## United States Department of the Interior **National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places** Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only MAY 1 6 1983 received date entered

not for publication

code

065

37402

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

#### 1. Name

historic Southern Railway Freight Depot (preferred)

John's Railroad Salvage/Southern Railway Freight Depot and/or common

#### 2. Location

1140 Newby Street street & number

N/A vicinity of

Tennessee state

city, town

47 code

county Hamilton

### Classification 3.

Chattanooga

Status **Present Use Ownership** Category \_ public \_ district \_X\_ occupied \_ agriculture \_ museum <u>X</u> building(s) \_X\_ private \_ unoccupied \_\_X\_ commercial park \_\_\_ structure \_ both work in progress \_\_\_\_ educational private residence \_ site **Public Acquisition** Accessible entertainment religious \_\_ in process \_X\_ yes: restricted government \_ scientific \_\_\_ object \_ being considered \_\_\_ yes: unrestricted industrial transportation AIN military other: no

#### **Owner of Property** 4.

Attention: Mr. Curtis B. Hale

name Commercial Development Division, Southern Railway System

street & number P. O. Box 1808

Washington city, town

N/Avicinity of

state D.C. 20013

state

N/A

#### Location of Legal Description 5.

Hamilton County Courthouse courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.

Georgia Avenue street & number

city, town Chattanooga

| 6. | Representatio | on in | Existing | Surveys |
|----|---------------|-------|----------|---------|
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|---------|---------------------|--------|-----------|------------------------------|----------------|-----------|-----|---------|
| title ( | hattanooga-Hamilton | County | Landmarks | has this property been deter | rmined eligi   | ible? X   | yes | no      |
|         |                     |        | Survey    |                              |                |           |     |         |
| date    | 1976-77             |        |           | federal                      | <u>X</u> state | _X_ count | у   | ▲ local |

Planning Commission, 200 City Hall Annex depository for survey records

Chattanooga city, town

state Tennessee 37402

Tennessee

# 7. Description

| Condition |              | Check one                | Check one              |             |   |
|-----------|--------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------|---|
| excellent | deteriorated | unaltered<br>_X_ altered | X_ original s<br>moved | ite<br>date | • |
| fair      | unexposed    |                          |                        |             |   |

#### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

The Southern Railway Freight Depot contains a two-and-one-half-story brick office portion and a one-story brick shed. The brick shed was apparently constructed in 1871 and was used as a machine shop for a foundry until about 1880. At that time the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia (ETV&G) Railroad purchased the property. The building was then used as a freight depot by the ETV&G Railroad until the line went bankrupt in 1894 and was absorbed by the Southern Railway System. Southern continued using the structure as a freight depot. In 1898 Southern expanded the existing building through the construction of a two-story addition that both expanded the freight depot and provided office space for Southern employees. Southern continued operations in this building until the late 1960s; since Southern's departure the building has been occuppied by a railroad salvage enterprise named John's Railroad Salvage. Plans are currently underway to renovate this building for use as restaurants and shops.

The Southern Freight Depot is located in downtown Chattanooga on the south end of the Central Business District. This portion of Chattanooga is flat and contains commercially used properties such as warehouses, offices, and surface parking areas. This portion of Chattanooga was once dominated by the railroad and related industries, and remnants such as the railroad tracks and some associated buildings remain. In recent years the character of the area has changed as the importance of the railroad to Chattanooga has declined. Currently, it is anticipated that this area will experience further changes primarily due to the construction of a nearby office complex by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The older portion of the building is a one-story (originally freestanding 1) shed of solid masonry construction laid in common bond. It rests on a stone and brick foundation, and is rectangular in shape; approximately 150 feet by 60 feet. The gable roof (originally tin) is covered with asphalt shingles. The east and west elevations of the building are similiar in appearance. Each has twelve bays formed by a projecting rectangular column of bricks creating a pilaster effect. On the west elevation there are segmental arched doorways in bays four and nine (from north to south); the remaining bays each contain one window. On the east elevation, there are segmental arched doorways in bays four and ten; rectangular doors in bays one and twelve; and windows within the remaining bays. There are two interior chimneys flush with the east wall. The northern gable end has been somewhat altered by the adjoining 1898 addition. The portion that is visible reveals an off-center fully arched opening flanked by a window to the west; the eastern portion of this wall is not visible. The southern elevation contains an off-center segmental arched entrance flanked by one window on each side. (The arched entrances on each end are not aligned.) Over each door is a row of brick headers, and over each window is a flat arch of vertical masonry. The sills are wooden. There is a one-story porch on the three exposed elevations.

