

**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 The Rawls Hotel

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 116 South Main Street _____ not for publication

city, town Enterprise _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 2

state Alabama code 01 county Coffee code 031

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Hayden C. and Barbara A. Pursley

street & number 706 West College Street

city, town Enterprise _____ vicinity of _____ state Alabama 36330

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Coffee County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Enterprise _____ 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		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	(slightly)	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This stucco-faced, load bearing brick building of Spanish Mission design was constructed in two phases (1903 and 1928), resulting in two distinct sections: the 1903 (76' x 61') section which fronts onto Main Street and consists of two, one-story storefronts and a central two-story pavillion containing two storefronts and a central hallway leading to the lobby in the rear section and the later, three-story, U-shaped segment (100' x 95') which faces Railroad Street and the depot. The Main Street section was altered in the 1928 renovation. It has suffered some slight alterations to the storefronts, some of which is reversable, but it retains its restrained Baroque-inspired frontispiece. The raised stepped, curvilinear parapet with cement coping painted a rich brown conceals the flat roof.

On the west, the two wings define a small entrance court terminated by a low arcaded loggia forming the entrance. A false roof with red tile and open eaves supported by heavy brackets runs the width of the loggia and is repeated on the ends of the two wings. There the raised, curvilinear parapet repeats that of the central section. The major ornamentation of this western elevation is the stairlanding window -- which consists of three tiers of triple windows enframed in a single panel with rich curving molding reflecting that of the parapet above. A small circular medallion with an enriched 'R' is repeated in each of the western parapets. Windows throughout are simple double-hung with 6/1 or 8/1 lights. Some are paired and there are a number of small single sash windows which correspond to bathrooms.

Interior: (see floor plan)

The major interior spaces are the front and rear lobby and the dining room. These rooms have terrazzo floors, richly ornamented walnut ceiling beams, elaborately carved and gilded column capitals and walnut trimmed doors and windows. A light well, the stairway and the landings are also notable features. Original lighting fixtures of brass and crystal and some original ceiling fans remain. Walls are original plaster painted white. Few interior changes have been made.

Also located on the lot with the hotel are two small structures associated with the nearby depot. The older of the two structures is located in the extreme southwest corner of the lot and is a one-story building of simple red brick design which originally belonged to the American Express Company. Adjacent to it is a two-story high structure with a fairly steep pitched roof. It is supposed to have been used for sleeping quarters for railroad crews.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1903, 1928 **Builder/Architect** John D. C. McKinnon, Contractor

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Rawls Hotel is significant as one of the most elaborate buildings in Coffee County. Constructed by Japenth Rawls about 1903 and remodeled and enlarged by his nephew, Jesse P. Rawls, in 1923, it is located across from the train station (NRHP 8-7-74) and has served as a landmark and central meeting place for the citizens of Enterprise. The building is also significant for its associations with the Rawls -- a family which was important in the early growth and prosperity of the city. The elder Rawls was involved in the development of the turpentine industry in Coffee County, while his nephew built and financed the first electric system in Enterprise and operated one of the largest and oldest mills in the city. It was, however, the railroad, whose station the hotel served, that gave the town its major economic stimulus.

* * * * *

In 1896, the year that Enterprise incorporated with 250 citizens, Mr. Jesse P. (J.P.) Rawls of Nansenond County, Virginia, was sent to Enterprise by his uncle, Mr. Japenth (Capt.) Rawls, a South Georgia turpentine manufacturer, to buy or lease timber. Shortly after his arrival Rawls built what is reputed to be the first turpentine still in Coffee County and began overseeing construction of a house for his uncle who planned to move to Enterprise as soon as a suitable home could be built. Capt. Rawls and his wife arrived in 1898, the same year the first train arrived. By 1906, the population had grown to 3,750 and the elder Rawls had built and operated five turpentine stills and a saw mill. His nephew, J. P., owned and operated the Enterprise Mills and Novelty Works, which employed one hundred people making showcases, scrollwork, ceiling, flooring, molding, sashes, and doors for shipment to all parts of Alabama and the Southern states. In 1901 J. P. built and financed the first electric system in Enterprise. It served 50 customers and operated from sundown to bedtime.

In 1903, Capt. Rawls retired from the turpentine business and turned his interests to other ventures, including construction of a hotel on Main Street (then Carmichael Street). The hotel served as a central meeting place for businessmen, civic meetings and social gatherings. The Enterprise Rotary Club held its charter meeting and banquet in the hotel in 1926. When Capt. Rawls died on February 2, 1925, ownership passed to his nephew's wife, Mrs. Margaret E. Rawls. In 1928, J. P. and his wife remodeled and enlarged the small two-story brick building. Two, three-story wings were added facing the train depot and the original building remodeled. There are no documents to indicate that J. P. Rawls engaged an architect and, since he was familiar, through his mill business, with current fashions, he may have had a hand in the design. The construction was done by John D. C. McKinnon who also constructed the old U. S. Post Office Building in Enterprise. Rawls died in 1943 and the building passed to his daughters. It was recently purchased for restoration and renovation.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED
UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property c. .7 acres

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UMT References

A

1	6	6	0	9	0	4	0	3	4	6	3	7	2	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

(see continuation sheet)

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

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ellen Mertins/Hayden C. and Barbara A. Pursley

organization Alabama Historical Commission date July 14, 1980

street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 832-6621

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 Miss B. Toward

title SHPO date July 14, 1980

For HCERS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

W. Ray Luce
Keeper of the National Register

date 9/17/80

Attest: Carol Dubie
date 9/15/80

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

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DATE ENTERED SEP 17 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 1

Watson, Fred S. History of Coffee County, Alabama, 1841-1970, Higginbotham, Inc., Anniston, Alabama, 1970.

Interview, Mr. Leon Martin, Martin Drug Company, April 16, 1980

Interview, Mrs. Joanna R. Persse and Miss Margaret Rawls, 1980

Interview, Mrs. Elizabeth R. Peacock, April 16, 1980

Shoffner, Roy. "Rawls Hotel filled with historic memories", Enterprise Daily Ledger, October 6, 1972.

Deed and Mortgage records, Enterprise Court House and Elba Court House, Elba, Alabama.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Commencing at a point on the east right of way line of the A.C.L. Railway in the City of Enterprise, Alabama, and a distance of 139.3 feet south of the south property line of College Street as a starting point, running thence north 48 degrees 10 minutes east for a distance of 92.7 feet: Thence south 41 degrees 50 minutes east, a distance of 11.4 feet: Thence north 48 degrees 10 minutes east for a distance of 97.17 feet, to the west property line of Main Street: Then south 40 degrees no minutes east, along said west property line of Main Street for a distance of 76.6 feet: Thence south 48 degrees 10 minutes west for a distance of 62.3 feet: Thence south 25 degrees 10 minutes west for a distance of 19.3 feet; Thence south 48 degrees 10 minutes for a distance 11.7 feet: Thence south 59 degrees 21 minutes east for a distance of 122.8 feet to the north property line of Grubbs Street: Thence south 30 degrees one minute west along said north property line of Grubbs Street for a distance of 87.5 feet to the east side of a building; Thence north 37 degrees 46 minutes west along east side of said building for a distance of 44.8 feet: Thence south 52 degrees 14 minutes west along the north side of the said building for a distance of 22.5 feet to the east right of way line of the A.C.L. Railway: Thence north 38 degrees and no minutes west for a distance of 177.15 feet along said right of way to point of beginning: The described property lying in and being a part of the SE 1/4 - SW 1/4, Section 16, Township 4 North, Range 22 East.