NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

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: Old Noxubee County Jail of 1870

other names/site number: 1870 Jail Building

2. Location

street & number: 503 S. Washington St. — NA not for publication

city, town: Macon — NA vicinity

state: Mississippi code: MS county: Noxubee code: 103 zip code: 39341

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property: Contributing	Noncontributing	
☐ private	☒ building(s)	1	0	buildings
☒ public-local	☐ district			sites
☐ public-State	☐ site			structures
☐ public-Federal	☐ structure			objects
	☐ object	1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: None

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 ☐ 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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Kenneth H. O'Poole — 11/27/90

Signature of certifying official — Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

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 and bureau

5. 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:)

Entered in the National Register — 1/3/91

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Government: Correctional Facility	Commerce/Trade: Organizational (Chamber of Commerce Office)

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
No Style	foundation Brick walls Brick roof Composition Shingles other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The two-story brick jail building, built in 1870, faces west on a flat corner site east of the Noxubee County Courthouse and southeast of the 1906 jail building. The building was modified after 1906 when it ceased to be the county jail and again in 1960 when it became the offices of the Noxubee County Welfare Department and eventually the headquarters of the Noxubee County Chamber of Commerce. The form of the building in each of these periods is described below.

The building as completed in 1870 (see sketch plan and front elevation) consisted of a 44' wide by 30' deep brick block with a transverse gable roof, probably covered with wood shingles. The plan was subdivided by two brick bearing walls into a six-foot-wide central passage and two chambers about 15' wide and 26' deep on each floor with a single stair to the second floor located in the central passage. One first-floor chamber served as the jailor's room. Walls were laid up of solid brick 24" thick. In the jail portion of the building the surface of the first floor consisted of bricks set in cement at about 1'-0 above grade; the jailor's room had a plank floor.

On the front elevation a central door on the first floor was flanked by pairs of windows; on the second floor a central window was also flanked by pairs of windows, presumably aligned with those below. The endwalls of the structure had no openings. On the rear elevation paired windows on the first floor probably matched the positions of those on the front as did a single, central window on the second floor. Additional single windows on the second floor were centered above each of the pairs on the first floor. All of the windows were outfitted with lattice-type bars composed of flat, iron straps 1'-1 1/2" wide. The building had two wooden doors, probably the front door and the one leading to the jailor's room. It had three iron doors, probably those leading into the jail chambers on both floors (Macon Beacon--hereafter MB, 3 Sept 1870).

In 1874 the jail chambers were lined with iron, and nails 1/4" apart were driven into the upstairs ceiling (MB, 7 Mar 1874).

After the jail building was abandoned in 1906, it became a maintenance and storage building for the county. As such, the front facade and first floor plan were modified (see sketch plan and elevation of the building in 1960). An old photograph (see photo #1) shows that a wide opening was cut into the south end of the front (west) facade in order to store large equipment, and a storefront with two doors, both having sidelights, was inserted into the north end of this facade. The interior brick bearing wall along the north side of the central passage was removed and the stair moved to the back wall.

[X] See continuation sheet

The brick floor at the north end of the building was replaced by concrete, and the bricks were removed at the south end. The central passage floor construction on the second floor was modified.

In 1960 the building underwent major modifications (see sketch plan and elevations of existing conditions). A lean-to was removed from the rear of the structure. All of the iron lattice was removed from the windows, necessitating the insertion of concrete lintels and New double-hung sash. The openings on the first floor of the front facade were modified to take on their present configuration: single north-end window, central door, and south-end door. A new door was added on the south endwall. The interior of the structure was completely gutted except for the structure of the second floor structure above the two chambers. A new, concrete floor slab, new partitions, second floor structure in the area of the central passage, and stairs were added. A one-story wooden porch with concrete floor slab was added across the full width of the west facade. At some point the roof was covered with tin and the wooden cornice modified.

In summary, while many original features of the Old Jail have been modified or removed, the overall integrity of the structure remains intact. The exterior brick walls and most of the window openings remain in their original form, as does the roof profile and all of its superstructure and most of the second floor structure. The image of the building is still quite sufficient to convey its history and significance to observers in the community.

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) NA ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Law	1870-1906	NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

According to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, only the old jail in Macon, Mississippi and the Canton Jail (Ca. 1870) remain in the State from the Reconstruction Period. The Old Jail represents changes in law and law enforcement precipitated by the reorganization of local government at the end of Reconstruction in Mississippi. The events which occurred in the jail and on its grounds reveal much about the nature of justice in a rural, post-Civil War, Mississippi County among both blacks and whites during and after the removal of U.S. troops and the reconstitution of county government.

Four jails have been constructed in Macon, Mississippi. They date from 1836--constructed by John D. Barr for $2010 (Kate B. Augustus, "New Career for Noxubee Landmark," Macon Beacon--hereafter MB, 11 February 1960) and 1848 (both demolished); 1870, the "Old Jail" being nominated here; and 1906-1907 (MB, 11 Feb 1960), still extant, remodeled in the 1980s as a Public Library and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In May, 1869, as a preparation for the end of Reconstruction, the Board of Police was organized in Noxubee County. The U.S. Congress voted the State of Mississippi back into the Union in February, 1870 bringing an end to military rule in the county. Subsequently, as the first post-war election of public officials took place, the Board of Police was reorganized as the Board of Supervisors (Brook Sledge, Dancing Rabbit: A Book About People, Places and Things in Noxubee County, 95-96 and John Bettersworth, Mississippi: A History, 322 and 324). A new jail was required to accomodate this change in the structure af local government, law and law enforcement.

In August of 1870 Jonathan Staton, David Hines, and Stephen Badger were appointed as commissioners to draft plans for a jail, authorized to purchase a lot and to have built a jail with a dwelling house and a kitchen. This building was to measure 44 feet by 28 feet with the first floor to serve as quarters for the jailer. An interior stair was to lead to cells on the second floor. Windows were to have metal bars (MB, 8 Feb 1960 and 11 Feb 1960 and 17 Mar 1960).

☒ See continuation sheet

The 22 September 1870 Minutes of the Board of County Police show that the county made plans at this time for the new jail to have concrete foundations and brick walls 24 inches thick. The 1848 jail was to be demolished and the new jail erected on the cleared site. The contractors were to be J.C. Gilmore and Logan Cline with supervision by Commissioner M.B. Edwards. The cost was to be $14,640 (Minutes of the Board of County Police, Volume C, 327 and Kate B. Augustus, "Additional Notes on Old Jail," (MB. 17 Mar 1960).

This 1870 structure witnessed a panoply of law enforcement events during its tenure as the county's detention facility. From the beginning, jail breaks were all too common, necessitating modifications to increase security until 1874 (modifications described in Section 7) (MB, 20 May 1871 and 27 May 1871 and 17 June 1871). By 1877, the Noxubee County Grand Jury was able to report that:

> We have visited the jail in a body and find it in good order and well kept, and apparently secure except a break in the lining under the east window in the north room upstairs which we recommend be repaired immediately. We also believe that immediate steps be taken by proper authoritic for the heating of , at least, one room in the upper story for the health and comfort of prisoners, which could be done at small expense, by means of register to convey heat from the lower south room.

The amenities suggested here belie the fact that Macon still had certain frontier-like qualities. For instance, citizens discharging weapons in the streets at night were not uncommon. The stealing of livestock was the most common, serious offense (MB, 22 Jan 1870). Capital crimes included murders by both blacks and whites and even the murder of a child by a young woman (MB, 8 July 1871 and 12 Aug 1871). In addition to holding criminals, the Old Jail and its yard served as the site for hangings, including that of a black man in August of 1871 (MB, 19 August 1871) witnessed by a large group of blacks and whites. Records describe the activities of the Ku Klux Klan, of U.S. Marshalls (MB, July 1871), of local authorities and U.S. soldiers, and vigilante justice including tarring and feathering (MB, 25 NOv 1871 and 2 Nov 1872), Newspaper accounts chronicle the law enforcement procedures of sheriffs and their deputies, federal marshalls, judges, and the Circuit Court with their juries and grand juries and even the Governor and the State Supreme Court. These accounts give insights into the judicial and fiscal responsibilities and requirements of the various parties and the attitudes of citizens toward the maintenance of law and order and the criminal justice system in general. The Old Jail in Macon bears witness to this volatile and rapidly changing era in Mississippi's history.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bettersworth, John. Mississippi: A History. (Austin, TX: Steck Co.: 1959).

Lever, Webbie Johnson. "The Agrarian Movement in Noxubee County." M.A. Thesis: Mississippi State University, 1952.

Macon Beacon (Various issues), hard copies on file in the Office of the Noxubee County Chancery Clerk
Note: Research in the Macon Beacon carried out by Lucille M. Reeves

Noxubee County Deed Book "G," Office of the Chancery Clerk

Sledge, Broox. Dancing Rabbit: A Book About People, Places and Things in Noxubee County, (Noxubee County Historical Society, 1986).

☐ See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property One-fifth of an acre

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	16	354460	3663318
B			
C			
D			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies city lot 3, block 18

NA See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city lot that has historically been associated with the property.

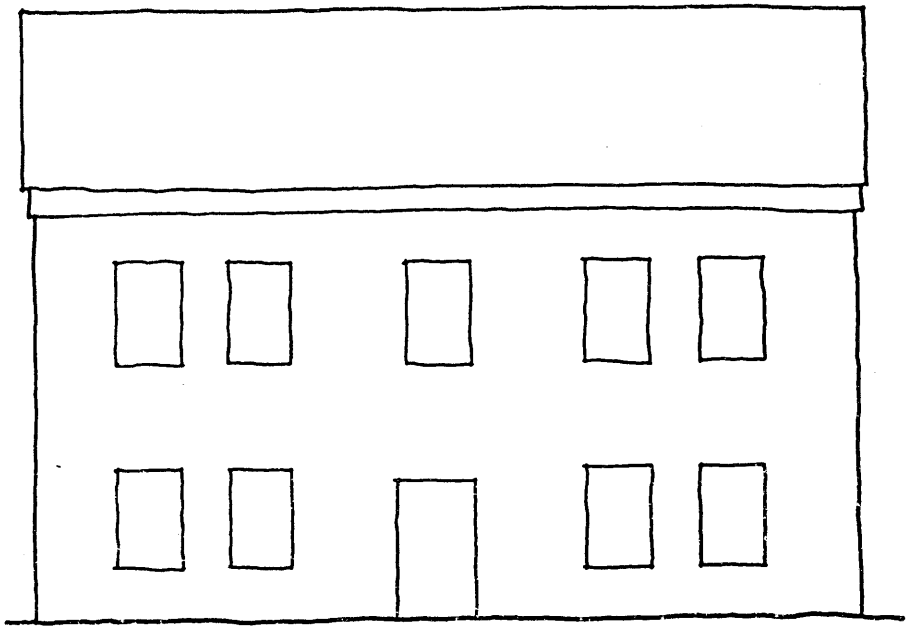
NA See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael Fazio
organization Architectural Historian date 1 June 1990
street & number PO Box 2870 telephone (601) 323-3451
city or town Mississippi State state MS zip code 39762

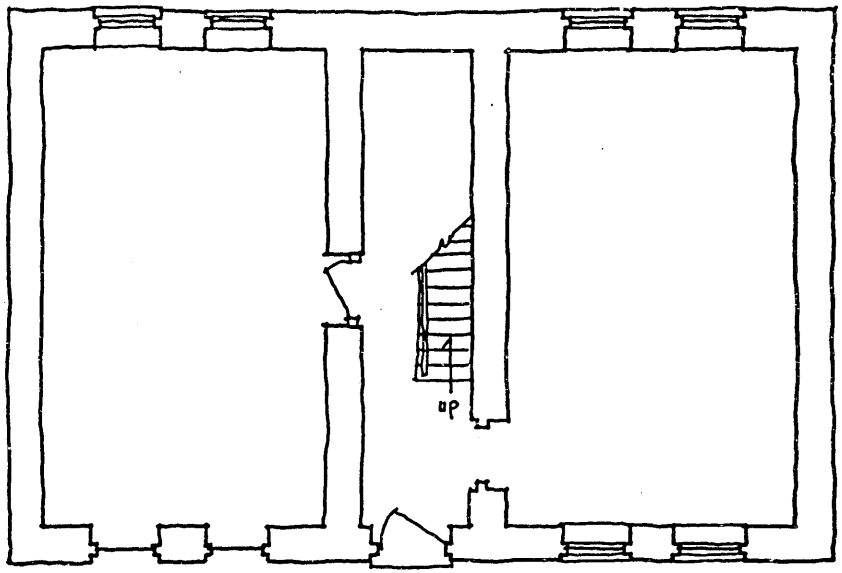
Owner: Board of Supervisors, PO Box 147, Noxubee County,MS, 39341

