



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Whatley Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number see continuation sheet not for publication N/A

city or town Whatley vicinity N/A

state Alabama code AL county Clarke code 025 zip code 36482

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

3/30/98
Date

Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)
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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that this 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] 4.30.98
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check only one box.)	Category of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>17</u>	<u>4</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>18</u>	<u>4</u> Total

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

Number of Contributing Resources Previously listed in the National Register N/A

Historic and Architectural Properties of
Clarke County, Alabama

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>single dwelling</u>
<u> </u>	<u>hotel</u>
<u>Commerce/Trade</u>	<u>department store</u>
<u>Transportation</u>	<u>rail-related</u>
<u>Health Care</u>	<u>medical business/office</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>single dwelling</u>
<u>Government</u>	<u>post office</u>
<u>Vacant/Not in Use</u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow/Craftsman
Queen Anne
 (See continuation sheet)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick; concrete
 roof tin; asphalt
 walls wood
 other wood
brick

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition on continuation sheet/s.)

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.) N/A

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture _____

Community Planning & Development _____

Period of Significance 1887-1948 _____

Significant Dates N/A _____

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

Cultural Affiliation N/A _____

Architect/Builder unknown _____

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS) N/A

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 _____

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property approx. 45 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
1	<u>16</u>	<u>432545</u>	<u>3501820</u>	3	<u>16</u>	<u>433290</u>	<u>3501790</u>
2	<u>16</u>	<u>432660</u>	<u>3501750</u>	4	<u>16</u>	<u>433375</u>	<u>3502200</u>

X 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.)

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Susan Enzweiler/Historian & Trina Binkley/AHC Reviewer

organization Alabama Historical Commission date February 2, 1998

street & number 468 S. Perry Street telephone (334) 242-3184

city or town Montgomery state Alabama zip code 36130-0900

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Additional Documentation
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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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 2 Page 1

Name of Property: **Whatley Historic District**
County and State: **Clarke County, Alabama**

There are no street addresses associated with the buildings in Whatley. Please refer to the sketch map of the proposed Whatley Historic District where the location of each resource is identified by its inventory number.

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Section 7 Page 2

Name of Property: Whatley Historic District
County and State: Clarke County, Alabama

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION

Other: Free standing parapet front
Free standing gable front

No style

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Whatley is a late nineteenth century railroad town that prospered up through the 1920s. Its street patterns and its architecture still reflect this history. The laying of the track for the Mobile and Birmingham Railroad through the narrow and marshy Bassett Creek Valley in this section of Clarke County predetermined that Whatley would be situated on the west side of the track because wetlands bordered the rail line's eastern side. The town's main street that leads from the tracks into Whatley is set perpendicular to the railroad line. In other words, the tracks form the top of the T and the road its stem. This "T-plan" was a common development plan for railroad communities that were established in the late nineteenth century. Since the railroad tracks are such an integral part of the T-plan, they are considered a contributing element in the historic district. The plan will be discussed more fully in Section 8.

The road into town, which is identified as Whatley Road on the map, heads west up a small hill. The area of town down by the tracks is known as "under the hill" (inv. #s 1-4), while the rest of town is referred to as "on the hill." Other streets run parallel to this main street while perpendicular roads cross these streets at right angles.

Commercial resources are located along the main road near the tracks, but gradually give way to residential resources as the street leads away from the railroad line. The extant, commercial resources represent several vernacular typologies. These include the free standing gable front (inv. #s 4 & 8) and the free standing parapet front (inv. #3). Another resource (inv. #2) is a side-gabled store. In 1931, according to a copy of a Sanborn map, additional commercial enterprises like a garage, a barber shop and a blacksmith were located under the hill. Furthermore, several warehouses and seed houses, two cotton gins and a small sawmill stretched out along the west side of the tracks north of the main road. All of these resources are nonextant (1931 Sanborn map).

