

**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

For HCRS use only
received APR 28 1980
date entered MAY 29 1980

1. Name

historic Clarke County Jail

and/or common Old Clarke County Jail

2. Location

Courthouse Sq.

street & number Behind 419 Pope Street on old courthouse square not for publication

city, town Athens vicinity of congressional district 10th - Doug Barnard

state Georgia code 013 county Clarke code 059

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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: none

4. Owner of Property

name James Holland, Chairman, Clarke County Board of Commissioners

street & number Clarke County Courthouse

city, town Athens vicinity of state Georgia 30601

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Clarke County Courthouse

city, town Athens state Georgia 30601

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

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		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated on part of the original courthouse square, the Clarke County Jail -- the only remaining building from the original courthouse complex -- is a two-story, rectangular building whose exterior walls are brick, plastered over and sectioned to appear like stone. Twenty-seven feet wide by forty-seven feet long, it has irregular windows: eleven on each floor. There is an outside door on each floor, one on the top floor to the left of center in front and one on the ground floor to the right of center in front. A wooden, exterior stair leads from the northeast corner of the building to the upstairs door. The box roof is tin with a tiny gable protruding from the center of the front side. Five chimneys, at different heights and angles, rise along the sides of the building. The jail has no exposed foundation for the lower floor is flush with ground level.

The interior is constructed around an I-beam framework with curved corrugated iron vaults and poured-concrete floors, all of which are part of the "fireproof" construction of the period in which it was built. The jail also has interior end chimneys, shallow segmental arched window and door lintels, corner pilasters, and a corbelled cornice.

Inside, the jail has been altered. A central hall originally paralleled the short sides of the building on both floors. While these walls are still standing on the lower floor, all partitions have been removed upstairs, leaving the upper floor completely open. The smaller room downstairs (to the right of the central hall) was originally the jailer's office. This room has been partitioned into four smaller rooms quite recently. The original trap door is visible in the floor upstairs, opening to the central hall below. This door was used to provide greater height for hanging inside the jail. The windows and window frames are now gone.

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

Specific dates built 1875-1876. **Builder/Architect** Architect; Leon H. Charbonnier

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Clark County Jail is significant in architecture and politics/government. In the former, it is significant due to its architect/builder and its design as part of the courthouse complex from Reconstruction times. In politics/government, it is significant for being the county jail for nearly three decades with the moving of the county government to Athens,

County lines form the basic geographical boundaries within the state of Georgia. Likewise, county governments form the basic units of government within these artificial divisions. Each county requires a county seat, and within that seat, a courthouse complex consisting of a courtroom, offices for keeping county records, sheriff's quarters, and jail. A jailhouse served as essential a function in a Georgia county seat as did the stocks and pillory of a New England township. Convicted criminals and those awaiting trial in the county court occupied the county jail. Many were executed here while the state prison system was in abeyance.

From the formation of Clarke County, Georgia, in 1801 until 1871, Watkinsville was the county seat. In 1871, the Georgia legislature designated Athens as the new seat of government, and the county offices were accordingly moved. However, no courthouse was built for several years. Throughout 1874, much debate occurred over the location for a long-needed courthouse complex. Finally, in September of 1875, the controversy was solved. The Athens Georgian reported on September 22nd:

The contract for building the Court House was awarded to Messrs. Eaves, McGinty & Co., for \$27,597.50. It is to be erected on the old Stevens lot on Prince Avenue.

While only the courthouse itself was mentioned in this article, the same paper revealed on November 17th that three buildings were under construction:

The noise of workmen attract one to Prince Avenue, where three new houses; the courthouse, jail and jailer's house are being rapidly erected and will, when completed, not only embellish the city, but reflect great credit upon the county. Col. L.H. Charbonnier is the chief architect.,..

During the next several months, reports on the progress of the three buildings appeared regularly in the Athens newspaper. On February 22, 1876, the Clarke County Grand Jury toured the new courthouse square and commented on the progress:

[continued]

9. Major Bibliographical References

Clarke County, Georgia, Superior Court Deeds
 Personal inspection, John M. Sheftall, 1979
 Sylvanus Morris, Strolls About Athens During the Early Seventies (Athens Historical Society, 1969).
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10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre
 Quadrangle name Athens West, Georgia Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>7</u>	<u>2</u> <u>7</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	B	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary is a line drawn six feet from each side of the building. This was done due to the disruption and destruction of the historical and archaeological integrity of the surrounding area.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1) Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., contact
2) John McKay Sheftall, intern for Historic Cobbham Foundation, Inc.
 organization 1) Historic Preservation Sec./Ga. D.N.R.
2) c/o James K. Reap, preservation planner date December 1, 1979
 street & number Northeast Georgia APDC telephone 1) (404) 656-2840
1) 270 Washington St., S.W. 2) (404) 548-3141
2) 305 Research Dr.
 city or town 1) Atlanta 2) Athens state Georgia

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 Acting State Historic Preservation Officer date 4/23/80

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>W. Ray Luce</u>	date <u>5/29/80</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>Cecil Aubie</u>	date <u>5/23/80</u>
Chief of Registration	

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None of the new county buildings are yet completed. We recommend that the cells on the ground floor of the new jail have better ventilation, by means of iron lattice doors, or otherwise. One story of the courthouse is up, and the jailer's house nearly completed.

On July 11, 1876, the Athens Georgian gave its readers a tour of the newly completed courthouse and proclaimed the entire square "the best for the county buildings, including the jail and jailer's house...."

Leon Henry Charbonnier, the architect for the courthouse complex, was a native of France. He was a French soldier and a graduate of St. Cyr. During the Civil War, he taught preparatory school in Athens (later the state Normal School and now the U.S. Navy School on Prince Avenue). Shortly after the Civil War, he founded the school of engineering at the University of Georgia in Athens and was a professor there from 1867 to 1898. Thereafter, he seems to have lent his architectural ability to the design of several notable buildings around the Athens area. Of particular note were the plans he drew for Moore College, an outstanding example of Second Empire which remains on the University of Georgia campus. He also served as acting chancellor of the University, 1888-1889, as well as being vice chancellor.

The jail is architecturally significant as well for being part of a county courthouse complex erected in the late Reconstruction Era. Georgia has only a few courthouses built during the years after the Civil War and fewer jails, since most were of lesser substance and have thus not survived.

The building was constructed to be "fireproof" as evidenced by the use of brickmasonry (as opposed to wood, which many counties used for several more decades), iron vaulting and concrete floors. The design is of a high caliber, as compared to other Georgia jails. It also included a stuccoed and scored exterior, a feature unknown for any other Georgia jail of the period and rare for such a utilitarian building. These fancier features presumably are a direct result of the architect's stature within the community. He also included fine architectural details such as shallow segmental arches, simple incised window and doorway openings, corner pilasters, a corbelled cornice, and capped chimneys.

Charbonnier's jail and courthouse continued to serve the citizenry of Clarke County for almost four decades. A new courthouse was built in downtown Athens in 1913, and the buildings of the old courthouse square were occupied by the Athens High School for many years. The original block bought by Clarke County in 1873 for the courthouse complex has been altered, as mentioned earlier. The Sanborn Map for 1898 shows the original block size, which remained the same until the old courthouse building was demolished and the eastern portion of the block was sold by the Board of Education. A small street was subsequently cut through the property, approximately

