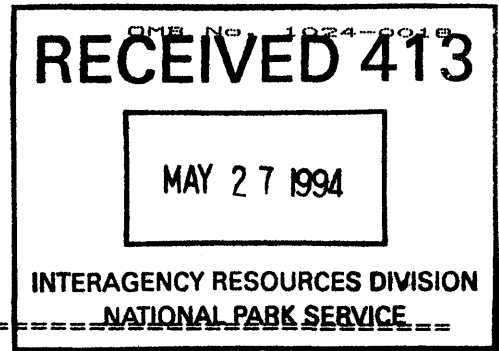


646



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: **New Alcazar Hotel**

other name/site number: Alcazar Hotel, Central Building

2. Location

street & number: 127 Third Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Clarksdale

vicinity: N/A

state: Mississippi code: MS county: Coahoma code: 027 zip code: 38614

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this **nomination** request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property **meets** does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide **locally**. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Kenneth H. P. Paul

May 20, 1994

Signature of certifying official

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the

National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the

National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Edson H. Beall 6/24/94

Entered in the
National Register

for

Signature of Keeper

Date
of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	-0-	buildings
-0-	-0-	sites
-0-	-0-	structures
-0-	-0-	objects
1	-0-	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

New Alcazar Hotel

Clarksdale, Coahoma County, MS

6. Function or Use

Historic: DOMESTIC
COMMERCE/TRADE
COMMERCE/TRADE

Sub: Hotel
Professional
Restaurant

Current : COMMERCE/TRADE
COMMERCE/TRADE

Sub: Professional
Specialty Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Colonial Revival
Classical Revival

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation CONCRETE roof Asphalt
 walls BRICK other N/A
 Terra Cotta

B. Statement of Significance

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Architecture

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

1914-15

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS

Property is: N/A

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave
- D a cemetery
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F a commemorative property
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

SIGNIFICANT DATES

1914-15

SIGNIFICANT PERSON

N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION

N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER

Pfeil, Charles O.

=====

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

=====

X See continuation sheet.

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:

State historic preservation office

Other state agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Specify Repository: **Mississippi Department of Archives and History**

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: Less than one acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

 A 15 723580 3786950 B
 C D

 ___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: John Linn Hopkins, Preservation Consultant

Organization: N/A

Date: February 23, 1994

Street & Number: 974 Philadelphia Street

Telephone: (901) 278-5186

City or Town: Memphis

State: TN ZIP: 38104

=====

12. PROPERTY OWNER

=====

Name: Alcazar Limited Partners

Street & Number: 130 Park Street

Telephone: (901) 278-5186

City/Town: Portland

State: ME

Zip Code: 04104

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

New Alcazar Hotel

Section number 7 Page # 1 Clarksdale, Coahoma County, MS

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The New Alcazar Hotel is a four-story, eleven-bay, reinforced concrete and brick veneered hotel structure, completed in 1915 to the designs of Memphis architect Charles O. Pfeil with Colonial Revival and Classical Revival influences. The structure occupies the equivalent of three city lots in Block G, at the northwestern corner of Yazoo and Third streets in downtown Clarksdale, Coahoma County, Mississippi. The front (south) facade of the structure faces Third Street. Its east (side) facade continues the design of the front for seven-bays along Yazoo Street.

In general, the building is laid out in a U-shaped plan, with the interior of the U filled with a lobby and formerly-open mezzanine on the first and second floors. The four-story portion of the building has a flat roof behind a plain parapet wall, covered with built-up asphalt roofing. The roof of the two-story lobby portion of the building is a hip and flat roof, covered with asphalt roll roofing. The existing roofing in this area covers the location of a large skylight that once lit the mezzanine and lobby area; it is not known if the skylight remains intact beneath this later alteration.

The Third Street and Yazoo Avenue facades of the structure feature a shallow terra cotta cornice above a wide frieze, detailed with an acanthus and dart molding and a band of geometric panels of herringbone brick outlined with cast stone elements. The windows of the principal facades are tripartite arrangements of sashes set within square reveals, which are topped with flat brick soldier course arches with cast stone spring blocks and center stone panels detailed with a Classical urn-motif. The windows of the third and fourth floors are 8/2 double-hung sashes flanked by 4/1 double-hung sashes; those of the second floor are 12/2 double-hung sashes flanked by 6/1 double-hung sashes. Windows on the side (west) and rear (north) facades are 2/2 double-hung sashes.

A terra cotta cornice detailed with a band of Greek fretwork separates the storefront level from the upper facades of the building. The rhythm of openings at the storefront level remains intact, though several of the individual systems have been altered over time. The Third Street facade has a center recessed alcove entrance, flanked by two larger- and one smaller-storefront bays on either side. There are three regularly-spaced storefront bays on either side of the former entrance for Yazoo Avenue. This entrance was enclosed in ca. 1948 for additional retail space. All of the storefront bays of the building have seen modifications and alterations from their original appearance over the period of ca. 1948-1975. The exception is the storefront for 257 Yazoo Avenue, which retains its original bronze-frame system with large-light display windows, recessed entrance with single-light oak door, and multi-light transom strip above.

<B-86>

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page # 2 New Alcazar Hotel
Clarksdale, Coahoma County, MS

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The recessed entrance on the Third Street facade is set with a pattern created of brick headers, surrounding a plaque detailed with a Classical urn-motif. The entrance doors were modified in the ca. 1950s to a metal-frame, single-light double-door, topped by a large transom area. The configuration of the original doorway is not known.

The entrance leads to the former hotel lobby. The lobby was originally constructed as a two-story space lit by skylights. It was designed to be at the center of a group of supporting facilities and leased retail spaces located around its periphery, the organization of which still remains. An open hall crosses one side of the lobby, leading to the elevator and stair core well-removed from the lobby itself. The lobby is detailed with large, square piers which support a grid of coffer beams. It retains many of its original finishes, including its marble wainscots, the doors and multi-light transom of its former Yazoo Avenue entrance, and the pattern of lobby-side openings for the retail and supporting spaces.

A floor was introduced in ca. 1948 to fill the open lobby and to separate the first from second floors. At this time, modifications to some of the original finishes and details were made, though these modifications have not caused significant impact upon the quality of the lobby space.

The mezzanine level of the hotel was laid out around the opening above the lobby. The mezzanine contained restaurant, kitchen and ballroom spaces, the organization of which was changed only slightly when the open lobby was filled in ca. 1948. The former lobby ceiling still possesses a low, bowed ceiling divided by a grid of plastered ribs, which apparently reflects the original pattern of glazing for the skylights. To the east overlooking Yazoo Avenue is the ballroom, which has a beamed ceiling supported by narrow piers, and its original decorative tile floor, laid in tiles of six colors. The organization of other rooms on this floor have been altered somewhat with the installation of partition walls and dropped ceilings, all of which appear to be removable.

The upper two floors contain the majority of its hotel rooms, which are double-loaded on corridors laid out in a rough U-shaped plan. Most of the hotel rooms are single-rooms with a closet and bathroom; however, the rooms at the corner of Third and Yazoo are larger and may be connected with two or more single rooms to form suites. Finishes of the hotel rooms include two-panel entrance doors topped with single-light transoms, raised-floor bathrooms decorated in a variety of tile colors and patterns, and, in some cases, original bathroom hardware including drop-in cast iron tubs, pedestal sinks, and chrome and porcelain faucets. The corner rooms at Yazoo and Third are the only ones outfitted with fireplaces and Colonial Revival mantelpieces.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page # 3 New Alcazar Hotel
Clarksdale, Coahoma County, MS

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The New Alcazar Hotel is being nominated under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a locally-significant example of a commercial hotel building designed in a variation of the Classical Revival and Colonial Revival styles. It is a notable example of the work of Memphis-based architect Charles O. Pfeil (1871-ca. 1930), who is known to have designed at least four other buildings in Clarksdale. Though largely vacant today as it has been for many years, the building remains today as an important local landmark in Downtown Clarksdale.

The New Alcazar Hotel was built in 1914-15 to supersede the original Alcazar Hotel, built on an adjoining lot to the south in ca. 1895 by the locally-famed real estate partnership of Cecil W. King (1845-1924) and W.P. Anderson (n.d.). King and Anderson began their real estate careers as planters outside of Clarksdale, slowly expanding their plantation with acquisitions of surrounding farm lands over time. By the 1890s, the pair had begun to acquire holdings in Downtown Clarksdale and apparently entered real estate development with the construction of the original Alcazar Hotel. At the time of Cecil King's death in 1924, the land holdings of the K & A Plantation exceeded 15,000 acres; their holdings in downtown Clarksdale at this time are not known.

The original Romanesque Revival and Moorish-influenced Alcazar Hotel became the center of social and cultural activity in Clarksdale and the vast Mississippi Delta surrounding it. With the close of the twentieth century's first decade, the hotel was no longer large enough to serve the demands for its use. Construction of the New Alcazar to the north of the original building was planned to double the size and numbers of public spaces and tripled the number of hotel rooms.

The New Alcazar Hotel was built at the height of a long period of prosperity in Clarksdale, fueled by the escalating yields of the surrounding cotton plantations and the increasing value of their crop. During this period, Clarksdale became a trade center of great importance due to its river and railroad connections. The New Alcazar was built in reflection of the heady enthusiasm of these times.

Newspaper accounts of the hotel's construction are few and far between. Planning for the new hotel must have begun in 1913, for construction of the \$100,000 building was nearly completed by November of 1914 (Press Register, June 24, 1988). The opening date for the new hotel is not exactly known, but guest lists for the "New Alcazar Hotel" were being published in the Clarksdale papers in early March of 1915 (Daily Register, March 14, 1915).

The hotel's design was the responsibility of architect Charles O. Pfeil (born 1871), one of a small group of Memphis architects who shaped the appearance of Memphis during its building boom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

New Alcazar Hotel

Section number 8 Page # 4 Clarksdale, Coahoma County, MS

from 1895 to 1925. Born in Illinois, Pfeil received his education at Kansas State Agricultural College and his architectural training at the University of Illinois before entering the professional world in 1893. He apprenticed in various offices in the Midwest before moving to Memphis in 1903 to join in partnership with George M. Shaw (d. 1919). Major commissions such as the Tennessee Trust Building (1906), the Businessmen's Club (1910) and the Memphis Country Club (ca. 1907) brought the partnership considerable attention, even on a regional scale. Pfeil left his partnership with Shaw in 1911 to practice on his own for a decade, during which time he was responsible for the design of the William R. Moore Building (1913), the American Snuff Company (c. 1915), and the Crane Company Building, among numerous major residences in Memphis. Though skilled in numerous design styles, Pfeil's preferences (and those of his clients) ran to the Colonial Revival and Beaux Arts styles.

There have always been close business, social and cultural ties between Memphis and Clarksdale, largely due to the interdependence of the two cities provided by the Delta cotton market. The sidewalks of Cotton Row, the lobby of the Peabody Hotel and the party rooms of the Memphis Country Club were the main places where the planter class of Clarksdale were made welcome to interact with the rich and powerful business families of Memphis. Pfeil's work in commercial and residential design made him a favorite of the well-to-do; he benefited from his membership in the Memphis Country Club, located just two blocks from his own home at 328 Goodwyn Street (Goodwyn Street Historic District, NR 3/9/90). Pfeil was a natural choice for commissions to be carried out for the planters and businessmen of Clarksdale.

The commission by King and Anderson for the construction of the New Alcazar Hotel ensured that other projects would be forthcoming for Pfeil in Clarksdale. The projects which followed included the Clarksdale Presbyterian Church, the Lewee Broad Building, the Carnegie Library and the Clarksdale City Hall. Residential commissions during this period are suggested, though not documented.

Once opened, the New Alcazar Hotel was touted by local boosters as "the best hotel in the state" (Illustrated Clarksdale:23). The older hotel remained in use as an annex to the new one, connected across Exchange Alley by a second floor walkway. Both buildings were leased from Anderson and King by N.D. West, who managed the hotel until retiring in 1943. Others, such as R.N. McWilliams, attempted to capitalize on the success of the Alcazar with their own hotel ventures (Press Register, June 24, 1988), only to fail with the downturn in the agricultural economy that plagued the South immediately following World War One and on into the 1920s and 1930s.

The New Alcazar was extensively remodeled in 1938 to provide private baths

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

New Alcazar Hotel

Section number 8 Page # 5 Clarksdale, Coahoma County, MS

for each room, among other changes. Some of the existing bathroom fixtures and finishes appear to remain from this period of renovation.

The historical era of the New Alcazar Hotel effectively concludes with the retirement of N.D. West as its manager in 1943. The Mississippi Hotel Company replaced West as manager until 1945, when its interests were bought out by the Hudson Hotel Company and run by A.E. Defend.

The original Alcazar Hotel was struck by fire on March 16, 1947 and completely destroyed, the result of arson set by a former employee (Press Register, June 24, 1988). An annex was planned for construction on the former site of the old hotel, but was abandoned in realization that the days of the downtown hotel had passed in favor of the roadside motel. Instead, the hotel was remodeled in ca. 1948 with a new restaurant space on the first floor, the enclosure of the mezzanine level of the lobby, and numerous other improvements intended to return the building to vitality. The hotel passed into use as an apartment-resident hotel in the years that followed. Today, only commercial tenants remain in the building.

The New Alcazar Hotel remains an important architectural landmark and as a place of fond memories for the people of Clarksdale. Proposals having been made to convert its rooms to housing for the elderly in the recent past have given citizens the hope that the building will lead Downtown Clarksdale into a new era of vitality, not unlike the impact provided by the original Alcazar in the 1890s.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page # 6 New Alcazar Hotel
Clarksdale, Coahoma County, MS
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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

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- Clarksdale Press Register "Old Hotel Awaits New Owner, New Era", n.v.; n.
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October 28, 1989.
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Series, Volume 3. From the microfilm on file at the Mississippi
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- Weeks, Linton
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 10 Page # 7 New Alcazar Hotel
Clarksdale, Coahoma County, MS

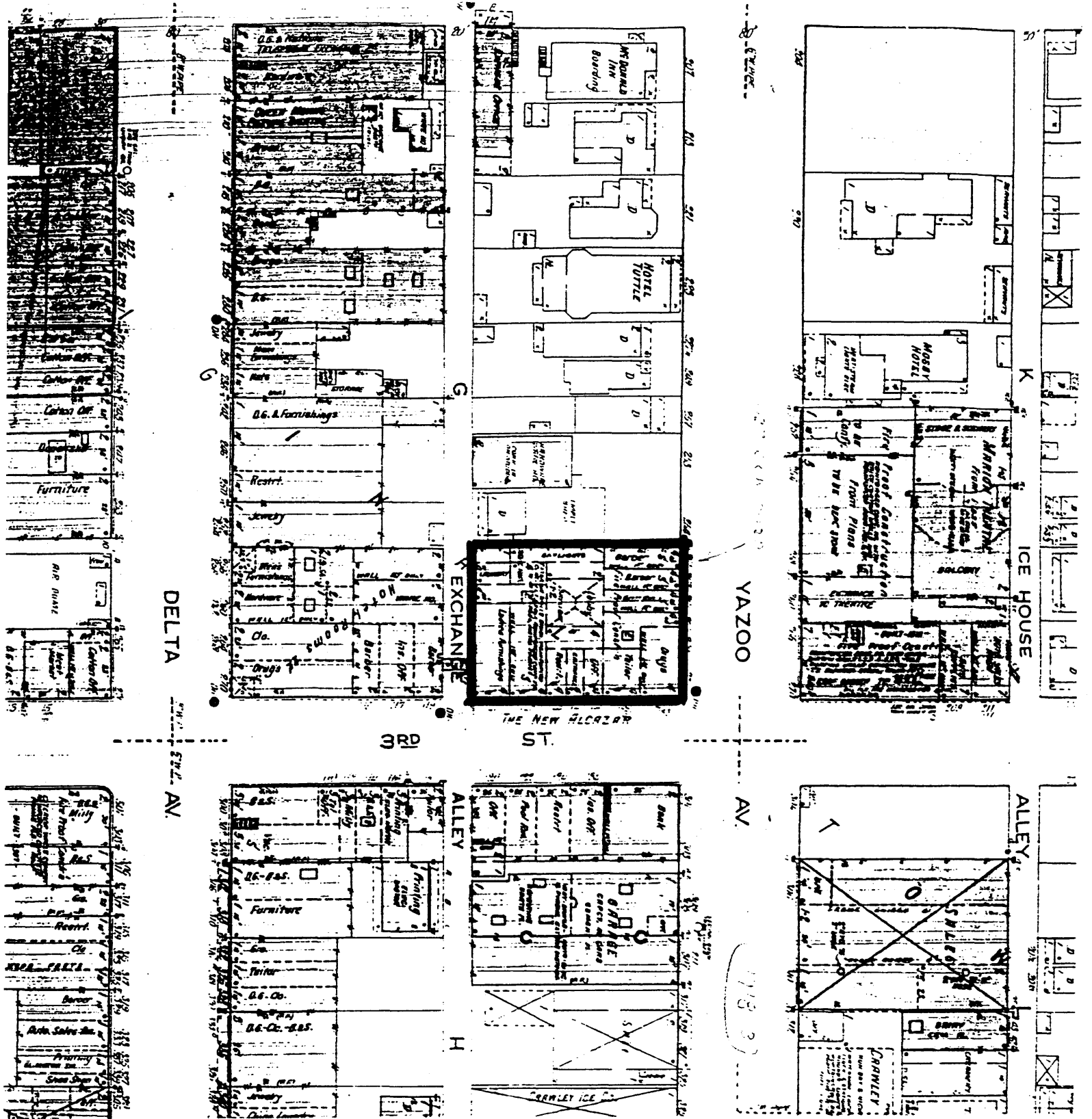
10. GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Verbal Boundary Description

The property in nomination includes the portion of Block G in the plan of Downtown Clarksdale at the northwest corner of Third Street and Yazoo Avenue, as delineated in a heavy black line on the enclosed copy of the 1918 Sanborn Fire Map of Clarksdale.

Boundary Justification

The boundary proposed for this nomination is restricted to the property historically associated with the New Alcazar Hotel since its construction in 1914-15.



NEW ALCAZAR HOTEL
 127 Third Street
 Clarksdale, Coahoma Co., MS
 Scale: 1" = 100'

Boundary:

