



Architect, Material, or Labor? A history of architecture in Sioux Falls.

The primary architecture of Sioux Falls is characterized by the Richardsonian Romanesque style by late nineteenth century architect Wallace Dow. He designed several civic buildings and over one hundred and fifty structures in South Dakota, Minnesota, and North Dakota. Being involved in the politics of the Dakota Territory led to Dow's success, and he is given much credit in shaping Sioux Falls. However, politicians, the local building materials, stonecutters, and prison labor also had influence on Sioux Falls architecture; it was not all generated by a single architect.

The first penitentiary in Sioux Falls of the Dakota Territory had a major impact on how Sioux Falls grew economically and aesthetically. Penal labor and manufacturing provided cheaper, necessary assistance and low cost goods to regional customers trying to stay afloat in the harsh economy of the Dakota Territory.

CONTEXT

During the time of settling in the later nineteenth century, the Dakota land was considered the wild west, home of Native Americans. Tribes lived around the Big Sioux River because of its rich mineral springs. The river first drew attention from two major companies in the area. The Dakota Land Company of St. Paul, Minnesota and the Western Town Company of Dubuque, Iowa claimed the falls for water power in 1856. In

1858, the Yankton Sioux signed a treaty granting the United States land between the Sioux and Missouri Rivers. It was a gloomy agreement by Chief Struck by the Ree; he felt opposing it would be futile. Fort Dakota was established in 1865 for the new settlers by the U.S. Army. Fort Dakota became the City of Sioux Falls, the largest city in the Dakota Territory, and it was growing rapidly. This infrastructure played a part in allowing for The Great Dakota Boom in 1879 to 1886, which brought settlers who would establish farmland.

The two major men believing in the town and its future were Richard Franklin Pettigrew and Charles K. Howard. Pettigrew, a law student from Wisconsin, came to Sioux Falls in 1869 to survey the land on contract. Beginning in 1872, he was highly involved in Dakota Legislature and eventually became the first senator of South Dakota. Pettigrew convinced the government to appropriate federal funding for many buildings in Sioux Falls including the penitentiary, the courthouse, and the post office. Pettigrew's first project was the Queen Bee Mill. He saw that Sioux Falls needed its own mill to avoid shipping costs to farmers, rather than relying on the previous practice of sending their wheat to Minnesota or Iowa. He asked investor, George I. Seney from New Jersey, to examine the mill site; Seney also became a major investor in Sioux Falls. From Iowa, C. K. Howard was a sutler for Fort Dakota, and in 1868 he purchased a post trading business and became the first general merchandiser. Howard majorly affected farming in Minnehaha County during the first settling years and put out advertisements stating "Howard buys anything and sells everything."

Queen Bee Mill



The railroad also had a large impact on future of Sioux Falls. City leaders promoted railroads from 1878 to 1893 in hopes of making Sioux Falls a central hub of the west for wholesale and manufacturing businesses. The Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Railway was the first to come to Sioux Falls. The railroad became a lifeline for many towns in the Dakotas; by 1899, Sioux Falls supported growth on all lines heading west.

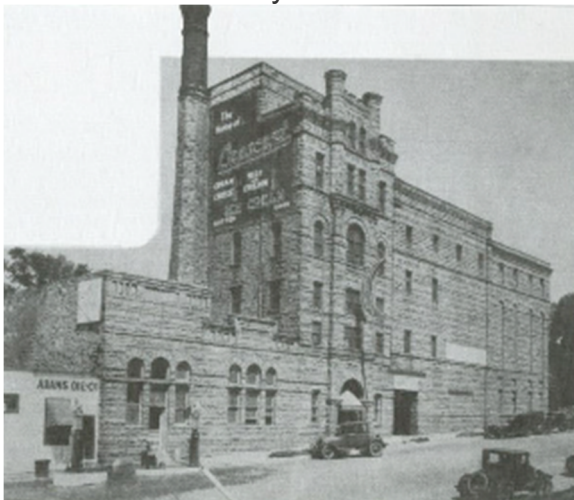
The successful businesses in the turn of the century who required new, larger buildings included the Jewett Brothers and Jewett Wholesale Grocers in 1899, the Andrew Kuehn Wholesale Grocery in 1900, Manchester Biscuit Company in 1902, the Sioux Falls Malting Works in 1902, and the Sioux Falls Brewery in 1904. The New public buildings that were constructed included the the first hospital in 1901, the Children's Home in

