NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

FINAL

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 Morgan County Courthouse

other names/site number 109-386-61029

2. Location

street & number Courthouse Square N/A ☒ not for publication

city or town Martinsville N/A ☐ vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Morgan code 109 zip code 46151

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.)

Patrick R. Robbins 11-20-95

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

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

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:) _____

Morgan County Courthouse
Name of Property

Morgan County, IN
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	1	structures
2	4	objects
3	5	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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: courthouse
DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: courthouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: sandstone
walls BRICK
STONE: sandstone
roof METAL: tin
other STONE: limestone

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.)

- [x] **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.
- [x] **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)

GOVERNMENT
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1859-1945

Significant Dates

1859

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Hodgson, Isaac
Blankenship, Perry

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibilography
(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:

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Name of repository:

_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	549210	4136410
2			
3			
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 Joanne Raetz Stuttgen

organization Morgan County Historic Preservation Society date January 5, 1995

street & number P.O. Box 1377 telephone (317) 349-1537

city or town Martinsville state IN zip code 46151

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 Morgan County Commissioners

street & number 10 East Washington telephone

city or town Martinsville state IN zip code 46151

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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

The Morgan County Courthouse is a two and one-half story brick and stone building located on the original courthouse square in downtown Martinsville, Indiana. The square includes several monuments and items (to be described later) and is bound by East Morgan, East Washington, South Main and South Jefferson Streets.

The Italianate style building was completed in 1857-59. Isaac Hodgson was the architect and Perry M. Blankenship was the brick mason. Brick was made by M.T. Lawman at the Cunningham Farm and is laid in common bond. Sandstone from nearby Indian Creek with some Bedford stone replacement blocks provide the trim and foundation. The original finish for the historic stone work, chiseled margins with bush-hammered faces, remains visible despite slight exfoliation and an apparent sandblasting. Poplar for the joists, beams and flooring came from Baker Township (Morgan County). The gable roofs are covered in painted tin.

The overall massing was originally in a cruciform plan with nearly freestanding *campanile* rising to five levels. Both the tower and an original two story, house-like annex to the west gave the building an asymmetrical appearance. Additions in 1956 and a sizable addition in 1975-76 have altered this massing considerably. The 1975-76 addition comprises the entire east half of the building and projects slightly from each side of the building. In detail, the addition closely matches the original building and it has a separate gable roof from the historic courthouse. Other remodelings were executed in c.1895, 1912, and 1934.

The south elevation is primary, having the *campanile* and main entrance (photo 3). There are three basic sections to this elevation. One is the west annex (Sheriff's House), to be described later. Next is the original main section with tower and projecting cross gable section. Continuing east, a taller, broader gabled section is the gable end of the 1975-76 addition. Starting with the main section of the historic courthouse, the *campanile* visually divides this section. West of the tower, the building has four bays. There are five openings on the first floor and four on the second level. Those on the first floor are arranged as linked pairs flanking a single window. Typical window headers are used on these openings, consisting of gauged tall brick round arches with

Morgan County Courthouse
Morgan County, Indiana

raised panel sandstone springers and keystones. Sandstone sills carried on corbel blocks. Paired windows share sills and springers. A belt course of sandstone divides the first and second levels. The second story window pairs are grouped to omit the space occupied by the single window of the first story. These windows are two stories tall with the same width as those below. As at each corner of the building, stone quoins mark the wall. The upper wall "entablature" treatment, common to most parts of the main building, consists of raised brick panels with square scallops extending to included the paired wooden scroll brackets. Between scroll brackets is a blind corbel arcade. Eaves are plain and the roof edge takes the form of a molded cornice.

Roughly centered on the south elevation is a two story cross gabled section which is slightly lower than the main block. It has a low pitched gable roof. Openings here are also round arched, but have stone hoods rather than brick arches. Arches are stepped or radiated with a molded impost. The main entrance, west of center, is a tall round arch and the voussoirs become a quoined surround. Steel and glass doors, a three light rectangular transom, and original wood transom panel with quarter-circle panels fill in the opening. East of this is a tall window with the usual sill treatment. A window pair is centered on the second story. Centered in the gable end is a large oculus with keystoned stone surround. It bears a tablet with the following inscription: ERECTED/A.D. 1857/J.S. HUBBARD/J. WILLIAMS/J. ADAMS/P.M. BLANKENSHIP, BUILDER/I. HODGSON, ARCHITECT The cornice line above the oculus lacks the raised panels of the main block but has the corbel arcade and paired brackets. Evident in the lower southeast wall of this section is a repair patch made in 1956. Portions of the sandstone foundation were replaced with limestone in this area also.

Next to the east of the projecting cross gabled section is an area modified in 1956. Originally, the cross gabled section cut back to join the main block, where two paired bays of fenestration similar to the west section would have been visible (photo 1). In 1956, this inside corner was filled in by extending the cross gable

front wall and the original east wall of the main block. The usual paired window treatment was replicated, but the brick seam is clearly visible today. In 1975-76, the raised panels (but not the corbel arcade) and brackets were replicated. The roof is flat.

The campanile is a distinctive feature of this elevation. Rising to five stories, it recalls the bell towers of Italian churches, which were always free-standing, or perhaps the town halls of Italian city-states. The stone foundation rises to a battered wall section which is capped by a stone belt course. Window pairs, narrower than usual but having the more elaborate stone arch headers, mark each level of the tower except the top. Stone belt courses divide the second and third stories, third and fourth, and fourth and fifth levels. The upper two courses also have three corbel blocks underneath. Quoins enframe the corners. The uppermost story has a large keystoned oculus with clock faces in each direction. Originally, this level housed a bell, which was removed in 1975-76. The *campanile* entablature has a denticulated frieze and modillions under broad eaves. A low pitched hip roof completes the *campanile*.

The section west of the 1956 modification is a large addition made in 1975-76. It has many of the same details as the historic courthouse: quoining, paired round arched windows with stone keystones and springers, paired brackets, and stone belt coursing. The brick closely matches the original brick in color. Brick round arches are not gauged, and the stone work is smooth sawn rather than the handworked historic sandstone. Some details are simplified (e.g., only window type is used) and there is much more reliance on symmetry. Facing south, the addition has a broad gable end with six openings on each level, the windows being paired as on some sections of the historic building. The oculus motif is centered in the gable end, here serving as a vent. The entablature has a subtle difference with the historic courthouse: the raised brick pattern is crow-stepped and has no corbel arcade.

Following the addition to the east facade, one finds a centered cross gabled entry section projecting from the addition with two

pairs of the usual window types on either side on each story. The entry section has a centered doorway, complete with radiating stone surround, flanked by windows. Three windows are above the first floor. The entablature continues that of the south facade. Photo 1 shows the original appearance of the west wall of the courthouse.

Following the addition once again finds one on the north elevation (photo 5). To the east is the gable end of the 1975-76 addition, a virtual mirror image of the other gable end of the addition. Stairs lead to a basement entrance to the addition on this side. The addition projects further away from the historic courthouse on this side than on the other elevation.

Abutting to the west of the 1975-75 addition is a two bay section added in 1956. As with the similar area on the south elevation, new brick walls filled an inside corner where the cross gabled section would have continued back to the main block. It has windows and quoining replicating those of the original building. Once again, the brick paneling and brackets were replicated as part of the 1975-76 rehabilitation. The original cross gable begins at a distinct seam in the brick and has a gable roof. Again, it is slightly lower than the main block. On the first floor is the main entrance, set one bay off center to the east. It has a radiating stone arch with quoined surrounds. The transom has a lunette panel with quarter circle panels. Typical windows (brick arches with stone detailing) are used on this cross gable section rather than the more elaborate stone arches. One is east of the doorway, two are paired on the other side. On the second floor, there are four symmetrically placed openings, two paired windows are centered, and individual windows flank the pair. Centered in the gable end is a stone oculus with louvered vent. The entablature carries the same elements as the south cross gable. The side of the cross gable projection is revealed to be two bays deep from the west (photos 7 and 8), with paired windows on each floor.

The section west of the cross gable is part of the main block. It

has two windows on the first level and two, two story tall windows on the second level.

The west elevation of the courthouse is partly obscured by the original annex or Sheriff's House. The first story walls of the main block have three bays, one to the north of a brick passageway and a pair to the south. Openings are of the usual brick arched type. The opening to the north on the first story (northwest corner of building) is filled in with concrete. Originally, it marked the location of the county jail cell. Above the usual belt course are four openings: paired two story tall windows on either side of a multi-paned, stone surrounded oculus, set with apex at arch crown height. Above this is a smaller stone oculus with vent. The entablature is detailed like other sides of the main block.

The annex or Sheriff's House is essentially a five bay wide, two bay deep I-house connected to the main block by an original one story, brick walled corridor (photos 8 and 9). The side gabled annex has stone round arched openings like those of the south gable. The single door is centered on the west front and is flanked by paired windows. On the second story are matching paired windows with a central oculus with keystone surround. The entablature has no brackets and no raised brick panels, but retains the corbel arcade. Corners are quoined. Side walls of the annex have typical brick round arched windows, one pair per story. A small brick rowlock oculus is centered at the apex of each gable. The roof edge has a molded cornice design. The walls of the connector hall have typical brick arched windows and the corbel arcade motif. A tin covered gable roof is over the connector.

Between 1890 and 1901, a basement was dug below the Sheriff's House to install a boiler. To access the basement, a flight of stairs was added to the north of the connector hall. A brick chimney which stood against the wall of the main block in this area is thought to have been added at this time. In 1912, a brick addition was placed north of the Sheriff's House. The addition housed a ladies restroom. The basement stairs may have enclosed as they are now in 1912. The ladies restroom addition

was removed as part of the 1975-76 rehabilitation.

Some alterations to the exterior are consistent throughout. Historic doors were replaced in the 1975-76 rehabilitation and addition with single light steel doors. In 1994, all windows were replaced. Chimneys were removed from all sections of the courthouse sometime between 1890-1901, when heating stoves were replaced by a steam radiator system. A wooden cupola centered on the roof of the main block was likely removed at this point.

The interior of the Morgan County Courthouse has two functional stories, with a third level located in the center, opposite the vaulted ceiling of the second floor courtroom. The main entrance to the south is connected by an original corridor to the north entrance. In 1975-76, an additional corridor was created from the east addition entrance to the original corridor, roughly bisecting it. Original staircases along the west wall of the north-south corridor were removed in 1975-76 and replaced by stairs located within the north and south cross gable sections. Wood floors and subfloors were replaced during the 1970s rehabilitation as well. Concrete subflooring and terrazzo were installed; on the second floor, terrazzo and carpet are present. Presumably, the wooden joist system was reinforced to bear the additional load. It would appear that new baseboards were installed at this time as well. Acoustical tile ceilings were installed at a lower height, but above header level.

In offices and in the historic corridor, original painted wood surrounds remain in place. Vertical boards take the form of Tuscan pilasters which support a full entablature (photo 10). Window moldings have the pilaster motif supporting archivolts with paneled keystones (photo 12). Original transoms are over most doorways. Doors themselves are 1976 replacements. Room proportions in the 1975-76 addition are similar to the historic courthouse, but finishes are very plain. Windows are devoid of surrounds. Doors have simple stained wood surrounds with no transoms. Within offices, most finishes are contemporary.

On the second floor, the original county courtroom occupies the western half of the original building, with new half-oval plan courtrooms facing each other but divided by an east-west hall in the 1975-76 addition. In the south stairwell area, several original features have been preserved. The paired windows retain their archivolt moldings which spring from inverted bell-shaped corbels (photo 14). The full entablature with water leaf frieze and double cornice, all of plaster, remain in place as does a ceiling medallion (photo 13).

The most significant space on this floor is the original courtroom (photo 15). The judge's bench, jury box, and other fixtures have been replaced, but the room retains its two story tall volume and tall, narrow Italianate window openings. The oculus with square paned stained glass is original as well. Walls have a plain coved treatment at the ceiling juncture. A balcony was added across the back of the courtroom in 1895, but it is now closed for use due to structural insufficiency.

The third floor has the best overall integrity of any level of the main building. It is reached by way of a wooden staircase of late 19th century vintage (photo 11). This staircase is Eastlake is spirit and so may date from the time of the balcony addition (c.1895). It has an angle set newel with incised ornament and turned ball finial. Balusters have a turned reel motif. Walls along the stairs and on third floor halls are wainscoted with vertical board capped by a chair rail. Surrounds have incised flutes and corner blocks which extend vertically beyond the header. The third floor provides access to the balcony and to offices. Original wood flooring remains under carpet.

The Sheriff's House annex is the most intact part of the courthouse complex. Inside, it reveals its I-house plan of a central hall with rooms on either side. Original plaster walls, window and door surrounds, and even paneled doors remain intact. Window and door moldings are like those of the courthouse main building. The original staircase, with tapered octagonal newel post and plain turned balusters, twists upward to the second

floor, which repeats the first floor plan. Wood floors have been carpeted throughout the Sheriff's House, which is now the surveyor's office.

Interior alterations occurred at an early date. In 1876, a fire destroyed the auditor's and clerk's records. It is believed that the fire was set by an official attempting to hide evidence of his misdeeds. The clerk's vault still has a smoke damaged wall from this event. In 1886 another fire damaged the courthouse. The cause was undetermined. Repairs included alterations to the second floor with the addition of a hall to separate the courtroom from a jury room and an office for the county commissioners. In 1895, the courtroom was redecorated and the balcony added. Electrical service is thought to have been added in 1912. In 1933-34, the Civil Works Administration granted $3,388.34 for extensive refinishing of the courthouse. Exterior work was limited, consisting of staining the brick, painting stonework white, and some roof work. On the interior, the courtroom was repainted and a colorful border added to the ceiling. Woodwork and furniture were revarnished or refinished throughout.

The courthouse lawn has four non-contributing monuments (objects), two contributing monuments (objects) and one non-contributing gazebo (structure). The courthouse itself is a contributing building. The three non-contributing monuments are placed along the northeast side of the square, close to the sidewalk. They are upright granite slabs, each about three feet high and one foot wide, with lettered bronze plaques. The marker on the north lawn commemorates William Bray (1903-1979), a Martinsville resident and U.S. Congressman from 1951-1975. The northernmost marker on the east lawn honors Martinsville resident Emmett Forest Branch (1874-1932), 31st governor of Indiana from 1924-25. South of this marker is a slab marker commemorating Paul Vorhies McNutt (1891-1955), a 1909 graduate of Martinsville High School and U.S. Ambassador to the Phillippines in 1932. The other non-contributing monument is a war memorial recently erected to honor Morgan County veterans of all wars. It is a brick wall with limestone plaque standing at the southwest corner of the square.

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The two contributing monuments were erected in the 19th century to commemorate the Civil War. To the north side of the west courthouse lawn is a Civil War era mortar mounted on a limestone pedestal. The mortar is marked T.J.R. and dated 1863, perhaps these are foundry marks. The pedestal is inscribed with G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) on one side, W.R.C. (Women's Relief Corps) on the other, and dates 61-65 at the base. In between the mortar memorial and the previously described war memorial is another Civil War monument. It is a Civil War era cannon (barrel only, no undercarriage) with five cannon balls mounted on a limestone pedestal. It is inscribed like the other Civil War monument. In 1942, a citizen suggested that the mortar and cannon be donated as war scrap. Fortunately, the idea was not undertaken.

The gazebo was built in October 1988 and stands near the center of the south lawn (visible in photo 3). Alpha Xi Chapter of Kappa Kappa sorority donated funds to build the structure, and the Martinsville High School Building Trades class erected it.

Although altered through the years, the Morgan County Courthouse still retains its identity. Its Italianate character on the exterior is still evident; on the interior, the original spaces still have the feeling of a historic building and are distinct from the addition rooms. Overall, enough integrity remains to convey the history, architecture, and function of the courthouse.

Section 8-Statement of Significance

As the seat of county government continuously for over 130 years, the Morgan County Courthouse has great local significance. The courthouse was the focus of all county government activity, including the County Sheriff's House, and its grounds were the focus of social life in Martinsville. Built in 1857-59, the courthouse is a good example of the work of Isaac Hodgson, a leading Indiana architect of the mid to late nineteenth century. Few of Hodgson's major works have survived. The Morgan County Courthouse is also significant for its Italianate architecture,

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being one of only six remaining Italianate county courthouses of Indiana's 92 counties. It is without question the grandest Italianate building in Morgan County and is the eighth oldest remaining county courthouse in Indiana. Continuous significance of the courthouse indicates the period of significance as 1859-1945.

Morgan County was organized in 1821, with some early settlement occurring in 1818. Martinsville was platted as the county seat in 1822. Waverly and Centerton were considered for county seat status over the Martinsville site, and had much to offer. Waverly in particular was at the end of a trail blazed by the Whetzels, from Franklin County to the White River. It also had immediate river access. But citizens donated land for public building sites at the Martinsville site if the county seat would be located there, and the offer was accepted. The choice of a Shelbyville Square plan for the courthouse square reflects the Upland South heritage of most settlers (the Shelbyville Square is formed by streets intersecting at the corners of the square; it is the most common type of courthouse square in Indiana).

The first court proceedings were held in Jacob Cutler's log cabin in 1822 (the site of this cabin is 183 North Jefferson Street). In 1823, the first courthouse proper was built on a 25' by 35' lot a the southwest corner of the central square. This two story log building was replaced by a two story brick building, 35' by 40' in size, in 1833-34. Giles Mitchell was the brick mason.

By the 1850s, Martinsville had become a successful county seat and farm market town. Several events lead to the community's success. Martinsville was within reach of the White River, making it a "port" for pork and grain shipping to the south. In 1847, a branch of the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad from Franklin to Martinsville was started, but not completed until 1852. The first train reached Martinsville in the spring of 1853. Railroads operated sporadically to Martinsville at first-the first line failed after five years. In 1853, the New Albany and Salem Railroad started to build an Indianapolis-Vincennes line, but this remained unused until after the Civil War. At that time, General

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Burnside (of Civil War fame) assumed control of both defunct lines and reopened them. Eventually, other rail conglomerates bought out these lines and constant rail service was established by the 1880s. Short-lived as it was, railroads gave Martinsville trade and commerce advantages over other mid south Indiana towns. Consummating this early period of prosperity was the construction of a suitable courthouse for the community.

In 1857, the county commissioners selected the plans of Indianapolis architect Isaac Hodgson and noted brick mason Perry Blankenship of Paragon, Indiana placed a winning bid of $30,000 for construction. Unusual for a county courthouse of the period is the combination of the county sheriff's house with those of the jail and courthouse. County governments in Indiana provided for a combined residence and jail for the county sheriff. The proximity of the sheriff's house to the jail insured security at all times and the sheriff was given a stipend to care for prisoners. Typically, the house/jail building was built close to the courthouse. The Morgan County Courthouse is one of two existing courthouses in Indiana to combine the function of sheriff's house and jail with those of county government. Jennings County has the other example. In both cases, the house is designed very much to appear as a separate residence (both were designed by Hodgson; see discussion below). In this way, the Morgan County Courthouse reflects a roll of county government which most Indiana courthouses do not.

