

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92001860 Date Listed: 2/10/93

Jerauld County Courthouse Jerauld SOUTH DAKOTA
Property Name: County: State:

County Courthouses of South Dakota MPS
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Autawalt J. Lee 2/23/93
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

No level of significance was checked in the state/federal agency certification section. In consultation with the South Dakota SHPO, locally has been checked as the level of significance. The text indicates the bays and trim are sandstone. In the description section, sandstone has been added as a building material.

The nomination is officially amended to include this information.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

1860

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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 16A). 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 (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: JERAULD COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Other names/site number: _____

2. Location

Street & number: SOUTH DAKOTA AVENUE not for publication

City or town: WESSINGTON SPRINGS vicinity

State: SOUTH DAKOTA Code: SD County: JERAULD Code: 073 Zip code: 57382

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 and title of certifying official: [Signature] Date: 12/17/92

State or Federal agency and bureau: South Dakota SHPI

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

Signature of the Keeper: _____ Date of Action: _____

State or Federal agency and bureau: _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper: Patrick Andrews Date of Action: 2/10/93

JERAULD COUNTY COURTHOUSE
Name of Property

JERAULD COUNTY, S.D.
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public - local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

COUNTY COURTHOUSES OF S.D.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: Courthouse

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT: Courthouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

ART DECO

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation CONCRETE

walls CONCRETE

BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other _____

Narrative Description

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

JERAULD COUNTY COURTHOUSE
Name of Property

JERAULD COUNTY, S.D.
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or 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 Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS / GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1930-1940

Significant Dates

1930

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect: Perkins & McWayne

Builder: Majerus Company

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

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Narrative Description:

The Jerauld County Courthouse stands in the center of the northern end of a rectangular block in Wessington Springs, South Dakota. The site is located just to the south of the main commercial district. The Courthouse faces east onto Wallace Street. South Dakota Avenue, the main access into town from South Dakota Highway 34 borders the rear of the block. The courthouse square is landscaped with many mature deciduous trees.

The Courthouse exhibits the design features of the Art Deco style which enjoyed widespread use for public and commercial buildings in the United States between 1925 and 1940. The arrangement of the facade with the ends stepped back, the vertical emphasis created by the strips of windows with spandrel panels, and the stylized geometric motif topping the piers separating the windows are all defining features of the style.

The Courthouse is three stories in height with a basement rising one-half level above grade at the rear. Exterior walls are concrete clad with brick. All facades are symmetrical. The building has a flat roof hidden behind the parapets.

The front facade of the building is divided into three balanced masses--a central square bay with slightly stepped-back narrow side bays. The bays are constructed of brick with sandstone parapet caps. Smooth-finished Bedford sandstone enframes the main entrance and five bands of windows. Fluted sandstone piers separate the windows; the piers are topped with sandstone caps carved in a stylized geometric pattern. These caps extend above the parapet line providing additional verticality to the building. The historic steel casement sash remain intact throughout the building and are separated by carved spandrels with recessed panels. The side bays of the facade are slightly lower than the central block and topped with a deeper sandstone parapet. The piers and spandrels are brick.

The main entrance to the building is defined by a uniquely designed projection at the first floor. The massive sandstone surround bears an Egyptian Revival feeling of a pylon or gateway. The surround is constructed of sandstone, fluted to the height of the entrance doors. The walls carry a deep, stepped lintel bearing the incised inscription "JERAULD COUNTY COURT HOUSE ERECTED 1930." The entry platform is flanked by gently flared, solid concrete railings which rise gradually toward the sandstone surround. From these railings rise sandstone "buttresses." The buttresses are composed of square piers topped by vertical, tapered consoles with volutes. From a distance, the "buttresses" give a battered appearance to the walls of the entry. A pair of hollow metal, full light doors with a transom of beveled, leaded glass provides access to the

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building. A rosette band of white flowers set in a blue background is located above the transoms.

The rear facade of the building is similar to the front facade in massing and details. The slope of the site, however, provides for the basement to be partially above ground. The rear entry enters at this half level. Above the entry, the windows are also placed at half floor levels in the building (corresponding with the interior stair landings).

The side elevations of the building are also similar to the front facade, but with the center mass having three bands of windows instead of five. The detailing, such as the spandrel panels, piers, and ornamentation are identical to the side bays of the front facade.

The interior plan of the courthouse is laid out with a central corridor running east and west through the building. Offices of the major county functions are accessed directly off the corridor. The east leg of the corridor houses the main entry; the west leg houses a double return stair.

The interior of the courthouse is elaborately decorated in a combination of motifs. This combination on the interior, as opposed to the sophistication of the Art Deco exterior, is likely due to its rather early construction during the Art Deco period.

