

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED DEC 6 1976  
DATE ENTERED APR 18 1977

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

\*\* Cottonwood County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

Cottonwood County Courthouse

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

10th St

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Windom

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Sixth

STATE

Minnesota

CODE

27

COUNTY

Cottonwood

CODE

033

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:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Cottonwood County

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Windom

VICINITY OF

STATE

Minnesota

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cottonwood County Courthouse - Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Windom

STATE

Minnesota

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Statewide Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1976

FEDERAL  STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Minnesota Historical Society, Building 25, Fort Snelling

CITY, TOWN

St. Paul

STATE

Minnesota

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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

Constructed by Jacob B. Nelsen of Mankato in 1904 according to designs by Saint Paul architects O-Meyer and Thori, the Cottonwood County Courthouse exemplifies an integration of elements from the Neo-Classic and Renaissance Revival modes. These styles replaced the Richardsonian Romanesque in application to public building design in Minnesota during the first decade of the twentieth century. The Cottonwood County building is situated on the center of the public square in Windom, Minnesota. Principal facades on east and west are embellished by monumental Corinthian porticoes. The center of the essentially rectangular mass is crowned by a domed tower; a statue of Justice surmounts the tower. Corners are defined by low domed pavilions. All facades are symmetrical.

The courthouse is two storeys in height and is set upon a high basement. Sandstone of a deep red hue is used in the construction of the rusticated basement, first floor window arches and sills, east and west porticoes, pilaster capitals and ball-type finials on the parapets. A buff-colored brick with pigmented mortar joints is used for the facing of the two principal floors and parapets. Domes are sheathed with metal.

The dominant feature of the interior is a central domed atrium which rises through the two upper storeys and off of which circulation is provided to offices and chambers. The plan of the dome itself is square with corners beveled to create the impression of an octagon. The interior face of the dome is divided into four tympani each bearing individual allegorical subjects; i.e. "government", "justice", "freedom of the press", and "freedom of religion". The short legs of the octagon bear emblems relating to history, art, government, and science. These are the work of the artist L.A. Thiel. The entire interior decoration was undertaken under the supervision of Odin J. Oyen of LaCrosse, Wisconsin, who personally executed the gold-leaf embellished mural of "Justice" above the bench in the second floor courtroom. This mural is patterned after the painting "Justice" in the Palace of Justice in Paris. The paintings throughout the courthouse have been restored and are presently in excellent condition, as is the entire building.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input 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 1904

BUILDER/ARCHITECT O'Meyer & Thori of St. Paul

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Builder: J.B. Nelson

Since its construction in 1904 the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom has served as the seat of county government. It is executed in the Neo-Classic mode of architectural design. The influence of such is evident in the design and construction of many turn of the century public buildings. Similarly, the treatment of the interior spaces with architectural and artistic features represents a carry-through the Neo-Classicism from exterior to interior. The dome and courtroom are embellished with painted murals depicting allorigical and classical themes; these works are the products of regional artists and craftsmen.

The Cottonwood County Courthouse has recently undergone preservation/restoration work. It is significant as a local landmark and future plans ensure its continued use.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Cross, Marion E., Minnesota Courthouse. (Minneapolis?), Colonial Dames of Am. in Minn. 1966.
- Lewis, Lucille, Cottonwood County Courthouse, 1976.
- "Windom pioneer built enduring 'monuments', "Worthington Minnesota Daily Globe, 9 March 1974, p. 9

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 1 acre  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	3 2 9 9 0 0	4 8 5 8 9 6 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
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Charles W. Nelson, Architectural Historian and Susan Zeik, Research Associate

ORGANIZATION

Minnesota Historical Society

DATE

10/26/76

STREET & NUMBER

Building 25, Fort Snelling

TELEPHONE

612-726-1171

CITY OR TOWN

St. Paul

STATE

Minnesota

# 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

*Russell W. Fridley* 11/29/76

TITLE Russell W. Fridley

DATE

State Historic Preservation Officer

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

CHIEF

*Jerry P. ...*

DATE

4/18/89

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

*Charles ...*

DATE

3.18.77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   2   Page   1  

---

REFERENCE NUMBER: 77000728

STATE: Minnesota

COUNTY: Cottonwood

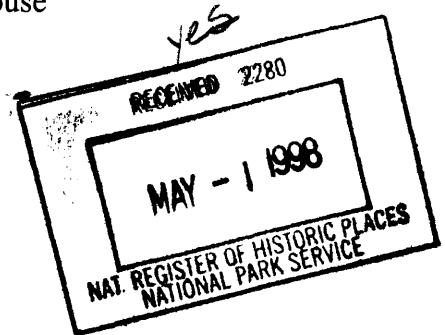
RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC): Cottonwood County Courthouse


CITY/TOWNSHIP: Windom

VICINITY OF:

ADDRESS: 900 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave.

COMMENTS: Address Correction



  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ian R. Stewart  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

4/24/98  
Date