When completed in 1859, the Morgan County Courthouse stood as a complete example of Italianate architecture. Architect Isaac Hodgson was at the height of his career when he received the commission to design a courthouse for Morgan County. Hodgson was born in Belfast, Ireland in 1826. He attended parochial schools and the Royal Academy. At age 16, Hodgson was employed in the office of Sir Charles Lanyard, architect.

After coming to the United States in 1848, Isaac moved to Decatur (county?), Indiana and then to Louisville. In Louisville, Hodgson was assistant architect for several government buildings. After

this, Hodgson moved to Indianapolis and established an office. He would remain in Indianapolis until about 1885 and became a leading architect in the city. Hodgson received a number of large commissions, including courthouses in Indiana and other states; prisons in Indianapolis and Dayton, Ohio; a building for Rose Polytechnic Institute in Terre Haute; Rose Orphan Asylum, also in Terre Haute; and many large homes in Indianapolis. By 1880, Hodgson's son Edgar practiced with him. The pair moved to St. Paul, Minnesota by about 1885. There, with Wallingford and Stem as partners, they are known to have designed an office building and house. Isaac Hodgson died in 1909.

His finest Indiana work is represented by the five known county courthouses by his hand, since little else remains by him in the state. The two earliest are the Jennings and Morgan County buildings, both 1857-59. The Henry County Courthouse followed in 1864-69. In 1869-1876, the Marion County Courthouse was a massive Second Empire style building which stood until 1960. Finally, in 1871-74, Hodgson's design for the Bartholomew County Courthouse was completed. It too is a Second Empire style building. As an example of Hodgson's work, the Morgan County Courthouse is a significant large, early commission.

The Morgan County Courthouse also has significance as an example of Italianate architecture. Originating in England in the 1830s, Italianate architecture was inspired by Italian rustic countryside buildings of the Renaissance era. American architects such as Downing and Sloan helped popularize the style through pattern books in the 1850s. Indiana would have had very few major Italianate buildings at the time Hodgson proposed a fully developed example for the Morgan County Courthouse in 1857. Indiana has about six Italianate county courthouses (depending on how one identifies the style-the six include only those readily identified with all the characteristics of Italianate style). Steuben, Martin, Posey, Henry, Morgan, and Jennings County Courthouses are the six Italianate examples. The Jennings County Courthouse, also designed by Hodgson, is most comparable. Indeed, it is highly similar to the Morgan County example and was designed

at the same time. While the Jennings County example has better integrity, it is simpler in detail. It lacks, for example, the more sophisticated stone hoods and brick corbel arcades of the Morgan County Courthouse. Both represent the typical 19th century architect's practice of varying a common theme for different clients.

The Morgan County Courthouse survived a number of fires and remodelings, as detailed in the description. In the late 1960s, the courthouse endured its most severe threat in recent history. Some considered the courthouse to be in "structural peril" and others though it to be a sound building. The county commissioners hoped to demolish the courthouse, but were later convinced to save the building. In 1973, it was agreed to save the courthouse, build an addition to the east, and rehabilitate the interior of the old building. H. Roll McLaughlin, architect for James Associates, designed the addition. McLaughlin was involved in HABS documentation in Indiana in the 1930s and later was an early member of the Indiana Historic Preservation Review Board. His obvious intention was to have the addition blend into the old building as much as possible, with details providing clues to the recent vintage of the addition for the discerning viewer. The addition was completed in 1975-76.

Morgan County Courthouse
Morgan County, Indiana

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Information on Isaac Hodgson came from Representative Men of Indiana. Cincinnati: Western Biographical Publishing Co., 1880. Vol. 1, pp94-95, and from DHPA's "Architects" binder.

Section 10-Geographical Data

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Morgan County Courthouse Square constitutes one square block in downtown Martinsville, Indiana, bound by the south curb line of East Morgan Street on the north; by the west curb line of North Jefferson Street on the east; by the north curb line of East Washington Street on the south; and by the east curb line of North Main Street on the west.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This is the historic boundary of the Morgan County Courthouse Square.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Note: All negatives are located in the Morgan County Historic Photograph Collection, Morgan County Public Library, 110 South Jefferson Street, Martinsville, Indiana, 46151.

Fig. 1 Photographer unknown. c.1900. Southeast view.

Fig. 2 Photographer unknown. c.1965. South view.

Fig. 3 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Southwest view.

Fig. 4 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. East view.

Fig. 5 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. North view.

Fig. 6 Photographer unknown. c.1940. (Photograph taken from Inventory of the County Archives of Indiana--No. 55, Morgan County [1941]: front flyleaf.) Northeast view.

Fig. 7 Photographer unknown. c.1897. Northwest view.

Fig. 8 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. West view.

Fig. 9 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Southeast view, two-story annex.

Fig. 10 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Original north-south corridor.

Fig. 11 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Original staircase to third floor.

Fig. 12 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Window surrounds, first floor women's rest room.

Fig. 13 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Cornice frieze and medallion, south stairwell.

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

FINAL

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 Morgan County Courthouse

other names/site number 109-386-61029

2. Location

street & number Courthouse Square N/A not for publication

city or town Martinsville N/A ☐ vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Morgan code 109 zip code 46151

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.)

Patrick R. Robbins 11-20-95

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

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

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:) _____

Morgan County Courthouse
Name of Property

Morgan County, IN
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	1	structures
2	4	objects
3	5	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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: courthouse
DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: courthouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: sandstone
walls BRICK
STONE: sandstone
roof METAL: tin
other STONE: limestone

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)

GOVERNMENT
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1859-1945

Significant Dates

1859

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Hodgson, Isaac
Blankenship, Perry

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibilography
(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:

_____

Morgan County Courthouse
Name of Property

Morgan County, IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	549210	4396160
2			
3			
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 Joanne Raetz Stuttgen

organization Morgan County Historic Preservation Society date January 5, 1995

street & number P.O. Box 1377 telephone (317) 349-1537

city or town Martinsville state IN zip code 46151

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 Morgan County Commissioners

street & number 10 East Washington telephone

city or town Martinsville state IN zip code 46151

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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

The Morgan County Courthouse is a two and one-half story brick and stone building located on the original courthouse square in downtown Martinsville, Indiana. The square includes several monuments and items (to be described later) and is bound by East Morgan, East Washington, South Main and South Jefferson Streets.

The Italianate style building was completed in 1857-59. Isaac Hodgson was the architect and Perry M. Blankenship was the brick mason. Brick was made by M.T. Lawman at the Cunningham Farm and is laid in common bond. Sandstone from nearby Indian Creek with some Bedford stone replacement blocks provide the trim and foundation. The original finish for the historic stone work, chiseled margins with bush-hammered faces, remains visible despite slight exfoliation and an apparent sandblasting. Poplar for the joists, beams and flooring came from Baker Township (Morgan County). The gable roofs are covered in painted tin.

The overall massing was originally in a cruciform plan with nearly freestanding *campanile* rising to five levels. Both the tower and an original two story, house-like annex to the west gave the building an asymmetrical appearance. Additions in 1956 and a sizable addition in 1975-76 have altered this massing considerably. The 1975-76 addition comprises the entire east half of the building and projects slightly from each side of the building. In detail, the addition closely matches the original building and it has a separate gable roof from the historic courthouse. Other remodelings were executed in c.1895, 1912, and 1934.

The south elevation is primary, having the *campanile* and main entrance (photo 3). There are three basic sections to this elevation. One is the west annex (Sheriff's House), to be described later. Next is the original main section with tower and projecting cross gable section. Continuing east, a taller, broader gabled section is the gable end of the 1975-76 addition. Starting with the main section of the historic courthouse, the *campanile* visually divides this section. West of the tower, the building has four bays. There are five openings on the first floor and four on the second level. Those on the first floor are arranged as linked pairs flanking a single window. Typical window headers are used on these openings, consisting of gauged tall brick round arches with

Morgan County Courthouse
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raised panel sandstone springers and keystones. Sandstone sills carried on corbel blocks. Paired windows share sills and springers. A belt course of sandstone divides the first and second levels. The second story window pairs are grouped to omit the space occupied by the single window of the first story. These windows are two stories tall with the same width as those below. As at each corner of the building, stone quoins mark the wall. The upper wall "entablature" treatment, common to most parts of the main building, consists of raised brick panels with square scallops extending to included the paired wooden scroll brackets. Between scroll brackets is a blind corbel arcade. Eaves are plain and the roof edge takes the form of a molded cornice.

Roughly centered on the south elevation is a two story cross gabled section which is slightly lower than the main block. It has a low pitched gable roof. Openings here are also round arched, but have stone hoods rather than brick arches. Arches are stepped or radiated with a molded impost. The main entrance, west of center, is a tall round arch and the voussoirs become a quoined surround. Steel and glass doors, a three light rectangular transom, and original wood transom panel with quarter-circle panels fill in the opening. East of this is a tall window with the usual sill treatment. A window pair is centered on the second story. Centered in the gable end is a large oculus with keystoned stone surround. It bears a tablet with the following inscription: ERECTED/A.D. 1857/J.S. HUBBARD/J. WILLIAMS/J. ADAMS/P.M. BLANKENSHIP, BUILDER/I. HODGSON, ARCHITECT The cornice line above the oculus lacks the raised panels of the main block but has the corbel arcade and paired brackets. Evident in the lower southeast wall of this section is a repair patch made in 1956. Portions of the sandstone foundation were replaced with limestone in this area also.

Next to the east of the projecting cross gabled section is an area modified in 1956. Originally, the cross gabled section cut back to join the main block, where two paired bays of fenestration similar to the west section would have been visible (photo 1). In 1956, this inside corner was filled in by extending the cross gable

front wall and the original east wall of the main block. The usual paired window treatment was replicated, but the brick seam is clearly visible today. In 1975-76, the raised panels (but not the corbel arcade) and brackets were replicated. The roof is flat.