Corridors on the first and second floor are lined with a beige-colored marble wainscotting. The plaster above the wainscotting is struck to appear like stone. The ornamental plaster cornice on these floors is an Art Nouveau-style link border of high-relief vessels containing floral arrangements. The vessels are connected by ribbons in a four-pointed, star-shaped pattern and separated by recessed, inverted triangles. Where the border extends across exposed beams, the beams are supported by erect consoles in an S-shaped double volute. Above the cornice, an unadorned molding rises to the transition between the wall and ceiling. The transition is decorated with a horizontal, slightly recessed, band and an ogee molding.

The third floor corridors are lined with a recessed, paneled wood wainscotting, and like the other floors, the plaster above is struck to appear as stone. The ornamental plaster cornice on the third floor hints at an Art Deco-style, geometric, interlacement band but is combined with an organic floral element. The ovolo molding below the band is enriched with a floral pattern. The transition between the band and the ceiling is decorated with a horizontal, slightly recessed, band and an ogee molding.

The courtroom is an interesting anomaly in this otherwise "moderne" building. The decorations and furnishings are more reminiscent of the earlier

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Neo-Classical style courthouses. The walls are lined with a recessed, paneled wood wainscotting; the doors and paneled area behind the judge's bench are topped with flat entablature moldings. The courtroom railing is composed of tightly spaced turned-wood balusters, with Colonial-Revival finials rising from the newel posts. A modern suspended acoustical tile ceiling conceals the courtroom's ornamental plaster cornice. The original Courtroom furnishings remain in-place.

Original pendant and ceiling mounted light fixtures with white globes decorated with black geometric designs remain in the public corridors throughout the building.

The Jerauld County Courthouse retains almost complete exterior and interior architectural integrity. The only modifications have been the lowering of the ceiling in the courtroom and the removal of the light standards from the entrances. A reflective coating has also been placed on the historic windows.

Two small, non-contributing buildings exist on the courthouse block. Both buildings have recently been moved onto the site.

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Narrative Statement of Significance:

The Jerauld County Courthouse is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under Criteria "A" and "C." The building is historically significant for its role as the symbolic and functional seat of government for Jerauld County. Since the building's construction, it has housed virtually all of the county's administrative, operational, and judicial functions, while simultaneously serving as the official repository for county records. The courthouse is the most important single physical element in the historic and contemporary governance of Jerauld County, and is an important local visual reminder of the importance of county government.

The Jerauld County courthouse is architecturally significant as a representative example of twentieth-century public and institutional architecture in South Dakota. The building's utilization of Art Deco design elements is typical of state courthouses constructed during the period. The building is an unusually well-crafted and executed example of Art Deco design, and is among the largest and most visually striking examples of architecture in Wessington Springs and Jerauld County.

Historical Narrative:

Jerauld County was created in 1883 from the northern portion of Aurora County, which had earlier been created by the Dakota Territorial Legislature. The creation of Jerauld County, one of the smaller counties in South Dakota, was unusual in that it stemmed from philosophical as well as geographic concerns--many of the county's new residents were temperance-minded Methodists with a more conservative outlook than that of many Aurora residents. Jerauld County's government was organized at Wessington Springs in late 1883, and Wessington Springs was named the permanent county seat at an election the following year.¹

The new county's commissioners moved relatively quickly to secure a permanent home for county offices and records. By 1884, Jerauld County's government was operated out of a small wooden building which formerly housed a privately-run subscription school. The old schoolhouse was far too small, however, to serve as a permanent courthouse, and in 1885 the county made plans to erect a replacement facility. That August, commissioners asked Sam Marlenee, an area resident, to prepare building plans for a new courthouse; they simultaneously requested contractors' bids for constructing the new building. In early September, the construction contract was also awarded to Marlenee. The new building was to cost \$2,000.00, with \$250.00 of the cost coming from local donations and the remaining funds from the county treasury. The building was constructed on a prominent block of lots, donated by the townsite company, in the southern portion of the community.²

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The building Marlenee designed and constructed was a two story wooden structure, measuring 32 by 40 feet. The building included symmetrically-placed two-over-two windows, a cross-gable roof, and corbeled brick chimneys. Little decorative detail was present, other than small rounded windows in the gable ends. The building was constructed in two months' time; its opening on November 12, 1885 was marked by a formal ball in the new courtroom. The interim courthouse building, meanwhile, was moved to the new courthouse block and converted to a sheriff's office and jail.³

By the mid-1920s, Jerauld County commissioners felt that the 1885 courthouse had outlived its original usefulness. During the 1920s, the county maintained a separate tax levy for deposit into a "court house building fund," and by 1929 the fund had grown to approximately \$120,000.00, large enough to fully fund the construction of a new courthouse. The county held a special election on September 24, 1929 to authorize construction of a new courthouse, and voters overwhelmingly approved the idea by a vote of 666 to 85.⁴

Further planning for the new building continued throughout the winter of 1929-1930. The county purchased a group of lots for a new courthouse block and began calling in farm and other loans it had made using Courthouse Building Fund money. Bonds were also issued to help finance the project, since a number of the loans made against the building fund were not yet due. In November, 1929, county commissioners also contracted with the Sioux Falls architectural firm of Perkins & McWayne to design the county's new courthouse. County records do not indicate whether a competitive bidding or design process was used in the selection of Perkins & McWayne.

