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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See Instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 10A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

Name of Property

historic name Audubon County Court House

other names/site number P.W.A. Docket IA 1586-F

2. Location

street & number 318 Leroy Street N/A not for publication

city or town Audubon N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Audubon code 009 zip code 50025

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (see continuation sheet for additional comments).

Rowell J. Sorko July 10, 2003

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

Signature of the Keeper
**Entered in the
National Register**

AUG 28 2003 Date of Action

determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Audubon County Court House
Name of Property

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)
 private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)
 building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
1		sites
	1	structures
	1	objects
2	2	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
PWA County Courthouses of Iowa MPD

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
GOVERNMENT/courthouse

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
GOVERNMENT/courthouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
OTHER/PWA Moderne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/limestone

walls BRICK
STONE

roof ASPHALT

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance

1939 - 1953

Significant Dates

1939

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Keffer & Jones

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Audubon County Auditor's Office

Audubon County Court House
Name of Property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than 5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	[1] [5]	[3] [3] [9] [5] [7] [0]	[4] [6] [2] [0] [4] [0] [0]	2	[] []	[] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] []
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3	[] []	[] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] []	4	[] []	[] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] []
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marlys A. Svendsen, Svendsen Tyler, Inc.
organization for State Historical Society of Iowa date November 2002
street & number N3834 Deep Lake Road telephone 715/469-3300
city or town Sarona state WI zip code 54870

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the complete form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Audubon County, c/o Lisa Fredericksen, Auditor
street & number 318 Leroy Street, Suite 4 telephone 712/563-2584
city or town Audubon state IA zip code 50025

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. Description

Site: The Audubon County Court House (contributing) was built in 1938-1939 on a quarter-block site at the southeast corner of Broadway and Leroy streets in downtown Audubon, Iowa opposite the town square. The courthouse site (contributing) is mostly flat with a slight slope from northwest to southeast. The building is set back from the front sidewalk approximately 40 feet with foundation plantings to either side of the concrete entrance steps. Angled parking spaces line the curb along Leroy Street and an asphalt paved parking area extends along the rear of the building adjacent to the alley. A paved driveway is also located along the south side of the building. A freestanding communications tower (non-contributing) used by the county sheriff's department is located at the southeast corner of the building. An exercise area for county prisoners is surrounded by chain link fencing at the northeast corner of the building. The previous county courthouse stood northwest of the present day courthouse but no historic archeological investigation was made to determine the presence of foundations or other building remains.

The Veteran's Memorial (non-contributing) commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, erected in 1995 is located near the intersection of Broadway and Leroy streets at the northwest corner of the courthouse. The memorial includes several granite obelisks as well as veteran rolls and U.S., Iowa, and military service branch flagpoles (*not* counted as separate non-contributing resources). No large trees are sited on the courthouse property.

Audubon's central business district extends along portions of the town square located opposite the courthouse. The square itself contains the Audubon Public Library and a bronze statue of the town's namesake, John James Audubon. One and two-story masonry commercial buildings surround the west half of the square. Churches and single-family residences are located north and east of the courthouse.

Exterior: The Audubon County Court House is one of ten courthouses built in Iowa during the federal Public Works Administration (PWA) program's operation in the 1930s. It has a rectangular footprint measuring approximately 113 feet by 65 feet with the front oriented toward the southwest. The courthouse is constructed of poured concrete with a brick and stone facing. The foundation is clad in Bedford limestone while the walls are faced in mottled tan and brown-colored brick set in a light gray-colored mortar. Decorative cut stone is also Bedford limestone.

Front elevation: On the front or west elevation, the building's central section is five bays wide with a height of 2½-stories or approximately 38 feet. Two-story wings 10 feet shorter than the central section are located at the northwest and southeast ends of the building. A raised basement or ground floor extends beneath the entire building. The raised foundation's facing stones have deeply recessed cuts along the edges which has the effect of deepening shadow lines and exaggerating the joints. The central section's bays are separated by six fluted stone pilasters that extend from the top of the foundation to the upper edge of the second floor windows. A wide stone band extends above the windows and bears the inscription "Audubon County Court House." Plain brick pilasters

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and narrow stone bands along the upper edges set off the wings.

The concrete entrance steps are centered on the front elevation between solid cut-stone balustrades. The building's original bronze light standards have a simplified Art Deco design with white opaque glass panels and are approximately 5 feet in height. They are set on the lower levels of stone balustrades to either side of the entrance steps and remain operable.

The front entrance surround has a simple cut-stone design with the panel over the transom containing a gilded excised inscription that reads "Equality Before the Law." The metal and plate glass entrance doors are replacements likely installed in ca. 1982 at the same time that new windows were installed throughout the building. The new windows are fabricated of metal with a brown finish with metal infill panels in the top and a 1/1 configuration in the lower two-thirds. The bottom window panels tilt out to open. Because most of the building does not have central air conditioning, window AC units are installed in some of the upper panels. All of the windows have stone sills and lintels of varying dimensions.

Side elevations: On the north and south elevations, the courthouse has seven narrow bays with a height of two stories. Like the front, the wings have raised stone foundations, brick walls, and stone trim for the windows. A continuous stone beltcourse also provides the window lintels for the second floor openings. The principal difference between the north and south elevations is the full exposed foundation level at the south end due to the slope in the site.

Rear elevation: The rear or east elevation is a less formal, more functional version of the front façade. Brick and stone work matches the balance of the building though somewhat more straightforward. A stone surround frames the main entrance in the central section and there is a second service entrance leading to stairwell located in the northeast corner of the building. Window locations in this bay are in line with stairwell landings rather than floor elevations. The openings in the south half of the first floor are part of the cellblock of the county jail and are covered with a grid of metal bands. New windows in the balance of the rear elevation are of a similar design to others replaced in ca. 1982.

Interior Floor Plan: The Audubon County Court House has a central corridor plan similar to those of the other nine PWA Courthouses in Iowa. The front and rear entrances located midway along the west and east façades open into entrance vestibules set between the ground level and the first floor. On the interior, these vestibules are set perpendicular to the central corridor, which runs the full length of the building. Individual county offices outfitted to meet the needs of specific county functions open onto the public corridor. Circulation between floors in the courthouse is via the central staircase located opposite the front entrance vestibule and the secondary staircase located in the northeast corner of the building. An elevator was retrofitted into the plan near the south end of the central corridor. The district courtroom is located on the second floor and the county jail is located on the ground level. Design elements and finishes for the most important spaces in the courthouse are discussed in greater detail below.

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Entrance vestibule: The front entrance vestibule has terrazzo floors, marble wainscot and plastered walls. The original suspended ceiling light fixture as it appeared in Keffer and Jones drawings is still in use. It consists of a circular white glass globe surrounded by three stainless steel disks. This fixture is repeated in the central corridor on the first floor. A second set of double doors (original) lead to a short corridor with a flight of six steps connecting to the main public corridor. A bronze tablet citing the Federal Works Administration (successor to the PWA) as the funding source for the courthouse and giving the construction date of 1939 hangs in the south wall in this area. A similar style commemorative tablet listing the names of the supervisors, county auditor, architect, and various contractors is mounted in the north wall.

Public corridors: The first floor corridor has a two-tone terrazzo floor (light gray and dark gray) and base (dark gray). Gray marble wainscoting approximately 36 inches in height and textured plaster cover the walls. The intersecting walls are cut at a 45-degree angle where the entrance corridor and central staircase join the main corridor. The central sections of the ceiling in the public corridor are clad in the original "Celotex" acoustic tile (12 inch squares) used elsewhere in the building and other Keffer and Jones courthouse designs. A strip of fluorescent lights (non-original) extends down the center of the ceiling in both directions. All doors opening onto the corridor are metal and have their original two-tone (black and silver) sponge-painted finish. Clear glass transoms above the doors retain their original county office signs using Sans Serif lettering. Original glass block sidelights remain at entrances. Openings for a public telephone booth and drinking fountain retain their original metal folding doors and marble surround, respectively.

The ground and second floor corridors are finished in a similar manner as the first floor with a few exceptions. On the second floor, marble-clad square support columns are located at the top of the central staircase. The ground floor has a lower ceiling height with no acoustic tile. Steam pipes and returns are left exposed along the ceiling. The courthouse's original boiler remains in use with the boiler room located in the north corridor of the ground level.

County offices: Each of the offices contains a service counter at which public business is transacted, a public lobby in front of the counter, a staff work area to the rear of the counter, one or more private offices, and a tile-lined vault space for storage of records. In some cases, internal circulation hallways, restrooms, meeting rooms, conference rooms, and storage areas are also included in the county offices. Walls are plaster with oak chair rails. Flooring is a combination of terrazzo in the public areas and original asphalt tile and carpeting (non-original) in the non-public areas.

Central staircase: The central staircase is located opposite the front entrance. The staircase features a left-hand run leading to a wide landing between flights. The steps are made of dark gray terrazzo and have a cast iron balustrade painted black with a geometric pattern. An oak handrail is mounted on the marble wainscoting along the stairwell walls. Oversize windows at the landing providing abundant light for both the first floor and second floor corridors.

