

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

MAR 15 2007

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 (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Reiff Building
Other name/site number Dorrance Historical Society Museum; 167-1380-0003

2. Location

Street & number 513 Main Street not for publication
City or town Dorrance vicinity
State Kansas Code KS County Russell Code 167 Zip code 67634

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

Patrick Polner DSHPO 1/25/07
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Kansas State Historical Society

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 commenting official /Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- 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:) _____

Reiff Building
Name of Property

Russell County, Kansas
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	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		total

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

Historic Theaters & Opera Houses of Kansas

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter Categories from instructions)

COMMERCE / TRADE: Specialty Store: Hardware Store
COMMERCE / TRADE: Department Store: General Store
SOCIAL: Meeting Hall: Fraternal
RECREATION & CULTURE: Theater

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION & CULTURE: Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: STONE: Limestone
Walls: STONE: Limestone
Roof: METAL
Other:

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

Reiff Building
Name of Property

Russell County, Kansas
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)

- 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 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.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT / RECREATION

PERFORMING ARTS

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1911-1956

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Anspaugh, Harvey

Anspaugh, Hiram

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Dorrance Historical Society Museum

Reiff Building
Name of Property

Russell County, Kansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	4	5	3	5	6	7	0	4	2	9	9	5	3	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

2

Zone		Easting						Northing						

3

Zone		Easting						Northing						

4

Zone		Easting						Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title Esther Reilly, President; with KSHS Staff edits
Organization Dorrance Historical Society Museum Date September 2006
Street & number 416 Coleman Avenue Telephone (785) 666-4415
City or town Dorrance State Kansas Zip code 67634

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Name The Dorrance Historical Society
Street & number 513 Main Street Telephone none
City or town Dorrance State Kansas Zip code 67634

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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Reiff Building
Dorrance, Russell County, KS

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Summary

The Reiff Building (c. 1911) is located in eastern Russell County in the small town of Dorrance (population 205) less than one mile south of Interstate 70 at 513 Main Street. The two-story limestone commercial building sits on a limestone foundation and is covered with a flat metal roof. The building faces east with measurements of approximately 138 feet east to west and 50 feet north to south. It is the tallest and most dominant commercial building in downtown Dorrance. The building has been home to specialty stores on the first floor and a social hall on the second floor, and currently houses the displays and collections of the Dorrance Historical Society Museum.

Exterior

The Reiff Building, which stands at the northwest corner of Main and Jellison Streets, retains its architectural integrity as an example of a multipurpose commercial building constructed by early settlers of this area. The building's style is functionally rectangular, common to the Post Rock area of the late 19th and early 20th centuries since construction material was limited and quite extensive if delivered by railroad. A cornerstone on the south side of the building features a date of 1911. The first and second floors reflect different internal uses. The first floor has front windows opening onto Main Street. The first floor is typical of a late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial building. The upper floor is indicative of a meeting hall and opera house.

The exterior of the building is constructed of native limestone. A doorway at the center of the south wall, first floor is surmounted with a native limestone arch. This door opens into the main floor. To the west end of the south wall is another door entering into the rear of the building. This enters into the main floor and also to a stairway leading to the upper floor. The east wall is all windows with a double door at the center. These windows were originally large plate glass sheets on either side of the front door, but due to vandalism in 1995 they were replaced using four sections of glass on either side of the door. Dispersed across the east wall of the second floor are six tall vertical windows. The south wall has 5 similar windows and a door leading to a fire escape ladder.

Interior

The interior of the main floor is presently one large room with a rebuilt wall in the rear area. This wall is in the same position as the original wall. The back room was used as storage for the mercantile store but is presently housing antique farm implements and equipment. A wall (built lengthwise west to east) down the center of the main floor originally divided the room into two parts. The south half of the main floor housed the grocery store and the north half housed the hardware, farm supply and equipment store. A metal embossed tile ceiling and plastered walls are as they were during the community's heyday. The front (east-facing) windows are protected by a metal awning.

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Reiff Building
Dorrance, Russell County, KS

In addition to first floor doors and windows previously mentioned, a large wide stairway covers the back (west) wall of the building. This wood stairway, approximately 8 feet wide, leads to the second floor and opens into the large main room there. Also at the rear of the main floor is the original freight elevator installed during construction to move supplies from delivery dock, to basement storage, back to main floor and also to the second floor. At the east end of the second floor room is the original stage fronted by previously mentioned windows encased in wooden/steel frames. On each side of the stage is a small room used for "off stage production" purposes. The walls are covered with plaster and the ceiling is covered with tin ceiling tiles.

The building also features a full-length basement. There is access to the basement via a large wooden staircase at the front of the building and also a smaller rear wooden staircase. The basement has native limestone walls with original sand finished plaster and a concrete floor. Hewn wood beams support the floor system of the main level. This space is currently used as storage.

The Reiff Building maintains its integrity of location, setting, design, and materials, and is a good representation of a rural turn-of-the-century commercial building. It is the most dominant commercial structure in downtown Dorrance, and is currently owned and occupied by the Dorrance Historical Society.

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Reiff Building
Dorrance, Russell County, KS

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Reiff Building is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of ENTERTAINMENT / RECREATION, PERFORMING ARTS, and SOCIAL HISTORY, and under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE as documented in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "Historic Theaters and Opera Houses of Kansas."¹ The property is located in Dorrance, a rural farming community that is located in the eastern part of Russell County in central Kansas. Old U.S. Highway 40 passes through the town and runs parallel to the Union Pacific Railroad tracks that divide the town.

Community History

Russell County's first white settlers arrived in the late 1860s and communities quickly formed and developed during the 1870s. In June of 1867, the Kansas Pacific Railroad reached the area that would become Dorrance bringing German, English, Irish, and other immigrants who accounted for much of the town's modest growth by 1870. The site along the railroad chosen for this town was named after the Kansas Pacific Railroad Superintendent O.B. Dorrance. "From 1874-1877 the population of the county increased steadily, and although they came neither in crowds nor colonies, each year saw new farms opened up and new dwellings going up over the prairie..."² Temporary officials were selected to oversee a special election during which the county's first commissioners were chosen. The election was held September 9, 1872, establishing a county government.

The U.S. Post Office was established on July 9, 1883. On April 7, 1910, the City of Dorrance was incorporated as a third class city. The population was 281 citizens. Located in the heart of the Post Rock area³, Dorrance was mostly populated by farm families of modest income. A great need for a source of supplies was met with the construction of a native limestone building that would later be

¹ Elizabeth Rosin, Dale Nimz, Kristen Ottsen, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic Theaters and Opera Houses of Kansas," 23 December 2004. Filed at the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas.

² William Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: Andreas Publishing, 1883).

³ The land of the Post Rock is defined as "an area stretching about 200 miles from the [southern] Nebraska border near Mahaska...almost directly southwest to a few miles north of Dodge City, Kansas. East to west the boundaries of the area so zigzag that its width ranges from less than ten to more than 40 miles." Grace Muilenburg and Ada Swineford, *Land of the Post Rock: Its Origins, History, and People* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1969), 5.

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Reiff Building
Dorrance, Russell County, KS

known as Reiff Building. City officers and councilmen were elected on April 19, 1910 – A.C. Reiff served on this first city council.⁴

Dorrance had a sizeable business district in those early days, which included a hotel, blacksmith shop, livery barn, hardware stores, doctor's offices, a bank, a lumber yard, grocery stores, a butcher shop, a drug store, a dry goods store, and a newspaper.⁵ Between 1910-1940, Dorrance served the eastern portion of the Russell County area as the primary supplier of goods and services.

Building History

In 1910, Harvey Anspaugh purchased lots 25, 26, and 28 in Block "B" in the City of Dorrance. With the assistance of his brother Hiram Anspaugh, they began the design and construction of the building on lot number 28. A header stone above the arched entrance on the south elevation dates the building to 1911. An ad published in the *Dorrance News* on September 7, 1911, stated

We Have Just Moved Into Our New Store Building With A Complete Line of The Very Best Up To Date Machinery, Wagons, Implements, Carriages, Windmills, Stoves, Pumps, Ranges and Shelf Hardware. The fine new Anspaugh building, the finest in the city just completed, affords us floor space 100 ft. long and 50 ft. wide, giving us ample room to display our large stock. Come In and make us a visit. A.C. Reiff.