The Perkins & McWayne firm consisted of Robert A. Perkins (1882-1954) and Albert McWayne (b. 1885). McWayne, an Iowa native and graduate of Purdue University, arrived in South Dakota about 1916 and worked as an architect and an engineer. Perkins was born in Wisconsin and earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from the Armour Institute of Technology; he had moved to South Dakota by 1912. The Perkins & McWayne partnership was established in 1918, with offices in Sioux Falls. Working together, individually, and in association with other architects, the two men completed a wide variety of design projects in South Dakota and elsewhere. The firm employed a significant range of academic styles in their work, and produced some of South Dakota's best-designed major buildings. Among their projects were four South Dakota courthouse buildings: Lyman (1925), Douglas (1927), Haakon (1930), and Jerauld (1930). Their partnership continued until Perkins' death in 1954, following which the firm became known as McWayne and McLaughlin.⁵

Jerauld County opened construction bids for its new courthouse on February 11, 1930. The general construction contract for the building was awarded to the Majerus Company of Watertown, South Dakota, in the amount of \$91,975.00.

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Additional, smaller contracts were simultaneously let for heating and plumbing work, electrical work, a "temperature control" system, and for plumbing fixtures. Other contracts were awarded later in 1930 for jail equipment, courtroom fixtures, and wood and metal office equipment and furniture. A final addition to the project was a \$1,551.00 appropriation to Majerus for gold-leaf exterior lettering and interior wall stenciling and decoration. The final cost of the finished courthouse was \$135,610.81.

The new courthouse was completed at the end of 1930, and apparently first occupied in January, 1931. The county's 1885 courthouse was sold for salvage and soon razed; the old jail building was converted into a residential garage and survived until 1976. The 1930 Jerauld County courthouse, meanwhile, continues in service in 1992, little-changed from its original appearance.

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ENDNOTES

1. Jack Marken, ed., *The Making of a Community: A History of Jerauld County to 1980* (Wessington Springs, South Dakota: Dunham Historical Society, 1982), 95-96.

2. N.J. Dunham, *A History of Jerauld County, South Dakota, from the Earliest Settlement to January 1st, 1909*. (Wessington Springs, South Dakota: n.p., 1910), 129-130.

3. Ibid.

4. "Record Commissioners Proceedings, Jerauld County," manuscript volume 5 (1928-1948), pp. 45-49 (August 6, 1929 - September 25, 1929).

5. Relatively little biographical information on Perkins & McWayne was uncovered during project research. The data in this paragraph is from Carolyn Torma, "Building Diversity: A Photographic Survey of South Dakota Architecture, 1913-1940," *South Dakota History* 19 (1989): 156-193.

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Bibliography:

Dunham, N.J. *A History of Jerauld County, South Dakota, from the Earliest Settlement to January 1st, 1909.* Wessington Springs, South Dakota: n.p., 1910.

Marken, Jack, ed. *The Making of a Community: A History of Jerauld County to 1980.* Wessington Springs, South Dakota: Dunham Historical Society, 1982.

"Record Commissioners Proceedings, Jerauld County." Manuscript volumes maintained at the County Auditor's Office, Wessington Springs, South Dakota.

Torma, Carolyn, "Building Diversity: A Photographic Survey of South Dakota Architecture, 1913-1940," *South Dakota History* 19 (1989): 156-193.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary includes the following contiguous parcels of land:

All of lots 17, 18, 19, and 20, in Block 12, Original Townsite of Wessington Springs, South Dakota;

All of Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4, and the north 100 feet of Lot 13, in Block 16, Burr and Scott's Addition to Wessington Springs, South Dakota; and

That portion of vacated First Street Southwest located between the two above-described blocks.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property includes the courthouse building and the landscaped grounds immediately surrounding it. It coincides with the legal description of the tract of land historically set aside as the courthouse grounds. It does not include adjacent city streets, or the unrelated urban development surrounding the block.