Overall, there has been extensive filling and patching of the brickwork, and several of the windows have been bricked up. On the south elevation is a twentieth century concrete loading dock and a badly damaged remnant of a wooden train shed. The remainder of this wooden structure was destroyed by fire in the early 1970s; the fire resulted in some smoke damage to the southern elevation of the depot building.

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0110 No. 1004 ......

NPS Form 10.900-8

In addition to the survey materials located at the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, similiar materials are located at the Tennessee Historical Commission (Customs House, 701 Broadway, Nashville, TN 37203).

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY: This property was one of fourteen buildings (twelve contributing) comprising the Market Street Commercial District which was submitted for a determination of eligibility in 1980. The determination of eligibility was requested by Madison McBrayer of the Chattanooga Community Development Office for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The district was subsequently determined eligible for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places 25 February 1980.

Since 1980 one contributing property (Inventory number 2) and one other building (Inventory number 13) have been demolished.

| NPS Form 10-900-a<br>(3-82)                                       |      | OMB No. 1024-0018<br>Exp. 10-31-84 |
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The interior is open, consisting of one large room. The walls are exposed brick. The roof is an open interior gable supported by a Howe truss system. There are eleven trusses corresponding with the twelve bays of the structure. The top and bottom chords are composed of laminated (built up) stock. The interior truss components are metal tension rods and wooden beam compression members. The bottom chords abut the walls at the centerpoint of the projecting brick columns (pilasters).

In 1898 Southern Railway built an addition which contains a two-story portion and a two-and-one-half story portion. <sup>2</sup>Brick paving along the west side of the building was also added at that time. This addition fronted Newby Street and was of brick construction laid in common bond resting on a brick foundation. The roof is slate. The northern-most portion is two stories in height and was used for offices. The three sides of this portion each contain three bays. On the facade the central bay contains concrete steps leading to a double doorway with transom and sidelights. The two flanking bays and the three second floor bays each contain two windows. On both the east and west elevations each bay on both floors contains two windows with the exception of the southern-most bay on the west elevation that contains a window and a door that was later bricked up. Most windows in this portion are presently boarded over.

Behind (to the south of) this two story office portion is the remainder of the 1898 addition which is two-and-one-half stories in height. Both the east and west elevations contain two floors with seven bays and a gabled attic section. On the first floor there are half-arched entrances in bays two, four, and six (from north to south); two windows in the first bay, and the remaining bays are solid brick. At the first floor level is a shed porch which connects to the porch of the one-story shed. The second floor of the office addition also contains seven bays; in each bay are two windows. Above the second floor is a centrally located gabled (attic) which contains three arched windows. The south elevation of this 1898 portion is attached to the 1871 portion with a one-story connector. On each side, the connector contains one bay with a segmental arched entranceway. Above this connector, the second floor of the 1898 portion is visible. It contains three bays each with two windows. All windows in the 1898 portion have wooden sills, are two-over-two single hung sash and, with the exception of the more fully arched attic windows, have slightly arched brick lintels. There are eleven interior chimneys within the outside walls.

The interior of the 1898 portion has remained largely intact over the years. Both floors of the two-story northern-most portion (facade) contained offices. The primary alteration is the enclosure of the stairway on the second floor level. The interior walls are either plastered or have narrow beaded tongue-and-groove paneling. The second floor of the two-and-one-half story section was also used for offices. <sup>3</sup>This portion also retains a high degree of integrity. Many of the interior walls and ceilings are also covered with tongue-and-groove paneling. Many of the doorway lintels have bull's-eye decorative motifs. All of the doors have glass transoms, all stationary with the exception of one. In addition, some of the original furnishings in the office portions remain such as the safe, shelves, and mailboxes.

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The first floor of the two-and-one-half story section was apparently used more directly in the shipping of freight and is separated from the office portion by a masonry wall. The interior walls are exposed brick, and the floor plan is open consisting of one room. There are two rows of exposed timber columns and beams supporting the floor joists of the second floor. This first floor section connects directly to the 1871 portion; apparently the original 1898 building had a wall dividing this portion from the connector but this wall has been removed. The masonry wall above is now supported by a steel I-beam and round metal columns.

In summary, the 1871 portion has been somewhat altered by the infilling of openings and masonry patching but maintains its basic integrity. The major "alteration" is the 1898 addition which maintains an unusually high degree of exterior and interior integrity and which is now perceived as the primary structure. Overall, both portions retain their architectural and historical integrity.

