



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY  
NOMINATION FORM

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Name Historic United States Court House Location 1100 Laurel Street  
Common Classification Building

Owner United States Government  
c/o Mr. Jack Terry, Buildings Manager  
General Services Administration, Room 502-D  
901 Sumter Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Representation in Existing Surveys

Description: Designed by Harold Tatum, the United States Court House was constructed in 1936 in the classic Renaissance Revival style. The building consists of a full basement, three full floors, and partial fourth and fifth floors for a total of 56,067 gross square feet. It is constructed of poured monolithic concrete and masonry with steel and wood framing. The structure features a rusticated ground level, rusticated quoins, smooth walls and trabeated fenestration accented with pediments of various types. The front facade is divided into five bays, with a central bay and two end bays which project slightly forward. The central bay projects well beyond the plane of the facade and is detailed with Ionic fluted pilasters which support an entablature and plain pediment. The main entrance is located in this central portion and consists of three recessed, arched apertures defined with rusticated voussoirs. The two side facades are divided into five bays with the central three bays defined by four Tuscan order pilasters. The central portion of the building contains a fourth level which is cruciform in shape. (continued on back)

Significance

The United States Court House was designed in 1936 by Harold Tatum, a graduate of the School of Architecture of the University of Pennsylvania and one of the few university trained architects to practice in Columbia during the 1930s. The Court House is a notable example of classic Renaissance Revival architecture. The structure is also significant for its use of poured monolithic concrete as a major building material. Although poured monolithic concrete is often used for buildings with plain linear designs, it is unusual for this method of construction to be used on structures with the kind of intricate detailing that characterizes the Renaissance Revival style. The Court House was built to house the United States District Court of Eastern South Carolina, the offices of the Internal Revenue Service, the Department of Justice, and the United States District Attorney. Still in active use, the United States Court House continues to house the United States District Court and the offices of the United States District Attorney.

Acreage .99 acre

Verbal Boundary Description TMS 20-04-01; running 286' along Laurel Street and 152' along Assembly Street

UTM Reference Point Columbia North 17/496480/3762920

Other Information The fifty-year age requirement for National Register status should be waived for the United States Court House for the following reasons:

1. It is a notable Columbia landmark significant for its classic Renaissance Revival architecture;
2. It is also significant for its use of poured monolithic concrete as a building material;
3. It is an integral part of the continuum of Columbia's architectural and historical development.

Description -- continued

Crowning the fourth level is an octagonal fifth level which houses a weather station observatory tower.

The interior of the Court House remains virtually intact and is notable for its courtroom and lobbies which feature ornate marble, plaster and woodwork ornamentation.

The method of construction used on this Court House was an unusual one. While the use of poured monolithic concrete is common for plain linear types of buildings, e.g. warehouses and office buildings, it is unusual for a structure with this kind of complex Renaissance style detailing to be constructed in this fashion.