FHR-8-300 (11-78)

FINAL

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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 Jay County Courthouse

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Jay County Courthouse ___ not for publication

city, town Portland ___ vicinity of congressional district 10th

state Indiana code 018 county Jay code 075

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	X public	___ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	___ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	X yes: restricted	X government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Jay County Commissioners

street & number Jay County Courthouse

city, town Portland ___ vicinity of state Indiana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office

street & number Jay County Courthouse

city, town Portland state Indiana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NONE has this property been determined elegible? ___ yes X no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
X excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Exterior Description

Designed in the second Renaissance Revival style, the Jay County Courthouse was completed in 1919. Typical of this style, the Courthouse is a straight-fronted building with smooth, plain surfaces on the second and third stories and a smoothly rusticated ground story with a water table, all composed of limestone from Bedford, Indiana. It has a low roof, that is not visible from the street. A limestone parapet runs around the perimeter of the roof, and the cornice and frieze are located on the roof line directly beneath the parapet.

The eastern and western facades of the building are identical, having eleven bays each. The arched windows on the first floor have exaggerated radiating voussoirs and six lights, but the sixth bay on this level is occupied by a door topped by a decorative pediment with embellished posts, instead of a window. Upper floor windows in bays two through ten are recessed and trabeated with plain surrounds and have six lights. They are separated by two-stor engaged Ionic columns, for a total of ten columns in antis. The second floor window in the first and eleventh bays is adorned by a pediment. All of the windows on the third floor are identical, although in bays two through ten they are recessed as on the second floor. They have plain window surrounds distinguished by a prominent keystone and each is supported by two consoles and has six lights. A string course separates the third story from the frieze upon which is written "Jay County Courthouse."

The northern and southern facades are also identical. Each has five bays with the center one being the dominant element. This central bay projects from the wall. The door on the first floor of this bay, is identical to the ones on the eastern and western facades. Directly above the door, resting on a belt course, are paired Ionic engaged columns, flanking the central windows. These columns support the frieze and cornice which surround the building. The second floor and third floor windows, both with six lights, are encompassed by a single plain window surround that is accented by a prominent keystone. The two bays on either side of the central bay are identical to the end bays on the east and west facades.

Interior Description

The floor plan of the Courthouse is in the shape of a cross with an entrance at each of the four ends. At the point where the two arms of the cross intersect, the Courthouse is completely open up to the top of its low dome. This octagonal space is dramatically occupied by a central marble staircase with a mahogany and iron railing (see photos #5-7), which was supplied by the Art Metal Company of Jamestown, New York. These elements direct the viewer's gaze upward to the octagonal stained glass window centered in the ceiling of the dome (see photo #8). This window is approximately 6-10 feet in diameter. On the first floor, access to the stairs is gained from the east or the west, but at the landing between the first and second floors, the stairs to the second floor ascend to the north and south. This staircase does not continue to the third floor. A pattern in the floor of colored marble is repeated throughout the central space. The colored marble divides the octagonal area into eight spaces (see photo #6), in each of which is a design of two overlapping squares within a circle. (see photo #11 in the foreground). This is found on all three levels.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion	
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science	
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture	
___ 1600–1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian	
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater	
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation	
X 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	X politics/government	___ other (specify)	
		___ invention			

Specific dates built 1915-1919 **Builder/Architect** Architects Peter Hulsken & Thomas McLaughlin

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Hulsken and McLaughlin, architects of the Jay County Courthouse, formed a partnership in Lima, Ohio for about ten years. Hulsken was a native of Arnheim in the Netherlands and graduated from the Ecole des Beaux Arts in France, while McLaughlin earned an architectural degree from Columbia University in 1905. Included among the credits of this partnership are the Celina, Ohio Courthouse; the Central Union Telegraph building of Lima, Ohio; Jefferson High School and Lincoln School of Delphos, Ohio; Shawnee School of Lima, Ohio; the Carnegie Libraries of Delphos and Lima, Ohio; and the Allen County (Ohio) Memorial Building. Dawson Construction Company built the Courthouse. Its richly decorated interior contributes to its architectural significance, and it has served as the focus of governmental, political and civic affairs since its construction. In addition, its size and architectural quality have dominated the community's downtown district, making it an important part of the cityscape.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. The Ohio Architect, Engineer & Builder, Vol. XVIII, No. 2,August, 1911, pp. 17-44.
2. "School Designer T.D. McLaughlin Succumbs at 84," Lima News, May 27, 1966.
3. "Peter Hulsken Dies Saturday," Lima News, June 5, 1949

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET...)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 1 1/2 acres

Quadrangle name Portland, Indiana **Quadrangle scale** 1:24000

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	16	671460	4147640
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 2, 3, 6, 7, 13, 14, 15, and 16 of Block 12 of the Original Plat of the City of Portland.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	None	code	county		code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Debra Beetem

organization **date** April, 1980

street & number 2005 Woodhaven Dr.,Apt. 1 **telephone** 219/747-7968

city or town Fort Wayne **state** Indiana 46819

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature John T. Goodlett

title State Historic Preservation Officer **date** 3-30-81

[redacted]

GPO 938 835

First Floor

Marble, a type which is different from the marble in the floor, lines the walls (see photo #6) of the first level. A pair of single Tuscan pilasters is positioned on either side of each of the four openings into the central space. The capitals of these pilasters are enriched with an egg and dart design, and a fret in a key pattern extends from these capitals around the perimeter of the entire hallway. The molded ceilings in the hallways and in the central space are painted. Although Henry Husman of Portland, Indiana, was contracted to refurbish the Courthouse in 1970, few changes have been made to this floor. None of the ceilings have been lowered, and the original wooden floors and light fixtures remain. Several offices front on the north-south hallway, which passes underneath the central staircase (see photo #6), but only two offices front on each arm of the east-west hallway, which is substantially shorter. An auditorium is located at the southwest corner of this floor.

Second Floor

As previously noted, the central staircase does not extend to the third floor. Instead, there is a stairway in the southern hall between the second and third floors and a barrel-vaulted stairwell (see photo #9) in the eastern hallway. Directly beneath the vault and above the window in the stairwell is a semi-circular mural depicting the first log cabin built in Jay County. Mrs. Peter Studebaker stands in the doorway with her baby in her arms, while her husband holds council with local Indians. Marble, identical to that found on the first floor walls, extends from the baseboards to the ceiling in this east stairwell, as well as in the central space of the second floor. However, only marble wainscoting was used in the northern and southern corridors. There is no western hallway on this or the third floor. Again, the same pilasters, the location of the pilasters and the floor design, which were found on the first level, are used here on the second level. Modern fluorescent lighting fixtures and carpeting have been installed in some offices on this floor, while in others the wooden or marble floors have been preserved. Walnut wainscoting, like that found in the County Commissioner's office has also been preserved.

Third Floor

The third floor of the Courthouse is dominated by the octagonal dome. A horizontal border with a scroll pattern marks the base of the dome. Each panel in the dome is framed by a molded plain border, a border in a rope pattern, and a beaded border (see photo #10), and the panels are separated from each other by a column of acanthus leaves. Beneath the panel above the Courtroom doors is a mural of a group of men being honored as they depart for the Civil War (see photo #11). Directly opposite is another semi-circular mural illustrating the Battle of Shiloh. The last mural, which is located above the doors of the Law Library (see photo #10), represents the first pioneers in Jay County, and John Gain and John Brooks, his wife Mary and infant daughter Nancy, are shown following the Godfrey Trace. The stationing of two Ionic pilasters at each point of the octagon is repeated in the central space at this level. Marble wainscoting extends three quarters of the way up the walls of the central space, and panels decorated by festoons rest on the wainscoting (see photo #10). The only hallway on this third floor is on the south end. The western arm is occupied by the Law Library, the northern by the Courtroom, and the eastern by the barrel-vaulted stairwell.

The Courtroom is an extremely important space in this building. Its ceiling is dominated by a vaulted stained glass skylight (see photo #12), which is framed by a fret in a key pattern and a coffered border. The entablature of the Ionic columns (see photo #12) extends around the inside perimeter of the room, which marks off the main seating from the aisles. Its frieze is decorated by small gold wreaths, and its cornice is ornamented by dentils and modillions. Between the entablature and the ceiling is a decorative semi-circular panel emblazoned with lions and foliage in bas relief. The ceiling over the aisles is lower and molded, and there is a door at the end of each aisle on either side of the judge's bench. There are two wooden panelled doors (see photo #11) which open into the central seating area. The wainscoting along the walls is painted and molded also, and the aisles have been carpeted.

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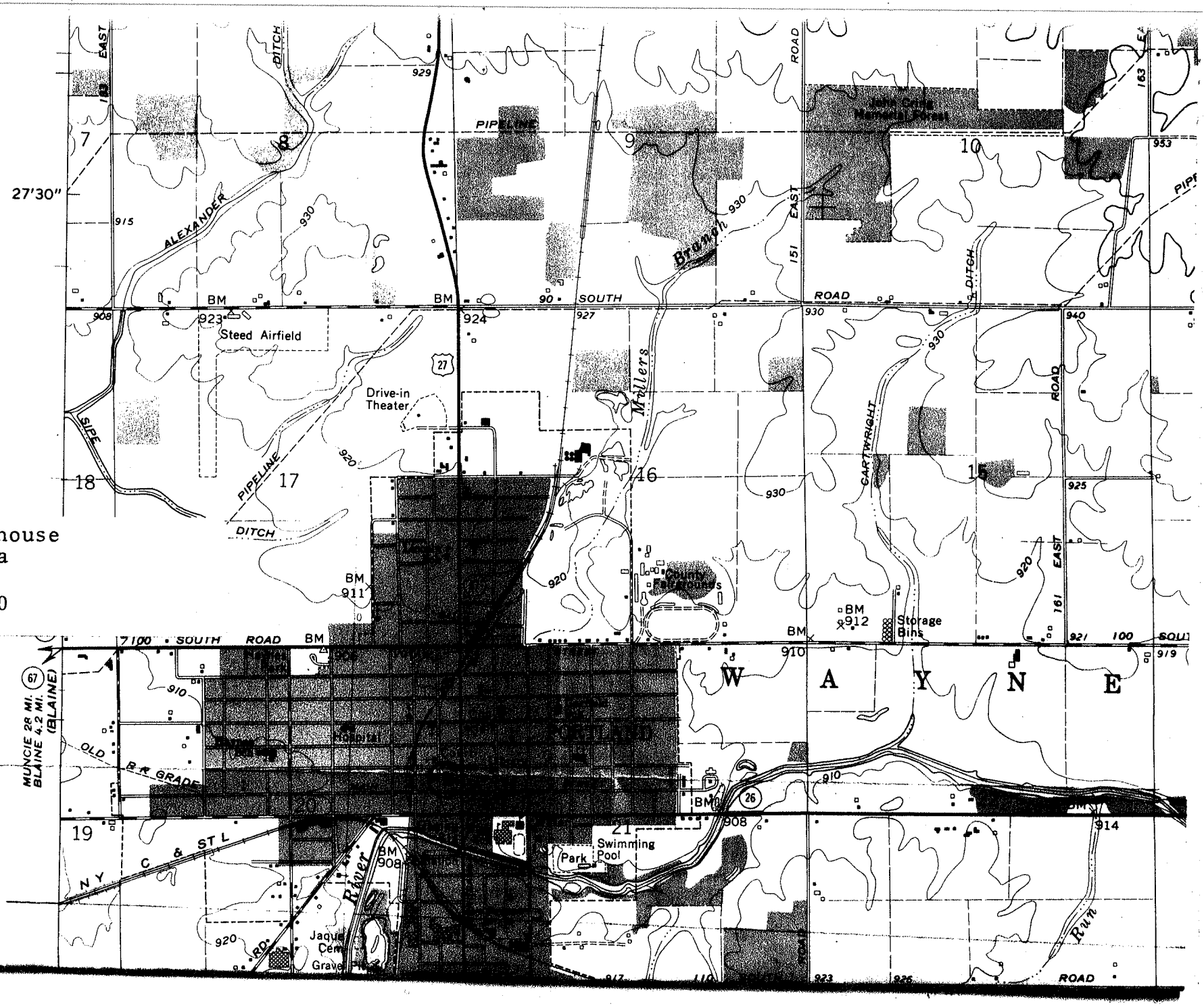
For HCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Item number 9 Page 1

4. A Standard History of Allen County, Ohio, Vol. II. William Rusler, Ed., Chicago; Amer. Historical Society, 1921.



Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
UTM Reference:
16/671460/4477640

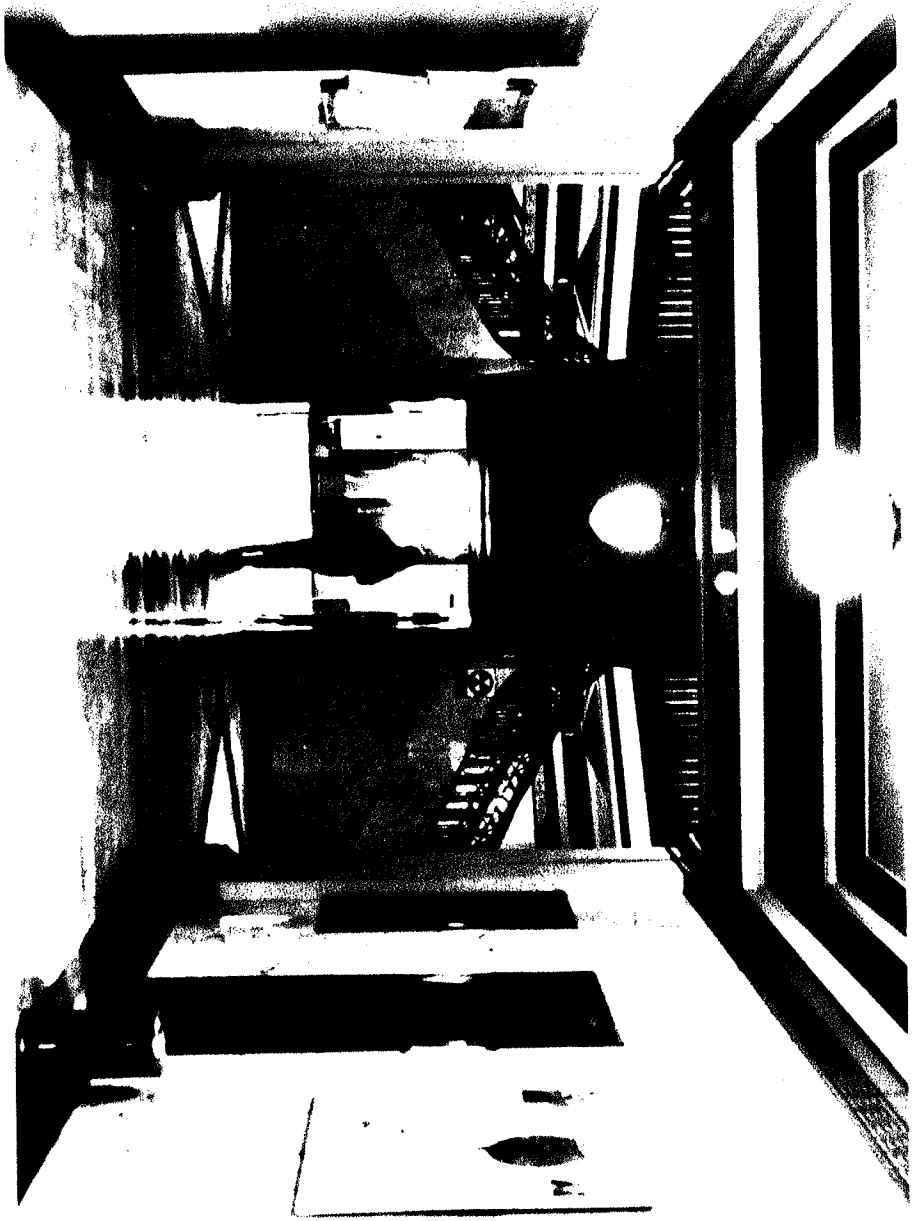
Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra Beetem
on Mar. 1980
Negative at Regional,
307 N. Tally,
Muncie, Indiana
Western facade
photo # 1 of 12

Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra
Beetem on Mar. 80

Negative at Regional,
307 N Tally:
Muncie, Indiana
Southern or principle
facade
photo # 2

Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra Beetem
on Mar. 1980
Negative at Region 6,
207 N. Talley,
Muncie, Indiana
northern facade
Photo #3

Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra Beetem
on Mar. 1980
Negative at Region 6,
207 N. Tally,
Muncie, Indiana
eastern facade
photo #4

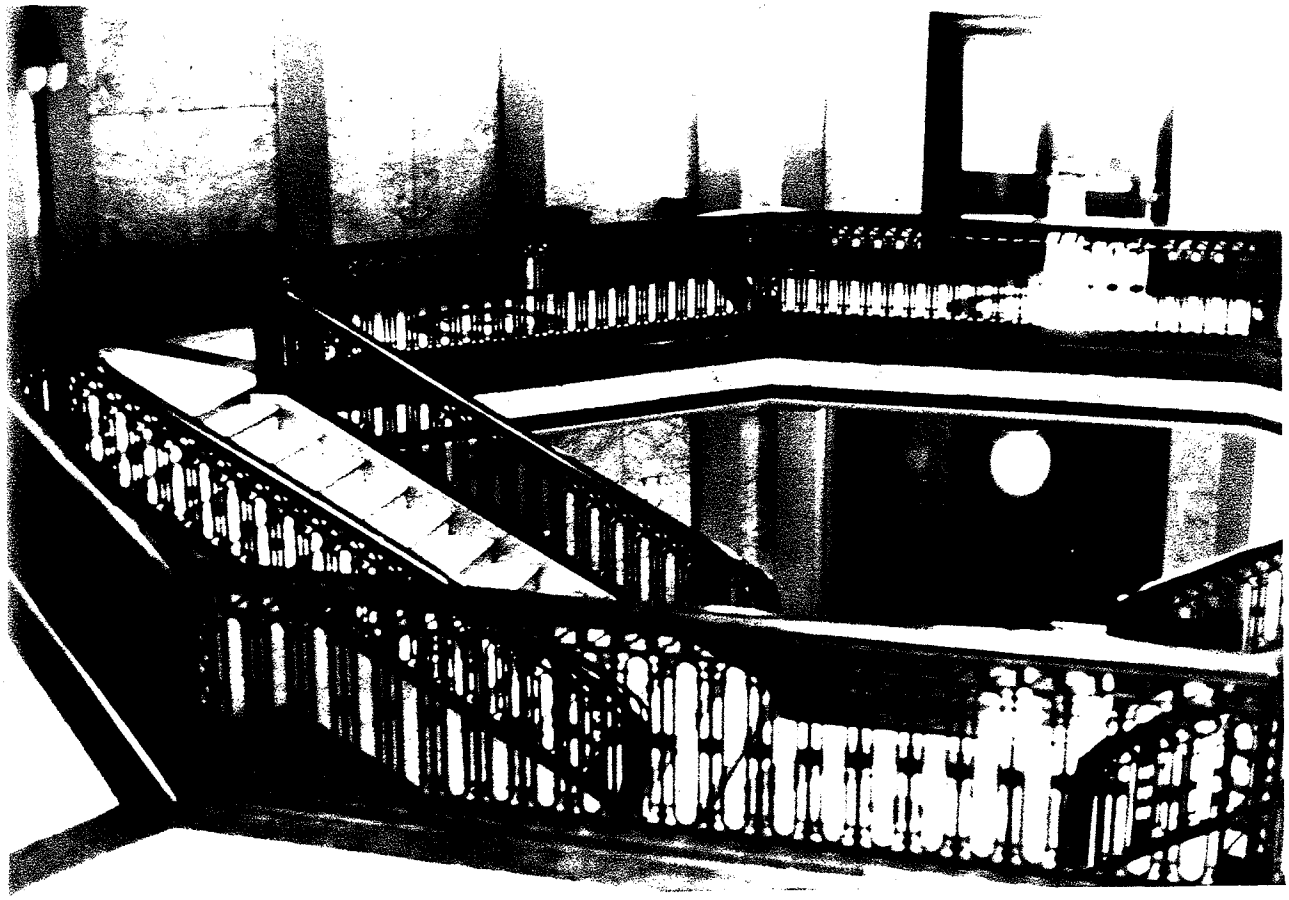


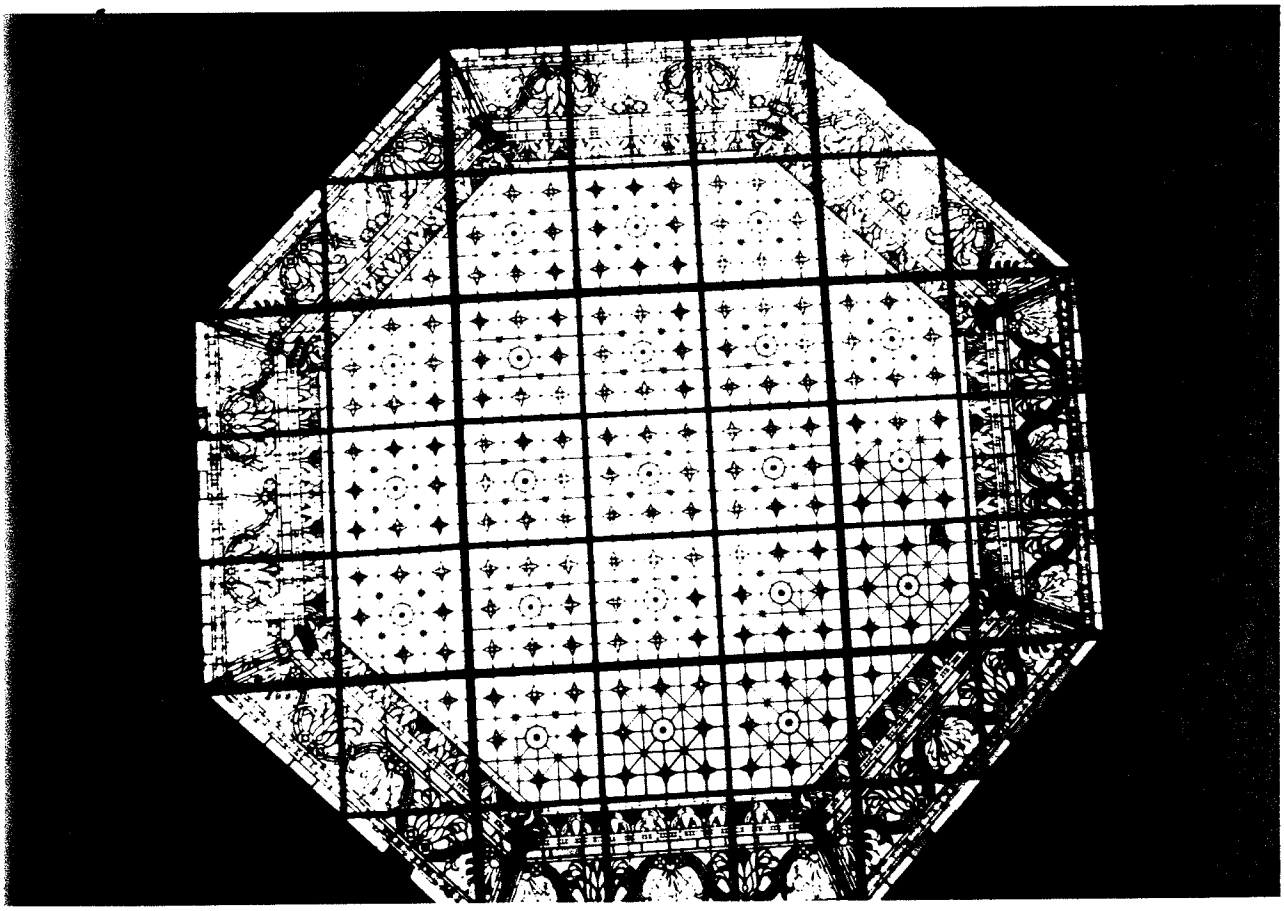
Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra Beetem
on Mar. 1980
Negative at Region 6

207 N. Talley,
Muncie, Indiana
ground floor, western
staircase (interior shot)
photo #5

Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra Beetem
on Mar. 1980
Negative at Region 6

207 N. Tally, Muncie,
Indiana
looking down northern
hallway toward
center staircase
photo #6





Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra Beetem
on Mar. 1980
Negative at Region 6,
207 N. Talley, Muncie,
Indiana
View of central staircase
taken from second
floor facing north
photo #7

Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra
Beetem on Mar. 1980
Negative at Region 6,
207 N. Talley,
Muncie, Indiana
Stained glass window
in ceiling
photo #8