Old Jail Macon Noxubee County Mississippi

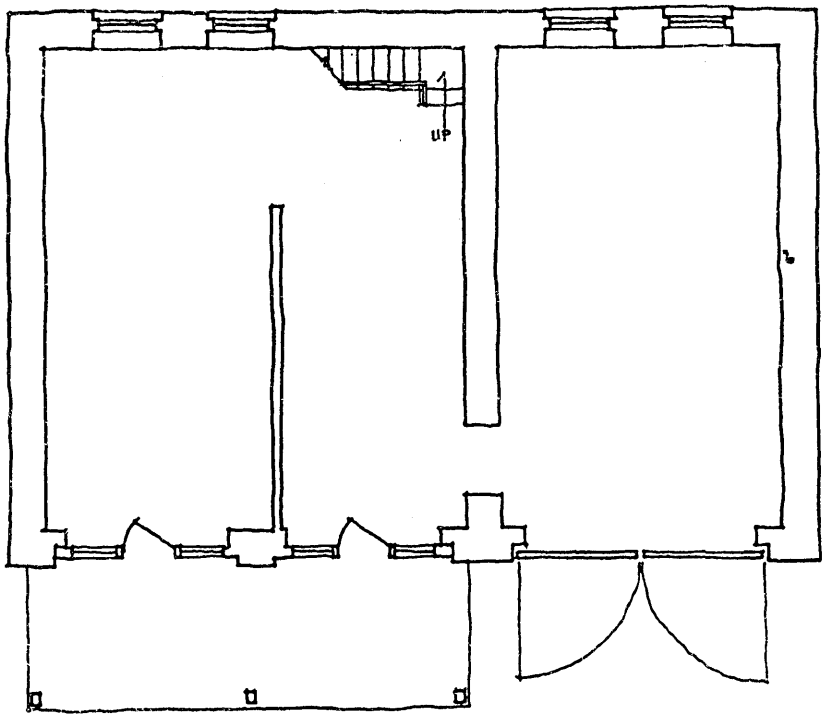


Front Elevation in 1870

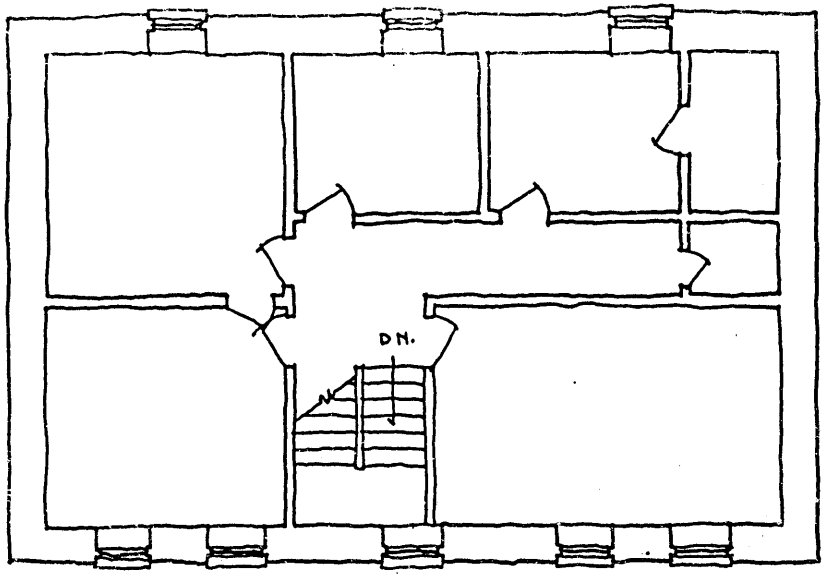
Front Elevation in 1960



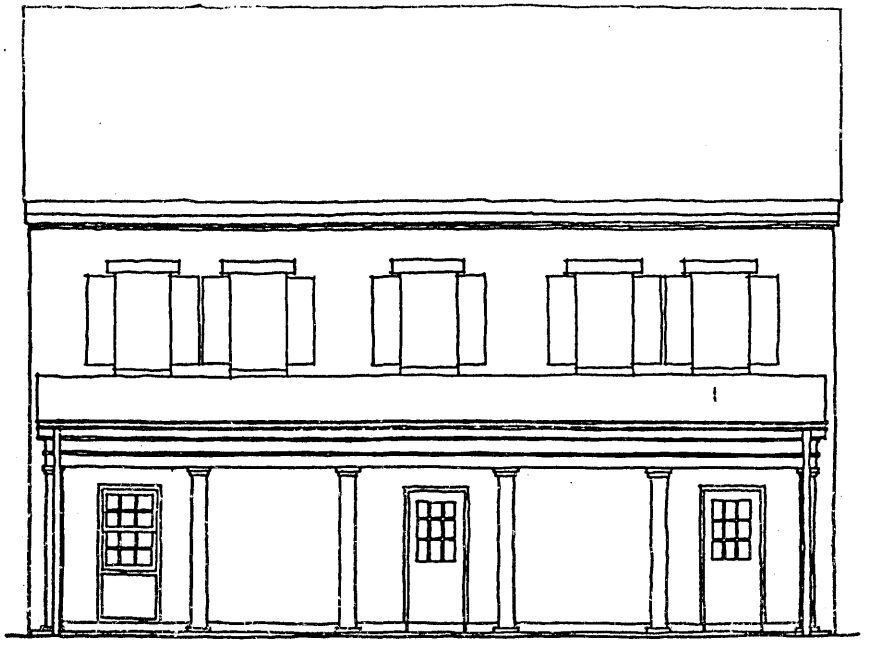
First Floor Plan in 1870



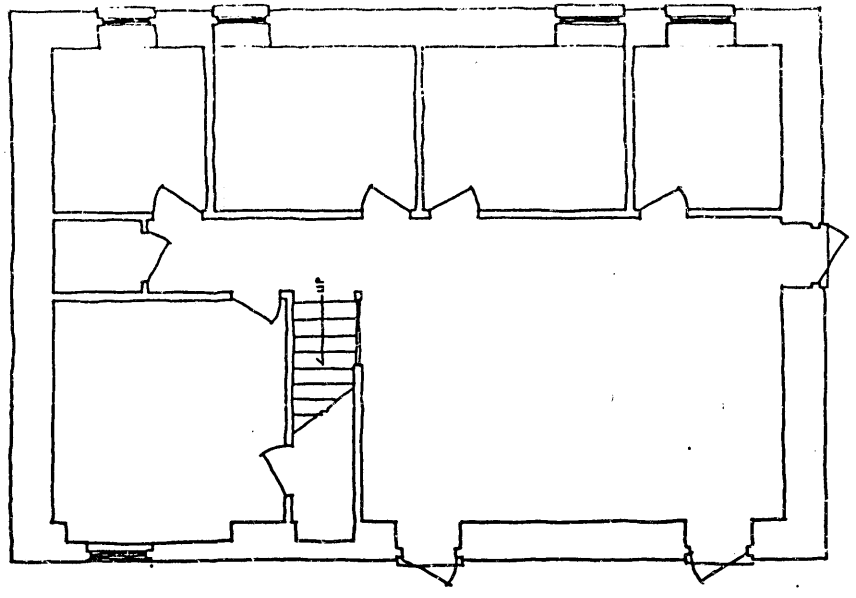
First Floor Plan in 1960



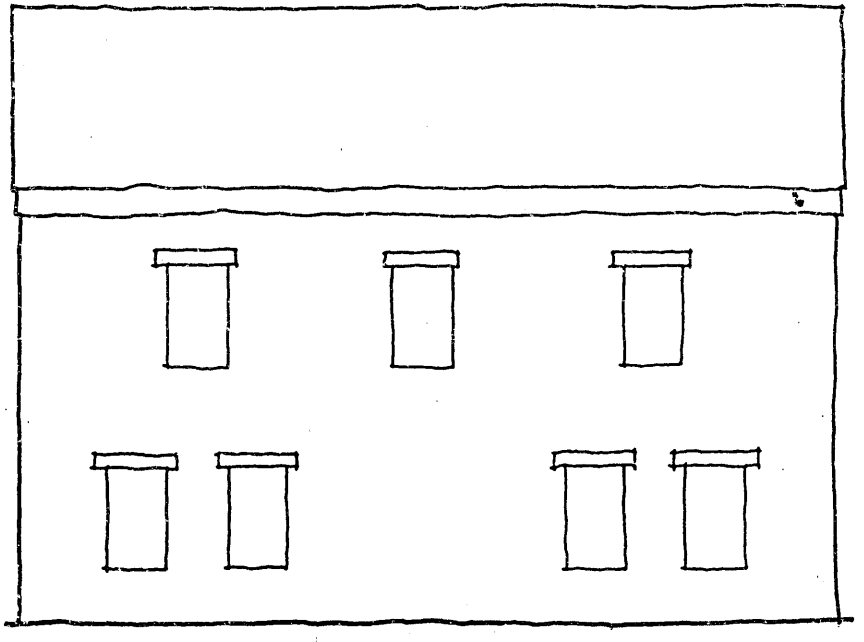
Second Floor Plan



Front Elevation



First Floor Plan



Rear Elevation

EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. OLD JAIL
2. MACON, NOXUBEE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
3. MICHAEL FAZIO
4. 1960
5. MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
6. FRONT AND RIGHT SIDE VIEW FROM THE SOUTH WEST
7. PHOTO # 1 OF 3

1. OLD JAIL
2. MACON, NOXUBEE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
3. MICHAEL FAZIO
4. MARCH, 1990
5. MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
6. FRONT AND RIGHT SIDE VIEW FROM THE SOUTHWEST
7. PHOTO #2 OF 3

1. OLD JAIL
2. MACON, NOXUBEE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
3. MICHAEL FAZIO
4. MARCH, 1990
5. MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
6. REAR AND LEFT SIDE VIEW FROM THE NORTHEAST
7. PHOTO # 3 OF 3