National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received SEP 5 1985 date entered

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Nam	e					
historic	Joseph Riley	Smith Histor	ic Distric	t		
and/or common	College Hill	Ls				
2. Loca						
						olocks of 9th Court A not for publication
city, town	Birmingham	NAv	icinity of	congression	al dist	crict 6
state	Alabama	code 01	county	Jefferson		code 073
3. Clas	sification					
Category _X district building(s) structure site object	Ownership public privateX both Public Acquisitio in process being consider	n Accessit	cupied in progress	Present Use agriculture commercie education entertainm governme industrial military	al al nent	museum park X private residence religious scientific transportation other:
name Mult	iple property o	owners				
city, town	ation of L		vicinity of		state	
	stry of deeds, etc.	Jefferson (
street & number		716 21st St	reet North	l .		
city, town		Birmingham			state	Alabama
6. Rep	resentation	on in Exi	sting (Surveys		
title Alaba	ıma Inventory		has this pro	perty been determi	ned elig	ible? yes _X_ no
date 1970-	present			federal	X state	county local
depository for su	rvey records Ala	abama Historio	al Commiss	sion		
city, town Mon	itgomery				state	Alabama

Condition excellent y good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	Check oneX unaltered altered	Check one X original s moved	ite date	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

7. Description

The Joseph Riley Smith Historic District lies four miles to the west of Birmingham's city center on a ridge of hills rising to the north of Jones Valley, the valley in which the city and major early industrial communities were located beginning in 1870. This ridge of hills, the southwestern extremity of the Appalachian Mountain chain which runs throughout Northern Alabama, is known as Flint Ridge and is also called Enon Ridge, College Hills and Dynamite Hill.

There are 66 buildings in the district: 47 (71.2%) are contributing, and 17 (25.7%) are non-contributing. The two conditionally contributing buildings have been modernized with alterations (Inv. #37) or have been covered with synthetic siding (Inv. #48). These buildings will be designated contributing when they are returned to their original appearances. The contributing and conditional contributing buildings were built between 1909-29, and consist of styles that exemplify the popular domestic tastes of that period, such as Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, Victorian Colonial Revival, Shingle Style, Victorian Cottage, Neo-Colonial, Craftsman, Bungalow, Georgian Revival and English Cottage.

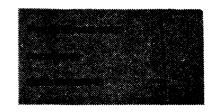
The Joseph Riley Smith Historic District is laid out in a regular grid pattern with straight broad avenues running due east and west across the ridge and intersected at right angles by streets running north and south. This grid pattern, platted as part of the original 1887 survey of Smithfield by Joseph Riley Smith, presented interesting challenges and resulted in a variety of solutions to siting of residences. Along the northern expanses of the avenues, stately residences are set on stepped terraces, often with long flights of ascending stairs. Modest one and two-story houses and bungalows front the more level southsides of the avenues. Despite this variation in scale and altitudes, the district is held together by its density with fairly regular spacing and set-backs, compatibility of materials and tree-lined streets. The solidly residential district is well-elevated and physically separated both from Center Street (the main artery for neighborhood traffic traveling to north Smithfield and Enon Ridge), other quiet residential communities located along Flint Ridge, and from 8th Avenue West (the principal traffic artery and commercial area linking the Smithfield community to the city center on the east and to Birmingham Southern College and other early industrial communities on the west). From this hilly, isolated enclave, there are beautiful views to the east of the city center.

The district's character derives from the extraordinary variety of building materials and styles represented. The most common building materials are brick and clapboard, fieldstone, rusticated stone and composition paper roofs.

Present use of the buildings is 100% residential. There are two vacant lots in the district. Few of the buildings need more than minor repairs, and have been significantly altered with changes in original materials or design.

The boundaries of the Joseph Riley Smith Historic District were drawn to include the neighborhood's noteworthy early residences and are the logical divisions separating this early enclave of buildings from later construction of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. There are few intrusions within the district as presently construed.