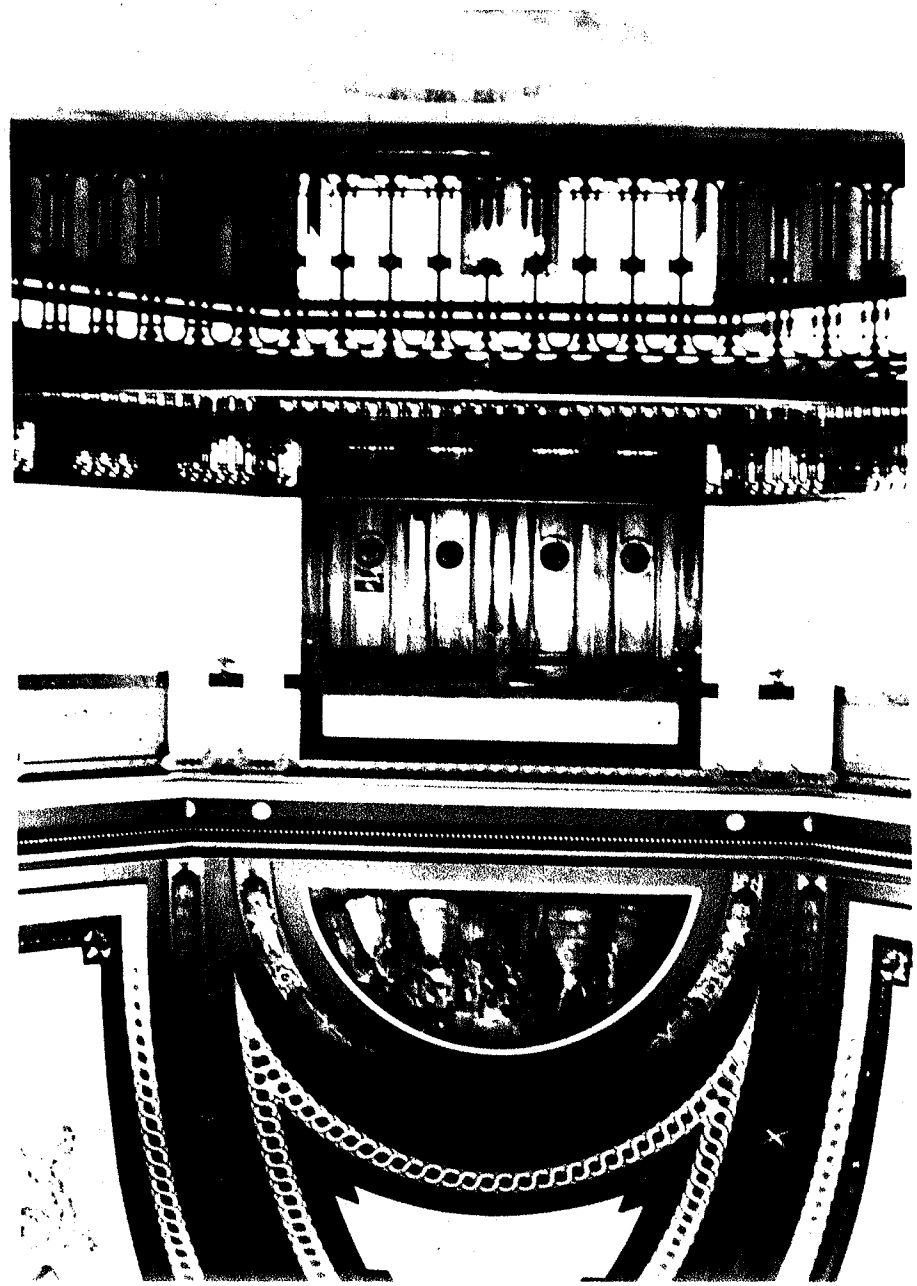
Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra Beetem
on Mar. 1980
Negative at Region 6,

207 N. Talley, Muncie,
Indiana
Western side of dome
& third floor (interior)
photo #10

Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra Beetem
on Mar. 1980
Negative at Region 6,

207 N. Talley, Muncie,
Indiana
taken from second floor
looking up into
barrel-vaulted ceiling
of eastern stairwell

photo #9



Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra Beetem
on Mar. 1980
Negative at Region 6,
207 N. Tally, Muncie,
Indiana
north side of dome &
third floor (interior)
photo # 11

Jay County Courthouse
Portland, Indiana
Photo by Debra Beetem
on Mar. 1980
Negative at Region 6,
207 N. Talley,
Muncie, IN.
Court Room, facing
Judge's bench
(interior shot)
photo # 12 of 12