

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

For NPS use only
received JUN 1 1983
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Southern Railroad Depot

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 933 Thornton Avenue, N.E. N/A not for publication

city, town Leeds N/A vicinity of

state Alabama code 01 county Jefferson code 073

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 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Southern Railway System

street & number 2201 First Avenue, North

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 North 21st Street

city, town Birmingham state Alabama

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Alabama Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1970-present federal state county local

depository for survey records Alabama Historical Commission

city, town Montgomery state Alabama

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Built in 1884, the depot is a wood frame structure with board and batten siding on the exterior. Rectangular in shape, it measures approximately 27' - 6" x 71' with uncovered loading dock and platform 30' x 37' on the east end. There are gables on either end with projecting eaves. A wide overhang extends along each side. Both the eaves and the overhangs are supported by large brackets which are non-existent on the north side of the building. Decorative brackets are at each corner of the building. The original building housed a cupola which was used by the telegraph operator and as a lookout until 1926 when the agent's and operator's positions were consolidated and all operations moved to the agent's office. The cupola was torn down when a new roof of asbestos shingles was added about 1940. Prior to that time, the building was covered with a tin roof.

Attached to the original building was a platform with steps and railing on each end for entering the waiting rooms on the west side. It was also used to place baggage for pickup by the porter to put on the train.

The depot sits approximately two (2) feet above ground supported by heavy timber creosote pressure treated piles with 12' x 2' sills and 2" x 12" floor joists. Picket-like fencing runs along the bottom screening the pole supports. Three (3) brick chimneys, not connected below the ceiling, were originally used for coal stove flues. A loading platform runs from east of agent's office across the east end and about one-half of the building on north side. The walkways from agent's office to loading dock are entered by steps on north and south of building. The walkways are 4' wide by 42' long and are 4' above the ground. The loading dock 30' x 37' with double wide door to baggage or freight room as previously described. The loading dock and walkways are floored with heavy duty 2" planks. There is a ramp to the loading dock on the northeast corner. Walkways and loading dock are underpinned with 1" x 2" x 3" - 6" picket type fencing spaced 1 1/2" apart.

There are a total of thirteen (13) bays in the four depot sides: 4 on the north; 1 on the east; 5 on the south; and 3 on the west, one of which is boarded up. Transoms are above the doors to waiting rooms on the west side. Of the seven (7) entrances into the structure, three (3) are large, square sliding doors of diagonal plain construction which provide access to the freight area. The other four (4) entrances include two on the south side, one into the agent's office, and the other to step which lead to the loft or the former location of a cupola where the operator sat and one into each of the waiting rooms. All of these are single doors with four vertical panels...two long and two short...with plain trim. All appear to be originals.

Six (6) of the bays in the depot are windows, all are two sash with six (6) panes in each sash. To the west and east of the bay housing the agent's office there are four (4) little panes on each side as shown in picture. All windows have plain wood trim. There are bars across the window on the north side to the security storage area off of agent's office.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Presently and originally, as far as can be determined, the depot was painted gray with the bottom four (4) feet being a darker gray.

Attached is a drawing by Southern Railway System which locates the property to be donated to the City of Leeds.

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 - 200	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art 800	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1884

Builder/Architect

Georgia Pacific Railway Company

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Southern Railroad Depot at Leeds, originally the Georgia Pacific Railway Company Depot, is a representative example of late 19th century, small town railroad depots. Like others such structures, it incorporates the freight and passenger depots into one simple frame building with deep overhanging eaves supported by oversized and curved brackets. The depot is closely associated with the early history of Leeds and with the Georgia Pacific Railway Company. Leeds was founded as a rail stop on the Georgia and Pacific Railway Company line which linked Birmingham with Atlanta in the early 1880s. The town was laid out by E. M. Tutwiler, a construction engineer for the railroad who purchased 156 acres of farmland along the new rail line. The depot was constructed in late 1883 or 1884 and soon after the town's first mercantile establishment was opened along the avenue nearby. When the town was incorporated in 1887, the city limits were established with the current depot as the center marker.

* * * * *

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name Leeds

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	5	4	2	8	2	0	3	7	1	1	4	6	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

See yellow line on attached map

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 Jane Culbreth, Councilwoman, Leeds and Ellen Mertins

organization Alabama Historical Commission date _____

street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone (205) 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

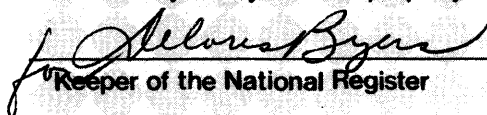
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title _____ date 5/26/83

For NPS use only

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


Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 6/30/83

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Construction of the Georgia Pacific Railroad began in the Spring of 1882 and the line was opened from Atlanta to Birmingham in November, 1883. Deed signed by J. H. Montgomery, Fannie B. Montgomery, E. M. Tutwiler and M. F. Tutwiler dated February 8, 1884 conveying property to the Georgia Pacific Railroad Company describes the property as ".....being the lot of land on which is built the depot of said company at 'Leeds' station."

Although the town of Leeds was not incorporated until 1887, six years after the incorporation of Cahaba Land Company, the organizers of the Company were listed as living in "Leeds." It is obvious that a community called "Leeds" existed before the town was incorporated.

A petition to incorporate was signed March 7, 1887 which set out the corporate limits "of the Town of Leeds to embrace the following territory or boundaries to wit: From the Depot of the G.P.R.R. in said Town North one mile south one mile East one mile West one mile to run parallel with said distances on this line of the United States Surveys making the said corporate limits Square."

Leeds arose in the Valley because of three events: first, the incorporation of Birmingham and the start of iron production; second, the building of the Georgia Pacific Railroad from Birmingham to Atlanta; third, the erection of a cement plant in the town.

The depot was the central building of the town of Leeds and businesses sprang up in this area. Many of the buildings are still standing and it is hoped to apply for listing of this historic district in the near future. As far as can be determined from research and interviews with elderly people in the community, the building is the original with few alterations. It is hoped to restore the depot to its original structure.

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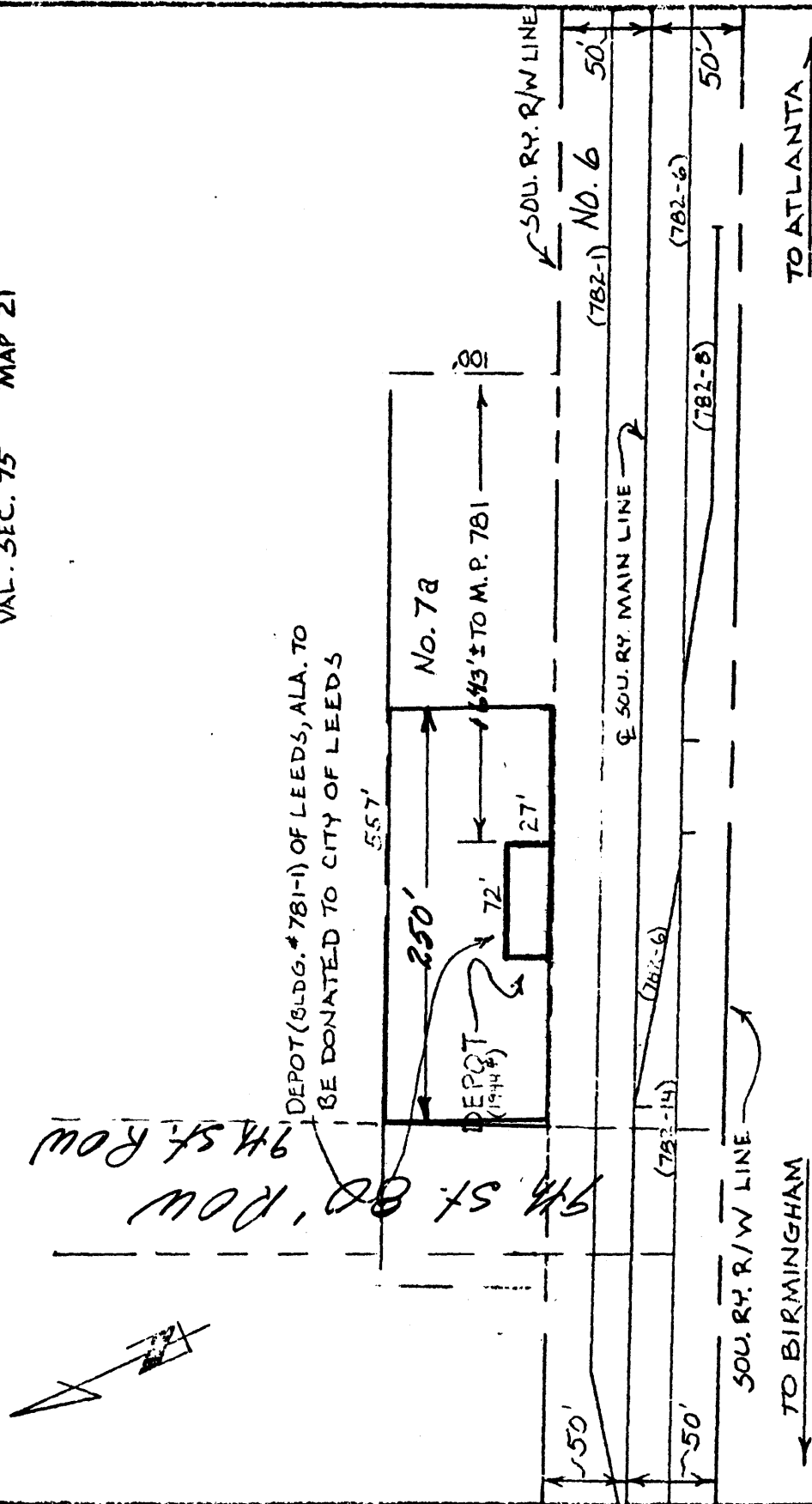
DATE ENTERED

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1. Leeds History Committee. Leeds ... Her Story. Anniston: Higginbotham, Inc. 1979.
2. "Southern Railway Engineering Report-Vol. 3." Photocopy of aquisition cost of Leeds Depot (on file at Alabama Historical Commission)
3. "Superintendent's Report. The Georgia Pacific Railway Company. "Birmingham, Alabama 1884. (Copy on file at Alabama Historical Commission)
4. White, Marjorie L. The Birmingham District: An Industrial History and Guide. Birmingham Publishing Company, 1981.

JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALA.
VAL. SEC. 75 MAP 21



NOTE:

LEASE OF SPACE TO CITY OF LEEDS, ALABAMA 1944 SQ. FT. SHOWN RED

SCALE: 1" = 100'

0 100' 200'

NO.	DATE	REVISION DESCRIPTION

SOUTHERN RAILWAY SYSTEM

OFFICE OF AYP M.W.S. ATLANTA, GA

LEEDS, ALA.

LEASE OF SPACE TO CITY OF LEEDS, ALABAMA

FILE NO. 155-1431 PROJECT TA-82-0130



Print of Southern Depot at Leeds about 1930 showing west and south sides with platform and cupola. Present depot to be restored like picture.