

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received MAY 18 1982
date entered
JUN 17 1982

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Mercer County Courthouse

and/or common Mercer County Courthouse

2. Location

street & number SE Third Street (Illinois Highway 17) N/A not for publication

city, town Aledo N/A vicinity of congressional district

state Illinois code 012 county Mercer code 131

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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<u>N/A</u>	<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 Mercer County

street & number SE Third Street

city, town Aledo N/A vicinity of state Illinois

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Mercer County Courthouse - Recorder's Office

street & number SE Third Street

city, town Aledo state Illinois

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory of Historic Structures
title in Mercer County

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date October, 1972 federal state county local

depository for survey records Illinois Department of Conservation

city, town Springfield state Illinois

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 <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Mercer County Courthouse is of Romanesque architecture and has undergone few alterations since its construction in 1894. Located in Aledo on Southeast Third Street between South College Avenue and South Second Avenue, the courthouse is the predominate structure in this midwest farm community.

The approximately one acre site of the courthouse is surrounded on three sides by low commercial and residential buildings and the town square to the north. The main streets leading to the courthouse create scenic vistas opening onto the expansive lawns surrounding the structure. Sidewalks lead to each doorway and in front of the main entrance a monument to Mercer County veterans has been erected with the names of those killed in action etched into the stone pillar.

The three story courthouse is constructed out of Beria sandstone and is basically rectangular in shape with five vertical sections. A decorative cornice runs around the entire building and is also evident over entrance ways.

The windows of the courthouse are of three basic designs; double-hung, double-hung with an arch above, and double-hung with a rectangle above. Exceptions to these three styles are found in the windows of the spires that form the main entryway at the front of the building. Generally speaking, the lower two floors of the building have plain double-hung windows while the third floor has windows with ornamentation. On the east side of the front and the east end of the building the windows of the third floor are arched; while on the west side of the front and the west end of the building rectangles are found above the windows. The windows on the back of the building have rectangles above them.

All four entrances into the building are arched doorways supported by ornamental columns. The doors on the north, south and east are used daily, but the one on the west is not functional.

The ends of the building are somewhat symmetrical to the center vertical section which is comprised of the main entryway and is flanked by two spires. Above the spires rests the clock tower. The tower, which rests in the middle of the roof, has four spires, one at each corner. There are five arched openings for the belfry which is located directly above the clock. Below the clock on each side of the tower there is a large opening which leads to an observation deck guarded by wrought iron railings.

During the spring of 1977, the original windows were replaced with double glazed, anodized aluminum frame windows. The original fixtures had deteriorated to the extent that they did not readily lend themselves to restoration.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Cornerstone laid on
Specific dates April 18, 1894 **Builder/Architect** L. L. Leach & Sons/M. E. Bell

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Mercer County Courthouse is located in Aledo, Illinois. Since its construction in 1894 the courthouse has greatly influenced the life and development of this rural farm community. County courthouses by their very nature are of paramount local significance. Mercer County's is no exception. Even though the windows have been altered it still retains its essential character and is worthy of inclusion in the National Register.

The Mercer County seat of government has not always been in Aledo, Illinois. An election was held in August of 1857 to determine whether the county seat would be located in Keithsburg or Aledo. Aledo was the victor. In April of 1893 the large volume of county business necessitated that the County Board of Supervisors pass a resolution authorizing the construction of a new courthouse which would cost no more than \$60,000.00. The board also stipulated that the citizens of Aledo contribute \$10,000.00. The citizens pledged over \$12,000.00. The cornerstone of the courthouse was laid in April 1894 funded through this public-private partnership brought about by the willing cooperation of the Mercer County residents.

The Mercer County Courthouse and the DuPage County Courthouse were designed by the same architect, M. E. Bell. The DuPage County structure, already listed on the National Register, is a more elaborate example of Bell's design for the Mercer County building. It is assumed that Bell probably expanded the Mercer County design (1894) to accommodate the more wealthy DuPage County clients (1896-97). The Mercer County structure was composed of sandstone rather than brick, and sported fewer ornamental elements than did the DuPage County edifice.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Allen, Bernice Study of Mercer County; Teacher's Manual (unpublished) found in Aledo Public Library, Aledo, Illinois.
Birkhead, Cynthia The Prize and Pride of Aledo (unpublished) found in Mercer County Clerk's Office, Aledo, Illinois.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Aledo East

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 15 688780 4563130
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

Block 94 Original Town, now City of Aledo

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dean Baumgardner, Director of Community and Economic Development

organization Bi-State Metropolitan Planning Commission date 12-30-81

street & number 1504 Third Avenue telephone (309)793-6322

city or town Rock Island state Illinois

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national state X local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature]

title Director

date 4/16/82

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 6/17/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Mercer County Courthouse Item number 9

