

PH 0508756

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

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RECEIVED NOV 7 1977
DATE ENTERED APR 19 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
Lincoln County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
1110 E. Main Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Merrill

VICINITY OF

Seventh

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Wisconsin

55

Lincoln

069

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Lincoln County

STREET & NUMBER
110 East Main Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Merrill

VICINITY OF

Wisconsin 54452

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Lincoln County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
1110 East Main Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Merrill

Wisconsin 54452

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1977

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Madison

Wisconsin 53706

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The nominated property includes the Lincoln County Courthouse proper and its courthouse square. The square comprises a complete block in the City of Merrill bounded by East Main, First and Court streets and Center Avenue. The main facade of the building faces approximately 162°. The courthouse square was acquired in 1899 and the building was constructed in 1902 and 1903.

The courthouse is a two-and-one-half story building with a mansard roof and 156-foot-high six-story central square clock tower. Its base is native Wisconsin brownstone; its first story is light-brown brick; and its second story and tower are salmon-colored brick. A mansard roof masks an interior octagonal dome and skylight. Pilasters with Ionic capitals separate arched windows on the second story of the main (south) facade, and ornate brackets support eaves above. Alternating semi-circular and triangular pediments cover third-level dormer windows. In general, second-story window openings are arched, and other levels have flat lintels. The tower has a silver-painted, eight-sided dome over four semi-circular arches framing four clock faces facing the cardinal points. A small arcade is located beneath each clock face. A one-ton, 48-inch bell tolls the time.

The interior is conventional for an early-twentieth-century courthouse of modest size. A central three-story light well is surrounded by offices and courtroom. The elaborate octagonal dome and skylight looms over this central space supported on an octagonal arcade. Natural-wood fluted Ionic columns support beams in the central stairway, which has cast iron railings and stairs. The floor under the dome has an elaborate floral pattern in the tiles. Unusual for such buildings is the mosaic panel to the right inside the main entrance that names the building committee, the architects, the contractor and the date of construction.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" 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 1902¹

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Van Ryn & De Gelleke²
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The courthouse is eligible for entry on the National Register in that it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period of construction, and in that it has served as the seat of county government, and therefore civic identity, for three-quarters of a century. While its governmental significance is local, its architectural importance merits nomination at the state level.

Architecture.

The Lincoln County Courthouse is one of the most imposing and handsome small courthouses in Wisconsin and is the most striking building in Lincoln County. Its monumental tower is visible for miles as one approaches Merrill. The building was designed by the prolific Milwaukee firm of Van Ryn and De Gelleke, which was responsible for numerous institutional buildings in small cities throughout Wisconsin. Stylistically, it belongs to the body of eclectic architecture popular in the first decades of the twentieth century showing influences of Beaux-Arts Classicism. In color, however, it breaks out of the usual mold resulting from Chicago's "White City" of 1893 and employs warm, earth-tone brick and native northern Wisconsin brownstone.

Government.

This building is the second courthouse built for Lincoln County, but the only one built on this site. The first was built in 1876 and was quickly outmoded. In 1899 the county board resolved to build a new courthouse and acquired the present site. An original contract called for a 1902 completion, but nationwide construction strikes delayed the project into 1903. In 1911 a new county jail was built across First Street to the north, behind the courthouse.

¹Mosaic panel inside main entrance; Jones, et al, History of Lincoln...

²Mosaic panel; original architectural drawings

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Original architectural plans are on file at the Milwaukee Public Library.

Jones, George O., and Norman S. McVean, et al. History of Lincoln, Oneida and Vilas Counties, Wisconsin. Minneapolis: H. C. Cooper, 1924. Page 25 (Cutter clas. F902L6.J77.2)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.66

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 6	2, 8, 9, 1, 4, 0	5, 0, 0, 6, 3, 7, 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nomination includes the courthouse and its setting, the courthouse square. This square is bounded by East Main Street on the south, First Street and Highway 64 on the north, Center Avenue on the east and Court Street on the west.

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

Jeff Dean, State Preservation Planner

ORGANIZATION

Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society

DATE

May 17, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

816 State Street

TELEPHONE

608/262-9504

CITY OR TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

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

Richard A. Erney

TITLE

Richard A. Erney, Acting Director
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

7/30/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. H. ...

DATE

4/19/78

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Walter ...

DATE

4-13-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER