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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

RECEIVED 413

FEB 27 1995

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions and the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by entering the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name MADISON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Public Square N/A not for publication

city or town Jackson N/A vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Madison code 113 zip code 38301

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert I. Hoyer 2/18/95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other. (explain:)

Edson W. Beall 3/30/95
Signature of the Keeper Entered in the National Register Date of Action

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

- building(s), district, site, structure, object

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Historic County Courthouses in Tennessee

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: courthouse

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: courthouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: PWA Modern

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls LIMESTONE: CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

other METAL, GLASS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is: N/A

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/ POLITICS

Period of Significance

1937-1945

1888, 1919, 1925 for objects

Significant Dates

1937

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Marr, Thomas and Holman, Joseph, arch.

Foster and Creighton, contractors

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data: N/A

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Madison County Courthouse
Name of Property

Jackson, Madison Co., TN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.44 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Jackson South, TN, 438 SE

1	16	335200	3942420
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2			

3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Trina Binkley

organization MTSU Center for Historic Preservation date Aug. 30, 1994

street & number PO Box 80, MTSU telephone 615-898-2947

city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name J. Alex Leech, county mayor

street & number Madison County Courthouse telephone 901-423-6020

city or town Jackson state TN zip code 38301

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

VII. DESCRIPTION

The 1937 Madison County Courthouse, located on Jackson's public square, is an excellent local example of PWA Modern architecture, but due to new windows installed in 1994, it will not be nominated for architectural significance. It was designed by the Nashville architectural firm of Marr and Holman, and built by Foster and Crieghton contractors. Originally planned to be finished in one year, the four story plus a basement building was completed in fourteen months. The PWA granted Madison County and the contractors time extensions because of poor weather conditions that prevented the project from finishing on time.

The courthouse was designed to be fireproof, being constructed of a reinforced concrete frame with brick exterior walls faced with Indiana limestone. These exterior walls are sixteen inches thick. The finish of the exterior limestone walls is plain ashlar. Fireproof materials used in the interior plan include plaster, marble, steel, bronze, and terrazzo. Based on a rectangular plan, the building is approximately one hundred and sixty feet by sixty-five feet and stands fifty feet high atop the fourth floor.

Each elevation contains common decorative elements. Located on the north and south elevations are slightly projecting central pavilions with nine bays. The wings on either side of the pavilion have two bays each. The east and west elevations contain five bays. The courthouse also features a raised basement with a water table at the bottom of the first floor level. Located at the bottom of the second floor level is a raised belt course. The top of the third floor contains a continuous cornice with dentil molding, frieze, and a parapet above. The fourth floor contains the county jail and is set back from all four sides of the building. Surrounding the fourth floor jail is a flat composition roof. The fourth floor roof is composition as well.

In September 1994, most of the original multi-pane medium green colored steel windows were replaced. This was done to increase window insulation power and keep energy costs down.

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A concerted effort was made to replace the old metal windows with identically-styled new metal ones. The window arrangement, or fenestration, on the north and south elevations is the same in each bay on the basement, first, second, and third floor levels. The first, second, and third floor fenestration on the east and west elevations coincide with each bay as well. However, the basement level on these two elevations contain only two windows, located in the bay on either side of the entrance.

The basement level windows are multipane brown-colored steel, but they vary in height. On the north and south elevations, the basement level windows have only four panes. Whereas, the east and west elevations are 4:4 sash. Each window unit on the first, second, and third floors in the courthouse is the same: a pair of casement windows with a horizontal fixed pane above and below, that runs the width of the casement windows. However the first floor windows are shorter in height than the second and third. These windows are also constructed of brown-colored steel.

Each elevation of the courthouse contains a centrally located entrance which leads to the first floor. Entrances to the basement from the outside are located down a pair of stairs on the east and west elevations. These sets of descending stairs split around the single ascending stair to the first floor entrances. Access to the basement can also be had on the south elevation by descending a set of interior stairs off of the southern entry landing.

The main entrance facade is located on the north side of the courthouse. This facade contains thirteen bays, broken up by a central pavilion and two wings. Leading up to the first floor entrance is a concrete step, framed with limestone abutments. There is a slightly inclined ramp with a metal rail next to the eastern abutment, making it level with the concrete landing step at the entrance. Located on each abutment are wrought iron and bronze light fixtures. Designed with Greek-styled motifs by the project architect, Joseph Holman Sr., each light has a base made of four reeded scroll-ended panels, that slightly graduate outward in a

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conical shape and are bound toward the bottom of the base with a reeded horizontal band. At the top of each panel are stylized scallop motifs which are capped by a band decorated with a Greek fret motif. This band is round-shaped and circumscribes the half-round white glass lamp shade located above it. The shade is held in place by four fluted metal panels. The light itself is painted a medium green. Each fixture stands approximately six feet high on top of the abutments, weighs about seven hundred pounds, and burns five hundred watt lamps.

The main entrance door surround is constructed of limestone and contains a series of panels in relief. Located in the center of each panel is a carved patera motif. There are fifteen panels in all. Atop the door surround is horizontal banding with a large anthemion motif in the center and smaller ones on each corner. The double leaf entrance doors are relatively new, consisting of glass in a metal frame with a glass transom above. Flanking each side of the main entrance are slender windows of the same style as the rest of the upper story windows. Each is covered by an iron grille. Painted medium green, the grille contains four stylized floral motifs. Located directly above these windows is a panel with recessed rectangle-shaped bands.

Located at the bottom of each window unit on the central pavilion of the second floor are steel railings. Each railing is approximately two feet high, contains a trio of anthemion motifs in the center, and is painted medium green. Between each window unit on the second and third floors of the central pavilion are fluted piers. These eight piers support the central part of the frieze and contain the inscription, "MADISON COUNTY COURT HOUSE."

Both the second and the third floor fenestration and wall treatment correspond with each other. Each bay in the central pavilion is recessed and contains the second and third floor window units plus a spandrel in between. The two bays in the wings are only slightly recessed and contain a spandrel in between the second and third floors as well. These spandrels are constructed of metal with a bull's-eye and a patera motif in the center. The background area of

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the spandrels is made up of vertical bands, and is framed by small horizontal bands on the sides. At the top of the each pier, the corners of the pavilion, and the areas surrounding the two bays on each wing is an ovolo molding.

The east elevation is essentially a smaller in scale version of the north facade, except for the treatment of the first floor entrance and basement level access. Leading up to the centrally located entrance is a flight of nine concrete stairs and a concrete landing. The metal stair and landing railings are painted medium green and are attached to the door surround. Designed of plain ashlar, the limestone surround is capped by a low pitch pedimented panel in which the center portion of the panel contains the inscription, "MADISON COUNTY COURT HOUSE." To each side of the panel are stylized floral motifs which extend around the corner and onto the sides of the door surround. The recessed double leaf entrance doors are relatively new glass in a metal frame with a single pane glass transom above.

Located on each stile of the door surround of the east elevation entrance is a bronze light fixture. These fixtures have similar design motifs as the lights on the north and south elevations and were also designed by Joseph Holman Sr. Each fixture is approximately two feet high with three vertical bands that are supported by two horizontal round bands, one at the bottom and one at the top. In between the vertical bands is white glass. The horizontal band at the top is decorated with a fret and supports a half-round white glass shade above it. These fixtures have patined, having not been painted.

The three central bay areas of the basement level are visible on the east elevation. The central entrance is accessible from the outside by two descending stairs which split around the ascending stair to the first floor. Located on either side of the entrance are 4:4 sash windows.

Fenestration on the first, second, and third floors correspond with each recessed bay. Spandrels are also located between the second and third floors. However, the piers in between each bay are not fluted. Both corners and each pier are capped with an ovolo molding.

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The south elevation is nearly identical to the north with the exception of several aspects pertaining to the entrance. On this side of the courthouse the grade leading up to the building is more severe than on the north side. Because of this, there are three concrete steps leading up to the entrance. However, the entrance walk is framed by the same two concrete abutments and light fixtures used on the north side. The other difference between the south and the north facade is the transom area above the entry doors. On the south facade the transom contains a limestone tablet with the inscription, "SALUS POPULI EST SUPREMA LEX." This is Latin meaning, "The welfare of the people is the supreme law."

The west elevation is identical to the east elevation.

Designed to house up to eighty men and twenty-four women, the Madison County Jail is located on the fourth floor of the courthouse building. The jail is approximately ten feet higher and ten feet smaller on each side than the courthouse. This allows the exterior walls of the jail to sit back from the main parapet walls of the building, preventing any view from the street. The construction of the exterior walls are the same as the rest of the building but heavy-duty steel windows reinforce the security of the jail. A special elevator, running only from the sheriff's office in the basement to the fourth floor jail, is positioned adjacent to the public elevator. The most modern design in cell block equipment was used--visitors could speak with prisoners through a special amplifying device separated by bullet-proof glass--whereas before visitors were allowed into the cell rooms. Besides the cell block, the fourth floor jail contained the jailer's rooms, medical facilities, a kitchen and a pantry. Thick steel walls were designed to separate the jail section from the remaining part of the floor.

