

MFB AR draft 1/23/95

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name \_\_\_\_\_

other names/site number Courthouse Historic District

2. Location

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication N/A  
city or town Grove Hill vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state Alabama code AL county Clarke code 025 zip code \_\_\_\_\_

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this \_\_\_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility 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 \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_\_\_ locally. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
\_\_\_\_\_ entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Classification

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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box.)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>20</u>	<u>5</u> buildings
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register     

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)     N/A    

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Commerce/trade</u>	Sub: <u>business</u>
<u>Government</u>	<u>county courthouse</u>
<u>Residential</u>	<u>single dwelling</u>
<u>Recreation/culture</u>	<u>monument/marker</u>
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Commerce/trade</u>	Sub: <u>business</u>
<u>Commerce/trade</u>	<u>financial institution</u>
<u>Government</u>	<u>county courthouse</u>
<u>Commerce/trade</u>	<u>restaurant</u>
<u>Commerce/trade</u>	<u>specialty store</u>
<u>Recreation/culture</u>	<u>monument/marker</u>
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>

Property Name Courthouse Historic District  
County and State Clarke County, Alabama

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Commercial Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick, concrete

roof unknown

walls brick, wood, concrete

other \_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition on continuation sheet/s.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture \_\_\_\_\_

Commerce \_\_\_\_\_

Government/Politics \_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance 1843-1955 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates 1843-1955 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder N/A

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9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- 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

Name of repository: Alabama Historical Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	___	_____	_____	3	___	_____
2	___	_____	_____	4	___	_____
	___ See continuation sheet.					

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Kay Buwalda, Research Coordinator and Susan Enzweiler, AR and NR Coordinator

organization Alabama Historical Commission date \_\_\_\_\_

street & number 468 S. Perry Street telephone (205) 242-3184

city or town Montgomery state AL zip code 36104

USDI/NPS Registration Form

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Additional Documentation  
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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Property Owner  
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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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Description:

The Courthouse Historic District encompasses three blocks of the downtown core, including the courthouse. The buildings included in the district are found on Main Street from Jackson Street to the courthouse, Court Street from the courthouse to Cobb Street, and Cobb Street from the courthouse to Jackson Street. Twenty contributing and five non-contributing buildings comprise this district. Main Street is the major roadway in the district and runs perpendicular to the courthouse, which marks the westernmost boundary of the district. The majority of the buildings face Main Street and date from 1843 to 1955. Most buildings are one story tall, with a few two story buildings. Most are built of brick and have simple detailing, reflecting typical commercial styles as seen in small towns during the period of significance. Cobb Street was historically residential and most buildings here are one story frame construction. The most prominent buildings in the district include the courthouse, built in 1955, the building at the northwest corner of Court and Cobb Streets, #22 ca. 1940, and the Alston-Cobb House, #26, ca. 1854.

Upon approaching the district from the east, one is impressed by the wide expanse of Main Street. Parking in the median of Main Street and along the edges of the street contributes to the wide feeling, and the absence of street trees enhances the urban atmosphere. Sidewalks are of concrete and are in good condition, and almost all of the buildings are occupied along Main Street. The setbacks are typical of commercial buildings from the period of significance, with most very close to the sidewalk. Various businesses are gathered here, from auto repair shops to a large grocery store. As one travels up Main Street, the Courthouse becomes the focal point as it sits directly perpendicular to Main Street across Courthouse Square. In the center of the informal square stands a monument to fallen servicemen of World War I. The courthouse itself is the largest building in the district and the most modern, built in 1955. The two-story brick building is typical of civic architecture of the 1950s and is a prominent landmark within the county. Court Street intersects the Courthouse Square, ending at Cobb Street to the north. This marks the transition between historically commercial and residential buildings. At the corner of Court and Cobb Streets, residential buildings appear. Most are of frame construction with the exception of #21, a two-story brick house. The district includes one block of Cobb Street from Court Street to Jackson Street and includes what were originally residences, now mostly serving as commercial buildings, including the Alston-Cobb House, ca. 1845, purchased in the 1970s by the Clarke County Historical Society and now operated as a museum.

The Courthouse Historic District contains good and intact local examples of commercial buildings and residences from the period of significance. The district has integrity of location, design, material workmanship, feeling and association, and setting.

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INVENTORY

1. SE corner Jackson & Main. ca. 1943. Urban Commercial. One story, brick commercial building. The store entrance is located at the angled corner. The building retains its original storefront. There is a metal parapet on the angled corner. The July 29, 1943 issue of the Clarke County Democrat reported the groundbreaking for this building, saying it was being erected on the lot formerly occupied by the Cunningham Hotel. (C)
2. SE corner Jackson & Main. ca. 1916-1930. Urban Commercial. One story, brick commercial building. The store entrance is a single leaf and is flanked by large glass picture windows on either side. A metal awning stretches across the front of the building. (C)
3. SE corner Jackson & Main. ca. 1916-1930. Urban Commercial. One story, brick commercial building. A metal and glass garage bay door is to the left of the facade, and the main entrance is a single leaf door between a three-part display window and the garage bay. (C)
4. SE corner Jackson & Main. ca. 1916-1930. Urban Commercial. One story, brick commercial building. The store entrance is under a projecting square awning. A single leaf door serves as the entrance which is flanked to the left by a large three-part glass display window. (C)
5. S side Main between US 43 & Court. ca. 1886-1915. Urban Commercial. Two story, brick commercial building. The building is three bays in width, and its storefront has been altered. A tall metal parapet adorns the front facade. (C)
6. S side Main between US 43 & Court. ca. 1886-1915. Urban Commercial. Two story brick building has a plain parapet of sheet metal. It is three bays in width and the storefront has been altered. (C)
7. S side Main between US 43 & Court. ca. 1866-1885. Urban Commercial. One story, frame commercial building. There is a small cornice across the top of the building. The first floor has been extensively altered including the application of a new facade. (NC)
8. S side of Main between Courthouse Square and Jackson. ca. x. Urban Commercial. The one story brick building serves as the IGA grocery store. Three single leaf glass doors are on the front facade which had a metal awning suspended over the level of the doors. A brick parapet wall rises above the awning with an extended portion of the parapet containing the IGA sign. (NC)
9. SE corner of Courthouse Square and Main. ca. 1943. Urban Commercial. This is a two story brick commercial building which faces west, or the Courthouse Square. The north facade of the building has six double hung sash windows on the second story and two double hung sash windows on the first story. The front facade has three double hung sash windows covered with metal awnings on the second floor and a central single leaf entrance flanked by a window on either

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side. In an article in the Clarke County Democrat, July 29, 1943, this building is described as being built by Judge Coma Garrett on the rear on the lot formerly occupied by the Cunningham Hotel. It was planned to house the post office on the first floor with offices on the second floor. (C)

10. Monument. ca. 1924. Monument to fallen soldiers of World War I. The monument is comprised of four columns supporting a covering with an eagle on the top. Under this cover is a slab with names of soldiers inscribed. The west face lists an honor roll of white soldiers while the east face lists an honor roll of black soldiers. On the base of the monument the following phrases appear: "Lest We Forget", "Greater Lover hath No Man Than This", "Their Deeds are Immortal", and "Their Memory Shall Never Die". The monument is surrounded by a small earth berm, landscaped with grass and shrubs. (C)

12. NE corner Court & Main, Clarke County Democrat, ca. 1941. Urban Commercial. Two story brick building with a flat roof and slightly recessed entrance. Although not the original building, this has been the site of the office for the Clarke County Democrat newspaper since it started in 1855. The present building is the third structure to house the paper on this site. It has been somewhat altered since its construction. (C)

13. N side of Courthouse Square. Ca. 1945. Urban Commercial. One story brick building with a flat roof. Two metal contemporary doors with single glass panes serve as the entrance and are flanked by two large recessed wood panels. There are no other windows in the front facade. (NC)

14. Courthouse square. ca. 1916-1930. Urban Commercial. Two story brick building with recessed panels along the parapet. The store retains its original wooden recessed storefront. (C)

15. N side Main between US 43 & Court. ca. 1886-1915. Urban Commercial. Two story, brick building with a wide brick beltcourse defining the parapet. The first floor has been extensively altered and the second floor is covered with metal. (C)

16. N side Main between US 43 & Court. ca. 1886-1915. Urban Commercial. One story, brick building with brick corbeling and a horizontal recessed panel across the parapet. The storefront has been altered. (C)

17. E side Main between Court & Jackson. ca. 1931-1945. Urban Commercial. Two story, brick commercial building has three vertical panels defining the front bays. The building has an altered storefront. One second story front facade are three pairs of 6 over 6 double hung sash windows. (C)

18. E side Main between Court & Jackson. ca. 1931-1945. Urban Commercial. One story, brick building adjoining building #17 but set back from the road. The building now serves as an auto repair shop. It has three bays, the center bay allowing for entrance into the building. The



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flanking bays contain four-part glass display windows. A paved area is between the building and the sidewalk. (C)

19. N side Main between US 43 & Court. ca. 1886-1915. Urban Commercial. One story, frame commercial building with a gable front roof. The building has a wooden parapet with a bracketed entablature. This parapet hide the front gable. The building has its original storefront with recessed double leaf entrance. (C)

