

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received FEB 28 1983

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Loveman, Joseph, & Loeb *Department Store*
and/or common Loveman's (Department Store)

2. Location

street & number 214-224 19th Street North N/A not for publication
city, town Birmingham N/A vicinity of
state Alabama code 01 county Jefferson code 071

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant

4. Owner of Property

name The Costa and Head (Birmingham One) LTD., Pedro Costa & Nelson Head Managing Partners
street & number P. O. Box 2323
city, town Birmingham N/A vicinity of state Alabama

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse
street & number 716 21st Street North
city, town Birmingham state Alabama

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Resources Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1970-present federal state county local
depository for survey records Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
city, town Washington state D. C.

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Loveman's Department Store (circa 1934), formally Loveman, Joseph and Loeb, is located on the southeast corner of 19th Street and 3rd Avenue North in Birmingham. This is the historic location of Loveman, Joseph and Loeb's second retail store built in 1890 and subsequently expanded in 1899 and 1916. On March 11, 1934, a catastrophic fire destroyed the four story 1890 and 1899 buildings and severely damaged the seven story Annex (circa 1916) on 3rd Avenue. The present Art Deco Department Store and the rehabilitated 1916 Annex opened for business on March 20, 1935. Forty-five years later in August, 1980 the Loveman's stores in Alabama were liquidated by City Stores, Incorporated. The Art Deco Department Store (circa 1934) and the 1916 seven story Annex, both now vacant, are the two historic properties being submitted for nomination to the National Register.

The Loveman's building is a four story, 200' x 140' department store with a full retailing basement. The store is constructed utilizing a fireproof, reinforced concrete column, beam and slab system with structural bay dimensions 22' x 22' and floor to floor heights varying from 21 feet on the ground floor to 14 feet on the top floor. The 35' x 140' seven story, 1916 Annex building, which survived the 1934 fire, was also constructed with a reinforced concrete structural system. The two buildings combined extend 235' along 3rd Avenue North and 140' from the corner of 19th Street and 3rd Avenue North in a southernly direction along 19th Street to the alley. This building plan, which is greater than one-quarter of a block, provides over 33,000 gross square feet per floor for five full levels, or over 165,000 gross square feet of retail commercial space.

The Loveman's store is clad in dimensionally cut Alabama limestone, punctuated by vertically oriented towers, fenestration, and decorated cast aluminum spandrel panels. The architecture of the store draws strong conceptual and design analogies from the composition of the original 1890 and 1899 retail block when viewed from the corner of 19th Street and 3rd Avenue North. The original building envelope (mass and height) and the position of the hooded pediments of the older retail block were formalized through architectural analogy in the design of the new Loveman's store. The towers in the new design and the pediments in the old design were centered above the primary entrances on both 19th Street and 3rd Avenue North. However, the faceted crystalline forms of the Art Deco towers of the later building in their pure form, are a restrained departure from the exuberant architectural quality of the original Victorian Romanesque revival cornice line and facades of the 1890 and 1899 buildings.

The decorative Art Deco window frames, screens, and spandrel panels displayed on the exterior of the Loveman's building are a foil to the massive "cubist character of the limestone block and towers which they adorn". The screened windows, doorways, canopies, and flagpoles present various focal points and opportunities for detail, shadow relief, and color. The contrast of exotic architectural materials, such as polished, cast, stainless steel and aluminum and granite, florentine marble and carrera glass is heightened when these materials are juxtaposed against the homogeneous mass and color of the planar limestone surfaces. The design of the exterior detailing in the cast aluminum screens, frames and spandrel panels, doorways, canopies, and flagpoles is representative of the free mixture of stylized floral and geometric patterns so popular in the mainstream of the Art Deco style.

(11/78)

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The geometric patterning is prevalent in the detailing surrounding or incorporated into door and window screens, openings and canopies as well as the decorative octagonal clock faces on the corners of the building at the alley of 3rd Avenue and the 19th Street corner. A cast aluminum pattern representing stylized Willow trees and floral detail adorns the screen and spandrel panels in repetitive patterns associated with the vertical window groupings above the display windows. Each ground floor display window is shaded by an awning supported by folding cast aluminum bracket arms which allow the awning to be withdrawn completely into a blind pocket above each window. The storefront on the ground level of the building, therefore exhibits a very sleek, planar surface of polished glass. Aluminum, granite and marble frame the show windows on both the 19th Street and 3rd Avenue facades.

