

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

PASSED
9/17/77

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC DuPage County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON
Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
200 Weber Street

CITY/TOWN
Wheaton

STATE
Illinois

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Fourteenth

VICINITY OF
CODE

COUNTY
Madison CODE

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 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	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" 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
DuPage County

STREET & NUMBER
421 N. County Farm Road

CITY/TOWN
Wheaton

VICINITY OF

STATE
Illinois

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Recorder of Deeds, DuPage County

STREET & NUMBER
421 N. County Farm Road

CITY/TOWN
Wheaton

STATE
Illinois

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Cook County Interior Report
Inventory of Historic Structures Wheaton

DATE
April, 1975 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Cook County Interior Report, Historic Sites Division

CITY/TOWN
Springfield STATE
Illinois

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 POOR
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The DeWitt County Courthouse is the same in appearance today, 1977, as it was when it was built in 1896. The building retains a castle-like appearance because of its bell tower and turrets. It stands as a fortress protecting the courts of law within.

The composition of the DeWitt County Courthouse is red brick masonry construction, while the roof is of red clay tile. There are four dormer windows, two on either side of the two center turrets. An arched window "eyebrow" each dormer window. Smaller arched windows circle the two turrets which rise from either side of the arched brick doorway. Continuing the importance of symmetry, there are five arched windows on either side of the arched entry. The bell tower has four turrets surrounding the four corners of the clock which faces North, South, East, and West. The turrets have small square openings circling them. The space above the clock has five square openings with four columns delineating them. Also above the five openings are five arched brick openings. This design is repeated on all four sides of the bell tower.

The only alterations were replacement of the five windows on the left side as you face the building with glass-blocked windows. Also, the front doors were replaced with metal and glass doors. A ramp was added to the front entry to provide access for the handicapped.

The interior of the building on the ground floor contains marble wall panels which rise about four feet along the perimeter of the walls. The stairway railing in the entry is composed of black wrought iron grill work. Observers may stand inside the turrets and view the panorama outside.

The architectural style resembles Richardsonian Romanesque in its design because of the use of arches, turrets, and symmetry. It is an excellent example of the breaking away from classical styles of architecture which was beginning to occur around the turn of the century.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Additions to the back of the building, offices and a jail have not altered the original appearance and location of the Courthouse.

Three additions have been made, two to the Courthouse and one to the jail. The architectural style of the additions is very contemporary and does not repeat the Romanesque Courthouse theme. The first addition was built on the east side (the back) of the Courthouse in 1952. Later, in 1957, a jail was added. Then in 1961 a second addition was added to the Courthouse. This second addition to the Courthouse was constructed above the first addition.

Only a small amount of ornamentation is evident on the old Courthouse. A frieze of flowers decorates the column between the arched windows. The architecture was the beginning of a more refined style in buildings.

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1896-1897

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Mifflin E. Bell

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The architecture of the DuPage County Courthouse is significant because it resembles Richardsonian Romanesque architecture. This style of architecture is significant because it symbolized a breaking away from classicism. It represented Western U. S. architecture as opposed to Eastern U. S. classical architecture.

The DuPage County Courthouse also has political/governmental significance. It has served as the center of Justice and Law and Order for DuPage County for over 80 years. It also serves as a solid, highly visible link with the past which is so treasured by the residents of DuPage County.

The architect, Mifflin E. Bell, was born in Birmingham, Pennsylvania in 1847 and died in 1904.

Architect:

- Mercer County Courthouse - Alledo, Ill. 1894
- Monroe County Courthouse - Sparta, Wis. 1895
- Marion County Courthouse - Knoxville, Iowa 1896
- DuPage County Courthouse - Wheaton, Ill. 1896-97

Bell's eight year apprenticeship with ... M. Piquenard at the Illinois State Capitol prepared him to complete that building and the Iowa State Capitol after Piquenard's death. This work in partnership with William F. Macmeyer of Des Moines commended him for the post of Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department which he filled for four years (1883-87) under Presidents Arthur and Cleveland.¹ By remarking that he would bring "western ideas" to the post, he incurred the scorn of Montgomery Schuyler.² Bell established a successful Chicago office after he left Washington but remained a target of eastern journalists and critics. An anonymous obituary in the Boston-published American Architect and Building News was unkind enough to say, "there is many a public building that would like to run up its flagmast high on hearing the news and then permanently hide behind a veil the uncomely face with which he had endowed it."³

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Unsuccessful submittals:

Henry County, Ill. - January 15, 1878

(as Ball and Mac'ney)

Winnepin County, Minn. - June 5, 1888

(Minneapolis Municipal Building,
3rd Prize, \$600)

Warren County, Ill. - November 7, 1893

(3rd Prize)

Allen County, Ind. - May 21, 1896

(3rd Prize, \$250)

Woodford County, Ill. - January 19, 1897

His tenure as Supervising Architect made Bell a member of the Joint Commission for the Completion of the Washington Monument. His name is among those inscribed on the north face of the aluminun capstone which was set December 6, 1884.⁴

In 1885 he designed the Quincy Postal Service office in Illinois modeled after the Vanderbilt Mansion in New York. It was originally known as the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse. It is listed on the National Register of Historical Monuments.⁵

The location and design are the same as the original construction. Within five years the DuPage County Board will begin vacating the Courthouse for a new structure. At that time the Courthouse might be in danger of being demolished.

A National Historic Register listing would assist attempts to preserve the building.

Hangings were a means of punishment until October 9, 1931 when John Preston was the first defendant in the State of Illinois to suffer death in the electric chair following his conviction by a DuPage Jury.⁶

In 1924 and 1925, Chicago newspapers focused their attention on the George Munding murder trial. The murdered woman, Mrs. Julia Abb Douglass, was the widow of George A. Dun of Dun and Bradstreet. Clarence Darrow, eminent Chicago

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trial lawyer, joined forces with Charles W. Hadley in landing's defence.⁶

In 1948, William Korbelik, a union organizer who lived in southern DuPage County, was murdered. The suspect was his daughter who was subjected to grueling interrogation for three days. Finally she confessed to the slaying. With the confession as the sole evidence, Judge Knock ruled the confession inadmissible and dismissed the case. This courageous landmark ruling was a forerunner of the famous Miranda decision of the United States Supreme Court, which set forth standards for admissibility of confessions.⁷

There are very few Richardsonian influenced structures remaining in Northern Illinois.⁸ The Richardson Romanesque period of architecture was short in duration and the buildings were generally expensive to construct.

1. Industrial Chicago, Vol. 1, The Building Interests: Goodspeed Publ. Co., Chicago (1891), pp. 507-608.
2. Montgomery Schuyler, "Glimpses of Western Architecture: St. Paul and Minneapolis," American Architecture and Other Writings, William H. Jordy and Ralph Coe editors, New York (1964), p. 128.
3. American Architect and Building News, Boston, June 18, 1904, p. 1.
4. Personal Communication, Paul Goeldner, A.I.A., Historical Architect.
5. The Quincy Herald Whig-Quincy Newspapers, Inc., Publishers, Quincy, Illinois, 62301.
6. DuPage Discovery, 1776-1976, Columbian Lithographing Company, D. E. Maas and C. W. Weber editors, p. 141.
7. Ibid., p. 142.
8. Personal Communication, Dr. William Brown, Northern Illinois University.

ILLINOIS HISTORIC SITES SURVEY INVENTORY

Du-H-44

200091

NR

1. Name of Site:

Common

Courthouse

Historic

2. Location:

Street and Number

Liberty St. E of Cross St.

City or Town

Zip Code

Township

Range

Section

1/4 Section

Wheaton
County

Du Page

3. Classification:

Category (check one)

- District
- Site

- Building
- Structure

Integrity (check one)

- Altered
- Moved
- Unaltered
- Original Site

4. Ownership:

- Private
- Public

Status (check one)

- Occupied
- Unoccupied
- Preservation work in progress

Access to Public

- Yes
- Restricted
- Unrestricted
- No

Present Use (check one or more)

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Museum
- Park
- Private Residence
- Religious
- Scientific
- Transportation
- Other

5. Ownership of Property:

Owner's Name

Phone Number

Street and Number

City or Town

State

County

Zip Code

6. Description: Romanesque

- Excellent
- Ruins
- Good
- Unexposed
- Fair
- Deteriorated

Is there a program of preservation underway?

- Yes
- No

GOVERNMENT

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

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archeological Site | (Pre-Columbian) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archeological 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 type="checkbox"/> Illinois Late | (1900-present) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Famous People | (give names & dates) |

8. Specific Date: 1896

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 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.

9. Form prepared by:

Name and Title: _____ Date: _____
Organization: _____ Phone: _____
Street and Number: _____
City or Town: _____ County: _____ Zip Code: _____

During the course of the Survey we often find it necessary to search 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.

