

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

JAN 05 1989

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Memorial Hall/General Service Building, Coker College
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number South side of Second St. between Home Ave. & Carolina Ave.
city, town Hartsville
state South Carolina code SC county Darlington code 031 zip code 29550

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked), public-local, public-State, public-Federal
Category of Property: building(s) (checked), district, site, structure, object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (1), Noncontributing (1), Total (1)

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Mary Watson Edmonds
Date: 12/20/88
State or Federal agency and bureau: Mary Watson Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S. C. Department of Archives & History

In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
entered in the National Register. (checked)
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION / education-related housing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION / education-related housing

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brickwalls Brick

roof Asphaltother Stone; IronWood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Coker College occupies approximately fifteen acres, near the downtown area of Hartsville, South Carolina. The campus is bounded by Home Avenue on the north, Carolina Avenue on the south, Second Street on the east and Third Street on the west. The Memorial Hall/General Service Building is located at the east edge of the Coker College campus and extends along Second Street from Home Avenue to Carolina Avenue. Davidson Hall (listed in the National Register on 11/10/83) is sited near the center of the campus.

The Memorial Hall/General Service Building was constructed in two phases. Memorial Hall, which comprises approximately the north one-third of the building, was constructed in 1913. The south two-thirds of the structure, the General Service Building, was built in 1916. The building is of masonry construction, three stories in height, and has projecting pedimented porticos. The original slate hipped roof has been replaced with asphalt shingles. Several brick chimney stacks are visible. The building rests on a brick foundation. A stone course marks the transitional area between the foundation and the first story. Only the 1916 portion of the building has a basement.

Memorial Hall Section

The Memorial Hall section serves as the primary entrance to the entire building. The five bay entrance facade, marked by a three-bay projecting full-height portico, faces Home Avenue. The pedimented portico, ornamented with block modillions, is supported by four colossal Corinthian columns and two pilasters. A louvered oculus vent is located in the center of the tympanum. A projecting one-story pilastered entrance, surmounted by an iron balustrade, is flanked by two blind arches inset with smaller rectangular windows. Recessed panels of header courses are located over the windows in the end bays. The windows on the first story have decorative stone lintels and sills. The rectangular window openings on the second and third stories have stone sills and flat arched brick lintels with stone keystones. The double-hung sash windows have six-over-one lights. The end bays are delineated by brick quoining. Similar decorative brickwork and

 See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture _____
 Education _____

Period of Significance

1913 - 1916 _____

Significant Dates

1913 _____
 1916 _____

Cultural Affiliation

N/A _____

Significant Person

N/A _____

Architect/Builder

Wilson and Sompayrac, Columbia, S. C. _____

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Memorial Hall/General Service Building at Coker College is architecturally significant as a component of an early twentieth-century planned college in South Carolina. Constructed in 1913 and 1916, it is an important, classically-influenced design by a prominent South Carolina architectural firm, Wilson and Sompayrac. In addition to its architectural importance the building is also significant for its relationship to Major James Lide Coker, a prominent Hartsville businessman and major benefactor of the college. Coker College and its buildings represented an important addition to the cultural life of Hartsville.

Additional Information

Coker College for Women was founded in 1908 by Major James Lide Coker (1837-1919), prominent Hartsville industrialist, merchant, banker and agriculturalist. Major Coker had been the primary benefactor of the Welsh Neck High School, the College's predecessor institution established in 1894. When the State of South Carolina announced in 1907 that a public high school would be built in Hartsville, Major Coker persuaded the Welsh Neck High School's Board of Trustees to disband the school in favor of converting the campus into a new college for women. (1) The Baptist associations which controlled the High School agreed to support the new college which remained under Baptist control until 1944 when it became completely independent. (2) The establishment of the four-year college for women caused great excitement in this culturally and economically deprived rural area. Coker College was the first South Carolina college to be established east of Columbia and north of Charleston and offered cultural and educational opportunities never before available to residents of the northeast quadrant of the state, known as the Pee Dee. (3)

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheets

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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:

S. C. Department of Archives & History

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 1.6 Acres

UTM References

A

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3	8	0	4	3	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of Memorial Hall/General Service Building, Coker College is shown as the black line on the accompanying Darlington County Tax Map 56-6, drawn at a scale of 100 feet to 1 inch.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes only the building and the land upon which it sits.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff, State Historic Preservation Office
organization S. C. Department of Archives and History date 30 November 1988
street & number 1430 Senate Street, P. O. Box 11669 telephone (803) 734-8610
city or town Columbia state South Carolina zip code 29211

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window treatment exists on the east and west facades of the main block of Memorial Hall.

