

107

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Scottsboro Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot
other names/site number Scottsboro Southern Railroad Freight Depot

2. Location

street & number Northwest corner of North Houston and Maple Avenue, north of the railroad line
city or town Scottsboro not for publication N/A vicinity N/A
state Alabama code AL county Jackson code 071 zip code 35768

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 1/16/98
Signature of certifying official 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 Edson H. Beall 2/20/98
___ 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] _____
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) <input type="checkbox"/> private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local <input type="checkbox"/> public-State <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	Category of Property (Check only one box) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) <input type="checkbox"/> district <input type="checkbox"/> site <input type="checkbox"/> structure <input type="checkbox"/> object	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.) Category of Property (Check only one box) <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Contributing</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Noncontributing</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> <td>buildings</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td>sites</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td>structures</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td>objects</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> <td>Total</td> </tr> </table>	Contributing	Noncontributing		1	0	buildings	_____	_____	sites	_____	_____	structures	_____	_____	objects	1	0	Total
Contributing	Noncontributing																			
1	0	buildings																		
_____	_____	sites																		
_____	_____	structures																		
_____	_____	objects																		
1	0	Total																		

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions) Cat: <u>Transportation: Rail Related</u>	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions) Cat: <u>Vacant</u>
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7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions) <u>No Style</u>	Materials (Enter categories from instructions) foundation <u>stone</u> roof <u>asphalt</u> walls <u>brick</u> other _____
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Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- 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)

Transportation

Significant Dates 1861, 1892, c. 1898

Significant Person: N/A

Period of Significance 1860-1948

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder Memphis and Charleston Railroad

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the 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.

Primary Location of Additional Data: N/A

previously listed in the National Register

State Historic Preservation Office

previously determined eligible by the National Register

Other State agency

designated a National Historic Landmark

Federal agency

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

Local government

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

University

Other, Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property half-acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet): Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

16 588230 3837220

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. David Campbell, Chair, Arts and Humanities Division and Trina Binkley, AHC Reviewer

organization Northeast Alabama Community College date February 14, 1997

street & number P. O. Box 159 telephone 205-228-6001, ext. 246

city or town Rainsville state AL zip code 35986

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Scottsboro

street & number 916 Broad Street telephone 205-574-3100

city or town Scottsboro state AL zip code 35768

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National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Scottsboro Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot
Jackson County, Alabama

7. Narrative Description

The Memphis & Charleston Railroad Depot in Scottsboro, Alabama is a good and intact example of an extremely rare building type; a pre-Civil War railroad depot, and one that remained in use for one-hundred and thirty-five years. In addition, it is one of three surviving Memphis & Charleston depots of the 1856-61 period in Alabama.¹ The town of Scottsboro is located in Jackson County, in the most northeastern corner of the state. Situated in the southern part of Brown Valley, Scottsboro around three miles west of Guntersville Lake (part of the Tennessee River system) and forty-five miles east of Huntsville.

The Scottsboro Freight Depot is a one-story rectangular gable-roofed brick building of utilitarian design that is very similar to the 1856 Huntsville Freight Depot. Research in 1993 by Nancy Rohr of Huntsville indicates that the designer of the Huntsville depot was Gabriel Jordan Jr. of Luray, Virginia.² It thus seems probable that Jordan also designed the Scottsboro depot. Jordan worked for the Memphis & Charleston Railroad and was named in the 1850's Calhoun family letters as the Huntsville Depot designer.

The Scottsboro Depot is built with seventeen inch thick brick bearing walls with 4"x24" brick pilasters about thirteen feet on centers. The brick walls bear on large hand-chiseled limestone blocks that form the foundation. These walls support light timber "queen-post" roof trusses centered over each pilaster. The trusses form a gabled roof of plank decking supported on rafters approximately 2' o.c., which are braced by purlins running across the truss queen-posts.

The rafters (2' o.c.) extend beyond the exterior walls to form a shelter over the track side and street side loading docks. The original roofing material is not known, but typically would have been a non-flammable material such as standing-seam metal. It is now composition shingles.

The gable-roofed building measures about 32'x2" wide and 68'x-3" along the tracks. The track side dock is about 7'-6"x68'-3" and is twentieth century concrete except for a planked 12' east end. The roof overhang on the street side dock extends about 18" past the dock edge. At the track side it does not extend past the dock edge so as not to be caught by the tall freight-cars. The wide overhangs are braced on the street side roof by diagonal timbers at each pilaster.

A modern timber freight platform of creosoted lumber, measuring about 46'x40' is attached to the east end of the building. The 1917 and 1927 Sanborn maps show a platform here, but this is apparently a rebuilt version, probably post-1950.

Each end-gable has a diamond-pattern wooden lattice vent near the apex. The gable apex is about 20' above the floor and the sidewalls are about 12' above the floor. The roof pitch is approximately 8 in 12.

At the track side wall of the office, a rectangular bay window of about 3'x6' has been added so the station master could see down the tracks. The sash muntin-bars here are of an ogee mould profile, a type most common in the 20th century. This bay does not appear on the 1917 or 1927 Sanborn maps, and thus the bay appears to be post-1927.

A modern steel semaphore pole chops through the roof overhang beside the office bay window. A small brick stove-flue projects above the west gable.

¹ The 1860 Memphis and Charleston Passenger Depot and Eastern Division Offices in Huntsville were added to the Register 9/10/71. The 1856 Memphis and Charleston Freight Depot in Huntsville is still in limited freight use and is currently not listed in the National Register.

² Letters of the Calhoun family of Huntsville, Alabama, are of the 1850s, Huntsville Madison County Public Library, Huntsville, Alabama. Pauline Gandrud records, page 520, Heritage Room records.

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Section 7 Page 2

Scottsboro Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot
Jackson County, Alabama

The primary interior space is the freight room of about 30'x46' with exposed roof trusses whose apex is about 20' above the floor. Each long wall has two tracked rolling wooden doors of about 7'-2" x 8'-6" high. Those are said to be later doors, but appear to be at least early twentieth century.

An interesting feature of the west end of the freight room is a cast-iron balance scale whose platform is recessed flush with the floor and whose top rail is supported by two cast iron fluted Doric colonnettes. The balance-beam and a number of iron weights are present. This scale, with its fluted Doric colonnettes, may be an 1861 original feature. Also at the west wall by the scale is a built-in desk with six drawers of various sizes and shelves above. The date of this item is unknown but its use of wide planking for the desk-top would indicate it is probably early if not original.

The west end of the building is occupied by the freight office (about 18'x30'), now divided into two spaces by a modern partition to form a small passenger waiting room in the north third, a modification that occurred when passenger traffic declined and the old and now-moved separate passenger depot was abandoned.

The walls in the office area are double-beaded tongue & groove 1x4 horizontal planks, a type which is probably later than 1861. The doors in this area are of five horizontal panels. Both these items are more typical of turn of the century than 1861 and may date from a remodeling of that period (circa 1898). The office floor is concrete, also apparently a modern revision. The office floor is dropped about 14" below the freight floor.

Two small restrooms of the same twentieth century 5-panel door type have been inserted in the northwest corner of the freight room, again indicating a probable remodeling around the turn of the century or later. The plumbing fixtures look c. 1950. The present office ceiling is modern 2'x4' lay-in acoustical panels, perhaps of c. 1950-1985.

The sashes (6/6 and 9/9) in the office area (other than in the later bay window) are of the single-slide type (top sash "fixed") without parting-beads or ropes or weights, with mortised, tenon and peg joints and muntin-bar profile of a wedge shape. This type was most common in the mid 19th century and therefore these sashes are probably original.

Archaeological Component

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

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Section 8 Page 3

Scottsboro Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot
Jackson County, Alabama

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot in Scottsboro, Jackson County, Alabama, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its significant association with the transportation history of Scottsboro and Jackson County and one of the South's most significant antebellum rail systems, the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. One of the last surviving antebellum depots in Alabama (most were burned during the Civil War), the depot in Scottsboro was begun in 1860 and completed and added to the Memphis and Charleston line on the eve of the Civil War in 1861. Scottsboro was located on the important route through Alabama which connected Memphis to Chattanooga. In 1865 the depot and surrounding area was the site of a skirmish between African-American Union troops, who were guarding the depot and water tanks, and rebel Confederate soldiers. The depot originally serviced both passengers and freight and continued to do so until 1892 when passenger service was transferred to a new depot constructed just for that purpose. The Memphis and Charleston line was later absorbed by the great Southern and continued freight service until the mid-1980s, when its previous owners, Norfolk Southern, discontinued its service. The depot was recently turned over to the City of Scottsboro and extensive plans are underway to work with the Jackson County Historical Association to restore the building for use as the group's headquarters and a small history museum. The period of significance extends from 1860, the year construction began on the depot, to 1948, the National Park Service's fifty-year cut-off date reflecting the depot's continued historic transportation usage.

Historic Summary

In 1859 the seat of Jackson County, Bellefonte, was changed by an act of the County Commissioners in an effort to move the county seat to the newly created town of Scottsboro, previously known as Scott's Mill, as it had become an important water stop for the Memphis and Charleston (M&C) Railroad line. Bellefonte, a Tennessee River town, had been incorporated and made county seat in 1821; however, with the coming of the M&C line in the 1850s, it began to experience a decline as the movement to transport people and goods switched from river to rail. In March 1856, the M&C completed its line connecting Decatur to Stevenson, Alabama. Construction of the depot at Scottsboro along this line was begun late in 1860 and completed in 1861 at a total cost of \$2,000.

Chartered in 1850, the Memphis and Charleston Railroad was the only east-west rail route running entirely across the Confederacy in the mid-nineteenth century, thus it became a major target for Union troops during the Civil War. Skirmishes and battles occurred all along the M&C line, many resulting in at the very least confiscation or vandalism of track and oftentimes, the burning of depots themselves. Capturing the M&C line meant that the Federal army could not only cut off rail movements across the South but also assure a supply line for the Atlanta campaign. The Scottsboro Depot's transportation function and its subsequent location on the M&C line, essentially insured some impact from the Civil War. According to official war records, a brief but intense skirmish between Union and Confederate troops occurred at the Depot on January 8, 1865. The Union troops consisted of twenty-nine soldiers of the "One hundred and first U.S. Colored Infantry" and twenty-five soldiers of the "One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry." The soldiers were under the command of First Lieutenant John Hull. The Union soldiers had been ordered to proceed to "Scottsborough" to guard water tanks and the depot. It had been reported that Confederate Brigadier-General H. B. Lyon and a force of about 1,000 -1,500 soldiers were in the area (later, Lyon's army was determined to be about 350). Lyon, a feared Confederate leader under the command of Nathan Bedford Forrest, led raids into Union-occupied territory in north Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee and destroyed a number of courthouses and railroad depots that had fallen under Union control.

The 101 and 110 African-American Union troops had only recently formed and had little combat experience. They had not been in the Scottsboro area during the early years of the war. These soldiers had been assigned primarily to guard the Memphis and Charleston railroad line, but on January 8, 1865, they found themselves in full battle with Lyon's unit at the depot in "Scottsborough," Alabama.

According to Hull's official report, fighting at the depot was ferocious. Lyon's men attacked first at 5:30 p.m. One Union soldier was shot then stabbed in the attack, but the Union troops held the depot. At 6:00 p.m., according to Hull, Lyon's men attacked again. Hull said that the Confederates "massed their force on the north side of the depot, making an assault, which I repulsed after ten minutes (of) almost hand-to-hand encounter."

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Scottsboro Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot
Jackson County, Alabama

The Confederate soldiers grabbed the muzzles of the Union troop's guns, attempting to "wrest them through the loopholes of the depot building, in which we were stationed," Hull said. The Union soldiers again fought off the attack. A third even more intense attack occurred and once again the Confederates were driven back. Finally, the Confederates fell back and opened artillery fire on the soldiers at the Depot, after which the Union soldiers "fell back to the mountain."

Lyon's forces did not stay in "Scottsborough" for long. Union Colonel A. G. Mallory reported that soon after the skirmish he was stopped by Hull's garrison near "Scottsborough." He then advanced and moved into the town, which he said had been evacuated. Before leaving, the Confederates had set fire to the depot. "Mallory's men extinguished the fire and saved the building," he said. Lyon marched on toward Guntersville, his unit steadily disbanding.

After the War, railroad owners and managers grappled with recapturing their lines back from the United States Provisional Military Government. The Memphis and Charleston line successfully reorganized and began the monumental task of rebuilding the line late in 1856. From Decatur to Pocahaontas, Alabama alone, a 114-mile section, forty miles of M&C track had been burned and the remaining line was in shambles including destroyed trestles, bridges, buildings, and water tanks. However, the company moved quickly and by the summer of 1866, the entire Alabama section of the M&C had been repaired, including the Scottsboro Depot. By 1870 the town of Scottsboro had recovered enough from the Civil War to incorporate itself and finally build the county courthouse. While at the same time, the depot had become the centerpiece of Scottsboro's main business district, known as the Railroad District.

However by 1877, the Memphis and Charleston was in such financial trouble that it leased out its line to the then prosperous and expanding East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad. 1885 stockholder records of the ETV&G/M&C line show that repairs were made to the depot in that year. The ETV&G retained the M&C until the former was absorbed by the Southern Railroad in 1894. However, the ETV&G/M&C was not completely reorganized into the Southern system until 1898. The absorption of the ETV&G/M&C line by Southern was part of the latter's defensive acquisition policy to buy up small and/or derelict lines to keep them out of the hands of Southern's competitors. The Scottsboro Depot had served passengers until 1892, when a separate passenger depot was established approximately one-fourth mile east of the original depot along the railroad line (the passenger depot has since been moved to a private residence). Despite the opening of this passenger depot, the 1861 depot remained important in the life of the city and county for decades. Residents from throughout the county received freight orders delivered to the depot. For years, the depot was one of the most active business centers in Scottsboro.

During Southern's interim reorganization period, the Scottsboro Freight Depot was reported to be in good condition, but in need of repairs and painting. This work was probably completed relatively soon after the Southern transfer was finalized in 1898. Up until this point the depot had remained virtually unchanged since its completion in 1861. These repairs might be seen in the use of board-and-batten interior wall covering. The Scottsboro Depot continued its function as a freight station throughout the twentieth century; however, its usage began to decline as more and more freight shipping was done by highway trucking. Eventually its new owners, Norfolk Southern, consolidated their freight shipping centers and closed the Scottsboro Depot in the 1980s.

Currently, local citizens, elected officials, the Alabama Historical Commission, and other interested parties are working together with Norfolk Southern officials to preserve the building. As a result of this effort, Norfolk Southern has agreed to give the building and the land on which it sits to the city of Scottsboro. In turn, the Jackson County Historical Association (JCHA) will restore the building through grants and fundraising efforts. The JCHA will use the building for its headquarters. The JCHA plans to place markers at the building explaining the history of the depot, with emphasis given to the Civil War skirmish that took place there. Additionally, the JCHA plans to open a small museum in the depot. Designation of the depot on the National Register of Historic Places will bring more recognition to the depot and help pass its legacy to future generations.

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Scottsboro Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot
Jackson County, Alabama

