

4-11-74

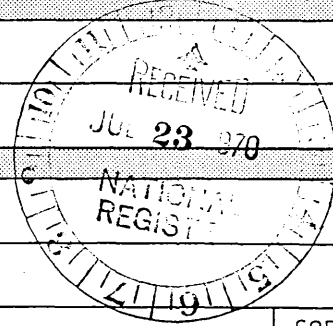
Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Nebraska
COUNTY:	Deuel
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
70.10.31.0006	10/15/70



1. NAME

COMMON:
Phelps Hotel

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Northeast corner, Second and Pine Streets

CITY OR TOWN:
Big Springs

STATE: Nebraska CODE: 69122 COUNTY: Deuel CODE: 049

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>vacant</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mrs. Maude Phelps estate, c/o Byron H. Phelps

STREET AND NUMBER:
919 North Burlington Street

CITY OR TOWN: Hastings STATE: Nebraska CODE: 26

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
County Clerk, Deuel County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chappell STATE: Nebraska CODE: 26

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Nebraska

COUNTY: Deuel

ENTRY NUMBER: 70.10.31.0006

DATE: 10/15/70

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Phelps Hotel faces west and is 26 feet in width and 50 feet in length. The building was erected in 1885 as a large, unpretentious, two-story, frame structure with a full basement and a hip roof. J. W. Kimball served as construction contractor. The lower story included an office, parlor, dining room, kitchen, and bedroom, while the upper story was divided into ten bedrooms.

Some subsequent alterations have been made to the exterior of the hotel, including the replacement of the original front veranda with a newer veranda and the enlargement of several windows. However, few interior alterations have apparently been made over the years. The hotel still has an old bathtub that was equipped with a hinged lid and padlocked, and guests wishing to use it were charged 25 cents. The hotel's old registers, which include the names of many early settlers and travelers, may still be examined inside the building.

The Phelps Hotel is well located for tourism. It is situated in the center of Big Springs and located along U.S. route 138 (Pine Street). Just south of town is the Big Springs interchange of Interstate 80, and just west of this interchange is the junction of Interstate 80 (leading west to Salt Lake City and San Francisco) and Interstate 80S (to Denver and Los Angeles). About 16 miles north of Big Springs is Ash Hollow State Historical Park, now under development. A portion of this park is now on the National Register. The Phelps Hotel is located along a principal access route to this park from Interstate 80.

Just east of the Phelps Hotel is a small brick building originally erected as a post office and purportedly constructed in the 1920's. The property of both the hotel and the old post office occupy lots 16, 17, and 18 in Block 9 of Thompson's Addition to Big Springs. These three lots, which occupy a 75 x 140 foot area, define the boundaries of the property now being nominated to the National Register.

In 1968 the voters of Deuel County approved a one mill tax levy to support museum projects of both the Big Springs and Chappell chapters of the Deuel County Historical Society. These funds have not yet been expended. The Big Springs chapter hopes to acquire lots 16, 17, and 18, restore the Phelps Hotel, and install museum artifacts and exhibits in the adjoining post office building.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

6. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1885**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1885, the Phelps Hotel is viewed as the most important nineteenth century landmark in Deuel County. It is typical of many similar hotels built during western Nebraska's pioneer period. Few of these early structures survive, however, and the interior of the Phelps Hotel (unlike that of other surviving early hotels in western Nebraska) is well preserved.

The Phelps Hotel, also known as the "House of Three Chimneys" in its early years, is Deuel County's oldest hotel. Since the time of its construction, it has been owned and managed by the Phelps family, who were among the first settlers in the Big Springs area. The hotel was one of the first commercial buildings erected in Big Springs and is believed to be the oldest commercial building in that community. Soon after it was built, it became a center of community activity in the Big Springs vicinity and a haven of rest for early travelers, land seekers, and pioneers. Here the first church services in the Big Springs area were held.

The Union Pacific Railroad reached the site of Big Springs in 1867, and the townsite soon became a railroad stop. In 1869 this railroad was completed to Utah, where it joined with the Central Pacific Railroad to form America's first transcontinental railroad. Big Springs was the site of a famous train robbery on September 18, 1877. A Union Pacific train, its passengers, and the Big Springs depot (not extant) were robbed, and Sam Bass and his gang reportedly escaped with over \$60,000. Bass was killed in Texas by Texas Rangers on July 21, 1878.

It was not until late in 1884 that Big Springs was platted and established as a community. Edwin A. Phelps, who worked for the Union Pacific, had been transferred here with his family in 1883. Mrs. Phelps took roomers into their small home until the Phelps Hotel was completed in December of 1885.

The hotel's grand opening was celebrated with a banquet and dance on Christmas Eve, 1885, and attended by most settlers in the vicinity. Mrs. E. A. (Sarah) Phelps operated the hotel from the outset. Following her death many years later, the hotel remained open until 1965 under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin A. Phelps, Jr., who lived at the hotel.

(CONTINUED)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Big Springs Enterprise, October 23, 1968.
Deuel County Herald, November 5, 1936.
 Files, Nebraska State Historical Society.
Sidney Telegraph, 1885-86.

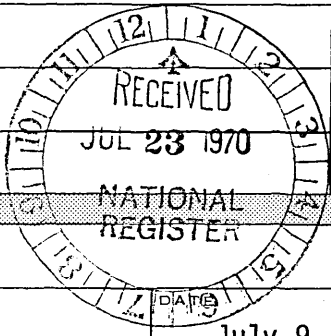
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"	41	03	48
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"	102	04	35
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"			
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **1/4 acre**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



NO
CITY
CD

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **John Q. Magie, Historic Sites Curator**

ORGANIZATION: **Nebraska State Historical Society** DATE: **July 9, 1970**

STREET AND NUMBER: **1500 R Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Lincoln** STATE: **Nebraska 68508** CODE: **26**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Marvin O. Knott

Title: Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

Date: _____

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

Ernest Allen Connolly
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

OCT 15 1970

Date: _____

ATTEST: William A. Vintaght
 Keeper of The National Register

AUG 19 1970

Date: _____

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

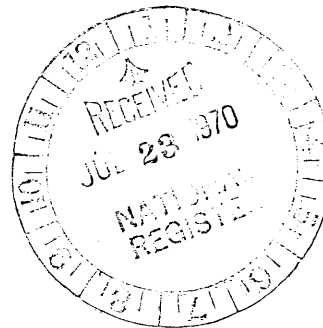
(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Nebraska	
COUNTY Deuel	
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ENTRY NUMBER 70,10,31,0006	DATE 10/15/70

(Number all entries)

PHELPS HOTEL

8. The hotel's name has never been changed. E. A. Phelps, Jr., died in 1959. Since his wife's death in 1968, the building has been vacant. The Phelps family, which still owns the building, is sympathetic to current plans for public acquisition and development of the hotel property.



Form 10-301
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Nebraska	
COUNTY Deuel	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 70.10.31.0006	DATE 10/15/70

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON:		Phelps Hotel	
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
Northeast corner, Second and Pine Streets			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Big Springs			
STATE:	Nebraska	69122	CODE
			26
COUNTY:	Deuel		CODE
			049
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE:			
U.S.G.S. 7½', quadrangle Big Springs			
SCALE:			
1: 24,000			
DATE:			
1961			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

