

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Lafayette</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER <b>70-4-48-0001</b>	DATE <b>4/28/70</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**First Capitol**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**First Wisconsin Territorial Capitol or Council House**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: **N of Belmont off U.S. 151**  
**3 mi N and 1 mi W of Belmont on County Trunk Highway G**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Belmont vic.**

STATE <b>Wisconsin</b>	CODE <b>48</b>	COUNTY: <b>Lafayette</b>	CODE <b>065</b>
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**State of Wisconsin, Department of Natural Resources**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Madison**

STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b>	CODE <b>48</b>
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Lafayette County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Darlington**

STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b>	CODE <b>48</b>
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**None**

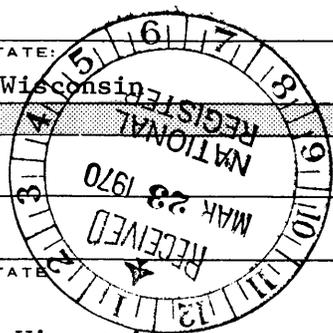
DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE:
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b>
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

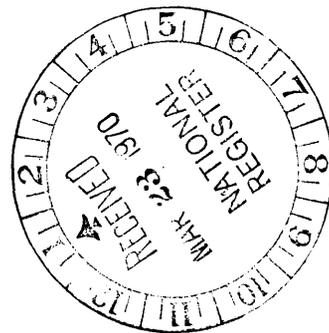
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

A simple two-story frame clapboard building, 26 feet wide and 42 feet long, with a relatively shallow pitched roof, the First Capitol is a plain yet singularly attractive structure distinguished in its architectural design only by a battlemented facade. The front entry is a single door with a simple three-paned transom.

The Capitol was nevertheless a very substantial structure, built in 1836 with timber purchased in Pittsburg, pre-cut, and transported by boat down the Ohio River to the Mississippi, north to Galena, then hauled by wagon to Belmont. Inside, thick hand-split oak lath, covered with heavy plaster, added to the sturdiness of the walls.

The building has been faithfully restored with use made of as much of the original construction as possible.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1836

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                       |   |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering  | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry     | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape    | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature   | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military     |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Music        |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

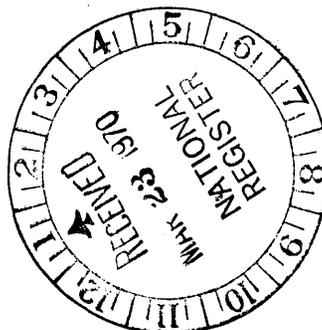
When President Andrew Jackson signed the bill which created the Wisconsin Territory in 1836, the new territory included all of Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, parts of the two Dakotas and "disputed" territory in northern Illinois. Immediately after assuming office on July 4, 1836, Governor Henry Dodge called for a census as required and found that the territory's population of about 22,000 people was fairly evenly divided east and west of the Mississippi. The lead mining region of southwestern Wisconsin had the greatest density of population and on the basis of both geography and population Governor Dodge selected Belmont as the territorial capital.

The choice was not popular and in fact caused much open dissention and dispute. The Territorial Legislature met there for only one session, from October 25 to December 9, 1836, a period of 46 days. During that session, with some 20 communities besides Belmont vying for selection as the new capital, Madison was chosen and building of the new capitol began the next year.

Despite its brief use, the First Capitol at Old Belmont is one of Wisconsin's most significant historic sites. It was the birthplace of local government for the present-day states of Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota.

Marked with an Official Wisconsin Historical Marker.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Mack, John G. J., "The Four Wisconsin Capitols," Wisconsin Blue Book, Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library, Madison, 1923, 41-52.

Rindlaub, M. P., "The Preservation of Wisconsin's First Capitol," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 3:374-75 (March, 1920).

Schaefer, Joseph, The Wisconsin Lead Region, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, 1932, 57-73.

History of LaFayette County, Wisconsin, Western Historical Company, Chicago, 1881, 41-44.

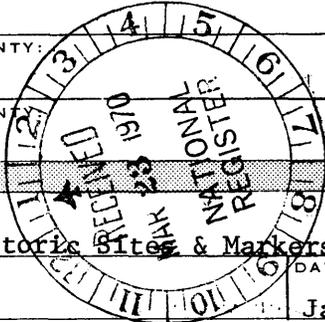
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	N 42°	46'	07"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	W 90°	21'	45"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: LESS THAN 10

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: D. N. Anderson, Assistant Director, Historic Sites & Markers Division

ORGANIZATION: State Historical Society of Wisconsin

STREET AND NUMBER: 816 State Street

CITY OR TOWN: Madison STATE: Wisconsin CODE: 48

DATE: Jan. 23, 1970

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Richard Skerney

Title Acting Director  
State Historical Society of Wis.

Date March 18, 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest Allen Connally  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date APR 28 1970

ATTEST:

William J. Swartz  
Keeper of The National Register

Date APR 13 1970

SEE INSTRUCTIONS