

PH0500488

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUL 6 1977
DATE ENTERED JAN 9 1978

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC A.C. FOSTER BUILDING

AND/OR COMMON UNIVERSITY BUILDING

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 912 16th Street

CITY, TOWN Denver VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 01

STATE Colorado COUNTY CODE Denver 031

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" 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	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" 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 Colorado Seminary

STREET & NUMBER c/o Real Estate Management, Old Main Bldg. Denver University

CITY, TOWN Denver VICINITY OF STATE Colorado

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Clerk and Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER 1400 Bannock St.

CITY, TOWN Denver, STATE Colorado

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Colorado State Inventory of Historic Sites

DATE Ongoing FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS State Historical Society of Colorado 200 E. 14th Ave.

CITY, TOWN Denver, STATE Colorado

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" 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 <u>1911</u>

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The A.C. Foster Building, on the northwest corner of 16th and Champa Streets, consists of three buildings: the main building, seen from the street, is a twelve-story office building (built in 1911); a six-story addition fronting the alley between Champa and Curtis Streets, not visible from the street (also built in 1911); and a one-story commercial store building in the angle of the first two and fronting on Champa Street (built in 1936). The twelve-story office building is by far the most significant architecturally and is the most distinctive in the use of dark brown brick in the corner bays which contrasts dramatically with the light tan colored brick used in the remainder of the exterior wall surfaces. White terra cotta has been used for the decorative treatment around the main entrance, for the window sills and in horizontal bands at intervals between the second and fourth floors of the building.

Both street facades of the building are similar in exterior wall material, in massing, and in the division of wall surfaces into bays divided by vertical piers running the height of the building. The flat lintel windows are arranged into groups of three within each bay.

The ground and second floors are surfaced with smooth-cut granite. Seven bays are created by vertical rusticated granite piers. Above each pier are capitals which are an interpretation of the Doric order. The main entrance is in the center bay of the 16th Street facade. Framing the stone piers at the entrance is quarter-round terra cotta molding in modules of an elaborate linear design. Directly above the entrance is a large terra cotta panel, added in 1929 when the name of the building was changed, of floral motifs done in a very geometric manner. The entrance surface, recessed about 10 feet from the facade surface, is glass framed with gilt brass. Halfway up the bay over the entrance is a frieze bearing the legend "UNIVERSITY BUILDING". Above this frieze is a gilt-brass screen of naturalistic and linear design.

The upper portion of the eleventh and all of the twelfth floors compose the cornice treatment of the building. All surfacing and design on these top floors is in white terra cotta. On the corner bays of the eleventh floor there is a wide band of ribbed terra cotta beginning halfway up the window opening up to window head height. Above the central window of each bay is an elaborate cartouche with ribbon-like molding extending over the flanking windows. This ribbon molding is interrupted at the window mullions by molded torch-like devices.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The twelfth floor facade is completely surfaced with white terra cotta ribs with green tile interstices. The windows in the corner bays are flat linteled as on the other floors while the remaining windows are round headed and grouped in threes. Above the windows, the ribbed terra cotta surface flares out, forming a cavetto cornice with a flat, geometric "leaf" motif at the edge. The top of the flare consists of a blue terra cotta frieze with an elaborately molded repeating pattern picked out in gold. Above the frieze is a parapet of terra cotta which is slightly higher at the corners.

On the Champa Street facade, the 1936 one-story addition is covered with white metal panels and a store sign. It has no decorative facade treatment.

The rear surface of the office building has a U-shaped plan surrounding a light court. The exterior wall treatment is plain brown brick up to the lower portion of the eleventh floor, then beige brick to the parapet. The 16th Street facade treatment is "returned" about 8 feet onto the south, or back side of the building. This returned section is one bay wide.

The entrance bay leads to a T-shaped lobby. There is a bank of four elevators flanked at the ends by a stairway to the right and entrance to a ground floor space to the left. The floor of the lobby is terrazzo, while the walls are of beautifully veined Colorado Yule marble. The ceiling, designed in an elaborate Roman Doric manner, has been covered over by a suspended ceiling with fluorescent panels. The stairway contains marble stairs with elaborate gilt brass railings. The elevator doors are also of brass.