<sup>1</sup>This rectangular building is apparently depicted on two 1871 maps of Chattanooga as a freestanding structure (Bradt's 1871 Map of the City of Chattanooga and Paine's 1871 Map of Chattanooga), on Wittman's 1885 Map of Chattanooga, as well as the 1889 Atlas of Chattanooga. On the 1904 Sanborn map, the outline of the building as it presently exists is clearly defined.

<sup>2</sup>Southern Railway has an undated set of drawings for its later addition to this building. These drawings show the two-story office portion of the 1898 addition essentially as it appears now. But the two-and-one-half story portion is quite different: the plans show this portion to be one story in height and having a roof truss system identical to the 1871 shed. From the appearance of the present structure, it appears that these plans were probably altered before construction began and the building was originally constructed as it now appears.

<sup>3</sup>The attic was apparently seldom used and is now inaccessible.

# 8. Significance

| Period<br>prehistoric<br>1400–1499<br>1500–1599<br>1600–1699<br>1700–1799<br>X 1800–1899<br>1900– | Areas of Significance—C<br>archeology-prehistoric<br>archeology-historic<br>agriculture<br>X architecture<br>art<br>commerce<br>communications | community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlement | Iandscape architecture<br>law<br>literature<br>military<br>music<br>philosophy<br>politics/government | e religion<br>science<br>sculpture<br>social/<br>humanitarian<br>theater<br>_X transportation<br>other (specify) |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Specific dates  | 1871;1898  | Builder/Architect Offic  | ce of the Chief Engi  | neer of Southerr   |

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Builder/Architect Office of the Chief Engineer of Southern Railway

The Southern Railway Freight Depot derives its significance from its historical associations with two industries that significantly affected Chattanooga's history, the iron industry and the railroad industry. Also, the 1871 portion, retaining its basic integrity, is one of the oldest remaining buildings in downtown Chattanooga. The 1898 portion, one of the few remaining railroad constructed buildings in Chattanooga, retains an unusually high degree of integrity both on the exterior and interior. Architecturally, both building portions reflect the unadorned and utilitarian yet attractive styles often used for industrial and some commercial buildings in the nineteenth century. As such, it is being nominated under Criteria A and C.

The Southern Freight Depot has close ties to the railroad industry and its history in Chattanooga. The railroad has special significance to Chattanooga since it was one of the most important factors in her development as a major city. Noted Chattanooga historians Drs. Livingood and Govan describe the selection of Chattanooga for the northern terminal of the Western and Atlantic Railroad in the 1840s as "the most important decision of the town's history." As terminals, Chattanooga and Atlanta 'became as magnets, drawing to them a network of other railroad projects. Thus, the two communities came to dominate transportation in the southeast."<sup>1</sup> This can be seen in the number of rail lines entering the city in the period prior to Civil War. During the Civil War itself, Chattanooga played a significant role due to its importance as a rail center and consequently was the site of a major battle. During Reconstruction, even more rail lines entered the city. Chattanooga's position as a rail center was firmly established with the consolidation of several railroad lines under the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad in 1873 and the Southern Railroad Company in 1894. The importance of Chattanooga as a regional center of transportation and as an economical center can be seen in the 1913 decision of the Interstate Commerce Commission to designate Chattanooga as the headquarters of the ICC's fifth district.

As a result of this pivotal position as a railroad center, the railroad industry resulted in a variety of buildings being constructed in downtown Chattanooga. The southern portion of Chattanooga became a center of support buildings for the railroad industry such as hotels, industrial mills, factories, and warehouses. Also, the railroads themselves built a variety of buildings in this area including freight and passenger depots, roundhouses, engine shops, repair shops and offices.

The Southern Freight Depot represents both aspects of this commercial development created by the railroad industry in Chattanooga. The older portion of the building, the one-story brick shed from all evidence was originally constructed as the machine shop of Webster's Foundry, an important early Chattanooga industry, and thus represents the type of industrial development that frequently flourished around centers of rail transportation.

