

INTENSIVE SURVEY FORM Historic Preservation Division State Historical Society of Wisconsin

City, Village or Town: Hudson	County: St. Croix	Surveyor: Agnes Ring D. Filipowicz L. Garfield	Date: 6/81 4/81	Street Number
Street Address: 904 Third Street		Legal Description: (over)	Acreage: less than one	

Current Name & Use: St. Croix County Courthouse	Current Owner: County of St. Croix; Attn: F. Verna Stohlberg, County Clerk
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Film Roll No.	Affix Contact Prints	Current Owner's Address: 904 Third Street, Hudson, WI
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Negative No.	Affix Contact Prints	Special Features Not Visible In Photographs: See Description of Architectural Statement, Item 3
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Facade Orient.	Affix Contact Prints	Interior visited? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
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Original Name & Use: 2 St. Croix County Courthouse	Source	Previous Owners	Dates	Uses	Source	Town Range Section
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Dates of Construction: 1900	Source A					Town Range Section
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Architect and/or Builder: William T. Towner, St. Paul	Source B,C					Town Range Section
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3 Architectural Significance <input checked="" type="radio"/> Represents work of a master <input checked="" 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 Historical Significance <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.	Section Map Name Map Code
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Statement of Architectural Significance: Description: One of the finest of the state's courthouses designed in the Richardsonian manner, the St. Croix County Courthouse is a symmetrical assemblage of Romanesque elements. A rusticated first story of Portage Entry Stone (red sandstone) is matched with red pressed brick second and third stories and tower; red sandstone divides the tall round-headed openings in the gabled walls into stories. Large voussoirs trim the ground-story windows and the wide arches in projecting portals on the west and (over)	Statement of Historical Significance: When dedicated in June, 1900, the St. Croix County Courthouse was hailed as a reflection of the "growth of St. Croix County," the result of the "steady efforts of a conservative people for more than half a century." Despite such rhetoric, it was indeed a vast improvement over the outmoded first courthouse, built in 1856, whose faulty ventilation was not only endangering county records but was producing a memorable "courthouse headache" as well. The new structure, designed by St. Paul architect William Towner, cost \$50,000 and "places our county in the first rank among counties of the state," according to one dedication day speaker. From 1900 until 1966, when it was replaced as a courthouse by a new structure, the building served as both the seat and the symbol of St. Croix County government. Today, it functions as the administrative center of several county agencies.
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Sources of Information (Reference to Above)	6 District Classification District Name: _____ <input type="radio"/> Pivotal <input type="radio"/> Contributing <input type="radio"/> Non-Contributing Initials: _____ Date: _____
Inscription stone (portal).	
Cornerstone.	
Hudson Star Times, June 15, 1900.	
Hudson Star Times, Vol. XLVI, No. 7 June 22, 1900, p. 1.	

Dedication Booklet of the St. Croix County Courthouse, Oct. 1, 1966, n.p. (p.9?).	8 Eligibility for the National Register <input checked="" type="radio"/> Eligible <input type="radio"/> Not Eligible <input type="radio"/> Unknown local Initials: DHF Date: 10/81
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7 Representation in Previous Surveys: <input type="radio"/> NRHP <input type="radio"/> WRL <input type="radio"/> Local Landmark <input type="radio"/> HABS <input checked="" type="radio"/> Other: WIHP
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Legal Description:

All of the following described pieces or parcels of land lying and being in the SW fractional quarter of Sec. 24 in T29N, of R20W of the fourth principal meridian in the county of St. Croix, WI and bounded as follows to wit: Beginning at a point four rods E of the SE corner of Block 3 in the Village of Buena Vista, and runs thence E twenty rods, thence N eight rods, thence W twenty rods, thence S eight rods to the point of the beginning.

Architectural Statement (cont.):

south sides. Recessed in the center of gables on the front facade, the five-story tower culminates in an arcaded belfrey, corner turrets and a cross-gabled roof, underscored by a brick corbel table. The high foundation is composed of "layers" of brick and sandstone. Gray slate still covers all of the roof gables. Combination aluminum-frame windows were installed in most openings in 1970.

Less formal spatially than courthouses of the period, the interior is nonetheless rich in its limited appointments. The cross plan of halls on the first floor is colored by a deep-red and yellow encaustic tile floor, marble wainscoting, and stained oak moldings. The east end of the main east-west corridor, opposite the portal, is terminated by an oak door with large leaded stained glass side-lights and transom lights. Like the covered skylight in the former courtroom (now offices) upstairs, the glass is patterned with embellished ovals and acanthus leaves in green and gold tones. (The small lobby or anteroom behind the door once prefaced the county clerk's suite; it is now part of the social services offices.) Wide painted plaster arches form a small loggia at the base of the stairs, ornamented with gilded capitals, plinth, and brass balusters. Above modern movable partitions, the original glass skylight (closed on the roof) is still visible in the center of the ceiling in the second-story courtroom. Historic views of Hudson, including an elevation of the 1857 courthouse, are represented in stained glass windows on the south wall. Probation, parole, and planning offices now occupy the offices along the east, west, and north sides of the plan. Accoustical tile ceilings and flourescent lights were installed throughout the interior in the 1950s.

The new two-story courthouse addition (1966) a short distance to the rear (east) of the original building is not significant to the nomination.

Significance: Handsome in its richness of textures and forms, the St. Croix County Courthouse is a classic example of the Richardsonian public building. Its monumentality, quality masonry construction (Frederick C. Norlander, builder - Source 5C, over), and distinctive interior features (see Description) make the building a surprisingly fine landmark in the small Mississippi River city. Architect William T. Towner of St. Paul was thirty years old when he designed the building. A native of Sussex, England, Towner was educated in London, and emigrated to America in 1881 (Source 5C, over). Before opening a St. Paul office in 1898, Towner worked in Montana and for the Land and Improvement Company in West Superior.

In state-wide perspective, the Hudson courthouse rivals those in Port Washington (Ozaukee County), Waukesha (Waukesha County), and Monroe (Green County) as representative of its period of construction.

