

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Rapid City Laundry
other names/site number Kellogg's Laundry

2. Location

street & number 312 Main Street N/A not for publication
city or town Rapid City N/A vicinity
state South Dakota code SD county Pennington code 103 zip code 57701

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

Rapid City Laundry
Name of Property

Pennington, South Dakota
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register.
continuation sheet.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

See

determined eligible for the
National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the
National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National
Register.

other, (explain:) _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check only one box) apply)
Category of Property (Check the count)
Number of Resources within Property (Do not include listed resources within as many boxes as

private

public-local

public-state

public-federal

building(s)

district

site

structure

object

Contributing

Noncontributing

1 buildings

_____ sites

_____ structures

_____ objects

1 0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

not part of a

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Specialty Store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Specialty Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls stucco

ceramic tile

roof tar/concrete

other _____

Narrative Description

Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Rapid City Laundry

County and State

Pennington, South Dakota

Name of Property

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the
criteria qualifying the property for the
National Register listing.)

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from
instructions)

Architecture

A Property is associated with events
that have made a significant
contribution to the broad patterns of
our history.

B Property is associated with the lives
of persons significant in our past.

Period of Significance

C Property embodies the distinctive
characteristics of a type, period, or
method of construction or represents
the work of a master, or possesses
high artistic values, or represents a
significant and distinguishable entity
whose components lack individual
distinction.

1928-1929

Significant Dates

1928-1929

D Property has yielded, or is likely to
yield, information important in
prehistory or history.

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is
marked above)

N/A

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

A owned by a religious institution or
used for religious purposes.

Cultural Affiliation

B removed from its original location.

N/A

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

Architect/Builder

E a reconstructed building, object, or
structure.

James C. Ewing/
Ewing and Forrette

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age achieved
significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more
continuation sheets.)

Rapid City Laundry
Name of Property

Pennington, South Dakota
County and State

Previous Documentation on File (NPS):
 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:
 State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State Agency
 Federal Agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository:
Rapid City Public Library

10. Geographical Data

Property Less than one (1) acre Acreage of

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>1/3</u>	<u>6/4/2/4/2/5</u>	<u>4/8/8/2/1/3/0</u>	3	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>
	Zone Easting		Northing		Zone Easting										
2	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>
	Zone Easting		Northing		Zone Easting										
															<u>see continuation sheet</u>

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth A. Butterfield/Barbara M. Kooiman/Christina Slattery

organization U.S. West Research, Inc. date 12 December 1994

street & number 421 Main St., Suite 306 telephone (608) 782-3338

city or town La Crosse state WI zip code 54602

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Rapid City Laundry
Name of Property