The street facades of the Loveman's building remain in excellent condition and are unaltered, except for the painting of the windows, spandrel panels and screens above the first floor. The interior Art Deco detailing in the Loveman's building included geometric patterns at the column capitals, linear cast aluminum handrails around the mezzanine and stairs and stylized floral patterns painted as cornices, borders and accents on the ground floor and mezzanine levels. A major feature of the ground floor of the Loveman's building is a mezzanine level which extends along the alley wall and the party wall separating the Alabama Theatre from Loveman's. Most of the interior detailing of Loveman's, which are identified in early photographs, has been covered over or removed in subsequent remodelings. However, some interior detailing around the column capitals on the ground floor, major store entrances, and some of the cast aluminum handrail extending around the mezzanine and down the stair to the ground floor still remain. In 1955, Loveman's was remodeled extensively on the interior. A part of this remodeling included the extension of escalators from the second floor to the fourth floor of the building in a scissors pattern. The remainder of the interior spaces in Loveman's have been remodeled extensively in recent years to provide for changing retail markets and shopping patterns.

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ARCHITECTURE

The Loveman, Joseph and Loeb store by William Lehman, architect of Newark, New Jersey, and Miller, Martin & Lewis, associate architects of Birmingham, Alabama, is representative of the finest retail commercial buildings executed in the Art Deco style in the United States from 1925 to 1940.

The Art Deco design excellence of the Loveman's building is complemented by a comparable level of craftsmanship in the assemblage of the exotic, "modern" materials such as cast stainless steel and aluminum and carrera glass with the more traditional cut limestone, marble and granite building materials. The architect's excellent Art Deco design, detailing, and use of fine materials, resulted in a sleek modern "retailing machine" which successfully displays the quality of the merchandise through its elegant store front and display windows on the exterior and simultaneously provides a controlled environment for merchandising on the interior. Only the Art Deco store front and galleria of the remodeled Burger-Phillips building (circa 1933) approaches the architectural design quality, selection of materials and craftsmanship of the Loveman's store front. These two stores, which are less than a half a block apart, do not compete for attention but rather complement each other. Together they exemplify the finest Art Deco retail commercial architectural statements in the City of Birmingham.

Following the disastrous fire on March 11, 1934, which destroyed the 1890 and 1899 Loveman, Joseph and Loeb buildings, the management of that company and the City Stores Company embarked on an accelerated rebuilding campaign to have the new department store ready for the 1935 Christmas season. The new four story building was designed to have the same form as the original 1890 and 1899 stores on that site. However, the internal arrangement of the new store substantially increased the useable retail floor space. The management stated that the emphasis for the new building design should be focused on the creation of a fresh merchandising image which also stressed solidarity and fire safety. The architects' response to the issue of fire safety, was to design a fully sprinklered, reinforced concrete, "fireproof" building structurally similar to the surviving 1916 Annex.

The exterior design and character of the Loveman's building is significant in that it exemplifies an architectural trend toward the modern merchandising requirements of flexible interior space, air-conditioning and artificial lighting. The windows and spandrel panels in the Loveman's building were employed by the architect as major figurative elements which he arranged as vertical groups of recessed panels. These window groups accentuate the entrance towers and planar store walls exaggerating their height by segmenting the otherwise horizontal building form into vertically oriented components. These recessed window groups were designed to light only the ancillary spaces, such as storerooms, dressing rooms, offices, and alteration rooms and were never intended to light or ventilate interior retailing areas. The trend to internal retailing, which commenced in the 1930's relied heavily on artificial lighting and air-conditioning. These technological advances eliminated the restrictions on window size and location in order to ensure proper ventilation and light. The operable window areas in the 1935 Loveman's building are limited and are indicative of future retailing trends to "windowless" walls in department store design. The form and design of the Loveman's building clearly

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reflects not only a change to the Art Deco architectural style, but also to changes in functional and design relationships as compared with earlier department stores, notably Pizitz built in 1926 and Newberry's built in 1912, prior to the application of air-conditioning and lighting technology. The Loveman, Joseph and Loeb store was the first large department store in the State to be fully air-conditioned. The ground floor was illuminated by indirect incandescent lighting instead of the standard globe lights suspended by pendants from the ceiling. The Loveman, Joseph and Loeb store should be considered extremely significant in characterizing trends towards new functions and therefore, new forms for future retailing structures. It heralded a new age in retailing concepts and commercial building requirements which are still widely accepted today.

