

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 ☒ in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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.

RECEIVED 413

OMB No. 10024-0018

OCT 11 1994

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

historic name Jefferson Davis County Courthouse

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Northwest corner of North Columbia Avenue and Third Street N/A for publication

city or town Prentiss N/A vicinity

state Mississippi code MS county Jefferson Davis code 65 zip code 39474

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Kenneth H. P. Paul  
Signature of certifying official/Title

October 5, 1994  
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
State of 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 official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

for  
Edson A. Beall

Entered  
National

11.10.94

### 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

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1 buildings  
sites  
structures  
objects  
1 0 Total

#### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

#### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Government/courthouse

#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Government/courthouse

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick

roof asphalt shingles

other stone (columns and trim)

#### Narrative Description

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

## 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.)

- ☐ **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.
- ☒ **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.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or 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.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(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 # \_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

#### Architecture

### Period of Significance

1907

### Significant Dates

1907

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Architect: Hull, W.S. (of Jackson, MS)

Builder: McGee, W.J.

### Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Name of Property

Jefferson Davis County, Mississippi  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 228140 3499540  
Zone Easting Northing  
2         

3           
Zone Easting Northing  
4         

☐ 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 Todd Sanders, Architectural Historian  
Mississippi Department of Archives  
organization and History date June 23, 1994  
street & number P.O. Box 571 telephone (601) 359-6940  
city or town Jackson state MS zip code 39205

### 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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Jefferson Davis County Board of Supervisors  
street & number P.O. Box 1137 telephone (601) 792-4204  
city or town Prentiss state MS zip code 39474

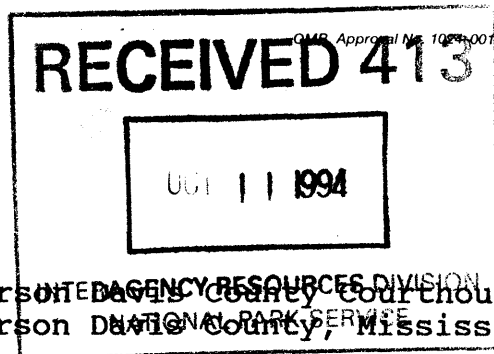
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to 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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Jefferson Davis County, Mississippi



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Occupying a location at the northeastern end of the downtown commercial district at the corner of Third Street and Columbia Avenue and facing southeast, the Jefferson Davis County Courthouse is a two-and-a-half-story, symmetrical Classical Revival building built of orange-colored brick with stone trim. The plan consists of an essentially rectangular front and a semicircular center with a smaller rectangular rear projection. The front facade has a Corinthian tetrastyle portico on the upper level carried by a three bay arcade at the lower level. A fine modillioned and denticulated cornice encircles the building. The roof is hipped but has a gable over the portico and gabled wall dormers on the sides and rear above the side and rear entrances. The side entrances are framed by slightly projecting arcaded and pedimented porticoes. The bays immediately flanking the portico terminate in flat-topped square towers. To each side of these towers is a slightly recessed two-bay end block.

Within the loggia is the main entrance which consists of a double-leaf, half-glass, paneled wood door flanked by sidelights consisting of a glass pane with panels below which echo the style of the doors. The sidelights are separated from the doors by brick piers. Flanking the entrance are two one-over-one, double-hung windows. The windows for the remainder of the first floor are one-over-one, double-hung windows while those on the second floor of the facade and side elevations have been altered from their original configuration. The top sash of these windows has been replaced with a fixed white panel and the lower sash replaced with plate glass. From a distance, however, they still read as one-over-one, double-hung windows. The windows on the rear maintain their original configuration. All of these windows have stone lintels. On the second story, the portico shelters two tall, thin, round-arched, one-over-one, double-hung windows in the outer bays which flank a rather curious arrangement of a square plate glass window surmounted by two round-arched, one-over-one, double-hung windows. The columns of the portico are linked by a simple cast iron balustrade. A simple round window lights the pediment.

The side elevations of the front, rectangular part of the plan are identical and consist of five bays. The center bay of the first floor contains a door flanked by a slightly projecting arcaded and pedimented portico. A wall dormer composed of three round-arched single-pane fixed windows is located in the center of the roof of

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Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Jefferson Davis County, Mississippi

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each side elevation. The modillion cornice serves as the sill for the dormer windows. The semi-circular part of the plan contains the courtroom on the second floor. The original courtroom windows have been covered but still read as one-over-one, double-hung windows.

A smaller rectangular projection forms the rear of the building. Several early twentieth century additions have been constructed at first floor level that obscure the original configuration of this elevation. The second floor and roof have survived unchanged, however. The second floor rear facade contains five bays with a double window in the center bay. The roof has a central wall dormer consisting of two round-arched, fixed single-pane windows flanked by two square flat-topped towers.

Internally, the first story plan consists of a broad central corridor intersected by a slightly narrower cross hall. Offices fill the remainder of the first floor. The front door opens under the landing of the double staircase which leads to the upper floors. The stair is original and consists of paneled newel posts and turned balusters. The corridors have their original beaded-board wainscoting. Most of the offices have their original doors and transoms surrounded by original door casings. The corridor ceiling has been replaced with dropped acoustical tile but the original pressed metal ceiling remains over the staircase. Some of the offices retain their original metal ceilings as well.

The courtroom, located on the second floor in the semi-circular part of the plan, is the main interior space of the building. The courtroom is entered from the stair hall through original half-glass, double-leaf, wood paneled doors. The courtroom is roughly fan-shaped and is two-stories high. The room has been altered by the addition of plywood paneling and a dropped acoustical tile ceiling. The windows have been covered and the balcony removed. The original judge's bench remains and is located on a raised dais which is slightly recessed into the rear wall of the courtroom. This dais is framed by original Corinthian pilasters and a pediment. The courtroom also retains its original pews and railing. The second floor of the rear rectangular part of the plan contains the judge's chambers and the law library. The front part of the second floor is arranged as offices. The third floor contains offices and is arranged similarly.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
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Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Jefferson Davis County, Mississippi

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Overall, the Jefferson Davis County Courthouse retains a relatively high degree of architectural integrity and is an excellent example of the Classical Revival courthouses built in Mississippi in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Also located on the property is a two-story jail constructed about 1985. This structure is connected to the courthouse at its southwest corner and is set back further from the street than the courthouse. The detailing of the jail is reminiscent of that of the courthouse and helps it blend with the original building. Due to this thoughtful siting and detailing, the jail does not detract from the courthouse.

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Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Jefferson Davis County, Mississippi

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The Jefferson Davis County Courthouse, built in 1907, is a locally important work of early twentieth century Classical Revival architecture, and is a well-executed and well-maintained example of the Classical Revival county courthouses built in Mississippi between about 1901 and 1920. It is the only notable example of Classical Revival architecture in the town of Prentiss and is the principal architectural landmark of Jefferson Davis County.

The Classical Revival style, in several variations, was by far the dominant architectural fashion for public buildings in Mississippi during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Although some important public buildings were built in the Victorian Romanesque style as late as 1902, by the time the New State Capitol was built in 1903, the preference for classical public buildings had swept the state. Of 35 county courthouses built between 1903 and 1920, 30 were of Classical Revival design, with the remainder displaying a loosely classical eclecticism. About 20 Classical Revival courthouses of this period still stand and retain a relatively high degree of integrity, including the Jefferson Davis County Courthouse. Between 1920 and 1930, Mississippi county courthouse design became much more eclectic, but tended to retain a classical vocabulary. By the 1930s, however, the designers of the state's major civic buildings had largely turned away from the Classical Revival and embraced the Art Deco style.

The Jefferson Davis County Courthouse is an excellent example of the Classical Revival civic architecture of Mississippi during the first decade of the twentieth century and retains a relatively high degree of architectural integrity.

The building was designed by W.S. Hull of Jackson, Mississippi, who designed at least ten other courthouses in Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama. His earlier courthouses, such as the Tallahatchie County Courthouse (1902) at Sumner, Mississippi, and the old Bolivar County Courthouse (built 1903 and demolished 1924) at Cleveland, Mississippi, were designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, but those built after 1903 had Classical Revival designs. A characteristic feature of his Classical courthouses was an arcaded entrance loggia surmounted by a colonnaded portico. Other surviving Classical Revival courthouses by Hull include:



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Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Jefferson Davis County, Mississippi

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Sharkey County Courthouse (1902), Rolling Fork, Mississippi  
(Old) Hinds County Courthouse (1902, demolished 1930), Jackson,  
Mississippi  
Perry County Courthouse (1904), New Augusta, Mississippi  
Old Jefferson Parish Courthouse (1905-06), Gretna, Louisiana  
Choctaw County Courthouse (1906), Butler, Alabama  
Covington County Courthouse (1907, NR 1991), Collins,  
Mississippi

Of these buildings, the Perry County and Sharkey County, Mississippi courthouses are very similar to the Jefferson Davis County Courthouse.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Jefferson Davis County, Mississippi

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**9 - BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Historic Resources Inventory Files. Historic Preservation Division,  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson.

Site visit, February 8, 1994, by Todd Sanders, Architectural  
Historian, Mississippi Department of Archives and History,  
Jackson.

**10 - GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

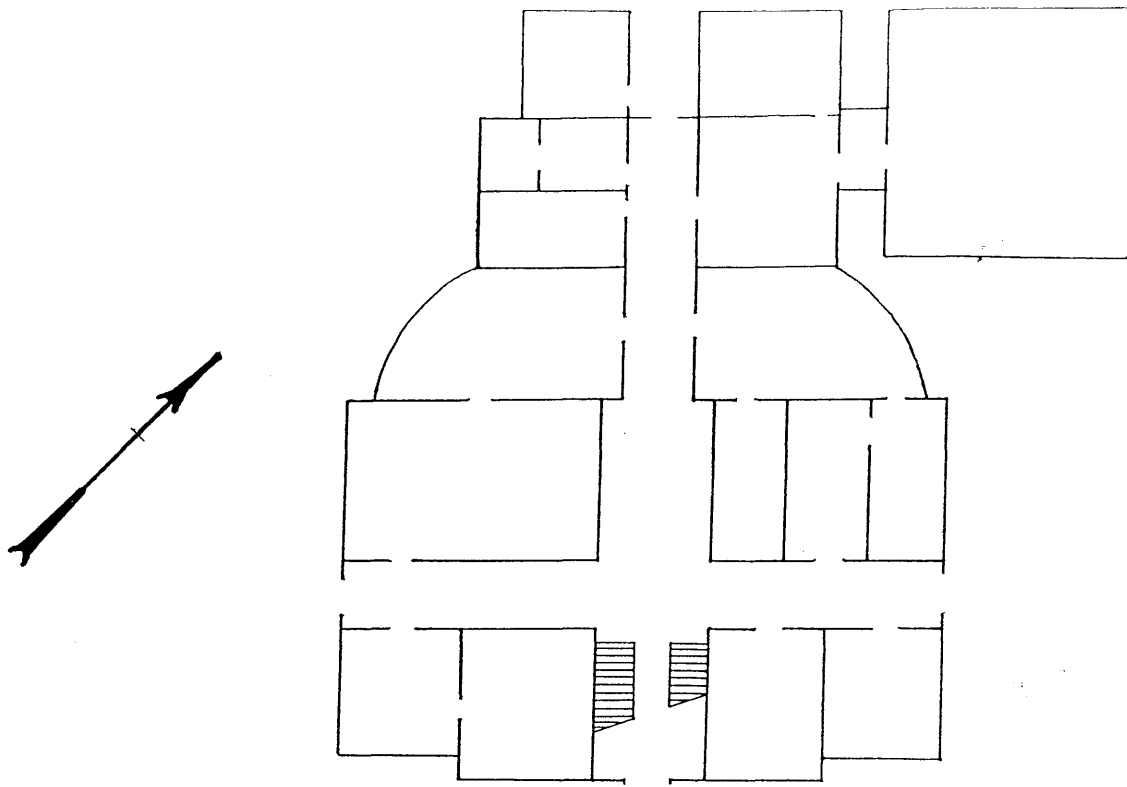
Lots 7-10, block 12, Prentiss.

**Boundary Justification**

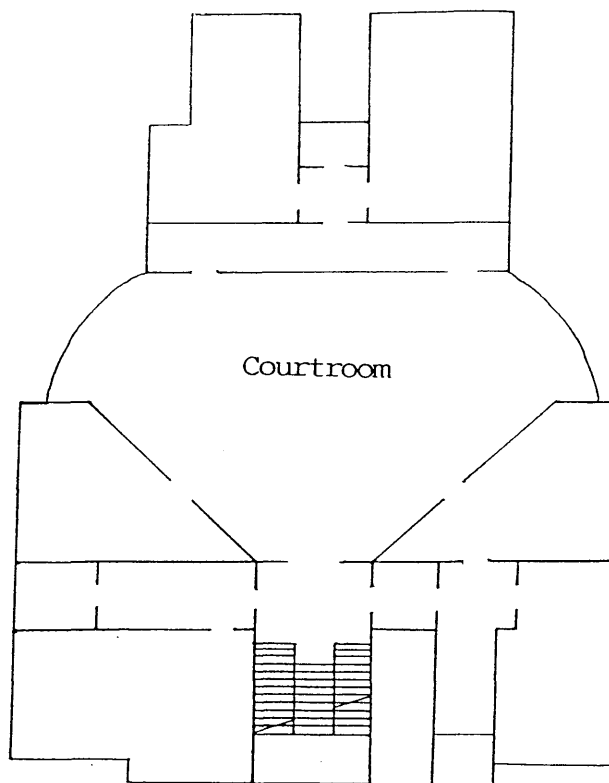
The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically  
associated with the courthouse.

# Jefferson Davis County Courthouse

Prentiss, Jefferson Davis County, Mississippi



First Floor



Second Floor





Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Prentiss, Jefferson Davis County, MS  
Todd Sanders

February 1994

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Facade, view to Northwest

Photo 1 of 4



Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Prentiss, Jefferson Davis County, MS  
Todd Sanders

February 1994

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Portico, view to North

Photo 2 of 4





Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Prentiss, Jefferson Davis County, MS

Todd Sanders

February 1994

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Southwest elevation, view to Northeast

Photo 3 of 4



Jefferson Davis County Courthouse  
Prentiss, Jefferson Davis County, MS  
Todd Sanders

February 1994

Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
Staircase, view to North  
Photo 4 of 4