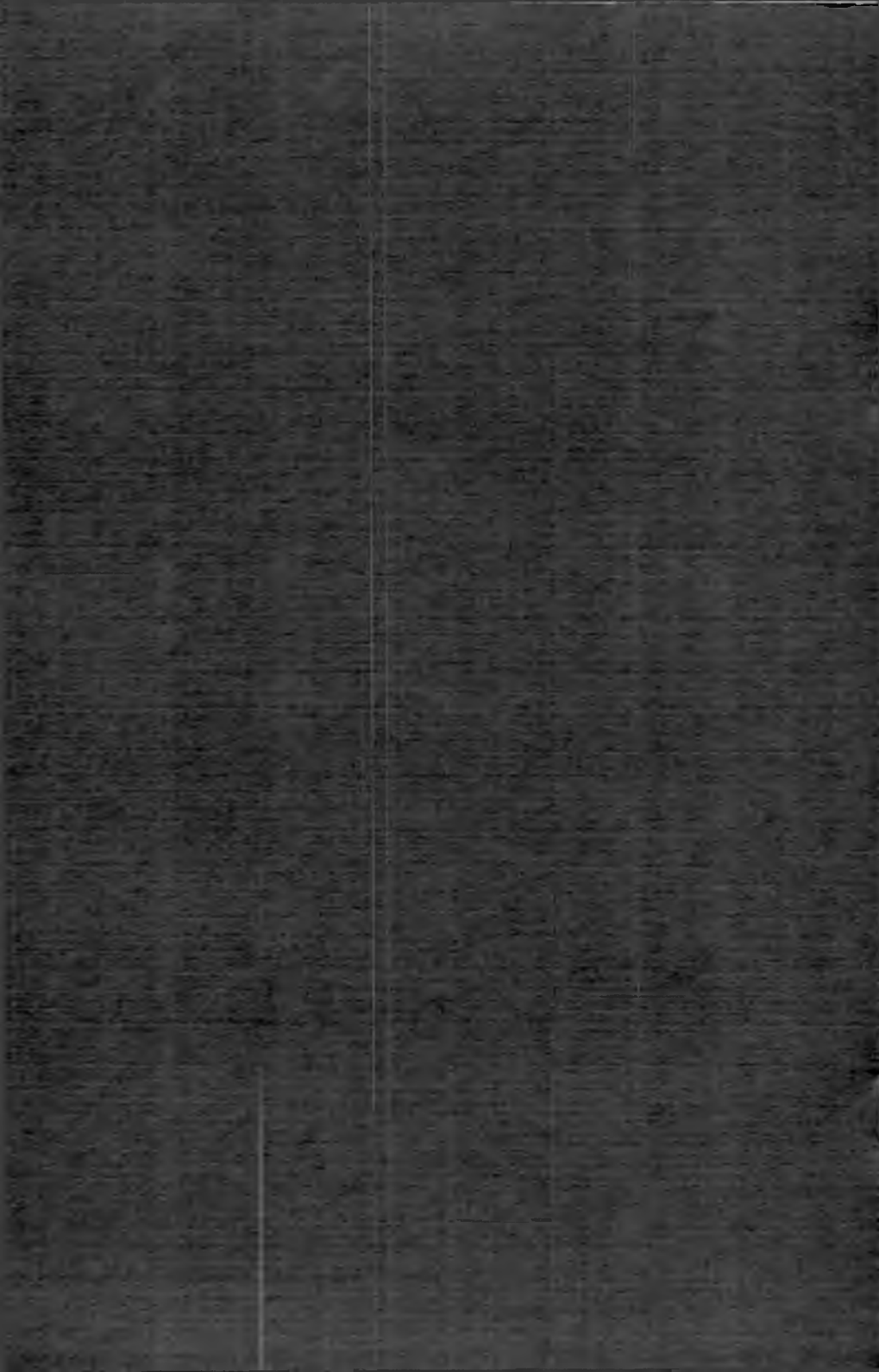




Fall

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THE HISTORIC HUNTSVILLE
QUARTERLY
Of Local Architecture & Preservation



THE HISTORIC HUNTSVILLE QUARTERLY

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from the Editor

Most people are first attracted to older buildings because in some indefinable way they satisfy a need that contemporary design does not fulfill. The idea of saving and restoring for modern use an old, run-down structure is romantic and exciting. There is a tremendous thrill at seeing an historic building returned to life as tacky additions are removed and the original fabric and texture reappear. But for the preservation movement to achieve more than scattered, isolated successes, preservationists must make themselves thoroughly knowledgeable in the area of finance. Old buildings are real estate, and real estate is finance. Every serious preservationist must become as familiar with the realities of financing and government funding as he is with the number of panes in a Federal sash.

