

**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

For HCRS use only

received FEB 20 1980

date entered APR 2 1980

**1. Name**

historic \_\_\_\_\_

and/or common Oxford Courthouse Square Historic District

**2. Location**

street & number S. Lamar Blvd., Jackson and Van Buren Aves. \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Oxford \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district First

state Mississippi code 28 county Lafayette code 71

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Ownership

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Location of Legal Description**

Office of the Chancery Clerk  
courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lafayette County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Oxford state Mississippi

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Statewide Survey of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1975, 1976, 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Mississippi Department of Archives and History

city, town Jackson state Mississippi

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The town of Oxford (pop. 13,846) is the seat of Lafayette County, Mississippi, and the home of the University of Mississippi. The northern Mississippi community is located approximately 160 miles north of the capital city of Jackson and thirty miles south of Holly Springs. Comprising the commercially developed center of town, the Oxford Courthouse Square Historic District is situated on a plateau which slopes down to the southwest and southeast. The visual focus, structural massing, and traffic flow within the district is centered around the courthouse square.

Architectural styles represented in the district reflect the widespread destruction which occurred on all sides of the square during the Civil War, and the subsequent rebuilding period during the 1870s and '80s. The square has substantially retained its early-twentieth-century physical appearance. Two-story brick and stuccoed-brick commercial structures of that period feature a conglomeration and dilution of picturesque Revival-style details such as segmental-arch fenestration, corbeled and denticulated roof cornices and parapets, blind panels, and an exceptional variety of cast-iron storefront columns. The continuing maintenance and preservation of shed-roof storefront porches along several businesses on the square, as well as the frame double gallery along the side (north) elevation of Sneed Ace Hardware (building no. 42), greatly enhances the architectural integrity of the district. Frame porches are a historic streetscape amenity adding decorative and textural interest to the square.

The one- and two-story commercial-building row along the east side of the square is punctuated by the multigabled Romanesque Revival city hall (the former federal building, no. 2). Facade lines on the south, east, and north sides of the square generally follow an even rhythm of storefront bays; building height is consistently two story with the exception of building nos. 3, 5-8, 17, 20-22, 41, 51, and 52, all of which are one story, and building no. 55, which is three stories. The two blocks west of the square contain mainly one-story brick commercial buildings as well as two churches (nos. 25, 47) and two theaters (nos. 23, 28). These commercial blocks possess an integral physical relationship with the square because of their ongoing history and use for commercial, religious, and entertainment activities by Oxfordians and the university community. The distinctly civic-commercial quality of the district is derived from both its density of development around the courthouse and the preponderance of brick as a building material. Of the sixty-one structures in the district, only three (nos. 2, 27, 49) are of frame construction. The district contains fifty-two commercial buildings, and two each of civic, religious, entertainment, and residential structures.

Restoration-rehabilitation activities on the square began in the early 1970s, culminating with the formation of Oxford Ltd., a group dedicated to the revitalization of the square. Recent interest in historic preservation on the part of the Oxford Chamber of Commerce resulted in the formation of a local historical commission in 1979. The adaptive reuse of the federal building as a city hall in 1974 was accompanied by the demolition of the building then in use as city hall, a highly significant Moderne-style masonry structure designed in 1938 by architect James Canizaro of Jackson. The structure was located on the north side of Jackson Avenue across from St. Peter's Episcopal Church. The county courthouse is currently undergoing extensive restoration and renovation. Rehabilitation planning is underway for the Lyric Theater (no. 23).

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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### 6 - REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
1974   x   federal  
Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.

### 7 - DESCRIPTION

#### INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS IN THE DISTRICT

1. Lafayette County Courthouse, Courthouse Square. Three-story nine-by-five-bay stuccoed-brick structure with identical north and south facades, each featuring a central pedimented portico supported by a rusticated stone arcade. Italianate, 1871. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 1977.  

