

PERSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Historical Sketch

Person County was formed in 1791 from Caswell, and its first courts were held at Pope's Tavern. The county's first permanent courthouse was built of logs in the county seat of Roxboro in 1793. This structure was replaced by a frame building in 1810, and a third courthouse, of brick, was erected in 1873. In 1930 the citizens of Person elected to build a new courthouse, and to plan the structure they commissioned architect Charles C. Hartman, who practiced in Greensboro from around 1920 until his retirement in the 1960s and designed many of that city's twentieth century landmarks, including the Guilford Building, the Northwestern Bank, and the Central Fire Station. George W. Kane was the contractor for the new fireproof courthouse which consisted of four stories, a basement, and was constructed of brick tile and reinforced concrete.¹

Architectural Description

The Person County Courthouse, located in the town square of Roxboro, is a four-story tan brick building designed in 1930 by Charles C. Hartman. The rectangular structure is unusual in its combination of classical and modernistic ornament. Built in an era of public architecture dominated by the Neo-Classical Revival style, the Person County Courthouse is an early exercise in the modern aesthetics of design, yet it adheres in form and ornament to the classical style. The main facade of the courthouse is clearly articulated into three levels. The rusticated first floor is separated from the upper stories by a masonry belt course of octagonal panels. The main area of the building is contained between paired pilasters with flattened and stylized Corinthian caps. This area, which has been filled in, once consisted of two nearly uninterrupted floors of windows. The attic level, located above the main entablature, is topped by a crest of shell antefixes. The side elevations are punctuated by processions of two-story round arched windows which have been filled in. Overall the courthouse is characterized by a simplicity of form and elegantly stylized ornament.

The interior of the Person County Courthouse presents generous spaces and an understated use of classical and geometric ornament. Cross halls divide the first floor into four compartments of office space. The floor is laid in mosaic squares of multi-color tiles, and tan ceramic bricks line the walls. The courtroom, located on the second floor, has an art-deco flavor evident in the herring-bone patterned ceiling and in the rectilinearity of the window openings. A classical theme is evident in the globe light fixtures and in the public seats. The sophisticated blend of classical and modernistic styles has been continued in the interior, creating a cohesive and comprehensive design.

¹Crittenden and Lacy, eds., Historical Records, III, p. 160; Ruth Little-Stokes and H. McKelden Smith, Jefferson Standard Building, Greensboro, an unpublished statement of significance, Historic Preservation Section, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

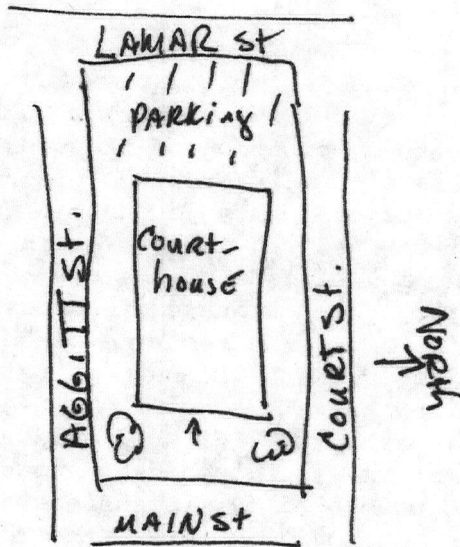
Roxboro's commercial district offers a wide variety of architectural styles and periods. The eclecticism of the Person County Courthouse blends with the diversity of the area, although its scale and prominent location in the center square indicates the importance of its function.

Address: Bennie L. Bradsher, Chairman, Person County Commissioners,
Person County Courthouse, Roxboro, N.C. 27573

Acceage: one acre

UTM reference: 17/680850/4029350

Verbal Boundary Description: The courthouse is bounded to the north by Court St., to the south by Aggitt Ave., to the east by Main St., and to the west by parking and Lamar St.



PERSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE - addendum

Built in 1930, the Person County Courthouse's exemption from the fifty-year old rule is justified in that it is a unique example of the combination of the mature Neo-Classical Revival style and early modernistic design aesthetics in the architectural history of North Carolina's county courthouses. In addition, it is the work of Charles C. Hartmann who practiced architecture in Greensboro from ca. 1920 to his retirement in the mid-1960s. Among his designs are a large number of Greensboro's twentieth century landmarks, including the Jefferson Standard Building (1922-1923, NR), the Guilford Building, the Northwestern Bank, and the Central Fire Station. Hartmann died recently.

Property North Carolina Courthouses Thematic Group

State N.C.

Working Number 12.12.78.4763

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos #62
Maps 57

OK 12.14.78

57 county courthouses ranging from early 19th century to 1930s. Significant in long time associations with ~~the~~ commercial, political, and legal activities in the communities they serve. Some questions on integrity of earliest, justification on 1930s examples. Needs call for minimal information. CHIEF / ACCEPT DUBIE 3/6/79

HISTORIAN

THE SUMMARY FORMS COVER ADEQUATE DESCRIPTIONS AND STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE. YET FOR CONVENIENCE OF THE COURTHOUSES ARE SENT IMPORTANCE OF MANY BUILDINGS ARE BEING NOMINATED. I THINK WE SHOULD RETURN FOR PROPER COMPLETION.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

READ
3/6/79

1930's structures justified in continuation sheets; additional photos received. Brunswick Co. Courthouse has suffered some loss of integrity but retains missing fenestration, being symbolizing public building - would accept but defer to architectural historian opinion. ACCEPT DUBIE 5/8/79

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____
Review _____

articulate presentation of significance of these Court houses. **REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

one apparently eligible property held back because of county opposition, but I cannot see rejecting entire thematic of exclusion of one property. Accept Lebowitz 5/10/79
BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up _____
Federal Register Entry 6-5-79

Send-back _____
Re-submit _____

Entered MAY 10 1979
5/10/79



DEC 12 1978

NEGATIVE NUMBER N-75-8-1078

PHOTOGRAPHER R. Little

MAY 10 1979

PHOTO DATE 7-75

SUBJECT Person Co. Courthouse

Person
North Carolina Courthouse
Thematic Group
Currituck
Alamance Co.

FROM DIVISION OF
ARCHIVES & HISTORY
RALEIGH, N. C.

JAN 20 1980

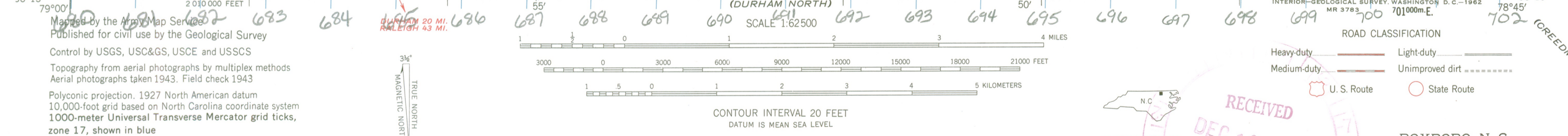
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Person County Courthouse
Roxboro, North Carolina
UTM Reference
17/680850/4029350



Map by the Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE and USSCS
Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods
Aerial photographs taken 1943. Field check 1943
Polyconic projection, 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on North Carolina coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 17, shown in blue

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROXBORO, N. C.
N3615-W7845/15
1943

MAY 10 1979