The campanile is a distinctive feature of this elevation. Rising to five stories, it recalls the bell towers of Italian churches, which were always free-standing, or perhaps the town halls of Italian city-states. The stone foundation rises to a battered wall section which is capped by a stone belt course. Window pairs, narrower than usual but having the more elaborate stone arch headers, mark each level of the tower except the top. Stone belt courses divide the second and third stories, third and fourth, and fourth and fifth levels. The upper two courses also have three corbel blocks underneath. Quoins enframe the corners. The uppermost story has a large keystoned oculus with clock faces in each direction. Originally, this level housed a bell, which was removed in 1975-76. The *campanile* entablature has a denticulated frieze and modillions under broad eaves. A low pitched hip roof completes the *campanile*.

The section west of the 1956 modification is a large addition made in 1975-76. It has many of the same details as the historic courthouse: quoining, paired round arched windows with stone keystones and springers, paired brackets, and stone belt coursing. The brick closely matches the original brick in color. Brick round arches are not gauged, and the stone work is smooth sawn rather than the handworked historic sandstone. Some details are simplified (e.g., only window type is used) and there is much more reliance on symmetry. Facing south, the addition has a broad gable end with six openings on each level, the windows being paired as on some sections of the historic building. The oculus motif is centered in the gable end, here serving as a vent. The entablature has a subtle difference with the historic courthouse: the raised brick pattern is crow-stepped and has no corbel arcade.

Following the addition to the east facade, one finds a centered cross gabled entry section projecting from the addition with two

pairs of the usual window types on either side on each story. The entry section has a centered doorway, complete with radiating stone surround, flanked by windows. Three windows are above the first floor. The entablature continues that of the south facade. Photo 1 shows the original appearance of the west wall of the courthouse.

Following the addition once again finds one on the north elevation (photo 5). To the east is the gable end of the 1975-76 addition, a virtual mirror image of the other gable end of the addition. Stairs lead to a basement entrance to the addition on this side. The addition projects further away from the historic courthouse on this side than on the other elevation.

Abutting to the west of the 1975-75 addition is a two bay section added in 1956. As with the similar area on the south elevation, new brick walls filled an inside corner where the cross gabled section would have continued back to the main block. It has windows and quoining replicating those of the original building. Once again, the brick paneling and brackets were replicated as part of the 1975-76 rehabilitation. The original cross gable begins at a distinct seam in the brick and has a gable roof. Again, it is slightly lower than the main block. On the first floor is the main entrance, set one bay off center to the east. It has a radiating stone arch with quoined surrounds. The transom has a lunette panel with quarter circle panels. Typical windows (brick arches with stone detailing) are used on this cross gable section rather than the more elaborate stone arches. One is east of the doorway, two are paired on the other side. On the second floor, there are four symmetrically placed openings, two paired windows are centered, and individual windows flank the pair. Centered in the gable end is a stone oculus with louvered vent. The entablature carries the same elements as the south cross gable. The side of the cross gable projection is revealed to be two bays deep from the west (photos 7 and 8), with paired windows on each floor.

The section west of the cross gable is part of the main block. It

has two windows on the first level and two, two story tall windows on the second level.

The west elevation of the courthouse is partly obscured by the original annex or Sheriff's House. The first story walls of the main block have three bays, one to the north of a brick passageway and a pair to the south. Openings are of the usual brick arched type. The opening to the north on the first story (northwest corner of building) is filled in with concrete. Originally, it marked the location of the county jail cell. Above the usual belt course are four openings: paired two story tall windows on either side of a multi-paned, stone surrounded oculus, set with apex at arch crown height. Above this is a smaller stone oculus with vent. The entablature is detailed like other sides of the main block.

The annex or Sheriff's House is essentially a five bay wide, two bay deep I-house connected to the main block by an original one story, brick walled corridor (photos 8 and 9). The side gabled annex has stone round arched openings like those of the south gable. The single door is centered on the west front and is flanked by paired windows. On the second story are matching paired windows with a central oculus with keystone surround. The entablature has no brackets and no raised brick panels, but retains the corbel arcade. Corners are quoined. Side walls of the annex have typical brick round arched windows, one pair per story. A small brick rowlock oculus is centered at the apex of each gable. The roof edge has a molded cornice design. The walls of the connector hall have typical brick arched windows and the corbel arcade motif. A tin covered gable roof is over the connector.

Between 1890 and 1901, a basement was dug below the Sheriff's House to install a boiler. To access the basement, a flight of stairs was added to the north of the connector hall. A brick chimney which stood against the wall of the main block in this area is thought to have been added at this time. In 1912, a brick addition was placed north of the Sheriff's House. The addition housed a ladies restroom. The basement stairs may have enclosed as they are now in 1912. The ladies restroom addition

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was removed as part of the 1975-76 rehabilitation.

Some alterations to the exterior are consistent throughout. Historic doors were replaced in the 1975-76 rehabilitation and addition with single light steel doors. In 1994, all windows were replaced. Chimneys were removed from all sections of the courthouse sometime between 1890-1901, when heating stoves were replaced by a steam radiator system. A wooden cupola centered on the roof of the main block was likely removed at this point.

The interior of the Morgan County Courthouse has two functional stories, with a third level located in the center, opposite the vaulted ceiling of the second floor courtroom. The main entrance to the south is connected by an original corridor to the north entrance. In 1975-76, an additional corridor was created from the east addition entrance to the original corridor, roughly bisecting it. Original staircases along the west wall of the north-south corridor were removed in 1975-76 and replaced by stairs located within the north and south cross gable sections. Wood floors and subfloors were replaced during the 1970s rehabilitation as well. Concrete subflooring and terrazzo were installed; on the second floor, terrazzo and carpet are present. Presumably, the wooden joist system was reinforced to bear the additional load. It would appear that new baseboards were installed at this time as well. Acoustical tile ceilings were installed at a lower height, but above header level.

In offices and in the historic corridor, original painted wood surrounds remain in place. Vertical boards take the form of Tuscan pilasters which support a full entablature (photo 10). Window moldings have the pilaster motif supporting archivolts with paneled keystones (photo 12). Original transoms are over most doorways. Doors themselves are 1976 replacements. Room proportions in the 1975-76 addition are similar to the historic courthouse, but finishes are very plain. Windows are devoid of surrounds. Doors have simple stained wood surrounds with no transoms. Within offices, most finishes are contemporary.

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On the second floor, the original county courtroom occupies the western half of the original building, with new half-oval plan courtrooms facing each other but divided by an east-west hall in the 1975-76 addition. In the south stairwell area, several original features have been preserved. The paired windows retain their archivolt moldings which spring from inverted bell-shaped corbels (photo 14). The full entablature with water leaf frieze and double cornice, all of plaster, remain in place as does a ceiling medallion (photo 13).

The most significant space on this floor is the original courtroom (photo 15). The judge's bench, jury box, and other fixtures have been replaced, but the room retains its two story tall volume and tall, narrow Italianate window openings. The oculus with square paned stained glass is original as well. Walls have a plain coved treatment at the ceiling juncture. A balcony was added across the back of the courtroom in 1895, but it is now closed for use due to structural insufficiency.

The third floor has the best overall integrity of any level of the main building. It is reached by way of a wooden staircase of late 19th century vintage (photo 11). This staircase is Eastlake is spirit and so may date from the time of the balcony addition (c.1895). It has an angle set newel with incised ornament and turned ball finial. Balusters have a turned reel motif. Walls along the stairs and on third floor halls are wainscoted with vertical board capped by a chair rail. Surrounds have incised flutes and corner blocks which extend vertically beyond the header. The third floor provides access to the balcony and to offices. Original wood flooring remains under carpet.

The Sheriff's House annex is the most intact part of the courthouse complex. Inside, it reveals its I-house plan of a central hall with rooms on either side. Original plaster walls, window and door surrounds, and even paneled doors remain intact. Window and door moldings are like those of the courthouse main building. The original staircase, with tapered octagonal newel post and plain turned balusters, twists upward to the second

floor, which repeats the first floor plan. Wood floors have been carpeted throughout the Sheriff's House, which is now the surveyor's office.

Interior alterations occurred at an early date. In 1876, a fire destroyed the auditor's and clerk's records. It is believed that the fire was set by an official attempting to hide evidence of his misdeeds. The clerk's vault still has a smoke damaged wall from this event. In 1886 another fire damaged the courthouse. The cause was undetermined. Repairs included alterations to the second floor with the addition of a hall to separate the courtroom from a jury room and an office for the county commissioners. In 1895, the courtroom was redecorated and the balcony added. Electrical service is thought to have been added in 1912. In 1933-34, the Civil Works Administration granted $3,388.34 for extensive refinishing of the courthouse. Exterior work was limited, consisting of staining the brick, painting stonework white, and some roof work. On the interior, the courtroom was repainted and a colorful border added to the ceiling. Woodwork and furniture were revarnished or refinished throughout.

The courthouse lawn has four non-contributing monuments (objects), two contributing monuments (objects) and one non-contributing gazebo (structure). The courthouse itself is a contributing building. The three non-contributing monuments are placed along the northeast side of the square, close to the sidewalk. They are upright granite slabs, each about three feet high and one foot wide, with lettered bronze plaques. The marker on the north lawn commemorates William Bray (1903-1979), a Martinsville resident and U.S. Congressman from 1951-1975. The northernmost marker on the east lawn honors Martinsville resident Emmett Forest Branch (1874-1932), 31st governor of Indiana from 1924-25. South of this marker is a slab marker commemorating Paul Vorhies McNutt (1891-1955), a 1909 graduate of Martinsville High School and U.S. Ambassador to the Phillippines in 1932. The other non-contributing monument is a war memorial recently erected to honor Morgan County veterans of all wars. It is a brick wall with limestone plaque standing at the southwest corner of the square.

Morgan County Courthouse
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The two contributing monuments were erected in the 19th century to commemorate the Civil War. To the north side of the west courthouse lawn is a Civil War era mortar mounted on a limestone pedestal. The mortar is marked T.J.R. and dated 1863, perhaps these are foundry marks. The pedestal is inscribed with G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) on one side, W.R.C. (Women's Relief Corps) on the other, and dates 61-65 at the base. In between the mortar memorial and the previously described war memorial is another Civil War monument. It is a Civil War era cannon (barrel only, no undercarriage) with five cannon balls mounted on a limestone pedestal. It is inscribed like the other Civil War monument. In 1942, a citizen suggested that the mortar and cannon be donated as war scrap. Fortunately, the idea was not undertaken.

The gazebo was built in October 1988 and stands near the center of the south lawn (visible in photo 3). Alpha Xi Chapter of Kappa Kappa sorority donated funds to build the structure, and the Martinsville High School Building Trades class erected it.

Although altered through the years, the Morgan County Courthouse still retains its identity. Its Italianate character on the exterior is still evident; on the interior, the original spaces still have the feeling of a historic building and are distinct from the addition rooms. Overall, enough integrity remains to convey the history, architecture, and function of the courthouse.

Section 8-Statement of Significance

As the seat of county government continuously for over 130 years, the Morgan County Courthouse has great local significance. The courthouse was the focus of all county government activity, including the County Sheriff's House, and its grounds were the focus of social life in Martinsville. Built in 1857-59, the courthouse is a good example of the work of Isaac Hodgson, a leading Indiana architect of the mid to late nineteenth century. Few of Hodgson's major works have survived. The Morgan County Courthouse is also significant for its Italianate architecture,

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being one of only six remaining Italianate county courthouses of Indiana's 92 counties. It is without question the grandest Italianate building in Morgan County and is the eighth oldest remaining county courthouse in Indiana. Continuous significance of the courthouse indicates the period of significance as 1859-1945.

Morgan County was organized in 1821, with some early settlement occurring in 1818. Martinsville was platted as the county seat in 1822. Waverly and Centerton were considered for county seat status over the Martinsville site, and had much to offer. Waverly in particular was at the end of a trail blazed by the Whetzels, from Franklin County to the White River. It also had immediate river access. But citizens donated land for public building sites at the Martinsville site if the county seat would be located there, and the offer was accepted. The choice of a Shelbyville Square plan for the courthouse square reflects the Upland South heritage of most settlers (the Shelbyville Square is formed by streets intersecting at the corners of the square; it is the most common type of courthouse square in Indiana).

The first court proceedings were held in Jacob Cutler's log cabin in 1822 (the site of this cabin is 183 North Jefferson Street). In 1823, the first courthouse proper was built on a 25' by 35' lot a the southwest corner of the central square. This two story log building was replaced by a two story brick building, 35' by 40' in size, in 1833-34. Giles Mitchell was the brick mason.

By the 1850s, Martinsville had become a successful county seat and farm market town. Several events lead to the community's success. Martinsville was within reach of the White River, making it a "port" for pork and grain shipping to the south. In 1847, a branch of the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad from Franklin to Martinsville was started, but not completed until 1852. The first train reached Martinsville in the spring of 1853. Railroads operated sporadically to Martinsville at first-the first line failed after five years. In 1853, the New Albany and Salem Railroad started to build an Indianapolis-Vincennes line, but this remained unused until after the Civil War. At that time, General

Morgan County Courthouse
Morgan County, Indiana

Burnside (of Civil War fame) assumed control of both defunct lines and reopened them. Eventually, other rail conglomerates bought out these lines and constant rail service was established by the 1880s. Short-lived as it was, railroads gave Martinsville trade and commerce advantages over other mid south Indiana towns. Consummating this early period of prosperity was the construction of a suitable courthouse for the community.

In 1857, the county commissioners selected the plans of Indianapolis architect Isaac Hodgson and noted brick mason Perry Blankenship of Paragon, Indiana placed a winning bid of $30,000 for construction. Unusual for a county courthouse of the period is the combination of the county sheriff's house with those of the jail and courthouse. County governments in Indiana provided for a combined residence and jail for the county sheriff. The proximity of the sheriff's house to the jail insured security at all times and the sheriff was given a stipend to care for prisoners. Typically, the house/jail building was built close to the courthouse. The Morgan County Courthouse is one of two existing courthouses in Indiana to combine the function of sheriff's house and jail with those of county government. Jennings County has the other example. In both cases, the house is designed very much to appear as a separate residence (both were designed by Hodgson; see discussion below). In this way, the Morgan County Courthouse reflects a roll of county government which most Indiana courthouses do not.

When completed in 1859, the Morgan County Courthouse stood as a complete example of Italianate architecture. Architect Isaac Hodgson was at the height of his career when he received the commission to design a courthouse for Morgan County. Hodgson was born in Belfast, Ireland in 1826. He attended parochial schools and the Royal Academy. At age 16, Hodgson was employed in the office of Sir Charles Lanyard, architect.

After coming to the United States in 1848, Isaac moved to Decatur (county?), Indiana and then to Louisville. In Louisville, Hodgson was assistant architect for several government buildings. After

this, Hodgson moved to Indianapolis and established an office. He would remain in Indianapolis until about 1885 and became a leading architect in the city. Hodgson received a number of large commissions, including courthouses in Indiana and other states; prisons in Indianapolis and Dayton, Ohio; a building for Rose Polytechnic Institute in Terre Haute; Rose Orphan Asylum, also in Terre Haute; and many large homes in Indianapolis. By 1880, Hodgson's son Edgar practiced with him. The pair moved to St. Paul, Minnesota by about 1885. There, with Wallingford and Stem as partners, they are known to have designed an office building and house. Isaac Hodgson died in 1909.

His finest Indiana work is represented by the five known county courthouses by his hand, since little else remains by him in the state. The two earliest are the Jennings and Morgan County buildings, both 1857-59. The Henry County Courthouse followed in 1864-69. In 1869-1876, the Marion County Courthouse was a massive Second Empire style building which stood until 1960. Finally, in 1871-74, Hodgson's design for the Bartholomew County Courthouse was completed. It too is a Second Empire style building. As an example of Hodgson's work, the Morgan County Courthouse is a significant large, early commission.

The Morgan County Courthouse also has significance as an example of Italianate architecture. Originating in England in the 1830s, Italianate architecture was inspired by Italian rustic countryside buildings of the Renaissance era. American architects such as Downing and Sloan helped popularize the style through pattern books in the 1850s. Indiana would have had very few major Italianate buildings at the time Hodgson proposed a fully developed example for the Morgan County Courthouse in 1857. Indiana has about six Italianate county courthouses (depending on how one identifies the style-the six include only those readily identified with all the characteristics of Italianate style). Steuben, Martin, Posey, Henry, Morgan, and Jennings County Courthouses are the six Italianate examples. The Jennings County Courthouse, also designed by Hodgson, is most comparable. Indeed, it is highly similar to the Morgan County example and was designed

at the same time. While the Jennings County example has better integrity, it is simpler in detail. It lacks, for example, the more sophisticated stone hoods and brick corbel arcades of the Morgan County Courthouse. Both represent the typical 19th century architect's practice of varying a common theme for different clients.

The Morgan County Courthouse survived a number of fires and remodelings, as detailed in the description. In the late 1960s, the courthouse endured its most severe threat in recent history. Some considered the courthouse to be in "structural peril" and others though it to be a sound building. The county commissioners hoped to demolish the courthouse, but were later convinced to save the building. In 1973, it was agreed to save the courthouse, build an addition to the east, and rehabilitate the interior of the old building. H. Roll McLaughlin, architect for James Associates, designed the addition. McLaughlin was involved in HABS documentation in Indiana in the 1930s and later was an early member of the Indiana Historic Preservation Review Board. His obvious intention was to have the addition blend into the old building as much as possible, with details providing clues to the recent vintage of the addition for the discerning viewer. The addition was completed in 1975-76.

Morgan County Courthouse
Morgan County, Indiana

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Section 10-Geographical Data

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Morgan County Courthouse Square constitutes one square block in downtown Martinsville, Indiana, bound by the south curb line of East Morgan Street on the north; by the west curb line of North Jefferson Street on the east; by the north curb line of East Washington Street on the south; and by the east curb line of North Main Street on the west.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This is the historic boundary of the Morgan County Courthouse Square.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Note: All negatives are located in the Morgan County Historic Photograph Collection, Morgan County Public Library, 110 South Jefferson Street, Martinsville, Indiana, 46151.

Fig. 1 Photographer unknown. c.1900. Southeast view.

Fig. 2 Photographer unknown. c.1965. South view.

Fig. 3 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Southwest view.

Fig. 4 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. East view.

Fig. 5 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. North view.

Fig. 6 Photographer unknown. c.1940. (Photograph taken from Inventory of the County Archives of Indiana--No. 55, Morgan County [1941]: front flyleaf.) Northeast view.

Fig. 7 Photographer unknown. c.1897. Northwest view.

Fig. 8 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. West view.

Fig. 9 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Southeast view, two-story annex.

Fig. 10 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Original north-south corridor.

Fig. 11 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Original staircase to third floor.