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Courtroom: The most important space aesthetically and functionally in the any courthouse is frequently the courtroom. Located on the second floor facing the front of the building (west) this room has a two-story ceiling height that extends into the attic level or third floor. Floors are covered in the original brown and rust-red asphalt tile specified for this space. The walls and ceiling are covered in plaster with alternating wide bands of Celotex panels. The four plaster ceiling sections have stepped edges. An Art Deco design is stenciled in a rust-red tone on the acoustic wall panels. In the 1980s, the tiles were cleaned but not painted as in other areas of the building.

Lighting in the courtroom includes eight circular fixtures similar in design to the vestibule and public corridor lights on the first floor. The white glass and metal fixtures in the courtroom are larger. The courtroom is organized in theater style with the judge's bench at the north end, jury box along the east wall, counsel tables in front of the windows, and audience seating in the south half of the room. American black walnut is the wood species used for all wood elements in the courtroom including paneled finishes for the bar, raised jury box, judge's bench, and witness stand, counsel tables and chairs, jury chairs, and audience pew seating. The simple design of these furnishings includes curved bands along the upper edges of all horizontal edges.

The major alteration to the courtroom space was a reduction in floor size carried out in the late 1970s prior to the elevator installation. The rear (south) wall of the courtroom was foreshortened approximately 12 feet. Previously the courtroom had a double door entrance into the public area. When the elevator was added this opening was reused for the elevator door. Three rows of bench pew seating were removed at this time.

The judge's chambers, law library, jury room, and other related offices are located along the north end of the second floor and are accessed through doors located to either side of the judge's bench.

Floor plan: As originally conceived, the principal county offices for the Audubon County Court House were to be located on the first and second floors with unassigned space reserved for expansion and the future installation of a jail on the ground level. The first floor included offices and an assembly room for the board of supervisors, the auditor, treasurer, clerk, and recorder. The second floor contained the courtroom, judge's chambers, law library, jury room, attorney and witness conference rooms, dormitory rooms for women and men jurors, and county attorney's office. County offices for the engineer and superintendent of schools were also located here. Prior to the letting of bids, construction estimates determined that sufficient funds would be available to install the jail at the time of construction so this work element along with residential quarters for the sheriff was added to the south half of the basement.

During the past several decades in a series of small to medium sized, phased remodelings the original allocation of space in the courthouse has been altered. Changes were based on the obsolescence of certain offices (county school superintendent) and functions (sheriff's residence and dormitory space for jurors). In other instances, the expanded needs of specific offices were

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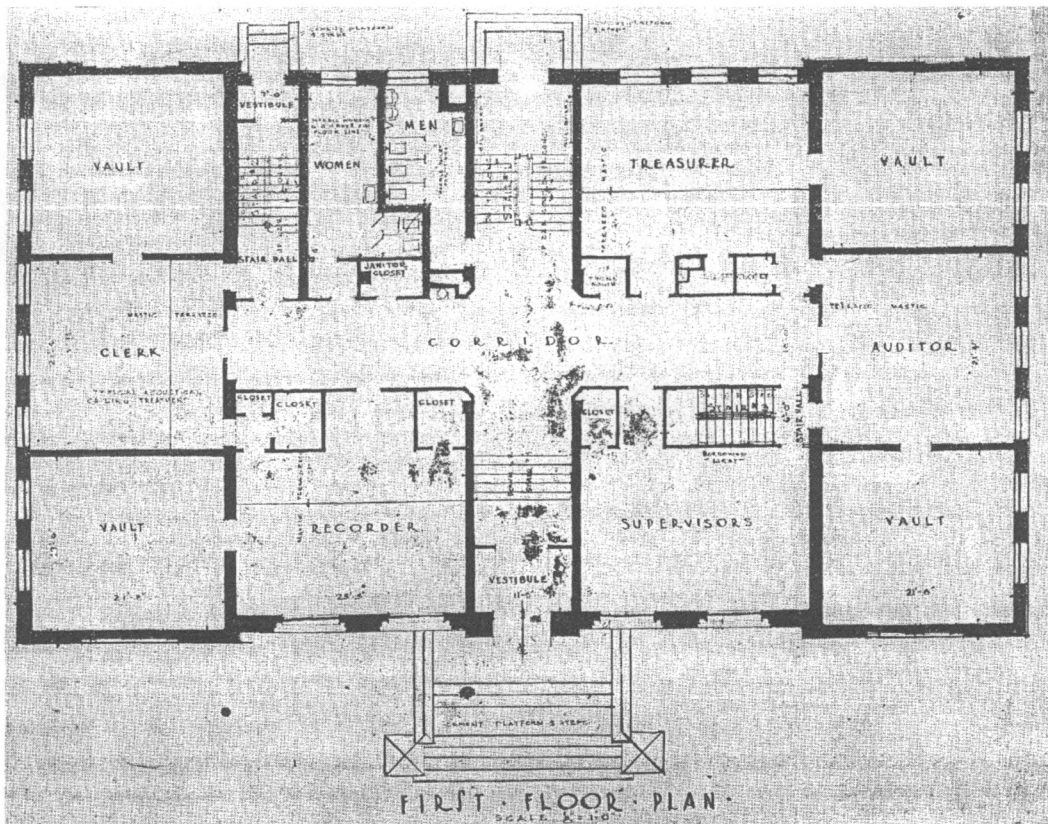
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accommodated by the allocation of vacant areas (assessor's office) or removal to office locations outside of the courthouse (county engineer). Changes made to meet access requirements were done within the original space allocations (ADA rest rooms) or through sensitive alterations (elevator installation and courtroom reduction). Alterations in the jail area to respond to the changing demands of law enforcement have been made while retaining most of the original public spaces. One rare surviving feature in the Audubon County jail is the kitchen cabinetry from the former sheriff's apartment, which is still found in the county sheriff's office. Floor plans published in successive issues of *The Advocate-Republican* in early 1939 appear below.¹

Audubon County Court House, First Floor Plan



¹Floor Plans, *The Advocate-Republican*, March 9, 1939, March 16, 1939 and April 6, 1939. The original sources for plans and drawings reproduced in this and other PWA-Era Courthouse nominations came in various sized formats from original documents, old newspaper clippings, microfilmed newspaper articles, old photo copies, and reverse print images, all of varying quality. The purpose of including images here is to provide a sense of the overall form and delineation of space in the building's principal unaltered floors.

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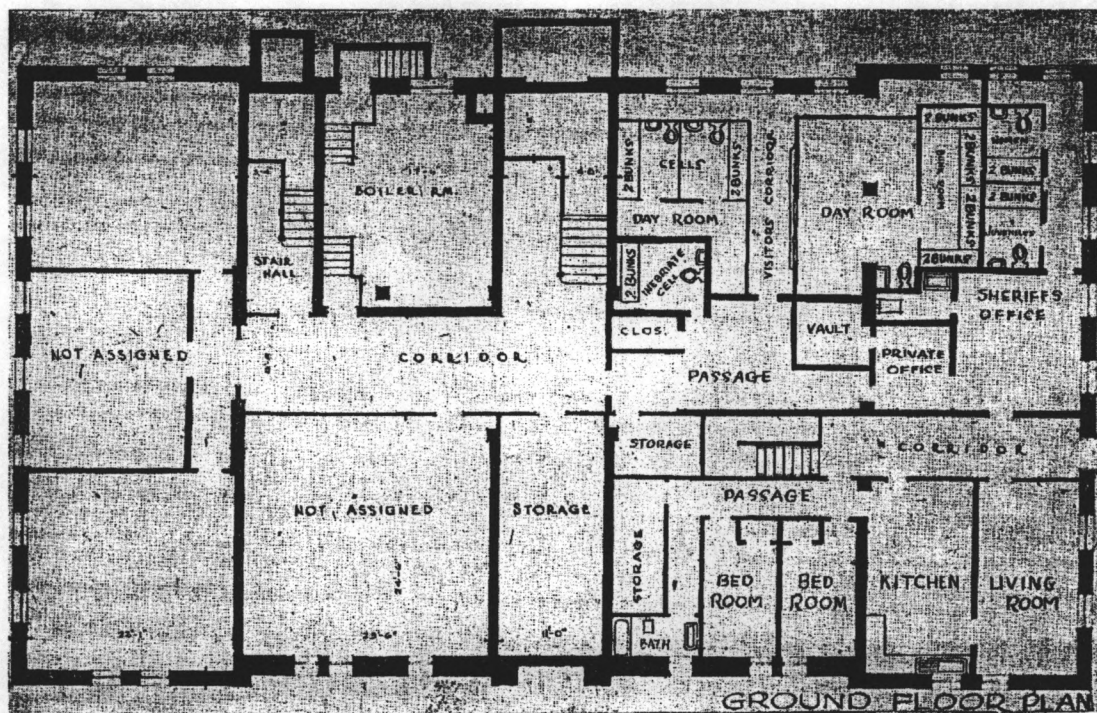
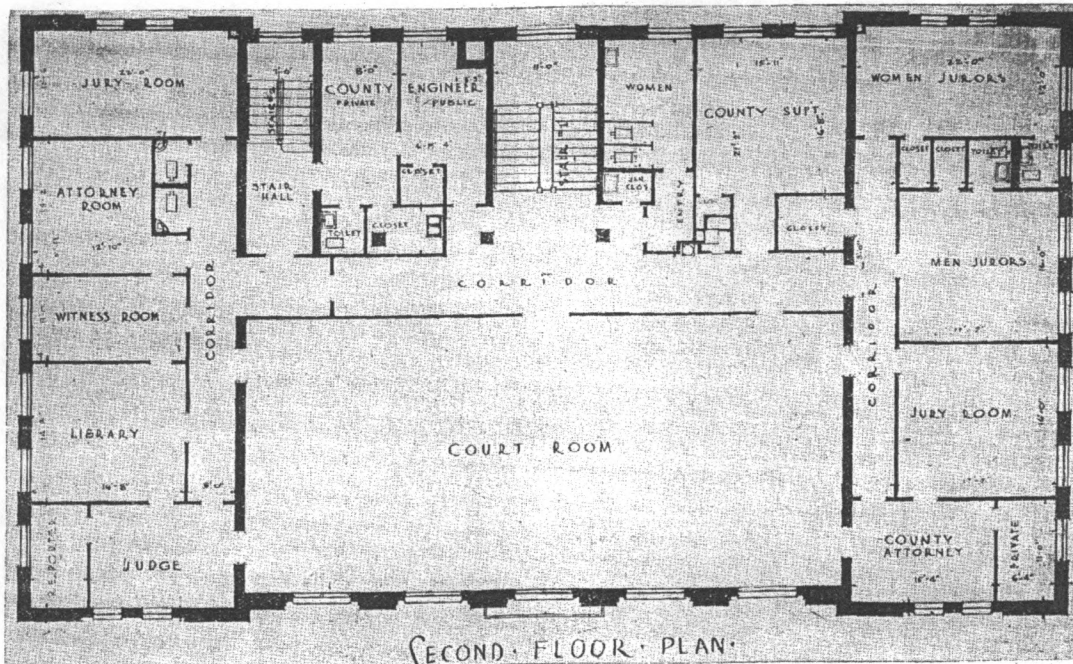
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Audubon County Court House, Second & Ground Floor Plans