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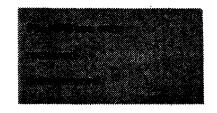
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CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES Joseph Riley Smith Historic District

- McLester House -1429 10th Ave. West, c. 1928 English cottage style, 1 story, half timber.
- 2. Blake House 423 10th Ave West, c. 1924 Bungalow style, 1 story, frame clapboard, clipped gable roof.
- Lonergan House 421 10th Ave. West, c. 1913
 Colonial Revival style with craftsman details
 2 story, frame clapboard with brick porch.
- 6. McDavid/Blair House 409 10th Ave. West, c.1924 Colonial Revival style, 2 story, Gamprel roor classical pedimented entrance.
- 7. McLester House 403 10th Ave. West, c. 1924 Bungalow style, craftsman influence, 1 story clapboard, fieldstone porch. Tudor arch over entrance to porch.
- 8. McDavid House 401 10th Ave. West, c. 1924 Eungalow style, porch enclosed, with craftsman influence, 1 story, frame clapboard with fieldstone porch piers, shallow basket arch over porch entrance.
- Earington House 420 10th Ave. West, c. 1924 Bungalow style with craftsman influence, 1 story, frame clapboard, decorative wood trellis on stuccoed porch piers.
- 12 McNeil House 416 10th Ave. West, c. 1912 Victorian Colonial Revival style, 2 stories, frame with clapboard (aluminum) wrought iron columns.

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- 15. Gassman House 325 10th Ave. West, c. 1915
 American 4 square with craftsman influence,
 2 story, frame clapboard. Double columns on brick bases and double brackets support gable roof over entrance.
- Blair House 323 10th Ave. West, c. 1918 Colonial Revival style, 2 story, frame clapboard Palladian attic windows in gable ends, triple Ionic columns support porch roof, circular or octagonal stairway is defined on exterior.
- 19. Moore House 301 10th Ave.West, c. 1915 Craftsman style, 2 story frame, clapboard, brick porch piers, decoratively milled rafter ends.
- 20. Goar House 330 10th Ave. West, c. 1922 Georgian style, 2 story, gable type roof with central chimney.
- 21. Finklea House 320 10th Ave. West, c. 1909 Raised, 2 story building with hipped/asphalt roof, sidelights, double columns support porch roof, aluminum siding.
- Nelson House 316 10th Ave. West, c. 1910 Victorian Cottage style, 1 story, plus basement, frame, porch has Ionic columns.
- Thomas O. Smith House 308 10th Ave. West, c.1910 Tudor Revival 2-1/2 story, stone and half timber multible gables, second story porch.

 T.O. Smith, Vice President, Birmingham Trust and Savings has carriage house.
- 24. House 944 4th Street West, c. 1940 1 story cottage, wood shingles, asphalt/gable roof.

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- 2.5. Craven House 419 9th Court West, c. 1911 Craftsman style, 1-1/2 story, clapboard with fieldstone porch, 4 chimneys, second story balcony flanked by 2 large dormers.
- 26 Keller House 417 9th Court West, c. 1911 American four square with craftsman details, 2 stories, frame, clapboard. Porch has paired columns with brackets on brick bases, large central dormer.
- 27. Beecher House 415 9th Court West, c. 1912
 Greek Revival style with craftsman influence,
 1 story, frame, clapboard sidint, fieldstone
 porch piers. Unusual combination of Greek temple
 form and craftsman materials.
- Rowe House 413 9th Court West, c. 1913
 Bungalow style, 1 story, frame, with fieldstone porch and chimney, low hipped roof, symmetrical facade Prairie influence.
- 29. Lebo House 411 9th Court West, c. 1909
 Shingle style with classical influence, 1-1/2 story, frame wood shingles with brick piers, steep gable roof has large Palladian windows. Symmetrical facade, wide sidelights flank entrance, upper story railing.
- 30. Henley J. Smith House 401 9th Court West c. 1923 conditional contributor
- 31. Allen House 430 9th Court West, c. 1912 Bungalow style, 1-1/2 story, frame, clapboard 2nd story balcony recessed roof.
- 32. Westbrook House 420 9th Court West, c. 1926 American four square, 2 stories, brick.

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- 33. Winslow House 410 9th Court West, c. 1910
 Tudor Revival style, 2 stories, half-timber,
 clapboard and fieldstone, Double gable facade
 with central chimney.
- Ransom House 400 9th Court West, c 1911
 Craftsman style, 2 stories, frame, clapboard
 with brick porch Pyramidal roof-has dormer
 and projection. Floor joists of second story
 porch project as elements of lower porch frieze.
- Fulford House 319 9th Court West, c. 1924
 Bungalow wtyle with craftsman influence, 1 story
 clapboard with yellow brick porch. Attic window has
 yents on each side decorated with dentils.
- 39. Hubbert Smith House 305 9th Sourt West, c. 1912 Georgian Revival style, 2 stories, frame, clapboard. Entrance has broken pediment arch, fanlight over door, cornice with large scale dentils.
- 41 William Smith House 320 9th Court West, c. 1909
 Tudor Revival style, 2 stories, brick and half timber.
 Series of Tudor arches defines large porch and
 carriage porch.
- 42. McDavid House 310 9th Court West, c. 1909
 Victorian Colonial Revival style, 2 stories, frame,
 clapboard, brownstone basement wall, classical details.
 Leaded glass transom, cornerlights and sidelights.
 Pedimented second story gables decorated with wood
 shingles and arched vent.
- 43. Moon House 300 9th Court West, c. 1930 1-1/2 story frame, clapboard, ladder type columns on brick bases, fanlight in entrance gable.
- 45. Quinn House 231 9th Court West, c. 1916
 Bungalow style, 1 story, frame clapboard with brick
 foundation.
- 46. Riddle House 227 9th Court West, c. 1924
 Colonial Revival style, 1 story, frame, clapboard,
 Gambrel roof, elliptical dormer vents, classically
 influenced gabled entry.

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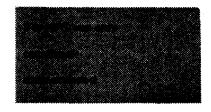


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- Gardner House 209 9th Court West, c. 1929
 English Cottage style, 1 story, brick, small paned
 casement windows, decorative stucco and brick entrance.
- 50. Robb House 207 9th Court West, c. 1915 2 story, frame, clapboard, brick porch piers, bracketed eaves.
- 52. Reynolds House 230 9th Sourt West, c. 1913 2 story, stone, clapboard. Unusual massing, huge gable with second floor balcony, eliptical leaded glass windows.
- 53. Edward Wingate House 226 9th Court West, c. 1909 Victorian Colonial Revival style, 2 story, frame, clapboard, leaded glass sidelights and transom and windows, unusual porch columns.
- 54. Henry Wingate House 220 9th Court West, c. 1920 Bungalow style, 1 story, frame, clapboard, bracketed eaves.
- 55. Morrow House 214 9th Court West, c. 1915 2 story, frame, clapboard, paired columns on brick bases.
- 56. Rauckman House 203 9th Court West, c. 1911
 American four square style, 2 story, frame, clapboard with fieldstone porch. Porch may be addition.
- 57 Mom's House 200 9th Court West, c. 1929 Bungalow style, craftsman influence, 1 story, brick, porch rail has decorative brick work.

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- 58 Allison House 125 9th Court West, c. 1923 Bungalow style, 1 story, frame, clapboard, fieldstone porch piers.
- 59. Munger House 123 9th Court West, c. 1922 Bungalow style, 1 story
- 60 Moon House 121 9th Court West, c. 1929 Raised bungalow, 2 story clapboard with brick porch piers.
- 63. Bryant House 109 9th Court West, c. 1927
 Bungalow style, 1 story, frame, clapboard with brick
 porch.
- 64 Douglas House 103 9th Court West, c. 1929 English Cottage style, 2 story, brick.
- 65 Brown House 108 9th Court West, c. 1913 Craftsman style, 2 story, brick. Home of Mary Louise Smith Browne, grand-daughter of Joseph R. Smith Sr. Has porte corchere, gabled entrance, lots of definition of structural members.

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CONDITIONAL

Joseph Riley Smith

Historic District

- 37. McCracken House 325 9th Court West, c.1928 Georgian Revival, 2 story, clapboard.
- 48. Evans House 211 9th Court West, c.1922
 Bungalow style, craftsman influence, 1 story,
 brick foundation and porch posts, asphalt siding.

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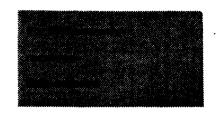
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NON CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES Joseph Riley Smith Historic District

- House 417 10th Avenue West, c. 1953
 Neo-Colonial style, 1 story, clapboard.
- House ~ 413 10th Avenue West, c. 1950
 Modern style, 1 story aluminum siding.
- House 428 10th Avenue West, c. 1953
 Modern style, 1 story, viynl-asbestos shingles.
- House 424 10th Avenue West, c. 1953
 Modern style cottage, 1 story, aluminum siding.
- 13. House 408 10th Avenue West, c. 1970 Modern style, 1 story vertical wood siding.
- 14. Vacant lot 400 block 10th Avenue West
- 17. House 319 10th Avenue West, c. 1968 Modern style, 1 story brick.
- House 309 10th Avenue West, c. 1968
 Modern style, 1 story brick.

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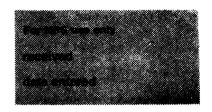


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- 34. House 408 9th Court West, c. 1954 Modern style, 1 story, vinyl asbestos shingles.
- 36 House 329 9th Court West, c. 1954 Modern style, 1 story, clapboard.
- 40. Vacant lot 300 block of 9th Court West
- 44. House 948 3rd Street, c. 1960-65 Brick ranch style house.
- 47. House 215 9th Court West, c. 1954 Bungalow style, 1 story, vinyl siding.
- 51. House 201 9th Court West, c. 1958 Modern style, 1 story brick.
- 61. House 117 9th Court West, c. 1963 Modern style, 1 story brick.
- 62. House 111 9th Court West, c. 1953 Modern style, 1 story.

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The Joseph Riley Smith Historic District contains a core of residential housing built on the highlands of the original 1887 Smithfield subdivision for prominent members of the Smith family and other corporate managers and professionals.

Joseph Riley Smith is said to be the first white child born (1818) in the area which later became Jefferson County, when carved in 1819 out of Blount County. Smith's family had migrated to the area in 1816 from South Carolina and eventually acquired 2,000 acres of rich farmlands along Valley Creek, just to the south of the present district. Here his father, John Smith, pursued the planting of cotton and corn on a grand scale, and reared a family of 12 children. John Smith served as magistrate and county commissioner at the early county seat of Elyton. Reared in comfortable circumstances and well-educated, Joseph Riley Smith studied medicine in Lexington, Kentucky and New Orleans before engaging in the practice of medicine and surgery at Elyton. In the 1870s he ventured out into the mercantile business, and became one of the area's largest real estate developers. Smith served on boards of local streetcar companies, banks and businesses. He also inherited 600 acres of worn-out plantation lands which he subdivided to form a suburban community. Smith continued to live at his plantation home, located on 3rd Avenue, just a few blocks from the heart of Elyton. At his death in 1892, he was said to be the wealthiest man in Jefferson County.

"Smith's addition to Birmingham" is first mentioned in a deed of July 9, 1882. However, in March of 1882, Smith had sold the first lots in what was to become the suburban town, Smithfield. These sales preceded by two years the founding of other early suburbs of Avondale and Highlands, perhaps making Smithfield the earliest of suburban communities which grew up surrounding the central City of Birmingham.

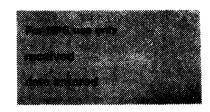
On November 3, 1886, together with nine local investors, Smith incorporated the Smithfield Land Company, with a capital stock of \$800,000 for "sale and purchase of lands and improvement of the same." Smith's improvements to the subdivision included the laying out of streets and avenues. These were originally named for Smith's sons and daughters, his wives and a few planter friends and neighbors.

Development evidently was initiated in the 1880s for an Age-Herald reporter traveled by carriage with Smith to view the new community and reported the former cotton fields as "now almost thickly settled with families." He traveled along 8th Avenue, the early thoroughfare of the community, just to the south of the present district.

By 1898 Smithfield was the fourth largest of suburban communities surrounding Birmingham, with 267 households. These early residences tended to concentrate along the early traffic arteries, the 8th Avenue and 3rd Avenue carlines linking Smithfield and the city center to the east to the industrial centers of Bessemer and Ensley on the west. The area within the district is not known to have been developed by this time.

