

STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
725 MONROE STREET  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130  
PHONE: 832-6621



ALABAMA INVENTORY AND WORKSHEET FOR LANDMARKS

COUNTY Bibb

PRESENT NAME Bibb County Junior High School HISTORIC NAME Bibb County High School

LOCATION (Street and number) 335 Walnut Street

TOWN (Give directions if rural) Centreville

PRESENT USE Education (Junior High) HISTORIC USE Education (High School)

OWNERSHIP: Public  Private  Public acquisition being considered

OWNER'S NAME Bibb County Board of Education

MAILING ADDRESS 103 Southwest Davidson  
Centreville, Alabama 35042

CONDITION: Excellent  Good  Fair  Ruins

INTEGRITY: Original Site  Moved  When? \_\_\_\_\_

From where? \_\_\_\_\_ Give details in significance.

THREATS: No  Yes  By What? \_\_\_\_\_

RESTORATION WORK: Being considered  Underway  Completed  Not planned

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Open land  Woodland  Scattered buildings   
High building density  Commercial  Industrial   
Residential  Rural

If there are numerous buildings in the area, could this structure be part of a Historic District?

SIGNIFICANCE: Why is this important  associated with events, persons, or movements  
Local  State  National   
 a good example of a type or style of structure  
 other

Explain: (Expand on the significance of the building. If architecturally significant, give details being very specific. Additional data on what aspects of the community's development the building represents, or a specific event, trend or person related to the building's importance.)

## Old Bibb County High School

### Description

The Old Bibb County High School is a two-story red brick structure of Neo-Classical architecture. Completed in 1909, the original structure measured approximately 40 feet by 74 feet. The building had only 3 classrooms and an office on the first floor; the second floor consisted of one large room, which served as an auditorium. During the early 1930's, two additional wings were added to the building with the same structural design.

The main facade is composed of a gable roofed portico supported by four columns of plastered wood, the two pilasters flanking the entrance are composed of plastered brick. All of their capitals are a composite of Ionic and Corinthian styling, adorned with Acanthus leaves above with pairs of branching scrolls meet at the corners in spiral volutes.

Above the doubled doors of the facade is an arched transom and sidelights. The transom is repeated over the first floor windows on the portico. These windows have an arch design with keystones. Two interior chimneys are connected to the boiler room which provided heat for the present structure.

The roof is hipped and originally had a cupola, which was destroyed by a tornado in 1932. The exposed woodwork of the original building has dental block designs which can be seen at the front and back of building.

The floor plan on both levels is essentially the same with the exception of an library located on the second level measuring 32 feet by 40 feet. Stairs are located on each end of the central corridor as well as the center of the corridor. The interior walls are of plaster with ceilings of wood.



