

Historical Marker - L1235A - Midland County Courthouse / Midland County Courthouse (Marker ID#:L1235A)



Front - Title/Description

Midland County Courthouse

In 1831 the first white settlers in the area built a fur trading post near this site, called "Little Forks" by the Indians. When Midland County was organized in 1850, sixty-five people lived here. In 1856 Henry C. Ashmun, the county's first prosecuting attorney, was authorized to locate a courthouse, and he chose this site. The original courthouse served until 1926. In 1919 Mayor Joseph A. Cavanagh proposed that a new courthouse be built at this site. Voters approved a \$225,000 bond issue in 1920 and, in gratitude for the war effort of area servicemen, invited the Midland American Legion to make its home here at the courthouse. Herbert H. Dow, founder of the Dow Chemical Company, provided additional funds and materials. Dr. Dow laid the cornerstone on March 29, 1925. This courthouse was occupied on January 1, 1926.

Significant Date:

Two World Wars and the Depression (1915-1945)

Registry Year: 1985 **Erected Date:** 1989

Marker Location

Address: 301 West Main

City: Midland

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Midland

Township: Midland

Lat: 43.61435200 / **Long:** -84.24751400

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

Midland County Courthouse

Architect Bloodgood Tuttle of Detroit and Cleveland designed this courthouse in rustic Tudor Revival style. A portion of the exterior is magnesite stucco, a building material developed in 1925 by the Dow Chemical Company from Midland's vast underground brines. Donald Gibb of Dow worked with noted Detroit artist Paul Honoré to develop the new "plastic mosaic" material. Ground glass was used instead of sand and silex in the magnesite stucco to give the murals their unusual color and sparkle. Using a palette knife, Honoré created the layered, three-dimensional exterior murals of life-sized Indians, lumbermen, and traders, illustrating the history of Midland County, and the mural in the circuit courtroom depicting an Indian Council. All of the exterior building