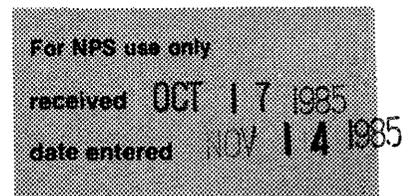


**United States Department of the Interior  
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NAME: Towner County Courthouse

LOCATION: Second Street South, bounded west by Third Avenue and east by Fourth Avenue, Cando, North Dakota 038, Towner County 095

OWNER: Towner County, Cando, North Dakota

VBD (LEGAL): Block 9, Original Townsite Plat

ACREAGE: 2.065 Acres

UTM: Zone 14, Easting = 484815, Northing = 5370945; Cando, N. Dak. Quad.

DESCRIPTION: The Towner County courthouse, a four-floor structure including raised basement and attic, stands at the northern periphery of the town of Cando. The building rises from a cut stone foundation which flares out toward the bottom. Foundation stone and wheat colored brick convey the building's asymmetrical facade. An irregular plan and complex roofline are elements of Queen Anne styling which the building retains. Three bays--a narrow central entryway, a massive west-side block, and a smaller east-side block--form the major elements of composition. One-story vaults flank the east and west bays of the courthouse. The roofline shows the major hipped roof into which gable roofs converge. The windows assume a variety of rhythms, from frequent and regular on the south (front) side of the large bay, to more scattered on the rest of the building. The window frames, replaced in 1982, preserve the original 1-over-1, 1-over-1 with transom, and various multi-pane configurations. The structure has an interior of wooden floors and wainscoting, and plaster walls. The interior spaces show little evidence of recent alteration.

Loss of integrity primarily occurs at the roof level and on the site. Originally a bell tower extended above the entryway, where now rests a simple gable roof. The chimneys, too, have been reduced in size, reflecting maintenance concerns and changes in the heating system. The site contains two rectangular frame garages of common design, a wood-frame coal bin, and an old school house which was moved to the grounds, none of which shall be considered significant for purposes of this nomination.

SIGNIFICANCE: Date: 1898

Architect: A.J. O'Shea  
Contractor: Watterwoth Fee

The courthouse in Cando has significance in the history of local government and architecture. The building has served as the site where court trials have been held, vital documents have been stored, and local government has been administered.

The structure retains its fundamental design qualities despite the loss of a major structural element, the upper portion of the entry tower. The small gable roof replacing the tower on the front side complements the gable of the large bay and the hipped-roof dormer of the smaller bay on the same side. The replacement of the tower with the smaller feature is within stylistic boundaries, and the impact on the overall design is minimal. The courthouse bears a style which today is rarely found with more integrity, more variety, or greater dimension. The structure is the only courthouse among those newly nominated which carries a Queen Anne styling.

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Letter from Mrs. John Gibbens, Egeland, N.D.