East of Courthouse Square
2. Oxford City Hall (formerly the federal building). Two-and-a-half-story multigable brick structure. Rectangular, segmental, and semicircular-arch fenestration with archivolt trim. Constructed 1887 as the federal building; rehabilitated 1974 as the city hall. Romanesque Revival.
3. Tourist Information Center (Skipwith House outbuilding), 109 S. Lamar Blvd. Simple single-story single-bay gable-front frame structure; moved to present site in 1976 from University Avenue to allow demolition of Skipwith House. Ca. 1865.
4. Neilson's Store for Children, Square Books; 117 S. Lamar Blvd. Two-story four-bay brick commercial building. Segmental-arch fenestration; cast-iron storefront columns. Second-floor balcony and roof added ca. 1965. Nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1880.
5. Neilson's Department Store, 119 S. Lamar Blvd. Single-story twelve-bay brick commercial building with stuccoed-and-wood-faced front (west) facade. Prominent roof parapet features garlanded frieze and projecting central block surmounted by a segmental arch and finial. Shed-roof canopy wraps around chamfered streetcorner entrance. Cast-iron columns along storefront. Prominent streetcorner location. Colonial Revival, 1897; south end of building with compatible design features incorporating the two sections, 1970.

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7 - DESCRIPTION

South of Courthouse Square

6. Phone Center Store, 1216 Van Buren Ave. Single-story three-bay brick commercial building. Blind brick panels above storefront; denticulated roof cornice. Frame shed-roof storefront porch. Nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1880.
7. The Image [women's apparel], 1214 Van Buren Ave. Single-story three-bay brick commercial building. Blind brick panels above storefront; denticulated roof cornice. Frame shed-roof storefront porch. Nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1880.
8. Law Offices of Roberts and Clisby, 1212 Van Buren Ave. One-and-a-half-story three-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building. Storefront features prominent pedimented roof parapet with acroteria surmounting pilastered storefront punctuated by diamond-shaped blind panels. Pedimented multilight windows with fixed sash (ca. 1970) infill storefront, which retains its original circular cast-iron columns. Eclectic Revival, ca. 1900.
9. New's Drug Store, 1210 Van Buren Ave. Two-story four-bay brick commercial building. Segmental-arch fenestration; corbeled roof parapet; cast-iron storefront columns. Nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1875.
10. Metts Hardware, Oxford Fabric Center; 1208-1206 Van Buren Ave. Two-story six-bay brick commercial building. Segmental arch fenestration; denticulated cornice below roof parapet; octagonal cast-iron storefront columns. Nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1885.
11. Law offices of Summers, Hickman, and Rayburn, 1204 Van Buren Ave. An incompatible intrusion; see below.
12. Morgan Jewelry, 1202 Van Buren Ave. Two-story five-by-seven-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building with prominent stepped and circular-arched roof parapet, which formerly extended four bays east over 1206 Van Buren Ave. Prominent street-corner location. Romanesque Revival, ca. 1870.
13. Sibyl's Styles Unlimited [women's apparel], 207 S. Lamar Blvd. Of marginal significance; see below.
14. Singer Sales and Service [sewing machines], 209 S. Lamar Blvd. Of marginal significance; see below.

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## 7 - DESCRIPTION

15. Smitty's Restaurant, 208 S. Lamar Blvd. Two-story three-bay gable-front brick commercial building. Segmental-arch fenestration; corbeled cornice. Storefront remodeled with octagonal windows, ca. 1950. Art Deco neon sign. Late-nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1890.
16. Blaylock Drugs, 1126 Van Buren Ave. Two-story three-bay brick commercial building. Projecting bracketed window-and-roof cornices; canted storefront entrance. Frame double gallery formerly ran along full length of east elevation. Prominent street-corner location. High Victorian Italianate, ca. 1880.
17. Bank of Oxford, 1124 Van Buren Ave. One-story nine-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building. Segmental, semicircular, and rectangular fenestration. Paneled roof parapet with heavy modillioned cornice. High Victorian Italianate, 1877.
18. The Gumbo Company, Shine Morgan Furniture and Appliance Company; 1118-1116 Van Buren Ave. Two-story five-bay brick commercial building. Rectangular fenestration; corbeled roof cornice. Gumbo Company has octagonal cast-iron storefront columns. Nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1880.
19. Gathright-Reed Drug Company, 1112 Van Buren Ave. Two-story two-bay brick commercial building with shed-roof frame porch along storefront. Rectangular fenestration; diminutive mansard-roof parapet with boxed cornice. Early-twentieth-century commercial style, 1923.
20. Denton Furniture Company, 1110 Van Buren Ave. Single-story three-bay brick commercial building. Art Deco plate-glass storefront features recessed central entrance, tiled floor, and neon. Ca. 1930.
21. D. H. Marchbanks Insurance and Real Estate, 1108 Van Buren Ave. Single-story five-bay brick commercial building. Denticulated roof cornice; blind brick panels; fluted rectangular cast-iron storefront columns. Late-nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1900.
22. Fur, Fin and Feather Hunting and Fishing Supplies, Record Shack; 1104-1102 Van Buren Ave. Single-story six-bay brick commercial building. Decorative brick roof parapet with blind panels, corbel tables, and projecting pilaster strips. Fluted rectangular cast-iron storefront columns. Late-nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1890.

