

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0687431

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NOV 7 1978
DATE ENTERED DEC 22 1978

**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

Old Richmond County Courthouse/~~Hale-Murphey House~~

(CHABS)

AND/OR COMMON

Old Government House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

432 Telfair Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Augusta

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

10th - Barnard

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Georgia

CODE

13

COUNTY

Richmond

CODE

245

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

__DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

__AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

__PRIVATE

__UNOCCUPIED

__COMMERCIAL

__PARK

__STRUCTURE

__BOTH

__WORK IN PROGRESS

__EDUCATIONAL

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

__ENTERTAINMENT

__RELIGIOUS

__OBJECT

__IN PROCESS

__YES: RESTRICTED

__GOVERNMENT

__SCIENTIFIC

__BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

__INDUSTRIAL

__TRANSPORTATION

__NO

__MILITARY

OTHER: Offices

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Historic Augusta, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER

432 Telfair Street

CITY, TOWN

Augusta

STATE

Georgia 30901

__ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Richmond County Courthouse, Superior Court

STREET & NUMBER

Green Street

CITY, TOWN

Augusta

STATE

Georgia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Building Survey

Richmond County Architectural Survey

DATE

1934/1977

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress
Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources

CITY, TOWN

Washington, D.C./Atlanta, Georgia

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Government House or Courthouse is a two-story brick building, which was later stuccoed, with parapet end chimneys. Wings are recessed from the front facade and project in four-sided sections in the rear. Delicate iron filigree work on the front facade forms a first story portico and supports an iron railing balcony at the second story. Iron work also forms horizontal panels in front of small recessed rectangles of the attic. These features appear to be in the Regency style. The entrance doorway features rectangular transom and side lights enclosed in severe Doric pilasters and entablature, typical of the Greek Revival in Georgia. The central rear door and moldings are of the federal period and, at one time, the door was capped by a fanlight. All other entrances are similar to the front doorway, having Greek Revival characteristics. The central block is five bays wide, with four, nine over nine, ceiling-to-floor windows. Identical windows on the second floor are enclosed in arched and recessed panels. Across the rear facade, the projecting wings are connected by a colonnade of square Doric columns at each story level. The porch formed by the colonnade has been enclosed. Original servant bells remain hanging along the central section of the entablature.

The building was originally a Federal style, four over four, central hall design with the wings, iron work and stucco added between 1820 and 1840. The central block was built as a courthouse in 1801 with additions made after it became a private home. The first floor rooms, rather than being two separate rooms on either side of the hall, are actually double parlors which give the appearance of one long room on each side of the hall. There are four separate rooms on the second floor. A third floor is actually an attic with small rectangular windows.

The mantels are Early Victorian throughout the house. Those in the west parlor are white marble while those of the east parlor are black marble. An exception is in the right wing, lower floor, where a stone fireplace and stone overmantel of recent years was added. Upstairs mantels are variegated black marble, except for a wood one in the left front room. The straight-run stair is Early Victorian transitional. Notable interior details include plaster ceiling medallions and elaborate cornice work in both parlors. The west parlor features a c. 1840 crystal chandelier and massive gilt mirrors with matching gilt cornices over the windows. The east parlor retains the gasoliers.

The rooms in the wings have undergone modern alteration for use as apartments, including kitchens and baths, although the form on the interior of these rooms and the view from the exterior is unchanged. The central block, however, is basically unaltered.

The grounds of this house are distinguished by old trees, including one particularly old ginkgo tree in the front yard. The stone carriage block remains before the front gate on Telfair Street and an iron fence encloses the area with brick pillars in the corners and granite pillars at the entrance gate. On the west side of the lot is a cobblestone lane. The house is part of what is called courthouse square where other buildings are being restored. An expressway forms the eastern boundary of the property.

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 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1801

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Government House or Courthouse has played a significant role in the social, architectural and governmental history of Augusta, serving for twenty years as the Richmond County Courthouse and thence as a private residence for several distinguished families of Georgia and South Carolina. The building is a fine example of the architectural development of a house through time that encompasses four architectural periods or styles, each enhancing the other to make it one of Augusta's most interesting and elegant structures.

By 1801, Richmond County had grown to such proportions that its original courthouse could no longer accommodate the activities of the courts. The old courthouse had been a building owned by the Richmond Academy. In 1801, the Trustees of the Richmond Academy proposed to lay off a square back of Telfair Street between Center and Elbert Streets for the construction of a courthouse and requested that the Inferior Court take steps to that end. At the June term, 1801, the court ordered that the new building be erected on the site suggested by the Trustees. George Sibald, describing Augusta in 1801, commented on the Academy and stated that "...upon a line with it, fronting another square, a Brick Building is now erecting for a Courthouse, upon a handsome plan...." By 1821, this building was considered too small and a new courthouse was built on Greene Street. The county sold the old courthouse to the city which immediately sold the building and courthouse square to Samuel Hale. At that time, the property fronted 830 feet on Telfair Street. Hale was a native of New England and, since moving to Augusta, had become a wealthy businessman and banker. He served fifteen years as president of the New England Society of Augusta and eleven years as mayor. It seems likely that during his eighteen years of ownership, the wings, stucco and iron work were added. He likely wanted to change the building from its austere, Federal style, public building appearance to a domestic appearance reflecting the currently popular Regency style, which had come into vogue about 1815 in Savannah. In 1839, Hale, having financial difficulties, sold the structure to Paul Fitzsimmons.

Fitzsimmons was one of the wealthiest men in the area. A native of Charleston, his father, Christopher, had amassed a fortune as a shipping magnate and planter. Paul increased the family fortune and in 1839 owned Old Town Plantation and Pine View Plantation in Jefferson County, a summer home called Windsor seven miles east of Augusta and "Old Government House." The Fitzsimmons family had also owned Goodale Plantation at Augusta, a National Register site, and the William Rhett House, the oldest house in Charleston. They were connected with other prominent families of South Carolina. Paul Fitzsimmons' sister, Anne, married Wade Hampton, Jr., making Paul the uncle of later Confederate General and Governor of South Carolina, Wade Hampton, III. Another sister, Katherine, married James Hammond, who later became governor of South Carolina.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- J. V. McDonough, William Jay Regency Architecture in Georgia and South Carolina, University Microfilm: Ann Arbor, Michigan.
- Frederick D. Nichols, The Architecture of Georgia, Beehive Press, Savannah.
- Richmond County Court of Ordinary, Estate Records, Inventories, Book E, 1840-48, p. 598.
- George Sibald, Notes and Observations on the Pine Lands of Georgia, Augusta: William J. Bience, 1801; from copy in the DeRenne Collection, University of Georgia, Athens.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Augusta East

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 410840 3703520

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the ^{east} southwest corner of the intersection of Courthouse Lane and Telfair Street and running ^{east} westerly 151.33 feet approximately to the right-of-way line of Gordon Highway (U.S. #1,25,78 and 278); thence southerly 249.97 feet approximately to the back

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 Martha F. Norwood, Historian, and

Dr. Elizabeth A. Lyon, Consulting Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation Section

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Historic Preservation Section

June 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

270 Washington Street, S. W.

(404) 656-2840

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Atlanta

Georgia 30334

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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

Elizabeth A. Lyon

TITLE

Elizabeth A. Lyon

DATE

Acting State Historic Preservation Officer

10/13/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

12-22-78

ATTEST:

James H. Moore
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12/22/78

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Paul Fitzsimmons resided at Old Government House for only one year, dying at Windsor on September 28, 1840, leaving a wife and five minor children. It is possible that his heirs continued to reside there part-time as before, since his estate did not sell the house until May of 1849.

On May 2, 1849, the house and courthouse square was sold to Green H. Jordan of Baldwin County, Georgia. He sold off some of the vacant land around it but reserved the house and immediately surrounding property, giving it to his daughter Martha C. S. Gardner and her husband James Gardner. The Jordan-Gardner ownership lasted until 1860. Thus, it is likely that the Greek Revival doors, moldings and fireplaces and the Early Victorian stair were added during that period. It is known that the Gardners resided in the house while the Fitzsimmons, after Paul's untimely death, may have rented it or lived in one of the other principal residences. While there is no documentary evidence for the dates of any of the changes, it seems logical to attribute the Greek Revival and Victorian influences to the Jordan-Gardner period.

In November of 1860, the house, then fronting approximately 200 feet on Telfair Street and running back to Walker Street, was sold to Massillon P. Stovall. Then, on December 17, 1868, Stovall sold to James J. Gregg the lot on the south side of Telfair Street between Center and Elbert Streets, with the house. James J. Gregg was the son of William Gregg, founder of the Graniteville Mill, a textile mill which still operates in South Carolina and Georgia. His wife was Katherine Hammond Gregg, daughter of Governor James Hammond and Katherine Fitzsimmons Hammond. So, in 1868, the house was owned by the niece of a previous owner, Paul Fitzsimmons.

