

PH0503495

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 31 1977
DATE ENTERED MAR 30 1978

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

Branch Banking House

AND/OR COMMON

Woodville Library

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Bank Street (Courthouse Square)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Woodville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fourth

STATE

Mississippi

VICINITY OF

CODE
28

COUNTY

Wilkinson

CODE

157

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

__DISTRICT

__PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

__AGRICULTURE

__MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

__UNOCCUPIED

__COMMERCIAL

__PARK

__STRUCTURE

__BOTH

__WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

__ENTERTAINMENT

__RELIGIOUS

__OBJECT

__IN PROCESS

__YES: RESTRICTED

__GOVERNMENT

__SCIENTIFIC

__BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

__INDUSTRIAL

__TRANSPORTATION

__NO

__MILITARY

__OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Woodville Civic Club

STREET & NUMBER

Post Office Box 605

CITY, TOWN

Woodville

VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi 39669

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Wilkinson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Woodville

STATE

Mississippi 39669

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Statewide Survey of Historic Sites

DATE

1973

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

CITY, TOWN

Jackson

STATE

Mississippi 39205

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 type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Set close to the street on a corner lot on the west side of the courthouse square of Woodville, the old Branch Banking House building (1819) consists of a single block, measuring thirty-five feet across the front (north) and thirty-eight feet along the sides. The two-story brick structure was later stuccoed and scored to imitate ashlar masonry. In the late nineteenth century a third story was added, but it burned ca. 1900 and was removed. The resulting parapet wall steps down twice toward the rear of the building, with a corbeled cornice of exposed brick capping the whole. Just below the cornice of the facade, a corbeled belt course extends between two projections.

Centered in the three-bay facade is a doorway, consisting of a four-light transom and a partly glazed double-leaf door, both set in a rectangular opening with paneled embrasure and stone slip sill. Each leaf of the door has a large recessed lower panel with beveled edges and a raised field, framed by the molded edges of the stiles and rails. The door was originally closed by double-leaf blinds like those remaining on the matching door on the west side. The exterior face of each leaf is decorated by matched diagonal boards and the interior face is decorated by a large panel with a smaller panel above and below. These panels are similar to those in the lower part of the door. The blinds are hung on wrought iron strap hinges, three to each leaf.

The double-hung sash windows are set in rectangular openings with wooden slip sills. All sash are two-over-two except for one original twelve-over-twelve sash in the lower window on the west side. This same window also retains the only original window blinds. These double-leaf blinds are hung on wrought iron strap hinges, two for each leaf, and each leaf is composed of two matching large panels with a smaller panel above. On the exterior face the panels are set flush, but on the interior face the plain panels are recessed within the molded edges of the stiles and rails.

The symmetrical fenestration of the west side consists of a door and a window placed beneath two upper windows. The door unit, matching that on the facade, is located toward the front of the building. The fenestration of the east side is similar but lacks the lower window. The western portion of the rear (south) wall is symmetrically arranged, with three windows above a door and its flanking two windows. The eastern portion is punctuated by a single door set above the level of the first floor and reached by a series of concrete steps. The rear wall shows evidence of previous attachments; the fenestration of the eastern portion of the wall appears to have been changed.

The first floor contains three small rooms arranged across the rear and a large room (32 feet by 23 feet) occupying the entire front portion of the building. The plan of the second floor is similar, except that the two rear rooms to the west are combined into one long room. At both levels, the rear room to the east contains a stairway with slender, turned balusters and a round-section handrail. Though the stairs now lead straight up from the exterior rear door, at one time they made a quarter turn at the bottom to lead up from the center rear room. Beneath the stairs is the vault, its walls lined with wooden shelves and its six-foot-square floor paved with brick. The vault is entered from the large front room by way of a low, elliptically arched opening

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 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 type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1819

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Branch Banking House in Woodville, Mississippi, completed in early 1819 as a branch of the Bank of the State of Mississippi, is the oldest banking edifice in Mississippi and thus was an integral part of the state's economic activity in its formative period. Purchased later to serve as a branch of another state institution, the Planters' Bank, the building served twenty-five years as a banking facility. The Banking House is one of the earliest examples of the Federal style in Mississippi and features an exceptionally detailed interior which includes the original vault.

In February, 1818, the territorial Bank of the Mississippi became the official Bank of the State of Mississippi through a bill entitled "An Act Supplemental to an act entitled, 'An Act to Establish a Bank in the Mississippi Territory.'" This bill proposed simply to convert the territorial bank into the state bank without drastically changing the existing laws governing it. Aside from increasing capital stock, adding three directors, and making a few other necessary administrative shifts, the charter remained the same, with one important exception: offices of deposit and discount were to be opened at Port Gibson and Woodville, Mississippi's second and third largest cities, respectively. After almost a decade of banking in this region, Natchez lost its monopoly of Mississippi banking and became the parent institution. Though the subscription books were opened in the cities soon after the bill's passage on January 28, 1818, neither branch was to go into operation until \$25,000 was paid in on subscription of \$50,000. The directors next began construction of suitable banking houses for the two branches in the spring of 1818.

An April 28th letter to Woodville Branch president Hays P. White from the parent bank enclosed "a plan of a Banking House, estimate of materials, and cost of building" and stated further: "We hope the procuring a lot can be accommodated without any difficulty. The estimates are furnished by a respectable Builder who thinks them very reasonable and perhaps you may obtain still better terms." The vault was fabricated by a Natchez blacksmith, and the outer vault doors and their locks, as well as the front door locks, were ordered from New York. Williams and Lane of Natchez contracted to lay the brick at a cost of \$4.00 per thousand. Delayed by improper scheduling and delivery of materials, the banking house was not completed until late January of 1819, with the opening taking place the week of February 23. Full title to the property was officially acquired with the recording of the deed on May 21, 1819 (Deed Book B:157-59).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bentley, Julius Marvin. "Incorporated Banks and the Economic Development of Mississippi, 1829-1837." The Journal of Mississippi History 35:381-401.

Jackson. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Bank of the State of Mississippi Papers. Letter Book 9, March 19, 1818-August 19, 1819; Stockholders Journal, 1811-1843.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than .25

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	5	6	6	2	2	0	0	3	4	4	2	0	5	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING								

B

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The bank is located on a rectangular lot bounded on the north by Bank Street for a distance of approximately seventy-five feet and on the east by Royal Oak Street for a distance of approximately fifty feet.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Gregory B. Free, Architectural Historian
Ronald W. Miller, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION Mississippi Department of Archives and History

DATE July, 1977

STREET & NUMBER P. O. Box 571

TELEPHONE (601) 354-6218

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 X

LOCAL X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE Elmer R. Hilliard

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE August 9, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

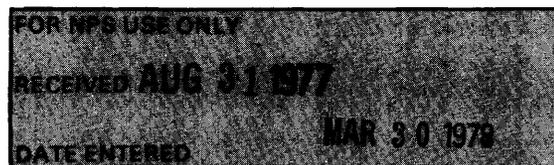
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

INTECTOR OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST: Watson Cole
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 3-30-78
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 DATE 3-14-78

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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ITEM NUMBER 7 & 8 PAGE 1

7 - DESCRIPTION

framed by a molded wood architrave. The opening is closed by a pair of iron-reinforced, double-leaf doors hung on heavy hinges and secured by large box locks with keeps.

On each floor, two fireplaces are placed back to back in the center of the east-west cross wall. Cabinets are recessed in the sides of the chimney-breasts and Federal mantelpieces are attached to the fronts. The simpler mantelpieces in the rear rooms have full entablatures broken forward in the center and at the sides over flanking pilasters. The mantelpiece in the large upper room is further enriched by additional molding of the mantelshelf, paneling of the pilasters, and carving of the architrave. The carving includes, in the central panel, an oval patera in the frieze and, in each side panel, an urn set within a rectangular recess in the frieze and a plain oval recess in the architrave. All rooms are finished with a baseboard and a chair rail. The chair rail continues across the base of the window openings to form the facing of the window sills. The splayed jambs of the windows in the large upper room are reeded, but those of the other windows are paneled to match the paneling on the doors, the door jambs, the cabinet doors, and the window blinds.

The integrity of the building appears to have been well maintained; few important changes have been made. Among the changes are the replacement of most of the window sash, the installation of a partition dividing the large downstairs room, the reworking of the stairs, the removal of the mantelpiece in the large downstairs room, and the removal of most of the blinds.

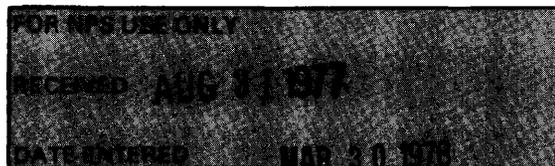
8 - SIGNIFICANCE

For more than a decade the Bank of Mississippi enjoyed prosperity, until political conflicts gave rise to the chartering of a rival state bank, the Planters' Bank, in 1830. It soon appeared that the two banks could not coexist without harming both institutions and the state's economy. The politically stronger Planters' Bank faction prevailed, and on December 31, 1831, the Bank of Mississippi officially transferred its physical and monetary assets to the Planters' Bank. On that same day, the banking houses at Woodville and Port Gibson were purchased by the new institution. The Planters' Bank was soon the victim of "flush times" speculation and the "Panic of 1837," which finally brought about its failure in 1840. Sold by the stockholders in December, 1843, the Woodville Branch Banking House came into private hands.

The building was subsequently owned by Mrs. Julia Stierlin, who in 1872 deeded it to her daughter, Mrs. J. C. P. Mayer. During the 1880s, the building

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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8 - SIGNIFICANCE

was used for offices. In 1887, Mrs. Mayer deeded the property to her son, Christopher Shaefer, who sold it to Mrs. Lina Thomas and C. F. Zoller in 1905. They in turn sold it to the Woodmen of the World in 1915. The Woodville Civic Club purchased the building in 1976.

9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

McCain, William David. "The Charter of Mississippi's First Bank." The Journal of Mississippi History 1:251-63.

McLemore, Richard Aubrey. A History of Mississippi. Vol. 1. Hattiesburg: University & College Press of Mississippi, 1973.

Weems, Robert Cicero, Jr. "The Bank of the Mississippi." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1951.

Wilkinson County, Mississippi. Land Records. Deed Books: Original Entries, B, L.