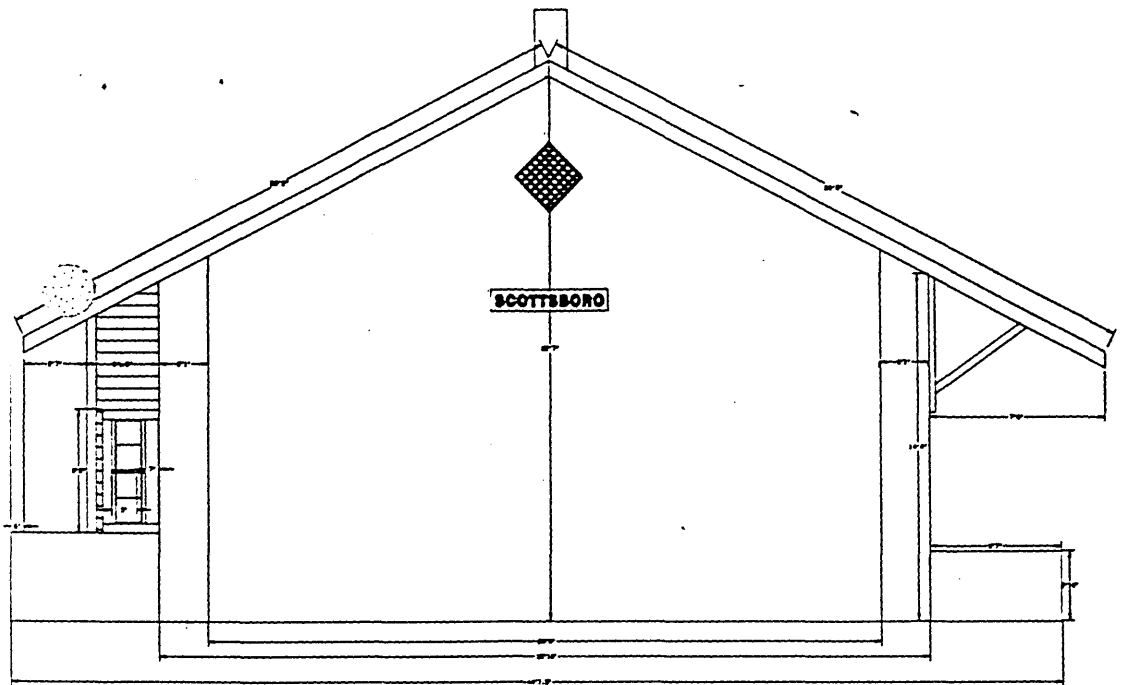
9. Major Bibliographical References

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10. Geographical Data

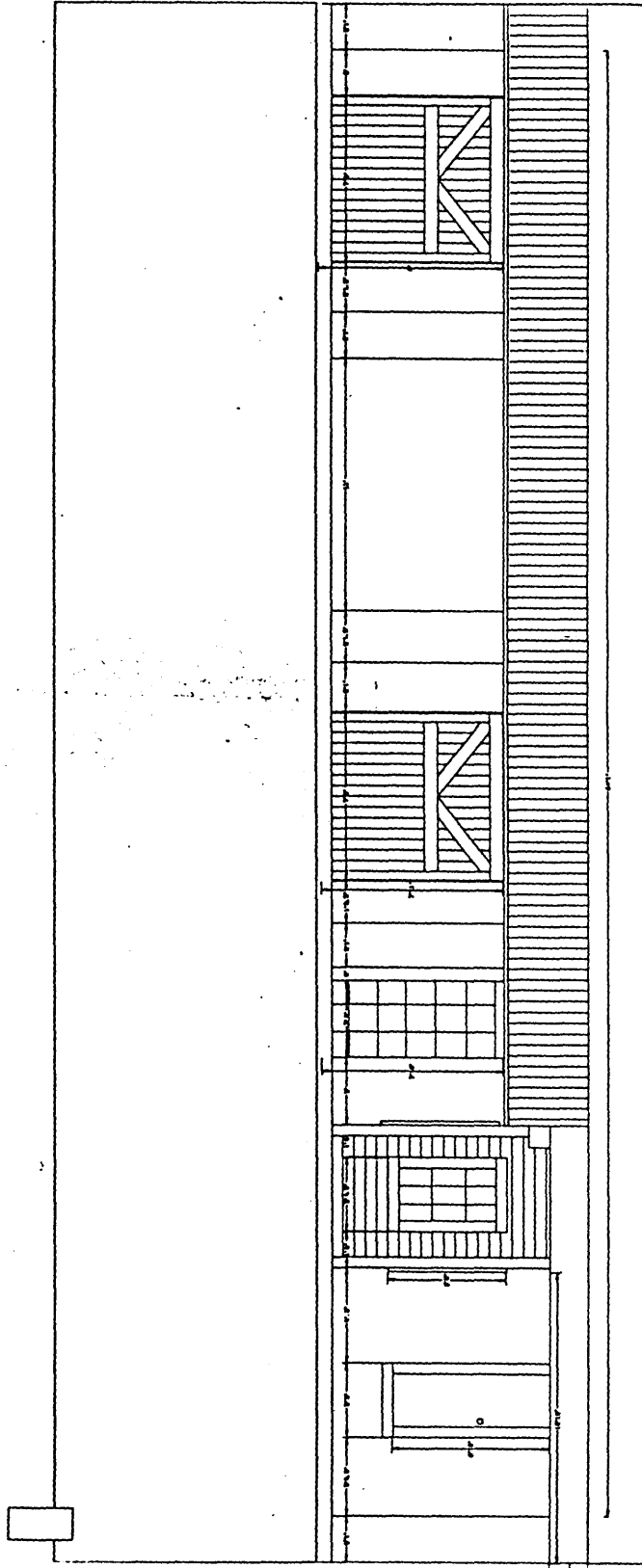
Verbal Boundary Description: The Scottsboro Memphis and Charleston Freight Depot is located on the northwest corner of North Houston Street and Maple Avenue in Scottsboro, Jackson County, Alabama as located within the railroad right-of-way designation on Jackson County tax map number 39-27-04-19-13.

Boundary Justification: The nominated boundaries contain the immediate surroundings of all the extant historic property associated with the Scottsboro Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot.



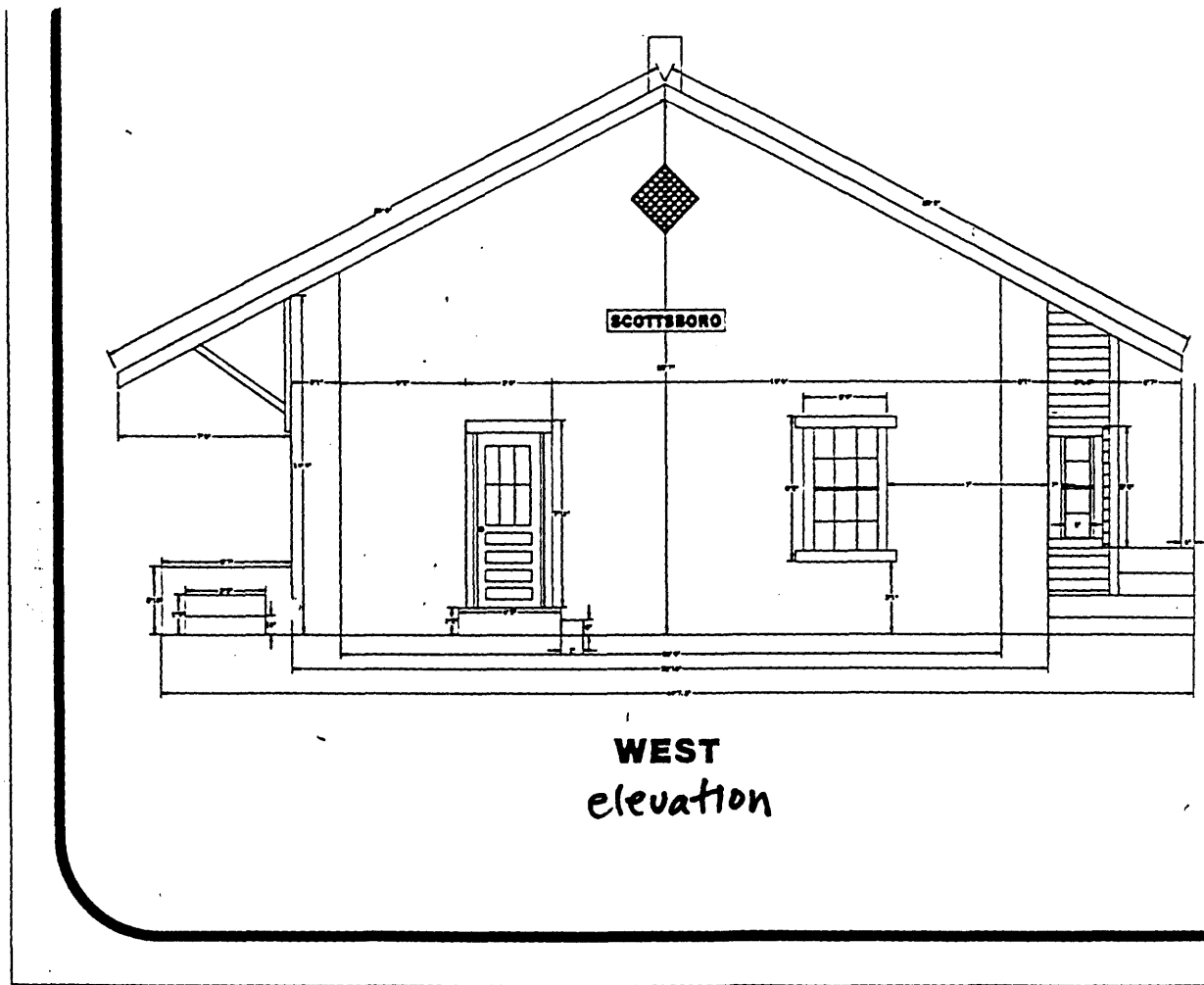
