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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Webster County Jails
other names/site number Old Jail; New Jail

2. Location

street & number unnamed city street at the intersection of Cass Street and Post Office Road,
behind the Baptist Church
city, town Preston (N/A) vicinity of
county Webster code GA 307
state Georgia code GA zip code 31824

(N/A) not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property:

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	2	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	0	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

for Richard Coates 1-20-00
Signature of certifying official Date

W. Ray Luce, Division Director and
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property () meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Ethan A. Beall 3/3/00

() determined eligible for the National Register _____

() determined not eligible for the National Register _____

() removed from the National Register _____

() other, explain: _____

() see continuation sheet

for _____
Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

GOVERNMENT/correctional facility

Current Functions:

GOVERNMENT/correctional facility

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

LATE VICTORIAN: Victorian Eclectic

Materials:

foundation concrete; brick

walls brick; wood

roof asphalt; metal

other N/A

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Webster County Jails are located in downtown Preston, Georgia, the county seat of rural Webster County. The property contains both the Old Webster County Jail and the New Webster County Jail, both of which are historic buildings.

The Old Webster County Jail is a one-story building built c.1856. The construction is of 5" by 9" hand-hewn log timbers with weatherboard siding. It is a rectangular-shaped building. It has a raised-seam metal gable roof with the single-door entrances on the north gable side and the west lateral side. The doors are thick wood doors with strong iron bars running diagonally across the doors and triangular-shaped hinges. There are two window openings on the two lateral sides with metal strips, connected with bolts, running vertically and horizontally and serving as bars. The lateral side with the door opening also has a third smaller barred window about eye level near the door. The brick pier foundation, made of old brick, was newly constructed when the Old Jail was recently moved to its current and historically original location adjacent to the New Jail. New brick steps were also built at both entrances after the last move.

The interior of the Old Jail is one room with a flat ceiling. The floors, walls, and ceilings consist of hand-hewn timbers with square nails nailed in the wood about two inches apart throughout the interior. The nails served to strengthen the wood for added security. The prisoners were originally housed in a cell which was in the center of the room. There is a rectangular wood framing strip on the ceiling which is a ghost of the original placement of the cell which is now gone.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7--Description

The Old Jail was moved from its original location adjacent to the New Jail in the early 1950s to a site near the present location. In 1975 the building was moved back to its original location for the 1976 Bicentennial Celebration. The jail was again moved behind the New Jail in 1977 when the county moved a metal pavilion from the landfill to the corner lot. The pavilion was used as storage for county vehicles. In August 1995, the Old Jail was once again moved back to its original site, and the metal pavilion was moved behind the New Jail. All of these locations are on the same piece of property or adjacent to it.

The Old Jail is currently used for storage; however, the county plans to restore the building for use as a museum.

The c.1910 New Jail is a two-story brick building with a three-foot high, concrete foundation. It is a rectangular building with a hipped, asphalt shingle roof with overhanging eaves. There is brick corbeling and a string course at the cornice. The double-hung, 4/4 windows are encased in arched openings with brick sills and metal security bars. There is a gable-front portico over the entrance. The main entrance is a nonhistoric wood door with single-light window. An oculus is beside the front door. The central, second-floor window on the rear of the building was converted to a door for fire-safety purposes in 1993. There is a one-story shed addition on the north facade.

The interior of the jail has concrete floors, walls, and ceilings. The walls are one foot thick. The front door opens into a foyer space with the jail office straight ahead. There is a built-in safe in this area. The office has had linoleum flooring and faux wood paneling put in over the concrete. The door to the office is a steel-vault door with a visitor's window and small semi-circular barred cage on the back of the door.

On the first floor off the main foyer, there is a heavier cell door with a visitor's window and barred cage which opens into a small holding area off of which are two small cells where the women were housed. The cells are small rectangular rooms with metal-lattice security doors and solid metal doors. All of the steel-cell doors were made by the Stewart Jail Works Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, whose name is found on several of the cell doors. Both rooms have a sink, commode, and bed. There are hooks on the wall which were used to support bunk beds. Across the hall from the women's cells is the women's bath which includes a claw-foot tub.

On the opposite end of the foyer from the women's cell is the shed addition which houses office space and a bathroom. The stairs are off the main foyer in an enclosed stair case rising above the built-in safe. The quarter-turn stairs are made of steel.

The second floor is a large open room with a concrete floor and a concrete ceiling with steel beams. There is a large steel cell block in the center of the room with a corridor around the insert. Made by

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Section 7--Description

Stewart Jail Works, the cell block is approximately 18' by 12' with a central hall. There are four jail cells, two on each side of the hall with four beds in each cell. There are steel bar doors on each cell with a floor-to-ceiling steel-bar opening in each cell. In the hall, there is one urinal and sink with the plumbing piped in from outside the cell through the steel bars at the end of the hall. The steel-barred door to the cell block has a lock mechanism beside it which locks and unlocks all the doors at one time.

The New Jail is now used as the Webster County Sheriff Department, although it still houses prisoners on a temporary basis. The New Jail stopped housing prisoners full-time in the 1980s; the County currently sends its prisoners to jails in the surrounding counties.

The Jails are located one block from the Webster County Courthouse. There is a mix of historic and nonhistoric commercial and residential buildings surrounding the property. There is no landscaping around the jails.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture
Politics and Government

Period of Significance:

c.1856-1950

Significant Dates:

c.1856 - Old Jail was constructed
c.1910 - New Jail was constructed

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Stewart Jail Works Company of Cincinnati, Ohio - Steel Cell components in the New Jail building

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Webster County Jails, including the Old Jail and New Jail, are significant for their architecture representing county correctional facility construction in the 1850s and the first decade of 20th century. Both of the jails were built with security in mind. The Old Jail is an excellent and intact example of a mid-19th century, wooden jail. It is one of just a few surviving examples in Georgia of a jail constructed of wood. It is extremely intact with its hand-hewn timbers, square nails, and window openings with security bars.

The New Jail is significant in architecture as a good and extremely intact example of a jail built in the early 20th century. It has an understated Late Victorian influence with its brick corbeling and oculus. The jail is also significant for its intact interior which has its women's cells and second-floor cell insert intact. The steel doors and cells were made by the Stewart Jail Works Company of Cincinnati, Ohio. When built the New Jail was extremely modern with its male and female cells, the cell insert with mechanized lock system, and the use of concrete.

The Webster County Jails are significant in politics and government as Webster County's only two correctional facilities ever built. The Old Jail was constructed around the time that the county was formed (1856) and used until the New Jail was constructed in 1910. The New Jail is still used to house prisoners on a temporary basis and is still the county's only functioning jail. Also noteworthy is that no prisoner has ever escaped from either jail.

National Register Criteria

The Webster County Jails, including the New Jail and Old Jail, are eligible under Criteria A and C for their significance in Webster County's history as the only two jails built by the county and as excellent and intact examples of a mid-19th century and early-20th century jails. The Old Jail is the one of only a few extant wooden county jails in the state of Georgia.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

The Old Webster County Jail meets Criterion Consideration B as a moved building which derives its primary significance from its architectural value, its high degree of integrity, and its historical associations. While it has been moved four times, to locations all close to or on this site, it has recently (1995) returned to its original location. The fact that a wooden jail survives at all on or near its original setting and was not torn down when a new replacement jail was built is in itself remarkable.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

Period of significance (justification)

The Old Webster County Jail was constructed in c.1856 and the New Webster County Jail was constructed in c.1910. They show a continuity of jail institutions from 1856 shortly after the county was founded and Preston became the county seat through the end of the historic era, 1950, since the New Jail was still being used then, and is in fact still being used into the 1990s.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The two contributing resources are the two historic and intact jails.

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

The Preston area was originally called Lannahassee when it was first settled after the 1827 Land Lottery opened up the area for settlement. In 1833, a post office was established in the area. In 1853, the town became McIntosh after William McIntosh, an earlier Creek Indian leader. It was also at this time, December 16, 1853 that Kinchafoonee County was formed from a portion of Stewart County. In 1856 by Act of the Georgia Legislature, Kinchafoonee County was renamed Webster County and the county seat was changed to Preston from McIntosh. Preston was named for William C. Preston of South Carolina, a distinguished orator and veteran of the War of 1812. Preston was incorporated in 1857.

It was around the time that Webster County was formed that the Old Jail was constructed. Although the county was created in 1853, it is unclear what the county did for a jail from 1854 until the Old Jail is said to have been built c. 1855-1856. The authors of the History of Webster County, Georgia state that the Old Jail was built in 1855. A description of the Old Jail from the History of Webster County reads:

East of the Main square in the block bounded by Harris Street and the street north of the main square facing west, a site was chosen for the jail. The north half of this block was set aside for the jail and chain gang camps or convict camps.

The jail was 28 feet 6 inches by 18 feet 4 inches, made of hewn logs about 10 inches square pinned together with pegs. No cracks were left between the logs. The floor, walls, and ceiling were solid 10 to 11 inch logs. The ceiling was 12 feet high. Inside the walls and ceiling was covered with 2 X 6 timbers nailed with 40 d spikes every two inches.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

Four cells made of iron rods and steel strap were inside. There was a walk way all around the cells. Heat was provided by a pot-bellied stove. Small barred windows were eight feet from the floor. The two outside doors were held by strong iron bars and padlocks as large as a man's hand. No prisoner ever escaped from this jail. The building was erected by slave labor in 1855.

The Old Jail was used by Webster County until the construction of the new jail in the first decade of the 20th century.

In 1910, the new brick jail was built. While no architect has been identified, one might not have been necessary. The jail works were from Stewart Jail Works Company of Cincinnati, Ohio. That company would have produced the actual jail cells and iron work. As with similar jails of that era, many times the jail works company built the entire building.

The New Jail served as the county's only jail from 1910 until the present. The building is still used to house prisoners on a temporary basis. It is currently used as the Webster County Sheriff Department and for temporarily holding prisoners. Since 1993, the county has housed their prisoners in the jails of Sumter, Stewart, and Randolph counties, all adjoining counties.

The Old Jail was moved from its original location adjacent to the New Jail in the early 1950s to a site near the present location. In 1975 the building was moved back to its original location for the 1976 Bicentennial Celebration. The jail was again moved behind the New Jail in 1977 when the county moved a metal pavilion from the landfill to the corner lot. The pavilion was used as storage for county vehicles. In August 1995, the Old Jail was once moved back to its original site, and the metal pavilion was moved behind the New Jail. A Flood Recover Grant for Historic Preservation was obtained from funds related to the 1994 flooding by Tropical Storm Alberto and used for the jail's foundation. The Old Jail is currently used for storage; however, the county plans to restore the building for use as a museum.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Rees, Sam. Resident Historian, Preston, GA. Interview by Diana Miles, July 21, 1995.

Walker, Jerry, 1976 Centennial Coordinator, Preston, GA. Interview by Vivian Bankston, July 6, 1995.

Weston's Woman's Club, compilers. History of Webster County, Georgia. W. H. Wolfe Associates: Roswell, GA, 1980.

Williams, Ben. Former Webster County Commissioner, Preston, GA. Interview by Lucius Brown, July 6, 1995.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued
date issued:
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately one acre.

UTM References

A) Zone 16 Easting 732620 Northing 3550280

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is that parcel that includes both jails. It is delineated on the enclosed Site Plan/Sketch Map with boundaries walked off by David W. Ray, January 4, 2000.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is all the property currently associated with the two historic jails.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian

organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

street & number 500 The Healey Building, 57 Forsyth Street

city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303

telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** December 21, 1999

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) () not applicable

name/title Diana Miles, Preservation Planner Assistant

organization Middle Flint Regional Development Center

street and number 228 W. Lamar Street

city or town Americus **state** Georgia **zip code** 31709

telephone (912) 928-4120

() **consultant**

(X) **regional development center preservation planner**

() **other:**

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Photographs

Name of Property: Webster County Jails
City or Vicinity: Preston
County: Webster
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: August, 1998

Description of Photograph(s):

- 1 of 23: New Jail on right, Old Jail on left; photographer facing southeast.
- 2 of 23: New Jail in foreground, on right, Old Jail in left background; photographer facing northeast.
- 3 of 23: Rear of jails, New Jail on left, Old Jail on the right; photographer facing northwest.
- 4 of 23: South and rear facades of New Jail; photographer facing northwest.
- 5 of 23: New Jail, front facade; photographer facing east.
- 6 of 23: New Jail, first floor, stairs on the right with safe underneath stairway; photographer facing south.
- 7 of 23: New Jail, first floor, door on left leads into office, door on right leads into cell area (see next two photographs for more details); photographer facing east.
- 8 of 23: New Jail, first floor, looking into door leading to cell block on south side; photographer facing southeast.
- 9 of 23: New Jail, first floor, detail of door from previous photo showing name of jail works company; photographer facing southeast.
- 10 of 23: New Jail, second floor, stairs on left; photographer facing north.
- 11 of 23: New Jail, second floor, looking down hallway between two rows of cells; photographer facing east.

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Photographs

12 of 23: New Jail, second floor, looking at cell on right in previous photograph with bunk bed hooked to wall on left; photographer facing southeast.

13 of 23: Old Jail, front facade; photographer facing south.

14 of 23: Old Jail, front (north) facade on right, east facade on left; photographer facing southwest.

15 of 23: Old Jail, east facade showing new foundation and damage from Alberto; photographer facing northwest.

16 of 23: Old Jail, west facade with entry door; photographer facing east.

17 of 23: Old Jail, west facade detail with flood grants sign visible (temporary); photographer facing southeast.

18 of 23: Old Jail, detail of sills on south side near entry door; photographer facing north.

19 of 23: Old Jail, side entry on west facade; photographer facing east.

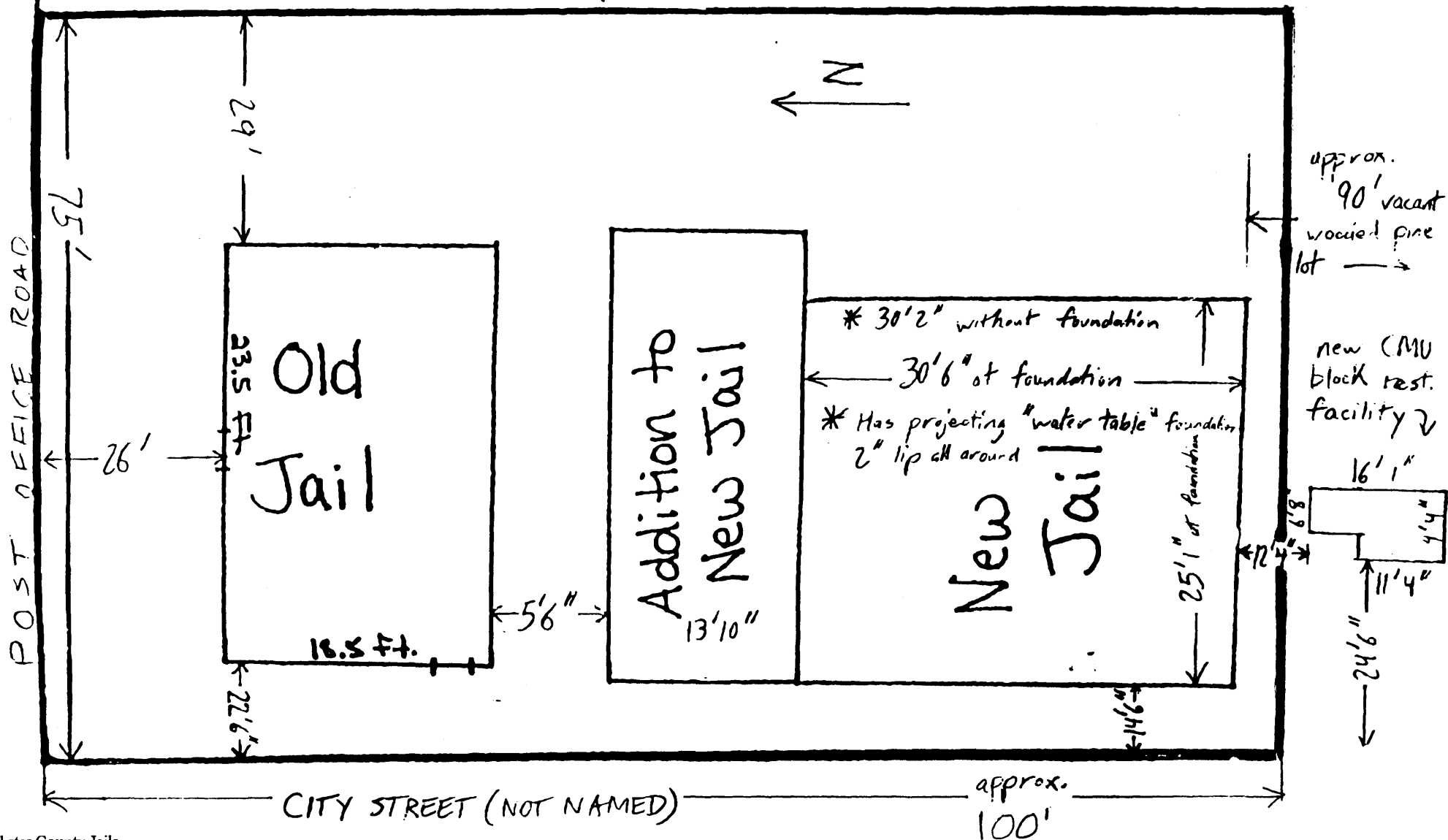
20 of 23: Old Jail, window and northeast corner of building; photographer facing northeast.

21 of 23: Old Jail, window and front door on north facade; photographer facing north.

22 of 23: Old Jail, window detail on south facade; photographer facing south.

23 of 23: Old Jail, toilet opening in southeast corner of jail; photographer facing east.

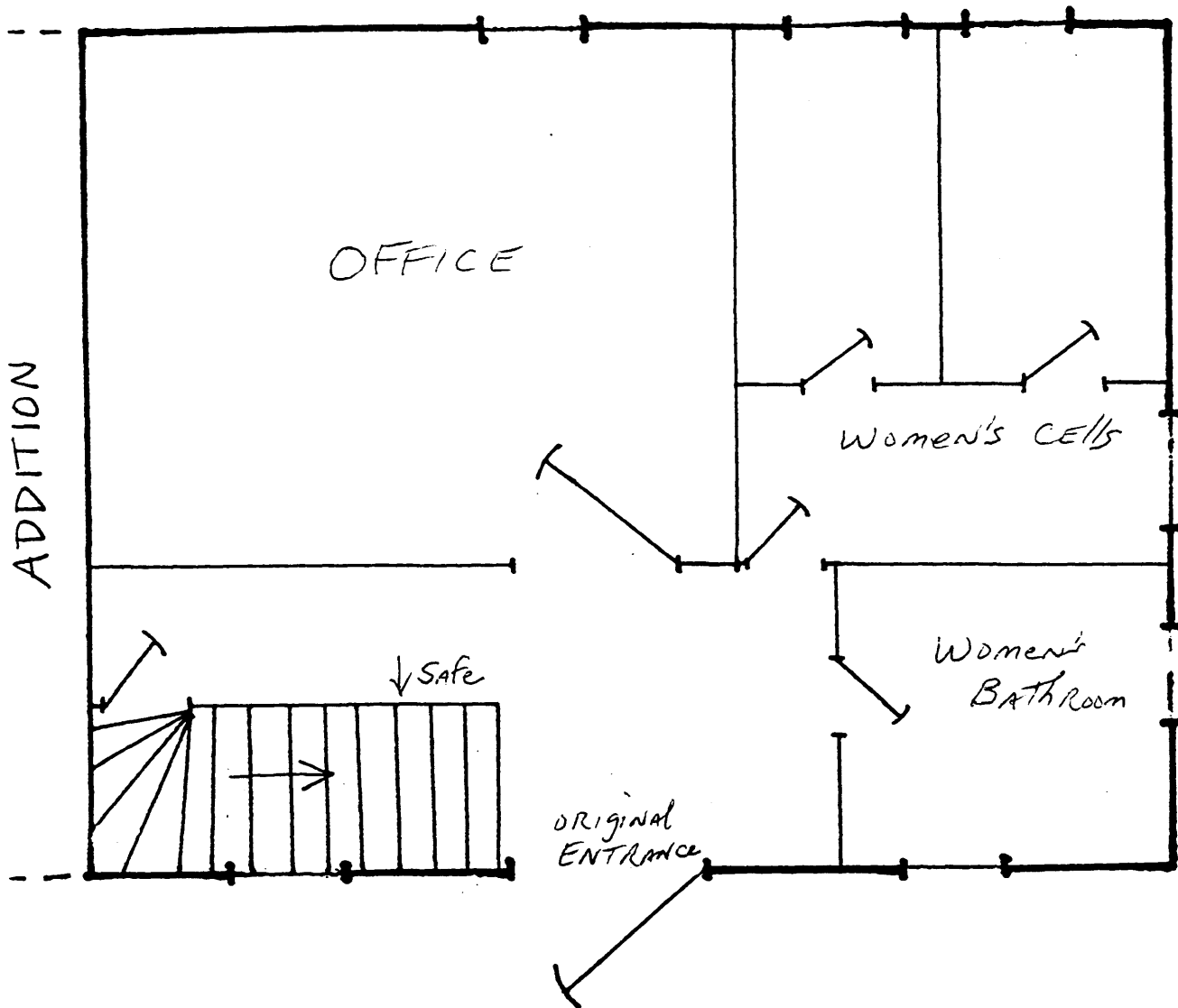
* much as a foot, as there are no curbs (esp. true at west boundary)