Katherine Gregg survived her husband and continued to own the house until 1877. She remarried and left Georgia and the house was sold to Edmund T. Murphey, still fronting approximately 200 feet on Telfair Street.

The Murphey family had come to Georgia in the 1730's and had lived in Hephzibah, near Augusta, since 1784. Edmund T. Murphey lived at Old Government House with his wife Sarah and son Eugene E. Murphey, until his death on September 23, 1899. After his death, his widow and son owned the house and resided there. They sold off additional lots around the house, reducing further the frontage on Telfair Street.

Eugene E. Murphey, after his mother's death, owned the property until his death on June 25, 1952. He bequeathed the home to his wife, Willie Roney Murphey. She died in May of 1953, leaving the house to her sister, Florence R. Richardson, and her niece, Florence R. Floyd. After owning it one year, they conveyed the property to the Junior League of Augusta, Inc., which restored it and used it as their headquarters until January of 1972 when they conveyed it to Historic Augusta, Inc., the property then fronting on Telfair Street 151.33 feet.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Eugene E. Murphey was a prominent Augustan in several fields. He was a well known physician as well as an ornithologist and poet of local fame. His noted bird collection is now in the Charleston Museum. Because of the long Murphey ownership of the house, the house was known for many years as the Old Murphey House.

The architectural history of Old Government House is particularly notable. It was built in a simple, Federal style of brick with parapet end chimneys, appropriate for its governmental functions. When it became a residence, the owners stuccoed the walls, added the elaborate, recessed wings and the graceful iron portico, balcony and window trim, giving it the look of the Regency style, similar to houses built in Savannah ca. 1820 by the noted architect, William Jay. The exterior of the house retains that Regency style today. These changes are thought to have been made between 1821 and 1839. During the late Greek Revival period, probably in the 1850's, the mantels, all but one door, and door moldings were changed to the Greek Revival type, the mantels being simple marble shelves with arched openings made of black or white marble. The doors were given rectangular sidelights and transoms. The stairway was replaced by an Early Victorian transitional one that is a straight-run but curves slightly when it reaches the central hall of the second floor. In more modern times, partitions were added in the wings and second floor to provide baths and the rear porch was enclosed. The stylistic changes to the house which took place between 1821 and 1860 are compatible each to the other and produce the elegant, tasteful and balanced effect seen today. It is a fine example of the compatible adaptation of an early structure to changing architectural styles. The architects of the original structure and the additions are not known. Today, it is in an excellent state of preservation and is being used, appropriately, as the headquarters of Historic Augusta, Inc., though that organization hopes to sell the building to a sympathetic owner in the near future.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

Major Bibliographical References: (Continued)

Dr. Elizabeth A. Lyon and Ms. Suzanne Turner, Architectural Historians, 1974 National Register form, files of the Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta.

William R. Mitchell, Architectural Historian, Interviews with Martha Norwood on June 5 and 6, 1978. Mr. Mitchell has studied the structure extensively during his tenure as Director of Historic Augusta.

Historic Augusta, Blueprint ca. 1954 of Old Government House.

Charles G. Cordle, "The Murphey House at Augusta, Georgia," Report to the Georgia Historical Commission on the history and title to Old Government House, 1954.

