

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Old Court House, Warren County

AND/OR COMMON

Old Court House, Warren County

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Court Square

CITY, TOWN

Vicksburg

___ VICINITY OF

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

4th

STATE

Mississippi

CODE
28

COUNTY
Warren

CODE
149

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"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Warren County, operated by Vicksburg and Warren County
Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

Court Square

CITY, TOWN

Vicksburg

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, Warren County Courthouse
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET & NUMBER

Grove and Cherry Streets

CITY, TOWN

Vicksburg

STATE

Mississippi

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey (9 drawings)

DATE

1966

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress/Annex

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D. C.

Copy received 19 February 1986

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Warren County Courthouse is a large two story rectangular brick building, originally faced with smooth stucco, now with cement, scored to give the appearance of ashlar masonry. The shorter ends of the building have four columned temple porticos with fluted Ionic columns supporting a full entablature which runs around the entire building. The long sides have six columned porticos of identical design. The well proportioned thirty-foot columns with a decorative Athenian band below the capitol give an imposing dignity to the structure, an effect which is heightened by the hilltop location.

A large well scaled tower adds further visual impact. A great octagonal drum rests upon a low broad square base which rises from the roof. Slender engaged Corinthian columns mark the angles and support a full heavy entablature which adds needed weight to the central octagon section. Between the columns are doors which open onto the low terrace base. These have semicircular fanlights and are framed by smaller Corinthian columns in turn supporting entablatures for the entrances which correspond to that of the octagon itself. Above this a lighter circular cupola supported by slender colonettes shelters the tower bell.

Four small octagonal buildings at the corners were originally cistern houses for catching water to fight fires. In later years these were converted into outside offices.

In 1876 balconies were added to the second story windows behind the porticos and in 1907 a new coat of cement was put on the face of the building. A tornado damaged the Courthouse slightly in 1953; minor repairs included the replacement of the cupola roof.

Minor alterations in the interior of the building since the 1860's include the replacement of some wainscoting, the removal of a few small partitions, the construction of a cement floor in the downstairs hall on top of the original hard wood surface, and the closing of the dome cavity on the second floor by a ceiling. Generally, however, the building retains remarkable integrity.

Exhibits occupy eight rooms and two halls on the first and second floors. Generally they deal with Civil War and Southern history. The large courtroom on the second floor is used for meetings of the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society and for various public functions.

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 checked="" 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 1859-1861, 1863 BUILDER/ARCHITECT William Weldon

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Warren County Courthouse, constructed between 1859-1861, became the symbol of Confederate resistance during the siege of Vicksburg because of its large size and prominent hilltop position. Following the surrender of the city on July 4, 1863, Union forces under Major General U. S. Grant replaced the Confederate flag with the Union flag on the Courthouse cupola, signifying the Union victory in a campaign which most historians agree was the most decisive in the Civil War. Substantially unchanged after more than a century, the Old Warren County Courthouse, now maintained as a museum, remains today not only a symbol of the siege of Vicksburg, but a nice example of late Greek Revival style.

HISTORY

In 1859 builders George and Thomas Weldon of Antrim, Ireland, began construction of a new courthouse for Warren County, Mississippi. William Weldon, a brother of the contractors furnished the design. The builders utilized trained slave labor and burned brick for the courthouse at the site. A direct tax levy provided the necessary capital for other materials. The building was completed in 1861 and later played a significant role in the siege of Vicksburg.

The Vicksburg Campaign (May 1862-July 1863) is recognized by many of the leading military historians in the United States and abroad as the decisive campaign of the Civil War. In this campaign the Warren County Courthouse became a symbol to the Union soldiers and sailors who struggled to gain a victory over Confederate forces.

When the Union ocean-going fleet arrived below Vicksburg on May 18, 1862, Commander S. Phillips Lee ordered Brigadier General H. L. Smith to surrender the city. After Smith refused, Union warships bombarded Vicksburg and its defenders for two months but failed to break the spirit of the Confederates. Sketches and drawings prepared by artists and illustrators who accompanied the fleet show the Courthouse as Vicksburg's most prominent landmark.

(Continued)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Because the navy failed to take the city, Major General U. S. Grant moved down from the north in the autumn of 1862. His army spent the winter camped on the Louisiana flood plain opposite Vicksburg where they looked across the Mississippi and saw the Vicksburg bluffs and the Warren County Courthouse. Their goal became simplified in the complexities of war: unfurl the colors from the cupola of the Courthouse and the battle would be won. In April, satisfied that the Confederate were using the Courthouse as an observation post, Grant had a battery of 30-pound guns placed with orders to destroy the structure. Union guns, however, failed to inflict serious damage.

On April 30, 1863, Grant crossed the Mississippi 30 miles below Vicksburg. In a lightning 18-day campaign, Grant defeated the Confederates in five battles and approached Vicksburg from the east. An epic 47-day siege ensued. From their rifle-pits and batteries, Union soldiers looked across Confederate defenses at the Courthouse.

Finally on July 4, the Confederates surrendered. The battle-hardened veterans of Grant's army moved into Vicksburg and raised the flag over the Courthouse as a symbol of their victory, while troops paraded around the building.

Coming the day after the Union victory at Gettysburg, the fall of Vicksburg was a crucial blow to the Confederate cause. Not only was the South cut in half, but Grant's large forces were free for further action, and the Mississippi River was again open for northern trade.

Warren County continued to use the old building until 1939, when a new courthouse was erected directly opposite the old one on Cherry Street. Except for a few offices, the structure remained vacant until 1942. At that time Mrs. Eve W. Davis of Vicksburg spearheaded a drive to preserve the building for use as a museum and obtained occupancy rights from the Warren County Board of Supervisors. While the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society assumed responsibility for the custody of the structure, the county continues to bear the cost of maintenance.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuance Sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,5	6,9,9	6,3,0	3,5	8,1	2,5,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING
C							D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Courthouse is located in Courthouse Square. The boundary is drawn to enclose this square including the main building and its four cistern houses (the only structure on the Square) within the landmark designation. Using the near curb line, Courthouse Square is bounded on the north by Jackson Street, on the east by Cherry Street, on the south by Grove Street and on the west by Monroe Street.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Patricia Heintzelman, Architectural Historian, Landmark Review Project

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

5/15/75

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE

202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C. 20240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

Landmark Designated: May 23, 1968
 Boundary Certified: June 1, 1975
 Perry T. Emery
 June 1, 1975

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

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

DATE

12/7/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Crummer, Wilber F., With Grant at Fort Donelson, Shiloh and Vicksburg,
Oak Park, 1915.

Grant, U. S., Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant, 2 vols., New York, 1885.

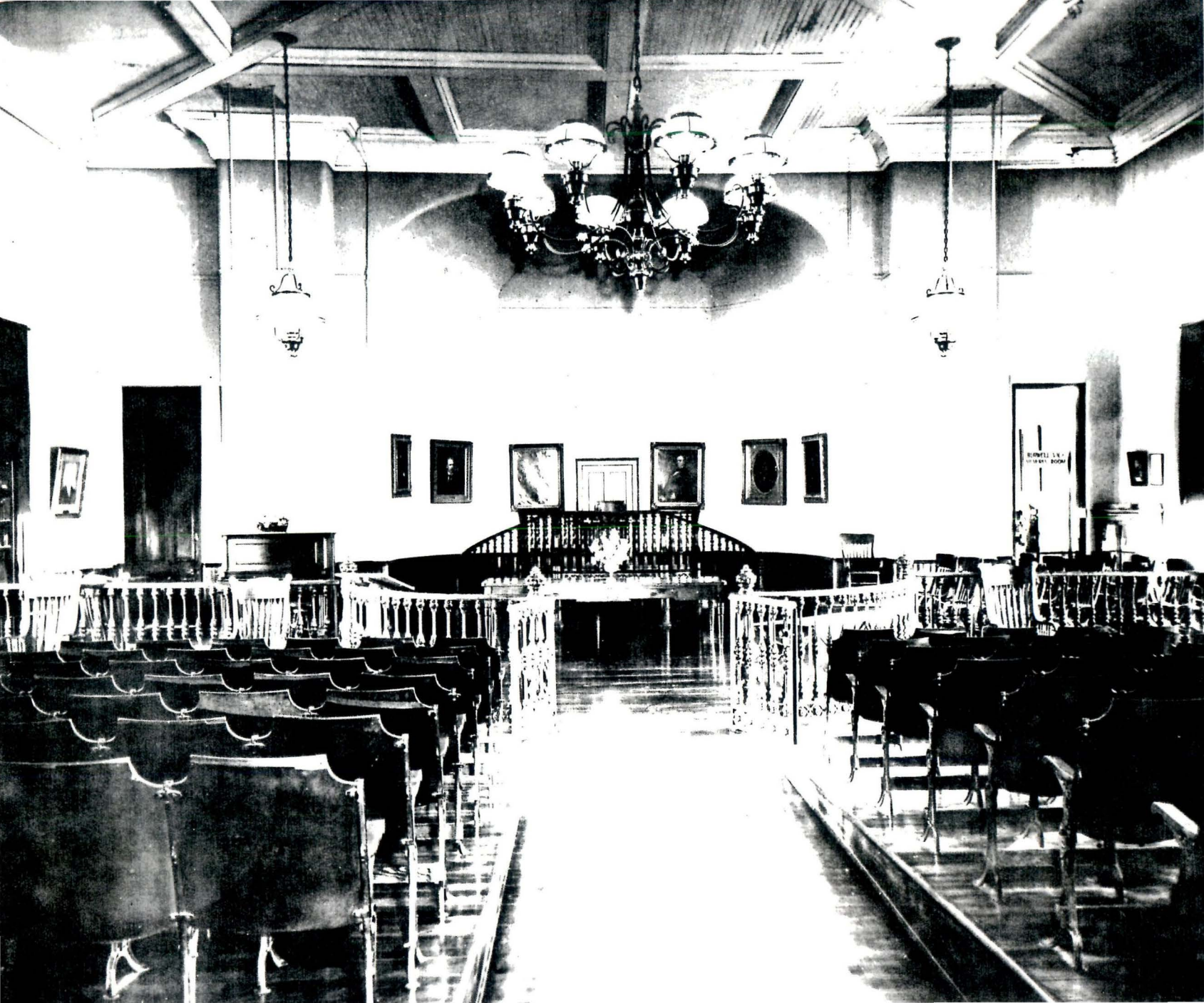
McDermott, John D., and Bearss, Edwin C., "The Old Warren County Courthouse,
Vicksburg, Mississippi," Special Report, NPS, HSS property files, 1968.

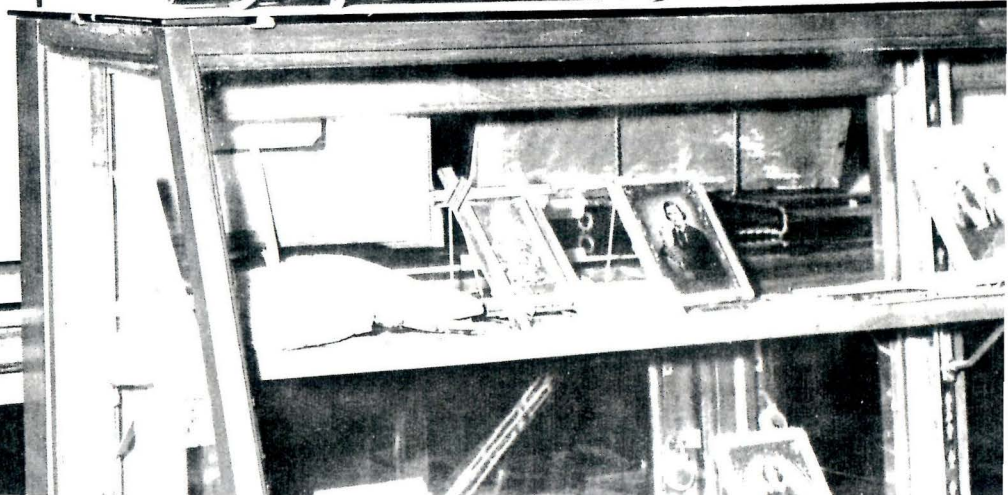
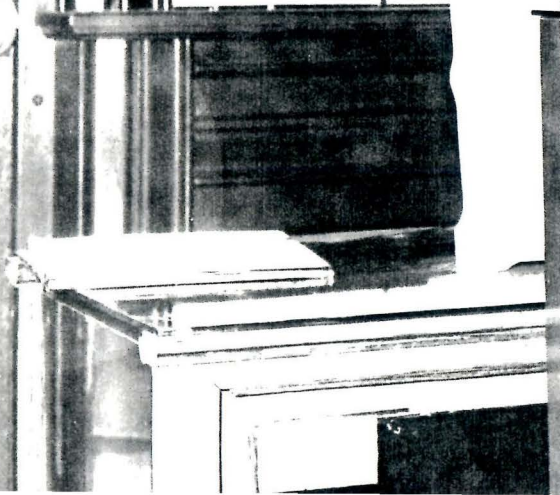
Strong, William E., "The Campaign Against Vicksburg," MOLLUS-Illinois,
Vol II.

"Vicksburg Evening Post," July 1, 1963, United States Publishing Company,
Comp., In and About Vicksburg, Gibraltar Publishing Company, 1890.









NP2

Index No. 20

THE OLD WARREN COUNTY COURT HOUSE

MISSISSIPPI

The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

Completed in 1861, the Old Warren County Court House was the symbol of Confederate resistance in the Vicksburg Campaign of 1862-1863. Following the surrender of the city on July 4, 1863, Union forces under Maj. Gen. U. S. Grant unfurled their colors from the Court House cupola and paraded around the building in celebration of the victory, which most historians agree was the most decisive in the Civil War. Substantially unchanged after more than a century, the Old Court House is maintained as a museum by the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society under an arrangement with the Warren County Board of Supervisors.

JDM: 3/11/68

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

Special Report

The Old Warren County Court House
Vicksburg, Mississippi

Prepared by
John D. McDermott
and
Edwin C. Beares
Historians
Division of History
February 21, 1968

The Old Warren County Court House,
Vicksburg, Mississippi

Location: Court Square bordered by Cherry Street on the east Jackson Street on the north, Monroe Street on the west, and Grove Street on the south

Ownership: Warren County: Custody by the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society, Director Edward Finane

Statement of Significance

Completed in 1861, the Old Warren County Court House was the symbol of Confederate resistance in the Vicksburg Campaign of 1862-1863. Following the surrender of the city on July 4, 1863, Union forces under Maj. Gen. U. S. Grant unfurled their colors from the Court House cupola and paraded around the building in celebration of the victory, which most historians agree was the most decisive in the Civil War. Substantially unchanged after more than a century, the Old Court House is maintained as a museum by the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society under an arrangement with the Warren County Board of Supervisors.

History

Construction of the Court House

In 1859 builders George and Thomas Weldon of Antrim, Ireland, began construction of a new courthouse for Warren County, Mississippi. William Weldon, a brother of the contractors furnished the design. The builders utilized trained slave labor and burned brick for the courthouse at the site. A direct tax levy provided the necessary capital for other materials.

Completed in 1861, the courthouse stood two stories in height. Of Greek Revival style, the building had four identical facades with broad galleries and porticos. Fluted Ionic columns extended the full length on each side of the structure. The county obtained cast iron capitals, doors, shutters, and stairways from the Baker Iron Company of Cincinnati, Ohio. Workmen finished the exterior with a smooth coat of mortar.

Role of the Court House in the Siege of Vicksburg

The Vicksburg Campaign (May 1862-July 1863) is recognized by many of the leading military historians in the United States and abroad as the decisive campaign of the Civil War. In this campaign the Warren County Court House became a symbol to the Union soldiers and sailors who struggled to wrest a victory from Confederate forces.

When the Union ocean-going fleet arrived below Vicksburg on May 18, 1862, Comdr. S. Phillips Lee ordered Brig. Gen. M. L. Smith to surrender the city. After Smith refused, Union warships bombarded Vicksburg and its defenders for two months but failed to break the spirit of the Confederates. Sketches and drawings prepared by artists and illustrators who accompanied the fleet show the Court House as Vicksburg's most prominent landmark.

Because the navy failed to take the city, Maj. Gen. U. S. Grant moved down from the north in the autumn of 1862. His army spent the winter camped on the Louisiana flood plain opposite Vicksburg. As the troops went about their duties, they looked across the Mississippi and saw the Vicksburg bluffs and the Warren County Court House. Their goal became

simplified in the complexities of war: unfurl the colors from the cupola of the Court House and the battle would be won. In April, satisfied that the Confederates were using the Court House as an observation post, Grant had a battery of 30-pounder Parrotts emplaced with orders to destroy the structure. Union guns, however, failed to inflict serious damage.

