Griggs County Courthouse Report

HABS State Level II Documentation

Performed by NDSU professor Angela Smith and
NDSU graduate student Wyatt Atchley

March 2021



ND SHPO Ref.: 18-5674 Demolition of 1884 Griggs County Courthouse

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Griggs County Courthouse tower
Photo by Angela Smith, July 2020

Report

GRIGGS COUNTY COURTHOUSE: HABS STATE LEVEL II DOCUMENTATION

The Griggs County Courthouse was built in 1884. It was one of the oldest courthouses in the state still used for its intended purpose until the county approved and built a new courthouse that opened in 2017. Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977, by 2012 mold, accesibility, and structural issues pushed the county to consider a new facility. County offices moved into the new courthouse in 2018 and the county petitioned the State Historic Preservation Office for permission to raze the courthouse in 2019. The ND SHPO provided mitigation instructions for the "adverse effect" of tearing down the building. Those terms are:

1. HABS State Level II documentation by NDSU graduate students.
2. Updating the Site form
3. Updating the National Register nomination
4. Salvage of Architectural materials/elements as practicable
5. Creation/Installation of a plague or sign discussing the courthouse placed somewhere on the grounds once the structure is demolished.

The NDSU Public History Program was contracted by Griggs County to conduct the HABS Level II State Documentation requirement. Dr. Angela Smith, a public historian and director of the program selected Wyatt Atchley, a graduate student interested in historic preservation, to assist in the documentation.

The project began with a careful reading of the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) mitigation plan for Griggs County. Because the courthouse is on the National Register of Historic Places, the ND SHPO must mitigate the "adverse effect" of razing the building. This legal process is required by Section 106 of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act. After a careful read of the National Register Nomination for the courthouse prepared by Architectural Historian Dawn Maddox in 1977 (reference #77001025), we traveled to Cooperstown five times during the summer and fall of 2020 to measure the courthouse, take photographs, and conduct research.

We made detailed measurements of each room. We later discovered that Michael Burns, a Moorhead, Minnesota architect who worked with the county on renovation planning, had drawn up plans for the site. Burns had conducted assessments of the Courthouse in 2010 and had worked with the county in the past to create a new elevator and fire-escape route plans. Burns was kind enough to share digital files of his plans which Wyatt added measurements to.

Once our work inside the building was completed, we moved to the research process to confirm the information in the original National Register entry by Dawn Maddox. We began with the bibliography provided in the Griggs County Courthouse entry. We then searched the newspaper database "Chronicling America" and Newspapers.com. Much of the most useful information came from the Griggs County Sentinel later called the Griggs Courier. The search did yield a written history of Cooperstown from 1882-1982 which included useful information on the Griggs County Courthouse. Finally, we requested additional information from the Griggs County Museum and the County Commission Minutes since the NR nomination in 1977. The museum reported that there was nothing additional to add from their collection, so a history was written based on the sources at hand. We found and confirmed all of the information in the original entry by Maddox. We also went through the County Commission Minutes since 1978 and recorded changes to the building on page 5.

History

The Griggs County Courthouse was built near the center of Cooperstown, North Dakota. Brothers Rollin C. Cooper and Thomas J. Cooper were integral to the early boom of the town. Rollin Cooper arrived in what would become Cooperstown in 1880 and began negotiations with railroad companies to purchase blocks of land in an attempt to turn the area into a wheat-land empire. R.C. Cooper set to work in the fields and made the necessary steps to create a town. The town, known then as it is today as Cooperstown, was platted in 1882. Griggs County voters authorized its commissioners to issue bonds of $30,000 for building and furnishing a courthouse and jail. The bonds were issued on January 7, 1884, and the commissioners accepted the bid for construction by Alex Moffat. Upon its completion, the original courthouse was 91 feet long, 48 feet wide, three stories tall, and occupied 3,077 square feet on the registered block of land. The courthouse contained three fireproof vaults and three brick jail cells. The final costs including additional expenses totaled $29,212.28.

The first officers of Griggs County as named by the first election were: Andrew Johnson, Sheriff; Byron Andrus, Judge of Probate; E. W. McCrae, Assessor; George W. Virgo, coroner. The majority of the old officers were retained except for constables and justices. George W. Barnard was named Treasurer; Herbert P. Smart, Register of Deeds and County Clerk; John N. Jorgenson, Clerk of Court; Dr. Theo. Kerr, Superintendent of Schools, and also Coroner; Fred B. Edwards, surveyor.

With the rise of inhabitants from diverse backgrounds came the need for churches to serve the people of the county. By 1885, none of the church congregations had built a church, and the county commissioners made a statement on April 17, 1885, that the courthouse would not be used for religious purposes. The courthouse was, however, the only large building in the area and thus became a place for social gatherings and town events. In 1895, the courthouse could be rented for $15.00 per night for dances and $10.00 for "other entertainments." In 1904 and 1905, the courthouse became the primary location for school classes after the schoolhouse burned down on March 27, 1904. For some, the courthouse was a staple of their small town. In 2021, before its demolition, the courthouse was still the tallest structure in the town. Driving east or west on Highway 200, one could see the modest weathervane atop the northeast tower break the tree line when nearing the city of Cooperstown. The daughter of Mason Knapp who was the County Sheriff of Griggs County from 1907 to 1911, remembers climbing the stairs to the top of the tower - "one could get such a good sight of the town and country from there" (Cooperstown Centennial, 21).

The Griggs County Courthouse served the state of North Dakota and the citizens of Griggs County for 133 years when, in 2017, a new courthouse was built after years of debate about safety issues. County offices moved into the new courthouse in 2018. The Griggs County commission sought permission from the State Historic Preservation Office of North Dakota to raze the old courthouse because the structure was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The North Dakota SHPO had to mitigate adverse effects under Section 106 of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act. Dr. Angela Smith, a public historian and associate professor at North Dakota State University, and Wyatt Atchley, a graduate student of history at NDSU, worked to document the building before its demolition.

Bibliography

Centennial Book Committee of Cooperstown, North Dakota. Cooperstown, North Dakota, 1881-1982. 1982.

Cooperstown Diamond Jubilee, 1882-1957. Published in 1957.

Martens, Steve and Ronald H.L.M. Ramsay. *Buildings of North Dakota*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2015.

Architectural Changes or Additions to Griggs County Courthouse Since 1977

The building was approved for the National Register in 1977. Since that time there were repairs to the roof, exterior brick mortor, basement windows, coal bin, and several interior modifications to accompany network wiring and a computer server. The County Commission minutes reveal the following updates to the building since that time:

March, 1979

The Griggs County Commission voted to install a new heating plants in the Griggs Courthouse. A March 6th commission meeting states that the new heating plant did not function properly resulting in excessive fire and calamity which further resulted in major smoke damage to the walls, ceilings and other fixtures. The commission moved to take $2,843.05 from the emergency fund for the repair.

March, 1986

Courthouse roof repaired.

May, 1986

A motion was approved to fix the "dangerous condition caused by loose bricks and mortar in the courthouse eaves , and further that deteriorating floor covering in the courthouse hallways , steps and offices constitutes a hazard to the public and to the County employees."

March, 1990

Orville Tranby representing the County Historical Society met with the Board about the expansion of the Museum and cataloging of all fixtures and furnishings in the courthouse.

May, 1991

Commission approved an emergency fund to repair the roof of the County Auditor addition to the courthouse.

September 1992

The side walk was repaired and the slope fixed on the west and south side of the Sheriff's Office because it was leaking and ruining the walls and floor.

March, 1993

Approved emergency repairs to the courthouse furnace.

September 1994

Main courthouse required new shingles on the roof and updates to the furnace.

November, 1995

Scherr Construction Company, Inc. of Valley City built an open chairlift on the west and an enclosed lift on the East end of the courthouse for $63,7000 as part of an ADA contract.

July, 1999

The County Commission accepted a bid by Art Electric on Finely for electrical work for the courthouse.

August, 2000

Commission approved repairs for the coal bin on the northwest side of the main courthouse building. The minutes note that "the northwest side of the Griggs County Courthouse began to fall in, decay, and became inundated with water."

A motion was approved to do more concrete work on the front and side of the building.

August, 2003

Twelve windows in basement replaced by Rosco Windows for $4,796.00

May, 2005

Commission approved Karr Tuckpointing to point tuck the courthouse (mortar repair) and roofing repairs.

July, 2007

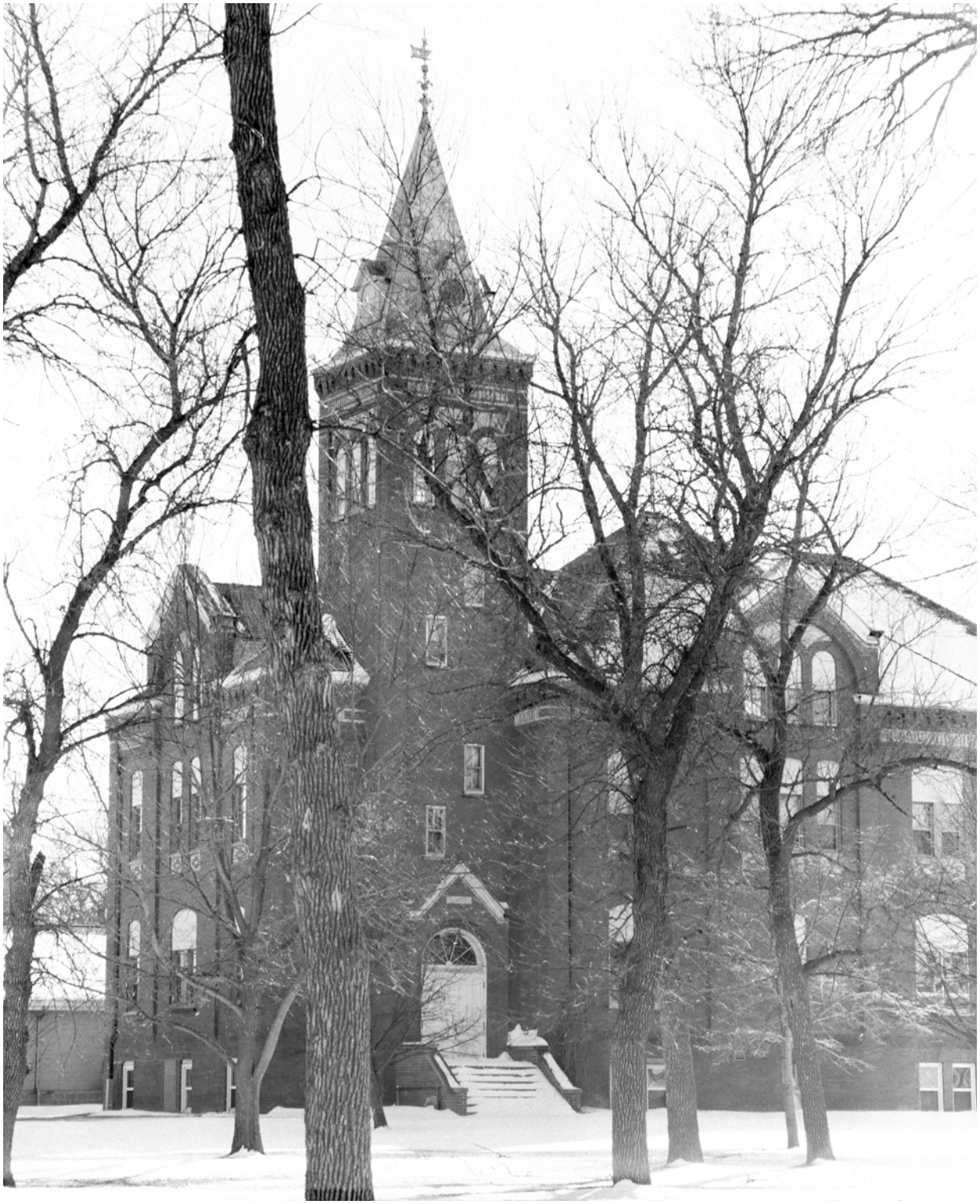
Interior room addition and network wiring for a computer server.

Water pipe repair by PLBG, HTG, & A/C, INC. for the amount of $3,171.00

June 2010

Griggs County Commission declares an emergency due to mold and other environmental concerns in the courthouse basement rendering that area unusable.

Photographic Documentation



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_3R.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Wyatt Atchley
Date: 2-25-2021
Camera facing southwest

Description: Exterior photo of the northeast corner and front entrance of the Griggs County Courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo:
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Wyatt Atchley
Date: 2-25-2021
Camera facing northeast

Description: Rear west facing entrance to the courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_1.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Angela Smith
Date: 7-23-2020
Camera facing southeast

Description: Exterior photo facing the northwest corner of the Griggs County Courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_2.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Angela Smith
Date: 7-23-2020
Camera facing south

Description: Exterior photo facing the north side of the Griggs County Courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_3.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Angela Smith
Date: 7-23-2020
Camera facing south

Description: Exterior photo facing the north side entrance to the Griggs County Courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_5.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Angela Smith
Date: 7-23-2020
Camera facing north

Description: Exterior photo of the south side of the Griggs County Courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_6.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Angela Smith
Date: 7-23-2020
Camera facing north

Description: Exterior photo of the south side of the Griggs County Courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_15
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Wyatt Atchley
Date: 2-25-2021
Camera facing east

Description: Rear view of courthouse facing west



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_17
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Wyatt Atchley
Date: 2-25-2021
Camera facing northwest

Description: Exterior photo of the south side of the courthouse.
The building in front of it is the new courthouse.



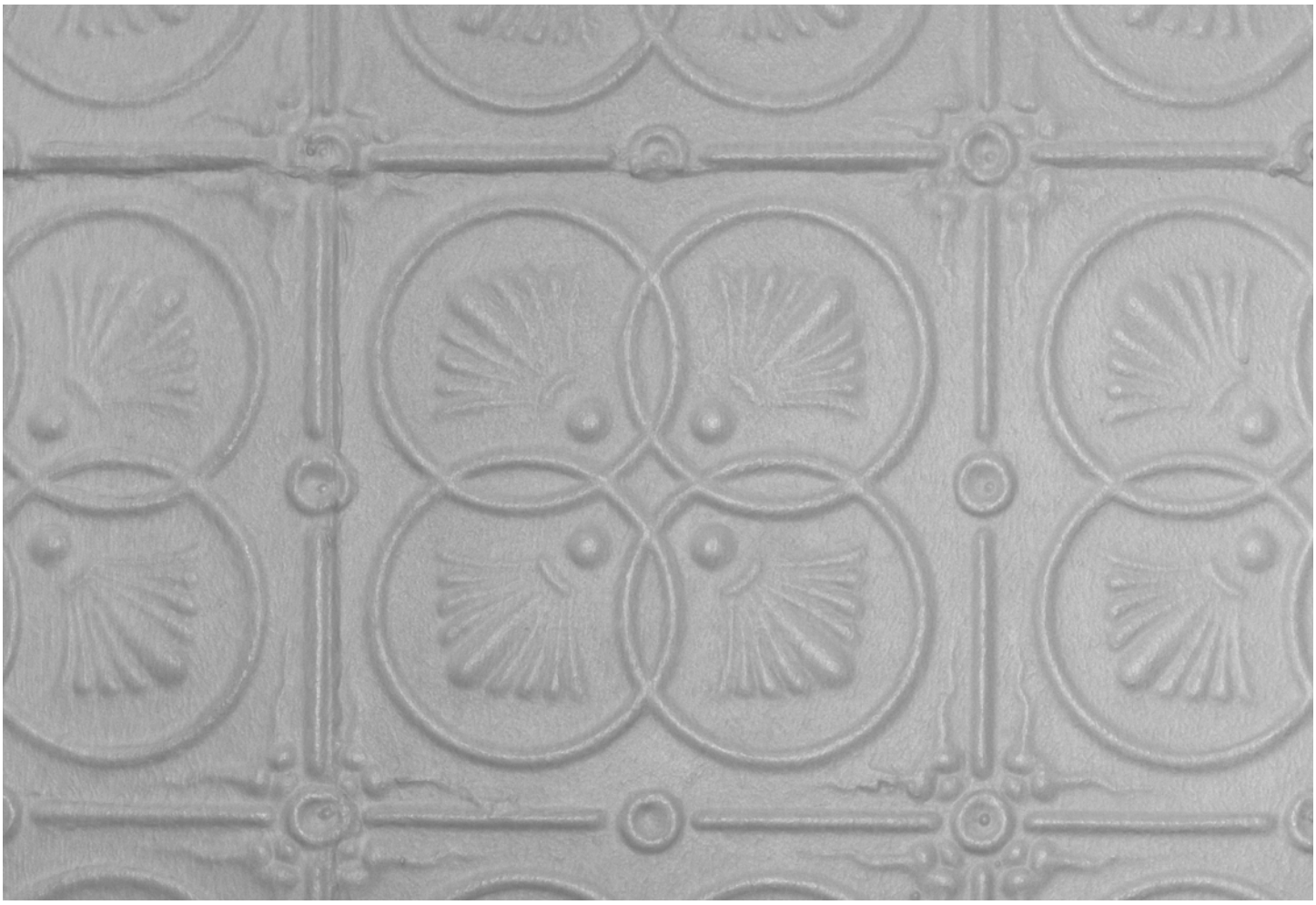
Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_14
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Wyatt Atchley
Date: 2-25-2021

Description: First floor interior hallway. Metal wall panels shown in detail on the next page.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_7.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Angela Smith
Date: 9-17-2020

Description: Interior photo of metal panels and woodwork in main floor hallway of Griggs County Courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_19.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Wyatt Atchley
Date: 2-25-2021

Description: Interior closeup photo of metal panel in the main floor hallway of Griggs County Courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_8.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Angela Smith
Date: 9-17-2020

Description: Interior photo of hinges on main floor doors in Griggs County Courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_10.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Wyatt Atchley
Date: 10-16-2020
Camera facing southwest

Description: Second floor courtroom of the Griggs County Courthouse.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_11.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Wyatt Atchley
Date: 10-16-2020
Camera facing west

Description: Interior view of the second-level courtroom.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_7.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Angela Smith
Date: 9-17-2020

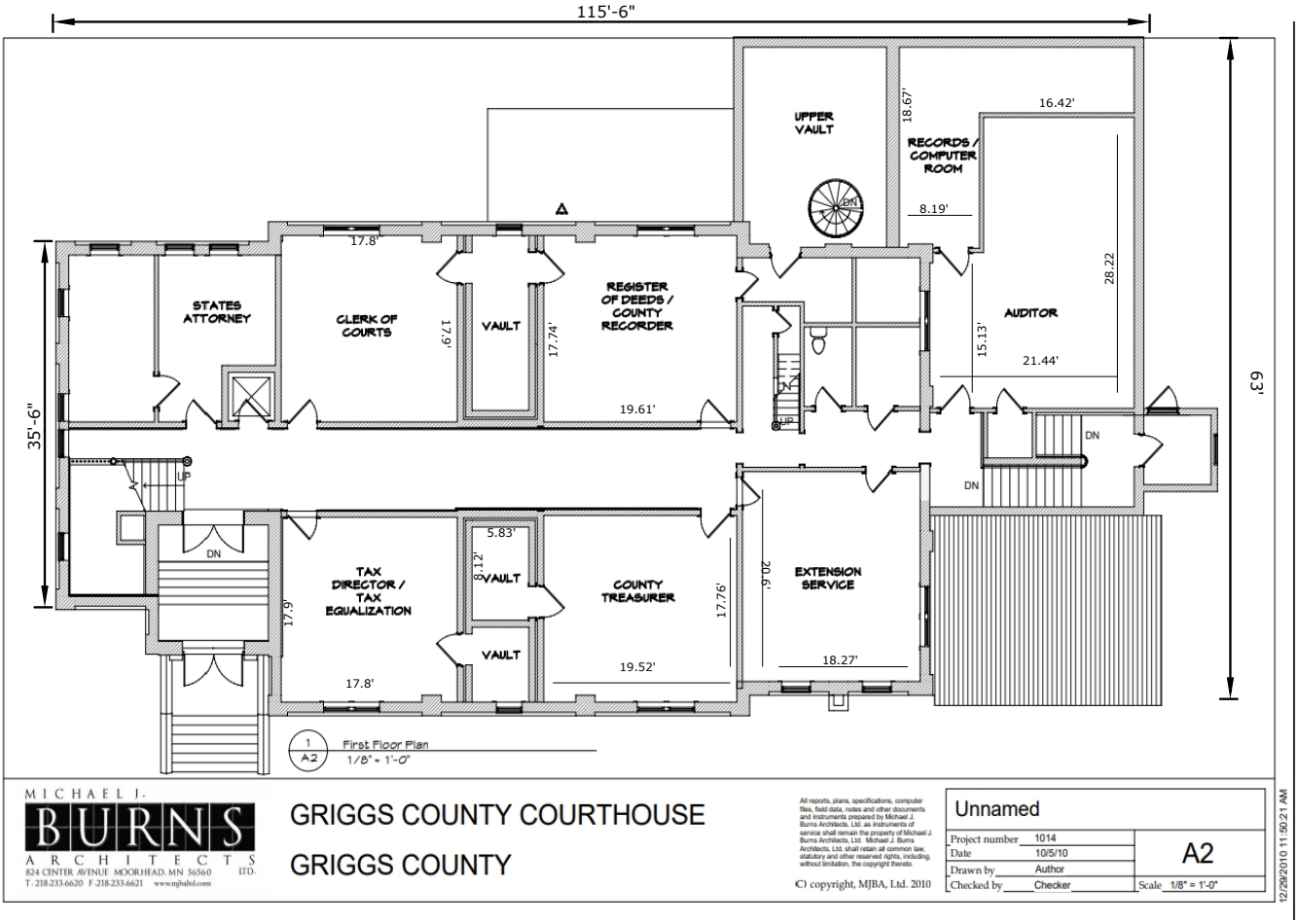
Description: Interior photo of rear stairwell woodwork on the second floor of Griggs County Courthouse just outside the court room.



Griggs County Courthouse
Photo: Griggs_12.tiff
Cooperstown, ND
Photographer: Angela Smith
Date: 7-23-2020
Camera facing northwest

Description: Exterior view of the southern and eastern sides.
Opheim house on the right-hand side of the frame.

Measured Drawings



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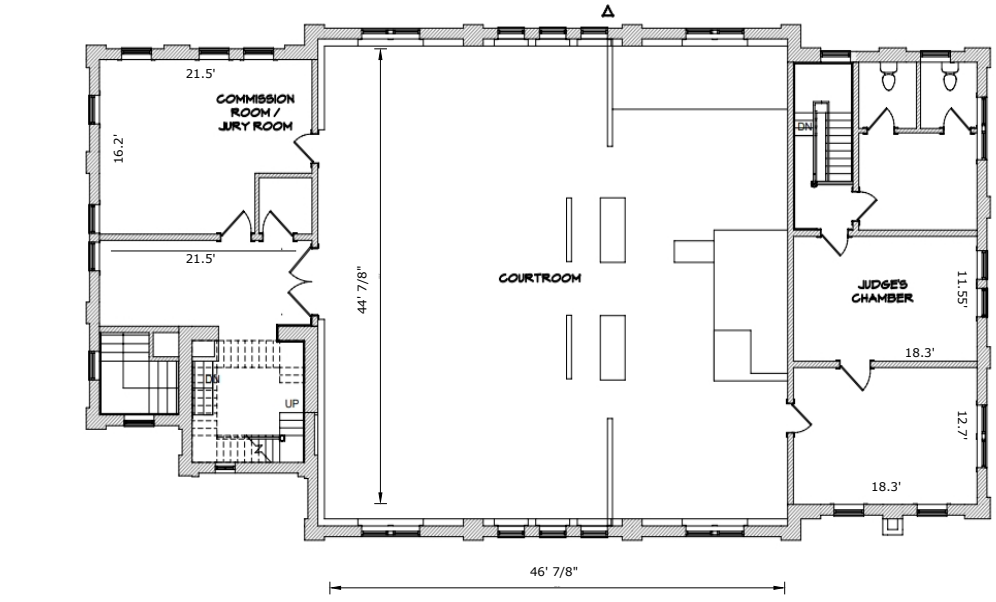
GRIGGS COUNTY COURTHOUSE
GRIGGS COUNTY

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Unnamed		
Project number	1014	A2
Date	10/5/10	
Drawn by	Author	
Checked by	Checker	Scale 1/8" = 1'-0"

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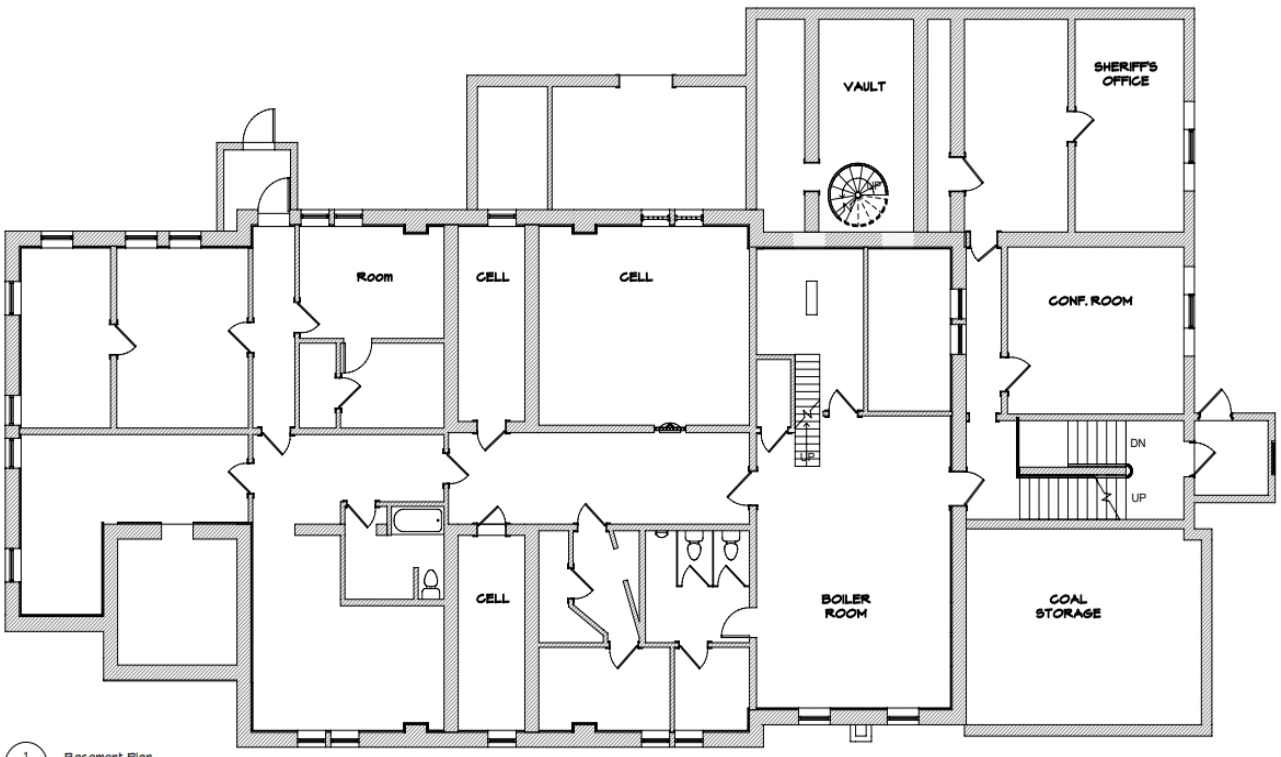
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Drawn by	Author	
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1 / A1 Basement Plan
1/8" = 1'-0"

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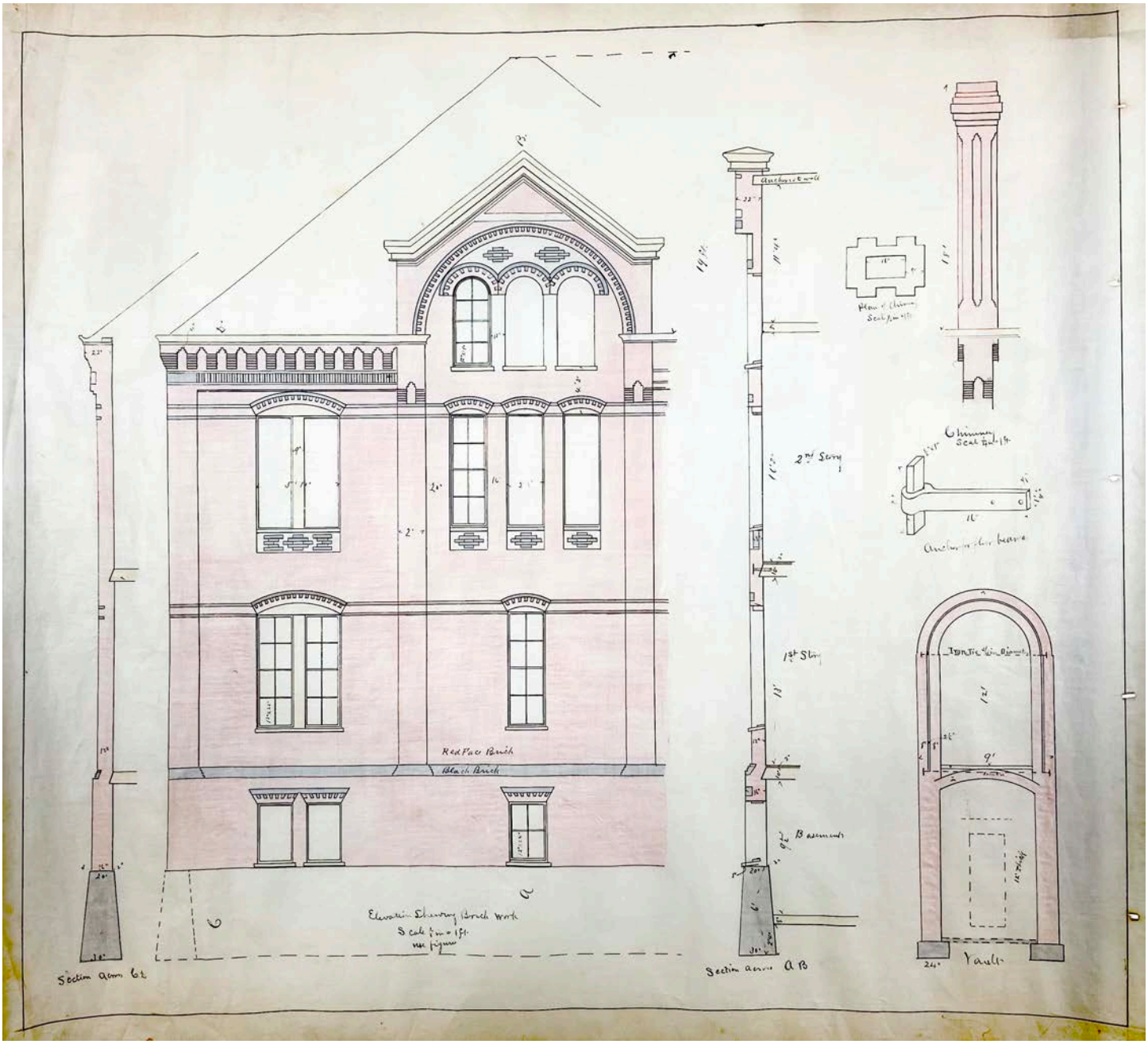
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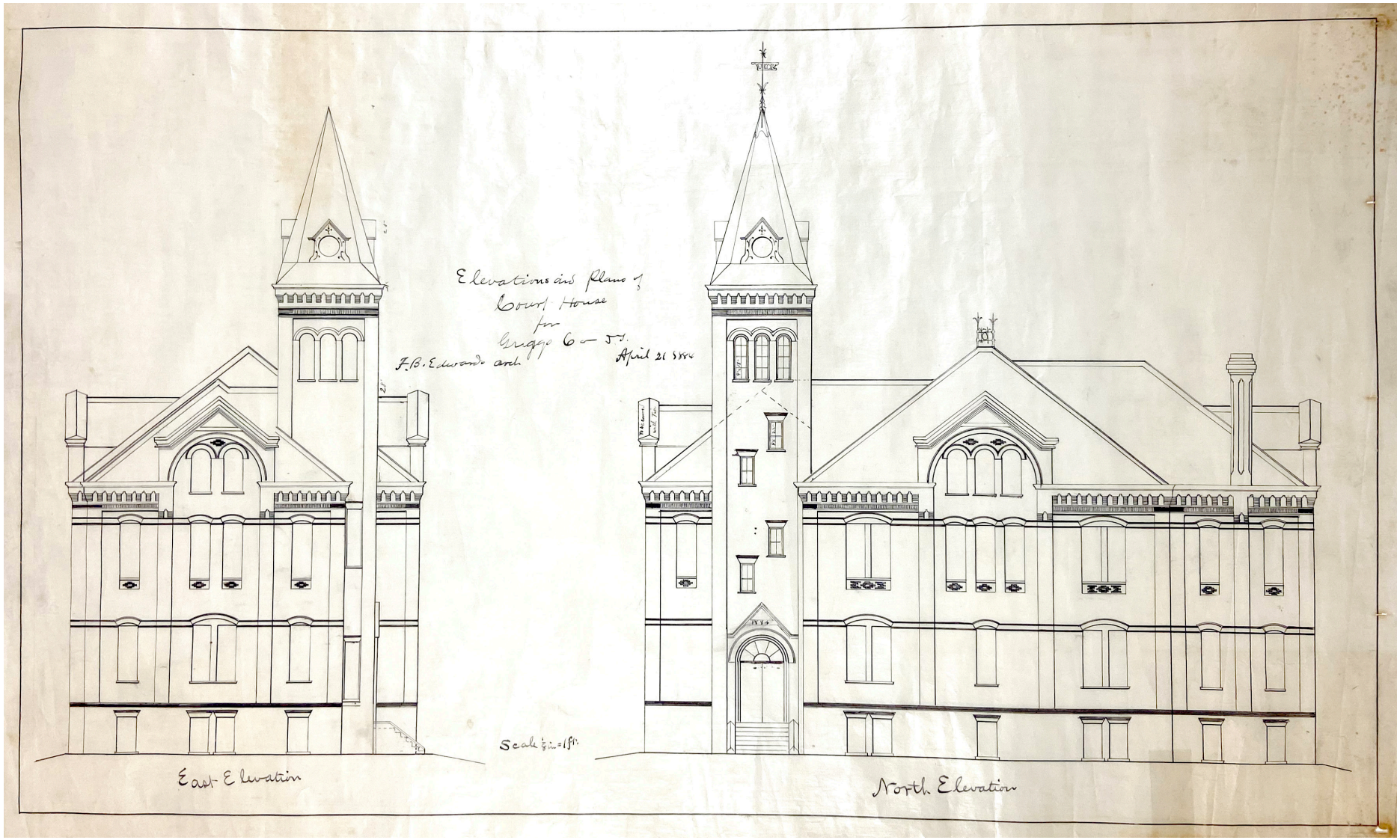
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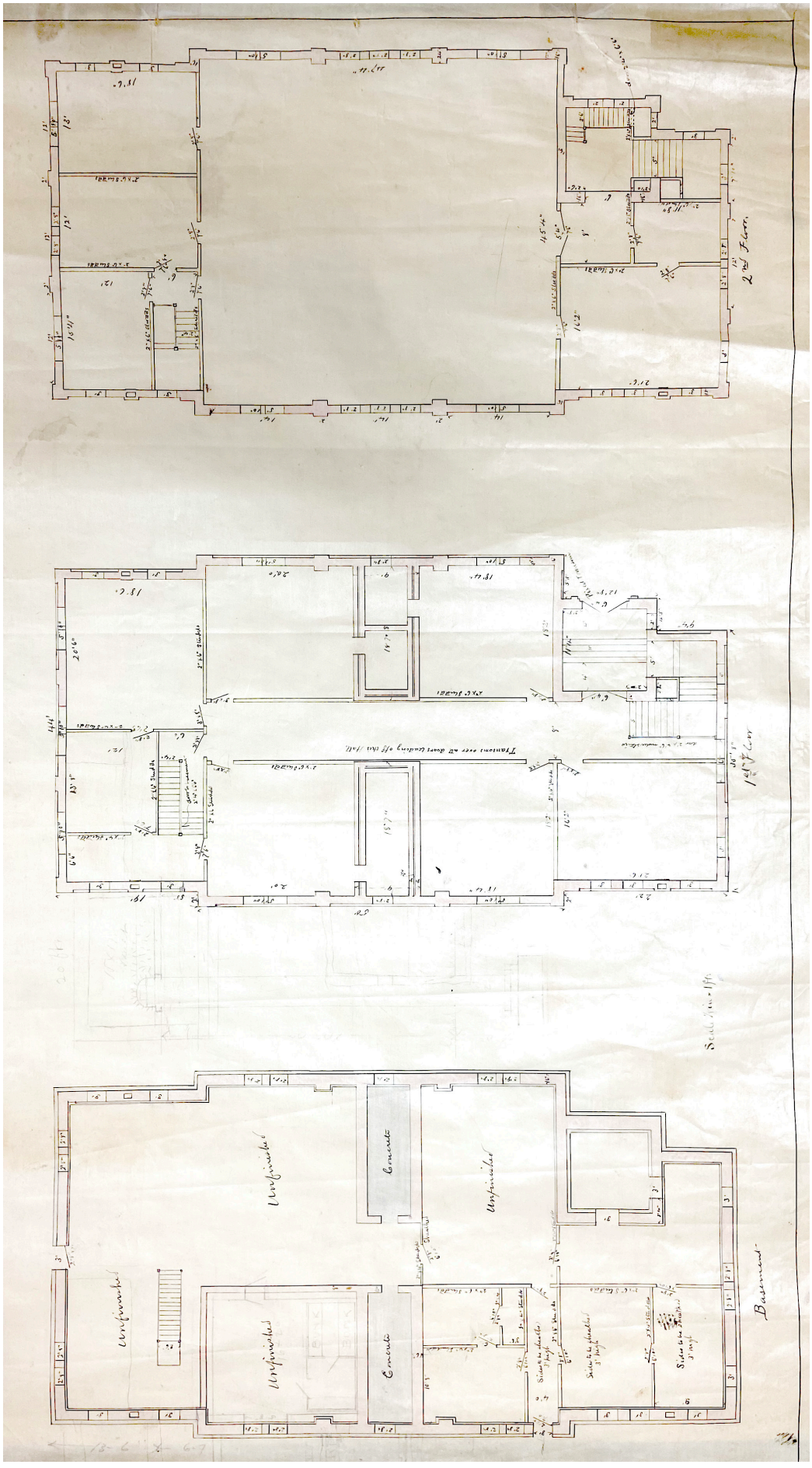


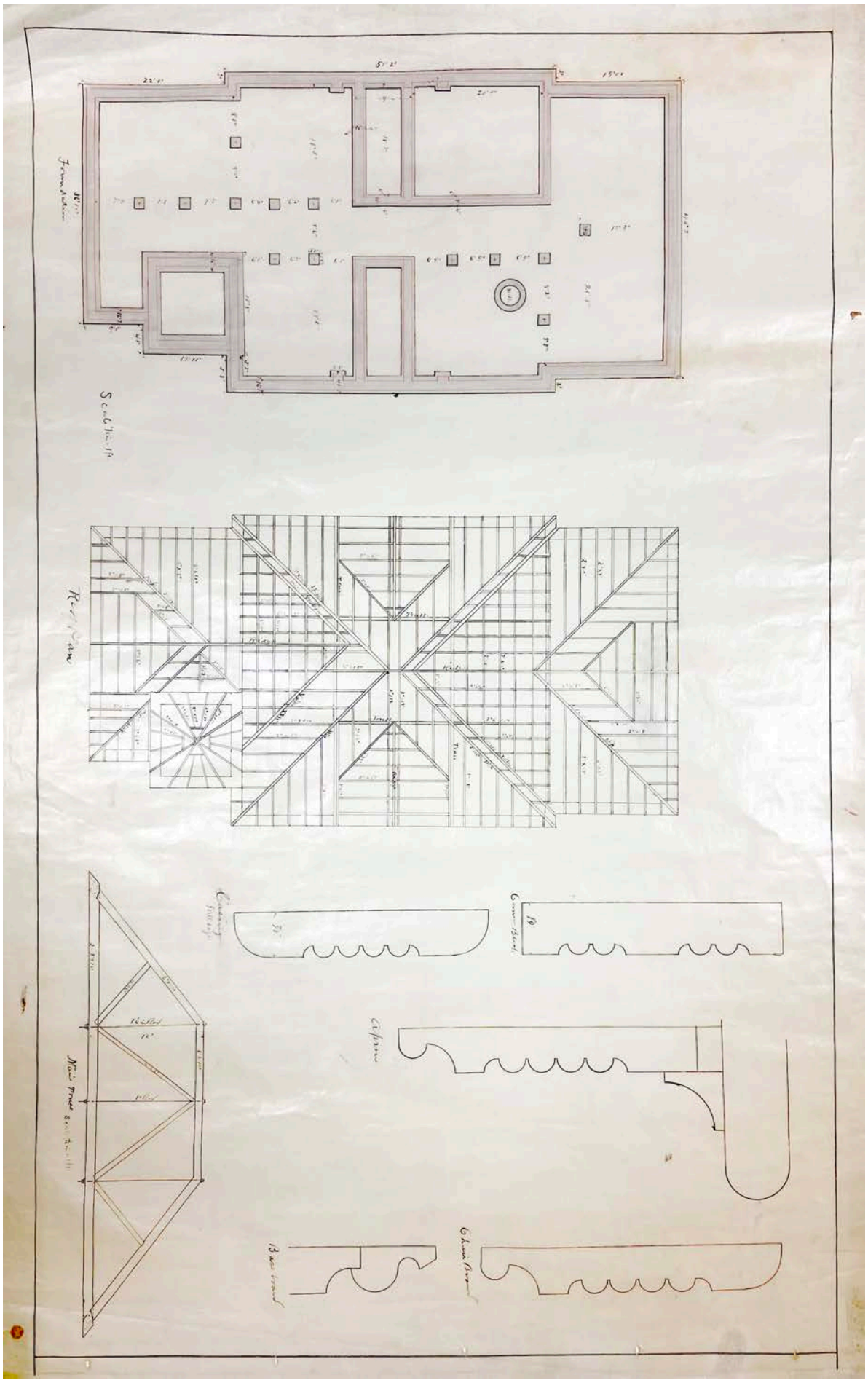
Griggs County Courthouse
Cooperstown, ND

