

714

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Cook County Courthouse  
other names/site number n/a

**2. Location**

street & number 212 North Hutchinson Avenue  
city, town Adel ( ) vicinity of  
county Cook code GA 075  
state Georgia code GA zip code 31620

( ) not for publication

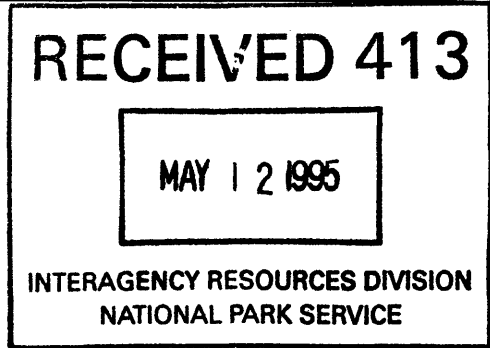
**3. Classification**

**Ownership of Property:**

- ( ) private
- (X) public-local
- ( ) public-state
- ( ) public-federal

**Category of Property**

- (X) building(s)
- ( ) district
- ( ) site
- ( ) structure
- ( ) object



**Number of Resources within Property:**

|            | <u>Contributing</u> | <u>Noncontributing</u> |
|------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| buildings  | 1                   | 1                      |
| sites      | 0                   | 0                      |
| structures | 0                   | 0                      |
| objects    | 0                   | 0                      |
| total      | 1                   | 1                      |

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: n/a

Name of related multiple property listing: County Courthouses in Georgia

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Mark R. Edwards  
Signature of certifying official

5/05/95  
Date

Mark R. Edwards  
State Historic Preservation Officer,  
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

In my opinion, the property ( ) meets ( ) does not meet the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency or bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Edson H. Beall

6/14/95

determined eligible for the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, explain:

see continuation sheet

[Signature]  
Signature, Keeper of the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions:

GOVERNMENT: courthouse  
GOVERNMENT: correctional facility

### Current Functions:

GOVERNMENT: courthouse  
GOVERNMENT: correctional facility

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

OTHER: STRIPPED CLASSICAL

### Materials:

foundation concrete  
walls brick  
roof gravel  
other limestone

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Cook County Courthouse is located in the county seat of Adel in South Georgia, twenty-five miles north of Valdosta. Completed in 1939, the courthouse was designed by the prominent Atlanta architect William J. J. Chase with forty-five percent funding from the Public Works Administration (PWA). The builder was the Ray M. Lee Company.

The courthouse is a two-story, white brick and finished limestone, Stripped Classical-style building with a flat roof and concrete foundation. It was originally symmetrical with a more massive central block and identical side wings. In 1973, a visually compatible, two-story extension was added to the south side and a rear wing on the east facade.

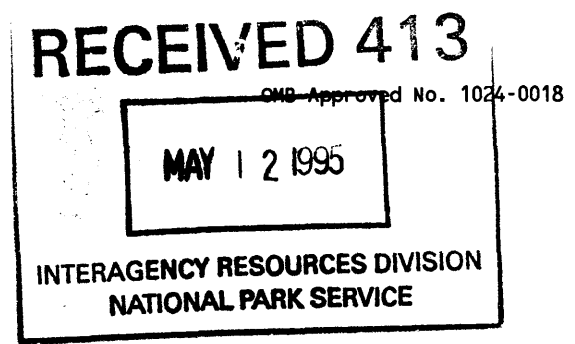
The central portion is of finished limestone with a curved, triangular-shaped parapet, the words "COOK COUNTY COURT HOUSE" carved on the cornice, fluted pilasters separating the bays, and decorative panels between the first and second story windows. The entrance has double glass and metal doors with brass handles and single light transom. There are fluted posts with globe light fixtures on each side of the entrance. The rear door and north facade doors are identical. All of the aluminum and glass windows are vertically oriented with geometrically-designed sashes, with the exception of the jail windows which are security-type windows. The steps are of Stone Mountain granite.

The original interior layout of the courthouse was a cross plan with the halls radiating from the center to each entrance. The floor plan in the original portion remains intact with the exception of the south hall which now leads to the new portions. The jail was originally

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7



housed in the south side. It is now in the rear wing addition. Office space occupies the first floor, the extension, and a portion of the second floor. The courtroom is on the second floor. Staircases are on the south and north ends of the hallways and have geometrically-designed, iron balustrades with brass rails and brass newel post caps.

