

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED NOV 14 1977  
DATE ENTERED FEB 14 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
Robertson County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON  
Same

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
Court Street

CITY, TOWN  
Mt. Olivet

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
07

STATE  
Kentucky

VICINITY OF  
CODE  
021

COUNTY  
Robertson

CODE  
201

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Robertson County Fiscal Court

STREET & NUMBER  
Robertson County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN  
Mt. Olivet

STATE  
Kentucky

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Robertson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER  
Court Street

CITY, TOWN  
Mt. Olivet

STATE  
Kentucky

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE  
1971

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN  
Frankfort

STATE  
Kentucky

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Robertson County Courthouse occupies the summit of a steep hill overlooking Court Street in Mt. Olivet, Kentucky. The structure faces southeast, and its situation is unusual in that it is not located in the town's center as are most Kentucky courthouses.

Completed in 1870, this chaste yet straightforward Italianate building of two floors is three bays in width and four bays in length. The design was provided by G. M. Williams, a local builder who also supervised the construction.

The foundation is of roughly finished limestone, and the bricks, which were fired on the site, are laid in common bond. A continuous stringcourse is between the two stories and on each side is a gable pierced by an oculus. The elongated windows of the first floor have segmental heads and hoodmolds of brick, while those of the second floor are semicircular. The centered entrance has retained its Victorian double doors and its hood with brackets whose profiles match those of the corner eaves. (The gables are not treated with brackets and, in a sense, they gain distinction from lack of such.) (See photo 1.)

A square bell tower whose hipped roof is covered with copper rises from the center and serves as the visual landmark of the community. On each side of the tower is a louvered window with a semicircular head, and at the tower's apex is an orb and a weather vane containing the Masonic emblem.

The courtroom occupies most of the first floor. The original spectators' and jurors' benches, the judge's podium, and the heavy wooden railing are much intact. Overhead is an impressive embossed metal ceiling also in good condition. (See photo 3.) To the north are two offices, a vault, and a stairway leading to the second floor which remains to be used exclusively as a Masonic lodge.

Flanking the courthouse are two early 1960s constructions; on the west is the Police Department offices and on the east is the county jail. Portions of the courthouse's masonry have been replaced, and both the exterior and interior of the courthouse are in fair condition.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1870-1873

BUILDER/ARCHITECT G. M. Williams

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Robertson County Courthouse, located in Mount Olivet, was built in 1870, three years after the county was established. At the time of construction it was the only brick structure in the county. It is also one of the few courthouses in Kentucky built in the Italianate style.

Robertson County was formed in 1867 out of parts of Nicholas, Harrison, Bracken, and Mason Counties, and was one of the last nine counties established in the state. The county, located in the north central section of the state, is hilly, but suitable to cultivation. Mount Olivet, the county seat, is a very small rural town which was incorporated in 1851.

After the formation of the county, court was held on the second floor of the masonic lodge in Mount Olivet until 1870 when the present courthouse was built. Money to build the courthouse was raised by a special tax fixed at 10¢ per one hundred dollars of taxable property and \$1.50 per capita on each tax payer in the county. Additional funds for the structure were borrowed from individuals. The Blue Lodge F.A.M. donated the sum of \$1,500.00 for which they received the second floor of the courthouse.

The courthouse was designed and built in the Italianate style by G. M. Williams, a Robertson County builder. According to Richard Collin's History of Kentucky (1876), the courthouse was the only brick structure in Robertson County at the time it was constructed (p. 687).

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Collins, Richard. History of Kentucky. Covington: by the author, 1874, Vol. II, p. 687.
- Garr, Elisabeth. The History of Kentucky Courthouses. The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, 1972.

(continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .5 acre Latitude: 38° 31' 54"  
 Longitude: 84° 02' 08"  
 UTM REFERENCES (A U.S.G.S. map with UTM ticks is not available for this quadrant.)

