

(June 1991)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form

RECEIVED

FEB 14 1994

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

X New Submission

Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES OF SENATOBIA, MISSISSIPPI

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Historical Development of Senatobia, ca. 1870 to ca. 1941

C. Form Prepared by

Name/Title: John Linn Hopkins, Preservation Consultant

Organization: N/A

Date: June 1, 1993

Street & Number: 974 Philadelphia Street

Telephone: (901) 278-5186

City: Memphis

State: TN

Zip Code: 38104

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Kenneth H. P. Paul*

Deputy State Historic  
Preservation Officer

February 1, 1994

Signature and title of certifying official

Date

Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

*Mal M. May*  
Signature of the Keeper

3/3/94  
Date of Action

**RECEIVED**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**FEB 14 1994**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**NATIONAL  
REGISTER**

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number E Page # 1

**INTRODUCTION AND ORGANIZATION**

The multiple property listing for Senatobia, Tate County, Mississippi is based upon the historic context, "Historical Development of Senatobia, ca. 1870 to ca. 1941", reflecting the roughly seventy-year period in which Senatobia was established and grew to become a mature, smaller city possessing a unique identity formed by the physical character of its historic environments. Though the history of development in this city is intrinsically linked with the establishment of the Tennessee and Mississippi Railroad through this place in 1856-57, the development of Senatobia as the place we know today is more importantly linked to the establishment of Tate County in 1873 with its county seat at Senatobia. It was roughly at this time that Senatobia became firmly established as a local center for trade, with its focus at its interface with the railroad. The seventy year period covered by this historic context climaxes with the onset of World War Two, a point that marks a dramatic change in the transportation patterns, agricultural practices, commercial development patterns, and approaches to traditional design and building practices in Senatobia and Tate County. It was this period which was clearly most significant in the development of Senatobia.

The approach to this multiple property listing began with a comprehensive architectural survey of the corporate limits of Senatobia. The survey was carried out by John Linn Hopkins, Preservation Consultant, in compliance with standards set by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the National Park Service. The survey resulted in the completion of 270 Historic Resources Inventory Forms for properties found to meet the survey criteria. There were no previously listed properties located in Senatobia. Mapping of the field data clearly revealed the presence of eight potential historic districts and two individual properties which reflected a common historical development pattern. This cover nomination was prepared to recognize this common pattern as its primary historical context. For each historic district nomination, the period of significance was defined by the resources evident, as opposed to the larger period of significance demonstrated by the entire community's historic context. In this way, the contribution of each district to the significance of the larger whole is duly and appropriately recognized.

There were three property types identified during the survey for inclusion in the multiple property listing for Senatobia. They are 1) residential resources; 2) commercial resources; and, 3) public/semi-public institutional resources. While each of these property types is distinctly different in appearance, design, detail, etc., the survey revealed that, for instance, residential areas of Senatobia are quite likely to contain one or more resources of a commercial or institutional nature as a historical part of that neighborhood's development. Variations of the converse are also true. For this reason, most of the resources that could

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number E Page # 2

normally stand individual nomination (historic schools, churches, etc.) were included in historic districts as part of the context of that neighborhood, rather than as separate entities.

Survey for archaeological resources was not included within the scope of the project. The potential for prehistoric resources is completely unexplored. It is clear, however, that there is a high potential for historic archaeological sites in areas inside and outside of the historic districts identified.

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXT:

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SENATOBIA (ca. 1870 to ca. 1941)

Located in northwestern Mississippi on the Hickahala Creek, just south of its confluence with the Coldwater River, the City of Senatobia (Population 4,772, 1990 Census) continues its role today as a modest trade center serving Tate County and its surrounds. The city lies to the west of Interstate 55 and is quartered by the intersection of U.S. Highway 51 (Panola Street) and Mississippi Highway 4 (Main and West Tate streets), the two historic roadways which have served its development since prior to the Civil War.

As noted previously, the development of Senatobia is tied in a large part to the establishment of the Tennessee and Mississippi Railroad (now Illinois Central Gulf) and its initiation of regular rail service in 1856. The intersection of the new railroad with the prehistoric Ponotoc Indian trail (now Mississippi Highway 4) was the natural place for the development of a town that could serve as the railhead interface for rail-born commerce and the agricultural interests of the region. Two older rural communities--Tatesville and Tatumsville--were effectively abandoned at this time with the intent of establishing a new community nearer to the railroad. The name of the new town was taken from the Chickasaw name for the nearby creek "Sen-a-ta-ho-ba", a part of the Hickahala Creek drainage basin located just to the east of today's Interstate 55.

Senatobia grew to be a modest village by the time of its charter in 1860. Perhaps an indication of its trend towards permanence was shown by the relocation in June of 1859 of the Ebenezer F&AM Lodge #76 to the new community from its original location on the Stage Road, well west of modern-day Senatobia (Tate County Genealogical, pg. 155). As can be expected, however, whatever momentum of growth in place at this time was cut short by the outbreak of the Civil War. Local histories suggest that much of the town was destroyed as a result of various raids between 1863 and 1865.

