

PH0502090

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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
Van Buren County Courthouse
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
904 4th Street
CITY, TOWN
Keosauqua
STATE
Iowa
VICINITY OF
First
COUNTY
Van Buren
CODE
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
NOT FOR PUBLICATION

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"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Van Buren County
STREET & NUMBER
904 4th St.
CITY, TOWN
Keosauqua
STATE
Iowa
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Van Buren County Office Building
STREET & NUMBER
402 Dodge Street
CITY, TOWN
Keosauqua
STATE
Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
HABS-Inventory
DATE
22 Feb. 1964
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN
STATE
 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

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

The Van Buren County Courthouse, built 1840-43, expresses classical influences in its proportions, wide cornices and pedimented gable ends. The two-story structure is built of red brick laid in common bond on a dressed limestone foundation. Walls are 22" thick on the ground floor, tapering to 18" above. Windows are plain, with wide, flat stone lintels and narrower sills. The central entrance has double doors and multilight transom. Within the tympanum is set a fanlight.

Timbers and trusses are oak, woodwork is walnut. The ground floor is divided into office space, with the courtroom occupying the whole upper floor. Original jury chairs, spectator benches and iron railing are still in use. Two walnut spiral staircases were part of the original plan, now replaced by a single, plain stairway.

Although no pictures have been found as illustration, the original courthouse had a wooden, gable-roofed tower, which was removed sometime during the 1860's. The courthouse is set on a hill overlooking the Des Moines River, along with a jail and office building which are not included in this nomination (they have neither the historical or architectural significance of the courthouse).

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 type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1840-43

BUILDER/~~ARCHITECT~~ James Hall, John Fairman, Edwin Manning

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Van Buren County Courthouse is one of the oldest county courthouses still existing in the state. Like other pre-Civil War courthouses in Iowa, such as those in Lee and Allamakee Counties, it was built in the Greek Revival style, a form both imposing and suited, when necessary, to the unsophisticated construction methods so often found in recently-settled areas. Use of detail is far more sparing on this courthouse than on others of its style in Iowa, but is enough to clearly mark its classical origins.

Van Buren County was formed in 1836 by the Territorial Legislature of Wisconsin, with Farmington as the county seat. After Iowa Territory was created (1838) and a series of challenges made to Farmington's preeminence as a political center, the county seat was permanently established at Keosauqua. The first contract for the courthouse was awarded in 1840 to local builders James Hall and John Fairman, on the understanding the building would be completed in two years. Fairman and Hall apparently failed in this regard, for the contract was reawarded to Edwin Manning, who finished the courthouse in 1843. It has served since then as the home of Van Buren County government.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Van Buren County, Iowa. Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1878.
 Goeldner, Paul. Temples of Justice. Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1970.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one (land on which courthouse sits)

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	5 8 7 5 5 0	4 5 0 9 4 7 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Libby Morgan Woodruff, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION

Van Buren County Development Association

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Box 9

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Keosauqua, Iowa 52565

STATE

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

Alvin D. Anderson MB

TITLE

Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

8/13/47

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. M. ...

DATE

11/9/72

DIRECTOR OF OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Charles ...

DATE

11-4-72

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER