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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:	Ha
Hamblen County Register's Office	Hamblen
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS	
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (II known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Hamblen County Courthouse in Morristown is one of the more imposing public buildings seen along a major road in east Tennessee. Located on the north side of W. 1st North Street, which is also Highway 11E, the large brick building is surrounded by a sizeable landscaped lot.

Because the structure has been enlarged to meet the expanding needs of Hamblen County, it is difficult to determine the exact appearance of the original structure. The country combination of <u>Second Empire</u> and Italianate features was even more obvious when the building was red brick, and quoinings and other details were white. It was painted gray in 1968.

Built on a sloping lot, the building has only two floors above ground level on the north side. The south side, with three floors above ground level and a double balcony, was originally the main entrance and the site for political and other public gatherings. Present parking facilities have shifted the main entrance to W. 2nd North Street.

The projected entrance areas are terminated by a pediment. A mansard roof, with dormer windows and surmounted by a domed cupola, covers the central core of the building. The verticalized openings are arched.

In the early 1950's, wings were added to provide vault space for records. Additional changes, made in 1968, gave more floor and vault space. The interior has been completely altered.



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PERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
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Agriculture	Invention	Science	local level
X Architecture	Landscape	Sculpture	
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Conservation		Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although the Hamblen County Courthouse does not exhibit its original appearance, it is an example of successful county preservation efforts to adapt a locally important historic structure to expanding needs. Rather than build a new courthouse several years ago, county officials decided to make additions which were architecturally compatible to the existing building. As a result, the building, which is located on a heavily trafficked route in east Tennessee, continues to be a landmark not only for area citizens but also for travelers.

After the Civil War, the area around Morristown, then a part of Jefferson County, experienced tremendous growth in population and wealth. In May, 1870, Hamblen County was created with Morristown as the county seat. By April, 1871, land had been acquired for a courthouse site and by the following October, an appointed committee of five had employed A. C. Bruce as architect. Bruce was asked to submit three plans ranging in building cost: \$10,000; \$15,000; and \$18,000. The committee and county court selected the most expensive plan. In December, 1872, George Folsom and John Lyle signed a contract to build the courthouse for \$21,750, and guaranteed completion by November 1, 1874, a deadline they apparently met.

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