20. NW corner of Jackson and Main. ca. 1960. Urban Commercial. The building is now a fast food establishment. It is a one-story concrete block building with a flat roof which projects over the front of the building. The front facade is wrapped with windows. (NC)

21. E side Court between Cobb & Square. ca. 1931-1945. Urban Commercial. Simple rectangular, gable front structure of brick veneer with wooden gable end. (NC)

22. SE corner Court & Cobb. ca. 1940. L-cottage, 2 stories. Two story house with a cross-gable roof. The two story, flat roof portico fits within the L formed by the projecting front bay and has large classical columns. Two small gable roofed dormers extend from the main roof. An article in the April 25, 1940 issue of the Clarke County Democrat describes this building as the "W.D. Dunn home, a commodious two-story structure of brick veneer...of the Colonial type." It was discussed as one of the many homes being constructed as part of the buiding boom taking place in Grove Hill in 1940. The large collumns across the front of this building originally had corinthian capitals which have been removed. (C)

23. SE corner Court & Cobb. ca. 1886-1915. Queen Anne Style. Two story, frame house with a cross-gable roof. The gables each have boxed cornices and returns. The one story porch wrapping around two sides on the house has simple round columns. Many additions have been made to the rear and sides of the structure. (C)

24. S side Cobb, between Jackson & Court. ca. 1916-1930. High Hip Pyramidal Form, L-Cottage. One story, frame house with a high hipped roof. The shed-roofed porch wraps around two sides of the house. The front projecting bay has angled bay. (C)

25. N side Cobb between Jackson & Church, Armistead House. ca. 1843. Greek Revival Style, Half Spraddle Form. One story, frame house with a half spraddle roof. The full width porch is recessed under the main roofline and has six square wood columns. The entrance is surrounded by sidelights and transom and pilasters. The spraddle roof is characterized by a break in the slope of a gable. Sometimes the break occurs on both slopes, sometimes only on one. In this house the spraddle occurs at the rear and extends over shed rooms added to the house. The house was built in 1843 by Thomas Hearin and occupied by him until 1861. Dr. James Armistead purchased the house in 1886 and it has remained in his family until the present time. (C)

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26. NW corner of Cobb & Jackson, Alston-Cobb House. ca. 1854. Greek Revival Style, Extended I-House Form. An example of an I-house with shed extension, the Alston-Cobb House is one of four such structures still standing in Clarke County. The house is a five bay, two story, frame structure with clapboard siding, a gable roof and two end exterior chimneys. It is built on a central hall plan, with two rooms over two rooms in the main section and an original one story, two room lean-to wing across the rear. The house has a full-width double veranda which was a later addition. The front entrance has a double-leaf door surrounded by a transom and sidelights. On the second floor, a single leaf door leads to the balcony. On each side of the doors, at both levels, are two symmetrically arranged floor-length windows, with those on the ground floor being slightly larger. It is now the home of the Clarke County Historical Society and museum. (C)

27. Creagh Law Office. West side Jackson Street. ca. 1832. One story frame building with a central single leaf entrance. Nine-over-six double hung sash windows flank the entrance. The roof is side gable and covered with wood shingles. A central chimney pierces the roof. There is a shed addition across the rear of the building. *determined contributing 1/27/99 (EM, JF, SM)*

HISTORIC CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS OF THE DISTRICT:

The Courthouse Historic District is comprised of buildings that have always been commercial in function and those that are now used as commercial buildings but were originally built as residences. Although the district functions as one commercial area, the visual differences are striking enough to merit separate lists of character-defining features. These features are listed below.

Main Street, Courthouse Square, and Court Street:

- Uniform setbacks of buildings
- Concrete sidewalks
- Spacing between buildings is either very close or non-existent; many buildings share firewalls
- The predominant building material is brick
- Buildings are typical of commercial buildings during the period of significance

Cobb Street:

- Slightly deeper set-backs

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- Grassy areas and trees, landscaping between the sidewalks and the buildings
- Concrete sidewalks
- Spacing between buildings is wider, with a residential feel
- Mature trees are scattered throughout the area
- Off-street parking is provided
- The predominant building material is wood
- Buildings are typical of residential buildings built during the period of significance

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Statement of Significance:

CRITERION C, ARCHITECTURE:

The Courthouse Historic District contains good and intact local examples of late 19th-century and early 20th-century small town commercial architecture. The architecture of this town reflects the local interpretation of the high styles and the development of the downtown from the 1840s to the 1955. Many of the buildings are utilitarian in nature and have no stylistic qualities. Those along Cobb Street, however, were originally residential and reflect typical residential styles found in small town Alabama during the period of significance.

