

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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

1. Name

historic Vaught House

and/or common Nicholson House

2. Location

street & number 701 Ward Avenue _____ not for publication

city, town Huntsville _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 5

state Alabama code 01 county Madison code 089

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered /	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Evelyn Barnett Wright

street & number 2202 Covemont Drive, S. E.

city, town Huntsville _____ vicinity of _____ state Alabama

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Madison County Courthouse

street & number _____

city, town Huntsville _____ state Alabama

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of Huntsville Architecture has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1976-present _____ federal _____ state _____ county local

depository for survey records Huntsville Planning Department

city, town Huntsville _____ state Alabama

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Vaught house was erected in 1900 on the corner of Ward Avenue and Fifth Street. It is a frame structure of late Victorian massing and detail. Its irregular plan and outline are further varied by the partial second story which increases the complexity of the roofline. The main roof is hipped and supports a population of gables of various sizes and shapes facing each direction, while the hipped roof of the upper bedroom is topped by a cluster of four gablets, which provide visual interest as well as ventilation. Originally there were five chimneys with corbeled tops, but only one still stands, minus its tip. A large, curved, one-story porch extends around the southwest corner from the parlor ell to the dining room bay. This porch originally had slender turned posts supporting the flat roof, and it was decorated with a frieze of spindles and brackets and a balustrade of spindlework rectangles. This Eastlake ornament has been replaced by slightly tapered columns beneath a solid frieze of vertical boards, while the railing now has closely spaced rectangular balusters--probably an early alteration intended to update the house to the Colonial Revival style. The dining room bay has a double hung window in each side wall and a horizontal window of frosted and etched glass in the center. The other windows are of varying sizes but are double hung with a single pane in each sash and have plain frames with modest cornices. The foundation of brick piers has been filled in solid. The front door is multi-paneled and glazed and has a rectangular transom above. An identical door directly above it admits to a small balcony from the upstairs bedroom. This balcony is wood shingled along the bottom in a scalloped pattern, while turned corner posts support a pedimented gabled roof. Spindlework, arranged to create a circular opening on each side of this balcony, has disappeared. Decorative work of the jigsaw variety enlivens the front pediments and gable peaks. A porch across the rear has been enclosed.

The front entrance opens directly into the west parlor, which connects with both the east parlor and with the dining room on the north. Access to the long center hall originally was from either of the parlors; however, the doorway from the east one has now been plastered over. Off the hall on the east side are two baths and two bedrooms, while the west side contains the dining room and kitchen. The second floor is composed of a large stairhall, one bedroom and a bath. Although minor alterations have been made on the interior, the turn-of-the-century appearance is intact. The coal burning fireplaces have wooden mantels of varying designs; the most impressive is in the west parlor and has tall Ionic columns supporting an overmantel frieze above a mirror and a bowed and bracketed shelf. Polychromed ceramic tiles of a wreath and ribbon design surround the opening. The dining room mantel is composed of colonettes on tall pedestals, a simple shelf, plain frieze, and surround of floral patterned tiles. The bedroom mantels each have pilasters of molded trim, end and base blocks, a simple shelf, and a curvilinear frieze. A pocket door separates the two parlors as well as the west parlor and dining room; these are multi-paneled while the other doors are four paneled. There are several styles of trim, but all are symmetrically molded with bull's eye corner blocks and base blocks. Most doorways have transoms, and crown molding encircles the three main rooms. The stairway has a half-turn with landing, rectangular balusters rising from the closed string, and a simplified Eastlake newel. The wood floors are original.

The house has just been renovated for use as an art gallery and frame shop. The only structural change made at this time was the conversion of a back window to a door.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1900 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Vaught house is a well maintained example of late Victorian domestic architecture in Huntsville. It also functions as a concrete reminder of the days when East Huntsville Addition was Huntsville's first modern suburb--a fashionable neighborhood removed from the downtown and made practical by the construction of the street car line. It is one of the few Victorian style houses and one of the few large scale houses which remains in this area of town.

In 1890 construction began on Huntsville's first large-scale manufacturing operation--a cotton textile mill located beside the railroad tracks north of town and outside the then city limits. The land east and south of the mill was platted as the East Huntsville Addition (1892) with the major streets being a continuation of the existing city street system. The land immediately adjoining the mill was developed as mill housing for the operatives, while the remainder became Huntsville's first modern suburb and began to fill with private homes for the people who were attracted to the town by the prosperity of the mill.

Development was slow at first but picked up after 1900, when a street car line was completed through the suburb connecting it with downtown Huntsville. As a result, the majority of homes in East Huntsville were erected during the first thirty years of this century; and consequently, they are predominantly variations of the bungalow. The Vaught house, built in 1900, was one of the earliest of these privately constructed homes as is evident by its strong Victorian character. Although this appears to be a late date for Victorian building, it was the period 1900-1910 that saw the transition from 19th to 20th century architectural styles in Huntsville. During this decade, one could erect a Victorian cottage, a Colonial Revival house, a bungalow, or some combination thereof.

The Vaught house is representative of Victorian residential design in Huntsville, displaying such characteristics as asymmetrical massing with a strong vertical emphasis, irregular, complex roof, jigsaw ornament on gables and pediments, and variety in fenestration and window design. On the interior, the house retains its original finish of multiple fireplaces with accompanying variations in mantel design, pocket doors, hardware, staircase with Victorian newel, floors, and variety of window and door trim.

The house remained a single family residence until 1974 when it was converted to commercial use--a reflection of the changing character of the neighborhood. Fifth Street, which ran beside it, has become, in the last twenty years, a major commercial thoroughfare, now renamed Andrew Jackson Way. Fortunately, however, the house has since been used as a decorator's shop and now as an art gallery and frame shop, uses that took advantage of its distinctive architectural identity to create an attractive shop image. During the most recent restoration just completed, the house was beautifully repaired and repainted, with the only structural alteration being the conversion of a rear window to a doorway. The colors chosen for both interior and exterior were taken from the ceramic tiles surrounding the fireplace openings.

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property .27

Quadrangle name Huntsville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 16 5318762 3844090
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is located at the northeast corner of Ward Avenue and Andrew Jackson Way and faces 80 feet on Ward and extends 145 feet along Andrew Jackson.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Linda Bayer, Planner

organization Huntsville Planning Department date January 7, 1981

street & number P. O. Box 308 telephone

city or town Huntsville state Alabama

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Phil B. Howard, Jr.

title SHPO Alabama date January 8, 1981

For HCERS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register Entered in the National Register	
<u>Linda Bayer</u> Keeper of the National Register	date <u>12/15/81</u>
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	