In 1913 the son of Thomas Webster, "Daddy" Webster, a colorful street car conductor, said in an interview that his father's foundry was the largest industry in Chattanooga in the 1850s and that "part of the present Southern freight depot was the old Webster machine shop."<sup>3</sup> This statement is supported by two 1871 Chattanooga maps which show a building roughly the size of the depot-shed at this approximate site labeled as Thomas Webster's foundry.<sup>4</sup> Also, the first City Directory of Chattanooga, issued in 1871 by Lou Parham, contains this discussion of Thomas Webster and his foundry:

3

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

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| · · ·  |             |    |                  |         |

At present a large frame building is used for a machine shop, but there is being built and nearly completed a new

#### MACHINE SHOP

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brick of the best brick, and will be covered with tin. It is one hundred and fifty feet long and sixty feet wide, and fifteen feet high in the clear. There are no partitions or divisions.<sup>5</sup>

Webster had come to Chattanooga around 1856 and had purchased from Robert Cravens an iron industry concern, the East Tennessee Iron Manufacturing Company which was the principal metal working operation in Chattanooga. Webster quickly became one of the most prominent and influential businessmen in Chattanooga.<sup>6</sup> While the furnace and some of his other iron operations were located on the river for accessibility by water transport, Webster's foundry was located in the heart of the railroad area for easy access to markets by rail.

During the Federal advance on Chattanooga, Webster's foundry continued to operate day and night, and Webster himself left Chattanooga only slightly ahead of the occupation of the city by Federal forces. During the occupation, Webster's foundry was destroyed. However, after the war he returned to Chattanooga and began rebuilding his enterprise. After his operations were again destroyed, this time by fire in 1867, he once again rebuilt.<sup>7</sup> By 1871 there were at least three buildings at this site; a brick foundry, a brick blacksmith shop, and a frame machine shop.<sup>8</sup> This frame machine shop presumably is the one which was replaced by the present brick structure and referred to in the city directory quoted above. After surviving the 1873 depression, Webster closed his foundry in 1874.<sup>9</sup> In 1880 the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia (ETV&G) Railway purchased this property and used the building for a freight depot.<sup>10</sup>

The iron industry was a major factor in the development of Chattanooga. Chattanooga historians Drs. Govan and Livingood state that the most outstanding early industrial efforts in Chattanooga involved the smelting and working of iron primarily due to the influences that this industry would have on Chattanooga later in its history.<sup>11</sup> In the 1860s and 1870s, the foundation of the local economy was iron and coal.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, few buildings remain from this early period in Chattanooga and almost none which directly relate to the iron industry.<sup>13</sup> This 1871 machine shop is thus one of the oldest buildings remaining in downtown Chattanooga and is also the oldest known building in Chattanooga that was used in the smelting and working of iron.

Architecturally, the 1871 portion is relatively unadorned. Yet, it does represent the distinctive characteristics of functional yet handsome architectural design. The 1871 machine shop, one of the oldest extant buildings in Chattanooga, is reflective of the rebuilding period after the Civil War which was necessarily utilitarian and unadorned. Even so, its appearance is enhanced by the flat arched window treatments, segmental arched entrances, and especially by the fully developed single arch on the north end.

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The 1898 addition reflects a more direct involvement with the railroad. The ETV&G Railway<sup>14</sup> used the old Webster's machine shop as a freight depot until 1894 when the company went bankrupt. The newly formed Southern Railway purchased the ETV&G Railway and thus acquired the freight depot which Southern continued to use for that purpose.

NPS Form 10-900-a

In the late 1890s, Southern proposed and expanded its railway holdings by purchasing numerous rail lines and extending its own lines. It is assumed that due to this expansion additional space was required by Southern in Chattanooga. In 1898 Southern consequently constructed onto the old depot (machine shop) a large addition for offices and increased freight shipping capacities.<sup>15</sup> The building was designed by the Office of the Chief Engineer of Southern Railway Company.<sup>16</sup>

While the rail industry resulted in a variety of buildings being constructed in this portion of Chattanooga, few specifically built by Southern remain. The major buildings constructed by Southern that remain are probably limited to the freight depot, the Chattanooga Terminal (NR, 1906-08), and an office building built in the mid-1920s. There were several depots constructed in Chattanooga and all in this immediate area between 1850 and 1910: the Western and Atlantic Depot, the Union Depot, the Nashville and Chattanooga Depot, the Central Passenger Depot, the Cincinnati Southern Railroad Freight Depot, the ETV&G Railroad Freight Depot (later Southern Railway Freight Depot), and the Chattanooga Terminal Station. Of these only the Southern Railway Freight Depot and the Chattanooga Terminal (N.R., 1906-08) remain.<sup>17</sup> Thus, these two buildings are the last remaining depots from the peiod when the railroad industry dominated Chattanooga. Interestingly, these two depots represent both services the railroads provided: the shipping of freight and the conveyance of passengers.