For this reason, the first issue of the QUARTERLY under its new editor will focus on one of the economic methods that can be used to make restored buildings a reality. Tax laws and government grants are not inherently fascinating to most people; but they are the tools of the preservation profession. Until they are understood and utilized to their fullest extent, the preservation movement can not achieve its greatest potential and impact.

Preservationists must learn to communicate with developers, bankers, and government bureaucrats in the only language they understand - the language of money. The preservationist can talk about beautiful restoration plans forever, but until he backs up his ideas with specific figures on their financial feasibility, no one will listen except like-minded preservationists. Recent changes in the federal tax laws and proposed changes in Alabama ad valorem taxation should have a positive influence on making preservation more acceptable to owners and developers. For the first time, the tax laws are written to favor restoration rather than demolition or new construction. Also, the outrageous costs of new construction today should encourage preservation to be considered as a viable alternative to demolition and rebuilding. Armed with the new tax laws, the preservationist has a strong financial resource to support his arguments; his duty is to see that people are made aware of the economic benefits to be derived from restoration.

As the federal tax laws are now written, the provisions favoring historic restoration expire in 1981 so that preservationists should not delay in taking advantage of them. Congress may extend these provisions beyond 1981 - but it may not. The Alabama tax law providing a tax break for historic properties must be approved by the people. Be sure you vote on November 7th in favor of this constitutional amendment.

Future issues of the QUARTERLY will discuss other avenues of preservation funding, examine local architectural history, and provide articles of assistance to the individual restorer. The QUARTERLY is perceived as a means of informing the public of preservation techniques, architectural history, and news and events, all of regional significance. If you have any suggestions for future issues or news that should be publicized, please contact the editor. ❀

TAXES AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION



The Law Library on East Side Square is an excellent example of rehabilitating an older structure for an "efficient contemporary use." It was built in 1913 for a department store; the 1974 renovation retained the significant architectural features but created a contemporary entrance since the original was unrecorded.

I. The Tax Reform Act of 1976

The Tax Reform Act of 1976, signed into law October 4, 1976, contains provisions (Section 2124) designed to stimulate the rehabilitation of historic buildings and discourage their destruction. To facilitate this, certain tax incentives are provided to owners who rehabilitate depreciable historic structures within the guidelines established by the Secretary of the Interior. Conversely, there are tax disincentives when such a structure is demolished. The following description of the tax consequences is for general informational purposes only.

ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES: To qualify, a structure must be a depreciable property; this generally means one that is subject to allowance for depreciation under Section 167 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 and excludes owner-occupi-

ed homes. In other words, it must be income-producing property which includes rental housing. IN ADDITION the building must be a "certified historic structure" which means that it satisfies any one of the following conditions:

1. Listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places.
2. Located in a district listed on the National Register and certified as being of historical significance to the district.
3. Located in a district designated under a state or local statute which has been certified by the Secretary of the Interior and individually certified as being of historical significance to the district.

Structures qualifying under condition 1 are automatically certified historic structures. Those structures located within a district (conditions 2 and 3) must be certified by filing Part I of the Historic Preservation Certification Application with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). He will forward the application to the National Register Division staff who then rules on whether or not the structure is of historical significance to the district and provides written notification of the decision to the owner.

REHABILITATION: The Tax Reform Act of 1976 provides major tax incentives for rehabilitation by owners of commercial historic structures. Rehabilitation means the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an EFFICIENT CONTEMPORARY USE while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural and cultural values. This does not require restoration although a restoration would also be eligible for the same tax benefits if it met all the requirements. For an owner to

take advantage of the rehabilitation provisions of the tax law, he must have the rehabilitation certified by the Secretary of the Interior. This is



BEFORE: This two-story brick store house at 106 South Side Square was built in 1883 but through the years has suffered thoughtless modernizations and wanton neglect.

accomplished by filing Part II of the Historic Preservation Certification Application with the SHPO at any time during the rehabilitation work although to ensure acceptance it is advisable to submit the proposed rehabilitation plans prior to the start of construction so that any items which do not meet the standards may be corrected. The SHPO will forward the application to the Technical Preservation Services Divi-

sion for review and evaluation, and they will then notify the owner whether the project is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Upon completion of the rehabilitation work, the owner must notify the Technical Preservation Services Division, through the SHPO, that the project has been completed and submit appropriate materials documenting it.



AFTER: A sensitive renovation has highlighted the surviving original elements, the cleaned brick and repainted cornice, while remodeling the ground floor to both harmonize with the existing design and provide a contemporary entrance.

If the completed work meets the Standards for Rehabilitation, it will be certified and the owner will be eligible to

take advantage of the tax incentives.

