

**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 Henry County Courthouse

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Courthouse Square _____ not for publication

city, town New Castle _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 10th

state Indiana _____ code 018 _____ county Henry _____ code 065

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

4. Owner of Property

name Henry County Commissioners

street & number Henry County Courthouse

city, town New Castle _____ vicinity of _____ state Indiana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, Henry County Commissioners

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town New Castle, _____ state Indiana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A _____ has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes no

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" 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 Henry County Courthouse occupies a prominent spot in downtown New Castle, and is visible from a great distance. It nearly fills the central square of the downtown, with relatively small surrounding grounds.

The original, eastern section of the building, completed in 1869, is a two-story composite of French Second Empire, Italianate, and Renaissance Revival elements. It measures, not including the tower, 66 feet wide and 82 feet long. The 1905 addition adds another 66.6 feet to the length, but duplicates the proportions of the rest of the building. The walls are of red brick, laid in common bond in the original building and running bond in the addition, with limestone trim.

The main facade is at the east end of the building and features a large, central square tower with a mansard roof. The tower extends a story and a half above the rest of the building. The base of the tower is of dressed limestone, with a large curved base molding resting on the water table.

The brick surface of the tower is broken by stone string courses at four levels, and the corners of the tower have stone quoins. The tower houses the main entrance into the building, which is approached by a stone stair, with rails for the stair formed by massive scrolls of stone ending in piers with decorated balls.

Entrance to the building is through an arched opening in the tower. The arch is supported by engaged stone columns, and is composed of dressed stone voussoirs with a plain archivolt. Above the main entrance is a stone string course, upon which rests a decorated panel and corbeled supports for a two-story arch. This arch has quoin-like columns and a console keystone. Within the arch is a niche, with a statue of Blind Justice resting on a corbelled platform. Similar arches on the two sides of the tower have windows.

A second string course, on a level with the roof of the main building, marks the beginning of the third tower level. Another string course is located about three feet above, and forms the base for another arch similar to the one below. In this arch is a stone tablet giving the date of construction, and the names of the commissioners, architect, and superintendent. Similar openings on the sides of the tower have windows.

Above this is the fourth string course, which serves as a base for a window ensemble made up of a round window in the center, and smaller rectangular windows on either side. The windows are framed by short pilasters, and keystoned heads. This ensemble is repeated on all four sides of the tower. Above the round windows is a heavy bracketed cornice with a rounded arch over the window. Above the cornice is the slate mansard roof, with round clock faces in each of its four sides. The roof is finished off, finally, by a bracketed curb and balustrade.

The rest of the building, west of the tower, has an above-grade basement. The site slopes down to the west, with the tower being on the highest point, so that more of the limestone foundation is visible at the west end than at the east. The lower half of the foundation is rock-faced, and the upper half dressed limestone. Most openings in the foundation story are round-arched, with modern combination sash units (fixed upper sash, bottom sash opening to the inside).

The first floor of the courthouse is of brick, with round-arched openings outlined by

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stone quoins and stepped voussoirs. Quoins also appear at the building's corners, and at the edges of slightly projecting bays that are in line with gables on the roof. Three more entrances appear at this level, one on each side. On the north and south sides, the entrances are located in the third bay from the east end, in the oldest section of the building. These entrances are identical to the main one, except that the stone stair rails are less grand. At the west end, the entrance is again like the main entrance, but the stair rail is of plain dressed limestone blocks.

A stone string course separates the first from the upper stories. Resting on the string course are spandrel-like panels below each window opening, capped by projecting sills. There are six bays on the north side at this level, seven on the south side, five at the west end, and one on either side of the tower on the east end. In the older, two-story section of the building, the tall windows have modern sash, with two fixed upper lights, and a small lower light that opens outward. The newer section of the building has three stories, although the windows are at first glance identical to those of the older section, making it appear that there are only two stories. The floor level of the third story is marked only by a stone spandrel beam. The surrounds of most of these windows are a simple stone molding, with a low triangular-arched head. Exceptions to this window treatment appear over the two side entrances, where a Palladian fenestration is used. Corner quoins do not appear on the upper story level, except at the edges of the slightly projecting bays below the roof gables.

