

PH000680

Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>ALABAMA</b>	
COUNTY: <b>RUSSELL</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER <b>MAY 23 1974</b>	DATE

#### 1. NAME

COMMON:  
**Russell County Courthouse at Seale**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Russell County Courthouse**

#### 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Courthouse Square**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Seale 3rd Congressional District**

STATE <b>Alabama</b>	CODE <b>01</b>	COUNTY: <b>Russell</b>	CODE <b>113</b>
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#### 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Not being Used</u>

#### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Russell County, Alabama**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**P. O. Box 969**

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Phenix City</b>	STATE: <b>Alabama</b>	CODE <b>01</b>
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#### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Judge of Probate of Russell County (Public Deeds Records)**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**P. O. Box 700**

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Phenix City</b>	STATE: <b>Alabama</b>	CODE <b>01</b>
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#### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

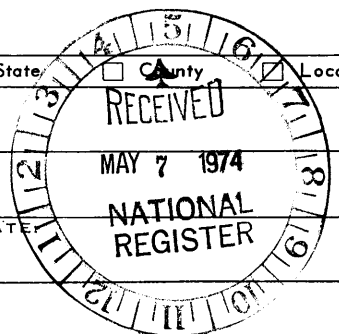
STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE:
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:  
COUNTY:  
ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY



MAY 23 1974

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

At present, the courthouse is a two story T-shaped red brick structure. The front section of the building measures 62 feet by 27 feet and is seven bays wide by 2 bays deep. The rear section is 63 feet by 50 feet and contains four bays across the sides with 3 bays along the rear.

The facade features a two story portico with massive Roman Doric columns supporting a pediment and entablature. A small balcony is located above the central entrance door and access to the balcony is gained by a similar door.

Windows on the front section have flat arches with keystones, and above the second floor is a row of half windows with similar arches. The same pattern exists on the sides of the front section of the building, which also have pediments.

On the rear section only the first floor windows have this treatment, while second floor windows have round arches with brick hood moldings. The half windows are absent from this section.

The interior first floor is divided by a central hall. The hall is wider in the front section of the building and contains two staircases, one on either side of the hall. To the right of this hall, the front section consists of one large room, while to the left of the hall there are two rooms. In the rear section of the building, the hall separates the three rooms on each side. The first room on the left is the old vault which has walls 42" thick.

The second floor is similar in plan to the first with the exception of the rear section which consists of one large room.

Prior to 1908, when the entire building was rebricked, the structure was rectangular in shape and entrance to the second floor was gained by an exterior staircase under the portico.

The abandoned landmark, while structurally sound, has deteriorated elements including the roof. The Russell County Commission has allocated \$15,000 in public funds for the appropriate replacement of the roof, the first phase of the proposed restoration which is scheduled to begin when the landmark is added to the National Register of Historic Places.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**6. 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)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input 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 Russell County Courthouse in Seale is one of the oldest standing courthouses in Alabama and one of the oldest public buildings in the eastern half of the State.

In 1866 just after the Civil War, a portion of Russell County was ceded to newly formed Lee County. As the new boundary was just north of Crawford, the county seat, the Legislature called for the selection of a more centrally located seat of government for Russell County. While Crawford and Girard, both border towns, were put into nomination for the site, the only two centrally located nominations were Silver Run (Seale) and Sand Fort. Silver Run won the election, but post election maneuvering by those opposed to the move prevented the immediate transfer of records to Silver Run - now beginning to be known as Seale's Station.

In 1868 the records were finally removed from Crawford by oxcart and placed in the storehouse of William Henry Holland.

In 1868 work was set in motion for the erection of a courthouse, but progress was slow and it was not until 1869 that a tax to fund the project adequately was levied by the Board of Commissioners of Russell County. The Board meeting at Seale levied a special tax of 50% of the existing county taxes for the purpose of funding the courthouse construction.

Simeon O'Neal was awarded the contract with a bid of \$6,500 and the building was first used in 1869.

In 1908 wings were added to meet the growing space requirements. In 1935 the county seat was moved to Phenix City but the courthouse at Seale remained in use as a branch until 1943. During World War II, the building was used by a local draft board and by the school system for storage. In subsequent years vocational-agricultural classes were held there. The Seale Civic Club used a room for meetings there for a while. Since 1958 the massive landmark has been unused and unoccupied. Plans call for its restoration as an area museum, with some portions proposed for regional governmental offices.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

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

Walker, Anne Kendrick, Russell County in Retrospect. Richmond, Virginia:  
Dietz Press, Incorporated, 1950.

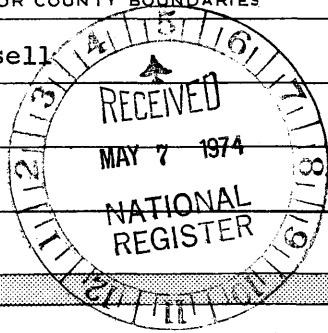
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		32 ° 17 ' 54 "	85 ° 10 ' 03 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2.5

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Alabama		Russell	
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director**

ORGANIZATION: **Alabama Historical Commission**      DATE: **4/25/74**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**725 Monroe Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Montgomery**      STATE: **Alabama, 36104**      CODE: **01**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Neil B. Howard Jr.

Title SHPO - Ala.

Date April 29, 1974

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

AB Watson  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 5/23/74

ATTEST:  
Wm. Montz  
Keeper of The National Register

Date 5.23.74