**EAST
elevation**

Scottsboro Memphis & Charleston Railroad Depot
Jackson Co, AL

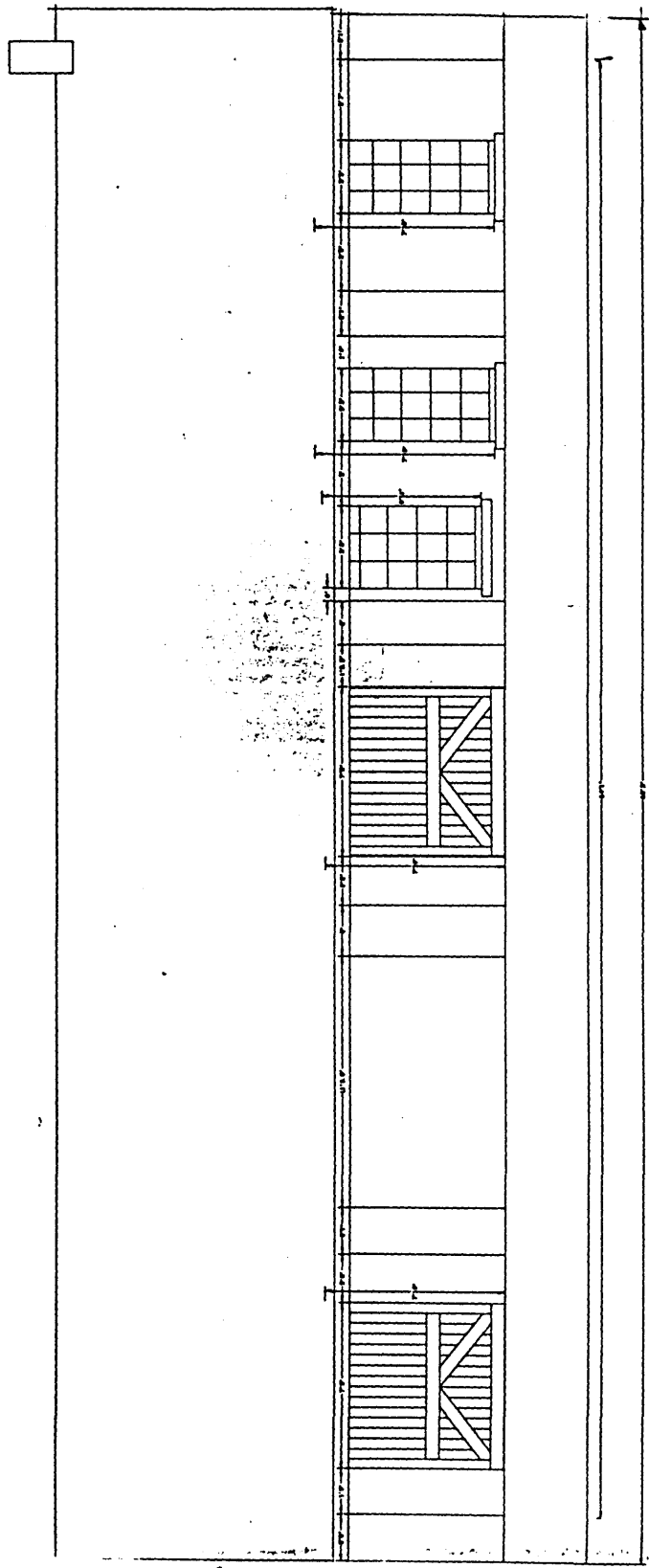


SOUTH
elevation

Scottsboro Memphis & Charleston Railroad Depot
Jackson Co., AL