The historic housing stock is now dominated by bungalows. Historic photographs and the 1931 Sanborn map, however, hint that other housing designs were also common in the town. W. D. Whatley, a local historian who grew up in the community, confirms that there were large, two-story homes in Whatley well into the twentieth century. Some were destroyed by fire and others were demolished. The largest of these houses belonged to Cornelius Euriah Chamberlain, Dr. Robert Edward Shaw, Ira Leonard Chamberlain and Robert J. Cooper (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997).

Whatley has an essentially bucolic nature to it. Wooded vacant lots, fields, and pecan groves are interspersed among the buildings. Commercial development occurs along US 84, which is an east-west highway that lies south of the town. This highway was constructed in 1929 and immediately drew traffic away from the commercial core of Whatley. Prior to its construction, all traffic between Grove Hill and Monroe County passed through the middle of Whatley, crossed the railroad tracks, and went through the Bassett Creek swamp to the Alabama River ferry. The highway and its bridges across the river and the railroad tracks changed all this and helped preserve Whatley as a small, rural community in Clarke County. The proposed Whatley Historic District encompasses seventeen contributing resources and four noncontributing resources (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997).

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Section 7 Page 3

Name of Property: **Whatley Historic District**
County and State: **Clarke County, Alabama**

Inventory of Whatley

The buildings in Whatley do not have street addresses. Those that are included in the historic district boundaries are identified on the map by their inventory numbers. The majority of these face Whatley Road, the main street that travels from the railroad through town.

Outbuildings are not counted as resources within the historic district. However, if they were clearly visible from the road and appeared to be over fifty years old, they were described in conjunction with the main buildings associated with them.

1) Mobile & Birmingham Railroad 1887

C

The railroad runs in a north-south direction and forms the eastern boundary of this historic district. Undoubtedly, over the years, individual components of the track have been replaced in-kind as part of routine maintenance. The main line, however, is still intact on its original road bed. The portion of the railroad included within the district boundaries equals 3000 linear feet or 1500 feet in each direction from where Whatley Road meets the rail line. Fifteen hundred feet is roughly the amount of track visible to the eye if one stands at the junction of the railroad and Whatley Road and looks south down the track. To the south, the track visually terminates at 1500 feet where the Highway 84 bridge crosses it. To the north, at approximately 1500 feet, the track enters the wetlands.

For a history of Clarke County's railroad, see the multiple property nomination.

2) Elvin Littleton Coleman, II Store c. 1890

C

This store is a one-story, four-bay wide, wood frame, side gable building with a front gable that dominates the western half of the main roof. The integral front porch displays four brick pillars. These pillars were added in the late 1930s as replacements for wooden columns or posts. The front facade has two windows and a double leaf door under the gable. The single leaf door is located on the eastern end of the front facade. The windows retain their original "slant board design" shutters. The interior of the building is divided into three main rooms. The double leaf door accesses the store. The single leaf entry led into a small room with a smaller room off the rear of it. These rooms housed the U. S. post office until 1934. After the post office relocated, the rooms were used for storage (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997 & 1931 Sanborn map).

To the east of this store (between it and the railroad tracks) is a natural spring which was drilled in 1920 and is overflowing with sulphur water. Some people still come to the spring to get their drinking water.

3) Robert Edward Chamberlain Store c. 1920

C

This building is a commercial, one-story, wood frame, free-standing parapet front store that is badly deteriorated. The roof is clad in tin and has exposed rafter ends but the main roofline is hidden by a false front parapet. A few pieces of the dentil molding remain along the cornice line. A metal awning is supported by four thin metal posts. Both the parapet and the awning are deteriorated. In the porch area, the four-bay front facade features two doors and two windows. A smaller double leaf door is located on the western end of the front facade. This door leads to a narrow storage area. The larger double leaf door is flanked by two windows (one on each side) with the remaining one being 6/6 double hung sash. The interior is one large, open space with a beaded board ceiling. Clerestory windows are located just a few feet below the ceiling on the east elevation.