Original plans
Photographer: Wyatt Atchley
Date scanned: 10-17-2020

Description: Original courthouse plans stored in the Griggs County court clerk office


Elevations and Plans of
Court House
for
Griggs Co — Ind.
F.B. Edwards arch
April 21 1884
Scale ⅛ in = 1 ft.
East Elevation
North Elevation


2nd Floor.
Transom over all doors Leading off this Hall
Concrete
Concrete
Basement



ND SHPO Mitigation Requirements

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NORTH DAKOTA

Doug Burgum
Governor of North Dakota

North Dakota State Historical Board

Terrance Rockstad
Bismarck - President

H. Patrick Weir
Medora - Vice President

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Sondra Goebel
Representative
Department of Transportation

Claudia J. Berg
Director

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums since 1986

June 10, 2019

Mr. Jayme Tenneson
Griggs County
PO Box 541
Cooperstown, ND 58425

ND SHPO Ref.: 18-5674 Demolition of 1884 Griggs County Courthouse, 808 Rollin Avenue, Cooperstown, Griggs County, North Dakota

Dear Mr. Tenneson,

We have been informed of the intent to Demolish the 1884 Griggs County Courthouse, 808 Rollin Avenue, Cooperstown, Griggs County, North Dakota. Appropriate mitigation of the "Adverse Effect" of this project is as follows:

1. HABS State Level II documenation by NDSU graduate students (specifications attached), approved by the SHSND.
2. Updating of the Site form
3. Updating of the National Register nomination
4. Salvage of Architectural materials/elements as practicable
5. Creation/Installation of a plaque or sign discussing the courthouse to be placed somewhere on the grounds once the structure is demolished

Once these mitigation measures have been completed and approved by our office we will issue a further letter advising that the project be allowed to commence.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. Please include the ND SHPO Reference number listed above in further correspondence for this specific project. If you have any questions please contact Lisa Steckler, Historic Preservation Planner at (701) 328-3577 or lsteckler@nd.gov

Sincerely,

Claudia J. Berg
State Historic Preservation Officer
(North Dakota)

18-5674

North Dakota Heritage Center • 612 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58505-0830 • Phone: 701-328-2666 • Fax: 701-328-3710
Email: histsoc@nd.gov • Web site: history.nd.gov • TTY: 1-800-366-6888

Documentation Requirements

It is importation that the documentation be as complete as possible.

Documentation consists of three parts:

- Architectural and Historical Narrative
- Measured drawings
- Photographs

1. Architectural and Historical Narrative

The narrative provides a description of the structure and a summary of its history. The architectural description should begin with a short summary paragraph that describes the property. The summary paragraph should address the following: date of construction, location, setting, type, style, method of construction, size, and significance.

The rest of the architectural narrative goes into more detail, painting a literary picture of the structure. The narrative works hand-in-hand with the photographs. Be sure to describe features that you have photographed and be sure to photograph features that you have described.

The historical narrative should begin in the same way as the architectural description-with a summary paragraph introducing the reader to the property. Be sure to emphasis the most important features of the structure, whether it be history or architecture.

After the summary, the narrative should discuss the history of the structure beginning with the date of construction. Some narratives will also cover the origins of the structure if it is relevant. For instance, if it is a house built by the first settler in town it is worth describing how the town itself was settled and what role the house builder played in it.

The narrative does not need to be a complete story of the property. Most narratives focus on the most important events, those that make the property significant today. If there is very little known history available on the other hand, it is best to include everything.

2. Measured drawings

Measured drawings shall be produced from recorded, accurate measurements. Portions of the building that were not accessible for measurement should not be drawn on the measured drawings, but clearly labeled as not accessible or drawn from available construction drawings

and other sources and so identified. No part of the measured drawings shall be produced from hypothesis or non-measurement related activities. A reasonable effort should be made to locate technical drawings. If they cannot be found a statement describing the search will take the place of the technical drawings.

3. Photographs

Photography is critical to Architectural Documentation. The photographs will be the last permanent record of the property as it existed before the demolition/alteration took place. Future historians will rely on these photographs when they conduct their own research. Therefore, it is important that the photos meet the highest standards of quality and durability. Digital photographs must be stored on archival quality CD/DVDs.

The number of photos need for good complete documentation will vary from property to property. Size and complexity of the structure may both determine the number of photos required. The recorder should use professional judgment.

Typically, a complete documentation will include the following:

- Exterior photos of each elevation
- Interior photos of each room
- Context Shots showing the building in relation to its landscape and site
- Photos of significant features and spaces

A good rule of thumb is to have a picture for every significant item described in the Architectural Description.

Photo Log

Label photographs with the following information

1. Name of Property
2. Site number
3. Photograph number

Provide additional information on a separate sheet:

1. Photo number
2. Name of property
3. Location of property
4. Photographer
5. Date of photograph
6. Location of negatives
7. Direction the camera was pointing when the photo was taken (NSEW)
8. Description of the photograph

1977 National Register Nomination

Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74) PH0368431

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JAN 26 1977
DATE ENTERED JUL 21 1977

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

1 NAME

** HISTORIC: Griggs County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON:

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: Post Office Box 326, Rollin Avenue — __NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN: Cooperstown — __ VICINITY OF — CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 1

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
North Dakota	38	Griggs	039

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	X GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Griggs County

STREET & NUMBER: Post Office Box 326, Rollin Avenue

CITY, TOWN: Cooperstown — __ VICINITY OF — STATE: North Dakota 58425

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Griggs County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER: Post Office Box 326, Rollin Avenue

CITY, TOWN: Cooperstown — STATE: North Dakota 58425

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: North Dakota Historic Sites Survey

DATE: 1976 — __FEDERAL X 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
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
X FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

As built, the Griggs County Courthouse was 91 feet long, 48 feet wide, and occupied 3,077 square feet of ground. The original dimensions of the 2-story building with raised basement were first increased in 1918 when a brick register of deeds' vault was constructed on the rear (south) elevation. An adjoining brick addition on the southwest corner of the building was erected in 1960 by Wells-Denbrook & Associates, Grand Forks, to serve as the auditor's office. Other alterations have included the installation of new sash and opaque window panels and rebuilding the chimneys.

The foundation of the courthouse is stone and the walls are red brick laid in mortar of the same color. Beneath the windows of the second story are rectangular recessions of white brick centered with lozenge-shaped patterns of black brick. More subtle variegation is produced by white brick banding above the windows and by a water table of dark brown brick. Additional wall enrichment is derived from pilasters and, at the eaves line, a corbel table arcaded in pointed arches. The latter repeat in miniature the gables which on all four elevations interrupt the slopes of the multi-hipped, cedar-shingled roof. Within the gable pediments are round arches containing round-arch windows, the curves of which contrast with the segmental-arch openings on the first and second stories and those with flat lintels in the basement.

The stair tower at the northeast corner of the courthouse recapitulates a number of design elements such as round-arch fenestration, the interplay between pointed and round arches (the entrance gable with its fanlighted doorway), corbeling, and contrasting brickwork. The tower also carries the single liveliest treatment in the overall composition: a pyramidal roof surmounted by an ornate weather vane and illuminated on each steeply pitched slope by a gabled dormer perforated by an oculus and cut-out tracery.

The first-floor hallway on the interior of the courthouse has a 10-foot ceiling of ornamental stamped matal. The covering also extends down the walls to the wainscoting, which, along with the hall doors, was grained at the time of construction in imitation of oak and black walnut. The oak floor of the hallway was later covered with vinyl tile, but in a reversal of the process, the original inlaid tile in some of the adjoining offices has been replaced by hardwood flooring. Other changes in the office spaces include the installation of acoustical ceiling tile, flourescent lighting, and plywood paneling. The original plastered walls have undergone the following paint sequence: olive (1884), buff (1930s), and light green (1950s).

The courtroom on the second floor, measuring 45½ by 47½ feet and with a 16½-foot ceiling, was refurbished in the summer and fall of 1976 with wall-to-wall carpeting, a dropped acoustical tile ceiling in which fluorescent lighting is concealed, and wall coverings of 4 by 10-foot vinyl fabric panels. The original predominance of highly varnished wood, however, is still maintained in the 78 captain's chairs used as public seating (down 22 from an original consignment of 100); louvered interior shutters for the 14 windows; a lawyer's railing with turned balusters and crested, cross-rail gates; a paneled judge's bench; and 5-panel doors with grooved casings and corner blocks. Still in the process of renovation are the judge's chamber and

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the jury room west of the courtroom, in both of which will be installed vinyl wall panels and tile floors and ceilings. As in the courtroom, efforts are being made to preserve as nearly intact as possible the original heavy wooden molding which frames doors and windows.

The basement of the courthouse has plastered walls and concrete floors covered with tile. There are offices beneath the additions built on the first floor, and the original basement area is occupied by the sheriff's residence and the jail. The latter contains three brick cells with windows barred by 1-inch iron rods set four inches apart in the brick walls. There are two stairways in the building: the principal one in the tower and a secondary flight in the southwest corner. Both are half-turn types with landings, molded handrails atop turned balusters, and dadoes of beaded, vertical matched board above closed stringers.

The setting for the courthouse is the entire 300 by 300-foot block on which it is situated, planted in grass and trees. A concrete walkway leads from the entrance to the sidewalk on the north boundary of the block, both of which were laid in 1903 by the North Dakota Tile Works, Fargo. On the northwest lawn stands a metal flagpole erected in 1918, and a white frame garage and a paved parking lot are on the south (rear) side of the block. An 1879 log house was moved to the east lawn in 1932 from its original location about ten miles northeast of Cooperstown in Washburn Township, at the Fort Totten crossing of the Sheyenne River. Constructed of notched and fitted logs, it was the first house in Griggs County known to have been built by a permanent white settler (Omund Nelson Opheim, who came from Iowa to Dakota Territory with his family).

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	X POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1884 BUILDER/ARCHITECT F.B. Edwards (Architect) Alexander Moffat (Builder)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Griggs County Courthouse is one of North Dakota's oldest public buildings, erected five years prior to the 1889 division of Dakota Territory into the states of North and South Dakota. In terms of design, the courthouse exhibits the eclecticism prevalent in American architecture during the late nineteenth century. Its polychrome fabric and pointed arch motifs are particularly noteworthy since both are features of the High Victorian Gothic mode which was rarely executed in North Dakota.

Formed from parts of Traill and Foster Counties in 1881, Griggs County was named for Captain Alexander Griggs, the founder of Grand Forks, who was closely identified with the earliest phases of steam navigation on the Red River of the North. The Cooperstown Townsite Company was incorporated in 1882 to promote the development of the county seat, the name of which was chosen in honor of two of the company's five members, the brothers R.C. and T.J. Cooper. The Coopers were engaged in large-scale mechanized (or bonanza) wheat farming, and Cooperstown was platted near the center of their holdings. When a site for the courthouse within the original town could not be agreed upon by the county commissioners, the Cooper brothers laid out the Cooper Addition to the south and offered any block in it free to the county, plus one thousand dollars in cash upon completion of the courthouse. The proposal was accepted and block 3 decided upon since its center was an elevation which sloped in all directions and would give prominence to the structure erected thereon.

Following the passage of a $30,000 bond issue for building a courthouse and a jail, the plans of F.B. Edwards were approved (and are still on file in the register of deeds' office). Alexander Moffat of Sanborn, a skilled carpenter who constructed many early Cooperstown buildings, submitted the successful contractor's bid of $20,980, and work began in May, 1884. S.B. Langford did the grading and excavating, and a large force of masons was engaged under the direction of subcontractor A.J. Codding of Valley City, who also was responsible for the plaster work. Sand for mortar was brought in from Bald Hill Creek southeast of town, and brick was imported from Brainerd, Minnesota. Vault doors for the completed building were obtained from the Detroit Safe Company, and the S.I. Pope Company, Chicago, installed the steam heating system.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Edwards, F.B. Plans for Griggs County Courthouse, 1884. On file in Register of Deeds' Office, Griggs County Courthouse, Cooperstown.
Griggs County Heritage Book Committee. Griggs County Heritage. Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1976.
Griggs County Sentinel - Courier. "The Court House." December 26, 1884.
Maddox, Dawn. Personal inspection, November 4, 1976.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.06 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	14	516030	5254440
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Dawn Maddox, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: State Historical Society of North Dakota

DATE: January 6, 1977

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 James E. Sperry

TITLE N.D. State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE January 14, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 2/21/77

ATTEST: Charles Peterson

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 6/14/77

Form No. 10-300a
(Rev. 10-74)

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A well for the courthouse had to be dug twice because it proved impossible to brick up the first one, a 48-foot excavation which filled with 21 feet of water at such a rapid rate that workmen had to climb for their lives. The grounds were first landscaped by R.C. Cooper in 1886, but trees were not planted until 1891. In 1897 an acetylene gas plant for lighting the courthouse and the jail was purchased for $285.00, and a second gas plant acquired in 1904. Four years later, gas lighting was removed and an electrical system installed by the Piatt Electric Company at a cost of $385.00 Arc lighting in the courtroom was replaced by incandescent lamps in 1915. The exterior of the courthouse was painted during a Works Progress Administration project of the mid-1930s, at which time the roof was also reshingled. In 1974 the building was sandblasted and given a silicone coating.

County officials presently occupying the courthouse are as follows: judge, clerk of court, register of deeds, auditor, treasurer, superintendent of schools, agricultural extension agent, welfare agent, and sheriff. The basic soundness of the structure, its value as a county landmark, and its capacity for continued service were affirmed in the summer of 1976 when the Griggs County commissioners approved its renovation rather than replacement.

Griggs County Courthouse
Cooperstown, North Dakota
Griggs County,
Photo credit: State Historical Society of North Dakota
Date of photo: June 19, 1976
Location of negative: Liberty Memorial Building
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505

Facade (N) and E elevation, looking SW.

Photo 1 of 4

JAN 26 1977





Griggs County Courthouse
Cooperstown, North Dakota
Griggs County
Photo credit: State Historical Society of North Dakota
Date of photo: June 19, 1976
Location of negative: Liberty Memorial Building
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505

Rear (S) and W elevation, looking NE.

Photo 2 of 4

JAN 26 1977



Griggs County Courthouse
Cooperstown, North Dakota
Griggs County
Photo credit: State Historical Society of North Dakota
Date of photo: November 4, 1976
Location of negative: Liberty Memorial Building
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505

Secondary stairway in SW corner of courthouse, taken from second floor looking SE toward landing.

Photo 3 of 4

JAN 26 1977

JUL 21 1977



Griggs County Courthouse
Cooperstown, North Dakota
G Riggs County
Photo credit: State Historical Society of North Dakota
Date of photo: June 19, 1976
Location of negative: Liberty Memorial Building
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505

E (right) and S elevations of 1879 log house built by Omund Nelson Opheim and now located on E lawn of courthouse, looking NW.

