

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

**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 Manitowoc County Court House

and/or common Same

**2. Location**

street & number 8th Street at Washington Street not for publication

city, town Manitowoc vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state Wisconsin code 055 county Manitowoc code 071

**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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered  | <input checked="" 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 County of Manitowoc, Miss June E. Fetzer, County Clerk

street & number P. O. Box 765

city, town Manitowoc vicinity of state Wisconsin 54220

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds - Manitowoc County Court House

street & number 8th Street at Washington Street

city, town Manitowoc state Wisconsin 54220

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Wisconsin Inventory of  
Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1975  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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

The Manitowoc County Court House is a monumental structure in the NeoClassic (Renaissance) Style. Three elevations (north, east, and west) facing three principal streets are similar in design. There has been very little minor alteration since the original construction in 1906.

Three stories, plus a basement more than a half story above grade, the exterior is faced with dressed Indiana limestone and the foundation with red sandstone. The first story and foundation are ornamented with strong horizontal rustication. The feature of the three principal elevations is a projecting two story colonade of round Ionic columns extending through the second and third story and capped with a classical cornice with dentils and a stone parapet.

The central roof feature is a copper-covered high dome with a small open lantern above, supported by a square drum with three "Georgian" windows per face.

Architectural elements in general are Renaissance in character (rusticated porticos beneath projecting balconies, regularly-spaced rectangular windows); smaller decorative details (cartouches, finials, sculpted consoles) are Beaux-Arts-inspired.

The plan of the interior is basically square with a large central square open lobby surrounded by balcony-corridors at second and third floor levels, and open full height to the central cupola. The central lobby at first floor level has a raised court four steps above the surrounding corridor and offices. The outstanding feature in this central lobby is a monumental cast iron stairway with ornamental cast iron balustrade. The interior lobby is ornamented with cast plaster columns and pilaster capitals, ceiling beams and massive arches at the third floor balcony level, decorated with colored stencil design.

Interior marble wainscot, tile floors and oak woodwork are in good condition of preservation and the building serves as an excellent example of monumental public building architecture of its time.

# 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/<br>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              |   |  |

|   |                          |  |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Specific dates</b> 1906 <sup>1</sup>             | <b>Builder/Architect</b> | Architect - C. H. Tegen<br>Manitowoc, Wisconsin <sup>2</sup>                     |
| <b>Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)</b> |                          | Builder: George Rickman & Sons Company<br>Kalamazoo, Michigan<br>Cost: \$159,200 |

The Manitowoc County Court House is a prime example of civic NeoClassical architecture of the early twentieth century, whose traditional Renaissance design was alloyed with elements of more novel Beaux Arts Style. Situated on the same site as the first county courthouse constructed in Manitowoc in 1861, the building is inextricably linked with the history of government in the lakeshore city.

## Architecture

With its NeoClassical porticos, rusticated lower story, and center dome, the Manitowoc County Court House is readily associated with other county courthouses and civic buildings of the period. In addition to its link with traditional architectural form, the Renaissance-derived design is part of the more exceptional Beaux Arts movement which produced some of the most imposing buildings near the turn of the century. The subtly innovative work, with its Beaux Arts pavilion-like drum and dome and formal sculptural enrichments, was the creation of locally-prominent architect Christ H. Tegen.

Tegen, who immigrated to the United States in 1883, was educated at the Polytechnic School in Hamburg, his native city. The works of the designer of "many of the largest and most beautiful buildings in Manitowoc" include the Dempsey Block (a white tile NeoClassical commercial building) in Manitowoc, and the Oneida County Courthouse in 1908, whose Renaissance-Beaux Arts exterior also encloses a multi-story light court open to the dome.

## Politics/Government

Manitowoc City and County, located on Lake Michigan near Fort Howard, Green Bay, and on the overland route from Green Bay to Milwaukee, was settled early in Wisconsin history. By 1836 a county seat was established at Manitowoc Rapids, and in 1838 a county government was organized. The first building, a county house, was erected in the summer of 1840. It was 24' x 30', one story frame construction and cost \$650.00. It was destroyed by fire in 1852. In 1853 the county seat was changed from Manitowoc Rapids to the Village of Manitowoc and county buildings were erected there with completion in 1857. In 1861, five city lots were purchased for a new county court house, and an adjoining two lots were added in 1875.<sup>4</sup> The court house erected on this property served until replaced in 1906 by the present court house building. Additional property has been added recently to provide for parking.

The present court house continues to serve as the principal place of county government. Few counties in Wisconsin can boast of a court house building of monumental design dating back to the opening decade of this century, geographically associated with the simplest ancestor of more than one hundred years earlier. Situated on a square block on a main street corner in the city, the building has been well maintained and preserved as an outstanding example of public monumental classic architecture. The landmark will certainly serve as a center of county government and legal justice for many years to come.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

John Nagle's History of Manitowoc County, Wisconsin - 1878, Monograph 22, 1974 Series published by Manitowoc County Historical Society.  
Proceedings of Manitowoc County Board as recorded in Office of the County Clerk, Manitowoc, County, Wisconsin.

# 10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 1.45  
 Quadrangle name Manitowoc, Wis.

ACREEAGE NOT VERIFIED  
 Quadrangle scale 1:100,000

### UMT References

|   |           |               |                |   |      |         |          |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | <u>16</u> | <u>447310</u> | <u>4881660</u> | B |      |         |          |
|   | Zone      | Easting       | Northing       |   | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| C |           |               |                | D |      |         |          |
| E |           |               |                | F |      |         |          |
| G |           |               |                | H |      |         |          |

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12 in block No. 273 according to recorded plat of City of Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

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

|       |                              |      |        |      |
|-------|------------------------------|------|--------|------|
| state | No overlapping of boundaries | code | county | code |
| state |                              | code | county | code |

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Frederick C. Steinhaus - Architect

organization The Stubenrauch Associates, date April 1980  
Architecture Engineering Planning

street & number 708 Erie Avenue, P.O. Box 975 telephone 414/458-3526

city or town Sheboygan, Wisconsin 53081 state Wisconsin

# 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 Richard M. Kerney

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. date 3/14/81

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| For HCRS use only  |                     |
| I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register |                     |
| <u>Thomas M. Dwyer</u>   | date <u>4/16/81</u> |
| Keeper of the National Register  |                     |
| Attest: <u>Linda Hunt McClelland</u>                                     | date <u>4-14-81</u> |
| Chief of Registration  |                     |

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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

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SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Inscription stone on building.

<sup>2</sup>Manitowoc County Courthouse Records.

<sup>3</sup>Louis Falge, Ed., History of Manitowoc County, 1912, p. 98.

<sup>4</sup>John Nagle, History of Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, 1878.