NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME
HISTORIC
First National Bank in Mankato (preferred name)

AND/OR COMMON
First National Bank of Mankato

2 LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
Northwest corner, Commercial and Jefferson

CITY, TOWN
Mankato

STATE
Kansas

CODE
66956

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3 CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
DISTRICT
BUILDING(S)
STRUCTURE
SITE
OBJECT

OWNERSHIP
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION
IN PROCESS
BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS
X OCCUPIED
UNOCCUPIED
WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
YES: RESTRICTED
YES: UNRESTRICTED
NO

PRESENT USE
AGRICULTURE
COMMERCIAL
EDUCATIONAL
ENTERTAINMENT
GOVERNMENT
INDUSTRIAL
MILITARY
MUSEUM
PARK
PRIVATE RESIDENCE
RELIGIOUS
SCIENTIFIC
TRANSPORTATION
OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME
Forrest R. Fair

STREET & NUMBER
501 North High Street

CITY, TOWN
Mankato

STATE
Kansas

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER
Jewell County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN
Mankato

STATE
Kansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
Historic Sites Survey

DATE
1970

FEDERAL
STATE
COUNTY
LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Kansas State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN
Topeka

STATE
Kansas

66612
The First National Bank in Mankato exhibits many of the influences of the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The building was constructed of Kansas City pressed brick on a limestone foundation with limestone trim and a wooden cornice. Located at the northwest corner of Commercial and Jefferson streets, the building dominates the major intersection of Mankato's business district. The building runs 20 feet along Commercial and 50 feet along Jefferson street and is 35 feet high. It has two stories and a basement. The main entrance to the bank addresses the corner and has a heavy stone arch supported by squat red granite columns on limestone pedestals. An electric clock has been hung in the archway under the keystone. Five steps lead up to the recessed doorway which has a fanlight. The imposts of all openings have been joined by a limestone string course. Above this entranceway is an arched window which rests on a limestone string course that connects all the second story window sills. This arched window has heavy limestone voussoirs and quoins. Another limestone string course at the level of the impost continues around the two facades, unifying the windows. The spandrels above the arch have been filled with decorative brickwork that continues up to the brick corbeling which supports the cornice. This cornice is also supported by brick piers which spring from the impost line. The entablature molds around these piers and has three consoles below the cornice. Above the cornice is a solid balustrade with finials capping the piers.

The east facade on Commercial street is dominated by a large arched window on the first story. The window has been divided vertically into three sections and the transom is stained glass. This window aligns with a basement window that has been spanned by a flat arch with limestone voussoirs. Centered above the first story window are two arched windows trimmed in limestone over the arches, on the quoining and also in the infill of the pier separating them. There is decorative brickwork between the voussoirs and the entablature. This entablature has a cornice line supported on brackets and above which is a brick balustrade capped with a plain limestone molding.

The northern bay of the facade projects from the building. There is a doorway on the ground level. The door has been slightly recessed from the main facade and has a transom. The brick piers on either side of the door are corbelled below the impost, and the doorway is spanned with a straight limestone block. A stained glass window has been set in this doorway before the actual door. There is a rectangular panel of decorative brickwork above the doorway. A single arched window with limestone voussoirs and quoins has been placed above the door. This bay is crowned with a pedimental form supported on brick corbels.

The arrangement on the south facade is asymmetrical but unified by the limestone string courses. Just west of the angled entranceway are two arched windows on the first story. A group of three windows has been placed above these on the second story. The decorative treatment of all apertures on this facade is similar to that described for the main entrance and eastern front. Three basement windows have been aligned
The First National Bank building in Mankato was erected in 1887-1888 for the Mankato National Bank Company. That company was formed by a man named Keyes, who represented Eastern financial interests and who was the bank’s first cashier. The banking history of Mankato is in many respects closely linked to the history of this building.

The First National Bank of Mankato was chartered in 1887 and opened for business in August in temporary quarters while its new building was under construction. It had absorbed the town’s oldest bank, Case, Bishop and Co., which had been established in 1877.

Work on the new building began in August, 1887. The contract for construction was awarded to a Clay Center builder. A shortage of material delayed construction for a time in November, but by the spring of 1888 the building was enclosed. The First National Bank of Mankato began banking operations in the new structure on May 23, 1888.

A few years later the First National Bank was absorbed by the Jewell County National Bank. It was soon forced to liquidate, and the building became the property of the American National Bank of Kansas City, which eventually sold the bank building to J. P. Fair around the turn of the century.

John Porter Fair had come to Mankato from Iowa in 1886 and purchased the Bank of Mankato, a private bank which had been founded in 1883. Several years later when a state charter was obtained, he changed the name to Mankato State Bank. The next major event was the move into the vacant former First National Bank building. In 1903 a national charter was secured and the bank was renamed the Mankato National Bank. The final name change occurred in 1923 when it became the First National Bank in Mankato, the "in" distinguishing the name of the present firm from that of the building’s original occupant.

Both the bank and the building are still owned by the Fair family and both continue to play an important role in the financial and business affairs of the community. The building is important to the streetscape of Mankato’s commercial district since it anchors the major business intersection of the community.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
"A Brief History of the First National Bank..." The Western Advocate (Mankato, Kansas), July 25, 1940.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF Nominated Property: 1
UTM REFERENCES

A
B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE
Richard Pankratz Director, Historic Sites Survey
Cornelia Wyma Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION
Kansas State Historical Society

DATE
January 29, 1976

STREET & NUMBER
120 West 10th Street

TELEPHONE
913-296-3251

CITY OR TOWN
Topeka

STATE
Kansas

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION
THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE X 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

TITLE Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

DATE February 4, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
under those on the second story.

The entablature from the east facade has been continued but is broken just past these windows by a corbelled brick chimney. Beyond this chimney are a group of three windows and a brick pier separating another group of two windows on the second story. Four openings on the first story align with those above, and the second one from the end is a doorway.

The west facade is a plain brick wall with several undecorated windows. A small one-story brick addition extends to the west. There is a large brick chimney which projects out from the wall. The north facade is a shared wall.

In 1971 the building was completely refurbished. The stone was sandblasted, a red cement wash was applied to the brick, the wood trim was painted and the cornices repaired. Modern fixed shutters were added to some of the first story windows and an indoor-outdoor carpet laid on the main entranceway steps. The interior was also remodeled.

Except for the time and temperature sign, the electric clock, the shutters, and the indoor-outdoor carpet on the entry steps, the building's external appearance has changed very little from the original.