

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Walker County Hospital

and/or common Jasper Community Hospital

2. Location

street & number 1100 Seventh Avenue NA not for publication

city, town Jasper NA vicinity of congressional district 4

state Alabama code 01 county Walker code 127

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center, Inc.

street & number 13 Highway 78 Bypass

city, town Jasper NA vicinity of state Alabama

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Walker County Courthouse

street & number Third Avenue

city, town Jasper state Alabama

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Alabama Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1970-present federal state county local

depository for survey records Alabama Historical Commission

city, town Montgomery state Alabama

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Walker County Hospital is a typical example of institutional and particularly hospital construction of the first three decades of the 20th century.

The hospital is located on a landscaped 2.48 acre block bordered by 12th Street on the North, by 8th Avenue on the East, 11th Street on the South, and 7th Avenue on the West.

The hospital building is basically an E-shaped, two-story brick building, with solid brick load-bearing exterior walls, and contains a basement and an attic. The building is thirteen bays wide across the front and has a small, one-story central gabled front entrance with a series of concrete walks and steps leading from the street to the main entrance. This walk replaced the original circular drive which ran past the front of the building. The main rectangular block of the building is covered with a wide eave gable-on-hip roof with louvers in the gables and a series of projecting gabled and shed dormers on the front and side slopes. Much of the original slate roof tiles remains although asphalt shingles have replaced some of the original tiles.

The building receives its overall E-shape from three short parallel wings, with hip roofs, that project from the rear of the main rectangular block. The principal fenestration of the building consists of a series of double windows divided by a wooden mullion with original 6/1 sashing in each opening. The windows in the dormers vary from this treatment in that the dormers contain a series of small double 6/6 sash windows divided by a wooden mullion.

The interior walls of the building are either plaster on metal lathe, sheetrock or solid brick. Although dropped ceilings and linoleum floors have been introduced over the years, the majority of the interior woodwork and trim appears to be original.

The original wooden stairs have been replaced by metal stairs, in order to meet fire code safety regulations for hospitals, and an elevator has been added.

Located off the northeast corner of the main hospital building is the old clinic building which was constructed shortly after completion of the main building for use as a nurses annex. This building is one-story brick with a gable-on-hip roof. A gabled entry porch, with false half timbering in the gable, is located on the northwest corner of the building. There is a series of double windows with 6/6 sashing, divided by a wooden mullion across the front. Immediately behind the hospital building, but not attached, is the Regional Office of the Northwest Alabama Regional Mental Health Authority which was constructed in 1964.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Medical
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1923 **Builder/Architect** Wm. Leslie Welton - Birmingham Architect
L. J. Wilson - Jasper Contractor

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criterion A - Medicine

The Walker County Hospital is significant for its association with the development of modern health care in a four-county area in Northwest-Central Alabama. This hospital, built in 1923, was the first constructed in Walker County and was funded thru the sale of stock in the hospital corporation to local citizens. The hospital was originally built to provide for the health care needs of the citizens of Walker, Winston, Lamar, and Fayette Counties and to alleviate the necessity of transporting patients who required emergency medical treatment, or standard hospital care, to hospitals in the Birmingham area. The Walker County Hospital was the only hospital in Walker County until 1936 and served the county until its closing in 1980.

Criterion A - Industry/Labor Relations

The Walker County Hospital is significant for its association with the industrialization of Walker County and the surrounding area. The development of the hospital was initiated by at least three Birmingham-based coal companies that worked in conjunction with local businessmen and the Walker County Medical Society to insure its construction. The hospital, which specialized in industrial injuries, was designed to meet the health care needs of workers in the expanding industrial region of Northwest Alabama that encompassed Walker, Winston, Lamar, and Fayette Counties. The development of the Walker County Hospital is also indicative of the growing trend, beginning in the 1920's, of coal companies initiating the development of health care facilities for their workers but removing themselves from direct involvement in the operations of these facilities. This policy was part of an overall effort by coal companies to limit the rise of mine workers' unions following the unsuccessful miners' strike in the Alabama coal fields during 1919-1920 which effectively destroyed the power of the mine workers' union in the state until its resurgence in the early 1930's.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 2.48 acres

Quadrangle name Jasper

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	6
---	---

4	7	3	8	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	7	7	4	3	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification Parcel #4 of the SW 1/4 section of #9, township T-14-S, range R-7-W, (see red line on attached scale map) is the original block, measuring 360'x300', purchased by the Walker County Hospital Corporation and includes the original hospital building and nurses quarters, a later boiler building and the present office building of the Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael Bailey, Historic Resource Coordinator

organization Alabama Historical Commission date March 14, 1985

street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 205 261-3184

city or town Montgomery state Alabama

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 4-2-85

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register

date 5/31/85

 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Walker County Hospital

By 1920 the four-county area of Walker, Winston, Lamar and Fayette Counties had grown to become the state's second leading coal mining area, behind Jefferson County, and was also a leader in the production of lumber and timber products. During this period local leaders had pushed for the construction of a hospital to meet the needs of this growing industrial area but met with little success. It was not until mid-October 1922 that the construction of such a facility began to become a reality.