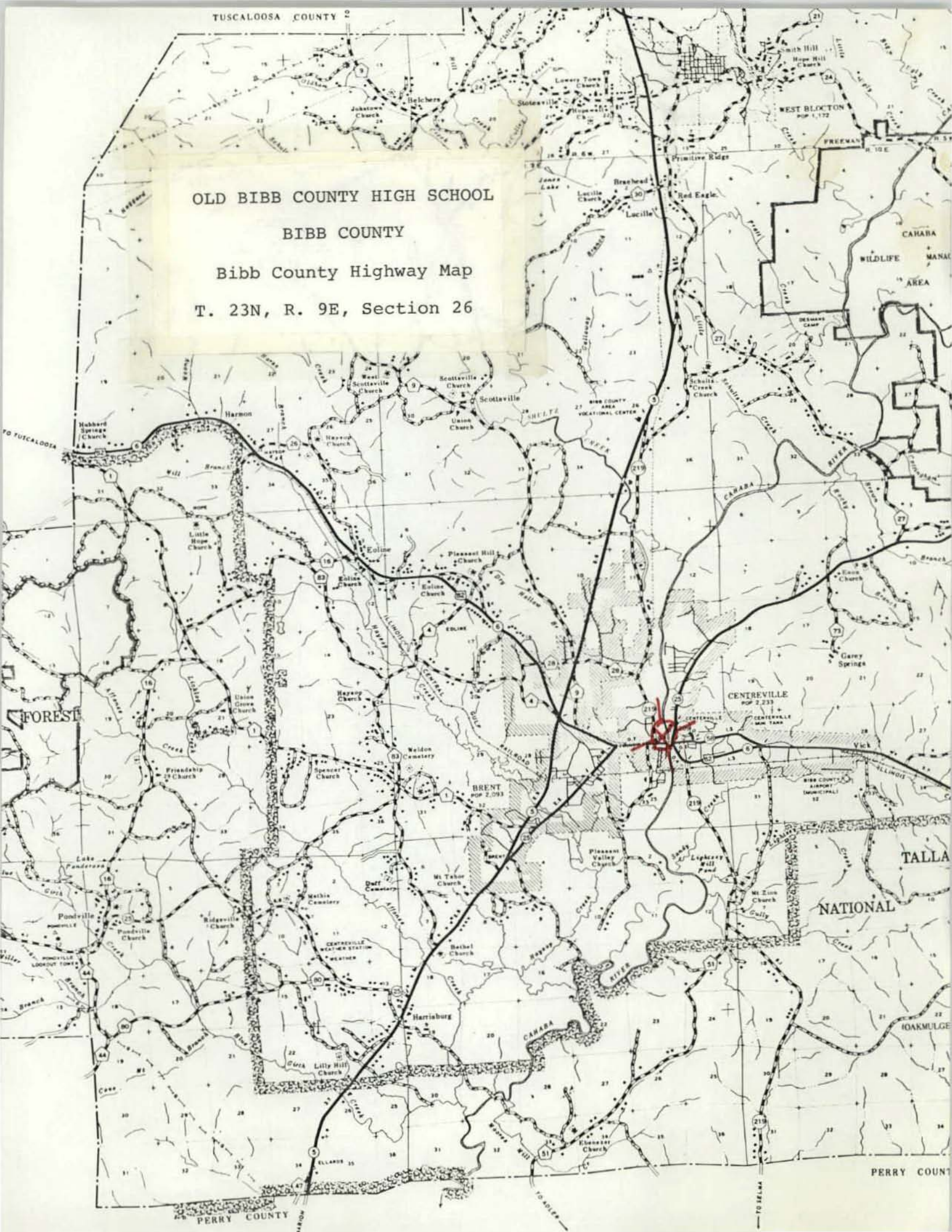
## Old Bibb County High School

### Significance

The Old Bibb County High School, constructed in 1908-09, is believed to be the last of the schools built under the Governorship of B. B. Comer which is still in use as a secondary school. Governor Comer, known as the "educational governor", was extremely interested in improving the educational system of the state, and he initiated the establishment of county high schools in each Alabama county.

As the first consolidated high school in Bibb County, the old high school has played an important role in the educational history of the county and is also noted for one of its prominent teachers, Mrs. John Sparkman, wife of the longtime Alabama Senator, taught at the school in the 1930's. Since its construction, it has served as an educational facility for the county, now serving as the Bibb County Junior High School.

OLD BIBB COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL  
BIBB COUNTY  
Bibb County Highway Map  
T. 23N, R. 9E, Section 26







W WARNER FLOYD  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF ALABAMA  
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

725 MONROE STREET  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36104



TELEPHONE NUMBER  
832-6621

August 1, 1977

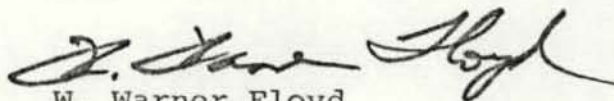
Mr. James L. Kornegay, Jr.  
Bibb County Superintendent of Education  
103 Southwest Davidson  
Centreville, Alabama 35042

Re: Old Bibb County High School  
Bibb County (July 29, 1977)

Dear Mr. Kornegay:

The Alabama Historical Commission is pleased to inform you that the referenced landmark has been favorably reviewed and added to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage. The Alabama Register is a prestigious listing of historic, architectural and archaeological landmarks. These selected Alabama landmarks are worthy of both recognition and restoration. The Alabama Historical Commission appreciates your interest in Alabama's historic preservation program.

