

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

PHO 699497

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 13 1979

DATE ENTERED MAR 13 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Jefferson Davis Hotel

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Northeast corner of Catoma and Montgomery streets

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Montgomery

VICINITY OF

2

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Alabama

01

Montgomery

101

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER: vacant

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

William B. Moore, Jr.; J. W. Casey; and, W. S. Newell

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 270

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Montgomery

VICINITY OF

Alabama

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Montgomery County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

142 Washington Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Montgomery

Alabama

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

none

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Exterior:

The Jefferson Davis Hotel Building is a ten-story reinforced concrete structure with a brick and limestone exterior, of early 20th century Commercial Style with mixed Classical and Sullivanesque details. The building occupies the northeast corner of the intersection of Montgomery and Catoma streets in downtown Montgomery, Alabama. The first floor and mezzanine form an approximate square in plan while the second through tenth floors form a "L" configuration in plan, with one wing facing Montgomery Street and the other wing facing Catoma Street. The Montgomery Street elevation consists of seven structural bays, while the Catoma Street elevation consists of eight structural bays. As was typical of the period, the two street elevations are quite heavily ornamented, while the rear elevations are plain brick punctuated only by window openings.

On the street elevations, the surface treatment divides the structure into three distinct units: the first floor, mezzanine and second floor; the third through ninth floors; and the tenth floor.

The first floor facade is a series of segmental arches in cut limestone. The arches occur in each structural bay and are approximately twenty-four feet tall and ten feet wide. The arches have red brick infill (which appears to be original only in two bays) up to a decorative cut limestone panel of Sullivan inspiration. Above the decorative panel are three double hung windows, the center window being larger than the two flanking windows forming an a-b-a rhythm. On the Catoma Street front, two arches have a limestone infill rather than brick which is apparently original, being where the lobby stair climbs along the interior side of the wall. A flat steel post and joist canopy covers a small off street unloading area at the main door on the Catoma Street side which is in the fourth bay from the corner. The doors are glass and aluminum storefront and along with the canopy are recent alterations. On the Montgomery Street front, the entrance (also glass and aluminum storefront) is located in the center bay. The bays on each side have storefronts and entrances to restaurants that have been often redone over the years. These three central bays have a cantilevered marquee-balcony over them, which is accessible through doors in the center bay, from the mezzanine level. There appears to have been a former balcony, though the existing one of brick screenblock and glazed tile is an alteration. The first floor arcade is topped by a large cornice mold of approximately three feet in depth, the top of which is at the sill level of the second floor windows. The second floor windows are paired in each structural bay, with each pair being encased in cut limestone. Between each pair of encased windows is a decorative panel, which acts visually with the window encasements to form an ornamental band above the cornice, around the second floor. The third through ninth floors are red brick, punctuated only by windows (which continue to be paired in structural bays) in wood frames with limestone sills.

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At the ninth floor level, there are two false balconies, on each street elevation. The balconies have ornamental limestone panels for sides, rather than balustrades, and are supported by acanthus leaf brackets.

A cornice mold of cut limestone occurs between the ninth and tenth floors, above which the window encasements and decorative panels of limestone form a continuous ornamental band around the tenth floor, visually creating an architrave upon which the frieze and cornice rest. The frieze rests on a row of dentils topped by an egg and dart mold, and is composed of acanthus leaf brackets as triglyphs alternating with metopes of round medallions with a shield in the center. Above the frieze is a large cornice mold which tops the elevation.

The building has a built up flat roof with a parapet wall, and penthouse for the elevator equipment and services.

There are fourteen windows per floor on the Montgomery Street elevation on the second through tenth floors, arranged in seven pairs within the structural bays. The Catoma Street elevation is similar with sixteen windows in eight pairs. The windows are wood double hung in wood frames. The lower sash is a single pane of glass, while the upper sash is a six-pane divided light. The windows on the rear elevations are also double hung, but both sashes are single panes of glass.

INTERIOR:

The only notable interior space in the Jefferson Davis Hotel Building is the lobby. It faces Catoma Street, and features a full height coffered ceiling, and ornate stair to the mezzanine which forms a balcony on the right side. The columns in the lobby are square with chamfered corners and are plaster on marble bases, which match the marble floor.

The column capitals are stylized and of no particular order. The chamfered corners are an acanthus leaf topped by a scroll, while each side of the columns have a shield in the center, flanked by a vertical row of leaves, the stem of which ends at the top with scrolls of ribbons. The capitals are finished in a metallic gold color. The walls are panelized with applied molding on plaster, and a wainscot mold on most walls. The stair is marble with a marble wainscot along the wall, and a wrought iron baluster and an ornate cast iron newell post.