THE TAX ADVANTAGES: The Tax Reform Act of 1976 provides two separate tax advantages for rehabilitation.

1. **THE 60-MONTH AMORTIZATION DEDUCTION** may be used by an owner for depreciating any capital expenditure incurred in connection with a certified rehabilitation of a certified historic structure in lieu of depreciation deductions otherwise allowed. A **CERTIFIED REHABILITATION** means any rehabilitation of a certified historic structure which the Secretary of the Interior has certified to the Secretary of the Treasury as being consistent with the historic character of such property or the district in which it is located. It does not require any minimum amount to be spent on rehabilitation work. The 60-month amortization deduction applies only to rehabilitation expenses incurred after June 14, 1976 and before June 15, 1981. This provision allows an owner to deduct capital expenditures incurred in rehabilitation over a sixty month period rather than being added to the adjusted basis of the structure and depreciated over its useful life.

2. **ACCELERATED DEPRECIATION DEDUCTIONS** may be taken at the owner's election on certified historic properties which are substantially rehabilitated. A **SUBSTANTIAL REHABILITATION** is one in which the expenditure for a 24-month period ending on the last day of any taxable year (reduced by any amounts allowed as depreciation or amortization with respect thereto) exceed the greater of 1. \$5,000 or 2. the adjusted basis of such property. The adjusted basis (initial cost of the property plus the costs

II. Standards for Rehabilitation

The following Standards shall be used by the Secretary of the Interior when determining if a rehabilitation project qualifies as certified rehabilitation pursuant to the Tax Reform Act of 1976.

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property that requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.
2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
3. All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and that seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
4. Changes, which may have taken place in the course of time, are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplication of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.
7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be used.
8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to, any project.
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale,

color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.

10. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to

structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired. ✱

III. Alabama Ad Valorem Taxation

As a result of the state wide property reappraisal and the proposed constitutional amendment on ad valorem taxation, the amount of property taxes paid next year could change dramatically. The Wallace Property Relief Package contains enabling legislation of which Act 728 is of particular interest to owners of historic property. The ad valorem taxation rates now in effect have no incentives for historic preservation; historic property is assessed at the current rate of either 25% for commercial property or 15% for single family dwellings. Act 728, which defines classes of taxable property and fixes the ratios of assessed value, would change this. Commercial assessment ratios would decrease from 25% to 20% of the appraisal value and residential assessment ratios, from 15% to 10%. In addition, provision is made for the first time for historic buildings and sites; these would be assessed at 10% regardless of the use to which such property is put. Historic buildings and sites are defined by the Act as all buildings or

structures (i) listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or (ii) located in a Registered Historic District and certified by the United States Secretary of the Interior as being of historic significance to the district. This means that historic properties would be assessed at the lowest rate even if they are used commercially; in other words, the assessment basis for historically significant commercial property would decrease from the current rate of 25% to the new rate of 10%.

All properties individually listed on the National Register would be assessed at 10%. All properties located in Old Town or Twickenham and used exclusively as a single family dwelling by the owner would be assessed at 10%. Those properties located in Old Town and Twickenham that are not owner occupied as a single family dwelling would be assessed at 20% UNLESS they are certified by the Secretary of the Interior as being of historic significance to the district, then

they would qualify for the 10% ratio of assessment regardless of their use.

The Wallace Property Relief Constitutional Amendment will be voted on in the November 7th general election. If passed, the amendment will become effective immediately, and the revised assessment bases described above will be applicable during the next tax year.

The lower assessment rates, however, do not necessarily mean that the amount of taxes paid by the property owner will decrease. They may, in fact, increase because of the property reappraisal which is now underway. The decrease in assessment rate may not be enough to offset the increase in appraisal value. Particularly hard hit will be those properties that have not been reappraised recently and, as a consequence, have a decidedly out-

of-date appraisal value on the tax books.

However, owners of historic commercial property will be able to cut their taxes in half merely by agreeing to have their historic properties listed on the National Register. This provision should be particularly attractive to people who own older structures in the central business district. Listing on the Register would not only decrease property taxes by half but would also make these properties eligible for certain tax incentives if they were rehabilitated.

If this constitutional amendment is passed in the November election, the QUARTERLY will carry a further article advising owners of National Register properties of their obligations to ensure that they receive the 10% ratio of assessment due them. *

IV. NATIONAL REGISTER PROPERTIES IN MADISON COUNTY

Clemons House
219 Clinton Avenue
Domestic Science Building
Alabama A & M Campus
Steele-Fowler House
808 Maysville Road
Hundley House
401 Madison Street
First Alabama Bank
216 West Side Square

Episcopal Church of the Nativity
208 Eustis Street
Redstone Test Stand
Redstone Arsenal
Memphis & Charleston Depot
Church Street
Humphreys-Rodgers House
502 Clinton Avenue
Old Town Historic District
Twickenham Historic District



127 Walker, 1889

Old Town Historic District

Huntsville's newest National Register listing is the Old Town Historic District which was accepted July 18, 1978. This district which lies on the northeast edge of the central business district was originally created by city ordinance in 1974 and contains 263 structures spread over almost 100 acres. The addition of Old Town to the Register means that those properties within the district that are income-producing and certifiably significant are eligible for renovation under the provisions of the Tax Reform Act of 1976.

Residential construction in Huntsville was seriously underway by 1815 with many of the wealthy cotton planters choosing to erect their homes southeast of the Courthouse Square along Williams, Adams, and McClung, a rolling, wooded area

outside of the city limits. Other early residents built their homes scattered along the other streets of the town and several lived on the Square itself, often dividing their structure between residential and business uses.

Several factors had a decided influence on the character of early Huntsville housing. The town population was small - not quite 3,000 by 1850 - and land was abundant. Transportation was either by foot or by horse which required people to live within a reasonable distance of the courthouse; two miles was usually the limit for a pedestrian city. The combination of these factors meant that most people lived within a mile of the town center, but because the population was not large, each family could have a generous plot of ground for their home, often an acre or more.

This was important since the average ante-bellum home consisted of much more than a house; each residence also required a collection of out-buildings. The house itself contained only entertaining rooms, bedrooms for the family, and perhaps a dining room. All

the other functions of daily life were conducted in specialized accessory structures that could include any or all of the following: slave quarters, smoke house, kitchen, gin press and house, barn and stables, grainary, corn mill, mule shed, wellhouse, dairy and wood shed.

Obviously a lot of land was needed to accommodate all these separate structures. The kitchen was removed from the house to minimize the danger of fire to the main structure and to keep it cooler since the cooking fire had to be kept burning all summer. This dispersal of household activities was rendered functional by the presence of slaves who carried out the chores. The result was a town with homes set on spacious grounds but concentrated within a mile of the courthouse.

705 Randolph, 1889





413 Holmes, before 1860

By 1861, the Huntsville map shows that about 25 houses were located within the present boundaries of Old Town, but most of these have been demolished to make way for more contemporary structures or they have been remodeled beyond recognition.

The western half of Old Town was incorporated into Huntsville by act of the state legislature in 1843, but of the three main thoroughfares only Clinton and Holmes were opened before the Civil War. The land between Clinton and Randolph was owned by George Steele, Huntsville's premier ante-bellum architect, and he developed this property to face onto Randolph causing the south side of Clinton to become backyards. Steele's own house was the first to be built on this tract. The north side of Clinton also remained undeveloped, probably because the land between Clinton and Holmes was low and swampy, often standing under water, and not considered suitable for building sites. One early feature of Clinton street was the brick yard of George Steele in the 500 block which

in 1858 became the site of Steele's Machine Shop, erected by George's son Matthew who took over his father's brick building and architecture business. At the east end of Clinton was the site of Green Academy, an early boys' school which was built in 1821 and destroyed during the Civil War.

At the east end of Clinton was the site of Green Academy, an early boys' school which was built in 1821 and destroyed during the Civil War. The site was later deeded to the city to be used exclusively for public schools, the first of which was designed by Matthew Steele and erected by J. M. Hutchens in 1882.

Another famous school, Huntsville Female College, was built on a large lot between Clinton and Randolph in 1853, but it also faced Randolph. The building was designed by George Steele and was an imposing two-story, brick structure on a full raised basement with a central portico of two-story columns. The school burned in 1895 and was not rebuilt.

The only street to be developed during this early phase was Holmes and most of the houses were on the north side of the street. The early residents of this area who can be identified were store owners and professional people. There was a mayor, physician, planter, an attorney, several merchants, and the register of the U. S. land office.

The Dill-Rice home at 118 Calhoun is the largest of the surviving ante-bellum homes. It was built in 1856 and was probably designed by Matthew Steele for Isiah Dill who was a prominent local attorney. It is a good example of the Greek Revival style with its formal, symmetrical facade and classical detailing. Two other homes, 413 and 505 Holmes, are small, one-story structures, also of solid brick construction, representative of early 19th century tastes with their centered entrance, regularly spaced windows, gable roof, and lack of applied ornament.

However, late in the 19th century, a porch, decorated with exquisite jigsaw cut woodwork, was added to 505, and 413 was slightly altered when the roof was raised.