CRITERION A (COMMERCE)

The Courthouse Historic District is significant as a late 19th- and early 20th-century commercial downtown. Clarke County grew rapidly from 1890 to 1910. Grove Hill was the most populated town in the county in 1910 with a population of 3,362. People migrated to more urban areas after the boll weevil invasion of 1911, increasing the population still further. Many buildings in the district date from this time of growth.

CRITERION A (GOVERNMENT/POLITICS)

The Courthouse Historic District is significant for its associations with being the political and governmental center of Clarke County. Grove Hill has been the site of the county courthouse and jail since 1832. All governmental functions moved from Clarksville to Grove Hill at that time and have remained in Grove Hill until the present. Although the original courthouse was replaced in 1955, governmental functions continue on this spot.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The period of significance for the Courthouse Historic District extends from the construction of the oldest contributing building in the district, the Armistead House, ca. 1843, to the construction of the most recent contributing building in the district, the Courthouse, ca. 1955\*.

\*This historic district is still a significant center for government and commerce for Clarke County.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Grove Hill, located in almost the geographical center of the County, was chosen as the county seat in 1832. Local tradition says that the name of Grove Hill was chosen because of the stand of oaks on the plateau upon which the settlement was made. The first settlement of whites in the vicinity of what is today Grove Hill was called Magoffin's Store. James Magoffin came to St.

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Stephens from Philadelphia in 1809. He represented Washington County in the legislature of the Mississippi Territory prior to coming to the Grove Hill area in 1815. According to historian T.H. Ball in his CLARKE COUNTY, ALABAMA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS, Magoffin established a store, about two miles north of the present courthouse and that this store was listed as a voting place in 1819.<sup>1</sup>

In the early 1800s, a settlement in the vicinity of the present Clarke County Courthouse was known as both Smithville and Macon. T. H. Ball, in his history, states that the Clarke County Courthouse was moved from Clarkesville to Smithville in 1832. However, the minutes of the

Orphan's Court show that court was held at Macon on February 4, 1833. These minutes continue to mention Macon as the place of the court from that time until 1850, except for one entry on April 6, 1835, where Smithville is named as the place to appear before the court. When the county seat was moved to Grove Hill, a one-story frame courthouse was built with a log jail behind it and a town well nearby. Ball states that the name of the town was established as<sup>2</sup> Grove Hill about 1850 when the Grove Hill Post Office was moved to the courthouse vicinity.

One of the most important changes to happen in Clarke County after the Civil War was the arrival of the railroad in the late 1880s. Boom towns sprang up along its route and the timber industry flourished. Both Jackson and Thomasville grew tremendously because of the railroad's proximity. Grove Hill, however, was bypassed by the railroad. A heated debate about moving the county seat from Grove Hill to one of the railroad towns had begun by 1890. Representative E.O. Calhoun introduced a bill in legislature in 1892 calling for a vote to settle the issue. Whatley, Walker Springs, Thomasville and Jackson all competed against Grove Hill for the honor of being named county seat. In the end, the people chose Grove Hill to remain as county seat, with 1,552 votes<sup>3</sup> for Grove Hill, 518 votes for Jackson, 307 votes for Whatley, and six votes for Walker Springs.

In 1899 the frame courthouse was replaced with a two story brick building which served as the courthouse until 1955 when it was replaced with the present structure. Grove Hill has served as the center of political and legal activity from the time it was made county seat to the present day. Several hotels were located around the courthouse, including one operated by a freed slave,

<sup>1</sup> Historical summary, Standing Structures Survey of Clarke County, on file at the Alabama Historical Commission, Montgomery, Alabama.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "Election to move county seat very hot," The Clarke County Democrat, 25 November 1982, p. 17C.

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to accomodate people who travelled to Grove Hill to conduct business in the courts. As could be expected, many lawyers, clerks, and merchants lived permanently in the town.<sup>4</sup>

Historic photos give us a fair idea of the condition of the square during the early part of the 20th century. (Fig. 1) What is now Main Street was then a wide expanse of dirt with mature trees dotting its edges. The brick courthouse built in 1899 stands at the end of Main Street and several crude log and frame buildings line Main. A newspaper article (Fig. 2) attests to the changes which have happened on Main Street. For instance, a blacksmith shop once stood on Main, and hogs were allowed free range throughout town.<sup>5</sup>

