

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

STATE:	South Dakota
COUNTY:	Minnehaha
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	MAY 2 1974

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES**
(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME COMMON	
Federal Building and U.S. Court House	
AND/OR HISTORIC: Old Post Office	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 400 South Phillips Avenue			
CITY OR TOWN: Sioux Falls		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 1st (Frank E. Denholm, H.R.)	
STATE: South Dakota	CODE 46	COUNTY: Minnehaha	CODE 099

3. CLASSIFICATION					
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC		
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	

4. AGENCY			
General Services Administration, PBS			
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable) Region #8		STREET AND NUMBER: Bldg. 41 Denver Fed. Center	
CITY OR TOWN: Denver		STATE: Colorado	CODE 08

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Minnehaha County Court House, Registry of Deeds			
STREET AND NUMBER: 415 North Dakota Avenue			
CITY OR TOWN: Sioux Falls		STATE: South Dakota	CODE 46

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: "Students, Pioneers and a Community Sense of History: A Survey Study of Sioux Falls, South Dakota"			
DATE OF SURVEY: 1972-3 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Center for Western Studies, Augustana College			
STREET AND NUMBER: 28th Street and Summit Avenue			
CITY OR TOWN: Sioux Falls		STATE: South Dakota	CODE 46

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Site: (See 1895 photo #1 and Property Map)

On July 22, 1891 the U.S. purchased a corner site for the first Court House and Post Office building one block east of the main street but several blocks southward (12th St.) from the previously leased premises at 9th and Main. A few frame houses stood at the rear (east) but there were no buildings to be seen along Phillips either to the south or in the block to the north. Today, there are commercial buildings and apartments all along both principal streets and the Federal Building clearly adds much to the character of the neighborhood.

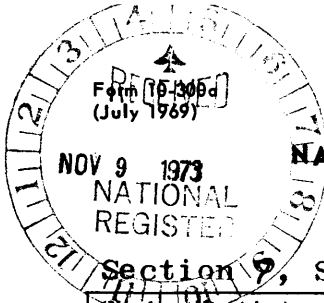
The Original 1892-95 Unit was designed during the good vintage (Richardsonian) years of the early 1890's when Treasury Department buildings were influenced by the late work of the architect, H. H. Richardson, especially his Allegheny County buildings completed ca. 1887. Although the term "Romanesque" is popularly used for almost any structure with round arches it does not distinguish between the simpler, geometrical and rugged Post-Victorian here at Sioux Falls, in contrast to the more elaborate Victorian designs that were common elsewhere.

The plan of the first unit was essentially a two-story, rectangular block with octagonal corner turrets facing Phillips Avenue. The main central entrance was recessed behind a powerful archway that was set within a slightly projecting pavilion rising through the second-story cornice to another arch treatment and window at the third-floor level. A gable topped the pavilion with finials at the apex and each parapet pedestal below. The principal first-floor windows lighting the lobby were large arched openings; on the second floor they were appropriately narrower, either arched in pairs or with horizontal lintels; all had stone transoms. A side entrance on 12th Street through the second arched opening from the corner was reached by projecting two-way steps.

The Sioux Falls building is distinguished from dozens of Treasury Department designs in this general style by the unusual rosy color and unique texture contrast of the exterior masonry material. It is called jasper or quartzite, a local, metamorphic rock and building stone. This peculiar stone is durable, like granite, keeping its crisp edges, and has similar texture and workability. However, unlike granite the surface, when clean, appears slightly translucent. As a result, the Federal Building has the look of permanence and security but, withal, a friendly warmth that comes from the color as well as the large arch treatment. Instead of using a contrasting stone for the vousoirs and trim the same quartzite material was tooled to a smoother finish than the rock facing of the rest of the wall. This contrast has led some critics to assume mistakenly that the trim and ornament is terra-cotta.

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



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Section 9, Sheet 1 (Continuation Sheet)

(Number of entries)

Inside, the plan of the original unit followed the typical post-office scheme for a corner site: An "L"-shaped lobby received ample daylight from the large windows on the street sides; the workroom behind the "screen line" had the same high ceilings as in the lobby and borrowed some light, but also had a skylight court opening up through the second story to the roof. The Federal Court Room, approximately 36' x 48', was located on the second floor served by an elevator and 15'-wide stair hall. The floor-to-floor heights are generous and typical of the era: basement to 1st = 11'-0"; 1st to 2nd = 19'-0"; 2nd to 3rd = 16'-0" (20' over the Court Room); about 13'-6" on the upper floors. Iron columns were used in the 1892-95 unit; steel in later work, also steel roof framing.

