

PH 0021245

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

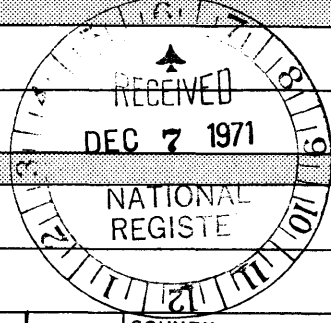
(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	ALABAMA	
COUNTY:	MORGAN	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
	MAR 24 1972	

1. NAME

COMMON:
Somerville Courthouse

AND/OR HISTORIC:



2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Somerville

STATE: Alabama CODE: 01 COUNTY: Morgan CODE: 103

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	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 type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
City of Somerville

STREET AND NUMBER:
Route 1

CITY OR TOWN: Somerville STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Morgan County Courthouse Probate Office

STREET AND NUMBER:
301 Ferry Street, N. E.

CITY OR TOWN: Decatur STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: _____

COUNTY: _____

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7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Somerville Courthouse is a rectangular structure built in the Federal style of the Virginia colony. The two-story brick building which has a stone foundation is set in a grassy courtyard surrounded by a low stone wall.

Built from a simple plan the building has five double hung windows across the upper floor on the north and south sides, and four windows and a door on the first floor. The windows have flat white lintels and eight lights in each sash. The doors are centrally located and have a transom with two rectangular lights and a flat lintel above.

There are two end-interior chimneys on the east and west sides. The east side has four windows between the chimneys while the west side has only two windows.

A hipped metal roof is surmounted by a cupola set on a square wooden base. This cupola is octagonal and has a copper dome which is topped with a finial.

On the ground floor are four offices. The second story was used as a courtroom with small rooms for use by witnesses and jurors. The original mantels adorn the fireplaces on both floors and some of the original trim and doors remain.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input 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 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

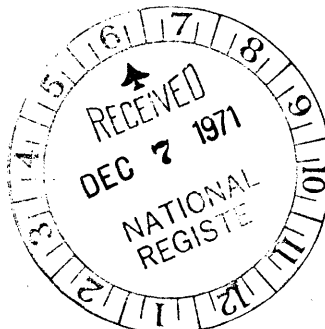
The Somerville Courthouse, one of Alabama's outstanding landmarks, is the oldest standing courthouse in Alabama and is of a type of architecture which is rare in the state. Its style follows that of the buildings built in Virginia in the late 1700's and early 1800's.

In 1819 Somerville was incorporated as the county seat of Cotaco County which was created February 8, 1818 and was renamed Morgan County in 1821. The courthouse was built in 1837 with special taxes levied by the Alabama legislature in 1836 to replace the first courthouse built in 1825.

This building served as the courthouse until the late 1800's when dissatisfaction with the location caused the county seat to be moved. Several unsuccessful attempts had been made to move the county seat earlier, but finally in 1891 it was moved to the steadily growing river-front town of Decatur, and the records were removed from Somerville at night under armed guard.

The building was used as a school for several years. Now vacant, it is used once a month for meetings of the Somerville Town Council. The Council has proposed to donate this significant structure to the Alabama Historical Commission and the Commission will preserve this landmark when sufficient state and Federal funds are available.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Jenkins, William and Knox, John. The Story of Decatur, Alabama. Decatur: Decatur Printing Co., 1970.

Knox, John. The Story of Morgan County, Alabama. Decatur: Decatur Printing Co. Inc., 1967.

National Society of Colonial Dames of America in the State of Alabama. Early Courthouses of Alabama. Mobile: Jordan Printing Co. 1966.

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		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		34 ° 28 ' 30 "	86 ° 47 ' 45 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **0.8 Acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION: **Alabama Historical Commission** DATE: _____

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 Wils B. Howard, Jr.

Title SLC

Date December 3, 1971

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

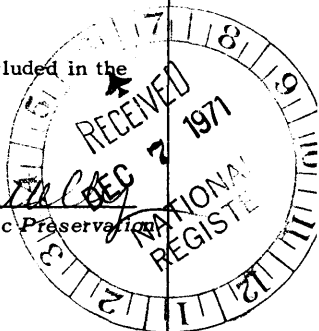
Ernest A. Cantel
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

MAR 24 1972

Date _____

ATTEST:
William H. [Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date **MAR 9 1972**



No
now
CO

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE ALABAMA	
COUNTY MORGAN	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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(Number all entries)

9. Owen, Thomas. History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography.
Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1921

