

1 City, Village or Town: Sparta	County: Monroe	Surveyor: D. Filipowicz	Date: 4/81 10/81	Street Number
Street Address: 418 W. Main Street		Legal Description: Block 4, Dammon's Addition to Sparta.	Acreage: approx. 1.5	
Current Name & Use: Monroe County Court House		Current Owner: County of Monroe; Attn: David Hering, County Clerk		
Film Roll No.	Affix Contact Prints	Current Owner's Address: P. O. Box 260, Sparta, WI 54656		
Negative No.		Special Features Not Visible In Photographs: see Description of interior, Architectural Statement, Item 3.		
Facade Orient.		Interior visited? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		

2 Original Name & Use: Monroe County Court House	Source	Previous Owners	Dates	Uses	Source	Town Range Section
Dates of Construction: 1895	Source A					
Architect and/or Builder: M. E. Bell	Source A					

3 <u>Architectural Significance</u> <input type="radio"/> Represents work of a master <input type="radio"/> Possesses high artistic values <input checked="" type="radio"/> Represents a type, period, or method of construction <input checked="" type="radio"/> Is a visual landmark in the area <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ . <input type="radio"/> None.	4 <u>Historical Significance</u> <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with lives of significant persons <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with significant historical events <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with development of a locality <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ . <input checked="" type="radio"/> None.
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<p>Statement of Architectural Significance:</p> <p><u>Description:</u> Symmetrical in form and ornamentation, the Monroe County Court House in Sparta stands three stories high with a hipped-roofed attic. A tall shouldered gable crowns the shallow projecting pavilion in the center of the front (south) and side elevations. Gabled dormers enclosed by thin piers are set into the south faces of the flared-roof corner pavilions. Hipped-roof shed dormers alternate with the pavilions. A square corner tower with open oriels on all faces rises from the</p> <p style="text-align:right;">(over)</p>	<p>Statement of Historical Significance:</p> <p>When Monroe County was created by legislative enactment in 1854, the village of Sparta, Town of Leon, was named the seat; it was just two miles north of the village that initial settlement of the territory had taken place in 1850. The more than 900 square mile-area is less three-quarters of a quarter section of land included in the original boundaries, due to the loss of that property to the County of Vernon in 1939.^B The one challenge to the location of the seat was unsuccessful when a vote to relocate at Tomah was disqualified in 1885.</p> <p>The first courthouse at Sparta was constructed in 1856; the facility, which included a jail, was used until 1863 when a new courthouse, jail, and jailer's residence were constructed at a cost of \$20,750. The present courthouse was completed at a cost in excess of \$50,000.^C</p>
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5 Sources of Information (Reference to Above)	6 <u>District Classification</u>
A Cornerstone.	District Name: _____
B "Inventory of the County Archives of Wisconsin," No. 41, Wisc. Historical Records Survey, 1941.	<input type="radio"/> Pivotal <input type="radio"/> Contributing <input type="radio"/> Non-Contributing
C Official Proceedings of the County Board of Supervisors, 1894-1896.	Initials: _____ Date: _____
D Biographical Dictionary of American Architects Deceased, H.F. & E.R. Withey, Hennessey & Ingells Inc., 1970, p. 48.	Map Code
E	

7 Representation in Previous Surveys: <input type="radio"/> HABS <input type="radio"/> NRHP <input type="radio"/> WRL <input type="radio"/> Local Landmark <input checked="" type="radio"/> Other: WIHP	8 <u>Eligibility for the National Register</u> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Eligible <input type="radio"/> Not Eligible <input type="radio"/> Unknown <small>local</small> Initials: DHF Date: 10/81
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Architectural Statement (cont.):

deck of the steep hipped roof; round turrets at the corners of the tower pierce the pyramidal roof. Double-hung windows fill the regularly-spaced rectangular windows in the coursed rock-faced red sandstone walls; on the east side only of the third story, semicircular transoms mark the location of the courtroom. The entrance is composed of a short flight of concrete steps covered by a denticulated rectangular wood canopy, with square corner columns of wood and round inner columns of polished granite. Decorative cut stone panels decorate the face of the pavilion overhead; at the attic level, the short open arcade with polished red marble columns is now glazed for protection.

Inside the front entrance, the stair rising against the center pavilion retains its steel treads, newels, and decorative railings. Walls and ceilings are generally of painted plaster, and floors of terrazzo. Altered in 1971, the courtroom on the third floor does retain the original oak railing and benches.

A small one-story brick addition (1965) to the rear contains the jail (first floor) and other county offices (basement). It is nearly invisible except at the back of the site, and neither detracts from the integrity of the original nor adds to its significance.

Significance: A towered, red sandstone building in the Richardsonian Romanesque mode, the Monroe County Courthouse represents a period of construction. The design was the work of Chicago architect Mifflin E. Bell (1846-1904). The Iowa native worked with Alfred Piquenard on the construction of the Illinois Capitol during the 1870s,^D and later succeeded him as U.S. Supervising Architect in Washington during 1881-85.

Located in an open square in Sparta's civic and commercial district, the three-story building dominates the smaller-scale neighborhood. Its strong visual impact, evident antiquity, and local civic importance would make it the transcendent pivotal element in a potential historic district in the neighborhood.

