

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

The Abbeville and York County Courthouses are listed in the National Register as elements of the Abbeville and York Historic Districts. Descriptions of the Abbeville and York Courthouses are included in this thematic study so that a comprehensive view of William A. Edwards's South Carolina courthouse design may be attained.

ABBEVILLE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Abbeville County Courthouse was built in 1908, to replace an earlier courthouse destroyed by fire. William Augustus Edwards, of the Atlanta firm of Edwards and Walter, was the architect and Frederic Minshall of Abbeville was the contractor.

The courthouse is a monumental two-story brick building, located on the public square of Abbeville. The facade is characterized by a projecting entrance pavilion with a colossal Ionic portico in antis, of stone construction. The portico has two pair of unfluted stone columns, with Scamozzi capitals, which support a full entablature, composed of an architrave consisting of three fascias; a plain frieze; and a cornice composed of a bead-and-reel astragal, a cyma recta with leaf-and-tongue carving, a dentil course, a bead-and-reel astragal, an egg-and-dart ovolo, a soffit and corona, a cyma reversa, a fillet, and a crowning cyma recta. This entablature is carried around the entire elevation unifying and ordering its elements.

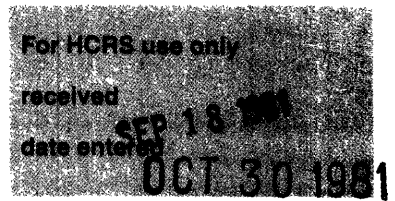
The facade beneath the portico is of brick, laid in American Flemish bond, with raked joints. A wooden arch encompasses both levels of the central bay of the facade; the central entrance on the first floor has new glass doors, while the casement windows of the second story are original. The single bays flanking the entrance pavilion have similar arches encompassing the casement windows of the first and second stories. A broad brick attic story rises above the entablature; this attic story bears a stone course inscribed "ABBEVILLE COUNTY COURT HOUSE."

The left side elevation has a central, recessed, three-bay section with a flanking single-bay pavilion towards the front and a three-bay pavilion towards the rear. The sloping lot allows for two full basement levels at the rear of the building. The facade entablature in full is carried around the foremost pavilion; only the cornice is carried around the rest of the side elevation. The broad arched windows of the second story of the side elevation mark the courtroom. The lesser windows of the side elevation have flat brick arches with stone key and terminal voussoirs. This fenestration is carried out over the rear elevation, which, owing to the sloping site, and the full expression of the attic story, has five full stories.

The right side elevation has a brick arcade, connecting the courthouse to the adjacent opera house and municipal office building, which was designed by Edwards and which uses many of the same compositional elements and details. The junction between the two buildings has been filled with further expansion of the courthouse, on two stories.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

The Abbeville County Courthouse has a longitudinal hall, defining its main axis; the county offices are located on either side of this hall. A stair is located at either end of the hall. The front stair has paneled newel posts and a sawn balustrade. A dentil cornice enriches the hallway. The courtroom occupies most of the second story. The three arched windows of the left side elevation are reflected in three blind arches on the right side. Roman Doric pilasters alternate with the arches. A heavy tabernacle frame behind the judge's seat features three stained glass windows; this frame is flanked by pedimented doorways leading from the judge's chambers. The pilasters carry a dentil cornice and the main roof beams; the ceiling itself is acoustical tile. The audience seats are of bent plywood on metal frames.

The courthouse was renovated in 1964 by Lyles, Bissett, Carlisle, and Wolff of Columbia.

YORK COUNTY COURTHOUSE

York County Courthouse is a monumental two-story yellow brick building constructed in 1914. William A. Edwards was the architect.

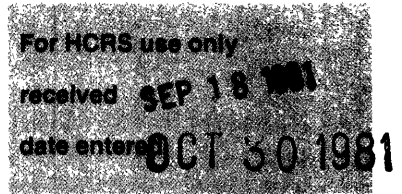
The courthouse has the cross-axis plan common to Edwards courthouses with the facade at the south end of the longitudinal axis. The facade features a colossal Ionic tetrastyle portico, projecting from a three-bay entrance pavilion on the five-bay elevation. The portico is of stone as are the entablature and the basement story. The columns of the portico are unfluted with Attic bases, Greek Ionic capitals, and a broad stone entablature. The entablature consists of an architrave with three fascia, a cyma reversa, and a fillet; a frieze, with paterae centered over the terminal columns, and the words "YORK COUNTY COURTHOUSE" inscribed between these paterae; and a cornice, consisting of a cyma recta, a dentil course, a cyma reversa and fillet, a soffit and corona, and a crowning fillet. The cornice is raked into a pediment above the portico, where it is further enriched with an acanthus leaf cyma recta. The pediment features a central recessed medallion, with flanking triangular recesses, in its tympanum.

The facade behind the portico is three bays, of yellow brick, with a central entrance marked by a stone surround, which features console brackets supporting a stone cornice. A tripartite window is located over the entrance. The flanking bays have small one-over-one windows, on the first story only. Pilaster responds delineate the bays; the outer pilasters are of stone, and the inner pilasters are of brick.

The single bays of the facade which flank the entrance pavilion have twelve-over-twelve windows on the first and second story. The portico entablature is carried around the building, in simplified form: the cornice is of stone, but without the dentils; the frieze is of brick; and the architrave is reduced to a corbelled yellow brick rowlock course. A broad attic story, of yellow brick, is located above the entablature; this attic story features six-over-six windows. A second cornice, of bronze, is located above the attic

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

story. This cornice consists of a cyma recta, a dentil course, an ovolo, a course of console modillions, a soffit and corona, and a quirked cavetto. This second cornice is also carried around the entire building. A hip roof, sheathed in tile, is pierced by four yellow-brick chimneys.

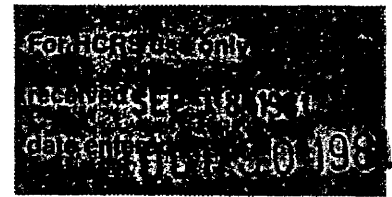
The east elevation is five bays wide with single bay end pavilions. A central entry beneath a stone arch defines the transverse axis of the building. The second story has a five-bay arcade, encompassing the courtroom windows; the central window opens onto a stone cantilevered balcony. The end pavilions have paired nine-over-nine windows on the first and second stories. The entablature of the portico is carried through this elevation.

The opposite (west) elevation and the rear elevation, have two-story yellow brick additions, which continue the proportioning of the original building without the attention to detail.

The interior of the York County Courthouse features tile floors with inlaid Greek key patterning, marble wainscoting and door surrounds, and stairs at both ends of the longitudinal hall. The courtroom on the second floor has a plaster vaulted ceiling; Tuscan pilasters lining the walls; and an apse at the north end, containing a wooden crosssetted tabernacle frame, which serves as a backdrop for the judge's seat.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

2

Item number

6

Page 1

The following courthouses in South Carolinadesigned by William Augustus Edwards are listed in the National Register:

Abbeville County Courthouse (listed as an element in the Abbeville Historic District, September 14, 1972)

York County Courthouse (listed as an element in the York Historic District, October 18, 1979)