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208030

1. Name of Site:

Common Brown County Courthouse

Historic

2. Location: N side of North St. at Capitol

Street and Number

Township

Section

City or Town

Zip Code

Range

1/4 Section

Mt. Sterling

County

Brown

3. Classification:

Category (check one)

Integrity (check one)

- District
- Building
- Site
- Structure

- Altered
- Unaltered
- Moved
- Original Site

4. Ownership:

Status (check one)

- Private
- Public

- Occupied
- Unoccupied
- Preservation work in progress

Access to Public

- Yes
- Restricted
- Unrestricted
- No

Present Use (check one or more)

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

5. Ownership of Property:

Owner's Name

Phone Number

Street and Number

City or Town

State

County

Zip Code

6. Description:

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

Is there a program of preservation underway? Yes No

GOVERNMENT

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

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archeological Site | (Pre-Columbian) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archeological Site | (Post-Columbian to 1673) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French Influence | (1673-1780) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Frontier | (1780-1818) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Early | (1818-1850) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illinois Middle | (1850-1900) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Late | (1900-present) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Famous People | (give names & dates) |

8. Specific Date:

1868

Areas of significance (check one or more of the following)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal (historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal (pre-historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Military |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Music |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | |

Brief statement of significance: (include all names and dates)

Use additional sheets if necessary. 2nd courthouse, restored in 1939 without cupola.

9. Form prepared by:

Name and Title:

Date:

Organization:

Phone:

Street and Number:

City or Town:

County:

Zip Code

During the course of the Survey we often find it necessary to search for a particular site. When filling out the Survey form, please list according to the following example, published references to the site for which forms are being completed. If a bibliography can be compiled, it will greatly deduct from the Survey's task.

Bibliography

Robertson, Robert, Of Whales and Men. New York, Alfred K. Knopf, Inc., 1954.



100-20-67

Brown County Court House adds to history of state

Editor's note: The history of the Illinois River Valley is the history of Illinois. The tributary was and is, the historical mainstream of Illinois. Margaret Wainman, an Illinoisian-Star correspondent for the Mt. Sterling area, asked this editor if he knew anything about the historical significance of the Brown County Court House. I replied that I didn't and asked her if she would check into it and get a story. Margaret has spent over a month digging for facts and her story is of great interest to the people of Brown County and the people of Beardstown. Because of the length of story it will be published in a two-part series.

By MARGARET WAINMAN
While gathering news at the present day court house in Mt. Sterling, an item regarding it stirred up interest among several people in regard to its history and its predecessor, as it was discovered that the original had been torn down to make room for the present building just one hundred years ago last June. So with the extensive help of Mrs. Lanie Wagner, Miss Clara Gobell and the public library, the following article concerning Brown County and the court house has been compiled.

At one time the county of Brown was a part of Schuyler, but due to the fact that the people of Brown were often cut off because of the high water of Crooked Creek (or Lamoine River), considerable discussion went on concerning the moving of the county seat to Ripley. Finally it was thought best to just divide it into two counties. Work was started on this in 1836, but Brown was not organized until February 1, 1839 with Mt. Sterling designated as the county seat. At that time records show that a census taken in 1840 showed a population 4,183 and by twenty years later had more than doubled itself by having a population in 1860 of 9,938. Comparatively Illinois itself had a population of 476,183 in 1840 and it, too, more than doubled by 1860 with a population then of 1,711,951. Thus showing the fast growth of both the county and state during those pioneering

with three sons, William, Peter S. and Elihu, in the spring of 1824 and built his home at the same site as Sheppard, whose cabin was mutely marked by charred poles, the only remaining evidence of his existence there. Vandeventer moved his family here in the fall after having spent the spring and summer with tilling the ground and putting in corn crops for a livelihood and building a home to have in readiness for his family.

He also brought the family of Wm. McFarland, who had started out with him originally from Ohio, but McFarland had died during the winter of '23 near Springfield, Ill. In 1825 Vandeventer's wife died, being the first death in the county. He afterward married McFarland's wife, who was his first wife's sister. He was a brave and hardy man and was one who helped choose land, raise cabins and settled all the first arrivals in his neighborhood. He died at the age of 82 in the year 1865, after having reared a large family of children, including both his and his brother-in-law's.

The first doctor was Dr. Isaac Vandeventer, nephew of Cornelius, who came with his wife from Virginia in 1824 and located at the foot of the bluff in section 15, locating not far from his uncle. He taught school in an early day, altho apparently in his or someone else's home or building, as he graduated from Cincinnati Medical school in 1830 and that is

school being taught in a house on the NW quarter of section 5 in Cooperstown township by a man named Agneal, who was also a minister, coming originally from Ohio. The first schoolhouse built in the county was also in this township in the fall of 1831. It was a rough log building 16' long having a clapboard door and roof with ordinary furniture and was never completed. In the spring and summer of 1832 school was taught by George W. Lester and one of his pupils, A. A. Green, afterward represented this district in the state senate and was acting lieutenant governor. His school was composed of the O'Neal settlement near Ripley and the White settlement, so named from Jacob White. The O'Neal family, headed by Willis O'Neal, came over from Rushville and settled in Ripley, coming originally from Kentucky. Many descendants of these early settlers can be found residing and taking active part in the affairs of Brown County yet.

Many other pioneers in the county who came were Dr. Bristow in 1828, whose son-in-law, Mark Riggin, came with the doctor's family and settled near them. Riggin was the first man in the community to give the ring of the anvil and two attended to the wants of people in horse shoeing and broken wagon mending. But both Bristow and Riggin moved away in 1834. Other trades becoming represented in the county were: a hatter, David Six, who came with his family in 1829, following his brother, Jack Six; Asa Benton, in 1829, erected and ran the first mill built in Ripley; Ezekial Rose Sr. came by prairie schooner and brought some of the first domestic animals (several herd of cattle) into the county; John Roberts, backwoodsman and preacher, who although illiterate, made many conversions that withstood the test of time; James Q