

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received JUL 28 1981

date entered AUG 27 1981

## 1. Name

historic Tama County Jail

and/or common Tama County Historical Museum

## 2. Location

street & number Broadway and State Streets \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Toledo \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 3

state Iowa code 19 county Tama code 171

## 3. Classification

| Category  | Ownership                                  | Status  | Present Use   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied        | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private           | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                 | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both              | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress           | <input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                  | <b>Accessible</b>                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | <input type="checkbox"/> in process        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific         |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered  | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted          | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation     |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> no                         | <input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:               |

## 4. Owner of Property

name Tama County

street & number Tama County Courthouse

city, town Toledo \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Iowa

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office

street & number Tama County Courthouse

city, town Toledo \_\_\_\_\_ state Iowa

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NONE has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state

---

## 7. Description

---

**Condition** excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved date \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

For well over a century the Tama County Jail, situated on the edge of the business district diagonally across from the courthouse, has been a visual landmark for residents of Toledo and Tama County. David Stoner, a local contractor who built an adjacent church and several other buildings in Toledo, designed and erected this two-story, red brick edifice in 1870. Although Stoner's chief concerns in designing the jail were utilitarian, he did incorporate features from the Italianate and Romanesque modes. The almost squarish feel of the structure, the two-over-two wood sash windows set in round arched brick surrounds, overhanging bracketted cornice, and low pitched hipped roof are characteristic of the Italianate. At the ground floor level on the south side, however, Stoner used semi-circular Romanesque arches, most likely in an attempt to make the jail compatible with the adjacent Romanesque Revival courthouse erected four years earlier. In the late 19th century the jail was enlarged by the addition of a two-story rear (east) wing.

Inside, the jail contained a large cell block and several rooms on the first floor while the upper floor served primarily as the sheriff's residence but did contain four cells. This building served as the Tama County Jail until 1970 when it was leased to the Tama County Historical Society and converted into a museum. At that time, the interior, which was in extremely poor condition, underwent renovation which included pouring a cement floor on the first story and panelling walls and installing drop ceiling in some areas of the building. The exterior appears to have undergone little change and the bars over the windows have been left in place.

## 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> education              | <input type="checkbox"/> military                       | <input type="checkbox"/> social/<br>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 checked="" 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** 1870–1970 **Builder/Architect** David Stoner

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Tama County Jail, now the Tama County Historical Society, has the unique distinction of being the only facility of its kind ever erected in Tama County. Although the county was organized in 1853, there was no sentiment to build a jail and prisoners of the county were lodged in jails in neighboring counties. The completion of a new courthouse in Toledo in 1865 was probably the chief factor leading to the erection of a county lockup. In January 1869 the Board of Supervisors agreed to build a jail and organized a committee to obtain plans and specifications for such a facility. In June of that year, the supervisors organized a site selection committee and enacted a special tax of 1½ mills to pay for the new jail. In June 1870 the board contracted with Toledo builder David Stoner to erect the facility, and by the end of that year, the jail was ready for its first prisoners.

Over the years, the jail housed its share of lawbreakers, and in the late 19th century was enlarged. The jail had political importance as well because of the practice of the sheriff and his family living on the upper floor and acting as jailers. Because the position of sheriff is a very political one in rural Iowa counties like Tama, the jail became a pawn in many heated intra and inter party struggles.

In the 1960's the jail came in for increasing criticism because of its inadequacy, and eventually a grand jury condemned it. In June 1970 it was closed, and the county reverted to the practice of housing its prisoners in neighboring county jails. The Tama County Historical Society leased the old building and converted it into a museum.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

# 10. Geographical Data **ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

Acreege of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Tama

Quadrangle scale 7.5

UMT References

|   |                   |   |  |
|---|-------------------|---|--|
| A | <u>1</u> <u>5</u> | <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u> | <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> |
|   | Zone              | Easting   | Northing   |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| B |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| C |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| D |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| E |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| F |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| G |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| H |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 1, Block 1, Original Town of Toledo.

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 Ralph J. Christian, Architectural Historian

organization Division of Historic Preservation date July 17, 1981

street & number 26 East Market Street telephone 319-353-6949/353-4186

city or town Iowa City state Iowa 52240

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Adrian A. Anderson

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 7/17/81

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
entered in the  
National Register

date 8/27/81

Keeper of the National Register

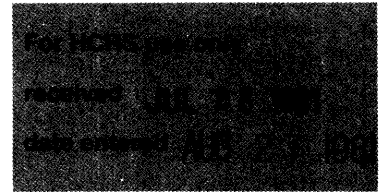
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

---

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Caldwell, J.R., A History of Tama County, Iowa, Volume I (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1910).

Chapman, Samuel D., History of Tama County, Iowa (Toledo: Toledo Times, 1879.)

Pratt, Leroy G., The Counties and Courthouses of Iowa (Mason City: Klipto Printing and Office Supply Company, 1977).