

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

RECEIVED

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

JAN 11 1994

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Montrose County Courthouse

other names/site number 5MN1813

2. Location

street & number 320 South 1st Street N/A not for publication

city or town Montrose N/A vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Montrose code 085 zip code 81401

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

James Edward Hartman Signature of certifying official/Title January 3, 1994 Date
State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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): _____

Entered in the National Register for Signature of the Keeper 2/18/94 Date of Action
Gregory Rapsley

Name of Property

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.)

Table with columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

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)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/sandstone walls STONE/sandstone

roof CERAMIC TILE

other

Narrative Description

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Montrose County Courthouse
Montrose County, CO**DESCRIPTION**

The Montrose County Courthouse is a rectangular (65 by 130 feet) plan, hipped roof building. Constructed of locally quarried sandstone with a red tile roof, the building is three stories with a raised basement. Representative of the Classical Revival Style, it is constructed of square cut, regular coursed rock-faced sandstone with smooth faced sandstone accents and a terra cotta cornice. The building sits strategically in the middle of the block, facing South First Street between Townsend (the major thoroughfare) and Cascade Avenues. The only other building on the block is the smaller jail. Although built later, the jail is of similar stone construction and serves as a companion piece to the Courthouse. The Courthouse is across the street from the main post office and is located in an area of downtown Montrose with several schools and churches. The building is in very good condition and has undergone only minor alterations since its construction.

The symmetrically arranged building is punctuated by a projecting central bay of smooth faced sandstone. Stairs rise from the street level, above the windows of the raised basement, to a two story portico flanked by pilasters. The portico features Roman Doric columns supporting a classical entablature with an inscribed identification panel and carved geometric ornamentation in the frieze and a row of dentils above. Three sets of double doors with a grillwork transom mark the main entrance. Above the portico is a centrally located semicircular window filled with diamond lights and flanked by two windows. A stepped parapet tops the projecting central bay. Cast iron lampposts sit on the rough faced stone walls that frame the main entry stairs. The stairs and wall create a covered entry to the basement level. Access to the basement is provided by stairs on the east and a wheelchair ramp on the west.

The smooth finished stone of the projecting bay provides a contrast to the rock faced sandstone walls. This use of smooth stone is continued on the third story (except for the rear elevation) and is also employed in details such as the quoins, belt course, entablature, and first story window panels. The rear elevation limits the use of smooth stone accents to the stringcourse, the sills and the cornice. The only projections from the rough faced walls of the rear elevation are a chimney, a second story oriel window (which appears on the original drawings), a metal fire staircase, and the entry stairs framed with stone walls.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2Montrose County Courthouse
Montrose County, CO**DESCRIPTION** (continued)

Each floor receives a different window treatment. The windows, with the exception of the newly installed horizontal sliders on the third story, are double hung sash. The wider windows on the first and second floors have eight-over-one lights; the narrow basement windows are six-over-six lights. The first story windows have slipsills and a panel of the smooth sandstone; the second story windows have smooth sandstone lugsills.

Today, the interior of the building is still dominated by the foyer on the first floor with its wainscotting, Doric columns and pilasters of marble. This vaulted ceiling area serves as a memorial hall and a bronze tablet with names of World War I veterans is attached to the west wall. Segmentally arched entryways lead into a large spacious hall where a circular opening (described on Bowman's drawings as a "well hole") in the ceiling and in the ceiling of the second story provides a view of the two upper floors. A metal balustrade of geometric designs surrounds these circular openings and outlines the massive staircases between floors. Other original interior features remain including the wood trim and chair rail, the plaster cornice and the marble baseboards.

The alterations to the Courthouse have been minimal. In 1970, the third story windows were replaced with horizontal metal sliders. A wheelchair ramp with a small hipped roof projection was installed in 1984 on the west of the basement entrance. It is not known when the metal fire escape on the rear elevation was installed, however it is believed to have been in the 1950s.

Twenty five feet west of the courthouse is the jail--a two story, rectangular plan, flat roof building. Built in 1936 as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project, the stone for the jail came from several nearby quarries, including the one that provided the stone for the Courthouse. The construction of the jail is similar to that of the Courthouse. Square cut, regularly coursed, rock faced sandstone forms the walls with smooth faced sandstone quoins. On the South First Street and the Townsend Avenue (main entrance) elevations, door surrounds of smooth faced sandstone with a cornice of cavetto moulding frame the single leaf metal and plate glass door. The building is considered contributing and is clearly a companion piece to the Courthouse, not only in its materials and design, but also in its location and use, serving as a functional unit of the Courthouse.

