United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

DRAFT

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office

Other names/site number: Ashe Street Courthouse

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Remove "N/A" if property is part of a multiple property listing and add name)

2. Location

Street & Number: 401 Ashe Street

City or town: Johnson City State: TN County: Washington

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A Zip: 37604

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this _X_ 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 _X_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

[ ] **national** [ ] **statewide** [X] **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria: [X] **A** [ ] **B** [X] **C** [ ] **D**

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official: **Date**

Title: **State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office
Name of Property

Washington County, Tennessee
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private	☐
Public – Local	X
Public – State	☐
Public – Federal	☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	X
District	☐
Site	☐
Structure	☐
Object	☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
GOVERNMENT/Post Office	VACANT/NOT IN USE
COMMERCE/Financial Institution	
GOVERNMENT/Courthouse	

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Beaux Arts

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Terracotta, Limestone, Granite, Synthetic

Narrative Description

Description of Building

The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office, also known as the Ashe Street Courthouse, is located at the southwest edge of Johnson City's central commercial area. The building, a rectangular block approximately 48 ft. x 80 ft., dominates its small site. The style is predominantly in the Beaux Art style prevalent in government buildings of the period. It consists of a low granite base topped with a heavy terracotta band for the foundation and brick walls set in running bond. The second floor is delineated by a terracotta belt course and is topped with a terracotta entablature and balustrade. The low-pitched bituminous hipped roof is not visible from street level. Windows vary in type but generally have thick decorative terracotta surrounds characteristic of the style.

Originally constructed in 1910, the first floor of the building was expanded to the south in 1927 which created a "T" shaped footprint.[1] This addition is 34 ft. x 46 ft. In 1940, after purchase by the Washington

[1] "$110,000 For Post Office," *Johnson City Chronicle*, January 18, 1927.

County government, the interior was renovated for a courthouse and a second small addition of 20 ft. x 34 ft. was added on the southwest corner. This contained an office for the judges and a jury room. Private restrooms were provided for each room. In 1964 a second level was added to the 1927 addition. This added space for the Clerk and Master's office. The last addition was a one story 30 ft x 60 ft addition on the southwest corner constructed in 1965 for a new courtroom and offices. It also contained a new entrance leading west to Earnest Street. The additions were built with closely matching brick and fenestration to be compatible with the original block. All additions have flat bituminous roofs covered with gravel.

Exterior

The façade faces north and fronts on Ashe Street. The façade presents as five bays reading window, window, door, window, and window. The end bays are setback. The center portion is a three-bay portico delineated by three round segmented arches set on brick pillars with a granite and terracotta base. The arches have prominent keystones. Above the springing of the center and side arches is a plain oriel decorative element. The primary entrance is accessed via a flight of 4 steps to a small flag plaza and then a flight of eight broad granite steps to the terrazzo floor of the portico.

Set within the center arch is an aluminum vestibule installed during the 1987 renovations.[2] The vestibule is an aluminum framed area of 6 x 8.5 feet with a 10 feet height. The sides have a solid panel of approximately 3 feet with a 4-foot glass panel and then another 2-foot solid panel on top. The front contains double aluminum glass doors with three light side lights. Above the doors is a single light. The ceiling is finished in plasterboard. The large use of glass in the vestibule minimizes the visual impact of the non-historic element on the appearance of the façade.

Beyond the vestibule is a large, wood double door that opens into the main lobby. A four light fanlight topping the door. The present doors are replacements for the original doors as part of the 1964 renovations. The material and appearance of the original doors is unknown. Replacements are wood with a single panel approximately 18 inches square in the lower half, a glass panel approximately 18 x 36 inches and then a smaller 12 by 18-inch panel in the upper portion. Side lights on each side are two panels with the lower portion being wood and the upper being glass. Above the door is a large single transom.

The side arches in the portico frame large identical windows. These are tripartite wood framed double-hung windows with two lights in each section. They are topped a four-light fanlight. They appear to be original.

The side bays are set back approximately two feet. Each bay has a large four light double-hung wood window with a two-light transom on the first floor. These windows are surrounded by an original terracotta frame, decorated sill and a molded header. Basement windows with an iron grill, apparently original, are also in each of the bays. The space in the west bay has been filled and a window air conditioner has been installed. The basement window on the east bay is a two light wood window that appears original. All the basement windows are covered with a heavy iron grill that also appears original.

The second floor is delineated by the terracotta belt course at the level of the second-floor windowsills. The five windows on this level are rectangles of equal dimensions, surrounded by a terracotta frame and

[2] "*Washington County Emergency Communication Center"*, Ken Ross Architects, Inc., 1987; Archives of Heritage Alliance, Jonesborough, TN.

keystone. The center three windows were infilled with glass block during a 1964 remodeling.[3] The two windows on the end bays are four light double hung wood and appear original.

A prominent entablature and balustrade surmount the main block of the building on all sides. This is cast concrete or terracotta with a cornice featuring block modillions. The corners of the balustrade appear as rusticated blocks with an open stone railing connecting each corner. A large cartouche is at the center of the façade. The center of the frieze states "United States Post Office." To the west, the 1965 addition is visible behind a tree. This is a one-story addition with two four light, double hung windows which appear to be the same size as the second-floor windows in the original block. The railing surrounds a stairwell leading to the basement.

The east elevation of the building faces Union Street (now closed as parking) and continues the design features of the front façade. The original block presents as three bays, with the first-floor windows duplicating the front side bay windows. The second-floor windows duplicate those on the second floor of the front. There are three basement openings, to the north is a two light wood window behind an original iron grill matching that on the facade. This opens into the stairwell. To the south, behind a non-historic chain link fence was possibly an original window. It now provides access for electrical and mechanical connections. (See basement description.) A third opening in the middle is obscured by the mechanical unit. This was likely the original coal shoot into the coal room. HVAC ductwork now fills the space.

To the south of the original building is the 1927 addition (first level) and the 1964 addition (second level). The first level on the east elevation has a single window that was infilled with glass block during the 1964 renovations. This window appears to be the same size as the original first level windows in the front with a splayed brick header. To the north of the window is a doorway that appears to have been part of the 1927 addition. The current door under the canopy is a steel security door that was part of the 1987 renovations for 9-1-1 operations. The door is accessed via concrete ramp that was added in 1987 for ADA compliance. Not visible behind the ramp is another railing that surrounds a stairwell leading to the basement boiler room. The second floor is a 1964 addition. The single four light wood window appears to match the original second floor windows in size and has a splayed brick header and keystone. The belt course is continued with limestone and there is a limestone cap topping the wall.

The south elevation of the building faces West Walnut Street. The original block and multiple additions are visible on this elevation. From west to east is the one-story 1965 addition, a small one-story 1940 addition, and the first-level 1927 addition topped by the 1964 second addition. The east and west ends of the original 1910 block are visible beyond the 1927 and 1964 additions. The first floor of the 1927 addition presents three large segmented arched windows which appear to have replicated the arched windows of the façade. These windows were infilled with glass block and the upper arch finished in stucco during the 1964 renovations.[4] With the upper arch area solid, it allowed for the installation of a dropped ceiling on the interior. The arch is a brick header springing from stone quoins and meeting with a keystone. The base of the wall is terracotta and includes the stone sills set out from the base. There are two openings to the basement in wells covered with metal shields. These are not windows; the south portion of the basement in the 1927

[3] "*Alterations to Ashe St. Courthouse"* Beeson & Beeson Architects, (January 1964) Archives of Heritage Alliance, Jonesborough, TN
[4] Ibid.

addition was unexcavated. The second floor 1964 addition has three, four-light wood double hung windows with a splayed brick header and keystone. A rooftop square brick vent with louvers on each side is visible.

The small extension to the west is a 1940 addition. It contains one window which appears to be the same size as the original second level windows in the north façade. It was infilled with glass block in 1964. Above this 1940 addition, a single four-light window in the second level of the original block is visible. A first-floor window has been totally enclosed by the addition. On the east end a section of the original block is visible. The second-floor window is the original four-light, wood double hung and unaltered. On the first floor the original four-light double hung has been replaced by a door leading to the conference room. This is also the ADA entrance for the first floor. The original transom has been retained. The larger addition on the west side was from1965 and contains no opening on the south elevation.

The west elevation facing Earnest Street features a mix of the original block, the 1964 second level addition and the 1965 side addition. The 1965 side addition provided a separate entrance to the first floor and to the General Sessions court room. The entrance is recessed with a metal double-door with single light in each door topped by a splayed brick header with keystone. On the first floor there are four windows replicative in size of the windows of the second floor of the rear addition. One window to the north is a four-light wood double hung window. The other three windows were finished with glass block. All windows are topped by splayed brick headers with keystones.[5]

The 1964 second-floor addition shows two four-light wood windows in the same pattern. All of these are finished with splayed brick header and keystone. To the north, a portion of the original block is visible with three original windows on the second floor. Two of the original windows are visible on the first floor, a paired one-over-one double-hung wood window with a transom above. The third original window has been enclosed by the addition. The upper portion of a large wood double hung four-light window in the basement is visible. This is covered by a heavy iron grate and it opens on to a stairwell to the basement that is behind the railing. The original belt course, terracotta decoration and balustrade are also featured on this elevation.