The future of Senatobia was set in motion in 1873 with the formation of Tate County from the portions of DeSoto, Tunica and Marshall counties

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number E Page # 3

lying south of the Coldwater River. The new county was named for T.S. Tate, an early settler of the region who was also namesake of the former village of Tatesville, which lay west of present-day Senatobia near the Stage Road (Carpenter, pg. 12). The county supervisors met in the chambers of the Ebenezer Lodge hall until March of 1876, when their new courthouse was ready for occupancy (see Tate County Courthouse, NR pending). The courthouse was first authorized by the supervisors in March of 1875; a design competition resulted in the selection of James B. Cook of Memphis to design the facility (Minute Book A, pg. 201). J. H. Cocke, a local contractor, was also selected by the supervisors to see the \$19,800 project through to completion.

The architectural survey of Senatobia identified a number of residential and commercial structures remaining from the decades surrounding the establishment of the new county. Comparison of this data with the Sanborn map series of 1886 reveals that Senatobia had already become a significant trade center for its region, with a population approaching 1500 souls. The 1886 map series indicates some forty-six existing businesses in the core of downtown (see Downtown Senatobia Historic District, NR pending); among them were two hotels, a carriage factory, a steam-driven grist mill and cotton gin, three large livery stables, two druggists, a jeweler, a billiards hall, a confectioner's shop, two lumber and hardware dealers, three blacksmiths, two dry goods stores, twenty other "general merchandise" stores, and the Senatobia Female College, located on College Street. Given Senatobia's population, it is clear that Senatobia's commercial base was not just viable, but served a population far afield from its own borders.

The population of Senatobia remained surprisingly stable between 1880 and ca. 1940. As a consequence, there are no clearly recognizable eras of development that would be attributable to periods of economic boom or bust. Indeed, the Sanborn maps clearly show that the commercial base of Downtown Senatobia did not grow in area appreciably from the time of the 1886 map series and the map series of 1936-42. The modest growth that is noticeable in this period occurs with the slight intensification of development within the same basic boundaries; otherwise, development appears to have occurred by the redevelopment of previously developed parcels-- newer buildings being built to replace older ones.

The same trend appears largely true in most of the residential areas of Senatobia, though Sanborn maps are not usable for proof of this point. For better or worse, the first three Sanborn maps series were limited in their scope to the immediate proximity of the downtown area (1886, 1892, 1897). It was not until the 1902 map series that housing areas outside of the downtown core were included. Architectural survey data clearly reveals that each of the six residential areas proposed for nomination in this listing were already substantially developed by 1902. The Sanborn map series issued following 1902 extended their mapping to larger and larger

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number E Page # 4

areas of housing in Senatobia, but the maps never were drawn to give a comprehensive view of housing development in Senatobia prior to World War Two. What they do show, however, is that each of the existing housing areas witnessed the development of replacement residences for earlier ones, and the construction of some infill dwellings over time on smaller lots subdivided from larger ones. The conclusion that is drawn from the synthesis of survey and map data is that the developed area of Senatobia--downtown and its residential areas alike-- was relatively static prior to World War Two-- at least until annexation of areas to the west of West Street in 1939.

This conclusion does not by any means indicate that Senatobia was a stagnant community between 1886 and 1941, but rather that it was a community in balance with the needs of its population and its surrounding markets. Accelerated growth in the community was not brought about by the introduction of large-scale manufacturing or processing plants, as was the experience of some other cities in this period. Senatobia's primary markets were fueled by: 1) the surrounding agricultural base of Tate County and beyond; 2) the ties of Senatobia to the shipping of agricultural products to market provided by the railroad; and, 3) the commercial effect provided by Senatobia's role as a county seat. Even if there were to have been increases in the amount of agricultural land under production in Tate County through this time, the cumulative economic effect in Senatobia would not have resulted in an appreciable demand for more businesses, or an increase in employment opportunities sufficient to draw new residents. The historical period appears to be marked by a pattern of reinvestment in Senatobia, instead of a growth pattern fueled by new investment.

Even though Senatobia did not appreciably grow in size, it was also not dormant. Instead, the community grew in character and tangible quality-- attributes not reflected in population statistics. There were several small agricultural processing enterprises built in the community over time to better serve the surrounding agricultural interests. The A. L. Blackburn Grist Mill and Cotton Gin, in existence in 1886 on East Front Street (now North Park Street), was taken over by J.R. Goode in the mid-1890s (Sanborn, 1902, 1907). This small mill was effectively replaced in ca. 1900 by the larger Senatobia Oil Company's Cotton Seed Oil Mill and Cotton Gin, the predecessor to the Senatobia Gin and Ice Company located on the extension of North Park Street north of McKie Street (Sanborn 1902, 1907). Competition was provided after ca. 1910 by the Planter's Gin and Seed Company, which was located on East Main Street several hundred feet east of its intersection with Robinson Street (Sanborn, 1915). In the 1930s, the Deluxe Food Corporation of Louisiana opened a small butter and cheese factory next to the Senatobia Gin and Ice Company (Sanborn, 1936-42). Larger-scale industrial and processing enterprises did not develop in Senatobia until the decades following World War Two.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number E Page # 5

---

Though the small cheese and butter factory apparently did not survive much more than a decade, its development reflects the partial change in farming practices during the late 1920s and early 1930s, which turned away from the sole reliance on cotton production, to more diversified farming that included ranching and dairying. The change was prompted by a number of factors: the invasion and effects of the cotton boll weevil beginning in the 1880s; the depletion of the soil and the effects of erosion caused by over-production of cotton; and, the subsequent decrease in available farming laborers, as part of the Great Migration to the urban areas of the South and to the industrial centers of the North in the period of ca. 1900-1920. The significance of this change is retained even to this day-- Tate County remains one of the most significant livestock and dairying areas in the state (Senatobia/Tate County Chamber of Commerce, pg. 10).

Public and semi-public institutions were developed in Senatobia that have added to its quality of life. Apart from their continuing importance in service to their community for religious, governmental and educational purposes, most of these facilities also serve as true architectural landmarks-- they shape a memorable internal and external image of Senatobia.

Unlike some communities, public and private schools have been a part of life in Senatobia since the 1870s, beginning with the Senatobia Female College. Tangible parts of this historic legacy remain in the community today in the form of the Senatobia High School Auditorium (1938, 303 College Street, part College Street Historic District, NR pending), and in the form of the Northwest Mississippi Community College (originally Tate County Agricultural High School, 1914-15, 510 North Panola Street, NR pending).

Churches have also enriched the lives of Senatobians since the formation of their community. Local histories suggest that the earliest churches established here were in 1872 by Senatobia's Baptist congregation, and the united congregation of Presbyterians and Methodists (Tate County Genealogical, pgs. 91; 101). The Presbyterian and Methodist congregations split in 1884, with the Methodists establishing a new church across West Gilmore from its existing sanctuary (this notable example of the Romanesque style was demolished in 1956).

The oldest of the existing historic churches of Senatobia is the Christian Church (411 West Tate, NR pending), built in 1887 as a frame structure in a vernacular form of the Romanesque style (Carpenter, pg. 31). Next in line is the Senatobia Presbyterian Church, built in 1927 as a restrained example of the Collegiate Gothic Revival (431 West Main Street, part College Street Historic District, NR pending), and the old sanctuary of the First Baptist Church of Senatobia (400 South Ward Street, part South Ward Street Historic District, NR pending), completed in March of 1929 as a fine example of Neo-Classical influences. Though the use of this

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number E Page # 6

---

historic sanctuary has been eclipsed by a newer structure (1958), the elder of the two maintains an important role as a historical and visual landmark for the community.

Without a doubt, though, Senatobia's premier institutional structure, from an architectural point of view, is the Tate County Courthouse (201 South Ward Street, part South Ward Historic District, NR pending), built in 1875-76. While the period of significance for the historical development of Senatobia precedes this structure by a handful of years, it is this structure which fulfills the symbolic role as the "gateway" of Senatobia and Tate County's development as a place. Designed by James B. Cook of Memphis and built by local contractor, J. H. Cocke, the Tate County Courthouse is a highly important example of the Italianate and Romanesque styles, and the only major public building by James B. Cook known to still stand.

A major factor contributing to Senatobia's quality of life during the historical period was its access via railroad to the cultural marketplace of Memphis. Perhaps the earliest indication of this accessibility is shown by the ability of the Tate County Board of Supervisors to hold something of a design competition for its new courthouse, which attracted the attention of a number of the leading architects in the Memphis region--the partnership of Edward Cullhatt Jones and Mathias Baldwin were the only other competitors to James B. Cook revealed in the Board of Supervisors records (Minute Book A, pg. 190), though the record clearly makes note that the submittals of several other firms were rejected.

It does not appear that the influence of professional architects was limited to the design of the Tate County Courthouse. The other major historic public and semi-public institutional buildings all appear to have been architect-designed, with the exception perhaps of the Senatobia Christian Church, the current Senatobia Public Works building, and the former City Water and Power Plant complex. Unfortunately, the scope of this project did not allow the opportunity to provide intensive research in an effort to reveal those who may have provided the talented minds behind the designs of buildings like the Senatobia High School Auditorium building, the older sanctuary of the First Baptist Church, or the Craftsman-inspired design of Tate Hall at the Tate County Agricultural High School complex.

Quality in design and materials was not limited to public or semi-public buildings alone. There are any number of private homes in Senatobia which were built with highly-sophisticated designs, at the very least indicating easy accessibility by property owners and local builders alike to the latest publications in architecture and design, and catalogs for hardware and pre-manufactured building elements. However, there are also a number of homes in Senatobia which possess distinctive design qualities that strongly suggest the hands of practiced architects. A few of the possible

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number E Page # 7

---

candidates are the very fine Craftsman house located at 309 South Ward Street; another fine Craftsman house at 204 East Tate Street; and, the fine transitional Queen Anne-Colonial Revival house at 412 College Street, among many others.

For whatever reason, the commercial buildings of Downtown Senatobia appear to be more influenced by the hands of talented builders and masons as opposed to those of architects. It is not known whether outstanding buildings like the Italianate-styled French's Hotel (101-107 South Ward Street), the Italianate-styled Ebenezer Lodge building (100 North Front Street), the Craftsman-influenced design of 314-316 West Main Street, or the exuberant terra cotta features of 122 North Front Street were the work of professional architects, or simply talented builders.

However, there is much evidence in the buildings of Downtown that reflects the importance of the railroad as a connection with the architectural supply houses of Memphis. There is no better indication of this than that provided by the number of surviving Chickasaw Ironworks storefronts in the Downtown area; many others are suspected to be hidden beneath later alterations. The Chickasaw Ironworks was a Memphis-based manufacturer of cast iron storefronts, among other products, from ca. 1875 to ca. 1935. Of the eight Chickasaw storefronts identified in the downtown area of Senatobia, four entirely different patterns are represented on buildings constructed over a range of approximately thirty years or so. Not only does this represent changing trends in the design of storefronts, but also the importance of the Chickasaw Ironworks as a dominant supplier of cast iron work in the Mid-South region.

