

Attachment One

DESCRIPTION

The Towns County Jail is a two-story rock structure with raised mortar. A one-story porch extends across the front facade with craftsman design in the square rock columns and exposed rafter ends. Structure contains an end chimney and two interior chimneys. Windows on first floor are 6/6 with barred 4/4 windows on second floor. Structure is built on a central hall plan with hall containing interior staircase. Three entrances from porch lead to side rooms and the central hall. The roof is hipped and covered with asphalt shingles. A one-story concrete block addition extends across the rear facade. The interior arrangement consists of two rooms on each side of the central hall with a portion of the hall utilized for the first floor bath. The jail works (with no manufacturer's label) are housed on the second floor and the cell spaces repeat the first floor arrangement. The concrete addition is one large room to accommodate the city's fire truck. The interior on the first floor has been altered with the addition of carpeting, paneling, and acoustical tile ceilings. Original 4" wood plank floors, wood ceilings, and rock walls remain in the central hall space. The second floor retains its original jailworks and white-washed rock walls.

The structure is situated in the central business district of Hiawassee adjacent to a 1970's county courthouse. The jail is part of a larger tract owned by the county. For purposes of this nomination, only the ground on which this structure stands is proposed for nomination. The structure is in good to fair condition.

Attachment Two

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Towns County was created in 1856 from parts of Union and Rabun Counties. By 1857, the Superior Court minutes state that the county "has its public buildings" but there is no description of the first jail. In 1870, the second jail was constructed at a cost of \$448, containing two stories. By 1888, the condition of this jail had deteriorated and there were discussions about the need to add a jailer's residence. In 1890, it appears that extensive repairs were made to the second jail including the addition of jailer's quarters. Despite the repairs cries for a new jail continued throughout the 1890's. The construction of a new courthouse in 1899 postponed a new jail due to the unavailability of money. Of note is that the new courthouse was built outside the original town square. By 1915 the county was able to finance a new jail which was the third jail for the county. In 1931, the minutes state that this jail was in bad condition.

On March 28, 1935 high winds unroofed the existing jail and prompted the county to build a new jail. The March 1935 Superior Court Minutes instructed the Ordinary to build the jail in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (F.E.R.A.) and to follow a design similar to the Union County jail. The design was described as a "two-story stone jail including quarters for the jaylor (sic) and family." The ordinary was further instructed to tear down the present jail and use "what material and equipment to the best advantage." Plans for the construction appear to have moved forward.

The minutes from September, 1935 recommended that the "Ordinary exchange the present county jail and lot for a lot located south of the courthouse", an even swap with the county, which reserved the cells located in "said old jail."

The Towns County Herald noted that the jail was under construction in October, 1935. In March 1936 the paper stated the jail was complete and a "modern, safe, sanitary, and commendable structure." Ordinary J. F. Johnson was praised for his work on the jail which was built at a total cost of \$4,353. In the early 1970's this jail was replaced by a new jail constructed for joint use by Towns County and Union County. In 1980, the old jail was renovated for use as the Hiwassee City Hall.

Attachment Three

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Towns County Jail is significant in the areas of architecture and politics/government. In architecture, the structure is significant for its vernacular design which through the use of indigenous materials illustrates its location in a mountain county. In politics and government, the structure is significant as the fourth jail for Towns County. It also illustrates the utilization of a federal program, F.E.R.A., to stimulate jobs and add a needed community facility during the public work programs of the 1930's.

It was built to be the county's only jail and was used for that sole purpose for 45 years.

ATTACHMENT FOUR

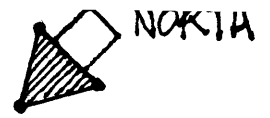
BIBLIOGRAPHY - TOWNS COUNTY

Towns County, Georgia. Superior Court. Minutes, 1857 - 1936.

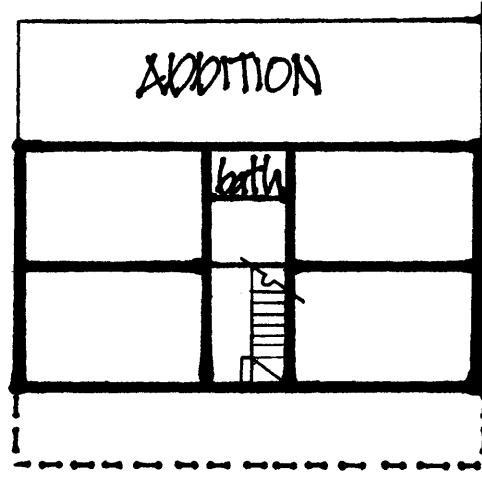
Towns County Herald. Hiawassee, Georgia (various issues 1933-1936).

Research Assistance from Elma Beynon, RSVP Worker and Elaine Fatora,
Georgia Mountains Historic Preservation Advisory Committee Member.

