

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: South Carolina	
COUNTY: Charleston	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
The Fireproof Building

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
100 Meeting Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Charleston

STATE: South Carolina	CODE: 045	COUNTY: Charleston	CODE: 019
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
South Carolina Historical Society on long term lease from Charleston County

STREET AND NUMBER:
700 Meeting Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Charleston

STATE: South Carolina	CODE: 019
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Charleston County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
Courthouse Square

CITY OR TOWN:
Charleston

STATE: South Carolina	CODE: 045
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Preliminary Survey of Historic Sites in South Carolina

DATE OF SURVEY:
 Federal
 State
 County
 Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
South Carolina Department of Archives and History

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 11188 Capital Station

CITY OR TOWN:
Columbia

STATE: South Carolina	CODE: 045
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The design of the Fireproof Building is in the simple Greek Doric style, without any ornament, except that afforded by the porticoes which face each front. These porticoes are each composed of four massy columns three-and-a-half feet in diameter, raised on an arcade; the columns rise the whole height of the building (comprising two stories) surmounted by their entablature, and crowned with a pediment which, extending entirely across the building, meet together in the middle; the remaining part of the building, on each side, constitutes the wings to the center, falling below the apex of the pediment; the front of these offices is sixty-six feet, and breadth fifty-six feet, besides the porticoes, which project about twelve, and extend in front thirty-three feet each. They are approached from the street by a double flight of stone steps at both ends. The basement, porticoes, and cornices are of stone. The walls are of brick, stuccoed in imitation of the same.

The building as it now stands has undergone certain changes since it was constructed. The exterior steps to the porticoes which originally curved around the cylindrical corners of the portico bases were replaced after the 1886 earthquake with rectangular steps of granite. Some of the iron casement sash have been replaced by wood sash because of the warping by expansion of the iron under the heat of the summer sun.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) ca. 1822-27

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The Fireproof Building was the most fire protected building in the country at the time of its construction and is believed to be the oldest building of fireproof construction in the United States. This building was designed by Robert Mills (the first native American-trained architect) and is very characteristic of his work. Both the high columnar portico raised on a basement arcade and the triple window treatment of the central window mass are typical of Mills' work. The Fireproof Building is built of solid masonry in an avowed attempt to be fireresistant since Mills was intensely concerned for the safty of the public records housed in the building.

As to the design character, it appears that Mills was working in the manner of Latrobe. The buildings of Latrobe show the influence of such contemporary English architects as John Nash and Sir John Soane, who, reacting from the exuberance of Adam, tended toward clean bare surfaces and mouldings in small crisp profiles. This prescription is based on that "less is more" and is only successful when proportions, masses, light, and shadow have been carefully studied to the ultimate. Mills' Fireproof Building, which seems so simple at first glance, is the end result of intensive study and the rejection of nonessentials, achieving thereby an austere sense of order and serenity. (Albert Simons comment, FAIA)

In the architectural survey of Charleston, a jury composed of Dr. William Murtagh, Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places, Professor Bernard Lemann, Tulane University School of Architecture, Mr. Carl Feiss and Mr. Russell Wright, consultants to the city, noted this structure as exceptional. This notation indicates that the building is of the highest architectural design quality, well-proportioned, and architecturally sophisticated. Windows, classical orders or other period designs, chimneys, verandahs, massing, materials, textures, refined detail, and craftsmanship are all elegant and innovative. The structure is to be preserved and protected in situ at all costs.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

McClure, Harlan, et al. South Carolina Architecture 1670-1970. Columbia: Tricentennial Commission 1970.
 McKee, Henry J. (ed.). Historic American Building Survey -- South Carolina Catalog. Washington: H. A. B. S. Commission, 1972.
 Marsh, Blanche. Robert Mills -- Architect in South Carolina. Columbia: R. L. Bryan Company, 1970.
 Simons, Albert, and W.H.J. Thomas. An Architectural Guide to Charleston, South Carolina: 1700-1900 (unpublished manuscript). Charleston: Historic Charleston Foundation, 1972.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/4 acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Tray Stephenson and Bernard Kears (Historic Preservation Division)
 ORGANIZATION: South Carolina Department of Archives and History DATE: April 20, 1973
 STREET AND NUMBER:
1430 Senate Street
 CITY OR TOWN: Columbia STATE: South Carolina CODE: 045

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Charles E. Lee
 Title State Liaison Officer
Department of Archives & History
 Date April 23, 1973

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS