

MAY 29 1981

IOWA SITE INVENTORY

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

JUL - 2 1981 Site Number 4-004-002
District Name _____
Map Reference # 4-004-002
Topo Map Centerville NK 1:250,000

IDENTIFICATION

1. Site Name Appanoose County Courthouse
2. Village/Town/City Centerville Township _____ County Appanoose
3. Street Address Van Buren and N. 12th Street, S.W. Corner
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 510600 northing 4509000; Acreage less than 1 ac
6. Owner(s) Name Appanoose County Board of Supervisors
7. Owner(s) Address _____
(Street address) (City) (State) (Zip)
Centerville Iowa 52544
8. Use: present Courthouse original Courthouse

DESCRIPTION

9. Date of Construction 1903-04 Architect/Builder Smith & Gage/W.M. Peatman
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:
Very well intact
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

A very well preserved courthouse. The style is somewhat eclectic, combining large polygonal bays and having rockfaced stone of the medieval revivals with classical details such as pediments and the entrance portal.

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 Division of Historic Preservation Date January 1980
 Address 26 East Market St., Iowa City, Ia. 52240 Telephone 353-6949
 Organization _____

FOR DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION USE ONLY

1. OFFICE INFORMATION SOURCES ON THIS PROPERTY		REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE PROJECT:	
<input type="checkbox"/> COUNTY RESOURCE FILE		<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> WINDSHIELD SURVEY		<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> NATIONAL REGISTER		<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> GRANTS-IN-AID: _____			
<input type="checkbox"/> DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY			
2. SUBJECT TRACES		3. PHOTO IMAGES <u>396/34-43 & 1-15</u>	
a. _____		<u>398/30-34</u>	<u>161/2,3, & 1 80/3</u>
b. _____		<u>80/2</u>	
c. _____			
d. _____			
e. _____			

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Site Number _____

CONTINUATION SHEET

Item Number(s) _____

APPANOOSE COUNTY

The first courthouse in Appanoose county was really no courthouse at all. Court was held in a small storeroom and the jury deliberated in the blacksmith's shop. The judge's bench was really the store's counter and a barrel was the clerk's table. Sometimes court was held in the blacksmith's shop and here the judge made use of the anvil for his bench and the clerk sat at the bellows. Nevertheless, the court's business was carried on very competently.

The first true courthouse in Centerville was a 24 by 20 foot 1½ story cabin built of logs erected at a total expense of \$160. It was used for only ten years, from 1848 to 1858, at which time it was so dreadfully outgrown that it could no longer be used. Up until the time that the second courthouse was built, the Methodist and Presbyterian churches served as temporary courtrooms.

The second courthouse was a brick structure of two stories and a basement, costing the county \$23,000. This one was utilized until 1891 when it was declared unsafe and condemned.

The third and present courthouse is a handsome structure of stone with a tile roof. Completed in 1904, it "rises majestically in the center of the park, with each of its four faces turned to one of the main thoroughfares of the city". An imposing tower rises from the center of the building, "in which has been placed . . . a clock of fine workmanship which, from its four dials the time of day or night can be seen from a great distance".

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