Interior features include glazed tile walls in the first floor halls, ornamental acoustical tile ceilings, original wood and glass doors, metal trim, and plaster walls in the offices. The terrazzo flooring has been carpeted. At least one office retains its stainless steel fixture which is both a light and fan. The building was originally steam heated.

The courtroom has a double door entrance on the north side. It has Philippine mahogany walls, judge's stand, and jury box. The judge's chair and the tables are walnut. The two sections of public seating are of red gum. There are paired pilasters and dentils along the walls, as well as pedimented entrances. The floor is carpeted and the ceiling is the original decorative acoustical tile. The courtroom was air conditioned when built.

The courthouse grounds include sidewalks extending from each entrance to the street, oak trees, a non-historic monument, historical marker, and benches. The courthouse is to the north of the commercial downtown of Adel.

Separate from the courthouse and across an alley to the rear of the building is the Department of Family and Children Services building which was originally the Cook County Library. It is a noncontributing resource that was constructed in the 1960s.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

**Applicable National Register Criteria:**

A     B     C     D

**Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):**     N/A

A     B     C     D     E     F     G

**Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):**

ARCHITECTURE  
POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

**Period of Significance:**

1939-1945

**Significant Dates:**

1939 - Present courthouse completed

**Significant Person(s):**

n/a

**Cultural Affiliation:**

n/a

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

William J.J. Chase - architect  
Ray M. Lee Construction Company - builder

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

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**Significance of property, justification of criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:**

**Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)**

The Cook County Courthouse is significant in architecture as a good and intact example of a Stripped Classical-style community landmark type of building built during the 1930s and 1940s. The classical style of architecture became popular for use in public buildings after the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 which featured the "White City," which was made up of classical style buildings which housed the exhibits. The use of classical elements in public buildings continued until the mid-20th century. As reflected in the Cook County Courthouse, the classical elements became more understated after the 1910s, as seen in its lack of ornamentation. This more straight forward style can in part be attributed to the higher cost of building and the lessening of available public funds during and after the Depression, as well as to the rise of modern architecture which favored function over form and a lack of stylistic elements.

The Stripped Classical-style courthouse, with its suggestion of columns, simple cornice, and symmetry has understated classical detailing underlying an otherwise unadorned building. This building represents a transition between classical influenced architecture with pediments and pilasters and modern architecture which is characterized by plain wall surfaces and no stylistic detailing as seen in Art Deco style buildings. This Stripped Classical style or "starved classical" style was commonly used for governmental buildings from the 1920s through the 1940s and represents the synthesis of the "traditionalists," who favored the use of classical details, and the "modernists," who favored simple, unadorned buildings and rejected historical antecedents.

The intact architectural features on the interior, such as the glazed tile walls, the original fixtures and hardware, staircases, and the classical detailing in the courtroom, enhance the architectural significance of the courthouse

Like other community landmark type of buildings, the Cook County Courthouse is freestanding and, when built, was the most modern in Adel and reflected the architectural trends of the period. As a centerpiece for public gatherings, the courthouse provides a sense of place and cohesiveness for the citizens and symbolizes the permanence, stability, and strength of a county.

The courthouse is also significant for architecture as a design of the prominent Atlanta architect William J. J. Chase (1884-1967). Chase designed over 100 schools and at least 11 county courthouse in

National Register of Historic Places  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8

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Georgia. He also designed hospitals, jails, apartments, and residences. His designs are recognized for their symmetry, flatness of facade, and restrained decoration. As with his Cook County design, the heavy massing of the building conveys a sense of importance and hierarchy. During the 1930s, Chase also designed courthouses in Oconee, Mitchell, Rockdale and Troup Counties.

In terms of politics and government, the courthouse is significant because it has been the center for county governmental activity since it was built in 1940. In Georgia and throughout the South, county government has traditionally been the strongest form of local government. The present courthouse is the first Cook County Courthouse that was built to serve as a courthouse. Built to house the county jail, this building also represents the correctional aspect of Cook County government.

The courthouse is also significant in government because it was built with Federal monies from the Public Works Administration (PWA) program during the New Deal era. The courthouse represents the federal government's efforts to provide employment and assist communities during the Depression as a part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's economic stimulus programs and a major Depression-era public works project for Adel and Cook County. Other projects funded by the PWA in Cook County during this time were the building of a high school basketball shell, fair grounds, and a post office.

The Cook County Courthouse is one of 19 Georgia courthouses built from 1930 to 1945. It is one of 12 documented courthouses that was funded by the federal government through one of its Depression Era relief programs.

**National Register Criteria**

The Cook County Courthouse is eligible under Criterion A for its significance in the political and governmental history of Cook County. It is also eligible under Criterion C as a good and intact example of a Stripped Classical-style community landmark building.

**Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

n/a

**Period of significance (justification)**

The courthouse was constructed in 1939 and the fifty-year cut-off of historical significance is 1945.

National Register of Historic Places  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8

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**Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)**

The courthouse was built within the period of significance and retains a high degree of integrity. The noncontributing resource is the Department of Family and Children Services building which was built in 1960s.



National Register of Historic Places  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8

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**Developmental history/historic context (if applicable)**

Cook County was created July 30, 1918 by Act of the Georgia Legislature. Named for General Philip Cook, war hero, congressman from 1872-1182, and Georgia Secretary of State, Cook County was formed from parts of Berrien County. Adel was named the county seat in 1918.

After its creation, the Adel City Hall was used as the first courthouse with the courtroom on the second floor, which had formerly been used as public meeting space. In 1924 the county then purchased the Wilkes Building at the southeast corner of Fifth Street and Hutchinson Avenue and used it until 1939 when the present courthouse was completed.

In 1938, the Cook County bought what was known as the Wiseman Lot for the courthouse and jail. The Public Works Administration (PWA) provided a grant of \$49,655 to Cook County as forty-five percent of the cost of constructing the courthouse and jail. Through a bond issue, the county provided fifty-five percent of the cost to bring the total construction amount to \$110,345.00.

Final inspection of the building was made December 11, 1939 by the architect William J. J. Chase of Atlanta, the contractor Ray M. Lee and the PWA inspector L. Silas Moore. The dedication ceremony for the courthouse was held Thursday night June 13, 1940. A quote from The Adel News read as follows:

The pride of the people of Cook county and the admiration of all visitors who enter it, is the Cook County Court House just to the north of the business district on the National Highway. There is no prettier Temple of Justice in the state and while some may have cost more, this building is not surpassed in beauty by any court house in Georgia.

Other projects built during this time in Cook County with PWA funds were the high school basketball shell and the United States Post Office.

**NOTE: The late Judge Dan Cowert assisted with the research for this nomination. He had a great love and knowledge of the courthouse and Cook County.**

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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Cowert, Dan, Cook County Probate Judge. Cook County Courthouse, Adel, Georgia. Informal interview by Leslie N. Sharp, September 8, 1994.

Parrish, June Jackson. The History of Cook County and Its Municipalities. Adel, GA: Adel News Publishing Company, 1968.

The Adel News, 1938-1940, various issues.

Sharp, Leslie N. "County Courthouses in Georgia," Multiple Property Documentation Form, amended submission, 1994. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A

- ( ) preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ( ) previously listed in the National Register
- ( ) previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ( ) designated a National Historic Landmark
- ( ) recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ( ) recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- (X) State Historic Preservation Office
- ( ) Other State Agency
- ( ) Federal agency
- ( ) Local government
- ( ) University
- ( ) Other, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

n/a

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property** Approximately two acres.

**UTM References**

A) Zone 17 Easting 268780 Northing 3447350

**Verbal Boundary Description**

This nomination encompasses the property which includes the Cook County Courthouse, as indicated by the heavy black line on the attached tax map, drawn to scale.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the all of the property owned by Cook County at this location which includes the Cook County Courthouse, its grounds, and the Department of Family and Children Services.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**name/title** Leslie N. Sharp, National Register Consultant  
**organization** Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG)  
**street & number** 50 Hurt Plaza, Suite 1000  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303  
**telephone** (404) 522-5022 **date** April 13, 1995

(OHP form version 12-08-93)

