

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

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

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

**1. Name**

historic Bradshaw House

and/or common Bradshaw House

**2. Location**

street & number 2154 Highland Avenue \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Birmingham \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 6

state Alabama code 01 county Jefferson code 073

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Mr. John F. Debuys, Jr., Mr. James J. Odum, Jr., and Mr. James W. May

street & number 2154 Highland Avenue

city, town Birmingham \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Alabama

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number 716 North 21st Street

city, town Birmingham \_\_\_\_\_ state Alabama

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

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

date 1970-present \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Alabama Historical Commission

city, town Montgomery \_\_\_\_\_ state Alabama

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved    date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

This is an irregularly massed, two-story masonry house with a full basement and a steep hipped roof with projecting gables. It utilized paired and arched windows, fishscale shingles, turned millwork, tall paneled chimneys and contrasting colors in a restrained Queen Anne design which is devoid of classical references common in later examples. The most notable feature of the house is the domed turret with recessed porch which rises from the wraparound porch.

By the mid-1970's the house had been painted white and stripped of its stained glass, mantels and ornamental roof cresting. The domed turret had been enclosed and the floor plan subdivided. In the recent restoration, the building was painted pale grey, some of the original stained glass was returned and replacement mantels installed. The posts on the turret and porch were replaced with posts of a similar nature, but no attempt was made to match the original balustrade. Copper replaces the galvanized tin of the domed turret, which like the wraparound porch, is enclosed with plexiglass.

The interior of the house is not lavish, featuring plain pine flooring and simple victorian period moldings. Replacement mantels (with an exception of a marble mantel in an upstairs room) are appropriate. The original floor plan was maintained except for the relocation of a second floor wall. (see sketch plan) A small shed addition on the west was removed but one on the east retained.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1892 **Builder/Architect** George Torgeson

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Bradshaw House (1892) and the Hassinger House (1895) are the only remaining 19th-century Queen Anne residences in Birmingham and the last of the 19th-century mansions built along Highland Avenue, the city's premier upper class residential development. The Bradshaw House is also noted for its early owners who were important in the commercial and industrial development of the city.

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Developed by the Elyton Land Company in the 1880's, Highland Avenue was planned as a grand boulevard winding its way around three small parks to a large park with a lake and pavillion. Constructed in 1892 for Caldwell Bradshaw, this restrained masonry structure was among the earlier houses on the street. It was designed by George Torgeson who had an office in Birmingham in the 1890's. Bradshaw served for 18 years as the resident attorney for the Corbin Banking Company of New York and for eight large English investment corporations. As a co-founder of Consolidated By-Products, he was responsible for the installation of gas mains in Birmingham. The Bradshaws occupied the house until 1902 when they rented it to Erskine Ramsay while they toured the western United States.

In 1905, Ramsay purchased the house and occupied it with four other bachelors, becoming locally famous for the lavish entertainments which took place. Ramsay, vice-president and chief engineer of the Pratt Consolidated Coal Company, was an important figure in the early history of the city, "assisting in the development of banking, commercial, real estate, construction, manufacturing and investment companys in the Birmingham district as well as in other states outside of Alabama." He was a pioneer in the introduction of shaking screens at bituminous mines and was the author of numerous technical and scientific articles about coal, coke and iron. In 1911, he was chosen as a member of the engineering commission sent by the U. S. Bureau of Mines to study the coal mines and conditions in Europe. Ramsay High School (originally Ramsay Technical Institute) was named for him, as was Ramsay Mining Hall in Auburn.

In 1922, Ramsay sold the house to Pattie Ruffner Jacobs, Alabama's leading suffragist, who apparently used it for rental income, as she never occupied it. In the years after World War II, Highland Avenue began to decline, and most of the early houses along the lower section of the street were replaced with commercial developments and large apartment buildings. The Bradshaw House was allowed to deteriorate and was vandalized in the early 1970's. It was recently restored for law offices by the current owners.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Owen, T. M. History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography. S. J. Clarke Publishing Company: Chicago, 1921.  
 Personal Interview: Mrs. Walter Scott Rountree (formerly Margaret J. Bradshaw) by Ellen A. Ferrell (Birmingham Regional Planning Commission) September, 1972.

