

PH0014107

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Kentucky	
COUNTY: Jefferson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER APR 10 1972	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Jefferson County Courthouse

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Louisville Courthouse

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
527 West Jefferson Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Louisville

STATE: Kentucky CODE: 21 COUNTY: Jefferson CODE: III

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Jefferson County
Jefferson Fiscal Court

STREET AND NUMBER:
527 West Jefferson Street

CITY OR TOWN: Louisville STATE: Kentucky CODE: III

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
527 West Jefferson Street

CITY OR TOWN: Louisville STATE: Kentucky CODE: 21

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Survey Of Historic Sites In Kentucky

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Kentucky Heritage Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
401 Wapping Street

CITY OR TOWN: Frankfort STATE: Kentucky CODE: 21

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Jefferson County Courthouse as designed and built by Gideon Shryock (1802-1880) is considerably larger than the governmental complex the City and County first proposed in 1835 to build jointly. The original plans by the City Architect, Shryock, have been lost. However engravings published in 1844 and 1845 indicate that planned end-porticoes and a cupola were never attempted, and the front (south) Doric portico was reduced from hexastyle to tetrastyle.

The basic mass appears as Shryock envisioned it, approximately 208' (east-west) by 93' (north-south). When the combined City Hall and Courthouse opened in 1842, the ground floor was occupied by the City Police Departments, Jefferson County Sheriff and various court clerks. The first floor, then divided by axis hallways and an open rotunda (51' in diameter) into four quadrants, housed the Mayor and his Court and the Louisville Chancery Court in the west wing and in the east wing, the Jefferson Circuit Court and Jefferson County Court. The second floor (now 4th) was not finished and was left vacant after the Federal Court system and State government declined to use the space.

Albert Fink and Charles Stancliff were employed by the City in 1858 to complete the second floor (4th), to add the front portico and enlarge the stairway from the first to the second floor. In 1867, Joel Hart's statue of Henry Clay was placed on a metal floor enclosing the oculus (27'7" in diameter) at the first floor. The next significant change occurred in 1905, when as a result of a fire which destroyed part of the roof, all wooden items and exposed members were removed or covered with metal frames. Thus the major doorways presently have pleasing, but architecturally incongruous, Georgian style frames. The new structural members support concrete floors except in the rotunda area and part of the volume created under the roof is used for records storage. The rotunda dome is not original, but probably resembles Shryock's or Fink's conception.

Although Fink contemplated finishing the Courthouse after Shryock's design, only the reduced front portico was added. Apparently, Fink attempted to curtail the limestone deterioration which had forced Shryock to select a different quarry by the time he was ready to erect the entablature. The outside appearance was described in 1842 as one of "polished stone." This was probably the result of rubbing the flaking stone with a caustic solution. However when the erosion continued, stucco was applied to a deeply scored surface. This unattractive

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) Designed 1835, Opened 1842; Completed 1858

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although not completed as envisioned by the Kentucky architect Gideon Shryock, the Jefferson County Courthouse is considered his principal work in Louisville. Its massive proportions reflect the importance Louisville was beginning to feel in the late 1830's as a result of its new canal and increased river commerce.

The Courthouse has been the seat of government for Jefferson County since 1842 and it served concurrently as Louisville's City Hall for a period. Significantly, the City and County jointly undertook the structure's construction and the City employed Shryock as its first City Architect. Briefly in 1862, while the security of Frankfort was in doubt, State government occupied the second floor. Most citizens of Jefferson County have had occasion to use this Courthouse over the past 129 years to either record documents, obtain licenses, pay taxes, dispense justice, or more recently to petition for services.

Since the early 1950's, an effort to beautify the Courthouse grounds has been underway. The resulting park-like setting is one of the few open areas in center city and it provides a pleasant environment for two important sculptural works: Ezekiel's statue of Jefferson and Valois' statue of Louis XVI.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Samuel W. Thomas, "The Jefferson County Courthouse: Designed and Built between 1835 and 1842, by the City Architect, Gideon Shryock," Louisville Bar Association Bulletin, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1967), pp. 6-9.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		
NW	0 . .	0 . .	38 ° 15 . 15 .	85 ° 45 . 35 "		
NE	0 . .	0 . .				
SE	0 . .	0 . .				
SW	0 . .	0 . .				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

UTM
16/608540/
4234580

SEE INSTRUCTIONS CD

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Dr. Samuel W. Thomas, Director of Archives and Records

ORGANIZATION: **Jefferson Fiscal Court** DATE: _____

STREET AND NUMBER:
602 Courthouse, 527 West Jefferson Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Louisville** STATE: **Kentucky** CODE: **21**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title *S.W. True*
State Liaison Officer

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Robert M. Tracy
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 4/10/72

ATTEST:

William M. ...
Keeper of The National Register

Date **APR 10 1972**

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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(Number all entries)

#7 Description:

scoring has necessitated periodic restuccoing and has not allowed the use of modern surface hardening agents.

The front portico divides four plastered bays. The ends show indications of the originally planned porticos. In recent years the other entrances have been protected from falling ornamentation and weather by covered doorways. An elevator shaft was added to the north elevation in 1901 to provide service for the Courthouse and a courts annex which was attached by corridors over Court Place to the north.