Pennington, South Dakota
County and State

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

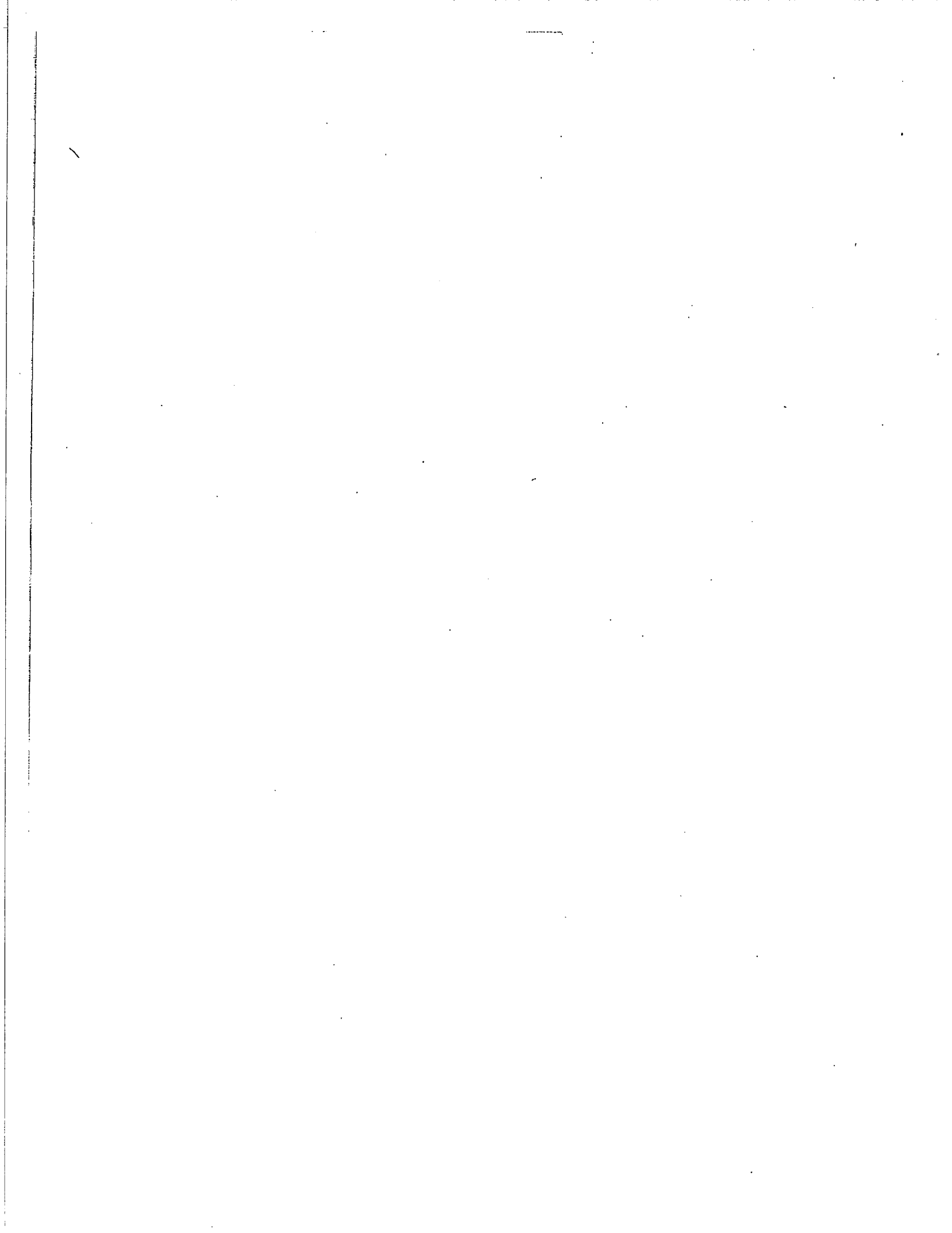
name Gene Williams

street & number 312 Main Street telephone 605/342-0191

city or town Rapid City state South Dakota zip code 57701

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



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Section 7: Description

The Rapid City Laundry Building is a one-story Art Deco style commercial building located in the city of Rapid City, Pennington County, South Dakota. The building was designed in 1928 by James C. Ewing, an architect practicing in Rapid City. In 1929, Theodore Stubstad served as the contractor for the construction of the building.¹ In 1945, an addition was designed by the architectural firm of Forrette and Ewing. It is located to the east of the main building. To the north of the building is a parking lot and warehouse owned by the Rapid City Laundry and the building is flanked by commercial buildings to the east and west. Main Street runs along the south side, front of the Rapid City Laundry Building.

The Rapid City Laundry Building is a one-story facility with a basement and an irregular plan. The commercial building displays a modern broad-front and stretches three bays wide. The wall material on the main building is stucco, while the addition displays small ceramic tile. The roof of the main building is a wood frame pitched gable covered in tar and the addition displays a flat concrete roof.² The foundation is constructed of concrete.

¹Stubstad's office was located at 318 Columbus Street, Rapid City, South Dakota. R.L. Polk, *Polk's Rapid City (South Dakota) Directory 1930-1931*, (Colorado Springs, CO: R.L. Polk Directory Co., 1931); Gene Williams, interview with U.S. West Research, Inc., 27 June 1994.

²Gene Williams, interview with U.S. West Research, Inc., 27 June 1994.

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The front, south-facing main facade fronts Main Street. The building is set back approximately seven feet from the street, and is approached by a concrete sidewalk, running parallel to the street. A stepped parapet roof and two thick brick piers, which "anchor" the corners of the building, ornament the front facade. The main building is symmetrical. A blocked-in single door with a transom is located in the center of the building. Light fixtures, original to the building, ornament each side of the door and a night drop box is located to the east of the entrance. Two windows, which display glass blocks and concrete sills, line the east and west sides of the main entrance. These windows were originally sash six-over-six.³ The word "laundry" is affixed to the front facade over the western windows and the word "cleaners" is affixed over the eastern windows. Directly over the door is a L-shaped neon sign, which measures approximately six feet and reads, "laundry" horizontally and "dry cleaners" vertically.

The main building and the west addition are visually connected by a neon sign of "Mother Rapid," a woman washing clothes in a washtub. The sign, which is located at the point where the roof of the addition meets the main building's roof reads, "Rapid's Wash Woman-Rapid City Laundry." The sign originally faced west, but when Main Street was redesigned as a one-way street running east to west, the sign was turned east to face traffic.⁴ The buildings are also visually connected through the use of white

³Gene Williams, interview with U.S. West Research, Inc., 27 June 1994; Historic Photograph in the collection of Gene Williams, ca.1929.

⁴Mildred Roberts, interview with U.S. West Research, Inc., 27 June 1994.

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and blue paint which covers both facades. The addition was designed in 1945 by the architectural firm of Forrette and Ewing. It was originally set back approximately six feet from the front facade of the original building.⁵

In 1950, an addition was constructed to the front of the 1945 addition, making the entire addition flush with the original building. This new addition served as a snack shop until 1960. when Rapid City Laundry utilized the extra space for its operation.⁶ Small ceramic square tiles cover the front facade of the addition. The majority of the tiles are painted white and three vertical sections are painted blue, which run from the roof to the floor, and line the east and west sides of the facade. Two large plate glass windows with thin mullions and an offset plate glass door consume the lower half of the facade. The words "Rapid City Laundry Cleaners" are affixed to the facade above the plate glass door and windows.

The sides of the main building and addition are difficult to view because the east elevation abuts the addition and the west elevation is located approximately three feet from the neighboring commercial building. Floor plans drawn by James C. Ewing depict that the building was originally constructed with approximately eight windows on the side elevations.⁷ Based upon

⁵Forrette and Ewing, "Blue Prints of Addition to Kellogg's Laundry," July 1945.

⁶Mildred Roberts, telephone conversation with U.S. West Research, Inc., 5 August 1994.

⁷James C. Ewing, "Blue Prints of Rapid City Steam Laundry," June 1928.

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a historic photograph ca. 1929, the side elevations displayed poured concrete construction.⁸ While the west side of the addition historically abutted the main building, the east side originally was exposed and displayed six windows.

The north elevation displays concrete block constructed walls with three large wood sliding garage doors and wood double hinged doors. On the north elevation, a clay tile and flat roof addition was added in the 1940s to the west of the main building.⁹

The main entrance to the building is through an off-set single door on the addition, facing south. The interior of the building has not been significantly altered. A reception room, located directly within the door, has undergone a recent renovation. To the west of the reception room are offices, which historically served as both offices and reception room for the main building. The rear of both the addition and main building form a large room which houses the cleaning equipment. Three large garage doors

provide access from the northside into this room. Seven skylights were added to the original building in the 1950s.¹⁰

The Rapid City Laundry Building is of local significance as an

⁸Historic photograph, ca. 1929, in the collection of Gene Williams.

⁹Gene Williams, Telephone conversation with U.S. West Research, Inc., 5 August 1994.

¹⁰Mildred Roberts, Telephone conversation with U.S. West Research, Inc., 5 August 1994.

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excellent representation of a commercial Art Deco building
constructed in Rapid City, South Dakota. The overall integrity
of this building is high and it is a fine example of work
completed by local architect James. C. Ewing.

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Section 8: Statement of Significance

The Rapid City Laundry building in Rapid City, Pennington County, South Dakota is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The building properly meets the National Register criteria for several reasons. First, it is a fine example of commercial Art Deco architecture in the city. The building displays a variety of Art Deco elements including streamline design, geometric forms, glass block, and stucco siding. Second, the Rapid City Laundry Building is also representative of a commercial building designed by the Rapid City architect James C. Ewing. It was constructed in 1928-1929 to serve as a laundry facility and has continued that service for approximately the past sixty-five years. The building's exterior and interior has not undergone any significant physical changes during its history. The Rapid City Laundry relates to the historic context "Depression and Rebuilding: Changing Urban Patterns/Rebuilding Commercial Centers in Larger Towns, 1893-1929," as outlined by the *Historic Contexts for Historical and Architectural Resources of South Dakota* by the South Dakota Historical Preservation Center.¹¹

History of Area

Rapid City, located in west central South Dakota, lies at the

¹¹South Dakota Historical Preservation Center, *Historic Contexts for Historical and Architectural Resources of South Dakota* (1989), 160.

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junction of the Black Hills and the rolling plains in Pennington County. Prior to permanent Euro-American settlement in the Black Hills, several mining parties attempted to enter the area and prospect for gold. However, they were often refused entry by the United States Army. This pressure prompted a United States Government sponsored expedition headed by General George A. Custer to the Black Hills in 1874. By 1875, the Black Hills' territory was overrun with approximately 1,000 miners prospecting for gold and mining communities such as nearby Lead and Deadwood, South Dakota were born.¹²

Rapid City, named after Rapid Creek, which flows through the city, was founded in 1876 during the Black Hills mining boom.¹³ It served as a trade center for communities in the Black Hills. By 1877, the city was designated as the county seat of Pennington County and the community was re-platted to expand the boundaries of Original Town to include 130 blocks. Three years later, the population of Rapid City reached 312. On October 19, 1882, the city was incorporated and by 1890 the population jumped to 2,128. The growth of Rapid City increased as a result of the arrival of the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad, under the ownership of the Chicago & Northwestern System, on July 4,

¹²The Story of Homestake: A South Dakota Enterprise (Lead: Homestake Mining Company, 1948), 5-6; William Bronson and T.H. Watkins, Homestake: The Centennial History of America's Greatest Gold Mine (San Francisco: Homestake Mining Company, 1977), 21-22.

¹³Pennington County History Book Committee, A History of Pennington County, South Dakota, 22.

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1886.¹⁴

After the turn of the century, additional railroad activity included the connection of Rapid City to eastern markets by both the Milwaukee Railroad and Chicago & Northwestern Railroad. Herbert Schell, a South Dakota Historian, notes that Rapid City served as "the eastern gateway to the mining region and an important station on the transportation routes from south and east."¹⁵ As a result of the improved railroad access, a rush of settlers entered the region between the Cheyenne and White Rivers.¹⁶ With the increase in settlers, the economy of Rapid City flourished. Increased commercial, social, and industrial activity prompted the construction of many of the current downtown buildings up to World War I. During this period, the city not only served as a trading center and a political center, but growth of the community was also incurred from the tourism industry of the Black Hills promoted in the 1920s.¹⁷ By 1930 the

¹⁴Jeff Buechler, "City of Rapid City Historic Context Planning Document," May 1989, 7; Mary McCormick, Dale Martin and Lon Johnson, RTI Inc., "West Boulevard Neighborhood Rapid City, South Dakota Historic Sites Survey Phase II," March 1992, 10; Rick Mills, *Making the Grade: A Century of Black Hills Railroading* (Rapid City, South Dakota: Grellind Photographics), 27-28.

¹⁵Herbert S. Schell, *History of South Dakota*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 143.

¹⁶Herbert S. Schell, *History of South Dakota*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 253.

¹⁷Jeff Buechler, "City of Rapid City Historic Context Planning Document," May 1989, 7; Mary McCormick and Dale Martin RTI Inc., "West Boulevard Neighborhood and Other Historic Properties, Rapid City, South Dakota

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population of Rapid City, according to the U.S. Census, was 10,404 and it was now the largest city in the Black Hills with a greater population than the early mining towns of Deadwood and Lead combined.¹⁸

Rapid City Laundry was built during a period of significant construction. In 1928 the Rapid City building program was estimated at 1.75 million dollars, including significant buildings such as the Alex Johnson Hotel, St. John's Hospital, and the School of Mines Gymnasium.¹⁹ In April of 1929 the *Rapid City Journal* reported that ten major structures were under construction in Rapid City, including the Rapid City Auditorium, Western South Dakota Alfalfa Seed Growers Exchange, Fairmount Creamery and three large buildings for the Fish and Hunter Lumber Company.²⁰ In 1929, it was also estimated that 140 new homes were constructed and eighteen new businesses.²¹

Historic Sites Survey Phase III Project Report," February 1993, 16.

¹⁸Jeff Buechler, "City of Rapid City Historic Context Planning Document," May 1989, 7. McCormick, Mary and Dale Martin, RTI, Inc., "West Boulevard Neighborhood and Other Historic Properties, Rapid City, South Dakota Historic Sites Survey Phase III Project Report," February 1993, 16.

¹⁹"Million and a Half Building Program for 1929," *Rapid City Journal*, n.d., article in the collection of Eka Parkinson.

²⁰"Building Program for 1929 Well Under Way Here," *Rapid City Journal*, 6 April 1929.

²¹"Million and a Half Building Program for 1929," *Rapid City Journal* article in the collection of Eka Parkinson.

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Historical Background of Rapid City Laundry

In 1928-1929, Amos Kellogg erected a new building to house his company known as Rapid City Steam Laundry.²² On October 3, 1928, Kellogg purchased Lots 25, 26, 27, Block 77 in Original Town from Dakota Title and Investment Company for \$1.00.²³ The new facility, which was occupied in January of 1929 stood at 312 Main Street.²⁴ During the same year that the new building underwent construction, Kenneth Roberts began working for Rapid City Laundry and Dry Cleaners. In 1933, Rapid City Laundry employed 14 people and operated one truck. In 1941, Kellogg passed away and after the estate was settled, Roberts gained one-quarter interest in the company. In 1945, Rapid City Laundry was incorporated. By 1948, Roberts purchased the business.²⁵ By the early 1950s, the company utilized eight trucks and employed approximately 100 people.²⁶

Kenneth Roberts was also Director of District 6 and represented members of laundry people from Minnesota, North Dakota, South

²²The Rapid City Steam Laundry was also commonly known and referred to as Kellogg's Laundry.

²³Pennington County, Warranty Deed, Vol.52, 16.

²⁴Gene Williams, Interview with U.S. West Research, Inc., 27 June 1994.

²⁵Pennington County, Misc. Records, Vol. 43, 489.

²⁶Mildred Roberts Collection, *Rapid City Laundry Cleaners*, ca. 1952; Mildred Roberts Collection, *Laundry Man of the Month*, u.d.

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Dakota, and Wisconsin on the Board of Directors of American Institute of Laundering.²⁷ Roberts served as state president and state secretary-treasurer of South Dakota Laundry Owners Association. In 1978, the business passed from Kenneth Roberts to Marilyn Williams, and trustee for Kenneth Williams, Gene Williams, Joanne Love, and Judy Williams, joint tenants.²⁸ The Williams Family, current owners and managers, maintain a commitment to leaving the building intact and operating it in its original capacity as a cleaners, as well as making changes compatible with the architectural character of the building.

In 1930, three laundries existed in Rapid City. Black Hills Laundry was located at 520 Main Street, Home Laundry was at 520 St. Joseph Street, and Rapid City Laundry was located at 312 Main Street.²⁹ By the following year, only two remained, Rapid City Laundry and Black Hills Laundry.³⁰ By 1939 the Hill City Laundry joined Rapid City Laundry and Black Hills Laundry in the city directory listings.³¹ In 1945 Home Laundry was listed at 410

²⁷Mildred Roberts Collection, "Three Veteran Laundrymen Installed as Directors," u.d.; Mildred Roberts Collection, "Roberts District Director of Laundry Institute," u.d.

²⁸Warranty Deed, Vol. 52, 7766.

²⁹R.L. Polk, *Polk's Rapid City (South Dakota) Directory, 1930-1931* (Colorado Springs, CO: R.L. Polk Directory Co., 1931), 278.

³⁰R.L. Polk, *Polk's Rapid City (South Dakota) Directory, 1932-1933* (Colorado Springs, CO: R.L. Polk Directory Co., 1933), 291.

³¹R.L. Polk, *Polk's Rapid City (South Dakota) Directory, 1939* (Colorado Springs, CO: R.L. Polk Directory Co., 1939), 331.

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Main Street and the Rapid City Laundry was listed under both the names Kellogg's Laundry and Rapid City Laundry.³²

Rapid City Laundry's long history and good reputation contributed to its success. However, Rapid City Laundry also relied heavily on newspaper advertisements to ensure stable business operations. In the *Rapid City Journal*, Rapid City Laundry advertised on a daily basis and appealed to the ideology that doing your business at a cleaners would save valuable time for more important tasks. In 1925, Rapid City Steam Laundry appealed to families by charging \$.05 for "wet wash" and \$.10 for "rough dry."³³ Besides clothes, in the 1920s, Rapid City Laundry also advertised regarding its ability to clean rugs, carpets, pillows, and curtains, as well as its daily pick-up service.³⁴ Rapid City Laundry and Dry Cleaners utilized "a feminine approach." They advertised on "seeing things through the eyes of a customer." Popular slogans used by Rapid City Laundry included "Mother Rapid, Rapid City's Best Washwoman," let Mother Rapid help you with your housekeeping problems," and "take your problems to Mother Rapid." Key advertisement words included "lovely" and

³²R.L. Polk, *Polk's Rapid City (South Dakota) Directory* (Colorado Springs, CO: R.L. Polk Directory Co., 1945), 374.

³³"Family Washing," *Rapid City Journal*, 30 September 1925.

³⁴"You Can Beat the Life Out of Rugs and Carpets Butt-- You Cannot Beat Cleanness Into Them," *Rapid City Journal*, 4 September 1925; "We Wash Pillows, Too," *Rapid City Journal*, 27 July 1925.

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"beautiful."³⁵ Mother Rapid was a highly known symbol of Rapid City Laundry.

Rapid City Laundry's advertisements reflected the historical changes in the United States. For example, in the 1920s, an advertisement read, "the Modern Flapper will never do her own washing. She has learned that woman was not created to do work as hard as washing."³⁶ Furthermore, Rapid City Laundry, known also during the 1940s as Kellogg's Laundry, was affected by world-wide events. During the Second World War, Kellogg's Laundry printed an article regarding their work production. It stated:

there are times when our service isn't as good as you'd expect...as good as we'd like you to have. You have a right to know why. Many of our employees have left to join the service or to do their bit in war plants. Most of them had been with us for years, and they were highly skilled...Let us both look forward to the better days ahead....³⁷

During the war, Kellogg Laundry also sponsored an advertisement which read, "His Patriotism is written in Blood, Yours is Written

³⁵Mildred Roberts Collection, "Mildred Lux of Rapid City Laundry and Dry Cleaners Tells How That Company Appeals to the House Wife With Its Service," u.d.

³⁶"The Modern Flapper," *Rapid City Journal*, 25 July 1925.

³⁷"We Did It Before...We'll Do It Again," *Rapid City Journal*, 7 November 1944.

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on Every Bond you Buy in the 5th War Loan."³⁸

Rapid City Laundry's signage has also been a big part of its advertising. The 1928-1929 Art Deco building displays neon signs of "Mother Rapid" and "Dry Cleaners, Laundry" dating between 1936 and 1940. The Electrical Products Consolidated of Denver Colorado designed "Mother Rapid" and Ali and Walt Rosenbaum of Rapid City designed the "Dry Cleaners, Laundry" Sign.³⁹ Both signs remain in place today and retain their historic character.

Rapid City Laundry founded much of its success in its long term contracts, such as Ellsworth Air Force Base. Rapid City Laundry serviced Ellsworth Air Force Base for over twenty-five years and even operated a cleaning plant on the base from 1969 to 1984.⁴⁰ In 1942 construction began on the Rapid City Army Air Corps Base. By the spring of the next year, over five thousand military personnel occupied the base. As a result of the Cold War, the Rapid City Air Force Base was designated in 1947. Six years later, in 1953, it was renamed Ellsworth Air Force Base.⁴¹

³⁸"His Patriotism is Written in Blood, Yours is Written On Every Bond You Buy in the 5th War Loan," *Rapid City Journal*, 15 June 1944.

³⁹Walt Rosenbaum, Telephone conversation with U.S. West Research, Inc., 5 August 1994; Dennis Harriman, Telephone conversation with U.S. West Research, Inc., 5 August 1994.

⁴⁰Gene Williams, Interview with U.S. West Research, Inc., 28 June 1994; Gene Williams, Telephone Conversation with U.S. West Research, Inc., 5 August 1994.

⁴¹Jeff Buechler, "City of Rapid City Historic Context Planning Document," May 1989, 25-26.

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Today, 1994, Rapid City Laundry operates a drop-off box on base and still serves Ellsworth Air Force Base on a contractual basis.

Architecture

The Rapid City Laundry Building is a fine example of Art Deco style architecture in the city of Rapid City, South Dakota. Art Deco had its origins at the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs held in Paris in 1925. In the Midwest, many of the small commercial buildings constructed between 1925 and 1945 display Art Deco features. This style of architecture is often recognized as a result of the use of geometric forms, stepped facades and rooflines, and the use of strong vertical lines.⁴² The Rapid City Laundry building demonstrates a streamlined Art Deco style. The Art Deco style, as a modern building type, may have been specifically chosen for the Rapid City Laundry to represent through its architecture the theme of a "modern" laundry facility. The Rapid City Laundry building exhibits the streamlined and geometric features of the Art Deco style with its simple ornamentation, piers and pilasters which emphasize the vertical forms of the building and a stepped parapet roofline.

James C. Ewing

James C. Ewing was born on May 16, 1888. He received his formal

⁴²Barbara Wyatt, *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: A Manual for Historic Properties, Vol.2* (Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), 2-34.

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education from the Chicago School of Technology and Georgia Tech. Ewing worked for the architectural firm of Hulse & Company of Des Moines, Iowa until 1920 when he opened a practice in Rapid City. Ewing was exposed to Rapid City when he worked on the construction of the Pennington County Courthouse while being employed with Hulse & Company. Ewing was the only architect listed in the 1930-1931 Rapid City Directory.⁴³ Ewing joined a partnership with Adrian Forrette in 1944. The firm of Forrette and Ewing operated until 1960 when both men retired. Other buildings designed in Rapid City by Ewing include the Motor Service Company, Riss Building, Jefferson School, and what is currently the Fair Grounds Administration Building. The latter building was one of the first pre-cast concrete structures constructed in Rapid City. In 1984, at the age of 96 James Ewing passed away. As a result of the Flood of 1972, all floor plans held by the Ewing Family were destroyed.⁴⁴

In conclusion, the Rapid City Laundry at 312 Main Street in Rapid City, South Dakota is an excellent example of commercial Art Deco style architecture in Rapid City. The building constructed in 1928-1929, was designed by the regionally renowned Rapid City architect, James C. Ewing. This date of construction falls into the statewide context "Depression and Rebuilding: Changing Urban Patterns/Rebuilding Commercial Centers in Larger Towns, 1893-1929." The Rapid City Laundry building meets the National

⁴³R.L. Polk, *Polk's Rapid City (South Dakota) Directory 1930-1931*, (Colorado Springs, CO: R.L. Polk Directory Co., 1931), 237.

⁴⁴James C. Ewing, Jr., Interview with U.S. West Research, Inc., 19 July 1994.

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Register Criterion C in the area of architecture and is an excellent representation of an Art Deco commercial building in the city and the work of architect James C. Ewing.

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Section 10: Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary includes Lots 25, 26, and 27 of Block 77, Original Town.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the Rapid City Laundry building and addition which were historically associated with the property.

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Photographs

The following information applies to all photographs:

Rapid City Laundry
Rapid City, Pennington County, South Dakota
Photographer: Christina Slattery
Date: November 1994
Negatives located at South Dakota Historic Preservation Center,
Vermillion, South Dakota

Photo 1 of 7
Detail, Neon signs
Photographer facing northwest

Photo 2 of 7
Exterior, south elevation
Photographer facing northwest

Photo 3 of 7
Detail, Neon sign
Photographer facing east

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Photo 4 of 7
Exterior, South elevation
Photographer facing northeast

Photo 5 of 7
Exterior, North elevation
Photographer facing southeast

Photo 6 of 7
Exterior, North elevation
Photographer facing south

Photo 7 of 7
Interior, Laundry cleaning area
Photographer facing north

