

USE TO COPY

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

Fayette County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

Fayette County Courthouse

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Court Street between Wiseman and Maple Avenues

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fayetteville

__ VICINITY OF

Second

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

West Virginia

54

Fayette

019

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

__DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

__AGRICULTURE

__MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

__PRIVATE

__UNOCCUPIED

__COMMERCIAL

__PARK

__STRUCTURE

__BOTH

__WORK IN PROGRESS

__EDUCATIONAL

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

__ENTERTAINMENT

__RELIGIOUS

__OBJECT

__IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

__SCIENTIFIC

__BEING CONSIDERED

__YES: UNRESTRICTED

__INDUSTRIAL

__TRANSPORTATION

__NO

__MILITARY

__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Fayette County Commission

STREET & NUMBER

Fayette County Courthouse, Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Fayetteville

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

West Virginia 25840

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Fayette County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Fayetteville

STATE

West Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Fayette County Courthouse, designed by Wheeling, West Virginia, architects Edward B. Franzheim and Millard F. Giesey, is a good example of late nineteenth-century Romanesque architecture. While not using rock-faced masonry as the primary building material, this type of surface is present at the basement level, in lintels and arches, belt courses and small ornamental panels between second and third floors. Although not purely Richardsonian in the use of brick, the stone work does provide emphasis on structural features through its differentiation from the materials of the main walls. And while exterior window reveals are not especially deep, stone transoms, steep-gabled wall dormers and the square tower with pyramidal roof are common attributes of the style.

The courthouse is sited on a plot of land in the business section of Fayetteville but is separated from other buildings by streets and an open area at its front and southeast side. The basically rectangular structure is 2 1/2 stories high and five bays wide at the entrance elevation with a narrow projecting wing on the southeast and an enclosed stair tower with belfry on the northwest. The foundation or basement level is constructed of sandstone with the exterior surfaced in a rock-faced random ashlar bond. All walls above the stone water table are of brick in a stretcher bond. The central roof is hipped as is that on the tower, the wall dormers are gabled, and all are covered in slate with patterned geometric bands.

Porches are located at the front and on the southeast side, and there is a landing at the top of stone steps leading to the stair tower. Each porch is constructed of stone with a balustraded roof supported by columns that have typical Romanesque capitals (the columns at the front are fluted). Additionally, pedestals, frieze elements and posts on the entrance porch have decorative recessed panels.

Windows in the basement, at the first level and in the dormers are straight-topped, while those on the second level (and the louvered openings in the belfry) are arched. All windows have 1/1 light sash, with those on the first floor at the front having a transom and those on the second floor at the front being divided into two distinct vertical sections by either wooden mullions or stone dividers. There are no dormers on the sides, but light is provided through windows in the parapet.

Primary entrance doors are on the front and side porches and in the stair tower. That at the front originally had a double-door, transomed opening with a small vestibule on the interior, but the configuration has been changed to a single door with transom and sidelights. The stair tower entrance has double doors leading into a vestibule.

Large chimneys project from the center of the roof to either side of the ridge line, forming a symmetrical backdrop to the dormers on the facade. Each of these is of brick, and a belt course several feet below the top is the only embellishment (at one time there was another belt course with corbeling below the cap). Smaller chimneys are located at the main corners and are distinguished by stone pilasters and caps. There is a large dormer above the center entrance on the southwest elevation and smaller dormers placed between this and the corner chimneys.

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Decorative features on the exterior include the porches with their balustraded balconies in stone, the nicely arched windows at the second level and the paneled brick parapet at the roofline. The fanlighted stair tower is attractive in itself, but the louvered belfry with a circular stone segment surrounded by semi-circular arches in each elevation and a corbeled cornice make it especially interesting. Dormers have a scroll-like projection at the side of the base of the gable and a finial at the peak. Probably the outstanding features, however, are the carvings (representing both animals and humans) in many of the pilaster capitals on the corner chimneys and dormers and in a circular design in the gable of the center dormer.