Sincerely,

  
W. Warner Floyd

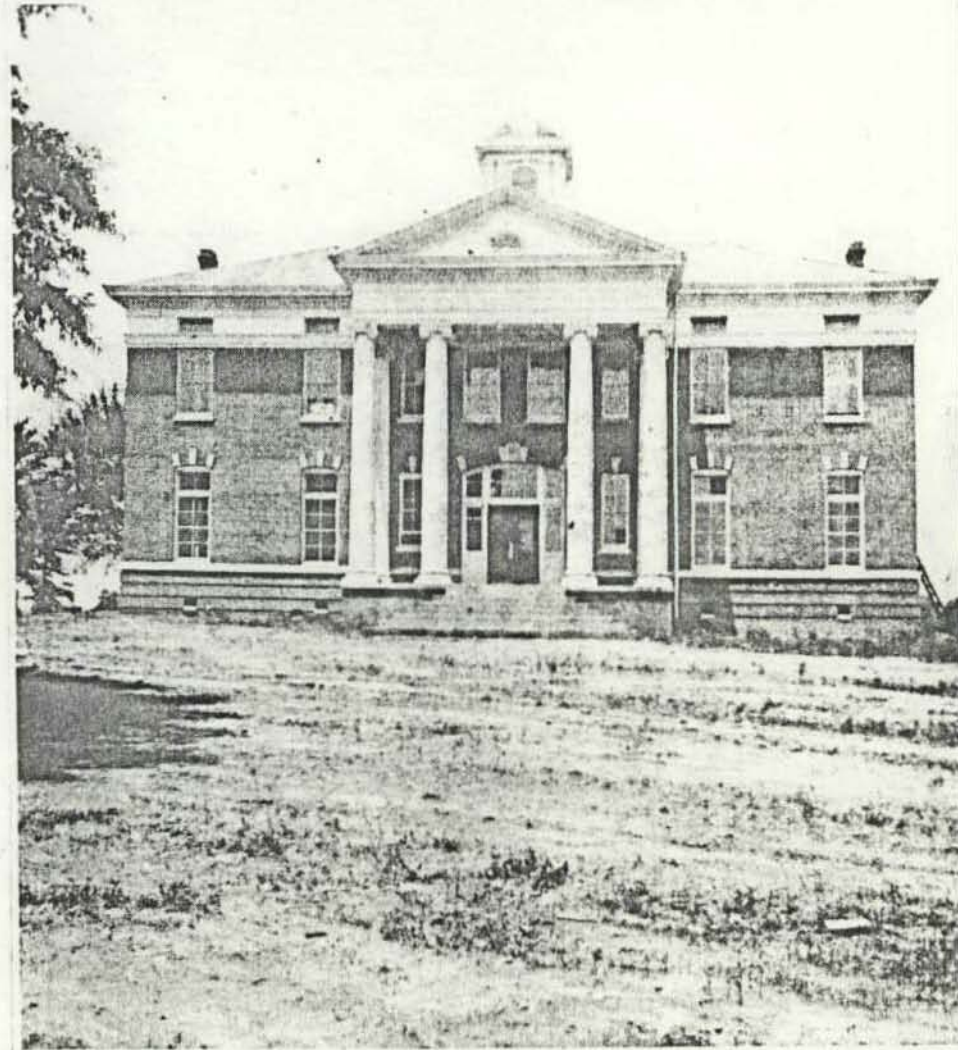
WWF/pjs

cc: Ms. Lynn Hamric  
Bibb County Heritage Association  
P. O. Box 270  
Brent, Alabama 35034

THE CENTREVILLE PRESS  
P. O. Box 127  
Centreville, Alabama 35042

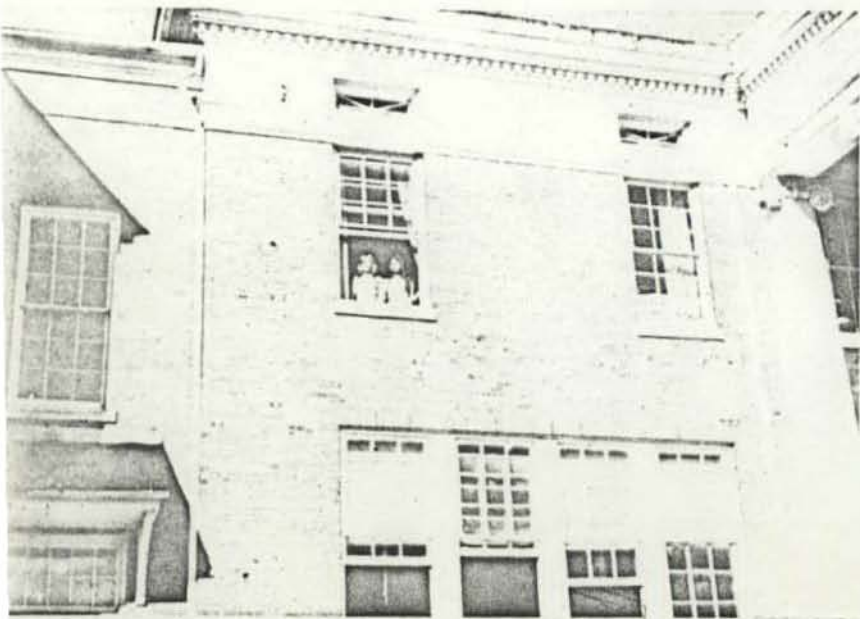
# FOUR COLUMNS ON THE HILL

## A Short History of the Old High School Building





The present Bibb County Junior High School Building was built in 1909 as Bibb County High School. At that time the building had only three classrooms, an office, and an auditorium. The school had no indoor restroom facilities. The second floor of the building consisted of one large room, which served as an auditorium. The stage of the auditorium was four feet high and ten feet long with two small dressing rooms on each side. The original roof of the building was constructed with a dome; however, it was destroyed by a "deadly tornado" in the 1930's.



During the early 1930's, two additional wings were added. These are a part of the present structure. This, of course, added much needed space to meet the needs of a growing student body. In 1962 a new High School Building was constructed, and the old structure became Bibb County Junior High School.

Present and Original Physical Appearance

The Bibb County Junior High School is a two story, red brick structure of Greek Revival architectural design. Completed in 1909, the original structure measured approximately 40 feet by 74 feet. Three wings were added to the building with the same structural design.

The main facade is composed of a gable roof portico supported by four columns of plastered wood. The pilasters are composed of plastered brick. The capitals are a composite of ionic and corinthian styling, adorned with acanthus leaves above which pairs of branching scrolls meet at the corners in spiral volutes.

Above the double doors of the facade is an arched transom and sidelights. The transom is repeated over the windows on the portico. These windows have an arch design with keystones. Two interior chimneys are connected to the boiler room which provided heat for the present structure.

The roof is hipped and originally had a cupola, which was destroyed by a tornado in 1932. The exposed woodwork of the original building has dental block designs which can be seen at the front and back of building.

The floor plan on both levels is essentially the same with the exception of an library located on the second level measuring 32 feet by 40 feet. Stair are located on each end of the central corridor as well as the center of the corridor. The interior walls are of plaster with ceilings of wood.

The building is structurally sound, however plans are being made for extensive renovation.