Serious development of Old Town began in the 1880's and was influenced by the location of the Memphis & Charleston depot on the north side of town and by the establishment of a cotton spinning mill on Jefferson street one block south of the M & C tracks. The coming of the railroad in 1859 changed the town's focus from the Tennessee River to the depot as the source of contact with the outside world. However since in-town transportation had not improved, it naturally became advantageous to locate as near the depot as possible.

In 1892 the Dallas mill opened north of the Old Town area. The construction of this, Huntsville's first large textile mill, signaled the start of a period of prosperity

105 Calhoun, ca. 1905'



and growth for the town and an end to the post war depression. As other mills opened in Huntsville during the next ten years, Huntsville became a scene of great activity, and people flocked to the city to partake of the new employment and opportunities offered.

Housing construction boomed as the newcomers doubled the town's population. The sparsely settled land of Old Town became popular because of its proximity to town and the depot. The ends of Holmes and Clinton west of town were also filled with Victorian homes at this time as was any vacant land near the Square, but urban renewal and redevelopment have obliterated these neighborhoods so that Old Town is unique in preserving its Victorian character. This can be seen in its high concentration of closely spaced, ornate Victorian houses of frame construction which make a dramatic contrast to the formal brick homes set on large lots of the ante-bellum period.

There were several reasons for this change in streetscape. People were still confined to an area they could easily walk which meant that the practical limits of the ante-bellum community had remained constant, but at the same time, the population had greatly increased. Twice as many people had to be accommodated on the same amount of land area; naturally the portion of land available for each house was reduced.

Two changes in life style also influenced the relationship of the house to its environment. With the abolition of slavery, detached kitchens and other accessory structures became less and less convenient as the housewife was forced to

take over more of the chores herself. Moving the kitchen into the house was much more efficient. This shift seems to have appeared earliest in those homes of the less wealthy who were the first to experience a lack of servants. Also as the century progressed, the number of goods and services available in the marketplace increased so that fewer chores had to be carried out at home.

As the specialized outbuildings became superfluous, they were eliminated. And as they disappeared, the amount of land required for a home decreased. The final result of all these factors was that neighborhoods which were built predominantly at the end of the 19th century tended to be densely packed on narrow lots. Also during this time, the contractor-developer became common; naturally the more houses he could build on a tract of land, the larger the profit he made.

In 1871 the east half of Old Town was incorporated into the city limits, and Walker street was opened to development during this decade. The majority of the Old Town houses are typically Victorian. They are of one or two stories of frame construction with steep hipped and gabled roofs and asymmetrical facades created by a projecting front parlor and bay windows. An L-shaped front porch elaborately decorated with fancy cut woodwork was absolutely essential. The layout often retained the central hallway, but rooms were of varying size and shape depending on the function they were to fulfill.

Typical of the small, one-story Victorian houses is 105 Calhoun with its steep, truncated hipped roof gabled over

the projecting front room and side bays. The L-shaped porch is decorated with a band of spindles and delicate turned brackets at each post. Similar in style but even more picturesque are 408 and 410 Holmes (1897) which each have a polygonal tower at the corner.

The Keniston house at 615 Holmes (ca. 1894) is also a

of spindles and chamfers. The centered gable features a large semicircle of latticework surrounded by rosettes.

One of the most imposing homes is the Baughn house at 705 Randolph built in 1889. It is a huge, two-story house of Italianate massing topped by a mansard roof and embellished with a three-story



611 Holmes, 1906

small structure but displays the fine Queen Anne detailing that could be applied to even a modest home. The roof erupts with false gables while the porch and front ell are extensively trimmed with paneling and spoolwork.

The McCaleb house at 424 Holmes (1888) has a symmetrical facade but is notable for its distinctive ornament composed

tower. The various window groupings are particularly interesting.

Old Town continued to grow during the early years of the 20th century as a middle class neighborhood of merchants and professional people. In 1902 a new public school was erected on the Green Academy site; it was a two-story brick building designed by Herbert Cowell.



709 Randolph, 1919

This structure was replaced in 1938 by the present school which is a fine example of the Art Deco style of architecture.

House design during the first decade was a mixture of late Victorians, Colonial Revivals, and bungalows, although by 1915 the latter had gained supremacy. The McMeans house at 611 Holmes (1906) is a good example of the Colonial Revival design with its formal, symmetrical facade and classical detailing all interpreted in wood.

A less typical Colonial Revival design is seen at 514 Holmes which was enlarged and given a full second floor in 1902 by architect Cowell who also modernized the windows and facade and added the off-center porch.

The bungalow house form was created to fit the needs of

the smaller family without servants. Coming of age simultaneously with the automobile, it was the first widely popular style to incorporate the carport as an integral part of the plan. Bungalows were typically of wood or stucco construction of one floor with perhaps a partial second floor. The large roof extended unbroken to shelter the always present porch which was enclosed by a low wall of masonry and tapered piers. The windows were grouped.