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Summary of contributing and non-contributing resources:

All historic resources associated with the courthouse were evaluated according to rules set forth in *National Register Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* (1991). The evaluation was made according to procedures further specified in Section F.v. "Individually Eligible Properties," p. 47 of the PWA-Era County Courthouses of Iowa MPD. A summary follows.

- 1 Contributing Building: courthouse
- 1 Non-contributing Structure: communications tower
- 1 Contributing Site: courthouse site
- 1 Non-contributing Object: Veteran's Memorial (obelisks, veteran rolls, and flagpoles)

Summary of alterations:

- Court room remodeling, late-1970s
- Installation of elevator to serve all three levels, ca. 1980
- New metal windows, ca. 1982
- Re-roofing, 1993, 2002
- Minor remodeling of various offices and rest rooms, ca. 1980 to present
- Remodeling of county jail areas, 1970s to present
- Veteran's Memorial, installed 1995
- Minor floor plan changes of selected county offices, 1960s to present

The changes made to the Audubon County Court House are consistent with the registration requirements set forth under Section F.iv.c of the "PWA-Era County Courthouses of Iowa" MPD, pp. F45-F48. The courtroom remodeling saw the room reduced in size in order to accommodate installation of an elevator to serve the ADA needs of the building. Openings onto the central corridor remained as originally designed with the former double-door courtroom entrance reused for the new elevator opening. Because the courtroom was originally quite long, the loss of the rear section of the room had a minimal impact on the overall size of the courtroom space.

Introduction of new windows is also consistent with the registration requirements. All of the openings have retained their original size with replacement sash incorporating metal transoms where reduced size sash have been installed. Re-roofing and office changes have had minimal impact on the building and are expected with its continued use as a modern office building. The jail area on the third floor (cell block, day rooms, and various offices) has been modified in order to continue its use according to modern jail standards. Another modification related to jail activities has been the addition of an enclosed exercise area for prisoners on the exterior of the courthouse. This chain linked space has had a minor impact on the courthouse's appearance because of its location at the rear of the building. The addition of a Veteran's Memorial on the courthouse site has had a minor impact on the building because of its location some distance from the building.

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8. Statement of Significance

The Audubon County Court House is significant under Criteria A and C as one of ten county courthouses built in Iowa during the New Deal Era as part of the federal Public Works Administration and its successor agencies. Its construction represented a significant public investment of federal and local dollars by voters in a sparsely populated rural county that was hard pressed by the effects of the Great Depression. Designed by Keffer and Jones of Des Moines, an important Iowa architectural firm responsible for the design of numerous PWA funded public buildings, it is a well-preserved example of the PWA Moderne style of public building architecture developed during the 1930s and early 1940s. Its design blends Art Deco and Moderne style elements with the utilitarian advantages of modern office building construction. Nomination of the Audubon County Court House is consistent with the registration requirements set forth in Section F of the "PWA-Era County Courthouses of Iowa" MPD.

Historical Background:

I. New Deal Era and the Public Works Administration:

In June 1933 near the end of Franklin Roosevelt's first one hundred days in office, Congress passed the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) creating two important federal initiatives designed to combat the Depression. The National Recovery Administration or NRA was established to set up code agreements with private industries that would encourage greater employment and at the same time, regulate wages and affirm union organizing. The other new agency was intended to serve an emergency role hence the name, Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works. A short time later, President Franklin Roosevelt appointed General Hugh Johnson to head the NRA. During the next two years it would have a fractious history until the Supreme Court struck it down in May 1935.

Roosevelt's second initiative on behalf of industrial workers was intended to serve as an emergency program that would soon outlive its useful life.² He appointed his good friend Harry Hopkins to head the newly established Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and Civil Works Administration (CWA). Responsibilities for the new Public Works Administration (PWA) were assigned to Harold Ickes, Roosevelt's fiscally conservative Secretary of the Interior. The following year the CWA efforts were also transferred to Ickes. Under their direction a series of federal undertakings were given form and substance. Management structures were created, distribution systems organized, administrative practices reorganized, and funding set in motion. By June 1934, Ickes had overseen expenditure of \$3.3 billion to 13,266 federal projects and 2,407 non-federal projects. The popular federal program would see a series of successive appropriations continue for nearly a decade until the PWA was dismantled in 1943. It is this aspect of the NIRA that comprises

²Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Roosevelt: The Coming of the New Deal* (Boston, 1959), p. 104 as quoted in Lisa B. Reitzes, "Moderately Modern: Interpreting the Architecture of the Public Works Administration, Volume II," unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Delaware, May 1989, p. 370.

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the balance of this discussion.

It is not surprising that the first public works projects to be funded through the FERA were for federal agencies. The Federal Employment Stabilization Board created in 1931 was responsible for establishing a six-year program of federal construction projects. However, under President Hoover's administration that was as far as the planning had gone. Now, with federal funding in place, many of these construction initiatives were ready to move forward. As a result, Washington, D.C. was among the first cities to benefit from the demand for both skilled and unskilled workers created by these federal programs.

The other part of the NIRA was intended to stimulate non-federal projects where the national government would serve as a partner with states, local communities, schools, and other non-governmental groups. For these projects to get off the ground, considerable planning would have to take place first. Soon after FERA was established, each state was asked to establish an advisory board with three members. Their purpose would be to stimulate applications for the non-federal funds, forward reports to Washington, and handle requests for funds once they were received. These boards were criticized and by February 1934 were discontinued.³

State level offices staffed by federal employees soon replaced the state boards. These offices were headed by "state engineers" and despite their titles, their responsibility was to the federal government. In a major effort at decentralization, legal, engineering, and financing experts were transferred from Washington to the State Engineer offices. Over time, there were problems with these offices as well. Their titles lead to confusion as local officials sought to learn how to apply for federal assistance and were unclear as to whether the "State Engineer" was a promoter or administrator.

Despite these problems, Congressional appropriations continued annually, each year accompanied by mandated changes in the operation of the PWA program. Among the most important were provisions in the Relief Appropriation Act of 1935 that allowed the federal share of PWA projects to be increased from 30 percent to 45 percent. Another provision allowed the grants to cover the cost of architects and engineers, acquisition of necessary land, legal fees, and administrative costs. By including these costs, more localities were able to participate and the quality of projects was enhanced. An executive order issued by President Roosevelt added the requirement that prevailing wage rates be observed on PWA projects.

When the 1936 appropriation bill came up the following year, Congress expressed its continuing concern for the large numbers of unemployed Americans by enacting new measures in the PWA designed to accelerate the expenditure of PWA funds. Historian Lisa Reitzes summarized the conflict:

³Jack F. Isakoff, "The Public Works Administration," *University of Illinois Bulletin*, Volume XXXVI, (November 18, 1938), p. 36.