In sum, though Senatobia remained a modest-sized community from the 1870s through the 1940s, the community has grown in ways not reflected by population size. In many ways, the historic character of this community exceeds expectations for its population, proving that a high quality of life is not directly dependent on the normal indicators of economic development-- population growth, industrialization or ever expanding commercial development. Many communities might do well to learn lessons from the historical experiences of Senatobia.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number F Page # 8

---

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES:

1. Residential Resources

Description of Residential Resources

Resources surveyed in connection with this multiple property listing included a large number of residential structures which reflected a historical context of ca. 1870 to ca. 1941. Taken as a whole, these structures represent the extant fabric of residential development in Senatobia during the period of its greatest significance.

Mapping of survey data showed that most of the resources reflective of the historic context are concentrated east of West Street, the western corporate limit of Senatobia during most of its period of historic significance. There are six clearly-delineated areas which best represent the range of residential resources developed during the historic period; these areas have been proposed as potential historic districts. The known or estimated construction dates of these resources do not reveal clear patterns of progression in the development of Senatobia during the period of ca. 1870 to ca. 1941. As such, the periods of significance for each proposed district were defined by the resources present-- each represents a historical sub-set of the larger context.

Senatobia's residential resources reflect a wide range of traditional house types; these house types are overlaid with either high-styled expressions of architectural influences, or more modest interpretations of the same architectural influences. There appears to be little separation of residential development by class or economic status. It was not possible for the survey to explore ethnic or racial development patterns in Senatobia, due to the lack of city directories and like sources.

The attributes of setting for residential resources form an important contribution to their character, whether as individual structures or as groups. Sidewalks, street trees, lot sizes, building setbacks and other qualities of setting add greatly to their sense of time and place. The patterns and combinations of these characteristics varies from place to place within Senatobia.

Residences are generally of one or two stories in height and largely of wood-frame construction-- load-bearing masonry construction was found among only a select few of the earliest residences surviving in the city. Of residences built with frame construction, weatherboard is the most common wall treatment; however, brick veneer and stucco veneer are also found alone or in combinations on residences built during the twentieth century. If present, stone or cast stone is sparingly used for key

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number F Page # 9

---

1. Residential Resources- Description, continued:

architectural elements-- porch piers, lintels and sills for windows and doors, etc. Rough-faced cast stone block is mostly limited in use to the construction of a few outbuildings.

The majority of residential resources in Senatobia were built in forms of recognizable house types commonly found in Southern cities and towns during this historical period. The range of historic house types represented here is quite notable, including center-hall plans, double-cribs, saddlebags, single-pens, shotguns, modified shotguns, cubical cottages, pyramidal cottages, side L-plan cottages, side L-plan houses, composite cottages, homestead houses, four-square houses, bungalows, Capes, and English cottages. Sanborn maps suggest that a few of these resources were originally constructed as one house type, then subsequently modified to the appearance of another by subsequent construction later in the historical period.

The architectural influences overlaid on the basic house type add an additional layer of diversity to Senatobia's residences. The range of key influences found here include the Italianate, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Neo-Classical Revival, Tudor Revival, and Minimalist Traditional styles. Many residences sport combinations of these influences as part of their original finishes; others have had their original stylistic treatment modified by later additions of other historic stylistic influences. When present, these "layers" of influences help to demonstrate some of the broad patterns of historical development evident within Senatobia as a whole.

Concentrations of residential resources which reflect the historical context of ca. 1870 to ca. 1941 are located mainly in the areas of North Panola Street, South Panola Street, College Street, North Park Street, South Ward Street, and, in a U-shaped area formed by portions of the East Gilmore, East Tate and South Park street corridors. These groups of resources appear to be eligible for listing as historic districts under the context identified. There are, however, scattered individual properties and small groups of properties that may be eligible for listing under separate contexts at some time in the future, or with additional research beyond the scope of this project. The McKie Street area and the area of the Gann Subdivision (Camille Street, Gann Alley, North Marvin Street) could be eligible in the future under a post-World War Two context. Individual structures like the the Gann Place (717 Strayhorn) and the group of structures located at 512, 513, 514 and 516 Strayhorn all deserve a good deal of additional research before their potential for nomination can be proposed.

In summary, a sizable number of residential structures remain which illustrate the period of Senatobia's most robust period of historical

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	F	Page #	10	Historical Development of Senatobia, Tate Co., Mississippi Multiple Property Listing
----------------	---	--------	----	--

---

1. Residential Resources-- Description, continued:

development. These structures illustrate changing patterns of tastes and building techniques which provide a character of time and place that is unique to Senatobia.

Significance of Residential Resources

Residential resources have been evaluated in relation to the context of the historical development of Senatobia within the period of ca. 1870 to ca. 1941. The significance of these structures has also been evaluated under criterion C in the area of architecture. The wide range of house types and the stylistic influences afforded them in this period reflect broad patterns of importance in the experience of the Senatobia community during this period. They demonstrate levels of cultural sophistication, seamless periods of development and redevelopment, and a high quality of life that have combined to shape Senatobia in unique ways. In general, the period of significance for residential resources reflects that of the community at large. This period begins with the renewed growth of the community following the Civil War due to the subsequent re-establishment of rail service to the community; this period ends with the onset of World War Two. In the decade following World War Two, the patterns of residential development, economic development, transportation and architectural tastes are effected dramatic changes that clearly separate the post-War period from the seventy year period prior.