Page 2

Thomas, Clarence C. Official Directory of Mercer County, Illinois 1935. Aledo,
Illinois: the Times Record Company, 1935.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

82002589

Property: Mercer County Courthouse
State, County: IL, Mercer
Federal Agency: _____

Working No. 5/18/82-1421
Fed. Reg. Date: FEB 1, 1983
Date Due: 6-17-82 / 7-2-82

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Entered in the National Register ACCEPT 6/17/82
 RETURN _____
 REJECT _____
 photos
 maps

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom. / Criteria _____
 Reviewer _____
 Discipline _____
 Date _____
 see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: technical corrections cited below
 substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Area of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- _____ summary paragraph
- _____ completeness
- _____ clarity
- _____ applicable criteria
- _____ justification of areas checked
- _____ relating significance to the resource
- _____ context
- _____ relationship of integrity to significance
- _____ justification of exception
- _____ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

USMT References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

Site _____ date _____

13. Other

- _____ Maps
- _____ Photographs
- _____ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



- 1) Mercer County Courthouse
- 2) Aledo, Illinois
- 3) Dean Baumgardner
- 4) December 15, 1981
- 5) Bi-State Metropolitan Planning Commission,
Rock Island, Illinois
- 6) South
- 7) #1



- 1) Mercer County Courthouse
- 2) Aledo, Illinois
- 3) Dean Baumgardner
- 4) December 15, 1981
- 5) Bi-State Metropolitan Planning Commission,
Rock Island, Illinois
- 6) Southeast
- 7) #2



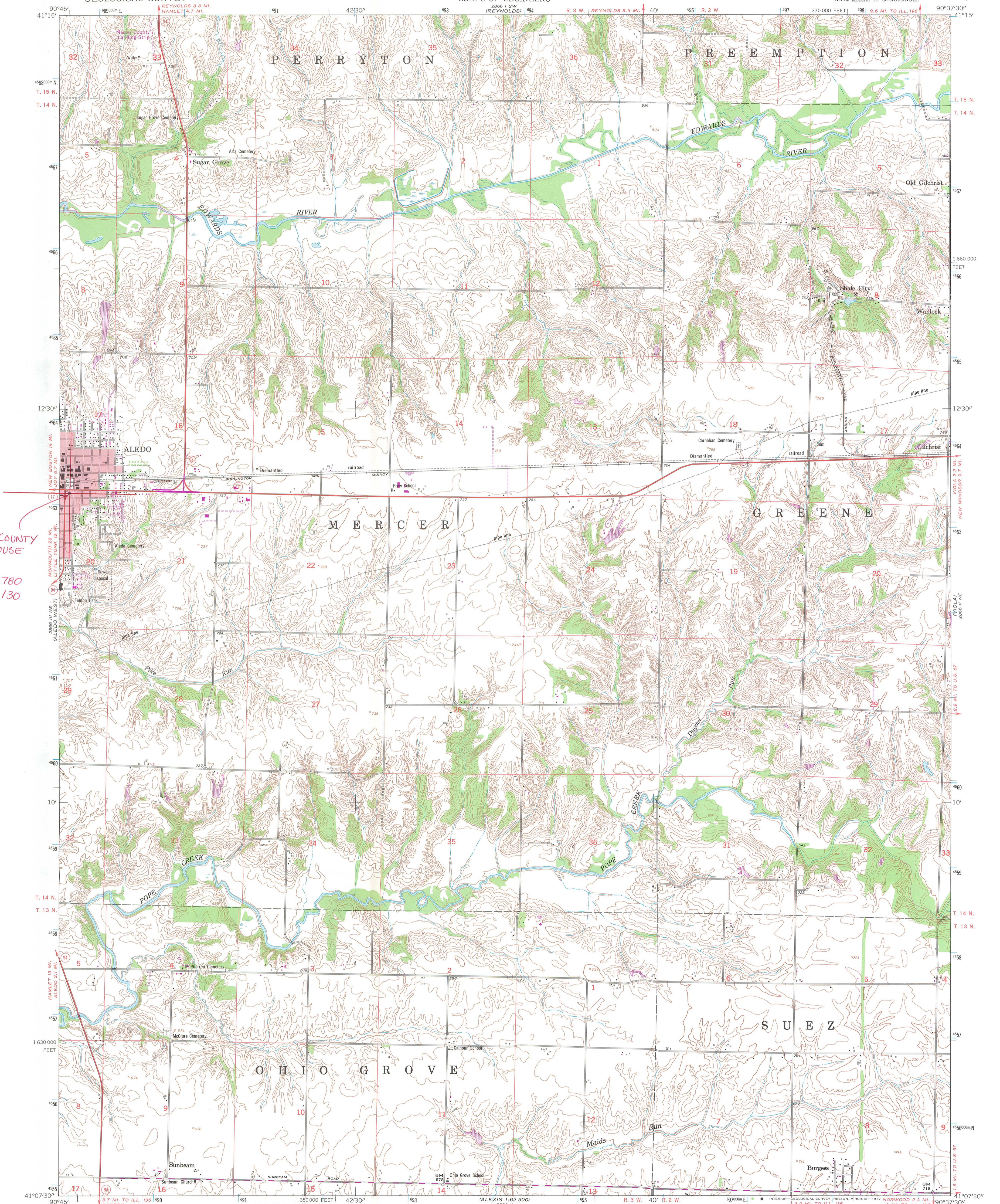
- 1) Mercer County Courthouse
- 2) Aledo, Illinois
- 3) Dean Baumgardner
- 4) December 15, 1981
- 5) Bi-State Metropolitan Planning Commission,
Rock Island, Illinois
- 6) South
- 7) #3



