

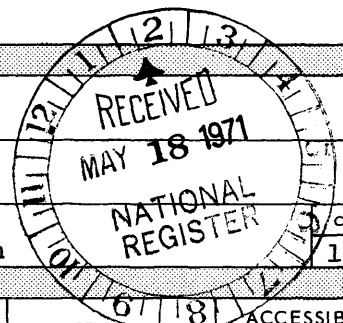
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Georgia	
COUNTY: Lumpkin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 70.5.10.0064	DATE 5/13/70

1. NAME	
COMMON: Dahlonega Courthouse Gold Museum	
AND/OR HISTORIC: Old Lumpkin County Courthouse	

2. LOCATION	
STREET AND NUMBER: U.S. 19	
CITY OR TOWN: Dahlonega	
STATE: Georgia	CODE 13
COUNTY: Lumpkin	CODE 187



3. CLASSIFICATION	
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both
PUBLIC ACQUISITION: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	
STATUS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	
ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY	
OWNER'S NAME: Georgia Historical Commission	
STREET AND NUMBER: 116 Mitchell Street, S.W.	
CITY OR TOWN: Atlanta	STATE: Georgia
	CODE 13

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION	
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Office of Clerk, Superior Court of Lumpkin County	
STREET AND NUMBER: Lumpkin County Courthouse	
CITY OR TOWN: Dahlonega	STATE: Georgia
	CODE 13

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS	
TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Building Survey	
DATE OF SURVEY: 1936	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress	
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE: D.C.
	CODE 08

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

☒ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed

(Check One)

☒ Altered ☐ Unaltered

(Check One)

☐ Moved ☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

one bay

The old Lumpkin County Courthouse is built of brick, two stories high with a two-columned Tuscan portico rising to the full height of the building. It stands on a square in the middle of Dahlonega as it has since 1838. Today it belongs to the State and looks much as it was when new. Little outside restoration was needed since few alterations had ever been made. Inside, extensive renovations were necessary. Through the years many remodelings on both floors had changed the basic plan and secondly the building had to be adapted to serve as a museum. Originally the first floor level had been a sort of market place where stalls were set up. In time various county offices were put on this floor and the building became a courthouse in the modern sense. The second floor, reached from outside stairs in the portico, was always the courtroom. Today the ground floor is given over to exhibits and the second floor is one large room in which visitors will eventually be able to see an interpretative slide show. The first floor consists of a large reception hall graced by two widely spaced Tuscan columns in the middle of the room and a room in each of the four corners of the structure. The architect in charge of the renovation was Garland Reynolds, AIA; the Commission staff member who worked closely with him to see that all changes in the building were done at least in the spirit of the original conception was William R. Mitchell, Jr. Architecturally it could be described as country Classic Revival.



modification committee

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☐ 18th Century ☒ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1838; restored 1966-67.

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/Phi- | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | History |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Dahlonega Courthouse Gold Museum, formerly the Lumpkin County Courthouse, houses the story of the nation's first notable gold rush. The brick courthouse, now the oldest public building in North Georgia, is itself a part of the gold story having witnessed most events associated with gold fever in that part of Georgia. The very name of the town means gold; it is the English equivalent of the Cherokee word Talonega, meaning "precious yellow." The contractor Ephraim Clayton who built the courthouse in 1838 received his final payment in gold bullion. The bricks and mud mortar between them all reveal traces of the precious metal. And hundreds of law cases over mining disagreements resounded behind its thick brick walls.

Dahlonega's importance as a gold producing area was recognized by Congress even before the Courthouse was built. March 3, 1835, Congress authorized the country's first branch mints; Dahlonega joined New Orleans and Charlotte, North Carolina, in this historical first. On a knoll south of the Courthouse the branch mint was built and opened in 1838.

That same year the Courthouse was ready for action. Stylistically it is a country version of Classic Revival; has a Jeffersonian flavor; is partly Greek, partly Roman and partly Federal. Ephraim Clayton or someone involved evidently knew buildings inspired by Jefferson and by Asher Benjamin, perhaps even had a copy of one of Benjamin's architectural handbooks. The first floor was used as a market place with the courtroom and the county offices upstairs. Legend records that a Bible lies under each of the four corners of the building pledging that the courthouse is built on the foundation of justice. The solid brick exterior walls are 22 1/2 inches thick and the interior walls, also solid brick, are 12 inches thick. The brick was cast from the clay of Cane Creek, one mile from Dahlonega.

On a Saturday in 1849, a crowd gathered in front of the courthouse to hear Matthew F. Stephenson, assayer of the Dahlonega mint, implore from the balcony of the courthouse as he pointed to Findley Ridge in front of him "There's millions in it." Not deterred by his entreaty the "Forty-Niners" left Dahlonega to go to California, but they carried his words with them. Mark Twain, hearing them from a friend William Sellars, wrote in his Gilded Age his famous version of Dr. Stephenson's expression "There's gold in them thar hills." Dahlonega sent many of its miners westward after 1849. Green Russell, an Auraria gold miner, returned from California and later led a gold party with his two brothers to the Kansas Territory starting the "Pike's Peak or Bust" stampede that gave birth to Colorado and founding a small village which is today part of the city of Denver.

Lumpkin County presented the building to the State in 1966 after a new courthouse was built in 1965. The restoration of the building by the Georgia Historical Commission and the preservation in the Museum of the historical records of the gold rush era continue the North Georgia gold story.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cain, Andrew, History of Lumpkin County. (Atlanta: Stein Printing Co., 1932).
 _____, "Dahlonega Courthouse Preserves Golden Era," The Athens Banner-Herald
 and Daily News, June 15, 1969.
 Mitchell, William R., Jr., Personal Inspections.
 Sparks, Andrew, "Home for Memories of the Gold Rush," Atlanta Journal and
Constitution Magazine, June 4, 1967.
 Files and Documents, Georgia Historical Commission.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	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	° ' "	° ' "		34 ° 31 ' 50 "	83 ° 58 ' 53 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



UTM
 16/224020
 3825040
 CD

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: William R. Mitchell, Jr., Director, Georgia Historic Sites Survey	
ORGANIZATION Georgia Historical Commission	DATE May 7, 1971
STREET AND NUMBER: 116 Mitchell St., S.W.	
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 May Gregory Jewett

Title State Liaison Officer

Date May 7, 1971

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Ernest A. Connally
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

AUG 26 1971

Date _____

ATTEST:

William R. Mitchell Jr.
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 29 1971