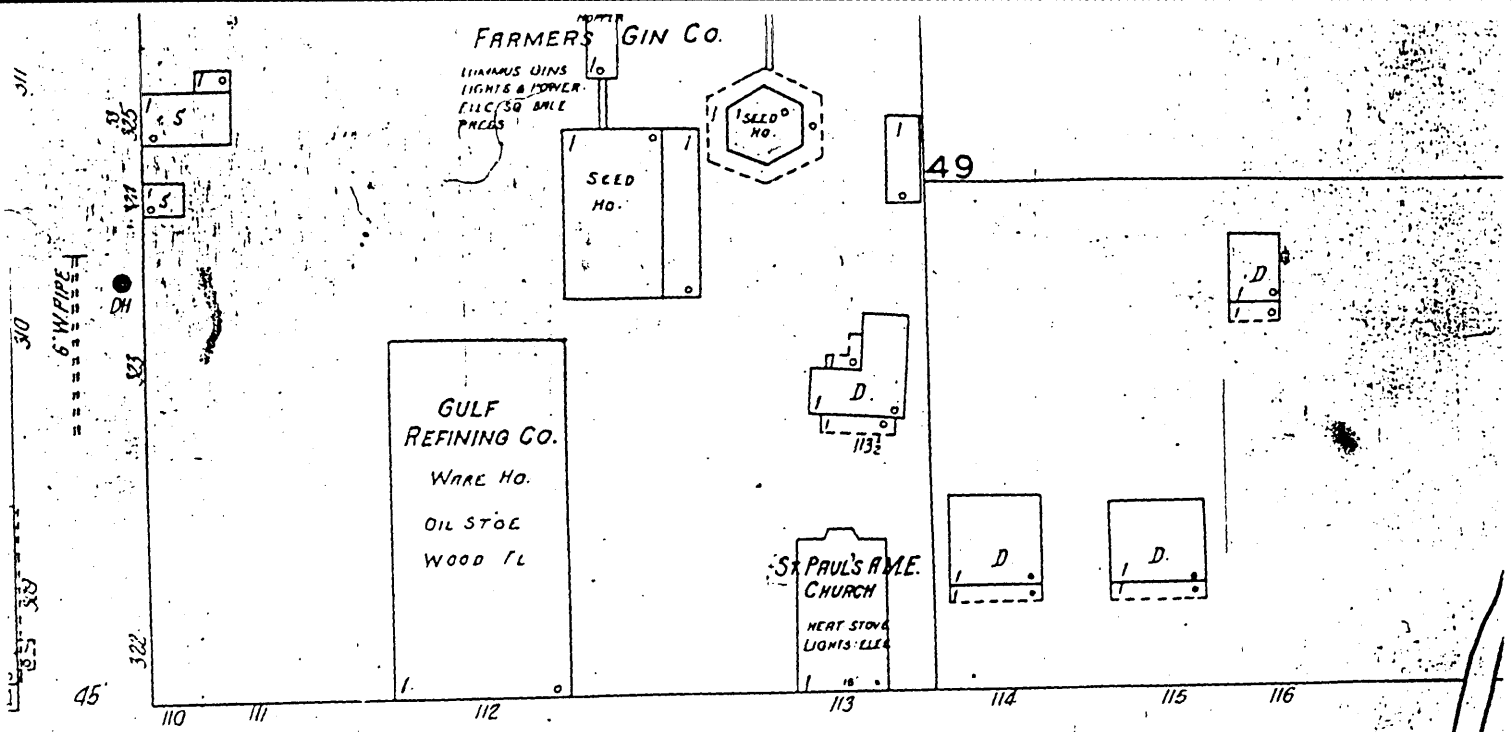


Scottsboro Memphis & Charleston Railroad Depot
Jackson Co., AL

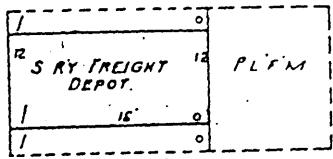


NORTH
elevation

Scottsboro Memphis & Charleston Railroad Depot
Jackson Co., AL



RAILWAY AV.



RAILWAY AV.