The most interesting house from this period is 709 Randolph (1919) which is a Prairie style house inspired by the designs of Frank Lloyd Wright fifteen years earlier in the Chicago suburbs.

There has been a minimal amount of new construction in the district since 1940. During the middle of the century,

the area began to deteriorate, and when the population boom of the 1950's occurred, many of these fine older homes were converted to apartments and boardinghouses to the detriment of both them and the neighborhood. Now however, their charms have been rediscovered and slowly the area is returning to a district of well tended, single family dwellings.

Old Town represents an important era in Huntsville's history, when the town was a prosperous cotton mill center, and it stands today to remind us of a way of life that can not be recreated. Old Town is a valuable historic resource to be appreciated by residents and visitors alike. *

615 Holmes, 1894



News...

THE 11th ANNUAL ALABAMA Preservation Conference was held in Selma on August 11th and 12th. The Friday morning session featured talks by Leopold Adler of Savannah and Chris Delaporte of Washington, D. C. Adler presented the excellent slide lecture on restoration activity in Savannah that he had delivered in Huntsville in June.

Chris Delaporte is director of the newly created Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (Department of the Interior) which administers the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation. His talk was a plea for preservationists to become active in policy planning and to encourage public participation at the local level. His office can best provide technical assistance and financial support to those programs that have already demonstrated an ability to involve the local government and community in their activities. The future of the preservation movement depends on broadening its base to attract new people and ideas and on developing creative new preservation methods as an alternative to simply asking for more money.

There was a tour of the site of Cahaba before the afternoon session which featured workshops. Mrs. Lambdin of Natchez gave an excellent lecture on how to run a successful architectural pilgrimage. Harvie

Jones of HHF conducted a workshop on the problems encountered in the renovation of older homes. A buffet supper at Sturdivant Hall concluded the day's activities.

Saturday morning's general session began with Dwight Young of Charleston who is director of the Southern Field Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. He stressed that the preservation program must enlarge its scope and focus its attention on small houses, commercial and industrial complexes, and streetscapes in addition to the traditional mansion. Young then outlined the National Trust funding programs that are currently available. None of them, however, can be used for construction; they are all to be utilized for planning activities.

Clem Labine, the editor of THE OLD HOUSE JOURNAL, spoke on the theme of the preservationist as a modern day pioneer. It is his contention that as the geographical frontier disappeared, the pioneer type among us turned instead to the decaying city center as the frontier of this century. Preservationists are the leaders in an attack on the values of our throw-away society by demonstrating that recycling the past is energy conservative and absolutely essential if we are to survive the next century.

They are showing the way to a new life style that places a high value on the conservation of our natural and man-made resources, and consequently, preservationists are the real futurists in our society.

The last morning talk was delivered by Warner Floyd, director of the Alabama Historical Commission, who outlined the activities of his office during the past few years.

A box lunch was served at Kenan's Grist Mill and more workshops filled the afternoon. A cocktail party at the John Tyler Morgan House preceded the awards banquet which concluded the conference. Harvie Jones received an honorary membership from the Live-in-a-Landmark Council for his many contributions to the restoration of state landmarks.

The 12th Annual Preservation Conference will be held in Tuscaloosa next August.

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PROFESSOR JEFFREY BAYER will be the first speaker on the Historic Huntsville Foundation's Program Series for the 1978-79 season. Professor Bayer, who is chairman of the U. A. H. art department, will present a slide lecture on "Victorian Architecture." It will be held Tuesday evening, October 17th, at 8 in Parlor B, Von Braun Civic Center. The Program Series is open to the public, so come and bring your friends. Admission is \$1 for members and \$3 for non-members.

••••

NANCY HOLMES OF MOBILE will be in Huntsville on November 14th to address the membership of the Historic Huntsville

Foundation on the topic of historic preservation in Mobile. She is very active in the National Trust and has done much local preservation work in Mobile. This should be an informative and interesting evening; details will be in the next Newsletter.

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THE CITY OF HUNTSVILLE, with the encouragement and assistance of the Historic Huntsville Foundation, has applied for a matching grant from the Alabama Historical Commission in the amount of \$39,000 for restoration of the exterior of the O. R. Hundley House. The City is appropriating \$19,000 in in-kind services, and the County, \$20,000 to match the grant. The City is also taking care of immediate emergency roof repair to stop leaks. The City will apply for a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission for interior restoration.

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THE EDITOR WOULD LIKE TO extend her heartfelt thanks to Richard Pope who generously gave of his time and knowledge to teach her a crash course on the mechanics of printing - which made this issue of the QUARTERLY possible. *

In Memoriam

THE FOSTER HOUSE, 408 Clinton Avenue, Old Town, ca. 1900. Demolished September 12 without permission of the Historic Preservation Commission or a demolition permit, by Minimum Housing at the request of the owner, Temple B'Nai Sholom.