On October 13, 1922 the first of a series of meetings was held between a group, led by Dr. A. C. Jackson, representing Birmingham-based coal interest in the Jasper area (which included Brilliant Coal Company, Monro-Warrior Coal Company and Railway Fuel Company) and the Walker County Medical Society and local businessmen. Another meeting was held on October 20 at which time the hospital corporation was organized and \$4,000 in stock sold. The new corporation's charter was written by then practicing Jasper attorney, John H. Bankhead, Jr. At this meeting Dr. Jackson unveiled the plans for the new hospital which were drawn up by Birmingham architect William Leslie Welton. These plans called for the building to have three floors, with a basement, to have a 61-bed capacity, and to be equipped with all modern hospital services such as X-ray and surgical units.

The Jasper Mountain Eagle called attention to the advantages that could be derived from having a hospital for the area which included "A saving of time. Sometimes life depends upon a speedy operation; with a hospital in Jasper, Walker County patients will not be obliged to wait for hours for a train to Birmingham or other points. A saving of railroad fare, which is quite an expensive item, not only for patients but for relatives and friends. With a hospital in Jasper, relatives and friends will be able to see patients more often than they would if they were at some hospital outside the county. It is estimated that not fewer than 365 Walker County patients are carried to Birmingham hospitals annually. What a saving in time and money if most of these cases could be kept in this county..."

The Mountain Eagle also called attention to the reasons why a hospital should be built in Jasper.

"There is not a more suitable location in Alabama for a hospital than Walker County offers. Walker is a rapidly growing industrial county of 50,000 inhabitants according to the 1920 census. In more normal times, Walker County mines over 5,000,000 tons of coal and cuts a great quantity of timber, and naturally accidents are common in the mining and the sawmills and other public works; and Walker people are subject to appendicitis and other troubles that human flesh is heir to, and require hospital attention. It is estimated that \$75,000 or more goes out of this section annually to pay for hospital expenses. A hospital in Walker by nearness of location, would get patients from Winston, Lamar and Fayette Counties. In a matter of supporting a hospital, Jasper and surrounding territory should not be compared with other small cities located in an agricultural section...Walker is a rich and rapidly growing industrial county and there is no reason why a hospital in this community should not be made a paying investment and a great convenience to this part of the state."

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

In the period following the organization of the hospital corporation, there was a major stock sales effort aimed at the public. This effort included the running of a series of half-page ads which called upon people's civic spirit as well as economic sense to purchase corporate stock at \$10 per share in order to finance the construction of the hospital building. By early December 1922 over 3/5 of the stock available had been sold to the public.

By the end of December it was reported that \$40,000 of the required \$50,000 in stock had been sold and that a site for the location of the hospital had been purchased. The site that was purchased was known as the Dilworth block and was located away from the railroad and the manufacturing district, a fact that had been a prime concern for the site committee.

On Thursday, March 15, 1923, bids were opened for the construction of the hospital building. Twelve bids were submitted and a contract for \$48,000 was awarded to L. J. Wilson, a Jasper contractor and builder. The heating and plumbing contract for \$11,250 was awarded to Calhoun Engineering Company of Sheffield and the electrical contract for \$3,600 was awarded to Gandy Electrical Company of Birmingham. Construction of the hospital began in April 1923 and by mid-August, Dr. A. C. Jackson, who had been elected president of the hospital corporation, estimated the completion date for October 10. On October 10, Sheriden Bowser, who was foreman for the carpenter crew working on the building, told the Mountain Eagle that the new estimated completion date was set for the middle of November. By mid-November the building was near completion and the opening ceremony was held on December 5, 1923.

When completed, the hospital was one of the "best and up-to-date hospitals in Alabama. The very best equipment that could be found in the U. S. has been secured...the X-ray, the sterilizer, operating tables, instruments, wards and room furnishings... (are) of the highest type to be found anywhere." The first three floors contained the main reception room, offices for the superintendent and doctor, a doctors' lounge as well as several private rooms.

The hospital took pride in the service offered to black patients, as the Mountain Eagle explained, "Many hospitals have the colored patients in the basement but the Walker County Hospital has a department on the first floor for the colored. These wards are arranged that they can be closed off from the remainder of the hospital. There is a special entrance for these patients. By this arrangement the colored patients will receive first-class service."

The hospital kitchen included modern cooking ranges, ventilating fans and steam serving tables to allow meals to still be hot when served to patients. On the second floor were located men's and women's wards, each with beds equipped with a backrest and a bedside table for each patient. Also located on the second floor on the northwest corner, to take advantage of the maximum amount of light, were the operating rooms. The present-day attic served as the quarters for the staff nurses and nursing students until the completion, the next year, of the new nurses' building just off the main hospital.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 3

The hospital served the Walker County area as its only hospital until 1936 when a new Works Progress Administration-built hospital was completed. The Walker County Hospital served as a private corporate institution until 1956 when Dr. A. C. Jackson, who had served as superintendent from the corporation organization and was major stockholder, turned the facility over to the city of Jasper as a public institution to be known as Jasper Community Hospital. The hospital served under this name until its closing in 1980.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

- 1) The (Jasper) Mountain Eagle; Weds. Oct. 18, 1922; Vol 50, #49, pg. 1; "Plan on Foot to Erect Large Hospital Here."
- 2) The (Jasper) Mountain Eagle; Weds. Oct. 25, 1922; Vol. 50, #50, pg. 1; "New Hospital Considered a Certainty" and "Officials of New Hospital Corporation."
- 3) The (Jasper) Mountain Eagle; Weds. Nov. 1, 1922; Vol. 50, #51, pg. 6; "Double Dividends in This Investment/One is Money/The Other is Community Good."
- 4) The (Jasper) Mountain Eagle; Weds. Dec. 13, 1922; Vol. 51, #5, pg. 1; "A Hospital Is To Be Built Here Soon."
- 5) The Jasper Daily Mountain Eagle, January 3, 1923; "Site Selected For Hospital By Directors."
- 6) The Jasper Daily Mountain Eagle, January 17, 1923; "Medical Society in Monthly Session."
- 7) The Jasper Daily Mountain Eagle, March 21, 1923; "Contract Let For Hospital on Thursday."
- 8) The (Jasper) Mountain Eagle, Weds. May 23, 1923; Vol. 51, #18, pg. 1; "Walker County Hospital Is Being Erected."
- 9) The (Jasper) Mountain Eagle, Weds. Aug. 22, 1923; Vol. 51, #31, pg. 1; "New Walker County Hospital."
- 10) The (Jasper) Mountain Eagle, Weds. Sept. 19, 1923; Vol. 51, #35, pg. 1; "Walker County Hospital Will Soon Be Finished."
- 11) The (Jasper) Mountain Eagle, Weds. Sept. 26, 1923; Vol. 51, #36, pg. 1; "Walker Enjoys Building Boom in 1923."
- 12) The (Jasper) Mountain Eagle, Weds. Oct. 10, 1923; Vol. 51, #38, pg. 4; "To Complete Hospital By November 15th."
- 13) The (Jasper) Mountain Eagle, Weds. Oct. 17, 1923; Vol. 51, #39, pg. 1; "December 5th Is To Be Hospital Opening Day."
- 14) The (Jasper) Daily Mountain Eagle, Dec. 12, 1923; "Formal Opening of the Hospital On Wednesday."
- 15) The (Jasper) Daily Mountain Eagle, Dec. 20, 1956; Taylor, Fred, "Civic Minded Surgeon Gives Jasper Hospital."
- 16) Dombhart, John Martin; History of Walker County: Its Towns and Its People; Cayce Publishing Co., Thornton, Arkansas.
- 17) Owen, Thomas M. History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, Vol. II, S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., Chicago, Illinois, 1921.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 2

-
- 18) Industrial Survey of Jasper and Walker County (no date), Jasper Chamber of Commerce, Eagle Printing, Jasper, Alabama.
 - 19) Tendall, George B. The Emergence of The New South, 1913-1945; Louisians State University Press, 1967.
 - 20) Informal Interview with Dr. Marlene Rikard, Labor Historian, Samford University, March 13, 1985

Plot Plan

7th Ave (100' ROW)

11th St (60' ROW)

12th St (30' ROW)

8th Ave 60' (ROW)

