

**Historic Name:** Cannon Falls Elementary School *see cont sheet*  
**Common Name:** Cannon Falls Community Schools  
**Owner's Name and Address:** Cannon Falls Community Schools  
 115 West Minnesota Street  
 Cannon Falls, Minnesota 55009

**County:** Goodhue  
**Community:** Cannon Falls  
City  
**Address/Legal Desc.:**  
 115 W. Minnesota Street

**Classification:**  
 Building  Structure \_\_\_\_\_ Object \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

**Acreage:**  
 Less than one acre

**Condition:**  
 Excellent \_\_\_\_\_ Good  Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Deteriorated \_\_\_\_\_

**Verbal Boundary Desc.:**  
 Block 18, original plat to city of Cannon Falls.

**Open to the Public:**  
 Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

**Visible from the road:**  
 Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

**Occupied:**  
 Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

**Present Use:**  
 Educational

**History:**  
 Cannon Falls  
**Date Constructed:** 1893; 1912  
**Original Owner:** School District  
**Architect/Builder:** Unknown  
**Original Use:** Educational

**UIM Reference:**  
 15/507800/4928400  
 Hastings Quadrangle

**Description:**  
 The historic section of the Cannon Falls Elementary School consists of two connected buildings on the south side of Minnesota St., between First and Second Streets in Cannon Falls City. The building to the west dates from 1893, that to the east from 1912.  
 Both the 1893 and 1912 buildings are massive stone structures in a style derived from the Richardsonian Romanesque. The 1893 building measures 86 by 70 feet, is two stories tall with a raised basement, and has a truncated hip roof. Its facade features a tri-partite division, with a gabled projecting central bay. Each section of the facade is three bays in width. The windows are tall and narrow with those on the first floor being semi-circular and those on the second floor having flat tops that project into the wide, white-painted, wooden cornice. A band of four small, semi-circular windows forms a  
 (continued)

**Level of Significance:**  
 Local   
 State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Nation \_\_\_\_\_

**Status:**  
 Survey \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Local \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ 4/78  
 Nat'l. Reg. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Nat'l. Land. \_\_\_\_\_  
 HABS/HAER \_\_\_\_\_

**Significance:**  
 The Cannon Falls Elementary School buildings are significant examples of the type of educational facilities that were appearing in the booming towns of southeastern Minnesota by the end of the 19th century.  
 The early schools in Cannon Falls, as elsewhere, differed little from the small district schools that dotted the countryside. Thus, one of the first schools in the village, built in 1857, measured a mere 28 by 38 feet. Under the population pressures of succeeding decades, the school board at first adopted a series of stop-gap measures - adding additions to this structure and building a one-room school on the North Side in 1875. However, these measures proved inadequate to meet the needs of the growing town. In the quarter century following its founding in the mid-1850's, the population of Cannon Falls jumped to 942, and reached 1239 by 1900. There occurred a similar leap in the number of schoolchildren in the town, from 181 pupils inrolled in 1877 to 305 by 1893. Conditions in the schools were so crowded by this date that it was necessary to divide the  
 (continued)

**Theme/s:**  
 Primary Education  
 Secondary \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Contact/Org.:**  
 Cannon Falls Bicentennial  
 Heritage Committee

**Prepared by and date:**  
 B. Michael Zuckerman  
 July 1978

**Description:**

decorative element in the gable of the central bay. Entry to the building is through a massive Romanesque arch that dominates the central bay.

The 1912 building measures 86 by 84 feet and is also two stories tall with a raised basement. It sits about 10 feet to the east of the 1893 building and is connected to it through a passageway cut through its side. Its facade is perfectly aligned to that of the 1893 building, and in massing, building material, and style, the two buildings are totally compatible. The 1912 building's facade also has a tri-partite division, with a projecting central bay (although one that lacks a gable end and that is less pronounced than that of the 1894 building). Its central section is one bay wide, while the two on either side are each five bays wide. Entry to the 1912 building is through a large, recessed Romanesque arch in the central bay, which is surmounted by one large arched window on the second floor. The first floor windows on each side are semi-circular, with their stone arches linked together in an arcade effect. Both the basement and second floor windows are flat-topped, with the basement ones having stone lintels while those on the second floor rise flush to the cornice line. All of the windows in the 1912 building are noticeably wider than those of the 1893 building. The 1912 building has a medium hip roof and is 10 bays deep.

**Significance:**

students and have half come in the morning and half in the afternoon.

It was in response to this growth crisis that the Cannon Falls School Board purchased land for \$750 and sold bonds for \$15,000 to build the 1893 buildings. In its size and scale, this building dwarfed everything that preceded it. Its massive stone construction and fine Romanesque detailing reflected the tremendous civic pride of this generation of townspeople, as well as their commitment to quality education for their children.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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FEB 12 1980
DATE ENTERED

Cannon Falls School

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

Addendum Sheet

Cannon Falls School  
Goodhue County, Minnesota MRN

Change NAME

from: Cannon Falls Elementary School  
to: CANNON FALLS SCHOOL

Add to DESCRIPTION:

The School also includes two recent additions, constructed in 1954 and 1957. Both of these sections are of brick and are attached to the back and side of the earlier structures.

