

PH000094

Congressional Dist. III

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	ALABAMA
COUNTY:	ELMORE
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	MAY 8 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
Alabama State Penitentiary

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Wetumpka Women's Prison; The Walls

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Highway 231, .4 mile north of the juncture of U.S. 231 and Ala. 14

CITY OR TOWN:
Wetumpka VIC

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
01

STATE: **Alabama** CODE: **01** COUNTY: **Elmore** CODE: **051**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <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	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input 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) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Elmore County

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Wetumpka

STATE:
Alabama

CODE:
01

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Elmore County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Wetumpka

STATE:
Alabama

CODE:
01

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

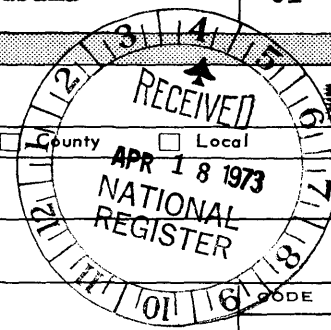
STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Wetumpka

STATE:
Alabama

CODE:
01

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: _____

COUNTY: _____

ENTRY NUMBER: _____

DATE: _____

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The State Penitentiary consist of two large brick buildings located in an area of three acres.

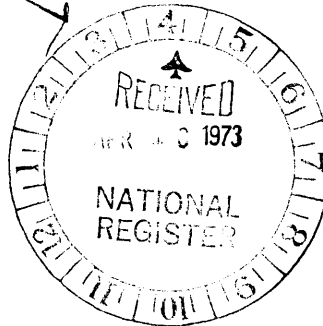
Originally the complex consisted of three brick buildings enclosed on three sides by a 30-foot high brick wall braced by modified engaged buttresses, and across the front by a central entrance building, three stories in height. This building fronted East and was occupied by guard room, the main entrance, domestic offices, residences of the warden and cell rooms. An ornate two-story portico with wood trim crossed the front of the building.

The space enclosed by the three walls and main building was landscaped with trees, a formal garden and a small fountain.

At the back of west side of the yard was a brick building 228 feet long. This building which is presently standing consists of a two-story central block with one-story wings on either side. The roof is gabled and originally there was an ornate portico across the front. It housed the kitchen, office, dining room, chapel and wood and blacksmith shops.

A two-story brick building, located on the north wall measures 123 feet by 30 feet. A two-story portico crosses the south side of the building and originally was used for stable, barn and printers shop.

A brick hospital was located near the center of the yard along with a wooden bath and laundry house.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

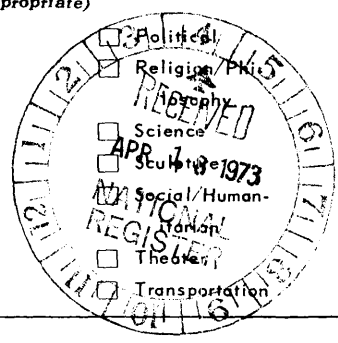
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian!	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/PKis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>Correctional</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The Alabama State Penitentiary constructed in 1840 was the first brick state prison in Alabama's history and is one of the older surviving penal institute landmarks in the Lower South. The buildings were unusually attractive and except for the bars on the windows might have been mistaken for any other public building.

On January 26, 1839, a law was passed providing that a penitentiary should be located at a place not more than fifty miles from the center of the state, the site to be selected by the Alabama Legislature. A sum of \$30,000 was appropriated with which to purchase the necessary land and erect the buildings. Land was obtained in Elmore County on the east bank of the Coosa River not far from Wetumpka.

The cornerstone was laid March 14, 1840, and the buildings were constructed by W. H. Thomas. The keys to the building were given to Alabama State Prison Commissioners on October 27, 1841, and the first warden, William Hogan, assumed charge.

The administration of the penitentiary from the outset was unprofitable and unsatisfactory. During the first four years of its history the excess of expenditures over receipts was \$31,980.69. The original cost of the buildings had been more than \$84,000 and during 1844 the frame workshops in the yard had been destroyed by fire. Public dissatisfaction with the operation of the penitentiary grew.

As a result of this dissatisfaction, an act was passed during the legislative session of 1845 authorizing the lease of the penitentiary. The law constituted the person leasing the prison as warden with full authority over the convicts and held him responsible for the preservation of the state's property.

From 1845 to 1862 the property was leased three times. The third lease was to Dr. Ambrose Burrows from 1858 to 1862. In 1862 Dr. Burrows was killed by a convict and the penitentiary reverted to the state. Dr. M. G. Moore was appointed warden.

During the War Between the States any prisoner who would enlist in the Confederate army was pardoned, and remaining prisoners worked to manufacture

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Biennial Reports of the Inspectors of the Alabama Penitentiaries to the Governor. W. P. Brown and Co: Montgomery, 1884.
 Lee, Frank, "Historical Review of the Alabama Prison System". State of Alabama, 1960
 Porter, Elizabeth, A History of Wetumpka, Wetumpka, The Wetumpka Chamber of Commerce, 1957.

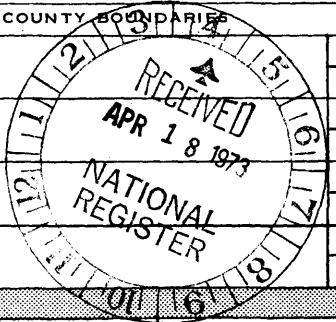
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	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
NW	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		32	33	06
SE	° ' "	° ' "		86	11	31
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **3 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION: **Alabama Historical Commission** DATE: **3-30-73**

STREET AND NUMBER:
305 South Lawrence Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Montgomery** STATE: **Alabama** CODE: **01**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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 Milo B. Howard, Jr.

Title SLO for Historic Preservation

Date April 6, 1973

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

Robert M. Utley
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 5/8/73

ATTEST:

W. D. Mumby
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 4 26 73

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE		ALABAMA
COUNTY		ELMORE
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	MAY 8	1973

(Number all entries)

SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

articles for the Confederate soldiers. In 1865 federal troops opened the doors of the penitentiary and freed all of the convicts.

In 1866 Governor Robert M. Patton made another lease. Two individuals, Smith and McMillan, were to operate the penitentiary with a \$15,000 loan from the state. Shortly after the beginning of the Smith-McMillan lease, an act was passed allowing them to sublet convicts to work outside the penitentiary as a means of meeting operating expenses. The arrangement was highly unsuccessful and the loan was never repaid, but the practice of subcontracting prison labor continued until the turn of the century when the penitentiary was adapted to house only women prisoners.

In 1942 the women's prison was relocated at Tutwiler prison and the buildings emptied. At present the Alabama State Penitentiary is used for industrial storage, but the Elmore County Historical Society plans to obtain the property and restore the remaining structures for use as offices and a museum.

5/2/73

