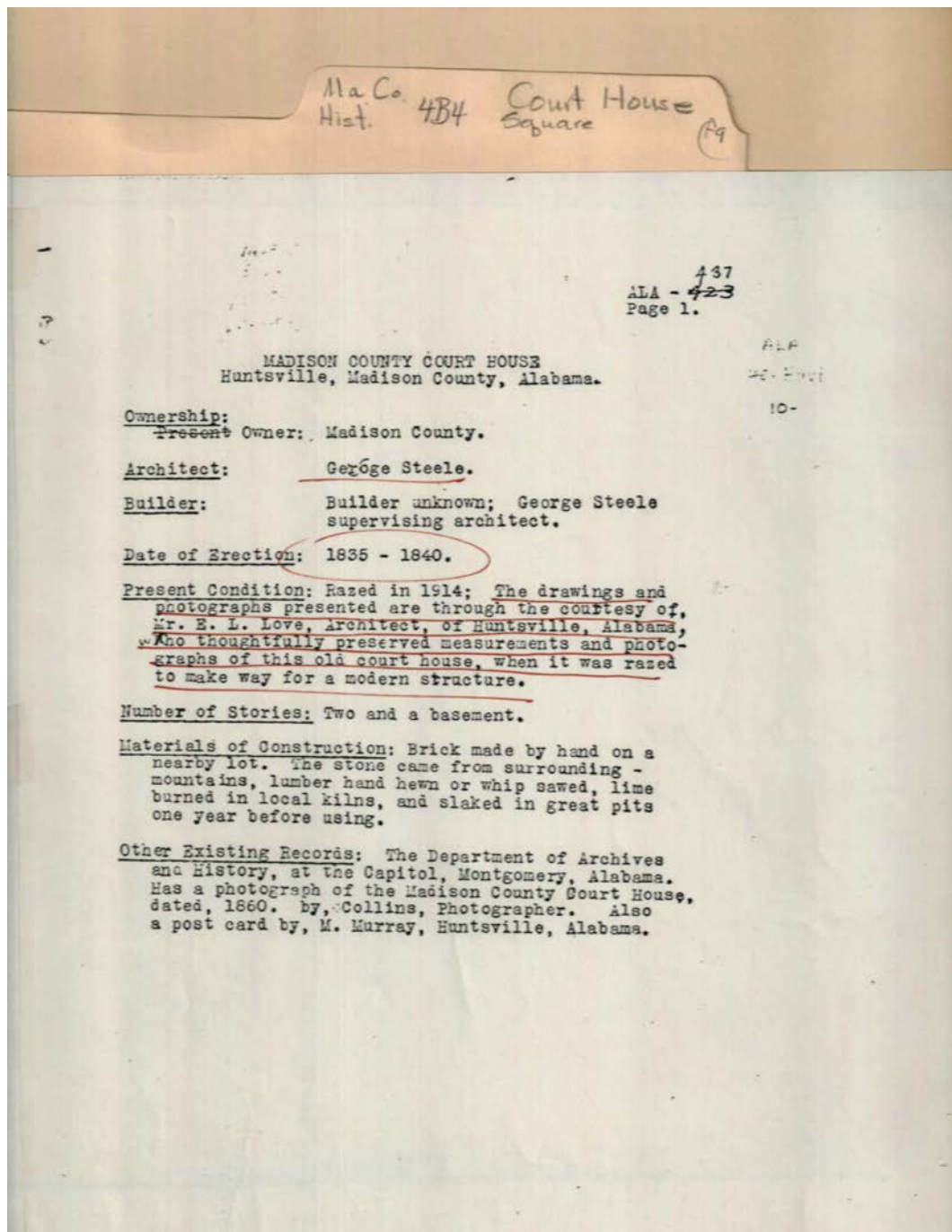


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**Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings**

Image 1    r04b04-09-000-0068    [Contents](#)    [Index](#)    [About](#)



**Names:**

Collins,  
Love, E. L.

Madison County  
Courthouse

Murray, M.

Steele, George  
Architect

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

notes

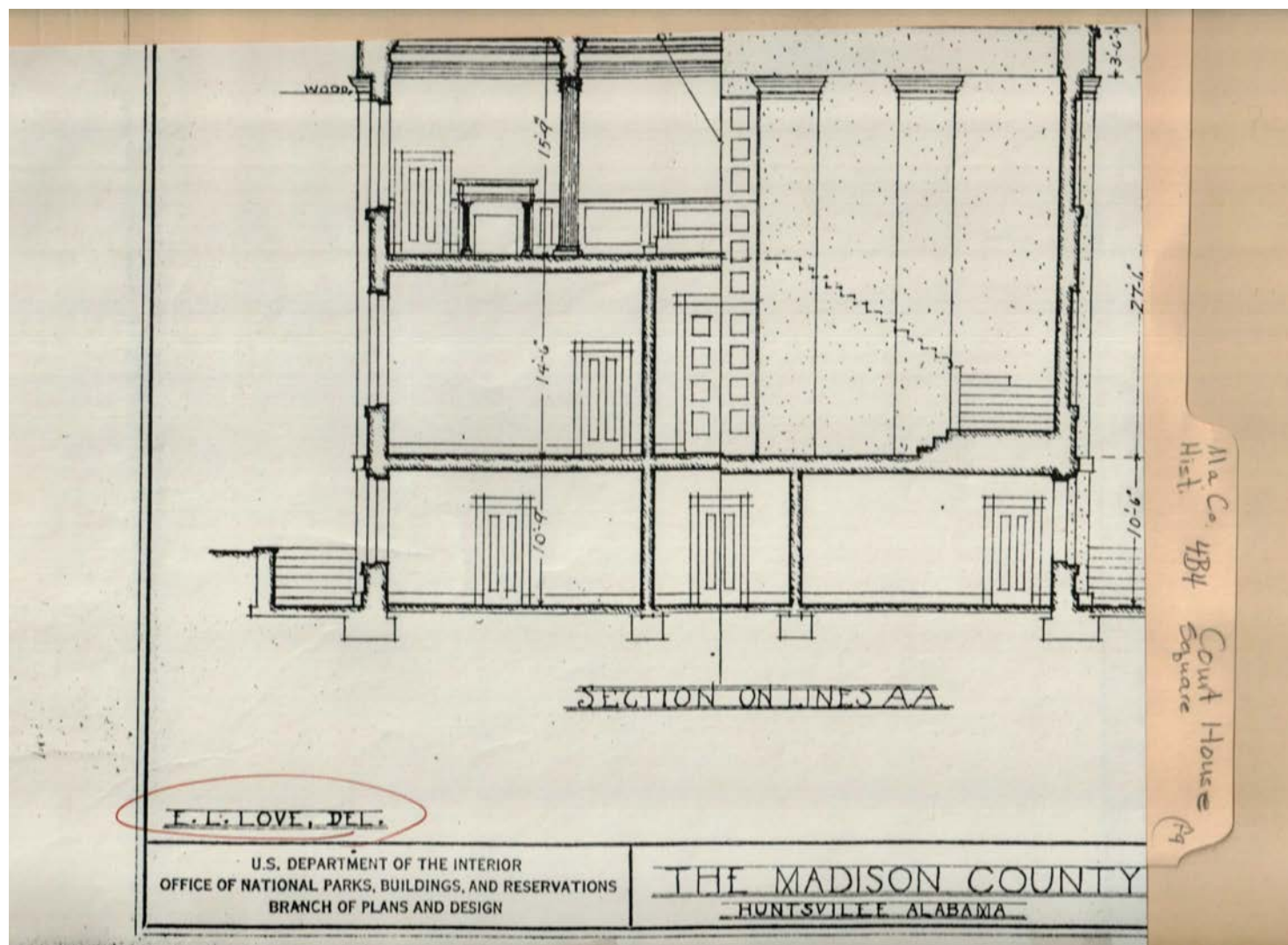
**Dates:**

1835-1914

Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 9

Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings

Image 2 r04b04-09-000-0069 [Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)



**Names:**

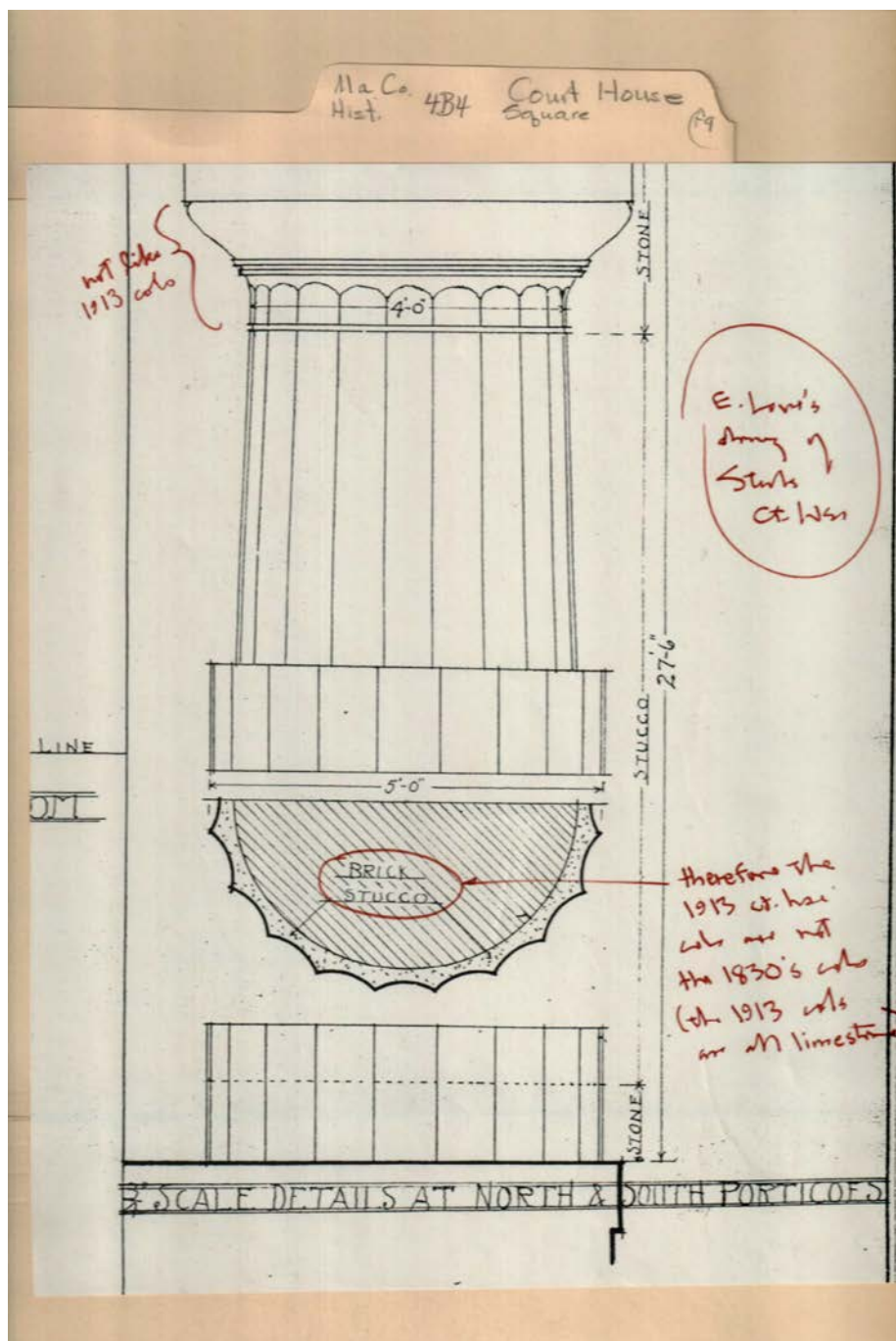
Love, E. L.

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

drawing



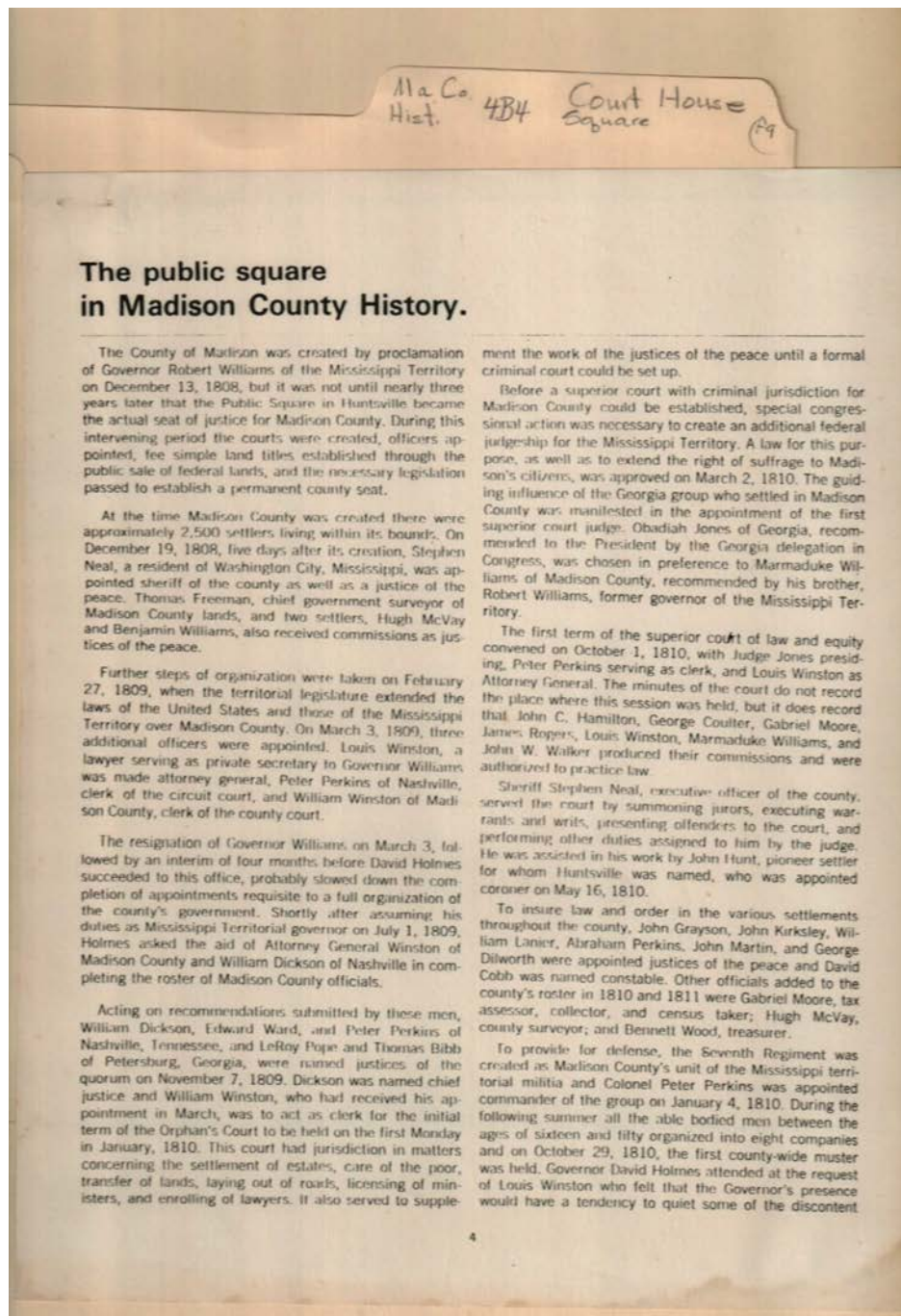
**Names:**

Love, E. L.

**Types:**

drawing





## The public square in Madison County History.

The County of Madison was created by proclamation of Governor Robert Williams of the Mississippi Territory on December 13, 1808, but it was not until nearly three years later that the Public Square in Huntsville became the actual seat of justice for Madison County. During this intervening period the courts were created, officers appointed, fee simple land titles established through the public sale of federal lands, and the necessary legislation passed to establish a permanent county seat.

At the time Madison County was created there were approximately 2,500 settlers living within its bounds. On December 19, 1808, five days after its creation, Stephen Neal, a resident of Washington City, Mississippi, was appointed sheriff of the county as well as a justice of the peace. Thomas Freeman, chief government surveyor of Madison County lands, and two settlers, Hugh McVay and Benjamin Williams, also received commissions as justices of the peace.

Further steps of organization were taken on February 27, 1809, when the territorial legislature extended the laws of the United States and those of the Mississippi Territory over Madison County. On March 3, 1809, three additional officers were appointed. Louis Winston, a lawyer serving as private secretary to Governor Williams was made attorney general, Peter Perkins of Nashville, clerk of the circuit court, and William Winston of Madison County, clerk of the county court.

The resignation of Governor Williams on March 3, followed by an interim of four months before David Holmes succeeded to this office, probably slowed down the completion of appointments requisite to a full organization of the county's government. Shortly after assuming his duties as Mississippi Territorial governor on July 1, 1809, Holmes asked the aid of Attorney General Winston of Madison County and William Dickson of Nashville in completing the roster of Madison County officials.

Acting on recommendations submitted by these men, William Dickson, Edward Ward, and Peter Perkins of Nashville, Tennessee, and LeRoy Pope and Thomas Bibb of Petersburg, Georgia, were named justices of the quorum on November 7, 1809. Dickson was named chief justice and William Winston, who had received his appointment in March, was to act as clerk for the initial term of the Orphan's Court to be held on the first Monday in January, 1810. This court had jurisdiction in matters concerning the settlement of estates, care of the poor, transfer of lands, laying out of roads, licensing of ministers, and enrolling of lawyers. It also served to supple-

ment the work of the justices of the peace until a formal criminal court could be set up.

Before a superior court with criminal jurisdiction for Madison County could be established, special congressional action was necessary to create an additional federal judgeship for the Mississippi Territory. A law for this purpose, as well as to extend the right of suffrage to Madison's citizens, was approved on March 2, 1810. The guiding influence of the Georgia group who settled in Madison County was manifested in the appointment of the first superior court judge. Obadiah Jones of Georgia, recommended to the President by the Georgia delegation in Congress, was chosen in preference to Marmaduke Williams of Madison County, recommended by his brother, Robert Williams, former governor of the Mississippi Territory.

The first term of the superior court of law and equity convened on October 1, 1810, with Judge Jones presiding, Peter Perkins serving as clerk, and Louis Winston as Attorney General. The minutes of the court do not record the place where this session was held, but it does record that John C. Hamilton, George Coulter, Gabriel Moore, James Rogers, Louis Winston, Marmaduke Williams, and John W. Walker produced their commissions and were authorized to practice law.

Sheriff Stephen Neal, executive officer of the county, served the court by summoning jurors, executing warrants and writs, presenting offenders to the court, and performing other duties assigned to him by the judge. He was assisted in his work by John Hunt, pioneer settler for whom Huntsville was named, who was appointed coroner on May 16, 1810.

To insure law and order in the various settlements throughout the county, John Grayson, John Kirksley, William Lanier, Abraham Perkins, John Martin, and George Dilworth were appointed justices of the peace and David Cobb was named constable. Other officials added to the county's roster in 1810 and 1811 were Gabriel Moore, tax assessor, collector, and census taker; Hugh McVay, county surveyor; and Bennett Wood, treasurer.

To provide for defense, the Seventh Regiment was created as Madison County's unit of the Mississippi territorial militia and Colonel Peter Perkins was appointed commander of the group on January 4, 1810. During the following summer all the able bodied men between the ages of sixteen and fifty organized into eight companies and on October 29, 1810, the first county-wide muster was held. Governor David Holmes attended at the request of Louis Winston who felt that the Governor's presence would have a tendency to quiet some of the discontent

### Names:

Bibb, Thomas  
Cobb, David  
Coulter, George  
Dickson, William  
Dilworth, George  
Freeman, Thomas,  
Surveyor  
Grayson, John  
Hamilton, John C.

