

JUL - 2 1981

MAY 29 1981

# IOWA SITE INVENTORY

Division of Historic Preservation  
Iowa State Historical Department  
26 E. Market St., Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Site Number 28-020-002  
District Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Map Reference # 28-020-002  
Topo Map Manchester 1:24,000

## IDENTIFICATION

1. Site Name Delaware
2. Village/Town/City Manchester Township \_\_\_\_\_ County Delaware
3. Street Address Main between S. Tama and S. Brewer Streets
4. Legal Location OT 18 W $\frac{1}{2}$   
Urban: subdivision block parcel  
Rural: township range section  
subparcel 1/4 section-1/4 section
5. UTM Location: zone 15 easting 627990 northing 4704450; Acreage less than 1 ac
6. Owner(s) Name Delaware County Board of Supervisors
7. Owner(s) Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street address) (City) (State) (Zip)  
Manchester Iowa 52057
8. Use: present Courthouse original Courthouse

## DESCRIPTION

9. Date of Construction 1894 Architect/Builder C.E. Bell, Council Bluffs, Arch.
10. Building Type:  single family dwelling  multiple family dwelling  commercial  
 industrial  educational  other institutional  public  religious  agricultural
11. Exterior Walls:  clapboard  stone  brick  board & batten  shingles  stucco  
 other \_\_\_\_\_
12. Structural System:  wood frame with interlocking joints  
 wood frame with light members (balloon frame)  masonry load-bearing walls  
 iron frame  steel frame with curtain walls  reinforced concrete  
 other \_\_\_\_\_
13. Condition:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated
14. Integrity:  original site  moved-if so, when? \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes on alterations, additions (with dates and architect, if known) and any other notable features of building and site:  
Extensive use of dropped ceilings- some original pressed tin above stairway - ceramic tile flooring in public spaces - spiral stair from clerk's office to courtroom - main doors replaced with aluminum
15. Related Outbuildings and Property:  barn  other farm structures  
 carriage house  garage  privy  other \_\_\_\_\_
16. Is the building endangered?  no  yes-if so, why? \_\_\_\_\_
17. Surroundings of the building:  open land  woodland  scattered outbuildings  
 densely built-up  commercial  industrial  residential  other \_\_\_\_\_
18. Map
19. Photo  
Roll \_\_\_\_\_ Frame \_\_\_\_\_ View \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNIFICANCE** (Indicate sources of information for all statements)

**20. Architectural Significance**

- a. Key structure/individually may qualify for the National Register
- b. Contributing structure  c. Not eligible/intrusion

This courthouse combines Victorian Romanesque (rusticated stone entrance portal with round arch, heavy rockfaced stone beltcourses, round-arched second story windows) with elements of the Chateausque (steeply-pitched roofs, sharply pointed tower gables with assorted finials).

**21. Historical Significance**

Theme(s) Politics/Government

- a. Key structure/individually may qualify for the National Register
- b. Contributing structure  c. Not eligible/intrusion

This courthouse is locally significant as the historical focus of county government, and of the political power and prestige derived from the community's status as the county seat. As center of county government, an Iowa town was reasonably assured of economic and population growth, and a prominent role in local social and political life. The county courthouse represents a significant public investment in a structure built not simply for utilitarian purposes, but also as a monument associated with the historical importance of county organization and development. Fourth courthouse in Delaware County. Manchester became county seat in 1880.

See Continuation Sheet

**22. Sources** (for primary and secondary sources, give complete facts of publication: author, title, place of publication, date, etc.):

- Andreas, A.T. Illustrated Historical Atlas of Iowa. Chicago: Andreas Atlas Co., 1875.
- Pratt, LeRoy G. The Counties and Courthouses of Iowa. Mason City, Iowa: Klipto Printing and Office Supply Co., 1977.
- Stanek, Edward and Jacqueline. Iowa's Magnificent County Courthouses. Des Moines: Wallace-Homestead Book Co., 1976.

Prepared by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organization DHP

**FOR DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION USE ONLY**

**1. OFFICE INFORMATION SOURCES ON THIS PROPERTY**

- COUNTY RESOURCE FILE
- WINDSHIELD SURVEY
- NATIONAL REGISTER
- GRANTS-IN-AID: \_\_\_\_\_
- DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY

- REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE PROJECT: \_\_\_\_\_
- OTHER \_\_\_\_\_
- OTHER \_\_\_\_\_
- OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

**2. SUBJECT TRACES**

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_

**3. PHOTO IMAGES**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

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## CONTINUATION SHEET

Item Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

## DELAWARE COUNTY

The first seat of Delaware County government was located at Delhi. By a cooperative effort of Delaware County citizens armed with axes and teams of horses, logs were cut and hauled over a frozen lake to build a two-story cabin measuring 18 x 24 feet. The upper floor was for the jury and the lower floor was designed as a courtroom. Although the building had a lumber floor, it lacked some finishing touches, including a roof. It stood out distinctly as the only building in the county seat for at least two years while the county commissioners labored fruitlessly to raise \$65 to purchase windows, doors, and the long-needed roof.

In order for the jury to make its deliberations, it had to enter the upper-story jury room by means of a ladder outside the building. There was some real concern that the frail floor boards might give way and the jury might re-enter the courtroom without using the ladder. Because the rain and snow often caused the Recorder's ink to run, the commissioners' court was sometimes held in a settler's house.

The county commissioners resolved, in April of 1850, to build a new courthouse, but no contractor applied for the job. Instead, the settlers again had to use their axes to cut and hew timber for the newer structure. These settlers were paid in warrants or Delhi lots valued at \$5 each. By 1853, the new courthouse with the jail in its basement had been completed. This courthouse served the public until the county seat was moved to Manchester.

The present courthouse was built in 1894 for a cost of \$38,000. It was financed by the use of a bridge fund, dog tax, and the sale of swampland. It is made of red pressed brick and trimmed with rough-hewn stone. Approximately 700 citizens of the county made contributions in 1895, to purchase a clock for the tower to keep time for the public.

--from Stanek, Edward, and Jacqueline Stanek,  
Iowa's Magnificent County Courthouses. Des  
Moines: Wallace-Homestead Book Co., 1976.