The interior of the Madison County Courthouse has had no major structural and only minimal decorative changes since its erection in 1937. Two aspects of the interior that have maintained their original design and are continuous

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throughout the basement and the first three floors are the restrooms and the staircase.

The staircase has a divided flight design consisting of a central double-wide flight with a single-width flight located on either side. The stairs themselves are made of marble, while the railing is metal painted white. Along the exterior wall is a landing running the full width of the stairwell. Located on either side of the central flight is an open well which runs from the basement to the third floor. A curved handrail rests upon a series of square post balusters with "X"-shaped rails in between. Each "X" has a horizontal rail on the top and bottom. The square space between it and the handrail contains a stylized floral motif with scrolls. The square space below the "X" in between the stringer is empty. Separating the double-wide center section of the stairs is a unadorned metal railing with square posts. Located at the end of each stair rail is a newel post. The newel posts on every floor, except the second, are topped with a spherical finial. The newel posts on the second floor have no finial. The outside ends of the starting steps on each floor are finished in a half circle and made of marble.

The basement level floor plan contains a long central corridor that bisects the building. Several offices and storage rooms are located on either side of the corridor: general sessions court and judge's office, general sessions clerk, highway patrol division, and sherriff's department. Most offices have retained their original materials, except the general sessions clerk's office and the court room. The clerk's office has a new service counter and drop ceiling, while the court room has paneled walls. Located on the southern side of the corridor in the center is the stairwell. It leads up to a landing which exits out to the southern facade entrance doors or continues up to the first floor. At each end of the long corridor is a set of double doors and a vestibule leading outside. These swinging doors have a lower wood panel with a single glass pane above. East of the staircase is the jail elevator and the public elevator, with the latter being the shaft nearest the

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staircase. To the left of the jail elevator is a water fountain.

Flooring in the basement is tan-colored terrazzo laid in a three foot grid pattern with a one foot wide green-colored terrazzo border. The walls have a curved tile baseboard with five foot buff-colored tile wainscoting and plaster above. A drop ceiling has been installed with florescent lighting in about 1980. Each door into the offices is paneled with a transom above.

The first floor is based upon a cruciform plan. It contains a long central corridor that bisects the building and two central corridors containing the lobby and the stairwell on either side of the long corridor. Situated at the ceiling line in the very center of the cruciform, are four large beams heading each hallway opening. Supporting each corner of each beam are two console brackets. The four console brackets that face out to the long corridor are attached to pilasters.

All of the first floor offices open up on the long corridor and have a paneled single glass pane door with a single pane transom above. Offices located on the corridor consist of probate, county clerk, building commissioner, trustee, and the registrar of deeds. These offices have retained a good deal of their original materials; however, some changes have occurred. The probate and the county clerk offices have dropped acoustical tile ceilings. The building commissioner's office has carpet in the worker areas. The trustee's office contains a new service counter. A dropped acoustical tile ceiling and carpet in the worker areas have been placed in the registrar of deeds' office. A conference room is also located on the first floor. It has wallpaper above the wainscoting, carpet throughout the room, and a drop ceiling. East of the public elevator is a water fountain and the mail chute receptacle. Made of copper, this box has a hinged panel opening framed by Classical-style trim. Above the panel is the letter slot with a patera in relief on either side. The glass chute is framed

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in copper. Located at each end of the corridor are the double-leaf side doors that lead outdoors.

The lobby is located on the north side corridor and contains four interior steps that lead up to the main level of the first floor. These stairs run the width of the corridor, but a handicap ramp has been installed over them next to the western wall. The western wall of the lobby also contains the bronze PWA and Madison County Building Committee plaques. Located on the east and west walls of the lobby are large copper heating grates. Decorated in a linear design, these grates conceal the original gas radiators.

The staircase is located on the south side corridor. The double-wide flight opens up onto the long corridor with small halls on each side that have three stairs that lead in the opposite direction to a landing. Surrounding the stairwell sides of the hall and three steps is the same metal railing on the staircase. The east and west landing walls contain large copper heating grates like the pair in the lobby.

The floor material in the first floor corridors is tan-colored terrazzo laid in a three foot grid pattern with a one foot wide green-colored terrazzo border. The walls have a marble baseboard with a five foot marble wainscoting and plaster above. The french rose-colored marble comes from the Appalachian Marble Works near Knoxville. Along the ceiling line is a cornice molding. The corridor ceilings are divided into grids by the beams in central section of the cruciform and by cornice molding that is extended across the long corridor. The ceilings in the corridor are surfaced with the original twelve inch square acoustic fiber tile. It was chosen to reduce the volume of noises in the corridors. Several original light fixtures remain in the corridors. These pendant fixtures have a round vertically scored copper top. On the underside of the top is a horizontal white glass shade covered by copper starbursts with a celadon-colored round shade that graduates downward in the center. A brass pendant is located in the center of the celadon-colored shade. These fixtures can be seen in the lobby and the center section of the cruciform. The

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other sections of the long corridor have fluorescent lighting.

The second floor plan is also based around a central corridor. The corridor has tan-colored terrazzo laid in a three foot grid pattern with a one foot wide green-colored terrazzo border, marble baseboards, five foot marble wainscoting with plaster above, single panel and glass pane doors with a transom, continuous cornice molding, original acoustical tile, and fluorescent light fixtures. Located in the center on the southern side of the corridor is the stairwell. This corridor opening is framed by two console brackets. East of the elevator is a water fountain and the glass and metal mail chute with a copper letter opening.

The offices on the second floor have maintained good integrity; only a few changes have been made. In the circuit court clerk's office a dropped acoustical tile ceiling has been added, wallpaper used above the wainscoting, and carpet installed in the worker's areas. The chancery court clerk's office, located on the northwest end of the corridor, currently contains a new service counter.

Courtrooms are located at both ends of the second floor. The Chancery Court room is at the northwest end of the corridor. Originally covered in linoleum, the floor is presently carpeted, added in about 1980. The walls have a wood baseboard, four foot high walnut paneled wainscoting with plaster above. Designed with two story high ceiling, the ceiling is plaster with six acoustical tile grids. Each is framed with a guilloche molding and contain a central light fixture. The original judges' bench, witness stand, and courtroom dividing half-wall remain and are constructed of wood.

The Circuit Court Division II courtroom is the most elaborate of the two courtrooms on the second floor. Located at the southeast corner of the building, the room has retained all of its original designs. The floors are

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twelve inch square cream and tan-colored terrazzo tiles. The baseboard, wainscoting, and wainscoting molding are birchwood with a walnut finish. The wall area above the wainscoting is plaster. The ceiling line is covered by a linear molding that extends onto the ceiling. The ceiling surface is cream-colored plaster with a series of acoustical tile grids framed by a white guilloche molding. Thirty in all, there are six grids running the length of the courtroom, five rows wide. Six pendant light fixtures, like the fixtures in the first floor corridors, are located on the ceiling. Two rows of fixtures are centered in between the first and second, third and fourth, and fifth and sixth grids running the length of the courtroom. Three original electric ceiling fans are situated down the center of the courtroom. Each fan lines up with the light fixture rows.

The north side of the Circuit Court Division II courtroom contains the courtroom space: the judge's bench, clerk bench, witness stand, jury box, attorneys' tables, and podium. This area is separated from the public space by a stepped half-wall with a swinging door. The courtroom space is also divided by the jury box. It is a board and batten-style paneled half-wall. The jury box is located next to the western wall which is paneled as well. Above this paneled area is a set burgundy pinch pleat draperies. Board and batten paneling is used for the judge's bench and the backdrop panel behind it, which also has a set of draperies above it. The State Seal is located above the board and batten-style panel behind the judge's bench. Centered in front of the judge's bench is the gothic-styled attorneys' podium. The wooden podium has a heavy base with recessed arches on two sides of the pedestal, a paneled door on one side of the pedestal, and trefoil motifs on the sides of the top surface.

The south side of the Circuit Court Division II courtroom contains the public space. This side is accessed by paneled double doors with a upper multipane glass section. The seating area is divided into two groups of rows of benches. These original benches are wooden with decorative ends. Each end has a raised center section that contains a panel

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with a flower in relief. Flanking each side of the center section is a group of vertical fluting with pointed ends.

The third floor plan is based around the central corridor. Offices (county mayor, circuit court judge's, and accounting) open up to the corridor on the north, south, and west sides. Of these, only the county mayor and the circuit court judge's offices have been changed. The mayor's office has a drop ceiling and carpeting, and paneling has been used some in the judge's office. Adjacent to the judge's office is a small corridor leading to the jury deliberation room. This side corridor has been paneled on the west wall. The corridor has tan-colored terrazzo laid in a three foot grid pattern with a one foot wide green-colored terrazzo border, marble baseboards, five foot marble wainscoting with plaster above, single panel and glass pane doors with a transom, and drop ceiling acoustical tile with fluorescent light fixtures. Located in the center on the southern side of the corridor is the stairwell. East of the elevator is a water fountain and the glass and metal mail chute with a copper letter opening. The east side of the third floor contains the Circuit Court Division I courtroom. Until the mid 1970s, this courtroom was used by the Western Division of the Tennessee State Supreme Court.

The courtroom doors are wooden with six paned oval portal windows. The original terrazzo floors have been covered with carpet. Surrounding the public area is a six foot high decorative diamond patterned mahogany wainscoting. New benches have been used in the public area. Wood baseboards are used throughout the courtroom. Above the wainscoting is plaster. The ceiling has been dropped with new acoustical tiles and recessed fluorescent lighting. The original raised wood judges' bench remains. It is constructed of diamond patterned mahogany. Behind this is the original mahogany backdrop panel. It has diamond patterned panels separated by linenfold-styled vertical bands. A new jury box has been assembled on the western wall, since one was not originally designed for the Supreme Court.

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Located on the north side of the courthouse are five objects. Located the farthest from the building on the southeast corner of the lawn is a 1888 obelisk monument erected to the Confederate dead of Madison County (C). East of the Confederate monument is a non-contributing black painted cast iron flower urn (NC, due to date). A silver painted cast iron water fountain (C) was constructed as a World War I memorial in about 1919. A plain circa 1960 enclosed glass stand contains a bible (NC, due to date). East of the north walk is a circa 1925 historical marker (C), erected to face the original route of the Memphis-to-Bristol Highway which passed directly in front of the courthouse. Celebrating David Crockett, the marker states: "On this site in 1831 Congressman Crockett defeated for reelection told the citizens of Jackson and Tennessee 'You can go to hell, but I am going to Texas.'" He went to Texas where he died in the Battle of the Alamo.

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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

VIII. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Madison County Courthouse in Jackson (pop. 48,949), Tennessee, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under the theme of government/politics of Criterion A as a significant local example of a federal relief project by the Public Works Administration, an important New Deal recovery and reform agency that specialized in constructing public buildings and works throughout the country. As a significant center of local government, the Madison County Courthouse is nominated under the registration requirements set forth in the Multiple Property Documentation form for Historic Courthouses in Tennessee, 1865-1945.

Madison County, with Jackson as its county seat, has always been one of the leading industrial and commercial centers in western Tennessee. In its historic period, it was a key railroad junction for traffic throughout the South. Second only to Memphis in the distribution of cotton and cottonseed products in Tennessee, Jackson was the transfer point for Madison and the surrounding counties' produce, goods, and merchandise. Besides cotton products, Madison County produced a variety of staple products: corn, fruits, vegetables, as well as livestock. Its industries included a great number of lumber mills, the Southern Engine and Boiler works, veneer and woodworking companies, wholesale grocery warehouses, automobile distributors, bottling works, parts manufacturing, and cotton gin and oil mills. Fortunate for the city, none of Jackson's industrial plants shut down during the Depression. One of the largest employers in the county at this time was the Bemis cotton mill products plant. Situated in the southern suburbs of Jackson, the company created the model cotton mill town of Bemis (NR 12/16/91), employing nearly eight hundred workers in 1937.

Jackson's location, situated between the state's two largest cities: Nashville and Memphis, was perfectly positioned as a railroad hub and interchange for five railroads: the Illinois Central, the Mobile and Ohio, the Nashville

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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

Chattanooga and St. Louis, the Gulf Mobile Northern, and the Birmingham Northwestern. In addition to railroad transportation, the automobile accommodated the needs of the area with seven highways traversing the county and the city of Jackson. These highways brought in many bus line operations. Greyhound was the most predominant line in Jackson, and in 1938 built a new, streamlined terminal east of the courthouse on Main Street (NR 2/11/93). The city's central location in west Tennessee also led it to become a command station for highway and road work being built in cooperation with New Deal programs. In 1937 a new State Highway Department building was constructed to serve the needs of these federal, state, and county projects. Undoubtedly, Jackson deserved its nickname of the "Hub City".

