

MAR 15 1982

HISTORIC NAME: Parsons Block and Hall

COUNTY: Fillmore

CURRENT NAME: VFW Post 4114

CITY/TWP.: Spring Valley City

LEGAL DESC.:

Lot 3, Block 7, Original Plat.

ADDRESS:

112 South Broadway
Spring Valley, MN

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u>X</u>	Excellent _____	Local <u>X</u>	Primary <u>Commerce</u>
Structure _____	Good _____	State _____	Secondary <u>Architecture</u>
Object _____	Fair <u>X</u>	National _____	Others _____
District _____	Deteriorated _____		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes X No _____ Restricted X

PRESENT USE:

VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes X No _____

Social

OCCUPIED: Yes X No _____

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1871

ORIGINAL USE: stores and meeting hall

ORIGINAL OWNER: Emilus Parsons

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Unknown

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Hanson-Raabe Post 4114,
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United StatesACREAGE: Less than one acre X

ATTN: Commander Robert Czapiewski, 112 South Broadway, Spring Valley

GUTM REFERENCE:

LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.:

N/A

Spring Valley Quad.

FORM PREPARED BY: Robert Frame

15 / 549090 / 4837120

DATE: September 4, 1980

DESCRIPTION:

Parsons Block and Hall is located on the west side of Broadway in Spring Valley's downtown commercial district. It is a two-story stone structure approximately 40 x 60 feet, with flat roof sloping to the rear. The north, west, and south facades are unadorned and have been covered with cement. Other commercial buildings abut the north and south sides. The primary (east) facade is designed in a local commercial version of High Victorian Italianate. It is characterized by smooth-faced rusticated stone with cast iron columns, assembled in an arcade at the first story; rough-faced ashlar stone with hooded semi-circular arch window openings at the second story; and a dominant decorative metal cornice and stone quoining at the corners. The original window sash have removed and replaced by brick and glass block. The interior is largely altered but retains some original elements in the second floor hall.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Parsons Block and Hall was built in 1871 for Emilus Parsons, a prosperous local real estate investor, and is significant both for its architecture and for its function as an important commercial, social, and theatrical center for the rural village of Spring Valley. It was constructed at a time of great prosperity and expansion in the community, and represents the epitome of commercial development for that period. Designed in a local commercial version of High Victorian Italianate, it employed expensive local materials and craftsmanship, and was considered the finest structure in the area when completed. The first floor was divided into north and south stores, while the second floor was designed as a large hall and was in constant use for local social, musical, and theatrical productions. The present owners are interested in the history of the building and would like to see it preserved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

(see continuation sheet)

Spring Valley Western Progress, various issues, 1872-73-74.Andreas, A.T. Atlas of Minnesota. Chicago, 1874. P. 144.

OCT 5 1982

Parsons Block and Hall/VFW Post 4114
Spring Valley, MN; Fillmore County

SIGNIFICANCE: (supplement)

Although many towns in southeastern Minnesota had well-developed commercial centers by the 1870s, few examples of elaborate Victorian commercial design such as the Parson's Block have survived. A majority of the commercial building stock from this period was of simpler wood frame or brick construction, and most of the structures which remain in place have been greatly altered at the street level and often shorn of much of the ornamentation of upper stories. The elaborate cornice, rusticated stone on the second level, and cut stone and cast iron columns at the street level of the Parson's Block made it an important building at the time it was constructed, as evidenced by its appearance in the 1874 Andreas Atlas of Minnesota. In spite of the modifications which have been made within the original facade openings, the survival of the basic cast iron, stone, and cornice features make the building an even more noteworthy structure today, both in Spring Valley and in Fillmore County.

MnSHPO
Sept. 1982