

Listed in the N.R.
12-29-83

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

received _____
date entered _____

1. Name

historic George R. Mann Building

and/or common Adkins Building

2. Location

street & number 115 East Fifth Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Little Rock

N/A vicinity of

congressional district Second

state Arkansas

code 05

county Pulaski

code 119

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | <u>N/A</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <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: |

4. Owner of Property

name Walter F. Hussman, Jr.

street & number P.O. Box 2221

city, town Little Rock

N/A vicinity of

state Arkansas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Pulaski County Courthouse

street & number 405 West Markham

city, town Little Rock

state Arkansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

State Survey - Little Rock Main

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

Street Survey

date 1977

federal state county local

depository for survey records Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

city, town Little Rock

state Arkansas

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered
 (Interior)

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY

Built in 1906, the George R. Mann building, named for its architect -- George R. Mann, displays the Classical vocabulary and design pedantry popular during the early twentieth century and often associated in Arkansas with the work of its designer. The two-story flat-roofed symmetrically massed commercial structure is sited on a side street running perpendicular to Main Street, Little Rock's downtown commercial center since the late-nineteenth century, freestanding on a lot surrounded on three sides by narrow alleys. Constructed of wood joists spanning masonry bearing walls, the building's side and rear elevations are faced with a light buff-colored brick veneer which complements the white terra cotta facade's rich application of Classical decorative details, including a full entablature, dentiling and two-story fluted Ionic columns, and bay "Chicago style" windows. Continuously providing office space since its construction, the long, narrow building was designed on a symmetrical plan with offices flanking a double-loaded central corridor.

ELABORATION

In spite of the building's small scale, the order and monumentality inherent in Beaux Arts Classicism is apparent in the Mann Building's principal (north) elevation. The corners of the facade project slightly, marking the termination of the structural wall, and are articulated with moulded terra cotta blocks that visually create a raised vertical panel framed by a narrow bank of talon moulding. This treatment creates the impression of two-story pilasters. These strong vertical elements are set upon square terra cotta block pedestals with recessed central panels, articulated bases and egg and dart moulding capped cornices, and are surmounted by decorative cartouches. Each end pedestal also supports a fluted, engaged Doric half-column which together with four additional like-designed two-story tall columns, on pedestals narrower than but identical in design to the corner pedestals, carry the building's elaborately embellished entablature. Above a simple architrave, terra cotta blocks cast with a raised design of sinuous foliated forms comprise the entablature's frieze. Medallions featuring single rosettes also appear in the frieze, defining each bay of the facade and further enriching this decorative element. The entablature's dentiled cornice is capped with a series of cartouches that rhythmically decorate the parapet which caps the building. The corners of the parapet project slightly articulating the termination of the facade. A simple coping completes the crowning parapet wall.

The decorative Classical spirit of the facade is clearly reflected in the articulation of its fenestration. Four tall rectangular one-over-one double-hung windows pierce the chamfered bays of the first story elevation. Today, the original dimensions of the windows have been diminished by the creation of a false transom and a single glass door has replaced the western-most window. Both alterations date to the 1930s and will soon be corrected as part of a proposed rehabilitation project. The windows are set on a base of terra cotta blocks laid flush with the building line, thus emphasizing the profile of the chamfered bay above, and are framed with a band of egg and dart moulding that is contiguous across the facade, spanning the column pedestals as well as surrounding the windows. Fascia bands and a narrow cornice with enriched talon moulding define the transition from the first to the second story of the facade. Even richer than the first floor fenestration, the second floor features the bay or "Chicago" windows Mann often employed in commercial structures here composed of one-

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

| | |
|------------------|--|
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| RECEIVED | |
| DATE ENTERED | |

CONTINUATION SHEET

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over-one double-hung windows, each surmounted by a transom. Two slender colonnettes, the height of the window and of the transom respectively, and a narrow band of dentiling articulate the wood window surrounds. A dented cornice board above the transoms mediates between the facade's angular front and the dominant entablature above.

A double-leaf entrance, definitively, framed by a one-story flat-roofed surround projecting slightly beyond the facade's central bay offers principal access to the building. The recessed doorway, composed of simple wood doors with large rectangular lights, is raised slightly above grade and reached by two shallow steps. The door surround features a perimeter of egg and dart moulding, terra cotta panels decorated with garlands, and a panel bearing the name "Adkins" (dating to a 1930s ownership change) in the lintel.

The side (east and west) elevations of the building appear to have been conceived to afford maximum light to the relatively narrow office spaces within. The long facade features a variety of window designs to achieve this end. The first story of the brick walls is penetrated by eight tripartite openings each consisting of two narrow one-over-one double-hung windows flanking a larger center window. Wood lintels and concrete sills offer further definition. In the second story, like-designed tripartite windows alternate with four bay windows with exposed concrete slabs forming their flat roofs and projecting floors. Single double-hung one-over-one rectangular windows in segmental arched surrounds appear in both the first and second stories of the southern end bays of the side elevations. The rear (south) elevation is the least distinguished of the building's facades, exhibiting no fabric of architectural significance.

In contrast to its richly decorated facade, the interior of the Mann Building is almost utilitarian. The original plan of the building provided only for a double-loaded corridor flanked by offices with a stairway occupying a central location along the interior east wall. Although the building has no formal lobby space, finely milled arched doorways with transoms appear along the first floor corridor and the first floor corridor features a tile wainscot. A similar wainscot lines the walls of the stairwell that holds the building's U-planned cast iron stair. Distinguished by its decorative rail, the stair is the building's most significant interior feature. As the cumulative result of alterations made by a succession of tenants over the building's life, little additional interior fabric of importance survives. Some original baseboard and window moulding remains but not contiguously nor characteristically throughout the building. A recent rehabilitation project has assured the continuation of the Mann Building's historic use as an office building and protectively restored its outstanding facade.

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | |

Specific dates 1906

Builder/Architect George R. Mann

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The George R. Mann Building is of architectural significance both as an example of the pervasive influence of Beaux Arts Classicism on the American architecture of the early twentieth century and as an example of the work of its designer, prominent architect George R. Mann who maintained his professional offices in the building from the time of its construction until 1911-12. Among other early tenants of the Mann Building were some of Little Rock's most distinguished professionals, including Dr. Frank Visonhaler, Dr. E. R. Dibrell and Dr. M. E. McCaskill, thus suggesting, as contemporary City Directories indicate, that this was indeed a prime location. In 1911-12, the building was sold and renamed the Urquhart Building. It again changed hands in the 1930s and has since been known as the Adkins Building. The monumentality and Classical proportions intrinsic to the Beaux Arts style in its most literal interpretations are most frequently associated with and especially well suited to the design of public buildings. However, they are skillfully translated in the Mann Building even within the constraints of its small scale rendering the building truly outstanding among Little Rock's commercial architecture of this period. Recognized as one of Arkansas' most significant architects for his execution of a wealth of important, largely Classical, structures including the Pulaski County Courthouse (1912, NR listed 18 October 1979), the Arkansas Gazette Building (1908, NR listed 22 October 1976) and the Arkansas State Capitol (c. 1900-1912, NR listed 28 June 1974). Mann's training in Classicism both during his studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with William R. Ware and in earlier practice with Beaux Arts trained Edward Jacques Eckel, prepared him well to apply the dictates of the style. In this building, his fluency in the Classical vocabulary is evidenced by the richly decorative facade's foliated frieze, dentiled cornice and cartouche laden parapet. These features, together with Mann's adaption of the more modern bay or "Chicago" window, contribute to the building's esthetically pleasing appearance while continuing to serve its historic function as an office facility.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Autobiographical Sketch, George R. Mann, written October 6, 1932.
City Directories, City of Little Rock, 1904 to present.
Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1897 and 1913
"Little Rock and Arkansas Development Edition", Arkansas Gazette, March 1908 p. 10

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one
Quadrangle name Little Rock, ARK Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|---|--|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | <u>1</u> <u>5</u> | <u>5</u> <u>6</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> | <u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>4</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> | B | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| C | | | | D | | | |
| E | | | | F | | | |
| G | | | | H | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

W 50' of lots 11 and 12 and W 50" of the N 40" of Lot 10 block 6 original city of Little Rock

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| | | | | |
|-------|------------|------|--------|------|
| state | <u>N/A</u> | code | county | code |
| state | | code | county | code |

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ethel Goodstein, Architectural Historian (ed. by staff of the AHPP)
 organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date August 17, 1981
 street & number Suite 500 Continental Building telephone (501) 371-2763
 city or town Little Rock state Arkansas

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Wilson Shirley

title State Historic Preservation Officer date April 13, 1983

| | |
|--|------|
| For HCRS use only | |
| I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register | |
| | date |
| Keeper of the National Register | |
| Attest: | date |
| Chief of Registration | |







