

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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 Quitman County Jail

and/or common Old Quitman County Jail

2. Location

street & number Main Street not for publication

city, town Georgetown vicinity of congressional district 2nd - Charles Hatcher

state Georgia code 013 county Quitman code 239

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. H. L. Balkcom, Jr., Chairman, Quitman County Board of Commissioners

street & number

city, town Georgetown vicinity of state Georgia 31754

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Quitman County Courthouse

city, town Georgetown state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Structures Field Survey: has this property been determined eligible? yes no
Quitman County

date 1976 federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta state Georgia

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Quitman County Jail is a two-story brick building, laid in common brick bond, in a square floor plan. There is no visible foundation, and a brick water table divides the first floor from the ground.

The first-floor front facade has three openings, all off-center. To the left, as facing the building, is a single-leafed door with an arched lintel. This door opens into the downstairs misdemeanor cell and the staircase. To the right of this door is an arched lintel window which is in the misdemeanor cell. To the right of this window is another arched lintel doorway the same height as the window (other door is actually taller). This door opens into the jailer's office.

The second-floor front facade is divided from the first by a stringcourse. There is a centrally positioned four-over-four double-hung sash window with an arched lintel, flanked on both sides by inset brick panels. The top of these panels have corbelled brick. The roof line has a brick frieze and wood cornice.

The standing seam cooper hip roof is topped by an octagonal wooden cupola with a conical metal roof, with a weathervane on top. Out of the roof rises two interior chimney stacks with corbelled caps.

All windows have metal bars. Each one has four flat horizontal bars and nine vertical round ones.

The interior of the building is plaster over brick. The ceiling is barrel-vaulted and is poured-concrete molded in a corrugated pattern. There are steel I-beams running through this system. The first floor has four sections: the stairwell with metal steps, misdemeanor cell, and the sheriff's office with a coal-burning fireplace with no mantel, and a storage area to the rear and under the stairs.

The second floor is one large room with a half-inch-thick metal cage. This tripart cage has three compartments, two for sleeping, with a center walking area. Each compartment can be locked from the first by a metal barred door. The floor is concrete and the ceiling is plaster covered with plywood. There is one closet in the room.

Alterations to the building are limited. A gas heater was installed on the second floor. It has been wired for electricity and modern plumbing has been added.

It is situated on a relatively flat lot with a gentle slope to the rear. The front facade has been landscaped with small evergreen shrubs, and the remainder of the lot is planted with grass.

[continued]

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 type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history
<input type="checkbox"/> invention				

Specific dates 1891 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Quitman County Jail is significant in architectural and local history. Architecturally, it is significant due to its fire-proof construction and its rather plain styling as opposed to other jails of the same era that took on a much more imposing appearance. In local history, it is significant to the county for serving as the only county jail from its completion in 1891 until the mid-1960s.

Quitman County was formed in 1858, It was originally a part of Lee County, then later Stewart County. By 1858, citizens felt the county should be recognized in its own right, so it was incorporated. It was named for General John A. Quitman. The first jail, a wooden structure on the site of the present jail, was built that same year.

Georgetown was actually founded earlier than this, for in 1833 it had a post office, and was known as Tobanana. Three years later, in 1836, its name was changed to Georgetown. It was founded, and served primarily as a river port on the Chattahoochee River. At the founding of Quitman County, Georgetown was deemed the most practical point for the county government, both as a riverport, and an established town.

In Quitman County, as in many other towns and cities in the nineteenth century, the earliest jails had been wooden. By the 1880s, the movement had begun to replace these earlier jails with more substantial structures. Thus, the simple, but fire-proof, architecture of this jail reflects the times into which it was placed, providing both a more secure place for prisoners while at the same time reflecting a more substantial community than one that could build only a wooden structure. Although it is not known which jail works provided the iron-interior jail for this county, in similar counties companies from north Georgia (Manley Jail Works) or St. Louis, Missouri (Paul Jail Works), were secured.

The role of the jail in the local community in rural Georgia cannot be underestimated. A county as small and sparsely populated as Quitman would have had few if any other places of incarceration. Prisoners were kept at the local level if their crimes did not warrant capital punishment.

The area in which this jail rests has been the location of the seat of government for the county since its inception. Here, the earlier courthouse burned in 1919 and the nearby non-historic one was erected in 1939.

[continued]

9. Major Bibliographical References

Interview of George Phillips, local historian, August 20, 1980, by Nancy Alexander.

Douglas C. Purcell and D. Gregory Jeane, Architectural Legacy of the Lower Chattahoochee Valley (1978).

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED
UMT NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Georgetown, Ga.-Ala,

Quadrangle scale 1: 24,000

UMT References

A

16	6 7 8 7 9 0	3 5 2 9 1 3 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

The boundary of the nominated property has been designated as a line drawn 25 feet from all sides of the structure. This was created due to the fact that the county ~~government owns a much larger tract surrounding the jail that encompasses the courthouse~~ and other non-historic facilities.

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

11. Form Prepared By

*Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historic Preservation Section, contact person
name/title +Nancy A. Alexander, Historic Preservation Planner

*Historic Preservation Sec., Georgia DNR

organization +Lower Chattahoochee APDC

date April 1, 1981

*270 Washington St., S.W.

street & number +P.O. Box 1908

telephone * (404) 656-2840

*Atlanta

city or town +Columbus

*Georgia 30337

state +Georgia 31902

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Elizabeth A. Lyon
Elizabeth A. Lyon

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/1/81

For HCRS use only

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

Richard Lyons
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 8/13/81

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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For HCERS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Description & Significance Item number 7 & 8

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7. Description

The jail stands on the site of the original 1858 jail and is between the Quitman County Courthouse and the Georgetown City Hall. It sits approximately fifty feet back from these buildings.

8. Significance

Since it ceased to be the county jail, this building has been maintained by the Georgetown Garden Club. A historical marker entitled "Quitman County's Old Jail" was erected by the Historic Chattahoochee Commission and dedicated here May 19, 1980.