Located in the center of the Jackson city square, the current Madison County Courthouse was the fourth to be constructed since the county's creation out of the Western District of Tennessee in November 1821. The first courthouse was a thirty by forty foot log structure on the northeast corner of the square in 1822. The county's growth was so rapid that the log structure was inadequate for their needs and a new two-story brick building was constructed on the same site in 1825. When this building became deteriorated, a new, larger courthouse was constructed by Thomas and Robert Brown in 1845 at the present location. It went through several remodelling efforts during its existence, but was razed in December 1935 when plans for the current courthouse were implemented. Completed in March 1937, the new Madison County Courthouse was by far the most elaborate and expensive courthouse to date.

The plan for a new courthouse in Jackson was well accepted by Madison County. The existing structure had become too small for the growing county government, the state regional supreme and circuit court offices, and the interim New Deal organizations' office needs. A new courthouse also meant the opportunity to use local resources and businesses during construction. This would have provided the county with a new, larger facility, created jobs for many local citizens, and poured more money into the local economy.

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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

Funding for the new courthouse in Madison County was assisted by the New Deal organization, the Public Works Administration. Madison County was awarded a PWA grant allotment for \$142,000, roughly forty-five percent of its total cost of \$300,000. The county issued bonds totaling \$172,000, some of which was unused and returned back to the county at the end of the project.

A building committee was selected to oversee the selection of an architecture firm. It included Judges August Wilde and S. J. Everett, J. W. Boon, Robert Grove, Ray Ozier, C. E. Pigford, and Ray Wisdom. They employed the services of the Nashville architecture firm, Marr and Holman, to design the courthouse. Demolition of the old brick courthouse, by Nashville contractors Foster and Creighton, occurred in December 1935 and work on the new building began in early January 1936. Foster and Creighton were employed to do the demolition, excavation, and general contracting work in cooperation with Marr and Holman.

The style chosen by Marr and Holman for the new courthouse was clearly the most elaborate example of modern architecture for a public building in Madison County. Known as PWA Modern, it combined both Classical and Modern architectural elements. It along with the \$350,000 Federal Post Office and Courthouse were evidence of a new direction in proper modern government buildings in Jackson. PWA officials in Washington considered the building's successful blending of Art Deco and Classical elements to be a model project for a county courthouse. The agency included a photograph, brief history, and typical interior floor plan of the Madison County Courthouse in its Public Buildings (1940), a compilation of PWA highlights nationwide. The Madison County Courthouse was the only West Tennessee courthouse so featured in this prestigious national publication, a fact which emphasizes the property's significance as a good representative example of PWA projects in Tennessee in general and Madison County in particular.

The Madison County Courthouse was the most important public government building in west Tennessee, outside of Memphis.

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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

At the time of its construction, the building housed the Tennessee Supreme Court, the West Tennessee Court of Appeals, Chancery Courts as well as all of the county government offices and courts. The Western Division Supreme Court and its offices, while located in Jackson, is a part of a trio of offices for the state Supreme Court. The Middle Division offices and court are located in Nashville and the Eastern Division in Knoxville. This arrangement allows each Supreme Court judge to have an office at the site of the court in each district. The Western Division offices and court in Jackson remained in the 1937 courthouse until 1974, when they were moved to a new building. During this period, the presence of these state officials was significant to local government and politics because local officials had immediate access to these important state officials, without having to travel to Nashville. Moreover, the state officials were afforded an important role in local political brokering due to their statewide contacts.

One-hundred and sixty feet by sixty-five feet in dimension, the building was planned to include a basement level, three main floors, and a new jail for the county on the fourth floor. Initially there were a great number of specialized offices located in the new structure. Located in the basement were the Sheriff, Farm Bureau and Farm Credit Administration, Tax Assessor, and County Highway Commission offices; public rest rooms; and boiler rooms. The first floor contained the offices of the Trustee, Registrar, County Superintendent, County Court Clerk, County Judge, and the Quarterly County Courtroom. On the second floor were the offices for the Circuit Court Clerk, the Circuit Court Judge, the Chancellor, the Circuit Courtroom, jury room, witness room, and room for representatives of the press. Located on the third floor were the quarters for both the Western Division of Tennessee's Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals, the Supreme Court's courtroom, the judges' chambers, the office of the Supreme Court Clerk, the State Law Library, office of the Attorney General, grand jury room, and witness rooms. The fourth floor was completely dedicated to the county jail. The courthouse had a special elevator that ran from the Sheriff's Office in the basement, directly up to the jail on the fourth floor. The jail was

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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

programmed to house up to eighty men and twenty-four women, while also having medical facilities, kitchen, pantry, and jailer's rooms.

On January 4 1937, the Jackson Sun described the new courthouse as "streamlined architecture at its best." Constructed of reinforced concrete with exterior walls of brick faced with stone, the Madison County Courthouse contains many decorative qualities. The building has an abundance of large windows, flooding light into every room. The interior plan of the building is arranged with a central wide corridor with all offices open upon the corridors and a stairway on the south side.

The floor plan of the building is virtually unchanged since its date of construction and the building is still the center for all county government in Madison County. As a comprehensive governmental center, the courthouse was the location of significant developments in local government. New Deal agencies operated their relief and recovery programs from courthouse offices until most programs closed their doors in 1942. It was also a county government center during World War II when important local decision-making bodies, such as the county draft board and homefront fund drive committees, met regularly at the courthouse.

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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

X. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated boundaries for the Madison County Courthouse occupy the city lot designated as Block "A," parcel 1 in the attached Madison County Tax Map number 78-P-C.

Boundary Justification

The nominated boundaries include all of the historic property associated with the Madison County Courthouse.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

PHOTOGRAPHS

Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, TN
Photos by: Carroll Van West and Trina Binkley
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Date: May 1994

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, TN

North facade, facing southwest
1 of 30

North entrance, facing south
2 of 30

South elevation, facing northwest
3 of 30

South entrance, facing north
4 of 30

West elevation, facing southeast
5 of 30

East elevation, facing northwest
6 of 30

Decorative iron railing
7 of 30

Decorative iron window grille
8 of 30

Outside lamp, facing south
9 of 30

Bible monument, facing south
10 of 30

Flower urn, Confederate monument, and flag, facing southeast
11 of 30

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

David Crockett historic marker, facing south
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Fountain, facing northwest
13 of 30

Original basement bathrooms, facing south
14 of 30

Basement hallway, facing east
15 of 30

Decorative bracket and PWA plaque, facing west
16 of 30

First floor lobby, facing south
17 of 30

First floor hall, facing east
18 of 30

Second floor hall, facing west
19 of 30

Second floor hall, facing east
20 of 30

Staircase on second floor, facing southeast
21 of 30

Circuit Court Division II room, facing east
22 of 30

Chancery Court room, second floor, facing west
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Chancery Court bar, facing east
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United States Department of the Interior
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Madison County Courthouse, Jackson, Madison Co., TN

Third floor hall, facing west
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Third floor hall, facing east
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First floor lobby, facing west
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Chancery Court entrance, second floor, facing west
28 of 30