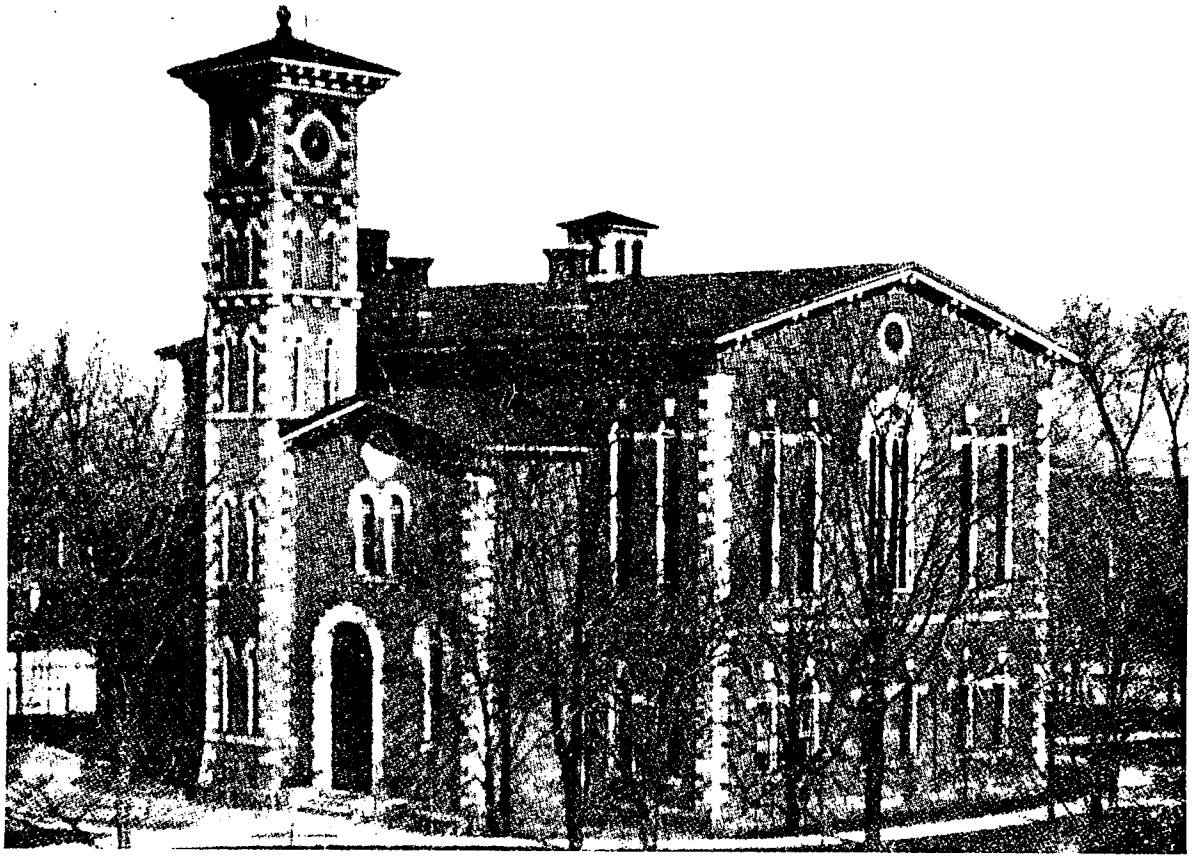
Fig. 12 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Window surrounds, first floor women's rest room.

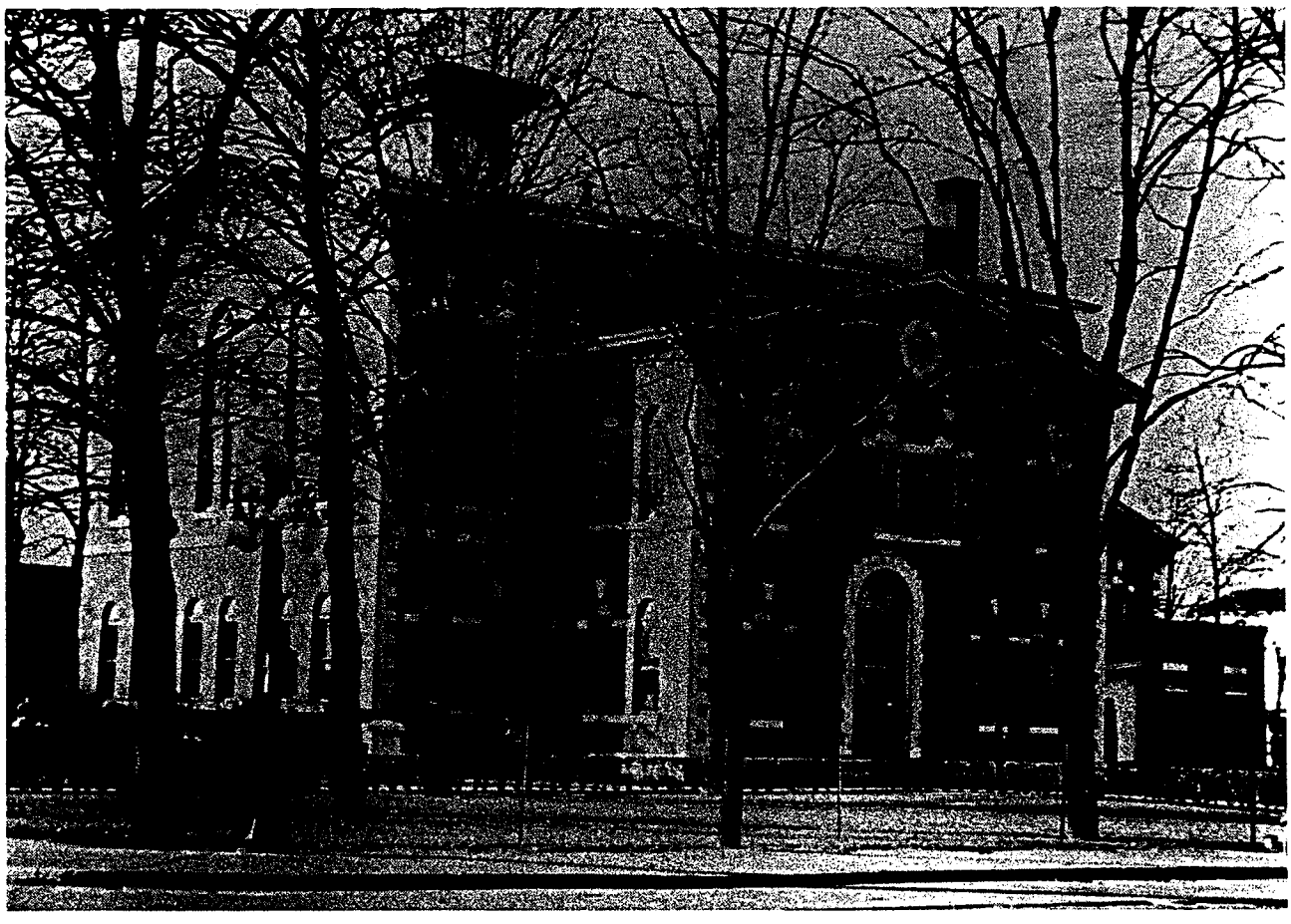
Fig. 13 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Cornice frieze and medallion, south stairwell.

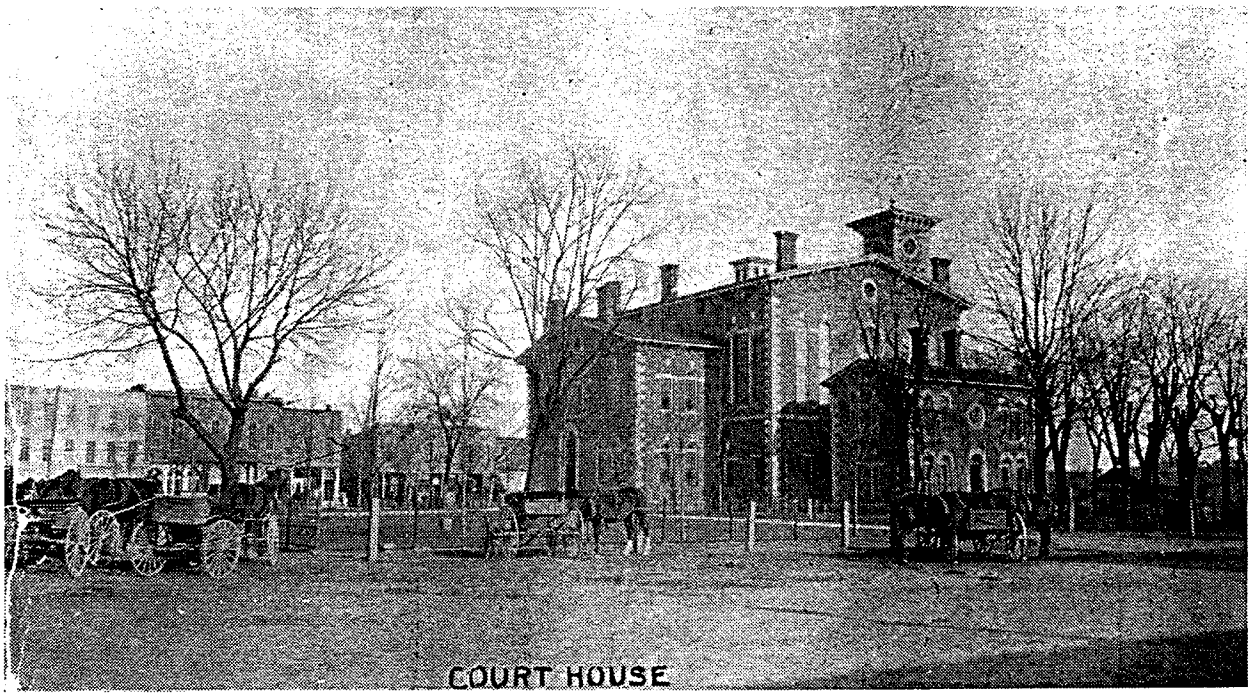
PHOTOGRAPHS (continued):

Fig. 14 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Window archivolt with corbels, south stairwell.

