

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92001859 Date Listed: 2/10/93

Hughes County Courthouse Hughes SOUTH DAKOTA  
Property Name: County: State:

County Courthouses of South Dakota MPS  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*Antoinette J. Gee*  
for \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

2/23/93  
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

No level of significance was indicated in the state/federal agency certification section. In consultation with the South Dakota SHPO, locally has been checked as the level of significance. Concrete was listed as a foundation material but the text indicates stone. Stone has been added as a foundation material.

The nomination is officially amended to include this information.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

1057

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

DEC 23 1992

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: HUGHES COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

Street & number: CAPITOL AVENUE  not for publication

City or town: PIERRE  vicinity

State: SOUTH DAKOTA Code: SD County: HUGHES Code: 065 Zip code: 57501

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination request for determination of eligibility  meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature and title of certifying official: [Signature] Date: 12/17/92  
South Dakota SHPO  
 State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of the Keeper: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet.  
 determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper: [Signature] Date of Action: 2/10/93

HUGHES COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
Name of Property

HUGHES COUNTY, S.D.  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public - local
- public - State
- public - Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

COUNTY COURTHOUSES OF S.D.

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: Courthouse  
EDUCATION: Library  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT: Courthouse  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

ART DECO  
MODERNE  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation CONCRETE  
walls STONE  
CONCRETE  
roof ASPHALT  
other BRICK  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

HUGHES COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
Name of Property

HUGHES COUNTY, S.D.  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS / GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1933-1940

**Significant Dates**

1933

1934

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Architect: Hugill & Blatherwick

Builder: Henry Carlson Company

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_



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**Narrative Description:**

The Hughes County Courthouse stands at the west end of a nearly square block in Pierre, South Dakota. The site is located just to the west of the main commercial district. The Courthouse faces south onto Capital Avenue. A 1903 Carnegie Library and a modern jail also stand on the block to the east of the courthouse. The courthouse square is landscaped with a few mature deciduous trees. An approximately 2-foot high rose quartzite retaining wall runs the full length of the front of the block at the sidewalk.

The Hughes County Courthouse is designed in the PWA Moderne Style. This governmental interpretation of the Art Deco style reflects the watered down version of an exuberant style expectant of a nation in the midst of a national depression. The uninterrupted square massing of the building and vertical bands of windows separated by decorative-patterned brick spandrels provide the only historical references to the style.

The Hughes County Courthouse is three stories in height with a full basement and a partial fourth floor. The roof is flat and hidden behind the parapet walls. Exterior walls are random-laid ashlar rose quartzite. Horizontal divisions exist at the ground floor window sills where a sloped stone course projects outward to cover a slightly projecting stone foundation, at the second floor window heads where a smooth stone string course supports a slightly projecting carved stone vertebrate band (interlaced stems with stylized flowers), and at the cornice where another vertebrate band, is interrupted by alternating triangular pointed heraldic shields and almond-shaped shields.

Rose quartzite stone piers, evenly spaced across each elevation separate the vertical bands of windows. The windows are set within brick panels of heavily wire-struck brick laid in a checkerboard pattern. The front entry is simply defined by flanking, carved stone panels with an undulating floral pattern. The entry opening is topped with a carved panel dominated by a bound sheath of wheat. Triangular pointed heraldic shields flank the sheath and all are connected by stems and leaves. The original paired, full-light, multi-paned doors with a full transom have been replaced with anodized aluminum units. Likewise, the original steel sash casement windows with transoms have been replaced with anodized aluminum units.

Both side elevations and the back of the building are detailed similarly to the front facade. A three-story elevator shaft was added to the rear of the building in 1983. It is constructed of brick similar to the main body of the building.

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The interior rooms of the courthouse are accessed from T-shaped corridors. A single-run staircase is located in the north leg of the "T". The corridors are wainscotted with marble as are the columns at the intersection of the "T". Floors are terrazzo in a bold geometric design. Stair rails are brushed aluminum with horizontal divisions and newel posts with a floral motif at the top. The coffered ceiling panels are enframed by an undulate torus molding of grapes and leaves. The original light fixtures have all been replaced with surface-mount fluorescent units. From the second floor a single-run staircase rises to the former jail facilities on the fourth floor--this floor has been abandoned.

The courtroom, which occupies the eastern half of the second floor, has been totally remodeled and no historic finishes remain. The walls are covered with wood paneling and the ceilings have been dropped with suspended acoustical tile. Some historic furnishings remain such as the judge's bench and the courtroom benches.

#### CARNEGIE LIBRARY

The Carnegie Library is located at the southeast corner of the Hughes County Courthouse block. The one-story building rests on a raised basement. It is constructed of rose quartzite laid in a random pattern. The building is topped with a hipped roof with a portico extending to the south. Fluted wood columns with stylized Ionic-order capitals support the pediment. A lunette is located in the pediment. The building is surrounded by a pressed-metal cornice. All historic windows and doors have been replaced with anodized aluminum units.

The Carnegie Library is a contributing building to the Hughes County Courthouse complex.

#### HUGHES COUNTY REGIONAL JAIL

The Hughes County Regional Jail is located at the northeast corner of the Hughes County Courthouse block. The modern building is two stories in height. Exterior walls are constructed of a dark brick. The narrow, vertical windows are enframed with a projecting concrete surround. The main entry doors are located behind a low arch on the east side of the building. A wood fenced exercise yard also projects from this facade.

The Hughes County Regional Jail is less than 50 years old and, therefore is a non-contributing building to the Hughes County Courthouse complex.

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### **Narrative Statement of Significance:**

The Hughes County Courthouse is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under Criteria "A" and "C." The building is historically significant for its role as the symbolic and functional seat of government for Hughes County. Since the building's construction, it has housed virtually all of the county's administrative, operational, and judicial functions, while simultaneously serving as the official repository for county records. The courthouse is the most important single physical element in the historic and contemporary governance of Hughes County, and is an important local visual reminder of the importance of county government.

The Hughes County courthouse is architecturally significant as a representative example of twentieth-century public and institutional architecture in South Dakota. The building's utilization of Art Deco and Moderne design elements is typical of state courthouses constructed during the period. While the building's level of architectural detail is minimal by many standards, the courthouse remains a relatively large and visually striking example of architecture in Pierre and Hughes County.

### *Historical Narrative:*

Hughes County was one of the many counties established by the 1873 Dakota Territorial Legislature. The sparsely-populated county remained unorganized until 1880, when the incipient arrival of the Chicago & North Western Railway brought the first wave of settlers and resulted in the founding of the townsite of Pierre. The Hughes County Commission first met on November 26, 1880 in a Pierre hotel. The Hughes county seat has remained at Pierre throughout the county's history; unlike many South Dakota counties, Hughes apparently did not endure a "county seat war."<sup>1</sup>

The first Hughes County offices were in rented commercial space in Pierre. Although the 1881 Dakota Territorial Legislature authorized Hughes County to issue bonds for courthouse construction, county commissioners decided that constructing a jail first would be more prudent, and a small county jail was completed in the summer of 1881. The jail was erected on a townsite block in Pierre, which had been donated by the Chicago & North Western as a courthouse site.<sup>2</sup>

The county began planning the construction of its first permanent courthouse in early 1883. That May, the commissioners reviewed proposed building designs from three architectural firms, and selected the plans submitted by Proudfoot & Bird, of Des Moines, Iowa. Proudfoot & Bird were instructed to prepare final plans for a courthouse costing less than \$30,000.00; simultaneously, the county advertised for construction bids, and planned for the sale of \$30,000.00 in 20-



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year, 7% bonds. Construction bids were opened on July 26, but all bids exceeded the \$30,000.00 limit. Proudfoot & Bird then modified their plans to reduce the building cost, and on July 14 a construction contract was awarded to Smith Brothers of Pierre. The building's cornerstone was laid on September 29, 1883, in a gala ceremony which included a public dance to raise funds for a tower clock in the new building.<sup>3</sup>

The 1883 Hughes County courthouse was a large, impressive, two-story building, wood-framed with a brick exterior veneer. Each of the building's facades featured a projecting central bay, and rows of double-hung windows with rounded tops. Both the window sills and arched lintels were continuous across each facade. The building displayed a hipped roof with round-window dormers and roof cresting. Additional visual detail was provided by an ornate, dentilled cornice. A large octagonal clock tower with bell-shaped roof was centered above the building. The tower was removed in 1909 following the failure of some of its iron structural members.<sup>4</sup>

The 1883 Hughes County courthouse remained in use for 50 years, but county commissioners felt that the building was showing its age by the early 1930s. The county had earlier established a "Court House sinking fund," in which tax revenues earmarked for a new courthouse building were allowed to accumulate. In early April, 1933 a delegation from the Pierre Commercial Club approached county commissioners to discuss the possibility of constructing a new courthouse. Both the commissioners and local citizens seemed in favor of the proposal. While the old courthouse was becoming "dilapidated," supporters of the project also noted the high unemployment in Hughes County at the time, and observed that 1933 labor prices were lower than they had been for the past decade.<sup>5</sup>

During April and May, 1933, county commissioners toured several recently-built courthouses in nearby counties, and discussed possible building plans with a number of South Dakota architects. Formal proposals from interested architects were received on June 19, 1933. A total of six firms presented designs and price quotes; the firm of Hugill & Blatherwick was selected in the commissioners' balloting which followed.<sup>6</sup> This partnership consisted of George C. Hugill (1888-1950) and Wilfred F. Blatherwick (b. 1892). Hugill studied architecture at the Art Institute of Chicago, and worked for the firm of Patton & Miller there from 1908-1918, when he moved to Sioux Falls. Blatherwick graduated from the University of Illinois in 1913, and moved to South Dakota six years later to work as a draughtsman for the Perkins & McWayne firm. The Hugill & Blatherwick partnership was formed in Sioux Falls in October, 1921, and continued until Hugill's death. A successor firm still operates in Sioux Falls. The firm advertised itself as being "devoted to institutional, commercial, medical, [and] educational buildings." Hugill & Blatherwick became one of the most prominent architectural firms in post-World War I South Dakota, executing major commissions in restrained Classical forms and later in Art Deco or Moderne motifs. The

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firm's most well-known commission is for the Soldiers and Sailors World War Memorial building in Pierre. Hugill and Blatherwick also designed four South Dakota courthouse buildings, all relatively utilitarian in form: Ziebach County (1930), Hughes County (1933), Clark County (1934), and Lake County (1935).<sup>7</sup>

The Hugill & Blatherwick plans approved by Hughes County specified the construction of a building costing approximately \$100,000.00. The county's sinking fund in 1933 contained approximately \$61,000.00, and the county therefore decided to issue \$40,000.00 in building bonds. A special election to authorize the bond issue was held on July 3, 1933, and the measure passed, 1,495 to 846. The proposition was heavily supported by Pierre residents, while most rural voters showed opposition to the idea. In common with many of South Dakota's New Deal-era courthouse projects, Hughes County's building bonds were eventually purchased by the federal government; this allowed the project to proceed despite the nationwide financial uncertainty of the Depression.<sup>8</sup>

The county opened construction bids for the new courthouse on September 20, 1933. All bids received, however, significantly exceeded the county's \$100,000.00 spending limit. Commissioners then eliminated a number of features from the building plans, and on September 22 accepted a revised bid of \$110,842.00 from the Henry Carlson Company of Sioux Falls. Carlson also agreed to purchase much of the building material the county would salvage from the 1883 courthouse, which was to be razed prior to the new building's construction. (The new courthouse was erected on the site of the earlier building.) The same day, commissioners awarded smaller contracts for plumbing and heating work, and for electrical wiring.<sup>9</sup>

Work on the new courthouse began in early 1934. That January, the 1883 courthouse was vacated in favor of rented office space, and the old building was razed during February and March. Federal public works labor was initially used to salvage the old building, but the county finished the task itself following a dispute over ownership of salvaged building materials.<sup>10</sup> Construction work on the new building began soon after, and almost immediately entered a period of controversy. The previous autumn, the county had received a citizens' petition asking that the new courthouse include a facing of native stone. This proposal was advanced not only for aesthetic reasons, but since the use of stone would result in the "greater employment of local labor [and] the retention of a larger proportion of the money spent in our own community."<sup>11</sup> This idea was accepted by the county, but in May, 1934, local citizens realized that much of the stone cutting was being performed by foreign labor. This resulted in a protest group visiting the county commissioners, followed by meetings among the commissioners, contractor, and local residents. County records do not reveal how the labor dispute was resolved.<sup>12</sup>

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Construction work on the new courthouse continued throughout the summer and fall of 1934; the building was formally accepted by the county of February 11, 1935. The 1934 Hughes County courthouse remains in use in 1992, displaying only minor changes from its original appearance. The most significant alteration to the site was the construction of a new jail facility behind the courthouse in 1967. An elevator/stair tower was added to the courthouse in 1983, and the building's original windows were replaced several years later.<sup>13</sup>

The townsite block containing the Hughes County courthouse also includes Pierre's historic Carnegie Library building. This facility, the first public library in Pierre, was constructed with a \$12,500.00 grant from industrialist Andrew Carnegie, awarded to the town in 1903 as part of Carnegie's nationwide effort to assist in library construction. The building site, on the south side of Pierre's courthouse square, was donated by the county with the approval of its voters. The noted Sioux Falls architectural firm of Wallace Dow and Son designed the new library, and the building was constructed by the firm of Clow and Stainer, of Pierre. The library opened to the public on March 10, 1905, and continued operating in the Carnegie building until a replacement facility was constructed in 1972. The Carnegie building is now used for additional county office space.<sup>14</sup>

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ENDNOTES

1. For a brief history of nineteenth-century Hughes County and Pierre, see Harold H. Schuler, *A Bridge Apart: History of Early Pierre and Fort Pierre* (Pierre, South Dakota: the author, 1987), 66-70.
2. Ibid., p. 67.
3. "Hughes County Commissioners' Record," manuscript volume 1 (1881-1893), pp. 92-101 (May 29, 1883 - July 14, 1883); Harold H. Schuler, *A Bridge Apart: History of Early Pierre and Fort Pierre* (Pierre, South Dakota: the author, 1987), 67.
4. A line drawing of the old Hughes County courthouse is on p. 70 of *Hughes County History*, (Pierre, South Dakota: Hughes County Superintendent of Schools, 1937). See also Harold H. Schuler, *A Bridge Apart: History of Early Pierre and Fort Pierre* (Pierre, South Dakota: the author, 1987), 67.
5. "Hughes County Commissioners' Record," manuscript volume 7 (1932-1935), unpaginated, entries for April 6 and 7, 1933.
6. "Hughes County Commissioners' Record," manuscript volume 7 (1932-1935), unpaginated, entries for April 12, 1933, through June 19, 1933.
7. Carolyn Torma, "Building Diversity: A Photographic Survey of South Dakota Architecture, 1913-1940," *South Dakota History* 19 (1989): 156-193; "Architects" vertical file, South Dakota State Historical Preservation Center, Vermillion.
8. "Hughes County Commissioners' Record," manuscript volume 7 (1932-1935), unpaginated, entries for the period May 9, 1933 to March 10, 1934.
9. "Hughes County Commissioners' Record," manuscript volume 7 (1932-1935), unpaginated, entries for September 20 and 22, 1933.
10. "Hughes County Commissioners' Record," manuscript volume 7 (1932-1935), unpaginated, entries for the period January 8, 1934 to March 8, 1934.

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11. "Hughes County Commissioners' Record," manuscript volume 7 (1932-1935), unpaginated, entry for September 20, 1933.
12. "Hughes County Commissioners' Record," manuscript volume 7 (1932-1935), unpaginated, entries for May 10 and 12, 1934.
13. "Hughes County Commissioners' Record," manuscript volume 7 (1932-1935), unpaginated, entry for February 11, 1935.
14. Harold H. Schuler, *A Bridge Apart: History of Early Pierre and Fort Pierre* (Pierre, South Dakota: the author, 1987), 141-142.

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### **Bibliography:**

"Hughes County Commissioners' Record." Manuscript volumes maintained at the County Auditor's Office, Pierre, South Dakota.

*Hughes County History.* Pierre, South Dakota: Hughes County Superintendent of Schools, 1937.

Schuler, Harold H. *A Bridge Apart: History of Early Pierre and Fort Pierre.* Pierre, South Dakota: the author, 1987.

Torma, Carolyn. "Building Diversity: A Photographic Survey of South Dakota Architecture, 1913-1940," *South Dakota History* 19 (1989): 156-193.

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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The southeast 300 feet of Block 4, First Railway Addition, Pierre, South Dakota.

**Boundary Justification:**

The nominated property includes the courthouse building and the landscaped grounds immediately surrounding it. It coincides with the legal description of the tract of land historically set aside as the courthouse grounds. It does not include adjacent city streets, or the unrelated urban development surrounding the block.

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**Index to Photographs**

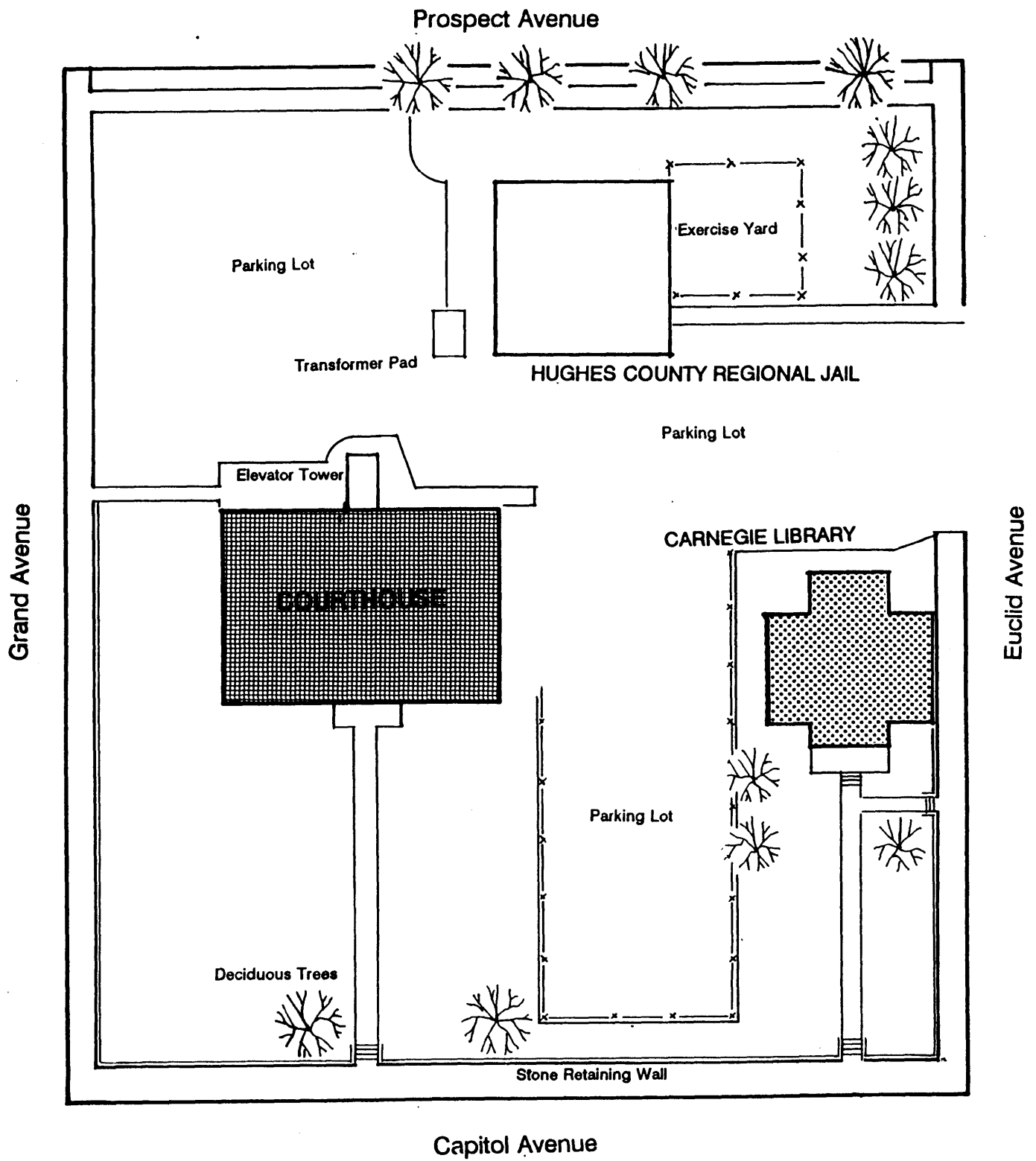
Photographer: Lon Johnson

Date: January 23, 1992

Location of original negatives: South Dakota State Historical Preservation  
Center, Vermillion, South Dakota

Photograph Number	Description	Direction of View
1	Overall view of site: west and south elevations of courthouse and library	Northeast
2	West (primary) exterior elevation of courthouse	East
3	South exterior elevation of courthouse	North
4	East exterior elevation of courthouse	West
5	Detail of area over west courthouse entry	East
6	Courthouse stairwell and second floor hallway	
7	Courthouse third floor hallway	
8	Courtroom interior	
9	Carnegie Library: west (primary) elevation	East
10	Carnegie Library: south and east elevations	Northwest
11	Carnegie Library: north and west elevations	Southeast
12	Regional Jail: west and south elevations	Northeast





Scale: 1" = 50'

**HUGHES COUNTY COURTHOUSE**  
Pierre, South Dakota

Southeast 300 Feet of Block 4 - First Railway Addition