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Anniston, Alabama 36202

MULTIPLE RESOURCES OF ANNISTON CALHOUN COUNTY, ALABAMA

Historic name:

Samuel Noble Monument

Owner: City of Anniston

P. O. Box 670

Address:

In the parkway median on

the south side of Eleventh

Street and Ouintard Avenue

Acreage:

less than one acre

UTM: 16/608780/3724670

Verbal Boundary: A small plot of land bounded on the north by Eleventh Street, on

the east by the northbound lane of Quintard Avenue, and on the

west by the southbound lane of Quintard Avenue.

Date of Erection: 1895

Statement of Significance:

Criterion A - Sculpture:

The Samuel Noble Monument is significant as a good local example of a late 19th century commemorative sculpture and is indicative of the nationwide movement, during the late 19th century and early 20th century, that emphasized the use of public commissioned sculpture as the most visible and lasting means of celebrating events or individuals that had influenced national or local history. Designed by Durham & Company of Charlotte, North Carolina and sculpted in Italy by an unnamed sculptor, the monument was erected in June 1895 through the contributions of the citizens of Anniston and was placed in a prominent location on the main thoroughfare of the town. The monument represents the esteem felt by the people of Anniston towards Samuel Noble and their persistence in the completion of the project that was undertaken during a period of economic depression in the town.

Description:

The statue of Anniston's founder remains in its original location in the middle of the park between the north and south-bound lanes of Quintard Avenue on Eleventh Street, facing north. For about fifty years a cast-iron fence surrounded the statue, but was apparently removed when the street was first widened.

The component parts of the monument include a North Carolina granite three-tiered base with the words "Samuel Noble" in raised lettering, then a large dado consisting of sculpting to resemble layers of bars of pig iron, symbolic of the ironmaster's contribution to the development of the Southern iron industry. A scroll over the bars is inscribed "Erected by citizens of Anniston, 1895." Atop the bars is a granite pedestal topped by a life-sized white marble statue of Samuel Noble wearing a knee-length dress coat. The right hand is inserted into the opening of the coat. The head was modeled from one of the last portraits made of Noble at about age fifty. The picture is in the possession of his granddaughter, Addie McCaa Butler.

The City of Anniston has installed lighting to illuminate the statue at night.

Historical Summary:

Shortly after Noble's death in August 1888, plans were under way with Mayor Richard P. Huger heading the "Samuel Noble Monument Association." Over the next several years \$5,400 was raised to commission the monument.

By 1890 the committee had selected a design submitted by Durham and Company of Charlotte, North Carolina. They wanted something both beautiful and enduring, but rejected bronze because of its expense and chose instead the North Carolina granite and white marble. The statue itself was sculpted in Italy and was considered by Noble's contemporaries to be a very good likeness.

The people of Anniston held dedication services in June, 1895. The procession consisted of an estimated 5,000 citizens, including carriages with the monument committee, mayor and city council, newspaper representatives, military companies, the fire department and bicyclists. They formed at Tenth and Noble Streets and wound their way on Noble, Thirteenth, Wilmer Avenue to Eleventh Street, then to the monument site on Quintard. Elizabeth Daves Roberts, the eldest granddaughter of Samuel Noble, pulled the cord to release the drapery covering the statue, and the unveiling was followed by speeches, poems, and music.

The monument remains in good condition today despite some vandalism attempts. It is maintained by the city of Anniston.

Craven, Wayne: Sculpture In America. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1968.

200 Years of American Sculpture. Whitney Museum of American Art, David R. Godine, Publisher, New York, 1976.

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