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mary Cronan Oppel, Historian; Daniel Kidd, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

August 1977

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

(502) 564-3741

CITY OR TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Edward W. Yelton*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 10/31/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Robert B. Pettig*

DATE 2/14/78

DIRECTOR, SERVICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST

*Charles A. ...*

DATE 2-9-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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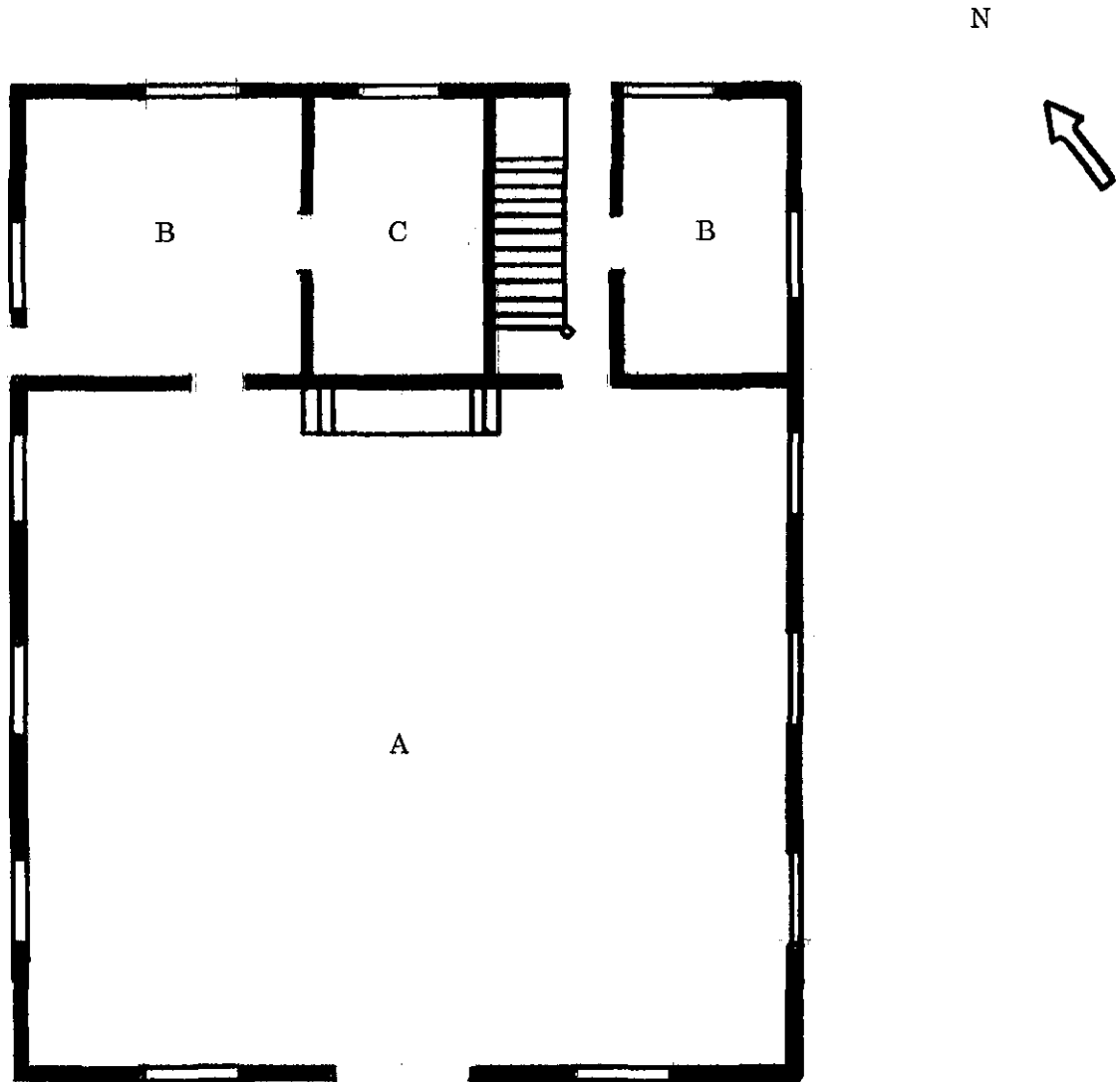
Robertson County Courthouse

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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Additional information from Michael Becker, Physical Planner, Buffalo Trace  
Area Development District, State National Bank Building, Maysville, Kentucky  
41056.



ROBERTSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
MT. OLIVET, KENTUCKY

FIRST FLOOR  
NO SCALE

- A    COURTROOM
- B    OFFICES
- C    VAULT

Robertson County Courthouse  
Mt. Olivet  
Robertson County  
Kentucky

NOV 14 1977

Sketch plan.

Dan Kidd, August 1977

No Scale.

FEB 14 1978

Map 2. Sketch map of first  
floor.