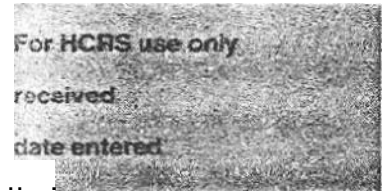


VLR-9/18/79 NRHP-12/28/79

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Orange County Courthouse

and/or common

2. Location

Intersection of routes 15 and 20.
street & number (Corner of Madison Road and North Main Street) not for publication
city, town Orange vicinity of Seventh (J. Kenneth Robinson) congressional district
state Virginia code 51 county Orange code 137

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name Orange County, c/o Chairman, Board of Supervisors
street & number Orange Courthouse
city, town Orange vicinity of state Virginia 22960

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Orange County Courthouse
street & number
city, town Orange state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (2) (See continuation Sheet A 1)

title Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1957 federal s t a t e county local
depository for survey records Library of Congress
city, town Washington state D.C.

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located at the intersection of routes 15 and 20, in the heart of the town of Orange, the courthouse is the central building in a complex of county office buildings that consists of the courthouse, clerk's office, and jail. A Confederate monument, erected in 1900, completes the classic Virginian courthouse square. Constructed between 1858-9, the courthouse was built in the Italian Villa style according to the plans of Haskins and Alexander of Washington. D.C.

The 1½-story, 75' x 40' rectangular structure is executed in stretcher-bond brick. The south facade originally contained a first-story arcaded loggia, two bays in depth. The loggia originally was topped by a balustrade and was mostly enclosed in 1949 and converted into office space. The entrance is now a three-part arcade consisting of a semi-elliptical arch flanked by small semicircular arches. The arcade forms the base of an entrance tower of three stages. The first stage contains the main entrance, a modern, clear, glass double door. The second stage features a clock, installed within existing round windows in 1949. Arched openings with louvres complete the tower which is covered by a shallow hip roof and topped by a finial.

The building's principal east and west walls consist of three bays of 6/6 hung-sash windows topped by semicircular fanlight transoms. Rounded windows define the attic story. A deep cornice with long, flat brackets runs along the roof line. The north (rear) elevation is dominated by a brick ell that constitutes a later addition. The ell contains segmental-arched windows with 6/6 hung sash.

The interior of the building has been extensively altered. The alterations include dropped ceilings, newly partitioned walls, and new flooring. With the exception of a blind wooden arch in the courtroom, the original interior trim has been removed or covered over. Window sash dates from the late 19th to the 20th centuries.

Built in 1894, the clerk's office is located to the west of the courthouse. The one-story structure was constructed in stretcher-bond brick. Enlarged in the 20th century, the building retains its stepped-gable facade.

Erected in 1891, the jail is situated to the rear (north) of the courthouse. The two-story, stretcher-bond brick building is stylistically undistinguished. Subsequent additions have enlarged the structure.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1858-9; 1891; 1894 **Builder/Architect** Haskins & Alexander

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Erected between 1858-59, the Orange County Courthouse is Virginia's unique example of the Italian Villa style adapted for the seat of a county government. Characterized by deep bracketed cornices, shallow hipped roofs, and the inevitable square tower, the villa style was recommended by architectural theorist Andrew Jackson Downing as being especially suitable for Southern country houses. Although it was employed for other architectural types, its use for public buildings is rare. Virginia traditionally has been very conservative in the architecture of its government buildings: the arcaded fronts of its Colonial, Georgian-style courthouses persisted in the many temple-form courthouses of the early Republican era. The Orange County building thus marks a radical departure from traditional forms and illustrates a public acceptance of the picturesque and exotic styles popular in the years before the Civil War. The departure may be explained by the fact that the building is probably Virginia's only pre-Civil War courthouse designed by a professional architectural firm, Haskins and Alexander of Washington, D.C.; the designs of all others are mostly the products of master builders. Interestingly, the architects made a concession to tradition by providing the building with an arcaded loggia (now mostly bricked in) around the base of the tower. The courthouse is the fourth to serve the county.

Orange County was formed in 1734 from Spotsylvania County and was named for William IV, Prince of Orange. He had married Anne, the Princess Royal, daughter of George II of England, the same year. The first session of the county court was held on January 21, 1735, in a house belonging to Colonel Henry Willis on Black Walnut Creek in the eastern part of the county. A bench was provided for the justices and a room prepared for the prisoners. Court was to be held there until the justices determined a more suitable arrangement. In the spring of that year the Governor and Council ordered that a courthouse be built on the south side of the Rapidan River. The court then asked for authority to change its location to John Bramham's house, near where the courthouse "with all expedition was going to be built."¹ The first courthouse was completed in 1738-39.

In 1749 the County of Culpeper was formed from part of Orange, leaving the courthouse at the far edge of the county. In November 1749 court removed to the house of Timothy Crosthwait and held its first session at the present county seat in the Town of Orange. In May 1752 the court accepted a completed courthouse from the builder. In 1753 the deed was recorded in which Crosthwait conveyed the two acres of land on which the building stood. This remained the public lot for over one hundred years. A new courthouse was built on the lot in 1801, a clerk's office in 1804, and a new jail in 1836.