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...it was widely agreed that, for the PWA to have a visible effect on unemployment and poverty, it needed to move quickly on labor-intensive projects; but Ickes insisted that to produce permanent useful public works whose execution would be economical and free from scandal, the PWA had to move slowly and apply strict standards for inclusion in the program...many in the government believed that the PWA needed to dictate what and where projects were undertaken; however, to enlist local support and ensure the "usefulness" of public works projects, many felt that distribution of PWA funds and designation of construction priorities needed to be guided by local decisions.⁴

In the end, Congress prevailed seeking to increase the ranks of the employed by speeding up spending on PWA projects. Setting an aggressive timetable for completion of projects did this.

The following year, Congressional sentiment shifted again. Funding under the PWA Extension Act of 1937 was drastically cut and July 1, 1939 set as the date for completion of all projects. The PWA's administrative staff was cut as it moved towards "liquidation" with state offices among the first to be shut down. Although seven regional offices, each with three or more states, had been in place since early in the life of the PWA, they had not had major responsibilities for project oversight.

This changed in the fall of 1937 as the state PWA offices closed. Thereafter, all grant applications, approvals, bidding and contracting, monitoring of wage scales, correspondence, payments, and auditing would flow through the regional offices. Though final authority remained in Washington, the day-to-day management of the PWA shifted to the regional offices. Iowa was one of eight states included in Region No. 4 headquartered in Omaha. Other states in Region No. 4 included Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Missouri. The other regional offices were headquartered in New York, Atlanta, Chicago, Fort Worth, San Francisco, and Portland.

By June 1938 with liquidation measures well underway, Congress reversed itself again. Measures to shut down the PWA were temporarily halted and a new appropriation of nearly \$1 billion was authorized. To keep the money flowing as quickly as possible, the appropriation law specified that new projects must be completed by July 1940.

In early 1939 a series of government publications appeared describing the story of the PWA. Some were designed to respond to criticism of the PWA and others were published to document for posterity the success of this experiment in public works construction. *The Story of PWA* came out in the spring of 1939, the lengthy *Public Buildings: A Survey of Architecture of Projects Constructed by Federal and other Governmental Bodies between the Years 1933 and 1939 with the Assistance of the Public Works Administration* came out later that year, and *America Builds the Record of PWA* came out before year's end.

⁴Lisa B. Reitzes, "Moderately Modern: Interpreting the Architecture of the Public Works Administration, Volume II," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Delaware, May 1989, p.372-373.

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The PWA officially ended in July 1939 as the focus of the Administration began to shift toward readying for war. President Roosevelt's reorganization plan consolidated the efforts of a number of the "alphabet agencies" under the umbrella of the Federal Works Agency (FWA). It absorbed not only the PWA but also the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Supervising Architect's Office in the Treasury Department (responsible for post office construction), and the U.S. Housing Authority. John M. Carmody was selected to head the new agency. The regional offices continued to operate until 1943 with Iowa projects still in the pipeline managed through the Omaha office through 1941.

ii. The PWA at Work in Iowa: County Courthouse Building (1934-1941):

Establishment of the Public Works Administration in June 1933 prompted formation of a network of 48 state PWA offices. There was no precedent to guide the federal-state-local partnership resulting in considerable time spent during the first months in simply setting up the state offices. Communities were not prepared to respond quickly to a call for PWA projects and as a result, the federal government turned to two other programs to speed federal money into the pipeline – the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the short-lived Civil Works Administration (CWA).

Meanwhile it became clear that antiquated municipal and county laws governing public building and the poor credit ratings of many cities and counties in the wake of bond failures would further prohibit a prompt set of applications. The PWA responded by sending financing and legal experts to states to assist in drafting new state enabling legislation and arranging for federal loan guarantees. Although no history of Iowa's State PWA Office has been written, it is likely that similar problems and responses were experienced there. The acting state director of Iowa's PWA Office by the time the first county courthouse was being planned in Cass County was P.F. Hopkins.⁵ Based on the correspondence record from that office, it appears that he continued in that capacity throughout the office's life.

The process of selecting PWA projects would be the same in Iowa as in other states. Initially applicants would be able to apply for grants amounting to up to 30 percent of the project's costs. Funding could be used for labor and materials but not for project management, architectural and engineering fees, and land acquisition. There would be five "yardsticks" by which local projects would be measured:

1. The social desirability of the project and its relation to coordinated planning.
2. The economic desirability; that is its relation to unemployment and the revival of industry.
3. The soundness of the project from engineering and technical standpoints.
4. The financial ability of the applicant to complete the work and "reasonably

⁵P.F. Hopkins' familial relationship, if any, to PWA Administrator Harry Hopkins is unknown.

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secure⁷ any loans by the United States.

5. The legal collectibility of the securities to be purchased or the enforceability of any lease entered into.⁶

In the case of county courthouses, the application would need to be submitted by the county board of supervisors with the actual applications usually prepared by the county auditor. In some Iowa counties, courthouses had been under discussion for years. In the case of Jones County, space for county offices and a courtroom was maintained in rented quarters for more than six decades prior to the completion of the new Jones County Court House in 1937. In Bremer County, the county offices and courtroom were housed in seven buildings including the 1857 courthouse, three banks, and above a hardware store. In the case of three counties, multiple referenda were held to consider building a new courthouse. One unique example involved the Cass County Court House in Atlantic. After a fire destroyed the old courthouse in 1932, a referendum vote was scheduled two months later. Faced with grim economic conditions voters turned down the referendum by a substantial margin. By the time the second vote was held, a citizens group had prompted the board of supervisors to apply for a PWA grant to underwrite a portion of the costs. After the second referendum was held year later, local officials were certain that the availability of a PWA grant had contributed to its passage. In several cases in Iowa when courthouse referenda votes were held in conjunction with a general election they failed. Passage appears to have been more likely when scheduled as part of a special election.

It was necessary for a PWA applicant to provide considerable information about their intended project. The only surviving application for a county courthouse in Iowa is believed to be the application prepared for the Jones County Court House in Anamosa in 1935. It is likely that it was typical of other applications filed. It contained the following:

- a general description of the project
- a statement regarding the status of drawings and specifications
- a breakdown of labor expenses by category of worker, amount, and percentage of grant allotment
- a breakdown of expenses for superintendence, architects, and engineers
- a breakdown of expense for land, materials, equipment, and contingent expenses
- a list of skilled laborers by specific trade and number to be employed
- estimated average worker yearly wage
- estimated total number of man-hours
- estimated daily average number of employees each month for term of the project
- a statement regarding source of other funds and statutory authority to undertake project
- a copy of the application resolution by the board of supervisors

⁶*America Builds. The Record of PWA. Public Works Administration.* Prepared in the Division of Information by the United States, Public Works Administration. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939.

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- supplemental information regarding outstanding bonds, borrowing capacity, county population, and assessed valuation⁷

To answer these questions, an applicant-county would need to have preliminary cost estimates in hand. It would be impossible to determine the overall cost figure or any of the breakdowns required in the application without first having a general building plan in hand. To do this it appears that several architectural firms in Iowa were prepared to work for little or no fee during this first phase. In courthouses where Keffer & Jones of Des Moines were involved, the firm signed a contract stipulating that no fee would be charged until the PWA grant was approved and the bonds sold. Their services were limited to preliminary sketches until that time.⁸

The willingness of an architectural firm to work with a county in such a manner allowed two things. First, it enabled the county to prepare an application and respond in an educated manner to the questions posed by federal reviewers. Second, it gave the board of supervisors a building concept and design to promote during the referendum process. If the grants were awarded and the county's voters approved, the architect who had supported the local efforts was likely to secure the design services contract.

Once a PWA application was approved at the state, regional, and national levels, the board of supervisors moved to the next step – the referendum campaign. In virtually every county in the Iowa, these campaigns looked the same. A citizens committee, either formal or informal, undertook a public information campaign to persuade voters of the merits of building a courthouse with the help of a PWA grant. Presentations were given by members of the committee or the board of supervisors to civic organizations. Using the front pages of the local newspapers, articles appeared regularly touting the merit of grants that would underwrite 45 percent of the cost. Voters were encouraged to think themselves fortunate to be able to get more courthouse than their tax dollars would normally buy.

An example of such a campaign was seen on the front pages of the *Indianola Record* in 1936 and 1937. During the summer of 1936 the Warren County Federated Women's Clubs had the courthouse as part of their quarterly meeting. Following the meeting the *Indianola Record* carried an extensive article with the opinions of various members, both pro and con, cited. The newspaper carried similar articles when the Indianola Chamber of Commerce considered it on its several months later. The opinions of those who favored the new courthouse were best summarized in the comments of one Warren County woman when she said that "she had always been taught to take a piece of pie when it was passed to her. She was heartily in favor of constructing a new courthouse now when the county can get a \$145,000 building for \$80,000."⁹ The referendum vote was held in

⁷Application for Grant, Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, PWA Form No. 175 for Court House for Jones County," dated July 5, 1935, on file in Auditor's Office, Jones County Court House, Anamosa, Iowa.

⁸Agreement between Architects and Owners, for Court House for Audubon County," dated July 29, 1938, on file in Auditor's Office, Audubon County Court House, Audubon, Iowa.

⁹"Women's Clubs Talk Building a Courthouse," *Indianola Record*, July, 1936.

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conjunction with the general election in 1936 and failed. Two years later at a special election following a continuing campaign by promoters, the measure passed.

Other pro-courthouse campaign messages stressed the need for a new courthouse to keep records safe. In Cass County, a referendum information pamphlet made the case for approval by pointing out that in Douglas County, Nebraska the county had spent nearly \$300,000 to recreate records lost or damaged in a fire. When Jones County began to make a case for its courthouse in 1935 it contacted Cass County's auditor who happily shared a copy of the information pamphlet.¹⁰

A third reason frequently given for erecting a courthouse in the midst of a national economic depression related to the cost of bonds. Architect Karl Keffer combined all of these arguments when he spoke to the Audubon Board of Supervisors in August 1938. He said that the "primary reason Audubon County should have a new courthouse is because county records are not safe in case of fire in the present building. The secondary reason is that it would be to the county's financial advantage not only to secure the government grant but to take advantage of present low interest rates county bonds carry."¹¹ Keffer's assessment of bond rates proved prophetic when the county was able to secure a favorable rate of just 1¾- percent later that year. This rate was less than half that paid four years earlier in Cass County.

Soon, the success of one PWA-funded courthouse encouraged other counties to undertake the application process. By the time Warren County voters were asked to consider approving a referendum the second time, the *Indianola Tribune* was able to feature photographs of three completed buildings – two were completed with PWA grants in Jones and Cass counties while a third, much smaller building, was erected before the PWA was available in Ringgold County.¹²

The first county to successfully complete the application, referendum, and courthouse construction process was Cass County in southwest Iowa in 1934. Both Governor Clyde Herring and Lieutenant Governor N. C. Kraschel were on hand for the cornerstone ceremony in March 1934 when 1,200 Atlantic school children turned out to greet them. Groundbreaking ceremonies, cornerstone laying events, courtroom dedications, and courthouse openings were celebrated with parades, keynote speakers, and historical pageants. In most communities completion of the courthouses was viewed as an opportunity to pass the torch from one generation to another and the county's old settlers were given special honors. In all but the last several courthouse completions community boosters used these events to look to better times ahead.

A chronological list of PWA-Era courthouses completed between 1934 and 1941 appears below. All received federal assistance except the Floyd County Court House, which was denied funding

¹⁰"Suggest for the New Court House for Cass County," prepared by the Board of Supervisors of Cass County, Iowa for November 8, 1932 referendum, on file in Auditor's Office, Jones County Court House, Anamosa, Iowa.

¹¹"PWA Grant for Court House is Asked by Board," *The Advocate-Republican*, August 4, 1938.

¹²"County Board Reserves Right to Reject Any and All Architectural Plans for Courthouse," *Indianola Tribune*, August 3, 1938.

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when the federal appropriation available for the state ran out.

Figure 2: Chronological list of PWA-Era Courthouses, 1934-1941

County/City Federal Project #	Year Completed	Architect	General Contractor	Original Cost ¹³
Cass Co., Atlantic Federal Public Works Project No. 1410	1934	Dougher, Rich & Woodburn, Des Moines, Iowa	C.C. Larsen Co., Council Bluffs, Iowa	\$130,000
Bremer Co., Waverly P.W.A. Docket IA 1338-R	1937	Mortimer Cleveland, Waterloo, Iowa	Drape Construction Co., Tripoli, Iowa	\$119,000
Jones Co., Anamosa P.W.A. Docket IA 1068-R	1937	Dougher, Rich & Woodburn, Des Moines, Iowa	C.C. Larsen & Sons Co., Council Bluffs, Iowa	\$200,000
Humboldt Co., Dakota City P.W.A. Docket IA 1351-DS	1939	Dougher, Rich & Woodburn, Des Moines, Iowa	Holtze Construction Co., Sioux City, Iowa	\$185,000
Warren Co., Indianola P.W.A. Docket IA 1290-F	1939	Keffer & Jones, Des Moines, Iowa	F.B. Dickinson & Co., Des Moines, Iowa	\$145,000
Buchanan Co., Independence P.W.A. Docket IA 1447-F	1940	Dougher, Rich & Woodburn, Des Moines, Iowa	C.C. Larsen & Sons Co., Council Bluffs, Iowa	\$254,000
Audubon Co., Audubon P.W.A. Docket IA 1586-F	1939	Keffer & Jones, Des Moines, Iowa	J.C. Mayer, Clarion, Iowa	\$133,000
Des Moines Co., Burlington P.W.A. Docket IA 1529-F	1940	Keffer & Jones, Des Moines, Iowa	Paul Steenberg Construction Co., St. Paul, Minnesota	\$280,000
Allamakee Co., Waukon Federal project # unknown	1940	Charles Altfillisch, Decorah, Iowa	Rye & Henkel, Mason City, Iowa	\$202,000
Floyd Co., Charles City Not funded with PWA assistance	1941	Hansen & Waggoner, Mason City, Iowa	James Thompson & Sons, Ames, Iowa	\$265,000

iii. Building the Audubon County Court House:

Audubon was established as the county seat of Audubon County in 1878 shortly after the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad completed construction of a branch line from Atlantic north to the new town of Audubon. A courthouse was built by the railroad company and offered free to the county if the county seat was moved from Exira to Audubon. A hotly contested election was held to determine the county seat and Audubon was accepted by voters.

Population in Audubon County grew from 7,448 in 1880 to a peak of 13,626 in 1900. By 1930 population had declined to 12,264, a pattern that would be encouraged by the Great Depression

¹³Original cost figures include all expenses for completion of the courthouse including site acquisition if applicable, architectural fees, excavation, general contract, subcontracts, furnishings and equipment, and landscaping. Cost figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

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years. The change in national leadership in 1933 saw the creation of a series of federal programs designed to combat this national malaise. Among the most active programs to find their way to the county level were the Public Works Administration (PWA), the Works Progress Administration (WPA), and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). All became active in Audubon County by the decade's end. The CCC built a barracks encampment south of Audubon and carried out several projects in the county while the WPA employed dozens of workers on projects directed through the state WPA office.

The most important project undertaken through the PWA was the effort to construct a new Audubon County courthouse. Plans were formally begun on July 29, 1938 during a public meeting held by the board of supervisors. The large citizens committee on hand for the meeting included business and civic leaders from Audubon and Exira as well as a cross-section of Republican and Democratic party officials, all expressing support for a new federally funded courthouse project.

Karl Keffer of the Des Moines architectural firm of Keffer and Jones was on hand at the meeting to answer questions. He was later quoted by *The Advocate-Republican* as saying that:

“the primary reason Audubon County should have a new courthouse is because county records are not safe in case of fire in the present building. The secondary reason is that it would be to the county's financial advantage not only to secure the government grant but to take advantage of present low interest rates county bonds carry.”¹⁴

At the meeting the board approved filing an application for a federal grant from the Public Works Administration regional district office in Omaha to cover 45 percent of the cost for constructing the new building estimated at \$131,775. A contract was also signed with Keffer and Jones to prepare preliminary plans and sketches. This was the third of three county courthouses that Keffer and Jones would design in Iowa. Other projects completed by the firm in the area included the Audubon Memorial Building, the Viola Consolidated School, and the Atlantic High School. The firm agreed to accept a stipulation in their contract that allowed no fees to be paid for the initial design work should voters reject the courthouse proposal. The fee structure for the contract was typical of other PWA project contracts limiting the billable amount to 5 percent of the building's construction cost.¹⁵

On August 18, 1938 Audubon County was notified that its grant request of \$59,299 (45 percent of the cost) had been approved. An election to secure voter approval to bond the balance of \$73,000 was set for September 15, 1938. The referendum carried by a wide margin on a vote of 1,960 to 859, a 70 percent approval rate. When bonds were sold the following month a highly favorable interest rate of 1¾ percent was secured well below pre-Depression Era rates of 5 percent.

¹⁴“Plans Submitted,” *The Advocate-Republican*, August 4, 1938.

¹⁵“Agreement Between Architects and Owners,” Keffer and Jones, architects, and the Audubon County Board of Supervisors, owner, dated July 29, 1938; Audubon County Auditor's Office.

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In November 1938 site excavation work was completed at the new courthouse immediately adjacent to the existing courthouse. The quarter-block parcel had been assembled more than 20 years earlier in anticipation of a future courthouse construction project. J.C. Bonwell, a 96-year old Civil War veteran, was given the honor of turning the first shovel full of dirt.

Bidding was intense for the courthouse construction contracts. Contractors from central and western Iowa, Nebraska, and Kentucky submitted bids with 15 separate bids received on the general construction alone. On December 29, 1938 the general construction contract was awarded to low-bidder J.C. Mayer of Clarion, Iowa. This bid came in at \$74,783 or nearly \$17,000 less than the architect's estimate. Mechanical contracts came in under estimate as well leaving the board of supervisors in the enviable position of having nearly \$25,000 available in excess grant dollars and bond proceeds to spend elsewhere on the project.

