

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**DATA SHEET**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 20 1975
DATE ENTERED	JAN 1 1976

**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

Brown County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

100 South Jefferson Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Green Bay

VICINITY OF

8th

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Wisconsin 54301

CODE

55

COUNTY

Brown

CODE

009

**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	<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	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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

County of Brown

STREET & NUMBER

100 South Jefferson Street

CITY, TOWN

Green Bay

VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 54301

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Brown County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

100 South Jefferson Street

CITY, TOWN

Green Bay

STATE

Wisconsin 54301

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Wisconsin's Historic Preservation Plan: Volume II - The Inventory

DATE

1975

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

7 DESCRIPTION

13114 AT&O

CONDITION

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR

- DETERIORATED
- RUINS
- UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

- UNALTERED
- ALTERED

CHECK ONE

- ORIGINAL SITE
- MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

C. E. Bell's Brown County Courthouse (1908-1910) is an impressive Beaux-Arts structure, situated in a relatively small urban environment. Its characteristically Beaux-Arts, cross-axial approach provides a lasting impression of this finely proportioned and balanced design. The very lack of unnecessary details emphasizes its geometrically ordered elevations. It is three-stories high, plus an attic storey and the dome. All four entrances utilize the Ionic order. The main entrance, balanced by coupled Ionic columns, projects more and is made more imposing by the slightly taller pediment. The composition adheres to the three-bay system, showing great concern with symmetry, balance and clarity. Rustication varies, and it provides surface contrasts. Fenestration is very symmetrical. The dome is square at the base, with four massive corner piers, and Ionic columns, both single and coupled from where the cupola rises, surmounted by the lantern.

Standing on the northeast corner of the courthouse grounds, Sidney Bedore's sculpture, "Spirit of the Northwest," showing the early Jesuit missionary Father Claude Allouez, the French explorer-trader Nicolas Perrot, and an Indian, complements the classically-oriented building. Franz Rohrbeck, the noted panorama painter of San Francisco and Milwaukee, painted murals in the courthouse showing Jean Nicolet's landing in 1634, Indian battles, Old Fort Howard, and the arrival of Father Claude Allouez in the company of an Indian chief. For the dome, Rohrbeck used allegorical subject matter—Justice, Agriculture, Commerce, and Industry. The Brown County Courthouse has nobility and dignity, and Bell's mastery of Beaux-Arts style shows selectively in motifs and fine proportioning of the mass.

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1908-1910; 1922      ~~BUILDER~~/ARCHITECT      C. E. Bell

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Brown County Courthouse is an excellent example of Beaux-Arts architecture; it shows marked restraint that lends dignity to the design that is achieved by balanced disposition of classical forms. It bears definite resemblances to another of Bell's works, the state capitol of South Dakota.

Sidney Bedore's statue, "Spirit of the Northwest" (c. 1922), nicely summarizes highlights of Brown County's early history. Nicolas Perrot, one of the leading figures during the French régime in Wisconsin, had visited Green Bay in 1671 and secured Indian delegates for the ceremony of annexation of Sault Ste. Marie by which France acquired the western country. Father Claude Allouez was one of the most successful early Jesuit missionaries in Wisconsin between 1665 and 1677. In 1669 he left northern Wisconsin to establish a mission among the Potowatomie in the Green Bay area and founded several missions in the general vicinity of Green Bay and Brown County. A native of Green Bay, Sidney Bedore (1883-19?) attained some note as a sculptor, although he never really achieved fame. He did an excellent sculpture of Theodore Roosevelt at Benton Harbor, Michigan, and a number of smaller pieces, some of which are displayed at the Neville Public Museum in Green Bay. He studied at the Art Institute in Chicago and went to New York to complete his training. When Bedore returned to Chicago, Lorado Taft, who admired his work, installed him at the Taft Midway Studios, where he remained and worked on some of Taft's projects as well as his own sculpture.

Franz Rohrbeck (1852-19?), a German-born artist from Milwaukee, was a graduate of the Berlin Art Academy who had come to America in 1885. He worked as a panoramic painter in San Francisco for a time and later did some painting for the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago before becoming a muralist. He did murals at St. Cloud, Minnesota; Davenport, Iowa; and Calumet, Michigan. Besides painting the murals in the Brown County Courthouse, he did some in the Manitowoc County (Wisconsin) Courthouse and a large mural, "The Spirit and Strength of Wisconsin," in the state capitol at Madison.

The Brown County Courthouse, with its fine Beaux-Arts styling and its artistically significant murals and statuary, is the only public building in Brown County of such architectural and related significance.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4.6

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 6	4, 1, 9, 3, 7, 5	4, 9, 2, 9, 1, 0, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Biruta Erdmann, Preservation Planning Assistant

July 9, 1975

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

816 State Street

TELEPHONE

608/262-2970

CITY OR TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

## 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.

SHPO Signature  
~~FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE~~

*James Morton Smith*

TITLE

Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

10/14/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Acting*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

1/1/76

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12/30/75

*Ronald W. Steinberg*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Brown County Courthouse

"Former Worker in Brick Yard in Green Bay Wins Fame as Sculptor," Green Bay Press-Gazette, December 16, 1922

Hart, Edwin C., "From Lowly Brickyard Worker to National Fame as Sculptor Is Gamut Run by Green Bay Boy," Milwaukee Sentinel, December 31, 1922

Martens, Tom, "County Courthouse Murals Unique," Green Bay Press-Gazette, February 16, 1974

Martin, Deborah Beaumont, History of Brown County, Wisconsin, 1:336 (Chicago, 1913)

"The South Dakota Capitol Building, Pierre, South Dakota, C. E. Best, Architect," The Western Architect, 17(4):40-42 (April 1911)

"Things to See," Badger History, 1(3):6 (December, 1947)

Wittig, Dorothy Straubel, "Lost History," Peoples Forum, Green Bay Press-Gazette, November 5, 1974

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Brown County Courthouse

Donald N. Anderson, Assistant Director, Historic Preservation

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

15 July 1975

816 State Street

608/262-0746

Madison

Wisconsin 53706