On April 30, 1863, Grant crossed the Mississippi 30 miles below Vicksburg. In a lightning 18-day campaign, Grant defeated the Confederates in five battles and invested Vicksburg from the east. An epic 47-day siege ensued. From their rifle-pits and batteries, Union soldiers looked across Confederate defenses at the Court House.

Finally on July 4 the Confederates surrendered. A single thought now possessed the battle-hardened veterans of Grant's army--to move into Vicksburg as rapidly as possible and raise their colors over the Court House as a symbol of their victory. One of Grant's staff officers, Col. William E. Strong, led the first group to enter the building. Racing up the stairs to the cupola, he ran up the garrison flag entrusted to him by Maj. Gen. James B. McPherson. Other regiments arrived shortly afterward, bands were formed, and, as General Grant and his staff looked on, the troops paraded around the building.

Coming the day after the Union victory at Gettysburg, the fall of Vicksburg was a crucial blow to the Confederate cause. Not only was the South cut in half, but Grant's large forces were free for further action, and the Mississippi River was again open for northern trade with the outside world.

The Court House 1863-1968

Warren County continued to use the Old Court House until 1939, when a new building was constructed directly opposite on Cherry Street. Except for a few offices, the structure remained vacant until 1948. At that time Mrs. Eva W. Davis of Vicksburg spearheaded a drive to preserve the building for use as a museum and obtained occupancy rights from the Warren County Board of Supervisors. While the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society assumed responsibility for the custody of the structure, the county continued to bear the cost of utilities and repairs.

Condition

The Old Warren County Court House stands in good condition. Very few changes have been made to the exterior of the building since the time of the Civil War. In 1876 terraces were added, and in 1907 the county put a fresh coat of cement on the face of the building. A tornado in 1953 damaged the Court House slightly; minor repairs included the replacement of the cupola roof.

Minor alterations in the interior of the building since the 1860s include the replacement of some wainscoting, the removal of three small partitions, the construction of a cement floor in the downstairs hall on top of the original hard wood surface, and the ceiling-in of the dome cavity on the second floor. Generally, however, the building possesses remarkable integrity.

Warren County retains the responsibility for upkeep of the building and plans to invest \$60,000 in its restoration during the next five years.

Exhibits occupy eight rooms and two halls on the first and second floors. Generally they deal with Civil War and Southern history. The large courtroom on the second floor is used for meetings of the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society and for various public functions. The library consists of 25,000 volumes. Attendance for 1967 was about 30,000. The Court House is open daily and an admission is charged.

References: Vicksburg Evening Post, July 1, 1963: United Service Publishing Company, comp., In and About Vicksburg (Gibraltar Publishing Company, 1890); Federal Writers' Project, Mississippi: A Guide to the Magnolia State (New York, 1949); Historic American Buildings Survey. "Old Vicksburg." (Library of Congress); William E. Strong, "The Campaign Against Vicksburg," MOLLUS-Illinois, Vol. II; Frank E. Moore, ed., The Civil War in Song and Story (New York, 1889); Wilbur F. Crummer, With Grant at Fort Donelson, Shiloh, and Vicksburg (Oak Park, 1915); U. S. Grant, Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant, 2 vols. (New York, 1885); "Old Court House Museum" (Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society, 1967); Interview of Edward Finane, Director of the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society; Skip Tumenillo, architect; and Mrs. Eva W. Davis by John D. McDermott, Old Warren County Court House, Vicksburg, January 31, 1968.

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

Old Warren County Court House, Mississippi

Completed in 1861, the Old Warren County Court House was the symbol of Confederate resistance in the Vicksburg Campaign of 1862-1863. Following the surrender of the city on July 4, 1863, Union forces under Maj. Gen. U. S. Grant unfurled their colors from the Court House cupola and paraded around the building in celebration of the victory, which most historians agree was the most decisive in the Civil War. Substantially unchanged after more than a century, the Old Court House is maintained as a museum by the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society under an arrangement with the Warren County Board of Supervisors.

NSHSB: 4/12/63
JDM