Reviews...

"Reviews" will be a regular feature of the QUARTERLY; books, magazines and organizations of interest to the preservationist will be discussed.

AMERICAN PRESERVATION The Magazine for Historic and Neighborhood Preservation.

Published bimonthly, subscriptions \$12 a year. The Bracy House, P. O. Box 2451, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72203.

This magazine will be one year old this fall, and it belongs on the subscription list of everyone interested in preservation and our architectural heritage. It is a beautiful publication, full of glorious, full-page color photographs of restored buildings from across the country. While some articles focus on the already well publicized architecture of places like Eureka, California, and Galveston, Texas, many more concentrate on lesser known preservation successes such as those in Helena, Montana, and Hudson, Ohio. Other articles document various neighborhood conservation projects and the techniques being tried to stabilize the deteriorated, lower class sections of the inner cities. Future issues will also include articles on the preservation activities of other countries. A special section at the front and back of each issue presents short articles of preservation news, profiles of active preservationists, and an update on pertinent legislation.

IDENTIFYING AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945, by John J.-G. Blumenson.

American Association for State and Local History (1400 Eighth Ave. South, Nashville, Tennessee 37203), 1977. 120 pages, illustrated, index bibliography, paper, \$8.75.

This is the perfect book for the person who has trouble identifying the major domestic styles of the United States and is tired of referring to architectural elements as thingamabobs. The first section of the book is devoted to the various exterior styles with a page of photographs for each, a brief description, and the approximate dates of its popularity. But the best part are the numbers superimposed on selected architectural features of each illustrated building with the correct terminology for it listed in the margin. The styles are arranged chronologically except for those styles which recur as revivals or had several distinct phases, such as Romanesque Revival, Victorian Romanesque, and Richardsonian Romanesque. These are placed together to facilitate comparison of the several stages. The back section of the book is a grouping by architectural components i.e. roofs, windows, and porches, again with the photographs numbered for easy identification of the features. An index allows the reader to quickly locate an illustration of an unfamiliar term. This excellent book is long overdue. ✱

And Old Views



This extraordinary structure once stood on the east side of Jefferson street half way between North Side Square and Clinton street. It was demolished in 1928 to make way for "three modern one-story stores faced with terra cotta, and modern in every way."¹ These buildings were in turn demolished in 1974 to be replaced by a parking garage. Property just off the Square had filled a mixture of commercial and residential functions until the 1920's when the expansion of mercantile activity made residential uses uneconomical.

This lot seems to have remained vacant until Orville M. Hundley purchased it in 1871, but by 1884, it contained two attached brick structures. One

was a two-story house set back from the street while the other contained offices on the first floor and a residence on the second. Between 1884 and 1888, the two buildings were reworked into a single brick residence, probably with an office in the front.

In 1894 the ARGUS announced that "Mr. Orville M. Hundley will have his residence on Jefferson street entirely remodeled so that it will be practically a new house. The office in front will be done away with and most of the space now occupied by the office will be left for a portion of the front yard. There will be such a complete change that to all intents and purposes it will be a new resi-

dence throughout." ² About all that Hundley retained of the original structure were the side walls and part of the back wall while a totally new facade was created. Unfortunately no architect can be credited with the design which is an extravagant interpretation of the Queen Anne style in masonry. The keynote of the Queen Anne is variety - variety in shape, texture, color, and material, and the Hundley house had it all. The design was asymmetrical and composed of a multitude of forms including a two-story bay, a recessed porch, a central tower, and wall dormers flanked by brick turrets. The windows were rectangular, segmental, and arched, and at least one of them featured stained glass. The wall surface was textured by a variety of brickwork patterns, such as dentils, corbels, and panels. The brick was contrasted with the rock-faced stone of the lintels, foundation and porch. Patterned terra cotta panels added yet another accent to the wealth of decorative details. O. M. Hundley's initials were worked into the conical roof of the bay and his name appeared again on the carriage block. It is a wildly agitated design that seemed ready to explode upward in a mass of spiky verticals were it not for the sense of solidity provided by the heavy masonry construction.

Hundley remodeled his home when he was already 65 years old, and in 1903 he died, followed in 1905 by his wife. By 1908 the residence had been converted to offices and served for many years as the headquarters of the Huntsville Chamber of Commerce and of the Madison County Board of Health. In 1928, Hundley's daughter-in-law, Mrs. O. R. Hundley, had it

torn down to build modern stores.

