

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUN 13 1978
DATE ENTERED NOV 17 1978

**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

Union County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Morganfield

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

01

STATE

Kentucky

___ VICINITY OF

CODE

021

COUNTY

Union

CODE

225

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- ___ DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- ___ STRUCTURE
- ___ SITE
- ___ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- ___ PRIVATE
- ___ BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- ___ IN PROCESS
- ___ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- ___ UNOCCUPIED
- ___ WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- ___ YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- ___ NO

PRESENT USE

- ___ AGRICULTURE
- ___ COMMERCIAL
- ___ EDUCATIONAL
- ___ ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- ___ INDUSTRIAL
- ___ MILITARY
- ___ MUSEUM
- ___ PARK
- ___ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ___ RELIGIOUS
- ___ SCIENTIFIC
- ___ TRANSPORTATION
- ___ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Union County Fiscal Court

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Morganfield

STATE

Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Union County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Morganfield

STATE

Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1971

___ FEDERAL STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Union County Courthouse occupies a prominent site in the western Kentucky town of Morganfield (1970 pop., 3,563). This building is located on a small square that is bounded by streets on all sides, and the nomination includes the total property of the courthouse, which is approximately three-quarters of an acre.

The original portion of the building faces Main Street and was a cruciform edifice erected in 1872 (see photos 1 and 2). This 2½-story building is of brick construction resting on a stone foundation. The main entrance is recessed and is framed by large stone blocks with a centered console. The double doors are surrounded by numerous panes of opaque glass that were installed in the 1930's. All windows of the first level have segmental heads and keystone hoodmolds, and the corners of the pavilion's first floor are treated with brick quoins.

A stone stringcourse separates the first two floors. Windows of the second level have semi-circular heads and keystone hoodmolds, and these openings are separated by brick pilasters that have stone astragals and capitals. The pediment over the pavilion is pierced by an oculus, and this element is enriched by denticulated and modillioned cornices.

During the 1930's the courthouse received a substantial addition on the south under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration (see photos 2 and 3 and roof plan). This adjunction, which has a full basement, is quite harmonious with the older portion, although several differentiations exist. The height of the pavilion on the south is the same as the pavilion on the north, but it contains three full stories. In addition, windows of the upper levels are rectangular, the placement of pilasters differs, and there are two large dormers protruding from the gable roof. Still, the entrance with its console, the cornices, and the brickwork of the 1872 section were faithfully copied.

The arrangement of rooms and chambers of the courthouse follows a functional order. A wide central hall bisects the building and is crossed at two points by narrower halls that have arched openings. Most doors of the first floor have single-pane transoms and pedimented panels above. With the 1930's addition, the access between floors was moved to the south end of the building. This access is provided by twin flights of spiral staircases that connect all levels. The stairs are green terrazo and the handrails and balustrades are brass.

The courtroom is at the north end of the second floor and measures 52 x 70 feet (see photo 4). There is a continuous low dado, and decorative pointed segmental hoodmolds are above the windows. The woodwork is of handsome proportions,

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES
1872

BUILDER/ARCHITECT
J.C. Frick, Boyd and Frick

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Union County Courthouse ranks as the most substantial building in Union County (1970 pop., 14,500). Constructed in 1872, it is also associated with significant historical events in the area. The overriding issue in the 1870 general election to the Kentucky legislature in Union County was the attempt to move the county seat from Morganfield to Uniontown, four miles to the north. The Morganfield candidate won the election, and in 1871 the Kentucky General Assembly passed an act retaining Morganfield as the county seat.

In the same year of the establishment of the county, trustees were appointed to formulate plans for the laying out of the county seat which was to be named Morganfield in honor of General Daniel Morgan on whose land the community was to be built. In July 1812 the first courthouse was constructed on the north side of the public square--a-one-and-one-half story hickory log structure. A few years later the need for more space led to the construction of a second courthouse, completed in 1819 at a cost of \$3,800.

After the Civil War the citizens of the county expressed their sentiments for a new and more impressive courthouse. At the same time, however, an effort was being made by some in the county to move the county seat to Uniontown, four miles to the north. A newspaper, The Advocate, was started in Morganfield to fight for the retention of the county seat there.

In 1870 the conflict expanded to become the main issue of the general election for Union County's representative to the Kentucky legislature. John Dyer, the Morganfield man, was elected to the legislature, and on February 9, 1871, the general assembly passed an act retaining Morganfield as the county seat of Union County.

In the same year, the Union County Court appointed a board of commissioners to survey other courthouses in the Commonwealth and to confer with various architects in the drafting of plans for a new courthouse. The court allocated \$30,000 for the construction of the new courthouse. On August 14, 1871, upon the recommendation of the board of commissioners, the Union County Court adopted the plans of J.C. Frick, of Boyd and Frick, Architects. On October 2, 1871, the court allocated an additional \$28,000 for the courthouse, and contracted with Weaver, Bell, and Fallan for its construction. The third courthouse, a two-story square brick structure, was

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Garr, Elizabeth. The History of Kentucky Courthouses. Frankfort: National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Kentucky, 1966.

History of Union County, Kentucky. Evansville, Indiana: Courier Company, 1886.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approx. 3/4 Acres.

