

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NR 10/21/08

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 Hill, Taylor, Hotel
other names/site number Taylor Hotel/ Site # JO0033

2. Location

street & number 409 Alabama Street not for publication
city or town Coal Hill vicinity
state Arkansas code AR county Johnson code 071 zip code 72832

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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ 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

Hill, Taylor, Hotel
Name of Property

Johnson County, Arkansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	1	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)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Hotel

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/I-house

foundation STONE
walls WOOD/Weatherboard
roof METAL/Tin
other _____

Narrative Description

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

Hill, Taylor, Hotel
Name of Property

Johnson County, Arkansas
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.)

- 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.** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- 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.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

LOCAL

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

c. 1890-1950

Significant Dates

c. 1890

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

(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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Hill, Taylor, Hotel
Name of Property

Johnson County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>439101</u>	<u>3921636</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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 Donald Ray Hurst; edited by Van Zbinden, National Register Historian
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date February 22, 2003
street & number 323 Center Street, 1600 Tower Building telephone (501) 324-9880
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 Donald Ray Hurst
street & number 3235 Shady Brook Road telephone
city or town Altus state AR zip code 72821

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 Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Summary

The Taylor Hill Hotel is a good example of the I-house form in the folk, or national folk, tradition. The hotel was located directly across the street from the railroad depot and was the center of a thriving business community. Constructed in the traditional folk I-house form with a large rear addition, the proprietor added Folk Victorian, or Victorian elements to enhance the hotel and give it a more sophisticated feeling.

Elaboration

The Taylor Hill Hotel is a large, two-story structure located in Coal Hill, Arkansas, two blocks south of U.S. Highway 64 on Alabama Street. The construction date and craft persons are unknown though it was thought to be built circa 1890. The building is a good example of the National Folk, I-house form with Folk Victorian and Greek Revival elements in the town of Coal Hill. The Folk Victorian style of architecture was common in residential structures in Coal Hill built at the end of the nineteenth century. One of the few remaining examples, the Bowman House, built circa 1890, is one example.¹

The building might properly be called National Folk in the long tradition of the I-house form. The building is primarily an I-house structure with a rear-facing T. In this specific instance, the linear form has a long central hall running from the front to the rear through the rear wing. The exterior decoration is simple as was common to Folk homes. A three-quarter width, two-story porch on the front of the home has plain balusters; but the hotel also has turned columns and mass-produced decorative carpentry work on the porch giving a bit of Folk Victorian detailing. Additional Folk Victorian elements can be seen in the partial porch to the west elevation of the rear wing.

The hotel sits on a rough-cut stone foundation set in an irregular course. There were no fireplaces installed in the hotel, instead the hotel was heated with wood stoves on the upper and lower floors; one interior brick chimney remains. The exterior wall covering is lapped siding with cornice raking in the pediments. It has a wide cornice under the shallow boxed eaves, vernacular Doric pilasters on six of the eight corners, and door surrounds more commonly associated with Greek Revival architecture.

The selection of the I-house or National Folk form of architecture for this hotel is not surprising. Primarily a rural farming community into the late 1870s, the town of Coal Hill had only a few dry goods and grocers prior to the arrival of the railroad. The carpenters and craftsman who settled in the community would certainly have been familiar with home construction in many of the folk forms. Economics and the inability to obtain inexpensive building materials would have made folk forms like the I-house or the front-gable and wing preferred building stock.

¹ Editors Note: The Bowman House (JO0031) is, in the opinion of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, unfortunately not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places due to the application of artificial siding, replacement of windows, and removal of chimneys. Though it is ineligible it still has the basic form and decorative elements of a Folk Victorian structure.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

The community was settled largely by immigrants from Tennessee and Alabama. Homes in the hall-and-parlor and I-house forms had long existed as derivations from original English housing stock in these states. The architectural traditions from the east like the hall-and parlor, the I-house, Folk Victorian, and Greek Revival learned by carpenters in the east migrated across the South as settlement moved westward. In this way it is not uncommon to find folk building forms with dated architectural details such as the Greek Revival details on the Taylor Hill Hotel.

A burgeoning coal industry was the reason that the Little Rock & Fort Smith Railway constructed its Coal Hill Branch in the middle to late 1880s. The arrival of the railroad spurred adaptations to pre-railroad folk forms in Coal Hill. Mass produced, decorative carpentry elements could now be ordered and shipped by rail at greatly reduced costs. This is when we see the construction of the Queen Anne style, Dr. Coyle House—built circa 1890—and the Folk Victorian, Will Hunt House—built circa 1890, destroyed 2002. Taylor Hill, or his carpenter, was able to order decorative carpentry elements and have them delivered relatively inexpensively. In this way he could give his folk I-house structure a more, elaborate or fashionable appearance by the addition of Victorian elements.

