

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED OCT 18 1976  
DATE ENTERED JAN 30 1978

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 \*\*  
First National Bank of Greenville  
AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *EAST CORNER OF MAIN AND SOUTH POPLAR STREETS*  
Northeast corner of Main and Walnut streets  
CITY, TOWN Greenville  
STATE Mississippi  
VICINITY OF Second  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Second  
COUNTY Washington  
CODE 28  
CODE 151

CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY  | OWNERSHIP                                   | STATUS  | PRESENT USE                                    |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT               | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED        | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED                 | <input checked="" 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                   | <b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>                   | <b>ACCESSIBLE</b>                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT                 | <input 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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM                |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> PARK                  |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE     |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS             |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC            |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION        |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:                |

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME First National Bank of Greenville  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN Greenville  
STATE Mississippi  
VICINITY OF

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Washington County Courthouse  
STREET & NUMBER Washington Avenue  
CITY, TOWN Greenville  
STATE Mississippi

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Statewide Survey of Historic Sites  
DATE 1975  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
CITY, TOWN Jackson  
STATE Mississippi

# 7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION                                     |                                       | CHECK ONE                                   | CHECK ONE   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR                 | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    |   |   |

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on the northeast corner of Main and Walnut streets in Greenville, Washington County, Mississippi, the First National Bank is a rectangular, one-story Neo-Classical Revival structure designed by the architectural firm of Barber and Kluttz of Knoxville, Tennessee. It is constructed of brick, and veneered with coursed, rock-faced stone below the water table and pressed brick above. Major features, such as quoins, columns, steps, and coping, are of sawed or carved grey Tennessee marble. The principal element of the composition is a recessed, three-bay portico of Roman Ionic columns on pedestals, a full entablature, which is continued on the front and side elevations, and a richly detailed pediment. Within the pediment, the tympanum is treated with a cartouche in high relief flanked by symbolic cornucopia and foliated swags. Above the cornice is a parapet wall used to screen the bank's low pitched roof.

Most of the interior space is occupied by a well-proportioned banking room divided by a curved, marble teller screen that separates the public and working areas. Tall pedestals, supporting globular lighting fixtures and affixed with brass shields bearing the FNB monogram, divide the screen into a series of bays, each with glass windows decorated with key cornered designs. The original white alabaster tile floor in the lobby in front of the screen has been covered with linoleum but retains its marble dado below simple plaster walls. Behind the teller screen, the banking room is wainscotted with white oak paneling stained to imitate mahogany. Throughout the room, tall one-over-one windows, with transoms of colorful art glass are hung in wide architraves. Intersecting joists divide the ceiling into a series of coffers with an Art Nouveau skylight in the center. Of special interest are the pair of brick fireplaces with large mantels supported by modillion-like brackets and chimney breasts with brass sconces and terra cotta architraves. The north wall of the banking room is divided into five bays, with office and storage rooms flanking the center vault. A small mezzanine and balcony occupy the space above these low ceilinged rooms. Originally, the balcony was reached by a circular iron staircase located in the northeast corner of the banking room, but unfortunately, this was removed for unknown reasons shortly after the bank was finished.

In 1957, a reinforced concrete addition was connected to the east wall of the main building. With its drive-in windows on the first level and aluminum spandrels on the second, this characterless intrusion makes no attempt to complement or blend with the color, texture or materials of the original structure. Fortunately, the 1957 addition was not planned to be a permanent fixture. A second addition, finished in 1971, was attached to the rear of the bank. It is a one-story structure with a red brick veneer whose principal visual contribution is the reestablishment of a facade continuity along Walnut Street.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" 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 1887, 1903

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Barber and Kluttz

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The First National Bank of Greenville was the first federally chartered bank in Washington County, Mississippi, and is today one of the oldest federally chartered banks in continuous operation in the state of Mississippi. The building is one of the best examples of Neo-Classical architecture in Washington County.

The bank was founded by James E. Negus, Jr., a Civil War Union officer who located in Greenville in 1870. In 1886, Negus and Henry T. Ireys formed the bank of Negus, Ireys and Company. Negus's aim to establish a national bank, however, was not shared by Ireys, and this difference in banking philosophy led to an early dissolution of the partnership. On May 1, 1886, the Greenville Times announced: "The Banking Firm of Negus and Ireys was dissolved by mutual consent. . . . The Banking business will be continued by James E. Negus under the name of The Merchants Bank." On July 28, 1887, the bank received a national charter as the First National Bank of Greenville, Mississippi.

The First National Bank acquired land for a new building on December 15, 1902, and in 1903 the bank applied for and received a permit to erect the new structure at the cost of \$50,000. According to Herman W. Solomon's History of the First National Bank of Greenville, Negus himself traveled to Italy to select the marble and stained glass for the skylight and the ornate transoms above the tall windows of the present bank building.

When James Negus died in 1904, Wade Negus succeeded his father as president of the bank, in which position he served until his death in 1946. For almost sixty years this bank was under the direction of a Negus. Many prominent people, such as United States Senator Leroy Percy and his son, author William Alexander Percy, have served on the bank's board of directors.

Even during the harsh days of the depression, the First National Bank of Greenville had in 1934 an outstanding circulation of \$100,000 in national bank notes and was one of three of the original fourteen nationally chartered banks in Mississippi that had escaped liquidation or absorption. The First National Bank building has been the silent symbol of financial strength to citizens of Washington County for almost a half a century.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Jackson. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Statewide Survey of Historic Sites. Washington County. First National Bank.

Solomon, Herman W. The History of the First National Bank of Greenville. N.p.: Carter Printing Co., 1975.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one  
 UTM REFERENCES

140

|   |      |             |               |   |      |         |          |
|---|------|-------------|---------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 1,5  | 6,8,0,1,2,5 | 3,6,9,8,3,2,0 | B |      |         |          |
|   | ZONE | EASTING     | NORTHING      |   | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C |      |             |               | D |      |         |          |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

William C. Allen, Architectural Historian; Clinton Bagley, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 571

CITY OR TOWN

Jackson

DATE

October 1, 1976

TELEPHONE

(601) 354-6218

STATE

Mississippi

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL X

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

*Elbert B. Hilliard*

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

October 11, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

ATTEST:

*Wm. M. Smith*  
*Charles E. ...*

DATE

1 30 78

DATE

1.29.78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

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9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Personal Inspection of First National Bank, Greenville, Mississippi, by Clinton I. Bagley, historian, and William C. Allen, architectural historian, Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Telephone conversation with Office of the Controller of Currency, Administrator of National Banks, Washington, D.C., by Clinton I. Bagley.