The south end of the building originally terminated with a three-story open loggia or porch. The east and west ends of the porch feature slightly projecting porticos similar to the main entrance portico. These porches have been enclosed with glazing on the east and west facades. French doors open onto the campus and Second Street from the first floor and access onto shallow balconies projecting from the second and third floors.

General Service Building

In 1916 the porches of Memorial Hall were enclosed as the building was extended to the south. The extension, called the General Service Building, consists of three distinct parts: a central projecting block and two dormitory wings which extend north and south.

The five-bay central block has shallow porticos on the east and west facades. The pediments on the east and the west facades are supported by four colossal Corinthian columns and four pilasters. The denticulated pediment contains a festooned oculus window with stylized diamond-pattern tracery. The slightly projecting east portico was designed to be the visual focus as one drives west on East College Avenue toward the campus. Each bay on the east facade contains a tripartite window on the first floor. Each of the second floor bays on the east facade contains a French door opening onto a shallow balcony. This iron-railed balcony is formed by the hood of the lower window. The hood is composed of a cornice supported by a central keystone and two mutules, each with three guttae. The French doors, surmounted by eight-light transom panels are flanked by sidelights and topped by a brick jack arch articulated by stone skewbacks and keystones.

The central block projects further on the west facade. The treatment of the portico is similar to the east facade. Each of the five bays on the west facade and the two bays of the north and south sides of the projection contain a multi-paned semicircular arched tripartite window. A decorative metal grill forms a band at the springline of the window arch. The top of each window has a stone keystone. Above this is a rectangular stone panel with a carved garland. Centered below each of the three windows within the portico on the west facade is a niche with a decorative hood and a bench. Below each of the other

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windows are three vertical panels with diapering. These windows help define the double-height dining space.

The twelve-bay dormitory wings extending north and south are fenestrated on all three floors with rectangular double hung sash windows with six-over-one lights. The windows have stone sills and flat arched brick lintels. The north wing connects to Memorial Hall. A small passageway connects the south wing to a dormitory erected in 1969, Grannis Hall. Though a very simplified form, Grannis Hall is an attempt at continuing to follow the original campus plan, which called for a duplicate of Memorial Hall.

Interior

The interior of the building is composed of corridors lined with dormitory rooms, the enclosed porch areas, and the major interior spaces -- the dining hall (General Service) and the drawing room (Memorial Hall).

One enters the drawing room from the main (north) facade entrance of Memorial Hall. The large formal gathering space is seventy-five feet in length, thirty-five feet wide, and has a fifteen-foot-high ceiling. It features wood paneling and plaster arches, niches and denticulated crown molding. The room was used for college and community functions.

The dining hall has no primary entrances from the exterior; the main entrances are from the dormitory corridors. The sixty-six by eighty-three foot room was designed to accommodate 400 students. The large arched windows are the dominant features of this double-height space. The dining hall is separated from the kitchen by a one-story gallery supported by paired columns with an iron balustrade on the second story. The room is wood paneled to a one-story height and has a denticulated crown molding. Two large rooms over the kitchen area were designed as meeting spaces for literary societies.

The enclosed third floor porch of Memorial Hall was converted into a chapel in 1916.

Condition and Status

The Memorial Hall/General Service Building is in good condition and continues to serve its original functions. A wooden cupola originally

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rose from the roof of Memorial Hall at its northern end, but was later taken down after being destroyed in a storm. The Memorial Hall portion is currently being renovated to function as a dormitory for the recently established Governor's School for Mathematics and Science. It is not certain that the cupola will be restored in the current or any future rehabilitation. The college administration hopes to be able to restore the other halls (Belk, Dining Hall and New Central) at the rate of one per year for the next three years. Grannis Hall, attached at the south end of the Memorial Hall/General Service Building, is clearly new construction and does not impact on the visual qualities or integrity of the historic building.