*Draft*

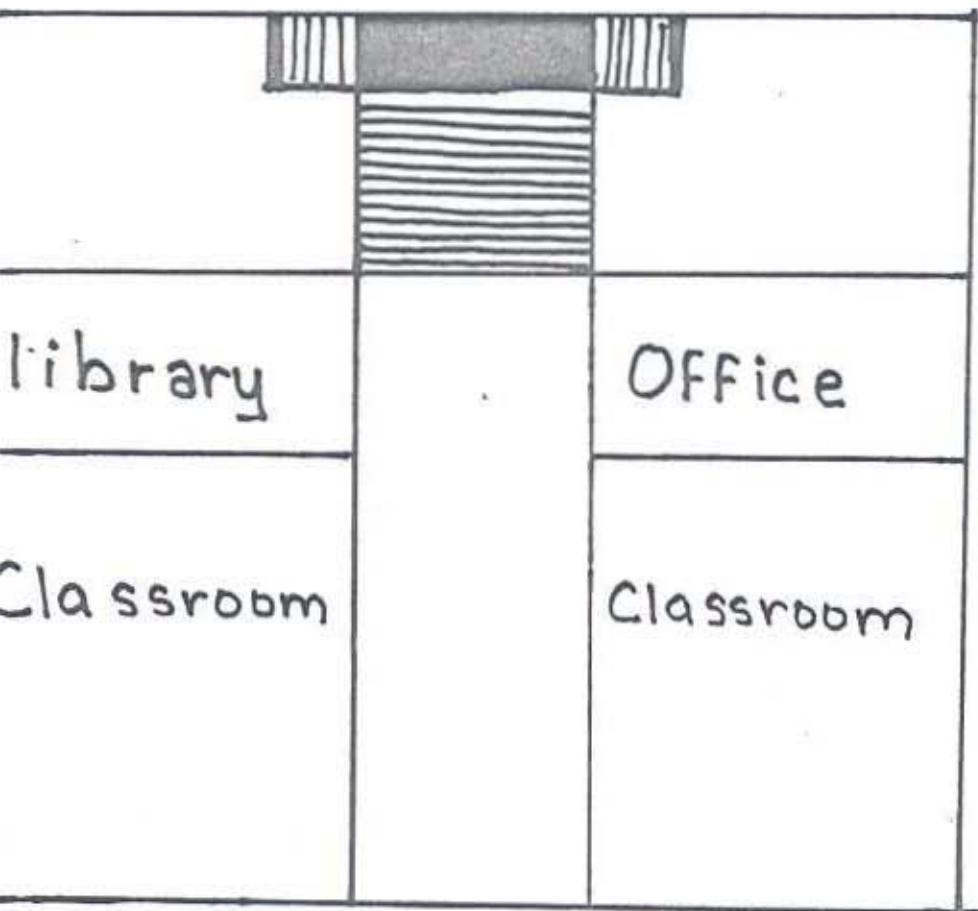
### Statement of Significance

The Bibb County High School is one of the few buildings in Bibb County with the provincial adaptation of Greek Revival Architecture. It is the only structure in the county of Greek Revival Architecture in brick with massive ionic columns.

The building is one of the few County schools currently in use that was constructed as a campaign promise of Prentiss Bragg Comer, former Governor of Alabama. B.B. Comer was known as the "Great Educational Governor". ONE of the important things accomplished by Comer was the County High Schools.

