

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCERS use only

received MAR 11 1981

date entered APR 19 1981

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Boone County Courthouse

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number State Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Madison \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district Third

state West Virginia code 54 county Boone code 005

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Boone County Commission

street & number Boone County Courthouse

city, town Madison \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state West Virginia

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Boone County Courthouse

street & number State Street

city, town Madison \_\_\_\_\_ state West Virginia

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title \_\_\_\_\_ has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

# 7. Description

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Boone County Courthouse (1921) at Madison, West Virginia, is a 3-story, gray limestone rectangle of Neo Classical Revival design. Stylistic references to Beaux-Arts Classicism appear in the impressive building, notably in the small, open domed belvedere above the central mass. The absence of exterior alterations has allowed the landmark to assume the important historical role as the prime example of early 20th century classicism in southwestern West Virginia (counties of Boone, Logan, McDowell, Mingo, Wayne).

All hallmarks of 20th century classicism present themselves in the Boone County Courthouse. Generally smooth, plain wall surfaces, monumental porticos, grand flights of steps, grill-work, and arched first floor window openings are elements which harmonize in the symmetrical composition.

A tetrastyle, 2-story portico with triangular pediment dominates the entrance elevation of the courthouse. Another tetrastyle portico of nearly identical design commands the side or south entrance, it too above a monumental flight of steps. The north (side) elevation is similarly tetrastyle in design, but it is a pavilion whose columns are engaged, unlike those of the porticos which are freestanding. Of especially impressive character, the bays of the pavilion are blind with the exception of the center unit which is pierced with a lower arched window and an upper opening screened with metal grilles.

Shafts of the columns of the front and south porticos are comprised of three smooth drums and are crowned with large deeply carved Corinthian capitals. Corresponding pilasters define the bays of the walls. Complementing the Corinthian order is a richly appointed dentiled and modillioned cornice. The tympana of the pediments are empty.

Arched mullions of the first floor windows are framed by the arched openings which were designed with extrados moldings and keystones. Second floor windows are nearly square, casement types with architrave trim and lugsills. Windows of the third floor are square and occupy the attic or garret level above the building's main cornice. The first and second floor windows occupying the shallow setback at the northwestern corner are screened with ornate metal grilles.

Crowning the courthouse is a domed, open, Renaissance-style belvedere. The eight arched openings are framed with colonettes decorated with urns at the arch bases. The bell of the dome is divided into eight segments, each centered with a circular raised panel. The copper surface of the dome was gilded in the summer of 1977.

The Courtroom of the second floor is a major space featuring a rear two-level public seating area and a corresponding balcony-level space above the bench. Hardwood, darkly stained, is found in the shouldered trim of the transomed, entrance double doors, and on the piers carrying the upper public seating area. The fluted piers feature a hardwood frieze embellished with triglyphs. Providing natural light for the courtroom is a large skylight (translucent glass) occupying the center-most of nine large ceiling panels.

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Aside from the usual alterations comprising lighting changes and drop ceilings in minor office spaces of the first floor, the major upper chamber and spaces are much as they were when designed. The installment of an elevator shaft off the main entrance is perhaps the most glaring interior alteration.

In 1977, a \$195,000 renovation plan ordered the exterior stone surfaces cleaned (sandblasted). The dome of the blevedere was gold-leafed.

The Boone County Courthouse commands a hillside site on a small square above State Street. It is encircled by four city streets. The small front lawn contains a white marble statue, a First World War memorial (1938). The figure is a dough boy and its markings are: "E.M. Viquesney, sculptor," "Spencer, Ind.", "copyrighted 1922".

# 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates**      1921                      **Builder/Architect**      H. Rus Warne, architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Boone County Courthouse at Madison is a significant architectural landmark of the Neo Classical Revival in southwestern West Virginia. Among the important coal producing counties of Boone, Logan, McDowell, Mingo, and Wayne, no major building better exemplifies the character of early 20th century classicism. The Boone County Courthouse is also significant as an important work of architect H. Rus Warne (1872-1954), a pioneer leader and organizer among early West Virginia professionals in the field of architecture.

Founded in 1847 from parts of Kanawha, Cabell, and Logan Counties, and named for Daniel Boone, the noted frontiersman who resided for a time in the 1790's in Kanawha County, Boone County's formative events are linked to, among others, one St. Clair Ballard. Ballard's mother was rescued from the Indians by Boone, and it was this event which influenced Ballard to select Boone's name for the new county. The present courthouse is the second at the county seat of Madison, a community incorporated in 1906 at the junction of Pond Fork and Spruce Fork which forms the Little Coal River.

Requirements of the County Court by 1913 were such that the cramped quarters of the old brick courthouse were no longer suitable for county government. By 1917 plans for a spacious building were submitted by a noted West Virginia architect, H. Rus Warne of Charleston, and approved. Construction problems developed, however, and the Indiana limestone edifice was not ready for use until 1921. Delays, dissension, financial problems, etc. beset the project and very uneasy relations between several contracting agencies and the county court caused anxious moments for the architect. Warne complained bitterly to the court in March 1919 that the contractor was not furnishing necessary materials or directing sufficiently skilled workmanship to the undertaking. The result of this difficulty placed the project directly in the hands of the county court, a wise move allowing for the successful completion of the building.

The dignified, simple, but monumental air of the Boone County Courthouse provided the people with the kind of public building that would instill pride and reflect well on institutions of the state. Neo Classicism, personified in the great works of such practitioners of the style as Cass Gilbert, hoped to convey a sense of power and majesty of the state as represented in the great public architecture of classical antiquity. Warne would be amused and surely gratified with the 1977 words of a Boone County public official who made the following statements: "Many times the progress of the county and its people is determined by their public buildings." "There is not another county building like it in the state. The only public building that looks better than ours is the State Capitol in Charleston. As a citizen I look at the building and I see Boone County and its people." (Haye, Rick. Coal Valley News. p. 3c.)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Donnelly, Shirley. "Why Boone County is Named for Daniel," Beckley Post-Herald. Nov. 9, 1959.  
 Haye, Rick. "Problems Developed in Courthouse Construction," "Coal Valley News." (Madison). Feb. 23, 1978.

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED  
 UTM NOT VERIFIED

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 1/2 acre

Quadrangle name Madison, WV

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

1	7	4	2	8	1	6	0	4	2	1	3	3	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

On a square bounded by State St., C Ave., Court St., and B Ave.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rodney S. Collins, Architectural Historian  
 organization Department of Culture & History date December 21, 1980  
 street & number Capitol Complex telephone 304-348-0240  
 city or town Charleston state West Virginia

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Clarence Illers*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date February 26, 1981

<b>For HCRS use only</b>	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u><i>Delores Byers</i></u>	Entered in the National Register date <u>4/9/81</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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H. Rus Warne produced plans for many prominent buildings in West Virginia during the half century of his active career. His works are found in all sections but the Northern and Eastern panhandles. Warne was a leader in the organization of a state board of architects and formation of a West Virginia chapter of the A.I.A. His several prominent partnerships employed many of West Virginia's later successful professionals. From the turn-of-the-century, until the mid-1940's, Warne was only one of several architects whose biographies were consistently published in various state and local directories. A student of the Beaux Arts tradition, Warne studied in a Paris atelier before the turn-of-the-century, and also spent some time in Rome. Interestingly, Warne always remembered the Boone County Courthouse for it was mentioned in his biographical sketches and it was one of only several of the several hundred buildings he designed or co-designed, that was specifically mentioned in his obituary.