

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 44

Depot-Compress Historic District

7 - DESCRIPTION

The twenty acre proposed Depot-Compress Historic District derives its identity from the Depot buildings constructed alongside the Illinois Central Railroad tracks and the Federal Compress Company's sprawling sheds. Unlike the other three proposed historic districts, the Depot-Compress area is distinguished by a marked juxtaposition of commercial and residential buildings. East of Compress Street, the district is dominated by the depot buildings and the Compress complex, while west of Compress Street the land is used exclusively for residential purposes. The proposed Depot-Compress District is located one mile east of the Holly Springs Courthouse Square Historic District.

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Depot-Compress Historic District

Primary elements (P) are significant documents of the historic and architectural development of the community, possess a high degree of architectural integrity, and maintain the scale, texture and use of the district. Contributing elements (C), both old and new, are historic elements which have been considerably, but not irreparably, altered. Marginal elements (M) have no distinguishable present or future historic or architectural value, but do not significantly detract from the tout ensemble of the district. Intrusive elements (I) have been unsympathetically altered beyond repair or, are elements which interrupt the scale, texture and use of the district.

Note: Because of the disparities inherent in Holly Springs' three street numbering systems and the relatively high incidence of unnumbered buildings, individual addresses have been deleted from the following inventory. Building numbers assigned in this inventory correspond with those used on the map labelled, "Holly Springs Multiple Resource Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places: Key to Partial Inventory of Architectural Resources."

Van Dorn Avenue

- 274) Illinois Central Depot and Hotel. Two-and-one-half-story hip-roof brick depot. Broad roof plane profile broken on facade by small hipped dormers; three-bay end pavillions surmounted by tent-roof towers with iron cresting and finials; and a three-bay center pavillion with a pyramidal-roof tower with a richly-embellished finial. Semi-circular arch windows, arcaded in groups of three on facade. Decorative brick corbelling. Hip-roof porch supported by oversize chamfered timber braces encircles facade and east and west elevation. Chateausque/Romanesque Revival, 1858 (northwest wing), 1886, facade. (P)
- 275) Illinois Central Railroad Freight Depot (Old Mississippi Central Railroad Office). Single-story flanking-gable brick depot building. Vertical divisions defined by brick pilasters. Segmental arch windows, 1876. (P)
- 276) Federal Compress. Single-story wood frame and corrugated metal saw-tooth-roof cotton processing plant and warehouse. Four foot high screened monitors. Timber loading platform extends along partially-enclosed east elevation, ca. 1900, 1933. (P)
- 277) Phillips Grocery. Two-story flat-roof brick commercial building with corbelled parapet. Shaped cast iron lintils on second floor windows and door. Cast iron trim on first floor. Three-by-three-bay hipped-roof porch encircles facade and east elevation. High Victorian Commercial. 1882. (P)

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7 - DESCRIPTION

- 278) Wyatt Building. Two-story flat-roof brick commercial building with corbelled parapet. Segmental arch windows and entrances. Ca. 1882. (P)
- 279) Lollar Building. Single-story flat-roof brick commercial building. Corbelled parapet on east half of building. Shed-roof porch extends along entire facade. Ca. 1882. (C)
- 280) Edwards Garage. Single-story flat-roof frame two-bay garage. Yard littered with cars and automobile parts. Ca. 1950. (I)
- 281) Single-story pyramid-roof frame residence with gable-front ell. Two-bay shed-roof porch. Ca. 1920. (C)
- 282) Single-story flanking-gable frame residence. Asbestos siding. Ca. 1940. (I)
- 283) Gaw House. One-and-one-half-story saltbox residence. Two front entrances. Four-bay flat-roof porch supported by square posts with a millwork apron. Porch surmounted by a picturesque sawn balustrade. Rural vernacular folk cottage, 1859. (P)
- 284) Hillside. One-and-one-half-story flanking-gable frame residence. Front-gable dormers with brackets and ogee arch windows. Three-bay porch with Gothic arch openings; spandrels pierced with quatrafoil motifs. Two-story hip-roof tower. Flat-roof-bay with paired windows and bracketed hood. Convex-pyramidal roof spring house partially enclosed with latticework. Italian Villa/Gothic Revival, 1861. (P)
- 285) Vertie's Antiques. Single-story flat-roof three-bay stucco commercial building. Ca. 1930. (M)
- East College Avenue
- 286) Govan-Herr-Knox House. Single-story flanking-gable brick residence. Gable-front ell with tripartite bay windows. Two-bay hip-roof porch along facade. Three-bay shed-roof along east elevation. 1850. (P)
- 287) Single-story hip-roof frame residence. Two-bay gable-front entrance porch. 1925. (M)
- 288) Single-story flanking-gable frame residence. Single-bay shed-roof entrance porch. 1955. (M)
- 289) One-and-one-half-story flanking-gable frame residence. Single-bay gable-front entrance porch. 1955. (M)

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8 - SIGNIFICANCE

Depot-Compress Historic District

In response to the rapid growth of Marshall County's bustling agricultural economy, the proposed Depot-Compress Historic District emerged as the area's leading transportation center in the early 1850s. The establishment, at that time, of the Mississippi Central Railroad, which linked north Mississippi with New Orleans, was perhaps, one of Holly Springs' greatest achievements. The proposed historic district's strategic location on the state's major rail line made it a particularly vulnerable target during the Civil War. Here, General Grant stored supplies for his Vicksburg campaign and was resolutely halted by General Van Dorn's raid on the Depot stockpile, one of the war's most daring Confederate coups. Late in the nineteenth century, the proposed historic district achieved new prominence as the base of the area's largest industry, the Federal Compress Company, a cotton-processing concern.

Ground was broken in 1852 at Holly Springs for the Mississippi Central Railroad after more than a year of surveying, and extended negotiations between Holly Springs promoters, Judge J. W. Clapp, Colonel H. W. Walter and Walter Goodman, first president of the line, and representative of the Southwestern Railroad Convention. (Wyatt, "The Depot," p. 2). By 1856, the newly-laid tracks stretched southward to the Tallahatchie River. Construction of the line northward from New Orleans had also begun. (Wyatt, p. 8.) By that time, a lot of cars had been delivered from Smith and Company in Dayton, Ohio and two locomotives had arrived from Lawrence, Massachusetts. (Wyatt, p. 8.) In 1857, the area's first telegraph line was installed in the Mississippi Central route by the Southwestern Telegraph Company. (Wyatt, p. 9.) Finally, in 1860, the long-awaited rail system linking Holly Springs and New Orleans was completed.

During the Civil War, the Mississippi Central Railroad played a vital role in the movement of troops and supplies by both Union and Confederate armies. General Grant kept the track cleared to maintain communications with the major supply base he had established at Holly Springs in 1862 in preparation for the siege of Vicksburg. (Deupree, p. 50.) Vast supplies of food, clothing, medicine and ammunition were stored at the depot, in box cars, at the courthouse and in buildings throughout the town. Led by General Van Dorn, the First Mississippi Cavalry, together with divisions from Missouri, Tennessee and Texas, stormed the supply center on 20 December 1862, totally ravaging the Federal stockpiles.

The scene might well have been described as "wild and exciting: Federals running; Confederates yelling and pursuing; tents and houses burning; torches flaming; guns popping; sabres clanking; negroes and abolitionists begging for mercy; women, in dreaming robes and with dissheveled hair floating in the morning breeze, clapping their hands with joy and shouting

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encouragement to the raiders; a mass of frantic, frightened human beings, presenting in the frosty morning hours, a motley picture, at once ludicrous and sublime, which words are impotent to portray" (Deupree, p. 58).

Between \$2,000,000 and \$4,000,000 in Union supplies were destroyed (Deupree, p. 58). Buildings throughout the town, as well as those in the proposed historic district, were burned. Gone were the old roundhouse with its octagonal cupola, the warehouses and machine shops illustrated in 10 January 1863 issue of Harper's Weekly. Only part of the hotel remained.

After the war, the task of rebuilding the railroad began immediately. In 1878, the Mississippi Central Railroad was purchased by the Chicago, St. Louis and New Orleans Railroad, to be integrated into the new line from Chicago and New Orleans. It came under the full ownership of the Illinois Central Railroad, today the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad, in 1882 (Wyatt, p. 15).

The Depot (#274), now used as a private residence, is the most outstanding extant nineteenth century railroad depot in the state. Completed in 1886 under the direction of the Illinois Central's Master Carpenter J. B. Lee, the Romanesque Revival-influenced hotel incorporated the old hotel which survived Van Dorn's Raid. The two-story structure, embellished with three prominent towers, soon became one of the most popular hotels on the line. The first floor housed ticket and telegraph offices; separate waiting rooms for ladies, gentlemen and blacks; and a splendid 125-seat dining room (The Reporter, 20 May 1886). Twenty guest rooms and suites filled the second floor. The facilities at the new hotel were complemented by the construction of several saloons and boarding houses across the street in the early 1880s (#277, 278, 279). Freight was handled at the freight depot (#275), constructed in 1876 (Interstate Commerce Commission Inventory, approved 12 August 1916).

Industrial development of the proposed historic district was initiated in 1890 with the establishment of a cotton compress on the site of the present Federal Compress Co. building (#276). The local firm was bought out in 1900 by Joe Newberger and R. L. Taylor of Memphis who organized the Granada Compress and Warehouse Company, parent company of forty-two compresses in Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. In 1942, the company was reorganized as the Federal Compress and Warehouse Company ("History of Marshall County," p. 13).

The giant sheds, with their monitor roofs enclosed with screens for ventilation, were built ca. 1900. Two additional sheds, which more than doubled the capacity of the operation, were constructed in 1933 ("History of Marshall Co.," p. 13). At the Compress, for many years the town's largest industry, graded cotton was compressed into bales for shipping.

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The significance of the proposed historic district is heightened by the inclusion of several properties long associated with the railroad and the compress. The Compress Office (#291) has been in use since the beginning of the twentieth century. A row of workers' dwellings on Compress Street is no longer extant. (Map, The Cotton Insurance Association, Atlanta, Georgia, 30 October 1919.) The Holland House (#293), constructed in 1859 for a Mr. Hastings and later sold to the Illinois Central Railroad for use as a section house.

Two of Holly Springs most architecturally significant residences are located within the boundaries of the proposed historic district. Hillside (#284) is the only pre-Civil War Italian Villa/Gothic Revival influenced residence in the town. The Sailor House (#290) is the last of the many homes built in Holly Springs by contractor Israel Sailor which still boasts Sailor's trademark, a stucco finish scored to simulate stone.

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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10 - GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Depot-Compress Historic District

UTM References:

Zone 15

M	Easting	276910	N	Easting	277330
	Northing	3849980		Northing	3849960
O	Easting	277290	P	Easting	276910
	Northing	3849760		Northing	3849760

Verbal Boundary Description:

The Depot-Compress Historic District, an irregularly shaped area of approximately twenty acres, is bounded on the east by the west side of the Illinois Central Railroad tracks; on the west, by the east side of Chesterman Street; on the north, by the north side of College Avenue and on the south, by the south side of Van Dorn Avenue. District boundaries correspond with the boundary line around shaded area (3) indicated on the Holly Springs Multiple Resource Nomination map.