The building name immediately changed from Anspaugh to the Reiff Building. Reiff, who operated the business, did not own the building until 1916 (abstract title). In addition to his mercantile stock on the main floor, he developed the second floor as a community, civic, and cultural center. The second floor served as a home for meetings of fraternal and lodge organizations, women's clubs, political rallies, firemen's balls, theatre, silent movies, Chautauqua, dances, concerts, and also as a gymnasium. A Lyceum Course was also held at the Reiff's Opera House. The following are excerpts from the *Dorrance News*:

A.C. Reiff and H.H. Anspaugh, with the help of W.D. Henderson and John Hammond, are putting in the furnace in their new building. It will furnish heat for their opera hall as well.⁶

⁴ Esther Reilly, *The Story of Dorrance, Kansas: Past and Present* (privately published) 2.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ *Dorrance News* (19 October 1911).

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Dorrance, Russell County, KS

The Busby Stock Co. of Kansas City spent three nights at the Reiff's new opera house rendering three excellent plays.⁷

A 1991 article published in the *Wilson World* referenced another article published in the same publication some 72 years earlier: "...August 5, 1919, sees the opening of the Dorrance Chautauqua. This is the third season for a Chautauqua and they have made it so big and the prospect for large crowds in attendance this year are good..."⁸

In an oral interview with longtime area resident Irene Thielen Steckel, she related that she, her parents, and two brothers attended silent movies at the Reiff Building in the 1920s and 1930s. Her husband Clarence worked in the mercantile part of the store and also ran the silent movie projector in the 1930s. She remembers being at the movies one night during the "dirty thirties" when a terrible dust storm began. She recalled, "Everyone had trouble getting home and we helped each other as best we could. As you know, most of us walked to the movies and so we had to walk home in the storm. Everything in the house was covered with dust." She also remembered attending the fabled dinners held for the jack rabbit hunters.⁹ Similar stories are also noted in the private collection of former Dorrance resident Dr. J.C. Hubbs. His narrative recalls, "The Reiff Building was the site for an oyster supper supplied by Ed Heel and Henry Stechtem for all jack rabbit hunters."

The Reiff Building was the center commerce and culture in Dorrance until the mid 20th century. It even housed the secondary school from 1917-1919 as the Dorrance High School was being built. Activities at the Reiff Building declined after World War II as the small community's population began to decline. Also, the use of the automobile made it easier to travel to other larger communities for goods, services, and entertainment. The advent of television reduced the interest in a cultural center and replaced the need for the second floor for those activities.

From 1943 to 1946, Ella Mary Reiff, A.C. Reiff's widow, continued the mercantile store and community hall. Robert Turner, Andrew Mahaffey and A.D. Zinn purchased the building in 1946. Zinn sold his share to Mahaffey and Turner in 1948. The building was also used those years as a grocery and hardware store. Claude Cason owned the building from 1955 to 1970 with Richard Stoppel operating a grocery store. Dale Hixon owned the building from 1970 to 1973, operating a grocery store also, as did I.M. Anderson, owner and operator from 1976 to 1979. Anderson sold the

⁷ *Dorrance News* (28 December 1911).

⁸ *Wilson World* (21 July 1991).

⁹ The author interviewed Irene Thielen Steckel on 20 July 2000. Mrs. Steckel was born in 1910.

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Reiff Building
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building to Josephine Thielen and son Jay Thielen as an investment. Clifford and Patricia Dick, owners from 1984 to 1986 planned to renovate the building to be used as apartments and a clothing shop. This venture did not develop and the building was next owned by Toss Back, Inc. from 1986 to 1988 and by Dorrance Athletic Service, Inc. from 1988 to 1996 for use as a commercial warehouse. Major repairs to the roof and windows were completed during the 1980s.