The upper stories also have corridors floored and wainscoted with Colorado Yule marble. Except on the eighth floor, the office partitions remain the same as the day the building opened in 1911, even down to the type face of the suite numbers. On the sixth floor, in the addition, is a law library, established in 1920.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES built 1911

BUILDER/ARCHITECT W.E. and A.A. Fisher

name changed 1929

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The A.C. Foster Building is significant because of its architects, William E. and Arthur A. Fisher; its architecture; and the great and important role played by its owners in the social, political, and intellectual life of Denver and the Rocky Mountain region.

The panic of 1893 marked a turning point in commercial building construction in downtown Denver. At that time there was a height limitation ordinance of nine stories in effect. However with recovery, leading Denver entrepreneurs, anxious to take advantage of increasing prosperity, were successful in having it modified.

One of the first Denver entrepreneurs to take advantage of this change was Alexis C. Foster, who had come to Denver in 1890 and entered the real estate business. In 1904 he became cashier of the Daniels Bank and by 1910 he was Vice-President of its corporate descendant, the United States National Bank (now known as the United Bank of Denver). Also in that year he formed a partnership with two other prominent Denver businessmen, William Ellery Sweet and James H. Causey, in the investment brokerage firm of Sweet, Causey and Foster. Mr. Foster went on to become President of the U.S. National Bank, a director of the Denver branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, and was a member of many of Denver's most prestigious clubs. Shortly after 1922 he moved to Bronxville, New York, where he died in 1945 at the age of 77. His home at 730 Pearl St. later became the French Consulate and is a Denver Landmark. William Sweet went on to become a Governor of Colorado (1923-1925).

It was the firm of Sweet, Causey and Foster which created and sold shares in the Foster Building Company, providing the major financial backing for the Foster Building. Immediately upon the passing of the amended height limitation ordinance, Mr. Foster began making financial arrangements for a twelve-story skyscraper on the northwest corner of 16th and Champa Streets. This building would be of steel and concrete, completely fireproof, and sumptuously decorated--truly "...class A 1 in every particular", to quote a contemporary newspaper report. The financial arrangements and the plans of the building were completed by December of 1909, and the building was

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Denver, City & County of. Building Permits. Office of Clerk and Recorder. Mss.

Denver City Directory. Denver: Ballenger & Richards, 1911 (v. 39)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 3	5 00 5 40	43 99 4 10
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 28, 29, 30, 31, & 32, Block 107 East Denver

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 William J. Handley

ORGANIZATION Historic Denver, Inc.

DATE March 9, 1977

STREET & NUMBER 770 Pennsylvania Street

TELEPHONE 837-1858

CITY OR TOWN Denver

STATE Colorado

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE *[Signature]*

TITLE Colo S K P O

DATE 6/8/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Signature]
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST: *[Signature]*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 1-9-78
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 DATE 1-6-78

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

ready for occupancy by January 1, 1911. A six-story addition to the main building for Dr. John Foster (A.C. Foster's brother and noted Denver surgeon) was built concurrently. The twelve-story tower was hailed as "one of the handsomest structures in Denver." Its final cost was \$800,000.

The architects of the A.C. Foster Building were William E. and Arthur Addison Fisher. By 1910 these two architects had already made a name for themselves, with such works to their credit as the Ideal Building (1906), and several homes for the wealthy denizens of Denver's Capitol Hill neighborhood. They were heavily involved in the Denver building boom of 1910, being the designers of the Foster Building, the Tramway Building, and the Colorado National Bank Building, all under construction in that year. Subsequently they continued to design major downtown office buildings, including the U.S. National Bank (later Guaranty) Building (1921), the Midland Building (1926), the Security Building (1928), and the remodelling of the Railway Exchange (now Title) Building (1937). They also designed the Voorhees Memorial in Civic Center (1919) which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the B'nai B'rith building of the National Jewish Hospital (1926?) and Denver South High School (1926) as well as continuing to design homes for prominent Denver citizens (including Mr. Foster). Almost all of these buildings are standing today, each unique, and a testimony to the creativity and success of this important architectural firm.