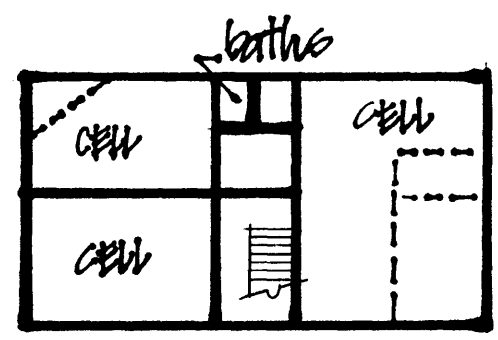
TOWNS COUNTY JAIL
HIAWASSEE, GA.



SCALE 1" = 20'
— ORIG. WALLS
— ADDITION



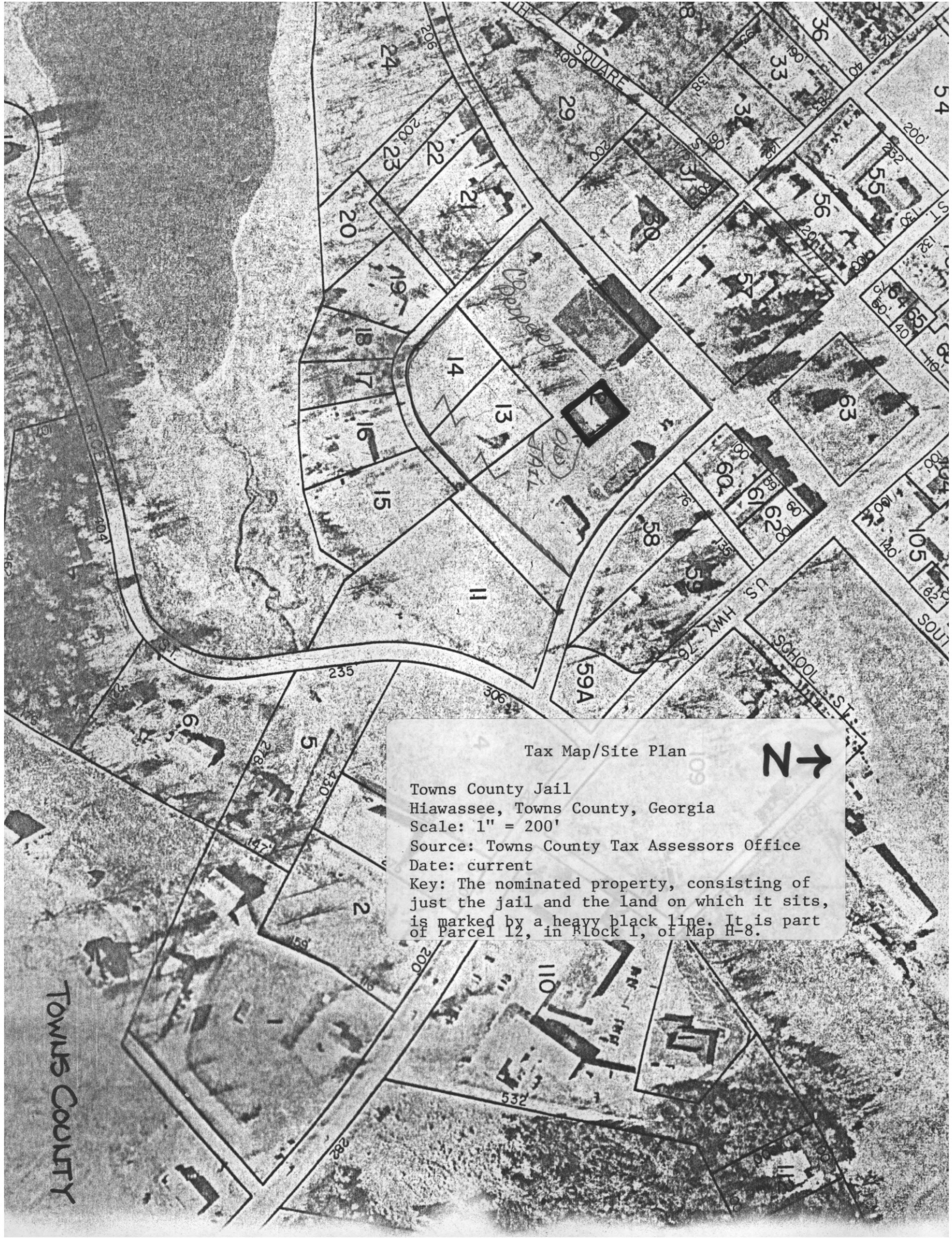
FIRST FLOOR



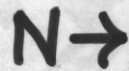
SECOND FLOOR

Floor Plan

Towns County Jail
Hiawasse, Towns County, Georgia
Scale: 1" = 20'
Source: Drawn by Dale Jaeger
Date: 1984
Key: as marked on the plan



Tax Map/Site Plan



Towns County Jail
Hiawassee, Towns County, Georgia
Scale: 1" = 200'

Source: Towns County Tax Assessors Office
Date: current

Key: The nominated property, consisting of just the jail and the land on which it sits, is marked by a heavy black line. It is part of Parcel 12, in Block 1, of Map H-8.

TOWNS COUNTY