Interior Description
First Level

The main entrance from Ashe Street is through an aluminum and glass vestibule added in 1987 that encloses the main wood doors from the weather. The doors may replicate original style but are replacements from the 1964 renovations. The lobby entrance is approximately 28 ft x 12 ft with a 17 ft ceiling. The area retains the terrazzo floor with black marble baseboard. Since documentation of the original plan is unavailable, it cannot be determined exactly how this space was originally configured. To the east alongside the door in the north wall, is a large wood double hung window with a four light fanlight above. The east wall has a double door leading to the stairway. The doors are an addition from 1987 for fire code compliance.[6] The south wall is divided into two large sections by apparently original columns. According to plans from 1964 the west section was open to a large hallway but is now enclosed with drywall and undecorated. The west wall is

[5] "*Alterations to Ashe St. Courthouse"* Beeson & Beeson Architects, (January 1965) Archives of Heritage Alliance, Jonesborough, TN
[6] "*Washington County Emergency Communication Center"*, Ken Ross Architects, Inc., 1987; Archives of Heritage Alliance, Jonesborough, TN.

undecorated. Previously this wall opened with a single door into the office of the Tax Assessor and later was the office of the Chancery Court Judge.[7]

To the south is a single, flush wood door and a small glass sliding window that would provide access to a receptionist. Prior to 1987, this wall did not exist. The remainder of the first floor from this point on has been remodeled with drywall, modern finishes and is painted white and the floors are carpeted. From the reception area two hallways lead west and south. The west hallway leads to several offices. The first office to the north is the Director's office and is typical in that the ceiling is dropped acoustic tile. This was the previously mentioned Tax Assessors office and the north wall contains the original double hung wood window overlooking the west end of the front portico. The fanlight has been covered with the current dropped ceiling but is still intact. The window trim and molding are visible but have been painted.

Across the hallway on the south side is a second office. This has a window approximately 3 ft. x 4 ft. opening onto the hallway. A single flush wood door leads to this office with dropped ceiling and access to a storeroom to the south. Continuing west in the hallway is a second large office for the Assistant Director. The ceiling is a dropped acoustic tile and the walls are painted white. In the west wall are two original wood double hung windows. In the north wall is a single wood double hung window, also original. The transom windows are intact but concealed by the ceiling.

Prior to the 1987 the reception area was part of the hallway and the lobby extended approximately another 12 feet to the south. On the west were offices of the Sessions Court and Circuit Court Clerks. To the east was a door to the Trustee's office. This is an office 22 ft. x 10 ft. with a small storeroom to the east that was originally a vault. There are no windows in the room. According to the 1964 drawings, this room had a short hallway to the east connecting the County Clerk's Office. This has now been closed.

The main hallway narrowed at this point and continued south to the Law Court room in the 1927 addition, now the operations center. Along the hallway were two small holding rooms for witnesses on the west side and a restroom on the east side. In 1987 these were remodeled as two restrooms and a storage closet. Double doors opened into the Law Court with a railing extending north/south across the room. Public seating was to the east, and the judge's bench was to the west.[8] The bench sat diagonally across the northwest corner of the room with a jury box in the southwest corner. A small addition to the west allowed for construction of a jury room to the south and the judge's chamber to the north. Between the two rooms were restrooms, one for each room. A hallway along the north end led to the judge's chambers and an emergency exit to the west.

When converted into a court room in 1940, a mural painted by New York artist Frank Reilly was placed on the wall behind the bench of the Law Court. It was dedicated on November 22, 1941.[5] This mural depicted three noted Tennessee jurists who had practiced in Washington County: David Campbell, Andrew Jackson, and Hugh Lawson White. The mural was removed during the renovations of 1968 and is now at East Tennessee State University in the Archives Reese Museum (see Figures 1 and 2).

[7] "Lifestyles," Kiener, John; Asso. Editor, *Jonesborough Herald & Tribune*, March 25,2020.
[8] "*Alterations to Ashe St. Courthouse,"* Beeson & Beeson Architects (July 1958) Archives of Heritage Alliance, Jonesborough, TN.

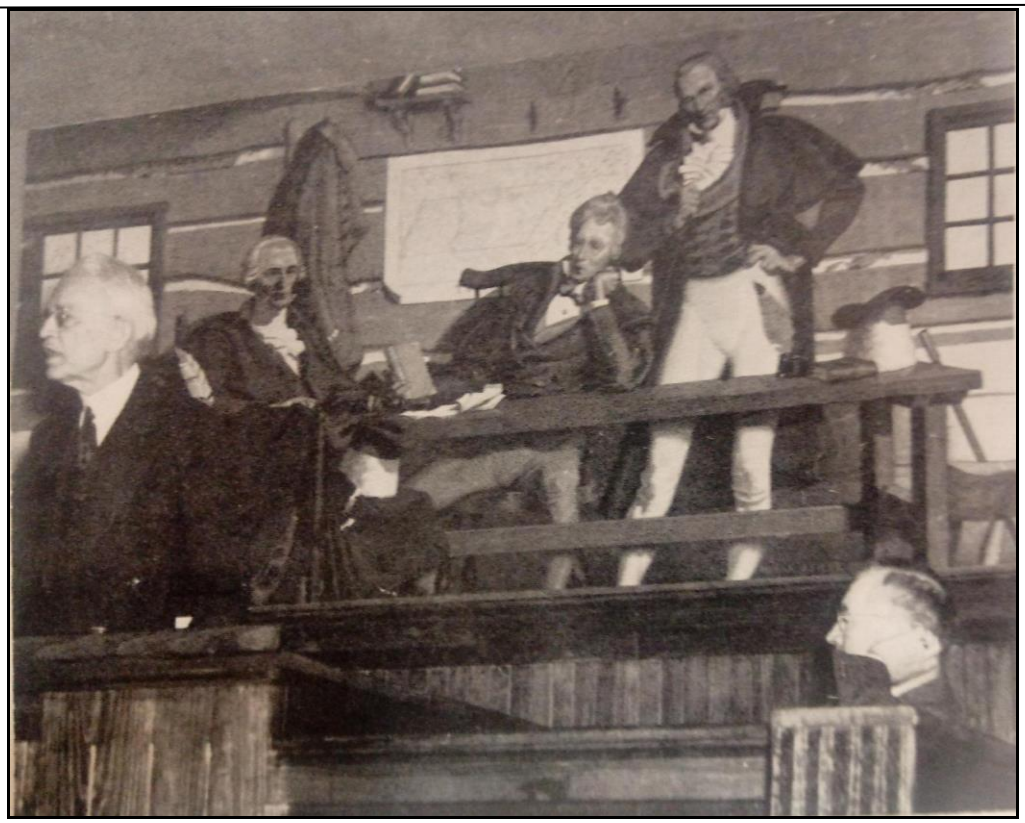

Figure 1: Courtroom showing the 1940 mural. From *"Tribute To Early Jurists Paid in Presenting Mural"*, Johnson City Press, November, 23, 1941

Figure 2: Original mural removed from Law Court with 1964 renovations. Archives of Reece Museum, ETSU.

With the 1987 renovations the hallway was narrowed, and a single door opened to the former Law Court, now the operations center for 9-1-1. There are two private rest rooms, one on each side of the hall and a small storage room on the west side. This 1987 renovation involved adding a raised access floor system allowing for connection of the electronics throughout the space. Gray acoustic panels are mounted on the walls and hanging from the ceiling. Walls are painted white. The existing windows in the east and south walls are glass block from the 1964 courthouse renovation, but the trim is simple pine and stained. A wood trim rail runs around the room at approximately seven feet above the floor. The former jury room and judge's chamber on the west end of the room have been converted into equipment rooms. The wood paneled finishes remain, and the floors are tile. Other spaces are used for storage. The exterior door on the east side of the room is a steel security door that provides access for workers. Along the north wall just inside this door to the east is a space that contained lockers.

At the west end, a short hallway leads to a break room. Two walls have a kitchen counter and undercounter cabinets along them. The cabinetry is a light oak finish and the floor is grey tile. Walls are painted white with a dropped ceiling. In the west wall is a doorway that leads down a short flight of three steps into the 1965 addition.

The first room was used by the court clerk and an adjoining room was the judge's chamber. These rooms are drywall, painted white with carpeted floors. Windows in both offices are four-light, wood, double hung appearing identical to the four-light windows used in the second floor addition. The clerk's office window faces north, and the judge's chamber has one facing north and one facing west. Both rooms open into an entry hall. To the west in the hall is a set of double steel doors that exit through a small recessed porch to Earnest St. On the east end of the hallway are two private rest rooms. A single flush door on the south wall opens into a large room, originally a court room, but not used by 9-1-1. The 1987 plans designate it as rental space. The walls are drywall and is painted white with a tile floor. There are three windows in the west wall that contain glass block. A wood trim runs around the room about six feet above the floor. All other trim around windows, doors and baseboard is simple molding and stained a medium oak. The glass block and trim are from the original construction.

Returning to the main lobby, to the east of the main entrance is another wall with a flush double door that provides a fire wall separation for the stairway to the second floor. Entering the hallway, the stairs ascend along the east and north walls. The terrazzo floor and black marble base are continued from the lobby. Immediately to the south a wood door leads into a conference room for 9-1-1. This was the County Clerk's office and had an adjoining hallway to the west connecting the trustee's office, formerly mentioned. This hall has been closed off and created a small storeroom. At the south end of this wall there is a small restroom. It is most likely plaster painted white and the fixtures may be from the 1960s renovations. On the south end of the room is a door that opens to the ADA ramp on the south elevation. This was an original four-light double hung window with the two-light transom. The lower portion of the window has been removed allowing for the placement of the door. The transom remains intact but concealed by the dropped ceiling. In the east wall are two of the original first floor windows. Both transoms are intact but have been concealed with the dropped ceiling.

In the stairway hall there is a door in the northwest corner that opens to a small custodial closet. Under the stairway on the northeast is a doorway providing access to the basement. These doors are flush wood, and the basement access has a glass panel for safety observance and were part of the 1987 renovations.

Second Level

The main stairway proceeds to the second floor with three landings. The area at the top of the stairs was originally an open area and the railing extended around to the east wall. With the 1964 renovations, a portion of the railing was removed, and an office was added. The entire second floor has not been used since the courts moved out in 1985. All the wood trim, doors, doorframes, baseboards, and other railings are finished in what appears to be a dark walnut finish. Many of the doors have a hammered glass panel with the name of the official or office painted on them. All office doors also have a single glass transom. The trim and finish are primarily from the 1940 renovation. Some individual rooms were redone with the 1968 renovation. There is no other access to the second level, nor is there an elevator in the building.

From the top landing a door to the east leads to the small reception office and then into a larger office in the southeast corner. The reception room is paneled and has one original four-light double hung window. The office to the south has a picture rail and wood trim throughout. The windows in the east and south walls are original four-light, double hung wood covered with shades. The walls are most likely plaster and have been painted, possibly a cream color. There are many signs of moisture intrusion on the floor, ceiling and mold on the walls. The floor was asphalt tile but is now very broken and brittle. All electricity and HVAC have been turned off on this floor.

Returning to the hallway, it extends to the west for the entire length of the building. A four-light original double hung wood window is at the east end of the hallway. As one proceeds down the hall, to the north side are a court room, chancellor's office and small storeroom with a ladder to the roof. The first door on the right is the entry for visitors to Chancery Court. This room extends the full length of the central bay of the building. A second entry for lawyers is further down the hall. There are three original window openings that were infilled with glass block in 1964. The furniture and trim are very simple and appear to have been redone c.1964 with light blond finish. The judge's bench and the benches for the attendees are similar. There are extra benches stacked in the room, which were probably removed for the first floor Law Court when it was converted to the 9-1-1 operations center. The ceiling is acoustic tile with fluorescent lighting. The walls have a light finished wood paneling wainscoting with red walls above. The floor is tiled.

Moving east in the hall, a second door in the north wall accesses a small closet which provides roof access via a ladder. The Chancellors chamber is accessed by a third door in the north wall of the hallway. It is paneled with an acoustic tile ceiling. The door, chair rail, and baseboard are dark finish. A reddish crown mold surrounds the room. The floor has been carpeted or tiled at different times but was later stripped. A hand sink is in the northwest corner, and in the northeast corner is a small restroom; both were installed c. 1940. An arched opening in the east wall leads to a short hallway. A door that opens into the courtroom immediately behind the bench area of the courtroom appears to be c.1940.

Directly across the hall from the judge's chamber are two restrooms for men and women. The fixtures appear to be c.1940. The walls are covered in marble to about seven feet high and the upper wall and ceiling are painted plaster. A four-light double hung original wood window is in the east wall of the men's room. The women's room has no windows.

Returning east in the hallway in the south wall, there is a conference room that opens to the hallway and the Clerk and Master's office beyond. The room is painted white with dark wood trim acoustic ceiling. The door from the hallway is finished with the dark walnut finish with a transom above and dates to c.1940.

The next door to the east opens into a passageway that leads to the Clerk & Master's office. This passageway was an office prior to the 1964 second story addition on top of the 1927 addition. It is finished with a dark paneling, trim, and tile floor. There are several small closets on the east side. The floor tile is very broken, and the room has suffered significant water damage.

Entry to the Clerk & Master's office is from the north. It is one large room with an L shaped counter in the northeast section. A portion of the north wall appears to have been covered with a white vinyl which is now pealing. Other parts of the wall are painted, and the ceiling is painted plaster board. The ceiling and parts of the wall show signs of water damage. The floor is a gray tile with black rubber base shoe. There are four, four-light double hung wood windows in the room: two in the south wall, one in the east wall, and one in the west wall. In the north wall to the west of the entry is a door to the conference room that is accessible from the hallway also. This is flush door added with the addition and all trim dates to 1964. A second opening in the north wall was the vault. The door and frame have been removed. A small office is in the southwest corner of the main room. The walls are a wood paneling with white ceiling and gray tile floor. There is one four-light, wood double-hung window in the south wall.

Basement Level

The basement is accessed from a door underneath the main stairway. This is a flush door from the 1987 renovations. The basement was used primarily as an auxiliary sheriff's office with small offices and records storage. The stairway leads from the first floor to a landing, turns west and then to a small entry hall. In the northeast corner is a small closet. The basement walls are either brick or concrete masonry units throughout. Brick portions of the walls are part of the original structure of brick piers and arched spans supporting the building. These piers are spaced 12 to 16 feet apart with a brick arch spanning the space between. Most of the arches have been closed in with brick or CMU. Many of the piers are totally enclosed in newer walls with brick, paneling, or CMU, however existing drawings for renovations in 1978 show the piers in place.[9] Floors are mostly concrete with a few rooms having tile.

From the stairway, the hallway turns south and then within about 12 ft. it turns west and continues to the west end of the building. At the west end there is a doorway which opens to an exterior stairway up to grade. Prior to the turn west there is a door in the west wall leading to an office room. In the north wall of the office is access to a storage area also accessible from another room at the west end. The walls of the room are brick and CMU.

Returning to the hallway and turning west, the north wall has had arches infilled with brick or CMU. The only door in the north wall of the hallway is at the west end and opens into a room labeled "Bull Pen."[10] The east wall contains two doors. In the south end of the wall a door leads to a breakroom used by the sheriff's department. The breakroom is finished with a dark pine paneling and has a counter along the north and east walls. The south and west walls are painted. It is finished with a drop ceiling and tile floor. In the north end of the "Bull Pen" wall is another door leading to a storage area/hallway extending east ending with the first office entered from the east end of the hallway. Walls are painted brick or CMU with a concrete floor. The ceiling is sprayed and unfinished.

[9] "*Alterations to Ashe St. Courthouse,"* Beeson, Lusk & Jones, Architects (July 1978) Archives of Heritage Alliance, Jonesborough, TN
[10] Ibid.

Returning to the hallway at the west end, two doors in the south wall lead to restrooms. The restrooms contain fixtures from the c.1940 renovation. The walls are marble to about 7 feet high with the upper wall painted white. Ceiling is unfinished. Moving east down the hall the next door is a small office used for communications. This room and the room immediately behind were parts of a courtroom from 1958.[11] The east wall is brick and has a solid white door leading to the reception room next door. The south wall is a glass and panel partition creating a small hallway that leads to the storage room to the south. The west wall is painted brick and the floor is grey tile.

The next door east in the hallway opens into a small office reception area. To the south a door leads to a private office. All walls are paneled in a medium colored pine with flush doors. Floors are grey tile. In the south end of the west wall a door leads to the storage area behind the communications room. In the north end is a door with direct access to the communications room.

Returning east in the hallway, a third door in the south wall leads to what was originally the boiler room. This room has been subdivided into two rooms. The walls have been paneled and possibly served as offices. Some of the paneling has been removed and the area does not have any ceiling. A room off this to the east from the first room was originally the coal room. The east wall has an opening for ductwork from the exterior HVAC unit. This was most likely the coal chute. A second opening, possibly a window, has been closed and all the main electrical feeds enter through this space. There is no ceiling in this room. The floor may have been tiled and the other walls are painted brick.

The second room contains more mechanical equipment, water heater, and plumbing connections. The north wall is paneled, and the other walls are painted brick. The southeast corner of this room has a door in the east wall which opens to the exterior stairway rising to grade at West Walnut Street. On the west wall is a door to the private office that is accessed from the previous reception room. Several of the doors and the steel frames have been removed and the openings are unfinished. Several vault doors are stored here, which are most likely ones removed from the vaults on the first and second floors.

Site Description

Located on an urban site surrounded by city streets on all sides, the building dominates the site with limited green space. The main block of the building is centered in the block on the east/west axis, and slightly to the north allowing more room for parking, etc. on the south. The north side rises three steps to a concrete flag plaza which leads to the main steps to the building. This plaza is the same width as the primary steps. On the east and west sides of the plaza is a lawn that extends along either side of the building to the south side. Sidewalks intersect the lawns to provide better access from the side streets and parking area. Each lawn area also has several medium sized holly and magnolia trees. There is no shrubbery next to the building and no other flower beds on the site. The south side on West Walnut Street is a parking area/driveway that leads to the Union Street parking on the east. Union Street was closed to traffic for use as parking. As of 28 March 2007, the former street became part of the property's legal parcel; this area is excluded from the National Register boundaries.[12]

[11] "*Alterations to Ashe St. Courthouse,"* Beeson & Beeson Architects (July 1958) Archives of Heritage Alliance, Jonesborough, TN.
[12] Quitclaim Deed, Roll 549, Image 826, Washington County Register of Deeds, Jonesborough, TN

The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office was intentionally located on the southwest side of the city in 1910. It was designed to be close to the economic hub of the city near the railroad depots and the Model Mill. It was positioned on Ashe Street so that it could be centrally located in relation to the businesses of a growing Johnson City. It was also ideally situated near the Tree Streets residential neighborhood (listed in the National Register as the Tree Streets Historic district on 3/12/1996) and the local streetcar line, making it an important part of the civic community. It was an institution for all of Johnson City, and it was so successful that it needed to be expanded soon after opening, as early as 1927. Today, the building is still centrally located near downtown Johnson City and is a major part of the City's plans to restore and develop the Walnut Street Corridor. The building's setting of one city block has been largely undisturbed through time.

Statement of Integrity

The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office is located at its original site. Its setting with commercial areas to the east, north, and west with the residential Tree Streets Historic District to the south is consistent with its historic setting. The growth of the Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office reflected the growth of Johnson City and Washington County. As the county continued to expand, they needed a larger courthouse, so the building was altered and expanded over the years to fulfil the changing needs of the community. When the courts moved out of the Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office (then called the Ashe Street Courthouse), the building was renovated in 1987 for the call center of Washington County's 9-1-1 services. Changes made in 1987 were largely cosmetic or added partition walls that could easily be removed. An aluminum and glass vestibule was added to the front entrance and that is the most obvious non-historic change on the façade but the usage of glass for much of the vestibule minimizes the visual impact. The interior of the first floor was remodeled to be a series of offices, however, these renovations retain many apparent elements of the 1910 building. Partitions were placed between major structure elements that are visible. The windows are all from their period of construction or were altered during the Period of Significance. For example, in the 1927 south addition, the windows were modified with 1964 additions and renovations. The second floor of the building remains unchanged from its courthouse days of the 1940s to the 1970s. The lower level is also unchanged from its last renovation in 1965. Many of the original, early 1910 design elements are still intact inside the building, including the terrazzo floor with black, marble baseboard and a grand, marble staircase with an iron railing that leads to the second floor. The historic physical evolution of the building reflects the evolving nature of the building to provide multiple essential government services. Therefore, the building has an overall good integrity of materials, design, and workmanship. The building retains the important character-defining aspects of the Beaux Arts style, including symmetrical façade, stone and terracotta detailing, decorative window surrounds and entablature, arch motifs, and numerous original wood windows. The building retains its association with its architectural style and significant history providing government services. Taken together, all these aspects allow it to retain its integrity of feeling.

The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office was designed to be a grand and influential structure that served its community. It has filled that role for more than one hundred years now, and its continued presence near downtown Johnson City makes it an integral part of not only Johnson City and Washington County's past, but of their future, too. Throughout its century of existence, the Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office has significantly retained its architectural integrity.

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.)

[X] 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.

[X] 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.)
Property is:

[ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] B removed from its original location.

[ ] C a birthplace or grave.

[ ] D a cemetery.

[ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

[ ] F a commemorative property.

[ ] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

N/A

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Architecture
Government

Period of Significance
1910-1970

Significant Dates
1910, 1927, 1940, 1964, 1965

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

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Taylor, James Knox
Ackers, John W.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office in Johnson City, Tennessee is eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for its local significance in the area of Government for its important role providing essential government functions in Johnson City. From its opening in January 1911 to 1937, it functioned as a U. S. Postal Savings Bank and Post Office. As the first Postal Savings Bank in Tennessee, and one of only a few throughout the nation, it held a place of high regard for the general public.[13] Its location within three blocks of the town center and the railroad stations made it a center of public activity. The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank also qualifies for the National Register under Criterion C as a significant local example of Beaux Arts architecture. Completed in 1910, the building was designed by the Office of the Supervising Architect under James Knox Taylor. The building became known as the Ashe Street Courthouse in 1940 when it was purchased by the government of Washington County and converted into a courthouse and county office building. It continued to provide important government services to the community in that capacity until 1985 when the county built a new courthouse. There have been several historic additions to the building on the south and west sides. These were done in a very compatible manner using similar brick and fenestration with a limestone wall cap and stringcourse and were completed within the Period of Significance. The last addition was completed in 1965. The building maintains its integrity. The Period of Significance is 1910 to 1970, which corresponds to the years when the building was a historically important government building.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Historical Significance

The growth of Johnson City revolved around the development of the railroads and the iron, timber, and coal industries. This combination set Johnson City up as a regional center of commerce and community, especially during the early twentieth century. According to research by Mary Hardin McCown in 1969, the first Post Office was established in a brick house about two miles west of the town and was called "Green Meadows" with Joseph Burts as Postmaster.[14] However, no definite documentation of this office has yet been discovered.

In 1849 a Post Office was located near the southern end of the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina railroad trestle over Sinking Creek with Henry Johnson as Postmaster. John H. Bowman, a contract mail carrier, was the second Postmaster and operated the Post Office from his home from 1855 through 1857, and the Post Office took the name of his home, "Blue Plum."[15] In 1854, Henry Johnson "built a store, and depot along the tracks of the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad." In July 1857, the Post Office was moved from the Blue Plum location to Johnson's building and the community became known as Johnson's

[13] Department of the Treasury, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, On the State of the Finances For The Fiscal Year Ended June 30 1910* (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.: 1911), 376; "Postal Savings Banks Are Open For Business," Knoxville Sentinel, January 3, 1911; "Postal Savings Bank to Open January 3," Chattanooga Daily Times, December 27, 1910.
[14] "Johnson City Is In The Lead," *The Comet*, July 6, 1911.
[15] Mary Hardin McCown, *A History of Johnson City* (Dec. 1, 1969), located in the Mary Hardin McCown Collection at the Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University.

Tank.[16] The name was changed to Haynesville in 1859, and Benjamin Broyles was appointed as Postmaster. The renaming was in honor of Landon Carter Haynes, a resident of the area who was serving as a Senator in the Confederate States of America. After the Civil War, the name was changed back to Johnson City, and Henry Johnson was again appointed as Postmaster.[17]

Johnson City was chartered on December 1, 1869. Over the next 40 years the location of the Post Office moved within the city but always remained within the main business district. In the early 1900s, the leaders of Johnson City saw a need for a new Post Office due to increased growth and commerce. According to historian Ray Stahl and Washington County archivist Ned Irwin, there was competition between the east and the west side of Johnson City as they each vied to possess the new building. The people from the east side, led by a group of businessmen in that area, wanted the new Post Office in a new town on the east side called Carnegie (this area was later annexed to Johnson City).[18] However, George L. Carter, a wealthy industrialist who was building the Clinchfield Railroad and Model Mill, was promoting development of the southwest side of Johnson City. The southwest side of Johnson City was well on its way to becoming a focus of residential development. The Carter Addition, as it became known, was developed with streets, sidewalks, water, and sewer. A streetcar line ran a loop around the Carter Addition and also connected West Walnut Street with Mountain Home, National Home for Disabled Soldiers (NHL, 6/17/2011).[19]

George L. Carter submitted a proposal to the Treasury Department offering a site on Ashe Street, "with a written guarantee to complete the railroad depot and other buildings in the vicinity of the Post Office." Carter also backed this guarantee by promising $10,000 to the government if the plan failed. Furthermore, Carter agreed to dig the foundation and build sidewalks, as requested. When officials first arrived to inspect the site, there were no sidewalks. However, Carter had crews come in overnight and construct sidewalks around the site; thus, the site was approved.[20]

With Carter's promise to complete the station for the new Clinchfield Railroad, which was then under construction, and other buildings in the area, the new Post Office was located in the hub of communication and business for all of Northeast Tennessee. Within three blocks there were three railroad stations: the Clinchfield, the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina and the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia, (now the Norfolk & Southern). Mr. Carter's office for the Clinchfield Railroad was constructed diagonally across the street at Ashe Street and Earnest Street. It is currently a church but has not been architecturally changed since that time.

This Post Office was the first Federal Building in Johnson City. It was designed by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of the Supervising Architect, James Knox Taylor who served from 1897 until 1912. Construction was completed December 10, 1910, and the operations were moved from the W.G. Mathes

[16] Samuel Cole Williams, *A History of Johnson City and Its Environs* (Johnson City, TN: Watauga Press, 1940).
[17] Ray Stahl, *Greater Johnson City; A Pictorial History* (Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Company, 1983).
[18] Williams, *A History of Johnson City and Its Environs,* 1940.
[19] Ray Stahl and Ned Irwin, *The Last Empire Builder; A Life of George L. Carter, 1854-1936* (Johnson City, TN: East Tennessee State University, 2012).
[20] Ibid, 106.

Building downtown.[21] A 1909 publication boasted that "The Government is just now having built a magnificent stone and brick building to be used as a post office and a federal building, generally. It will cust (sic) upward of $100,000..."[22] The Post Office opened for business on January 3, 1911 (see Figure 3). At the time it was also designated as the first and only Postal Savings Bank in Tennessee.[23] Only five years later, there might have been up to 95 postal savings banks in Tennessee, and by March 1918, the number of postal savings banks across the country had grown to over 7,160.[24]

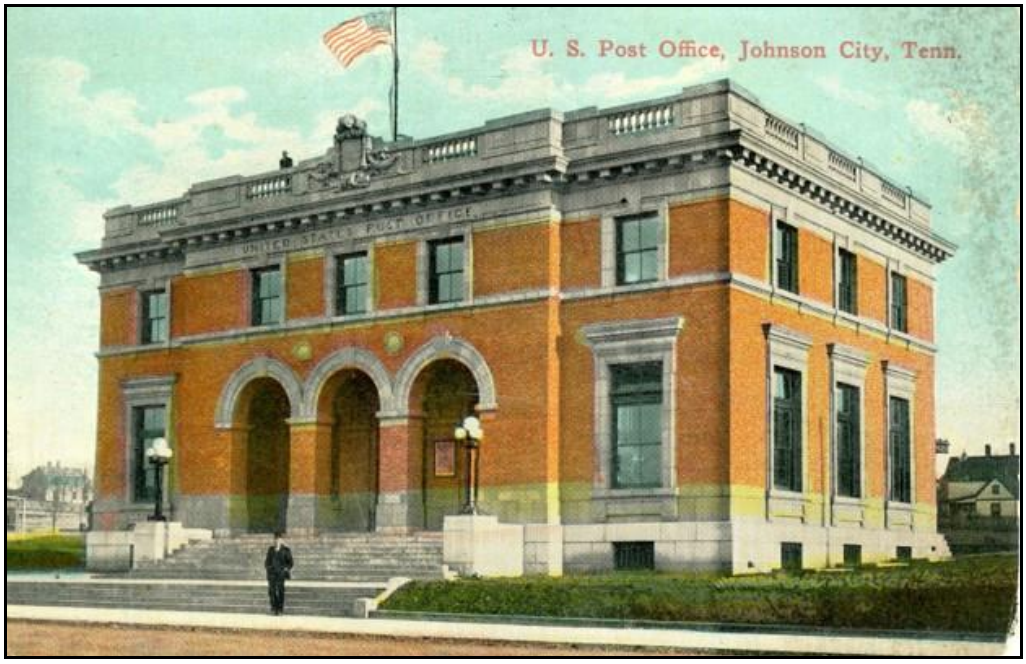

Figure 3: U.S. Post Office, Johnson City, Tenn, ca. 1910.
Box 8, Folder 1, Mildred S. Kozsuch Papers, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University

Implemented by President Howard Taft, the Postal Savings System encouraged fiscal responsibility and incremental savings, aimed at industrial communities and cities with high immigrant populations.[25] The intention was to leverage the public trust in a familiar and recognizable institution in order to improve the nation's financial situation. Effective on January 1, 1911, the postal savings system "was established as an