Achieving the appearance of a more high style feel was an important consideration for Taylor Hill. His was one of two hotels in Coal Hill. Directly across from the railroad station, the hotel was one of the first buildings seen by passengers arriving in, or passing through, Coal Hill. With the main land office of the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railroad located in the town and with Coal Hill being the center of the Johnson County coal fields, the hotel was certainly trying to attract a clientele accustomed to finer hotels in larger cities. It was in their best interest to design a hotel that was both economical to construct—the traditional I-house form—and one that gave the appearance of high style and finer living—the Folk Victorian and Greek Revival elements.

South Façade/Front

A common, two-story I-house form, the Taylor Hill Hotel was built facing the Little Rock & Fort Smith Railway on, what was at that time, Railroad Street. The front elevation is fenestrated by two double-hung, two-over-one windows on the lower floor and two double-hung, two-over-two windows on the second floor. Centered directly in the façade are two unglazed, panel doors. These doors, the upper floor and main floor, are both accentuated by square sidelights of clear glass. Door surrounds for both doors feature pilasters reminiscent of classical columns and are topped with entablature. The main entry door on the first floor, in addition to having square sidelights, has a two-pane transom and a substantial entablature with a prominent cornice and frieze.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

As was common to many southern folk I-houses, a porch was added on the front of the structure to provide additional living space and a cooler place to reside in the era before air conditioning. This porch on the Taylor Hill Hotel is a two-story, shed roof porch. The wooden porch is supported by four square columns on the lower level and four turned columns on the upper floor. The cross-gabled, symmetrical form of the south elevation is topped with a cornice and frieze entablature under a shallow, boxed eave.

East Façade/ Side

Two bays make up the east elevation of the home; the southern bay is the side-gabled end of the I-home, the northern bay is the east façade of the rear wing. The southern bay is fenestrated by two double-hung, two-over-two windows. The lap siding extends into the pediment which is topped by a steeply pitched gable roof; shallow, boxed eaves; and cornice raking.

The northern bay is fenestrated by three double-hung, two-over-two windows on the upper story. The lower story has one double-hung, two-over-two windows, one paneled door, and one replacement double-hung, horizontal, two-over-two aluminum window. Lapped siding extends to the entablature at the eave. All the windows, with the exception of the replacement, on this elevation have architrave trim.

North Façade/ Back

The rear elevation is the northern end of the rear wing and consists of three bays: the eastern width of the main body of the hotel, the rear wing, and the northern façade of what was originally the kitchen. There are few fenestrations on this northern façade. The eastern bay has no fenestrations and the only architectural decoration is the classically styled pilaster on the northeastern corner of the main I-house. There are three windows in the rear wing. The wing is two widths wide, it has its original lap siding and there are three original, double-hung, two-over-two windows set asymmetrically in the façade and one door located on the north side of the structure. The westernmost bay is the north façade of what was once the kitchen. This bay is fenestrated by one modern door. The wall covering on this bay is plywood sheeting, painted white.

West Façade/ Side

The western elevation is comprised of three bays, the first, or northernmost, is the kitchen bay; the second is the west side porch; the third is the main body of the I-house. On the northern bay, the western wall of the original kitchen is fenestrated with an original double-hung, two-over-two window. The original lap siding has been replaced with metal siding, but only on this one exterior wall. Above the kitchen bay is the northern end of the second floor porch which extends to the rear of the building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

The middle bay is the partial side porch of the home. Like the front porch, the side porch was originally decorated with turned columns on both upper and lower floors and decorative detailing at the top of each post. The bay is fenestrated with three double-hung, two-over-two windows on the upper floor and two double-hung, two-over-two windows on the lower floor. A simple, paneled door leads off of the porch into the home. After 1972 the lower floor of this side porch was enclosed with a screen. To facilitate the screening of this porch the original turned columns and decorative work were removed. The upper porch columns, balustrade and decorative carpentry remain intact.

The southern bay of this elevation is a match to that on the eastern elevation.

Contributing Structures

There are two contributing structures to the Taylor Hill Hotel. The first structure is a well house constructed circa 1900 to the northeast of the hotel. The frame structure sits on a stone and poured concrete foundation and covers the well that formerly supplied water for the hotel. The gable roof building is fenestrated by one simple wooden door.

The second contributing structure is a gable-roofed, frame shed built in 1948. This shed sits on a poured concrete foundation and is fenestrated by only one door on the southeast corner of the east elevation. Clad in weatherboard, the shed has a corrugated steel roof and is oriented on a north-south axis.