Registration Requirements for Residential Resources

The residential resources comprising this property type must be associated with the residential development within the corporate limits of Senatobia in the period of ca. 1870 to ca. 1941. These resources should reflect a portion of the broad patterns of house types and architectural influences that are recognized as critically-important aspects of this property type.

Residential buildings which are proposed for individual listing must be outstanding local examples of specific house types and architectural influences common to the Senatobia experience. Properties to be included in districts are required to reflect the basic characteristics of plan, massing and form that define its house type, and thus, retain integrity to contribute to the qualities of time and setting of the district.

Apart from the requirements related to the physical requirements of each

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number F Page # 11

---

residence within a district, the resources also must retain integrity in relationship with the outward character of the resources as a part of its larger setting. These characteristics include integrity of physical context, setting, massing, setback, feeling and association with the other members of the district.

Resources in districts are to be rated as contributing to the significance of the district, or as non-contributing to the significance of the district, as defined by and consistent with National Register criteria. As an aid to property owners and for the purposes of preservation planning objectives, the additional notation of "NC\*" may be made in the case of properties which are non-contributing at the time of the district's nomination, but which may retrieve their historic integrity through the removal of insensitive additions or modifications.

## ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

### 2. Commercial Resources

#### Description of Commercial Resources

Senatobia's very purpose as a community is intrinsically defined as a center for trade which could provide an interface between the agricultural interests of the surrounding area, and the transportation access to the larger marketplaces made available by the Tennessee and Mississippi Railroad at Senatobia. Its commercial resources are critical to the development of Senatobia in the era of ca. 1870 to ca. 1941.

The comprehensive survey of Senatobia revealed that the majority of the city's historic commercial resources are concentrated in Senatobia's traditional central business district. This core Downtown area is centered upon two major streets-- North/South Front Street, parallel to the railroad frontage of the railroad; and, West Main Street, running west from the intersection of North/South Front Street. The western boundary of the traditional business core was the small creek which crossed West Main Street a short distance west of the intersection of West Main Street and North/South Ward Street. A smaller number of commercial resources can be found nearby on side streets leading away from the two street axes.

As noted previously, Senatobia's commercial resources represent a reasonably seamless progression of development and redevelopment within the same area of the city. Growth in the downtown area was accomplished through the construction of new buildings on formerly vacant lots within the core of downtown; redevelopment was achieved through the replacement of older structures, usually as a result of a fire or similar catastrophe.

(8-86)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi

Section number F Page # 12 Multiple Property Listing

---

Commercial Resources-- Description, continued:

There were only a very few scattered commercial resources developed outside of this core in residential areas during the period of ca. 1870 to ca. 1941; only three such resources were made evident by the comprehensive survey of 1992-93. The location of resources inside areas of dissimilar uses is of no consequence-- they actually serve to broaden the pattern of diversity to Senatobia's benefit.

The commercial resources of Senatobia are generally one or two stories in height and of load-bearing brick masonry construction. By in large, these brick masonry resources conform to traditional patterns of massing, organization and design common to late-nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings throughout the Southern states. In general, one-story buildings are characterized by a parapet (plain or varietal), a cornice treatment, an attic and/or signboard area above the storefront, and, a traditional three-part storefront with transoms, display windows and bulkheads. A number of storefronts in the district possess original cast iron or wooden pilasters as part of their features. Two-story buildings share most of the same characteristics as one-story buildings, save for the presence of window openings on the second level. The window openings can be rectangular or arched, and may have cast stone or corbeled brick masonry treatments as part of the window reveals; common window divisions include 4/4, 2/2 and 1/1 double-hung sashes.

As in any groups of buildings, there are commercial resources which provide exceptions to these general rules. Two sets of commercial resources in Downtown possess rare arcaded storefronts (French's Hotel, 101-107 South Ward; and, 309-311 West Main), which feature corbeled semi-circular brick archways on the street level. Additionally, buildings constructed in the Commercial Minimalist Traditional style tend to be devoid of corbeled masonry treatments-- their decoration systems may be limited to a cast stone coping and simple rectangular attic vents. These exceptions add additional character to the continuity of the Downtown area rather than conflict with it.

The lot subdivision pattern and general pattern of redevelopment through time has provided the Downtown area with a great range of frontage widths. Consequently, there is no one standard pattern of width for commercial buildings. At one time, it appears that the pattern may have been more uniformly set in twenty-foot lot increments, given that this is the most common frontage standard remaining today. There are several pairs of commercial blocks which were originally constructed as two separate leasable spaces. However, there are several commercial blocks that have been built in Downtown that occupy two, three or perhaps four original lots. Some of these buildings (101-107 South Front, by example) contain

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number F Page # 13

---

2. Commercial Resources-- Description, continued:

several individual storefront spaces on the first floor, but have unified office or residential areas above, or which were simply built to serve one large-scale tenant (Roseborough's Store, 300 West Main).

Architectural styles applied to these basic commercial forms include Italianate, Romanesque, Colonial Revival, Craftsman and Commercial Minimalist Traditional influences. There have been numerous resources altered through the additions of brick veneer or sheet metal coverings to their facades. In some cases, these buildings have been completely and irreversibly lost to these alterations; in many others, though, the integrity of these buildings may be retrieved in the course of careful rehabilitation projects.