1903, the Carnegie Library in 1903, and the Lutheran Normal School in 1905. Each of these buildings were made from Sioux Quartzite, either facade or foundation or both.

Manchester Biscuit Company



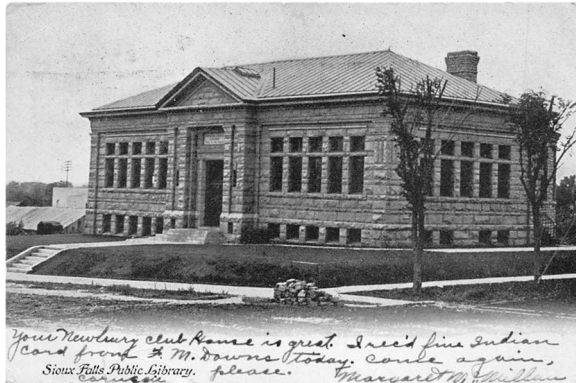
Sioux Falls Brewery



Lutheran Normal School



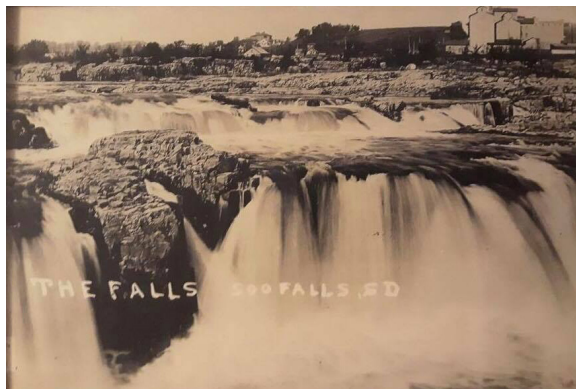
Carnegie Library



MATERIALS

Fourteen thousand years ago, one of the last glacial ice sheets cut and routed the path of the Big Sioux River. As the ice melted, intense rushing water exposed the underground Sioux quartzite bedrock. The hard rock is a billion and half years old and was originally bottom sediments of an ancient sea. The quartzite exposed at the Falls has attracted inhabitants since before 500 B.C.

The Falls



Minnehaha County has continued to have a rich economy in mining Sioux Quartzite for stone work and concrete aggregate. Also called Sioux Falls Granite, the material is found only in southwestern Minnesota, southeastern South Dakota, and a small portion of Iowa. The material is a chalky stone, dark in color and then whitens with air exposure. The ground quartzite is malleable and porous allowing water circulation underground.

The beautiful aesthetics of the Sioux Quartzite have become an iconic representation of Sioux Falls, surrounding towns, and landscapes. Today, outcrop touring sites include Falls Park on the Big Sioux River, Palisades Park on Split Rock Creek and Winnewissa Falls on Pipestone Creek in Minnesota.

Because it was rare and therefore valuable, Sioux Quartzite quickly became a business opportunity for Pettigrew and the area. In 1880, the Queen Bee Mill was one of the first significant projects using the local material. Sioux Quartzite from Sioux Falls was also a major aggregate used in building the Panama Canal. The Monarch was the first local quartzite quarry that opened in 1883 by Minnesotan James Haines Drake. Quarries also

opened in East Sioux Falls and Dell Rapids. Sioux Quartzite was often shipped to other cities including Chicago and Minneapolis. In Sioux Falls, most of the public buildings were made of the local stone.

The stonecutters and tradesmen were most knowledgeable about the Sioux Quartzite and its characteristics. Many of the stonecutters were immigrants from Scotland, Wales, and Scandinavia. They were attracted to the developing quarry work in the 1880s and 1890s, that employed hundreds of tradesman. The Sioux Falls branch of the Granite Cutter's National Union was formed in 1889.

Sioux Stonecutters



ARCHITECT

Architect Wallace Dow has been given credit for designing most public buildings and institutions in the area. He was born in 1844 and passed away in 1911. Originally from Croydon, New Hampshire, he worked there for his father's contracting business and in 1873, formed his own company.

Dow moved to Pierre, South Dakota in the fall of 1880. That winter he relocated to Yankton. In February of 1881, Dow was appointed Chairman on the Board of Directors to construct the Sioux Falls Penitentiary. Dow had close ties with the Republican territorial and state government, and largely due to these connections, he was awarded every local institution design in his heyday.

Courthouse



After completion of the penitentiary, Dow continued in architectural design of South Dakota public buildings and moved his firm permanently to Sioux Falls in 1883. His most famous building is the Sioux Falls Courthouse, constructed in 1881-2 and used for county offices and courtrooms until 1962. The local newspaper, the Argus Leader, was promoting the building be razed for a parking lot in 1965, but fortunately, it stands today as the Old Courthouse Museum.

Penitentiary postcard



Penitentiary postcard



The penitentiary was depicted as landmark and even pictured on South Dakota postcards from the mid-twentieth century. The postcards included luxurious landscape almost resembling English Gardens. One includes the Big Sioux River in the foreground, and depicts the state penitentiary in a romantic style. The writing found on a few of these antique postcards exhibits simple dialogue saying hello to and from ordinary citizens. The cartoonish colors emphasize the pink quartzite of the penitentiary walls. On another card, long winding roads suggest this place is a journey, removed from the city. Being pictured from the river suggests this building is a retreat. Perhaps, the dreamy depiction of the institution softened society's opinions on parolees entering the community after being "healed and helped" at a marvelous refuge by the Department of Corrections.

THE NEW STATE STRUGGLES

South Dakota was struggling economically when it became a state in 1889. There was a severe drought, and farm families were contemplating leaving their ruined crops in the dust. The state was given necessary relief funds in 1890, and although thankful, the legislature felt it publicly destroyed the state's reputation as the land of opportunity.

The 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago was a chance to restore South Dakota's regard and promote its local architecture. In 1891, Governor Arthur C. Mellette urged state legislatures to attempt funding for an exhibition at the fair. One year later, when South Dakota Commissions raised enough money, Chief Architect Dow and Advisory architect Edward W. Van Meter designed a 1200 square foot, two-story building. The South Dakota Pavillion was made of precast concrete and attached to a wood frame.

The porch was prominently designed with Sioux Falls Quartzite and Black Hills Sandstone. Aside from the pavilion, Dow also designed exhibits for the Agriculture and Mining buildings and was awarded for his work on both. Having Romanesque arches, the Agricultural exhibit displays checkered brick with lots of detail, almost resembling the design details the first Corn Palace, a South Dakota architectural phenomena. The Mining exhibit used Yankton Portland cement to resemble stone columns. When the pavilion building was disassembled, the materials were shipped back to Vermillion, South Dakota to rebuild University Hall.

Mining Pavilion



Agriculture Exhibit



CONCLUSION

The politicians and city leaders promoting the funding for many projects proved their character. However, in the context of the Dakota Territory, Sioux Falls was developed serendipitously. In addition to the famous architect Wallace Dow, who receives much of the credit, a complex combination of the political advocacy, local materials, and local labor shaped the city in significant ways. The lush quartzite bedrock provided opportunities for immigrant stonecutters and prisoners of the first Dakota Penitentiary. The role of the prisoners of the Dakotas allowed for cheap labor and manufactured goods to be sold at low costs. They contributed positively to the continuously economic fluctuation of South Dakota. Larger companies were eventually drawn to Sioux Falls, and the labor by the prisoners was an advantageous incentive.

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