The response of the supervisors was to revisit the issue of completing the county jail as part of the initial courthouse construction rather than deferring it until a future date. Permission was sought from the PWA regional district office while construction plans proceeded in early February 1939. In April approval was received to make a series of changes including completion of the jail facilities, the sheriff's residence, and substitution of cut stone for poured concrete as a foundation finish.

Throughout the course of construction, the PWA required workers to be paid minimum wages based on the prevailing wages for various trades. At the national level this measure had been established to stabilize wage rates and make sure that public works contracts did not see workers suffer in a competitive environment. In Audubon County, for example, the highest paid workers were structural ironworkers who made \$1.25 per hour. They were followed by bricklayers, plumbers, steam fitters, sheetmetal workers, asbestos workers, plasters, and terrazzo workers all of whom made \$1.00 per hour. Carpenters, electricians, glaziers, and painters made \$.80 per hour while roofers, cement finishers, and hoist operators made slightly less at \$.75 per hour. Truck drivers, teamsters, and helpers for various trades ranged from \$.50 to \$.65 per hour.¹⁶

Work proceeded at a steady pace with concrete foundations and walls poured and most of the cut limestone facing in place by the end of May. Concrete decking for the second floor was poured in June and the concrete roof decking completed in July. Windows were installed in early August followed by terrazzo floors later that month. Interior mechanical systems and finishes progressed steadily through the remainder of the summer. Installation of marble wainscoting was completed in the central corridors, three restrooms, and central staircase in September. *The Advocate-Republican* reported that the exterior of the new courthouse was nearly completed and approximately 70 percent of the overall project was finished.¹⁷

As construction continued on the courthouse, supervisors were kept busy reviewing equipment plans and bids for the jail, offices, and courtroom. No detail was too small. For example, at least a

¹⁶"Schedule of Minimum Hourly Wage Rates, Court House Building, Audubon, Iowa," November 10, 1938.

¹⁷"New Court House History in Brief from Beginning," *The Advocate-Republican*, June 6, 1940.

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half-dozen letters were sent between the county and the Great Northern Chair Company of Chicago regarding the firm's selection to supply the American black walnut chairs for the jury box. Similar correspondence was had with Pella Rolscreen regarding outfitting the courthouse windows with Venetian blinds.

As the weather began to turn colder, work concentrated on interior finishes. The building's gas-fired boiler was turned on the first week in November to allow work on laying asphalt floor tile and painting throughout the building to proceed. By mid-December county officials were already beginning to occupy the new courthouse. The last term of the district court was held in the old courthouse on December 14, 1939. Work in the jail facilities lagged with equipment installed as the year closed.

On January 18, 1940 the board of supervisors accepted completion of eight of the eleven building contracts for the courthouse, the balance involving equipment and furniture yet to be fulfilled. The efforts of the supervisors turned to the completion of site work in February 1940. A crew of 19 workers was secured through the state Works Progress Administration office to raze the old courthouse and jail buildings, paving parking and alleys adjacent to the building, constructing curb and gutter, and replacing approximately 4,000 square feet of sidewalk.

On February 15, 1940 with the new courtroom completed and furnished, the district bar association declared a holiday so that judges and attorneys from other counties in the 15th Judicial District could attend a celebration to officially open the Audubon County district court term in its new courtroom.

Formal dedication of the new Audubon County Court House was held on June 11, 1940 with a full day of ceremonies, a parade described by promoters as "mammoth," band concerts, baseball games, and a county historical pageant. The afternoon's dedication ceremony included old settlers who shared their recollections of Audubon County's pioneer days and a keynote address by Dr. Thomas Niven of the First Presbyterian Church in Omaha. James Huffman, chairman of the county board of supervisors, presented the new courthouse to the people of Audubon County.¹⁸

Although Audubon County had a low population during the 1930s, other PWA and WPA projects were completed here including work at the county home.

Sanborn maps appear below showing the courthouse site before and after construction of the new building.

¹⁸"Thousands Come to Audubon for Big Dedication," *The Advocate-Republican*, June 13, 1940.

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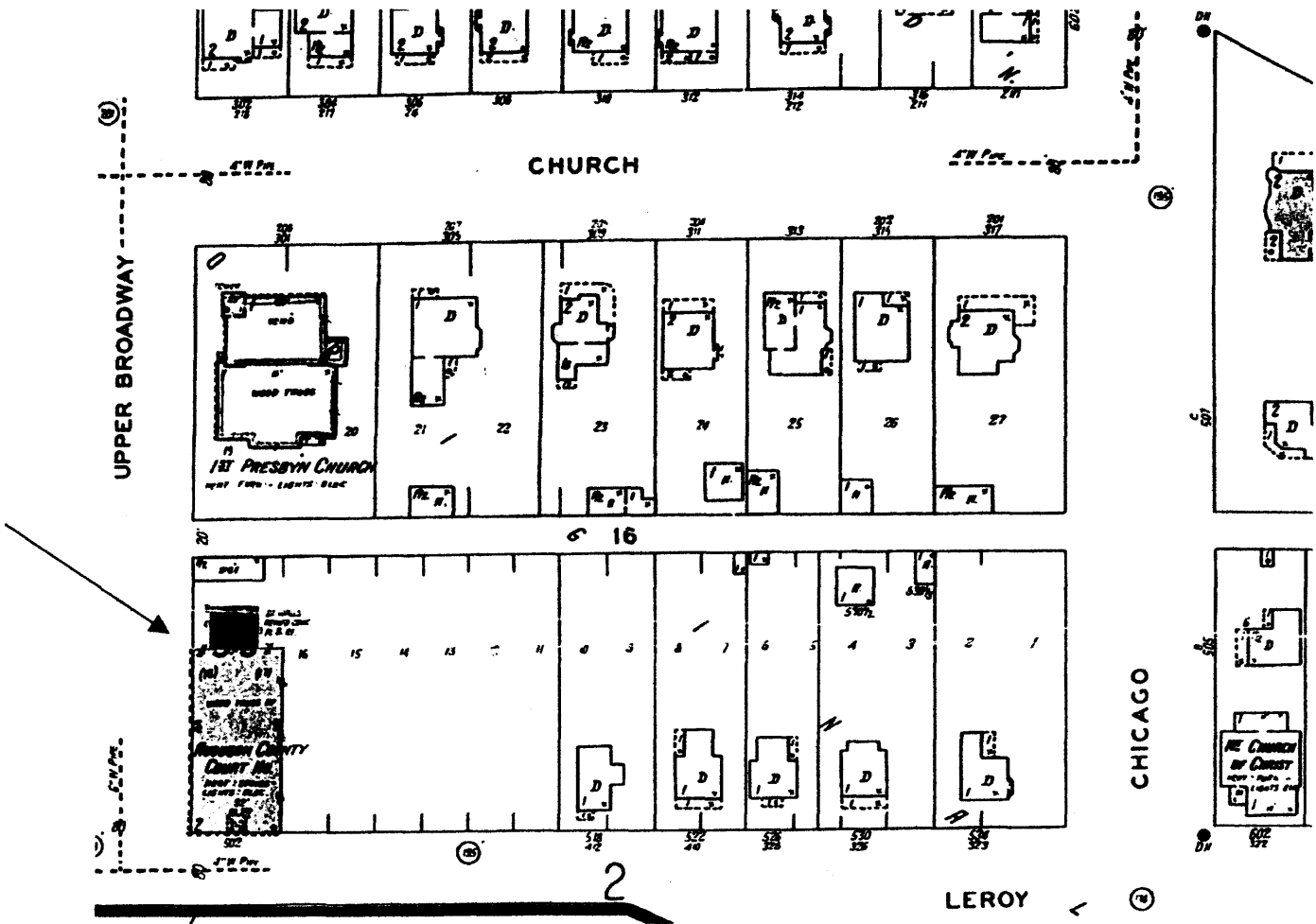
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Audubon County Court House, 1927¹⁹

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¹⁹Insurance Maps of Audubon, Iowa. (New York: The Sanborn and Perris Map Company) 1927, p.6.