Grove Hill was incorporated in 1929. The effort to incorporate was led by the Lions Club, which listed several benefits to be gained by incorporating, including street improvements issuing an order to keep livestock off the streets, the addition of street lights, and the securing of a telegraph. The issue was put to a vote and the election results were 89 for and 31 against. Despite incorporation, Grove Hill still did not have some of the amenities hoped for by early 1940. As an historic photo shows, (Fig. 3) Highway 43 was the only paved road around the courthouse in the 1940s. Compared to the rest of the county, however, Grove Hill was clearly modernized town. According to the 1940 housing statistics, eighty-seven per cent of the houses in the county had no running water, and seventy-two per cent had no form of heat other than a fireplace. The remaining housing in Grove Hill from this time shows us that the citizens had a fairly high standard of living compared to the more rural areas of the county.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, the community continued to expand and grow. Grove Hill continued to prosper, and the city limits were expanded by two-thirds, with the population growing from 730 people in 1940 to about 2,000 people in 1950. All the city streets were paved from 1945 to 1949. A 1940 article from the Clarke County Democrat describes the continued building boom in Grove Hill, focusing on new residences under construction, one of them being the W.D. Dunn Home, number 22 in the district. Homes along Cobb Street were changed from residences into businesses to allow for the increased need for commercial space, and some buildings were updated with the addition of stylistic details. Such modernization reflected the increased prosperity of enjoyed by Clarke County in the 1950s and 1960. In 1955 the courthouse was replaced with a modern building which could be utilized more efficiently by the courts and county offices. The September 24, 1953

<sup>4</sup> Historical summary, Standing Structures Survey.

<sup>5</sup> "Old photograph of Main Street reveals much about turn-of-century Grove Hill," The Clarke County Democrat, 25 November 1982, p. 2C.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> "Grove Hill continues its building boom," The Clarke County Democrat, 25 April 1940, no page number; Historical summary, Standing Structures Survey.

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issue of The Democrat offered the following description of the square area as described from an old photograph:

"First on the right is a blacksmith shop where the Leonard Motor Company building now stands. Next in line is the Morrow Hotel, now the Leggitte Hotel, which is but little changed in appearance. Then comes the Cobb Drug Company, next is the Pugh Bro. store with its sign out front, a vacant lot and then the W. W. Daffin store with its black cat sign. The tree with the bare branches, standing between the two waterworks, is a sycamore which formerly served as the town's domino parlor. It was here that Mr. Enoch Cobb made his classic comment, which is still occasionally quoted. Someone rushed up to where he was playing and excitedly informed him that his watermill dam had just broken. His only reply was "Come on down with your double-six."

Next after the Daffin store comes the J.W. Cunningham store, now the S.C. Gordon and Company building, and the lot beyond, now occupied by The First Bank of Grove Hill, was then vacant. On the lefthand side of the street, the first building seen is the Plez Rivers barber shop. Although the cross street is not in evidence, it was there just as it is today. Across this street and on the corner stands a building which was used for the Grove Hill post office with Frank Woodard as postmaster. Next is a small building which at one time was used by Miss Estelle Allen as a millinery shop. Then comes the Jno. S. Chapman store, now the Cowden hardware, and beyond it are seen the chimneys and the front of the Cunningham Hotel.

With the exception of the courthouse, the little building which stood to the south of it and which originally was used by the Probate Judge and the Register in Chancery, and the county jail, there were no brick buildings in the town."

Today, the district possesses integrity of location, design, setting, material workmanship, feeling and association.

8 "Old Photograph of Main Street reveals much about turn-of-century Grove Hill," The Clarke County Democrat, 25 November 1982, p. 2C.

MKB

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

COURTHOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT  
GROVE HILL, CLARKE COUNTY  
ISTEA PROJECT TO DO LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS  
1/23/95

COURTHOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT

The DOE group came evaluated the district against applicable criteria and determined that it is eligible for the National Register. It is significant under Criterion A, Commerce/Politics and Criterion C, Community Planning and Architecture.

CRITERION C, ARCHITECTURE and PLANNING:

The Courthouse Historic District contains good and intact local examples of late 19th-century and early 20th-century small town commercial and residential architecture. The architecture of this town reflects the local interpretation of the high styles and the development of the downtown from the 1840s to the 1955. Many of the buildings are utilitarian in nature and have no stylistic qualities. Those along Cobb Street, however, were originally residential and reflect typical residential styles found in small town Alabama during the period of significance.

Grove Hill's plan is unusual for Alabama in that three main streets converge midway upon a broad open square, with the courthouse to one side on axis with the east-west street. This layout, as well as the traditional openness, is significant under Criterion C.

CRITERION A (COMMERCE)

The Courthouse Historic District is significant as a late 19th- and early 20th-century commercial downtown. Clarke County grew rapidly from 1890 to 1910. Grove Hill was the most populated town in the county in 1910 with a population of 3,362. People migrated to more urban areas after the boll weevil invasion of 1911, increasing the population still further. Many buildings in the district date from this time of growth.

