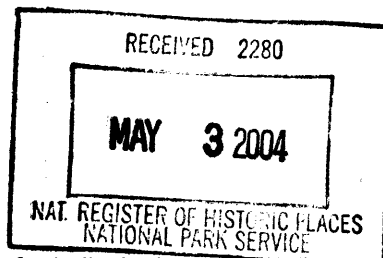


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sumter County Courthouse  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 141 North Main Street not for publication \_\_\_  
city or town Sumter vicinity 085  
state South Carolina code SC county Sumter code 043 zip code 29150

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally X statewide \_\_\_ locally. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 4/27/04  
Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, S.C. Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.  
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Edson H. Beall 6/16/04

[Signature]  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

Sumter County Courthouse  
Name of Property

Sumter County, South Carolina  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>      </u>
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
Courthouses in South Carolina Designed by William Augustus Edwards Thematic Resources

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Government

Subcategory: Courthouse

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Government

Subcategory: Courthouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Beaux-Arts

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation Limestone
- roof Metal
- walls Brick
- other Synthetics

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Sumter County Courthouse

Sumter County, South Carolina

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or a grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1907

Significant Dates

1907

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Edwards, William Augustus

Walter, Frank C.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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
X Local government
University
Other
Name of repository
Sumter County Courthouse, Sumter, S.C.

Sumter County Courthouse

Sumter County, South Carolina

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.6 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
1 17 560876 3753766 3
2
See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title Samia Hanafi, Elizabeth Kleinfelder, Kristy Lunsford, Chris Nelson, Kate Ruhf, Rawls Teft
Organization College of Charleston Program in Historic Preservation Date 25 April 2003
Street & Number 12 Bull Street Telephone (843) 953-6352
City or town Charleston State S.C. Zip code 29401

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Sumter County Administrator
street & number 13 East Canal Street telephone (803) 436-2102
city or town Sumter state S.C. zip code 29150-4925

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 5

Sumter County Courthouse  
Name of property  
Sumter County, South Carolina  
County and State

=====  
**Description**

The Sumter County Courthouse, on East Canal Street in Sumter, the seat of Sumter County, South Carolina, was built in 1907 and is a two-story brick building on a raised basement story.

It was constructed as an I-plan courthouse set in a deep one-and-six-tenths-acre block. The courthouse is centered on the block with its long axis parallel to Main Street, which allows for a substantial lawn and landscaping in front of the facade (west elevation) as well as between the east elevation and Harvin Street. The rear "notch" of the initial I-plan has been subsequently filled in after an addition and modernization was completed in 1965.

The central entrance is through a recessed portico of six unfluted columns of the Scamozzi order, set upon high base blocks and arranged in two pairs with single columns at each end. A monumental entry stair with wide limestone cheek walls leads up to the portico and the entrance to the building. The entrance is flanked on either side by a paired window, each of which is flanked by narrow windows. Also within the recessed portico and surmounting the entrance and flanking windows are three large arched windows that light the courtroom. The entrance is surmounted by a small balustraded balcony on the upper level. The building is constructed with a channeled ashlar stone base. The channeled pattern of the base is continued in the body of the building constructed of yellow Roman brick. To either side of the portico are window bays, with those on the first floor being topped by a narrow entablature crowned by an open triangular pediment and framed by pilasters. The second story windows contrast with the classical aedicular form of the windows of the first floor and are triple in formation with surmounting panels and transoms with typical crisscross Neoclassical or Beaux-Arts tracery. The upper windows feature jack arch lintels with keystones. A stone entablature surrounds the building, echoing the basement story. Its frieze is punctuated with disks or roundels at the portico and blocks with guttae bands. A classical balustraded parapet wall of brick and limestone caps the building above the roofline.

The side [north and south] elevations are nearly identical to each another, being slightly reduced versions of the courthouse's facade. The side entrances consist of double-leaf doors and topped with bracketed segmental arched pediments. Above each door is a large arched window with impost blocks and keystone.

The rear, or east, elevation of the building was modified by an addition built 1963-1965 by James and Durant, AIA and Associates, a Sumter architectural firm. This remarkably sympathetic addition, while three stories in height, is set beneath the original building's entablature. It nevertheless reflects an increasing reliance on modernist abstraction. Its entablature is dramatically simplified, with only a plain brick parapet topped by a cast-stone coping. The eastern entrance is marked by an arcuated projecting cast-stone porch, which enthusiastically recalls the Beaux-Arts classicism of the façade.

The interior of the courthouse was extensively remodeled during the 1963-1965 renovations. While its floor plan remains intact, it retains little of its original appearance.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section  8  Page  6

Sumter County Courthouse  
Name of property  
Sumter County, South Carolina  
County and State

=====  
**Statement of Significance**

The Sumter County Courthouse is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its significance in Politics/Government as the symbol and seat of Sumter County government since 1907 and under Criterion C for its significance in Architecture, as one of nine South Carolina county courthouses designed between 1903 and 1915 by prominent architect William Augustus Edwards.

From 1903 to 1915 Edwards designed nine county courthouses in South Carolina:

- Darlington County Courthouse, Darlington (1903)
- Kershaw County Courthouse, Camden (1904-1905)
- Sumter County Courthouse, Sumter (1905-1906)
- Abbeville County Courthouse, Abbeville (1908)
- Lee County Courthouse, Bishopville (1908-1909)
- Dillon County Courthouse, Dillon (1911)
- Calhoun County Courthouse, St. Matthews (1913)
- York County Courthouse, York (1914)
- Jasper County Courthouse, Ridgeland (1915)

Of these, only the Darlington County and Kershaw County courthouses have been demolished.

In 1981, the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) prepared "Courthouses in South Carolina Designed by William Augustus Edwards", a thematic resources nomination including the courthouses in Abbeville, Calhoun, Dillon, Jasper, Lee and York Counties; these six courthouses were individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places on 30 October 1981 (the courthouses in Abbeville and York Counties were already contributing properties in the Abbeville Historic District, listed in the Register on 14 September 1972, and the York Historic District, listed in the Register on 18 October 1979).

The Sumter County Courthouse, although a contributing property in the Sumter Historic District, listed in the National Register on 21 April 1975, was not individually nominated as part of the "Courthouses in South Carolina Designed by William Augustus Edwards" thematic resources listing. This nomination seeks to correct that oversight.

Edwards (1866-1939), a native of Darlington, was a prolific South Carolina architect of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He was educated at Richmond College and the University of South Carolina. From about 1893 to 1902 Edwards was associated with Charles Coker Wilson (1864-1933)—another Darlington County native and perhaps the most prominent South Carolina architect of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—first as a draftsman in Roanoke and Lynchburg, Virginia, and then as a

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section  8  Page  7

Sumter County Courthouse  
Name of property  
Sumter County, South Carolina  
County and State

=====

partner in Columbia, South Carolina. From 1902 to about 1908 Edwards formed partnership in Columbia with Missouri native Frank C. Walter (1869-ca. 1955); the firm of Edwards and Walter designed the Abbeville and Lee County courthouses, while Edwards designed the Dillon and Calhoun County courthouses on his own. In 1913 Edwards, by this time practicing architecture in Atlanta, formed a partnership with William J. Sayward (1875-1945), a Vermont native and former employee of McKim, Mead & White of New York; the firm of Edwards and Sayward designed the York and Jasper County courthouses.

The original Sumter District Courthouse, completed in 1821, was designed by William Jay; in 1839 it was remodeled to resemble the designs of Robert Mills, South Carolina's best-known architect renowned for his courthouses and other public buildings.

Although expanded by a rear addition designed by Wilson and Edwards in 1896, shortly after the turn of the twentieth century the courthouse was still too small and Sumter County began plans to build a new building.

In 1905 Sumter County secured a large lot at the corner of Main and Canal Streets. Legislative approval was also obtained for a bond issue and William Augustus Edwards was commissioned to design a new county courthouse for the sum of \$85,000.40.

The building that Edwards designed for Sumter County was an I-plan courthouse, set in the center of a deep open block that ran all the way from Main to Harvin Street. The I-plan was a popular design for courthouses all over the country at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. Edwards displayed a strong Beaux-Arts sensibility, however, by setting his courthouse with its long axis parallel to Main Street and putting the recessed entrance portico in the center of the long side. This creates the impression from Main Street that the building is really more of a rectangle with a notch carved out for an entrance. This impression has been much reinforced by the actual filling in of the rear notch in the early 1960s during a remodeling and enlargement of the building, so that it now actually has a rectangular footprint. Edwards's handsome blond-brick courthouse was dedicated on 21 October 1907.

Since its dedication in 1907, the Sumter County courthouse has served the citizens of Sumter County; it has been in continual use for nearly a century. It is also one of Sumter's most aesthetically important structures, and it is a recognizable and familiar downtown landmark.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   8  

Sumter County Courthouse  
Name of property  
Sumter County, South Carolina  
County and State

=====

**Bibliography**

- Wells, John E., Robert E. Dalton, and Suzanne Wylie. "Courthouses in South Carolina Designed by William Augustus Edwards" Thematic Resources Nomination, National Register of Historic Places, 1981, on file at the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.
- Wells, John E. and Robert E. Dalton. *The South Carolina Architects, 1885-1935: a Biographical Dictionary*. Richmond: New South Architectural Press, 1992.



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   9  

Sumter County Courthouse  
Name of property  
Sumter County, South Carolina  
County and State

=====

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the black line marked "Sumter County Courthouse" on the accompanying Sumter County Tax Map 249-09, Block 1, Parcel 13, drawn at a scale of 1" = 100'.

**Verbal Boundary Justification**

The nominated property is restricted to the historic courthouse and the grounds and city lot historically associated with it.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section PHOTOGRAPHS Page 10

Sumter County Courthouse  
Name of property  
Sumter County, South Carolina  
County and State

=====

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

Name of Property: Sumter County Courthouse  
Location of Property: 141 N. Main Street, Sumter  
Sumter County, S.C.

Name of Photographer: Christopher W. Nelson, College of Charleston  
Date of Photographs: 21 October 2003

Location of Original  
Negatives: S.C. Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.

1. Facade
2. South elevation
3. North elevation
4. East elevation