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## 7 - DESCRIPTION

- 23. Lyric Theater [vacant], 1024 Van Buren Ave. Two-story eight-bay brick theater; (third floor destroyed by fire ca. 1940). Segmental-arch fenestration; round-arch entrance; stepped-roof parapet; marquise and interior finish no longer extant. Early-twentieth-century commercial style, 1914.
- 24. Oxford Haberdashery Company, The Cotton Bell [book store], Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the State Department of Education; 1004-1002 Van Buren Ave. Single-story nine-bay brick commercial building. Storefronts separated by projecting pilaster strips. Stepped roof parapet along side (west) elevation. Art Deco, ca. 1930.
- 25. First Presbyterian Church, 924 Van Buren Ave. Original frame sanctuary constructed in 1837 and burned by Federal troops in 1864. Steep-pitch gable-front brick sanctuary features projecting interior-end belltower with bell-cast roof, and polygonal corner buttresses with bell-cast pinnacles. Round-arch fenestration articulated by hoodmolds with corbel stops. Romanesque Revival, 1881. Two-and-a-half-story hip-roof brick educational building situated west of sanctuary. Ca. 1960.
- 26. Oxford Production Credit Association, 914 Van Buren Ave. Of marginal significance; see below.
- 27. Estes Realty, 906 Van Buren Ave. One-story L-plan frame former residence with pitched roof. Five-bay porch along front (north) facade now enclosed with glass. Queen Anne influence, ca. 1900.

### West of Courthouse Square

- 28. Ritz Theater, 917 Van Buren. Two-story three-bay stuccoed-brick theater. Rectangular fenestration; neon marquise. Ca. 1930.
- 29. The Flower Mart, 923 Van Buren Ave. Of marginal significance; see below.
- 30. Continental Trailways Bus Station, 925 Van Buren Ave. An incompatible intrusion; see below.
- 31. Rebel Press and Office Supply Company, 1005 Van Buren Ave. Of marginal significance; see below.

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

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7 - SIGNIFICANCE

- 32. Pool, 1007 Van Buren Ave. One-story three-bay brick commercial building. Blind brick panels; denticulated roof cornice. Ca. 1910.
- 33. Scissors Den, Kara Optical; 1101-1105 Van Buren Ave. Of marginal significance; see below.
- 34. Callaway's Red Garter Contemporary Fashions, Plaza Shoes; 122-120 S. Lamar Blvd. Two-story six-bay brick commercial building. Segmental-arch fenestration features decorated hoodmolds; denticulated and modillioned roof cornice. Prominent streetcorner location. High Victorian Italianate, ca. 1885.
- 35. Elliott Jewelry, 118 S. Lamar Blvd. Two-story three-bay brick commercial building. Curvilinear Carrara-glass Art Deco storefront, ca. 1940. Ca. 1870.
- 36. North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, 116 S. Lamar Blvd. Two-story two-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building. Corbeled roof cornice with decorated parapet. Late-nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1900.
- 37. The Village Tailor, 114 S. Lamar Blvd. Two-story three-bay brick commercial building. Ca. 1920.
- 38. Hayward's Barn, 212 S. Lamar Blvd. An incompatible intrusion; see below.
- 39. Crouch's Jewelry Store, 110 S. Lamar Blvd. Two-story three-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building. Segmental-arch fenestration; second-floor balcony supported by round fluted cast-iron columns. Ca. 1920.
- 40. Cato [women's apparel], Dino's Pizza Palace (formerly Oxford Opera House); 108-106 S. Lamar Blvd. Two-story seven-bay brick commercial building. Stepped-roof parapet; square metal casement windows replaced original semicircular fenestration during remodeling after fire ca. 1940. Romanesque Revival, ca. 1875.
- 41. Jennie's Hallmark Shoppe, 104 S. Lamar Blvd. One-story three-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building with stepped-roof parapet. Ca. 1930.
- 42. Sneed Ace Hardware, 102 S. Lamar Blvd. Two-story three-by-seventeen-bay brick commercial building. Segmental-arch fenestration; shed porch along storefront on front (east) facade. Two-story frame gallery supported by chamfered posts along north elevation. Prominent streetcorner location. Nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1875.

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## 7 - DESCRIPTION

- 43. Parks Barber Shop, 1112 Jackson Ave. One-story three-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building with cast-iron storefront columns. Ca. 1910.
- 44. Rogers and Wiley Shoes, 1110 Jackson Ave. One-story three-bay brick commercial building. Ca. 1900.
- 45. The Abbey Apartments, 1000 Jackson Ave. Two-story gable-on-hip-roof stuccoed-brick structure with stained-glass lancet windows in the gable ends. Storefronts along first-floor (north) facade. Colonial Revival, ca. 1900.
- 46. 926-922 Jackson Ave. Of marginal significance; see below.
- 47. St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 113 S. Ninth St. Gothic Revival brick sanctuary with free-standing belltower. Ca. 1859. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 1975.

### North of Courthouse Square

- 48. Law offices of Ethridge and Grisham, 1001 Jackson Ave. Of marginal significance; see below.
- 49. 1011 Jackson Ave. Two-story seven-by-two-bay flanking-gable frame residence. Renovated ca. 1975; original central pedimented Greek Revival portico restored on front (south) facade, replacing a double gallery constructed ca. 1900 across full length of facade. Ca. 1850.
- 50. Law offices of Freeland and Gafford, 1013 Jackson Ave. One-and-a-half-story gable-on-hip-roof brick structure with free-standing polygonal tower and shed-roof front porch. Segmental and round-arch fenestration. Later rear additions ca. 1900. High Victorian Gothic, ca. 1885.
- 51. 1113-1107 Jackson Ave. Single-story ten-bay brick commercial building with continuous roof parapet along front (south) facade. Side elevations feature stuccoed-brick walls with stepped-roof parapet. Late-nineteenth century commercial style, ca. 1900.
- 52. Oxford Bank and Trust Company, 1105 Jackson Ave. An incompatible intrusion; see below.



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### 7 - DESCRIPTION

53. The Smoke Shop [tobacco], University Sporting Goods; 1115-1116 Jackson Ave. Two-story six-bay gable-front stuccoed-brick commercial building. Storefront facades altered with continuous wall and roof parapet hiding gable-front configuration. Side (west) elevation stuccoed and scored. Frame double gallery formerly spanned full length of west elevation. Shed roof extant. Nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1875.
54. Leslie Drugs, 1121 Jackson Ave. Two-story seven-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building with denticulated roof cornice. Shed-roof storefront porch supported by decorated wrought-iron posts. Late-nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1880.
55. Holcomb Building, 1127 Jackson Ave. Three-story five-by-eight-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building. Segmental-arch fenestration articulated by capped pilaster strips between bays. Storefront marquise along front (south) facade and east elevation supported by iron chains. Prominent streetcorner location. Neo-Classical Revival, ca. 1920.
56. Oxford Realty, Inc. (formerly the Colonial Hotel), 107 N. Lamar Blvd. Three-story five-by-eight-bay brick commercial building. Segmental-arch fenestration. Nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1890.
57. First National Bank, 1203 Jackson Ave. An incompatible intrusion; see below.
58. Duvall's [men's and women's apparel], 1213 Jackson Ave. Two-story three-bay brick commercial building. Segmental-arch fenestration; denticulated roof cornice. Second-floor balcony with iron trim above storefront. Nineteenth-century commercial style, ca. 1885.
59. Lanelle's Bridal and Formal Wear, 1215 Jackson Ave. Two-story three-bay brick commercial building with paneled roof parapet. Ca. 1920.
60. Precision Engineering Services, 1217 Jackson Ave. Two-and-a-half-story hip-roof brick structure with hip-roof dormer centered on front (south) facade. Colonial Revival, ca. 1910.
61. City Cleaners, 1223 Jackson Ave. One-story six-by-five-bay brick commercial building. Side elevations have stepped-roof parapet. Ca. 1920.

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7 - DESCRIPTION

### Incompatible Intrusions

*These structures disrupt the scale or texture of the district and lack historical or architectural significance.*

11. Law offices of Summers, Hickman, and Rayburn, 1204 Van Buren Ave. Two-story four-bay brick commercial building. Front (north) facade renovated with new brick, windows, and asphalt-shingled mansard parapet. Renovated ca. 1970. Ca. 1870.
30. Continental Trailways Bus Station, 925 Van Buren Ave. One-story brick commercial building with recessed drive-through front; mansard canopy. Ca. 1965.
38. Hayward's Barn, 212 S. Lamar Blvd. Two-story three-bay brick commercial building. Board-and-batten front (east) facade in imitation of a gambrel-roof barn, ca. 1970. Ca. 1930.
52. Oxford Bank and Trust Company, 1105 Jackson Ave. One-story three-bay modified-gable-roof brick structure. Ca. 1975.
57. First National Bank, 1203 Jackson Ave. Two-story two-by-eight-bay brick commercial building with frame double gallery; adjoins three-bay windowless front (south) facade. Ca. 1970.

### District Buildings of Marginal Significance

*These structures maintain compatible scale and texture in the district but lack significant architectural detail or historical significance.*

13. Sibyl's Styles Unlimited, 207 S. Lamar Blvd. One-story four-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building. Ca. 1950.
14. Singer Sales and Service [sewing machines], 209 S. Lamar Blvd. One-story five-bay stuccoed-brick commercial building. Ca. 1950.
26. Oxford Production Credit Association, 914 Van Buren Ave. One-story four-bay brick commercial building with pre-cast concrete window surrounds and cornices. Ca. 1950.
29. The Flower Mart, 923 Van Buren Ave. One-story two-bay buff-brick commercial building. Ca. 1945.

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### 7 - DESCRIPTION

31. Rebel Press and Office Supply Company, 1005 Van Buren Ave. One-story nine-bay brick commercial building. Ca. 1940.
33. Scissors Den, Kara Optical; 1101-1105 Van Buren Ave. One-story six-bay brick commercial building. Ca. 1955.
46. 926-922 Jackson Ave. One-story fifteen-bay brick commercial building. Ca. 1940.
48. Law offices of Ethridge and Grisham, 1001 Jackson Ave. One-story two-bay brick commercial building with pre-cast concrete window and entrance molding. Ca. 1950.

### 8 - SIGNIFICANCE

While the architectural significance of district commercial buildings is not major, the continued maintenance of storefront integrity by most property owners merits special recognition. The variety of cast-iron storefront columns has for the most part survived alterations and building improvements. The columns were manufactured by the Chickasaw Iron Works Company and the Livermore Foundry and Machine Company, both of Memphis. The Art Deco motif is the most striking mid-twentieth-century stylistic influence on the square, evidenced in reworked Carrara-glass and black-tiled storefronts (nos. 20, 35), and in various neon signs (on nos. 15, 20).

Four incompatible intrusions which disrupt the rhythm and texture of storefronts on the square (nos. 11, 38, 52, 57), and no. 30 on Van Buren Avenue do not detract significantly from the overall ensemble. District boundaries were drawn according to density of commercial development, as well as visual barriers such as the new federal building on Jackson Avenue across from St. Peter's Episcopal Church, new construction and residential development north of the square, and parking lots to the east, south, and west of the district.

### 9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson. National Register File:  
Lafayette County Courthouse, St. Peter's Episcopal Church.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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	Builder/Architect
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### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Oxford Courthouse Square Historic District is representative of the 150-year history of commerce, local government, and religious institutions in the city of Oxford, Mississippi. Rebuilt after its destruction during the Civil War, the courthouse and its square were later immortalized by the pen and presence of the acclaimed writer William Faulkner, whose legendary Yoknapatawpha County and town of Jefferson were fictive prototypes for the author's native Lafayette County and city of Oxford. A cohesive and architecturally significant ensemble of mid- to late-nineteenth-century buildings, the district also typifies early-nineteenth-century principles of town planning as practiced widely in Mississippi.

Oxford was incorporated in 1837, in which year the square was laid out and a temporary frame courthouse was constructed at its center. Replaced by a more-substantial masonry structure in 1840, the courthouse was again rebuilt in 1871, following its incineration by Union troops in 1864 under Gen. A. J. Smith. The chronology of courthouse construction in Oxford interestingly parallels the history of the Marshall County Courthouse in neighboring Holly Springs. The buildings surrounding the courthouse in Oxford, however, suffered almost total destruction during its Civil War occupation, while damage to the courthouse square in Holly Springs was less extensive. The viability of the courthouse as the seat of government and commerce in Lafayette County was confirmed by the rebuilding of the square in the years following the war. Nobel Prize-winning author William Faulkner (1897-1962), who lived in Oxford at Rowan Oak during most of his life, frequented the square. An alley between building nos. 18 and 19 was recently named in his honor. In his description of the significance of the square in Requiem for a Nun, Faulkner wrote:

But above all, the courthouse: the center, the focus, the hub; sitting looming in the center of the county's circumference like a single cloud . . . musing, brooding, symbolic and ponderable, tall as a cloud, solid as a rock, dominating all: protector of the weak, judiciate and curb of the passions and lusts, repository and guardian of the aspirations and hopes . . . .

Commercial and religious institutions in the courthouse square district represent a proud historical tradition. Neilson's Department Store (no. 5), founded 1839, is reputedly the oldest family-run business in continuous operation in Mississippi. The Freeland and Gafford law office (no. 50), a well-proportioned High Victorian Gothic structure, was built as a law office by U.S. Senator William V. Sullivan, with later additions by attorney James Stone, friend and advisor of William Faulkner. The Lyric Theater (no. 23) was the scene in 1949 of the opening of the movie Intruder in the Dust, based upon the novel by William Faulkner. MGM studios brought streetlights and beacons to Oxford to light the square for the event. The First Presbyterian Church (no. 25), organized 1837, is the oldest congregation in Oxford.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson. Statewide Survey of Historic Sites: Lafayette County; Oxford.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson. Subject File: William Faulkner, Oxford.

# 10. Geographical Data

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**  
**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

Acreege of nominated property approximately 30 acres  
Quadrangle name Oxford Quadrangle scale 1:62500

### UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>	B	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	D	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>
E	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See boundary line on enclosed map.

### 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 Jack A. Gold, Architectural Historian

organization Mississippi Department of Archives and History date January, 1980

street & number P. O. Box 571 telephone (601) 354-7326

city or town Jackson state Mississippi 39205

# 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 Arthur R. Williard

title State Historic Preservation Officer date February 14, 1980

**For HCRS use only**

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

Carol D. Shull date 4-2-80  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Carol D. Shull date 3/19/80  
Chief of Registration

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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RECEIVED	FEB 20 1980
DATE ENTERED	105 2

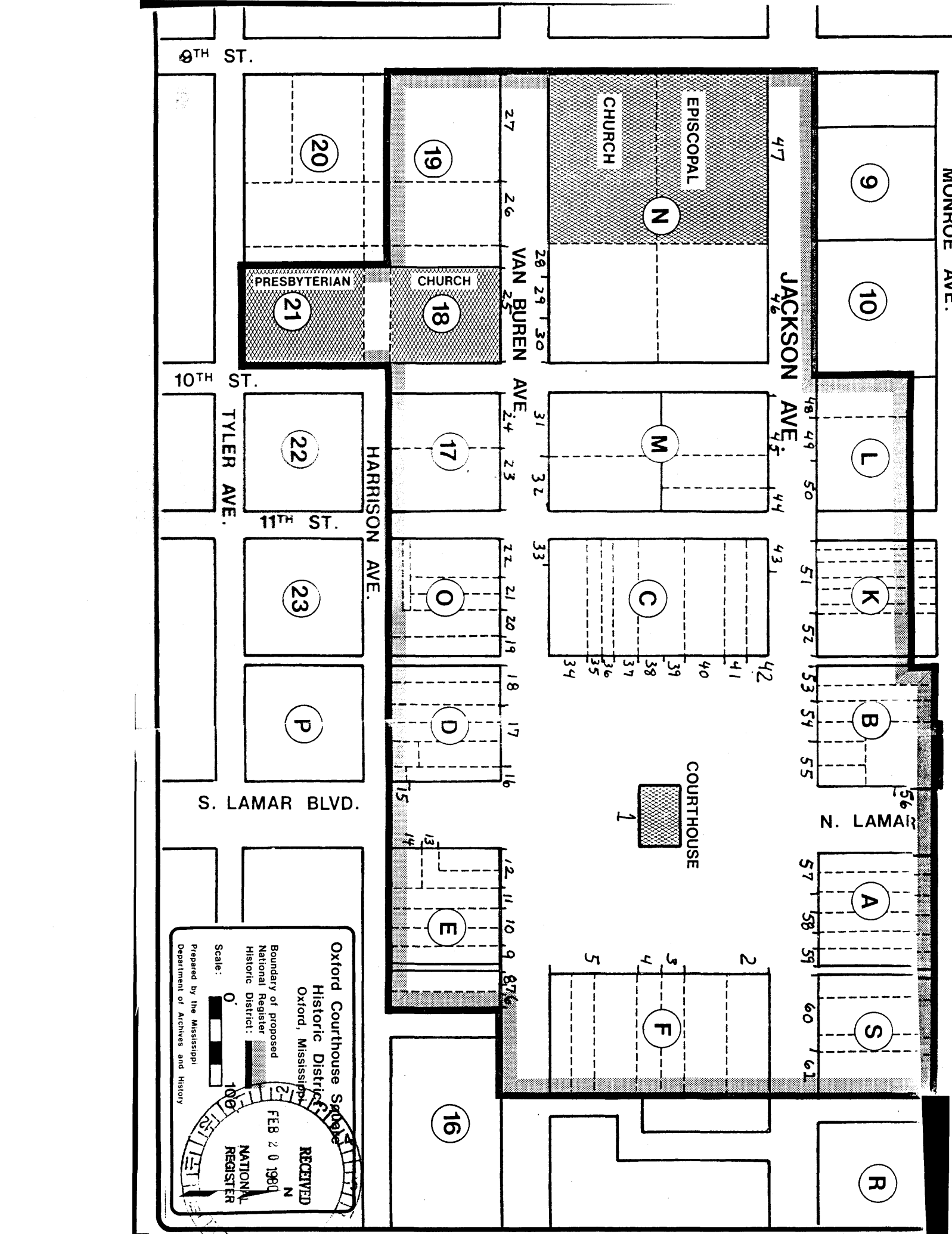
# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

McLemore, Richard Aubrey. A History of Mississippi. 2 vols. Hattiesburg: University and College Press of Mississippi, 1973.



8<sup>TH</sup> ST.

10<sup>TH</sup> ST.

TYLER AVE.

11<sup>TH</sup> ST.

S. LAMAR BLVD.

HARRISON AVE.

VAN BUREN AVE.

JACKSON AVE.

MUNHUE AVE.

N. LAMAR

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

COURTHOUSE

Oxford Courthouse Square  
 Historic District  
 Oxford, Mississippi

Boundary of proposed  
 National Register  
 Historic District:

Scale: 0' 100'

Prepared by the Mississippi  
 Department of Archives and History

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