Webster County Jails
 Preston, Webster County, Georgia
 Site Plan

Scale: Dimensions given on plan
 Source: drawn by Diana Miles based on tax map
 Date: 1995; 2000

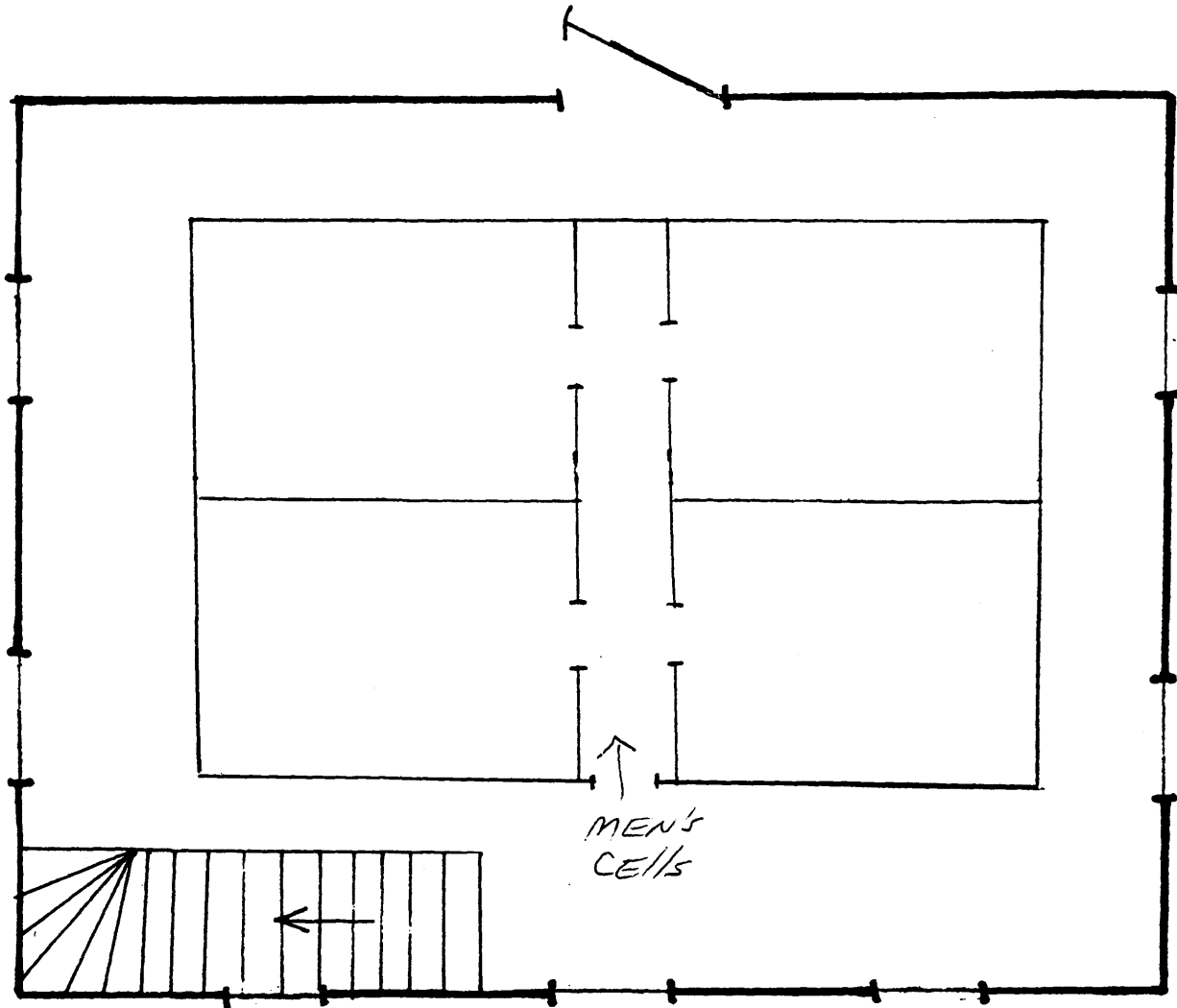
Key: Historic buildings are designated on map; nominated property is marked by heavy black line
 North: ←



