

*Sent to Washington 3/20/95*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Moultrie County Courthouse

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 10 South Main Street ☐ not for publication

city or town Sullivan ☐ vicinity

state Illinois code IL county Moultrie code 019 zip code 61951

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination  
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of  
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William L. Wheeler, SHPO 3-17-95  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:) _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Moultrie County Courthouse  
Name of Property

Moultrie, Illinois  
County and State

### 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private  
☒ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
3	1	objects
4	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register**

N/A

### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government/Courthouse

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government/Courthouse

### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Classic Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Stone  
Brick  
roof Asphalt  
other Copper

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Politics/Government

**Period of Significance**

1906-1945

**Significant Dates**

1906

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Deal & Ginzler, Architect

Walters, H.B., Builder

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References****Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Moultrie County Courthouse

Moultrie, Illinois

Name of Property

County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 1 6 3 6 2 0 3 0 4 3 8 4 2 8 0  
Zone Easting Northing  
2                                             

3                                               
Zone Easting Northing  
4                                             

☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joan & Joe Pound and Mabel & Charles Shuman

organization Moultrie County Historical & Genealogical Soc date 1/27/95

street & number 117 E. Harrison St. telephone 217/728-4085

city or town Sullivan state IL zip code 61951

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Moultrie County Board, Moultrie County Courthouse

street & number 10 South Main Street telephone 217/728-4389

city or town Sullivan state IL zip code 61951

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Moultrie County Courthouse

**DESCRIPTION SUMMARY**

Standing on the central public square in Sullivan, and bounded by Harrison, Jefferson, Main, and Washington Streets, the present Moultrie County Courthouse is an imposing structure of stately proportions, expressing in its classic details, the Classical Revival style of architecture. The structure, completed in 1906 rises a full three stories in height above a basement, and is topped by a massive octagonal clock tower with a domed copper roof. The first story is constructed of Cleveland stone, the second and third of pressed brick with stone trim.<sup>1</sup> Massive columns beginning at the second story support large pediments. Short flights of steps lead to impressive entrances on all four sides of the building. The entrances are fully protected by heavy storm doors, set well inside. Standing 80 feet wide, 100 feet long, and 50 feet high from the ground to the cornice, the courthouse contains 38 rooms and a space content of 400,000 cubic feet. Concrete, brick, and tile used in construction, especially in the vaults, caused the building to be considered fireproof. The building has a low pitched gable and hip roof of asphalt, with a tall chimney located on the south side of the roof. On the courthouse square is a Civil War Cannon placed in the southwest part of the courthouse yard in 1907; a Civil War Union Soldier Monument located southeast of the courthouse in 1906; and a Lincoln Eighth Judicial Circuit Courthouse Marker placed in the northeast corner of the courthouse yard in 1921. All three of these objects are considered contributing to the nomination. A WCTU Fountain, which was originally installed in 1905, is located in the northwest corner of the courthouse yard. This fountain has been rebuilt and renovated several times making it a noncontributing object. Concrete sidewalks from the center of each side of the square run straight to the entries on each side of the building. There is a concrete coping around all four sides of the square with a sidewalk running around the perimeter. Surrounding the courthouse square is the downtown business district of Sullivan. An handicapped accessible concrete and metal walkway is installed along the north side of the building.

**EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION**

The exterior walls are nearly identical. The east and west elevations are 100 feet long while the north and south elevations are 80 feet wide. On each of the four corners of the building as well as the two outside piers of the pediments are stone. Short flights of concrete steps lead to the arched entrances on all four sides of the building. The

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entrances are protected by heavy storm doors and are recessed underneath the arches. Massive stone Doric inspired columns beginning at the second story support the large pediments and break the monotony of the plain flat walls. There is a stone coping encircling the roof above the cornice. Classic pediments on each of the four sides with a circular inset stone panel are surrounded by stone. Each elevation's fenestration is nearly identical with the first story have from left to right, three, one-over-one windows, the central entry, and three more one-over-one windows. The second and third stories have two, one-over-one windows on each side of the pediment extension. The extension has single one-over-one windows flanking a pair of one-over-one windows.

The base of the dome is made of stone. It has four corner blocks with stepped courses in a pyramid shape rising to the eight-sided structure. The four sides of the dome that face north, east, south, and west have three recessed arches on each side while the four shorter sides of the dome at the northeast, southeast, southwest, and northwest corners have two recessed arches on each side. Above the arches is a solid balustrade. Above the balustrade is a clock with four faces. This clock was purchased from the E. Howard Clock Company by popular subscription at a cost of \$1280. The clock faces are 5' 6" in diameter. The dome's roof has eight sides that meet to form a base for a flag pole. The flag pole was bought by penny contributions furnished by school children from throughout the county.

## INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

Corridors lead from each entrance into a spacious square center lobby and divide the first floor into four equal parts. All corridors and the rotunda have tile floors. In the center of the first floor under the rotunda is a square design with the dates 1845, 1865, and 1904. They represent the years of the erection of the three courthouses on the present site. The walls of the rotunda and corridors of this floor as well as the others are protected by a wainscoting of Tennessee marble and finished in a terra cotta color with gold and green trim. The walls of the rotunda were adorned with pastoral and harvest scenes and also a representation of the first court house erected on the present site, which was destroyed by fire in 1864. Two banks of marble stairs at the south end of the central lobby lead to the upper floors. On the first floor are located the county nurse's office, a women's public waiting room, men's rest room, assistance office, and other offices. On the north side of the central lobby, flanking the north corridor on both sides, are vaults of the county clerk

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and the circuit clerk. They are entered through the second floor by means of circular stairways.

The second floor, arranged like the first floor, contains the county judge's office, the probate courtroom, a grand jury room, a witness room, a bailiff's room, board of supervisors room, and the treasurer's office with an attached vault and private office. The circuit clerk's suite takes up the entire northeast corner of the second floor and consists of two rooms, two vaults, and the circular stairway that leads to the vault on the first floor. The county clerk's suite occupies the entire northwest corner of the second floor and consists of two rooms, a private office, and a vault from which a circular stairway leads to the county clerk's sub-vault on the first floor. The walls of the rotunda on the second floor have murals representing science, commerce, mining, and industry in the county.

