

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED **AUG 13 1980**  
DATE ENTERED **16 1980**

**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 Calhoun County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

314 East Central Ave.

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Blountstown

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second

STATE

Florida

CODE

12

COUNTY

Calhoun

CODE

013

**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: vacant

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Board of County Commissioners, Calhoun County

STREET & NUMBER

425 East Central Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Blountstown

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Florida

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Calhoun County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Blountstown

STATE

Florida

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_FEDERAL \_\_\_STATE \_\_\_COUNTY \_\_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Calhoun County Courthouse is a T-shaped building with brick bearing exterior walls and a hipped main roof. The long axis of the courthouse is north-south. The main entrance (south) facade of the nearly square principal section of the building faces U. S. Highway 20, while the rectangular wing extends north from the rear of this section. The south portion of the building is two-and-one-half stories, while the rear wing is only two stories. Like the main block, the rear wing is covered by a hip roof.

The main (south) block appears cruciform in plan because of the shallow rectangular pavilions that project from the south, east and west facades. The pavilions are actually only frontispieces that emphasize the arched entranceways of the three facades. They rise to form buttressed gables above the cornice of the main roof. Because of the lengths of their ridges, the gable roofs of the pavilions visually form a crossing. The south pavilion on the main entrance facade is larger and its roof longer. The roofs of the pavilions terminate at the main hip roof approximately half way up its slope.

There are also two wall dormers on the south (main) facade of the courthouse. The entablature terminates at either side of the dormers so that the wall surface of the dormers is visually separated from that of the second story only by a stringcourse just above the second story windows.

There are seven tall rectangular chimneys, each with decorative corbeling and caps. There are two chimneys each on the south, east, and west slopes of the main roof and one chimney on the north slope of roof on the rear wing.

The courthouse has three one-story porches. The porch on the main (south) facade sits in front of the pavilion. The one-bay structure features a single compound arch opening on its front and sides. The arches rest on low, square piers at the front corners of the porch and on buttresses at the rear corners. The flat roof of the porch is surrounded by a high parapet with corbeling which frames recesses in the center of the parapet. The parapet and the buttresses on the south of the porch strongly accentuate the spandrels of the compound arch. The semi-circular arch has a wide extrados surrounded by five concentric rows of corbeled brick, the outermost row of which projects from the wall, leaving the spandrels in a recess framed by the arch, the buttresses, and the corbeling on the parapet.

The porches on the east and west are recessed into the shallow pavilions and framed by arched entranceways with hood mold and corbel steps.

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The doorways in the main entrance and in the east and west pavilions are approximately the same. Each features a double leaf paneled wood and glass door with paneled side lights and a fixed rectangular transom. There is also a paneled, single leaf door in the west elevation of the rear wing.

The windows that remain are all 1/1 double hung sashes. Some sashes have been lost or damaged through deterioration. Semi-circular arched windows are found in the main facade on the first story, the second story of the pavilion and in the dormers. The remainder of the original windows in the building have segmental arches.

The decorative details of the building are limited to the use of brick corbels, string courses and panels. The entablature of the main roof is pressed metal.

Only two small additions have been made to the courthouse. In the late 1940s two basement offices were established in the rear (north) of the building, and in the 1950s a two-story bathroom addition was constructed on the east elevation where the two sections of the original structure meet. The interior of the building has suffered from neglect, weather damage, and vandalism but appears to have had no major alterations. There are no significant architectural features on the interior. The building was abandoned in 1973 when the court and county offices were moved to a new building nearby.

# 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 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 type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

+1904

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

See Continuation Sheet

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Calhoun County Courthouse in Blountstown, Florida is significant as one of the two Romanesque Revival Style courthouse buildings extant in Florida.<sup>1</sup> Also, it was designed by Frank Lockwood and Benjamin Bosworth Smith, two Montgomery, Alabama architects who achieved regional reputations during their careers and both of whom designed buildings now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The erection of the Calhoun County Courthouse was proposed in December of 1903, twenty years after Blountstown was designated the county seat. Calhoun County is largely rural county located in the northwestern part of Florida. It was established in 1838 and named for John C. Calhoun, a senator from South Carolina and former vice president of the United States. Calhoun County has an area of 557 square miles. It is bordered on the east by the Apalachicola River, on the north by Jackson County, on the west by Bay County, and on the south by Gulf County. Its major products are timber, tobacco, and livestock. The county seat, Blountstown, is the county's largest city with a population of 2,496. The county commissioners placed a notice in the Calhoun County News and the Calhoun County Times, requesting sealed bids for the project. According to the record of the minutes of the county commissioners, two bids were considered, one for \$24,845.00 by "Mess. Gunn and Cooper of Liberty County" and one for \$16,110.00 by "Mess. Dobson and Archillus (Archelaus)."<sup>2</sup>