CRITERION A (GOVERNMENT/POLITICS)

The Courthouse Historic District is significant for its associations with being the political and governmental center of Clark County. Grove Hill has been the site of the county courthouse and jail since 1832. All governmental functions moved from Clarkesville moved to Grove Hill at that time and have remained in Grove Hill until the present. Although the original courthouse was replaced in 1955, governmental functions continue on this spot.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The period of significance for the Courthouse Historic District extends from 1839, the date of the plan as documented in deed books, to the construction of the most recent contributing building in the district, the Courthouse, ca. 1945\*.



\*This historic district is still a significant center for government and commerce for Clarke County and its significance will continue as properties mature to the 50 year age limit or until the properties no longer continue in their historic functions.

#### INTEGRITY

The group determined that the district possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

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#### HISTORIC CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS OF THE DISTRICT:

The Courthouse Historic District is comprised of buildings that have always been commercial in function and those that are now used as commercial buildings but were originally built as residences. Although the district functions as one commercial area, the visual differences are striking enough to merit separate lists of character-defining features. These features are listed below.

##### Main Street, Courthouse Square, and Court Street:

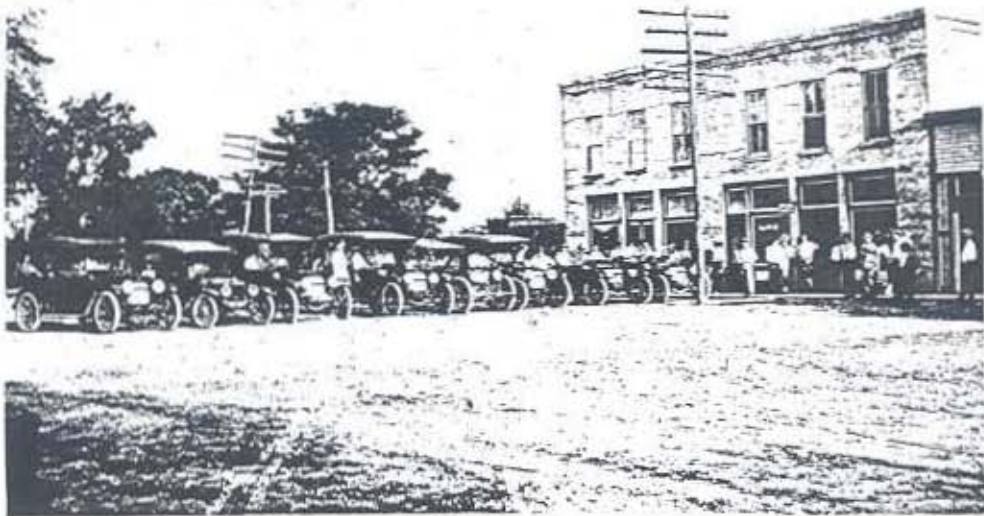
- The historic plan of the courthouse square and immediate surroundings
- Use of a monument as a focal point in the center of the square
- Most buildings are two stories in height
- Uniform setbacks of buildings
- Concrete sidewalks
- The predominant building material is brick
- The interplay of concrete and brick as building materials
- Spacing between buildings is either very close or non-existent; many buildings share firewalls
- Buildings are typical of commercial buildings during the period of significance