1st Floor

Webster County Jails
 Preston, Webster County, Georgia
 Floor Plan-New Jail
 Scale: Not to scale
 Source: Drawn by Diana Miles
 Date: 1995
 Key: 1st Floor
 North: ←

Webster County Jails
Preston, Webster County, Georgia
Floor Plan-New Jail
Scale: Not to scale
Source: Drawn by Diana Miles
Date: 1995
Key: 2nd Floor
North: ←

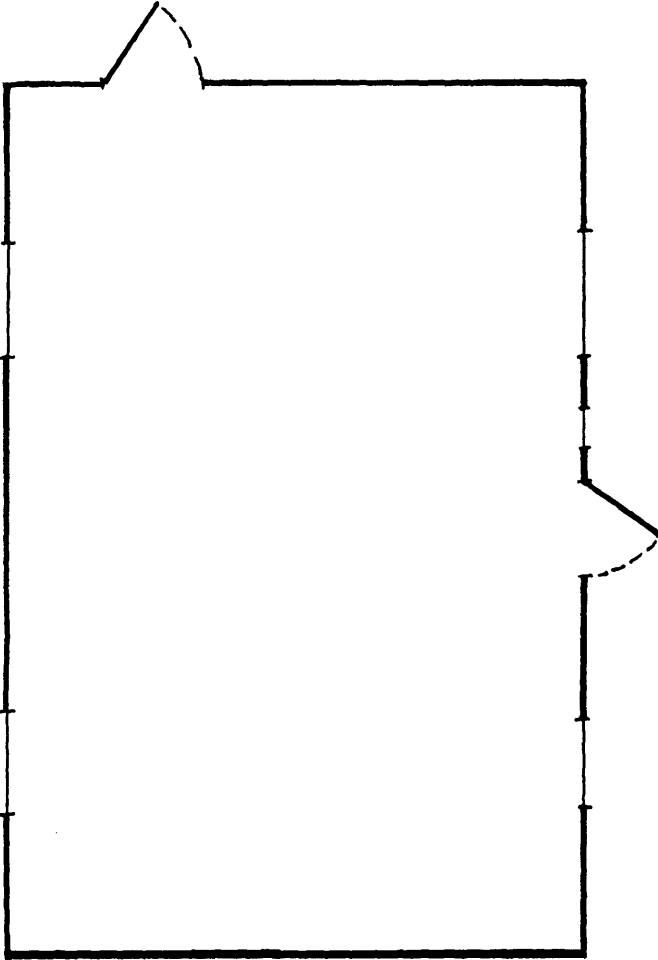


2nd Floor

Drawn 8-23-95 New Jail
by Diana Miles Webster County 1"=5'

PRESTON, WEBSTER COUNTY

Z →



Webster County Jails
Preston, Webster County, Georgia
Floor Plan-Old Jail
Scale: Not to scale
Source: Drawn by Diana Miles
Date: 1995
Key: Jail is one room
North: →

DRAWN BY DIANA MILES, JULY 20, 1995