On the third floor is the circuit courtroom which originally occupied almost the entire half of the north side of the floor. It had a seating capacity of 224. In 1970, the courtroom was renovated making it into smaller rooms for court purposes. There are now two smaller courtrooms with a jury room located between them. Walls in these rooms are paneled with light oak wood. Draperies cover the entire wall behind the judge's bench. Rest rooms and a kitchenette are located adjacent to the jury room. An access ramp is located on the south side of the west courtroom with a computer room is located at the south end of the jury room with an entrance from the west courtroom. Other rooms on this floor include a reception room and associate judge's office on the west side, the states attorney's office in the southwest corner, the law library on the south side, probation officers' office in the southeast corner and the public defender on the east side. The basement continues the general layout of the upper floors.

A single stairway from the central lobby of the first floor leads into the basement. There are boiler and fuel rooms, storage rooms, vaults, offices, and men's and women's rest rooms. One of the two original vaults in the basement was torn out and remodeled into an office.

### IMPROVEMENTS AND RENOVATIONS

Until 1938, the interior and exterior remained virtually unchanged. At that time, a small room in the office of the circuit clerk on the second floor was converted into an additional vault for the circuit clerk.<sup>2</sup>

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An interior elevator and a north side exterior access ramp was added to the building. A radio system was installed in 1947; however, in 1960 a newer system was purchased for the sheriff's office. This was necessary due to a change in frequencies. About the same time, the teller cages in all offices were removed and new formica counter tops were added to the base cabinets.<sup>3</sup>

In 1970 the courthouse underwent its most complete renovation since its construction. At that time a new zone control heating system and 60 tons of air conditioning were added as were storm windows throughout. New lighting fixtures and outlets were installed and both the primary and secondary electrical circuitry in the building were revamped. Offices have had paneling added to the walls and ceilings in all offices throughout the building were lowered. Suspended ceilings and recessed lighting were included in the halls, except for some of the plastered ceilings around the roof of the rotunda underneath the dome. In the attic area above the stained glass in the rotunda are lights which can be turned on to emphasize the stained glass design.<sup>4</sup>

The office of the Moultrie County Sheriff were moved from the courthouse to the county jail in 1978 to make room for the Moultrie County Board. The former sheriff's quarters are now occupied by the county nurse.

### CIVIL WAR CANNON

Stated in the records of the Moultrie County Board of Supervisors dated April 2, 1907,

"Whereas, the Honorable W. B. McKinley as a mark of his appreciation for the building of the new courthouse has presented to Moultrie County and the Grand Army of the Republic of said county, a large cannon; and whereas, the Grand Army of the Republic desire that said cannon be placed in the courthouse yard:

Therefore, be it resolved, that said gift is accepted and permission is hereby given to place said cannon in the southwest part of the courthouse yard in as secure and attractive a manner as possible."<sup>5</sup>

The cannon was made by the West Point Foundry in Cold Springs, New York and was cast in 1865, which is embossed on the discharged end. The identification number is



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S4190N379 and it is also marked with the initials S.C.L. for Stephen Carr Lyford, a U.S. Army Ordnance inspector from 1861-1865. The cannon is a 4.2 inch Parrott, which fired 30 "pounders" at about a 40 degree elevation. The Parrott cannons were designed by Robert Parker Parrott (1804-1877), a former captain in the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps. Hundreds of these Parrott cannons were used by the federal forces during the Civil War.

It is not been determined from whom the cannon was obtained by the Honorable W. B. McKinley; however, a conversation with the curator of the Rock Island Arsenal Museum indicated a large number of cannon were declared "surplus" following the Civil War. Some of these were stored at the Rock Island Arsenal in Rock Island, Illinois. This cannon is considered a contributing object to the nomination and is mounted on a concrete base.

### CIVIL WAR UNION SOLDIER MONUMENT

On August 1, 1906, the Moultrie County Board of Supervisors minutes read, "Motion by Supervisor Jenne that statue of soldier be erected by Fred Sona in Court House yard be placed 40 ft. from the SE corner of Court House square in direct line with SE corner of Court House."

Fred Sona operated the Fred Sona Monument Shop located on the east side of the courthouse square. An article in the Decatur Herald, November 13, 1906 describes the Civil War Soldier Monument as standing on the southeast corner of the courthouse yard. Its base is of granite standing six feet high and surmounted by an Italian figure representing a soldier in uniform. This figure is also six feet high. There is no inscription of any kind on the monument. Originally the statue was of a soldier holding a rifle. First the top of the rifle was broken off, and one morning several years ago, the rest of the rifle--in several pieces, was found on the ground below. The pedestal was reinforced with concrete, and today the soldier--still without a rifle, stands surveying the east side of the Sullivan square. This statue is considered a contributing object to the nomination.

### LINCOLN EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURTHOUSE MARKER

In 1921 the Lincoln Circuit Marker Association placed a granite stone monument on the northeast corner of the courthouse yard. The frontal dimensions of the monument are

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28 inches in width by 62 inches in height with a bronze plaque attached to the face of the monument. The dimensions of the plaque are 22 inches by 28 inches.

Under a profile relief view of Abraham Lincoln's face is inscribed: "Abraham Lincoln--Traveled This Way As He Rode--The Circuit of the Eighth--Judicial District..1847-1857--Erected 1921." "George Tober - 1921" is etched in the lower left hand corner of the bronze plaque. There are two other emblems on the lower section of the plaque, one of the Daughters of the American Revolution and one for the Lincoln Circuit Marker Association. The marker is considered a contributing object to the nomination.

## WCTU FOUNTAIN

In 1905, members of the Sullivan Women's Christian Temperance Union, dedicated the first fountain on the square. It was located on the northwest corner of the courthouse yard. The fountain was a statue of small boy, holding a boot, with a hole in the toe that allowed water to run out. It contained a center spray and drinking fountains around the outer edges as well as a circle of ornamental vases. Sometime around 1937, the fountain ceased to operate and the base was loaded with soil and used as a planter for nearly thirty years.

On June 1, 1967 the fountain was dug up and rehabilitated. Colored lights and a continuous flow pump were installed. An elaborate three tier fountain was constructed on the original base in September of 1970. Water flowed over a maiden located atop the statuary and decorative supporting arms surrounded the base of the upper two water bowls.

Plumbing from this effort rusted in a few years and concrete also needed to be replaced. In 1983, a rededication was held after the concrete retaining wall around the fountain was rebuilt and a new bronze plaque was attached to that wall. A new two tiered water fountain made of stone was installed. The fountain was topped with two children holding an umbrella, with water running from the top. Due to the numerous renovations of the fountain, it is considered a noncontributing object to the nomination.

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Moultrie County Courthouse is locally significant for Criterion A for politics/government as the center of Moultrie County's administrative and judicial government functions since its original construction. The period of significance is 1906, the year construction of the courthouse was completed until 1945, the fifty-year cutoff for the National Register of Historic Places.