Other technological innovations associated with the Loveman's building are notable. A bank of six passenger elevators located along the alley side of the building provided the primary vertical circulation. Loveman's had the most advanced and largest grouping of passenger elevators in a retail commercial building in the State. The elevator system was complemented by an escalator located at the center of the floor plan which connected the first and second floors. This was the first installation of an escalator in a commercial building in the State of Alabama.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT:

The rebuilding of Loveman, Joseph and Loeb after the March, 1934 fire initiated the redevelopment of 3rd Avenue North between 18th and 20th Streets as the new retail center for Birmingham's downtown commercial district. The architectural and commercial commitment to redevelop Loveman's historical location, first developed in the 1890's on the corner of 19th Street and 3rd Avenue North, encouraged the building of the Art Deco S. H. Kress store and F. W. Woolworth store on adjacent corners and initiated the relocation of the Blach's Department Store into an Art Deco remodeled hotel building on the corner of 3rd Avenue North and 20th Street. The close proximity of the Loveman's, Kress, Woolworth, Burger-Phillips, and Blach's buildings on 3rd Avenue North between 18th and 20th Streets constitutes the finest and most complete representation of Art Deco commercial styles in the City of Birmingham.

COMMERCE

Loveman's Store was found in 1870 by Mr. A. B. Loveman, in Greensboro, Alabama. In 1887, Mr. Loveman, attracted by the booming commercial opportunities of the "Magic City", moved his business to Birmingham. Between 1888 and 1889 Mr. Loveman attracted two partners, Mr. M. V. Joseph and Mr. Emil Loeb and the business name became Loveman, Joseph and Loeb. By 1890 the firm had expanded the business to a full scale department store and moved into a new four story building at 212 19th Street. In 1899, the 19th Street store was expanded by a larger addition extending to the corner of 19th Street and 3rd Avenue North.

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In 1909, Loveman, Joseph and Loeb was incorporated. By 1911, the store was recognized as the "largest and most magnificent" department store south of the Ohio River. In 1916, the company constructed a seven story reinforced concrete Annex to the east of the 1890 and 1899 stores on 3rd Avenue North. In 1919, Loveman, Joseph and Loeb joined the City Stores Company with national headquarters in New York City. The City Stores Company grew rapidly from 1920 and became one of the most powerful department store groups in the United States comprised of over 30 stores in New York, Memphis, Louisville, Miami, New Orleans, Boston, Philadelphia, Trenton, and Hartford.

By 1926, Loveman, Joseph and Loeb's control of retail merchandising in Birmingham was being challenged by Pizitz Department Store on the Corner of 2nd Avenue North and 19th Street, one block to the south. These two stores continuously aspired to maintain the number one position as Alabama's largest and most desirable commercial retailer. From 1926 to the closing of Loveman's by City Stores in April, 1980, these two stores competed by expanding their downtown facilities and establishing branch stores in the suburban malls and in other major cities within the State. The benefits of this stiff competition accrued to the City of Birmingham and its residents in many forms. These two stores quickly became the foundation for the downtown commercial district and guaranteed its success. From the 1950s to the 1970s Loveman's employed between 1,500 and 2,000 persons. The decision of City Stores to close the Loveman's Alabama operations, ended an Alabama empire in commercial retailing that extended over a period of 93 years, from 1887 to 1980.

EDUCATION AND THE ARTS:

In 1944, with the founding of the Scholastic Arts Awards Contest, Loveman's initiated the first of many civic projects that would aid school children City wide and bring Loveman's national recognition for its community service.