The interior has been altered to some extent to facilitate changed activities of county government. Paneled walls and lowered ceilings in a few offices detract somewhat, but the overall composition retains much of the original design. The cast-iron main stair in the tower is of open-well configuration and has two flights with landing between each floor. There are auxiliary stairs (also of cast iron) at the rear and off the southeast entrance; a spiral cast-iron stair leads from the present commissioners' meeting room to the basement. Tile was prescribed in the original specifications for the first and second floors and the main-stair landings, and it is still in place. Wainscoting is on walls not covered by paneling, there are several corner fireplaces still visible (two have attractive wood and marble mantels), pressed tin ceilings exist in a few rooms, most doorways retain paneled surrounds, many five-panel doors with decorative brass plates and knobs are still in place and there is a fanlight above the entrance to the courtroom.

Need for additional space for county offices and records has been answered by extending the original building to the rear. Each addition is constructed of brick and complements the complex; the first was made about 1948, the second about 1958 and the third in 1976. There is an early twentieth century jail with a random ashlar, rock-faced stone surface on the lot to the northeast of the courthouse. This building was also enlarged in 1976 and has walkways erected between it and the courthouse additions.

Work will soon commence on renovations and restorations at the courthouse. Using an Economic Development Administration Local Public Works grant, the County Commission will have the brick of the original section tuck pointed, detergent cleaned and sealed. Also, stone steps will be lifted and provided a more solid foundation and then put back in place, being turned where necessary to provide a level surface.

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 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 1895

BUILDER/ARCHITECT E. B. Franzheim and M. F. Giesey

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Fayette County Courthouse at Fayetteville, West Virginia, was constructed in 1894-95 following plans and specifications drawn up by prominent Wheeling architects Edward Bates Franzheim and Millard F. Giesey. The former, especially well accepted in the state, gained even greater renown in the early twentieth century. The structure they designed is not outstanding in terms of style or construction, but it is a good example and detailing in excellent. This Romanesque public building was well adapted to the requirements of a county entering on a coal-boom period, however, and has since served as the seat of its government, having been used considerably longer than any of its three predecessors at Fayetteville.

Fayette County was created in 1831 from parts of Greenbrier, Kanawha, Logan and Nicholas counties. A struggle ensued to determine the location of the county seat with the "communities" of New Haven, Vandalia and Falls of Kanawha vying. It was eventually settled in favor of Vandalia, as Fayetteville was then known, and the first courthouse was erected there in 1838. With the coming of the Civil War, Southern sympathies emanated from the courthouse through such official county resolutions as the following:

Whereas our State has been invaded by a hostile army of Northern Fanatics, and we feel bound to resist said invasion to the last extremity, Resolved, Therefore, First that we feel it to be our duty in accordance with an act of the Legislature passed January 19th 1861 to Levy on the people of the County from time to time as may be necessary to enable us to resist said invasion successfully, such amounts of money as we shall think practicable and expedient. Resolved 2nd That we will then after money and property are exhausted feel it to be our duty to Levy for said purpose on the Credit of the County and when that also is gone we will eat roots and drink water and still fight for our liberty unto death.

These early sentiments lingered long, but the building from which they were proclaimed was razed during the conflict.

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A second courthouse was soon erected, however, and remained in use until it proved insufficient and was replaced in 1887 with a brick and stone structure designed by Baltimore architect Frank Davis. Undoubtedly the county was satisfied with this building and anticipated many years of service. It was a double disaster, therefore, in terms of lost space and documents as well as lost capital investment, when the building burned in April of 1893. At first it was thought that the remains could be salvaged and the structure rebuilt, but it soon became apparent that after only six years it would have to be replaced.

Architect Davis was initially contracted for the work, but for some reason it was decided to open it to competition. The plans and specifications of Edward Franzheim and Millard Giesey, Wheeling architects, were accepted and paid for at the stipulated sum of \$750. Franzheim was to become one of the state's more successful architects, and his Board of Trade Building and Court Theater in the town at which he practiced were well received (his 1890 section of Centre Wheeling Market and 1921 E.A. Durham Residence at Sistersville, West Virginia, are listed in the National Register of Historic Places). He attended Boston Institute of Technology and studied in the Massachusetts city for seven years before returning to Wheeling in 1890.