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Coker College inherited from its predecessor institution its property consisting of three wooden buildings, none of which were designed for permanence. In 1909 the Board announced that Major Coker had donated \$25,000 for the erection of a permanent administration building which became a reality in 1910. Now known as Davidson Hall, the administration building was listed in the National Register on 11/10/83.

In 1913, Major Coker donated \$65,000 for the erection of the first permanent dormitory. It was named the Susan Stout Coker Memorial Hall (called Memorial Hall) in honor of his deceased wife. Memorial Hall was completed in January 1914 and housed 100 students, considerably increasing the housing capacity on the campus. (4)

In April, 1915, Major Coker donated \$100,000 for the erection of the largest building ever built on the Coker campus. An article in the Hartsville Messenger announcing the building referred to it as the "General Service Building." Although the structure was at first called Central Hall, its division into three distinct units caused it to be known by three names, Central Hall (renamed Belk Hall in 1979) the Dining Hall, and New Central Hall. Central and New Central were built as dormitories and are still used as such. The building was designed and built as an extension of Memorial Hall. The "general service building" was completed in 1916. The two new dormitories housed a total of 100 students, further increasing the number of resident students and permitting an increase in enrollment. (5) Whereas the 1912-13 catalogue listed 158 students, that of 1917-18 listed 304 students, and the 1918-19 catalogue listed 370 students (6).

The dormitories, Drawing Room and dining facilities of the Memorial-Belk-Dining Hall-New Central buildings are still serving the same purpose for which they were originally designed. Thousands of students have lived in these quarters and many more have attended receptions, meetings and banquets there.

Campus Planning:

The firm of Wilson and Sompayrac of Columbia was retained as college architects in 1909-1910 for the design and erection of the administration building (later Davidson Hall). Charles Coker Wilson, the senior member of this firm and a nephew of Major Coker, directed the designs of Memorial Hall and the campus plan. These designs were actually executed by a young architect in Wilson and Sompayrac's employ, J. Carroll Johnson, formerly of Chicago and Washington,

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D. C. (7) Though Johnson left the firm before Memorial Hall was completed, Wilson continued his plan with a complementary design for the General Service Building, the next phase of the college's building program. Although drawings have not been located, it is obvious that Johnson had conceived a plan for the entire Coker College Campus, even a president's residence located just to the west of Davidson Hall (later called the "White House"). (8) He placed college buildings so they would be the focal points of the existing city streets. Davidson Hall, already constructed, fit into the plan as the focal point as one views the campus through the main gates of the College from Third Street. The Memorial Hall/General Service Building is the focal point as one approaches the campus from East College Avenue. Newspaper accounts reveal that Major Coker had conceived of a quadrangular plan for the campus. Many American colleges, large and small, have looked to English precedents for guidance in campus design. The quadrangle, and especially the enclosed quadrangle typical of English colleges founded in the medieval period (such as portions of Oxford and Cambridge Universities), seemed an appropriate way to organize buildings and to express abstract values. "The small, enclosed quadrangle seemed to provide a natural setting for a college community that valued intimacy and fellowship." (9) The enclosure formed a "place apart," an area secluded and conducive to contemplation. Another feature of college life, borrowed from the English tradition, was that of students living together in campus dormitories. In fact, the architectural critic Montgomery Schuyler felt that "collegiate character" was incomplete without college dormitories. (10) The quadrangle concept was certainly not foreign to either Major Coker or Charles Coker Wilson, both of whom were graduates of the South Carolina College (now the University of South Carolina), where a partial quadrangle, the Horseshoe, was and remains the focal point of the campus. J. Carroll Johnson's experience as an architectural graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, where several quadrangular building forms exist, also provided inspiration for the Coker College plan.

Newspaper accounts of 1915 reveal the concept for extending Davidson Hall on each end with the addition of thirty-two lecture halls, thus forming a west portion of a quadrangle. Eventually the east and west ranges would be joined together with a range of buildings (gymnasium, library, additional dormitory) erected on the north side along Home Avenue and the south side along Avenue B (now known as Carolina Avenue). The four ranges would thus form a completely enclosed quadrangle. "Athletic fields and beautiful gardens" would be built

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inside the quadrangle so the students would be able to enjoy them in complete privacy. (11)

Memorial Hall was obviously designed with the possibility of expansion in mind. When expansion of the building did occur, the long structure formed the east side of the contemplated quadrangle. This was the only side of the quadrangle to be completed. The expansion of Davidson Hall never occurred. Several factors undoubtedly accounted for the failure of Wilson's campus plan to materialize. Although Coker's family continued to make financial contributions to the college, his death in 1919 left the college without his guiding vision and major benefactions. The college also failed to grow. In 1917-18 there were 304 students. An endowment campaign in 1929 was unsuccessful and the Great Depression of the early 1930s decreased enrollment to only 156. Today the Memorial Hall/General Service Building is the only structure to provide physical evidence of Johnson's quadrangle campus plan.

Architects:

Charles Coker Wilson (1864-1933) was one of the major architects in South Carolina in the early 20th century. He is noted for his activities in upgrading the profession in the state, for assisting many of the states' twentieth century architects in starting their careers, and as a specialist in the design of educational buildings. Wilson was a native of Hartsville, South Carolina. He was educated at the University of South Carolina and in 1888 completed a post-graduate course in Mechanical and Civil Engineering. He studied architecture in Paris for two years at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. He then entered the New York office of Carrere and Hastings as a draughtsman. (12). Wilson practiced in Virginia for several years before returning to Columbia in 1896 where he opened the office of Wilson and Edwards. (13) In addition to being listed as an architect with the firm in the Columbia city directory of 1897/98, he is also listed as city engineer and superintendent of the water works. His partner, William Augustus Edwards, went on to achieve fame as a designer of educational buildings. (14) In 1907 he formed the partnership of Wilson, Sompayrac and Urquhart, Engineers and Architects. By late 1910 James Burwell Urquhart had gone into private practice, and the firm was known as Wilson and Sompayrac until 1918. In that year Edwin Douglas Sompayrac left South Carolina and entered a New York firm. Among Wilson's other credits in educational architecture are four buildings at the University of South Carolina; Neville Hall at Presbyterian College in Clinton, South Carolina; several buildings for Meredith College in Raleigh, North Carolina; the high school for Greenwood,

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South Carolina; Burroughs School Auditorium in Conway, South Carolina; Winyah Indigo School in Georgetown, South Carolina; and four faculty residences for Chicora College in Columbia, South Carolina.

J. Carroll Johnson (1882-1967), one of Columbia, South Carolina's better known twentieth century architects, was noted for his design ability. He began his career in Chicago after the turn of the century as a protege of William LeBaron Jenney and Elmer Jensen, both of whom were "deans" of the Chicago school of architecture at the times of their deaths. (15) A native of Kristianstad, Sweden, Johnson emigrated to the United States as a young child with his family which settled in Chicago. He attended night classes at the Art Institute of Chicago while working in the firm of Jenney and Mundie (Jenney, Mundie and Jensen by 1906). In 1906 he was graduated from the Chicago Architectural School of the Armour Institute of Technology (now Illinois Institute of Technology or IIT). He completed post-graduate work in architecture in 1908 at the University of Pennsylvania. From 1906-1910 Johnson was employed as chief draughtsman in the offices of Wood, Donn and Deming in Washington, D. C. (16) There he had charge of the design and construction of several large buildings, including some government structures. In 1909, he travelled and studied in the interest of his profession in Italy, France and England. (17) The following year Johnson entered the Columbia, S. C.-based firm of Wilson, Sompayrac and Urquhart (subsequently Wilson and Sompayrac) as chief draughtsman. (18) While there he designed in addition to Memorial Hall at Coker College a number of buildings including the Consolidated Building (listed in the National Register in 1979), Logan School (listed also in 1979), the Gresham Hotel, and Thornwell College at the University of South Carolina, all in Columbia. By early 1913 he had formed a partnership with James Burwell Urquhart, an association which would last more than four years and would produce many structures throughout the state. (19) Johnson's designs during this period included Columbia High School (listed in the Register in 1979; demolished in 1984), the Masonic Temple at 1435 Main Street in Columbia, the American Lutheran Survey and Publishing Company Buildings (listed in the Register in 1979 as the Eau Claire Town Hall and Survey Publishing Company Building), and the Ridgewood Country Club. From the 1920s through the mid-1950s Johnson was associated with the University of South Carolina as its architect, designing such buildings as the Old Field House; Sloan College; Melton Observatory; the School of Education (University High School); Sims College; the Administration Building; Petigru College (Law School); LeConte College; and the Sumwalt Engineering Building. (20)

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NOTES

1. Major James Lide Coker, Commencement Address, Welsh Neck High School, May 1908, (Typescript) Coker College Library, Coker College, Hartsville, S. C.
2. Coker College Quarterly Bulletin, Catalogue Issue 1944-1945, pp. 13-14.
3. Robert R. Simpson, Coker College: The Diamond Jubilee History (Hartsville, S.C., 1983), p. 1.
4. Coker College Quarterly Bulletin, Catalogue Issue 1915-1916, p. 17; "Memorial Hall at College Dedicated," Hartsville Messenger, 8 October 1914, p. 1.
5. Coker College Quarterly Bulletin, Catalogue Issue 1916-1917, p. 17.
6. Coker College Quarterly Bulletin, Catalogue Issue 1912-1913, p. 83; Catalogue Issue 1917-1918, p. 101; and Catalogue Issue 1918-1919 p. 83.
7. J. Carroll Johnson to J. Gordon Hughes, 15 July 1926, David R. Coker Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S. C.
8. Architectural Drawings, Coker College, Hartsville, S. C.
9. Paul Venable Turner, Campus: An American Planning Tradition (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1984), p. 216.
10. Montgomery Schuyler, "The Architecture of American Colleges. Part IX," Architectural Record, 30(December 1911):565.
11. "Another Large Sum for Coker College," Hartsville Messenger, 15 April 1915, p. 1.
12. Henry and Elsie Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased) (Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc., 1970), pp. 662-663.

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13. Walter F. Petty, Architectural Practice in South Carolina, 1913-1963 (Columbia: South Carolina Chapter, AIA, 1963), pp. 8, 10, 13, 112 and 135.
14. Withey, pp. 190-191.
15. Withey, p. 662-663; "Notes From the Annual Convention of the South Carolina Association of Architects," Journal of the American Institute of Architects, (September 1913): 399-400; "C.C. Wilson, 68, Architect, Dies," Charleston News and Courier, 27 January 1933, p. 12.
16. Geddings Hardy Crawford, ed., Who's Who in South Carolina (Columbia, S. C.: McCaw, 1921), pp. 92-93.
17. J. Carroll Johnson to J. Gordon Hughes, 15 July 1926.
18. Ibid.; Crawford, ed. Who's Who in South Carolina; Wm. H. Walsh, ed., Walsh's Directory of the City of Columbia, 1911-13, (Columbia, S.C.).
19. Ibid.
20. J. Carroll Johnson to J. Gordon Hughes, 15 July 1926; Presidential Papers, University of South Carolina, 1920-1956, University Archives, McKissick Museum, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S. C.

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"C.C. Wilson, 68, Architect, Dies." Charleston News and Courier, 27 January 1933, p. 12.

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"Notes From the Annual Convention of the South Carolina Association of Architects." Journal of the American Institute of Architects (September 1913): 399-400.

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The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Location: Coker College, Hartsville, South Carolina

Date: March 1988

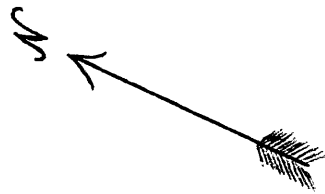
Photographer: Sherry Piland

Location of Negatives: South Carolina Department of Archives and
History

Additional information for each photograph follows:

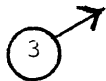
1. Memorial Hall, main entrance, north facade. View looking southeast.
2. Memorial Hall/General Service Building. East facade, view looking southwest.
3. Memorial Hall, east facade. View of enclosed porch area. View looking west.
4. Memorial Hall. Richardson Porch, west facade. View looking southeast.
5. Memorial Hall, Drawing Room. Interior view looking east.
6. Memorial Hall, Dormitory Corridor. Interior view looking south.
7. General Service Building, Dining Hall section, east facade. View looking northwest.
8. General Service Building, Dining Hall section. West facade on left, south facade on right. View looking northeast.
9. General Service Building, west facade. View looking east.
10. General Service Building, Dining Hall. Interior view looking southwest.
11. General Service Building on left; Grannis Hall on right. View of west facade, looking east.
12. General view of Memorial Hall/General Service Building/Grannis Hall. View looking northwest from Grannis Hall toward Memorial Hall.

Avenue

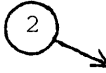


E. College Avenue

Photograph Directional Key =



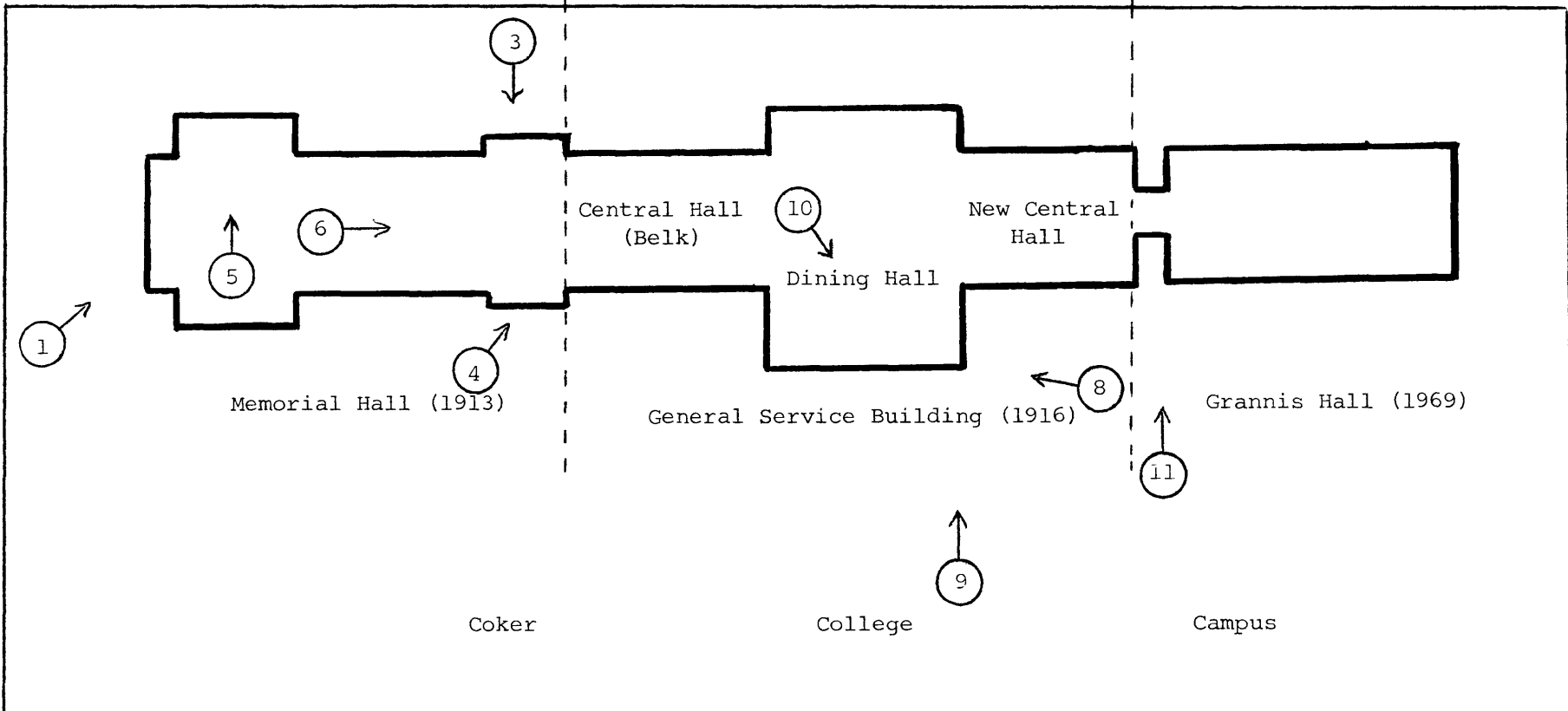
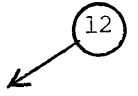
Avenue



Second



Street



Home

Coker

College

Campus

Carolina

MEMORIAL HALL/GENERAL SERVICE BUILDING
 Coker College, Hartsville, South Carolina
 Darlington County
 NOT TO SCALE