

# HUTCHINSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE



**Location:** 140 Euclid St., Olivet, SD 57052

**Date:** Constructed in 1881 with additions in 1888, 1934, 1967 and 1975.

**Architect:** none

**Description:** The Hutchinson County Courthouse is a rectangular, flat and hip roofed, two-story brick building with one-story wings extending in each direction. The original building, constructed in 1881, was a square, two-story, brick building with a hip roof. This building is the oldest courthouse still in use in South Dakota. In 1888, one-story, fireproof, brick vaults were built on each side of the original building, and in 1934, second story additions with flat roofs were added on both sides above the vaults. In 1967, a modern, one-story, brick wing was added to the west side of the building, and in 1975, a similar wing was added to the east. The front facade of the main building is symmetrical with three bays. The center bay of light colored brick with a hip roof is the original 1881 courthouse, and the flanking flat roofed bays of darker brick are the 1934 additions. The front facade has a projecting portico with a triangular pediment which dominates the front of the building. It is supported by square brick pillars on each side of the entrance door. The flat-roofed, one-story, 1967 and 1975 additions are set back to the rear of the building and extend to the east and west.<sup>i</sup> The original courthouse was built by Ferdinand Cash at a cost of \$2,400, with an extra \$225 for additional work, including a coal shed under the stairs, brick wall on the first floor, extra wall thickness on the second story, and two additional supporting pillars in the interior.

**History:** Hutchinson County was established by the territorial legislature in 1862.<sup>ii</sup> The original boundaries of the county included significant portions of present day Davison and Hanson Counties and part of what is presently Hutchinson County was within the

boundaries of Jayne County. Maxwell City was established as the county seat, and it remained there until October of 1873 when it was moved to Olivet following an election. In 1871, the Territorial Legislature established the present boundaries of the county, but in 1873, it was divided into two counties of which the northern half, named Armstrong County, had Milltown as its county seat. In 1879, the Legislature reunited the two counties and ordered the county officers of Armstrong County to deliver their records, money and papers to Olivet. However, the Armstrong people refused and continued to serve as county officers until a court decision in 1881 compelled them to surrender the records. Early in its history, the county erected a small courthouse of pine lumber with tar paper all around, which held a courtroom and treasurer's office, at a cost of \$310. In 1879, the county built a small jail with two cells, and in 1881 they built the central part of the present building, followed by various additions over the years. The 1934 additions were built by the WPA.<sup>iii</sup>

---

<sup>i</sup> Id. at pages 16-17.

<sup>ii</sup> SL 1862, ch 15.

<sup>iii</sup> Donna Zeeb, Hutchinson County had First Brick Courthouse, SDAAO News Bulletin (October 1980), page 16-17.