In December 1886, however, a group of area industrialists associated with the early development of Bessemer, had formed the College Hills Land Company with the expressed intent "to acquire lands." W. P. Pinckard was president, A. M. Adger, Secretary Treasurer and Bessemer's founder and promoter, Henry DeBardeleben, an investor and stockholder. The lands they acquired form the residential areas just to the west of the Joseph Riley Smith District. The use of the term college in this land company's name is interesting, for no college is known to have existed at this time. (There were secondary institutes and schools for planters' children at Elyton, but no college.)

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In 1896 Rose Wellington Owen, a resident of Owenton, another small 1800s subdivision carved from plantation lands just to the west of Smithfield, donated 15 acres of land on Flint Ridge to the Methodist Church to establish a men's college. Officially designated the North Alabama College, the hilltop site was commonly called Owen College. Owen had encouraged other prominent Elyton planters, Robert N. Greene. Paul H. Earle and William A. Walker (through the Walker Land Company) to contribute about 100 acres to the college. He also helped get the first building constructed. Owen Hall. In 1918 the institution merged with Southern University, established in 1856 in Greensboro, and the name was changed to Birmingham Southern College. Owen Hall was razed in 1923 and the foundations used for the construction of Munger Hall, the principal building of the Birmingham Southern campus today. Rose Wellington Owen married Sarah Emma Smith, daughter of Joseph Riley Smith, for whom Emma Avenue (now 10th Avenue West in the district) was named. The Owens lived on 8th Avenue at 7th Street. just outside the district, adjacent to the college, that gave its name to the many different subdivisions developed throughout the early years of the 20th century along the hilly ridge on which they and Birmingham Southern are located.

On July 3, 1907, an area known as Graymont was incorporated as a separate municipality. The geographic limits of Graymont include all of historic Smithfield and Owenton, as well as lands to the west of these communities extending toward Birmingham Southern. Graymont was named for Lucy Gray, first wife of wealthy planter Mortimer Jordan and mother-in-law of Joseph Riley Smith. At incorporation, Graymont had a population of "not less than 100 and not more than 3,000." The vote to incorporate was held at Walker Drug Store in Elyton with thirty-four persons voting for the incorporation and one against. Insurance man, Willis A. Lester, was elected Mayor. Although the town lasted but three years, the area is still often referred to as Graymont. The entrance gates and the school remain along 8th Avenue just outside the district. In 1910 Graymont including the historic Smithfield suburb was incorporated into the City of Birmingham along with many other outlying municipalities.

Little is known about any building on the elevated ridges of the historic district before the period beginning in 1909 when various members of the Smith family, who had been given lots there by their father and grandfather began construction. One source suggested that a black family, who had built an early cottage on the wooded slopes, was forced to remove the cottage to 8th Avenue within a well-defined area later zoned for black residences.

In 1909, banker Thomas Octavius Smith, born 1858 at Elyton who had been residing at the family plantation home along 3rd Avenue in Smithfield, selected noted Birmingham architect Hugh Martin, to design the district's finest early residence (c. 1910, Inv. #23). The palatial three-story Tudor Revival structure commands a large corner lot along 10th Avenue. The Smiths called the residence "Gardenview." This name still appears in a stone step leading up to the house. Gardenview was famous for its rose gardens, where the Smiths often entertained. Smith headed up the local Birmingham Trust and Savings Bank, now SouthTrust Bank. His stately residence set the tone for development of the quiet residential enclave in which six other members of the Smith family, children and grandchildren of Joseph Riley Smith, would build from 1909 to 1913, and in 1923.

Among Smith family members to build properties in the district are Mary Louise Smith Brown, Smith's favorite grandchild, whose palatial residence in the style of Frank

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Lloyd Wright is thought to have been designed by Birmingham architect S. Scott Joy (c. 1913, Inv. #65); M. Hubbard Smith, a grandson and official with The Continental Gin Company, the city's aggressive manufacturer of cotton gins (c. 1912, Inv. #39); William D. "Quack" Smith, a son for whom Center Street was originally named and the treasurer of a large city grocery chain, the Fox-Smith Grocery (c. 1909, Inv. #41); "Mittie Owen" (her pen name) McDavid, poet/artist/local historian/writer and wife of real estate and insurance man E.R. McDavid (c. 1909, Inv. #42); and Henly J. Smith a mine operator and son of Joseph Smith, Jr. (c. 1923, Inv. #300). These residences most of them in the 300 and 400 blocks of 9th Avenue, designed in the many fashionable styles of the early 20th Century constitute an important collection of buildings.

Empty lots along 9th and 10th Avenues continued to fill in the 1920s as comfortable bungalows were built to house corporate managers, dentists, physicians, and insurance men. Between 1920 and 1929 twenty bungalows were built ranging in style from the large, long, low variety with wide verandahs and deeply overhanging eaves to the smaller, more compact versions. Representative examples, with wonderful use of fieldstone in the foundations are the Rowe House, built for Walter B. Rowe (c. 1913, Inv. #28) and later examples the McLester House (c. 1924, Inv. #7) and the McDavid House (c. 1924, Inv. #8). A wonderful melange of stylesand flavors provided regularity and order in the district through the consistent use of uniform setbacks and sidewalks.

The district continued to be a quiet residential area enclave in the 1930s and 1940s. In the post war years, blacks whose residences had been traditionally zoned to the east of Center Street, the dividing line between black and white sections of Smithfield began acquiring property to the west of Center Street. In 1949 Naomi Patton, a black teacher/educator, was the first black to purchase a home in the district (the Winslow House, c. 1910, Inv. #33). It was a home she knew well for as a child she had spent many summers when the residence of Frazier Banks, Superintendent of Birmingham Schools. Patton's transition to the area was peaceful, but by 1957 the attempt by realtors to stop purchase of property by blacks erupted into what The Birmingham News termed a "racial spat." In the early 1960s, bombings of the residences of prominent black citizens along Center Street led to the designation of the area as Dynamite Hill. In the late 1960s condemnation of property in North Smithfield and Enon Ridge for construction of Interstates 20 and 59 forced many blacks from their homes. Many relocated in new residences adjacent to and within the historic district.

Today the neighborhood's stately mansions and smaller cottages and bungalows are well-maintained and quiet. The Neighborhood Association of the City of Birmingham provides active leadership for community projects and has worked with the Society in the research and preparation for this nomination.

8. Significance

1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric agricultureX architecture art commerce communications		ng landscape architectur law literature military music	re religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1909-1930	Builder/Architect I	Hugh Martin; S. Scott	Joy

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criterion C - Architecture:

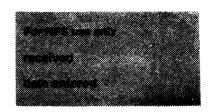
The Joseph Riley Smith Historic District is significant for its fine collection of early 20th century upper to middle class residences, some of which were designed by the city's most prominent architects. Good local examples of Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, Victorian Colonial Revival, Shingle Style, Victorian Cottage, Craftsman, Bungalow, Georgia Revival and English Cottage comprise the approximately 8-block district.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographic	al Data		
Acreage of nominated property app Quadrangle name Birmingham No		acres	Quadrangle scale 1:24000
UTM References			
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G	0 0 5 12 10	H []	
	n the attached noteworthy ea	rly residences	Boundaries have been drawn to and constitute the logical rom later construction.
List all states and counties for p	properties overla	pping state or co	unty boundaries
state NA	code	county	code
state	code	county	code
11. Form Prepar	red By		
Shirley Qualls, Coname/title Marjorie White, B			
organization Alabama Histori	cal Commission	da	te June 25, 1985
street & number 725 Monroe S	treet	tel	ephone 205 261-3184
city or town Montgomery		sta	ate Alabama
12. State Histor	ric Prese	rvation (Officer Certification
The evaluated significance of this pro	operty within the sta	ate is:	
national	state X	local	
As the designated State Historic Pres 665), I hereby nominate this property according to the criteria and procedu	for inclusion in the	National Register a	ric Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89– and certify that it has been evaluated vice
State Historic Preservation Officer si	gnature	Mirlene	Jan
title State Historic Preser	vation Officer		date 8–15–85
For NPS use only I hereby pertify that this proper	ty is included in the	National Register	date 10/10/85
Keeper of the National Register			
Attest: Chief of Registration			date

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White, Marjorie L. The Birmingham District - An Industrial History and Guide. Birmingham Historical Society, Birmingham, 1981.

Baist's Property Atlas, 1902.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1911 and 1928.

Birmingham City Directories.

Smith family deeds and records.

Early newspaper articles.

Personal Interviews.