[21] "Johnson City Post Office Being Moved, *The Bristol Herald Courier*, December 11, 1910.
[22] Johnson City, Tennessee; Where and What It Is, A Compilation of the Johnson City Commercial Club, 1909 Reprinted by The Overmountain Press, 1989. 19
[23] "Johnson City is Selected," Herald and Tribune, October 26, 1910.
[24] Congressional Record: Containing the Proceedings and Debates of the Second Session of the Sixty-Fifth Congress of the United States of America, vol. LVI Washington Government Printing Office 1918, 4102; Postal Savings banks. An Argument in Their Favor by the Postmaster-General, with Appendices (Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1891), 67; E.W. Kemmerer, "Six Years of Postal Savings in the United States," The American Economic Review 7, no. 1 (March 1917): 57.
[25] Postal Savings banks. An Argument in Their Favor by the Postmaster-General, with Appendices (Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1891).

experiment in a new field of public benefits."[26] According to one contemporary, the postal savings bank "brings out of hiding money that would not otherwise find its way into circulation."[27] According to one publication, the "people of this country greeted this innovation with an immediate and enthusiastic response."[28] The legislation announced that, "every post office that issues money orders, and such others as the postmaster general may designate, will be savings banks."[29] The act allowed deposits by any person over the age of ten years old, and permitted deposits by married women.[30] In a time when their rights were severely curtailed, these children and married women were allowed to make deposits in their own name, and without the interference of their parents or husbands. One newspaper article explained that the postal savings stamps system intended "to encourage thrift among the poor and to teach children the habit of saving."[31] The law stipulated that individuals could only have one account, and the interest on accounts at postal savings banks was set to 2.5 percent in order not to entice customers away from established banks.[32] The postal savings institutions were sometimes referred to as "the poor man's banks" in order to pacify bankers. Account holders were limited to $100 deposits per month and a total savings cap of $500, although in 1918 the limit was raised significantly to $2,500 dollars.[33]

The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office was affiliated with notable individuals who participated in many other aspects of the city's development, including politics, economics, and reform. For example, Lula Belle Divine (née Milburn) was appointed the first female Postmaster in Johnson City in 1922, managing the facility's operation at Ashe Street. According to Rebecca Proffitt, Collections Manager at East Tennessee State University's Reece Museum, Lula Belle was also prominent in the local suffrage movement, serving as the Recording Secretary of the Equal Suffrage League of Johnson City. This is only one example of the Johnson City Postal Savings Bank's connection to the greater history of both Johnson City and Washington County.

In 1912, the Supreme Court described the size and responsibilities of the United States Postal System:

> The great postal system of this country has been built up, involving an annual revenue and expenditure of over five hundred millions of dollars, the maintenance of 60,000 post offices, with hundreds of thousands of employees, the carriage of more than fifteen billions of pieces of mail matter each year, weighing over two billions of pounds, the incorporation of railroads, the establishment of the rural free delivery system, the money-order system, by which more than half a

[26] Richard B. Kielbowicz, "Postal Savings Banks," in Postal Enterprise: Innovations with Congressional Constraints, 1789-1910 (May 30, 2000): 47.
[27] Proceedings of the Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting Bar Association of Tennessee (Memphis, TN: June 29th & 30th, 1916), 47.
[28] H.L. Wiley, "Postal Savings Stamps of U.S.," Mekeel's Weekly Stamp, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1218, Boston, Massachusetts, May 2, 1914.
[29] "House Will Amend Postal Bank Bill," Knoxville Sentinel, March 9, 1910.
[30] "Postal Savings Banks Are Open For Business," Knoxville Sentinel, January 3, 1911; "Postal Savings Bank to Open January 3," Chattanooga Daily Times, December 27, 1910.
[31] "Postal Savings Banks Are Open For Business," Knoxville Sentinel, January 3, 1911.
[32] Ibid
[33] "Siphon for Large Cities," Chattanooga Daily Times, June 24, 1910; Mehrsa Baradaran, "A Short History of Postal Banking," *Slate*, August 18, 2014, https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2014/08/postal-banking-already-worked-in-the-usa-and-it-will-work-again.html, accessed July 12, 2020

> billion of dollars a year is transmitted from person to person, the postal savings bank, the parcels post, an aeroplane mail service, the suppression of lotteries, and a most efficient suppression of fraudulent and criminal schemes impossible to be reached in any other way.[34]

Post Offices also posted "bulletins of opportunities" prepared by the Labor Department in order to encourage employment and reduce joblessness.[35] The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank offered many of these services, including free mail delivery and bulletin postings. As one publication reported in 1909:

> Johnson City enjoys a first-class twice-a-day free mail delivery. The first rural route established in the United States was in Washington County and radiated from Johnson City. Congressman Walter P. Brownlow was one of the first movers in Congress for a free rural mail delivery, and when Congress recommended and appropriated funds for trial routes, Mr. Brownlow's district was one of two chosen, the other one being located in Kansas. The first district of Tennessee is today the largest free rural delivery district in the country.[36]

As one observer commented, rural free delivery was especially important, because it helped with "bringing the producer closer to the markets, and... securing to the farmer the same right as the city man has to receive his bills on the first day of the month."[37]

Johnson City continued to grow throughout the early twentieth century, and the needs of the citizens increased, as well. In 1927 the building was expanded with a large addition towards West Walnut Street.[38] Exactly what this addition housed has not been determined. However, with the growth in population, business and increased rural delivery, the Post Office undoubtedly needed more space for basic operations. Within another ten years more space was needed and in 1938 a new, larger Post Office Building was constructed on East Main Street and the postal operations moved.[39] In 1939, the building was briefly used by the New Deal agency National Youth Administration as an administration and training center. Young people from throughout the region (male, female, black, and white) learned valuable trade skills and benefited from much-needed economic relief after the Great Depression.[40]

The Washington County Government purchased the Ashe Street building in 1939 for a total sum of $12,720, which was paid in 5 payments concluding in 1944. At that time, the site and building were appraised collectively at around $24,000.[41] The building was designated as the new county courthouse, which helped meet one of the county's pressing needs. The Ashe Street building would now "house the separate courts of

[34] Proceedings of the Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting Bar Association of Tennessee (Memphis, TN: June 29th & 30th, 1916), 35.
[35] Proceedings of the Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting Bar Association of Tennessee (Memphis, TN: June 29th & 30th, 1916), 47
[36] Johnson City, Tennessee; Where and What It Is, A Compilation of the Johnson City Commercial Club, 1909 Reprinted by The Overmountain Press, 1989. 42.
[37] Proceedings of the Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting Bar Association of Tennessee (Memphis, TN: June 29th & 30th, 1916), 47.
[38] "$110,000 For Post Office," *Johnson City Chronicle*, January 18, 1927.
[39] "New Post Office Opens For Business Monday," *Johnson City Chronicle*, March 13, 1938.
[40] "NYA To Use Old Postal Building As Headquarters For Projects in Upstate," *Johnson City Press*, April 16, 1939.
[41] Quitclaim Deed, November 17, 1939, Washington County Archives; Quitclaim Deed, December 21, 1944, Washington County Archives.

law and of chancery in Johnson City, which were established in 1891."[42] One local newspaper characterized the decision as a "wise and far-sighted step."[43] In 1940 the county made major renovations to the interior to accommodate the needed courtrooms, clerk offices, etc.[44] The Johnson City Chronicle boasted in December 1940 that the city "now not only has one of the most attractive courthouses in Tennessee, but also one of the most ideally situated."[45]

The Ashe Street building contained the county courts throughout from 1940 until 1985. Expansions and renovations occurred in 1940, 1964, and 1965. The general sessions court, a new court system introduced to Tennesseans during the second half of the twentieth century, replaced the justice of the peace system. As a local center of law, order, and justice, many attorneys gained valuable legal experience during their time in the Ashe Street Courthouse. For example, longtime attorney Jim Brown practiced law there and, interestingly, his grandfather worked in the same building when it was a Post Office.[46] Over time, the "number of cases and judges had outgrown the space available at the Ashe Street Courthouse in Johnson City."[47] The construction of a new justice center in 1985 eventually replaced the Ashe Street building. But even today, many people still possess memories of their time in the "old courthouse."

During its tenure as a courthouse people throughout Washington County utilized the Ashe Street building for a wide range of services. These interactions with the site offer valuable snapshots of life in northeast Tennessee during the early to mid-twentieth century. Citizens would visit the Ashe Street building in order to receive marriage licenses and automobile license tags. Locals would also pay fines or attend court. Reminiscing on his time in the Ashe Street courthouse retired Session Court Judge, John Kiener recalled various stories, including "policemen testifying as character witnesses for a felon, a runaway bride, the songwriter who sang to get out of jail and a deputy sheriff who used the example of the "Hill Street Blues" to begin his shift."[48]

The Ashe Street building served as a county courthouse and auxiliary sheriff's office building until 1985. In 1987 it became the home of the Washington County 9-1-1 call center until 2018. From this facility, dispatchers would send "fire, police, and other emergency vehicles to the scene of emergency events in both the city and the county."[49] As of May 2020, the building was vacant.

In all its iterations (as a Postal Savings Bank, NYA building, Courthouse, and 9-1-1 call center) the Ashe Street building has served as a central focus for the community of Johnson City and Washington County.

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[42] Joyce and W. Eugene Cox, eds., *History of Washington County Tennessee* (Johnson City, TN: The Overmountain Press, 2001), 574.
[43] "Johnson City Is Rightly Proud Of Splendid New Courthouse," *Johnson City Chronicle,* December 29, 1940.
[44] Washington County Historical Association, *History of Washington County Tennessee* (Jonesborough, TN: Washington County Historical Association, 2011): 574.
[45] "Johnson City Is Rightly Proud Of Splendid New Courthouse," *Johnson City Chronicle,* December 29, 1940.
[46] Becky Campbell, "401 Ashe Street: Post Office, Courthouse, 911," *The Johnson City Press,* June 5, 2017.
[47] Cox, *History of Washington County Tennessee,* 580.
[48] John Kiener, "The Judge Explains: Ashe Street Courthouse Is On My Historic Register," *The Herald and Tribune,* March 25, 2020.
[49] Cox, *History of Washington County Tennessee,* 574.

This building allowed everyday citizens and notable persons alike to participate in the civic processes and legal systems that defined twentieth century life. With its trademark architectural style and civic symbolism, the Johnson City Postal Savings Bank greatly enriched Johnson City and Washington County alike, proving integral to the city's development, identity, and history.

Architectural Significance

The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office is a good example of the Beaux Arts classicism that was popular with government and wealthy homeowners. Renowned architectural historian Virginia Savage McAlester dates the period from 1885-1920 and describes the result as an elaborate eclectic style.[50] The major influence for the style was the Ecole des Beaux Art in France where many prominent American architects were trained. The Columbian Exposition in Chicago of 1893 was also a major influence on the popularity of the style. Architectural historian Carole Rifkind described the style: "The façade is enlivened by dynamic shifts in scale and form: orders may be reiterated; larger motifs enclose small ones; windows receive a variety of treatments. Classical ornament [is] applied for theatrical effect. . ."[51]

The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office demonstrates dynamism and change of scale in several ways. The north façade facing Ashe Street presents a monumental façade that states importance by the broad flight of stairs, three arched openings backed by arched windows and doorway while the end bays present rectangular window openings with thick decorative surrounds. The scale changes with the second story being lower and the windows are smaller setting up a vertical shift which creates another dynamism. The decorative entablature caps the complete building on all four facades. The modillions create a regular rhythm while the balustrade creates a counterpoint of open and closed railing. The cartouche in the center is the major focal point.

Johnson City's only comparable example of Beaux Arts architecture is The Mountain Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHL 6/17/2011). It was opened in 1904 and is considered an excellent example of Beaux Arts design. The theatre is a good comparison with the Postal Savings Bank (see Figure 4). The south façade presents three large arches with large muti-light windows and French doors opening to a small balcony on the second floor. Three double doors with a transom provide entry on the first floor. The dynamism and changes of scale in this façade create a different effect from the Postal Savings Bank. Corbeling supporting the overhanging eave has a musical rhythm. The corbels supporting the eaves and the balcony are structural and decorative. The two large cartouches on the east and west end are applied decoration.

[50] Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 2013), 478.
[51] Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to American Architecture* (New York: Signet Books, 1980), 219.

Figure 4: Auditorium/Theater, Mountain Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. Photo by Megan Tewell, 2020.

Looking at both of these local buildings, it can be argued that the Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office meets the design elements of the Beaux Arts period. As additions were made, a sensitivity to the original block was maintained. Using closely matched brick, maintaining window size, belt course and stone caps, the additions can be discerned as such but do not destroy the original design. Much of the interior retains historic elements that have not been covered up or destroyed. The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office has maintained its integrity.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):		**Primary location of additional data:**	
	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	X	State Historic Preservation Office
	previously listed in the National Register		Other State agency
	previously determined eligible by the National Register	X	Federal agency: National Archives
	designated a National Historic Landmark		Local government
	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	X	University: East Tennessee University
	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	X	Other
	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository: Heritage Alliance, Washington County Archives,	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A			

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 **USGS Quadrangle** Johnson City 198-SE

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

A. Latitude: 36.312963 Longitude: -82.353467

B. Latitude: 36.313212 Longitude: -82.353027

C. Latitude: 36.312897 Longitude: -82.352752

D. Latitude: 36.312642 Longitude: -82.353184

Verbal Boundary Description

The Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office is bounded by Ashe Street to the north, Union Street to the east, West Walnut Street to the south and Earnest Street to the west. These boundaries form a rectangle and the latitude/longitude points noted above correspond to the corners of that rectangle. These boundaries are depicted on the enclosed boundary map.

Boundary Justification

These boundaries encompass the property historically associated with the Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office.

USGS Topographic Map

The location of Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office is indicated by the red circle
Original Map Scale: 1:24,000.

Boundary Map

N

Corners correspond to the Latitude/Longitude coordinates noted in Section 10.
Aerial Imagery Courtesy of Google Maps, 2020.

11. Form Prepared By

Name	Dr. Harold J. Hunter, Megan Cullen Tewell, and Anne Mason		
Organization	Heritage Alliance of NE Tenn. & SW Virginia		
Street & Number	212 East Sabin Dr.	Date	July 6, 2020
City or Town	Jonesborough, TN	Telephone	423-753-9580
E-mail	amason@heritageall.org	State TN	Zip Code **37659**

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Photographs (**refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints**)**
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. should be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Johnson City Postal Savings Bank and Post Office
City or Vicinity: Johnson City
County: Washington State: Tennessee
Photographer: Gordon Edwards
Date Photographed: June 25, 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 33 Façade; view to the south.

2 of 33 Northwest oblique; view facing south east.

3 of 33 East elevation; view facing west.

4 of 33 South elevation oblique; view facing north wet.

5 of 33 South elevation; view facing north.

6 of 33 West elevation; view facing east.

7 of 33 Main Lobby; view facing east.

8 of 33 First floor Interior hallway; view facing west.

9 of 33 Reception area and hallway to operations center; view facing south.

10 of 33 Directors office; view facing north west.

11 of 33 Staff office; view facing north.

12 of 33 Operations center; view facing west.

13 of 33 Operations center; view facing east.

14 of 33 Breakroom; view facing northeast.

15 of 33 Office area, connection to 1965 addition; view facing southeast.

16 of 33 Court room; view to southwest.

17 of 33 Conference room on first floor; view to south.

18 of 33 Staircase at first floor; view to south east.

19 of 33 Stairway; view facing north.

20 of 33 Stairway from third landing; view to southeast.

21 of 33 Second floor office; view facing southeast.

22 of 33 Chancery court room; view facing west.

23 of 33 Judge's chamber, view facing southeast.

24 of 33 Men's restroom on second floor; view facing south.

25 of 33 Second floor Clerk & Master's office; view facing southeast.

26 of 33 Clerk & Master's office; view facing northwest.

27 of 33 Basement hallway; view facing west.

28 of 33 Basement breakroom; view facing northeast.

29 of 33 Hallway/storage area connecting to east office area; view facing east

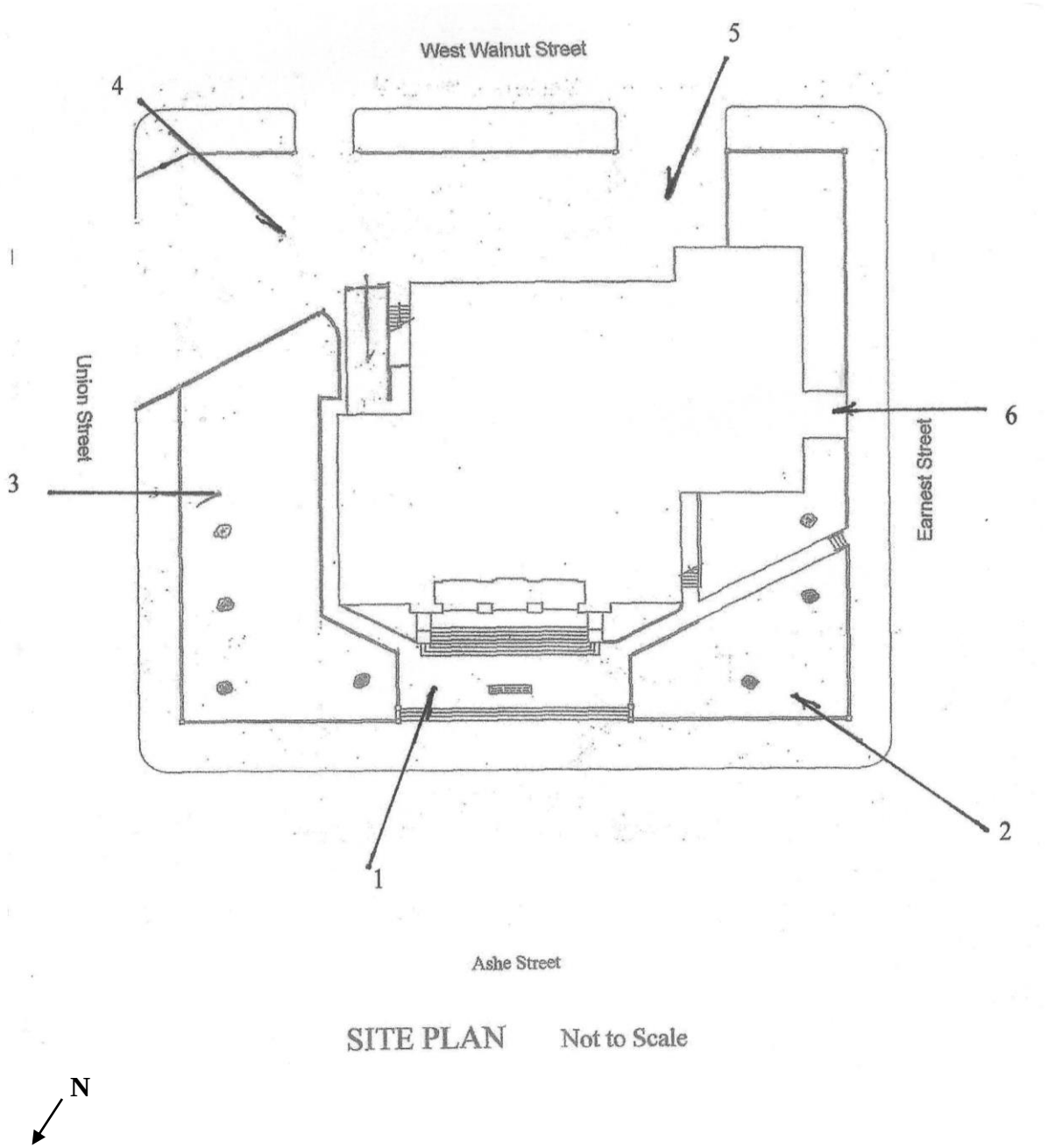
30 of 33 Men's basement restroom; view facing northeast.

