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RECEIVED AUG 12 1976
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC ******
James County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Mulberry Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Ooltewah

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Third

__ VICINITY OF

STATE
Tennessee

CODE
47

COUNTY
Hamilton

CODE
65

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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: masonic lodge

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Hamilton County

STREET & NUMBER
Georgia Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Chattanooga

__ VICINITY OF

STATE
Tennessee

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Hamilton County Register's Office

STREET & NUMBER
Hamilton County Courthouse, Georgia Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Chattanooga

STATE
Tennessee

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Hamilton County Survey

DATE
July 1972

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS Tennessee Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN
170 Second Avenue North

STATE
Tennessee

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The James County Courthouse is located in Ooltewah in the former court square. The Colonial Revival building was designed by Chattanooga architect William Hatfield Sears, and erected in 1913 by contractor M. K. Wilson, to replace the original 1870s courthouse which had burned. It served as the seat of government until James County was abolished by the legislature in 1919. Hamilton County used the building as a school for many years, and it is presently leased to Ooltewah Lodge No. 741 of the Free and Accepted Masons. The fraternity sealed a number of window openings, but the building has remained largely unchanged.

The square, two-story, five-bay building is constructed of brick laid in the stretcher bond pattern. Pilaster-like stacks of stretchers accentuate the vertical lines of the doors and windows and emphasize the height and vertical lines of the building. A two-story Greek Revival portico, graced with four nonfluted columns and two square pilasters and an unadorned pediment, highlights the west elevation. Composition shingles sheath the low hip roof which is surmounted with five, offset, brick chimney stacks. The plain, wooden, boxed cornice continues the Neo-Classical motif around the building. The water table, composed mainly of header courses rests on a concrete foundation.

Most of the window openings are rectangular and have vertical-joint brick heads only on the first story and plain wooden sills all around; the vertical surrounds reach from cornice to foundation. Those windows which were not bricked in contain various light configurations, namely, 12 over 1, 12 over 4, and 12 over 6. Small rectangular windows appear in a few of the original apertures. The main entrance is centered in the west elevation, and its head and surrounds match the windows; it contains wide, double-leaf doors and a blind, rectangular transom. The north door has an elliptical opening with a brick keystone arch and surrounds and is topped with a blind fan transom; above this door on the second story is a single light, rectangular window with brick surrounds. The south entrance, which originally probably resembled the main entrance, has been drastically modified; it now contains a small, plain, single-leaf door and a tiny window. Only the fan transom remains of a large window which was centered between the first and second stories; the opening and surrounds are similar to those on the north door, and the sill matches those found throughout the building.

Although more than sixty years old, the James County Courthouse is in good repair. The newly organized James County Historical Society has expressed its interest in the continued preservation of the building.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" 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		

SPECIFIC DATES 1913

BUILDER/ARCHITECT William Hatfield Sears

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Tennessee General Assembly organized James County from fractions of neighboring Hamilton and Bradley counties on January 30, 1871. The new county was named in honor of Rev. Jesse J. James, the father of Representative Elbert James who introduced the act which created the county. A dispute quickly developed over the location of the county seat; Ooltewah, a railroad town, was chosen on April 27, 1871 over Harrison, a port on the Tennessee River.

In 1890, the general assembly attempted to abolish the county, but local officials opposed the action and appealed to the state supreme court. The high court declared the act unconstitutional. By 1919, because tax revenues were so low, the county had become bankrupt. Schools, roads, and public services were inadequate. The state legislature voted in April 1919 to abolish James County, and in a referendum held on December 11, 1919, citizens of the county voted 941 to 79 for annexation to Hamilton County.

James County has the distinction of being the only Tennessee county, which, after being erected and organized in accordance with the requirements of the state constitution, was abolished. Two other attempts by the general assembly to eliminate other counties, namely Lewis and Putnam, were unsuccessful. The courthouse then is the only building associated with the "lost county of James."

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Little, Sue. "Discovering the lost county of James" in The Morning Sun (Cleveland, Tennessee), November 21, 1975.
 Telephone interviews with Mrs. R. D. Shelley, November 25 and 26, 1975.
 Telephone interview with Scott Knight, December 1, 1975.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	6	6	7	6	8	6	0	3	8	8	2	4	9	0
ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

B

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Robert E. Dalton, Director of Field Services

ORGANIZATION

Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

August, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

170 Second Avenue North

TELEPHONE

(615) 741-2371

CITY OR TOWN

Nashville

STATE

Tennessee

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

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

Robert E. Dalton

TITLE

Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

8/9/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Acting

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11/9/76

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11/2/76