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Name of Property: Whatley Historic District
County and State: Clarke County, Alabama

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Robert Chamberlain ran a store further west on Whatley Road from about 1910 to 1915. Later on, he constructed this building and operated a store out of it until his death on September 8, 1928. His brother Ira then took over the management of the business. Robert's widow, Bessie Dawson Kelly Chamberlain, owned the building until she died, which was probably in the mid-1970s (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997).

4) J. M. Jackson Barber Shop 1939 C

This small, free-standing gable front, two-bay wide, wood frame building contains only one room. It features Craftsman design elements. The building is clad with novelty board siding and has a corrugated metal roof with exposed rafter ends. The gable extends over the door and is supported by brackets. The original, poured concrete stoop decking remains. The front facade consists of the wood frame door with three panels and four vertical lights, and a vertical 4/1 double hung sash window. The side elevations have no window openings and the rear has two window openings. The interior walls are flushboard. The building currently serves as storage space. A short distance east of it is a naturally flowing spring (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997).

There was a wood frame building on this site and part of it housed a barber shop. This building was demolished in the late 1930s and the town barber, J. M. Jackson, constructed the present structure in 1939 for his shop (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997).

Between Resources 4 and 5 the topography changes. As the main street of Whatley heads west it ascends a hill, leaving the area of town known as "under the hill," and entering the central section of the community called "on the hill."

5) Residence c. 1920 C

The house is a one-story, wood frame building with a low pitch, pyramidal, tin roof, a porch that wraps around the front and east elevations, and novelty board siding. Door and window placement along the front facade suggest a double pen or saddlebag floor plan. The four-bay facade features two single leaf doors with a window on each end. Both doors are three panels and three vertical lights. The windows are varied, including single and paired 3/1 and 6/6 double hung sash. The porch posts consist of turned posts and "tree-trunk" posts which support a tin roof. The foundation is wood post and concrete block piers.

John Bernard Brewer became the postmaster of Whatley in 1934. He moved the post office from under the hill to on the hill. He then moved into this residence with his wife and his mother after having it refurbished. Local historian William D. Whatley remembers that the house was unusual in the town at that time because it was plumbed for gas lighting. Circa 1950, the house was the residence of the Gregory family. Nora Gregory was Dr. Godbold's nurse in the late 1940s and early 1950s (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997 & Bernice Godbold interview 1/20/1998).

6) Dr. John Cooper Godbold, Jr. Medical Office c. 1927 C

This small, medical office is a one-story, stuccoed, four-by-four-bay building crowned by a low pitched, hip roof displaying exposed rafter ends. Two single leaf, five panel doors are centered on the front facade. Beside each door is a 2/2 double hung sash window. A slightly recessed panel is above the doorways. The west facade has four windows, all 2/2 double hung sash. The east facade has six 2/2 double hung sash windows. The rear elevation features a single leaf, five-panel door and a 2/2 double hung sash window. The building has been altered over time. The front facade had a canopy, which is no longer extant. A rear addition, consisting of one room, was added in the early 1930s. The stucco was probably added in the mid-1930s (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997; W. D. Whatley interviews 1/12/1998 & 1/21/1998 & Bernice Godbold interview 1/20/1998).

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Name of Property: **Whatley Historic District**
County and State: **Clarke County, Alabama**

The building is located on a hill. A separate driveway off Whatley's main street leads to this building and the post office just west of it. Behind Dr. Godbold's office is a frame shed with two doors, each leading into a single room, and a shed roof.

Dr. John Cooper Godbold, Jr. (1888-1952), the son of a Wilcox County physician, came to Whatley in 1912 to practice medicine. He initially had his office in the Jeffrey Building which also housed Dr. Jeffrey's office and a few businesses. This building is no longer extant. Dr. Godbold built the office described above in the late 1920s. He maintained his practice here until the early 1950s. The two front entrances accessed two separate waiting rooms, the left one for whites and the right one for blacks. Behind these waiting rooms was the doctor's office. The rear examination room was added when Dr. Godbold hired a full-time nurse. Around 1953, this building was rehabbed into a residence for a crippled relative of the Godbolds. After that person died, the building was used for storage (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997; W. D. Whatley interview 1/12/1998 & Bernice Godbold interview 1/20/1998).

7) US Post Office

c. 1925/between 1951 & 1964 NC

Whatley's only extant, governmental building is a one-story, gable front, wood frame post office with a brick front facade that was added to the building sometime between 1951 and 1964. This brick facade features a false front parapet which hides the front gable. Two single leaf doors flank a central display window which has two lights and aluminum sash. The original storefront featured single leaf doors flanking a larger, central display window. A brick apron was located beneath the window and tall transoms were located above the window and the doors. A flat awning originally extended out from the front facade, shading a concreted area. The side elevations are clad in novelty board. The roof has exposed rafter ends (W. D. Whatley letter 12/12/1997).

A post office was established in the Whatley area as early as June 7, 1887, and was named Horeb after a nearby Baptist church. In August 1890, the name of the post office was changed to Whatley to correspond with the name of the railroad town it served. The post office has had several locations over the years. According to the 1931 Sanborn map, the post office at that time was located in Elvin Littleton Coleman, II's store (inv. #2) near the railroad tracks. It was moved into its present building in 1934 by the new postmaster, John Bernard Brewer. The building was vacant when the post office was relocated there, but as late as 1931 had been a one-story drug store with a front porch or, at least, a front awning. According to local tradition, this drug store was managed by Mr. C. Euniah Chamberlain in the 1920s. The building has served as Whatley's post office for over sixty years (Whatley 1990:1 & 2; 1931 Sanborn map & W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997).

8) Coleman Brothers Store

c. 1890 C

This is one of the best examples of a wood frame, free-standing gable front, commercial building in Clarke County. The gable front, one-story, store with an integral front porch features an asymmetrical facade. Since the store is constructed along the slope of the land, the slope of building and roof are further accentuated. The slope of the gable on the east side is short and steep, while the western side of the gable has a longer, gently sloping roof line. In the porch area, at the west side of the roof, the gable drops down and the porch is supported by shorter columns.

The gable has large gable returns and is supported by 5 wooden columns. The columns have decorative banding 3/4 of the way up each column. The front facade is clad with flushboard while the side elevations and the gable are board and batten. The four bay front porch area consists of two double leaf doors, both constructed with horizontal boards. A single window is located on each side of the double leaf door in the "tall" section of the porch. These windows are covered with horizontal boards. The foundation consists of wood piers and concrete block piers.

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Name of Property: Whatley Historic District
County and State: Clarke County, Alabama

A sign on the front facade of this building proclaims its construction date as 1880. Circumstantial evidence indicates that c. 1890 is probably a more accurate date. Whatley was founded in the late 1880s because of the coming of the railroad. Several stores were founded in the community at that time. This business was established by David Daniel Coleman and may have initially been housed in another building in front of which this present structure was built. The June 27, 1889, issue of the Clarke County Democrat reported that "Mr. Coleman will soon erect a new store house at Whatley." Additional information reports that Coleman started a general store in Whatley in 1888 and ran it until his death in 1921. His sons, L. L. and W. B. Coleman, continued to operate the establishment. It was listed as a general merchandise store on the 1931 Sanborn map. L. L. ran the store until his death in January 1962, and his wife, Velma, continued on for a year after that. Then her brother, Robert Lee Garrick, managed the store until his death in 1971. It has been closed since then and is badly deteriorated (11/17/1997 Wanda Coleman Johnson interview; Whatley 1990:23; W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997 & 1931 Sanborn map).

