

P40013523

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:  
Georgia  
COUNTY:  
Wilkes  
FOR NPS USE ONLY  
ENTRY DATE  
JUN 5 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:  
~~The~~ Old Jail  
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
103 Court Street  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington  
STATE: Georgia  
CODE: 13  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
10th - Robert G. Stephens, Jr.  
COUNTY:  
Wilkes  
CODE: 317

3. CLASSIFICATION

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

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mrs. Nita R. Edwards  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
Route 2 Box 162  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington  
STATE:  
Georgia  
CODE:  
13

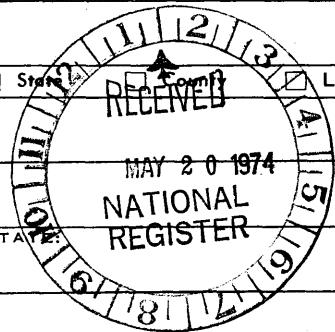
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Wilkes County Courthouse  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
Court Street  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington  
STATE:  
Georgia  
CODE:  
13

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
None  
DATE OF SURVEY:  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
CITY OR TOWN:  
STATE:  
CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: Georgia  
COUNTY: Wilkes  
ENTRY NUMBER: JUN 5 1974  
DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

**7 DESCRIPTION**

|           |                                    |   |  |   |                                |                                    |
|-----------|------------------------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One)                        |   |  |   |                                |                                    |
|           | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated             | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                        |   |  | (Check One)                                       |                                |                                    |
|           | <input 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

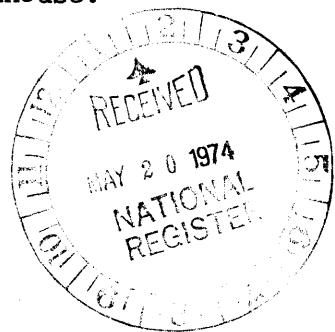
The Old Wilkes County Jail is one of the most unusually designed structures of its kind in Georgia. It was designed in a Romanesque style and built under the direction of the McDonald Brothers Jail Building Company of Louisville, Kentucky.

Constructed of red brick in common bond, the jail is basically a two story with basement, square, hipped roof structure with a belt coursing of rough stone. The front facade in design follows the covered stairway, under which is a post and lintel stone-faced doorway. Brick designs including flat gauged apertures between each column, indented square brick patterns, and a brick, dentilled cornice along the stepped and gabled rooflines help to make up this elaborate design. A series of small round head arches form a pattern across the gabled portion of the roof. The six-over-six windows have flat gauged brick work above each window. These windows have been slightly altered to make the opening smaller.

Originally the interior had eight cell blocks with four on each floor. Each cell was divided and floored by eight by ten blocks of Indiana limestone. The method of heating was a system of moat-like ducts on the interior periphery of the structure and in an L-shape through the center of the four room plan. Theoretically the limestone would absorb and transmit the heat upward through the floor.

Over the course of years the jail has been altered to suit various functions: wood flooring was placed over the limestone flooring, rooms petitioned, an interior stair was built, then later removed. Many of the limestone blocks that were removed from the jail are on a rear lot.

Recently the jail was acquired by a preservation-minded individual who plans to restore it for adaptive use as a townhouse.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**3. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1891

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>History</u> |
| <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 Old Wilkes County Jail, built in 1891, is designed in the Romanesque style by the McDonald Brothers Jail Building Company of Louisville, Kentucky, with a heating system that was both innovative and experimental. The building was used as a jail house for less than twenty years, then as a house, and later as an apartment-restaurant. Presently plans are being made for its adaptive use as a town house.

The Old Jail, as it is commonly referred to, was built to meet a need for a better jail, a need that had been discussed in the Grand Jury minutes since the 1870's. The new jail, the contract of which was awarded to McDonald Brothers Jail Building Company on January 22, 1891, for a total cost of \$8,250, was built on the site that the county had owned since 1821. The McDonald Brothers Jail Building Company was very well known for its jail and public building designs in the South and Mid-West during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century.

Three of the McDonald brothers, Harry, Kenneth and Donald McDonald, formed the McDonald Brothers Company in 1883, which continued at least until 1891. Although the Louisville city directory lists them all as architects, Harry was also president of the Louisville Bottle and Extract Manufacturing Company and president of the McDonald Brothers Building Company; Kenneth was the secretary of the jail company and Donald was the general manager. Both Harry and Donald attended the engineering school of Washington College.

The McDonald Brothers' design for the jail was the Romanesque style that was popular during the late nineteenth century. This style is evidenced in the solidarity and strength exhibited in the square brick pillars, the shadow-box plaque and dentil designs and the rough stone banding. The jail's exterior design was up-to-the-minute stylistically, but the heating system design more closely approached that of an experiment perhaps even being a forerunner of the duct or forced air method of heating. A fire was to be built outside, with the hot air drawn in through a system of moat-like tunnels formed by large limestone blocks. In theory, the warm air was apparently expected to be conducted upwards in the ducts and transmitted to the cells through the porous limestone walls and floor. This system, however, did not function as expected and was a major reason that the jail was used for such a short period.

In the Superior Court Minutes of May 1892, the Grand Jury expressed its great satisfaction with the new jail. They also praised its cleanliness and

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Bowen, Eliza A., The Story of Wilkes County Georgia; Edited by Louise Frederich Hayes, Marietta: Continental Book, 1950.  
 Edwards, Mrs. Nita, Researcher of Wilkes County Courthouse records, the Washington Chronicle and correspondence with the Filson Club, Inc., Louisville, Ky.; Prepared first draft of National Register form on file at Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources.  
 Kelly, Bruce R., and Varnell, David F., Washington-Wilkes, A Proposal for Downtown Revival -- School of Environmental Design, University of Ga., 1971.  
 McDonald, Mrs. Cornelia, "H. P. McDonald, Architect", A Diary with Reminiscences of The War and Refugee Life in the Shenandoah Valley, 1860-65 (Continued)

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

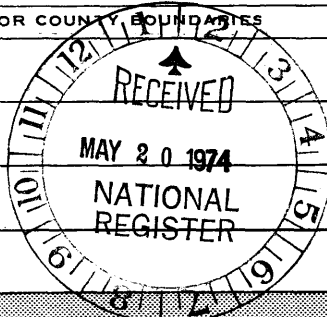
| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | OR | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY<br>OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |                         |  |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|----|---|-------------------------|--|
| CORNER   | LATITUDE                | LONGITUDE               |    | LATITUDE  | LONGITUDE               |  |
|  | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds |    | Degrees Minutes Seconds   | Degrees Minutes Seconds |  |
| NW   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |    | 33° 44' 20"   | 82° 44' 28"             |  |
| NE   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |    |   |                         |  |
| SE   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |    |   |                         |  |
| SW   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |    |   |                         |  |

NOU M  
CY

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/4 Acre

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY  | CODE |
|--------|------|---------|------|
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Elizabeth Z. Macgregor, Architectural Historian  
 Carole A. Stevens, Staff Researcher  
 ORGANIZATION: Historic Preservation Section, Dept. Natural Resources  
 DATE: March 28, 1974  
 STREET AND NUMBER: 270 Washington Street, S.W., Room 703C  
 CITY OR TOWN: Atlanta  
 STATE: Georgia  
 CODE: 13

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

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 Mary Gregory Jewett

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date March 28, 1974

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

Ernest A. Connolly  
 Associate Director of Professional Services

Date JUN 5 1974

ATTEST:  
Charles Offenberg  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 5-31-74

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

|                  |         |            |
|------------------|---------|------------|
| STATE            | Georgia |            |
| COUNTY           | Wilkes  |            |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |         |            |
| ENTRY NUMBER     |         | DATE       |
|                  |         | JUN 5 1974 |

(Number all entries)

8. Significance (continued)

comfort in comparison with the old jail. They recommended the building of a fence and the installation of blinds at the windows. However, in their presentments that were published in the Wilkes County Chronicle on June 4, 1895, the Wilkes County Commissioners announced that they would accept bids on a contract for a new heating system for the jail. With the change in heating systems, the old jail appears to have limped along until it was abandoned in favor of a newer jail which was built between 1910 and 1911.

The McDonald Brothers-built jail was apparently vacant and deteriorating from the turn of the century until the early 1930's. The rundown building changed ownership several times during the 1930's and the 1940's. The ground floor at one time was operated as the Royal Cafe, while the upper floor was made into an apartment during this period. The present owner plans to remodel the interior, reconstruct a fence, and use the structure as a town house.

9. Bibliographical References (continued)

1875; annotated in 1934 by Hunter McDonald, Nashville, Tennessee; pp. 156, 414, 418-9, 422-5.  
Willingham, Robert Marion, Jr., We Have This Heritage, Wilkes Publishing Company, 1969.