Characteristics of setting provided by commercial buildings include the tendency for most commercial buildings to have no setback from the sidewalk; the sideyard setbacks are also zero-- a large number of these buildings were built with shared party walls. A notable contribution of setting to the Downtown area is the wide expanse of North/South Front Street to the east of the buildings there. This wide streetscape was caused by its frontage on the railroad right of way, which originally contained the city's depot as well as areas for the storage of commodities for loading, areas for the parking of buggies, wagons and etc. It is sad that an unattractive prefabricated metal building has been allowed to be constructed on the depot site, thus diminishing the visual connection between the railroad frontage and the businesses of Front Street.

Significance of Commercial Resources

The commercial resources of Senatobia have been evaluated in relation to the context of the historical development of Senatobia during the period of ca. 1870 to ca. 1941. As such, the resources reflect local significance under National Register criterion C in the area of architecture.

Commercial resources in Senatobia reflect the development and redevelopment of the community through the period of historical context. The factors of design, materials, scale and setting provided by the commercial resources demonstrate the spread of national trends in architecture as applied to traditional building forms. Elements of these buildings-- cast iron, terra cotta, stone -- demonstrate the importance of trade networks provided by the railroads in affecting the qualities of design on the local level, in places remote from the point of their manufacture.

The period of significance for commercial resources is essentially the same as that for all historic resources in Senatobia, namely, ca. 1870 to

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number F Page # 14

---

2. Commercial Resources-- Significance, continued:

ca. 1941. Commercial resources in the period of context were developed and redeveloped in a seamless progression, such that no particular building periods can be identified within the larger period of historic context. The impetus to build in downtown appears to be keyed more by the occasional fire that destroys a building on site, rather than by a period of economic boom or expansion.

Commercial resources located outside of the downtown core are few in number; some are located in predominately residential areas. These isolated buildings do not represent separate contexts from those of the Downtown core, but are merely extensions of the same context and time period.

Registration Requirements for Commercial Resources

Commercial resources must be associated with the general period of historical development in Senatobia from ca. 1870 to ca. 1941. The comprehensive survey of Senatobia has revealed that there do not appear to be individually-eligible commercial resources in Senatobia that reflect this period of significance. However, if there were, the resources should be a locally-important and well-preserved example of an architectural style, as applied to their particular building form. Elements in districts should be a representative example of local commercial building types and possess stylistic elements which serve to retain the sense of time and place in evidence in the district.

The commercial buildings within districts are to be rated as either contributing or noncontributing as to the character of a district, as per criteria established for National Register listings. As a courtesy to property owners and for the purposes of long-range preservation planning, the designation of "NC\*" should be made to identify commercial buildings that date from the historic period of the district, but have seen alterations that have compromised their architectural integrity. Such buildings should be evaluated on the basis that the removal of alterations may feasibly restore architectural integrity as a result of a careful rehabilitation project. Though non-contributing at the time of nomination, these structures should not be eliminated from within the boundaries of districts solely on this basis.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number F Page # 15

---

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

3. Public/Semi-Public Resources

Public and semi-public resources have been developed at various times over the period of Senatobia's historical development context of ca. 1870 to ca. 1941. These resources include buildings which serve the purposes of local government, local or regional education, or the practice of religion on the local level. All of these structures reflect the development of Senatobia's civic character and unique quality of life; many of these structures serve dual roles as important architectural and cultural landmarks for the community.

The resources of Senatobia which are included in this property type and in this historical context are: a) the Tate County Courthouse (1875-76; 1904); b) the former Senatobia Christian Church (1887); c) the First Baptist Church of Senatobia (1928-29 sanctuary); d) the Senatobia Presbyterian Church (1927); e) the Tate County Agricultural High School complex (1914-15; 1938, now Northwest Mississippi Community College); f) the Senatobia High School Auditorium (1938); and, g) the former City Water Works and Light Plant (ca. 1903-07; ca. 1930-35, now the Heritage Foundation Museum, et al). Numerous other resources of a public/semi-public nature were constructed during this period of significance that are no longer extant.

Resources of this property type range from one- to two-stories. All are constructed of load-bearing brick or brick veneer, save for the Senatobia Christian Church, which is frame. The characteristics of these buildings and their sites are described as follows:

- a) The Tate County Courthouse is a notable example of courthouse architecture in Mississippi, both for its unusual H-shaped plan and for its design as a sophisticated example of Italianate and Romanesque styling. A major feature of the design is its center-front three-story tower and double-tiered spire. One-story additions in 1904 resulted in rooms filling the spaces between the wings of the H-plan, and in the construction of a rear stair and office core at the rear of the structure. These additions do not detract from the design qualities of the original structure. A one-story side addition was placed on the structure in 1975; this structure was carefully-designed in sympathy with the original design of the courthouse and does not hamper its architectural integrity. The courthouse is sited on a large lot at the corner of South Ward and West Tate Streets, with grassed and tree-covered front and side lawns. A large parking area extends from the rear, though a few trees remain from the former lawn in this area.



