

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUN 28 1976
DATE ENTERED	NOV 7 1976

**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  Edwards Hotel  
AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
Capitol at Mill Street

CITY, TOWN  
Jackson

STATE  
Mississippi

VICINITY OF  
Fourth

COUNTY  
Hinds

CODE  
28

CODE  
049

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: vacant

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Dumas Milner

STREET & NUMBER  
3691 Old Canton Road

CITY, TOWN  
Jackson

STATE  
Mississippi

VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Chancery Court Building

STREET & NUMBER  
P. O. Box 686

CITY, TOWN  
Jackson,

STATE  
Mississippi

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

# 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 type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Edwards Hotel is a large, twelve-story, steel and brick structure, located on the southeast corner of Capitol and Mill streets in Jackson, Mississippi. Designed by William T. Nolan (1877-1969) of New Orleans, the Edwards derives much of its architectural interest from the commercial style as developed by Louis Sullivan in the late nineteenth century. Characteristically, the wall surfaces are divided into a series of vertical shafts terminating in a wide, overhanging cornice. To prevent exaggerated verticality, horizontal entablatures and string courses are used to balance the composition. Neo-Classical Revival ornamentation is used sparingly, yet effectively, as exterior decoration. A one-story limestone portico of coupled Corinthian columns supporting a full entablature and balustrade shelters the entrance on Capitol Street. Above this, three windows are fitted into stone frontispieces, with a carved cartouche on each pediment. Additional ornamentation is limited to the terra-cotta panels below the upper entablature and the series of vaguely classical pilasters at the lower and upper stories.

The public area of the Edwards Hotel occupies the first two floors, with the remaining ten floors given over for lodging and offices. Located near the center of the public area is the main lobby, which is distinguished by six large columns set along the perimeter of what was originally an oval well, lit by skylights above the second floor. This "rotunda" was the dramatic focal point of the interior and was unfortunately floored over during a "modernization" in 1954.

Encircling the lobby were the hotel's business offices as well as the main dining room, kitchen, coffee room, coffee kitchen and six retail shops. The interior decoration consisted of applied Adamesque motifs in plaster, decorative iron grills and balustrades, marble tile floors and "tavernelle claire" marble wainscotting.\* A Tennessee golden vein marble staircase with an intricate bronze balustrade rises in a small alcove to the second floor, which contains a convention hall, a club dining room, a private dining room, a beauty salon, hotel offices, and guest rooms. The remaining floors are arranged into a U-shaped plan, each room equipped with a private bath. In 1954 a convention complex with a multilevel parking garage that included a patio area and swimming pool on the roof was added east of the building. A more comprehensive modernization of the hotel was not accomplished, as a result of the economic consideration which eventually led to the closing of the Edwards Hotel in 1967.

\*William T. Nolan, Architect, New Edwards Hotel, Working drawings, Sheet No. 37.

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1923

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

William T. Nolan

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Edwards Hotel is a Jackson, Mississippi, landmark significant for its excellent design and its association with the political and social life of the capital city. Although ornamented with Neo-Classical Revival motifs, the structure and form are derived from the commercial style of the late-nineteenth century, a relatively rare architectural style in Jackson. When the building was completed in 1923, the public was more impressed with the scale and magnitude of the Edwards than concerned with its architectural statement. Contemporary newspaper accounts devoted much space to statistical breakdowns of materials used, dimensions, and number of employees. One account impressed its readers with a list of materials:

Approximately four million common brick for backing; 58,000 sacks of cement, out of which were made 6,000 cubic yards of concrete; 1,200,000 feet of lumber for forms, etc.; 20,000 sacks of plaster, out of which were made 1,500,000 square feet of plastered walls; 500,000 pounds of reinforcing steel; 2,900,000 pounds of structural steel; 650,000 square feet of interior partitions; 300,000 lineal feet of plaster grounds; 1,200 cubic feet of granite; 10,000 cubic feet of limestone; 120,000 pounds of terra cotta; 136,500 lineal feet of electric conduit; 250,000 lineal feet of electrical wiring and 500,000 lineal feet of plumbing pipes ("New Jackson, Miss., Hotel Quickly Built," Illinois Central Magazine, June, 1924, p. 37).

Another writer, who called the hotel the "most modern in the country," noted that the Edwards stood on 1,170 piles, rose 166 feet to the roof, contained 15,000 yards of carpet, was equipped with elevators capable of running at 400 feet per minute, housed a two-ton ice plant, was equipped for 1,000 phones, and cost \$997,000 with an additional \$150,000 for equipment. In the same article, the interior decoration was given lavish praise:

". . . Entering the main entrance from Capitol Street into the hotel lobby one is almost appalled and smothered with the magnitude of this beautiful lobby . . . the tile floors, marble columns, handsomely decorated walls and mezzanine floors you feel as if you were really in New York, Chicago, or some other million-population city. You cannot realize at once that so much elegance and splendid taste would be possible in a city the size of Jackson ("The New Edwards Hotel To Be Opened Saturday; Most Modern in Country," Jackson [Miss.] Clarion Ledger, December 28, 1923).

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Jackson (Miss.) Clarion Ledger, December 28, 1923, February 1, 1946.

Jackson (Miss.) Daily News, March 18, 1924.

Jackson (Miss.) State Times, June 19, 1956, June 27, 1960.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	5
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7	6	4	5	7	0
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3	5	7	6	9	4	0
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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B 

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 

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D 

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

William C. Allen, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Mississippi Department of Archives & History

DATE

May 3, 1968

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 571

TELEPHONE

601-354-6218

CITY OR TOWN

Jackson

STATE

Mississippi

## 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

Edward R. Hilliard

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

June 23, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

ATTEST

[Signature]  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11/9/96

DATE

11/2/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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It is clear from these and other contemporary accounts that the Edwards became an important landmark in Jackson at the instant of its opening.

In addition to its notoriety as a splendid facility, the Edwards was the successor to two locally significant hotels. In 1861, Major R. O. Edwards, founder of the town of Edwards, Hinds County, Mississippi, erected on the corner of Capitol and Mill streets in Jackson a structure which he called the Confederate House (Jackson [Miss.] Daily News, March 18, 1924). This building served as a hotel until it was destroyed by General Sherman's forces on May 15, 1863 (Sherman to Rawlines, May 24, 1863, William T. Sherman Papers). Major Edwards began rebuilding the hotel in 1867 but died before it reopened as the Edwards House in 1868 (Jackson [Miss.] Daily News, March 18, 1924). From that time until the present, the name Edwards has been associated with hotel structures on the site. From 1870 until 1900, the hotel passed through a number of different proprietors and various structural changes. In 1900, the property was acquired by Enochs Brothers, a family concern that operated several businesses, including a lumber company in Jackson. This company was dissolved in 1913, but I. C. Enochs retained control of the hotel until his death in 1919, when possession passed to the family-owned Edwards Hotel Company (McCain, The Story of Jackson, 2:82-84). In 1923, the old structure was demolished, and within months a new million-dollar, twelve-story hotel was erected in its place ("Hotel Quickly Built," Illinois Central Magazine, June, 1924, pp. 36-37). This new hotel remained in the hands of the Enochs family until the Great Depression caused the business to revert to the mortgage holders. In 1946, however, the Enochs family regained control of the hotel and operated it until Milner Enterprises bought it in 1954 (Jackson [Miss.] Clarion Ledger, February 1, 1946; Jackson [Miss.] State Times, June 19, 1954). In that year, a major renovation of the interior was begun, and, in 1960, a convention complex and parking garage were added (Jackson [Miss.] State Times, June 27, 1960). In 1967, the hotel was closed, and the building has not been utilized since then.

Until recent years, the Edwards played a prominent role in the social and political affairs of Mississippi. As early as 1876, the Edwards House was advertising itself as the place for senators and representatives to reside while in Jackson for legislative sessions. By 1900, the status of the Edwards was such that the letterhead of the hotel stationery read: "Commercial and Political Headquarters for the State." Notable events associated with the 1868-1923 structure include a lavish banquet given in honor of President William H. Taft during his visit to Mississippi in 1909. While the Governor's Mansion was undergoing an extensive remodeling (1908-9), the Edwards served as the official residence of Governor Edmond F. Noel.

Because of its popularity with members of the state legislature, the Edwards could not afford to be closed during a biannual legislative session, which began

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in early January. For this reason, the construction of a new hotel on the site of the Edwards House was accomplished with amazing speed. The old frame and brick hotel was demolished in February, 1923, and the new twelve-story, 300-room structure was completed and opened to the public on December 29, 1923 -- a few days before the new legislature was to meet ("Hotel Quickly Built," Illinois Central Magazine, June, 1924, p. 36). Among the many lawmakers to occupy the new Edwards was Walter Sillers, a young representative from Bolivar County who continued to reside at the hotel until the 1960's. Sillers, who served as Speaker of the Mississippi House of Representatives from 1944 to 1966, was recognized as one of the most influential and powerful men in state government. His presence at the Edwards attracted other elected officials in addition to powerful lobbies, including the oil industry, which established the elegant Petroleum Club for the entertainment of state legislators at the hotel (Tape recorded interview, H. T. Holmes, oral historian, with Wilson F. Minor, July 22, 1974). The concentration of political activity at the Edwards Hotel prompted one reporter to write: "There are three separate branches of Mississippi Legislature-- The Upper House, the Lower House and the Edwards House" (Jackson [Miss.] State Times, June 27, 1960).

In addition to being a hub of political activity, the Edwards served as the social center of Jackson. Before closing in 1967, the hotel hosted countless receptions, balls, dinners, and meetings which for many years enhanced the social prestige of the city. Now empty, the Edwards Hotel is awaiting some suitable adaptive use or will face certain demolition.

Edwards Hotel 9 2

Jackson. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Statewide Survey File. Hinds County. Edwards Hotel.

Jackson. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Subject File. Edwards Hotel.

Jackson. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Tape Recorded Interview. H. T. Holmes, oral historian, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, with Wilson F. Minor, July 22, 1974.

Jackson. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Working Drawings. New Edwards Hotel.

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

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"New Jackson, Miss., Hotel Quickly Built." Illinois Central Magazine,  
June , 1924.

Notre Dame, Indiana. University of Notre Dame Archives. William T.  
Sherman Papers.