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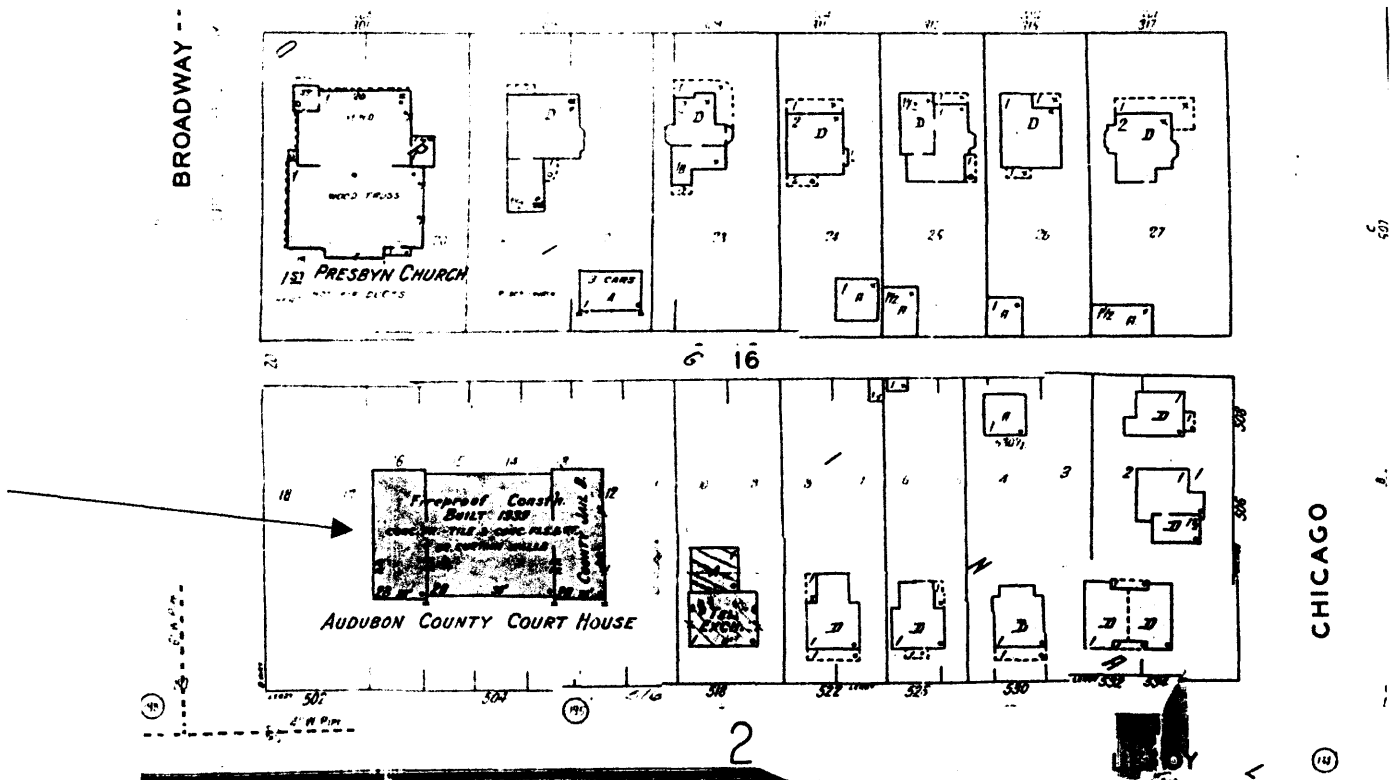
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Audubon County Court House, 1945²⁰

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iv. Architectural significance:

The Audubon County Court House was designed by the architectural firm of Keffer and Jones with offices in Des Moines, approximately 75 miles east of Audubon. Karl K. Keffer (1883-1954) and Earl E. Jones (1885-1950) formed their partnership in 1916 following the death of Keffer's earlier partner, Oliver O. Smith. The new firm saw Keffer continue in the capacity of principal designer with Jones assuming the practical operations of the partnership. The firm developed a solid reputation in the state eventually receiving commissions for dozens of schools and collegiate buildings. The firm designed twelve major buildings at the Iowa State Fairgrounds between 1920 and 1936 and a number of commissions for the Des Moines School District between 1921 and 1939. Architectural historian Wesley Shank credits their work on schools to their ability to work well with school

²⁰Insurance Maps of Audubon, Iowa. (New York: The Sanborn and Perris Map Company) 1927 updated to 1945, p.6.

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boards.²¹

The firm developed a similar reputation for their work on county courthouses in the state. Commissions included the O'Brien County Court House (1915-1917) in Primghar, the Ringgold County Court House (1926-27) in Mount Ayr, the Louisa County Court House (1926-1927) in Wapello, the Warren County Court House (1938-1939) in Indianola, the Audubon County Court House (1939) in Audubon, and the Des Moines County Court House (1939-1940) in Burlington. According to Shank, the firm's O'Brien County Court House was the first example of a flat-roofed rectangular block form in the state – a basic form that would be repeated in subsequent design efforts.

The three New Deal Era courthouses designed by the firm for Warren, Audubon, and Des Moines counties share a number of design attributes including basic form, floor plan, and materials. Each building has a symmetrical façade with a central section (two to four levels) flanked by lower height wings at each end. In each case a central corridor extends the length of the building with vaults in the corners and county offices opening onto the corridor. Common materials include buff colored brick, Bedford limestone, multi-colored terrazzo floors, marble wainscoting, and acoustic tile. Though the courtrooms designs are distinctly different, each originally used dark wood tones and simplified Art Deco ornamentation.

The Audubon County Court House is the best preserved of Keffer & Jones' New Deal Era courthouses. An extraordinary level of maintenance shows off the building's original finishes in a fashion rarely seen in public buildings. The courthouse is also the smallest of the three Keffer and Jones buildings and the only one to retain nearly all of the original light fixtures, many of its original furnishings, and a nearly unaltered courtroom.

Summary:

In summary, the Audubon County Court House derives its significance as one of ten county courthouses built in Iowa during the New Deal Era with funding assistance from the federal Public Works Administration. Its construction represented a significant public investment of federal and local tax dollars made at a time when this rural county was hard pressed by the Great Depression. Designed by Des Moines architects Karl Keffer and Earl Jones, it is a well-preserved example of the PWA Moderne Style of public building architecture that dominated the 1930s and early 1940s.

²¹Shank, Wesley I., *Iowa's Historic Architects: A Biographical Dictionary* (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1999, p. 94.

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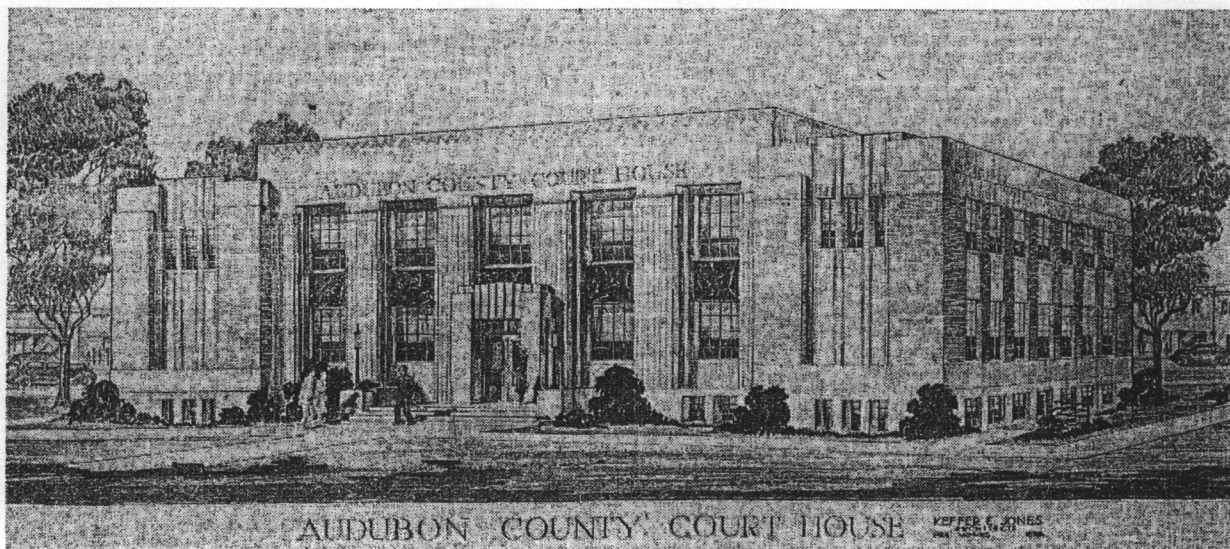
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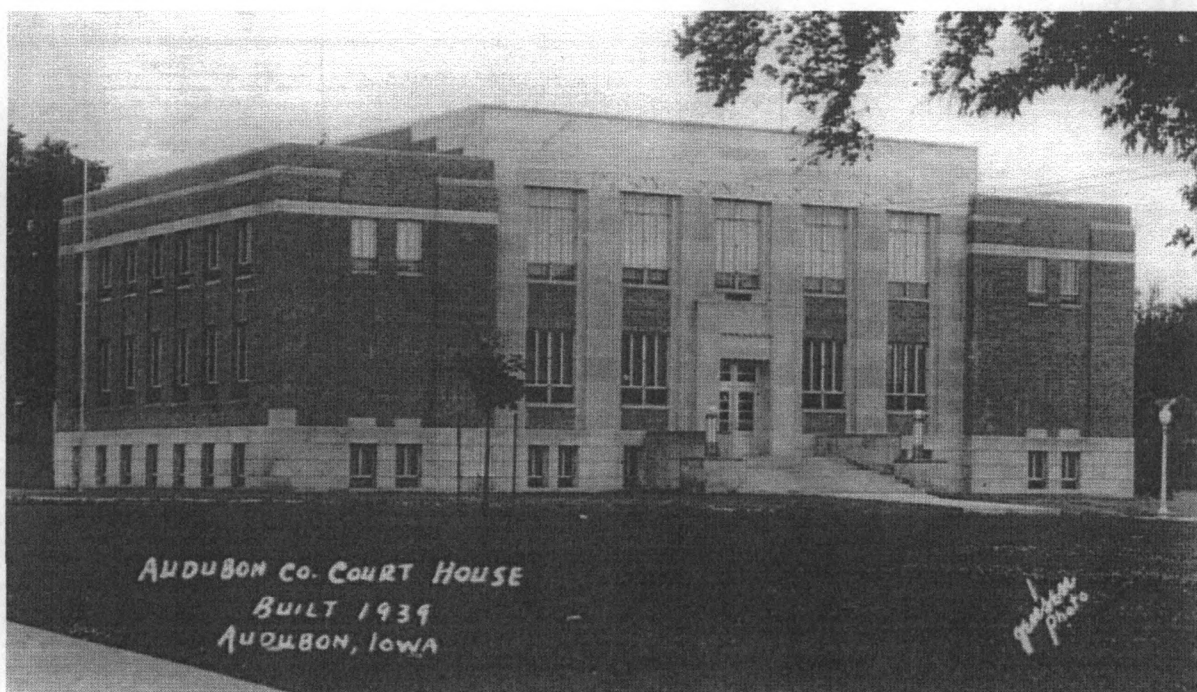
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Architectural drawing of proposed Audubon County Court House, 1939²²