O. M. Hundley was connected with other buildings in Huntsville. His wife donated the land for the Randolph Street Church of Christ and Hundley supervised the construction of it. In 1888 he was appointed Chief Superintendent for the construction of the new Federal building to be erected between Eustis and Randolph on Greene street. He also was the construction superintendent for the Huntsville Cotton Mill (1881, Jefferson), the Holding Block (1869, East Side Square) and the Opera House (1872, Jefferson), all of them demolished, as well as other unnamed substantial structures. His son, Oscar R. Hundley, also was responsible for several local buildings although there is no indication that he oversaw their construction as his father had done. He had built the imposing residence for himself at 401 Madison (National Register) as well as the houses at 108 Gates and 400 and 500 Franklin street which were rental properties. In 1896 he erected the two-story building at 128 South Side Square now occupied by American National Bank.

The two Hundleys, father and son, took a very active part in creating the physical fabric of late 19th century Huntsville; it is sad that the father's efforts can only be appreciated today through old photographs. *

1 THE WEEKLY TIMES, August 16, 1928, page 6.

2 ARGUS, March 29, 1894, page 8.

from the Chairman

I believe that the Historic Huntsville Foundation since its creation in 1974 has had a positive impact on the quality of life in Huntsville. There seems to be an increased awareness of the aesthetic and economic rewards of preserving historically and architecturally significant buildings. I see an emerging sense of pride in the unique character of our city as visitors are shown both the rockets pointing to the future at the Space Center and the carefully restored older homes and buildings signifying our strong links with the past. One might say that Huntsville has the best of three worlds - the past, the present, and the future.

In a sense this issue of the QUARTERLY under the editorship of Linda Bayer marks a new beginning for the Foundation. For the first time, copies will be sold to the public at a nominal price, focusing attention on the historical redevelopment movement in our community and, we hope, bringing to our organization additional members and financial support.

As I look at the goals we established last spring, I see progress being made. Membership continues to increase. Soon a drive will be underway to solicit business memberships. A grant application has been submitted for partial restoration of the Hundley House. Our program series has been set up. The calendar is being printed. The downtown tour for children was a huge success.

Downtown. This is one area where I do not feel altogether comfortable about our efforts. Most of the commercial buildings downtown would be categorized as "every day" or vernacular structures, built by former generations to house their businesses and institutions. Many of them, including Cotton Row and our old Courthouse, have been demolished. Individually those that are left may not all be historically significant, but COLLECTIVELY they are immensely significant in that they give our downtown its special identity. Savannah, Mobile, Louisville, Columbus, Georgia, and many other cities are successfully revitalizing their downtown areas. Leopold Adler, a leader in the downtown restoration of Savannah, had this to say in a recent address in Huntsville:

This rebirth of our downtown has meant more than refurbishing old buildings - more than the tourism that has sprung from it - more than national historic landmark status that resulted from our efforts - although these are wonderful and important happenings.

What Savannah is accomplishing is a healthy environment. We are becoming aware of our surroundings. We are retaining our sense of place and identity - for it is terribly important for each city and each area to identify and assess its unique qualities.

The certainty of increased ad valorem taxes in the near future has forced owners of vacant properties in downtown Huntsville to consider their options. One owner has decided that it will be to his advantage to demolish his building; our Foundation has been attempting to help him find a better alternative. Other buildings may be in danger that we are unaware of.

With the opening of Constitution Hall Park, the Weeden House, and the Transportation Museum, tourists will be coming downtown in increasing numbers. Large numbers of people work downtown, and still others find it necessary to visit the courthouse, the municipal building, or a lawyer's office. The possibility for the development of restaurants, specialty shops, and gift shops would seem promising. Of course there are problems. But where does a community begin? There seems to be a general lack of knowledge about what to do. Obviously bankers, savings and loan associations, real estate people, city planners, and community design experts need to be involved.

With the help of the Twickenham Preservation Society, Old Town, and the new Downtown Development organization, our Foundation is formulating plans for a seminar next year to bring together experts in the field of downtown revitalization and concerned local people. We solicit your suggestions and your help.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thanks to all of you who have responded to our requests for help. It has been appreciated.

Lynn Jones

THE HISTORIC HUNTSVILLE FOUNDATION is a non-profit organization established in 1974 to encourage the preservation of historically or architecturally significant sites and structures in Huntsville and Madison county and to increase public awareness of their value to the community. Membership is open to all persons interested in enhancing Huntsville's future by preserving its significant architectural heritage. To join, send your name, address, and telephone number to Mrs. Lynn Jones, Chairman, P.O. Box 786, Huntsville, Alabama, 35804. Student - \$2.50; Individual - \$10; Family - \$15; Business - \$50; Patron - \$25-99; Benefactor - \$100 and up.