(8-86)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number F Page # 15

---

3. Public/Semi-Public Resources-- Description, continued:

- b. The former Senatobia Christian Church is a notable example of a frame church building designed in a modest interpretation of the Romanesque style. The building features a center-front steeple with spire; exterior walls are covered with weatherboard. The exterior of the church is essentially intact; interior alterations made in the ca. 1950s resulted in the alteration of some original features, though the organization of spaces and finishes is substantially intact. The church is sited on a small grassed lot, removed only twenty-to-thirty feet from the street. Mature trees are found at the rear of the lot.
- c. The 1928-29 sanctuary of the First Baptist Church of Senatobia is a fine example of a small Neo-Classical Revival church sanctuary, executed in brick construction with ashlar columns, cornices and other key architectural details. Its premier feature is its dome, raised on a low drum, and its engaged pedimented portico. Reasonably sympathetic additions have been placed on the rear of this structure through time since its original construction, culminating with the construction of a new sanctuary on an adjacent site in 1959. The 1928-29 sanctuary is set back from South Ward Street by some forty feet and is surrounded by a grassed lawn.
- d. The Senatobia Presbyterian Church was built in 1927 in an interpretation of the Collegiate Gothic Revival style. Its materials are brick veneer with stone decorative elements, and a flat tile roof. A Manse was built beside the church in ca. 1952, designed in close sympathy with the original design of the church. An unsympathetic fellowship hall was added to the rear of the church in ca. 1970-75. The church site is grassed and features mature front and side yard trees. It is setback from the street by thirty to forty feet.
- e. The Tate County Agricultural High School complex is a series of four brick-veneered buildings which range in height from one- to two-stories, constructed over two major building periods. The buildings are variously designed in the Craftsman, Neo-Classical Revival, Colonial Revival and Art Moderne styles. All of these structures have witnessed additions or minor alterations constructed over time. None of these alterations result in significant compromises to the architectural qualities of these buildings. The buildings of this complex are set well back from the line of North Panola Street and are arranged facing a semi-circular drive, with a grassed lawn and numerous mature trees.
- f. The Senatobia High School Auditorium was built as a brick and stone veneered structure with a two-story central block flanked by one-story wings; it is a particularly fine example of the Art Moderne style. The central block features ashlar panels with allegorical bas-relief

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number F Page # 16

---

3. Public/Semi-Public Resources-- Description, continued:

sculptures placed on either side of a sun-dial. Original interior and exterior light fixtures, vent covers and other notable features remain intact. A large, one-story addition was placed to the rear of this structure in ca. 1954-59; later covered and enclosed walkways were added to the rear to connect this structure with other, non-historic portions of the Senatobia City Schools complex. None of these additions compromise the important qualities of the original Art Moderne building. The Auditorium is sited upon a large lot which has a grassed lawn with numerous mature trees placed in front of the side wings. The central block is setback from the street thirty or forty feet, and features a wide sidewalk leading to its entrances.

- g. The former City Water Works and Light Plant was built in phases along North Center Street as a one-story, gable-roofed, load-bearing brick masonry structure, with Italianate influences. The structure has witnessed the enclosure or alteration of some window and door bays through time. These alterations make only minor compromises in the qualities of the original Italianate design features. This structure is sited with no setback from the sidewalk along North Ward Street.

In conclusion, the public/semi-public resources of Senatobia reflect a wide range of buildings employed for a variety of functions. Taken as a whole, however, they illustrate the growth to maturity of the Senatobia community during the period of historic context.

Significance of Public/Semi-Public Resources

Simply put the public and semi-public resources of Senatobia represent the sense of continuity and confidence in the quality of a community's life. As opposed to residential or commercial resources, which are built to serve the aspirations or needs of individuals, public and semi-public resources are contributed to the community by the community-- whether that community is a religious community or governmental body.

It is a notable compliment to the people of Senatobia that many of their public and semi-public buildings are clearly architectural landmarks. However, public and semi-public resources need not be grand, confident architectural statements to be considered landmarks. A good example of this is the City Water and Light Plant, which is a diminutive, functional building. In terms of its contribution to the development of Senatobia, though, it is a landmark of technology and of public service to its community-- one can imagine that turn-of-the-century Senatobians certainly considered this building to be a landmark, as well as a place of miracles.

(8-86)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number F Page # 17

---

3. Public/Semi-Public Resources-- Description, continued:

All of the seven of the public and semi-public resources which remain from the historical period retain their architectural integrity in terms of design, setting, materials, association, etc. All of these resources are eligible for listing upon the National Register either as individual structures, as contributing parts of larger historic districts, or as districts unto themselves.

Registration Requirements for Public and Semi-Public Resources

The resources comprising this property type must be good examples of representative architectural styles which retain a good degree of their architectural integrity reflective of the period of their contribution as a public or semi-public resource within the historic period of Senatobia's development, ca. 1870 to ca. 1941. In essence, then, the requirements and standards for the listing of these resources are the same as those set forward in National Register criteria.