## 10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED  
 ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1  
 Quadrangle name Birmingham North Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	<u>16</u>	<u>519340</u>	<u>37065610</u>	B					
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing		
C				D					
E				F					
G				H					

Verbal boundary description and justification Lot 1 and part of Lot 2 in Block 753. Begin at the Southwest corner of block 753 and proceed east along north side of Highland Avenue for 76.4'; then northerly (90°) for 109.6'; then westerly (90°) 21.5'; then northerly (90°) 37.7'; then westerly (90°) 54.9'; then southerly (90°) 147.3' to point of beginning.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ellen Mertins, National Register Coordinator

organization Alabama Historical Commission date February 22, 1980

street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 832-6621

city or town Montgomery state Alabama

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

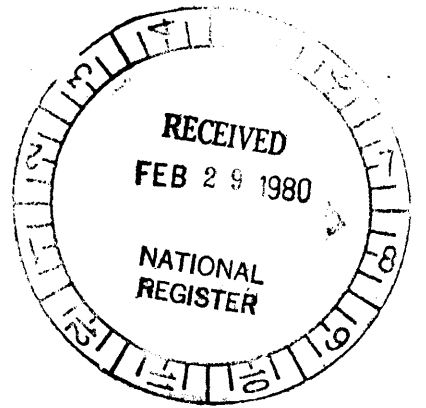
national  state  local

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

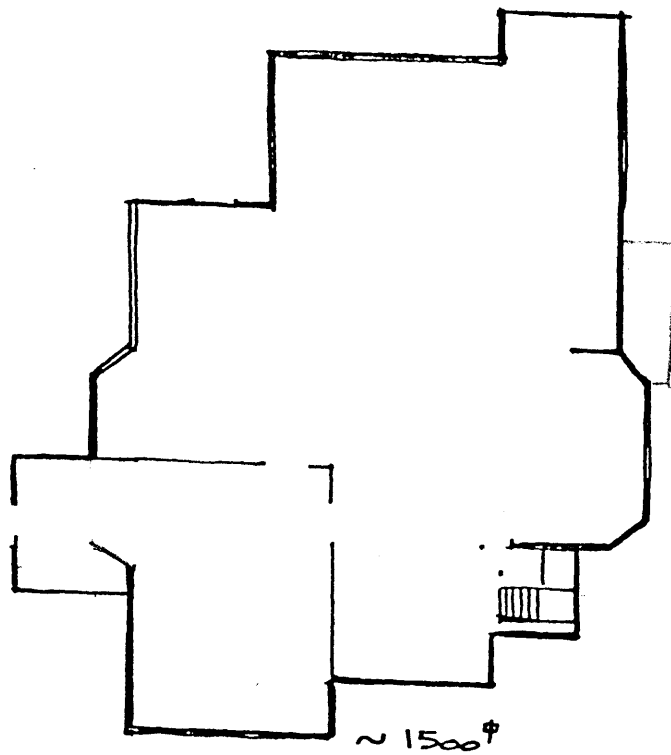
State Historic Preservation Officer signature Miss B. Howard Jr.

title SHPO Alabama date February 22, 1980

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>for W. Ray Luce</u>	date <u>4/28/80</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>Carol Dubois</u>	date <u>4/24/80</u>
Chief of Registration	

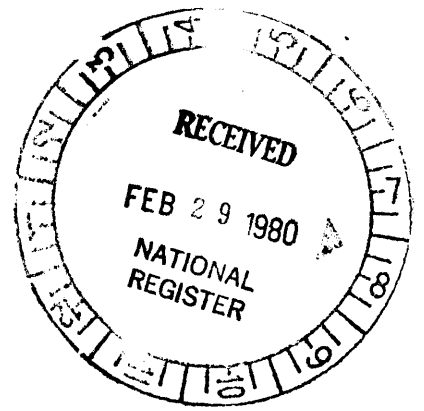


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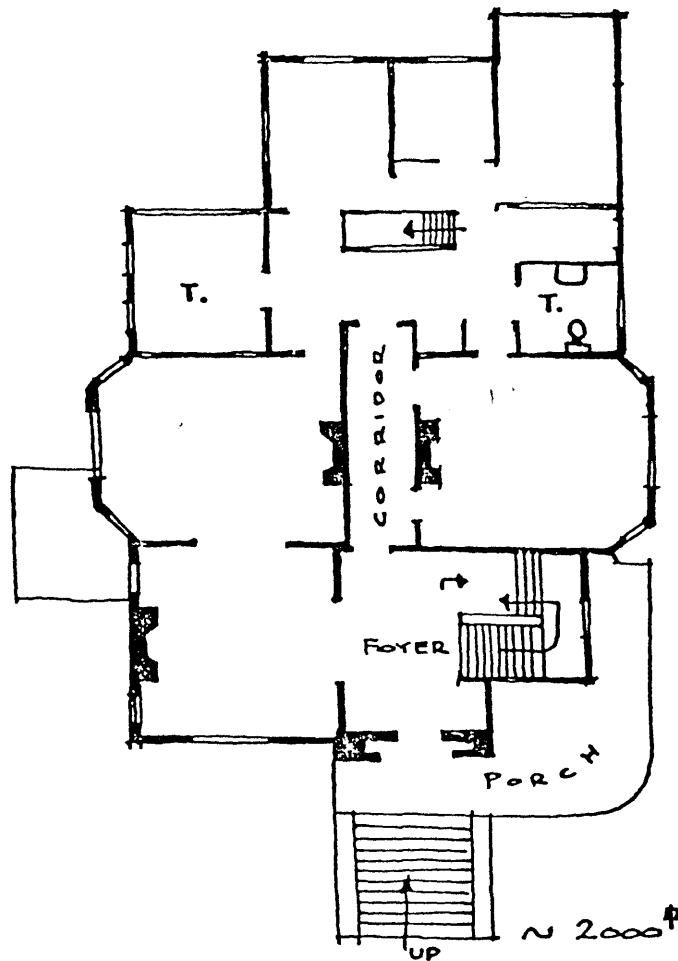


GROUND FLOOR

SCALE  $\frac{1}{16}'' = 1'-0''$



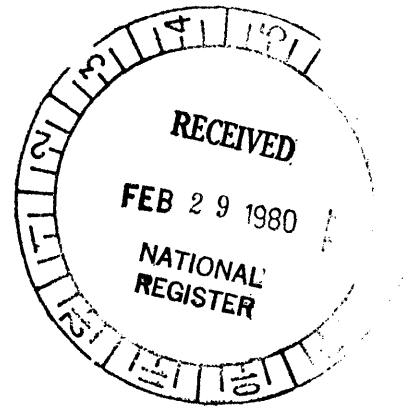
APPROXIMATE



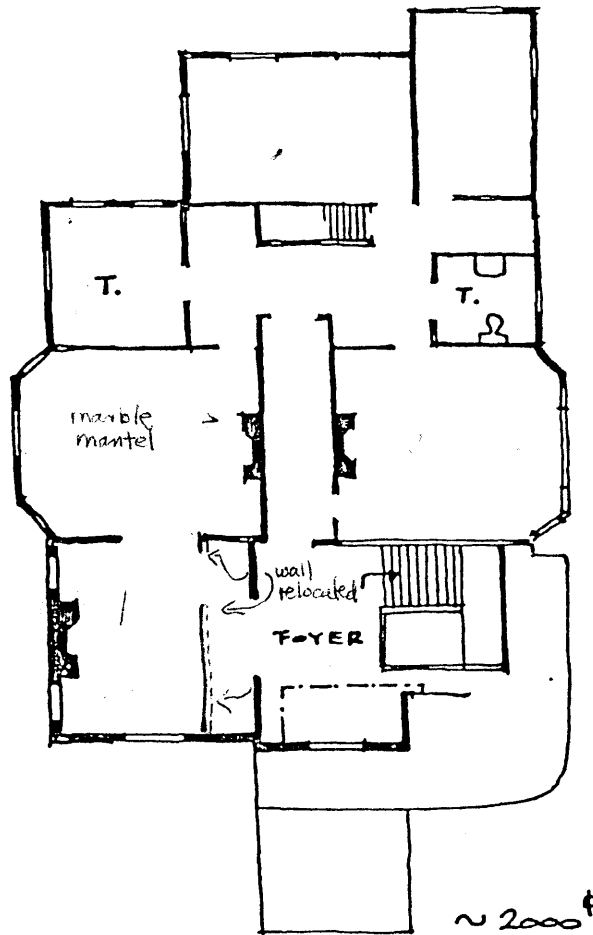
1st FLOOR

SCALE.  $\frac{1}{16}'' = 1'-0''$

BRADSHAW HOUSE 1892  
2154 HIGHLAND AVE.



APPROXIMATE



2nd FLOOR

SCALE  $\frac{1}{16} = 1'-0"$