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

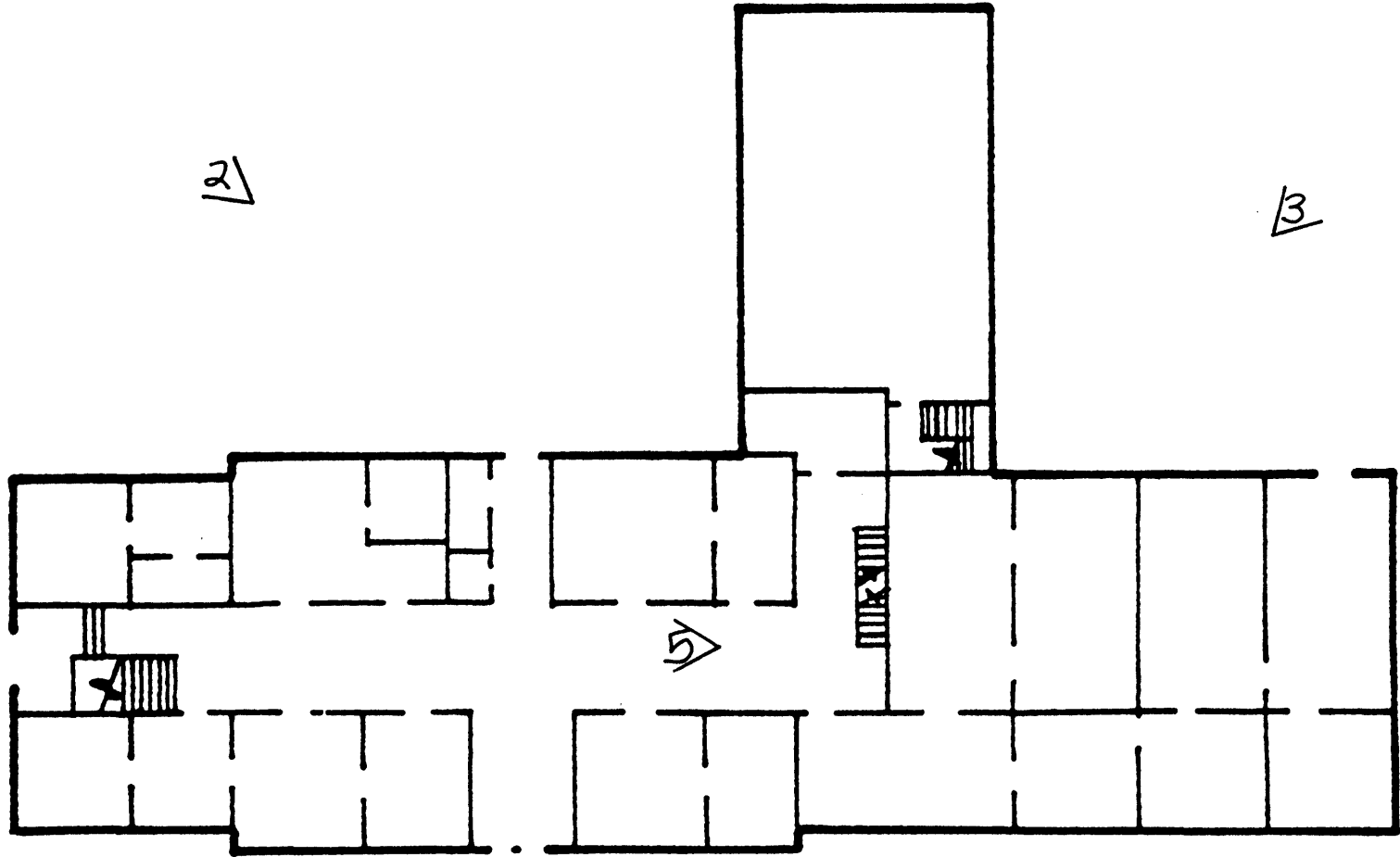
**Photographs**

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**Name of Property:** Cook County Courthouse and Old Jail  
**City or Vicinity:** Adel  
**County:** Cook  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** March 1995

**Description of Photograph(s):**

- 1 of 6: Cook County Courthouse, front facade; photographer facing northeast.
- 2 of 6: Courthouse, east facade and jail; photographer facing southwest.
- 3 of 6: Courthouse addition and jail; photographer facing northwest.
- 4 of 6: Courthouse, front facade; photographer facing northeast.
- 5 of 6: Hallway; photographer facing south.
- 6 of 6: Courtroom; photographer facing south-southwest.

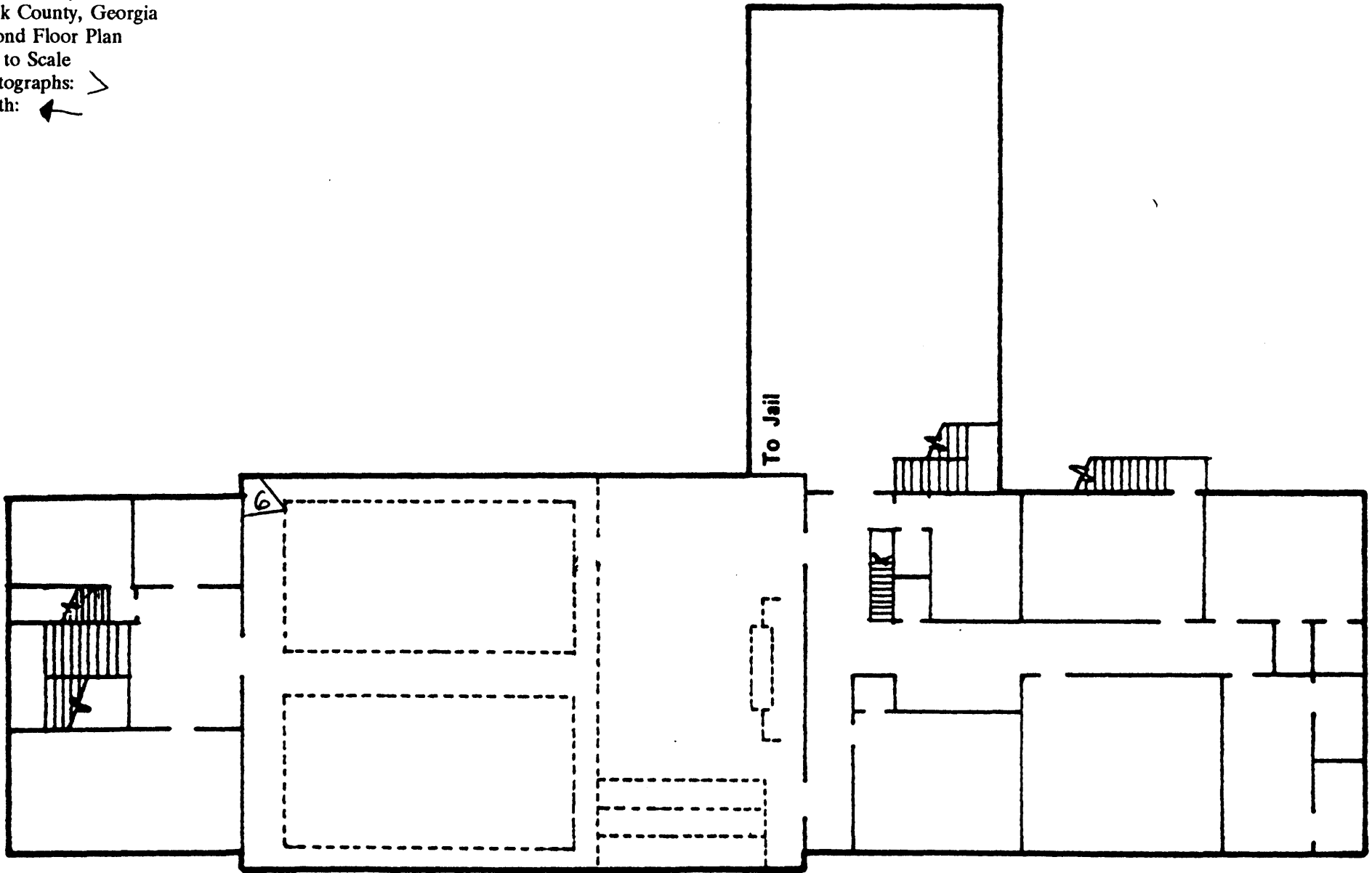


FIRST FLOOR

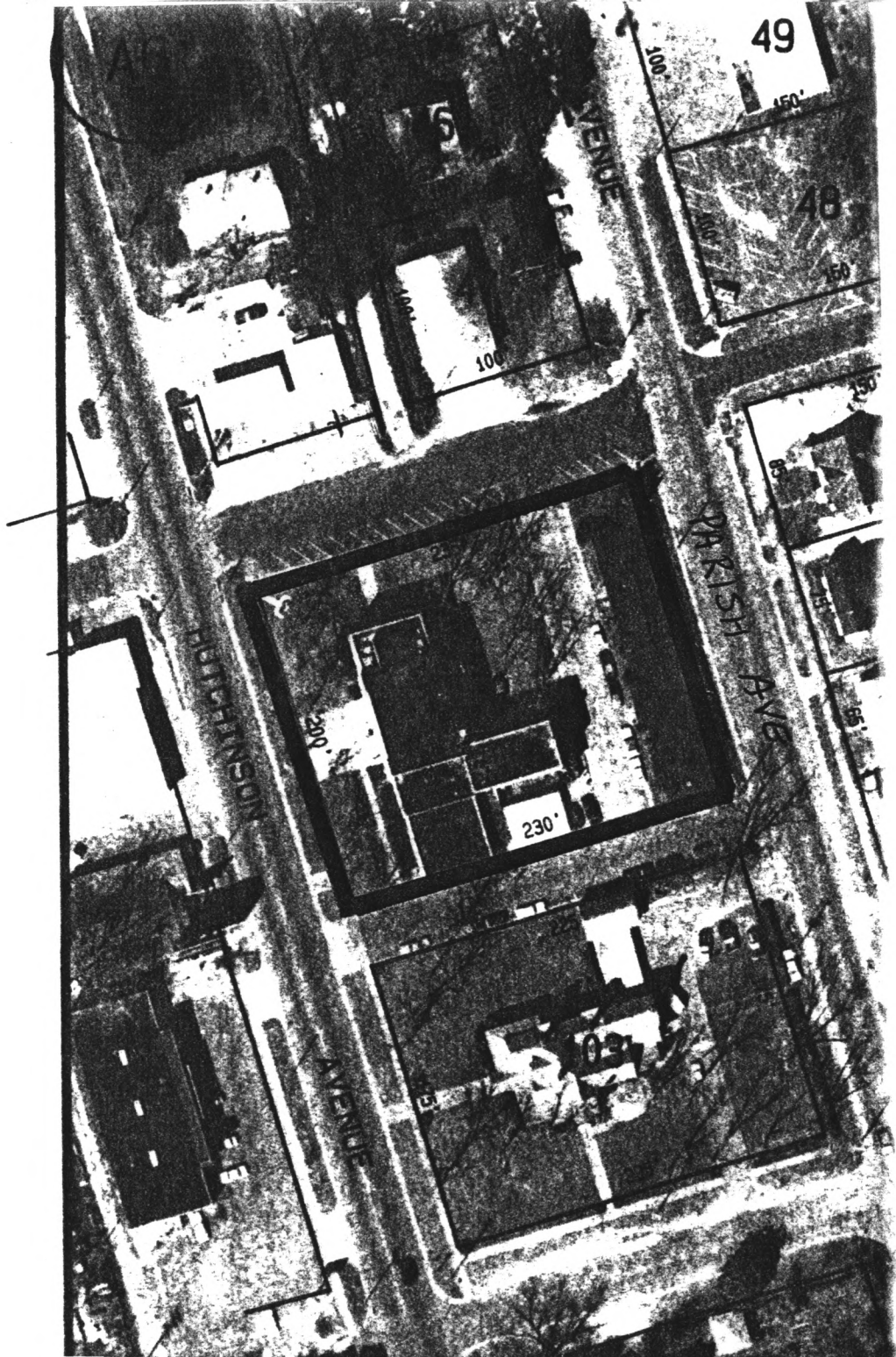
↗  
 Cook County Courthouse  
 Cook County, Georgia  
 First Floor Plan  
 Not to Scale  
 Photographs: >  
 North: ←

↗

Cook County Courthouse  
Cook County, Georgia  
Second Floor Plan  
Not to Scale  
Photographs: >  
North: ←




SECOND FLOOR




Cook County Courthouse

Cook County, Georgia






Tax Map

National Register Boundary: 

Scale: 1" = 100'

North: 

LEGEND

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
|  COUNTY LINE          | (55) SUBDIVISION LOT NUMBER |
|  PROPERTY LINE        | (2) ADJOINING MAP NUMBER    |
|  CORPORATE LIMIT LINE | 21 TAX PARCEL NUMBER        |
|  LEGAL INFORMATION    | "G" BLOCK NUMBER            |
|  LAND LOT CORNER      | 4 SCHOOL OR COLLEGE         |