

C1167-9A1

Spokane Register of Historic Places

Nomination Form

OPR 86-497

City/County Historic Landmarks Commission
Fourth Floor - City Hall
Spokane, Washington 99201-3333

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Spokane County Court House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number W 1116 Broadway

city, town Spokane _____ vicinity of

state Washington _____ county Spokane

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Spokane County

street & number W 1116 Broadway

city, town Spokane _____ vicinity of _____ state Washington

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Spokane County Court House

street & number W 1116 Broadway

city, town Spokane _____ state Washington

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Spokane Metropolitan Area Transportation Study;
title Spokane Historical & Cultural Site Inventory

date October, 1970 federal state county local

depository for survey records Spokane City Hall

city, town W 808 Spokane Falls Blvd, Spokane _____ state Washington

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Designed in the French Renaissance style, the Spokane County Court House is symmetricak "H" shaped building with a central square tower. The "H" portion of the court house, exclusive of the tower, stands three stories high and has attice and high Mansard style roofs.

The central tower, which rises above a semi-circular arched entryway, has arcading continuing up from the third-story windows. This arcading terminates in ogee decoration above which sit balustradws covering balconies and recessed windows. These balconies and windows are in turn capped by cornices. Located above each cornice are dormer windows framed on either side by spires that cap the turreted corners of the tower. The top is terminated by a steep-pitched Mansard-style roof and flag-pole.

The wings of the building's "H" have spired towers on the corners. All windows are symmetrically spaced, grouped one above the other and capped on the third story by a semi-circular arch. The first-story openings and windows are flat, simple, non-recessed elements above which a heavy, ogee molding extends around the building. The second and third story windows are framed on either side by one-story Corinthian pilasters and frame on top and bottom by a continuous molding strip. On the corner towers, a decorated entablature separates the third story attic. Above this entablature are dormer windows. The entire building is banded by a decorated, boxed cornice; and the spires and roof corners are ornamented with finials. Located at the center of the wings are building outsets, which enclose entyways into the court house.

The court house was built in the years 1894-95, by David B. Fotheringham. The building's design was the result of an 1893 architecture competition won by 29-yr old W.A. Ritchie, a local designer. Ritchie had previously worked on public buildings in Seattle, Bellingham, Port Townsend, and Olympia. Later, he designed many fine homes in the Spokane area. Interestingly, Ritchie's only formal training consisted of a corresspondence course conducted by the Superintendent of Architecture of the United States Treasury. The French Renaissance style used by Ritchie in designing the court house resembles two 16th Century Renaissance Chateaus: the Chateaus De Chambord (1519), in the Loir District of France; and the Chateau d'Azay le Rideau (1518), built on an island in the Loir River.

In the construction, Fotheringham used dry-pressed brick and shale in the French tradition of masonry. This dry-press brick, developed by the Washington Brick and Lime Company, was some of the first ever made in the area and was superior in quality and cheaper than any shipped from the East.

The exterior of the court house remains almost the same as when first built; the only changes have been the removal of stone steps to the entrances, and the filling in of earth around the outside of the building.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Spokane County Court House is a fine example of French Renaissance Architecture and is unique to the Pacific Northwest Region. Adhering to the revival of the Classic Orders for decoration, detail, and some structural aspects, the court house exemplifies the characteristics of the Renaissance style. The plan is arranged with special regard for symmetry; walls are constructed of masonry materials, and sightlines are characterized by horizontal cornices and balustrades. Doors and windows have unrecessed jambs and are finished with a classical, moulded architrave. Openings are placed with regard to symmetry, grouped one above the other, and spanned by semicircular arches. Towers are used sparingly, but are usually symmetrically placed in groups of two. The roofs are high and steeply pitched.

W.A. Ritchie, the Spokane architect, whose design for the court house won an architectural contest in 1893, was strongly influenced by the rising popularity of the Renaissance style and the Ecole Des Beaux Arts in Paris. At this time, many American buildings were being designed and constructed according to the teachings of Beaux-Arts School and the Great Periods of the Past. This influence was perhaps best exemplified at the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893. The classical buildings formal layout of the exposition did much to reinforce the popularity of Beaux-Arts teachings.

The Spokane County Court House is considered by many to be one of the two most beautiful county court houses in the west. The building has been occupied continuously for eighty years. The brick used in the construction was some of the first dry-press brick ever manufactured in the area. Previously, such brick had to be shipped from the East.

Ritchie's regard for proportion and detail allowed the creation of a strong, elegant building in the finest French Renaissance tradition.

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

Connor, Harriet J. "'Castle' is Priceless," Spokane Daily Chronicle, March 18, 1966
Fletcher, Sir Banister. A History of Architecture. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961, Seventeenth Edition

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property Less than 1 acre

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state _____ county _____

state _____ county _____

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marietta McKelvey, Historic Preservation

organization Historic Preservation/Property Development Services 6/4/86

street & number Spokane City Hall telephone 456-3240

city or town Spokane state Washington

12. Signature of Owner(s) 

For Office Use Only:


Date Received: 8-11-86

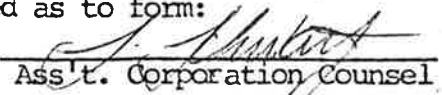
Date Heard: 8-13-86

Commission Decision: APPROVED

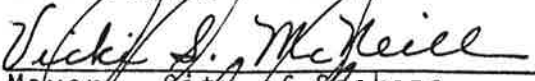
Council/Board Action: APPROVED

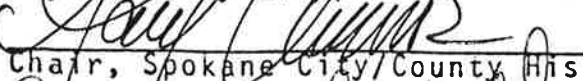
Date: August 25, 1986

Attest: 
City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Ass't. Corporation Counsel

We hereby certify that this property has been listed on the Spokane Register of Historic Places.


Mayor, City of Spokane or ~~Chair, Spokane County Commissioners~~


Chair, Spokane City/County Historic Landmarks Commission


City/County Historic Preservation Officer

SPOKANE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION FORM

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

#7 - Description

SPOKANE COUNTY COURT HOUSE

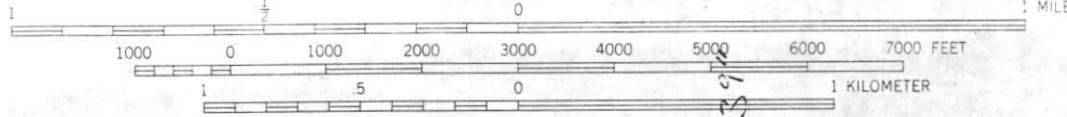
In 1953, a small addition was added to the Northwest corner of the Courthouse. Many features of this addition are similar to the original Courthouse Building, including the type of brick used, but there are differences too. The windows, for example, are not the same type of style.

Much remodeling has occurred on the interior. Today, the Courthouse remains in use and is in excellent condition.

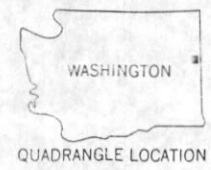


T 465 27'30" 466 SPANGLER 14 MI. (SPOKANE SW) 468 25' 19 45 1. 23 MI. TO U.S. 39

SCALE 1:24 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
 DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 5 AND 10-FOOT CONTOURS
 DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER 25, COLORADO OR WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

117° 25' 40"
 46° 27' 11"

NOV
Spem C71 C745