Non-Contributing Structures

There is one non-contributing structure associated with the Taylor Hill Hotel, a gable-roofed three bay garage. The garage was built in 1959 using heavy 8 inch by 8 inch timbers. Clad in corrugated steel siding, the garage faces to the south and is accessed by an unpaved, grass covered drive.

Integrity

Though the one hundred and seventeen year old Taylor Hill Hotel is showing its age, it remains a good example of the national folk I-house. Many of these homes in Arkansas have been lost or heavily modified. The Dr. Will Hunt House (JO0030), a Folk Victorian with Queen Anne elements, was lost prior to 2002. A five ranked, side-gable example of the I-house form in Coal Hill, the Old Whittle Home (JO0034) was torn down in 1975. Even within Johnson County the I-house folk structure is becoming more and more difficult to find. The Old Stagecoach Inn, Clarksville vic. (JO0024), a circa 1840 example of the I-house form, was torn down in 1965 and the Knoxville Hotel, Knoxville (JO0039), a structure very similar to the Taylor Hill Hotel, constructed circa 1870 is also no longer extant. Additionally the Taylor Hill Hotel is the only remaining example of a hotel in Coal Hill, the other is no longer extant.

Hill, Taylor, Hotel

Name of Property

Johnson County, Arkansas

County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

There have been some modifications to the hotel, primarily as a result of its conversion to private residence. One of the original windows has been replaced. The room listed as being a kitchen on the 1913 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map has been resided on its northern and western exposures. The porch on the west side has been enclosed. The entire structure is in its original state with the exception of the two lower porches. Both lower porches have cement floors, which were hand poured by Donald Rector Hurst, owner, and son Donald Ray Hurst in 1950.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Summary

The Taylor Hill Hotel is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local** significance under **Criterion A** for its association with commercial development and mining history in the community of Coal Hill. It is also being listed under **Criterion C** as a good example of the folk I-house form of architecture in Coal Hill.

Elaboration

The town of Coal Hill is on U.S. Highway 64, in the western end of Johnson County. Coal Hill lies five miles north of the Arkansas River in gently rolling hills to the north of the river valley. Coal Hill was incorporated on January 8, 1880. It originally was called Whalen's Switch, then Eureka, and finally Coal Hill. The town was named by Mose Butts, an early day official, after the coal beneath the ground and the hills rising above the little city. In 1912, Coal Hill was the largest town in Johnson County.

Just as coal is the reason for the town's name it is the reason for it's growth and demise. In 1840, coal was discovered on the east bank of Spadra Creek—east of Coal Hill—this was reportedly the first anthracite coal discovery west of the Mississippi River. However, due to the difficulty of mining and transporting the coal, it was not mined to any advantage for several years. In 1872, the Little Rock & Fort Smith Railroad reached Clarksville opening eastern Johnson County coal fields for exploration. As railroad connections grew in the late 1870s the mining industry began a real boom, as both miners and company men began to flood into Johnson County.

By the 1880s, the Johnson County coal fields were estimated at 140,000 acres. Coal Hill was the primary shipping point for coal on the western side of Johnson County. In 1891, it was estimated that 150,000 tons of coal was shipped on the Little Rock & Fort Smith from Coal Hill alone. Both Stiewell & Company and Ouita Coal Company had mines and offices in, or near, Coal Hill. Abe and Harry Stiewell started Stiewell & Company with a slope mine west of Spadra Creek in 1873. By the end of the nineteenth century that mine, known as the Old Stiewel Mine, was one of the biggest mines and biggest producers in the Coal Hill field. It is credited by *Goodspeed's Biographical and Historical Memoirs* as setting the standard of excellence for coal in the entire state and being judged to be the best steam fuel mined coal in the United States.

The growth of the coal industry resulted in the incorporation of Coal Hill as a town January 8, 1880. At that point the town had a population of approximately 1,000 people. In 1890, 10 years after it was incorporated, the town had a population of 1,490, which made it the largest town in the county. Uncle Billy Sams, whose real name is lost to history, was the first hotel owner in Coal Hill opening his hotel in the 1870s. Langford's history of Johnson County notes that the first home in Coal Hill was built by George Williford in 1876.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company's 1913 map of Coal Hill consists of only one page. The widely scattered town has: two wagon shops, two farm implement shops, six general merchandise stores, two druggists, one bank, one restaurant, one hay dealer, one lumber mill and wholesaler, two offices, one movie theatre, and the hotels of Taylor Hill and Billy Sams. At least one of these offices was the land office for the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railroad. The railroad established their office at Coal Hill in the early 1880s and advertised timber, coal, and farm lands in the area.

The coal mines operated primarily July to January which created an itinerant working population. Many of the men were farmers who worked the mines as a source of additional income during the farming off-season. That, in combination with the fact that Coal Hill was the center of Johnson County's coal mining region, meant that it was a town with little housing stock.

The hotels of Billy Sams and Taylor Hill provided much needed accommodation to coal industry professionals, land speculators, traveling salesmen or any other person looking for housing. The construction date and craft persons who built the Taylor Hill Hotel are unknown though it was thought to be built circa 1890. Deed research for the Taylor Hill Hotel suggests that the building could have been built as early as December 1884. Little is known about Taylor Hill himself. He was born December 17, 1848, in Johnson County; the son of Mark and Rachel Hill. Mark and Rachel immigrated to Johnson County from Tennessee in 1829. Taylor was the proprietor of his hotel until his death May 13, 1913.

Taylor Hill located his hotel in an ideal location. Directly across from the railroad station, his hotel was one of the first buildings seen by passengers arriving in, or passing through, Coal Hill on the train. With the main land office of the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railroad located in the town and with Coal Hill being the center of the Johnson County coal fields, the hotel was certainly trying to attract a clientele accustomed to finer hotels in larger cities. It was in his best interest to design a hotel that was both economical to construct—the traditional I-house form—and one that gave the appearance of high style and finer living—the Folk Victorian and Greek Revival elements; a hotel that would attract people.

Because of its location at the railroad station the Taylor Hill Hotel was often the center of activity in Coal Hill. It is said that doctors and dentists would come to the hotel and set up their practice in the rooms of the hotel to address the medical needs of the people in the area. There is also oral tradition that the agreement to lease convicts to work in the Old Slope and Old Hone mines near Coal Hill was signed in the hotel's dining room. Research has failed to reveal the exact date of this occurrence. Nevertheless, life-long resident, Steve Logan, remembers the convicts being unloaded from the train and taken to the hotel to be fed. After they ate, they were marched back to the depot freight room for the night. The next morning they were given breakfast and then marched to the blacksmith shop at the mines where the irons were cut off and they were put to work.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

By 1917, the coal mines in the Coal Hill district were producing 26,781 tons of coal per month with average payrolls of \$150,000 per mine. It is estimated that in that same year profits for Coal Hill mines reached half a million dollars. Coal continued to be an important part of the economy of Coal Hill through the 1920s. However, competition from mines in Kentucky, West Virginia, Colorado and elsewhere took its toll on Arkansas mines. The coal from Arkansas had many qualities that made it desirable for locomotives and steam coal; however, large discoveries of oil in East Texas and South Arkansas greatly reduced the demand for Arkansas coal. The same qualities that made the coal attractive to industries and railroads also proved to be detrimental; the coal was soft and would crumble during shipment. This limited the mine owners to Midwest or mid-South customers. Shipment to the Northeast or to eastern markets was not profitable because of the loss to crumbling.

Loss of markets and competition from larger, modern mines offering lower costs caused many of the mines in the coal field to close during the 1920s. The declining demand for coal led to gradual concessions on the part of labor so that by 1927 they were being paid wages equal to those of 1917 and had lost all the gains made during strikes and labor movements 1914 and 1919. Gradually the mines near Coal Hill became unprofitable or simply worked-out and the coal industry declined.

The creation of the United States Highway system designated Coal Street through Coal Hill as part of United States Highway 64. This route became the main route between Little Rock, Conway, Russellville, Van Buren, and Fort Smith. As part of United States Highway 64 it was a main route from North Carolina through Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico. The increased dependence on automobiles for passenger travel brought about the end of passenger railroad service to Coal Hill. This brought about a decrease in the number of guests staying at the hotel and, to some extent, the importance of the hotel as a center of the community. Though railroad passenger service ended the rise of vehicular traffic on U. S. Highway 64 served to keep the hotel in business for a time. By 1950, however there was no longer the overnight or long-term business to keep the hotel open. It was closed and converted to a private residence.

Statement of Significance

The Taylor Hill Hotel is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local** significance under **Criterion A** for its association with commercial development and mining history in the community of Coal Hill. It is also being listed under **Criterion C** as a good example of the folk I-house form of architecture in Coal Hill.

Hill, Taylor, Hotel
Name of Property

Johnson County, Arkansas
County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

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Hill, Taylor, Hotel

Name of Property

Johnson County, Arkansas

County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots One (1), Two (2), Three (3), Eight (8), Nine (9), Ten (10), and Eleven (11) in Block Two (2) in the School Land Addition North of the Railroad in the town of Coal Hill, Arkansas.

Boundary Justification

This description includes all the land historically associated with the Taylor Hill Hotel.