##### Cobb Street:

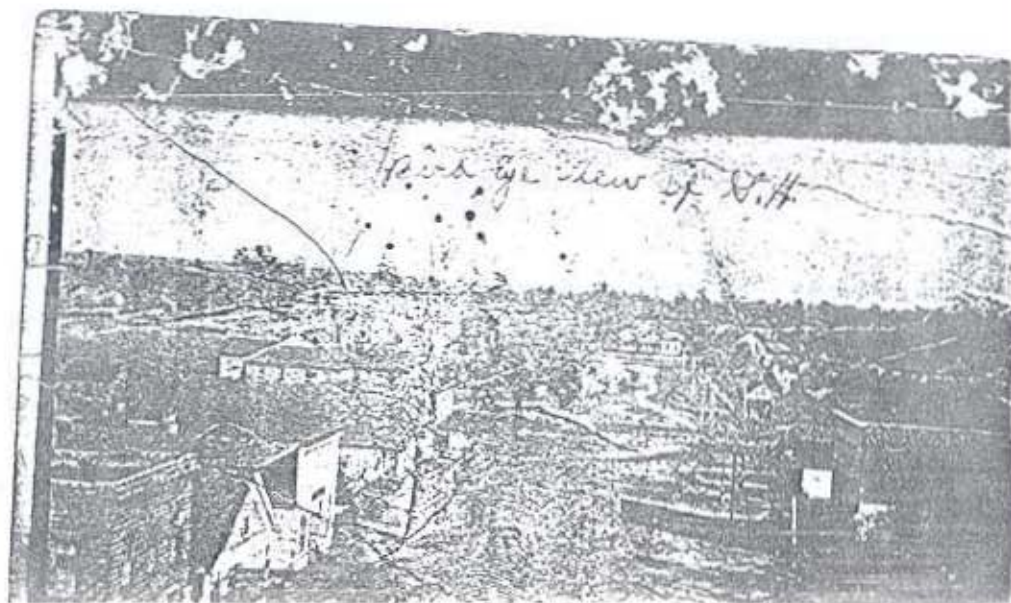
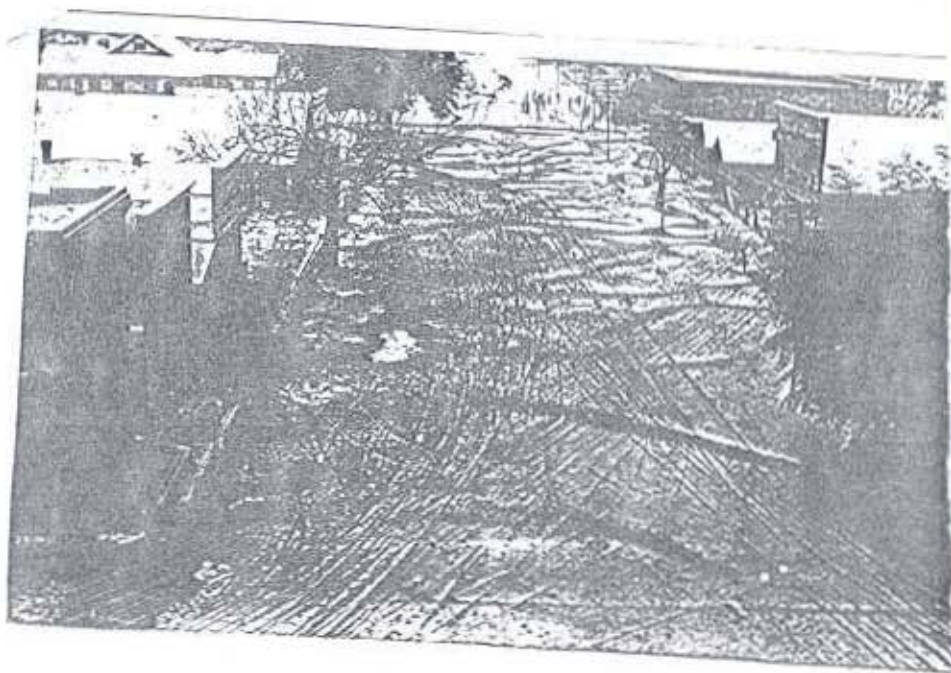
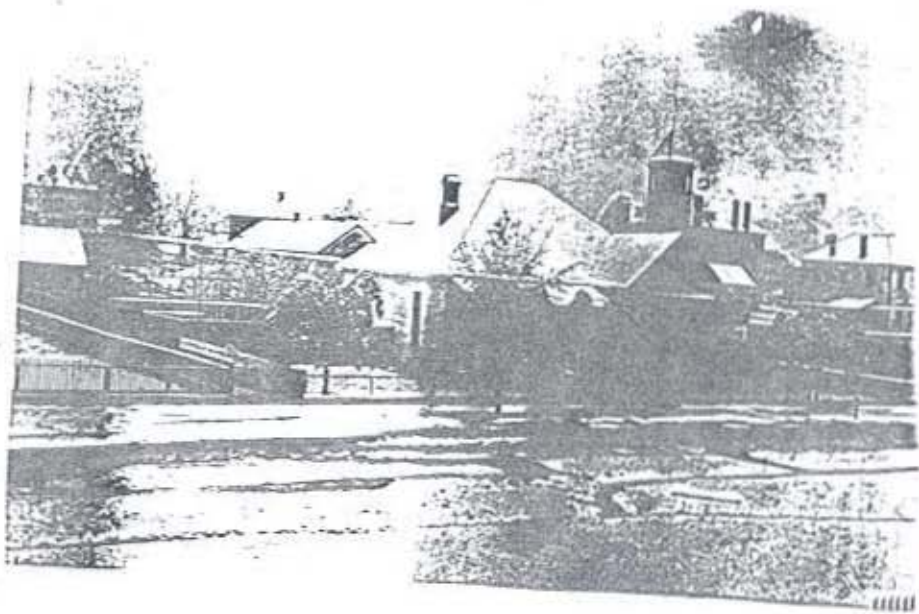
- Slightly deeper set-backs
- Grassy areas and trees, landscaping between the sidewalks and the buildings
- Concrete sidewalks
- Spacing between buildings is wider, with a residential feel
- Mature trees are scattered throughout the area
- Off-street parking is provided (driveways are present)
- The predominant building material is wood
- Buildings are one or two stories in height
- Buildings are typical of residential buildings built during the period of significance