However, organization of the listing of public and semi-public resources should include recognition of the pattern of development and the role in public service played by these resources. The public and semi-public resources identified in Senatobia are spread over a large area of the community; these resources are most often found as integral parts of surrounding historic environments, be they residential or commercial. Since these resources represent service to the community, the sense of this association should be maintained by the nomination process itself. Therefore, even when a resource may be eligible for listing on its own merits, primary consideration should be given to including that resource as a part of the larger eligible district surrounding it. Individual nominations should only be pursued when the surrounding context is lost in whole or in substantial part.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	G	Page #	18	Historical Development of Senatobia, Tate Co., Mississippi Multiple Property Listing
----------------	---	--------	----	--

---

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

This Multiple Property Listing has been limited in its scope to the incorporated limits of the City of Senatobia, Tate County, Mississippi.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi

Section number H Page # 19 Multiple Property Listing

---

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The Senatobia, Tate County, Mississippi Multiple Properties nomination was based on an intensive architectural and historical resources survey conducted between November of 1992 and January of 1993 by John Linn Hopkins, a private consultant in historic preservation from Memphis, Tennessee. The survey was conducted under contract with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Per the standards set by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, the survey was conducted to inventory those properties which met the following criteria:

1. Any extant building or structure constructed before 1865, regardless of condition.
2. Any extant building or structure built between 1865 and 1915 that retains sufficient physical integrity that its historic character can be determined by exterior examination from a public right-of-way.
3. Any extant building or other structure built between 1915 and 1941 that retains a moderate to high degree of architectural integrity and appreciable architectural character or historical interest. Extensively altered buildings and minor or insubstantial buildings or structures were disregarded.
4. Any building or structure built since 1941 that possesses exceptional architectural or historical significance.
5. Any freestanding object of artistic or historical interest.
6. Every major building within the boundaries of any proposed historic district, both contributing or non-contributing.

Following these guidelines, 270 State of Mississippi Historic Resources Inventory Forms with photographs and sketch maps were completed for properties within the incorporated limits of Senatobia, Tate County, Mississippi.

Historical research was conducted to flesh out the raw survey data and to add perspective to the broad pattern of historical development in Senatobia. Though there were limited published historical sources available, the most helpful included The History of Tate County, edited by Howard Carpenter (1975), and The Heritage of Tate County, Mississippi, compiled by the Tate County Genealogical and Historical Society (1991). Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Senatobia published in 1886, 1892, 1897,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number H Page # 20

---

H. Identification and Evaluation Methods, continued:

1902, 1907, 1915, 1925 and 1936-42 proved helpful in documenting building dates and development patterns. Many residents of Senatobia proved very helpful and generous in sharing knowledge on their homes or commercial buildings.

The architectural and historical survey revealed that there was a definitive break between the types and architectural character of buildings constructed prior to World War Two and those constructed in the years following. When survey data was synthesized with map data and historical information, a number of interesting conclusions were revealed. The first was that Senatobia's growth as a city effectively began with the post-Civil War development and redevelopment of what had been only a modest antebellum settlement. The second was that Senatobia grew rapidly from ca. 1870, at about the time that railroad service was re-established, reaching a position of maturity in ca. 1885 in terms of relative population and developed area. The third conclusion was that the population and developed area of Senatobia remained surprisingly stable from ca. 1885 until the onset of World War Two. The fourth conclusion was that in spite of this stability of population and developed area, Senatobia was not a stagnant community that could ill-afford to invest in public services or quality in the design of its buildings-- the historic resources of Senatobia reflect qualities of design, workmanship, detail and materials that are surprisingly sophisticated for a community of this size. The final conclusion was that the on-going pattern of redevelopment within the same developed area of the community had left Senatobia without the impression of boom or bust as evidenced in its buildings-- the pattern as a whole left for us today appears seamless in its evolution from one year to the next.

The period of historical context of ca. 1870 to ca. 1941 was developed from the combination of these conclusions. The analysis of the development of an individual historic district reveal slightly different periods of significance. However, when these resources are compared with those on a community-wide basis, the larger period of context is confirmed.

Three property types could be identified out of this period of historical context. It was not practical nor possible to identify sub-types, due to the relatively small number of total resources involved and due to the fact that no distinctive sub-periods of development could be determined, if they ever existed at all. All of the nominations presented under this multiple property listing reflect a close association with the historical context and with the property types identified.

(8-86)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	H	Page #	21	Historical Development of Senatobia, Tate Co., Mississippi Multiple Property Listing
----------------	---	--------	----	--

---

Registration requirements were based on National Register standards for assessing integrity, as shaped by the historic resources identified. Determinations for the allowances to be made for modification and deterioration of the resources were made accordingly.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	I	Page #	22	Historical Development of Senatobia, Tate Co., Mississippi Multiple Property Listing
----------------	---	--------	----	--

---

I. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

Carpenter, Howard, editor, The History of Tate County (Senatobia, MS: B/C Printing, 1975).

Herndon, Joseph, Architects of Tennessee (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Columbia University, New York City, NY, 1975)

"Progress Edition". Tate County Democrat (Senatobia, MS), July 3, 1980, Section D, pgs. 1-12.

Sanborn Map Company, "Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Senatobia, Mississippi". Map series 1886, 1892, 1897, 1902, 1907, 1915, 1925, 1936-42.

Tate County Board of Supervisors, Minute Book A, pgs. 190, 201.

Tate County Genealogical and Historical Society, The Heritage of Tate County, Mississippi (Curtis Media, 1991)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Historical Development of Senatobia,  
Tate Co., Mississippi  
Multiple Property Listing

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 23

---

Nominations for the following properties are being submitted  
as part of the multiple property submission for Senatobia,  
Tate County, Mississippi:

College Street Historic District  
Downtown Senatobia Historic District  
North Park Street Historic District  
Panola Street, North, Historic District  
Panola Street, South, Historic District  
Senatobia Christian Church  
Southeast Senatobia Historic District  
Tate County Agricultural High School Historic District  
Tate County Courthouse  
South Ward Street Historic District