Francis Dobson was field agent for the architectural firm of Lockwood and Smith located in Montgomery, Alabama. In 1901, Dobson had represented Lockwood and Smith in offering bids to construct the Bradford County Courthouse in Starke, Florida, a commission which the architects won.<sup>3</sup> The Bradford County Courthouse is visually quite similar to the one in Calhoun County. It is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Frank Lockwood and Benjamin B. Smith were the most prominent architects in Montgomery, Alabama in the first years of the twentieth century. Regrettably, few facts about Smith's life are recorded. He was apparently born in Montgomery in the 1860's and spent most of his professional career there. Perhaps the most notable structure designed by Smith was the Union Station and trainshed in Montgomery. This complex is today listed on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>4</sup>

(See Continuation Sheet)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

## UTM NOT VERIFIED ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than One

QUADRANGLE NAME USGS Blountstown, 1945

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5

UTM REFERENCES

A 

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B 

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

C 


D 


E 


F 


G 


H 


### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Begin at the northeast corner of Central Avenue and Cayson Street and run north along the curb of Cayson Street 210 feet, then run east 210 feet, then run south 210 feet, then run west 210 feet to the point of beginning.

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

W. Carl Shiver

ORGANIZATION

Florida Division of Archives History and Records Management

DATE

July 11, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

The Capitol

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

8/5/80

TITLE

L. Ross Morrell, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. Ray Luce  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

10/16/80

ATTEST: Carol Dubois  
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

10/11/80

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

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Builder - Dobson, F. M. (Montgomery, Alabama)

Architect - Smith, Benjamin B. & Lockwood, Frank (Montgomery, Alabama)

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The details of Frank Lockwood's biography are more complete, perhaps because he was a more prolific designer than Smith. Lockwood was born in Trenton, New Jersey in 1865. He received his architectural training in New York City and for a time pursued his career there. In 1892, he moved to Columbus, Georgia after designing the Romanesque Revival Style St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church in Anniston, Alabama. This building is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>5</sup>

Lockwood moved to Montgomery in 1894 and soon developed a flourishing architectural practice.<sup>6</sup> In 1901 he established the firm of Lockwood and Smith with Benjamin B. Smith. The partnership seems to have formally dissolved in 1903, however, as the Montgomery city directory lists them as having independent firms in that year.<sup>7</sup> Lockwood, therefore, might have designed the Calhoun County Courthouse on his own, but the similarities between it and the Bradford County Courthouse make it probable that Smith deserves some of the credit.

Lockwood designed many landmark structures in Montgomery including the Post Office, the Greystone Hotel, Trinity Episcopal Church and the buildings for Huntingdon College. He was responsible for numerous other public buildings in the state including seventy county high schools, several buildings at the University of Alabama and at least five courthouses in the state. He also designed the 1896 Washington County Courthouse in Chipley, Florida.<sup>8</sup> This Romanesque Revival structure was destroyed by fire in the 1920's.

The Old Calhoun County Courthouse exhibits features of the Romanesque Revival style through the broad massing of simple rectangular forms punctuated by arched windows and entrance ways. The horizontal divisions of the structure are marked by decorative corbeling along the eaves, beltcourses, and the entrados of the compound arches above the entranceways. Rectangular pavilions rise tower-like from the center of three of the building's elevations and terminate in buttressed gables which reflect the cruciform plan of the interior hallway.

The Romanesque Revival style had little influence in Florida before the late 1880's and was rarely used after 1905. It was used mainly for public buildings such as courthouses, city halls, and jails, but was occasionally used for commercial structures as well. No examples of high style nineteenth century Romanesque Revival style buildings have been recorded in the state.

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<sup>1</sup>The other is the Bradford County Courthouse in Starke, Florida.

<sup>2</sup>Records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Calhoun County, Blountstown, Florida. Minutes of the County Commission, Book E., p. 255.

<sup>3</sup>Records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Bradford County, Starke, Florida. Minutes of the County Commission for the year 1902, pp. 122-123.

<sup>4</sup>Milo B. Howard, Jr., Director of the State of Alabama Department of Archives and History, Letter to W. Carl Shiver, April 15, 1980.

<sup>5</sup>The National Cyclopedia of American Biography. Vol. XXVI, New York (James T. White & Company), 1937, p. 63.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Milo B. Howard to Carl Shiver.

<sup>8</sup>The National Cyclopedia of American Biography.



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Howard, Milo B., Jr. Director of the State of Alabama Department of Archives and History. Letter to W. Carl Shiver, April 15, 1980.

The National Cyclopedia of American Biography. Vol. XXVI, New York: James T. White and Company, 1937.

Records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court. Bradford County, Starke, Florida. Minutes of the County Commission, 1901-1902.

Records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court. Calhoun County, Blountstown, Florida. Minutes of the County Commission, Book E.