

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received 7-2-85
date entered AUG 1 1985

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

1. Name

historic Canon Commercial Historic District

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number Depot Street between Bond Avenue and Broad Street N/A not for publication

city, town Canon N/A vicinity of

state Georgia code 013 county Franklin code 119

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Owners

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Franklin County Courthouse

city, town Carnesville state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic Structural Field Survey:
title Franklin County has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Georgia Department of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta state Georgia

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 Canon Commercial Historic District is located in the center of the small town of Canon, in the area around Depot and Church Streets, and Central and Bond Avenues. The district boundary is based on an intact area of historic commercial buildings in the center of town. The district is surrounded by a mix of non-historic commercial development and both historic and non-historic residential development.

The Canon Commercial Historic District is comprised of late 19th- and early 20th-century commercial buildings, most of which are located on both sides of Depot Street. These buildings are simple one- and two-story brick structures with corbeled cornices, cast-iron columns, metal cornices, and intact storefronts with large windows, rectangular glass transoms, kick plates, and recessed doorways. An unusual detail is a kickplate of marble with the inscription "J.A. and B.F. Cheek", which is located on a structure in the row of attached general merchandise stores. Several of the storefronts have been altered with the addition of awnings, new doors, and infill brick.

One of the oldest brick structures within the district is the W.F. Bowers Building, constructed in the early 1890s. This structure contains a deteriorated Greek Revival-style porch at the Depot Street level that is supported by square brick columns. The central portal has a glass transom and a segmental arch and is flanked by a window on each side and four square brick wall pilasters. The porch has square wood columns and a wooden balustrade supported by square brick pillars.

The Canon Hotel, located at the corner of Central and Bond Avenues, is a two-story Georgian Revival-style structure with a wide veranda at each level. The front porch which is supported by square wood columns set on brick bases, has a balustrade across the second level and an exterior staircase. The pressed-metal hipped roof has projecting dormer windows on each side. The interior of the hotel has dark wood trim. The first floor plan consists of a large living room at the front with a long hallway extending to the rear and former rental rooms on each side.

One wood-framed commercial building is contained in the district. Located along the north side of Depot Street midway between Bond Avenue and Church Street, it is a simple, one-story, gable-roofed structure contemporary with its brick neighbors.

The primary landscape character of the district is that of a commercial center with buildings sited in uniform setbacks on the sidewalk and with a grassed area and trees between the sidewalk and street. The terrain is predominantly flat with the exception of Depot Street which slopes gently away from Broad Street toward the railroad.

Aside from two vacant lots where structures once stood, there are no non-contributing properties on the district.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Local History

Specific dates 1879 - 1932 Builder/Architect W.F. Bowers and Job Bowers

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Canon Commercial Historic District is significant in the areas of architecture, commerce, communications, community planning, transportation, and local history.

In terms of architecture, the district is important for its collection of intact historic commercial buildings in the center of Canon. The one-and two-story brick buildings, which were constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, have characteristic small-town commercial architectural features that include corbeled cornices, metal columns, doorways with transoms, and trabeated and arched windows. The district also contains the W.F. Bowers Building, a single-story brick structure with side porch, and the Canon Hotel, a two-story brick building with double porch across the principal facade. Such residential-looking hotels are characteristic of small Georgia towns. The district is also significant for its one plain-style wood-framed building. This type of structure, once common in rural Georgia is now relatively rare.

In the area of commerce, the district is significant as the commercial center for the town of Canon and surrounding rural area. It included general merchandise stores, banks, professional offices, and a hotel. It was also a marketing and distribution center for farm products.

In terms of communications, the district is important for its former role as a newspaper publishing center and for communicating local and regional news to the residents of Canon and surrounding area. The Franklin County Register, a weekly newspaper, was published here in the 1880s. Between 1884 and 1905, W.F. Bowers published The American Union, a publication which reflected his political and religious opinions. Other publications included the Free Press, a Populist Weekly produced between 1892 and 1896 and the Canon Echo, a local newspaper. A religious publication of national circulation, the Universalist Herald, which was published in Canon beginning in 1897, is still published there today.

The district is important in the areas of community planning and transportation for its development at the core of a small rural community that predated, influenced the course of, and then benefitted from the railroad. Such communities are relatively common in rural Georgia and contrast with the newer planned railroad towns which usually feature a more regular plan.

The town of Canon began as a small family settlement near a saw mill operated by W.F. Bowers. Around 1878 a post office was established, and the town was named "West Bowersville," as a tribute to the Bowers family. Job Bowers, father of W.F. Bowers became West Bowersville's first postmaster and assisted in the layout of the town. W.F. Bowers played a role in the establishment of the Elberton Air Line Railroad from Elberton to Toccoa, which was constructed through West Bowersville in 1879. The name of the town was later change to Canon.

In terms of local history, the district is significant for its association with Job Bowers and his son W.F. Bowers, who founded the town of West Bowersville in the 1870s, that later became the town of Canon in 1893. Job Bowers (1803-1886) was a farmer, general merchant, a Justice of the Peace, and at one time County Surveyor for Franklin County, and served as West Bowersville's first postmaster. His son William F. Bowers (1825-1905) was also a farmer and merchant, and a Baptist minister, state senator, editor, and publisher.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Jaeger, Dale. "Canon Commercial Historic District - Historic District Information Form". March 1984, (on file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources).

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 4.5 acres approximately

Quadrangle name Royston, GA.

Quadrangle scale 1: 24000

UTM References

A

17	306000	3801251610
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

17	301601010	31801211710
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

17	305780	3801231810
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

The boundary description and justification are included in section 7 (first paragraph). The boundary, which follows property lines, is drawn to scale on the attached "property/sketch map".

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Andrea Niles, Survey and Research Specialist

organization Georgia Department of Natural Resources date 5-30-85

street & number 270 Washington Street SW telephone (404) 656-2840

city or town Atlanta state Georgia

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 Elizabeth A. Lyon
Elizabeth A. Lyon

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Office date 6/13/85

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 8-1-85

J. Andrew Byrum
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

Canon Commercial Historic District
Canon, Franklin County, Georgia

Property/Sketch Map:

Scale: 1 inch = 500 feet

Direction of photograph: ②

Boundary of nominated property: ———

North: ↑