World War II veterans erected a monument on the grounds in 1989. This object is considered noncontributing.

Name of Property

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.)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
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.
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:

- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
removed from its original location.
a birthplace or grave.
a cemetery.
a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
a commemorative property.
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)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1922

1936

Significant Dates

1922

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

William Bowman Company

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Montrose County Courthouse
Montrose County, CO

SIGNIFICANCE

The Montrose County Courthouse is being presented for nomination under criterion C for significance related to architecture and community planning and development. This simplified version of the Classical Revival Style was produced primarily from local materials and at the laying of its cornerstone was referred to as the county's "most characteristic building." It is the best preserved and largest example of the Classic Revival style in the county. The building also represents the community's desire to provide a much needed public facility and also a suitable memorial to those Montrose County servicemen who lost their lives in the first World War.

The Classical Revival style signalled a return to the classic forms of Greece and Rome following the picturesque and elaborate styles of the Victorian period. In Colorado the style was popular from the late 1890s through the 1920s and its most pronounced expression can be seen on large institutional buildings. The monumental proportions, large columns, portico, pilasters, dentils and classical frieze are all characteristics of the Classical Revival style readily seen in the Courthouse.

The Montrose County Courthouse represents the work of William Norman Bowman, a prominent Denver architect who also designed schools and public buildings in other parts of the state. Bowman came to the profession through a carpenter's apprenticeship and went on to become one of Denver's finest architects. He started his successful practice in 1910 and only seven years later was elected president of the Colorado Chapter of the A.I.A. Bowman designed a significant number of buildings employing Classical elements. Among his designs are three properties listed on the National Register: his own home and an apartment building in Denver and the Courthouse in Weld County.

Unlike the understated classical expression of the Montrose County Courthouse, the Weld County Courthouse is a much more lavish design. With its exuberance of details and grandiose composition, it is a better representative of Beaux Arts Classicism. Built in 1917, it cost more than twice as much as the Montrose County building. In comparison, the Montrose County Courthouse is an excellent example of Bowman's ability to work with a much smaller budget and still create a sufficiently monumental structure. Bowman's restrained and simplified detailing on the Montrose County Courthouse was appropriate for the "memorial" intent of the building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Montrose County Courthouse
Montrose County, CO

SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Montrose County was created in 1882 and the first courthouse was an adobe building on North Cascade. In 1885, the county purchased the town skating rink in the 200 block of Main Street and it served as the courthouse until 1923, when this building was completed.

On November 13, 1918, a meeting was held for the purpose of making plans for some suitable memorial for the soldiers who lost their lives in World War I. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that a new courthouse building would serve the dual purpose of fulfilling the county's pressing need for a new facility while also providing a suitable memorial. It was further agreed that funding for the new courthouse could be provided by a mill levy. It was decided to appoint a committee to appear before the county commissioner asking for the levy.

The county commissioners accepted the plan in December and instituted a levy on all taxable property in order to obtain funds for the erection of a courthouse as a memorial for these soldiers. Plans for the building were accepted by the commissioner in September of the following year. The contract was let in June 1922 for the erection of the building. White and Okey General Contractors of Montrose won the contract with a bid of almost \$164,000.

William N. Bowman, the architect, was responsible for choosing local stone for the new courthouse. At a meeting before the Montrose Lions Club, Bowman emphasized his belief in the staying qualities of local stone and that in using it, there would be employment of local labor. Although brick would have cost less, Bowman opposed this suggestion. He argued that a courthouse is supposed to be as good a building as there is in the county seat, imposing, monumental, and that if built of brick it would lack these qualities.

The stone was quarried five miles west of Montrose from the August Kaleway quarry. It was cut in blocks weighing from 4,000 to 6,500 pounds each and hauled to the site where it was cut into the required size for building. The cornerstone was made of granite from Salida, Colorado, described as Colorado's best material. Weighing over two tons, it was purportedly one of the largest cornerstones ever laid in the state.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Montrose County Courthouse
Montrose County, CO

SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

At the ceremony for the laying of the cornerstone in September 1922, the chairman of the County Commissioners and construction supervisor, Joe Hartman, emphasized the use of local labor and local materials in the construction of the courthouse.

