

PH 126 36 51

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 9 1976
DATE ENTERED	MAR 25 1977

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 GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

AND/OR COMMON
W. B. Hodgson Hall *aka*

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 501 Whitaker Street

CITY, TOWN	Savannah	— VICINITY OF	— NOT FOR PUBLICATION	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
STATE	GEORGIA	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
		13 051	Chatham	13 051

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 type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" 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
		<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: Historical Society

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Georgia Historical Society

Headquarters & Library

STREET & NUMBER 501 Whitaker Street

CITY, TOWN	Savannah	— VICINITY OF	STATE
			Georgia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Chatham County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER Wright Square

CITY, TOWN	Savannah	STATE
		Georgia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic Savannah

DATE 1968 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Historic Savannah Foundation, Inc., 119 Habersham Street

CITY, TOWN	Savannah	STATE
		Georgia

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE <i>EAL</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED <i>EAL</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Hodgson Hall was erected in 1874-1875 as a memorial to William Brown Hodgson, diplomat and scholar, for the uses of the Georgia Historical Society. It is very impressive in appearance. The main floor with its 3-story high ceiling and two balconies is the library room of the Society. The striking feature of this room is its vaulted arched windows which were designed to provide maximum light and ventilation in the days when there was little artificial light and no air-conditioning. Just inside the front door is an entrance vestibule flanked on the right by the librarian's office and on the left by the bronze-railed stairway leading to the street level ground floor. The first balcony and its twin stairways at the front of the hall has a beautiful bronze railing. Another unique feature is a narrow winding stairway hidden behind supporting pillars and doors in the southwest corner of the building, from the ground floor to the attic. This is the only access to the bronze-railed top balcony. On the ground floor is the assembly room, rest rooms, the periodicals storage room, the cataloging and work room, the microfilming room and the mechanical room with heating and cooling equipment. Around the walls of the assembly room are hung portraits of illustrious Georgians. The library room has been only slightly altered; that is, in the arrangement of the book shelves from a continuous wall around three sides to alcoves around the lower windows. Originally equipped with gas lighting, it is now lighted by electricity. The outside entrance is a broad brown-stone stairway with heavy curving metal balustrades leading to a two-columned portico. There are eight ventilating louvers on the sloping metal roof. Along the ridge pole is an ornamental iron railing. There are five chimneys which are no longer used as the building has a modern gas heating and air-conditioning system. The property is surrounded on two sides by an ornamental iron fence with gates. A high stuccoed brick wall with a gate in the rear is on the other sides. The building was designed by Detlef Lienau, noted architect of New York and one of the original fellows of the American Institute of Architects. The only alteration to the exterior is the addition of an annex, built in 1969-1970 and named in memory of Edmund H. Abrahams, lawyer-historian of Savannah. It is a fire-resistant structure of steel and concrete block, also stuccoed. The facade is arched to blend in with the old building. It is three stories high, equipped with special library shelving. It houses the rarer books, the manuscript collections, the photograph collections, old maps and prints, old newspaper volumes and non-current records of the City of Savannah and Chatham County which are on deposit here. Portraits that are not on exhibit and the Society's historical artifacts are also housed in the annex. This street-level annex is entered from Hodgson Hall with one outside entrance in the rear. The building was designed by Thomas-Hutton-Johnson, Inc. of Savannah. On the south side of the building is a landscaped garden within the iron fence and brick wall. Hodgson Hall rests upon an impervious pad of Savannah grey bricks. A members lounge and research room, open to the public, are in the annex, which is officially designated as the Abrahams Archival Wing. The Society is the official depository for non-current City of Savannah and Chatham County records. It also has on deposit many of the old church records, records of local organizations and clubs. It is starting a national Naval Stores archives and has received such records from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 1874-75, 1969-70

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Detlef Lienau (1818-1887)
Thomas, Hutton, Johnson, Inc.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Detlef Lienau, trained in architecture in Munich and Paris is one of those mid-19th Century architects that have been overshadowed by Richard Morris Hunt, Calbert Vaux, and James Renwick. Known primarily for his important commissions in New York City (Schermerhorn, Colford-Jones, and the Cottenet mansions) Lienau was also the designer of the Lockwood Mansion in South Norwalk, Connecticut. This architect was the first to introduce the French Second Empire in America with the Hart M. Shiff commission, 1850 (the house was demolished in 1923) in New York City. Lienau's career spanned the "Brown Decades" and he brought clarity, honesty and skill to a period often remembered for its excesses architecturally.

"The Georgia Historical Society, founded May 24, 1839, is one of the oldest historical societies in the country. Among its founders were L. K. Tefft, the noted autograph collector; William Bacon Stevens, historian, physician and prelate; and Dr. Richard D. Arnold, who as Mayor of Savannah formally surrendered the city to Gen. Sherman in 1864. The Presidents of the Society have included John Macpherson Berrien, Attorney General under President Jackson and United States Senator; James M. Wayne, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; and Henry R. Jackson, jurist, soldier, diplomat and poet. Hodgson Hall, the home of the Society, is a repository for books, newspapers, and manuscripts relating to the history of Georgia. Dedicated in 1876, the building was a gift to Margaret Telfair Hodgson and Mary Telfair as a memorial to William Brown Hodgson, the distinguished scholar of Oriental languages and United States Dragoman and Consul to the Barbary States and Turkey." (Georgia Historical Commission marker in front of the building.)

The Savannah newspaper file covers from the first issue in 1763 to date, with a few gaps. Among its manuscripts are records of the colony and state of Georgia as well as private papers of Georgians, prominent and humble. Included in the portrait collection are those of Archibald Bulloch, first President of the State of Georgia, and his family; the Habershams: James, the elder, and his sons John and Joseph; Peter Tondee, Gen. James Oglethorpe; John Wesley; George Whitefield; Selina, Countess of Huntingdon; and Governors David B. Mitchell and Charles J. Jenkins. There are portraits of others significant in the history of Georgia. Its book collection, numbering over 25,000 volumes is outstanding. It includes many rare and unique books pertaining to Georgia and the South. In addition to functioning as a historical society, it founded and housed for several years the Savannah Public Library. It also served for some years as the library of Armstrong State College. Under the will of Mary Telfair, it owned and operated the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences from 1883 to 1920. Statewide, it helped to establish a Chair of History at the University of Georgia and the state Department of Archives and History.

This property is located in the Savannah Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Proceedings of the Dedication of Hodgson Hall, by the Georgia Historical Society, On Occasion of Its Thirty-Seventh Anniversary, February 14, 1876. Savannah Georgia, printed for the Society, 1876, 29 pp.

Historic Savannah. (Savannah, Georgia), Historic Savannah Foundation, Inc. (c. 1968), p. 207. (CONT'D)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one acre
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	4 9 0 8 6 0	3 5 4 8 0 6 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Hodgson Hall is on the southwest corner of Whitaker and Gaston Streets, on city lots 13 and 14, overlooking Forsyth Park, with Howard Street in the rear (west). The frontage on Whitaker and Howard Streets is 88.42 feet. The depth on Gaston Street is 131 feet. It faces east. It is in Forsyth Ward.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Carolyn Pitts, Architectural Historian	DATE 1/29/76
ORGANIZATION Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service	TELEPHONE 202-523-5464
STREET & NUMBER 1100 L Street, N.W.	STATE
CITY OR TOWN Washington, D.C. 20240	

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]* DATE 10-28-76
 TITLE Chief, Historic Preservation Section DAVID M. SHERMAN

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
CHIEF <i>[Signature]</i>	DATE <u>3/25/98</u>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>3/22/77</u>
ATTEST: <i>[Signature]</i>	
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

It has published 15 volumes of Collections, 1840-1971, from its manuscripts, and the Georgia Historical Quarterly, 1917 to date, now in its 52nd volume. For its architectural significance, see Description #7 above. Its conservation significance is in preservation of historic documents, artifacts, etc.; its educational and literary significance are in its library holdings and publications; its social/humanitarian significance is included in the above paragraphs.

The historical data was provided by Lilla Hawes, Director, Georgia Historical Society.

Bibliography

Item Number 9

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Minute Books and other records of the Georgia Historical Society, 1839 to date, at Hodgson Hall.

Architectural drawings of Hodgson Hall and the Abrahams Archival Wing, at Hodgson Hall.

Interviews of Oscar J. Sims with Col. A. S. Britt, Jr., and Lilla M. Hawes, President and Director of the Georgia Historical Society, respectively.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Photographs ITEM NUMBER PAGE

Georgia Historical Society, W. B. Hodgson Hall, Savannah, Chatham County
Photographs by: Georgia Historical Society
Date: Unknown
Negatives filed at: Georgia Historical Society, 501 Whitaker Street, Savannah, Ga.

1. Front facade, N.E. Corner, Gaston Street on north and Whitaker Street on East.
2. Front facade, view of S.E. Corner, showing Abraham Archival Wing. Facing East.
3. Three quarter view of N.W. Corner, the iron railing and west wall very distinct. Gaston Street on the North and Howard Street on West.
4. Closeup of bronze stairway. Shows part of entrance vestibule and door to Director's office.
5. View of Library room looking S.W. Shows both balconies with bronze railing.
6. View of Library room looking East. Shows stairways to first balcony.
7. View of rare book stacks in Abrahams Archival wing, looking west.
8. Western half of members lounge showing portraits of Archibald Bullock and family and William Houstoun.