

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED OCT 10 1975

DATE ENTERED

OCT 30 1975

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

Urban Central Fire Station

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

South President Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Jackson

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

__ VICINITY OF

Fourth

STATE

Mississippi

CODE

28

COUNTY

Hinds

CODE

049

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

__DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

__STRUCTURE

__SITE

__OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

__PRIVATE

__BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

__IN PROCESS

__BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

__OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

__WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

__YES: UNRESTRICTED

__NO

PRESENT USE

__AGRICULTURE

__COMMERCIAL

__EDUCATIONAL

__ENTERTAINMENT

__GOVERNMENT

__INDUSTRIAL

__MILITARY

__MUSEUM

__PARK

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__RELIGIOUS

__SCIENTIFIC

__TRANSPORTATION

OTHER: Storage

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Jackson

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 17

CITY, TOWN

Jackson

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi 39205

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Hinds County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

East Pascagoula Street

CITY, TOWN

Jackson

STATE

Mississippi

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Mississippi Statewide Survey of Historic Sites

DATE

1971 -

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

CITY, TOWN

Jackson

STATE

Mississippi

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Situated on the northeast corner of the City Hall block at the intersection of Pearl and South President streets, the Jackson Central Fire Station building is a brick structure which rises three stories from a partial basement to a solid parapet. Described in the original 1904 specifications as "60 x 80 feet in size," the building is structurally almost entirely intact in its original form. Measured floor plans of the basement and three main levels of the structure are included in a "Feasibility Study for Old Central Fire Station--City Hall Annex for the City of Jackson, Mississippi," compiled by the Jackson firm of Barlow and Plunkett, Architect and Engineer, in 1974.

The exterior surface of the Fire Station building is stuccoed and scored in imitation of stone construction (see Statement of Significance), and while the side elevations are otherwise unornamented, the six-bay facade (east) elevation provides a more embellished reflection of the civic pride which was associated with the structure when it was built. Modified pilasters divide the bays at the first floor level, and their molded capitals support a continuous entablature which visually separates the ground floor from the two upper stories. Above the entablature, the second and third floor window groupings are separated horizontally between the structural piers by paneled facing. The unbroken parapet which crowns the building rises from a projecting metal cornice, and the base of a no-longer-extant belfry still caps the northeast corner. A 1907 photograph in the Albert Frederick Daniel Collection at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History provides visual documentation of the belfry's original appearance.

All windows in the building are of the double-hung sash type, set in wooden frames and, in four instances on the facade, embellished with panels glazed in a starburst pattern. The three wide facade bays that were designed to accommodate vehicles on the ground floor are equipped with single vertically sliding doors which in recent years replaced the original double doors. A bronze commemorative plaque, evidently placed in lieu of a cornerstone, is mounted on the first floor facade wall, and directly above the plaque, "CENTRAL STATION" appears in relief on a cast metal plate which fills the width of the frieze. A similar metal plate applied to an ornamental cresting in the parapet publicizes the year of the Central Fire Station's dedication.

Two narrow facade bays are occupied by doorways at the first floor level, one giving access directly to the interior space designed for the drying and storage of fire hoses, and the other, with two diagonally placed openings, leading both to the first floor interior and to a stairway which rises to the second story along the north wall of the building.

The plan of the Central Station interior still reflects the necessities for which the building was designed. The first floor consists largely of an unornamented open space with only the hose storage bay, one vehicle bay, and a small office area separately partitioned. Three brass poles which gave the firemen immediate access from the office and residential spaces of the second and third floors are still in their original positions. A horse-drawn, steam-powered pumper ("No. 691"), manufactured in 1904 by the Nott Fire Engine Company of Minneapolis, has been returned to its original home in the Central Fire Station building for at least temporary storage and possibly for permanent display.

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Central Fire Station

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What is now termed the City Hall Annex was constructed in 1927 adjacent to the east wall of the Fire Station for the purpose of housing a City Jail, and its 6,896 square feet of floor space have continued to serve the city in a variety of capacities over the years. As a two-story structure, the architecturally uninteresting annex has remained visually as well as functionally distinct from the original three-story block of the Central Fire Station in spite of its adjoining position. Tentative plans to restore the Central Fire Station building include the removal of the City Hall Annex in order to return the fire station to its original configuration and further enhance the City Hall block.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" 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 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 1904-5

BUILDER/ARCHITECT G. T. Hallas & Co./P.H. Weathers

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Since its construction in 1904-5, the Central Fire Station has occupied a prominent position in both the physical and social environments of Mississippi's capital city. Erected as Jackson's main municipal fire station, Central Station No. 1 served the city in its intended capacity until 1974, when the Jackson Fire Department moved into new headquarters on West Street. Although presently standing vacant, the Central Station building, the oldest extant fire station in the city, continues to function as a visual landmark in downtown Jackson, and it has definite potential for once again serving the people of Jackson in a functional way. Situated on one of the most focal city blocks in Jackson, the Central Fire Station building shares its location with the Jackson City Hall, an 1847 antebellum landmark which the city has restored and maintained with pride, and with Josh Halbert Gardens, a public park which was recently relandscaped for the aesthetic and recreational benefit of the city.

Protection from fire was first provided for Jackson property when the volunteer Jackson Fire Company No. 1 was organized in 1839 (McCain, p. 244). The city continued to rely on this and other volunteer fire organizations until June 7, 1904, when the mayor and aldermen voted to adopt an ordinance establishing "a paid fire department" for the city of Jackson and designating it "The Jackson Fire Department" (Ordinances of the City of Jackson, Chap. 27, pp. 89-92).

Once the Jackson Fire Department was organized, the city's building committee was evidently commissioned to investigate the options available to the city with respect to providing adequate facilities for the new department. The committee's report to the mayor and Board of Aldermen at their regular meeting on September 6, 1904, set the stage for the construction of the Central Fire Station building in its present form and location:

Gentlemen: - Your building committee, after investigating the conditions of the fire buildings and the cost of repairing them, and taking into consideration the services required of a fireman, after a conference with the Fire Commissioners, think it would improve the service and be cheaper, to concentrate the fire equipment from the three buildings, formally known as the Gem No. 2, Jackson No. 1, and the Hope No. 3, in one building. We therefore recommend that a three-story brick building, 60 x 80 feet in size be erected in the City Hall lot; said building in addition to providing for

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places for the men and apparatus and horses should have a place in the battery room for the alarm system and the large bell now at the Century [sic] School Building should be placed on it. We recommend that the board, at this meeting, proceed to elect an Architect who shall draw up plans for the building, and that the building committee be authorized to advertise for bids on said building. . . (Jackson Minute Book J, pp. 87-88).

In accordance with the building committee's recommendations, an architect, P. H. Weathers, was selected for the work, and the committee was authorized to advertise for bids for the construction of the building. The Daily Clarion-Ledger for September 7, 1904, termed the decision to construct a fire department building "the most important action taken" at the previous evening's City Council meeting and reported that "the matter was discussed at some length."

One issue that was evidently the subject of lengthy discussion was that of the site on which the new building was to be constructed. The building committee had recommended "the City Hall lot," but dissension at the City Council meeting resulted in a recommendation "that the building committee get the opinion of the City Attorney and if he thinks advisable that the three story brick building be put up on the lot known as the No. 1 Engine House lot in the North end of the Old Capitol Grounds." Later in the meeting the proposed structure was diplomatically described as "a three story brick building on the No. 1 Lot in Old Capitol Grounds, or City Hall lot in accordance with the report of the Building Committee," and the following day's newspaper also indicated that the new fire department building would be located "either on the old capitol grounds or the city hall yard" (Daily Clarion-Ledger, September 7, 1904). As late as December 1, 1904, the city received a letter from Capitol Lodge No. 1, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, protesting what seemed by then a final decision to erect the fire station on the City Hall block, "for the reason that its erection will destroy one of the ornamental and much needed Parks of our City" (Jackson Municipal Archives, v. 27). Exactly how and when the city officially eliminated the option of constructing the building on the Old Capitol grounds is not clear, but by the time of the City Council's regular meeting on December 6, 1904, the present location of the building on the City Hall block was understood to be the site of the proposed fire station.

