

JUL - 2 1981 MAY 29 1981

IOWA SITE INVENTORY

Division of Historic Preservation
Iowa State Historical Department
26 E. Market St., Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Site Number 23-014-003
District Name _____
Map Reference # 23-014-003
Topo Map Clinton 1:24,000

IDENTIFICATION

1. Site Name Clinton County Courthouse
2. Village/Town/City Clinton Township _____ County Clinton
3. Street Address between 6th & 7th Avenue North
4. Legal Location N. Cleriton 8
Urban: subdivision block parcel subparcel
Rural: township range range section 1/4 section-1/4 section
5. UTM Location: zone 15 easting 733430 northing 4636800; Acreage less than 1 acre
6. Owner(s) Name Clinton County Board of Supervisors
7. Owner(s) Address _____ Clinton Iowa 52732
(Street address) (City) (State) (Zip)
8. Use: present Courthouse original _____ Courthouse

DESCRIPTION

9. Date of Construction 1897 Architect/Builder G.S. Mansfield, Architect
10. Building Type: single family dwelling multiple family dwelling commercial
 industrial educational other institutional public religious agricultural
11. Exterior Walls: clapboard stone brick board & batten shingles stucco
 other red sandstone
12. Structural System: wood frame with interlocking joints
 wood frame with light members (balloon frame) masonry load-bearing walls
 iron frame steel frame with curtain walls reinforced concrete
 other _____
13. Condition: excellent good fair deteriorated
14. Integrity: original site moved-if so, when? _____
Notes on alterations, additions (with dates and architect, if known) and any other notable features of building and site:
Many windows partially filled in - interior remodeled.
15. Related Outbuildings and Property: barn other farm structures
 carriage house garage privy other _____
16. Is the building endangered? no yes-if so, why? _____
17. Surroundings of the building: open land woodland scattered outbuildings
 densely built-up commercial industrial residential other _____
18. Map _____
19. Photo
Roll _____ Frame _____ View _____

SIGNIFICANCE (Indicate sources of information for all statements)

20. Architectural Significance

- a. Key structure/individually may qualify for the National Register
- b. Contributing structure c. Not eligible/intrusion

Good example of courthouse in Richardsonian Romanesque style. Tower sheathed with copper a little out of keeping with heavy, rockfaced sandstone walls. Typical stylistic features include parapet gable ends, corner towers, and sandstone exterior.

21. Historical Significance

Theme(s) Politics/Government

- a. Key structure/individually may qualify for the National Register
- b. Contributing structure c. Not eligible/intrusion

This courthouse is locally significant as the historical focus of county government, and of the political power and prestige derived from the community's status as the county seat. As center of county government, an Iowa town was reasonably assured of economic and population growth, and a prominent role in local social and political life. The county courthouse represents a significant public investment in a structure built not simply for utilitarian purposes, but also as a monument associated with the historical importance of county organization and development.

See Continuation Sheet

22. Sources (for primary and secondary sources, give complete facts of publication: author, title, place of publication, date, etc.):

Andreas, A.T. Illustrated Historical Atlas of Iowa. Chicago: Andreas Atlas Co., 1875.

Pratt, LeRoy G. The Counties and Courthouses of Iowa. Mason City, Iowa: Klipto Printing and Office Supply Co., 1977.

Stanek, Edward and Jacqueline. Iowa's Magnificent County Courthouses. Des Moines: Wallace-Homestead Book Co., 1976.

Prepared by _____ Date January 1980
 Address _____ Telephone _____
 Organization DHP

FOR DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION USE ONLY

1. OFFICE INFORMATION SOURCES ON THIS PROPERTY

<input type="checkbox"/> COUNTY RESOURCE FILE	<input type="checkbox"/> REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE PROJECT:
<input type="checkbox"/> WINDSHIELD SURVEY	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> NATIONAL REGISTER	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GRANTS-IN-AID: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____
<input type="checkbox"/> DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____

2. SUBJECT TRACES

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

3. PHOTO IMAGES _____

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Item Number(s) _____

CLINTON COUNTY

The first seat of government in Clinton County was located in Camanche, Iowa, in about 1840. The board of county commissioners operated out of hotels and houses rather than from a courthouse. After only about one year, a building in the town of Vanderburg was used to accommodate the court. This building was donated to the county for as long as it chose to occupy it. The building was made of basswood timbers and was approximately 32 feet long and 20 feet wide. As the size of county government increased, court was held in the attic of the building while other county business was transacted in the remainder. In 1846, additional space for county business was acquired at the Exchange Hotel, while the name of the town was changed to Dewitt. The first courthouse was used until 1854. The Exchange Hotel burned down in 1865.

The second courthouse was constructed in 1854 for the sum of \$6,000. This building was 40 by 50 feet and was constructed in a manner similar to the Scott County courthouse. Many county citizens felt ill at ease about the construction of this building because it had been ordered not by the people but under the power of the county judge.

The population of Clinton, and in general along the Mississippi River, had increased sharply. Frustrated attorneys who lived in Clinton had to try cases in Dewitt without the convenience of automobiles to make the trip. Political pressure finally resulted in moving the county seat to Clinton in 1869. The first courthouse in Clinton was a two-story building 44 by 52 feet. The building was erected after only 23 days and initially rented by the county prior to its purchase.

After considerable rivalry between different factions of the taxpayers, money was allocated to build a new courthouse in 1892. The foundation had to be rebuilt because of poor construction, but the building resembling a palace was completed in 1897 for a cost of \$168,000. After more than three-quarters of a century, this courthouse still proudly serves the people of Clinton.

--from Stanek, Edward, and Jacqueline Stanek,
Iowa's Magnificent County Courthouses. Des
Moines: Wallace-Homestead Book Co., 1976.