- 1) Mercer County Courthouse
- 2) Aledo, Illinois
- 3) Dean Baumgardner
- 4) December 15, 1981
- 5) Bi-State Metropolitan Planning Commission,
Rock Island, Illinois
- 6) North
- 7) #4



- 1) Mercer County Courthouse
- 2) Aledo, Illinois
- 3) Dean Baumgardner
- 4) December 15, 1981
- 5) Bi-State Metropolitan Planning Commission,
Rock Island, Illinois
- 6) North
- 7) #5



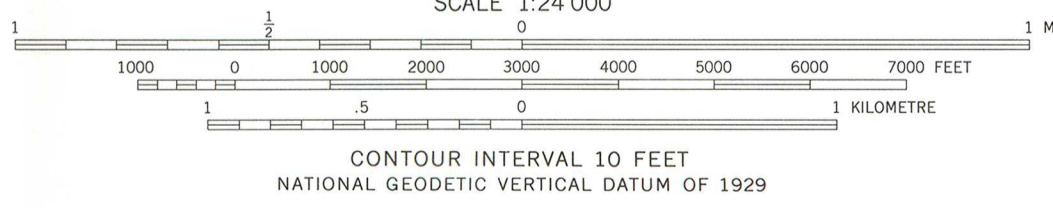
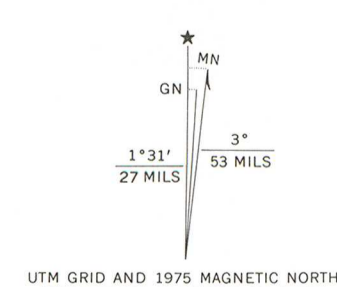
MERCER COUNTY
COURTHOUSE
Z 15
E 688 780
N 4563 130

Maped by the Army Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE

Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods
Aerial photographs taken 1952-1953. Field check 1953
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Illinois coordinate system, west zone
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue

Red tint indicates area in which only
landmark buildings are shown
Unchecked elevations are shown in brown

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from
aerial photographs taken 1975. This information not field checked



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND BY THE STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

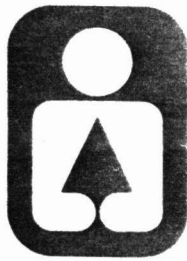
Primary highway, hard surface	Light duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route



ALEDO EAST, ILL.
NW 4 ALEXIS 15' QUADRANGLE
N 4107.5—W 9037.5/7.5

1953
PHOTOREVISED 1975
AMS 2866 II NW—SERIES V863

Illinois



Department of Conservation

life and land together

LINCOLN TOWER PLAZA • 524 SOUTH SECOND STREET • SPRINGFIELD 62706
CHICAGO OFFICE - ROOM 100, 160 NO. LASALLE 60601
David Kenney, Director • James C. Helfrich, Assistant Director

May 4, 1982



Carol Shull
Keeper of the National
Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
W 434
Washington, D.C. 20243

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed is the National Register nomination for the Mercer County Courthouse in Aledo.

We are also submitting the nomination for St. Stanislaus Kostka Church, Chicago, for a Determination of Eligibility.

Finally, we are submitting the nomination for the J. Ogden Armour House. We have included an aerial photo showing the boundaries of the nomination.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Ward".

Michael Ward
Assistant National
Register Coordinator

MW/lw
Enclosures