Photo 4 of 4

JAN 26 1977

JUL 21 1977

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: COUNTY COURTHOUSE DECISIONS AND TIMELINE

The fate of the old Griggs County Courthouse was a long and bureaucratic struggle. In 2010, two county offices — Social Services and the Sheriff's Department — moved out of the Griggs County Courthouse and into temporary quarters after 4 of 6 staff members visited their doctors for health issues connected to the mold present in several areas of the courthouse.

In 2011 Griggs County Commission held three public meetings to discuss and present renovation plans for the Griggs County Courthouse after voters rejected three separate bond issues for a new building. There were to be two sections to the new courthouse--one part would be an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the jail and law enforcement, and the other side of the building would house the court, social services, and the county extension agent. The county initially received one million dollars in grant funding from the federal Homeland Security Department for the EOC portion renovation project. To move forward, the Griggs County Commission members overrode the previous vote against a new courthouse building since its construction would not increase taxes and did not require a referendum vote. Construction began in July of 2013 on the new courthouse, but stopped in May of 2014 when the general contractor working on the nearly completed courthouse halted work due to payment disputes for previously completed work. In August, the Construction Engineers filed a lien over $856,000 plus interest against the county and the Griggs County Building Authority.

Griggs County then filed a lawsuit against the Griggs County Building Authority. Griggs County claimed that the Building Authority breached the contract for the unfinished new courthouse construction project. The Building Authority members argued that the remaining balances were to be paid by the County Commission for their responsibility in project delays that ultimately generated the increased costs. The mediation process lasted over a year. The Griggs County Commission and Building Authority finally agreed to drop lawsuits against each other during a mediation session in May of 2016. Three Building Authority members resigned and were replaced by members of the County Commission, granting them majority voting power. Construction resumed, and contractors began the finishing touches, like pouring concrete for the parking lot and sidewalks, a year after the settled dispute between the Griggs County Commission and the Building Authority. About 100 people attended the open house on April 28, 2017.

TIMELINE:

November 2, 2010 - In 2010, two county offices - Social Services and the Sheriff's Department - moved out of the Griggs County Courthouse and into temporary offices after 4 out of 6 staff members visited their doctors for their daily health issues connected to the mold present in several areas of the courthouse.

April 27, 2011 - The Griggs County Commision held three public meetings to discuss and present renovation plans for the Griggs County Courthouse after voters had rejected three separate bond issues for a new building.

August 29, 2011 - North Dakota granted $9.6 million in Homeland Security Grants. The former Griggs County Courthouse initially received one million dollars in grant funding for a $4.7 million renovation project.

October 2013 - A recall election occurred and all county commissioners were replaced after they voted to approve the building of a new courthouse despite the rejection by voters of three bond votes to fund the project.

October 8, 2014 - The general contractor working on the nearly completed courthouse halted work overpayment disputes for previously completed work. In August, the Construction Engineers filed a lien over $856,000 plus interest against the county and the Griggs County Building Authority.

August 21, 2015 - Griggs County files a lawsuit against the Griggs County Building Authority. Griggs County claimed that the Building Authority breached the contract for the unfinished courthouse construction project. Building Authority members argued that the remaining balances were to be paid by the County Commision for their responsibility in project delays that ultimately generated the increased costs. The mediation process lasted over a year.

May 5 2016 - Griggs County Commission and Building Authority agreed to drop lawsuits against each other during a mediation session. Three Building Authority members resigned and were replaced by members of the County Commission granting them majority voting power.

May 21, 2017 - Contractors began the finishing touches, like pouring concrete for the parking lot and sidewalks, a year after the settled dispute between the Griggs County Commission and the Building Authority. About 100 people attended the open house on April 28th.

APPENDIX 2: MISC. RESEARCH FINDING

DOWNSTAIRS AT THE COURTHOUSE

I was born October 3, 1902 on a farm near Cooperstown, North Dakota, called the Helena Farm what is now the town of Revere. The little house still is there just as it was then. My father, Mason Knapp, owned the farm then. Later we moved a few miles northwest to another farm. Papa, Mamma, and my brother Gail, four years older than I. Here Papa had more room for his big herd of sheep. This farm we called the Johnson Farm.

When I was one year old my mother fell and never walked again. Papa spent his two farms trying to get help for her but all in vain. The first year or so she went about on crutches, then in a wheel chair and the last two years of her life she was confined to her bed.

I was four years old when one stormy day we were loaded into a sleigh, my mother, brother, Papa's sister, and husband, and their little girl Grace, and Papa. Papa had nailed canvas over the top of a sleigh box and we had a lantern in there to keep us warm. We were moving to Cooperstown to live in the basement of the courthouse. Papa had been elected sheriff of Griggs County, his term to begin January 1, 1907. He served four years of which time I had lots of fun. I was into everything and nothing much missed entering my young mind. The prisoners were good friends of mine, gave me money for candy and had me speak and sing for them.

I started school when I was seven and used to pick Crocus on "Winger" Hill (vinegar).

I used to enjoy visiting the courtroom and the many offices in the courthouse. Sometimes we'd climb to the very top and view the town. One could get such a good sight of town and country from there.

The hall was long going to the furnace room with cells on each side for prisoners. This made a wonderful place to roller skate. Papa bought me a pair after he found out I could skate so well on borrowed ones. Oh, for fun we had! Other children came there and skated, too. Now I wonder how well the prisoners liked it — all that noise.

There were all kinds of people in the cells — some insane ones overnight or for a few days until Papa could take them to Jamestown, one or two who had committed murder waiting trial and then to be taken to Bismarck to the penitentiary, others to sober up and others just serving a few days to 30 or 60 days. One time Papa was notified two safe crackers might hit Cooperstown and to be on the lookout for them. Someone saw two suspicious characters get off the train and saw them go into a cafe so they called Papa. He took along his deputy and went to the cafe. There they sat up to the counter, the only two strangers in there, so Papa pulled a gun on them. They were armed but didn't go for their guns. The deputy took them to jail. They had a little bag with them with their tools in for cracking safes and a bottle of nitro-glycerin. After they were securely locked in, Papa buried the nitro-glycerin as it's so terribly explosive. The one man, Tom Tracy, as he gave his name, was wanted some place far away. He was known as the second best safe cracker in the world — so it was said. I have no way of knowing for sure. He was taken away. The other one, Joe somebody (I forget), was there a year. The last month of his time Papa would let him out of his cell and give him work to do around the house or down at the livery barn. He ate at the table with the family and was so good to Mamma. He pushed her wheel chair around wherever she wanted to go. I remember the day he was to leave. All morning he played our phonograph and visited with Mamma. When he said goodbye, he cried.

Once my father was called away to be gone overnight. He gave the housekeeper the keys to the two back doors and front door of the jail and told her to lock up early. She fed the prisoners early and went to get the keys to lock up and as she was about to close the door, two walked right by her and escaped. They had taken a watch spring and sawed two bars and bent the bars over with a table leg. One was recaptured but the other they never found.

My father, owned a livery barn and had many race horses, one he named "Lulu-gail" after us two children. She was a great trotter and won many races. Little Dick Lockart was a pacer and won races at Cooperstown, Fargo, Jamestown, Wimbledon, and the nearby towns. I loved these horses and many times was with my father while training them. I used to curl up with him on the high banks of horseblankets to sleep. Little Dick would eat anything from tobacco to candy. After school my brother would put a sack of peanuts in his pocket and Dick would snoop around until he found them and then eat sack, peanuts and all.

In 1910 my father went to Montana and filed on a claim. His office of sheriff ran out January 1, 1911. We then moved to a small house until Father could straighten his business and move to Montana. My mother was in bed very bad at this time but looked forward to going to Montana so much, but on July 1, 1911 she slept quietly away at 7 p.m. and on the 3rd we laid her to rest beside my father's father twelve miles west of Cooperstown.

In September I started my second year of school but only went two months. The latter part of October we bade North Dakota goodbye. My father and brother with furniture, farm machinery, Bess and Oakwood and Little Dick, two cows and a calf started for Montana in a boxcar. Our housekeeper and I left on the afternoon train. Many girl friends were at the train to say goodbye. Helen Stone gave me a box of chocolates, my first, and I was very proud of them.

—Lulu Knapp Quick

Centenial Book Committee. *Cooperstown, North Dakota 1882-1982*. Pages 21-22.