Architecturally, the freight and passenger depots also offer contrasts. The Chattanooga Terminal Station is a magnificent Beaux Arts design while the Freight Depot's appearance is representative of the less elaborate and more functional designs usually used by the railroads for their less visible buildings (such as freight depots). Even so, the Southern Freight Depot is an attractive building reflecting careful design and attention by Southern for even one of its less visible buildings. Using relatively restrained architectural features to enhance the building's appearance, Southern built a handsome structure featuring a carefully detailed symmetrical treatment that contains the repeated motif for its doorways of the segmental arch found on the 1871 machine shop and modified for the window lintels. A textured wall surface is created by the recessed bays containing the doorways and paired windows. All together, these features provide an echo of the more embellished designs more commonly used for passenger stations.

In summary, the Southern Railway Freight Depot derives its significance from its associations with two important historical developments in Chattanooga, the iron industry and the railroad industry. Also, the building is architecturally significant as an example of mid-nineteenth century industrial buildings and as an example of the handsome yet functional designs that many railroads used for their freight depots.



<sup>1</sup>Gilbert E. Govan and James W. Livingood, <u>The Chattanooga Country 1540-1976</u> (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1977), p.129.

<sup>2</sup>Chattanooga <u>Times</u>, 8 October 1913. Other headquarters were Washington, D.C.; Chicago; Kansas City; and San Francisco.

<sup>3</sup>This interview originally appeared in the <u>Chattanooga</u> <u>News</u>, 29 June 1913. It was reprinted in Susie McCarver Webster's Historic City-Chattanooga (N.P.: N.P.), 1915.

<sup>4</sup>Morris Bradt's 1871 'Map of the City of Chattanooga' and A. B. Paine's 1871 'Map of Chattanooga.''

<sup>5</sup>Lou Parham, <u>Annual Directory of the City of Chattanooga for 1871-72</u> (Knoxville: Whig and Register Steam Print, 1871), p. 54.

<sup>6</sup>Govan and Livingood, pp. 167-68. These holdings included the Bluff Furnace (NR, archaeological site).

<sup>7</sup>Parham, p. 54.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>John Wilson, <u>Chattanooga's Story</u> (Chattanooga: Chattanooga News-Free Press, 1980), p. 170.

<sup>10</sup>On Wittman's 1885 map of Chattanooga, this building seems to be the only remaining building from Webster's Foundry.

<sup>11</sup>Govan and Livingood, p. 163.

<sup>12</sup>Chattanooga-Hamilton County Landmarks Survey and Preservation Plan (N.P.: N.P., 1977), p. 16.

<sup>13</sup>Other properties related to the iron industry from this early period include the Bluff Furnace archaeological site and the Cravens House (residence of Robert Cravens built in the 1880s); both properties are listed on the National Register.

<sup>14</sup>The East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad Company sold under foreclosure in 1886 to be reorganized as the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railway Company.

<sup>15</sup>This date is based on information obtained from Southern Railway's accounting office in Atlanta. This was confirmed by a listing in the <u>Chattanooga Times</u> of major building permits issued in the City of Chattanooga for the year 1898 which listed an addition for \$6000 to the Southern Freight Depot (<u>Chattanooga Times</u>, 3 January 1899).

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 $^{16}{\rm The}$  architectural drawings for this building are on file in Southern's architect's office in Atlanta.

 $^{17}_{\ \ {\rm The}}$  Central Passenger Depot was demolished in the mid-1920s; an associated support building, possibly a baggage building, does remain.

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| Southern Railway Freight Depot                              |               |                          |
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Evp 10-31-84

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NPS Form 10-900-a

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\*Unless otherwise noted, these materials are available at the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Bicentennial Library. Chattanooga, Tennessee.

| (3-82)   |             |     | Exp. 10-31-84            |
|--|-------------|-----|--------------------------|
| United States Department of the Inter<br>National Park Service | rior        |     | For NPS use only         |
| National Register of Hist<br>Inventory—Nomination F            |             | es: | received<br>date entered |
| Southern Railway Freight Depot                                 |             |     |                          |
| Continuation sheet   | Item number | 10  | Page 2                   |

### Verbal boundary description and justification

NPS Form 10-900-a

The area being nominated contains the freight depot, a double line of railroad tracks to the east of the building, and a parking area adjacent to the southern elevation of the depot. This area was chosen as being distinct in appearance from those areas surrounding it. On the northeast the property is bounded by Newby Street, on the southeast by King Street, on the southwest by the railroad right of way, and on the northeast by an arbitrary line across the parking area.