The Orange and Alexandria Railroad had chosen Orange to be a permanent station on its proposed route from Washington, D.C., to a junction with the Virginia Central from Richmond. The railroad obtained the permission of the County Court to run the tracts through the public lot on which the courthouse stood. The right of way included a portion of the courthouse itself so that a new structure on a different site was needed. Early in 1852 discussions were begun with Richard Rawlings regarding an exchange of the courthouse and lot for his Orange Hotel lot. The final decision to proceed along these lines was made in 1857.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Thomas, William H. B., "Courthouses of Orange County." Virginia Cavalcade. 19 (Summer 1969): 32.

_____. Orange, Virginia. Story of a Courthouse Town. Verona, Va.: McClure Press, 1972.

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives, Orange County Courthouse file (275-3), Exhibits A-J, Richmond, Virginia.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1 acre

Quadrangle name Orange, Virginia

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>7</u>	<u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>7</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>7</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point at the NW corner of intersection of State Route 20 and U.S. Route 15 in the town of Orange and 700' NW of intersection of State Route 615 and alternate route 20; thence extending along W side of said route 15 200' SSE to N side of said route 20; thence extending 100' SW along said side of said route;

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries (See Continuation Sheet #1)

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

organization Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date August 1979

street & number 221 Governor Street telephone (804) 786-3144

city or town Richmond state Virginia 23219

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Tucker Hill, Executive Director

title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date SEP 18 1979

For HCRS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Orange County Courthouse, Orange, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 8,6,10 PAGE 1

8. SIGNIFICANCE

During the intervening years the building commissioners were appointed, and a plan was secured from M. McKinnie, architect, for a building in the conventional Roman Revival style. By June 1858 when an agreement was drawn up with the contractors, Spooner and Darrow, entirely new plans were accepted. The new Orange County Courthouse, as designed by Haskins and Alexander of Washington, D.C. was completed and first used by the court in July 1859.

During the Civil War the building served as an armory for the Montpelier Guard. In August 1862 a cavalry skirmish took place on Main Street in front of the courthouse. A monument commemorating Orange County's involvement in the War was erected in front of the courthouse on October 19, 1900.

VDS/RCC

¹William H. B. Thomas, "Courthouses of Orange County," Virginia Cavalcade 19 (Summer 1969): 32.

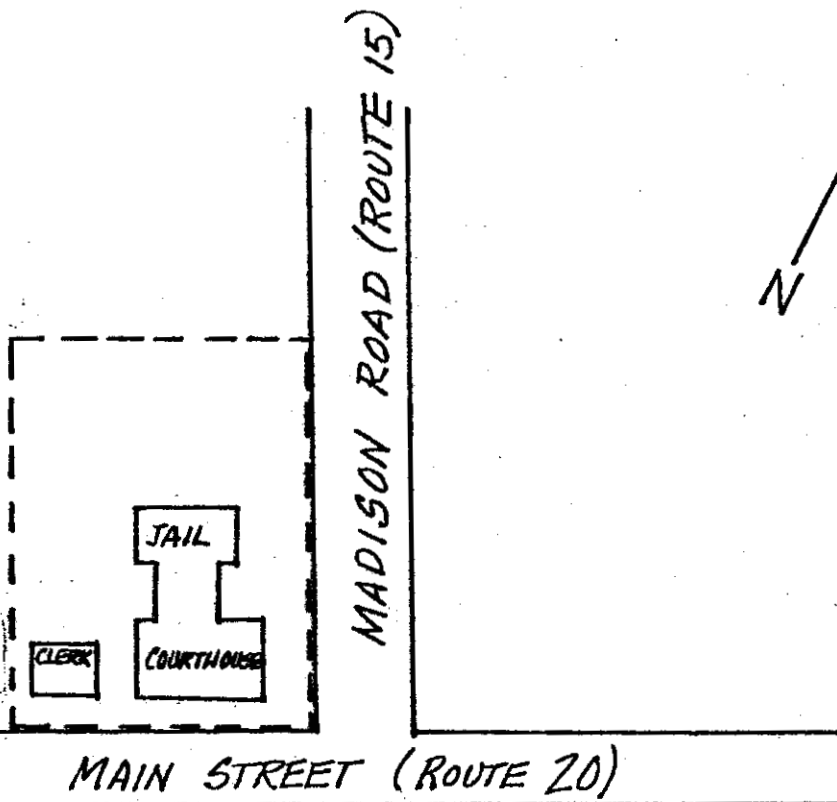
6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2). Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
1968 1976, 1979 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA - Verbal boundary description and justification

thence extending 200' NNW; thence extending 100' NNE to point of origin.

The courthouse has occupied its present site on the northwest corner of Madison Road and North Main Street since it was built in 1858-9. The Virginia courthouse complex traditionally includes the courthouse, jail and clerk's office.



ORANGE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
ORANGE COUNTY, VA.

SKETCH MAP - NOT TO SCALE

(DOTTED LINE INDICATES
APPROXIMATE REGISTER
BOUNDARY)

VHLC 1979