Holmes, David,  
Governor  
Hunt, John  
Jones, Obadiah  
Kirksley, John  
Lanier, William  
Martin, John  
McVay, Hugh  
Moore, Gabriel

Neal, Stephen, Sheriff  
Perkins, Abraham  
Perkins, Peter  
Pope, LeRoy  
Public Square in  
Huntsville  
Rogers, James  
Walker, John W.  
Ward, Edward

Williams, Benjamin  
Williams,  
Marmaduke  
Williams, Robert,  
Governor  
Winston, Louis  
Winston, William  
Wood, Bennett

### Places:

Huntsville, AL

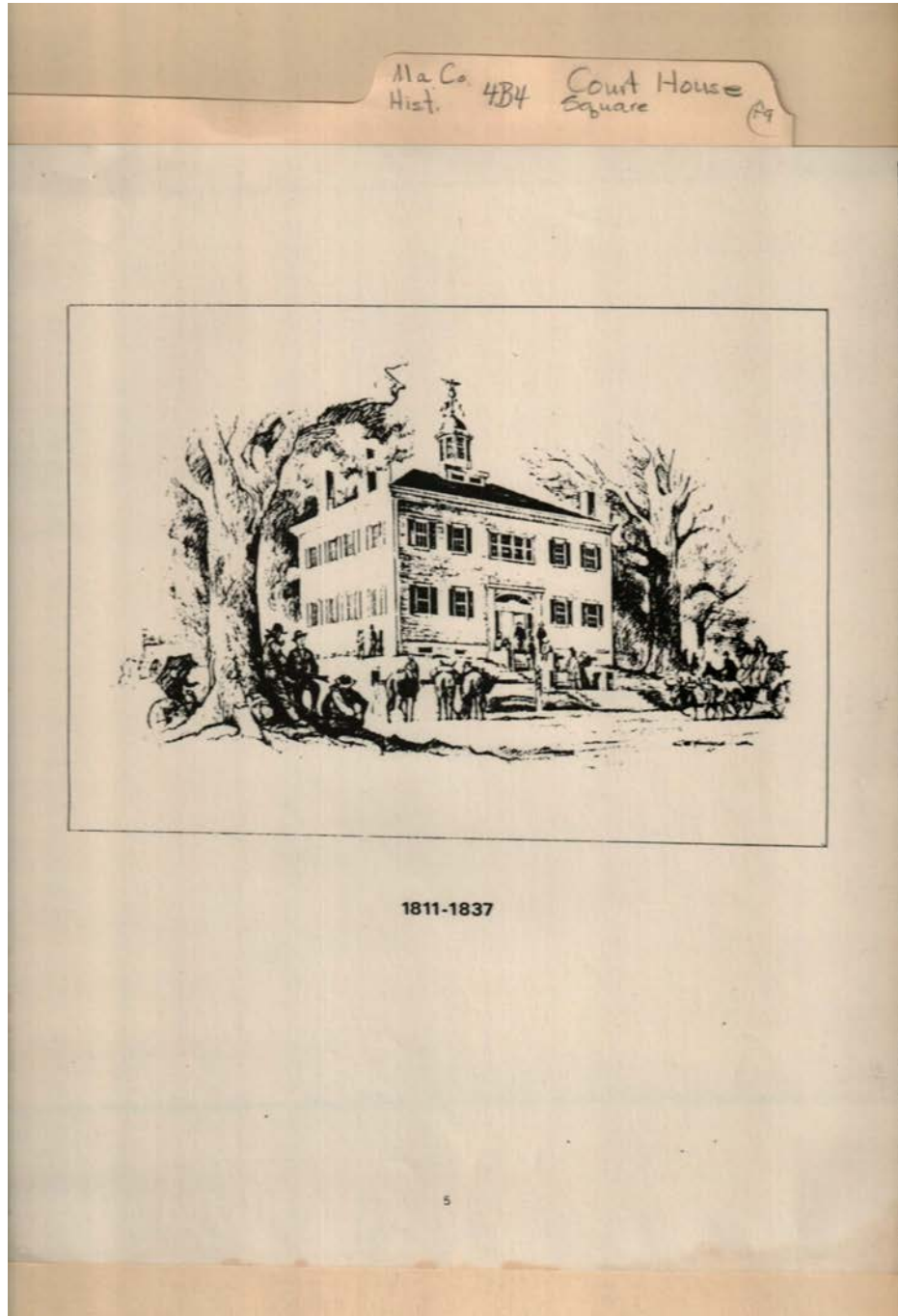
**Types:**

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Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings

Image 5 r04b04-09-000-0072 [Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)

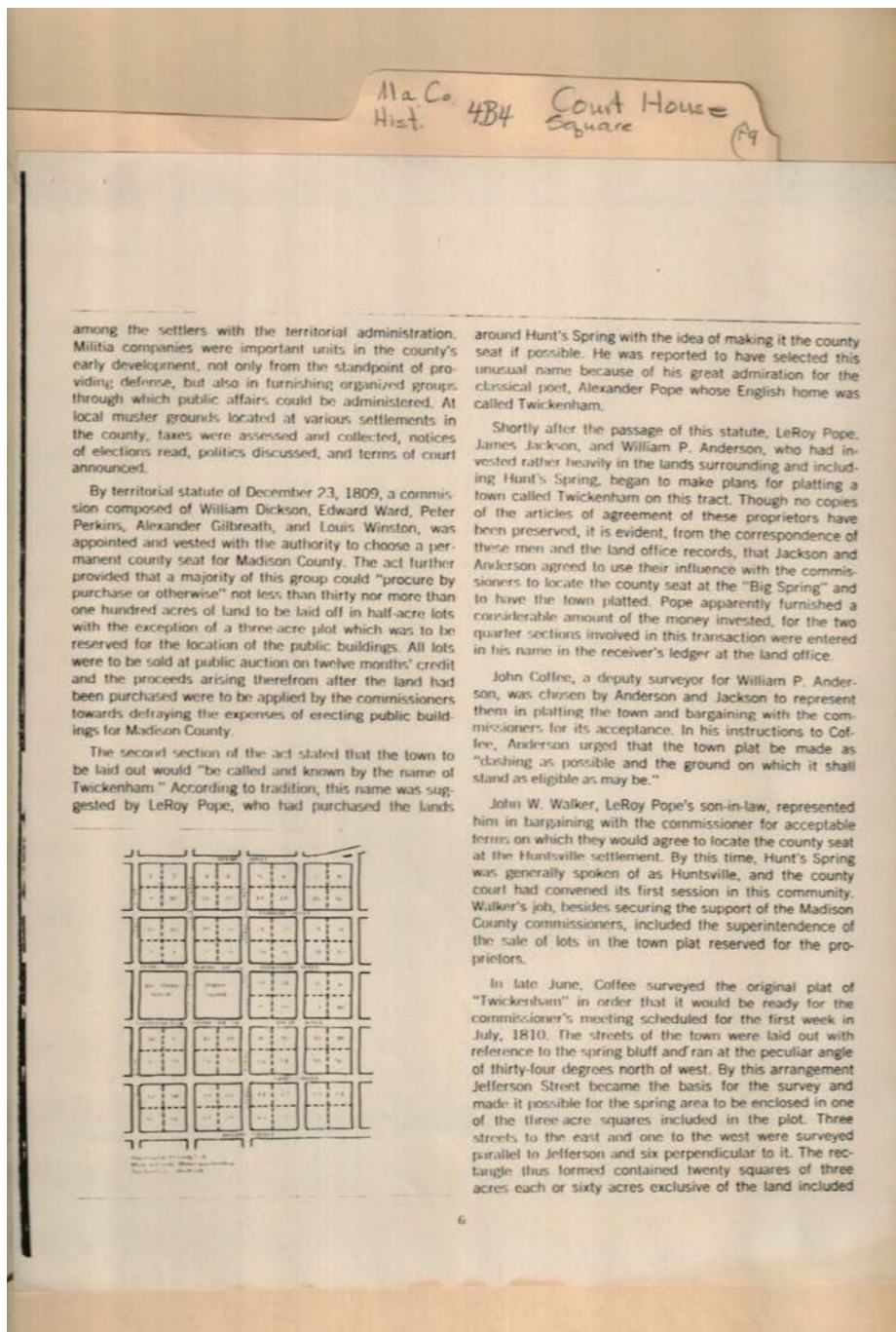


**Names:**

Early Courthouse

**Types:**

drawing



**Names:**

Anderson, William P.  
Coffee, John  
Dickson, William

Gilbreath, Alexander  
Jackson, James  
Perkins, Peter

Pope, Alexander  
Pope, LeRoy  
Walker, John W.

Ward, Edward  
Winston, Louis

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

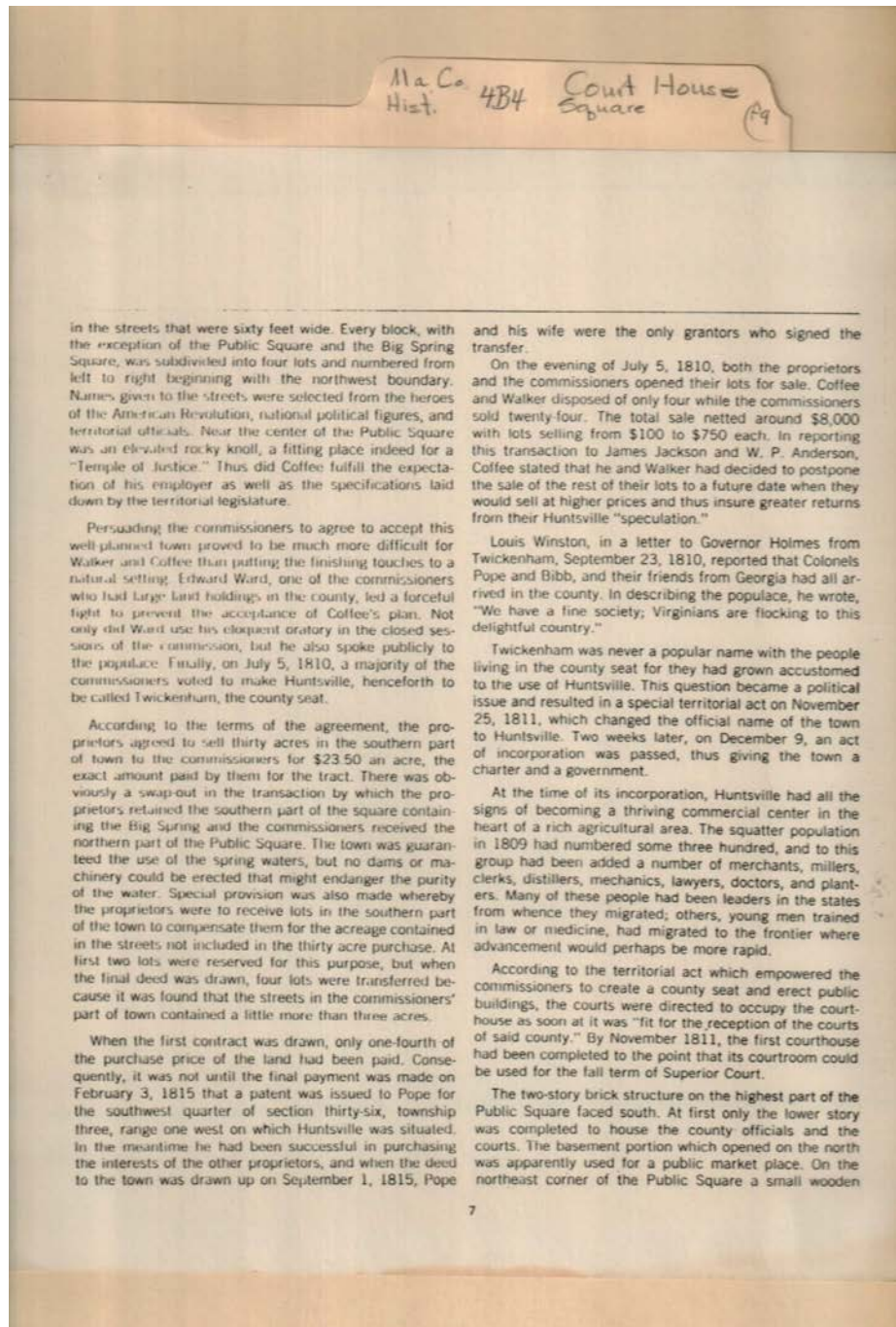
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**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 9**

**Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings**

Image 7    r04b04-09-000-0074    [Contents](#)    [Index](#)    [About](#)



**Names:**

Anderson, William P.  
Bibb, Colonel  
Coffee,

Holmes, David,  
Governor  
Jackson, James

Pope, Colonel  
Walker,  
Ward, Edward

Winston, Louis

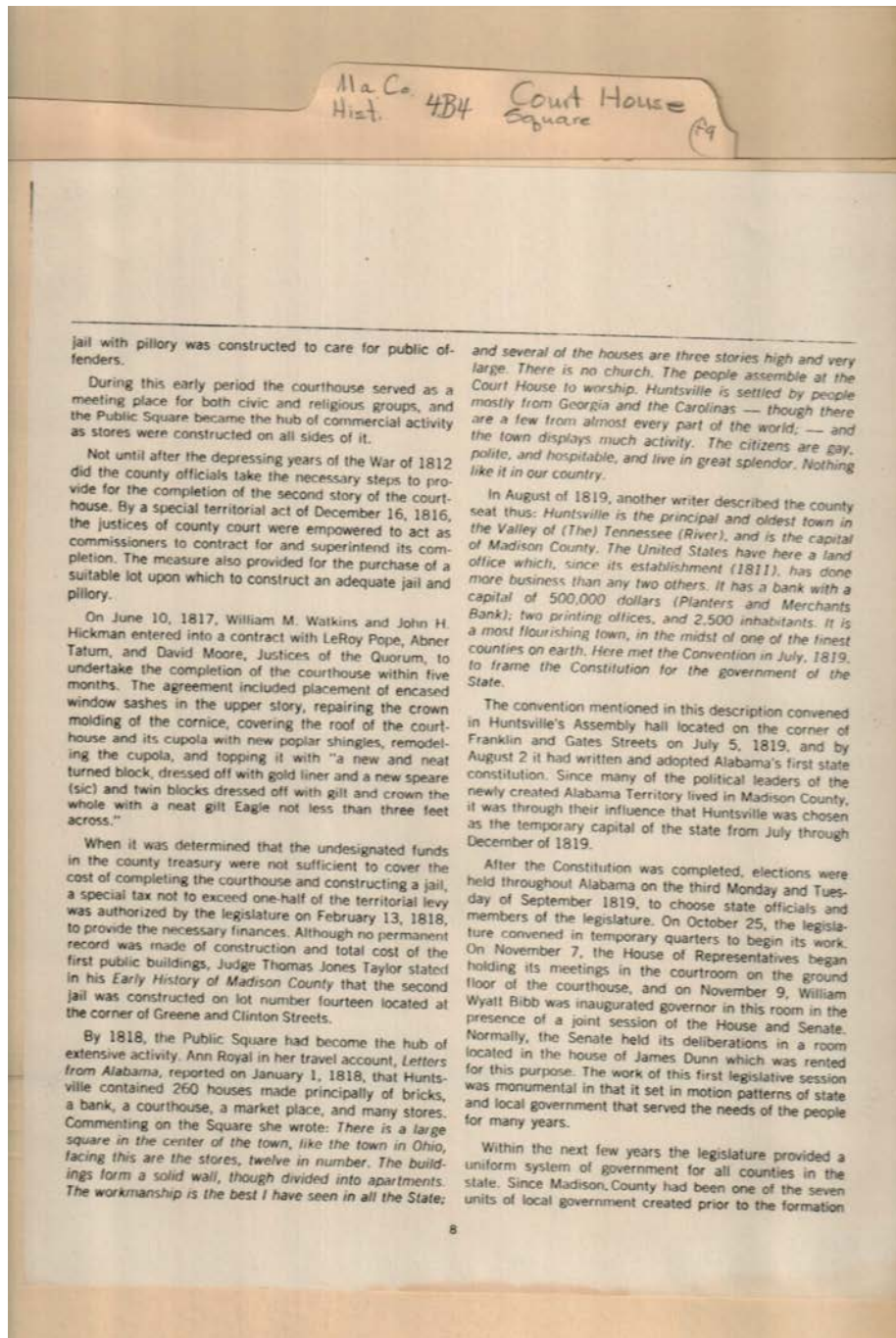
**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

essay





**Names:**

Bibb, William Wyatt  
Dunn, James  
Hickman, John H.

Moore, David  
Pope, LeRoy  
Royal, Ann

Tatum, Abner  
Taylor, Thomas  
Jones, Judge

Watkins, William M.  
Letters from Alabama

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

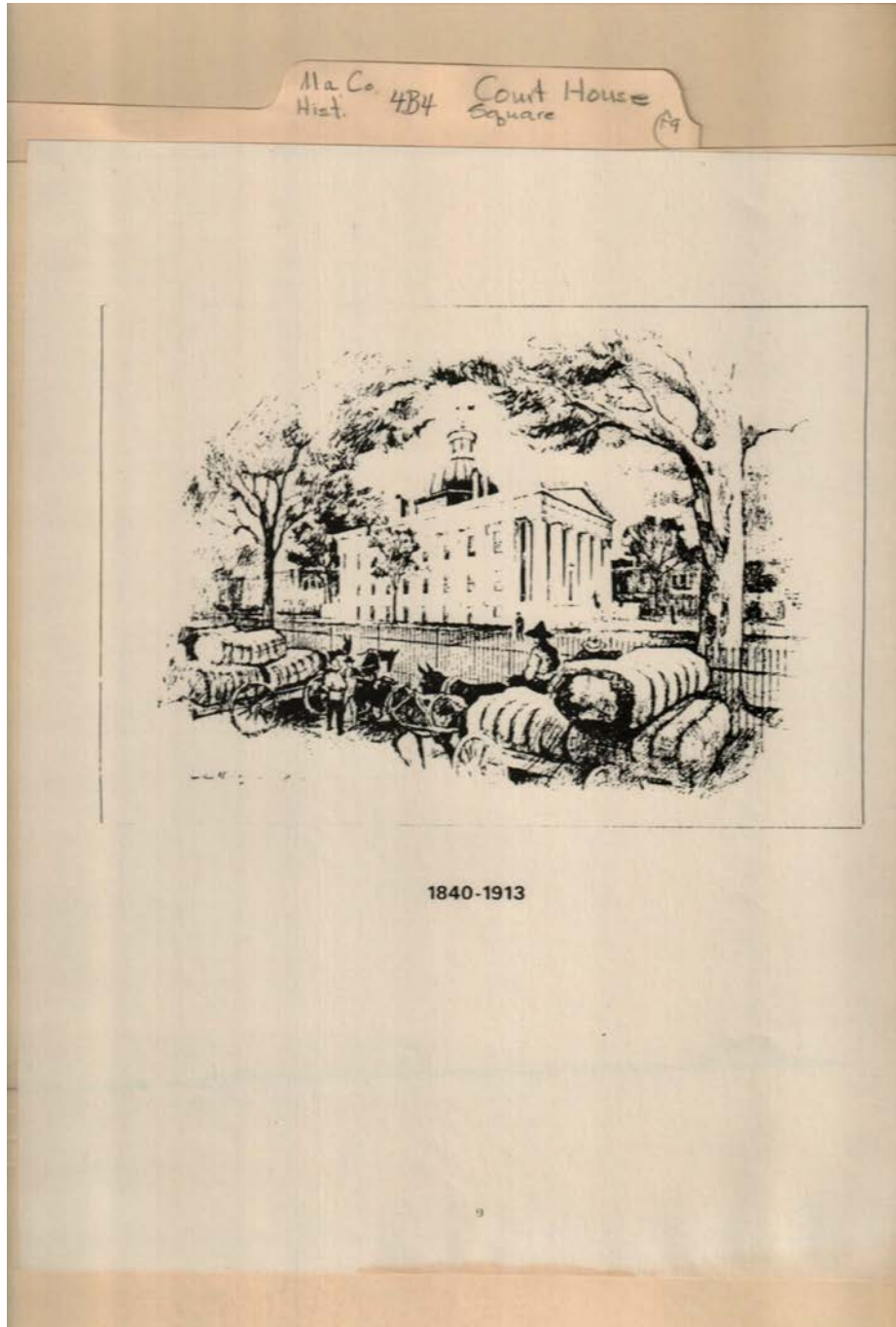
**Types:**

essay

**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection:** Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 9

**Madison County Courthouses Paper** - Madison County Buildings

Image 9 r04b04-09-000-0076 [Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)



**Names:**

Courthouse

**Places:**

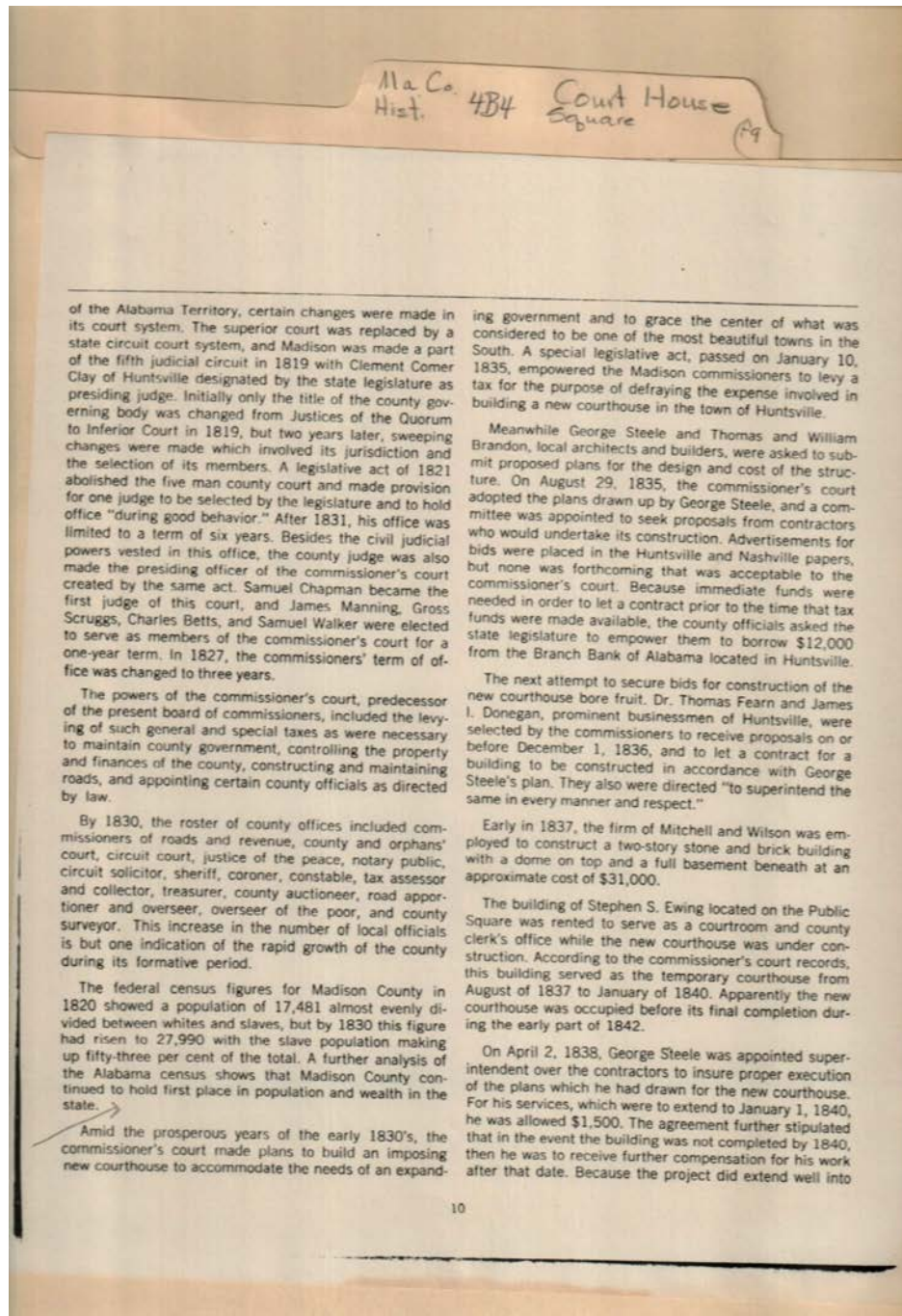
Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

drawing

**Dates:**

1840-1913



**Names:**

Betts, Charles  
Brandon, Thomas  
Brandon, William  
Chapman, Samuel

Clay, Clement Comer  
Donegan, James I.  
Ewing, Stephen S.  
Fearn, Thomas, Dr.

Manning, James  
Mitchell,  
Scruggs, Gross

Steele, George,  
Architect  
Walker, Samuel  
Wilson,

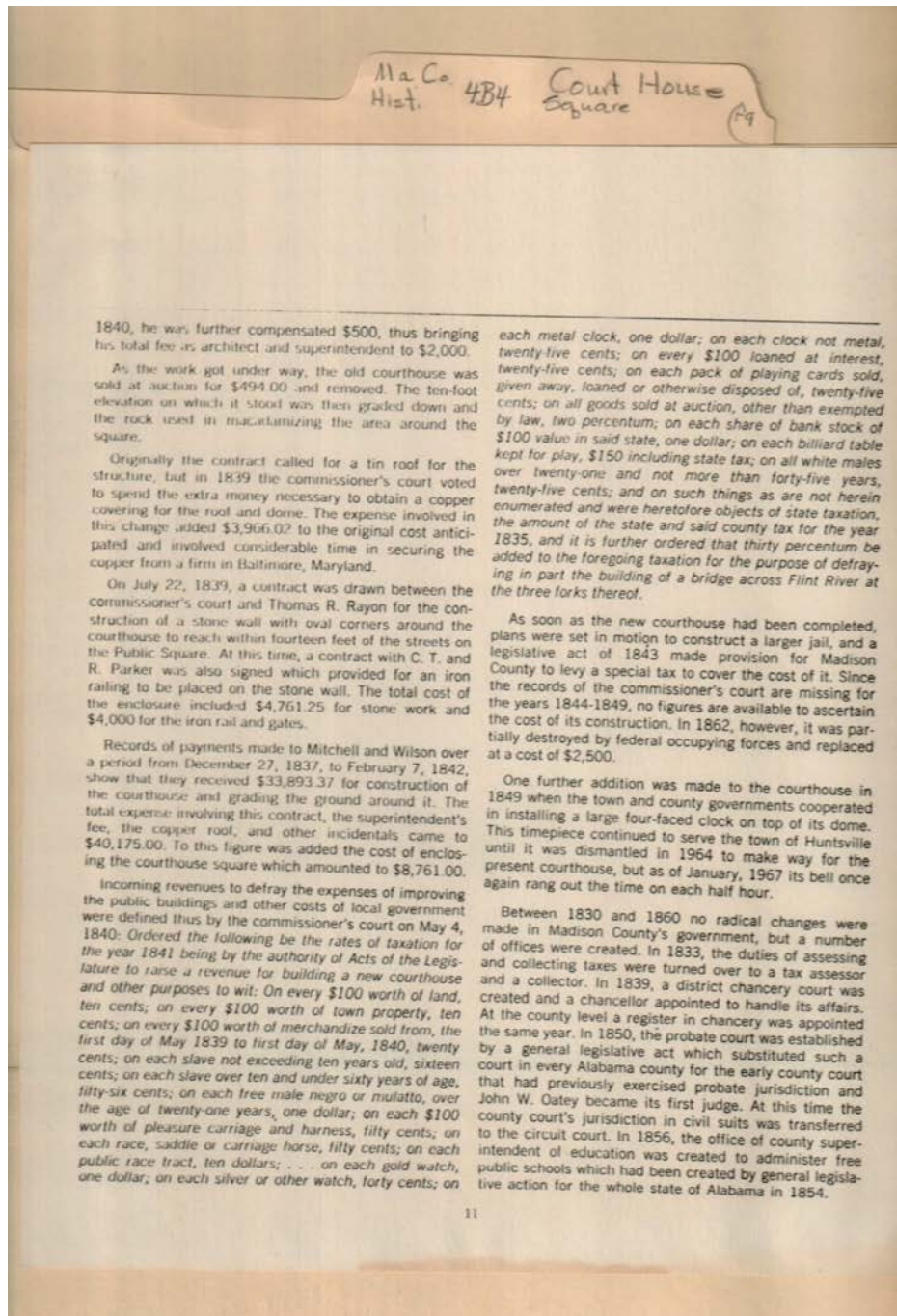
**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

essay





**Names:**

Mitchell,  
Parker, C. T.

Parker, R.  
Rayon, Thomas R.

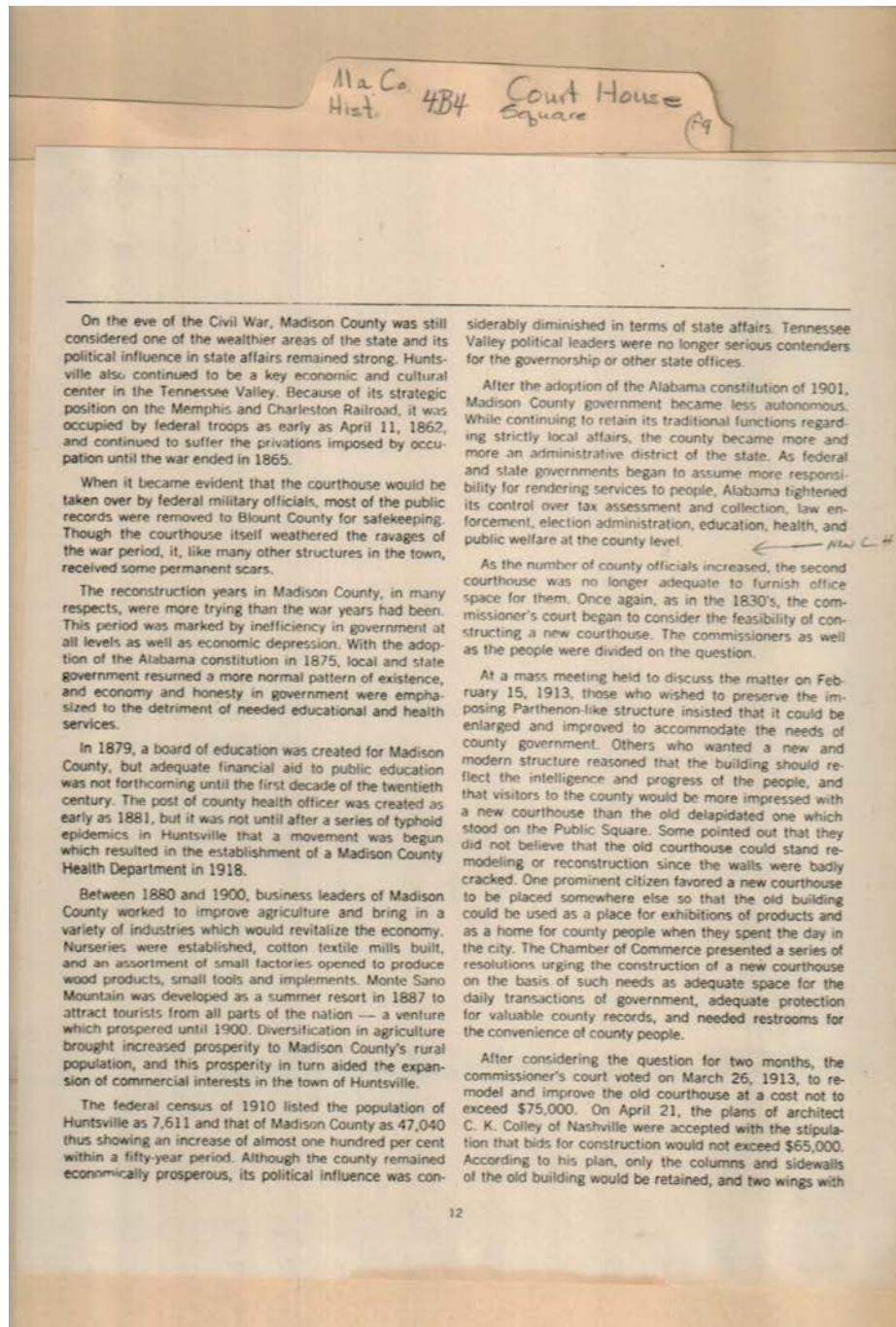
Wilson,

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

essay



**Names:**

Colley, C. K.,  
Architect

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

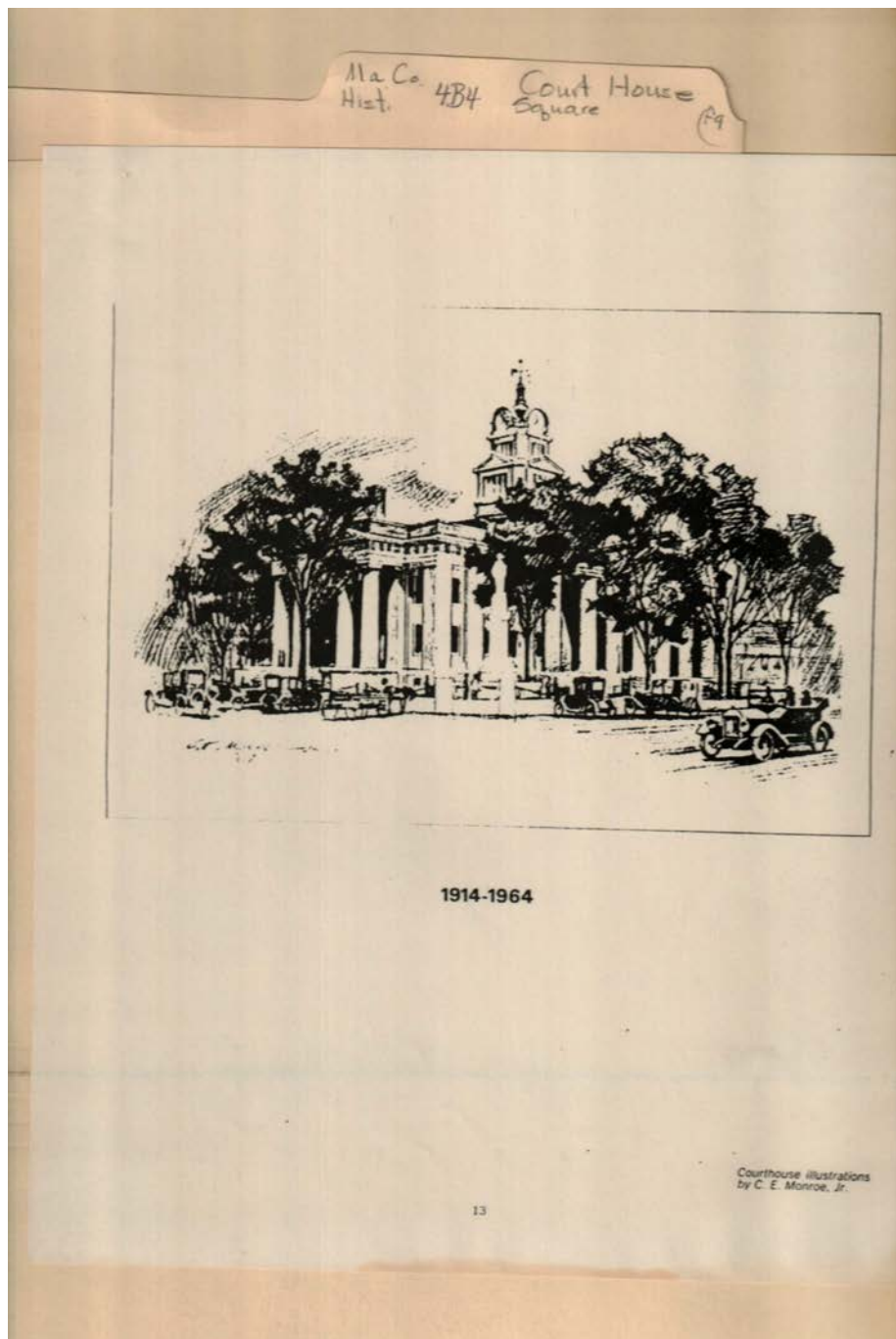
**Types:**

essay

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Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings

Image 13 r04b04-09-000-0080 [Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)



**Names:**

Courthouse

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

drawing

**Dates:**

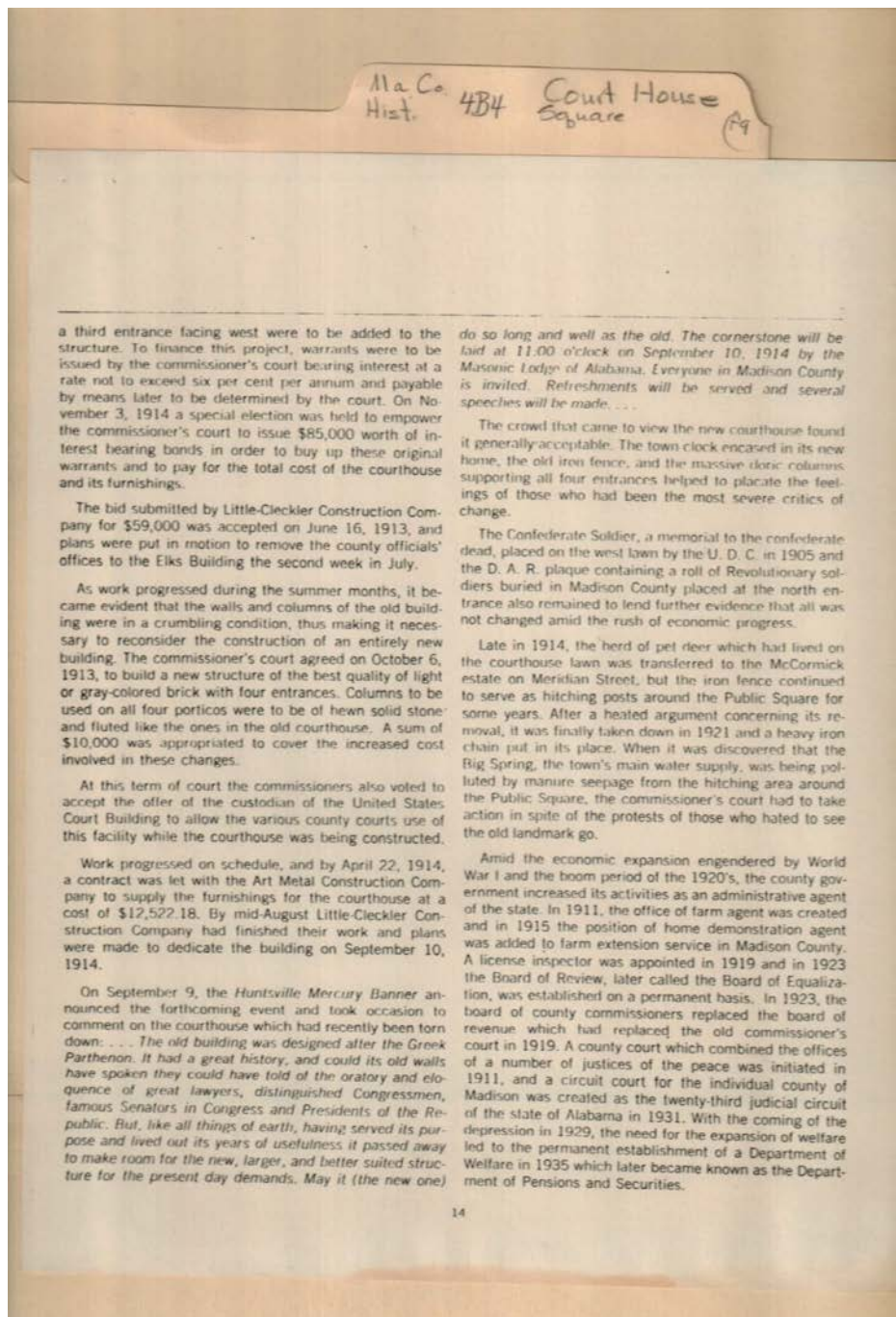
1914-1-64



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**Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings**

Image 14    r04b04-09-000-0081    [Contents](#)    [Index](#)    [About](#)



**Names:**

Art Metal  
Construction Co.

Little-Cleckler  
Construction Co.

McCormick,

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

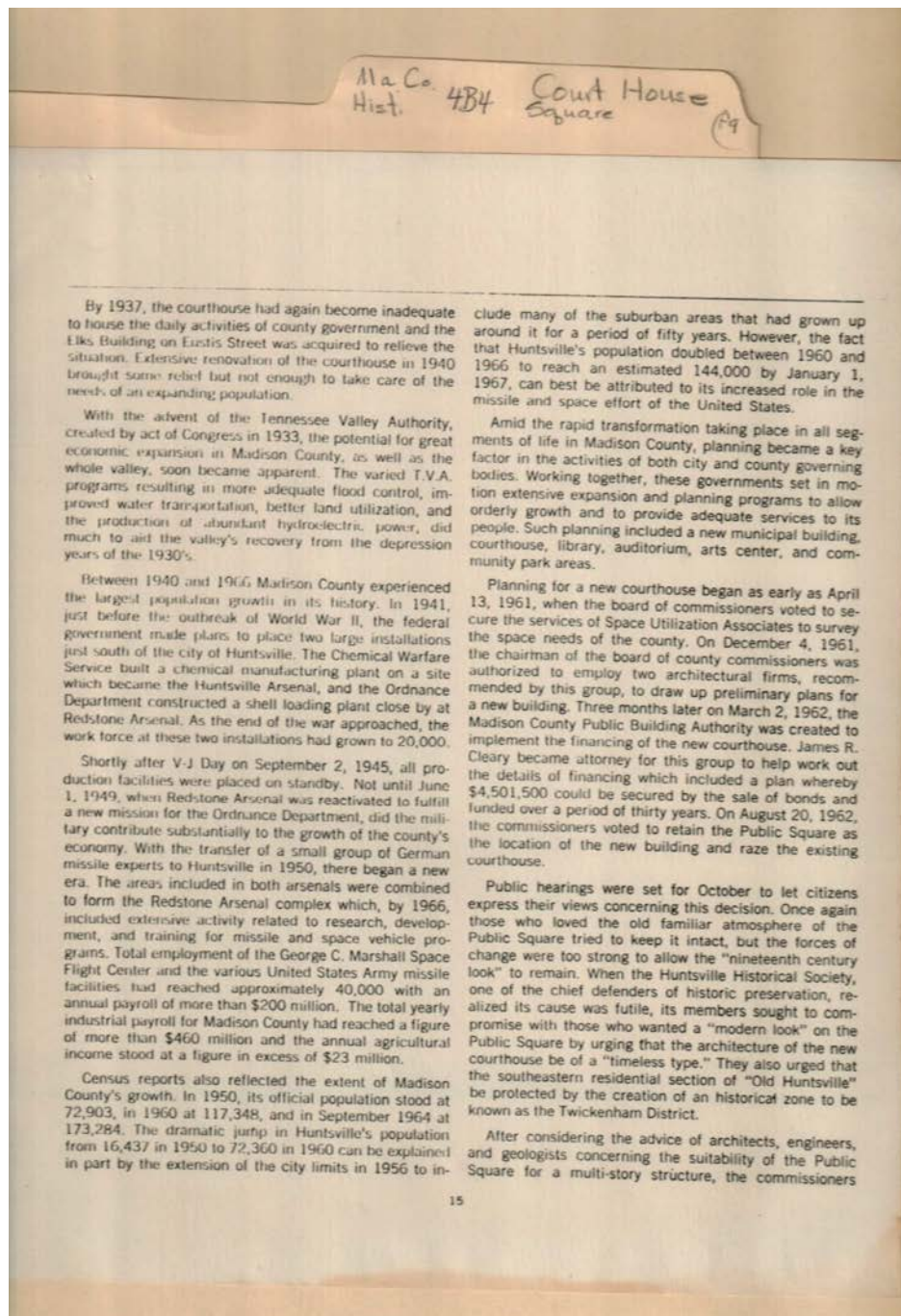
**Types:**

essay

**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 9**

**Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings**

Image 15    r04b04-09-000-0082    [Contents](#)    [Index](#)    [About](#)



**Names:**

Cleary, James R.

Courthouse discussed

Huntsville Arsenal

TVA

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

essay

**Dates:**

1933

1941

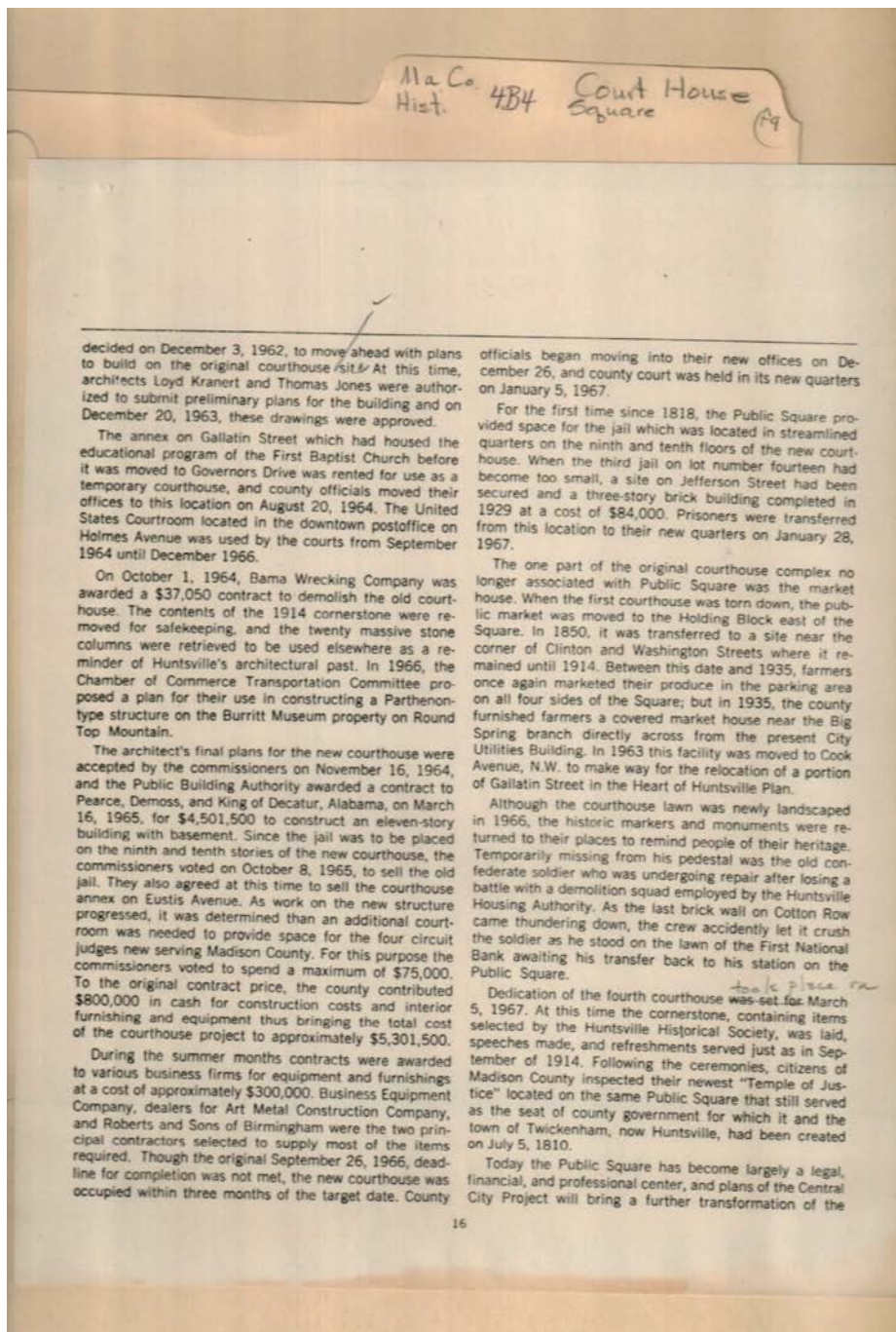
1962



**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 9**

**Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings**

Image 16    r04b04-09-000-0083    [Contents](#)    [Index](#)    [About](#)



**Names:**

Bama Wrecking  
Company  
Courthouse dedicated

Jones, Thomas,  
architect

Kranert, Loyd,  
architect

Pearce, Demoss, and  
King  
Roberts and Sons

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

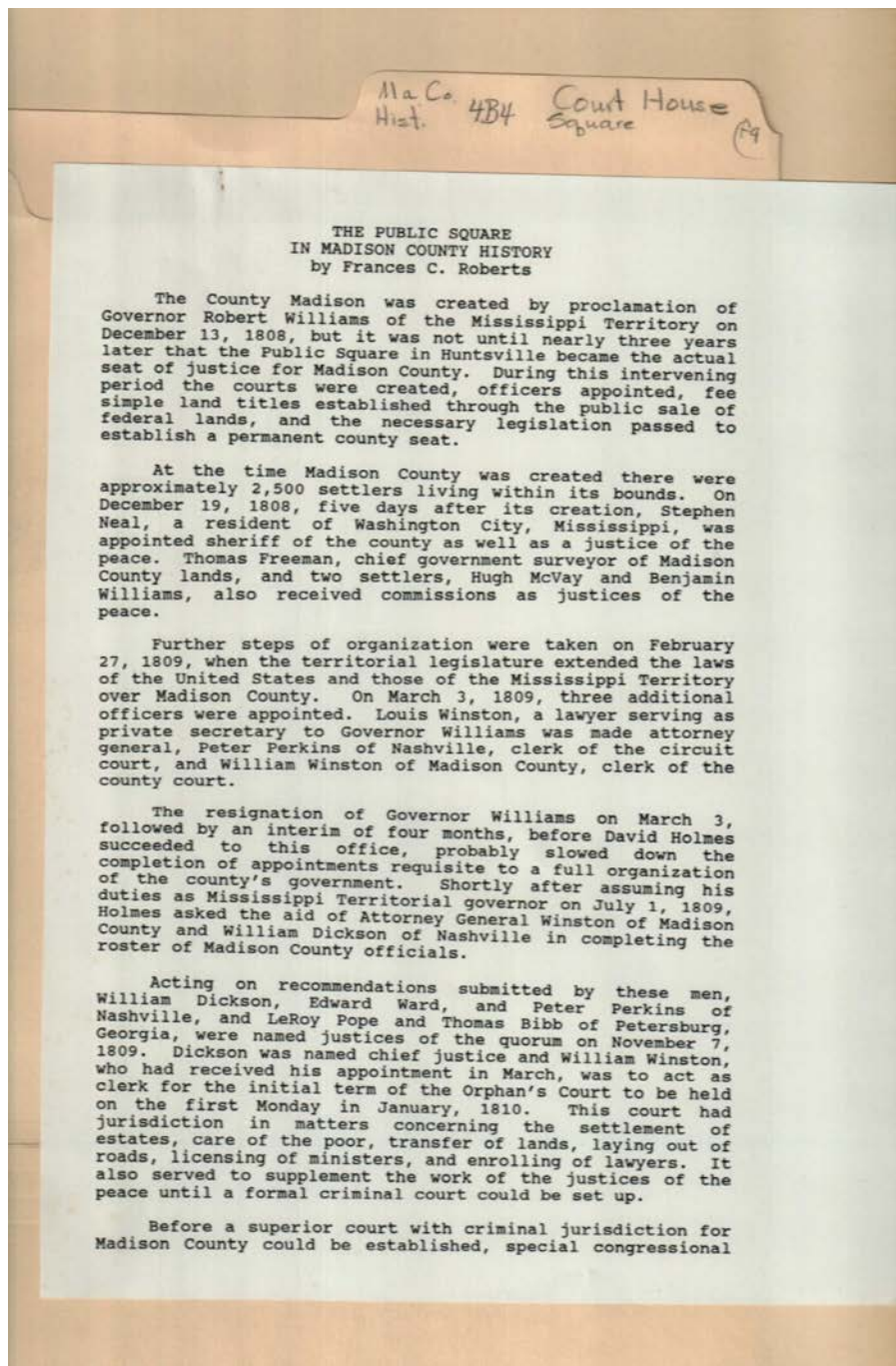
**Types:**

essay

**Dates:**

Mar 05, 1967





**Names:**

Bibb, Thomas  
Dickson, William  
Freeman, Thomas,  
Surveyor

Holmes, David,  
Governor  
McVay, Hugh  
Neal, Stephen, Sheriff  
Perkins, Peter

Pope, LeRoy  
Roberts, Frances C.  
Square in Madison  
County History  
Ward, Edward

Williams, Benjamin  
Williams, Robert,  
Governor  
Winston, Louis  
Winston, William

**Places:**

Madison County, AL

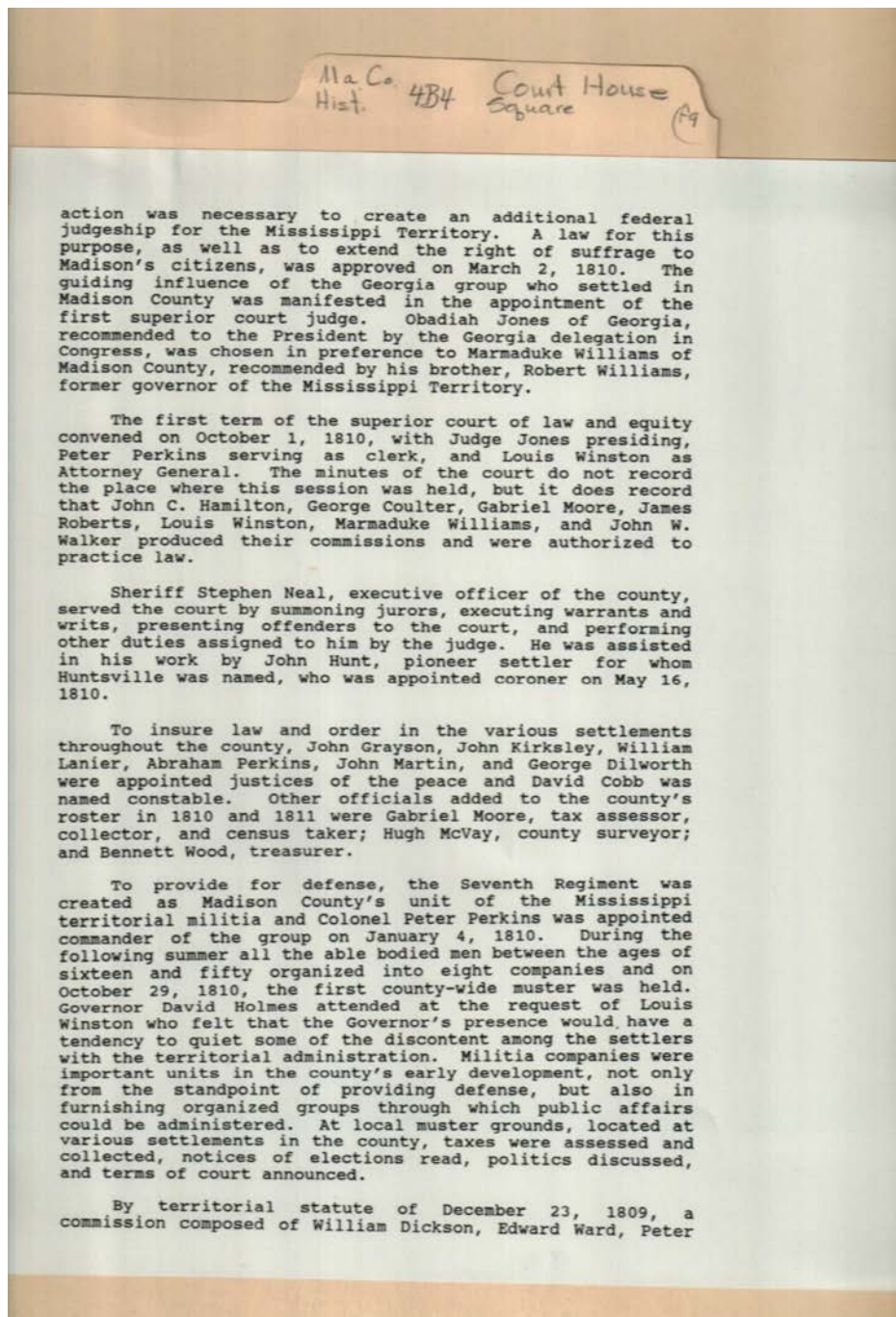
**Types:**

essay

**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 9**

**Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings**

Image 18    r04b04-09-000-0085    [Contents](#)    [Index](#)    [About](#)



action was necessary to create an additional federal judgeship for the Mississippi Territory. A law for this purpose, as well as to extend the right of suffrage to Madison's citizens, was approved on March 2, 1810. The guiding influence of the Georgia group who settled in Madison County was manifested in the appointment of the first superior court judge. Obadiah Jones of Georgia, recommended to the President by the Georgia delegation in Congress, was chosen in preference to Marmaduke Williams of Madison County, recommended by his brother, Robert Williams, former governor of the Mississippi Territory.

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Sheriff Stephen Neal, executive officer of the county, served the court by summoning jurors, executing warrants and writs, presenting offenders to the court, and performing other duties assigned to him by the judge. He was assisted in his work by John Hunt, pioneer settler for whom Huntsville was named, who was appointed coroner on May 16, 1810.

To insure law and order in the various settlements throughout the county, John Grayson, John Kirksley, William Lanier, Abraham Perkins, John Martin, and George Dilworth were appointed justices of the peace and David Cobb was named constable. Other officials added to the county's roster in 1810 and 1811 were Gabriel Moore, tax assessor, collector, and census taker; Hugh McVay, county surveyor; and Bennett Wood, treasurer.

To provide for defense, the Seventh Regiment was created as Madison County's unit of the Mississippi territorial militia and Colonel Peter Perkins was appointed commander of the group on January 4, 1810. During the following summer all the able bodied men between the ages of sixteen and fifty organized into eight companies and on October 29, 1810, the first county-wide muster was held. Governor David Holmes attended at the request of Louis Winston who felt that the Governor's presence would have a tendency to quiet some of the discontent among the settlers with the territorial administration. Militia companies were important units in the county's early development, not only from the standpoint of providing defense, but also in furnishing organized groups through which public affairs could be administered. At local muster grounds, located at various settlements in the county, taxes were assessed and collected, notices of elections read, politics discussed, and terms of court announced.

By territorial statute of December 23, 1809, a commission composed of William Dickson, Edward Ward, Peter

**Names:**

Cobb, David  
Coulter, George  
Dilworth, George  
Grayson, John  
Hamilton, John C.  
Hunt, John

Jones, Obadiah  
Kirksley, John  
Lanier, William  
Martin, John  
McVay, Hugh  
Moore, Gabriel

Neal, Stephen, Sheriff  
Perkins, Abraham  
Perkins, Peter  
Roberts, James  
Walker, John W.

Williams,  
Marmaduke  
Williams, Robert  
Winston, Louis

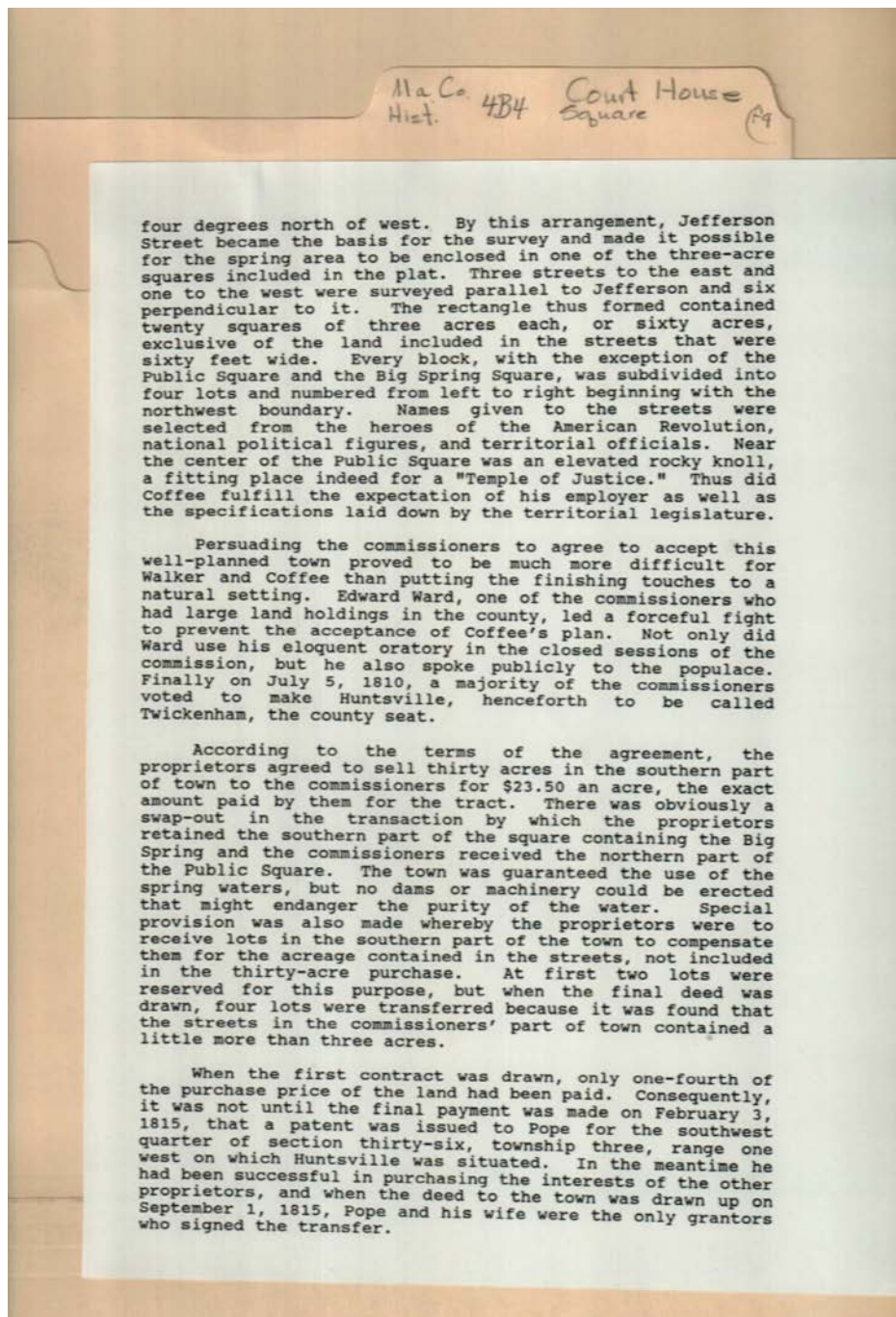
**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay





**Names:**

Coffee,

Pope,

Walker,

Ward, Edward

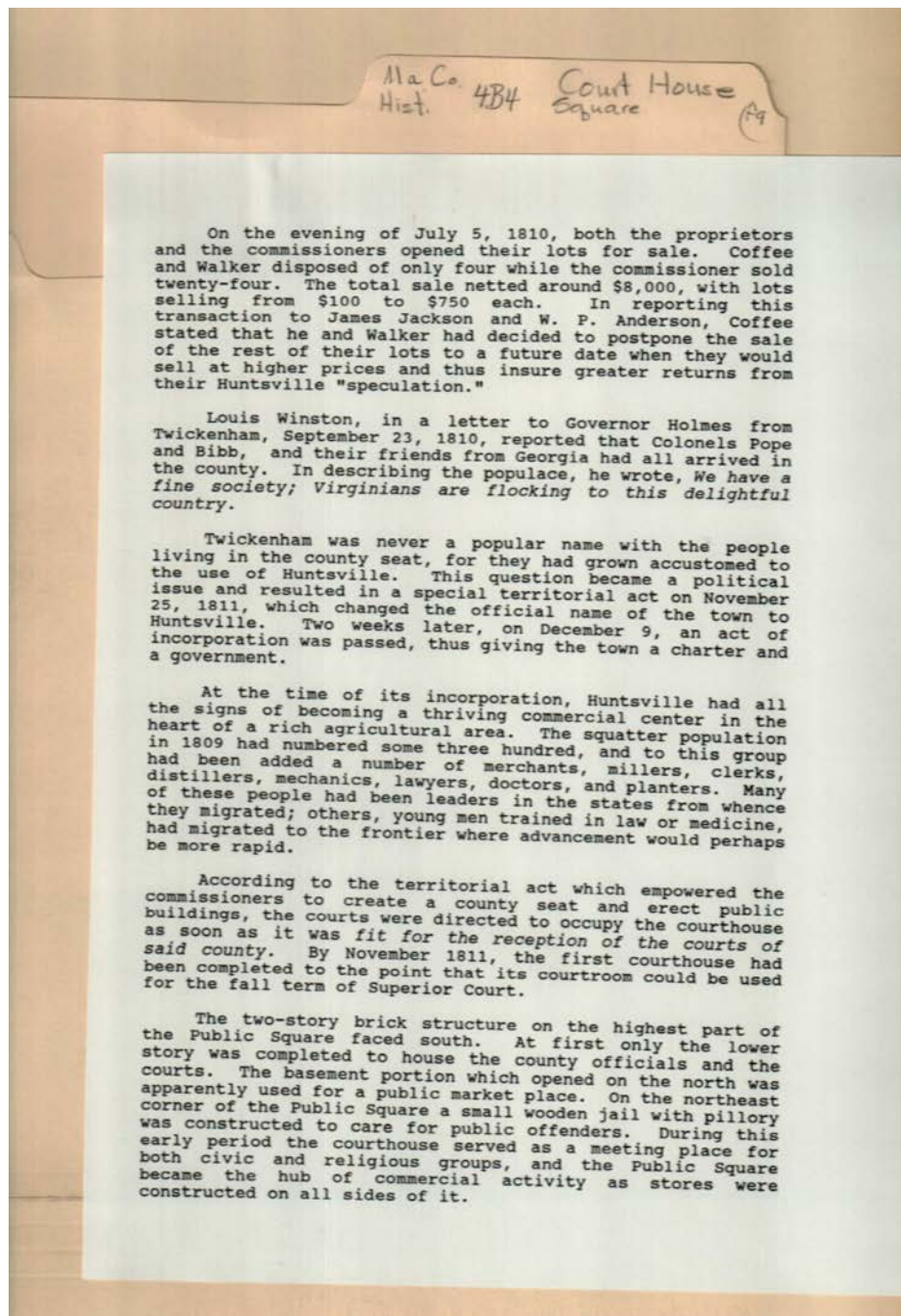
**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay





On the evening of July 5, 1810, both the proprietors and the commissioners opened their lots for sale. Coffee and Walker disposed of only four while the commissioner sold twenty-four. The total sale netted around \$8,000, with lots selling from \$100 to \$750 each. In reporting this transaction to James Jackson and W. P. Anderson, Coffee stated that he and Walker had decided to postpone the sale of the rest of their lots to a future date when they would sell at higher prices and thus insure greater returns from their Huntsville "speculation."

Louis Winston, in a letter to Governor Holmes from Twickenham, September 23, 1810, reported that Colonels Pope and Bibb, and their friends from Georgia had all arrived in the county. In describing the populace, he wrote, *We have a fine society; Virginians are flocking to this delightful country.*

Twickenham was never a popular name with the people living in the county seat, for they had grown accustomed to the use of Huntsville. This question became a political issue and resulted in a special territorial act on November 25, 1811, which changed the official name of the town to Huntsville. Two weeks later, on December 9, an act of incorporation was passed, thus giving the town a charter and a government.

At the time of its incorporation, Huntsville had all the signs of becoming a thriving commercial center in the heart of a rich agricultural area. The squatter population in 1809 had numbered some three hundred, and to this group had been added a number of merchants, millers, clerks, distillers, mechanics, lawyers, doctors, and planters. Many of these people had been leaders in the states from whence they migrated; others, young men trained in law or medicine, had migrated to the frontier where advancement would perhaps be more rapid.

According to the territorial act which empowered the commissioners to create a county seat and erect public buildings, the courts were directed to occupy the courthouse as soon as it was fit for the reception of the courts of said county. By November 1811, the first courthouse had been completed to the point that its courtroom could be used for the fall term of Superior Court.

The two-story brick structure on the highest part of the Public Square faced south. At first only the lower story was completed to house the county officials and the courts. The basement portion which opened on the north was apparently used for a public market place. On the northeast corner of the Public Square a small wooden jail with pillory was constructed to care for public offenders. During this early period the courthouse served as a meeting place for both civic and religious groups, and the Public Square became the hub of commercial activity as stores were constructed on all sides of it.

**Names:**

Anderson, William P.  
Bibb, Colonel  
Coffee,

Holmes, David,  
Governor  
Jackson, James

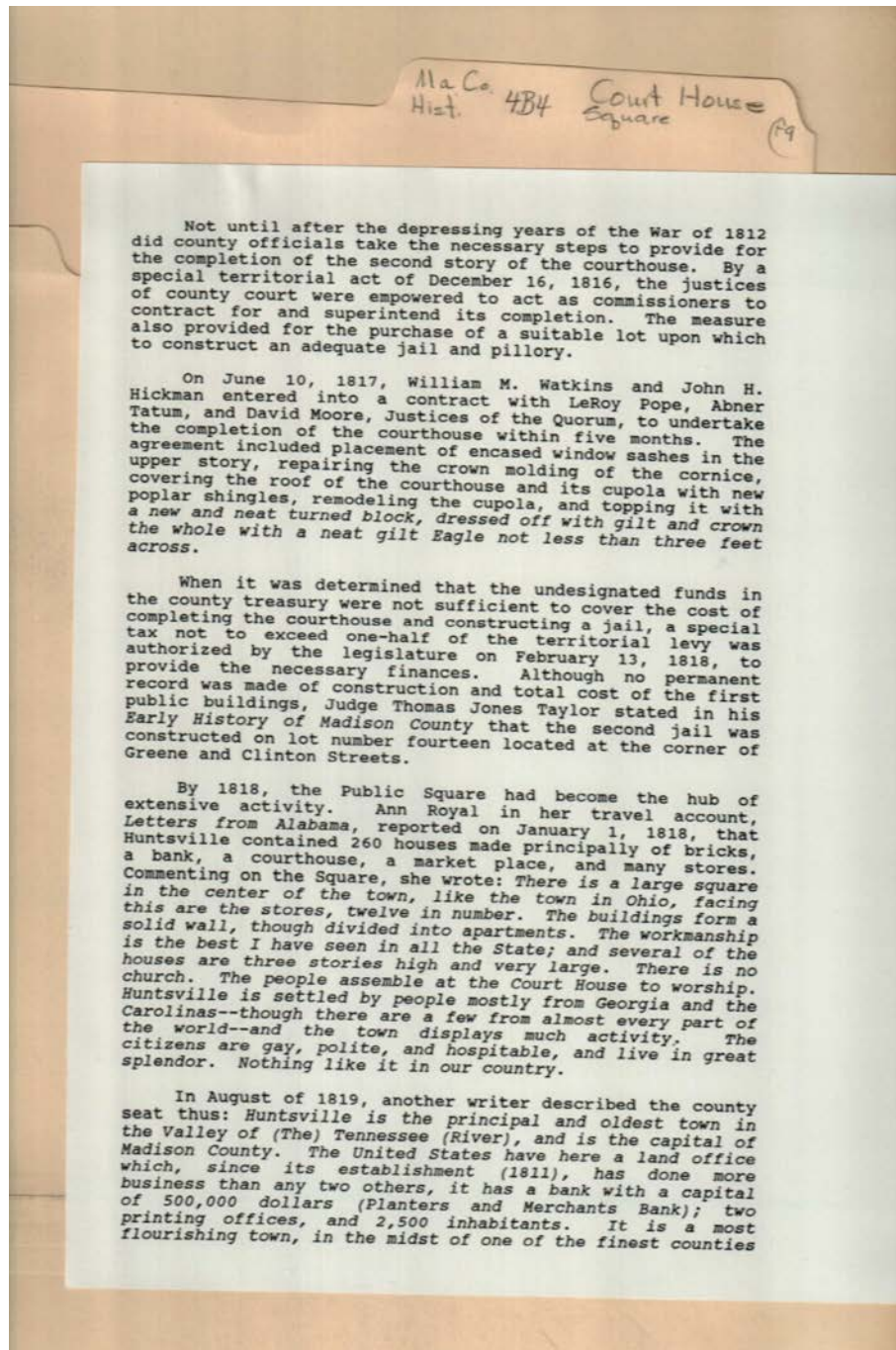
Pope, Colonel  
Walker,  
Winston, Louis

**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay



Not until after the depressing years of the War of 1812 did county officials take the necessary steps to provide for the completion of the second story of the courthouse. By a special territorial act of December 16, 1816, the justices of county court were empowered to act as commissioners to contract for and superintend its completion. The measure also provided for the purchase of a suitable lot upon which to construct an adequate jail and pillory.

On June 10, 1817, William M. Watkins and John H. Hickman entered into a contract with LeRoy Pope, Abner Tatum, and David Moore, Justices of the Quorum, to undertake the completion of the courthouse within five months. The agreement included placement of encased window sashes in the upper story, repairing the crown molding of the cornice, covering the roof of the courthouse and its cupola with new poplar shingles, remodeling the cupola, and topping it with a new and neat turned block, dressed off with gilt and crown the whole with a neat gilt Eagle not less than three feet across.

When it was determined that the undesignated funds in the county treasury were not sufficient to cover the cost of completing the courthouse and constructing a jail, a special tax not to exceed one-half of the territorial levy was authorized by the legislature on February 13, 1818, to provide the necessary finances. Although no permanent record was made of construction and total cost of the first public buildings, Judge Thomas Jones Taylor stated in his *Early History of Madison County* that the second jail was constructed on lot number fourteen located at the corner of Greene and Clinton Streets.

By 1818, the Public Square had become the hub of extensive activity. Ann Royal in her travel account, *Letters from Alabama*, reported on January 1, 1818, that Huntsville contained 260 houses made principally of bricks, a bank, a courthouse, a market place, and many stores. Commenting on the Square, she wrote: There is a large square in the center of the town, like the town in Ohio, facing this are the stores, twelve in number. The buildings form a solid wall, though divided into apartments. The workmanship is the best I have seen in all the State; and several of the houses are three stories high and very large. There is no church. The people assemble at the Court House to worship. Huntsville is settled by people mostly from Georgia and the Carolinas--though there are a few from almost every part of the world--and the town displays much activity. The citizens are gay, polite, and hospitable, and live in great splendor. Nothing like it in our country.

In August of 1819, another writer described the county seat thus: Huntsville is the principal and oldest town in the Valley of (The) Tennessee (River), and is the capital of Madison County. The United States have here a land office which, since its establishment (1811), has done more business than any two others, it has a bank with a capital of 500,000 dollars (Planters and Merchants Bank); two printing offices, and 2,500 inhabitants. It is a most flourishing town, in the midst of one of the finest counties

**Names:**

Hickman, John H.  
Moore, David  
Pope, LeRoy

Royal, Ann  
Tatum, Abner

Taylor, Thomas  
Jones, Judge  
Watkins, William M.

Early History of  
Madison County

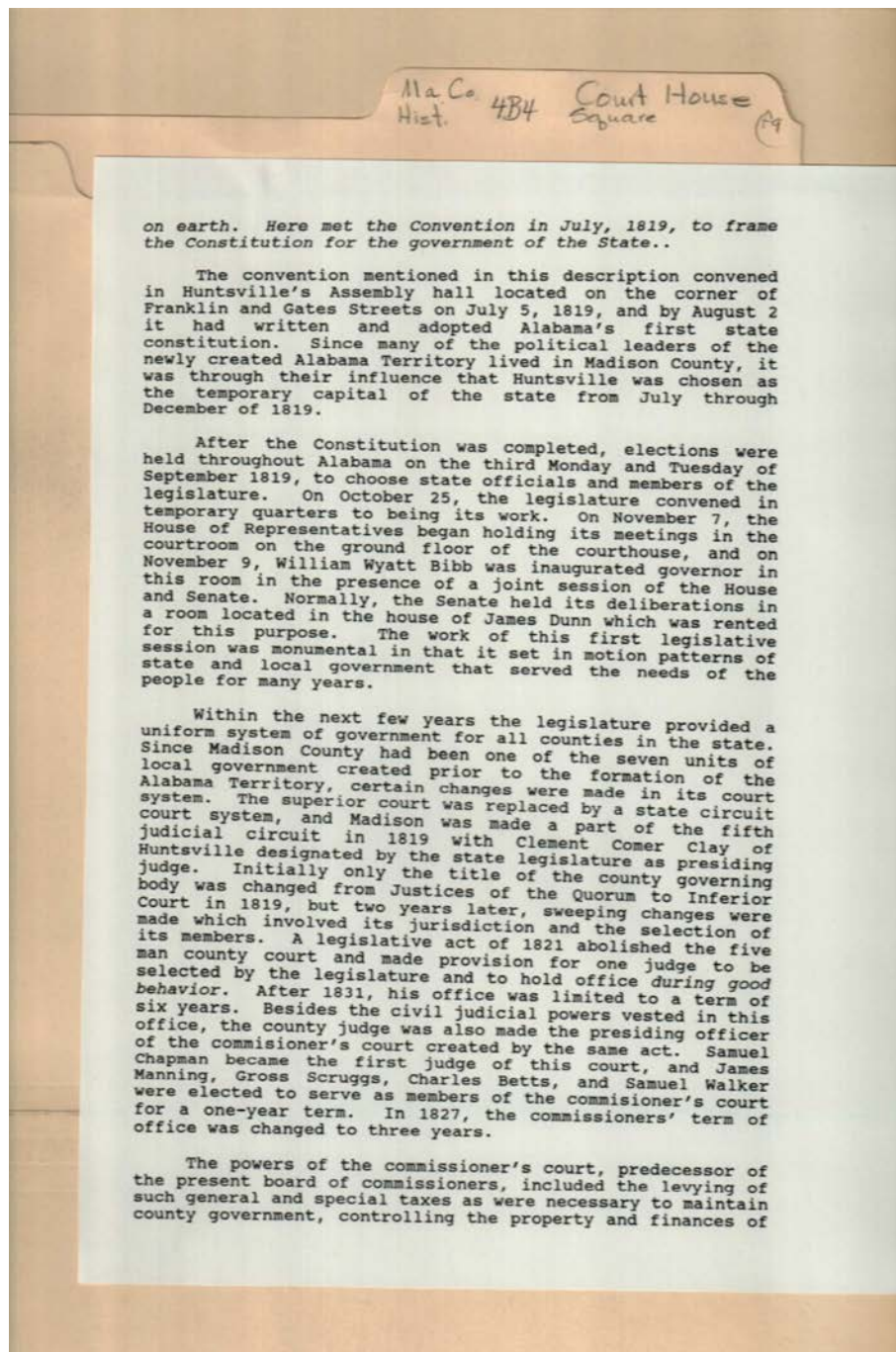
**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay





**Names:**

Bibb, William Wyatt

Clay, Clement Comer

Dunn, James

**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

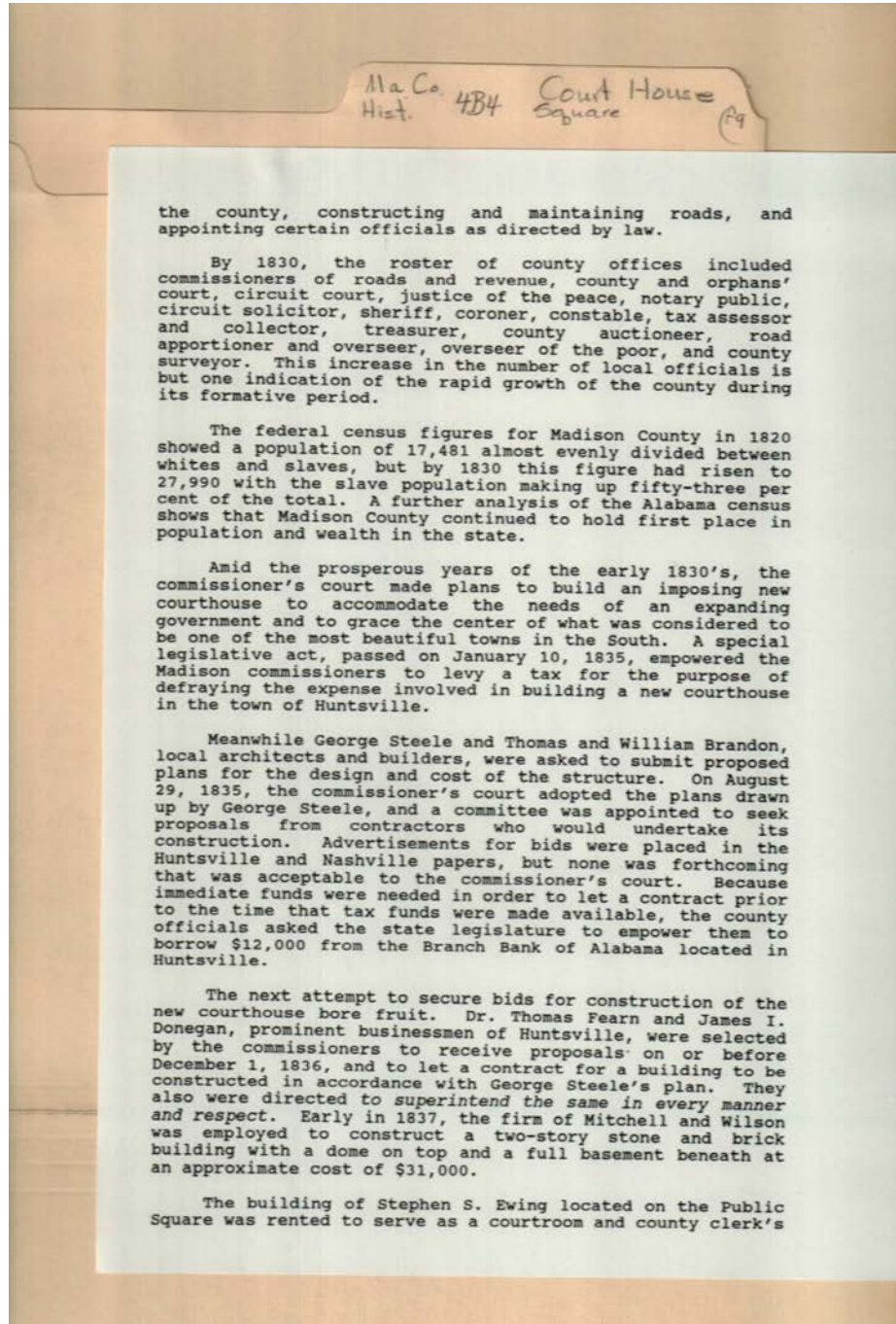
essay



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**Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings**

Image 23    r04b04-09-000-0090    [Contents](#)    [Index](#)    [About](#)



**Names:**

Brandon, Thomas  
Brandon, William

Donegan, James I.  
Ewing, Stephen S.

Fearn, Thomas, Dr.

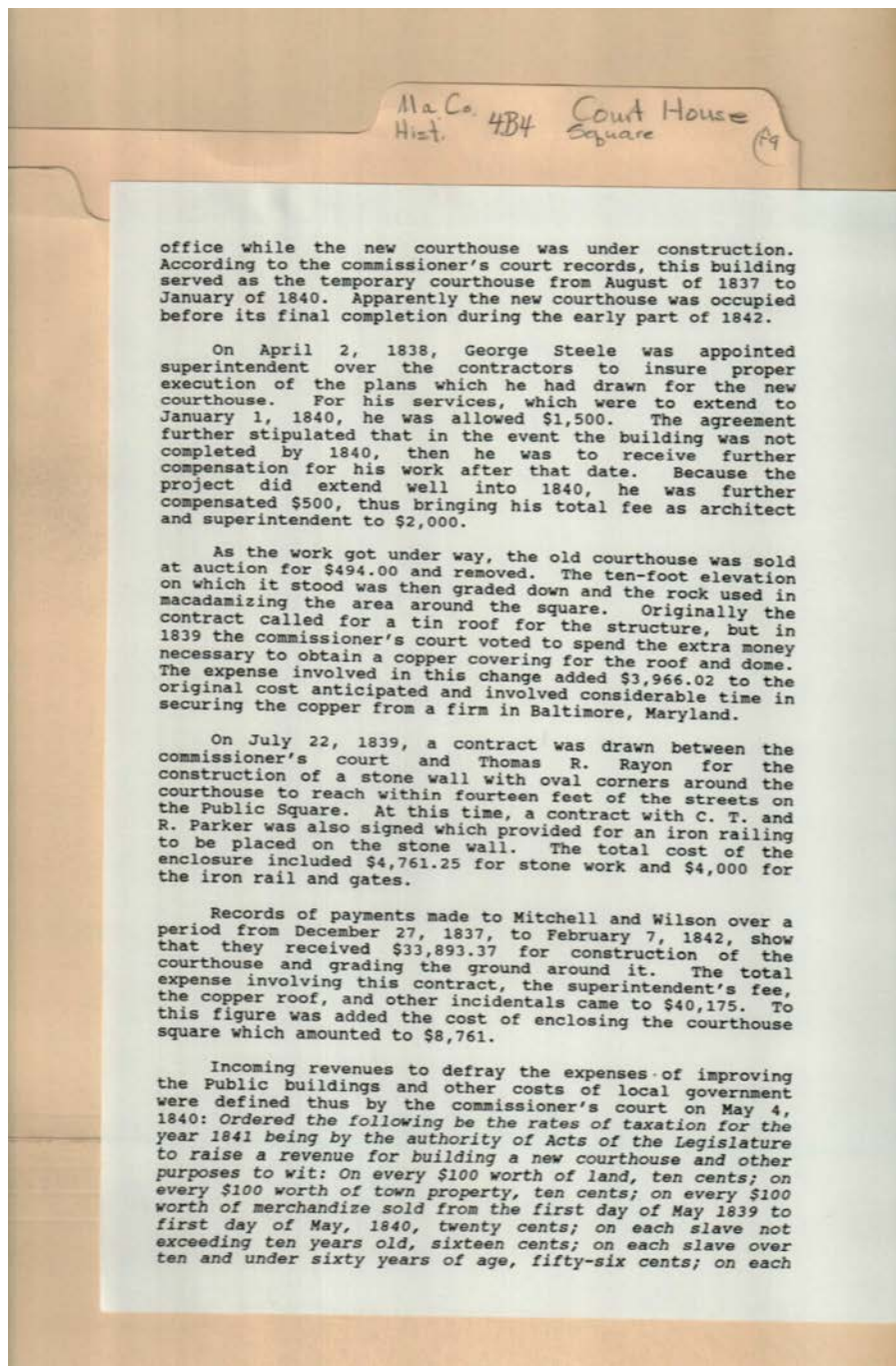
Steele, George  
Architect

**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay



**Names:**

Mitchell,  
Parker, C. T.

Parker, R.  
Rayon, Thomas R.

Steele, George,  
Architect

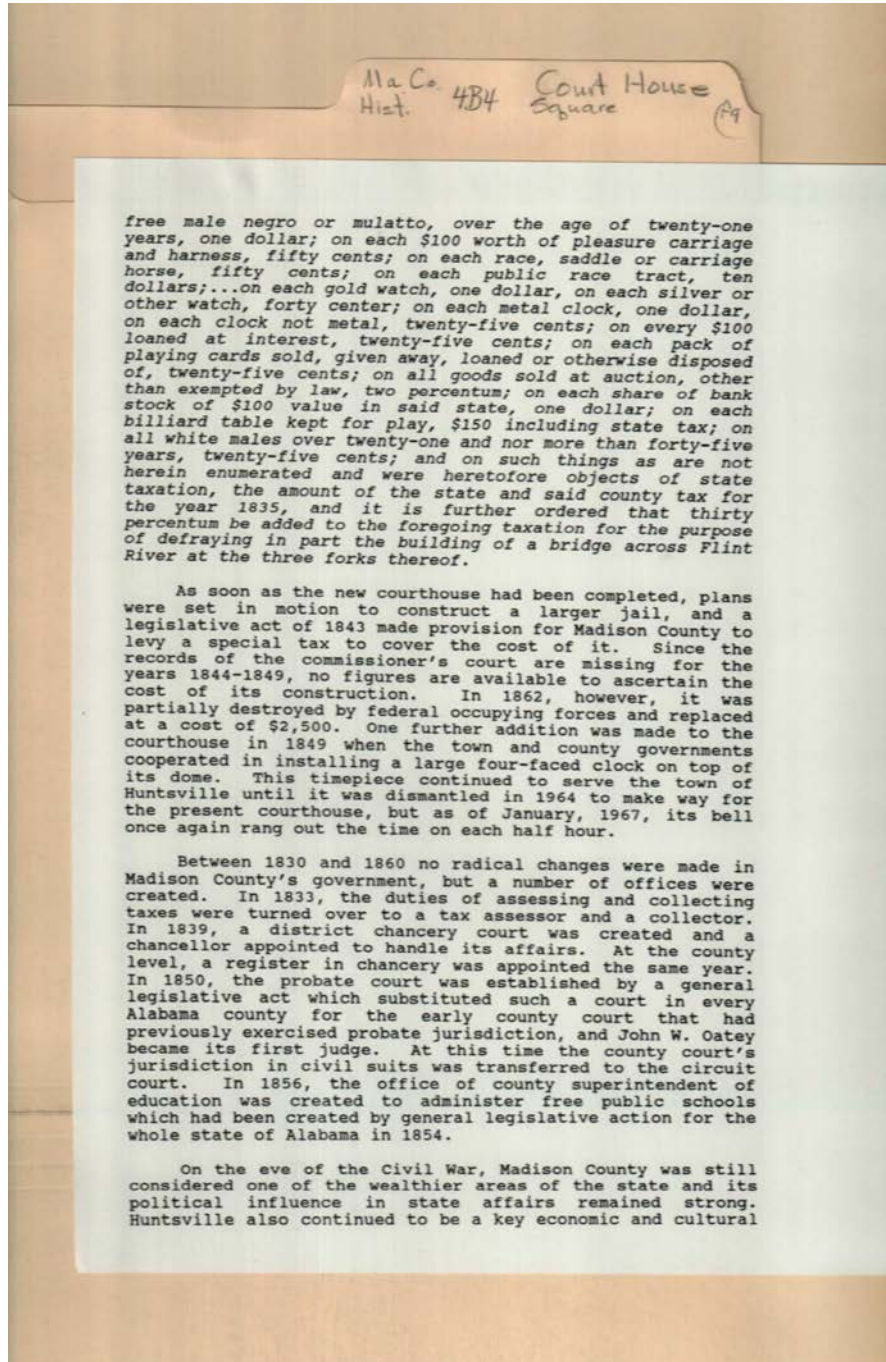
Wilson,

**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay



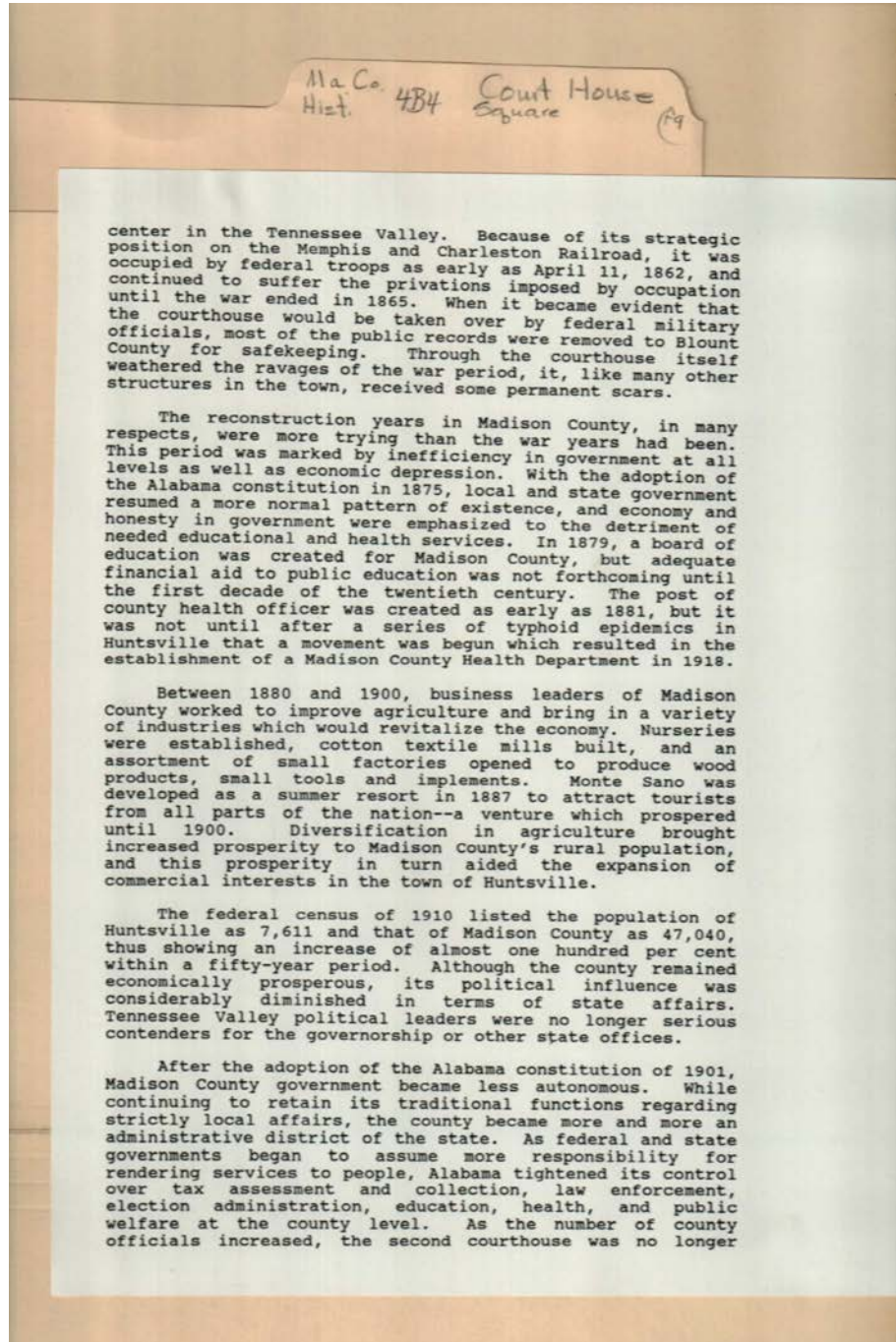
**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay



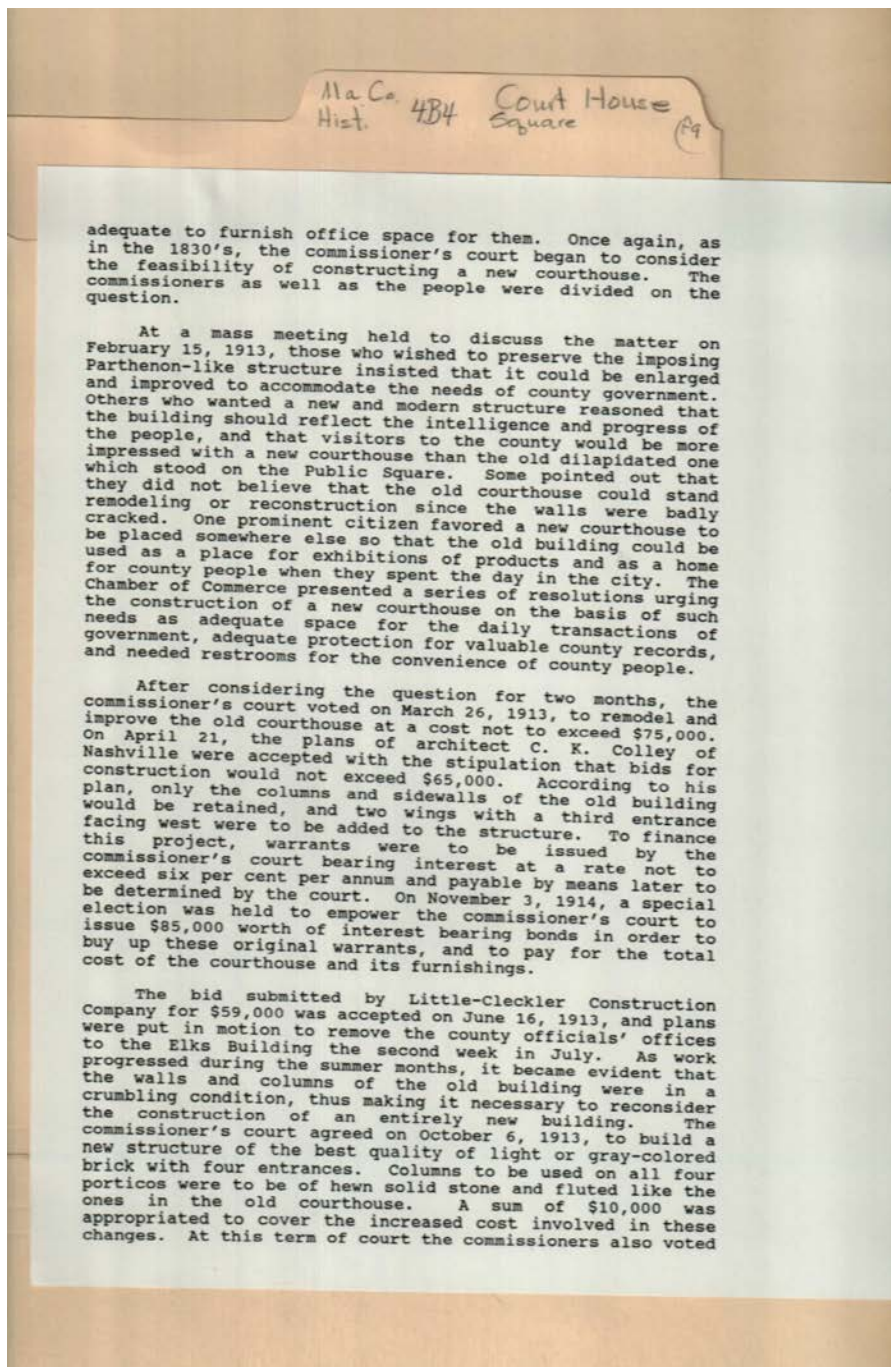


**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay



adequate to furnish office space for them. Once again, as in the 1830's, the commissioner's court began to consider the feasibility of constructing a new courthouse. The commissioners as well as the people were divided on the question.

At a mass meeting held to discuss the matter on February 15, 1913, those who wished to preserve the imposing Parthenon-like structure insisted that it could be enlarged and improved to accommodate the needs of county government. Others who wanted a new and modern structure reasoned that the building should reflect the intelligence and progress of the people, and that visitors to the county would be more impressed with a new courthouse than the old dilapidated one which stood on the Public Square. Some pointed out that they did not believe that the old courthouse could stand remodeling or reconstruction since the walls were badly cracked. One prominent citizen favored a new courthouse to be placed somewhere else so that the old building could be used as a place for exhibitions of products and as a home for county people when they spent the day in the city. The Chamber of Commerce presented a series of resolutions urging the construction of a new courthouse on the basis of such needs as adequate space for the daily transactions of government, adequate protection for valuable county records, and needed restrooms for the convenience of county people.

After considering the question for two months, the commissioner's court voted on March 26, 1913, to remodel and improve the old courthouse at a cost not to exceed \$75,000. On April 21, the plans of architect C. K. Colley of Nashville were accepted with the stipulation that bids for construction would not exceed \$65,000. According to his plan, only the columns and sidewalls of the old building would be retained, and two wings with a third entrance facing west were to be added to the structure. To finance this project, warrants were to be issued by the commissioner's court bearing interest at a rate not to exceed six per cent per annum and payable by means later to be determined by the court. On November 3, 1914, a special election was held to empower the commissioner's court to issue \$85,000 worth of interest bearing bonds in order to buy up these original warrants, and to pay for the total cost of the courthouse and its furnishings.

The bid submitted by Little-Cleckler Construction Company for \$59,000 was accepted on June 16, 1913, and plans were put in motion to remove the county officials' offices to the Elks Building the second week in July. As work progressed during the summer months, it became evident that the walls and columns of the old building were in a crumbling condition, thus making it necessary to reconsider the construction of an entirely new building. The commissioner's court agreed on October 6, 1913, to build a new structure of the best quality of light or gray-colored brick with four entrances. Columns to be used on all four porticos were to be of hewn solid stone and fluted like the ones in the old courthouse. A sum of \$10,000 was appropriated to cover the increased cost involved in these changes. At this term of court the commissioners also voted

**Names:**

Colley, C. K.,  
Architect

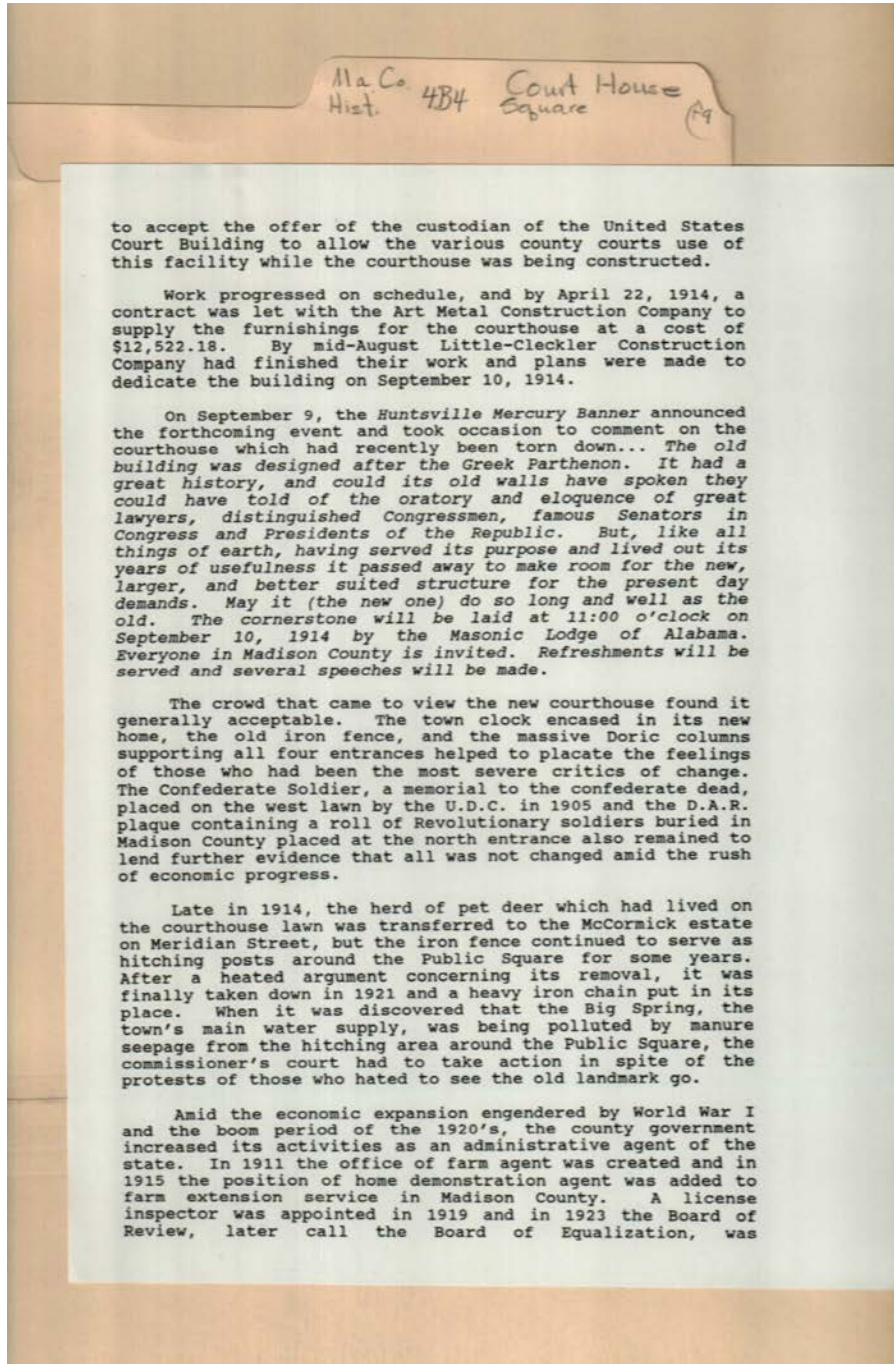
Little-Cleckler  
Construction Co.

**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

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**Names:**

Art Metal  
Construction Co.

Little-Cleckler  
Construction Co.

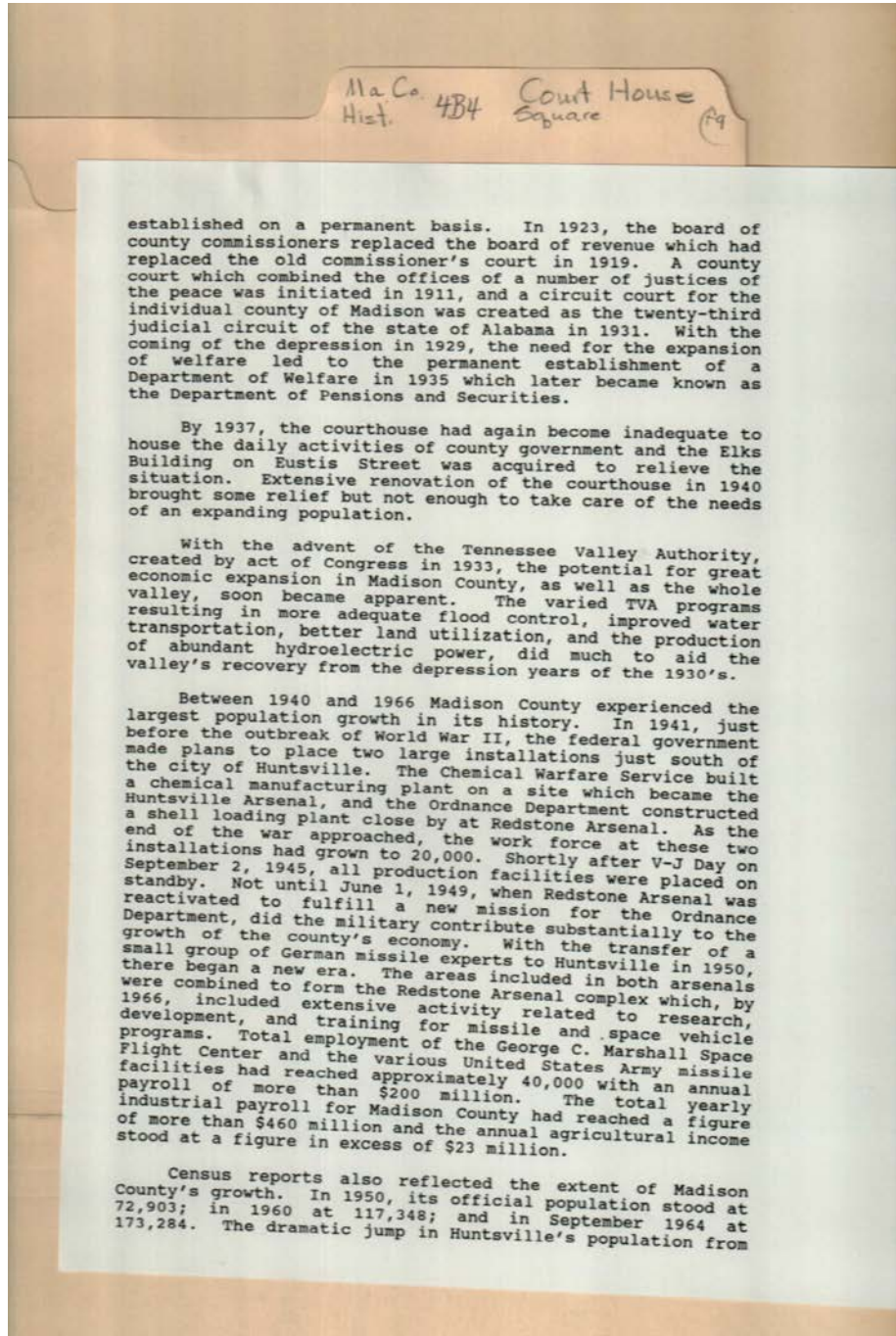
**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay





**Names:**

Huntsville Arsenal

TVA

**Places:**

Madison County, AL

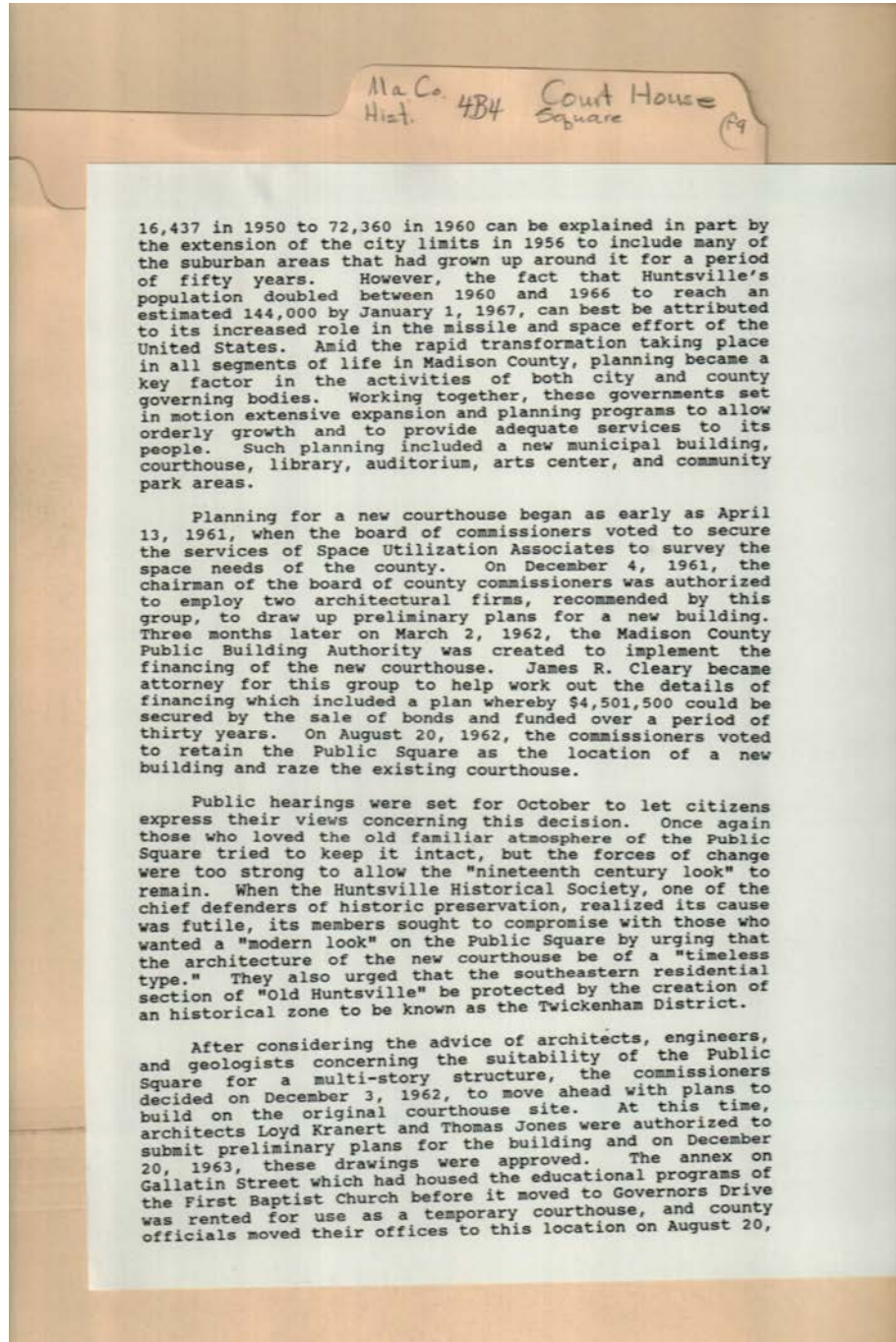
**Types:**

essay

**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 9**

**Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings**

Image 30    r04b04-09-000-0097    [Contents](#)    [Index](#)    [About](#)



**Names:**

Cleary, James R.

Jones, Thomas,  
architect

Kranert, Loyd,  
architect

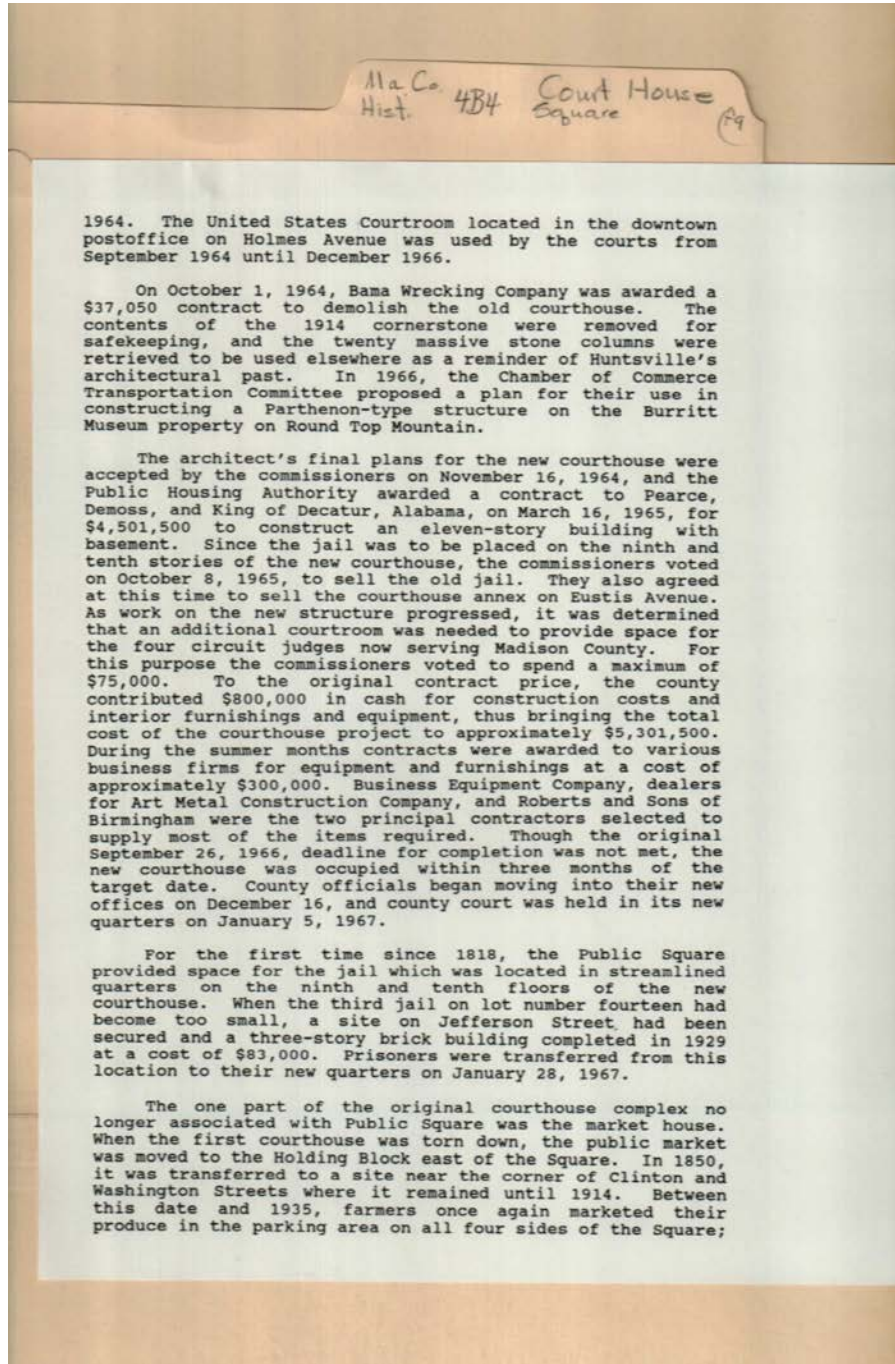
**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

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1964. The United States Courtroom located in the downtown postoffice on Holmes Avenue was used by the courts from September 1964 until December 1966.

On October 1, 1964, Bama Wrecking Company was awarded a \$37,050 contract to demolish the old courthouse. The contents of the 1914 cornerstone were removed for safekeeping, and the twenty massive stone columns were retrieved to be used elsewhere as a reminder of Huntsville's architectural past. In 1966, the Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee proposed a plan for their use in constructing a Parthenon-type structure on the Burritt Museum property on Round Top Mountain.

The architect's final plans for the new courthouse were accepted by the commissioners on November 16, 1964, and the Public Housing Authority awarded a contract to Pearce, Demoss, and King of Decatur, Alabama, on March 16, 1965, for \$4,501,500 to construct an eleven-story building with basement. Since the jail was to be placed on the ninth and tenth stories of the new courthouse, the commissioners voted on October 8, 1965, to sell the old jail. They also agreed at this time to sell the courthouse annex on Eustis Avenue. As work on the new structure progressed, it was determined that an additional courtroom was needed to provide space for the four circuit judges now serving Madison County. For this purpose the commissioners voted to spend a maximum of \$75,000. To the original contract price, the county contributed \$800,000 in cash for construction costs and interior furnishings and equipment, thus bringing the total cost of the courthouse project to approximately \$5,301,500. During the summer months contracts were awarded to various business firms for equipment and furnishings at a cost of approximately \$300,000. Business Equipment Company, dealers for Art Metal Construction Company, and Roberts and Sons of Birmingham were the two principal contractors selected to supply most of the items required. Though the original September 26, 1966, deadline for completion was not met, the new courthouse was occupied within three months of the target date. County officials began moving into their new offices on December 16, and county court was held in its new quarters on January 5, 1967.

For the first time since 1818, the Public Square provided space for the jail which was located in streamlined quarters on the ninth and tenth floors of the new courthouse. When the third jail on lot number fourteen had become too small, a site on Jefferson Street had been secured and a three-story brick building completed in 1929 at a cost of \$83,000. Prisoners were transferred from this location to their new quarters on January 28, 1967.

The one part of the original courthouse complex no longer associated with Public Square was the market house. When the first courthouse was torn down, the public market was moved to the Holding Block east of the Square. In 1850, it was transferred to a site near the corner of Clinton and Washington Streets where it remained until 1914. Between this date and 1935, farmers once again marketed their produce in the parking area on all four sides of the Square;

**Names:**

Bama Wrecking  
Company

Pearce, Demoss, and  
King

Roberts and Sons

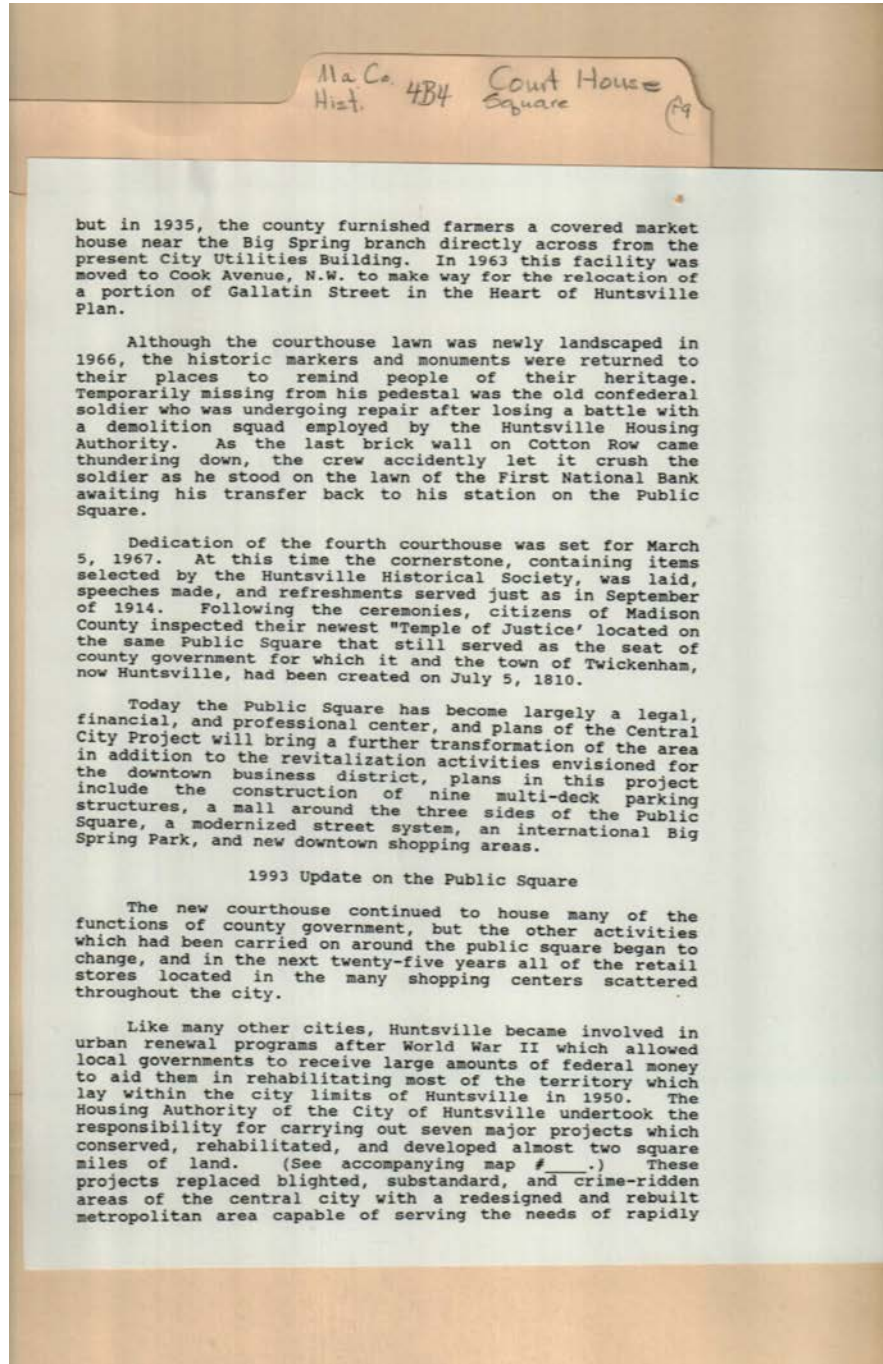
**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay



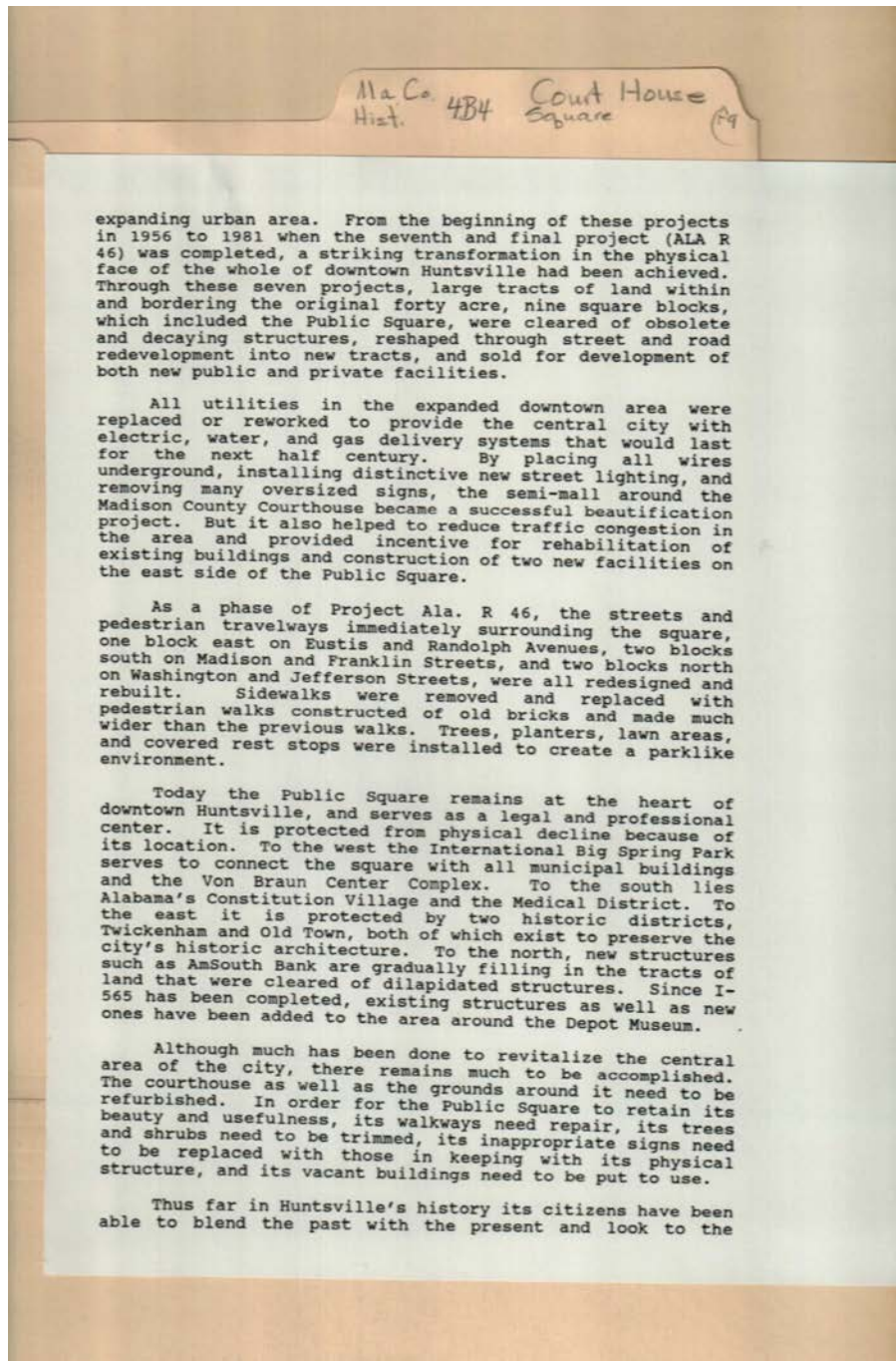


**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay



expanding urban area. From the beginning of these projects in 1956 to 1981 when the seventh and final project (ALA R 46) was completed, a striking transformation in the physical face of the whole of downtown Huntsville had been achieved. Through these seven projects, large tracts of land within and bordering the original forty acre, nine square blocks, which included the Public Square, were cleared of obsolete and decaying structures, reshaped through street and road redevelopment into new tracts, and sold for development of both new public and private facilities.

All utilities in the expanded downtown area were replaced or reworked to provide the central city with electric, water, and gas delivery systems that would last for the next half century. By placing all wires underground, installing distinctive new street lighting, and removing many oversized signs, the semi-mall around the Madison County Courthouse became a successful beautification project. But it also helped to reduce traffic congestion in the area and provided incentive for rehabilitation of existing buildings and construction of two new facilities on the east side of the Public Square.

As a phase of Project Ala. R 46, the streets and pedestrian travelways immediately surrounding the square, one block east on Eustis and Randolph Avenues, two blocks south on Madison and Franklin Streets, and two blocks north on Washington and Jefferson Streets, were all redesigned and rebuilt. Sidewalks were removed and replaced with pedestrian walks constructed of old bricks and made much wider than the previous walks. Trees, planters, lawn areas, and covered rest stops were installed to create a parklike environment.

Today the Public Square remains at the heart of downtown Huntsville, and serves as a legal and professional center. It is protected from physical decline because of its location. To the west the International Big Spring Park serves to connect the square with all municipal buildings and the Von Braun Center Complex. To the south lies Alabama's Constitution Village and the Medical District. To the east it is protected by two historic districts, Twickenham and Old Town, both of which exist to preserve the city's historic architecture. To the north, new structures such as AmSouth Bank are gradually filling in the tracts of land that were cleared of dilapidated structures. Since I-565 has been completed, existing structures as well as new ones have been added to the area around the Depot Museum.

Although much has been done to revitalize the central area of the city, there remains much to be accomplished. The courthouse as well as the grounds around it need to be refurbished. In order for the Public Square to retain its beauty and usefulness, its walkways need repair, its trees and shrubs need to be trimmed, its inappropriate signs need to be replaced with those in keeping with its physical structure, and its vacant buildings need to be put to use.

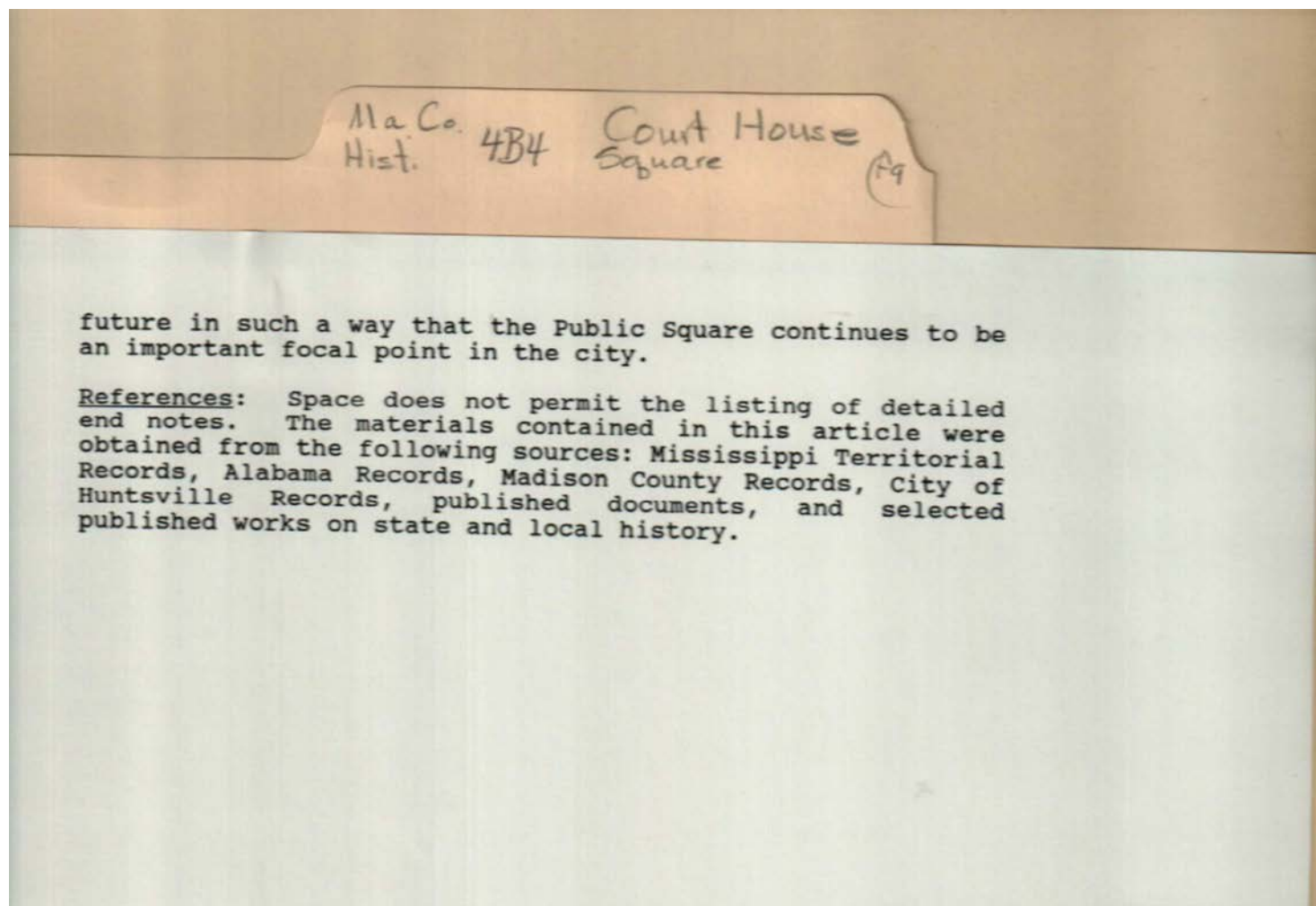
Thus far in Huntsville's history its citizens have been able to blend the past with the present and look to the

**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay



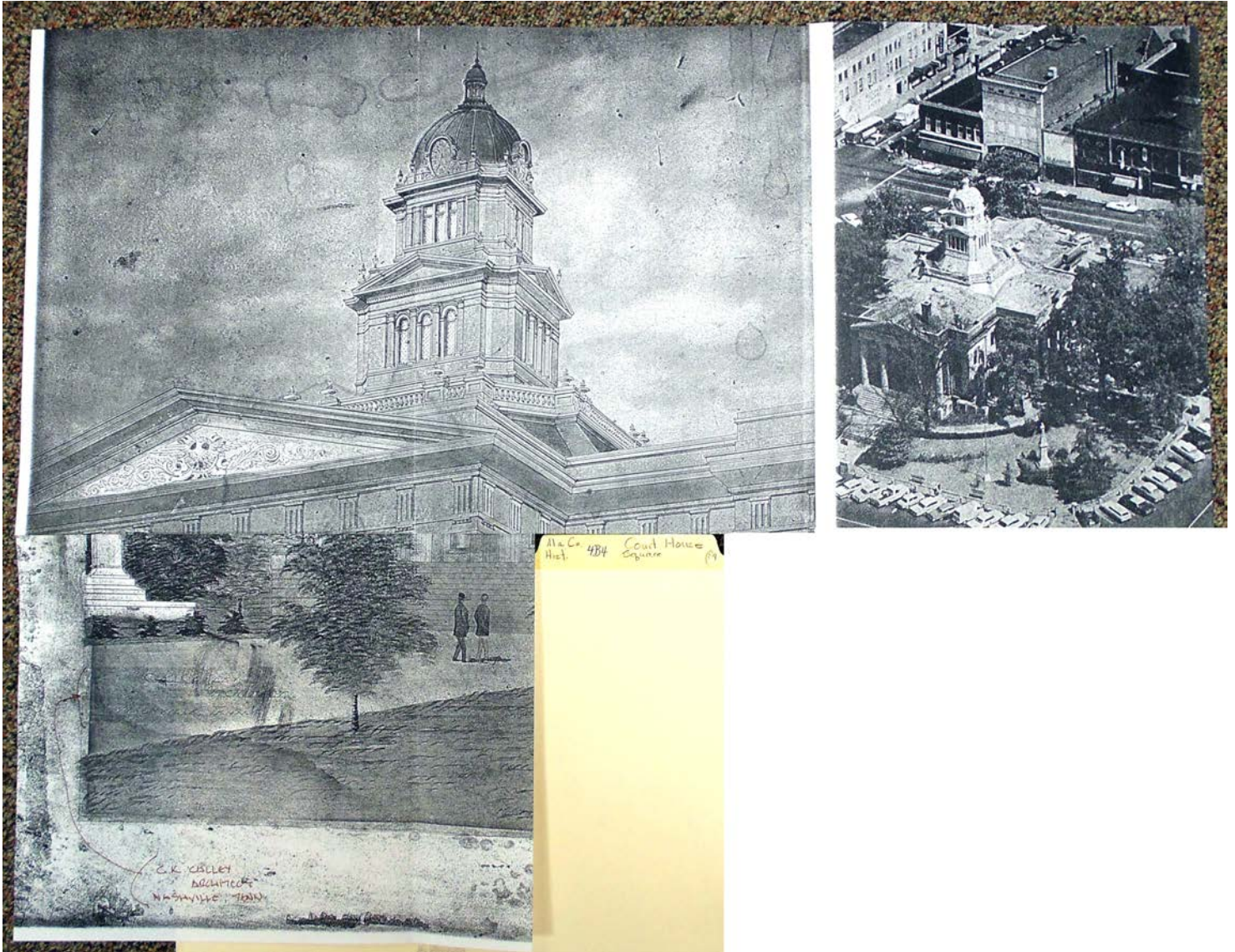
**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

essay





**Names:**

Courthouse Square

**Places:**

Madison County, AL

**Types:**

photo

**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 9**  
**Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings**

[Contents](#)   [Index](#)   [About](#)

**Table of Contents**

[Image 1](#) (r04b04-09-000-0068)  
[Image 2](#) (r04b04-09-000-0069)  
[Image 3](#) (r04b04-09-000-0070)  
[Image 4](#) (r04b04-09-000-0071)  
[Image 5](#) (r04b04-09-000-0072)  
[Image 6](#) (r04b04-09-000-0073)  
[Image 7](#) (r04b04-09-000-0074)  
[Image 8](#) (r04b04-09-000-0075)  
[Image 9](#) (r04b04-09-000-0076)  
[Image 10](#) (r04b04-09-000-0077)

[Image 11](#) (r04b04-09-000-0078)  
[Image 12](#) (r04b04-09-000-0079)  
[Image 13](#) (r04b04-09-000-0080)  
[Image 14](#) (r04b04-09-000-0081)  
[Image 15](#) (r04b04-09-000-0082)  
[Image 16](#) (r04b04-09-000-0083)  
[Image 17](#) (r04b04-09-000-0084)  
[Image 18](#) (r04b04-09-000-0085)  
[Image 19](#) (r04b04-09-000-0086)  
[Image 20](#) (r04b04-09-000-0087)

[Image 21](#) (r04b04-09-000-0088)  
[Image 22](#) (r04b04-09-000-0089)  
[Image 23](#) (r04b04-09-000-0090)  
[Image 24](#) (r04b04-09-000-0091)  
[Image 25](#) (r04b04-09-000-0092)  
[Image 26](#) (r04b04-09-000-0093)  
[Image 27](#) (r04b04-09-000-0094)  
[Image 28](#) (r04b04-09-000-0095)  
[Image 29](#) (r04b04-09-000-0096)  
[Image 30](#) (r04b04-09-000-0097)

[Image 31](#) (r04b04-09-000-0098)  
[Image 32](#) (r04b04-09-000-0099)  
[Image 33](#) (r04b04-09-000-0100)  
[Image 34](#) (r04b04-09-000-0101)  
[Image 35](#) (r04b04-09-000-4486)  
[Table of Contents](#)  
[Name & Place Index](#)  
[About the Collection](#)

**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 9**

**Madison County Courthouses Paper - Madison County Buildings**

[Contents](#)   [Index](#)   [About](#)

**Name & Place Index**

Anderson, William P. [6](#), [7](#), [20](#)  
Art Metal Construction Co. [14](#), [28](#)  
Bama Wrecking Company [16](#), [31](#)  
Betts, Charles [10](#)  
Bibb, Colonel [7](#), [20](#)  
Bibb, Thomas [4](#), [17](#)  
Bibb, William Wyatt [8](#), [22](#)  
Brandon, Thomas [10](#), [23](#)  
Brandon, William [10](#), [23](#)  
Chapman, Samuel [10](#)  
Clay, Clement Comer [10](#), [22](#)  
Cleary, James R. [15](#), [30](#)  
Cobb, David [4](#), [18](#)  
Coffee, John [6](#)  
Coffee, [7](#), [19](#), [20](#)  
Colley, C. K., Architect [12](#), [27](#)  
Collins, [1](#)  
Coulter, George [4](#), [18](#)  
Courthouse dedicated [16](#)  
Courthouse discussed [15](#)  
Courthouse Square [35](#)  
Courthouse [9](#), [13](#)  
Dickson, William [4](#), [6](#), [17](#)  
Dilworth, George [4](#), [18](#)  
Donegan, James I. [10](#), [23](#)  
Dunn, James [8](#), [22](#)  
Early Courthouse [5](#)  
Early History of Madison County [21](#)  
Ewing, Stephen S. [10](#), [23](#)  
Fearn, Thomas, Dr. [10](#), [23](#)  
Freeman, Thomas, Surveyor [4](#), [17](#)  
Gilbreath, Alexander [6](#)  
Grayson, John [4](#), [18](#)  
Hamilton, John C. [4](#), [18](#)  
Hickman, John H. [8](#), [21](#)  
Holmes, David, Governor [4](#), [7](#), [17](#), [20](#)  
Hunt, John [4](#), [18](#)  
Huntsville Arsenal [15](#), [29](#)  
Huntsville, AL [1](#), [2](#), [4](#), [6](#), [7](#), [8](#), [9](#), [10](#), [11](#), [12](#), [13](#), [14](#), [15](#), [16](#)  
Jackson, James [6](#), [7](#), [20](#)  
Jones, Obadiah [4](#), [18](#)  
Jones, Thomas, architect [16](#), [30](#)  
Kirksley, John [4](#), [18](#)  
Kranert, Loyd, architect [16](#), [30](#)  
Lanier, William [4](#), [18](#)  
Letters from Alabama [8](#)  
Little-Cleckler Construction Co. [14](#), [27](#), [28](#)  
Love, E. L. [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)  
Madison County Courthouse [1](#)  
Madison County, AL [17](#), [18](#), [19](#), [20](#), [21](#), [22](#), [23](#), [24](#), [25](#), [26](#), [27](#), [28](#), [29](#), [30](#), [31](#), [32](#), [33](#), [34](#), [35](#)  
Manning, James [10](#)  
Martin, John [4](#), [18](#)  
McCormick, [14](#)  
McVay, Hugh [4](#), [17](#), [18](#)  
Mitchell, [10](#), [11](#), [24](#)  
Moore, David [8](#), [21](#)  
Moore, Gabriel [4](#), [18](#)  
Murray, M. [1](#)  
Neal, Stephen, Sheriff [4](#), [17](#), [18](#)  
Parker, C. T. [11](#), [24](#)  
Parker, R. [11](#), [24](#)  
Pearce, Demoss, and King [16](#), [31](#)  
Perkins, Abraham [4](#), [18](#)  
Perkins, Peter [4](#), [6](#), [17](#), [18](#)  
Pope, Alexander [6](#)  
Pope, Colonel [7](#), [20](#)  
Pope, LeRoy [4](#), [6](#), [8](#), [17](#), [21](#)  
Pope, [19](#)  
Public Square in Huntsville [4](#)  
Rayon, Thomas R. [11](#), [24](#)  
Roberts and Sons [16](#), [31](#)  
Roberts, Frances C. [17](#)  
Roberts, James [18](#)  
Rogers, James [4](#)  
Royal, Ann [8](#), [21](#)  
Scruggs, Gross [10](#)  
Square in Madison County History [17](#)  
Steele, George Architect [1](#), [23](#)  
Steele, George, Architect [10](#), [24](#)  
Tatum, Abner [8](#), [21](#)  
Taylor, Thomas Jones, Judge [8](#), [21](#)  
TVA [15](#), [29](#)  
Walker, John W. [4](#), [6](#), [18](#)  
Walker, Samuel [10](#)  
Walker, [7](#), [19](#), [20](#)  
Ward, Edward [4](#), [6](#), [7](#), [17](#), [19](#)  
Watkins, William M. [8](#), [21](#)  
Williams, Benjamin [4](#), [17](#)  
Williams, Marmaduke [4](#), [18](#)  
Williams, Robert, Governor [4](#), [17](#)  
Williams, Robert [18](#)  
Wilson, [10](#), [11](#), [24](#)  
Winston, Louis [4](#), [6](#), [7](#), [17](#), [18](#), [20](#)  
Winston, William [4](#), [17](#)  
Wood, Bennett [4](#)



# Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection

**Preferred Citation:** Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection, Archives and Special Collections, M. Louis Salmon Library, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL.

**Collection Scope and Content:** The Collection of 114 Linear ft. includes a total of 156 Archival Boxes. The Frances Cabaniss Roberts collection covers the historical records of the Cabaniss Roberts family. This collection contains extensive correspondence records of the Cabaniss Roberts family circa 1830 to 1930.

**Archives/Special Collections Access Restrictions:** None

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