31 of 33 Communications room; view facing southeast.

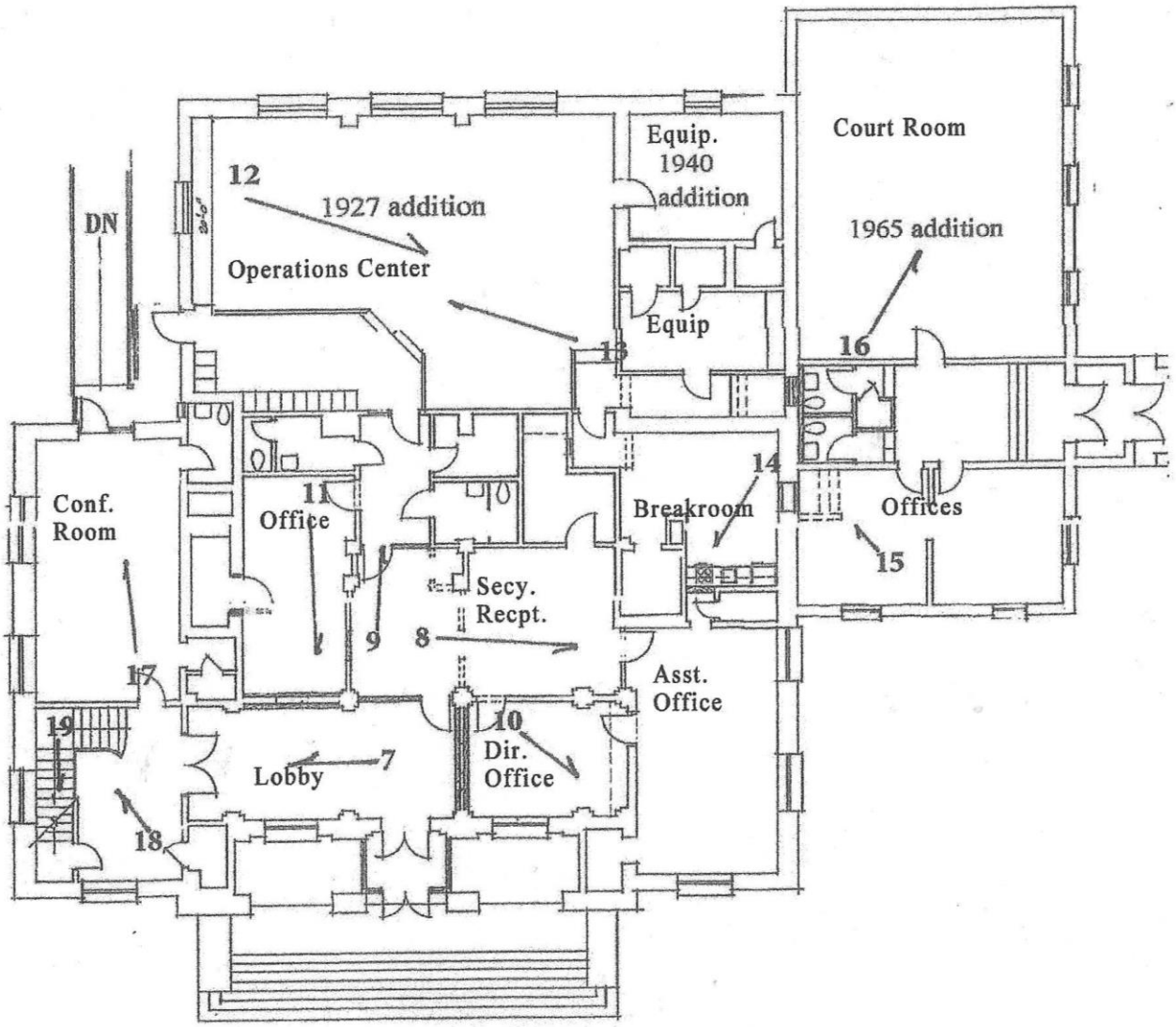
32 of 33 Reception room/Sheriff's office; view facing south.

33 of 33 Old boiler room; view facing northwest.