The 1911-13 addition of 30 feet to the east and a complete third story over all (see attachment 7-A) apparently had been anticipated as it completed the symmetry of the facade on 12th Street (compare photos #1 and #2). There is no evidence to indicate that the change was a labored afterthought. The center pavilions on both street facades were carefully redesigned to unify the new with the old; also a corbeled arcade has given the third-floor cornice a new scale appropriate to the additional height.

The 1931-33, two-story wing (see photo #3) added to the back (east) is equally compatible and harmonious -- unusual after a forty-year interval. Fashions change, and in recent years economy as well seems to dictate the use of utilitarian boxes to expand public buildings in the rear. However, Sioux Falls was exceptional: the same quartzite has been used, and the 1895 cornice and fenestration has been carried around the wing even on the parking lot elevations (S. & E.). The present building dimensions are: 100' x 201'. 100 feet of parking area to the east, 50 feet to the south.

In 1968 the Post Office was moved to a new building. On the exterior of the Federal Building, modifications were minimal: the 12th Street entrance and steps were removed meticulously, and after the cleaning process was applied to the whole exterior there is hardly a trace. However, the interior of the 1895-1913 block was completely replanned and "modernized" except for the stair hall, the Court Room and the Judge's suite on the S.W. corner of the second floor. The latter two retain all the earlier elegance. The remainder has been cut up into small units with standard office partitions (see plan, attachment 7-A); ceilings have been dropped and the light court converted for mechanical equipment; the new spaces are neat, clean but without distinction.

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Section 7 Sheet #2 (Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Federal Building, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

According to the Annual Report of the Supervising Architect for 1891 (opposite p. 157) the original unit of this building was designed under the administration of W. J. Edbrooke. The 1911-13 extension came under the administration of John Knox Taylor.



8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th-Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | Additions & Alterations |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1892-95, (1911-13, 1931-33, 1968)**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | Jurisprudence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Everyone knows about the Pony Express and its brief but glamorous mail service. But, except for local historians, (see Section 9, items c and d) few others have yet to recognize the important role of communications provided by the U.S. Postal System, that followed the railroads in the phenomenal growth and development of states west of the Mississippi River. The same can be said of the Federal court system in respect to jurisprudence. Thus a new Post Office and Federal Court House in South Dakota ca. 1895 had a beneficial psychological as well as functional effect on the community it served, comparable to one built in Ohio ca. 1820. The permanence and stability implicit in the new \$152,000 U.S. government building gave citizens a far greater sense of security for their own future.

The first Judge to occupy quarters in the building was a prominent politician in the new state named Edgerton, appointed by President Harrison. Since then, many people and events significant in local and state history have been associated with 400 South Phillips Avenue. Even while this report is being written, the building has been shown on television as the place where Indians from Wounded Knee came for a hearing.

But buildings may also be important historically simply as architecture. The primary significance of the Sioux Falls Federal Building is based upon its continued retention of architectural values incorporated in the original (1892-95) exterior design; these qualities have been enhanced, not diminished, by sympathetic regard for intrinsic character and integrity in both of the 20th-century additions at approximately twenty-year intervals. (See details discussed under Section 7) The Public Buildings "Survey" of 1901 (see Section 9, item b, pp. 32, 566 and 591) shows numerous U.S. C.H. & P.O. variations on the Post-Victorian, corner-turreted theme established by H. H. Richardson. However, few if any of these were superior to the one in Sioux Falls when built, and none could have survived the intervening years with more distinction as well as continued useful life in the community.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- (a) Annual Reports of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, Washington, D.C., GPO, (passim from 1891 p.157 to 1895 p.60)
- (b) A History of Public Buildings under the Control of the Treasury Department, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1901, p. 542-3.
- (c) Smith, Charles A., A Comprehensive History of Minnehaha County, South Dakota, Mitchell, South Dakota, Educator Supply Co., 1949, pp. 198-207.
- (d) Bragstad, R. E., Sioux Falls in Retrospect, privately printed, 1967, pp.53-57 (copy at the S.F. Public Library:TR978.33/B81)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

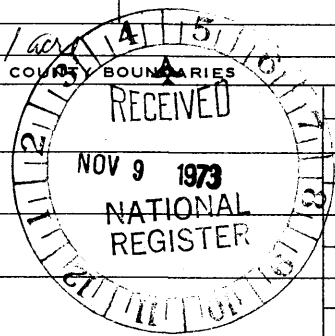
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		43° 32' 36"	96° 43' 33"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

NO COPY

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: *less than 1 acre*

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Buford L. Pickens, Prof., History of Architecture** DATE: **March 28, 1973**

BUSINESS ADDRESS: **Washington University**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Office: 1122 Warson Woods Drive** PHONE: **314-966-3590**

CITY OR TOWN: **St. Louis** STATE: **Missouri 63122** CODE: **29**

12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

State Liaison Officer recommendation:

Yes
 No
 None

[Signature]
 State Liaison Officer Signature

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Liaison Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The recommended level of significance is National State

Local

[Signature] **10/24/73**
 Federal Representative Signature Date

Historic Preservation
 Title
Liaison Officer

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

[Signature]
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: **5/2/74**

ATTEST:

[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

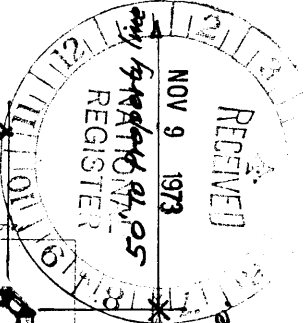
Date: **5.2.74**

101' To EDGE OF Parking Lot

101' "C"

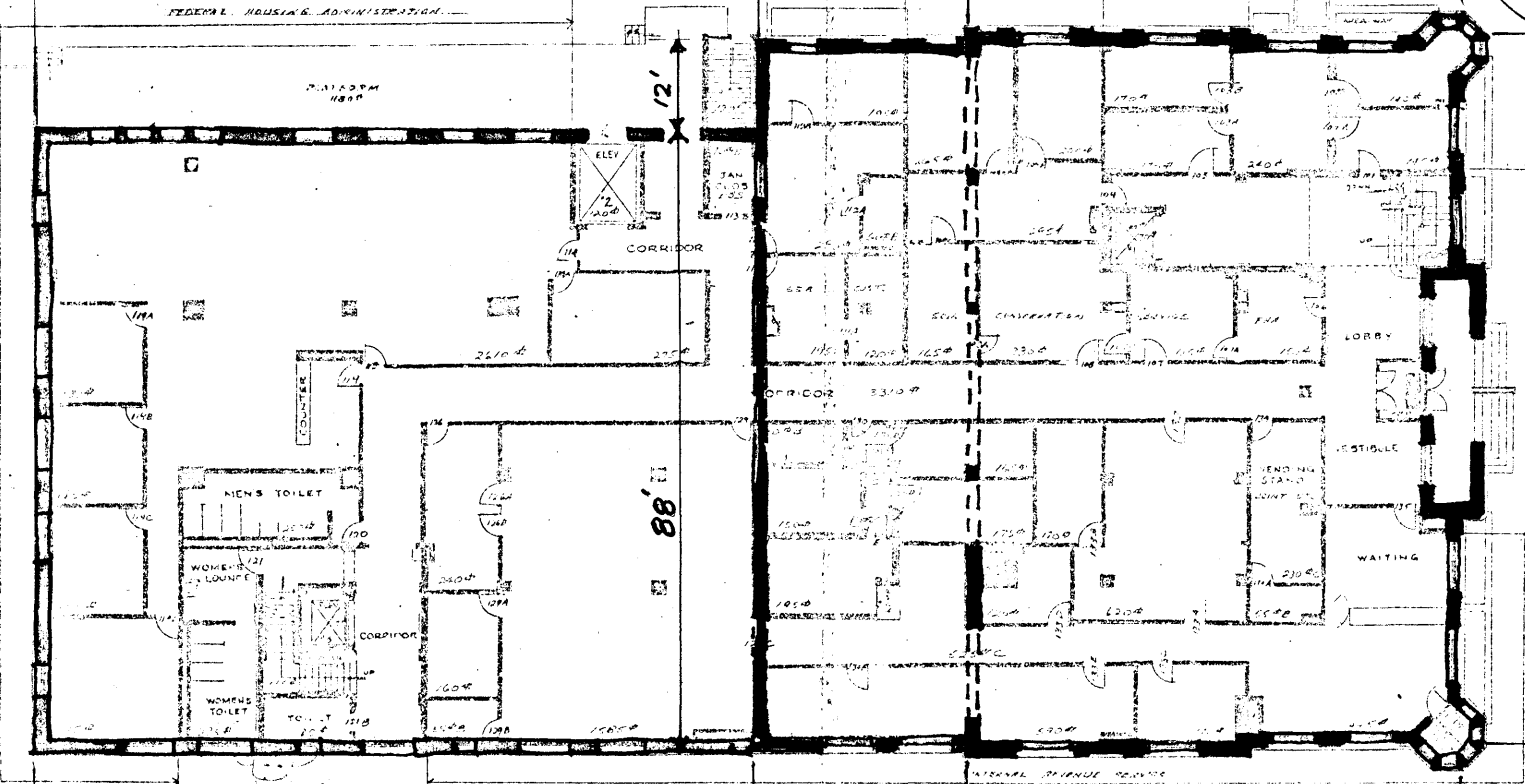
30' "B"

70' "A"



Phillips Ave

100'



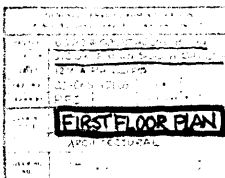
"C" 1931-33 Addition
88' x 101' 2 storys + Bsmt.

"B" 1911-13 Extension
included also the
third story over
both "A" and "B"
plus Bsmt.

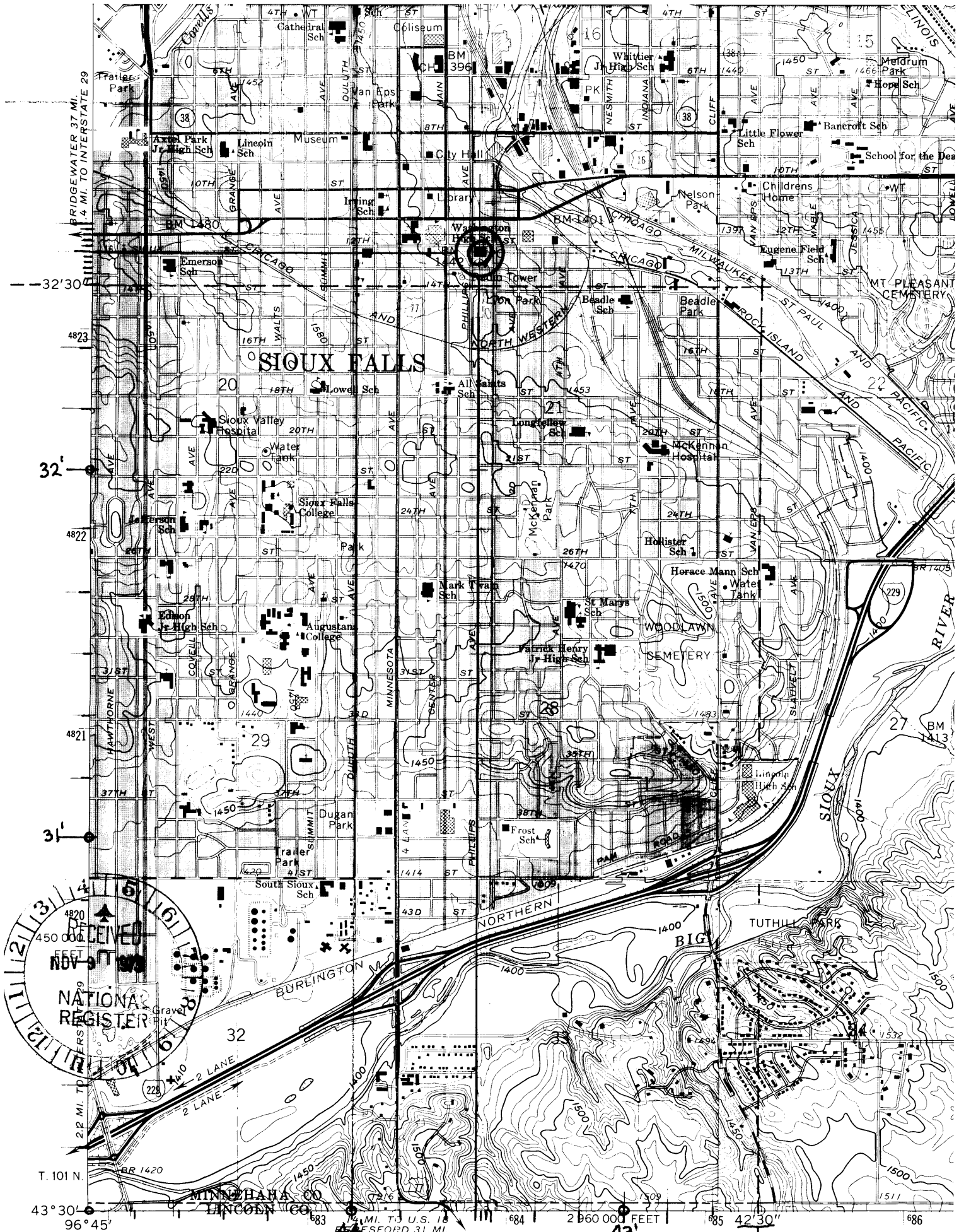
"A" 1892-95 original unit
70' x 100', 2 storys + Bsmt.

12th Street

data by B.L.P., 3-73



Sioux Falls Federal Bldg. -- Attachment 7-A, First Floor Plan showing later additions



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS



1

2

TEA
IV NE