9) Whatley Hotel 1888 C

The Whatley Hotel was and is a prominent visual landmark in the community. It is a two-story, wood frame, commercial building with a steep hip roof and an attached, wraparound, two-tier gallery displaying Queen Anne design elements such as turned posts with corner brackets and a spindled balustrade. The building also has tin shingles on the roof, 4/4 double hung sash windows and a brick pier foundation. The front facade has five bays, with the centered, single leaf, door topped with a two-light transom and two windows on each side of the door. The second story of the front facade echoes the ground floor in all aspects, except the door has no transom. The east elevation is six bays deep and includes a single leaf entrance. The west elevation has a slightly projecting, two-story, gabled bay with a gable clad in imbricated shingles. The rear elevation has a one-story wing off its southeast corner and a one-story, L-shaped porch that spans the wing and the elevation. The southern end of this porch is enclosed to form a pantry.

In the backyard of this property is a small shed clad in novelty board with a low pitch, gable roof.

The foundation for the Whatley Hotel was laid in early 1888. It is believed that Alexander David Whatley, the eldest son of F. B. Whatley, constructed the building. The Clarke County Democrat reported in February 1888 that he was laying the foundation for a hotel. An August 1888 issue of the same newspaper stated that "Messrs Nettles & Dacy are putting up a handsome, commodious building at Whatley, to be used as a hotel." Presumably, Nettles and Dacy were the first owners. The first manager of the hotel was Mrs. Tracy Bettis Anderson. Later on, Alexander's wife, Nancy A. Spinks Foreman Whatley, operated the hotel for many years. The management of the hotel then fell to Mary Simian Coleman. From the 1930s or 1940s until c. 1962, the hotel was managed by Velma Garrick Coleman. It was closed in the latter year (Whatley 1990:23, 34; Whatley 1991:59, 60; W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997 & Mobile Register 1996).

10) "The Cabin" 1947 C

This house is a small, one-story, four-bay wide residence clad in novelty board. Its centrally located, front gabled porch is two bays wide and contains two entrances. Most of the windows are single and paired 3/1 double hung sash.

This cottage is located on the same parcel of land as inventory #11 and their histories are connected. For a history of this building, please refer to inventory #11.

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Name of Property: Whatley Historic District
County and State: Clarke County, Alabama

11) George Lemuel Whatley House 1947 NC

This one-story, wood frame, side gable house is covered in aluminum siding and has replacement windows. Its centrally located, single leaf entrance is located on a small stoop under a prominent, front-facing gable.

Behind this residence is a brick building which housed the well and pump.

Both inventory numbers #10 and #11 represent buildings that were constructed in 1947 by George Lemuel Whatley. These structures replaced a small, frame bungalow, built c. 1920, which the Whatleys moved into around 1925. Inventory #11 housed George Whatley's family. Inventory #10 provided two more bedrooms and a bath for use when out-of-town family members visited. The Whatleys called it "the cabin" (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997).

12) Larrimore-Pruitt House c. 1925 C

This is a one-story, wood frame, front gable bungalow with a front gable porch. Craftsman details include exposed rafters, knee brackets in both front gables, a paired 3/3 window in the porch gable, battered porch posts on brick piers, and novelty board siding. Other details include single 6/6 double hung sash windows, one interior chimney, and a foundation of brick piers and brick infill. The front door is flanked by short sidelights with panels beneath them.

The original owners and residents of this house were Mattie Larrimore and Rufus Pruitt (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997).

13) Residence c. 1965 NC

This one-story, brick ranch style house, located at the corner of Whatley Road and an unnamed side street, faces the side street. The house has a complex gable roof and an integral carport.

14) Farrington House c. 1900/c. 1928 C

This house is a one-story brick, cross-gable bungalow with an integral front porch that features many Craftsman details. The gables have knee brackets and display false half timbering. The porch is supported by large brick posts that are tapered and wraps to the east side of the house. The front door is single leaf and is surrounded by a transom and sidelights. Windows are single, paired and banded. All windows have the same multi-light pattern on the top sash, and the bottom sash consists of one light. The yard is completely fenced in. Beyond the wire fence is a low pebble and concrete wall that divides the front and side yards from the street.