*Senator John Spinkman's wife was one of the teachers who taught at the school*

# FIRST FLOOR

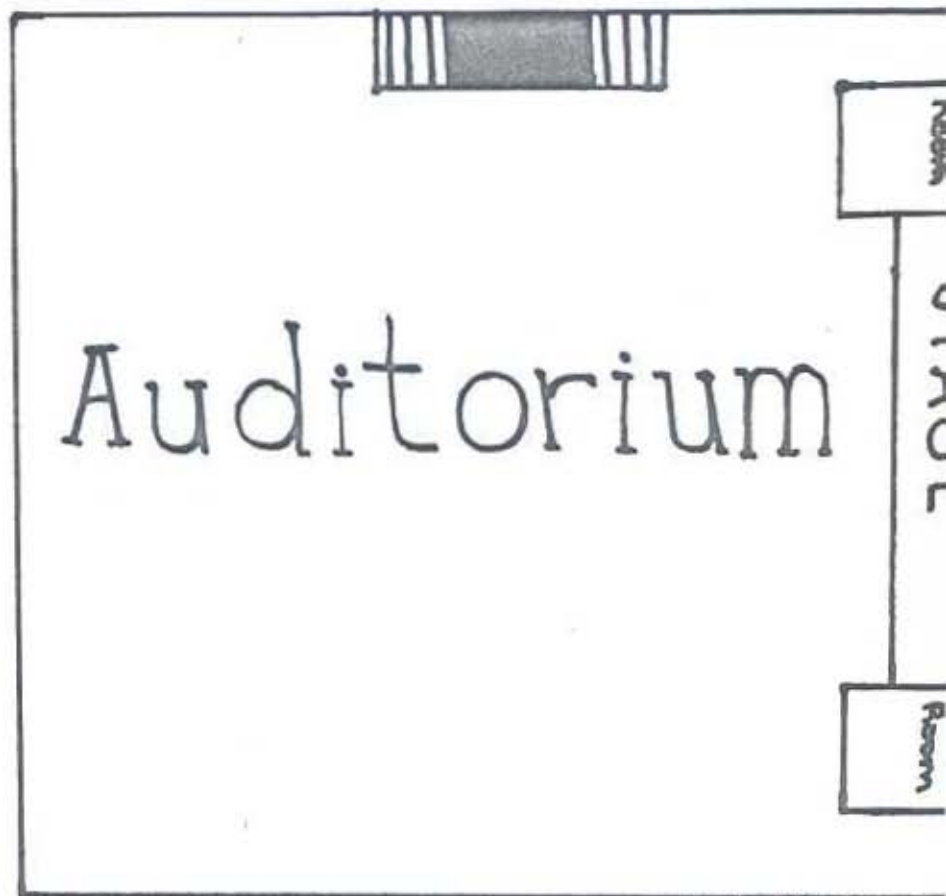


By Robt's Sanders

## FLOOR PLAN

### 1909

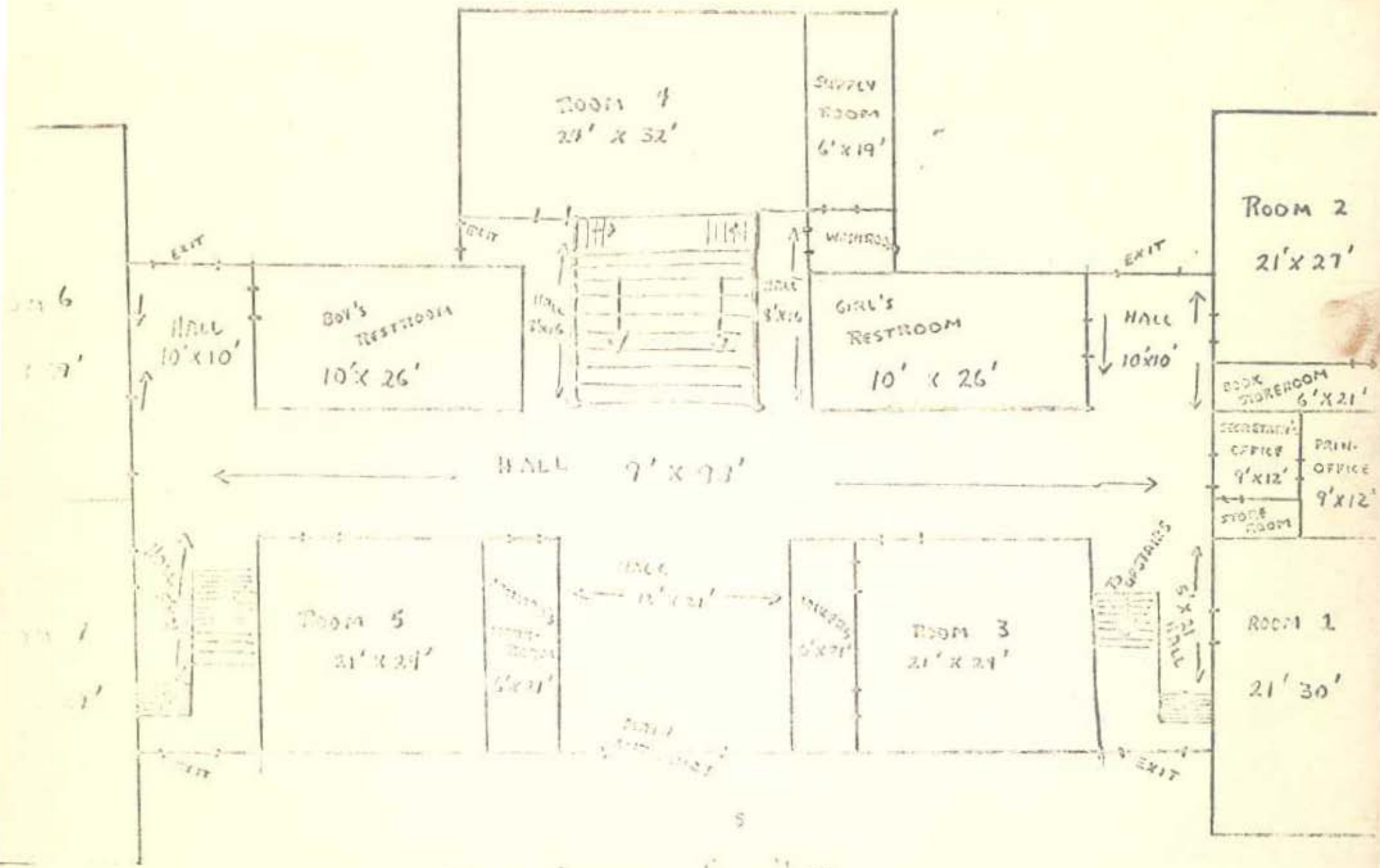
# Second FLOOR



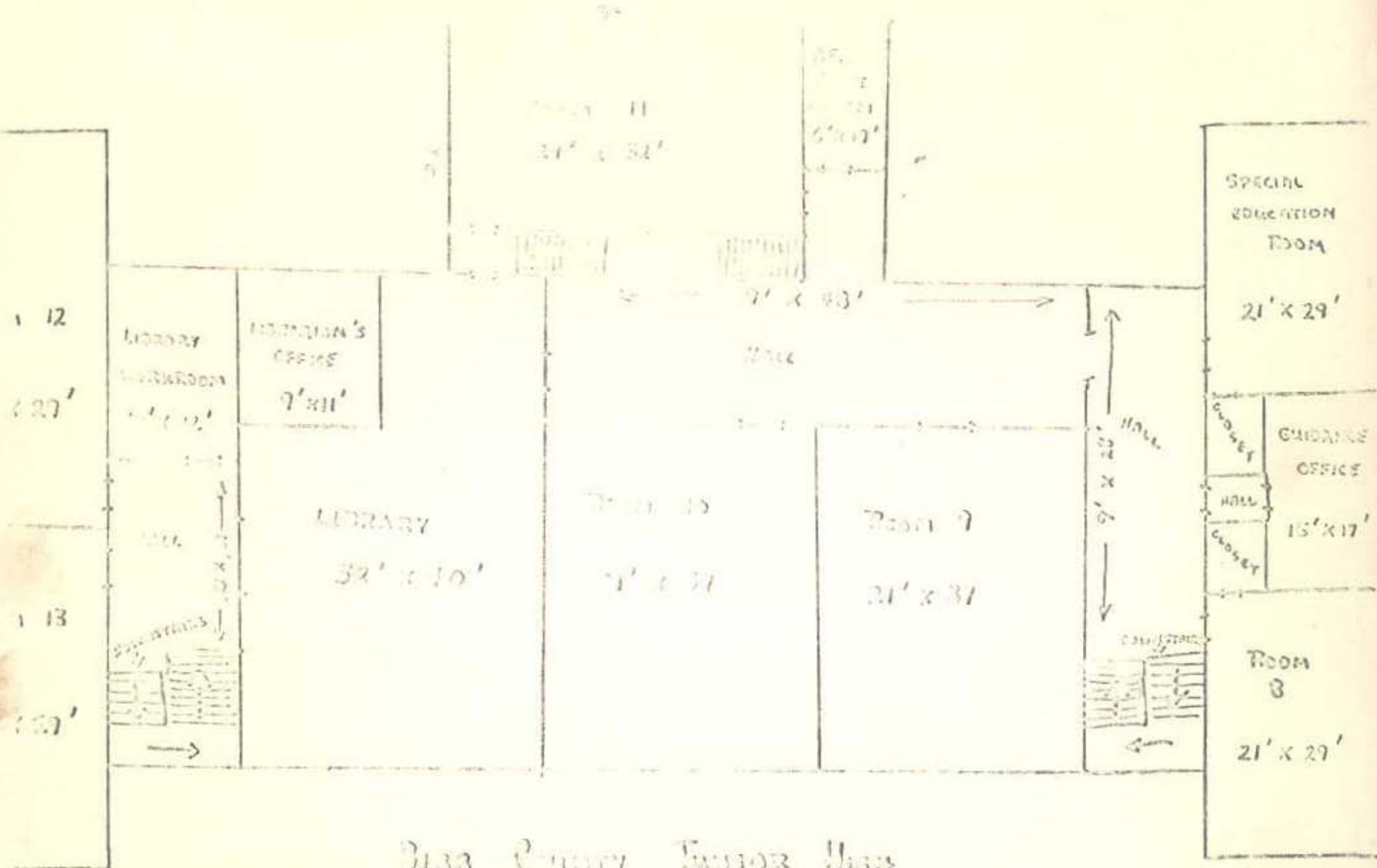
By Robt's Sanders

## OF THE BUILDING





1914  
 1914  
 1914



3133 County Junior High  
(1930-1935)



# Bibb County landmark burns

*Published: Wednesday, December 17, 2008 at 3:30 a.m.*

CENTREVILLE | Fire gutted a former school that's been part of the Centreville landscape for nearly a century.

Jerry Pow, Brent fire chief and Bibb County's probate judge, blamed faulty wiring in the attic of the former Bibb County Junior High School. The fire consumed the roof and most of the interior of the school, which opened Jan. 1, 1909.

No injuries were reported.

Dozens of Bibb County residents stood in the drizzle Tuesday afternoon, watching as flames destroyed the two-story, red-brick schoolhouse with white columns that sits in the middle of the county seat.

"I knew as soon as I saw it, as old as it was, that it was going to go fast," said Centreville resident Tina Samford, who attended the school, as did her father, sisters, daughter, nieces and nephews. Like Samford, most of the onlookers could list generations of family members educated there.

Frances McGee met her husband, Odis, there in the early 1960s. Nine of her brothers and sisters and eight of his siblings went to the school.

"This is so sad," she said, while watching crackling hunks of heart pine fall from the second story to the ground.

