

Form 10-300 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

2/6/73

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	South Carolina	
COUNTY:	Richland	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER:	OCT 18 1972	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Supreme Court of South Carolina Building

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Old United States Post Office

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Northwest corner of Gervais and Sumter Streets

CITY OR TOWN:
Columbia

STATE: South Carolina CODE: 45 COUNTY: Richland CODE: 079

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<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
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) <u>Judicial Facility</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
State of South Carolina

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Columbia STATE: South Carolina CODE: 45

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Richland County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:
1508 Washington Street

CITY OR TOWN: Columbia STATE: South Carolina CODE: 45

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
South Carolina Survey of Historic Places (Preliminary)

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969 Federal State County Local

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

STREET AND NUMBER:
1430 Senate Street, P.O. Box 11, 188 Capitol Station

CITY OR TOWN: Columbia STATE: South Carolina CODE: 45

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

OCT 18 1972

ENTRY NUMBER

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

 Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

(Check One)

 Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

 Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Foundations for the Federal Post Office laid in 1917. With start of World War I, materials allotted for post office were reallocated for building Camp Jackson (now Fort Jackson). Construction, resumed after the war, was completed September 30, 1921.

Wide steps lead from street level to first floor with decastyle of Doric columns and pilaster to each side. Projecting pavilions hold two pilasters to each side of large arched window with engaged balustrade.

Three large arched entrance ways within colonnade have paned doors and doorsized fanlight above. Long narrow fenestration within colonnade. Deep projecting cornice separates first and second stories. Second story end pavilions have twelve paned squares flanked by panels. Area over portico formerly had carved United States seals and the letters - UNITED STATES POST OFFICE. Today in the same area there are embossed cartouche plaques to either side of the carved letters - SUPREME COURT OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Sides are ten bays deep with arched fenestration on first floor and square on second.

Rear of building has twelve engaged columns, arched fenestration. Formerly had loading platform. Now entrance has covered, railed steps as well as ramp for handicapped.

Original interior: Lobby had marble floor, vaulted ceilings, post office boxes, service windows, offices to either side of lobby. Work room entire length of building, with ceiling at roof level, had roughly finished walls. Catwalk above lobby at second story level, concealed from first floor view, enabled inspector to observe lobby and work room. Basement level served as storage area and for parcel postage.

Being unable to accommodate the growing volume of mail, operations were moved to the new Columbia postal unit, terminating service at the old post office June, 1966.

The building was bought by the state of South Carolina, renovated and moved into by January, 1971.

Adaptation of the building was admirably achieved by architects Gill and Wilkins of Florence, South Carolina, and interior designer Andrew V. Kerns of Columbia, South Carolina.

Basement walls finished and supports strengthened to carry weight created by addition of second floor and mezzanine. Basement now equipped for testing facility.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1917-1921**

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 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	<u>Judicial</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	<u>Facility</u>
<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significant in the area of communications, it served as main postal unit in Columbia, South Carolina, from September 30, 1921, to June, 1966, when operations were moved to a new building.

Acquired by the State of South Carolina for use as the Supreme Court of South Carolina Building, it is significant as an example of preservation through adaptive use. Its location on the block adjacent to the State House enhances the complex of governmental buildings which includes and surrounds the South Carolina State House. This Capitol Complex gives the city its essential governmental flavor, enhances the dignity of the area and contributes visually to identifying Columbia's character as capital city, the role which prompted the city's creation in 1786. Resourcefully and tastefully renovated with necessary functional interior additions, its atmosphere befits the prestige and respect commanded by such a distinguished branch of the state government.

Russell V. Keune, Director of Field Services, National Trust for Historic Preservation, after an official trip to South Carolina had this to say concerning the building in his letter of June 2, 1971, to Governor John C. West: "The adaptation of this former federal post office to meet your state's present needs as a judicial facility was accomplished with creativity and understanding.

"The building, while not 'historic' in many individuals' eyes, certainly represents an important architectural contribution to the character of the city. As an architect, I was pleased with the way the character, both exterior and portions of interior, had been retained and enhanced by the installation of the necessary contemporary elements. All who participated in this endeavor are to be commended. All too often the Trust finds itself battling for preservation of similar buildings throughout the United States and seeing them needlessly destroyed for lack of imaginative use plan. Regrettably, the quality of the new architecture that replaces the old rarely equals the overall quality of what was destroyed."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

From remarks of W.O. Callahan in news conference October 26, 1962.
 Information from Columbia Post Office Scrapbook.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	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	°	'	"	°	'	"	34°	00'	06"	81°	01'	51"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than 1/2 acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Dollie McGrath, Historic Resources Assistant (NRR-Historic Preservation)

ORGANIZATION: South Carolina Department of Archives and History DATE: 8/18/71

STREET AND NUMBER:
1430 Senate Street, P.O. Box 11,188 Capitol Station

CITY OR TOWN: Columbia STATE: South Carolina CODE: 45

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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 Director, South Carolina Department of Archives & History
 Date Mar. 4, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Robert M. Utsey
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 10/18/72

ATTEST:
William M. Stewart
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 10-16-72

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
South Carolina	
COUNTY	
Richland	
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(Number all entries)

SUPREME COURT OF SOUTH CAROLINA BUILDING

7. Description

First Floor: Lobby remains structurally the same with the addition of hooded or pedimented mahogany doorways. Permanent office space provided to right and left of lobby extends the length of the building. Offices have wainscoting and molding of mahogany and parquet floors. Center of building, formerly work area, houses courtroom, conference room, robing room, and waiting area. Courtroom has mahogany wainscoting with engaged columns which reach dentilated molding at ceiling. Ceiling slightly arched. Supreme Court of South Carolina seal elegantly displayed at rear of bench in carved mahogany which is paneled and has Ionic pilasters.

Second floor: Catwalk, retained for structural reasons, now serves as gallery housing portraits of former South Carolina justices. Newly created second floor contains library, offices, conference room, and small courtroom with original bench brought from previous courtroom in State House.

Mezzanine level, immediately under east and west and rear of second floor provides stack space.