The roof of the main building is a low, decked hip roof, that is interrupted by two pedimented gables on each side, and one on the west end. A bracketed cornice follows the roofline around the building, straight and continuous, except for a curve at each of the Palladian windows. This bracketed cornice also appears on each of the five pediments.

Inside, marble wainscoting is found on the walls and black and white marble diamonds are used in the floors. The different government offices housed on this floor have been altered by lowering ceilings and by installing modern windows, fluorescent lighting, and carpet. What appear to be the original metal decorative security doors and shutters (see photograph Number 11) have been removed from almost all of the doorways and windows on this floor, although the hinges remain. The wooden doors with a transom (see photograph Number 12), which open into the offices of the County Commissioners, Clerk, and Auditor, have been retained. A small, recessed staircase runs up the center of the north side of the central hall, but the principle staircase is located at the east end of this hallway. This staircase is in the center of the hallway, utilizing almost all of the space (see photograph Number 8), and its foot is only a few feet from the eastern entrance. Constructed entirely of metal, it is highly decorative (see photographs number 8 and 9), using a leaf motif.

At the head of the staircase on the second floor is the entrance to the courtroom, which occupies over half of this floor. Like the offices on the first floor, it has been modified by the lowering of the ceiling and the installation of fluorescent lights and carpet. However, the wooden wainscoting remains, and the original judge's dais is still intact. Its Corinthian columns are decorated with acanthus leaves, which sit atop fluted shafts. These columns support an entablature of dentils and modillions and flank a small alcove. There are a few other small offices on the east end of the second floor, all of which have been modernized. The third floor the Courthouse, in the newer section, houses the law library and

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and the judge's office. The library does not appear to have been modified, and the plain original wooden flooring and plain woodwork remain. But the judge's office has been altered by the installation of carpeting and modern lighting fixtures.

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 checked="" 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 1866–1869 **Builder/Architect** Architect: Isaac Hodgson

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Henry County Courthouse is significant because it has served as the seat of government for Henry County since its completion in 1869. It also is significant as the largest and most architecturally outstanding building in New Castle's central business district. Lastly, it is significant because it represents the work of a prominent Indiana architect who designed several public buildings in Indiana.

Issac Hodgson, an Irish immigrant, designed the Henry County Courthouse. Born in Belfast, Ireland, in 1826, he learned his profession under the English architect, Sir Charles Lanyon. Hodgson came to the United States in 1848 and had established his practice in Indianapolis by 1855. During the ensuing years he designed a number of important buildings, including courthouses for Bartholomew, Jennings, Marion, and Morgan Counties, and has been credited with some of the buildings now part of Arsenal Technical High School in Indianapolis. Both Arsenal High School and the Bartholomew County Courthouse are on the National Register.

The Courthouse, which dominates New Castle's town square by its size and the quality of its architectural design, has been well maintained over the years.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. "Our Town" by Anton Scherrer. The Indianapolis Times. April 29, 1939, pg. 9
2. History of Henry County by Eldwood Pleas. New Castle: Pleas Brothers. 1871.
3. Early Architects and Builders of Indiana by Lee Burns. Indpls: IN. Historical Society, 1935

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approximately one and a quarter acres. ~~UTM NOT VERIFIED~~ ~~ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED~~ *9/12/83*

Quadrangle name New Castle East, Indiana

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>16</u>	<u>6392010</u>	<u>4142111510</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4, Block Number 12 in the original plat of the City of New Castle, Henry County, Indiana, as shown by the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 3A at page 59 of the records of the Recorder's Office of Henry County, Indiana

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 Debra Beetem, Senior Planner

organization Region 6 Planning & Development Commission date October, 1979

street & number 207 North Talley Avenue telephone 317/285-6252

city or town Muncie, Indiana 47303 state Indiana

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 James M. Rideron

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date February 13, 1981

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Lynn A. Beobe

date 4/2/1981

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Linda West McClelland

date 3-23-81

Chief of Registration