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The walls which separate the mezzanine from the lobby space at the rear and at the left have openings in them which are highlighted with plaster ornament. The opening at the center of the rear wall features a crest surrounded by garlands and scrollwork above a broken pediment which is supported by acanthus leaf brackets. The opening on the left wall features a crest emblazoned with JD and flanked by torches and scrollwork in plaster. The right side of the lobby has the mezzanine balcony, the edge of which is highlighted by ornate patterned moldings, similar to those in the ceiling coffers, which is a stylized acanthus leaf. An acanthus leaf bracket supports the edge of the mezzanine balcony at the columns.

The remainder of the first floor and mezzanine have been extensively altered and redone over the years so that neither the original layout or materials can be discerned. The hotel room floors, however, appear to have remained largely unaltered, with the exception of a lowered ceiling in the hallway to accommodate air conditioning. All the hotel rooms are virtually identical, with plaster walls, picture mold, single panel doors, and only the carpets appear to have been replaced over the years. There are transoms over the hallway doors, still visible (though not operable) from the rooms, but not the hallway, due to the lowered ceiling.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1927-1929

BUILDER/ARCHITECT architect: Frederick Ausfeld
builder: Hugger Bros. Const. Co.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Rising ten stories, the Jefferson Davis Hotel was Montgomery's fourth major hotel and was among the earliest reinforced concrete structures in the city. It was designed by architect Frederick Ausfeld and built by the Hugger Brothers Construction Company from 1927-1929. The combination of its early twentieth century commercial style and its Classical and Sullivanesque details characterized the decade's prevailing moods of modernity and lavishness. Located in the heart of downtown, only a few blocks from the State Capitol, the hotel became an important social and political gathering place.

During the prosperous decade of the 1920's, a group of local financiers foresaw that Montgomery had grown to need another major hotel, so in 1927 they formed the Capital City Hotel Company to implement their idea. Dr. S. D. Suggs served as President of the corporation, and other members included Walter L. Shepherd, Judge C. E. Thomas, and accountant Meyer W. Aldridge. Frederick Ausfeld, designer of the 1895 Schloss and Kahn Warehouse on Coosa Street, was selected to be the architect, and E. S. Hugger, of the popular Hugger Brothers building firm, the contractor. The financiers leased and later sold the structure to the Dinkler Corporation, a chain which operated hotels in many southern cities. When completed in 1929, the Jefferson Davis was the fourth large hotel in the city and the second to be constructed during that decade. It soon became a favorite stopping place for legislators and tourists who frequented the city.

The ten-story structure had an ornate lobby, a mezzanine, and 200 guest rooms. Local firms supplied much of the building materials, with the brick coming from the Jenkins Brick Company and the millwork, cement, lime, and plaster from the Southern Building Company. The most up-to-date engineering and mechanical equipment were used in the fireproof building, and particularly modern features were employed in the coffee shop, barber shop, and electrical system. Upon completion, the cost of the building was estimated to have been \$1,250,000.

In 1960, Montgomery businessmen H.O. Davis and Tine Davis purchased the hotel from the Dinkler Chain and spent approximately \$500,000 on remodeling and renovation work. However, the convenience of motels and the change in travel patterns proved too great a competition, and the hotel closed in 1975. It has recently been purchased by another group of businessmen who plan to begin renovating the structure in the near future.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

George, John. Personal inspection and architectural description, Fall, 1978.

Montgomery Advertiser. March 15, 1928; January 17, 1929; February 22, 1929; December 18, 1963; September 17, 1975; April 30, 1977; and, May 15, 1978.

Moore, William. Interview by Mary Ann Neeley, Fall, 1978.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 1/2 acre.

QUADRANGLE NAME Montgomery North Quadrangle

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 6	4 6 7 0	3 5 8 7 10 10	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C		5 6 9		D			
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 6, part Lot 7, Block 11, East Alabama Plat.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Sally Moore and Mary Ann Neeley (Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery)

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Alabama Historical Commission

February 8, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

725 Monroe Street

(205) 832-6621

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Montgomery

Alabama 36130

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Wils B. Howard Jr.

TITLE

SHPO

DATE

Feb. 9, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *[Signature]*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
[Signature]
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

3-13-79

DATE

2/26/79

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Neeley, Mary Ann. Proposed nomination form, Winter, 1978.