

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

For NPS use only
received **MAY 18 1983**
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Jasper County Courthouse

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number ~~West~~ Washington Street N/A not for publication

city, town Rensselaer N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Jasper code 073

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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<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 Jasper County Commissioners

street & number Jasper County Courthouse

city, town Rensselaer N/A vicinity of state Indiana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jasper County Courthouse, Recorder's Office

street & number West Washington Street

city, town Rensselaer state Indiana 47978

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 N/A

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Jasper County Courthouse was erected in 1898 at a total cost of \$141,731.94. It is located in the center of the Courthouse Square bounded by Washington, Cullen, Harrison and Van Rensselaer Streets.

The Courthouse Square, itself, is defined by a retaining wall of concrete, about 18" high and a foot wide. There are steps leading from the street to the walks leading to all four entrances to the building.

The building stands on a solid rock foundation, the earth being excavated down to the basic limestone. The building contains 87,101 square feet on each of four floors, a total of 348,404 square feet, exclusive of the basement and the tower. The clock tower is 120' tall.

The building is constructed of rock-faced Bedford limestone, and features a combination of medieval elements. The three-and-one-half story rectangular structure has a complex hipped roof, topped by the three-story bell tower. Entrances on the long (north and south) sides are framed in two-story Tudor arches supported on clusters of columns. Flanking these entrances are three-story round towers. Centered over the entrance is a wall dormer, which is surmounted by the clock tower. The clock tower also has a wall dormer on each face of its pyramidal roof.

On either side of the main entrances and towers are five double-hung windows on each floor, with wall dormers over two bays on each side. At the corners are narrow, windowless turrets.

The smaller entrances on the east and west sides are framed by smaller versions of the Tudor arches and clustered columns found on the north and south sides. The entrance bay, dormer, and flanking towers project from the main face of the building.

The basement has a concrete floor covering 40 percent of the space; the rest is dirt. This was poured in 1981. The stone masonry support walls have arches between rooms.

Each of the first three floors above the basement have terrazzo floors, marble wainscoting and oak woodwork, and the stairs have marble treads. The plaster columns in the stairwell have been decorated to look like marble. The stair rails are of hand-hammered iron with marble rails. The first floor contains Womens' and Men's Restrooms, a storage closet, Surveyor's Office, Probation Office, Veterans Service and Civil Defense Office, Custodian's Office and Closet, Assessor's Office, County Health and Sanitation Office, Clerk for Superior Court, a holding cell, and the law library.

In 1982 an elevator was installed in the building and serves the first three floors.

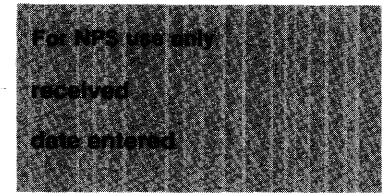
The second floor features include four brass chandeliers with lead blown shades and two newel post lamps to match. The recently decorated walls are highlighted with gold paint and some gold leaf decoration. The entrance to the Auditor's Office has stained glass windows on either side and above the door. This floor contains the Commissioners' room, and the offices of the County Clerk, Recorder, Treasurer, and Auditor. Each of the offices has a fireproof vault.

The third floor is used entirely by the two courts, the 30th Judicial Court on the west and the Jasper Superior Court on the east. It includes not only the courtrooms but the offices, storage and facilities to serve them. Another brass chandelier with lead blown glass shades is in the foyer between the two courtrooms. This floor has recently been remodeled to better serve the two courts. The courtrooms are almost identical with the original oak judicial benches with their hand carved seals of the State of Indiana on the back panel of each bench. The walls are decorated with a plaster leaf swag. There are

100-207-113
EXP. 12/31/84

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plaster columns on either side connected by plaster arches. There is decorative plaster work around the windows. The stained glass panels which surround the courtroom entrances are set in carved wooden frames. The doors, themselves, have fireproof glass. The spectator benches and the rails are new as of 1982.

The unfinished fourth floor is used for storage and as an access to the tower. It has multileveled flooring because of the variety of ceiling levels on the third floor. In the center is the spiral staircase leading to the clock tower.

The clock tower, itself, has three floors; the first has windows, the second contains the clock, and the third the bell.

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 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 1898 **Builder/Architect** Grindle and Weatherhogg, Architects
Statement of Significance ~~(in one paragraph)~~ Heinzmen Brothers, Noblesville, Builders

The Jasper County Courthouse has architectural significance in that it is a fine example of Victorian adaptation of the medieval forms of architecture. This style of architecture echoes the unique style used in English Country houses of this period. Several features demonstrate this, such as the free standing chimneys, the high pitched roof, the gabled dormers, the turrets, and the painted plaster columns in the hallways.

The first architect employed for this building was Alfred Grindle, who later associated himself with Charles R. Weatherhogg, of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Before the building was completed, Mr. Grindle dropped out and Mr. Weatherhogg completed the architectural part of the work. Both Mr. Grindle and Mr. Weatherhogg were greatly influenced by this English style.

This building has continued to serve as the seat of government of Jasper County and seems to be adequate for the needs of the County, not only past and present, but also for the future. The maintenance and careful attention paid to repairs testify to the fact that it will be a part of the government of Jasper County for years to come.

Another significance of equal importance is that the Jasper County Courthouse stands as a symbol of the community and gives continuity to life in the community. It stands as a link with the past. It is the oldest civic building in the county.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Courthouse Records

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property Approximately 2 1/4 acres

Quadrangle name Rensselaer, Indiana

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	4	8	7	3	1	0	4	5	3	1	4	3	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

The Jasper County Courthouse Square is bounded by Washington, Cullen, Harrison and Van Rensselaer Streets

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Beulah Arnott, President

organization Jasper County Historical Society date January, 1983

street & number Augusta Street telephone 219/866-5433

city or town Rensselaer state Indiana 47978

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *James M. Aderson*

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date April 21, 1983

For NPS use only

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

**Entered in the
National Register**

date 6/16/83

John A. Brown
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration