

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY  
NOMINATION FORM

OCT 30 1981

Continuation Sheet Item Number Page

Name Historic - Jasper County Courthouse Location - Russell Street, Ridgeland  
Common Classification - building

Owner - Jasper County  
c/o County Administrator  
Drawer F  
Ridgeland, S.C. 29936

Representation in Existing Surveys - Inventory of Historic Places in South Carolina, 1977

Description - Jasper County Courthouse was built in 1915, according to plans by William Augustus Edwards. C. V. York was the contractor.

The courthouse is a two-story brick building of Georgian Revival design. The facade is characterized by a central tetrastyle Ionic portico with flanking two-bay wings. The composition of the building reflects its cross-axis plan, with the offices concentrated in the four quadrants defined by the longitudinal and transverse halls. Entrances are centered on each elevation. The portico pediment and smaller pediments over the central pavilions of each side elevation reinforce the foursquare symmetry of the plan. The building is unified by the entablature of the portico, which is carried around the entire building. The order implied by the entablature and the basement governs the composition and fenestration.

The portico of the courthouse has four colossal metal columns, unfluted, with Greek Ionic\*

Significance - Jasper County Courthouse is the first and only courthouse for Jasper County, which was formed in 1912 from parts of Hampton and Beaufort Counties.<sup>1</sup> The name Jasper was chosen after Sergeant William Jasper, a Revolutionary War hero from the area.<sup>2</sup> At the time of its construction, the courthouse was considered to be a modern and well planned government building. A county bond issue of \$30,000 partially financed the construction.<sup>3</sup>

The plan and composition of the Jasper County Courthouse are logical and straightforward; the plan is easily read from the exterior. The colossal portico, the heraldic shield in the tympanum, and the siting of the building, occupying an entire block, are devices intended to establish and reinforce the authority of the newly-established county government. The\*\*

Acreage 1.5

Verbal Boundary Description The boundary of the Jasper County Courthouse nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying Jasper County Tax Map 001-01-09-001, drawn at the scale of 200 feet to 1 inch. The boundary includes the courthouse and its encompassing landscaped lot.

UTM Reference Point 17/501350/3593910

Other Information

\*capitals. Pilaster responds are at the juncture of the portico and the entrance pavilion. The portico entablature consists of a bipartite architrave; a plain frieze (which, apart from the portico and the side entrance pavilions, is executed in brick, instead of wood); and a cornice, composed of a cyma reversa, a dentil course, a soffit and corona, and a crowning cyma recta. The full entablature is raked in the pediment of the portico. A heraldic shield, bearing the date "1915" and the letters "J C," is centered on the tympanum of the pediment. The facade, beneath the portico, is three bays with a central double door and flanking six-over-six windows. The three windows of the second story, which light the courtroom, are arched with brick surrounds. Console brackets between the windows provide counterparts to the column capitals and visual support for the entablature.

The bays flanking the portico have double six-over-six windows on each story. The brickwork of the walls is American Flemish bond with deep raked joints. A concrete foundation and a concrete water table contrast with the red brick.

The side elevations are five bays with projecting entrance pavilions. The entrances on the first story of each side are recessed beneath brick-arched porches. The pedimented pavilions reinforce the longitudinal axis of the courthouse.

The rear elevation is tripartite with projecting pavilions at either side flanking a recessed three-bay central section. Three arched windows on the second story of this center section, counterparts to the arched windows of the facade, locate the courtroom. A simple entrance is centered on the first story.

The courthouse has a cross-axis plan, with a short, broad hall leading from the portico and a longitudinal hall perpendicular to the entrance hall. The county offices are located along these halls. A double-run stair is located at the north end of the longitudinal hall. The courtroom occupies most of the second story. Its central entrance, from the stair landing, features a tabernacle frame, which is reflected by a similar tabernacle frame at the opposite end of the room behind the judge's seat. This frame, with its dentil cornice and full pediment, enhances the symbolic authority of the judge. The rest of the courtroom is simple with plain wainscoting and a box cornice. New folding chairs (for the audience) and an acoustical-tile ceiling are among the very few alterations to the building. The judge's chambers are located behind the courtroom.

The courthouse occupies a small block in Ridgeland. It is surrounded by palmetto and oak trees. A World War I memorial, a flagpole, and a low brick wall complete the grounds. The neighborhood is primarily single-family residential, with a few small county office buildings on adjoining blocks.

\*\*portico, as well, establishes an order by which the entire building is composed. The ornament of the interior is sparse and concentrated in a few spots: the tabernacle frame of the entrance to the courtroom and the frame behind the judge's seat. These elements, like the portico and the monumental siting, are designed to establish a proper sense of authority and respect.

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<sup>1</sup>Robert E. Dalton, "William Augustus Edwards, AIA," June 1981. (Typewritten); Acts and Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina (Columbia, S.C.: Gonzales and Bryan, State Printers, 1912), pp. 827-841; Grace Fox Perry, Moving Finger of Jasper (Jasper County Confederate Centennial Committee, n.d.), pp. 1-3, 67-70.

<sup>2</sup>Perry, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>Historical Records Survey Division of Women's and Professional Projects, Works Progress Administration, Inventory of County Archives of South Carolina, #27, Jasper County (Columbia, S.C.: Historical Records Survey, 1938), p. 10.