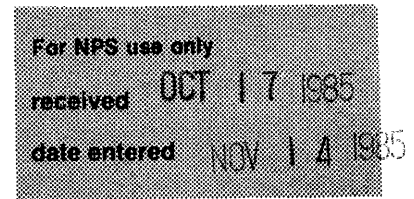


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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



Continuation sheet

Item number Various

Page 51

NAME: Original Slope County Courthouse

LOCATION: Second Street, bounded west by Court and east by West Streets, Amidon, North Dakota 38, Slope County 087.

OWNER: Prairie Senior Citizens, Inc., Amidon, North Dakota

ACREAGE: Less than one acre.

VBD: West 70' of lots 7-9, Block 6, Original Townsite of Amidon.

UTM: Zone 13, Easting = 628805, Northing = 5148710; Amidon, N. Dak. Quad.

DESCRIPTION: The original Slope County courthouse is a diminutive wood frame building situated on a block across the street from the current courthouse. It has lap siding and cornerboards, and is surmounted by a gable roof. The entry to the building is sheltered by a gabled vestibule with a projecting gabled tower with the sign "Prairie Senior Citizen's Center." The rear has a shed-roofed 22'x 18' addition. The central window on the buildings west side has been filled in. The other windows have been replaced, but remain in their original positions.

The building was moved to the site about 1915 to serve as the initial courthouse after county organization the year before. Photographic evidence from 1918 show the rear addition, but with an inconsistent siding appearance and a different roof treatment. Commissioners probably had the addition built to relieve spacial strain, as the original portion of the building is but a single room. Contact with local residents and documentary research could not confirm when the towered vestibule was added. The front addition is a result of the multiple uses to which the building was put after it ceased its role as a courthouse.

SIGNIFICANCE: Date: 1915

Architect/Builder: Unknown

The longevity of the original Slope County courthouse is impressive, but exterior changes may have compromised its architectural integrity. It is being nominated for its historical associations. The building is an architectural anomaly; no other extant structures have been identified which were temporary courthouses. Such buildings were generally occupied for only a few years because of their flimsy construction. Counties could ill afford to abandon a sound building because of the expense associated with a newer one. Thus, other facilities which were used as temporary courthouses have long since disappeared as a result of decay.

The original Slope County courthouse, however, has survived by continuing to serve a wide range of civic needs. Before being employed as a courthouse it was used as a community church. After its term as a courthouse it served as a school. Subsequent to that it fell into denominational hands and opened doors as a Presbyterian Church. After that it was converted back to its school role, only to be returned to religious use as the Amidon Church of Christ. Around 1979 it became the center for area senior citizens and remains so through the present. The entry tower is reminiscent of those used by schools and churches alike for their bells. Although the building served county government only a short time it still maintains a local notoriety as being the original courthouse: its integrity of association is firmly in place. The building has

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number Various

Page 52

excellent integrity of setting, locational, and workmanship, and a marginal integrity of materials and design. Because it fits within the theme of county government and represents a rare instance of a historically common resource (the temporary courthouse) it was judged to be appropriate for inclusion in this nomination.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

"Addition Being Built on Our Court House," Slope County News, February 4, 1915, p. 1.

"Amidon Wins County Seat Contest from Sister City of Marmarth," Slope County News, March 29, 1917, p. 1.

Anderson, J. Allen

"Presbyterian Mission Work Centering in Wishek and Amidon, N.D." Fall 1916-Summer 1918, photograph collection.

"Building Boom Now on at Ambitious Amidon," August 12, 1915, p. 1.

"Building Court House Now at Amidon," Slope County News, July 22, 1915, p. 1.

"Contracts Let for Court House and Bridge," Slope County News, July 8, 1918, p. 1.

"Court House is Badly Needed," Slope County News, July 15, 1915, p. 1.

"Dyvbik Gets Contract for Court House," Slope County News, July 26, 1917, p. 1.

"Injunction Filed Against Court House and Bridge," Slope County News, August 5, 1915, p. 1.

Interviews with Robert Strommen, Slope County Auditor, June 10 and July 1, 1985.

Interview with Stella Homelvig, June 22, 1985

Interview with Leo Holzemer, July 1, 1985.

Pearson, Dorothy and Junette Henke, ed's.

Slope Saga, (Bowman: Bowman County Pioneer, 1976).

"Slope County's New Court House," Mineral Springs Farmer's Press, January 4, 1918, p. 1.

"Slope's New Court House Ready," Slope County News, October 18, 1917, p. 1.

"Straight Talk for County Seat at Amidon," Slope County News, December 3, 1914, p. 1.

"To Build Court House and Several Bridges," Slope County News, May 27, 1915, p. 1.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number Various

Page 53

"Town Site Company Donates Site for Court House," Slope County News, February 11, 1915, p. 1.

"Vote for Amidon for County Seat," Slope County News, November 26, 1916, p. 1.