At their December 6 meeting, the mayor and aldermen passed, with only one dissenting vote, a resolution ratifying a contract which had already been entered into unofficially by the mayor and the building committee with

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G. T. Hallas and Company, a Jackson construction firm, "for the erection of a central fire station building" (Jackson Minute Book J, p. 118). Alderman L. F. Chiles, in a recorded statement supporting the resolution, indicated that the contractors had already "begun the work in good faith," so construction of the Central Fire Station was evidently well under way by the time the contract with Hallas and Company was made official. On December 28, a special meeting of the City Council was called to authorize payment of sums due to G. T. Hallas and Company for material furnished and work done on the new building, and to open bids for the heating and plumbing (Jackson Minute Book J. p. 139). Hallas and Company was paid \$4,093.42 in fees, and Peters Brothers and Butler of Jackson was awarded the heating and plumbing contract for a combined sum of \$1,800.00.

The Daily Clarion-Ledger for December 29, 1904, reported that the council also "decided to put a composition roof on the building, and to give the walls a stone finish similar to that now being placed on the First National Bank building." The "stone finish" referred to in the newspaper was described in a recorded change order directing Hallas and Company to "cement the two street fronts returning on [the] rear two feet and on the south side twelve feet at an extra cost of \$625.00." The City of Jackson had evidently decided to make the new Central Fire Station a proper symbol of the city's progress, and the mayor and aldermen were accordingly willing to direct improvements on the original plan in spite of the added expense involved. The "stone finish" which still covers the street elevations of the Central Fire Station building was a fashionable touch that visually reinforced the functional significance of the structure.

Construction of the fire station appears to have still been in progress at the time of the City Council meeting on May 2, 1905 (Jackson Minute Book J, p. 193):

At that meeting, G. T. Hallas and Company's representative came before the Board and stated that the completion of the basement in the Central Fire Station was not in the original contract and that he would put in the extra windows, steel I beams and extra concrete floor, and complete the job for an extra cost of \$229.00.

Hallas and Company's proposition was accepted by the mayor and aldermen, and it is assumed that work on the building was completed shortly thereafter. On March 7, 1905, the City Council had adopted a motion ordering

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the removal of the fire bell "from the Central School to the Central Fire Station" (Jackson Minute Book J, p. 173), so the aboveground portion of the building, including the no longer extant bell tower, was evidently substantially completed before finishing the basement became an issue.

Patrick Henry Weathers (b. August 13, 1870), the architect who furnished the plans for the Central Fire Station, was a native of Alabama who had studied architecture under Eugene T. Heiner of Houston, Texas, and by 1886 was associated with his uncle, L. M. Weathers, in building and construction (Rowland, p. 904). Weathers moved to Jackson in 1901, and he is listed as one of eight architects in Jackson in Maloney's 1904-5 Jackson City Directory, but by the time the 1907 directory was published he was evidently no longer in the area. He advertised in Jackson newspapers during 1904 and 1905, citing the now non-extant Norvelle Hotel in Jackson, the Carroll County Second District Courthouse in Vaiden, and the Lee County Courthouse in Tupelo as products of his talent in Mississippi. Particularly important surviving examples of his work in Jackson are St. Peter's Catholic Church (1898) and St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (1903), both currently serving as the cathedral churches of their respective dioceses. As another well-documented and largely unaltered product of Weathers's Jackson architectural practice, the Central Fire Station adds a valuable chapter to the body of knowledge associated with an architect who contributed significantly to the physical fabric of downtown Jackson.

Both individually and in the context of its setting, the Central Fire Station building is an important Jackson landmark--visually as well as symbolically. Since 1904 it has defined one corner of a major intersection and served as a twentieth century complement to the antebellum City Hall. It is hoped that creative preservation of the structure will give it new functional meaning for the community and provide an appropriate reflection of Jackson's pride in its social and cultural heritage.

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Jackson. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Daniel (Albert Frederick) photograph collection.

Jackson, Miss. Daily Clarion-Ledger, 1904-1905. On microfilm in Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

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McCain, William D. The Story of Jackson; A History of the Capitol of Mississippi 1821-1951. v. 1. Jackson: J. F. Hyer Publishing Company, 1953.

Maloney, T. J. Maloney's 1904-5 Jackson, Miss. City Directory. Memphis, Tenn.: Press of H. M. Pilcher & Co., 1904. Also 1907 edition.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Statewide Survey File. Hinds County. Central Fire Station.

Rowland, Dunbar. Mississippi. Volume 3, Contemporary Biography. Atlanta: Southern Historical Publishing Association, 1907.



(FLORENCE)
2948 NW
SCALE 24000

FLORENCE 8 MI
MENDENHALL 26 MI

Central Fire Station

769000m E