

MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

MAR 11 1982

HISTORIC NAME: Stearns County Courthouse and Jail

COUNTY: Stearns

CURRENT NAME: -same-

CITY/TWP.: St. Cloud

LEGAL DESC.: Columbia Square (Courthouse Square) and
Lots 11-15, Block 2, Columbia Square, Wilson's Survey
of St. Cloud

ADDRESS:
First Street and Eighth Avenue
North

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u> x </u>	Excellent <u> x </u>	Local <u> x </u>	Primary <u>Government</u>
Structure <u> </u>	Good <u> </u>	State <u> </u>	Secondary <u>Architecture</u>
Object <u> </u>	Fair <u> </u>	National <u> </u>	Others <u> </u>
District <u> </u>	Deteriorated <u> </u>		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:	Yes <u> x </u> No <u> </u> Restricted <u> </u>	PRESENT USE:
VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD:	Yes <u> x </u> No <u> </u>	
OCCUPIED:	Yes <u> x </u> No <u> </u>	Courthouse and jail

DATE CONSTRUCTED: Courthouse, 1921; Jail, 1922	ORIGINAL USE: Courthouse and jail
ORIGINAL OWNER: Stearns County	ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Toltz, King & Day; Louis Pinault

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Board of Commissioners, Stearns County Courthouse, St. Cloud, MN 56301	ACREAGE: Less than one acre <u> </u> Approx. 1½ acres <u> x </u>
LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: <p align="center">N/A</p>	UTM REFERENCE: 15 / 409310 / 5045700 St. Cloud, MN Quad. 7.5
FORM PREPARED BY: Thomas Harvey	
DATE: October, 1980	

DESCRIPTION:

The Stearns County Courthouse sits on a square at the edge of St. Cloud's central business district. Major city streets terminate at the square providing superb views of the building. The jail is situated on a corner across the street from the courthouse.

The Beaux Arts style courthouse has a front facade with broad steps and six massive granite columns. Exterior walls are brick with granite and terra cotta. A yellow-tiled dome sits on a low drum base. The building has a profusion of terra cotta detailing. Door and window surrounds have floral patterns, swags and garlands, and inscriptions appropriate to the setting (i.e. "Where the law ends, tyranny begins."). The base of the building is marked by tiles with repeating figures. Stone construction is continued in the interior with marble columns and floors. Terra cotta decoration surrounds the archways and rotunda. A mural by St. Paul artist, Elsa Jenne depicts early Minnesota life.

The Prairie School style jail was designed to house twenty cells along with an office and a five-bedroom residence for the sheriff on the second floor. It is connected to the courthouse by a tunnel. Local architect, Louis Pinault, designed the jail which was built a year after the courthouse. The brown brick building has a red-tile, low hipped roof, stone sills and belt courses below the windows on each floor, and a massive smokestack on one side. The main entrance is an arched doorway with stone and brick voussoirs.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Stearns County Courthouse and Jail are significant as the center of county-wide governmental organization. In their design and siting, the buildings form a visual focal point in downtown St. Cloud, with the Ring Road, a principal thoroughfare, leading to the courthouse square. The courthouse is the latest structure housing the central county functions. The first courthouse followed shortly after county organization in 1855. In 1861, John L. Wilson donated Columbia Square for courthouse use and in 1864 a frame courthouse was completed. County population growth and the need for larger facilities led to the present courthouse in 1921, and the jail in 1922. St. Cloud's Louis Pinault, active in the design of public buildings, was the architect for the jail. A St. Paul firm, Toltz, King and Day, designed the courthouse.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 2 Page 1

REFERENCE NUMBER: 82003056

STATE: Minnesota

COUNTY: Stearns

RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC): Stearns County Courthouse and Jail

CITY/TOWNSHIP: St. Cloud

VICINITY OF:

ADDRESS: 705 Courthouse Sq.

COMMENTS: Address Correction

Stearns County MPA



Ian R. Stewart
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

4/24/98
Date