

IOWA SITE INVENTORY

Division of Historic Preservation
Iowa State Historical Department
26 E. Market St., Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Site Number 73-008-003
District Name _____
Map Reference # 73-008-003
Topo Map Neb. City NK 1:250,000

IDENTIFICATION

1. Site Name Page County Courthouse
2. Village/Town/City Clarinda Township _____ County Page
3. Street Address Main Street between 15th and 17th Streets
4. Legal Location OT Courthouse Square
Urban: subdivision block parcel
Rural: township range section subparcel
1/4 section-1/4 section
5. UTM Location: zone 15 easting 328000 northing 4511300; Acreage less than 1 ac
6. Owner(s) Name Page County Board of Supervisors
7. Owner(s) Address Courthouse Clarinda Iowa 51632
(Street address) (City) (State) (Zip)
8. Use: present Courthouse original Courthouse

DESCRIPTION

9. Date of Construction 1885-87 Architect/Builder William Foster, Des Moines, Arch. William Butler, Builder
10. Building Type: single family dwelling multiple family dwelling commercial
 industrial educational other institutional public religious agricultural
11. Exterior Walls: clapboard stone brick board & batten shingles stucco
 other _____
12. Structural System: wood frame with interlocking joints
 wood frame with light members (balloon frame) masonry load-bearing walls
 iron frame steel frame with curtain walls reinforced concrete
 other _____
13. Condition: excellent good fair deteriorated
14. Integrity: original site moved-if so, when? _____
 Notes on alterations, additions (with dates and architect, if known) and any other notable features of building and site:
New metal stair in center of rotunda first floor - ceilings lower and upper portions of windows obscured - aluminum doors - 1½-story addition Northeast corner, original window openings blocked in - clock tower removed after 1922.
15. Related Outbuildings and Property: barn other farm structures
 carriage house garage privy other _____
16. Is the building endangered? no yes-if so, why? _____
17. Surroundings of the building: open land woodland scattered outbuildings
 densely built-up commercial industrial residential other _____
18. Map _____
19. Photo
 Roll _____ Frame _____ View _____

SIGNIFICANCE (Indicate sources of information for all statements)

20. Architectural Significance

- a. Key structure/individually may qualify for the National Register
- b. Contributing structure c. Not eligible/intrusion

This courthouse is an eclectic mix of Gothic Revival and Italianate elements for the most part well-preserved and attractively composed. Note wide lenticular frieze, with rows of corbelling just below bracketted eaves - small medallions on corner pilasters - entrance porches are heavily medieval, with thick columns and rather short capitals. Note variety of windows shapes: rectilinear, triangular, segmental arched and round-arched. The hoods of the latter, however, are shaped to give the illusion, at a distance, of very slightly pointed arches.

21. Historical Significance

Theme(s) Politics/Government

- a. Key structure/individually may qualify for the National Register
- b. Contributing structure c. Not eligible/intrusion

This courthouse is locally significant as the historical focus of county government, and of the political power and prestige derived from the community's status as the county seat. As center of county government, an Iowa town was reasonably assured of economic and population growth, and a prominent role in local social and political life. The county courthouse represents a significant public investment in a structure built not simply for utilitarian purposes, but also as a monument associated with the historical importance of county organization and development.

See Continuation Sheet

22. Sources (for primary and secondary sources, give complete facts of publication: author, title, place of publication, date, etc.):

- Andreas, A.T. Illustrated Historical Atlas of Iowa. Chicago: Andreas Atlas Co., 1875.
- Pratt, LeRoy G. The Counties and Courthouses of Iowa. Mason City, Iowa: Klipto Printing and Office Supply Co., 1977.
- Stanek, Edward and Jacqueline. Iowa's Magnificent County Courthouses. Des Moines: Wallace-Homestead Book Co., 1976.

Prepared by _____ Date January, 1980
 Address _____ Telephone _____
 Organization DHP

FOR DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION USE ONLY

1. OFFICE INFORMATION SOURCES ON THIS PROPERTY	
<input type="checkbox"/> COUNTY RESOURCE FILE	<input type="checkbox"/> REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE PROJECT:
<input type="checkbox"/> WINDSHIELD SURVEY	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> NATIONAL REGISTER	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GRANTS-IN-AID: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____
<input type="checkbox"/> DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____
2. SUBJECT TRACES	3. PHOTO IMAGES <u>86/3-4, 402/3-4</u>
a. _____	_____
b. _____	_____
c. _____	_____
d. _____	_____
e. _____	_____

CONTINUATION SHEET

Item Number(s) _____

PAGE COUNTY

Page County's first business was transacted two miles southeast of Clarinda in 1851. In early 1853, Clarinda was selected as the seat of justice. The county judge erected a building on the north side of the public square, which he used as his office and to sell goods. Unfortunately, this building and all of its contents were reduced to ashes in a fire on January 12, 1858.

Just prior to this destruction of county records, a frame courthouse was erected in 1856 on the southeast corner of the square. It was two stories high and measured about 30 by 40 feet at the base. As the facility became inadequate, churches and schoolhouses had to be used for holding court. Eventually this building was moved and used as a paint shop.

The board of supervisors raised the question of building a new courthouse in 1870. The measure was defeated and the board of supervisors, realizing that a new building was absolutely necessary, raised the issue of a \$25,000 courthouse project in 1873. This proposal also met with defeat and the supervisors took the matter into their own hands. They ordered the erection of a simple building, 44 by 60 feet, on Clarinda's public square. Its total cost was \$7,456.

Since the board's building was not a palatial affair, its adequacy was not to last long. The courthouse issue was again revived in 1882. The proposition was presented to levy a tax to finance the construction of a courthouse, the cost of which would not exceed \$75,000. The foundation was laid in 1885 and the completed structure was accepted by the board on December 19, 1887. The price of the building was \$71,000, but the addition of heating equipment, fixtures, furnishings, and art work brought the total cost to \$86,500. This courthouse today looks as though it were recently constructed. The only major change to its exterior over the years has been the removal of its clock and spire.

--from Stanek, Edward, and Jacqueline Stanek,
Iowa's Magnificent County Courthouses. Des
Moines: Wallace-Homestead Book Co., 1976.