

NR Listed: 1-08-03

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 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.

1. Name of Property

historic name Edward L. Westbrooke Building

other names/site number Jonesboro Masonic Lodge

2. Location

street & number 505 Union Street

not for publication

city or town Jonesboro

vicinity

state Arkansas Code AR county Craighead code 031 zip code 72401

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 for 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)

Leslie Matthews
Signature of certifying official/Title

11/20/02
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

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 certifying 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

Edward L. Westbrooke Building
Name of Property

Craighead County, Arkansas
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
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL: meeting hall

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture, Social History

Period of Significance 1899-1952

Significant Dates 1899

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked) N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked) N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheet)

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):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, National Register, National Historic Landmark, Historic American Buildings Survey, Historic American Engineering Record.

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State Agency, Federal Agency, Local Government, University, Other.

Name of repository:

Edward L. Westbrooke Building
Name of Property

Craighead County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 707222 3968200
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Starting at the Southeast corner on Union Street, walk north along the façade of the building 30 feet to the Northeast corner. Turn left and continue along the northern elevation 90 feet to the Northwest corner. Turn left and continue along the rear of the building 30 feet to the Southwest corner. Turn left and continue along the southern elevation 90 feet back to the starting point.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all of the area historically associated with the Edward L. Westbrooke building that retains historic integrity.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ginny Black
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date August 27, 2002
street & number 1500 Tower Building 323 Center Street telephone 501-324-9789
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

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 Mixon, Parker & Hurst, PLC, Attorneys at Law
Street & number 505 Union Street Telephone 870-935-8600
city or town Jonesboro state AR zip code 72401

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 listing. 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 20303.

1. The first part of the document is a header section containing the title and author information.



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SUMMARY

The Edward L. Westbrooke Building, located at 505 Union Street in Jonesboro, Arkansas, is a two-story brick masonry building constructed in 1899 and designed in the Romanesque Revival style. Located across the street from the Craighead County Courthouse, the building is one of the most visible structures in downtown Jonesboro. Rows of arched windows, a deep entryway, and the tower on the northeast corner of the building all reflect the influence of the Romanesque style of architecture. The tar build-up roof and brick walls rest upon a continuous brick foundation.

ELABORATION

The Edward L. Westbrooke Building is a two-story brick masonry building designed in the Romanesque Revival style. A brick tower, which forms the northeast corner of the building, enhances the rectangular floor plan. Eight-foot windows adorn the building with the exception of the south elevation, which originally was attached to another building. One chimney is symmetrically placed against the northern elevation, and there is a partial basement that once shared an entryway into the neighboring building, the Malone Theatre, which is no longer standing. The door was thought to be an escape route for the actors and has since been bricked over.

Two major features on this building classify it as Romanesque revival. The first and most dramatic feature of the building is the masonry tower, which forms the northeast corner of the building. No other commercial building in the area uses this design feature, and it gives the building a quite dramatic appearance when compared against the other square corners in the area. The second feature is the tall arching windows on the facade, which are set beneath arching masonry lintels that are connected with keystones. Stone lintels run above and stone sills run below the windows and vents along the façade, and also are found below the windows on the north and west elevations. Originally plaster molding ran along the top of the building but it slowly deteriorated over the years and is now entirely gone.

There have been relatively few changes to the building considering it was built in 1899. The only major changes to the exterior of the building occurred in the 1950s. During this time, the Masons enclosed the outside opening of the building and added an aluminum and glass front door. The original door framing and transom remained about 10 feet inside the old recessed entryway, but the doors were discarded. When Don Mixon purchased the building in April of 1991, he replaced the aluminum door with a larger wooden and glass door with an arched transom window above the door to make the entryway look more open. The new door was flanked with plinth blocks and trim routed to match the original trim inside. Also during the 1950s, one one-over-one double-hung windows that fenestrated the façade were removed and replaced with large single pane windows framed in aluminum. Mixon restored the one-over-one wood frame windows and returned the building to its original appearance. Circa 1920, a rear window and entrance were bricked in; these were thought to be part of an old fire escape. The last major change to the exterior happened sometime

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in the late 1920s or early 1930s, when the plaster molding around the top of the building was removed due to deterioration.

East Elevation

The front façade of the building faces east. The building's Romanesque Revival style gives it a unique appearance in downtown Jonesboro. The northeast corner is comprised of a brick tower fenestrated by four large one-over-one windows: two upstairs and two downstairs. The façade is fenestrated by four windows, three one-over-one windows upstairs and one large one-over-one window downstairs. All the windows upstairs including the tower windows, are set below arching masonry lintels that are ornamented with stone keystones. The lower windows are set above a continuous stone sill and below a continuous stone lintel, and the façade window has a transom. Above each second story window is a decorative metal vent opening to the attic space. The original doorway was recessed approximately 10 feet. The framing and transom window still remain inside the front entrance. An aluminum front door was added around 1950 by the Masons, and later redone with wood and glass by Mixon to mimic the original openness. Inlaid above the doorway is an original carved stone with the date 1899 signifying the date of completion.

North Elevation

The north elevation is fenestrated by twenty large one-over-one windows: ten on the bottom floor and ten on the top floor. All the windows are set below arching masonry lintels. Decorative masonry work above the two easternmost windows give this portion of the elevation a more refined look than the rest of the side elevation. A simplistic brick chimney is symmetrically placed against the buildings exterior wall. Access to the building's basement is through a single metal door located west of the chimney below ground level.

West Elevation

The rear of the building faces west and is fenestrated by two one-over-one double-hung windows, one upstairs and one downstairs. A single metal door provides a rear exit from the building. Located directly above the doorway is a two-pane window. Two windows have been infilled with brick on the southwest corner of the second story. These windows were more than likely part of a fire escape route that was torn down in the 1920s.

South Elevation

The south elevation once sat against the neighboring building, the Malone Theatre. Therefore, there are no windows located on the elevation. Presently, the courthouse annex occupies the neighboring lot. When the annex was constructed a five-foot walk space was left between the two buildings. Stucco was applied to this side of the building at an unknown date, but does little to alter the building's overall appearance due to its close proximity to the neighboring building.

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Interior

The interior of the building has been very well preserved. Interior walls are all exposed brick, except for the dividing walls between offices, and original hardwood floors can be found both upstairs and down. All of the window trim is also original to the building. The building was originally built to house law offices downstairs, but in the 1950s the Masons moved the rear stairwell to the front of the building to accommodate a dining hall downstairs. There was a stairwell in the rear of the building that descended into the partial basement, which was also covered at this time. Sections of the oak floor where the stairway was removed were repaired with pine, which is still in place. The 1950s also saw the addition of central heating and cooling as well as the upstairs Masonic lodge meeting room move from the front one-half of the building to the back two-thirds. After the Masons left in 1969, the downstairs was used for offices and then dance classes with walls placed and moved repeatedly. The upstairs was used as an apartment and for dance classes. When Mr. Mixon bought the building, law offices were restored downstairs, and the lowered ceiling removed revealing a pressed tin ceiling.

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SUMMARY

The Edward L. Westbrooke building located at 505 Union Street in Jonesboro, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with **local significance** for its association with the development of Jonesboro and its association with the Jonesboro Masonic Lodge #129. It is also being nominated under **Criterion C** as an excellent example, and the only example of Romanesque revival designed commercial building in Jonesboro.

ELABORATION

Craighead County was established on February 19, 1859, as a rapid influx of immigrants moved into this area. Jonesboro, the county seat, was established when the town was platted in the fall of 1859. Jonesboro was chosen not only for its beauty, but also because it was the only place where a land title could be secured. Fergus Snoddy donated 15 acres and the town site was secured as a gift. The original survey of Jonesboro was nine square blocks with the courthouse building located in the center. The block that includes the Edward L. Westbrooke Building was the first designated for commercial use.

The area around present day Craighead County was somewhat slow in growing. The New Madrid earthquake in 1811 & 1812 seriously retarded the settlement of the area. The second reason it was slow to develop was that the first white settlers, Mr. & Mrs. Rittenhouse, who had come from Missouri, were found murdered in their cabin that was still being constructed. Settlers were hesitant to move into this area, and it was 14 years later when the first permanent settler came to Jonesboro. The acquisition of old land grants from the War of 1812 and the Mexican War finally sped immigration. The completion of the railroads through Craighead County occurred in 1882-83 and caused an even more rapid influx of jobs and people. Edward L. Westbrooke had been sent to the community as a lawyer with the job of securing land for the railroad. He remained in the town after the railroad was completed and built his own office building four blocks south of the railroad in 1899.

The Edward L. Westbrooke building was built in 1899 to be used as law offices downstairs and a meeting hall for the Jonesboro Masonic Lodge #129 upstairs. However the history of the land dates back to the establishment of Jonesboro in 1859. This lot was included in the original survey of Jonesboro. Several frame structures were located on this site including the county courthouse from 1869-1878. The current brick structure was contracted by Edward L. Westbrooke and built in 1899. While under construction, the Masons contacted Westbrooke to inquire about the upstairs, which became their meeting hall. In 1909 they purchased the remaining downstairs portion of the building from Westbrooke.

Mr. Westbrooke was a well-known man in Jonesboro at the time the building was constructed. Around 1890 W.H.H. Morelock organized one of the first orchestras in Jonesboro, known as "Morelock's Orchestra" for the entertainment and amusement of his family and friends. The orchestra was composed of seven locals and

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Edward L. Westbrooke was one of them. Westbrooke was also one of three members on the Board of Sewer Commissioners which developed and superintended the laying of a sewer system for Jonesboro which was later turned over to City Water and Light and is still in use.

From the time of construction, the Masons contributed to the architectural style of this building. The Masonic fraternity in Jonesboro dates back to at least 1867 when northeast Arkansas's first newspaper, *The Jonesboro Register*, was launched. The Masons ran a card that announced that the lodge met "in Jonesboro on Friday before the full moon in each month at early candlelight." The Masonic Lodge has been an important presence in Jonesboro for one hundred and thirty-five years. It has involved thousands of men, women, and children in its various orders and its service projects have touched many lives.

The Masons owned and used the building until 1969 when they sold it to Julian James who put his insurance office downstairs. James died in 1974 and the building passed to his widow Evelyn P. Skeen. Edgar E. Hall, II, bought the building from the Ms. Skeen in 1981 and opened a dance studio. Some classes were held downstairs and the upstairs was remodeled to use as an apartment in the front and a large dance studio in the old lodge room. Donn Mixon and James McCauley purchased the building from the Halls in 1991 and began restoration work. The current owner is the law firm of Mixon, Parker & Hurst, PLC. Mixon and his father were involved in Masonic organizations which met at the building as was Mr. Westbrooke in his time.

Significance

The Edward L. Westbrooke building at 505 Union Street in Jonesboro, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with **local significance** for its direct association with the growth of Jonesboro and its association with Masonic activity in the community. The building is also being nominated under **Criterion C** as the best and only example of a commercial building in Jonesboro that was designed in the Romanesque Revival style.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

The abstract of title to the building.

Williams, H.L. (1930) The History of Craighead County Arkansas. Park Harper Co., Little Rock, Arkansas.
Reprinted by Rose Publishing Co., Little Rock in 1977.

Interview with Virgil Snow by Donn Mixon

Weekly Times Enterprise, April 1906

Edward L. Westbrooke Building
Jonesboro, Craighead Co., AR
15/ 70722213968200







