

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Neville House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 255 St. Francis Street N/A not for publication

city, town Mobile N/A vicinity of congressional district 01

state Alabama code 01 county Mobile code 097

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A being considered	<input 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 Benito Herman of Herman & Hynde Real Estate and Insurance Company

street & number 257 St. Francis Street

city, town Mobile N/A vicinity of state Alabama 36602

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Mobile County Court House, Probate Court Division

street & number 109 Government Street

city, town Mobile state Alabama 36601

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nineteenth Century Mobile Architecture,
an Inventory of Existing Buildings has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1974 federal state county local

depository for survey records Mobile City Planning Commission

city, town Mobile state Alabama 36633

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

The Neville House at 255 St. Francis is a 2 story brick building of right hall plan that is sited close to the sidewalk and is facing the north. The blocky rectangular mass is broken by the offset west entrance bay and by the one story, polygonal bay that projects from the frontal plane of the eastern half of the facade. Both the polygonal bay and the offset west entrance have a cast iron balustraded deck. At the entrance on the small porch there is one iron column that is connected to the northwest corner of the house by an iron frieze and brackets. The same iron design is used in the fence that extends at sidewalk level.

The cornices of both the house and the one story bay have an overhang on brackets. The main fascia and soffits are paneled. Above the cornice on the front and the rear rises a parapet of which the front one is paneled. This parapet does not continue down the side elevations. The windows of the main section of the house are double sash, 1/1; those of the rear wing are 6/6. The central window above the front bay was a twin 1/1 but was replaced with the modern multiple light stationary glazing after the rental of the property in the early 1940s. Beneath each of the bay windows is inset a white masonry panel embellished with low relief carving of a wheel or disk motif. The 2 leaf entrance door is set in framing in which the soffits of the jambs are paneled. A rear offset east wing has had the western face infilled with framing but is not offensive as it is not noticeable unless one goes down the alley between the two houses at 255 and 257 and it is obviously of different material than the original so there is no doubt of the integrity of the 1896 fabric.

The interior contains its original fabric except for the sliding door between the parlors. The old flooring of 4 inch pine is exposed in the entrance hall, though the rest of the floors are carpeted. The stairway rises along the western wall and has turned balusters. The newels are also turned and have bull's eye designs carved at the mid point. The arch that spans the entrance to the front bay rests of brackets of unusual design, being a series of five S curves. The door framing thruout both stories has its original channeled jambs and bull's eyes set in the outer corners. All of the original mantels are in place and the interior spaces unaltered. The only change is the 1940 installation of the modern double glass doorway with sidelights and transom that replace the old sliding doors between the parlors.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1896 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Architecture:

The Neville House is a late 19th century free adaptation of the Italianate style in which individuality of design has replaced the strict revivalist criteria of the earlier period. The building has the characteristic massing of a 19th century two story brick home built in the inner city which rises directly from the sidewalk. The use of the right hall plan, the bay window, the offset entrance, the panelled parapet above the bracketed overhanging eaves and the panelled fascia and soffits all carry forward the older tradition of the mid-century Italianate. However, details such as the large window panes, 1/1 light sashes, the plaques beneath the windows with the low relief design of wheels, the single instead of two story bay that breaks the massing, the thin, brittle geometric design of the cast iron and the interior trim--such as the brackets that support the bay arch--all typify an end of the century development. While none of these details are Victorian in detail, the total effect is diverse and compatible with the freer expression popular in the Victorian period.

Only one other extant brick house has similar features--that is the Meaher House at 5 S. Claiborne Street. Each is a free adaptation of the Italianate modified by later influences.

Integrity:

The basic fabric of the Neville House--walls, trim, iron galleries--is intact. The only exterior change in the main structure has been the alteration of the window light arrangement on the front second story window. Although the original window opening has not been modified, the window lights have been changed from double 1/1 to a multi-paned arrangement. The west side of the rear offset east wing has been infilled which does not interfere with the integrity of the main building block. The only interior modification has been the removal of the large double doors between the parlors which have been replaced by the present double glass doors with sidelights and transom. This was done during the 1940-44 renovation of the building.

* * * * *

The Neville House was built at a time in Mobile's history when the long period of Re-construction and its accompanying economic depression had come to an end and a revived financial climate allowed for a new building program. Within the last decade of the 19th century, although the major style was an exuberant Victorian, there was a continuation of a more traditional vernacular building mode. While the carpenter's skill was in vogue, the Neville House illustrates that the mason's skill had not been lost.

Both 257 and 255 St. Francis Street were Neville homes. 257 was occupied for many years by the Neville family. In 1896 Miss Belle Neville, a teacher in the Girl's High School at Barton Academy, built the home at 255, just to the east of her father's residence.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Nineteenth Century Mobile Architecture, an Inventory of Existing Buildings;
Sanborn Maps for 1880, 1885, 1904 and 1924;
City Directories from 1895 to 1898;
Chain of Title; Tax Records

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property (.15 ac.) less than one

Quadrangle name Mobile

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	6	3	9	9	9	2	5	3	3	9	5	7	0	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 Beginning at a point 122 feet west of the southwest corner of Joachim & St. Francis Streets, running west for $\frac{1}{2}$ of the 75' front of lot 257, comprising the east $\frac{1}{2}$ of said lot, with a depth of 150 feet.

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 Elizabeth B. Gould

organization Mobile Historic Development Commission

date August 25, 1982

street & number P.O. Box 1827

telephone (205) 438-7133

city or town Mobile

state Alabama 36633

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 11/29/83