

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Allen Parish Courthouse is on axis at the head of Sixth Ave., which is Oberlin's main thoroughfare. The buff brick building consists of two stories set on an English basement. The first floor plan consists of a pair of wide axial corridors with an imperial marble and steel staircase set at each end of the building. The structure is designed as a main block with a pair of two story side wings. The courtroom occupies the main block on the second story. It is lit by three massive lunette windows front and rear. The building is articulated in a robust style which was inspired by the Classical Baroque. The first floor is a rusticated brick base with jack arches. The second story of the main block has four sets of double Ionic columns which set off the three arch windows which light the courtroom. The second story of the wings has round arch windows with brick pilasters between. The building is capped by a heavy entablature which has a central scroll cartouche. In the center of the facade is a balustraded balcony resting upon elaborate terra cotta consoles with teas relief. The interior is relatively plain with simple pilasters articulating the corridors. The courtroom has a Doric entablature and pedimented oak doors. To the rear of the building is a modern office wing and a jail appendage.

Specific dates                    1914  
Builder/Architect                    Favrot and Livaudais

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)  
Criteria C & A

The Allen Parish Courthouse is significant in the area of architecture as Oberlin's most pretentious structure for the following reasons:

- (1) It stands at the head of Oberlin's main thoroughfare and hence has a commanding presence.
- (2) Because of its English basement and extra high stories, the courthouse towers over the predominantly 1½ story town.
- (3) It is the most elaborate, "high style," monumental building in town. The only other large building in Oberlin is the high school, which is a symmetrical two story brick structure with a meager looking four column portico. Compared to this the courthouse is much more impressive with features such as a rusticated base, terra cotta bas relief, three frontal windows with double Ionic columns which have the monumental effect of a triumphal arch motif, and a main block set off by end wings.

The Allen Parish Courthouse is also significant in the area of politics/ government because it has been the seat of parish government since its construction in 1914.

#### Major Bibliographical References

Brasseaux, Carl A., Conrad, Glenn R., Robison, R. Warren. The Courthouses of Louisiana. USL Architecture Series No. 1, Center for Louisiana Studies, USL, Lafayette, 1977.