In 1947, Mr. O. W. Schanbacher, a native of St. Louis, became the president of Loveman's. Mr. Schanbacher quickly attained prominence in the business community and was named as a director of the Community Chest and the the Executive Board of the Committee of 100. However, his civic interests were equally concentrated in the Arts and Education. While serving as president of Loveman's, he was one of the founders of the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the organization's president three times. Loveman's, in turn, through its contributions and civic leadership helped to found the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra Youth Concert program in 1947.

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Loveman's also introduced creative dramatics to the school children of Birmingham through a program of in-service training for teachers and workshops for students. Mrs. Robert I. Schwartz, a child drama specialist, was engaged to conduct this program. Loveman's sponsorship of the dramatics program won a citation for the store from the classroom teachers of the Alabama Education Association. The award for "service to public education" was presented in April, 1958. Loveman's was nationally recognized in 1962 for its contribution to the arts when the store received the Monte Meacham Award from the American Theater Association for "Enriching the lives of children through the Arts". This was the first award of this type to be presented to a department store chain. In the same year, Loveman's also won an award from the National Retail Merchants Association for its arts programs.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1934-35 **Builder/Architect** William E. Lehman, Newark, NJ Architect, Miller, Martin & Leaks Associate Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Architecture: Loveman's is the largest, most prominent and architecturally refined of the Art Deco retail commercial structures in the City of Birmingham, constructed in the period of 1928 to 1940. The architectural design and choice of materials by William Lehman, architect, and Miller, Martin & Lewis, associate architects of Birmingham, in consort with the fine craftsmanship exhibited in the executed building are indicative of the high standards and commitment to quality merchandising established by Loveman's and the City Stores Company. As such, the architectural design of the Loveman, Joseph and Loeb store is comparable to the largest and finest department stores in any American city.

Commerce: The rapid success of the Loveman, Joseph and Loeb, partnership, established that firm as one of the premier commercial retailers in the State of Alabama and the Southeast region, from the firm's founding in 1887 until the present. Loveman, Joseph and Loeb, Inc. and the City Stores Company have contributed significantly to the commercial momentum and growth of Birmingham's downtown district, by maintaining a consistently high standard of leadership in merchandising and community service throughout its entire 93 year history.

* * * * *

9. Major Bibliographical References

Downtown Birmingham - Architectural and Historical walking tour Guide
Birmingham Historical Society 1977 pp-51
Birmingham Library Archives Section, Loveman, Joseph & Loeb File

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 140' x 235'

Quadrangle name Birmingham North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	5	1	7	8	0	0	3	7	0	8	2	2	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

Parcels # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and the easterly 35 feet of Parcel #6; Block 87; Section 36, Township 17, Real Property Map, Jefferson County, Alabama

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Randy Marks, Preservation Planner (Pedro Costa, AIA) & Ellen Mertins

organization Alabama Historical Commission date December 16, 1982

street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 832-6621

city or town Montgomery 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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *[Signature]*

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 2-18-83

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

[Signature]
Keeper of the National Register

date 4/19/83

Attest: Patrick Andrews
Chief of Registration

date 4/19/83

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Loveman, Joseph, & Loeb Department Store Jefferson County ALABAMA 83002971

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVED

Entered in the
National Register

Guy M. Kapley 3/3/95

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

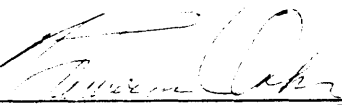
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page Downtown Birmingham Retail & Theatre Historic District
name of property
Jefferson County, Alabama
county and State

Correction of Physical Description for Inventory #74B (see enclosed continuation sheet)

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 of certifying official/Title

2/9/95

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 certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 7 Page 21Downtown Birmingham Retail & Theatre Historic District
name of property
Jefferson County, Alabama
county and State

=====
The physical description for Inventory #74B (which appears on page 7.11) is corrected to read as follows:

- 74B. Seven-story commercial building with a reinforced concrete structural system. It was built as an annex in 1916 for the Loveman, Joseph and Loeb's department store that dated from 1890. A fire in 1934 destroyed the latter building and severely damaged the annex. The present Art Deco department store and this rehabilitated annex opened for business on March 20, 1935. Entire structure listed on National Register, 1983.