UTM REFERENCES

A	16	419 ¹²⁰ 0	417 ⁹¹⁰ 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Union County Courthouse Square; bounded by Main Street on the north, Church Street on the west, O'Banion on the south, and South Court on the east.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

William G. Johnson, Historian and Daniel Kidd, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

February 1978

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

564-3741

CITY OR TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Charles W. Meets

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

6/2/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles Adams

DATE

11-17-78

ATTEST:

JANN U. Gilmore

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11/16/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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UNION COUNTY COURTHOUSE
CONTINUATION SHEET

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and the original seats for spectators have been retained. Flanking the double-door entrance are stone plaques set into the walls that are inscribed with the names of those officials and active attorneys who were practicing in Union County at the time of the courthouse's erection. In recent years, the ceiling of the courtroom has been lowered and fluorescent lighting has been installed. Also, a gallery to the rear has been enclosed to accommodate air conditioning components.

The addition has a third level that contains a wide stairlanding and two small offices. The basement contains small offices and restroom facilities. At an unknown time, the building was painted white, but this has recently been removed. Presently, the Union County Courthouse is in excellent condition.

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UNION COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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completed in 1872 at a cost of \$58,000.

The courthouse is certainly one of the most outstanding buildings architecturally in the county. The brick and stone masonry are well executed, and the masses of the building are cleanly composed. The nature of this edifice, whose exterior combines the Italianate with the Classic Revival, is straightforward and it is successful in speaking of its function. The 1930's addition--a project of the Works Progress Administration--is sympathetic to the original section's fabric. Care was obviously taken to make the two portions homogeneous, although the newer portion is no duplicate of the older portion. The floor plan is rational and allows for an easy flow of traffic. There are several notable interior features, including fine twin spiral staircases in the addition, doors of sizeable proportions throughout, and attractive woodwork in the courtroom. As evidence by a stone plaque to the left of the main entrance, the 1872 section was built by A. B. Weaver, G. E. Bell, G. W. Falloon and William Brown.

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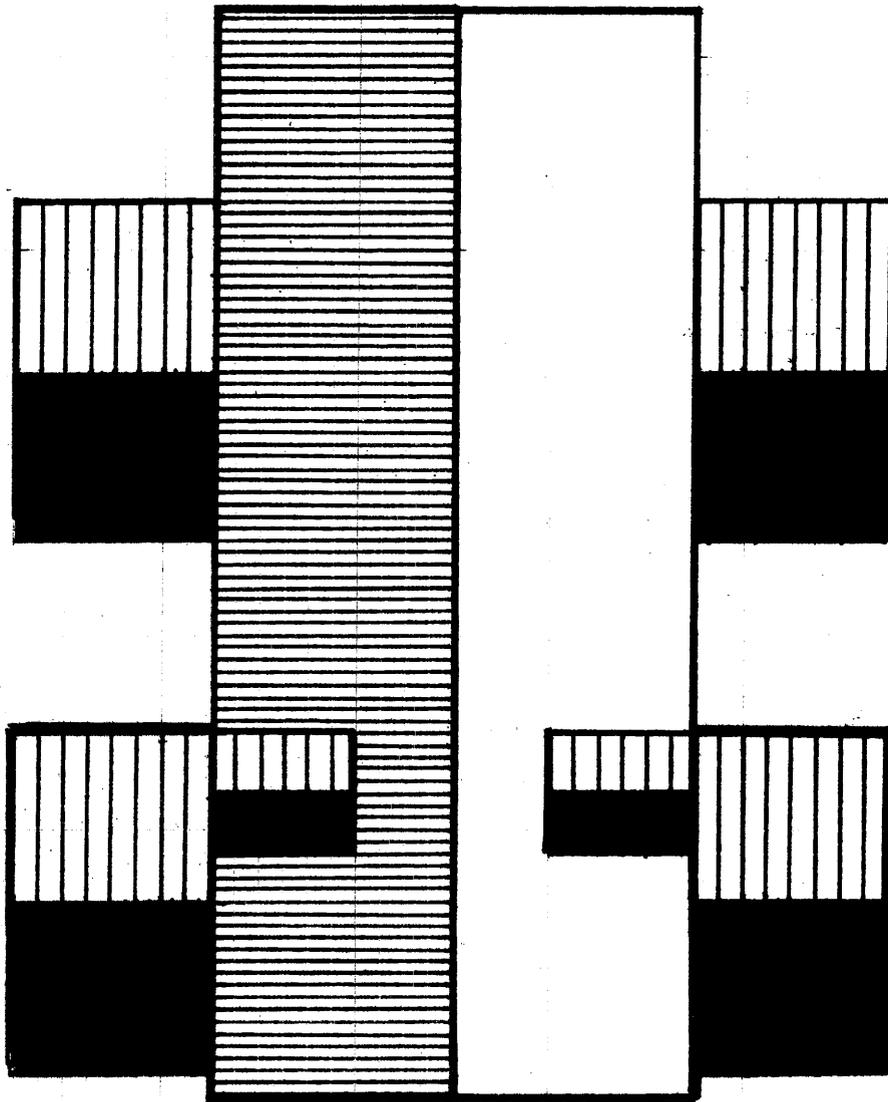
Union County Courthouse
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Perrin, W. H. Kentucky, A History of the State. Chicago and Louisville:
F. A. Battey and Company, 1886.

UNION COUNTY COURTHOUSE, MORGANFIELD, KENTUCKY
ROOF PLAN
NO SCALE

RED LINE INDICATES LATER ADDITION



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NATIONAL
REGISTER

