

PH0020397

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>ALABAMA</b>
COUNTY: <b>LEE</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE <b>JUL 23 1973</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**LEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**SOUTH 9th STREET BETWEEN AVENUE A AND AVENUE B, OPELIKA**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**OPELIKA,**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: **ALABAMA** CODE: **01** COUNTY: **LEE** CODE: **081**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ Comments _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**LEE COUNTY**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**SOUTH 9th STREET BETWEEN AVENUE A AND AVENUE B**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**OPELIKA**

STATE:  
**ALABAMA**

CODE:  
**01**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**COURT HOUSE**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**SOUTH 9th STREET**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**OPELIKA**

STATE:  
**ALABAMA**

CODE:  
**01**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

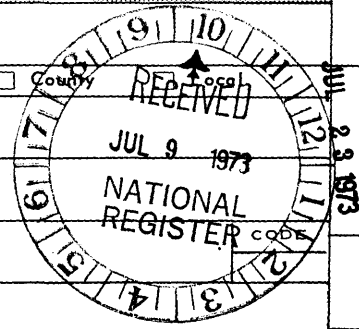
DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Lee County Courthouse in Opelika is a large two-story neo-classical revival structure constructed of red brick and consisting of a central section and two wings. The central section has a portico with six round fluted columns supporting the roof pediment. At each end of the portico there is a square brick pilaster set against the wing. The front entrance consists of double paneled doors with a fan light above. Above the entrance on the second floor is a palladian window. There are four rectangular windows with cornices above on each floor of this section.

The outstanding architectural features of the building are the windows on the front of the wings. On the first floor there is a large sash with smaller sashes on either side flanked by Ionic fluted pilasters and topped by a simple architrave and a cornice with dentils. Above the cornice is a flat balustrade and above this on the second floor a modified venetian window having only a single sash surrounded by ornate scroll work. The building has a metal frieze with elaborate tool work. Above the frieze there is a cornice with dentils.

There is pediment above the four central columns that is also elaborately decorated. Above the pediment there is a square brick steeple which is topped with a cornice with dentils. This is capped with a clock tower that is square on the lower level with palladian type louvre windows flanked by Corinthian towers. Above this is a cornice with dentil work and above the cornice a clock surrounded by scroll work. Above the clock is a simple circular cornice surmounted by a circular dome that is capped with a small ornament.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1896

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture  | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lee County Courthouse was an unusually fine courthouse for a small rural county when it was built in 1896. Andrew J. Bryan and Company of Atlanta were the architects and Andrews and Stevens were the contractors. The courthouse and a separate jail were built for a total of \$35,000. William C. Robinson was the probate judge at the time and the county commissioners were W. S. Robinson, J. S. Aiken, William H. Melton, and C. T. Griffin. The previous courthouse, a two-story brick building, was demolished after the present structure was completed.

Lee County was created in 1866 after the Civil War and was named for General Robert E. Lee. In the 1890 census, which was taken just before the courthouse was built, the population of Lee County was 28,694 and that of Opelika was 3,703. Opelika was incorporated in 1854 when it was part of Chambers County. When Lee County was created, Opelika was selected county seat over several other small towns.

Congressman William L. Dickinson, the first Republican to represent the Second Congressional District since Reconstruction, held court here as both a county judge and a circuit judge.

Demolition of the courthouse is threatened by the neglect of the current probate judge and county Commissioners and lack of revenue sharing funds.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Owen, M. B. , Our State-Alabama; Birmingham, Birmingham Printing Company, 1927.

"1954 Centennial Brochure of Opelika"

Lee County Records

Summersell, Charles G., Alabama. Montgomery, Viewpoint Publications, 1971.

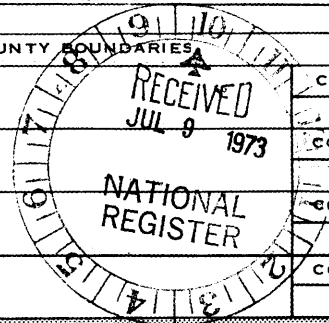
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	32°	38'	42"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	85°	22'	50"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: \_\_\_\_\_

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION: Alabama Historical Commission      DATE: March 30, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
305 South Lawrence Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montgomery      STATE: Alabama      CODE: 01

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION      NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National       State       Local

Name: Miss B. Edwards Jr.

Title: SHPO - Alabama

Date: July 2, 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert H. Utley  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 7/23/73

ATTEST:

Sept 1973  
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 9/19/73