor the north Broadway commercial district.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1914, 1919, 1938 **Builder/Architect** Hancock Brothers and William F. Kurke, Architects; T. F. Powers, Builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Powers Hotel is significant for its Sullivanesque architectural style as designed by the Hancock Brothers and William F. Kurke, for its builder, Thomas F. Powers, and for its role in the commercial development of North Broadway in Fargo, North Dakota.

The architectural style of the Powers Hotel can best be described as early Sullivanesque. This is because of its simple massing, absence of classical ornament, simple punched window and door openings, and dynamic organic theme of its parapet ornamentation. The architects for the lower three floors of the Powers Hotel were the Hancock Brothers of Fargo. These men are considered to belong to the small group of architects classed as pioneer architects. The Hancock Brothers are noteworthy not only for their practice in and around Fargo at the turn of the century, but as style setters for the city's architecture. The bulk of Hancock Brothers work is Classical Revival style, which was their mainstay after the Columbian Exposition of 1883. Many examples of this style exist in Fargo today. The Richardsonian Romanesque style was introduced in Fargo by the firm in four projects, of which two remain. The Chicago style, as popularized nationally by William Lebaron Jenny, Holabird and Root, and Louis Sullivan, was introduced to Fargo by the Hancock Brothers in warehouse type projects of which a few survive. But the style which is called Sullivanesque was introduced in only one structure, the Powers Hotel. The bold, simple massing, lack of classical ornament or detail inside or out, and the simple, bold, punched openings of the windows make this the sole existing example of yet another style introduced to the architectural vocabulary of Fargo. William F. Kurke, the architect for the top two floors, recognized this in 1919, and provided a consistent, if not emphatic, addition which has proven to be his only work which can be classified as Sullivanesque or Prairiesque. This is apparent in Kurke's choice for the parapet design, architectural terra cotta, but which was not as rich or imaginative as the work of Sullivan. This apparently "stock" terra cotta was designed to fit in the composition with the ornament, breaking the otherwise clean profile of the parapet.

The builder of the Powers Hotel was Thomas F. Powers, who leased it to his brother Joseph and managed it until 1925, when he moved to the Waldorf Hotel. The Powers family managed the hotel with their sons until 1981, when it was purchased by The 400 Associates Partnership for rehabilitation into elderly housing. T. F. Powers had a financial interest in the Fargoan Hotel, and his sons have always been prominent in the hotel management field in Fargo, managing the Gardner, Powers, Fargoan, and Waldorf Hotels.

Powers acted as a foreman for another contractor before forming his own construction company in 1904. His construction company constructed many city institutions, schools, buildings at North Dakota State Agricultural College, and local hospitals prior to constructing the Powers Hotel. He constructed the Fargoan Hotel. It is of interest to note that after constructing the Fargoan Hotel he built the city's only fireproof hotel for himself.

9. Major Bibliographical References

A Century Together: A History of Fargo, North Dakota and Moorhead, Minnesota. Fargo-Moorhead Centennial Corporation, June, 1975.
Fargo Forum.
Kurke, William, F., Architectural drawings.
Ramsey, Ronald L. M., Fargo-Moorhead - A Guide to Historic Architecture.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than 1 acre.

Quadrangle name Fargo North, N. Dak.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	1 4	6 6 8 5 6 0	5 1 9 3 9 8 0	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

South 70' of Block E Chapin's, Johnson and Barrett's Addition, Fargo, North Dakota.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A
state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael J. O'Brien, Architect, Associate

organization Seth Twichell and Associates

date 1/24/83

street & number 415 3rd Avenue North

telephone (701)237-6825

city or town Fargo

state North Dakota

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 James E. Sherry

title North Dakota State Historic Preservation Officer

date 3/11/83

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

Joan McClelland
Keeper of the National Register

date 5/10/83

Attest: Patrick Andrews

date 5/10/83

Chief of Registration

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The Powers Hotel has a commanding location on Broadway, marking the north entry to the central business district. It has acted as market generator for merchants in the immediate neighborhood. The hotel was constructed as a luxury hotel for passengers of the Great Northern Railroad, which passenger depot is one block north of the hotel. The hotel boasted such civilized amenities as running water in every room, a dining service in the same building, and fireproof construction. In the boom era of the railroads the Powers was a favorite spot for visiting dignitaries, housing as its first guest, James J. Hill, railroad baron from St. Paul, Minnesota. Throughout history, the Powers Hotel has been a gathering spot for political caucuses and political conventions. The coffee shop is known popularly in the Fargo community as one of the first public performing places of North Dakota's Peggy Lee.

The Powers Hotel has been a significant structure through history, although its use as a luxury hotel declined as the popularity of rail travel declined. It is important to note that the building has stood essentially unchanged from its appearance during the heyday of rail travel.