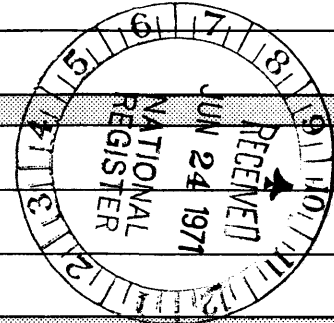


PH0021237

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: ALABAMA	
COUNTY: MORGAN	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
MAR 24 1972	



1. NAME

COMMON: State Bank Building, Decatur Branch

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 925 Bank Street, N.E.

CITY OR TOWN: Decatur,

STATE: Alabama CODE: 01 COUNTY: Morgan CODE: 103

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: American Legion Post 15, Bill Falls, Commander

STREET AND NUMBER: 304 Ferry Street, N. E.

CITY OR TOWN: Decatur STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Morgan County Courthouse, Probate Office

STREET AND NUMBER: 301 Ferry Street, N. E.

CITY OR TOWN: Decatur STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1936 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D. C. CODE: 08

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: _____

COUNTY: _____

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER: MAR 24 1972

DATE: _____

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
(Check One)			(Check One)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Altered		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	
				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Decatur State Bank Building is a two-story brick structure built in the classic or Greek Revival style with Federal ornamentation on the exterior. The building is transitional Federal with Greek Revival motifs found on both the interior and the exterior.

The front portico is unusual in that it has five round Roman Doric stone columns with square capitals. Two matching square pilasters are at either end of the portico which is elevated and has a double stairway leading up to it. The right stairway has wrought iron railings. To the left of the portico is an annex with the stairs leading up to it. This annex has one door and two windows on the front.

The pediment has Gothic lancet windows with interlacings forming a semi-circular top, which was not included in the original plans and may be a later addition.

The brick facade has three double wooden doors with Federal fanlights and windows with flat stone lintels terminated in Federal style rosettes. At the second floor level a window and one door face onto a wrought iron balcony located above the central door.

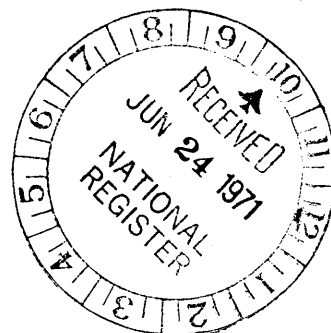
The exterior of the building remains in good condition with only minor alterations except for the application of stucco in the entablature of the front portico. From an early photograph this material seems to have been wood or metal simulated ashlar panelling.

The first floor interior reflects early traces of Greek Revival motifs in the banking room introduced by the vault door frame of cast iron. The walls of this vault are 36 inches thick. Tellers cages have been removed and the office and stair hall comprise the other rooms on the first floor. Both reflect the exterior style of the building. The wooden doors and window sashes on the first floor are not original; however, the doors may have been closely copied from the original door design. The second floor which once comprised apartment quarters has been substantially altered and no obvious arrangement is apparent except for the stair location and fireplace.

Evidence indicates the building has been repaired around 1870-1881 and 1934-36.

The building is structurally sound and appears to have been adequately maintained up until the present time.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



SIGNIFICANCE

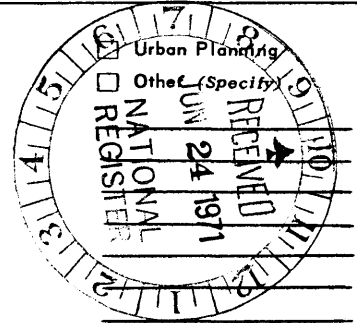
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Decatur State Bank building is one of the forerunners of Greek Revival architecture in Alabama. A transitional building, it is unique in having five round Roman Doric columns with square capitals. The building was one of the four branches of the State Bank system, which has been called by one author "the most notorious scandal in Alabama's political history."

The constitution of Alabama had provided that the legislature might create a state bank with branches. In 1823 the Bank of the State of Alabama was incorporated, the capital consisting of trust funds held by the state and the sale of bonds issued by the bank. The bank opened at Cahaba in 1824 with a capital slightly in excess of \$200,000. The bank was controlled by a president and Board of Directors elected annually by a joint vote of the legislature. The involvement of the bank in politics has been cited as one of the major causes of the bank's ultimate ruin. The banks were exploited by the legislators who often elected unqualified directors in return for favors. In 1825 the bank was moved to Tuscaloosa along with the state capital.

In the early 1830's it was thought necessary to set up branch banks in Mobile, Montgomery, and the Tennessee Valley. Decatur was successful in its claim over Courtland, Huntsville, Florence, and Tuscumbia for the Tennessee Valley branch and the bank was established in 1832. Later another branch was established at Huntsville.

Around this time Alabama entered a boom period. Obsession for land and slaves made large demands upon capital and invoked a very extensive use of credit. The banks did a flourishing business and appeared to be very prosperous. A report of the Decatur branch in 1836 showed a profit of \$115,751. In this same year the legislature abolished direct taxes and allowed the banks to pay the running expenses of the Government. The depression of 1837 revealed the true status of the banks.

A special legislative session in June of that year found that the banks had overextended themselves, the proportion of notes to specie at the Decatur branch was only 1%. A number of other irregularities were also found. Excessive loans and collusion between directors and members of the legislature were uncovered, the Decatur branch being conspicuous for its mismanagement and violation of the law.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Abrams, David, "The State Bank of Alabama 1841-1845," Unpublished M. A. thesis, Auburn University, 1965.
 Funderburk, E. L. "Business Corporations in Alabama in the 19th Century," Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1963.
 Jenkins, Wm. H. and Knox, John, The Story of Decatur, Alabama, Published by the Mayor and Council of Decatur, Decatur, 1970.
 Lancaster, Clay "Greek Revival Architecture in Alabama" Alabama Architect, January, 1968.
 Moore, A. B., History of Alabama, Alabama Bookstore Press, Tuscaloosa, 1951.
 Summersell, C. G., Alabama, History for Schools, Colonial Press: Birmingham, 1957.

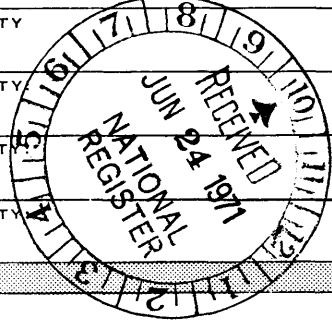
10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		34° 36' 52"	86° 59' 10"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1 acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION
Alabama Historical Commission

DATE
June 15, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:
305 South Lawrence Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Montgomery

STATE
Alabama

CODE
01

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Miss B. Howard J.

Title SLO

Date June 21, 1971

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest A. Connelley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date MAR 24 1972

ATTEST:

William M. ...
 Keeper of The National Register

Date MAR 20 1972

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
ALABAMA	
COUNTY	
MORGAN	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
MAR 24 1972	

(Number all entries)

8. Significance (continued) State Bank Building, Decatur Branch

The bank question became an issue in the gubernatorial elections of 1841, and Benjamin Fitzpatrick was elected on the bank reform platform. In January of 1843 bills were approved for the liquidation of the Decatur and Mobile branches. The Charter of the State Bank expired in 1845 and under the leadership of Fitzpatrick, it was not renewed. By 1858 the final liquidation of all state banks was complete.

After the failure of the State Banking system, the Decatur building was used as a private residence. During the Civil War the building was used as a hospital and was the site of several minor skirmishes with Union raiders.

From 1881 to 1902 the offices of the First National Bank of Decatur occupied the building. Dr. F. Y. Cantwell next bought the building and willed it to his grandniece Mrs. Edmunson. After World War II Mrs. Edmunson sold the building to the American Legion for the sum of \$5.00. Now known as the Lelia Cantwell Seton Hall, it is under the supervision of the legion's Auxiliary and is used for civic and social gatherings.