In 1996, the Reiff Building was donated to the Dorrance Historical Society to be used for historical and educational purposes. This venture continues as volunteers assist through the donation of time, money, artifacts, and antiques: all from present and former residents of Dorrance. Inmates from nearby Ellsworth Correctional Facility have provided a significant amount of labor for restoration purposes. The building currently houses the collections and displays of the Dorrance Historical Society Museum.

Architecture

Reflective of many late nineteenth and early twentieth century opera houses across Kansas, the Reiff Building featured an opera house on the second floor of a commercial building in the heart of a downtown. The Reiff Building fits the architectural description of opera houses outlined in the MPDF:

While the form of theater buildings continued to adapt the two-part commercial block form typical of nineteenth century main street construction, special attention was given to both the interior and exterior design of opera houses. The exterior treatments expressed the Late Victorian idioms popular at the time... More commonly, the builders of Kansas opera houses adapted simpler variations of popular architectural styles and applied them to vernacular commercial block forms.¹⁰

Conclusion

The Reiff Building is not only important to the city and surrounding community because of its past social, civic, and cultural importance, but also because it retains its architectural integrity as an early 20th century commercial style building. The property meets the registration requirements for opera houses as outlined in the MPDF "Historic Opera Houses and Theaters of Kansas." According to the MPDF, "opera houses often occupied the upper stories of a commercial block in the heart of a downtown..." and "special attention was given to both the interior and exterior design."¹¹ The intact storefront and open space used for performances, gatherings, and business, therefore qualify it for

¹⁰ Rosin, et. Al. "Historic Theaters and Opera Houses of Kansas," p. F 60-61.

¹¹ Ibid.

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listing under Criterion A in the areas of ENTERTAINMENT / RECREATION, PERFORMING ARTS, and SOCIAL HISTORY. Moreover, the exterior of this two-story downtown building maintains its architectural integrity as an early 20th century commercial block, and therefore qualifies for listing under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE.

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Dorrance, Russell County, KS

Bibliography

Cutler, William. *History of the State of Kansas*. Chicago: Andreas Publishing, 1883.

Dorrance (Kansas) News, 3 August 1911; 7 September 1911; 19 October 1911, 9 November 1911; 28 December 1911.

Muilenburg, Grace, and Ada Swineford. *Land of the Post Rock: Its Origins, History, and People*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1969.

Reilly, Esther. *The Story of Dorrance, Kansas – Past and Present*. Dorrance Historical Society. 1976.

Rosin, Elizabeth, Dale Nimz, and Kristen Ottsen. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historic Theaters and Opera Houses of Kansas" 23 December 2004. National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. Filed at the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Russell (Kansas) Daily News, 13 September 1933.

Steckel, Irene Thielen, oral interview with the author, 20 July 2000.

Wilson (Kansas) World, 21 July 1994.

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National Park Service

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Section number 10 & Photos Page 9

Reiff Building
Dorrance, Russell County, KS

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property stands on Lot 28 Block "B" in the City of Dorrance, Russell County, Kansas. This property is bounded on the east side by Main Street, to the South by Jellison Street, to the west by an alley and to the north by adjacent property lines. The two-story native limestone building faces east with measurements approximately 138 feet east to west and 50 feet north to south.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries include the land originally associated with the property.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The following information applies to all photos:

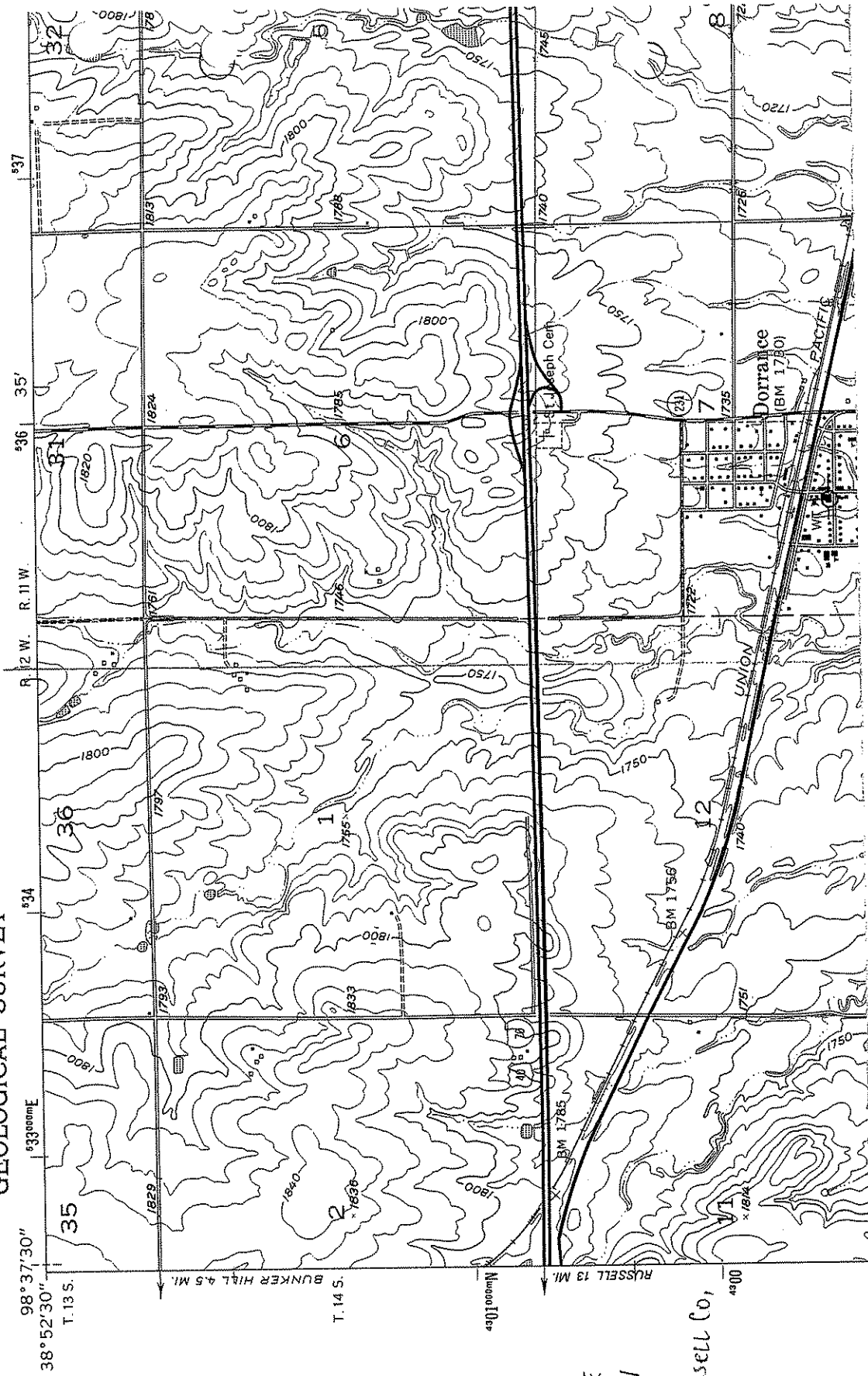
Property: Reiff Building
Location: Dorrance, Russell County, Kansas
Photographer: Sarah J. Martin
Date: 13 October 2006
Digital photographs on file at the Kansas State Historical Society

1. South (side) elevation, looking north along Main Street
2. East (front) and south (side) elevations, facing northwest
3. West (rear) and south (side) elevations, facing northeast
4. Double door, south elevation
5. Storefront, facing north
6. Interior, first floor, facing east
7. Interior, double door, south wall, facing south
8. Rear staircase leading to second floor, facing north
9. Second floor space, facing west
10. Stage along east wall, facing northeast
11. Stage detail, facing north
12. Basement, facing southwest

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STA'

6281 / NW
(DORRANCE NW)



Reiff Building
14: 535 670 E
4299530 N
DORRANCE, Russell Co,
KANSAS