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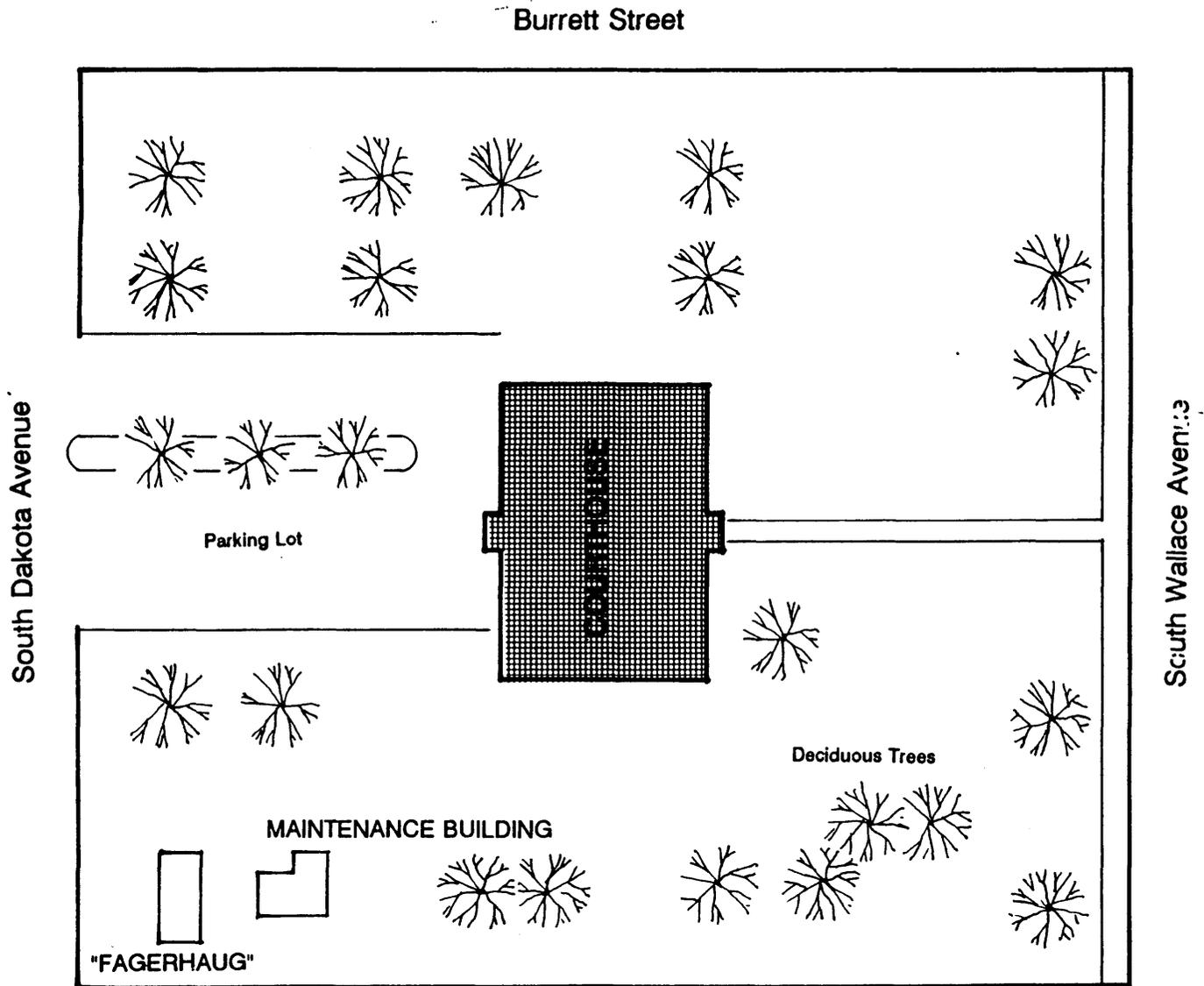
Index to Photographs

Photographer: Lon Johnson

Date: January 16, 1992

Location of original negatives: South Dakota State Historical Preservation
Center, Vermillion, South Dakota

Photograph Number	Description	Direction of View
1	South and east exterior elevations	Northwest
2	East exterior elevation	West
3	South exterior elevation	North
4	West (primary) exterior elevation	East
5	Detail of east entrance	West
6	First floor hallway area	
7	Detail of decorative interior plasterwork	
8	Detail: interior lighting fixture and cornice	
9	Courtroom interior	
10	Small buildings moved to courthouse grounds	Southwest



Scale: 1" = 50'

JERALD COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Wessington Springs, South Dakota

Lots 17, 18, 19, and 20 - Block 12 Original Townsite
 Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4 and the North 100 Feet of Lot 13 - Block 16 Burr and Scott's Addition
 That Portion of Vacated First Street Southwest between Block 12 and Block 16