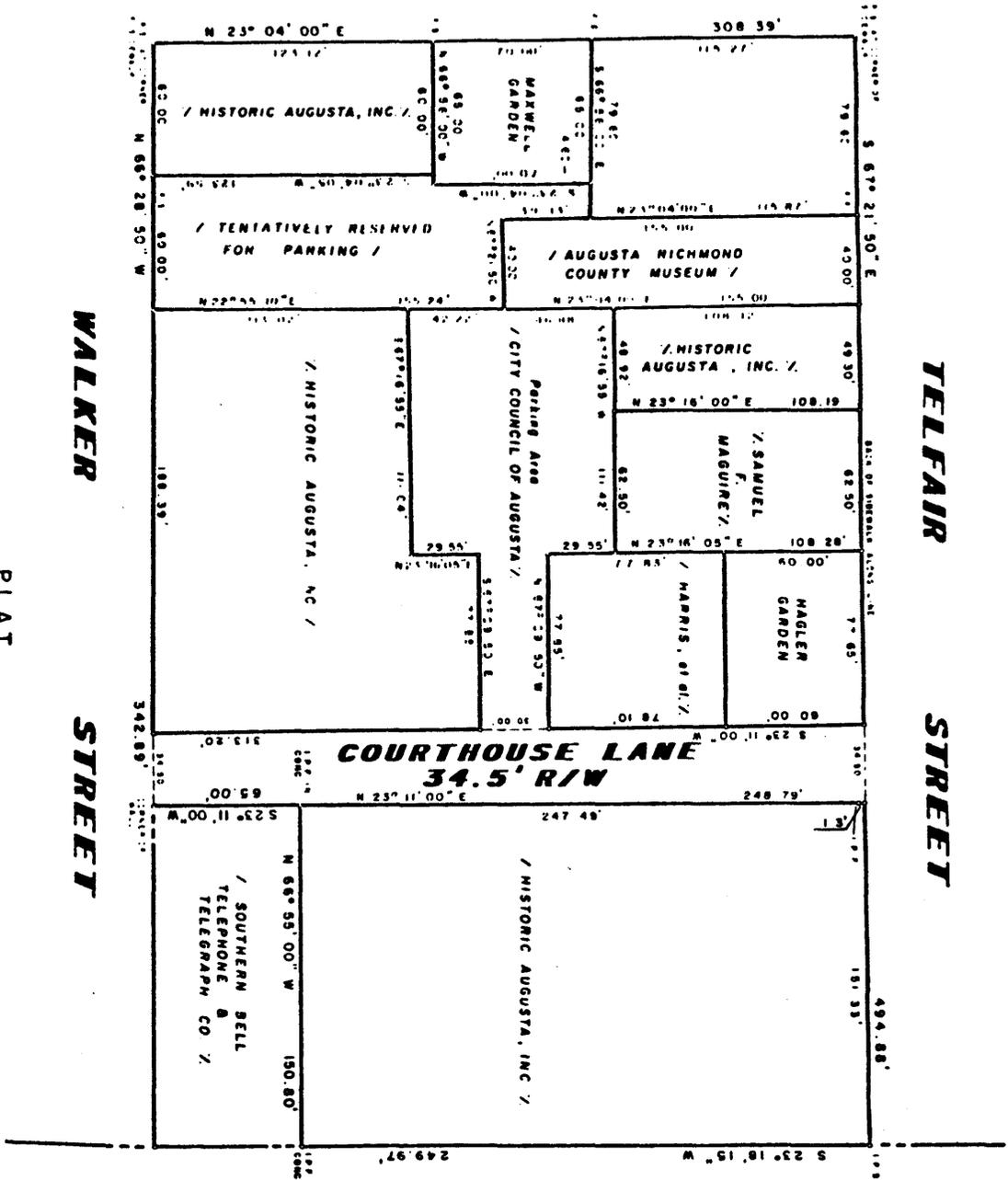
On site inspection by Martha Norwood.

Richmond County Superior Court, Deed Reel 4, pp. 2681-2685.

Verbal Boundary Description: (Continued)

lot line of the Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph lot; thence ~~easterly~~^{westerly} 150.80 feet approximately to Courthouse Lane; thence northerly 247.49 feet approximately to the point of origin. (See attached plat.)

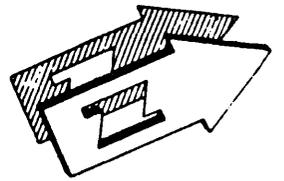
CENTRE (5th) STREET



TELF AIR STREET

WALKER STREET

GORDON HIGHWAY (Expressway) U.S. HWY. # 1, 25, 78 & 278



Old Richmond County Courthouse
(Hale-Murphey House)
Augusta, Richmond County

COURTHOUSE SQUARE

HISTORIC AUGUSTA, INC.

PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS OF AUGUSTA, RICHMOND COUNTY, GEORGIA

SEPTEMBER 27, 1977

IN MY OPINION, THIS PLAT IS A CORRECT REPRESENTATION OF THE LAND PLATTED AND HAS BEEN PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MINIMUM STANDARDS OF LAW.

Thomas M. Robertson

NO. 8034



BALDWIN & CRANSTON ASSOCIATES, Inc
1103 GREENE ST.
AUGUSTA, GEORGIA

ENGINEERS - PLANNERS - CONSULTANTS