

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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2. GYMNASIUM (now MILLER HALL).

VBD: Beginning at the intersection of the north-south half section line of Section 20, Township 33 N, Range 48 W, with the corporation line of the City of Chadron, proceed south 850 feet to this building.

UTM: E663320 N4742450.

Acreage: less than one.

Brick wall material; rectangular form; three stories and two-story side wings; flat roof; two main entrances placed at each end of the north (main) facade, stone door surrounds with stylized pediment, paired windows; decorative rectangular brickwork with white stone corner-blocks between floors; 1920; windows and doors have been replaced, though the window matches the original one-over-one lights; J. C. Stitt, Norfolk, architect.

A gymnasium was a new building type in western Nebraska in the year 1920. This is the first of its type currently known in the area and was the third building erected on the campus.

"In its early years, the gym was the only building in western Nebraska devoted exclusively to a physical education program. Basketball tournaments were held to accommodate area high school teams. It served as a community building where many functions were held, such as conventions, meetings, celebrations, produce shows, poultry shows, and a circus - complete with elephant. Miller Hall still houses gymnastic equipment and classrooms."

An indoor swimming pool was a "delightful luxury," although it is no longer useable. The building continues to serve certain elements of the physical education program.

Architecturally, the gymnasium is a simple brick building with hints of classicism in the form and architectural details. The flat roof with parapet, rectangular central block with shorter side wings, and stone door surrounds all reflect classical influences. The architect, James C. Stitt, used a simplified classical form to house an unusual function - a gymnasium. Classicism in public buildings was typical of the City Beautiful movement in the first part of the 20th century.