Firefighters from eight of Bibb County's nine volunteer departments responded to the blaze, which started around 2 p.m. Crews from Montevallo in Shelby County and Pinetucky in Perry County drove in to assist.

Workers had just begun renovations on the building, said Bibb County Superintendent Don Elam. The Bibb County Board of Education had budgeted around \$70,000 to renovate the school for administrative offices. There were plans to restore the original floors and display historic items so the new offices would be a source of community pride, he said.

"We're just really, really devastated," Elam said. "We had looked forward to remodeling this building."

There were a few people on the first floor of the school who escaped as soon as the fire started. The school's 333 seventh- and eighth-grade students were relocated to Centreville Middle School this year because of the school system's renovation plans.

Smoke quickly filled the building, which would have made it nearly impossible for anyone to escape from the building, Elam said. The building has only two exits on each end, he said.

"When we spoke to the board about closing the school, one of the reasons we stated was because it was a fire trap," Elam said. "It would have been a nightmare if students were still in there."

Bibb County Emergency Management Agency director Wayne Hayes said he expected firefighters to be on the scene until late Tuesday.

Bibb County High School seniors Katie Fancher, 17, and Kelli Buckalew, 18, were in English class when the fire started at their old school, which is about a block away on Walnut Street.

The school was put on lockdown, Fancher said, and students weren't allowed to leave until firefighters had the blaze under control.

"Of all the schools we've been to, that was my favorite," Buckalew said. "It just had a good feel to it."

Devin Horton, 13, attended seventh grade at the school last year, and said he made some good memories at the school.

"Everybody would jump off the old stairs if they were running late," he said.

Elizabeth Averette, 13, attends

Cahaba Christian Academy but had rehearsals for Children's Theater at the former Bibb County Junior High.

"In the short time I've been rehearsing there, I've come to know and love it," she said. "I like the architecture and the columns and that it's a historic building."

"It was a pretty school," said Amy Young, 11.

Kevin Cash, 31, had grandparents and parents who attended the school before he did in 1988 and 1989.



"I hate to see it burn," he said.

The Alabama State Fire Marshal will investigate to officially determine the cause of the fire.

Reach Stephanie Taylor at [stephanie.taylor@tuscaloosaneews.com](mailto:stephanie.taylor@tuscaloosaneews.com) or 205-722-0210.







































OFFICE

OFFICE  
Mr. Anderson  
Principal

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION...**

Bill  
Bill County Jr. High  
Bill  
Bill County Jr. High  
**DECEMBER**  
Bill  
Bill County Jr. High  
Bill  
Bill County Jr. High

**TORWED**  
**1938**