Chancery Court room, facing west
29 of 30

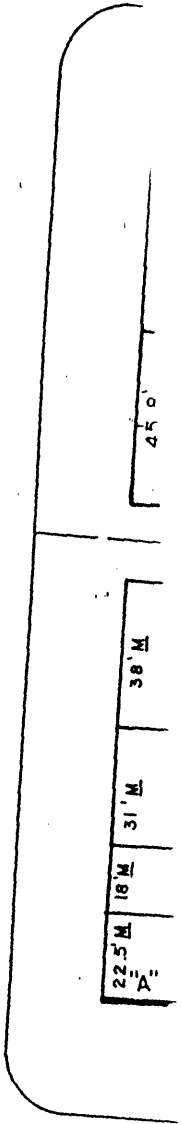
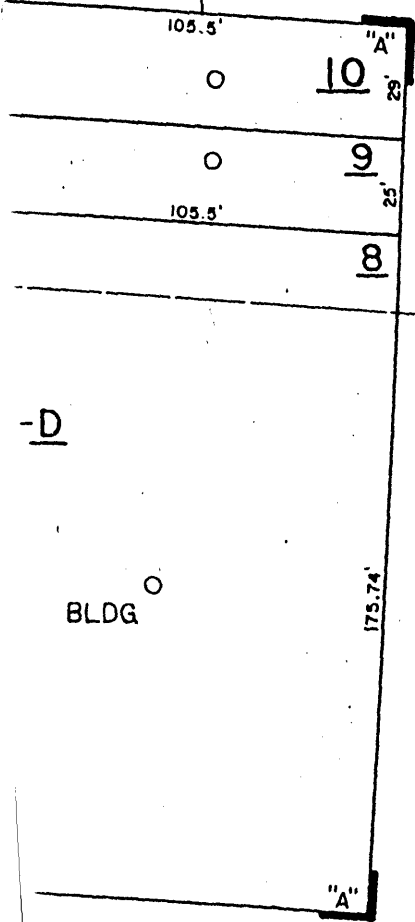
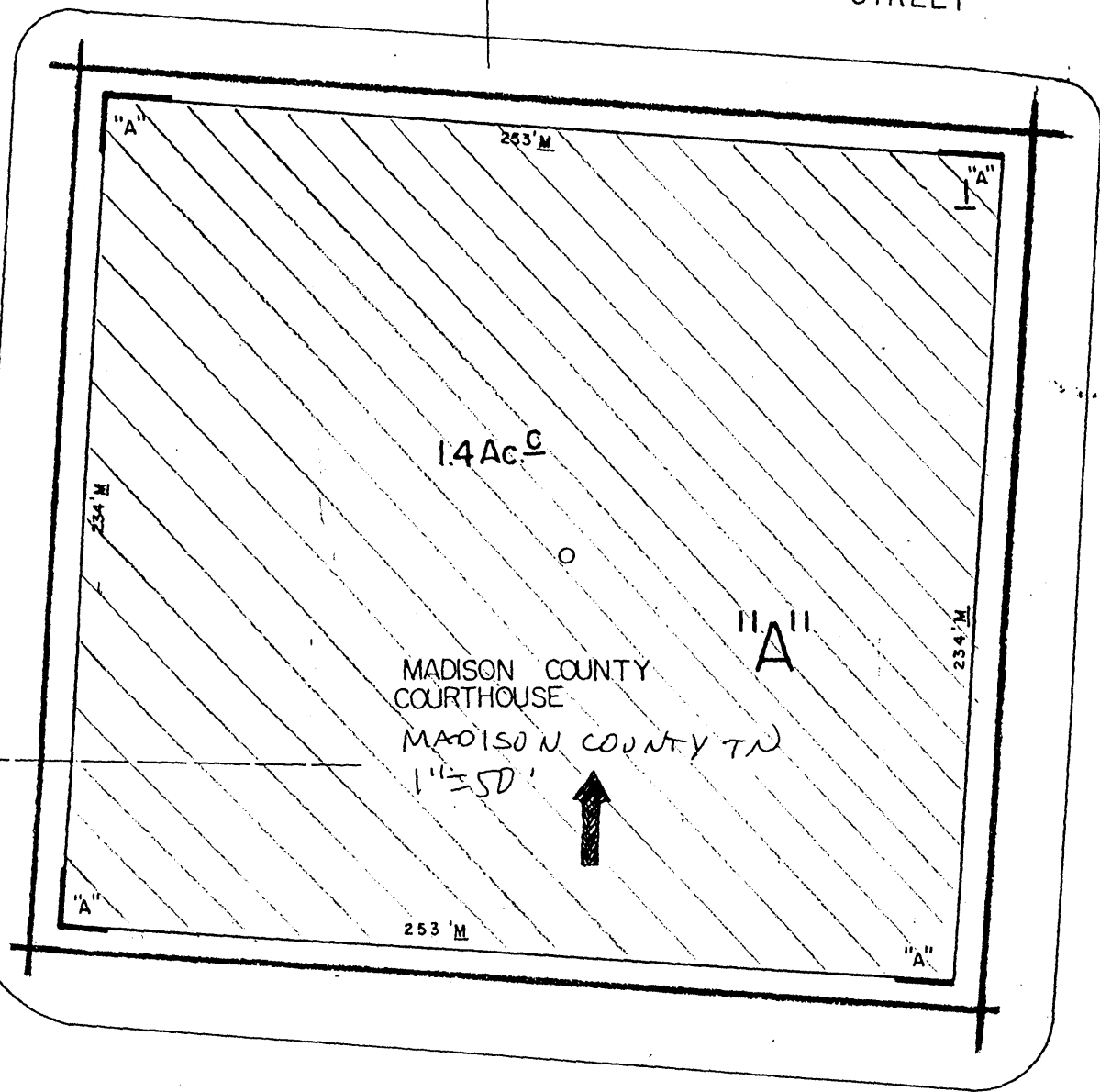
Third floor hallway, facing east
30 of 30

MAIN STREET

STREET

STREET

BALTIMORE



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