This bungalow was originally constructed as a two-story, frame house, probably around the turn of the century. Its original owners and occupants were Mabelle V. and Robert Edward Chamberlain. Mrs. Chamberlain died in 1911. Robert married Bessie Dawson Kelly, a Whatley school teacher, in 1918. The house was hit by a tornado in 1927 or 1928 and its second story was blown away. The Chamberlains rebuilt the house, turning it into a one-story structure and putting a brick veneer over the walls. Mr. Chamberlain died on September 8, 1928, before the remodeling was completed. His widow Bessie married Sam Farrington, a Southern Railroad conductor, in the 1930s. Mr. and Mrs. Farrington took great pride in maintaining their home and grounds. It was one of the most attractive residences in town. Currently, the house serves as a barn for shetland ponies which have free rein over the large, overgrown yard (W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997).

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Name of Property: Whatley Historic District
County and State: Clarke County, Alabama

15) Bodie Coleman House c. 1930 C

This cross gable, wood frame bungalow features a tin roof, a few exposed rafters, single, double and banded vertical 4/1 double hung sash windows and two three-panel, three vertical light front doors in the porch area. The porch is poured concrete and has brick piers with battered pillars.

This house was built as the residence of Bodie Coleman, one of the eleven children of D. D. Coleman. Bodie, also known as W. B., ran the Coleman general store with his brother L. L. after their father died. Miss Bernice Godbold, who grew up and still lives across the street, believes this house was built after the tornado in the late 1920s (Bernice Godbold interview 1/20/1998).

16) Dr. John Cooper Godbold, Jr. House c. 1925 C

This one-story, wood frame, front gable bungalow features front and side gable projections. Both projecting gables are clad with shingles and feature knee brackets and a horizontal shaped window divided into three vertical lights. The roof has exposed rafter ends. The single leaf front door is flanked by side lights. This bungalow has a variety of window styles including paired 6/6 double hung sash, large plate glass windows and multi-light/one double hung sash.

The frame outbuilding behind the house was Bernice Godbold's playhouse when she was a child (Bernice Godbold interview 1/20/1998).

This was the home of Dr. John Godbold who lived here until his death in 1952. At some point after arriving in Whatley, Dr. Godbold married Birdie Bernice Coleman, one of D. D. Coleman's eleven children. They were given most of this block where the house now stands as a wedding present from the Coleman family. There was already an old house on this site which was razed to make room for this bungalow. Birdie Godbold developed the plan for the bungalow and the Spinks brothers built it. One of the brothers admired the house so much, he constructed a brick version of it in Thomasville. The Godbolds' daughter, Bernice, still resides here (W. D. Whatley interview 1/12/1998 & Bernice Godbold interview 1/20/1998).

17) Mackie Whatley House c. 1890/c. 1948 C

This 1 1/2-story, four-bay wide, frame house is crowned by a steep, side gable roof that is clad in corrugated tin. Its integral front porch contains two shed rooms which were added after World War II. The eastern shed room has a 6/6 tripartite, double hung sash window and a single leaf door which accesses the porch. The western shed room has a 2/2 double hung sash window. The central open space of the porch contains a single-leaf door and a 6/6 double hung sash window.

Also located on the property is a gabled, frame outbuilding.

According to Mabel Sue Whatley, who married into the Whatley family, this house was built by Mackie Whatley over a century ago. He was a farmer. The shed rooms were added after World War II. Local historian W. D. Whatley recalls that before the war the "house had a large room on each side of a wide open hall, porch across the entire front. There was a shed bedroom behind each of the two large rooms. All four bedrooms were individually accessed from the same open hall. Behind and not attached to the shed room on the right were two rooms, dining room and kitchen. There was a covered porch extending from the hall past the entrance door to the dining room. In the back yard was a covered dug well" (Mabel Sue Whatley interview 11/18/1997 & W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997).

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18) Residence

c. 1970

NC

This four-bay wide, brick, ranch style house has a side gable roof. Associated with it are several outbuildings of concrete block or metal construction.

19) Mamie Curry Shaw House

c. 1932

C

This one-story, three-bay wide, gable-oriented bungalow is clad in clapboard. Its foundation is covered by metal sheeting. The full-width, gabled, front porch has four pillars and a balustrade which is not original. The porch gable features a rectangular attic vent, knee brackets, and exposed rafter ends. The main gable has knee brackets and the main roof has exposed rafter ends. Located in the porch area is a single leaf entrance flanked by 6/6 double hung sash replacement windows. There are a variety of window styles on this bungalow. On the rear is a board and batten addition and on the north (side) elevation is a primitive, frame, shed-roofed addition.

There are two frame outbuildings.

This was the residence of Mamie Curry Shaw (1877-1968) and her husband Dr. Robert Eugene Shaw (1871-1950). Dr. Shaw, who was a native of Cuba, Alabama, came to Whatley in 1908. He practiced medicine here and also was a nurseryman. His medical office was in a shed that was attached to the side of a store located under the hill. The store is no longer extant. Dr. Shaw's office had no electricity or running water. He seems to have been more interested in trees. According to his obituary, "during the time when pecans were being planted so extensively throughout portions of the South, [Dr. Shaw] operated a nursery at Whatley. . . . [he] also owned large pecan orchards as well as orchards of other types of fruit trees." Deed research indicates that Dr. Shaw bought land on which to grow his trees but also had an agreement with at least one landowner to plant trees on that man's property. They would share equally in the pecan harvest. His wife Mamie had attended Livingston State College and was a member of the State Teachers Association. However, her obituary states that "her hobby was gardening and for many years she was associated with her husband in the operation of nurseries and truck crops." The current postmaster, Wanda Coleman Johnson, believes that the Shaws' nursery was located around Monroeville (CCD 10/26/1950 & 5/16/1968; W. D. Whatley letter 12/9/1997; *Record Book No. 97*, pp. 187-188 & *Record Book No. 169*, p. 166 & Wanda Coleman Johnson interview 11/17/1997).

Dr. and Mrs. Shaw kept their finances and property separately. They lived together with their son in Dr. Shaw's house. It was a large, wood frame house on Whatley Road. This residence was totally destroyed by fire in the early 1930s. Mrs. Shaw then had this bungalow constructed out of lumber from Whatley's old schoolhouse that had been razed. The Shaw family came to live here in her house (W. D. Whatley interview 1/12/1998).

20) Residence

c. 1925

C

This house faces north. The front facade of this one-story, three-bay wide, clapboard, gable-oriented bungalow is dominated by a full-width porch. The porch's gable, which displays a rectangular attic window, is supported by pillars resting on brick piers. In the porch area, a single leaf entrance is flanked by paired 3/1 double hung sash windows. On the west (side) elevation are two paired 3/1 double hung sash and, towards the rear, a single leaf door.

Behind the house are two frame outbuildings.

21) Vacant Residence

c. 1920

C

This one-story, three-bay wide, gable-oriented cottage is clad in clapboard. Its integral front porch features

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simple posts with decorative corner brackets. Most of the windows appear to be 6/6 double hung sash. It is very overgrown around this house and therefore quite difficult to get a complete description.

Two buildings appear to be associated with this cottage because of their proximity to it. One of the outbuildings is covered by vines. The other is a gable roofed, board and batten building with a window on its east elevation. There may be an entrance in its gable end elevation.

Archaeological Component

Although no formal archaeological survey has been made of this district area, the potential for subsurface remains is good. Buried portions may contain significant information that may be useful in interpreting the entire area.

Section 8---NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The period of significance for the Whatley Historic District is 1887 to 1948. The beginning date corresponds to the construction start up of the railroad which spawned Whatley. The ending date is based on the fifty-year cut-off period. In this sixty-year period, Whatley's fortunes rose and fell with the railroad. The residential and commercial resources comprising the Whatley Historic District illustrate the evolution of the town during this significant period of its development. For a history of Whatley, please refer to the multiple property nomination.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Criterion A: Community Planning and Development

Whatley was founded as a railroad town, so the construction of the Mobile and Birmingham Railroad determined the location of the community to a great extent. The laying of the track through the narrow and marshy Bassett Creek Valley in this section of Clarke County predetermined that a town here would be situated on the west side of the track. Wetlands bordered the east side of the track. The main road that led from the tracks into Whatley was set perpendicular to the railroad line and headed west up a small hill where it became the main street of the community. This street is identified on the sketch map as Whatley Road. The area of town below the hill and near the railroad line is known as "under the hill." The section of Whatley atop the hill is called "on the hill."

In Tennessee, this development plan has been identified as the "T-plan." The railroad tracks form the top of a T and a single, commercial street its stem. The railroad depot stands at the junction of the T. This railroad town plan was popular around the turn of the century, superseding a symmetrical plan which was prevalent for these communities from 1850 to 1880. Historian C. Van West states that "railroad engineers liked the T-plan because the top of the T separated the business of the railroad, and associated industrial activities, from everyday commerce. It further eliminated unnecessary--and dangerous--crossings over the track. The stem of the T placed the most expensive real estate closest to the depot, while lots that were farther away from the passenger station could be sold more cheaply. Consequently, the first blocks of a typical Main Street were home to commercial businesses and professional offices. The latter blocks would be residential lots and the location of churches, schools, and civic buildings" (West 1995:390).

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Whatley proves that the "T-plan" was also utilized in Alabama. Whatley Road, its main street, is lined with commercial resources near the tracks which gradually give way to residential resources as the road leads away from the tracks. Historical research indicates that industrial buildings and at least one professional office were located near the tracks or "under the hill." The freight and passenger depot and a platform, according to the 1931 Sanborn map, were located where Whatley Road met the tracks. On top of the hill, other streets run parallel to Whatley Road while perpendicular roads cross these streets at right angles, forming one of the most common grid patterns found in American communities (1931 Sanborn map).

Because Whatley's population has declined since its heyday and any recent commercial development has occurred south of the core of the town out on Highway 84, Whatley's "under the hill" and "on the hill" areas retain their street patterns and a portion of their historic buildings. These areas are encompassed in the historic district and illustrate a turn-of-the-century railroad town that prospered up to the Great Depression.

Criterion C: Architecture

Whatley contains a fine collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century commercial buildings, a late nineteenth-century hotel and an early twentieth-century office building and residences, particularly bungalows. Although some of the buildings are deteriorated, when viewed as a collection they are locally significant interpretations of nationally popular architectural styles and local typologies. The commercial buildings include a side-gabled store (inv. #2), a free-standing parapet front (inv. #3) and two free-standing gable front businesses (inv. #s 4 & 8). The Whatley Hotel (#9), a large, wood frame building with Queen Anne stylistic elements, was constructed to accommodate railroad travelers. Although there were several railroad towns in Clarke County, this was the only such hotel identified in the survey. Dr. Godbold's office building (inv. #6) is quite vernacular in design, displaying no stylistic elements, but retains a high degree of architectural integrity. It represents how simple medical buildings were in small town Alabama early in this century. Whatley's extant bungalows are among the best examples identified in the Clarke County survey. They illustrate both the low horizontality of the bungalow form and Craftsman design elements (#13, #14, #15). The Mackie Whatley House (#16) and a vacant house with simple Queen Anne detailing on its front porch (#20) illustrate popular housing types in the community prior to the bungalow building boom. The buildings found in the proposed Whatley Historic District illustrate what architectural styles and typologies were popular in Clarke County during one of its periods of greatest growth and development.

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	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing			
5	16	433425	3502190	7	16	433190	3501320	9	16	432930	3501620	11	16	432560	3501480
6	16	433250	3501300	8	16	433220	3501690	10	16	432930	3501540				

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: See the accompanying sketch map which has a scale of 1"= 200'.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION: The boundaries were drawn to create a historic district that includes as many historic, contributing resources as possible and as few noncontributing resources as possible. As delineated, the boundaries encompass the T-plan of the town (including a portion of the railroad), as well as historic residences and historic, commercial/office buildings.