Completed Audubon County Court House, postcard view, ca. 1940



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Acknowledgement:

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"Almost Ready to Pour Second Floor," June 1, 1938.

"Award Contract Jail Equipment at Court House," June 8, 1938.

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"Work at Court House Moves on Toward Finnish," July 20, 1939.

"Court House Exterior is Near Finish," August 10, 1938.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

Lots 11-18, Block 16, Original Town Plat, City of Audubon, Audubon County, Iowa.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries comprise the original site for the Audubon County Court House. This site included the lots that held the previous county courthouse (17, 18) and adjacent lots secured in 1912 and 1915 in anticipation of constructing a new building.

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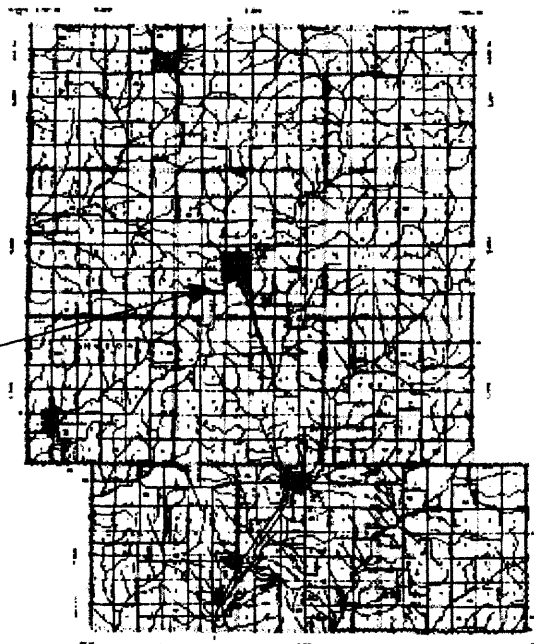
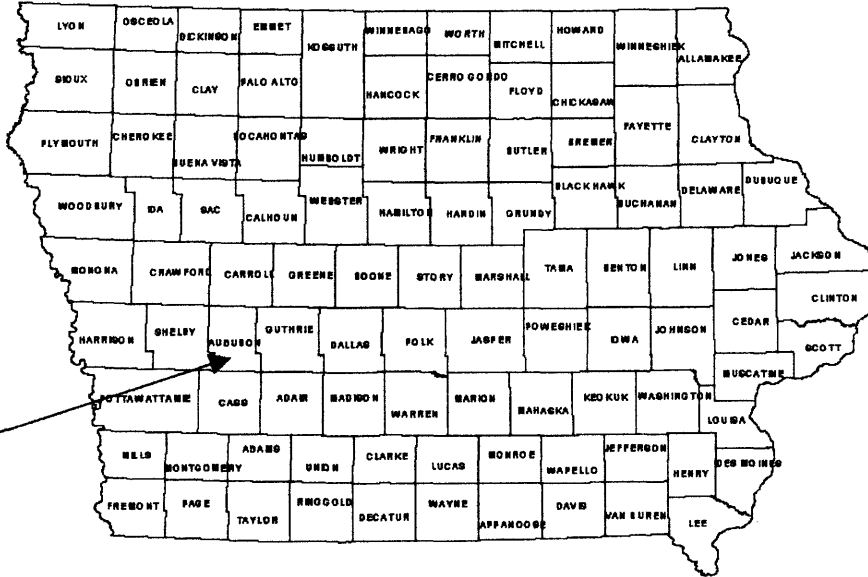
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Map: Audubon County, Iowa



ROAD AND TRANSPORTATION MAP
AUDUBON COUNTY
IOWA

Iowa Department
of Transportation
1952-53
United States
Department of Transportation
1952-53
January 1, 1953



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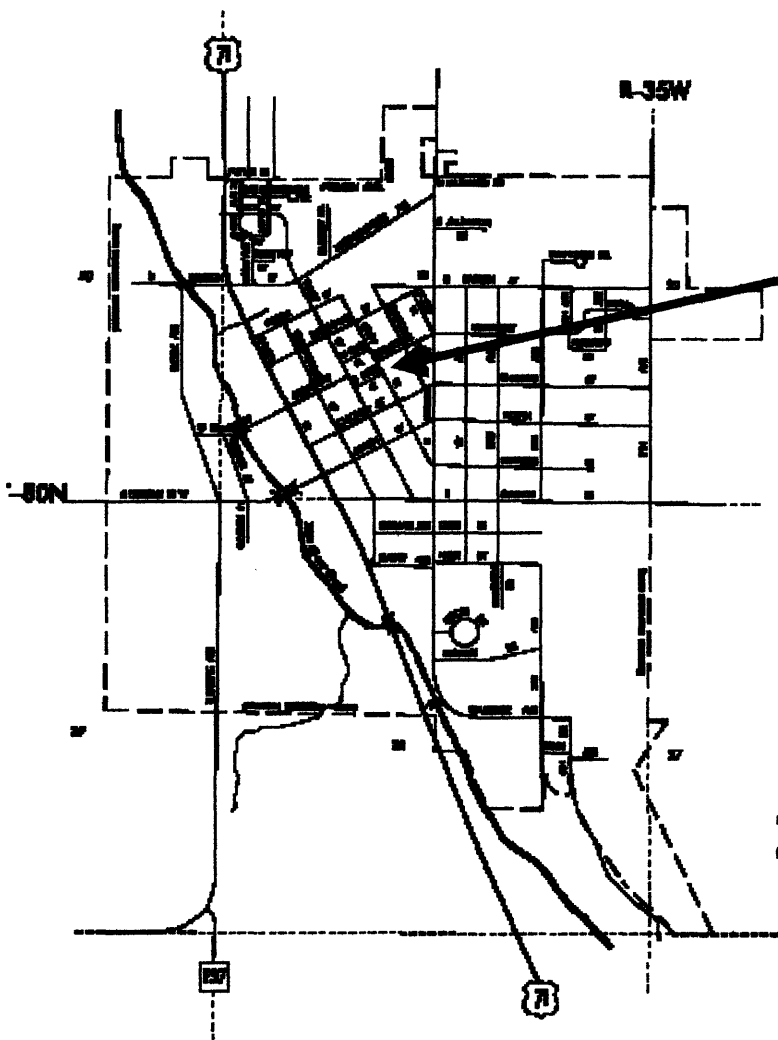
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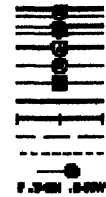
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Name of Property

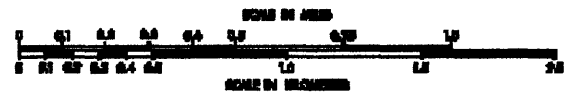
Audubon County, IA
County and State

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LEGEND

- STREET NAME
 - STREET OR HIGHWAY NAME
 - RAILROAD NAME
 - STATE HIGHWAY NAME
 - COUNTY HIGHWAY NAME
 - UNPAVED OR DIRT ROAD
 - BRIDGE
 - CONCRETE LANE
 - SECTION LINE
 - 1/4 SECTION
 - SECTION, TOWNSHIP & RANGE NUMBER
- 



HIGHWAY AND STREET MAP OF

AUDUBON
IOWA

ISSUED BY
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING
OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION DATA

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Photographs

Bruce Meyer, photographer
Date taken: October 21, 2002

1. Front façade, looking northeast
2. Front & northwest façades, looking east
3. Rear & northwest façades, looking south
4. Rear and southeast façades, looking west
5. Center section, front façade, looking northeast
6. Front entrance, looking northeast
7. Front entrance light detail, looking east, looking east
8. Central staircase with front entrance vestibule in background, between first and second floors, looking southwest
9. Central corridor, first floor, looking northwest
10. Courtroom, towards front of room, looking northwest
11. Courtroom, jury box, looking north
12. Courtroom, towards rear of room, looking south