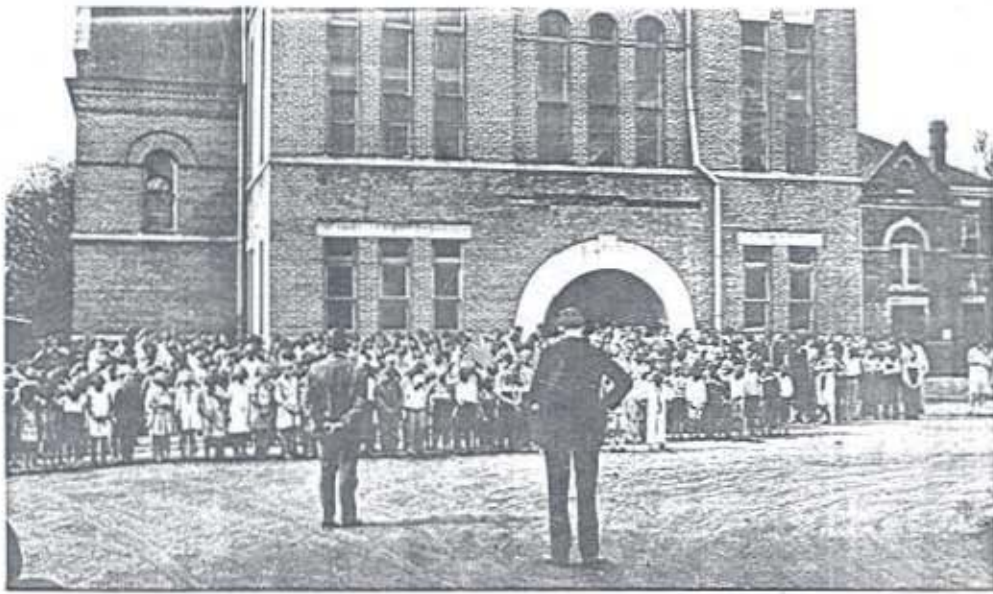
Court house  
Anney Constructed  
in 1911



Corner of Main Street & Jackson Street (Highway 43)



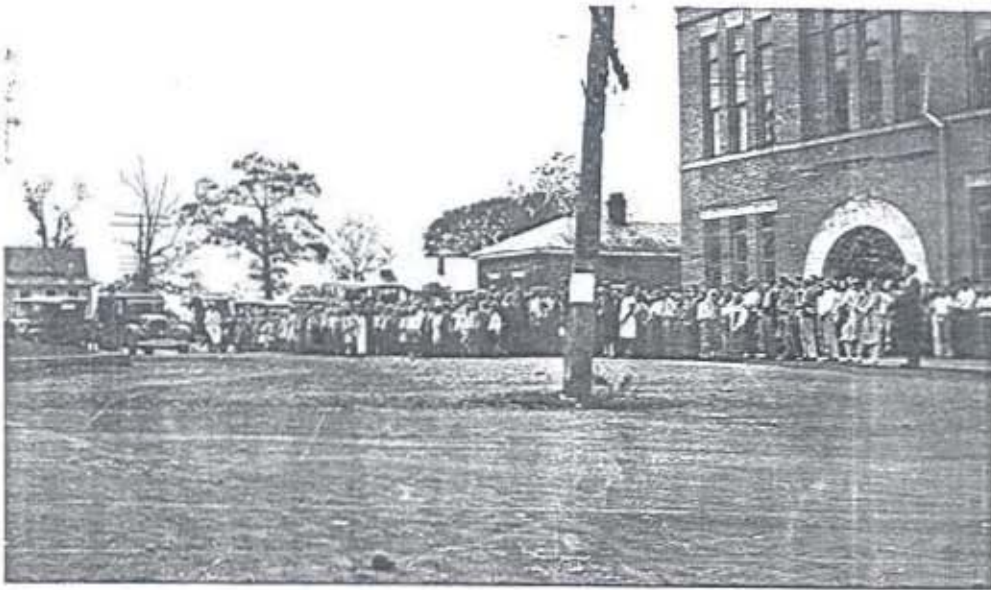
1879 Courthouse



Anney  
(1911)

Renovated  
in 1955

These may have been taken at the dedication of  
Veteran's Memorial on November 11, 1924



Court house looking to the southwest



Main Street (1920's?)



Bank