

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **JUL 22 1986**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Old Baker County Courthouse

and/or common Baker County Free Public Library

2. Location

street & number 14 West McIver Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Macclenny

_____ vicinity of

state Florida

code 012

county Baker

code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Baker County Board of County Commissioners

street & number Baker County Courthouse, 339 E. Macclenny Ave.

city, town Macclenny

N/A vicinity of

state Florida

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baker County Courthouse

street & number 339 E. Macclenny Ave.

city, town Macclenny

state Florida

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A

state N/A

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 Baker County Courthouse is a two-story, red brick, Colonial Revival style structure located at the intersection of South Fifth Street and West McIver Avenue, just two blocks south of Macclenny Avenue (U.S. 90), the main street of town. The structure is basically rectangular in plan, with octagonal dependencies at the four corners of the central block. It has a pyramidal roof surmounted by a cupola bearing a clock on each of its four elevations. The structure rests on a concrete foundation and has a one-story portico on its main facade. The majority of its windows are 1/1 double hung wooden sashes, and the building lacks any significant decorative details on either its exterior or interior.

The main (north) facade overlooks McIver Avenue and is divided into a three-bay central block flanked by the octagonal wings. The central bay is a narrow pavilion which projects shallowly from the main wall of the main block from which it is separated by broad brick pilasters. The main entranceway is marked by a classical portic or porch, composed of a low podium and paired Tuscan columns supporting a flat deck with a plain entablature. The windows flanking the central pavilion on the first floor are 4/4 double hung wood sashes with flat concrete heads which have been painted white, as is typical of the Colonial Revival style. A similar set of 4/4 windows are found on the rear of the building in line with those on the facade. The other major windows in the building have 1/1 lights and likewise have thick jack arches, except for those in the second story of the octagonal wings which abut directly on the cornice. The windows of the second story of the central block have fixed transom lights, and those of the center bay are paired and are slightly narrower than the other windows in the building.

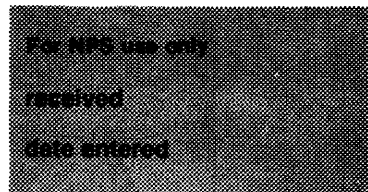
A pyramidal roof with a high plain entablature and a small pediment over the center of the facade rests atop the central block. At the apex of the roof is a tall tempietto style cupola with a clock on each of its four sides. Both the main block and wings of the courthouse rest upon a high concrete foundation. Although the wings are two stories in height, they are slightly shorter the central block. Each dependency is covered with a flat roof that originally was surrounded by a solid paneled parapet.

The double doors of the main entrance open onto a small foyer and transverse hallway. This hall connects all of the offices on the first floor and leads to the secondary entranceways at the east and west ends of the building. The rooms on the ground floor were originally used for record storage, clerical offices, and the offices of county officials. Access to the second floor is gained by the stairs located at the west end of the hall. These lead to the former courtroom which occupies all of the central block of the second floor and more offices in the wings.

The most significant addition to the courthouse was the installation of the clock in the cupola in 1917. The parapets on the wings were removed at an unknown date, probably because of the deterioration of the wood. In 1976, the interior of the building was renovated through an E.D.A. grant. The changes involved the upgrading of the electrical and plumbing systems, the installation

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DESCRIPTION (cont.)

of an airconditioning/heating system, and the paneling of the wall in the courtroom to overcome the flaking of the plaster walls. The building has been in continuous use since 1908 and has been fairly well maintained.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates +1908

Builder/Architect Edward C. Hosford

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Old Baker County Courthouse is significant for its architecture and its association with architect Edward C. Hosford, who was responsible for designing a number of county courthouses in both Florida and Georgia during the 1906-1910 period. Built in the "up-to-date" eclectic Colonial Revival style, the structure represented the pride of the county's citizens in the evolution of the local economy from subsistence farms to one based on commercial exploitation of agricultural resources made possible by the development of Florida's railroad system. During the first decade of the twentieth century the railroad made possible the shipment of local products to distant northern markets. The courthouse is also one of only seven similar projects that define Hosford's rather short career.

Baker County was established on February 8, 1861. It is one of the smaller counties in the state, being located in northeast Florida on the Georgia state line and bounded on the east by Nassau and Duval counties, on the south by Union, and on the west by Columbia. The first county seat was located in Sanderson, a small town about twelve miles west of the present seat of Macclenny, a city whose present population is just over 4,000. The wood frame courthouse in Sanderson burned in 1877, and the business of the county government was transferred to Macclenny, which officially became the county seat in 1886. The town was originally named Darbyville but was changed in 1899 to honor Carr B. Macclenny, who established a lumbermill there.¹

The county remains essentially rural. The backbone of its economy was historically based on the raising of cotton, cattle, and timber products. After the turn of the century, corn and peanuts were added as important crops. The first railroad through the area was completed about the time Baker County was founded, but only in the post-Civil War years did the railroad become a significant factor in the growth of the economy, particularly after 1900 when the Seaboard Air Line and Atlantic Coast Line railroads began to consolidate the smaller systems to form extensive networks throughout Florida.²

On December 9, 1907, the Baker County Commission voted to erect a new courthouse "for the safekeeping of county records." For this purpose, they hired architect Edward C. Hosford of Eastman, Georgia, to draw up the plans and in August, 1908, accepted the bid of the Mutual Construction Company of Louisville, Kentucky, to erect the building for \$19,985.00, with December of the same year to be the completion date.³

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one

Quadrangle name Macclenny East

Quadrangle scale: 24,000

UTM References

A

1	7	3	9	1	2	0	6	1	0	3	1	3	5	1	0	1	6	1	0
Zone			Easting						Northing										

B

Zone			Easting						Northing										

C

Zone			Easting						Northing										

D

Zone			Easting						Northing										

E

Zone			Easting						Northing										

F

Zone			Easting						Northing										

G

Zone			Easting						Northing										

H

Zone			Easting						Northing										

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 1 & East 1/2 of Lot 2, Block 58, Town of Macclenny, as Described in Plat Book D, Page 800.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title W. Carl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Division of Archives, History and Records Management date 6 - 20 - 86

street & number Department of State telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state 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



title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 6 - 20 - 86

For NPS use only

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

entered in the
National Register.

date 8-21-86

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

Edward Hosford was already known for his designs of courthouses in his native Georgia. He was born in Cochran, Georgia, in 1883 and had attended Gordon Military Academy before studying architecture at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. Upon graduating, he worked as a draftsman from 1901 to 1903 in the architectural firms of W.T. Downing and Harry F. Fowler in Atlanta. In 1904, he settled in Eastman, Georgia, where he undertook his first major project, the design of the Dodge County Courthouse.⁴ Between 1905 and 1906, Hosford designed two more Georgia courthouses: the Wheeler County Courthouse in Alamo and the Harris County Courthouse in Hamilton.⁵

The Baker County Courthouse was the first of Hosford's Florida efforts. Between 1908 and 1910, he also received commissions to design courthouses for Jefferson, Polk, and Lafayette counties. The largest and most costly of these was the one for Jefferson County in the town of Monticello which cost \$100,000. All of his courthouses, both in Georgia and Florida, were designed for rural counties. In 1920, Hosford moved to Lakeland, Florida, where he designed a number of businesses and houses in that city and nearby Bartow, for which he had designed the Polk County Courthouse in 1910.⁶ All mention of Hosford in Lakeland ceases in 1928,⁷ and no further mention of any activities in Florida have so far been discovered.

The building that had previously served as the courthouse in Macclenny before the erection of the one by Hosford was rented out to commercial interests and was destroyed by fire in 1924.⁸ In 1941, a new courthouse was built and the county government moved into it. The 1908 structure, however, continued to house various county offices. In 1964, the Baker County Free Public Library was given use of the second floor and assumed control of the entire building in 1972. The building is now also the home of the Baker County Historical Society.

The Old Baker County Courthouse is a good example of the Colonial Revival style as adapted to a small public building. The stylistic movement flourished in the United States from about 1890 to 1920 and found expression in a wide range of residential, commercial, governmental, and religious building designs. Generally, the style was a composite of the various subtypes defining the style: Georgian, Adam, and Federal, particularly focusing on those with strong "classical" content. Although it bears such distinctly "classical" elements as the portico, pediment, cupola, and balanced wings typical of the Federal and Adam styles, the Baker County Courthouse lacks the additional details and surface enrichment normally associated with them. The plain red brick walls, simple entablature, and straight window heads are more characteristic of the Georgian style. The 1/1 light windows are not colonial at all, the more usual choices being 6/6 or 9/9.

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SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

The Baker County Courthouse, like others in Florida from the same period, is reflective of the new prosperity that many rural counties were enjoying for the first time, as a result of the development of the railroads. Such "high style" buildings also expressed a new competitive spirit among the citizens of the various counties, so that the building became the embodiment of this rivalry rather than just a place to conduct the business of the county government.