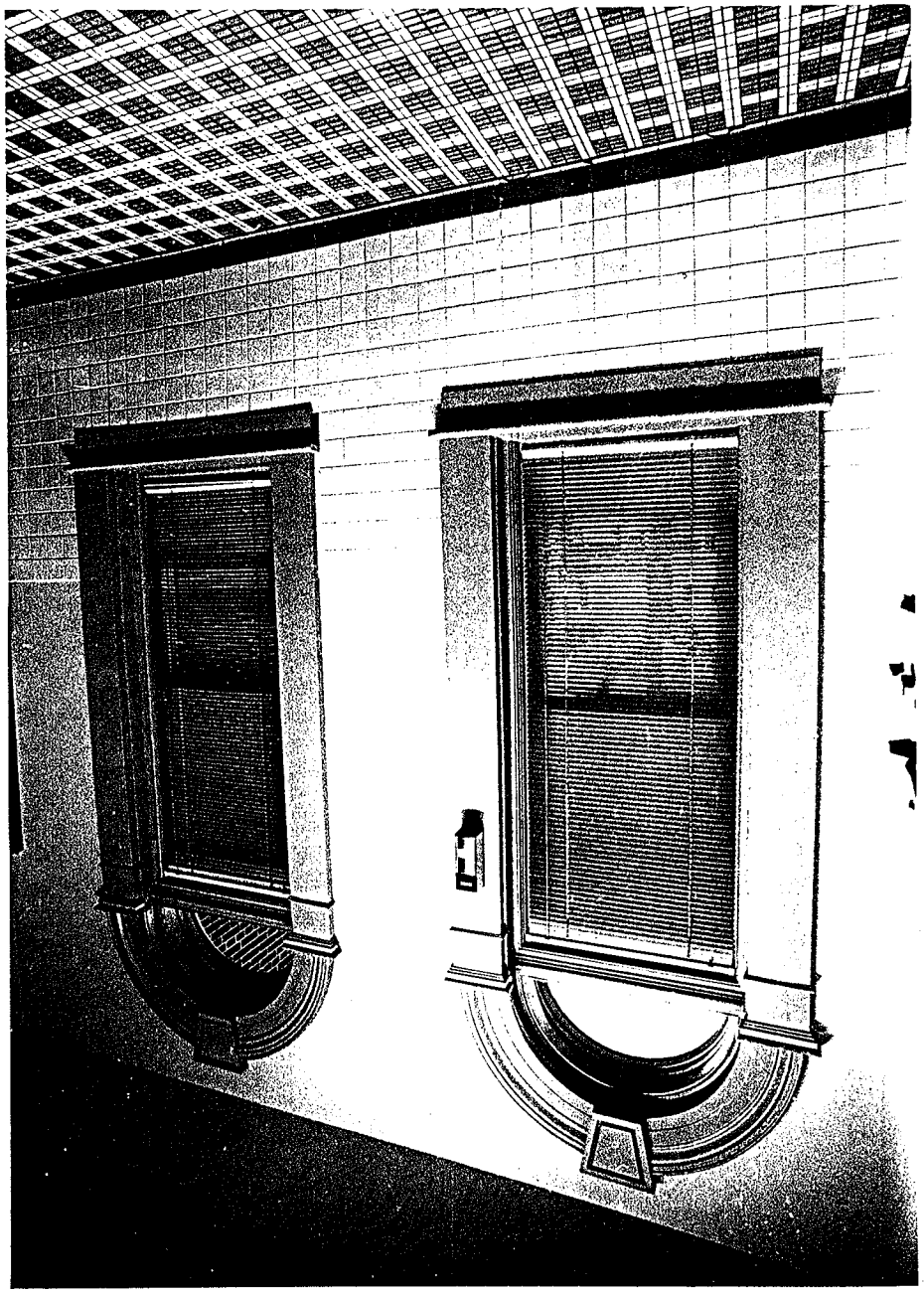
Fig. 15 Randy Cox, photographer. January 1995. Morgan County Court.

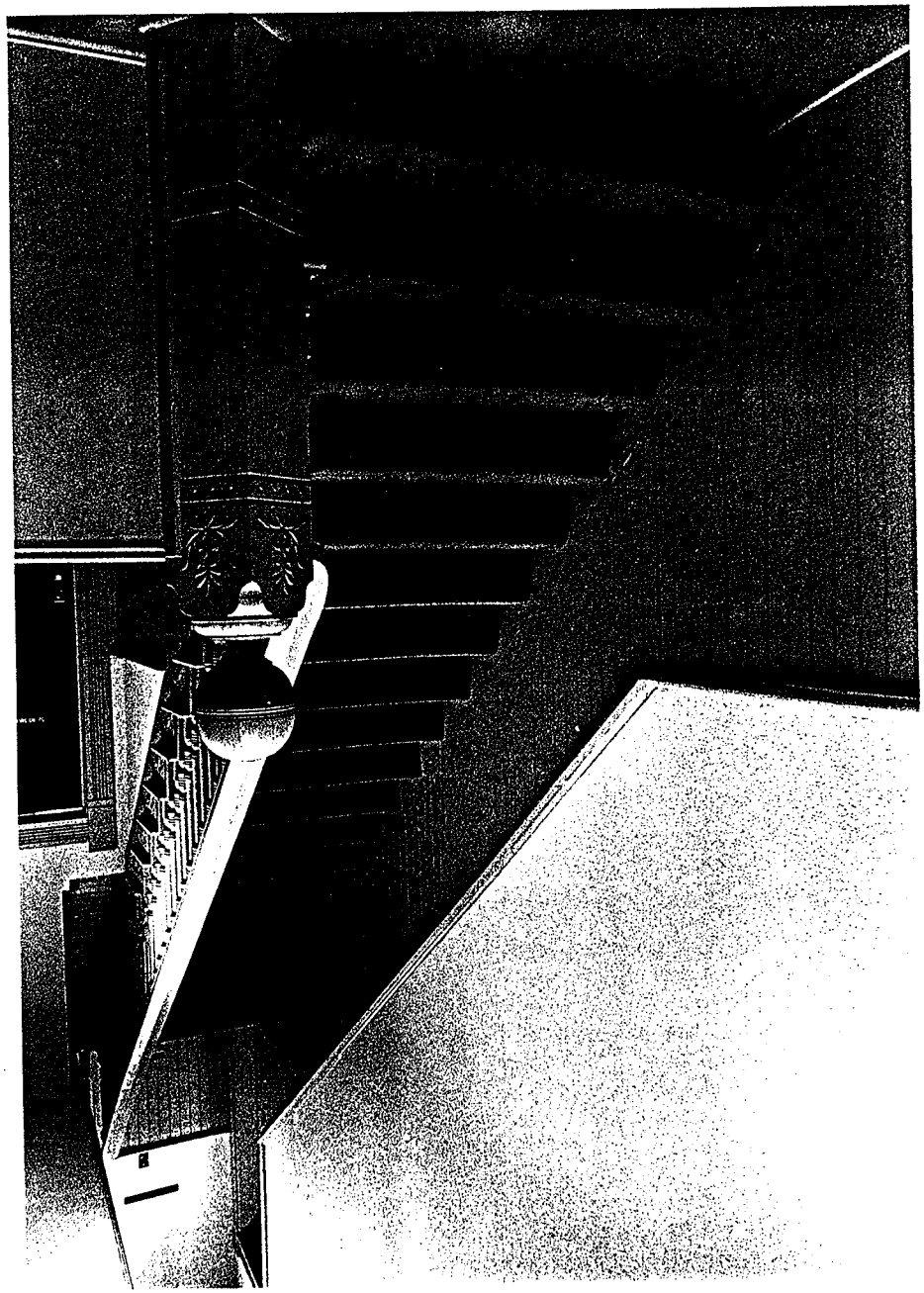


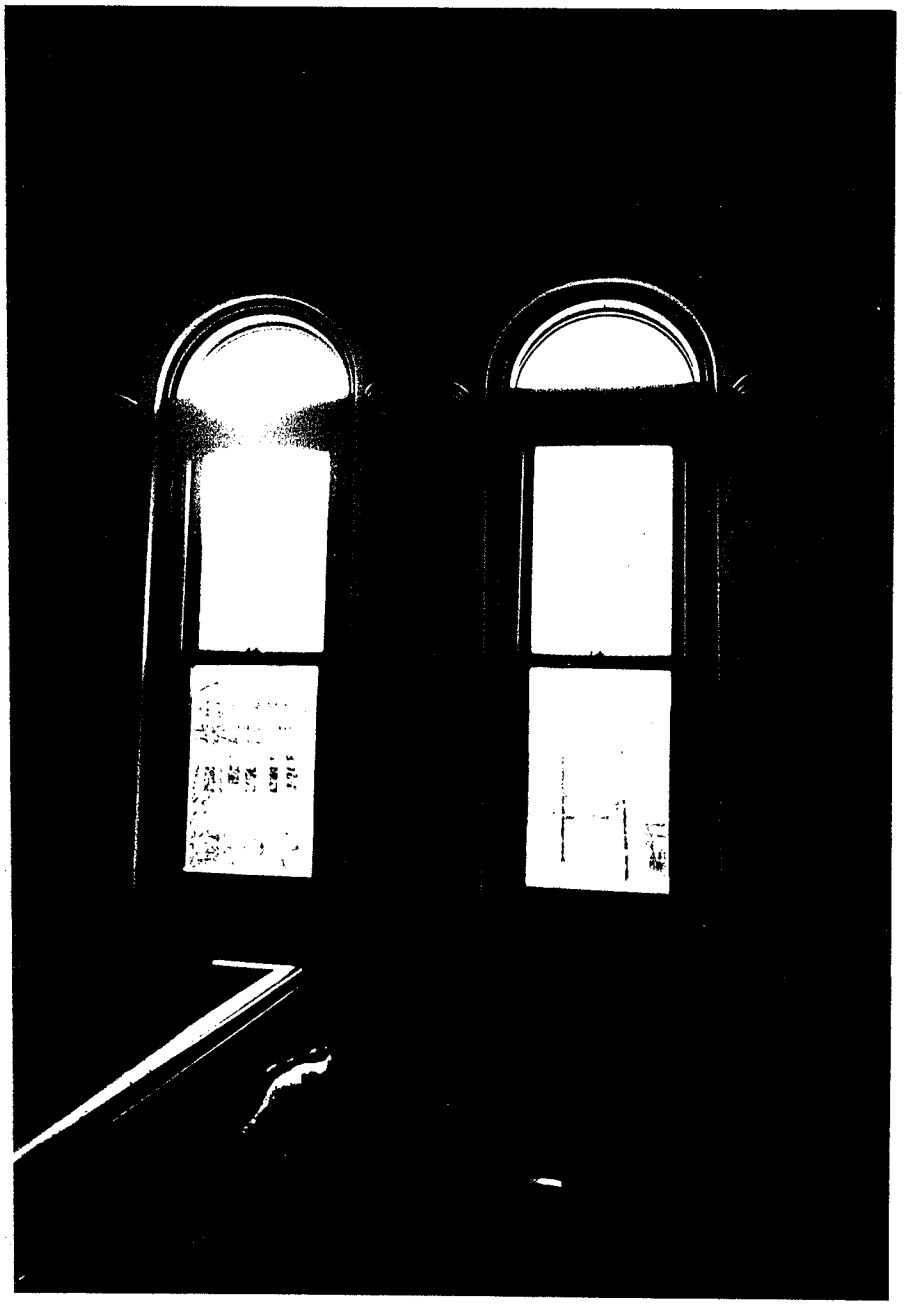


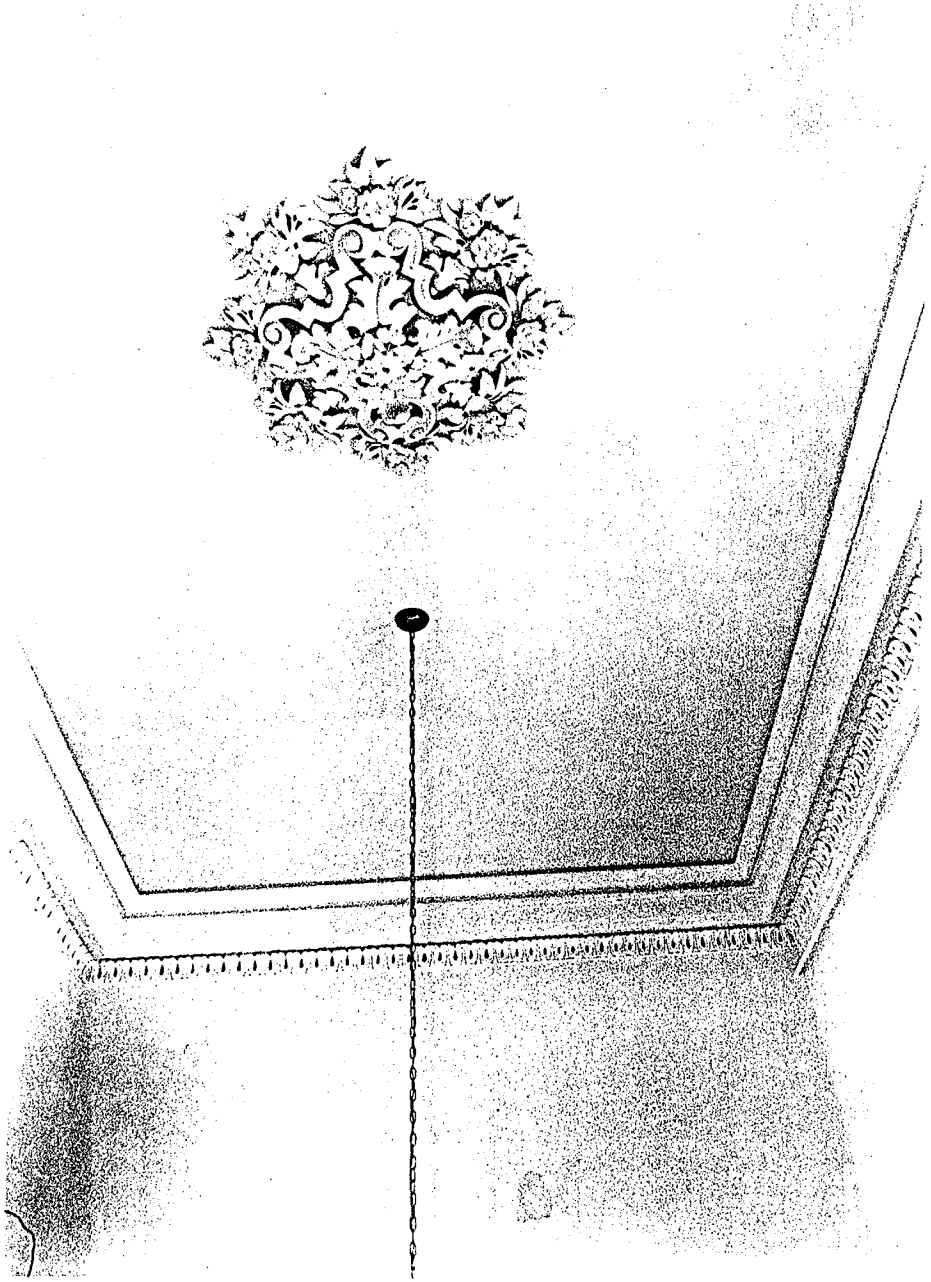


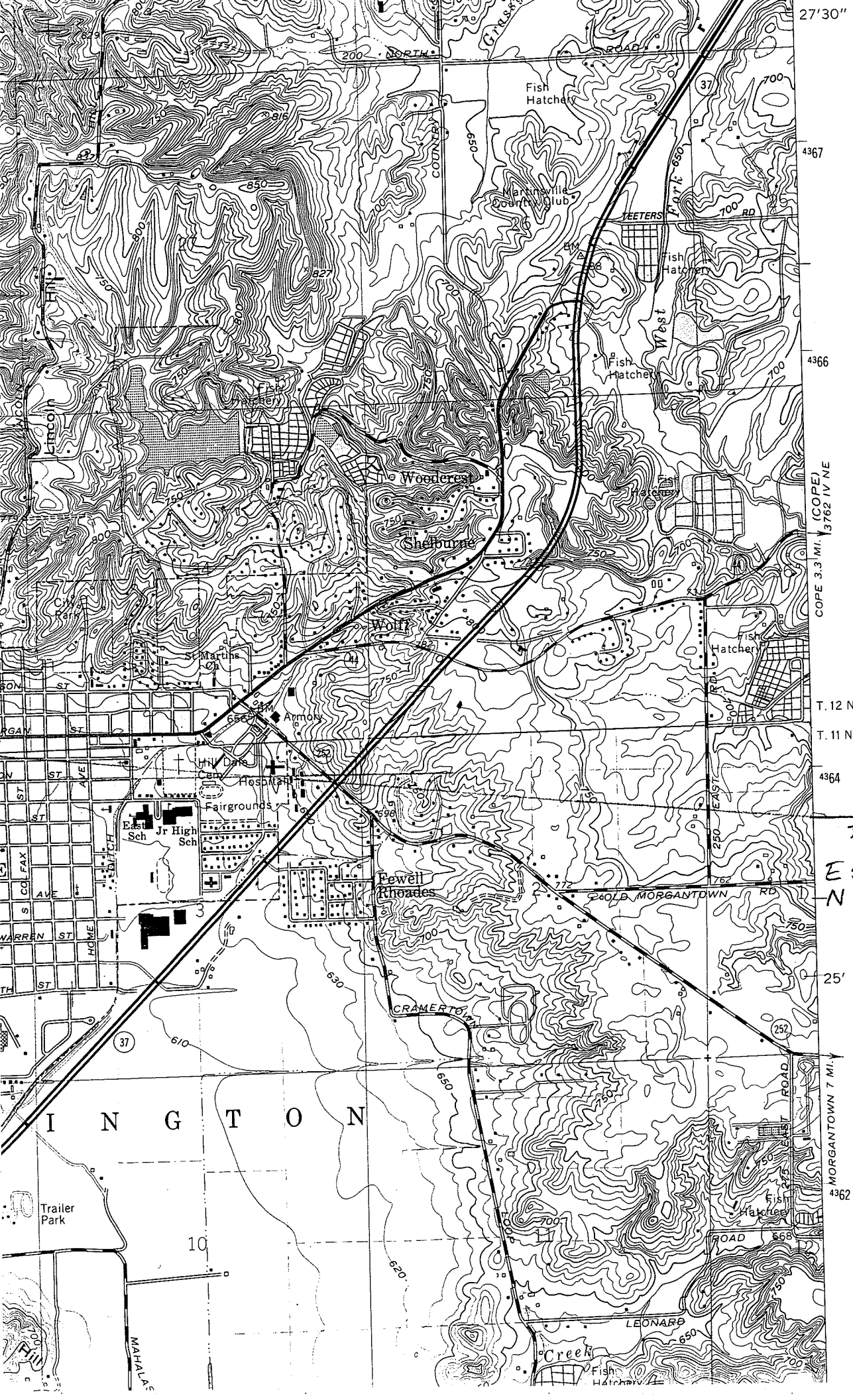
COURT HOUSE











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