...the commissioners let the contract to all home people. These contractors in turn are employing home labor. The building is constructed as far as possible with Montrose home products. The stone is mined in a quarry west of Montrose some five miles, the brick is made in the Allen brick plant adjoining the city, all the lumber that can possibly be used is milled out of timber grown in Montrose County, the sand and gravel is taken from the river bottom close to Montrose. You will see that as far as possible, the construction of this building, the material used is home products and every laboring man on the job... with the exception of very few intend to make this their home.

The final cost for the building was \$225,000. The Montrose County Courthouse had its grand opening dedication December 7, 1923 and the event was described as the most gala event to take place in Montrose since the opening of the Gunnison Tunnel.

The Montrose County Roll of Honor, a list of thirty four veterans and one nurse who either died in service or died since returning from service, was made into a bronze tablet and placed in the building as specified in Bowman's drawings. Hartman in his dedication speech said, "May this building constantly remind you of the great principles of democracy for which they so gallantly fought." A large room in the northeast corner of the basement, "one of the most attractive and alluring places in the courthouse," was reserved for the ex-servicemen and is still in use by the veterans to this day.

In his comments at the dedication, Hartman also discussed the critical need for the building, stating that "there never was a time in the history of the County that a courthouse was needed so much." He also reminded those in attendance that "this building is yours, built with your money, by you as taxpayers and citizens and largely out of Montrose material."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Montrose County Courthouse
Montrose County, CO

SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Another in attendance at the ceremonies was J. B. Loesch, who accepted the building on behalf of the taxpayers. He aptly summed up the building's dual purpose:

How much finer it is to have as a memorial, a building which is eminently useful and beautiful, than to have a mere monument.... Here we have a memorial which is good to look at, and at the same time necessary to the administration of our commonwealth.... Speaking for myself as one of the many owners of this County Memorial let me say that I am more than satisfied with it, I am proud of it. I offer my congratulations to the officials who used our money to such good ends.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 & 10 Page 7

Montrose County Courthouse
Montrose County, CO

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "Dedication Speeches," Montrose Daily Press. December 8, 1923.
- "Interesting Data About Montrose County and Its Courthouse," Montrose Daily Press. September 16, 1922.
- "Lions Favor Local Stone in Courthouse," Montrose Daily Press. June 1, 1922.
- "Montrose Formally Dedicates Courthouse," Montrose Daily Press. December 7, 1923.
- "New Court House Will Cost About \$125,000 Is Decision," Montrose Daily Press. March 21, 1919.
- Noel, Thomas J., and Norgren, Barbara S. Denver: the City Beautiful. Denver: Historic Denver, Inc., 1987.
- "Stone for Court House from the Kaleway Quarry," Montrose Daily Press. June 30, 1922.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1 through 12, Block 95 of the city of Montrose (approximately 300 feet by 125 feet in size).

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Courthouse.

Montrose County Courthouse
Name of Property

Montrose County, CO
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	3
---	---

2	4	9	1	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	2	6	2	5	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

3

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

2

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

4

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Phyllis A. Millard Johnson Alleman (edited by HLW 10/93)

organization N/A date August 25, 1993

street & number 63579 Spring Creek Road telephone (303) 249-2089

city or town Montrose state CO zip code 81401

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Montrose County (County Commissioners)

street & number 320 South 1st Street / P.O. Box 1289 telephone (303) 249-7755

city or town Montrose state CO zip code 81401

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page 8
PHOTOGRAPHS

Montrose County Courthouse
Montrose County, CO

PHOTOGRAPHS

The information below is the same for all photographs:

name of property: Montrose County Courthouse
county and state: Montrose County, Colorado
name of photographer: Mark Nash
location of original negative: Main Street Photography
340 Main Street, Montrose

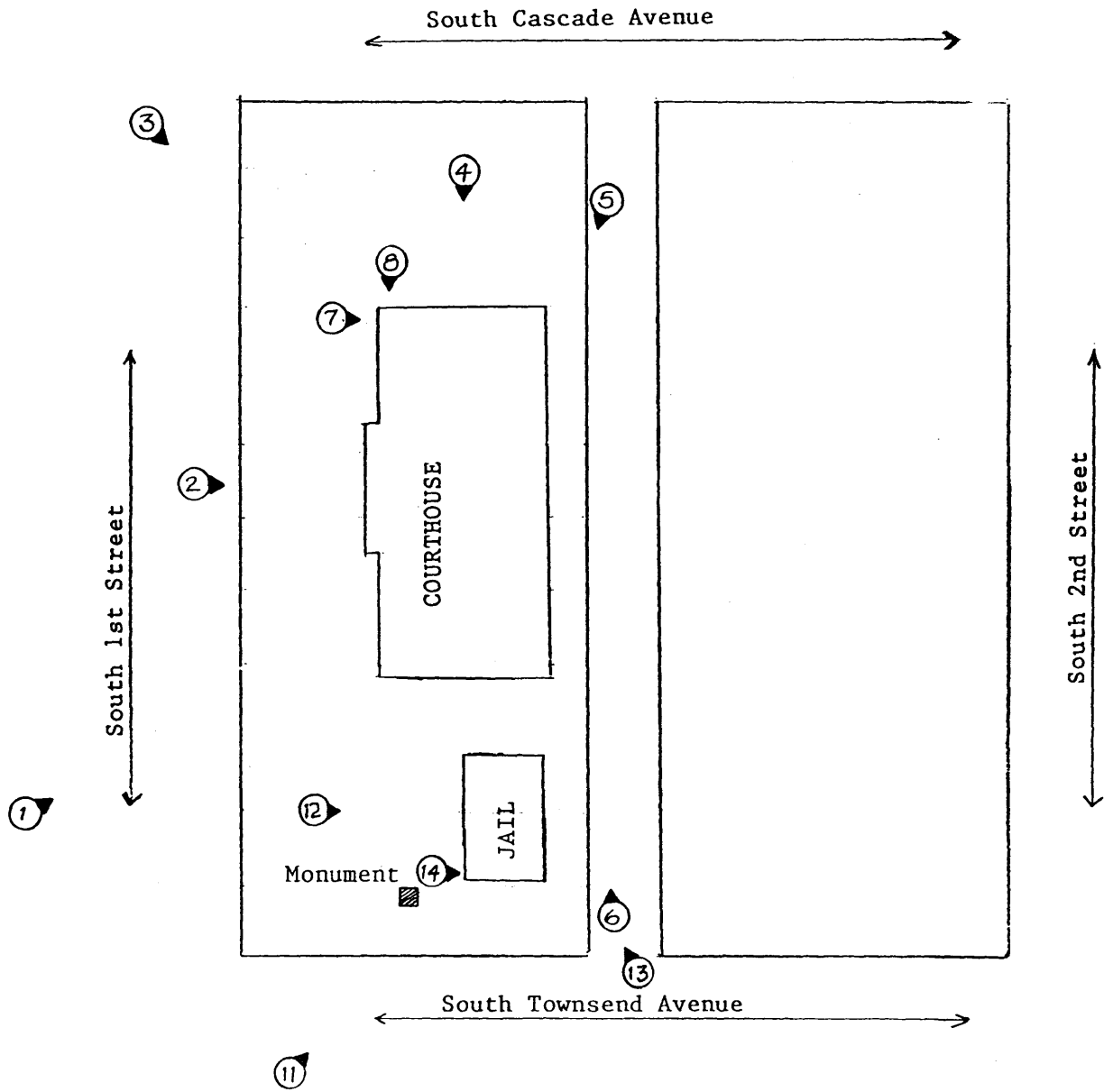
The following photographs were taken August 26, 1993:

- #1 camera facing east; front elevation of Courthouse with jail at right
- #2 camera facing southeast
- #3 camera facing south
- #4 camera facing southwest; side elevation
- #5 camera facing southwest; rear elevation
- #6 camera facing northeast; rear elevation with jail at left
- #7 camera facing southeast; cornerstone of Courthouse
- #8 camera facing southwest; cornerstone
- #9 interior of Courthouse from foyer
- #10 interior of Courthouse

The following photographs were taken October 20, 1993:

- #11 camera facing east; front entrance of jail facing South Townsend Avenue with 1989 monument at left
- #12 camera facing southeast; side (South 1st Street) elevation of jail
- #13 camera facing north; rear elevation of jail
- #14 camera facing southeast; WPA plaque on jail

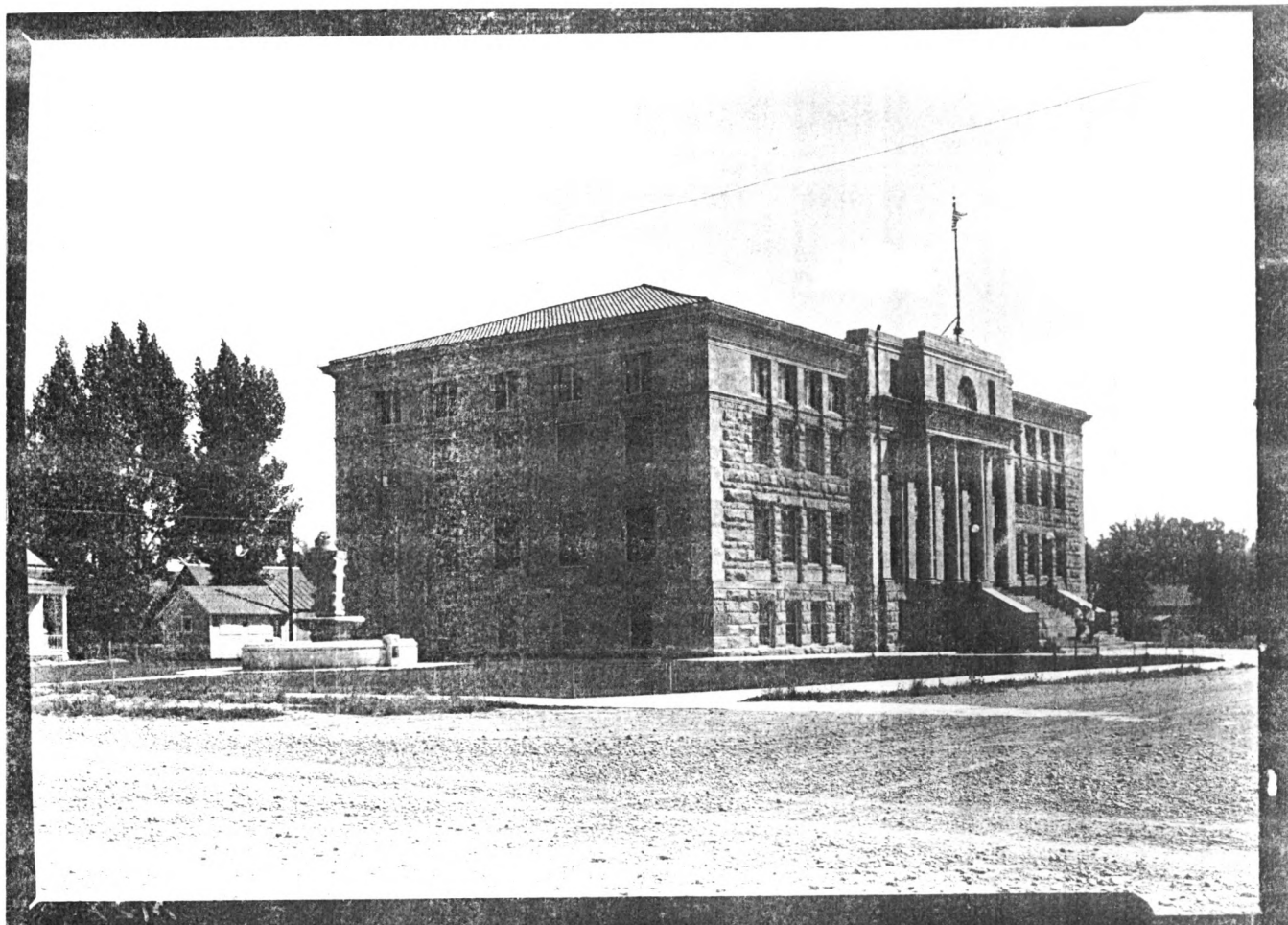
MONTROSE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
MONTROSE COUNTY, COLORADO



□ = contributing

▨ = noncontributing

○ = photograph



Montrose County Courthouse
Montrose County, Colorado
photographer: unknown
date: 1923
view to the south