

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Beaufort	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME	
COMMON: Beaufort County Courthouse	
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: Corner of West Second and Market Streets			
CITY OR TOWN: Washington			
STATE North Carolina	CODE 37	COUNTY: Beaufort	CODE 013

3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input 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

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: County of Beaufort			
STREET AND NUMBER: West Second and Market Streets			
CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE: North Carolina	CODE 37	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Beaufort County Courthouse			
STREET AND NUMBER: West Second and Market Streets			
CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE: North Carolina	CODE 37	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY:			
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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COUNTY: Beaufort
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
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DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input 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 Beaufort County Courthouse was built about 1786 as a two-story square structure, measuring approximately 42' x 42'. It was constructed of brick laid in Flemish bond with a high brick water table. Later, a two-bay brick extension was built at the rear of the building and a clock tower constructed on the gable roof.

The east (main) facade is three bays wide. It features a large lunette in the gable which is divided into two equal quadrants by a heavy wooden mullion. The central entrance contains a flat-panel folding double-door which is framed by a heavy molded architrave and surmounted by a six-pane transom.

The north and south sides contain five bays. The west two bays are a later addition and are of brick laid in one-to-five American bond. The sash in both the addition and the original portion has been replaced but the fine jack arches remain.

Above the east gable is the square clock tower which rises in two distinct stages above a plinth. The lower level forms an unadorned base for the upper stages. The second section features a pair of narrow louvered windows with segmental heads on each face flanked by two fluted pilasters and molded cornerposts. The top of the tower houses a four-faced clock. Each face is flanked by a molded cornerpost. The two upper levels of the tower have simple bracket cornices. Above the tower rises a small wooden pinnacle.

The interior of the first floor is center-passage in plan with two rooms flanking the hall on either side. A wide two-flight enclosed stair rises on the inside wall of the east facade on either side of the hall. The first floor has been greatly altered through several renovations but, a few chamfered columns and heavy Greek Revival door casings remain. The rooms have been partitioned and all the original hardware has been removed. The later additions which house the office of the Register of Deeds and the court records vault have heavy iron covers for both the doors and windows which roll into place on metal tracks.

The second floor consists of a large courtroom with the additions forming the jury room and judge's quarters. The original section of the courtroom contains a raised, stepped platform on which long benches provide gallery seating. The judge's bench, lawyer's tables, and jury seats are behind a balustrade featuring flat, scroll-saw balusters. The doors to the jury room and judge's quarters are framed by large bands of reeding with cornerblocks decorated with roundels.

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)

## 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/Philosophy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   | _____                                    |

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

On February 3, 1776, James Bonner sold to the commissioners of "an intended Township" the streets and lot 21 for the public use. At that time court for Beaufort County was held in the nearby town of Bath. But, by 1785 Bath had ceased to be a major port and was fast losing its prominence as a trading center. Therefore, on December 6, 1785, a bill was introduced in the General Assembly calling for the removal of the courthouse from Bath to Washington. The measure was approved and commissioners were appointed to build the new courthouse in Washington on "Public Lot" number 21. The minutes of the Inferior Court for March 1786 reported

that there is a sufficient sum subscribed for completing the courthouse. Ordered therefore that the Court stand adjourned until Court in Course, then to meet at the School House in Washington.

The September minutes of the court listed the meeting place "at the school house," but the December sessions were recorded "at the Court House in Washington."

Since its completion the courthouse has been used continually as the seat of Beaufort County government. It is one of the earliest permanent public buildings in North Carolina and has served as a meeting place for the prominent political and social figures in the area for over one hundred and fifty years.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

10. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Beaufort County Records, Beaufort County Courthouse, Washington, North Carolina. Office of the Register of Deeds. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate Papers, Census Reports).

Beaufort County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate Papers, Census Reports).

Reed, C. Wingate. Beaufort County, Two Centuries of History.

Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Company, 1962.

11. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			C 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	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0     '     "	0     '     "		35° 32' 37"	77° 01' 48"	
NE	"     '     "	0     '     "				
SE	0     '     "	0     '     "				
SW	0     '     "	0     '     "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: One half acre.

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

12. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
John Wells, Survey Specialist; Greer Suttlemyre, Survey Assistant

ORGANIZATION: State Department of Archives and History      DATE: December 18, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:  
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh      STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37

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 H. G. Jones

Title Director, State Department of Archives and History

Date December 18, 1970

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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