Many arguments can be presented supporting differing interpretations of the "style" of the Foster Building, but no matter what label one attempts to attach to it, one must finally acknowledge its great uniqueness and originality. One must remember that all of its contemporaries in Denver (with the exception of the Tramway Building) are strictly derivative from Renaissance or Classical prototypes consistent with the practices of Academic Classicism in America in the first decade of the 20th Century. The contrasting colors and textures of the dark brown brick and white terra cotta, the colorful (almost gaudy) cornice of green, white, blue, and gold terra cotta, the vertical emphasis caused by the contrast, the measured rhythm of the segmental arches, and the sudden, flaring termination of the cornice create a building of tremendous visual interest and excitement and make the Foster

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 3

Building's facade the most colorful in Denver. A contemporary newspaper article stated that the "Exterior decorations of the Foster Building are among the most unique and elaborate ever used on an office building in the United States.

The Foster Building was owned from 1911 to 1921 by the Foster Building Company and the Bankers Trust. In 1921 several real estate transactions resulted in ownership by the Retail District Investment Company, of which James H. Causey was the principal owner.

Causey came to Denver in 1900 as a seasoned businessman and established a municipal bond brokerage firm which merged with Sweet and Foster. After World War I he established James H. Causey & Co. with offices in Denver and New York City. A man of wealth, he was a member of many clubs in Denver and New York. Although an extremely sharp businessman he was an active political Progressive, and he donated most of his money to philanthropic causes.

Mr. Causey became acquainted with Dr. Heber Reece Harper, Chancellor of Denver University, who influenced him to donate the Foster Building to Denver University as an income-producing property. The gift of approximately \$1.5 million worth of property was somewhat controversial. The earnings of the Foster Building were to be used to found a Chair of Research in order to "create international, social, and industrial goodwill", and they are still used for that purpose today.

Due to his experiences in Europe during and after World War I and his involvement with the violent Denver Tramway strike of 1920, Causey had been exposed to the results of both international conflicts and labor disputes. From these experiences he deduced the need for education of the public and its leaders in international affairs. It was a giant step forward at a time when most Americans were retreating into isolationism.

The Social Science Foundation was created by Causey and Dr. Harper to deal with these problems. The mission of the foundation was to be twofold; to educate the community and its leaders on important questions of foreign affairs, and to train a new generation of leaders who would be involved and familiar with international relations. The purpose of the foundation was, therefore, to "create international, social, and industrial goodwill."

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 4

With degrees from the University of California and Columbia University, Dr. Ben Mark Cherrington was Director of the Social Science Foundation from its inception in 1926 until 1951. During that period he gained a considerable reputation in international relations. In 1938 he was invited by Secretary of State Cordell Hull to organize the Division of Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. He was an adviser to the U.S. delegations to several important scientific and cultural conferences and was an Associate to the United States delegation to the United Nations Conference in San Francisco in 1945. The next year Dr. Cherrington was invited to be a consultant on the establishment of UNESCO, on which he served for six years, a portion of that time on its Executive Committee. A man of tremendous character, personal magnetism, and leadership ability as well as a great scholar, Dr. Cherrington was chancellor of Denver University from 1943 to 1946. In 1956 Queen Elizabeth appointed him an honorary member of the Order of the British Empire. Subsequently Dr. Cherrington has been active in various educational and scientific associations concerned with international affairs.

From the beginning, Cherrington closely adhered to Mr. Causey's request that "students, faculty, and community become informed on the vital issues of the day, both domestic and international." To that end such controversial figures as Maud Royden and James Mallon, as well as persons well-known for their involvement in international affairs such as Anthony Eden, Ralph Bunche, John F. Kennedy, and Max Beloff were invited to lecture under the auspices of the Foundation.

Its academic program now thoroughly integrated with that of Denver University and its role in community education thoroughly established, the Social Science Foundation is recognized today as the leading center for international studies between the Mississippi River and the West Coast. The A.C. Foster (now University) Building, by providing the necessary funding for the past 51 years, has allowed the Foundation to prosper and grow to its present importance.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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