

21-09-A095-33

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

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 Desha County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Robert S. Moore Avenue

CITY, TOWN Arkansas City

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Fourth

STATE Arkansas

VICINITY OF
CODE 05

COUNTY Desha CODE 041

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBUC	<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 checked="" 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 Desha County (Bonnie Zook, County Judge)

STREET & NUMBER Post Office Box 218 Desha County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN Arkansas City VICINITY OF Arkansas STATE Arkansas

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Circuit Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER Desha County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN Arkansas City STATE Arkansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Desha County Courthouse in Arkansas City, Arkansas, is a good example of the type of county government buildings constructed in Arkansas at the turn of the century. Designed by architect Rome Harding of Little Rock, the structure displays some characteristics of the Romanesque Revival style.

This two and one-half storey brick building rests on a solid brick foundation made from forty freight-car loads of bricks. Five chimneys and a four storey clock tower extend above the irregular roof line. The angular lines of the roof are in contrast to the rounded arches of window and door openings around the building.

The square clock tower, located at the south corner of the building, has a clock face on each side of its fourth storey. Double rectangular windows at the ground floor, single arched windows at the second floor, and round arched openings at the third floor make each storey distinctive. A pyramid shaped roof with finial tops the clock tower.

The facade is five bays wide with the three center bays projecting from the mass of the building. The facade features a decorative star patterned band at the second storey level, and brickwork corbelling below the roofline. Ornamental brackets decorate the cornice. The one storey box-like entry protrudes from the facade and has a delicate iron grille around the top. A similar entry is located on the southwest elevation.

The main entry and three center windows on the second storey facade have arched heads, while the ground floor windows have plain lintel heads. A dormer with round arched window projects at the third storey line.

Exterior alterations to the courthouse have been slight, and consist mainly of a two-storey addition at the rear of the building. In 1943 this box-like addition was made to house vaults for the County Clerk's and Circuit and Chancery Clerk's Offices. In the early 1950's a small one storey storage wing was added to the southwest side of the earlier addition.

The original central hallway on the interior of the building was enclosed for offices in 1943. The most impressive room is the second floor court room with its twenty-three foot ceilings.

The Desha County Courthouse rests on a shady corner lot in the center of Arkansas City. Still surrounded by a decorative iron fence, the building appears much the same as when constructed in 1900.

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 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 1900 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Rome Harding

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1838 Desha County was formed from Arkansas County in the new state of Arkansas. The first county seat was at Napoleon, a river port located at the conflux of the Arkansas and Mississippi Rivers. Because Napoleon was frequently flooded, the site was abandoned in the 1870's. The county seat was first moved to Chicot City in 1873, and in 1877 was moved to its current location in Arkansas City.

The present Desha County Courthouse is located on the same tract of land as was the first courthouse which was constructed in 1880 and destroyed near the end of the century. In 1879 Mr. and Mrs. John W. Dickerson donated the land on which both the original and present courthouses were built.

In October, 1899, the Desha County Quorum Court voted to build a new brick courthouse at Arkansas City. It was to cost not less than \$10,000 and to be as nearly fire proof as possible. A three member commission was appointed to supervise construction of the courthouse. The commissioners consisted of: County Judge J. S. Ross, a major in the Federal army during the Civil War; Henry Thane, a wealthy businessman who owned several banks in southeast Arkansas; and G. E. Sweet, one of the largest contractors in southeast Arkansas.

Little Rock architect Rome Harding designed the courthouse with some elements of the Romanesque Revival style of architecture. The two and one-half storey brick structure features a four storey clock tower at the southwest corner, round arches and decorative patterns worked in brick.

On January 2, 1900, a contract for construction of the courthouse was signed by the Desha County Courthouse Committee and the W. D. Holtzman Company of Little Rock. Ten months later the courthouse was completed at a cost of \$23,369.44.

The Desha County Courthouse has long been a source of pride to the residents of the county. Though Desha County was one of the first parts of Arkansas to be settled, almost all of the early structures have fallen victim to the numerous floods which have plagued the county. As one of the most

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CONTINUATION SHEET

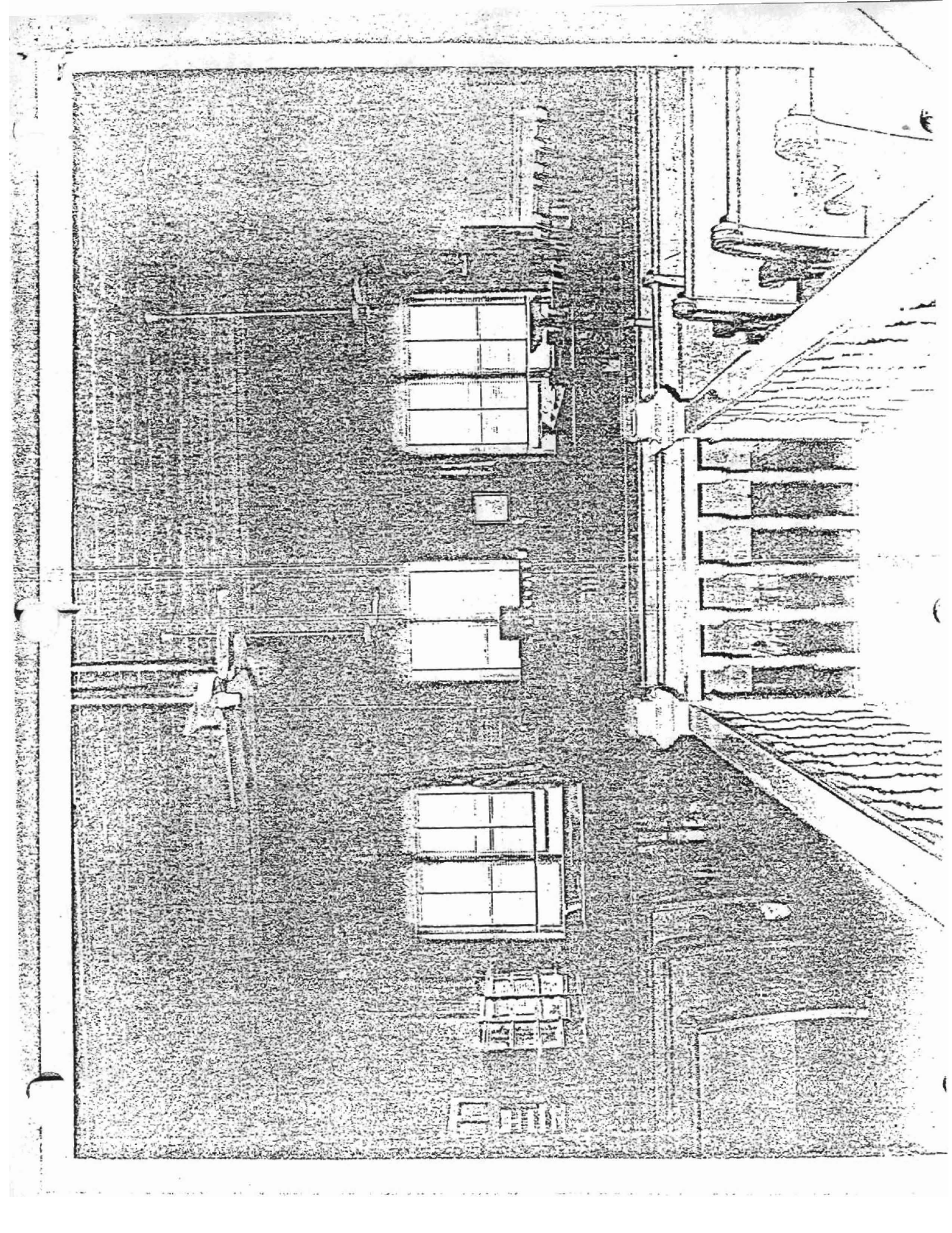
ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

one

architecturally significant structures in Desha County, the courthouse is also an important historic landmark in the Arkansas City area.



Form No. 10-301
(Rev. 10-74)

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP



NAME

HISTORIC

Desha County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON



LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Arkansas City

____ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Desha

STATE

Arkansas



MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE USGS, Arkansas City Quadrangle

SCALE 1:24,000

DATE 1972



REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

INT: 3464-75

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dreidel, E. M. "Desha County Courthouse at Arkansas City." 1974 Programs, Desha County Historical Society, Vol.1, No. 2.

Stroud, Mrs. J. H. "Present Desha County Courthouse, Arkansas City, Arkansas." Manuscript on file with Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, Arkansas.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.28 acra

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Latitude
33° 36' 32"

Longitude
91° 12' 09"

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Dianna Kirk, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

DATE

June 10, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

300 West Markham

TELEPHONE

371-1639

CITY OR TOWN

Little Rock

STATE

Arkansas

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE William E. Henderson

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE June 10, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER