

1 City, Village or Town: Florence		County: Florence (037)		Surveyor: B. Wyatt P. Lusignan		Date: 8-85		Lake Street 501
Street Address: 501 Lake Street				USGS Quad and UTM Reference: Florence East 16 403150 5085810		Acreage: less than one		
Current Name & Use: Florence County Courthouse & Jail				Current Owner: Florence County Board of Supervisors				
Film Roll No. -		Affix Contact Prints		Current Owner's Address: 501 Lake St. %Robert Anderson, Clerk Florence, WI 54121				
Negative No. -				Legal Description: Lots 9 thru 12, Block 26 & Lots 1 thru 5 and 12 thru 15, Block 29; City of Florence.				
Facade Orient. N								

2 Original Name & Use: Florence County Courthouse & Jail	Source	Previous Owners	Dates	Uses	Source	LOWE RANGE SECTION MAP INDEX
Dates of Construction /Alteration 1889	Source A					
Architect and/or Builder: James E. Clancy	Source A, B C					

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 type="radio"/> Engineering <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 Period of significance: _____	SECTION MAP INDEX
<u>Architectural Description and Significance:</u> A lofty Romanesque Revival design, the Florence County Courthouse is an imposing three-story structure set upon a large open square. To the rear (SW) of the lot is a small, one story jail building. Capped by a broad multi-gabled roof clad in asphalt shingles, the Courthouse rises from an irregularly coursed fieldstone foundation. Dominating the north facade (main elevation) are two shallow projecting bays, which <p style="text-align: right;">(continued)</p> Interior visited? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		
<u>Historical Background and Significance:</u> Built in 1889, the Florence County Courthouse is a classic example of the Romanesque Revival style of architecture and is an imposing visual landmark in Florence County. Although the building might be considered less distinctive architecturally were it located in the southern half of Wisconsin, it is an important landmark building in its locale in Florence County in the far northern <p style="text-align: right;">(continued)</p>		

5 <u>Sources of Information (Reference to Above)</u> A <u>The Florence Mining News, May 18, 1889</u> B <u>Minutes of the County Board of Florence Cty.</u> C <u>The Jewel of Iron County, M. Bernhardt</u> D <u>Heritage of Timber & Iron, Centennial Comm.</u> E <u>Florence Mining News 7/5/1941 11/30/1889; 1/25/1890</u> F <u>Rec'd OCT 3 1985</u>	6 <u>Representation in Previous Surveys</u> <input type="radio"/> HABS <input type="radio"/> LDMK <input checked="" type="radio"/> WIHP <input type="radio"/> NRHP <input type="radio"/> other: _____	MAP INDEX MAP CODE
	7 <u>Condition</u> <input type="radio"/> excellent <input checked="" type="radio"/> good <input type="radio"/> fair <input type="radio"/> poor <input type="radio"/> ruins	
	8 <u>District:</u> _____ <input type="radio"/> pivotal <input type="radio"/> contributing <input type="radio"/> non-contributing	
	9 <u>Opinion of National Register Eligibility</u> date: <u>9/85</u> initials: <u>PRL</u> <input checked="" type="radio"/> eligible <input type="radio"/> not eligible <input type="radio"/> unknown <input type="radio"/> national <input checked="" type="radio"/> state <input checked="" type="radio"/> local	

FLORENCE COUNTY COURTHOUSE & JAIL
Intensive Survey - Continuation Sheet

Architectural Statement (cont.)

flank a low, one-story gabled entrance. The eastern bay stretches upward three stories, terminating in a terra cotta topped gable, marked with a distinctive checkerboard pattern. Below the gable is located a Palladian motif framed by heavy stone trim. A tall, two-story window opening divided by a shingled spandrel and featuring a heavy, rounded arch completes the detailing. The western bay, housing an interior stairway, features narrow slit windows and heavy stone trim. A tower above the third floor level, which originally rose to a height of 95' and gave visitors their first glimpse of Florence, was removed in 1941 due to much needed repairs.

The commanding east and west elevations of the building each feature a towering, three-story (gabled) projection, which dominates the wall surface. Identical in size and detailing, the two bays feature rusticated stone belt courses; rounded arch window openings; and distinctive terra cotta trim at the roof parapets and the second floor level. Decorative panels of shingles are also visible between the first and second floor windows and in the gable peak. Framing the window openings are tall engaged pilasters marked with incised panels and diagonally set bricks.

The general detailing of the building provides a rather strong vertical emphasis to an otherwise heavy and massive building. Small corner turrets and a shingle-clad, clipped gable to the rear complete the building's playful decorative detailing.

The interior spaces of the Courthouse building have been remarkably well maintained and contain handsome wood trim, an elaborate wood staircase and other fine appointments. On the second floor, preserved in much its original condition, is the main court chamber, containing many of the original furnishings.

Alterations: In 1963 a small annex structure was added to the rear of the main building. Of cream brick construction and capped by a low gabled roof, the annex is a compatible addition and does not detract greatly from the main structure. Exterior renovations have over the years enclosed a number of window openings with brick infill. Other units, unfortunately, have been replaced with glass block panels. The overall effect of the building however, is still one of imposing scale on a grand level in Florence.

Florence County Jail:

The jail, located slightly to the southwest of the Courthouse, was designed by the same architect as the main building - James E. Clancy - and was completed in 1889. The small, Romanesque influenced structure is 24 x 30 feet in size and one story tall. It features deep set windows with enclosing steel security bars; several ornamental towers of varying height; an arched entryway; a high pitched, hip roof with metal shingles and decorative edging;

FLORENCE COUNTY COURTHOUSE & JAIL
Intensive Survey - Continuation sheet 2

Architectural Statement (cont.)

and decorative brick corbeling.

The interior of the jail remains as it did from the very beginning. It features a single cell for females and two cells for males, all with workable locks. The Diebold Safe and Lock Co. of Canton Ohio provided the lockups for a cost of \$2,460 in 1889. Records appear to be sketchy as to when the tiny facility was last used, but interviews with local residents have related that the extremely primitive facility ceased operation around the mid-1930s.

The old Florence County jail is historically significant as one of the oldest and best preserved penal facilities from the late 19th century history of the state. The unaltered facility reflects an era when prison conditions were rarely more than dark and dank cells, representing a rare remnant of civil authority and criminal justice in the far northern reaches of Florence County.

Statement of historical background and significance (cont,)

reaches of Wisconsin. There it represents an impressive public building designed by a local architect of enviable talent in the up to date Romanesque style.

The Florence County Courthouse & Jail are considered architecturally significant at the local level in an area where little that is comparable can be found. The jail facility in itself represents a highly significant reflection of early criminal/penal justice system in isolated northern Wisconsin. (The jail facility should be recognized as being of statewide significance)

Settlement in Florence County in northeastern Wisconsin, adjacent to the Michigan border, did not begin until the mid 1870s. The earliest development in the region was largely dependent upon the abundance of timber and high-grade iron ore to be found in the area. Political and economic power quickly centered at Florence, where the majority of the mining operations were based.

The historical development of the community of Florence began in 1873, when H.D. Fisher, a mineral prospector from Menasha, discovered iron ore in the region. Fisher's discovery was to become known as the Florence Mine, named in honor of the wife of Dr. H.P. Hulst, an early mining expert from nearby Iron Mountain, Michigan. Mrs. Hulst's name was then applied to the town which Fisher laid out in 1880.

By September of 1880, the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad had been extended to Florence to service the numerous mining operations which had established in the region. The arrival of the rail line meant an era of renewed growth and development for the small community. At that time, the settlement of Florence formed a part of Marinette and Oconto counties. It was through the efforts of Fisher in 1882 that a new county seat was created. "It was inconvenient in land matters and payment of taxes to travel 80 miles to Marinette." After much debate, legislative action succeeded in creating

FLORENCE COUNTY COURTHOUSE & JAIL
Intensive Survey - Continuation sheet 3

Historical background (cont.)

the County of Florence with the Town of Florence serving as the county seat.

Prior to the erection of the Courthouse and Jail in 1889, the County Board of Commissioners held court in Juneau Hall. Records show that county officials began planning the site in October 1888. Within eight months, architect J.E. Clancy's designs were being formally approved and construction began a month later. James E. Clancy, who maintained an office in Green Bay, was an Antigo, Wisconsin native and enjoyed an "enviable reputation in Northern Wisconsin." Among his many commissions he was responsible for the design of both the Iron and Dickinson County Courthouses in neighboring Michigan. (Listed in NRHP). Clancy superintended the work on the Courthouse until it was turned over to the county in January 1890 by contractors, Wickert and Weber of Menasha, Wisconsin.

The building that Clancy designed for Florence County is characteristic of the lofty Romanesque style period with arched doorways, high windows, high-pitched roof and round turrets. Many of his designs featured a strong visual massiveness, yet were straightforward in appearance. The total amount borrowed from the State for the construction of the buildings was \$16,000. An additional \$5,000 had already been raised locally, making the total building fund approximately \$21,000.

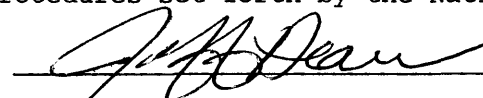
Over the years, the Courthouse has served the community as a meeting place for many organizations. It has also served as a place of education within the community. When the Florence High School was destroyed by fire in March of 1929, the Courtroom and the third floor of the Courthouse building were put to use as temporary quarters for the school program and served as such for a number of years.

From its beginning in 1889 to the present, the Courthouse has served the County of Florence well. Throughout these years the building has been utilized for the purpose to which it was intended, that of housing county offices and records. Changes in its exterior and interior appearances have primarily been made to keep the building functional.

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.

SHPO signature



Title

DIRECTOR OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION Date 10/22/85.

Lake Street

sidewalk

①

Alley

Court
House

②

⑦

⑥

④

Jail

parking lot

Alley

Spring Street

Florence County Courthouse & Jail
501 Lake Street
Florence, WI 54121

Courthouse: Block 26: Lots 9-11
Block 29: Lots 1-5
Jail: Block 29: Lots 12-15

①-⑦ views of buildings