The contract (eventually amounting to \$58,297.25 excluding the value of brick and stone salvaged from the previous courthouse) was awarded to Murray Brothers of Wheeling. Construction commenced in May 1894, and the county formally accepted the new building on November 22, 1895. It has since (with minor alterations and several additions) served Fayette County as the seat of its government and center of political activity.

Overall, the courthouse expresses an interpretation of the Romanesque style used in so many public buildings and churches between about 1870 and 1900. It is not a heavy, rock-faced masonry, Richardsonian example, but its use of stone at the basement, in belt courses and arches, and in porches and pilasters complements the brick main walls. Aside from the generally pleasing appearance initially evident to the viewer, though, a more thorough investigation reveals numerous details that make the Fayette County Courthouse especially attractive. From the vaulted brick ceiling in the basement, up the cast-iron stairs to the 1895 bell in the tower that still rings on court days, the interior displays a fine array of embellishments. Corner fireplaces, five-panel oak doors, fanlights above the entrance vestibule and the courtroom, and many original decorative brass plates and door knobs dispell the first impression of simplicity.

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It is the exterior, however, that is richer in ornament. The porches at the front and southeast corner feature heavy stone columns with stout Romanesque capitals that support a balustraded balcony. Rock-faced stonework in the arches over the second-story windows and above the louvered openings of the belfry are appealing, and the stone inlays below the brick-paneled parapet add to the handsome lines. While small windows hidden in the parapet at the sides provide some light for the third floor, the wall dormers at the front not only house window openings but also fine stone pilasters with carved capitals and, in the center dormer, a series of figures forming a circle in the gable. The chimneys at the corners, too, have stone pilasters with carved capitals. The entire building is roofed in geometrical slate bands, finials and cresting are along the ridge and there are eyebrow ventilation openings on the northwest and southeast sides.

As can be visualized from this description, the old courthouse is a significant expression by two important turn-of-the-century West Virginia architects. As can be discerned through its continuous use and planned preservation after more than eighty years, it has served county government well and has been accepted as a landmark in its area.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cranmer, Gibson Lamb, ed. A History of Wheeling City and Ohio County, West Virginia and Representative Citizens. Chicago: Biographical Publishing, Co., 1902. (pp. 331, 626)

Fayette County Court Records. Minute Book 4 (p. 246), Order Book 9 (pp. 478, 493, 510-31), and Order Book 10 (pp. 126-28, 134-38).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Fayetteville, W. Va.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5'

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 | 49,09,0,0 | 4,21,15,5,0

B | |

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | |

D | |

E | |

F | |

G | |

H | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the intersection of Wiseman Avenue and Court Street, thence northeastward along Wiseman Avenue to the intersection of Church Street, southeastward along Church

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

James E. Harding, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Preservation Unit, W. Va. Department of Culture and History November 15, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Science and Culture Center, Capitol Complex

TELEPHONE

(304) 348-0244

CITY OR TOWN

Charleston

STATE

West Virginia

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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

Clarence Moran

TITLE West Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

February 23, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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Historical, Industrial Special Edition. Fayette Journal, November 2, 1911.

Peters, J.T. and H.B. Carden. History of Fayette County, West Virginia. 1926.

Reprint. Parsons, WV: McClain Printing Co., 1972. (pp. 143-49, 213-42, 381-403)

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Street to its intersection with Maple Avenue, southwestward along Maple Avenue to its intersection with Court Street, and thence along Court Street to the intersection of Wiseman Avenue.

4216

4215
5'

4214

4213

4212

4211

2'30"

4210

4760 II SW
(BECKWITH)

SECTION 19
NORTHWEST, FAYETTEVILLE,
FAYETTE COUNTY,
WEST VIRGINIA
UTM REFERENCE:
17/490900/4211550