**HISTORY OF MOULTRIE COUNTY AND THE MOULTRIE COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

Moultrie County was settled in 1820-1850 by pioneers from Kentucky, Tennessee, southern Indiana, and Ohio. By 1842 the area of present day Moultrie County had become populous enough for the inhabitants to feel the need for a smaller and more closely knit unit of local government than the large counties of Macon (to the northwest) and Shelby (to the south) with their distant county seats. In the fall of that year a petition for the organization of a new county was circulated and presented to the legislature as soon as it convened. The area included the present territory of Moultrie County, plus one whole tier of townships on the west side of Coles County, and had for its southwestern boundary, an unbroken line instead of the series of notches that mark the present boundary. But four hundred citizens of Coles County were opposed to cutting off of any part of that county, therefore those townships were eliminated from the proposed Moultrie County area, and the new county was formed on February 16, 1843. Mr. Williamson, the Shelby County representative, was given the privilege of naming the new county. He named it in honor of Colonel William Moultrie of early military fame.<sup>6</sup>

The following year, 1844, the place of holding court was moved by a vote of the people from the home of James Camfield to East Nelson, a settlement a few miles southeast of where Sullivan now stands. In the fall of 1844 the question of permanently locating the county seat was submitted to the people. A majority of voters could not agree on a suitable site, so a second election was called. At the second election, Asa's Point, the site of Sullivan was selected and became the county seat. Asa's Point was changed to Sullivan by the county commissioners. They chose this name from Sullivan's Island, located in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, where historic Fort Moultrie is located.

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Philo Hale owned eighty acres of land on the site of Sullivan. He proposed for a nominal sum to let the town have forty acres of his land for a townsite. His offer of \$100 was accepted and the amount was raised by popular subscription.

Although the site of the county seat was decided upon in 1845, the building of the first courthouse was not started until the spring of 1847. It was built on the center block of the original town plat composed of 25 blocks. Unlike the first courthouses in the older counties, the structure was built not of logs, but of brick.<sup>7</sup> However, on the morning of November 25, 1864, a fire broke out in the courthouse which destroyed the building and with it a large part of the county records. Plans for a new and larger courthouse were completed in the spring of 1865; all materials except the bricks, which were made locally, were hauled by horse drawn wagons from Mattoon. The structure was financed by the sale of swamp lands at Eagle Pond north of Sullivan, which had been given to the county by federal grant. This land was soon drained and is very productive. The new building, complete with a fireproof vault, was received by the court in September of 1866. By 1904, this courthouse had become inadequate, and at a special election, held in February, the county voted to replace it with a modern structure, which is in use today.<sup>8</sup>

The buildings and grounds on the courthouse square have witnessed many interesting and historical events. During the Lincoln-Douglas senate campaign of 1858, both men addressed crowds in Sullivan. Stephen Douglas gave a speech from the east side of the courthouse while at the same time Abraham Lincoln and his supporters formed a parade that marched into Sullivan and through the edge of the Douglas crowd on their way to Freeland Grove on the north edge of town. The disturbance created a near riot.<sup>9</sup>

During the Civil War, the loyalty of the citizens of Sullivan was badly divided since many had relatives in the South. The Copperheads (Southern sympathizers) held frequent meetings and often paraded around the Sullivan square. Not to be outdone, the Union supporters began using the same tactics and there were frequent fights and arguments.

In 1896, there was a lynching on the north side of the courthouse square. The victim, Grant Atteberry, was locked up in the county jail, accused of assaulting a local woman. A mob, equipped with a strong hay rope, came to the jail and demanded that the sheriff release the accused to them. Impressed with their determination and array of weapons, he complied with their request and the accused was hanged from a limb of a tree on the

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Moultrie County Courthouse

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northwest corner of the courthouse lawn. After this event, all trees on the courthouse lawn were cut down and have only been replaced in recent years.

On May 17, 1904 the Moultrie County Board selected the architectural firm of Deal & Ginsel in Lincoln, Illinois to draw the plans and specifications for the new courthouse in Sullivan.<sup>10</sup> J. M. Deal was born in Sweetwater, Illinois in 1867 and was a cabinet maker by trade in his early years. He later began designing and constructing buildings and was one of the early architects to be "grandfathered" in under the Illinois Architectural Registration Act in 1897. In the late 1890's he teamed up with a professionally trained architectural designer named Roland F. Ginzel, who specialized in design as a complement to Deal's construction expertise.

Roland F. Ginzel was born in Trenton, Illinois on January 5, 1875. He attended architectural school at the University of Illinois for four years. The firm was very prolific and was responsible for the designs of hundreds of houses, schools, commercial, public, and civic buildings in the Midwest, including the Logan County Courthouse in Lincoln in 1903 and the Moultrie County Courthouse in Sullivan in 1906.

The plans and specifications were adopted August 1, and the old courthouse was ordered sold at public auction on August 24. The following day, the contract for erection of the new courthouse was awarded to H. B. Walters of Danville, Illinois for \$76,952.50. He also purchased the old courthouse for \$280, but the bell, vault doors, all furniture and fixtures, and windows and doors were reserved by the county for use in the temporary county quarters which were being built.<sup>11</sup> The exact time when work on the new courthouse began cannot be verified, but it was sometime between the dates of August 6 and December 13, 1904. The original contract did not provide for frescoing, furnishing, heating, lighting, and the extra marble work. In May 1906 the contracts were let for the frescoing, \$2500; furniture, \$9705; heating, \$2475; gas and electric fixtures, \$1300, and for the marble wainscoting, \$1205, making a total of \$17,185 for fixtures and furnishings.<sup>12</sup> The new courthouse was received as having been completed on August 6, 1906. The total cost was in excess of \$87,000.<sup>13</sup> It was reported that the contractor lost nearly \$17,000 on the job, allegedly due to omission of the third floor costs from his bid.<sup>14</sup>

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### SIGNIFICANCE

The primary purpose of the Moultrie County Courthouse is to house the several divisions of county government and to provide for citizen access to the officeholder/administrators of these several departments. Perhaps the governmental function that comes to mind first is the administration of justice. The present two courtrooms (originally just one large courtroom) have been the site of several newsworthy trials. The embezzlement of funds within the former Merchants and Farmers State Bank in 1921 led to the trial and sentencing of its president, Jimmy Steel and cashier, Z. B. Whitfield. The bank later failed on Christmas Day in 1931 during the early years of the Great Depression. Many other criminal and civil court actions were recorded during the years 1906 to 1945.<sup>15</sup> The chief prosecutor for criminal court action is the States Attorney, whose office is in the building.

During these years, the office of the County Sheriff and his deputies were also in the courthouse on the first floor near the west door so that they could depart swiftly when called in an emergency. The only driveway from the city streets to the building goes to this west door. After the coming of radio, a transmitter was located in the sheriff's office so that he could be in touch with law enforcement officers throughout the area.

The most important unit of county government in Illinois is the legislative body, the Board of Supervisors, which is composed of citizens elected to represent the various townships. This board meets at least monthly and has the important responsibilities of approving expenditures, adopting a budget, managing the courthouse and other county property, and considering legislative action.

The County Treasurer is responsible for the collection of all property taxes and the office is located on the second floor of the courthouse, as is the meeting room for the Board of Supervisors. The County Clerk's office is also on this floor and it does much business with county citizens as they record deeds to property and their transfer. They also issue marriage licenses. The Circuit clerk's office is also on this second floor and it serves the Circuit Court by carrying out court actions in civil suits including divorce settlements.

During these early years in the history of the present courthouse, there were other important governmental activities headquartered in the building.

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The office of the County Superintendent of Schools was located on the first floor of the courthouse, near the east entrance. The teachers of the one-room country schools, as well as town school teachers were expected to attend a teachers' institute which was held twice yearly and conducted by the Superintendent of Schools in the Circuit Court room. The final exams for eighth grade students were distributed by the County Superintendent and for several years the country school graduation exercises were held at the Moultrie County Courthouse. Many of these activities were transferred to high school auditoriums after they were constructed in 1918-1925. Today, the office of County Superintendent of Schools no longer exists.

Through the years, many other functions and activities for the benefit of the people of Moultrie County have been centered in the courthouse. The disastrous influenza epidemic of World War I caused public health to become a vital governmental function. Other contagious diseases, such as smallpox, diphtheria, scarlet fever, and polio, took a terrible toll until vaccinations were developed. The County Nurse, from the office in the courthouse, performed a major public health function by organizing immunization campaigns to control these diseases.

During the early years of the twentieth century, after the present courthouse was constructed, Moultrie County roads were a morass of mud and deep ruts from December to April. As automobiles became more numerous, the citizens demanded road and bridge improvements. The County Board of Supervisors authorized the construction of two single land concrete roads--one from Sullivan west to Kirksville and the other east to the Illinois Masonic Home. Later, the State of Illinois, launched a tremendous highway construction program in the late 1910s. The local township highway commissioners could not cope with these developments and the Office of the County Highway Superintendent was established by the Board of Supervisors. The present day all-weather road network, as well as the several state highways that cross Moultrie County, reflect the coordinating work and planning that was centered in this courthouse office.

The County Clerk's office is the repository for birth certificates and during World War I and II, the clerk often was called upon by draftees to provide proof of age; therefore, the courthouse was an important center of activities related to the drafting of young men for military service. It served as a meeting place not only for the draft board, but also for the rationing boards, which allocated various food and other commodities, such as gasoline and tire ration coupons for the family auto, to the citizens. Literally hundreds of Moultrie

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Moultrie County Courthouse

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County citizens made visits to these boards to present information and appeal for decisions that were important to them.

While these wars were fought in foreign lands, Moultrie County citizens, along with those of every community in the U.S. were deeply involved in support activities for our troops in service. The courthouse served as the center for organized financial and moral support for our soldiers in battle. War bond sales drives, Red Cross and U.S.O. campaigns were launched by public meetings in the courthouse. Local women made bandages for the troops using the courthouse basement as a site.

Toward the end of World War II, a large memorial honor roll was constructed on the northwest corner of the courthouse lawn to recognize the valiant contribution of Moultrie County citizens to the war effort.

From 1904-1906 when the courthouse was built, until the late 1920's, Moultrie County was a predominantly rural area with very little industrial activity. Most of the businesses were devoted to supplying the needs of farmers. With the coming of the automobile and paved highways, many residents of Moultrie County found jobs in Decatur and Mattoon. As a result, Sullivan, Bethany and Lovington became "bedroom" communities.

Census data from 1910 to 1940 indicates a relatively stable population pattern; however, the mechanization of farming did reduce the need for many farm workers; therefore, Moultrie County began to attract several industries. For example, the circuit court room in the courthouse was the site for meeting to organize a successful campaign to raise money to attract the Brown Shoe Company to locate a major factory in Sullivan, which provided critical employment to residents during the Depression of the 1930's. Today, far more residents of the country are employed in business or industry than on farms. The Moultrie County Courthouse has been the center of public service and action that has encouraged these important developments. Welfare, the care of the poor and indigent, was not an important or costly role of government in the early years of this century as it is today. The township supervisors in Moultrie County administered public aid to those not cared for by private charity.

However, the Moultrie County Board of Supervisors did purchase a farm with a large frame house and established the County Farm as a public "work relief" operation for able bodied but unemployed and destitute people. For many years, the farm was managed



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by a couple employed by the county and provided work and board for 15 to 25 poverty-stricken persons. While it remains county owned, today it is leased to a local farmer, since welfare service has been largely transferred to the state and federal government.

The Moultrie County Courthouse is the repository for the records and archives of the county and many of these historic and valuable papers are stored in the basement rooms of the building. Recently, a court document signed by Abraham Lincoln, when he was a circuit riding attorney, was discovered in these files.

Another public service function of the courthouse which has carried from the early days down to the present time is the occasional administrator's sale of farm land or city property to settle the estate of a deceased owner. These auctions are held in the lobby of the main floor of the courthouse and often attract a large crowd of spectators and bidders. Similarly the County Treasurer conducts property sales to satisfy tax obligations. The Moultrie County Courthouse has long been, and still is, the focal point for tabulating election returns, as the County Clerk is in charge of dispensing ballots to the voters and tabulating returns on election night. Many interesting stories have come down from the events and excitement of election night vote counting. Normally, a rather large crowd of interested spectators assembles in the main floor lobby of the courthouse to await the returns which are posted there.

Many important court sessions have been held in the Moultrie County Courthouse. Like all counties in Illinois, the grand jury is selected and assembled to hear the preliminary arguments concerning criminal cases. After the lynching on the courthouse lawn in the 1890's, before the present building was constructed, there was a period when murder and other serious criminal cases were somewhat reduced. However, civil litigation during the period 1904-1935 seemed to be more frequent than in recent years. It seemed that farm owners and city dwellers were constantly having litigation over property boundary lines and trespass. Court records in Moultrie County are filled with these cases of civil legal action. Some of these lawsuits attracted large crowds of spectators and the courtrooms were often filled. Today, this type of legal action is less frequent and less entertaining for the public.

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Moultrie County Courthouse

## CIVIC AND COMMUNITY

While the principal purpose and use of the courthouse has always been to house the personnel and machinery of Moultrie County government, it has also played an important role in facilitating a large number of community and organizational activities. During the first 40 years of its service, the Circuit Court room was used for a large number of community meetings because there was no other large meeting room available. The school with its assembly hall was not built until 1916, and church sanctuaries were not available for public meetings.

The Moultrie County Farmers' Institute, which was a very well attended and important three-day educational meeting was held in the courthouse each year. The Farmers' Institute was one of the important avenues through which the College of Agriculture at the University of Illinois reached out to help farmers and homemakers learn new and useful techniques. The Institute preceded the agricultural and home economics extension educational programs of the University. The Institute was active from approximately 1907 to about 1930. In addition to the adult educational features of the Institute, it featured a grain show which was held in the Moultrie County Courthouse in the first floor lobby area. Samples of grain and other farm products were exhibited by farmers and their children to be judged and prizes awarded for the best displays.<sup>16</sup>

The Farmers' Institutes stimulated the interest of farmers and the first organizational meetings of the Moultrie County Farm Bureau were held in the court room. Both political parties used the courthouse for meetings and candidates for national, state, and county offices have often spoken at campaign meetings in the building. Sometimes it was a standing-room-only crowd when the governor came to the courthouse, as several did during these years.<sup>17</sup> Later, Teachers' Institutes including art work from rural school students, were added to the Farmers' Institutes. The G.A.R. and the Moultrie County Historical and Genealogical Society also held meetings in the courthouse. Occasionally, business organizations or corporations held meetings in the court room. One such meeting that affected many local property owners was the reorganization of the Moultrie Mutual Relief Association, a local mutual assurance company.<sup>18</sup> Also, the Sullivan Chamber of Commerce scheduled meetings in the building during the early years of this courthouse. It was truly the hub of this growing agricultural and agribusiness community.

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Moultrie County Courthouse

The Moultrie County Courthouse merits recognition for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its association with the county's governmental and judicial functions and for its impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands of people during the first half of the twentieth century. During the first 40 years, there were over 250 different staff and elected officials, who at some time worked full time in this building. Approximately 6,000 marriage licenses were granted, 25,000 real estate transfers recorded, 2,480 served on juries for 250 or more criminal and civil court trials, thousands of births and deaths were recorded, and untold millions of dollars of taxes collected from property owners. From its beginning in 1904 to the present day, the Moultrie County Courthouse has served important roles in the lives of all county citizens. Today, 90 years after its construction, this venerable building is in excellent condition and its demonstrated adaptability to the slowly evolving functions is convincing evidence that it will continue to serve the needs of Moultrie County's citizens for another century or more. This beautiful and distinctive Classical Revival styled domed structure is a landmark that will remain forever in the memory of anyone who has ever visited Sullivan, the county seat of Moultrie County, Illinois.

## ENDNOTES

1. Sullivan Democrat, November 15, 1906.
2. Inventory of the County Archives of Illinois, #70, Moultrie County, p. 89.
3. Sullivan Progress, January 19, 1961.
4. Sullivan Progress, various issues, 1969.
5. Moultrie County Board of Supervisors Minutes, April 2, 1907.
6. Inventory of the County Archives of Illinois, #70, Moultrie County. P. 13.
7. *Ibid.* p. 15.
8. *Ibid.* p. 16.
9. Sullivan News-Progress, August 3, 1994.

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet**

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Moultrie County Courthouse

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10. Moultrie County Board of Supervisors Minutes, May 1904.
11. Ibid, August 1904.
12. Moultrie County Board of Supervisors - Report to The People of Moultrie County.
13. Moultrie County Board of Supervisors Minutes, August 6, 1906.
14. Decatur Review, November 13, 1906.
15. Sullivan Remembers When (1917), January 1993.
16. A History of Farmers' Institutes, (no date).
17. Sullivan Progress, 1912.
18. Sullivan Progress, 1928.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Moultrie County Courthouse

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Contract for Tower Clock - E. Howard Clock Company. September 14, 1905.

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Gertrude Dixon's Letter. May 29, 1975.

Inventory of the County Archives of Illinois, #70, Moultrie County. Chicago: The Illinois Historical Records Survey Project, April 1941.

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Sprague, Paul E., Survey Director. Inventory of Architecture before World War II in Moultrie County (Interim Report). The University of Chicago: Prepared by The Illinois Historic Structures Survey (a division of The Illinois Historic Sites Survey), October 1973.

Sullivan Progress. January 19, 1961; 1969; October 30, 1975.

The Sullivan Democrat. November 15, 1906.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Moultrie County Courthouse

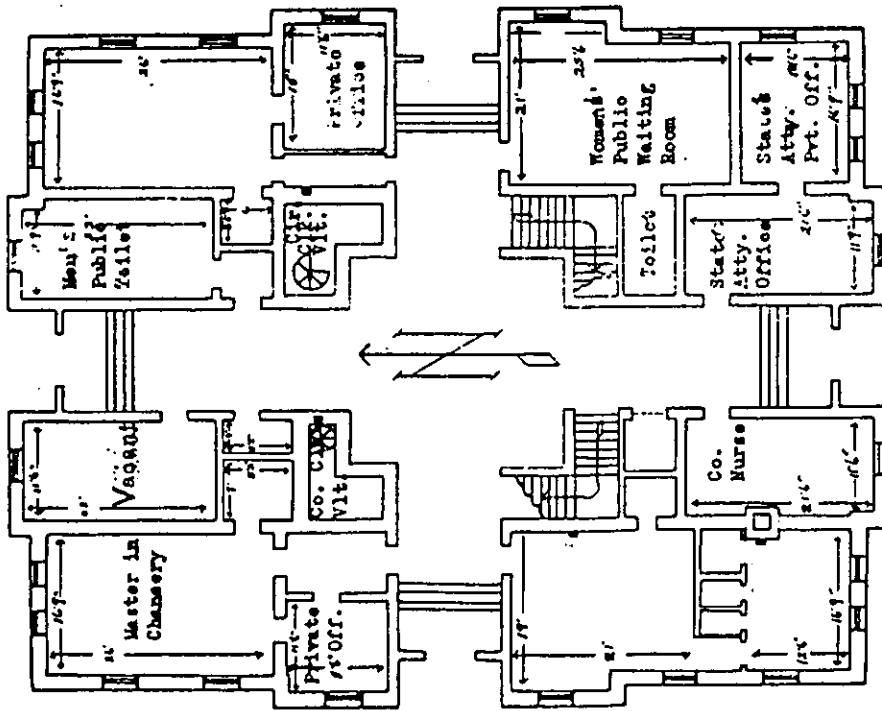
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### BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Moultrie County Courthouse is located in the Northeast quarter of the Southeast quarter of Section 2, Township 13 North, Range 5 East of the 3rd Principal Meridian. The Courthouse occupies an unnumbered block of land in the geographical center of an equal 25 block square of land that is the original platted town of Sullivan. The Courthouse is immediately encompassed by Harrison Street on the North, Washington Street on the East, Jefferson Street on the South, and Main Street on the West.

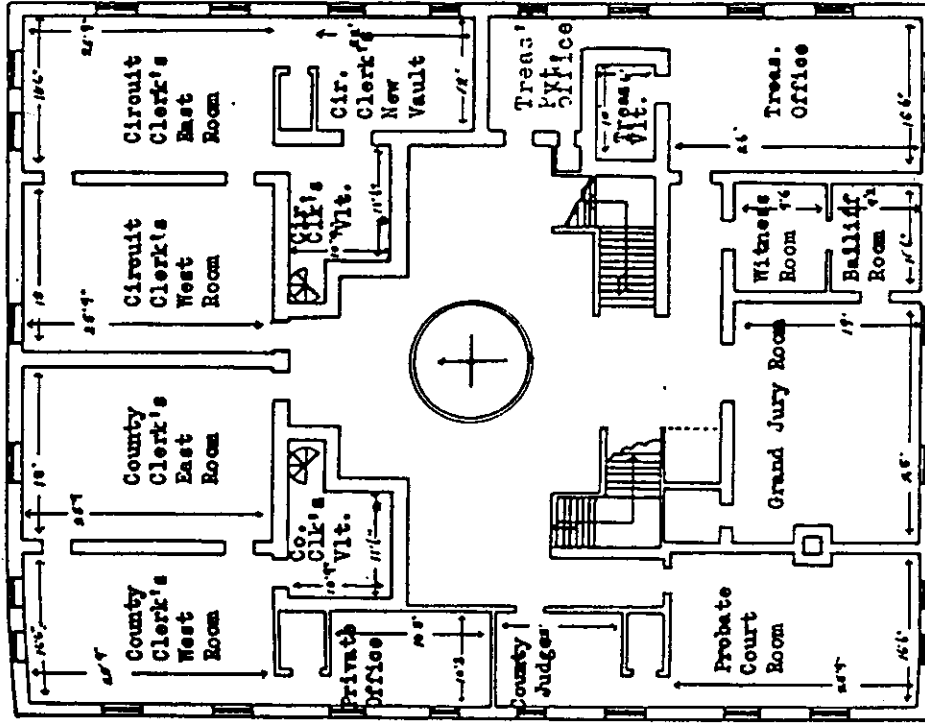
### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the area of county owned land that has historically been associated with the Moultrie County Courthouse. The courthouse is in the center of the central square of the City of Sullivan encompassed by a raised lawn created by a one foot high concrete retaining wall and adjacent sidewalk around all four sides of the block.



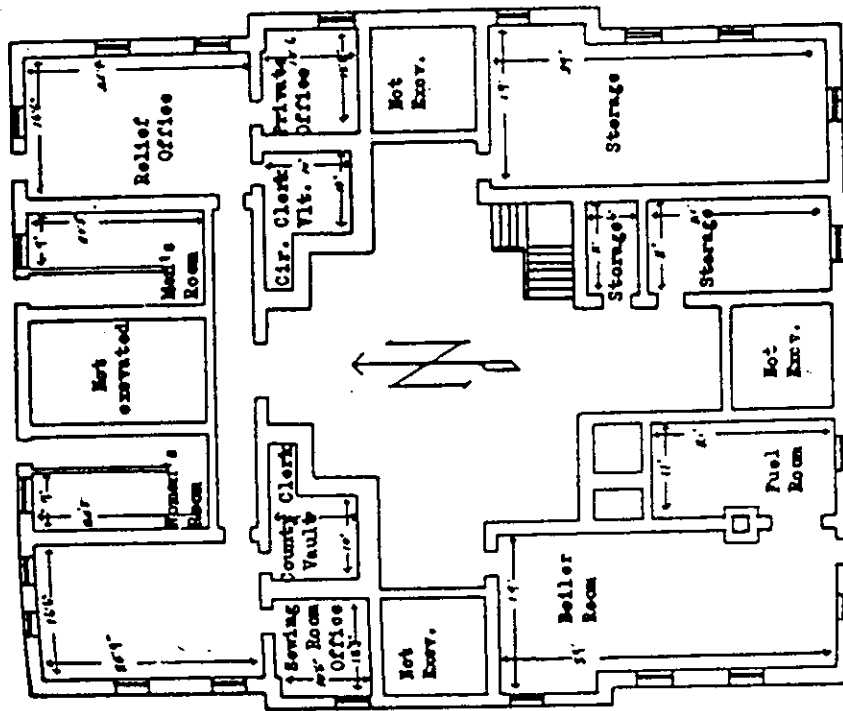
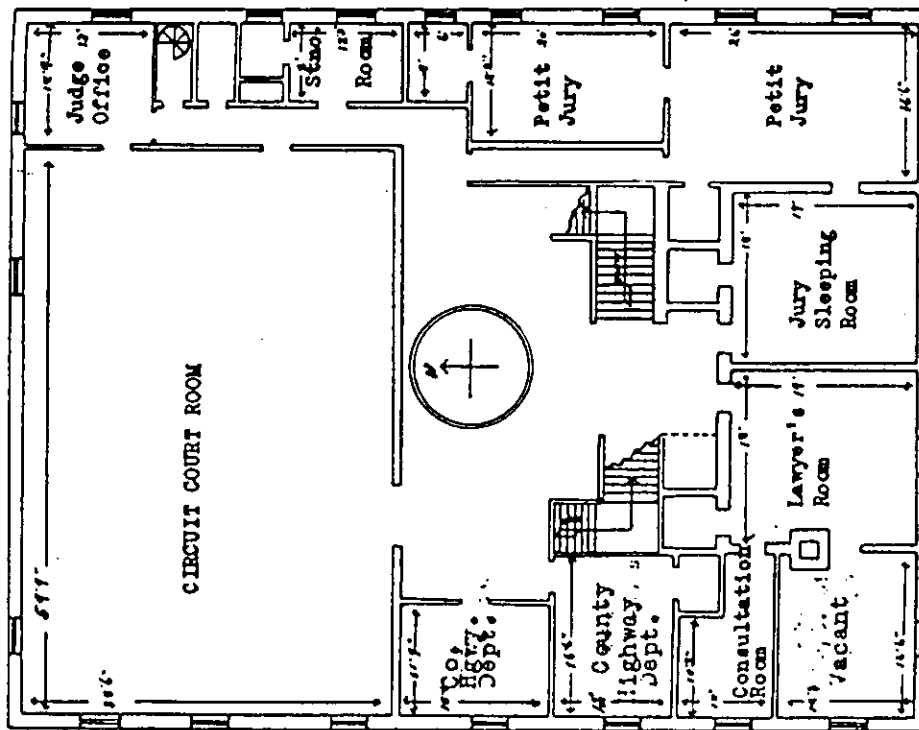
FIRST FLOOR - MOULTRIE COUNTY COURT HOUSE  
SULLIVAN, ILLINOIS

Not to Scale



SECOND FLOOR - MOULTRIE COUNTY COURT HOUSE  
SULLIVAN, ILLINOIS

Not to Scale



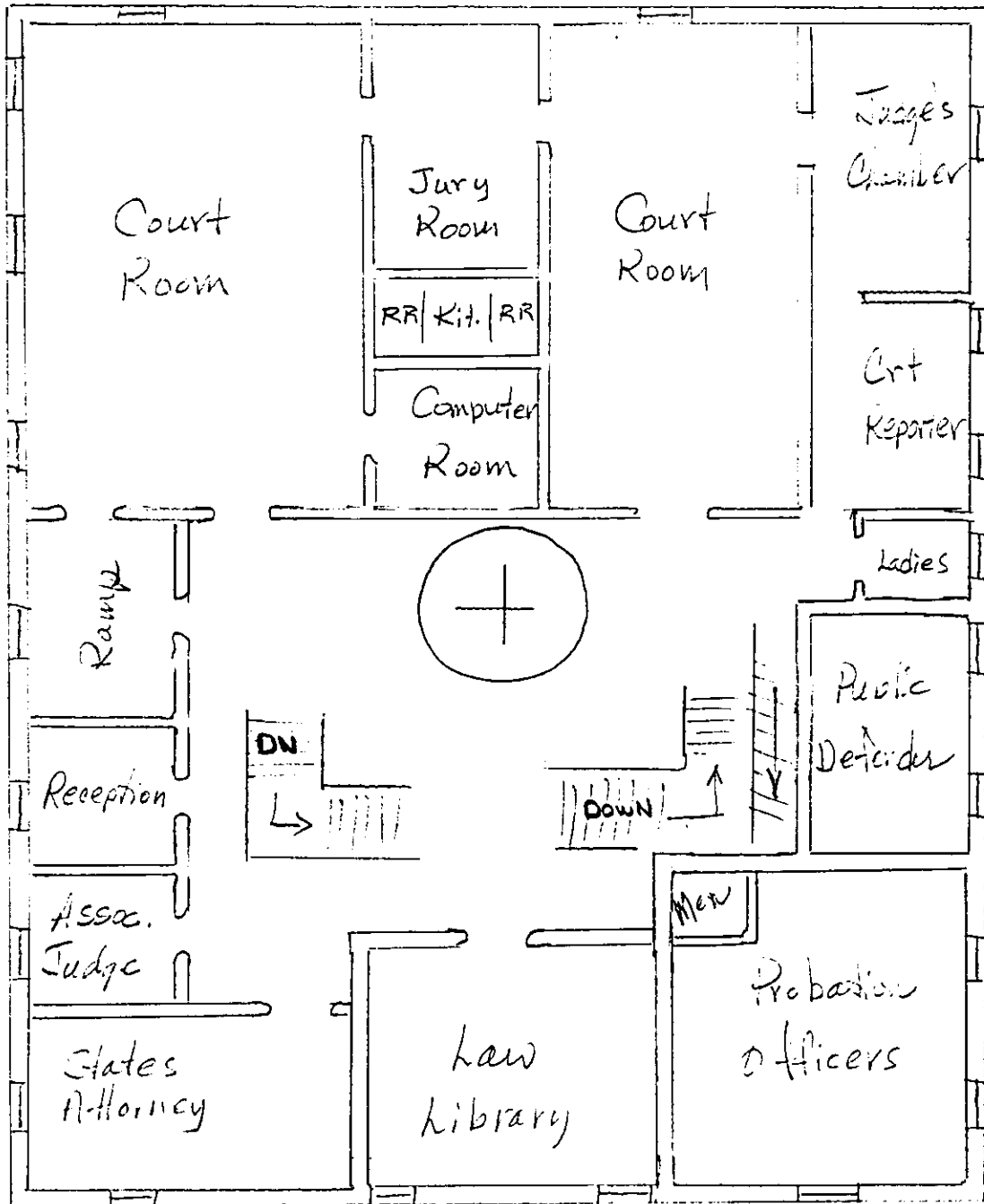


# Montie County Courthouse

Third Floor Plan - 1945

Not To Scale

N





# United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. Box 37127

Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. For further information call 202/343-9542.

MAY 01 1995

Preservation Services  
APR 28 1995

WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 4/17/95 THROUGH 4/21/95

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number NHL Status, Action, Date, Multiple Name

ARKANSAS, HOT SPRING COUNTY, Cabin No. 1, Cabin area access rd., Lake Catherine State Park, Shorewood Hills, 95000455, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Facilities Constructed by the CCC in Arkansas MPS)

ARKANSAS, PRAIRIE COUNTY, Prairie County Courthouse, Jct. of Magnolia and Prairie Sts., DeValls Bluff, 95000457, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

ARKANSAS, WASHINGTON COUNTY, Chi Omega Chapter House, 940 Maple St., Fayetteville, 95000456, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

COLORADO, EL PASO COUNTY, Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot, 252 ft. W of Denver St. on Rock Island RR right-of-way, Calhan, 95000476, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

FLORIDA, PALM BEACH COUNTY, Milton--Mvers American Legion Post No. 65, 263 NE. 5th Ave., Delray Beach, 95000471, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

FLORIDA, ST. LUCIE COUNTY, Frere, Jules, House, 2404 Sunrise Blvd., Fort Pierce, 95000467, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

FLORIDA, SUWANNEE COUNTY, Allison, George, House, 418 W. Duval St., Live Oak, 95000369, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

ILLINOIS, ADAMS COUNTY, South Side German Historic District (Boundary Increase), Roughly bounded by Jefferson, S. 12th, Jackson and S 5th Sts., Quincy, 95000481, BOUNDARY INCREASE, 4/20/95

ILLINOIS, MOULTRIE COUNTY, Moultrie County Courthouse, 10 S. Main St., Sullivan, 95000489, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 Moultrie

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Bryn Mawr Avenue Historic District, Bryn Mawr Ave. from Sheridan Rd. to Broadway, Chicago, 95000482, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Hamilton Park, 513 W. 72nd St., Chicago, 95000487, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Chicago Park District MPS)

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Indian Boundary Park, 2500 W. Lunt, Chicago, 95000485, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Chicago Park District MPS)

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Portage Park, 4100 N. Long Ave., Chicago, 95000484, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Chicago Park District MPS)

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Ris, Jacob A., Park, 6100 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, 95000483, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Chicago Park District MPS)

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Trumbull Park, 2400 E. 105th St., Chicago, 95000486, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Chicago Park District MPS)

ILLINOIS, MARION COUNTY, Jehle, Louis, House, 511 E. Fifth St., Pana, 95000490, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

ILLINOIS, MERCER COUNTY, Willits, Levi, House, 202 Main St., New Boston, 95000488, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

ILLINOIS, WOODFORD COUNTY, Schertz, Joseph, House, IL 116, 1 mi. W of city limits, Metamora vicinity, 95000491, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

IOWA, HANCOCK COUNTY, Pilot Knob State Park: Portals in Area 5b, Off IA 9 SE of Forest City, y Pilot Knob State Park, Forest City vicinity, 95000362, NOMINATION, 4/17/95 (CCC Properties in Iowa State Parks MPS)

IOWA, JACKSON COUNTY, Squiers, J. E., House, 418 W. Pleasant St., Maquoketa, 95000385, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Maquoketa MPS)

KANSAS, PAWNEE COUNTY, Babbitt--Doerr House, 423 W. 5th St., Larned, 95000477, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

MICHIGAN, MARQUETTE COUNTY, Negaunee State Bank Building, 331 Iron St., Negaunee, 95000295, NOMINATION, 4/13/95

NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Alert--Hatcher Building, Jct. of Second Ave. and Main St., SE corner, Hillsboro, 95000460, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)

NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Bucher, William H., House, 300 W. Main St., Hillsboro, 95000461, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)

NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Meyers House, Main St. N side between 4th and 5th Aves., Hillsboro, 95000463, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)

NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Miller, George Tambling and Ninette Stocker, House, Elenora St. S side, W of Union Church, Hillsboro, 95000465, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)

NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Robins, Will M., House, Jct. of Main St. and Fifth Ave., SW corner, Hillsboro, 95000462, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)

NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Sullivan, Cornelius, House, Jct. of Elenora and First Ave., SW corner, Hillsboro, 95000459, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)

NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Webster, John M., House, Jct. of Main St. and Fifth Ave., SE corner, Hillsboro, 95000464, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)

NEW YORK, CAYUGA COUNTY, House at 15 East Cayuga Street, 15 E. Cayuga St., Moravia, 95000472, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Moravia MPS)

NEW YORK, ESSEX COUNTY, Trudeau Sanatorium, Trudeau Rd., Saranac Lake vicinity, 95000479, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Saranac Lake MPS)

NEW YORK, NIAGARA COUNTY, Bond, Col. William M. and Nancy Ralston, House, 143 Ontario St., Lockport, 95000529, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

Continued on next page

Mu-4-29

ILLINOIS HISTORIC SITES SURVEY INVENTORY

1. Name of Site:

Common Moultrie County Court house  
Historic

2. Location:

Street and number Township Section  
Bounded by Harrison, Main, Jefferson, and Washington Streets  
City or Town Zip Code Range 1/4 Section  
Sullivan 61951  
County Moultrie

3. Classification:

Category (check one)

( ) District (X) Building  
( ) Site ( ) Structure

Integrity (check one)

( ) Altered (X) Unaltered  
( ) Moved (X) Original Site

4. Ownership:

( ) Private  
(X) Public

Status (check one)

(X) Occupied  
( ) Unoccupied  
( ) Preservation work in Progress

Access to Public

(X) Yes (X) Restricted ( ) Unrestricted ( ) No

Present Use (check one or more)

( ) Agricultural ( ) Industrial ( ) Religious  
( ) Commercial ( ) Military ( ) Scientific  
( ) Educational ( ) Museum ( ) Transportation  
( ) Entertainment ( ) Park ( ) Other (specify)  
(X) Government ( ) Private Residence

5. Ownership of Property:

Owner's name Moultrie County

Phone Number

Street and number

City or Town

State

County

Zip Code

6. Description:

Condition:

(X) Excellent ( ) Good ( ) Fair ( ) Deteriorated ( ) Ruins  
( ) Unexposed

Is there a program of preservation underway? ( ) Yes (X) No

GOVERNMENT

**INE**



7. Historical Themes: (check one or more of the following)

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological Site      | (Pre-Columbian)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological Site      | (Post-Columbian to 1673) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French Influence         | (1673-1780)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Frontier        | (1780-1818)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Early           | (1818-1850)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Middle          | (1850-1900)              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illinois Late | (1900-present)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Famous People            | (give names & dates)     |

8. Specific Date: Erected 1906.

Areas of significance (check one or more of the following)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal (historic)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal (pre-historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Military             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture               | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication             | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation              | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture    |   |

Brief statement of significance: (include all names and dates)

Use additional sheets if necessary.

The site of Moultrie County's government activity since 1906.

9. Form prepared by:

Name and Title: Keith A. Scullo Date: September, 1973  
Organization: Illinois Historic Sites Survey Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
1505 W. Kirby, Apt. 3  
Street and number: Champaign, Illinois 61820  
City or town: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

During the course of the Survey we often find it necessary to search for references for a particular site. When filling out the Survey form, please list according to the following example, published references to the site for which forms are being completed. If a bibliography can be compiled, it will greatly deduct from the Survey's task.

Bibliography

Robertson, Robert, Of Whales and Men. New York, Alfred K. Knopf, Inc., 1954.

Century I: Notes on Sullivan, Illinois 1845-1872-1972 No other bibliographic data given and no page numbers used.