

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received **OCT 28 1980**

date entered **APR 20 1981**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Gates College Gymnasium - (Antelope County Jail) (AP04-2)

and/or common Antelope County Museum

**2. Location**

street & number 509 L Street (Hiway 275)        not for publication

city, town Neligh        vicinity of        congressional district Third

state Nebraska code 031 county Antelope code 003

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Antelope County Commissioners

street & number Antelope County Courthouse

city, town Neligh        vicinity of        state Nebraska

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Antelope County Courthouse

street & number       

city, town Neligh        vicinity of        state Nebraska

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title        has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date         federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records       

city, town               vicinity of        state

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Situated across from the northeast corner of the Courthouse square, the Gates College Gymnasium is a two-story brick building. It measures thirty feet wide and fifty feet long, with a hip roof. Windows are found on each side with two windows closely set on each floor on the west side (toward the courthouse). On the south side, two entrance doors are located, one door leading into the first floor area, and the other leads to the stairway up to the second floor. When the building was used as a gymnasium, the first floor was the men's gym area and the ladies used the second floor, hence the two entrances. Gymnasium equipment included chest weights, Indian clubs, dumb bells, rowing machines, striking bag, horizontal bars, and other apparatus to measure strength and endurance. A small basement room is below the building and it is unsure to whether it was original to the structure or added when it was converted to a county jail facility.

In the spring of 1901, the gymnasium building became the Antelope County Jail. A cell block of three cells was removed from the county courthouse and installed in the first floor. The only other room on the first floor was utilized as the sheriff's office. In the northeast corner, a confinement room for females was constructed of 2 x 4 lumber laid on their sides in cribbing fashion. The second floor was partitioned off into five rooms for living quarters for the sheriff's family. A window on the east side was changed into an entrance door and a landing and stairway to the ground level constructed. A larger chimney was built on the north side, probably for a steam heating furnace installed in the basement room.

In 1964, a new jail and sheriff's office was built just to the east and the old gymnasium was then turned over to the Antelope County Historical Society for use as a museum. It presently houses the collections of the Historical Society and is open during the summer months as a museum. Shortly after this, a ca. 1920 log cabin was moved next to the gym on the north side, and furnished by the Historical Society as an exhibit of a frontier period cabin.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1892-1964 **Builder/Architect** T. H. Brenton & C. E. Spaulding

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Gates College Gymnasium is the last remaining building of Gates College, an educational institute located in Neligh during the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. After the college gave the building up, it was utilized by the county as a combination sheriff's office and jail. This unique building served those purposes in the county for seventy-five years.

In 1881, Neligh was selected over northeastern Nebraska towns by the Congregational Church as the location of a church-affiliated college. A classroom building was constructed and classes convened in 1882. The college was named 'Gates College' in honor of N. H. Gates, then superintendent of missions. Gates College was the first institute of higher learning, private or public, established north of the Platte River in Nebraska. The location of the college in Neligh had an intellectual, social, and economic impact on the town during its period of service. In 1887, Gaylord Hall was erected as a residence and dining hall. William C. Galloway, proprietor of the Neligh Mill, was an important supporter of the college and did much for its successful operation.

The college took interest in the health of the students and in September 1892, a meeting was held to discuss the possibility of erecting a gymnasium building. An athletic organization was formed consisting of both students and local citizens, to operate the gym when completed. Construction of the building began in October with college students digging the foundation ditches. The contract for the brick work was let to T. H. Brenton, and the carpentry work was done by C. E. Spaulding, both men from Neligh. Mr. Brenton later did the brick work for the county courthouse. Throughout the construction period, various entertainments and social functions were held to raise funds for the building and equipment. The gymnasium was completed late in December, 1892.

For the next half dozen years, the gymnasium was used for that purpose by the college. In the later 1890's Gates lost its college status, but remained open as an academy, and the gymnasium building was closed for a period of time. In 1900, the county board, looking for a building to use as a jail, purchased the gym for \$800 and converted it into the county jail. Cells were moved from the courthouse and installed on the first floor, and quarters for the sheriff were built on the second. For the next 64 years, the gymnasium served as the Antelope County jail.

In 1964, a new jail building was built just east of the gymnasium. Desiring to preserve the old building, the county board turned it over to the Antelope County Historical Society to use as a county museum, which it is used for today.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

UMT NOT VERIFIED  
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Neligh, Nebraska

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	4	5	8	10	3	5	10	4	6	6	4	6	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tom Buecker, Curator Neligh Mill

organization Nebraska State Historical Society date August, 1980

street & number P.O. Box 271 telephone 402/887-4303

city or town Neligh state Nebraska 68756

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Marion O'Knecht 10/7/80

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society date

For HCERS use only

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

Donna Ann Wilson date 4/20/81  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Bibliography

Item number 9

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Andreas, History of the State of Nebraska, (Western Historical Society:  
Chiago) 1882 p. 378.

Files of Antelope County Historical Society, Neligh.

Articles, Neligh Leader, 1891.

Interviews with Mrs. Kenneth Pierson, Neligh, February 18, 23, 1980.