FOOTNOTES

1. Work Projects Administration, "History of Baker County," Historic Records Survey of Florida, typescript, State Library of Florida, Tallahassee, n.d.
2. George Pettengill, Jr., "The Story of Florida Railroads 1834-1903," Bulletin of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, 86 (1952): 23.
3. Minutes of the Baker County Commission, Book A, Page 56.
4. M.F. Hetherington, History of Polk County (St. Augustine: The Record Company, 1928), p. 264.
5. Telephone interview with Charlotte Ramsay, Georgia S.H.P.O. Office, Atlanta.
6. Hetherington; also see Florida Master Site File, Polk County Survey, FDAH RM, Tallahassee, Florida.
7. Polk's City Directory of Lakeland, Florida, New York: R.L. Polk Publishing Co., 1920-1928.
8. Work Projects Administration, "History of Baker County."

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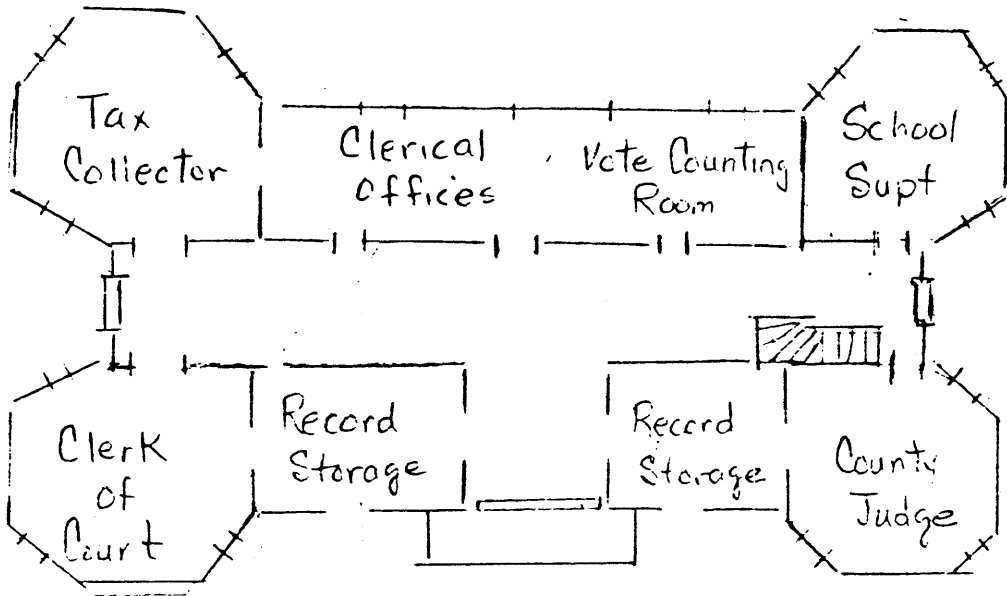
Item number 9

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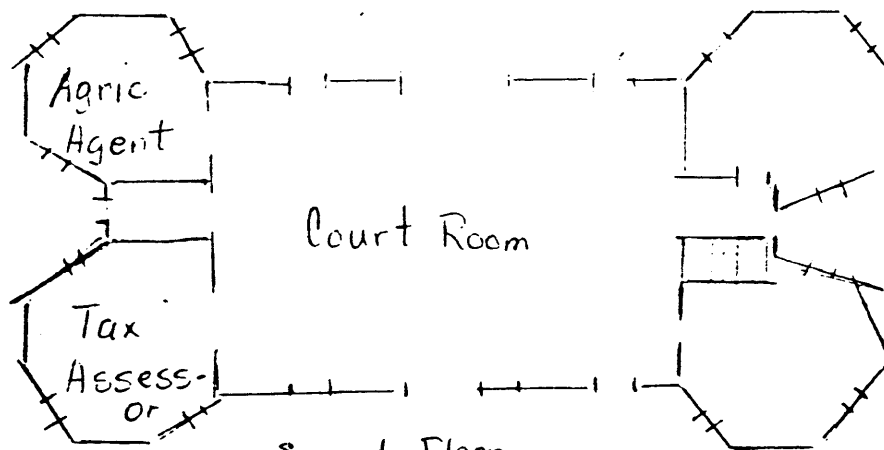
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Florida Master Site File, Polk County Survey, FDAHRM, Tallahassee, Florida.
2. Hetherington, M.F. History of Polk County. St. Augustine: The Record Company, 1928.
3. Minutes of the Baker County Commission, Book A.
4. Pettengill, George, Jr. "The Story of Florida Railroads," Bulletin of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society. Bulletin 86 (entire issue devoted to subject).
5. Polk's City Directory of Lakeland, Florida. New York: R.L. Polk Publishing Co., 1920-1928.
6. Work Projects Administration. "History of Baker County," Historic Records Survey of Florida. State Library of Florida, Tallahassee, n.d.

Old Baker County Courthouse
Macclenny, Fla.
1908



Ground Floor



Second Floor

Floor Plan

MACCLENNY, FLORIDA