Site Plan with Photo Key

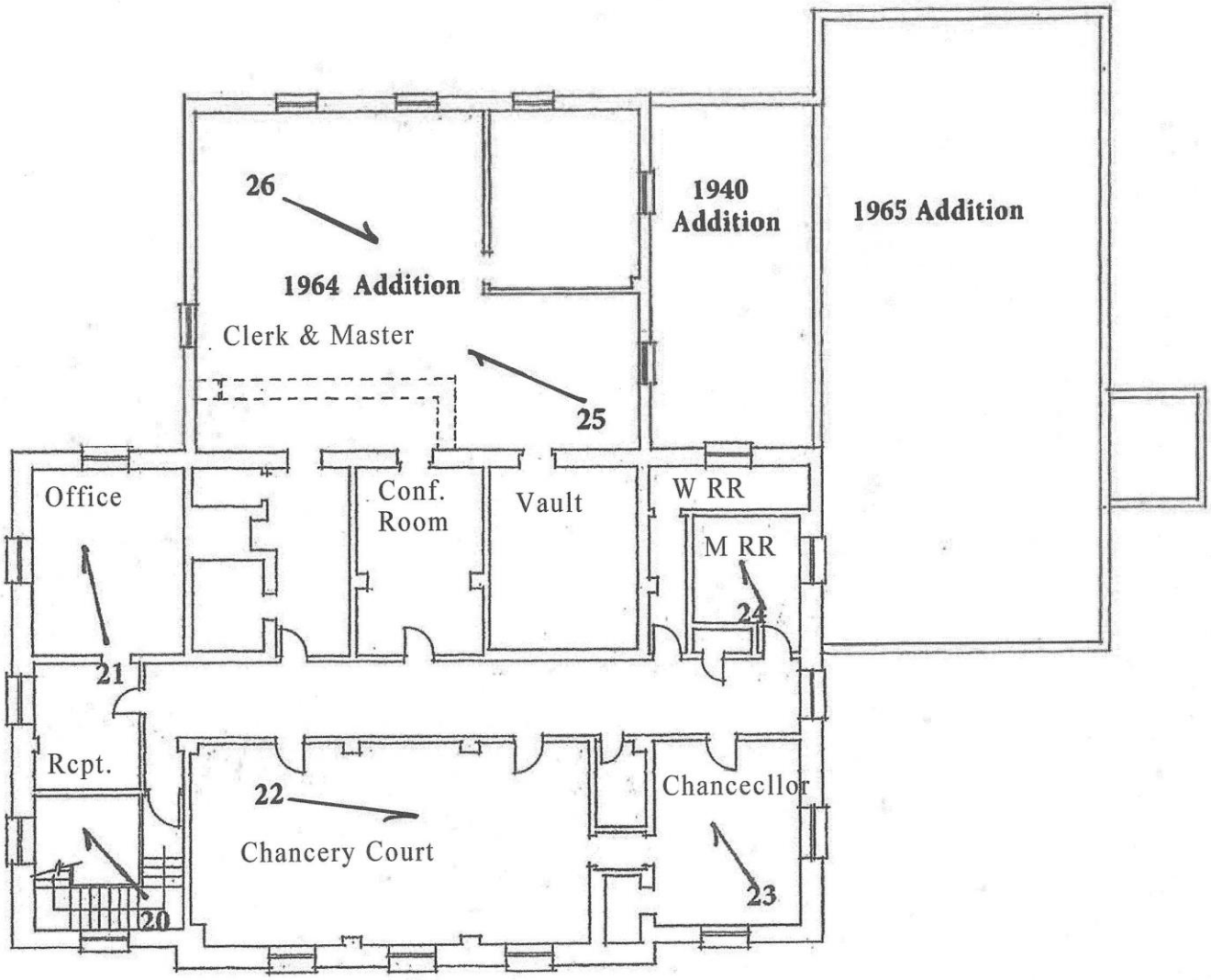


Floor Plans with Photo Keys



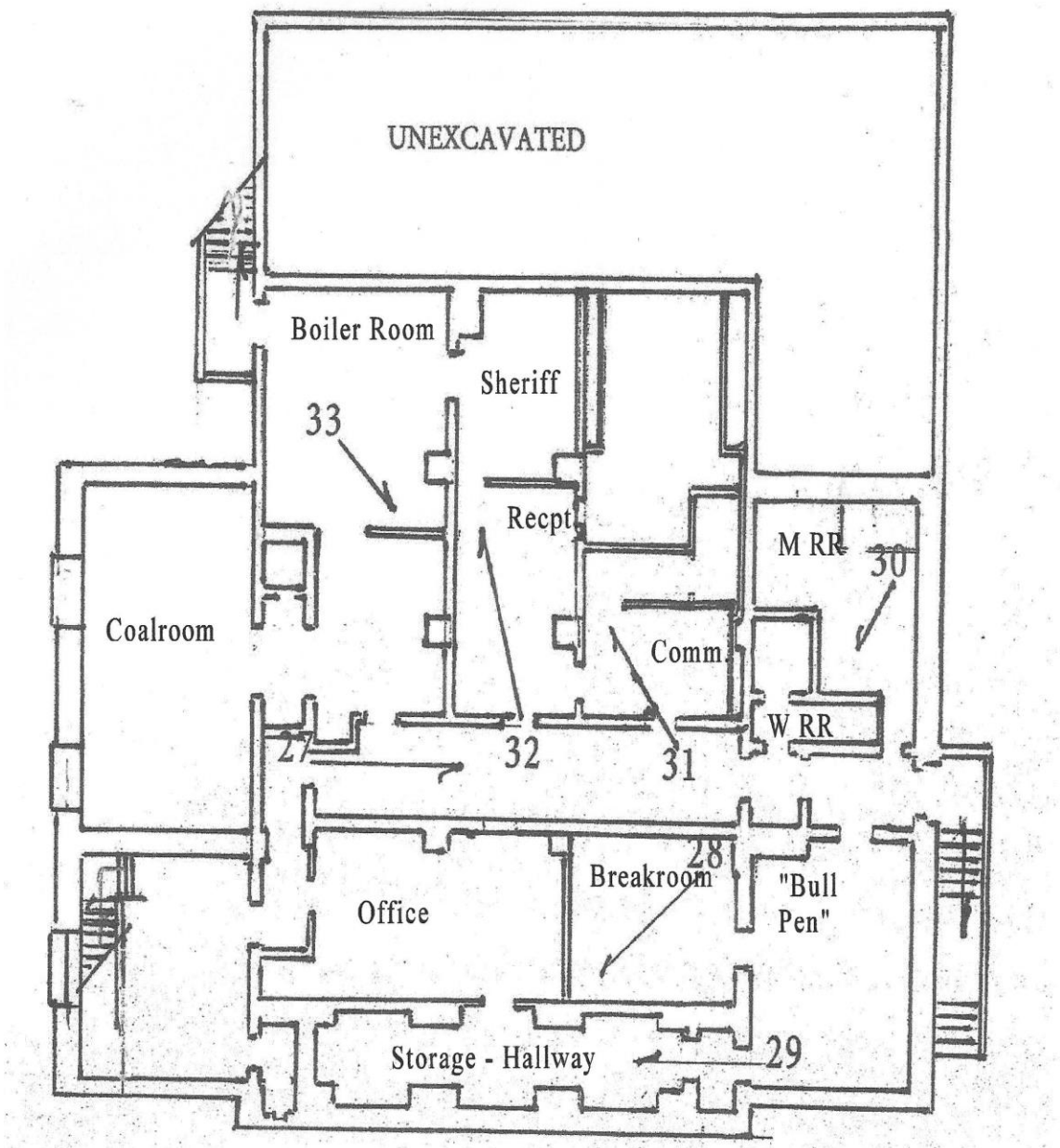
FIRST LEVEL PLAN Not to scale

N



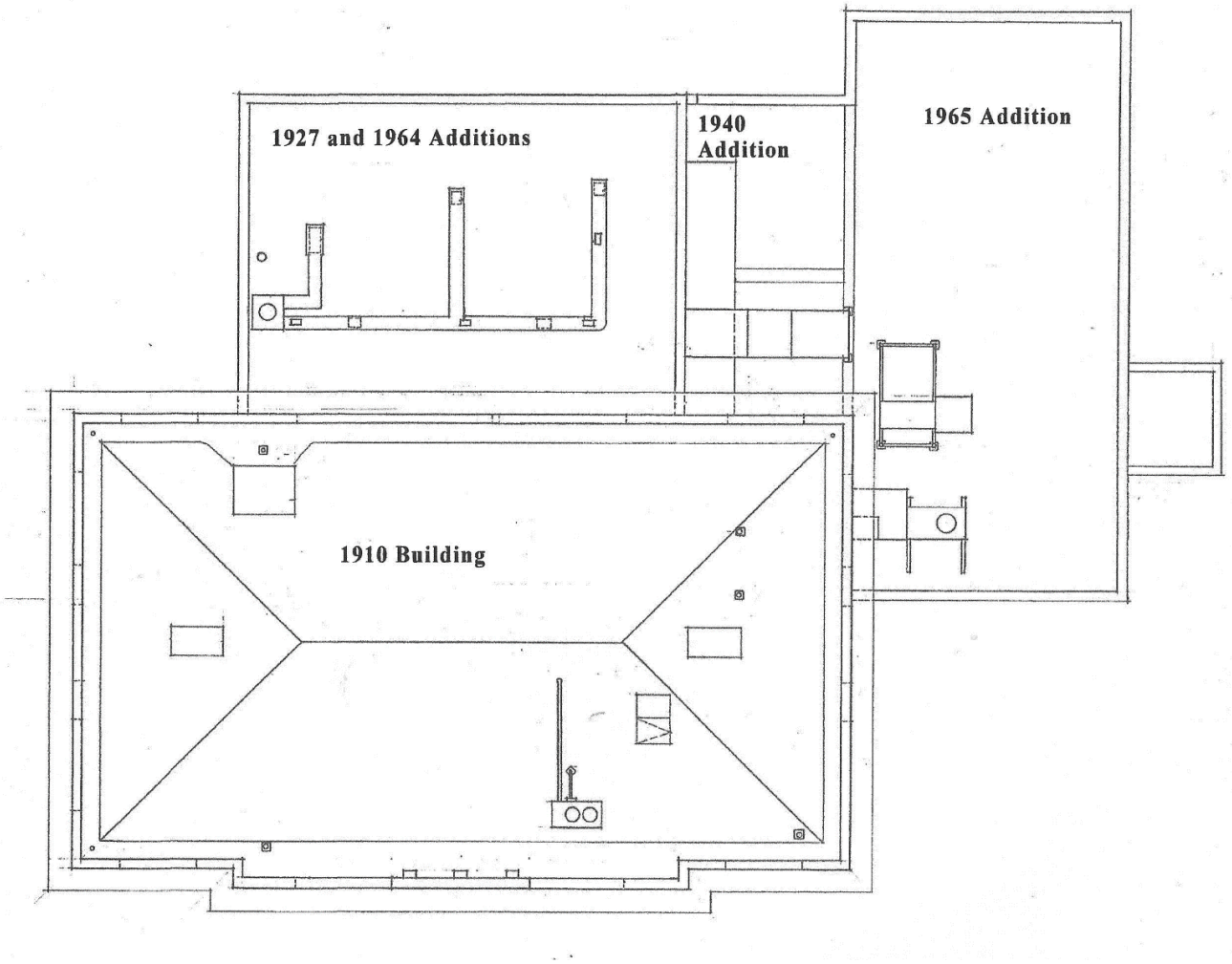
SECOND LEVEL PLAN **Not to scale**

N



BASEMENT PLAN Not to Scale

N



ROOF PLAN Not to Scale N

Property Owner:

(This information will not be submitted to the National Park Service, but will remain on file at the Tennessee Historical Commission)

Name	Washington County, c/o County Mayor William (Joe Grandy)		
Street & Number	P.O. Box 219	Telephone	423-753-1666
City or Town	Jonesborough	State/Zip	Tennessee, 37659

JOHNSON CITY POSTAL SAVINGS BANK AND POST OFFICE

JOHNSON CITY, WASHINGTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

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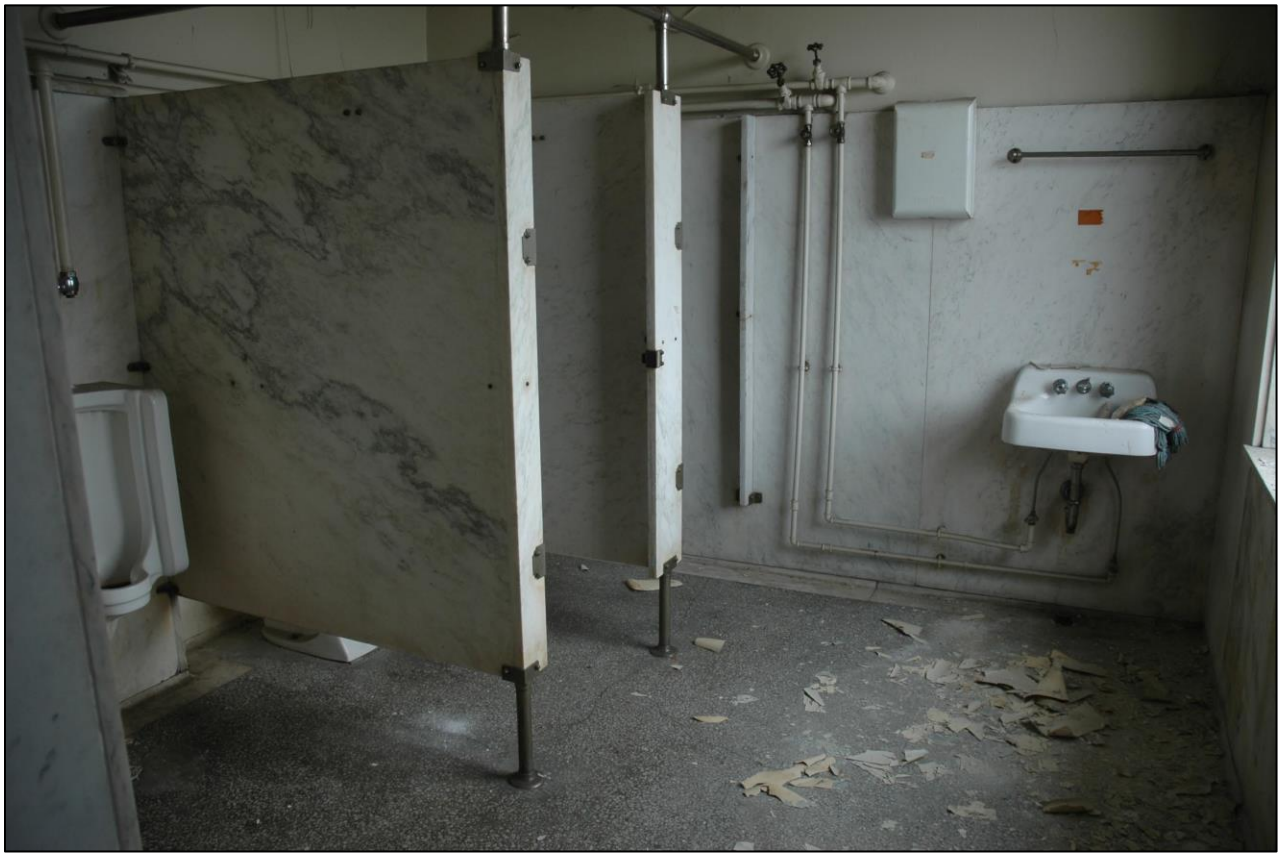

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