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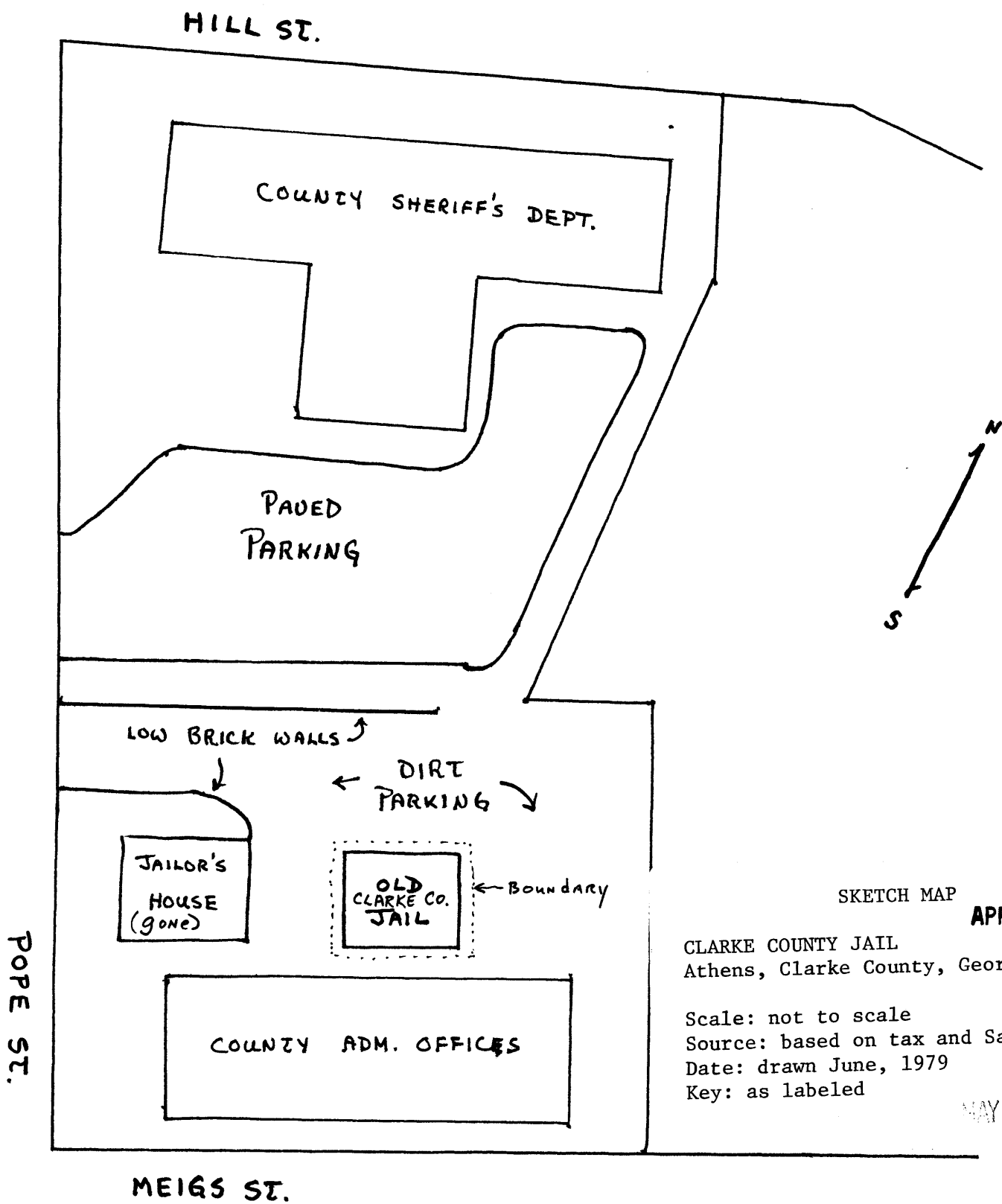
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where the courthouse itself once was. The eastern portion of the remaining square (or block) has even more recently been sold by the Board of Education to several development companies, who built franchise establishments on that portion of the original square. The Clarke County Board of Commissioners still owns the western portion of the square, part of which contains the old jail and the jailer's house. The jailer's house has been greatly altered through the years and is now in the process of being demolished. Today, the old jail is the only intact structure remaining from the original courthouse square to mark an era in Clarke County's government. It is thus the only portion of the original square included in this nomination. The jail is currently vacant, awaiting a plan for its re-use.



SKETCH MAP
 APR 28 1980

CLARKE COUNTY JAIL
 Athens, Clarke County, Georgia

Scale: not to scale
 Source: based on tax and Sanborn Maps
 Date: drawn June, 1979
 Key: as labeled

MAY 29 1980

Sketch Map of Western Portion, Block I
 (Lot 1)